

## BOOK REVIEWS

William R. Anderson with Don Keith. *Ice Diaries: The Untold Story of the Cold War's Most Daring Mission*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, www.thomasnelson.com, 2008. xix+360 pp., illustrations, index. US \$24.99, CDN \$30.99, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7852-2759-5.

The operations conducted by American submarines during the Cold War have, until recently, been shrouded in mystery. A decade after the implosion of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, Sherry Sontag and Christopher Drew began to lift the veil in *Blind Man's Bluff: The Untold Story of American Submarine Espionage* (1998) to which John Craven, *The Silent War: The Cold War Battle Beneath the Sea* (2002) added additional information. Gary E. Weir and Walter J. Boyne, *Rising Tide: The Untold Story of the Russian Submarines that Fought the Cold War* (2003) and Peter A. Huchtausen, *October Fury* (2003), an account of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, tell portions of the story from the perspective of Russian submarine commanders. Four veteran American submariners have published memoirs that add important perspectives to undersea operations: C. D. Summitt, *Tales of a Cold War Submariner* (2004); Gannon McHale, *Stealth Boat: Fighting the Cold War in a Fast Attack Submarine [1967-1970]* (2008); Alfred S. McLaren, *Unknown Waters: A First-Hand Account of the Historic Under-Ice Survey of the Siberian Continental Shelf by USS Queenfish (SSN-651) [in 1990]* (2008);

and Peter Sasgen, *Stalking the Red Bear: The True Story of a U.S. Cold War Submarine's Covert Operations Against the Soviet Union* (2009). The vast majority of the information in these works dates from the post-1960 era when nuclear-powered submarines had reached fully operational status.

In his memoir of the USS *Nautilus*, Captain William R. Anderson deals with an earlier era, that of the world's first operational nuclear submarine when the capabilities of such vessels were still more theoretical than proven, most of the world's seabed remained uncharted, and no vessel had ventured far beneath the polar icecap. Anderson has told the story before in *Nautilus 900 North*, written with Clair Blair, Jr. Published in 1959, that narrative remains of interest for what it does not contain, sanitized as it was by considerations of Cold War security.

This much expanded retelling of the *Nautilus*' subsurface transit of the Arctic Sea from west to east places the operation in the context of the Cold War. Anderson and a small coterie of naval officers and civilian scientists were eager to explore the depths of the Arctic, but others, including Admiral Hyman Rickover, considered cruising beneath the icecap to be fraught with danger and feared that any mishap would seriously damage the program to develop nuclear-powered submarines. Thus, Anderson and his allies prepared in secrecy for a voyage that gained presidential approval only in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's October 1957 launch of Sputnik and subsequent failures in the American space program.

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President Dwight Eisenhower authorized the voyage hoping its success could be employed to counter the perception that technological supremacy, or at least leadership, had passed from the democratic West to the autocratic Soviet Union. "Operation Sunrise," as it was codenamed, was conducted in secrecy lest a failure further damage the reputation of science and technology in the United States.

In retrospect, there appears to have been nothing to fear, but this account by Anderson, who became the second commander of the *Nautilus* in June 1957, describes malfunctioning equipment and a collision with the icecap that seriously damaged one of the submarine's periscopes when it probed beneath the icecap from the Atlantic in September 1957, an indication that concerns about the safety of the voyage were well-founded. Angry at the way information about the 1957 voyage leaked to the press, President Eisenhower clamped tight security on preparations for the 1958 transit. When Anderson, his 116-man crew, and submarine first entered the Arctic Ocean from the Pacific in June 1958, they were forced back when the clearance between the ice above and the seabed below was judged to be insufficient to risk proceeding further. In July they tried again, and this time found a larger passage. At 11:15 p.m. on 3 August 1958 they reached the North Pole, 90 degrees north, continued eastward and two days later, at 5:49 a.m. surfaced in the Greenland Sea, passed through the Denmark Strait into the Atlantic Ocean, and continued to a rendezvous point off Reykjavik, Iceland, where a helicopter plucked Anderson from the afterdeck of the *Nautilus* and transferred him to a transport plane which took him directly to Washington for a meeting with an elated President Eisenhower.

With the assistance of the veteran broadcast journalist and author Don Keith, Captain Anderson has produced a memoir

that provides a window into the early nuclear submarine development program and an account of the historic voyage of the *Nautilus* that pays tribute to the resolve and ingenuity of all involved.

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Bob Baird. *Shipwrecks of the Forth and Tay*. Caithness, Scotland: Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com, 2009. 286 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, indices. UK £18.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-904445-74-6.

This book claims to describe shipwrecks that lie in the estuaries of the Rivers Forth and Tay on the east coast of Scotland. The geographical range of the wrecks included, however, is far to the south of the Forth Estuary and far to the north of the Tay Estuary, making a more appropriate title *Shipwrecks of the East of Scotland*. This would have been consistent with the author's previous publications, *Shipwrecks of the West of Scotland* (1995) and *Shipwrecks of the North of Scotland* (2003) and it is not clear why he has restricted the title.

The book starts with a useful preface by the author explaining his interest in shipwrecks and how he gathered his information. It is followed by a section on GPS positions that appears to have been inserted to bring the text into the modern world as it is followed, in the introduction, by a substantial section on the intricacies of the compass which will be of little interest to most readers now, although it may still be seen as an interesting addition to the maritime specialist. Indeed, the development of GPS position-fixing is one of the most important recent changes in wreck diving as it takes away the uncertainties of trying to relocate a wreck

by observing shore features, taking transits, or by compass bearings. The inclusion of a substantial passage entitled "Locating wrecks with GPS" by Lt. Cdr. N. McEachan on pages vii-viii is not fully referenced.

At first glance, the book might appear as a gazetteer of wrecks, but there is much more to it than that as it includes many interesting facts and stories gleaned by the author over the years. This broadens the range of the work and will make it of interest not only to divers, who might seem to be the main target, but also to anyone interested in maritime matters, and even the more general reader as many of the anecdotes are of considerable general interest.

It is clear that the author has collected his information, and the abundance of useful photographs, over many years. In some cases, the origins are not clear, but he explains this in his acknowledgements (p.iv) and any confusion is excusable in a work of this personal nature. Baird lists the principal sources and publications in a bibliography (p.274) but it is obvious that much of the information is word-of-mouth and came direct from other divers and people who actually experienced the events described. The photographs vary in quality, but overall give a very good impression of the subject, with pictures of static ships and sequences showing the actual sinking, such as the case of the *Campania* (pp.121-122).

Baird's material is well organised by geographical region and each section starts with a useful map showing the location of the wrecks which are numbered in the text and on the map. The locations on the map are approximate but accurate latitudes and longitudes, and GPS co-ordinates are given at the start of each wreck description. The descriptions usefully describe the ships, their location, how they were sunk and in what depth of water they now lie.

The author's enthusiasm for his subject is obvious throughout and the sometimes lengthy research into individual wrecks and broader subject areas adds immensely to the interest, and enjoyment, of the book. In many cases, the bald description of a wreck leads into a detailed, and often exciting, description of the background and results of the event with a mass of extra detail about the other ships and incidents that were involved. A good example covers the sinking of the *Nymph* and the *Pallas* in 1810 because of the lack of adequate lighthouses in the Forth Estuary. The section goes on to cover the development of beacons and lighthouses in this important shipping area with vivid descriptions of the first beacon on the May Island. On page 40, there is a very attractive artist's reconstruction of the first beacon in 1636, but unfortunately, there is no credit identifying the artist.

Another example of the broader interest is the substantial amount of information relating to shipping losses in the First and Second World Wars and the very considerable impact made by U-boats in both wars. Wrecks sunk by the submarines and a significant number of the U-boats themselves litter the seabed in the subject area, and there is a section dedicated to this aspect of the German fleet (pp.53-60).

The main criticism of the book relates to the richness of the information it contains and the lack of a general index. There are very useful separate indices sorted by vessel and by location. Coming across many of the interesting cameos and anecdotes is a matter of chance while reading about a specific wreck. For example, the RAF shot down some of their own aircraft by accident and subsequently entertained the remaining, rather disgruntled, pilots to dinner in their mess in the evening. The following day, as those pilots left for their own airfields, they

bombed their hosts with toilet rolls! This amusing anecdote comes under the simple heading of the shipwreck of the *Bayonet* (p.75) and the two events are otherwise unrelated.

Another example of the need for a good general index comes under the section for the wreck of the light cruiser HMS *Pathfinder* (pp.65-68). The section incidentally describes the steamship *Glitra* as the first merchant ship sunk by a submarine and the British merchantman *Tokomaru* as the first sunk by torpedo, yet neither appears in the vessel index, presumably because they were not lost in the subject area.

Another omission is the lack of sufficient explanation regarding the law and shipwrecks. A Caution is given (p.186) regarding *The Protection of Wrecks Act* as related to military wrecks but shipwrecks as part of the cultural heritage and the protection for their historical value is only briefly mentioned (p.122) with regard to the important wreck of the *Campania* from 1918.

This is a fantastic book for anyone interested in maritime affairs and particularly shipwrecks. It is written in an engaging personal style and with such a wide range of stories and facts that it will appeal even to those who have no intention of searching for wrecks to dive on in the east of Scotland. Its few faults do not detract from the considerable pleasure that it will give the reader.

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Bill Beck and C. Patrick Labadie. *Pride of the Inland Seas: An Illustrated History of the Port of Duluth-Superior*. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press and Duluth Seaway Port Authority,

www.aftonpress.com, 2004. 288 pp., illustrations, notes, maps, index. US \$ 35.00, cloth; ISBN 1-890434-55-8.

There is a long legacy of commissioned historical works in North America, most of which are eminently forgettable from the point of view of a serious historian. This is one of the exceptions. The copyright holder is the Port of Duluth-Superior, and the financial support of a number of the port's businesses is acknowledged in large print on the verso of the title page. In terms of authorship, the major clues are in the acknowledgments (pp.10-11), written from the perspective of Bill Beck, author of "thirty or so books" and a former port commissioner from the 1980s. Beck notes that co-author Labadie "may know more about the Great Lakes in the nineteenth century than anyone alive," which suggests the principal roles and responsibilities in the writing of the work.

A few turns of phrase suggest that both authors didn't see the final draft of the work. Buffalo is introduced to the reader as "located at the eastern end of the Great Lakes..." (p.44) a fact that would surprise most of those living around the shores of Lake Ontario. James J. Hill of the Great Northern Railway is introduced as a dour Scotsman (why are all Scots dour?), when even Wikipedia knows he was born in Upper Canada, near Rockwood (p.141). Most odd, to a Canadian ear, is the appearance of the modern names of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec in 1841 (p.192).

Given the financing behind the work, one should not expect a serious consideration of the role of organized labour in the twin ports. A single photograph shows a rally of the longshoremen in favour of Democratic Senator (and later U.S. vice-president) Walter Mondale in 1971 (p.227). The single intrusion into the narrative is the section that blames the decline in 1980s

grain shipments in part on the 1979 strike of the grain handlers (pp.231-34), and in passing, notes four other strikes in the previous fifteen years.

So what do we have? On one level, the volume is a straightforward narrative of trade in the Lake Superior region following the arrival of Europeans on the scene. The first chapter on the early European adventurers, the First Nations people and the fur trade is fairly weak. Once we reach chapter two and the first American locks at the Soo are opened, there is a distinctly more authoritative feel to the work.

Having established the centrality of the Soo locks, the rail lines to the twin cities and the physical development of the harbour they shared, the late-nineteenth century portion moves to chapters on the trades that dominated traffic: wheat, iron, coal, lumber, passengers and fishing. Discussion is not confined to Superior-Duluth but manages to encompass the range of activity on the American side of Lake Superior. This then shifts to the topic of shipbuilding, especially the legendary whalebacks built by McDougall at American Steel Barge, in Superior. The twentieth-century discussion uses a more chronological approach to what are, by then, well established movements of goods and people. There is a lot of data embedded in the exposition that might have better been presented as tables as trade in one commodity or other doubles and doubles again. From 1960 on, the evidence includes a significant number of interviews as well as the traditional documentation which offers some new insights into the evolution of the port.

The volume contains just short of a thousand footnotes, five pages of index (three columns of fine print) and two pages of illustration credits from 31 different sources, but featuring the collections of Pat Labadie and the Lake Superior Maritime Collection at the University of Wisconsin-

Superior. For once, the design and printing of a local volume really does do justice to the quality of the maps and illustrations.

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Lawrence Burr. *US Cruisers 1883 – 1904. The birth of the steel navy.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com), 2008. 48pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography appendix, index. US \$17.95, CDN \$21.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-84603-267-7.

This is the story of the introduction of the steel cruiser into the U.S. Navy. It is the account of a period of transition in that service that has continued unabated to the present day, transforming the American fleet from relative obscurity and “antiquated wooden hulls” of the late nineteenth century to the technologically sophisticated blue water navy of the twenty-first century recognized by absolutely everyone.

*US Cruisers* is one of those very useful publications; precise, concise and easy to read. It covers not only the rationale for the introduction of steel hulls within the U.S. Navy, but also the technological advances they incorporated. Once this stage is set, the reader begins a chronological voyage from 1883 to 1904 through the accounts of the various ships authorized by Congress.

These short histories provide the salient details of the individual ships – noting especially the improvements made over their predecessors – without a reader having to acquire a large, expensive “encyclopedia” of American cruiser history. Each section is extremely well illustrated, with photographs as well as lavishly detailed, original artworks.

Rich as the illustrations are, neither negative numbers nor photograph accession

numbers are included. Anyone who is interested in procuring a copy of a photograph, whether credited to the author's collection or to the U.S. Naval Historical Center, would need to provide a significant amount of detail in order to get the correct item. Far easier to use either a negative number or an accession number to limit the search. Notwithstanding, if they do not exist a publisher cannot create them.

A reader wanting the main contours of the story could stop reading at p. 24 if he or she wished. All the ships are described, and the reasons for their construction fully illuminated. Still, building a weapon is one thing and using it quite another. "Cruisers in Action" (p. 25 on), relates the operational histories of these warships and the tactical twists and turns of the various battles in which they participated. By the time I had reached p. 32, I decided to watch an episode of "Sea Hunters" with Jim Delgado. By happy coincidence, the episode dealt with the Battle of Santiago and the wrecks of the Spanish squadron that had been obliterated by the U.S. cruisers discussed in the book. For an hour, while watching the program, I was able switch back and forth among the narrative of the battle, the U.S. cruiser specifications, photographs of the Spanish ships before their demise and the images being broadcast of the sad shape of these wrecks today. At the end of the program, I had the complete picture.

Certainly, details that contributed greatly to understanding the Battle of Santiago were clearly presented in the book. It was not possible to feel anything but the greatest sympathy for the Spanish commander – Admiral Cervera – for he was completely outgunned. He also suffered from the lack of a secure supply of coal, which significantly limited his ability to pick the time and place to fight and thus, minimize his squadron's significant disadvantages. If that were not enough, his newest ship sailed into action without even

having had its main armament fitted. The outcome of the engagement was clear before action was even joined, and the U.S. steel cruisers dispatched Cervera's entire squadron in a little less than two hours.

With any narrative about ships or classes of ships, it is always particularly interesting to learn about vessels that still exist. In the case of the ships discussed in this book, it is USS *Olympia*. A full description of this ship and account of her career is included as the final section of the book. There are also excellent photographs provided from the author's collection that show the interior of the ship in great detail. Now moored in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *Olympia* is a National Historic Monument – the engines designated a National Historic Engineering Landmark. Of course, with any vessel still in the water, restoration remains an ongoing activity. Still, its location in the Delaware River basin recognizes the technical and manufacturing innovation provided by companies in the region that helped ships like *Olympia* become part of a "substantial naval arsenal." That the ship is accessible to the public is a major accomplishment in maintaining the naval and maritime history of the U.S.

The story of the birth of the American steel navy is a fascinating one, captured here with great precision. This book would certainly be an interesting and useful addition to any naval library and I commend it to any collector of quality writing on naval subjects.

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Butler, Daniel Allen. *The Other Side of the Night: The Carpathia, the Californian, and the Night the Titanic was Lost*. Philadelphia, PA: Casemate Publishing, www.casemate

publishing.com, 2009. 256 pp., illustrations, maps. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-935149-02-6.

Veteran author of steamship history, Daniel Allen Butler, with *Unsinkable* (1988) under his belt, returns to the *Titanic* era with the present moderate-sized tome. It investigates a sideshow to the grand tragedy of the *Titanic*'s sinking that probably has generated more controversy than any other incident related to the fateful night of April 14-15, 1912: was the nearby *Californian*, helmed by Master Stanley Lord, positioned closely enough and possessed of sufficient evidence of the *Titanic*'s distress that it could have arrived in time at least to partially avert the more disastrous aspects of the event?

It is a question that has had its share of revisitations. The original American Senate investigation and British Board of Trade inquiry, the latter much more directly than the former, concluded that there was a reasonably large amount of proof to suggest Lord's inaction was negligent. Throughout the years, various authors have chimed in with their interpretations. The most notable was after the discovery of the wreck of the *Titanic* which proved that the coordinates relayed for the *Titanic* were incorrect and seemed to put the *Californian* at a greater distance from the *Titanic* than previously thought, thereby supporting Lord's story. Now Butler adds his conclusions which are valuable, not so much for any new evidence, but rather for how they fit into potentially larger questions of history and morality.

Butler's parsing of the facts puts him squarely into the camp of those who excoriate Lord. Drawing largely from the two investigations and contemporary accounts retailed almost immediately after the disaster, he shows that it was very likely that the two ships were less than twenty miles apart (and perhaps no more than ten),

that each saw the other (or at least each other's lights and signals), and that Lord's actions were designed to refuse to acknowledge the import of the sightings and to react as dilatorily as possible to them.

This line of argument is not new to published works. More novel, Butler brings in additional context. Reducing the credibility of Lord's defenders is Butler's account of Master Arthur Rostron of the *Carpathia* who, coming from a much further distance, nearly burst boilers dodging ice to get to the *Titanic* survivors and rescue those still left alive. Butler also demonstrates that Lord proved the most unreliable of witnesses on his ship and seemed, from the moment sailors on the *Californian* reported seeing white rockets (generally considered distress signals), to behave in an almost evasive, disingenuous way.

Yet Butler goes beyond the larger question of whether Lord was culpable in the matter of the *Titanic* and addresses Lord's behaviour in general: even if Lord's story that the vessel sighted was some unknown tramp steamer (of which no record exists), the fact that it was sending up signals according to the maritime rules of the era, meant even what could be interpreted as ambiguous signals merited investigation as a possible ship in distress. Aware that Lord never had encountered ice as a ship's master before, Butler reasons that the risk involved in a high-speed rescue attempt turned Lord into a coward. This, perhaps, accounts for Lord's failure to rouse his wireless operator to try to confirm if there was a ship in distress, whether the *Titanic* or any other vessel.

Mincing no words here, Butler explains Lord's alleged yellow streak as evidence indicative of a sociopathic personality and plays amateur psychologist to build his case. He also pulls no punches when it comes to some supporters of Lord's actions, referring to some, on the basis and

quality of their defense, as full of “hypocrisy”(p.198), and of the work of Lord’s chief defender within the British maritime establishment as “something of an embarrassment”(p.219).

Along the way, Butler makes interesting side observations on topics as varied as the history of steamship operators, how wireless worked in the era, the inadequacies of the British Board of Trade rules prior to the disaster, and whether class discrimination theories about *Titanic* survival rates have any substance. His prose, while sometimes assuming some basic maritime knowledge, at others strives to find a happy medium between that for the professional historian and the general public. He not only never strays from his central theme, what happened that night, but also, more helpfully, offers sustained analysis of why it happened and suggests how things might have turned out differently. It proves to be an entertaining read for the novice (if laden with a few editing errors in the advance copy) and can provide some insights for the *Titanic* enthusiast and historian as well.

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Paul Clancy. *Ironclad: The Epic Battle, Calamitous Loss, and Historic Recovery of the USS Monitor*. New York: International Marine/McGraw Hill, www.mcgraw-hill.com, 2006. 266 pp., illustrations, photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$30.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0071431323.

Unlike most historical accounts describing advances in ironclad technology during the U.S. Civil War, Paul Clancy’s *Ironclad: The Epic Battle, Calamitous Loss, and Historic*

*Recovery of the USS Monitor* provides readers with a glimpse into two worlds: the everyday experiences of sailors aboard the *USS Monitor*, coupled with those of modern-day efforts by U.S. Navy personnel to recover this naval icon, once described as “Ericsson’s folly,” a reference to *Monitor*’s chief designer, John Ericsson. Clancy attempts to create a balance by alternating his chapters between past and present, intending, no doubt, to captivate readers by placing them on the deck of the *Monitor*, first fighting heroically at the battle of Hampton Roads, Virginia, and then, lying quietly beneath the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of North Carolina. It is here where the vessel came to rest less than a year after being launched in 1862. The “unlikely marriage of technology and necessity, the serendipitous creation of John Ericsson,” (p.6) would become the focal point of the most extensive underwater excavation in U.S. naval history, and the nexus of Clancy’s book.

Clancy describes how, after impressing Secretary of Navy Gideon Welles with his distinctive ironclad design for the *Monitor*, Ericsson won approval for his contract to the U.S. Navy once President Abraham Lincoln was reputed to have commented “all I have to say is what the girl said when she put her foot in the stocking, ‘it strikes me there’s something in it.’” (p.8) Within 96 days, and nearly a week ahead of schedule, the *Monitor* was launched with much fanfare and excitement on 30 January 1862, from the Greenpoint, Brooklyn, naval yards in New York City. Clancy uses primary documents, such as letters from the *Monitor*’s paymaster, William Keeler, to provide more than a routine historical explanation of the *Monitor*’s final few weeks. This realism helps bring the story of the *Monitor* closer to home, offering a personal touch that readers can identify with. Unfortunately, while Clancy’s use of primary sources may



help readers wade through the book's 266 pages, it offers little new insight into the daily lives of Union sailors such as has been recorded in works such as Angus Konstam's *Dual of the Ironclads: U.S.S. Monitor and C.S.S. Virginia at Hampton Roads* (2003), or William C. Davis' *Duel Between The First Ironclads* (1975). Indeed, "Clancy's folly" can best be described as an attempt to connect both worlds of past and present into one volume.

What *Ironclad* does offer is insight into the fascinating world of deep-sea and saturation diving, as witnessed through the eyes of practitioners, such as the project's Master Diver, Jim Mariano. This is primarily a book about the salvage of the Union ironclad, and the many intriguing personalities encountered along the way and aboard the derrick barge, *Wotan*, where U.S. Navy divers and archaeologists collaborated during the summer of 2002 to recover *Monitor's* gun turret. In fact, the overall presentation of the book would have been significantly enhanced had Clancy stuck to basics and not included the chapters concerning the events of 1863. While the discovery of human remains in the gun turret (two Union sailors were found) is meant to bridge past and present by using modern technology (and less-modern logical deduction) to solve a riddle from the past, it only highlights the occasionally disjointed nature of this book, and Clancy's inability to combine the two apparently interconnected themes harmoniously.

The author muses that "the *Monitor* has much to teach everyone who investigates her, and one of the main lessons seems to be patience."(p.134). Ironically, had Clancy exercised patience and divided the book into two *separate* publications, the overall effectiveness of the story would have been greatly enhanced. The "tentative" identification of First Class Fireman Robert Williams is an excellent case in point. Clancy admits that DNA

technology does not currently exist to allow for a positive identification of the sailors' remains, and that "it would be risky to positively identify the two sailors and inappropriate even to try." (p.239) Nevertheless, try he does, as does the Army's Central Identification Laboratory (CILHI) in Hawaii. Despite presenting a number of educated guesses based on historical photographic evidence and the size of the bones found within the *Monitor's* turret, this final chapter appears out of step with the rest of the book, and would have been better published separately.

In the end, the *Monitor's* turret was successfully recovered, and today resides in the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Virginia, where tourists can explore the turret as well as exhibits about the world of nineteenth-century-ironclad sailors. The sheer magnitude of *Monitor's* underwater archaeological recovery should have remained the primary focus of this book, with the sailors' adventures, however dramatic, appearing in a different publication. Patience is indeed a virtue.

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Gary Collins. *The Last Farewell: The Loss of the Collett*. St. John's, NL: Flanker Press Limited, [www.flankerpress.com](http://www.flankerpress.com), 2008. 182 pp., illustrations, photographs, maps, glossary, bibliography. CDN \$15.95, paper: ISBN 978-1-897317-24-2.

Long after the arrival of Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1583, the North Atlantic shipping and fishing industries remain a vital component of Newfoundland and Labrador's commercial well-being and cultural heritage. In *The Last Farewell: The Loss of the Collett*, Gary Collins recounts the lives of sailors aboard an early twentieth-century schooner, providing a

fascinating glimpse at nautical life on the north-eastern fringes of North America during the Depression. The book is replete with accounts of the region's people, industries and wild life, interpreted through the eyes of the *Collett's* crew: Martin Ford, John Curtis, Marshall Wells, Walther Collins and Michael Bridgeman.

It was not uncommon for seamen to work multiple trades in order to survive. Such was the case with Marshall Wells, the *Collett's* youngest crew member, who worked off-season in a saw mill at Lockers Bay. Wells' experiences provide insight into the nature of early twentieth-century maritime labour relationships.

Collins was inspired by tales he heard during his own childhood in Newfoundland, and he interviewed members of the families of *Collett's* crew to unravel the tragic story of the ship, originally named *Pandora*, from its launch in 1892 to its sinking in 1934. Collins uses the Newfoundland dialect to help bring Captain Ford and his crew to life. "T'anks, Skipper. Baccy is a bit scarce now. 'Tis bin a won'erful bad winter, as ye fellers would know, in the woods all the time...Skipper Sam's not 'urtin much, though, be the looks of the lumber on deck!"(p.43)

Collins' treatment of previous tragedies, such as the 1898 wreck of the SS *Greenland*, a sealing vessel that lost 47 men out of a crew of 207 (one of whom was John Curtis' younger brother, Henry, p. 51), and the *Southern Cross*, a sealing vessel that vanished in 1886 with its entire 173-man crew, places the story of *Collette* firmly within Newfoundland's long, sad history of maritime disasters. The men of the *Collett*, indeed, any Newfoundland sailor of the 1930s, would have been familiar with these stories.

The author draws on other tales to relate *Collette* and her people to the larger global maritime community. Crewman Walther Collins had been deeply impressed

when he saw a monstrous steam-powered canal-digging machine at Deer Lake, on Newfoundland's west coast. He was, however, unaware that this behemoth had, at the beginning of the century, helped to dig the Panama Canal, which linked the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.

On a cultural level, *The Loss of the Collett* reveals some intriguing facets of religion in Newfoundland, a syncretism of Celtic Christianity and folk tradition. This is not dissimilar to the type of Catholicism practiced by many Old World immigrants to North America where belief in and respect for the Divine share an understanding and equal respect for superstition. For example premonition, when Billy Bridgeman watches his nephew sail off in the *Collett*, "as the schooner disappeared through the narrow east channel that would take her to the open sea, Uncle Billy Bridgeman turned towards his gate with a sudden violent shiver of his own."(p. 46) Theirs was a society that incorporated biblical passages into the vernacular, as illustrated by Captain Ford when he quips to Marshall Wells [as the schooner passed one of the bobbing punts] "... sure, 'e's jiggin' on the Peter side of 'is punt. 'E needs to be on the Christ side."(p.92) As Collins explains, this refers to the Bible verse John 21:6, when Christ tells Simon Peter to "Cast your nets on the right side of the boat." For the *Collett's* crew, religious parables and metaphor were a part of daily life, used to describe a variety of conditions and situations that paralleled their own. This cultural insight into early twentieth-century folk religion provides a rare glimpse into an otherwise obscure maritime tradition.

While familiarity with nautical, and more specifically schooner terminology is not a requisite for appreciating *The Loss of the Collett* (a glossary is provided), it might prove helpful at times, especially when faced with words such as *forefoot* (forward section of a ship's keel, where the keel

meets the stem), *gunnel* (gunwale - the top piece of timber covering a boat's rail), and *pawl post* (the base of a capstan or windlass with sockets or projections that allow the equipment to turn in one direction only for safe lifting of heavy objects like an anchor). The glossary helps ease the initial disappointment at not better understanding the world of sailing ships, and for not having paid more attention to my own Uncle Louie spinning yarns in Aunt Pearl's kitchen. *The Loss of the Collett* is informative and intriguing, and not merely for experienced sailors or Newfoundlanders.

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Jonathan Dull. *The Age of the Ship of the Line: The British and French Navies, 1650-1815*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, [www.nebraskapress.unl.edu](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu), 2009. x+250 pp., illustrations, maps, notes and further reading, index. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8032-1930-4.

Most books in English about the naval wars between Britain and France between 1689 and 1815 are written from the British perspective. Only a few consider the French side of the hill. This brief, well-written account is one of them. Jonathan Dull's aim is to explain the background, course and outcome of the long Anglo-French struggle for hegemony at sea. He uses the line-of-battle ship as a measure of strength, for, he argues, that in all the Franco-British wars of the period, the side that could put the most ships of the line to sea was successful.

An award-winning author of several important books, in particular *The French Navy and American Independence* (1975) and *The French Navy and the Seven Years War* (2008), Dull's newest book

consists of eight short chapters that quickly sail the reader through the seven wars fought during the period. Commencing with a description of the ship of the line as the most complex technical invention of the pre-industrial age and the tactics used to deploy it in action, he begins his account in the middle of the seventeenth century when the great, three-decker battleships became wedded to the line of battle. This actually occurred during a series of Anglo-Dutch Wars. In six subsequent chapters, Dull provides brief accounts of the wars of Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI, of the French Revolution, and of the war against Napoleon. Dull crams an amazing amount of information into 170 pages while succeeding in delivering a fast-paced, thorough account of a century and a quarter of naval warfare. From the end of the seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century, ships of the line grew considerably in the number of guns and men each could carry. This changed the nature of naval warfare by allowing ships to remain at sea far longer during the year than before. Placing such heavy emphasis on the ship of the line as a measure of naval strength is debatable, but Dull also gives due importance to manpower, materiel, logistics and money during the long struggle.

Louis XIV continually expanded his kingdom's borders, which required a large army, meanwhile building the largest navy in Europe and pursuing overseas trade and colonial development to increase France's wealth. This contradictory policy left naval policy in a limbo that a half-century of naval warfare failed to resolve. During the first part of Louis XV's reign, diminished naval rivalry devolved into a foolish war followed by a disastrous one. The French navy never recovered from decline and neglect during the early decades of the king's reign and was all but annihilated at the end of the Seven Years' War. The War of American Independence

revealed all of the French navy's weaknesses. It began the war with Britain from a position of strength and ended it in a state of steady decline. As the number of French ships of the line grew, the quality of the navy's manpower declined, as too few officers were available to man new ships and insufficient crews remained unpaid and untrained. The navy suffered both qualitative and quantitative failure during the French Revolution, as officers, few of whom were not of noble blood, fled or were driven from the service, crews went untrained and ships were in poor repair. Unlike the army, which survived by plundering foreign countries, the navy's survival depended on well-organized, and well-supplied, equipped and staffed arsenals at home. These did not exist. By the end of 1801, the French navy, numbering 45 ships of the line, faced a British fleet of 115 ships of the line in service. Napoleon viewed the navy as little more than the army's sea borne transport service. During the early years of his reign, he spent a quarter of the national budget to build landing craft. Lack of men, materiel and ships plagued the French navy throughout the quarter-century before 1815.

As always, in discussing the warfare of the period, Dull displays an easy mastery of diplomatic history. Long out of fashion, it is a wonderful aid to comprehension. Along the way he offers several shrewd insights into the success of the British and the failure of the French, while pointing to general differences between seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century naval warfare. In a final chapter, he gathers together the ingredients of naval supremacy in the age of sail, arguing that the British navy's accomplishments were not so much the product of battle as the result of organization and administration - to which may be added money and experience. Although qualitative factors like leadership and skill were critical factors in British

naval victory, Dull stresses that quantitative factors were just as important to success. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, Great Britain (no longer England) enjoyed the benefits of a superior financial system married to ever growing, easily taxable overseas trade. Whether in the form of taxes or loans, credit-worthy Britain bore the costs of naval warfare much more cheaply than larger, more populous France. By the late 1780s, the French government was able to service its naval debt only by paying interest at nearly twice the rate paid by the British, who were comfortably servicing a much larger debt at 3 or 4 per cent *per annum*.

This wonderful synthesis is both a handy primer for students seeking an introduction to naval warfare in the age of sail and an insightful overview containing shrewd observations for those who study these conflicts in detail. While based on secondary sources, the author's "Notes and Suggested Further Reading" is an excellent survey of current historiography. The book is highly recommended for anyone interested in gaining a balanced overview of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century naval warfare in the age of sail.

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Bryan Elson, *Nelson's Yankee Captain : the life of Boston loyalist Sir Benjamin Hallowell*, Halifax, NS, Formac Publishing, www.formac.ca, 2008, 416 pp., illustrations, notes, index, CDN \$29.95, hardcover; ISBN 978-0-88780-751-0.

Nelson's captains, his "Band of Brothers," have in general been a favourite subject of biographers over the years; not so Benjamin Hallowell, the subject of Bryan Elson's first book. The author's interest was originally piqued by the error in the *Dictionary of*

*National Biography* giving Hallowell as born in Canada; secondary sources revealed a number of sketches and three fictional uses, but no satisfactory biography. Elson has now filled that gap in our knowledge in an exemplary manner.

Benjamin Hallowell was born in 1761, grandson of a Boston shipbuilder and second surviving son of Benjamin Sr., who, after serving at sea protecting trade between Boston and Halifax against French privateers, became the last Commissioner of Customs in pre-revolutionary America. His family finally and unceremoniously left Boston in 1775, leaving property and employment behind them and returned to England. Readers interested in the Loyalists' arrival in Canada will be most interested by Elson's account of the experience of Hallowell's father who was forced to leave Boston and later relocated to Canada where he lived out his remaining years.

Hallowell joined his first ship, HMS *Sandwich*, as Midshipman in 1777, but as a sixteen year old and with a father of limited influence, career prospects were limited. He served in squadrons under Hood and Rodney, fought at Les Saintes and was made first lieutenant of the *Alfred*, but by late 1783 was on the beach – a state of affairs that would last several years. 1790 saw him promoted Master and Commander and given his first command. He fought at Cape St. Vincent, and by 1798 was captain of the *Swiftsure* at the Nile under Nelson's flag and responsible for the annihilation of *L'Orient*.

Hallowell narrowly missed Trafalgar as captain of the *Tigre*, having been dispatched to Gibraltar for provisions, and at this point Elson suggests that Hallowell may have wondered if fate was against him. Doubts lingered in his mind over battles he had missed and ships he had lost; he could think back to his childhood, his impoverished family and his late entry

into the navy. His remaining career at sea was largely to be influenced by the lack of a French enemy; he quarrelled with Lord St Vincent – not the first time he had shown a lack of diplomacy or even stubbornness with a superior – and refused a promotion to Captain of the Fleet under Cotton, but was finally promoted to rear admiral of the blue as commander of a Mediterranean squadron in 1811, then in 1814 as commander-in-chief of the Irish station and finally in 1818 as commander-in-chief of the Nore. He retired in 1824, was conferred Knight Grand Cross of the Bath in 1831. He died in 1834 after inheriting an estate and changing his name to Benjamin Hallowell-Carew in recognition — the last surviving member of Nelson's "Band of Brothers."

Elson brings alive Hallowell's introspection, his obstinacy for principles and his lack of political diplomacy. The author occasionally dwells on details of courts martial but their relevance is always evident. Elson also shows Hallowell as a man of courage, a master of his profession, enterprising and intelligent. The depth of detail combined with a most readable narrative style allow Elson to not only paint a portrait of a naval officer but also that of a man deeply marked by a difficult childhood, a man who was never rich but always generous, a man who raised a large family, who treated his enemies fairly and was intensely loyal to his country at great personal cost.

The possible weakness of this biography is the lack of footnotes, a conscious decision by the author; but extensive notes for each chapter are provided in compensation as well as an ample bibliography.

Elson's RCN background is evident in his treatment of naval matters; the means of recruitment, training, promotion, assignment of tasks, command of a ship, and operations in peacetime and war are well covered. Actual battle plans are

provided to illustrate the strategies followed. He has added an appendix explaining a number of points concerning seamanship and the life of a sailor for those less familiar with the period, and ends his biography with a short epilogue on the naming of HMCS *Hallowell*, a Second World War Canadian frigate.

I thoroughly enjoyed Bryan Elson's book and would recommend it as a necessary addition to the library of all readers with an interest in the Nelsonian period.

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Robert Frump. *Two Tankers Down: The Greatest Small-Boat Rescue in U.S. Coast Guard History*. Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, www.lyonspress.com, 2008. x+212 pp; illustrations, source notes, bibliography, index. US \$16.95/ CDN \$19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-59921-337-8.

On 18 February 1952, the unthinkable confronted the U.S. Coast Guard along the coast of Massachusetts. In a severe storm, two T-2 tankers, the *Fort Mercer* and *Pendleton*, both 503 feet in length, broke in two at least forty miles from each other. A total of 84 crewmen faced imminent death. At least 70 of the sailors survived due to acts of unbelievable seamanship and courage on the part of U.S. Coast Guard crews. On this terrible night, Boatswain's Mate First Class Bernard C. Webber, the coxswain of a wooden 36-foot motor lifeboat, and his crew of three, pushed out into the darkness, braving a freezing, howling gale, and seas estimated at up to 60 feet in height. Incredibly, these four U.S. Coast Guardsmen on their small motor lifeboat managed to pluck 32 sailors from the stern section of the *Pendleton*. In other

words, Webber had one sailor for every foot of motor lifeboat. The boat technically should have held no more than 20 people. Added to all this, the sea had damaged the boat's compass and Webber had no other navigational instrument on board. This amazing feat has become an icon in the annals of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Robert Frump, whose first book, *Until the Sea Shall Free Them* (Doubleday, 2001), first learned of the rescues of the two tankers while writing a book on another T-2 tanker incident, *The Marine Electric*, which sank in 1983. While a number of articles, book chapters, and at least one other book have covered Webber's amazing rescue, Frump is the first author that this reviewer has read that also incorporates the views of the sailors on both tankers and the rescue work accomplished by the U.S. Coast Guard of the *Fort Mercer*. He should be commended for bringing in all aspects of that terrible night.

All too often, those who write of sea rescues undertaken by the U.S. Coast Guard concentrate largely on just the work of the rescue; it is, after all, the most exciting aspect of a story. To his credit, Frump's highly readable account also includes material on what happens to heroes after the feats that propel them into the spotlight. What happened to Webber, who received the Gold Life Saving Medal, at the time the highest award for an enlisted man in the U.S. Coast Guard for valour in peacetime, is depressing, but shifts to uplifting in the end. Frump is to be commended for this.

Despite writing a highly readable book, Frump has made some mistakes dealing with aspects of the complicated history of the U.S. Coast Guard. The U.S. Life-Saving Service did not merge with the U.S. Coast Guard (p.14): the U.S. Coast Guard was formed by the merger of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Life-Saving Service. There is no listing in the

U.S. Life-Saving Service of a Charles McCormack who received five gold medals (pp.14-15); Keeper Patrick Ethridge was not an African- American Keeper of Pea Island, North Carolina who supposedly coined the phrase "you have to go out, but you do not have to come back." There was an African-American keeper at Pea Island, but according to the U.S. Coast Guard, there was a white keeper also named Ethridge, who served at Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, who is given credit for the comment (pp.18-19); and, finally, the main reason for the large amount of weight in the keel of the 36-foot motor lifeboat was to help right the boat, not to stabilize it (p.17). None of these mistakes, however, affects the main theme of the book.

Frump wisely spends time discussing the culture of the U.S. Coast Guard, including the culture of lifesaving and some of the tensions between officers and enlisted men, all of which the story of Bernard Webber clearly illustrates. In fact, very few writers have bothered to look deeply at the people who have served, or are serving, in the U.S. Coast Guard. Frump is one of the few authors who have successfully attempted this difficult task.

In short, *Two Tankers Down*, despite a few errors, is more than a man-against-the-sea book. It is an exciting story of sea rescues, but just as important, Frump has produced a human story of those who do brave deeds and the consequences of those deeds. His work also contains much information on the culture of the U.S. Coast Guard and the people who serve within it that rarely appears in books. This book is highly recommended and should be read by the general reader and maritime historians.

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Ingo Heidbrink, Eric Hoops and Katharina Jantzen (eds.). *Fischstäbchen (Fisheries and Fish Processing as Industrial Heritage). Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the North Atlantic Fisheries History Association*, 2006. Studio Atlantica, 10. Bremerhaven: Deutsches Schiffahrtsmuseum, www.dsm.museum, 2008. 90 pp., illustrations, tables, notes. € 4.00, paper; ISBN 978-3-86633-018-4.

*Fischstäbchen*, or "fish fingers," is the iconic title of this volume about fisheries and fish processing. It contains a selection of seven contributions at the Tenth Conference of the North Atlantic Fisheries History Association (NAFHA), which took place in Bremerhaven, Germany, in August 2006. The conference was part of the scientific program accompanying the German Maritime Museum's special exhibition "Fish-Fingers" in 2006, focusing on fisheries and fish processing. The title and subtitle of the present volume refers to this specific museum context, rather than the actual contents of the seven articles presented.

Fish, of course, is the common denominator for the contributions, and three of the authors (Svihus, Jantzen, Overgaard) have fisheries history as their main focus. Two authors have related subjects outside fisheries itself, i.e. the production of cans for the fish canning industry (Giráldez & Muñoz), and the German state's utopian view of the oceans as a general resource in nation building (Sparenberg). Finally, two authors use their articles for shedding light on issues within the social sciences, i.e. the role of the concept "coastal culture" in maritime history (Hundstad), and the combination of historical research with museum outreach and exhibition activities (Heidbrink).

Svihus most thoroughly focuses on a well described theme within fisheries history. He outlines how trawling increased

dramatically in north European fisheries after 1900, with Britain, Germany, France and even Iceland building fishing fleets for large-scale, deep-sea trawling. Svihus points out that Norway was different with Norwegian waters being fished by thousands of small-scale Norwegian fishermen. Large-scale trawling in Norway before the Second World War, writes Svihus, was seen as a menace to the Norwegians brought by foreign, greedy fish capitalists destroying small-scalers' fishing gear and damaging fish resources. The article offers an interesting account of why this situation developed, focusing on the classic dispute between the forces of industry and modernization vis-à-vis those who saw fisheries communities more as havens for secure employment and household economies benefitting a large rural and coastal population. This conflict has many faces, and Svihus deserves credit for also bringing the national Labour Party and their internal debates concerning state management of fisheries and fisheries communities into his analysis. After Svihus, Overgaard's rather short contribution gives a brief insight into some of the network relations within Dutch North Sea cod fisheries in a period of relative crisis in the first half of the nineteenth century. Through the example of a Vlaardingen company, Rederij de Zeeuw, she suggests that the close relations between member families in a closely-knit maritime community secured their survival through this period.

Giráldez and Muñoz take a refreshing perspective on a specific maritime service industry; namely, who supplies the cans for the canning industry? In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Galician canning industry in northwest Spain grew rapidly and was about to become the largest in Europe. This made the need for lithographed cans for fish products so big that a number of metal

graphic companies developed. Lithographed cans with nice representations of the contents were important for presenting the canned fish to retail customers. Interestingly, the authors document how specialization within can manufacturing also resulted in social changes as a feminization of the work-force took place, which in turn had consequences for the degree of unionization and wages in the can-producing industry.

Two contributions illustrate the contrast in world-views which has characterized state-view on the ocean and its resource potentials. In an interesting account of the sea as source of utopian world-views in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany, Sparenberg describes – in one out of three fascinating case stories – how the biological resources of the ocean have been conceived as infinite and inexhaustible. On the other side, Jantzen's contribution lines up the harsh realities facing late-twentieth-century authorities trying to manage cod stock sustainably in the North Atlantic. Unfolding the story of the overexploitation of cod in Atlantic waters through half a century, Jantzen stresses the importance of international fishing regulation to present-day industrialized fisheries. It is striking to read Jantzen on the immense difficulties of sound fisheries management, and then in the article by Sparenberg, witness how European decision-makers earlier in the twentieth century regarded the seas as “inexhaustible” and as resource for a new glorious future of the expanding western economy. The two articles in combination shed light on the historical change which has transformed fishermen into present-day managers of limited fishing rights overlooked by several authorities. It is also noteworthy that Sparenberg shows how people outside the world of fisheries tended to see the ocean as inexhaustible, while Svihus' Norwegian case included fishermen



themselves worrying that destructive fishing activities and fishing gear could destroy the fishing grounds of future generations of fishermen.

The last two contributions briefly discuss the concept of *coastal culture* [kystkultur] in maritime history (Hundstad), and the synergy between museum exhibitions and research (Heidbrink). In the case of Hundstad, this reviewer was glad to see him point to the fact that the use of the term “coastal culture” should be understood as emphasizing the mentality and hermeneutics as objects and tools within maritime history, putting “focus on the people” rather than only on the material legacy of the coastal culture.

As far as the co-editor and coordinator of the “Fish-Fingers” program, Ingo Heidbrink, is concerned, his experience with combining historical research with outreach activities and a special exhibition at the German Maritime Museum under the *Fischstäbchen* headline is incentive for museum researchers in particular, as he stresses the unexpectedly high scholarly value of the “Fish-Fingers” project to the museum’s department of fisheries and whaling.

The volume is an offprint of a section of the scientific yearbook of the German Maritime Museum in Bremerhaven, the *Deutsche Schifffahrtsarchiv*, vol. 30/ 2007 and includes summaries in German and French.

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Willeen Gertrude Keough. *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, 1750-1860*. New York: Gutenberg<e> book , [www.gutenberg-e.org](http://www.gutenberg-e.org) , 2006. Enumerated paragraphs, illustrations, maps, chapter notes, bibliography, glossary, case file

archive, appendices, media index. Available as part of the Gutenberg-e project free of charge as an open access work at: <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/keough/kew09.html>. New York: Columbia University Press [www.columbia.edu/cu/cup](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cup), 2008. xiv + 542 pp., bibliography, glossary, case file archive, appendices, US \$60, UK £35.50; ISBN 978-0-231-13202-2.

One of the more fascinating mysteries of Newfoundland history centres on its transition from transient activity involving primarily seasonal male workers rooted in Europe to a residential fishery conducted by a permanently rooted fishing society. Though Newfoundland attracted one of the earliest efforts at colonization in North America – Cuper’s Cove in 1610, just three years after the Jamestown colony was founded – the population remained predominantly seasonal well into the eighteenth century. Moreover, it remained predominantly male. Thus, historical geographer Gordon Handcock maintained that “the mean ratio of adult females per 100 adult males did not reach twenty until the 1780s”; see *Soe longe as there comes noe women: Origins of English Settlement in Newfoundland* (St. John’s, 1989), p. 92. Where, and how, and in what numbers did women begin to migrate to Newfoundland in sufficient numbers to enable the transformation of that fishery into a residential colony?

These are but some of the questions that Willeen Keough endeavours to answer in *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, 1750-1860*. The “slender thread” of the title is a reference to female migration to Newfoundland from southern Ireland, which first became significant in the 1750s and reached its peak during the early nineteenth century, particularly during the years 1811-16 and 1825-33. In ten chapters, Keough explores how, why,

where, and with what effect Irish women migrants arrived in Newfoundland and contributed to the transition by 1860 of Newfoundland's fishing economy and society from a predominantly male and seasonal activity based in Europe into one characterized by residential family household production. In so doing, she sets out to "contribute to an ongoing and necessary corrective in two broad areas of historiography: the literature on early European settlement in Newfoundland and Canada, and the history of the Irish diaspora." (p.2) The first, she maintains, has been dominated by a masculine perspective to the point where the onset of the large families characteristic of nineteenth-century Newfoundland society remains a mystery of almost miraculous proportions. The second corrective is to the distortion caused by the Great Famine and the emphasis on migration by the desperate poor seeking escape from starvation at home. Pre-Famine migration receives short shrift from scholars, yet the Irish movement to Newfoundland was exclusively pre-Famine. Keough, therefore, believes that her work on the "southern Avalon Irish will challenge [such] findings, portraying a largely Catholic migrant group as responsive to opportunity and often upwardly mobile in their new communities." (p.6)

Information and insight into the appearance, status, and role of women in the official records are extremely thin. Keough relies on a diversity of source material – not only surviving official despatches, court records, and journals but also on oral traditions that survived into the twentieth century, as well as insight gleaned from work done in other disciplines on the role and status of women, employing a combination of poststructuralism and empiricism ("strange bedfellows indeed" p.9). And for the most part, it works. Keough understands the limitations and risks of her approach, and is generally

careful to qualify both her evidence and her conclusions throughout. The result is a remarkable addition to the revision to Newfoundland history that has been ongoing since the mid-1970s.

In Chapter 1 ("Picking Up the Thread"), Keough introduces both her subject matter and her methodology. The next chapter examines how and why women began to migrate to Newfoundland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, noting that women faced prejudices not only because of their gender but also because of prevailing perceptions of Irish dishonesty, laziness, and criminal tendencies. The third chapter offers reasons "why early Newfoundland census material does not provide a solid foundation for calculating the dimensions or components of migration and population growth" (p.58) as well as emphasizing the tendency for the meagre record to allow over-generalizations about women (they were in fact as diverse as the men: transients versus residents, servants versus planters, mistresses, female "servants," and so on). Keough examines the Irish homeland, the better to understand and explain why the Irish generally, and women in particular, chose to migrate to Newfoundland. She insists that "[t]hese women were not passive victims of forces beyond their control; rather, they weighed the evidence before leaving Ireland and made conscious decisions that they felt would be in the best interests of themselves and their families." Once in Newfoundland, female Irish migrants had a profound impact on Newfoundland, providing on the one hand a stabilizing effect on existing communities while contributing – on the coast south of St. John's at least – to the gradual assimilation of English residents into an expanding Irish Catholic ethno-religious group. And as their numbers increased, and the gender imbalance diminished, "women played a pivotal role in the ... transition to the household production

unit.” (p.76)

Chapter 4 analyses what women did for a living and how they contributed to the family. Keough concludes that “in both Ireland and Newfoundland, Irish women were vital co-producers in family enterprises.” (p.133) Keough maintains that women were of great importance in shore operations but also in a diversity of other work – from subsistence agriculture to wrecking and salvage to paid service as seamstresses, laundresses, domestic servants, and in taverns. It is here that the risks of her methodology are particularly visible, for she relies for much of her evidence on oral testimony recorded in the twentieth century, leavened with a few references from Anspach (1819), Stuwitz (1840), and others to project the analysis back into the early nineteenth century. It is difficult not to be sceptical – not so much of the conclusion itself as by the certainty with which it is made – when she declares that “[t]he perception of these women as essential, skilled workers in the fishery was an integral part of their own self-image and of the construction of womanhood within the plebeian community in general.” (p.95) Is this truly a valid conclusion for the early nineteenth century?

Chapter 5 focuses upon the informal power of Irish Newfoundland women in family and community – the status of women in law and in society, and how women were able to exercise power within the legal constraints of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century society. She concludes that “Irish women ... exercised considerable authority in their families and communities, and continued to function in public spaces throughout the period,” and that this was true of married women as well as those who were single or widowed, exercising a sort of “matriarchal management behind a patriarchal exterior.” (p.156)

Chapter 6 looks at the encounters

of women with the judicial system; although this was a system heavily biased in favour of men, women were present in the courts, primarily in cases involving “debt collection, employment disputes, landlord-tenant matters, and trespass.” (p. 218) The court records, therefore, reveal a great deal about the place of women in society and of their ability – within certain limits – to assert their needs through official channels. In Chapter 7 Keough explores the particular legal questions surrounding women and inheritance, while in Chapter 8 she focuses on the regulation of Irish women’s sexuality on the Southern Avalon. Here Keough detects a departure from what was beginning to occur in the Irish homeland: whereas the status of rural women in Ireland had begun to diminish as the rural economy deteriorated, in Newfoundland the growing importance of women “as essential producers in the fishing economy” helped maintain their status. The final chapter before the conclusion uses the case studies of several women to explore the nature of life in Ferryland for women who belonged to the community’s élite or privileged classes (middle class, wives of administrators, merchants, and so on).

Overall, then, Keough has provided us with an important contribution to our better understanding of the transformation of Newfoundland from a predominantly seasonal and male fishery into a residential fishery supported by household labour in which women played a critical role. It is an interpretation that should also be read by those interested in migration history, Atlantic history, gender history, and Irish history. While one might quibble at some of the details of the author’s analysis, overall, this is a convincing and compelling monograph.

One final comment about the manuscript: it was first released as part of the Gutenberg-e history monograph series, which now (including this title) is accessible

without charge at <http://www.gutenberg-e.org>. It was there that I first read this book; the print copy only became available recently. There are certainly advantages in using the e-version: there are live links to some of the interviews on which the author bases some of her analysis, as well as links to relevant web-sites. The e-book also allows you to use your web browser's search engine to find words – the print book lacks an index (a serious deficiency). Even more frustrating is the fact that the rich abundance of figures that support the analysis in the e-book version have disappeared from the print version, even though references to the missing tables still appear throughout the text. Yet in the final analysis, I am happy to have a print copy for my bookshelf; I find it easier to navigate, easier to cite, and easier for making notations. Of course, to each his, or her, own. I count myself fortunate that Willeen Keough's book is available in both formats.

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Walter Lewis and Rick Neilson. *The River Palace*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com), 2008. 248 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$25.99, UK £12.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-55002-793-8.

This slim volume is, as the authors state in the foreword, a biography of a steamboat. They trace the steamboat, the *Kingston*, through various iterations and under a variety of names throughout its long, busy lifetime; from its launch, fitting out, and first cruise in 1855 from Kingston to Montreal carrying passengers and nearly 200 barrels of flour and potash, until it was scuttled in 1932 by its last owners, wreckers, after a long second career as a salvage vessel.

The period in transportation history spanned by the *Kingston* is a singularly important formative period in Canada's westward expansion, no less dramatic than that portrayed in American history.

The work's layout follows chronologically the broad periods of the vessel's life. First, through divers' photographs, we meet the "Wreck of the *Cornwall*" as it now is, lying in Kingston harbour. In succeeding chapters we follow its beginning as one of a fleet of iron steamboats plying Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River from Montreal to Hamilton. The remaining chapters address the ship in its various iterations: the iron steamboat, John Hamilton's *Kingston*, "The floating palace," The *Kingston* and the Canadian Navigation Company, The *Bavarian*, The *Algerian*, The *Cornwall*, The *Cornwall* and the Calvin Company, The *Cornwall* and the Donnelly Salvage and Wrecking Company, and finally, chapter 9, The *Cornwall* and Sin-Mac lines Limited.

The major character is the ship, the *Kingston*, but other important ships and their place in the picture are briefly sketched. People come and go, including the captains, builders and financiers as well as certain prominent citizens, larger-than-life figures that include John A. Macdonald and the Allan brothers. Gradually, a portrait of the passengers, the officers and the crew members, and their ship emerges. Pre-eminent among the sailors was the celebrated pilot, Baptiste, who guided the ship through the most difficult stretch down the Lachine Rapids.

The backdrop of the long-running drama was the waterway, especially the St. Lawrence River and the rapids which tested the ship and her sister on every voyage and which caused many wrecks. A picture of the cities and towns also emerges along the route: Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, and most especially, the city of Kingston, fortress, capital and beating heart of the

united Canadas.

We learn something of the first years of a young Canada through the history of the *Kingston*. A particular highlight is the visit of the 18-year-old Prince of Wales, where the name "River Palace" originated when the royal party traveled on the ship. The work reflects the tensions in Canada at that period in mid-century with the American Civil War and the Fenian invasion of 1868. The economic roller coaster of boom and bust became the constantly shifting environment for the ships as they attempted to compete with the new railway that enjoyed political favour from the very top.

Successive chapters detail different iterations of the vessel, which occurred after catastrophic fires and sinkings that were part of everyday maritime existence, given the crude engines and boilers of the day and the lack of navigational aids. Each disaster was followed by a new version of the vessel under a succession of names. The book also relates how these disasters resulted in the slow improvement of shipping safety. The last chapters feature the *Cornwall* as a salvage vessel from 1912 to 1932. We learn much about the vessels and the traffic on the main waterways of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. For example, *Cornwall's* service as a salvage vessel illustrates life in the maritime community of Portsmouth, a district of Kingston. Moreover, there is enough detail on the building and dimensions of the hull, fittings, and machinery of the vessel to satisfy ship buffs.

The authors make use of an amazing array of illustrations, including contemporary prints, posters, paintings, realia, photographs, diagrams, drawings, and plans. The underwater photographs are eerily spectacular. There is a drawing of the wreck, which illustrates the wreck as it now is.

What's missing? Not much except

a glossary. After reading the book many times, we are hungry to know more. We hope that the second edition is much larger, with colour illustrations. Together, the authors approach their subject with an interesting mix of skills and deep knowledge of the artifacts and archival material, which they use to animate the work.

This book belongs in every school and library in the country to remind young people of the story of Canada's maritime heritage. It would also be a useful addition to the library of anyone interested in history or transportation.

Kathy Crewdson and Ian Dew  
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Stephen Richardson. *School of the Sea*. Caithness, Scotland: Whittles Publishing, [www.whittlespublishing.com](http://www.whittlespublishing.com), 2009. xiii + 153pp., illustrations, maps. UK £16.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-904445-58-6.

The author served in the British Merchant Navy from 1937-1946 and recorded his experiences in a diary running to over 1000 pages. This book is based on those diary entries and provides an account of the author's apprenticeship during the late 1930s and his experiences as an officer on cargo ships during the Second World War.

It is the war years which provide the bulk of the book, but those expecting a yarn filled with excitement, danger and wartime heroics will be disappointed. Rather, and of much greater value to the historian, the author provides a detailed and interesting account of the everyday life and experiences of the seafarer during one of the most significant events in world history. Yet while the war and its real dangers are never far away, as the torpedoing of the *Kelmscott* illustrates, the focus is on the normality of life in the Merchant Navy

during this period. The reality for the merchant seafarer in times of peace was that life at sea was hard, often monotonous, sometimes exciting and exotic but with ever-present dangers. One of the strengths of this book is in showing that, while warfare provided additional, and very real, dangers the life of the seafarer continued almost as normal. By beginning the story in 1937, the author emphasizes that feeling of normality.

The original hand-written diary is now in the keeping of Liverpool's Merseyside Museum. The author is to be congratulated, firstly on keeping a meticulous diary covering an extensive period, and also on its successful editing for publication. The danger is often that accounts based on such records become mundane and repetitious in parts – although arguably these are often central to the seafarer's daily experiences in any case! Nevertheless, the author on the whole avoids these weaknesses, and while personal tastes dictates one's appreciation – some readers might wish more, or less, detail on certain events – the life story presented here is never dull.

Indeed, one of the major strengths of *School of the Sea* is in reminding us that history is not about the great events of the past but about people. The range of characters we meet, at sea and on land, ensures that all human life is here and we also get to know the author well and to empathize with his situation on a variety of levels. An interesting aspect is the women in his life, again reflecting so many seafarers' experiences, as we view the relationship with the author's mother and home life, on the one hand, and the unfolding love story – with its inherent difficulties for the seafarer – which would eventually lead to marriage and the author emigrating to the United States, on the other.

Publications based on diaries could

often benefit from additional description or commentary placing the particular events which preoccupy the author within a wider context. While this is also true to a certain extent with this book, the author's interests and ability to value the significance of his situation, ensures that we have much more than a purely descriptive account. Thus, when in Liverpool at the time of the "blitz," the author made a conscious effort to record the ways in which the city and docks were different from the last time he had visited the port. When in Bombay, meeting with Dr. D'Monte, who had been befriended by the author's grandparents when studying medicine in England, the doctor provides a number of reasons for anti-British feeling in the Indian sub-continent at the time. The author states that he was impressed by how succinctly Dr. D'Monte presented his views. It is our good fortune that the author himself has the ability to provide concise, and at times incisive, comment on what was happening around him. Those who doubt the value of "history from below" – through diaries and oral testimony, for example – would benefit from reading this account of "the real stuff of war at sea."

The illustrations are typical of this type of publication – the author at various points in his career, ships, shipmates and exotic places – but also include a number of interesting images, such as Pathans discharging chlorine drums in Bombay, and an aerial view of a convoy gathering in Halifax harbour. A welcome inclusion is a selection of maps which track the voyages of the ships the author sailed on and the ports he visited in the British Isles.

While the general reader will enjoy reading this account from cover to cover, the academic researcher would probably have appreciated an index, based possibly on themes reflecting working and living conditions on land and at sea, in peace and war.

The book's dedication, "To my

shipmates who were my teachers,” and its title reflect the author’s appreciation of the significance of his maritime experiences as part of his education for life. Those, in turn, wishing to educate themselves about the day-to-day existence of the ordinary seafarer in the British Merchant Navy during this period need look no further than this excellent publication.

Robert John Evans  
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Arthur Britton Smith. *Legend of the Lake. The 22-gun brig-sloop Ontario 1780*. Kingston, ON.: Quarry Press, www.hotfrog.ca, 2009. (First published 1997) 176 pp., illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. CDN \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55082-186-5.

In November 1814, during the War of 1812, American inventor Robert Fulton described Lake Ontario as “a lake as turbulent as the Ocean.” Some 34 years earlier, on 31 October 1780, ample proof of the truth of Fulton’s statement was provided when the 22-gun British brig-sloop *Ontario* was lost with all on board in a violent storm on that lake.

Launched less than six months earlier at the shipyard on Carleton Island, the *Ontario* was the latest and largest addition to a small British naval force maintained on Lake Ontario during the American War of Independence. The *Ontario* was never expected to face an enemy warship. Its weak armament of 4- and 6-pounder cannon was sufficient to overwhelm any number of small boats, and that was all that was needed. In 1760, during the French and Indian War, the British captured Montreal from the French using the water route down the St. Lawrence River. The British did not wish

the forces of the fledgling United States to be able to repeat that success.

After fitting out, the *Ontario* spent the summer and early fall of 1780 as a stores and troop transport between Fort Haldimand on Carleton Island, and the mouth of the Niagara River. In late October, the *Ontario* sailed to Niagara to pick up passengers before recovering a British raiding force at Oswego at the end of the month. The *Ontario* sailed from Niagara in the early afternoon of 31 October with as many as 120 men, women and children on board, including Captain James Andrews, the commodore of the Lake Ontario vessels, and Lt. Col. Masson Bolton, the former commandant at Fort Niagara.

From reports at the time, it appears that the voyage began pleasantly enough. The weather was clear and cool and a steady westerly wind allowed the *Ontario* to make good progress towards Oswego. Around midnight the weather changed dramatically. A sudden and violent north-east squall hit the vessel with overwhelming force. When the wind subsided, the *Ontario* had disappeared.

Later, search parties discovered just enough wreckage along the southern shore of the lake to confirm that the *Ontario* had been lost. The following summer six bodies washed ashore but no other remains were ever discovered. This was the worst loss of life ever to occur on Lake Ontario.

For the next 228 years, the exact fate of the *Ontario*, and her location, remained a mystery. Unlike the American schooner-gunboats *Hamilton* and *Scourge*, sunk in a similar sudden storm in 1813 and later found intact on the lake bottom, there were no survivors or witnesses to the tragedy to point to a location. The *Ontario*’s remains could lie anywhere off the south-west shore of Lake Ontario. In 1995, divers reported the discovery of the remains of a vessel, believed to be the *Ontario*, near Olcott, NY. While this was

about 25 miles from her probable location when the storm struck, the 1997 first edition of Mr. Smith's book included newspaper reports of the discovery and left the reader with the hope that the mystery was finally solved. It was not to be. This vessel, whatever it was, was not the *Ontario*.

That discovery would have to wait until 2008, when Jim Kennard and his partner, Dan Scoville, using side scan sonar and an underwater Remote Operated Vehicle (ROV) of their own design, discovered the remains of the *Ontario*, upright and almost completely intact, on the lake bottom in very deep water.

This new edition of *Legend of the Lake* provides a very satisfying conclusion to the mystery of *Ontario's* fate. While including all the historical background, plans, drawings, paintings, and transcribed letters that made the first edition so interesting and informative, this edition adds three new chapters; "The Discovery," "Finding the Wreck" and "Ownership and Title" with details, drawings and photographs of the *Ontario* as it lies on the bottom.

The vessel's condition is truly remarkable. Both masts are mostly intact, including the tops, as is the bowsprit. While the lower portion of the hull has settled into the mud, the deck is clear and most of the stern cabin windows remain. An intact cutter lies on the bottom near the *Ontario's* stern. Although mussels have covered the wreck, the photographs are clear enough to confirm most details given in the first edition and to offer graphic proof of the suddenness of its demise.

The discoverers are justifiably imprecise as to the *Ontario's* location, but it appears, fortunately, that the wreck lies in water far too deep for recreational diving. In addition to the photographs, Kennard and Scoville have taken over 80 minutes of video as their ROV circled the wreck. Despite their claim that their documentation

is so complete that it will never be necessary to revisit the wreck, this reviewer has his doubts. Like the *Hamilton* and *Scourge* of a later war, the *Ontario* is likely to see an occasional visitor or two in future years, especially as underwater technology continues to improve.

Like the *Hamilton* and *Scourge*, the *Ontario* is a war grave. The final chapter of this edition addresses the question of which nation — Great Britain or Canada — owns the remains. The conclusion that since 1867 the warship has been the property of Canada seems both logical and reasonable.

This new edition of Smith's work improves upon what was already, in the first edition, deserving of a place on every naval historian's bookshelf. The information added has broadened the scope to include nautical archaeology, making this book a worthy and highly-recommended companion to Emily Cain's 1983 *Ghost Ships*.

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Joshua M. Smith and the National Maritime Historical Society. *Voyages: Documents in American Maritime History*. Volume I: 1492-1865 and Volume II: 1865-Present. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, 2009. Vol. I: xviii+396 pp., Vol. II, xviii+427 pp., illustrations, notes. US \$34.95, paper; ISBN: 978-0-8130-3304-4 and 978-0-8130-3305-1.

This ambitious two-volume set, the latest in a series on "New Perspectives in Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology" published by the University Press of Florida, offers endless opportunities for scholars, teachers, and lay readers alike. Rooted in a firm belief in the value of document-based learning, *Voyages* contains some 150 primary sources, meticulously



compiled by Joshua Smith, Associate Professor of Humanities at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and noted maritime historian in his own right. Ranging from seventeenth-century diary entries that describe indigenous watercraft, to twenty-first century policies that cover maritime terrorism, and from nineteenth century prints to contemporary photographs, the selections touch on virtually every aspect of America's relationship with the sea. Smith, though, does more than merely assemble the documents in a chronological fashion; he expertly introduces each of the selections with a context-setting vignette, and provides follow-on questions that guide the reader through the materials. Titled, respectively, *The Age of Sail* and *The Age of Engines*, these two volumes offer a unique first-person perspective on many aspects of the American maritime experience and provide a valuable tool for those who are tasked with teaching courses in US maritime history.

*The Age of Sail* traces maritime developments from first contact through the American Civil War. Selections include treatments concerned with the Atlantic World, the early Republic and Antebellum Seafaring, and are chosen to illustrate larger societal trends and constructs. Pieces that detail the abuse of seamen, for example, are wedded to larger reform movements, those that cover the experiences of seafaring women are tied to issues of gender, and those detailing the rich fisheries and whaling are linked to environmental discussions. The second volume, covering the last century and a half of American maritime history, includes selections on inland navigation, two world wars, and maritime labour, among others. Again, connections to larger, historically-significant themes, such as matters of foreign policy, immigration, and class conflict are clearly on display. The result is a collection that uses the particulars of

maritime history to illustrate general trends in American society over the course of 500 years. After all, as Smith boldly (and correctly) states in his preface "there are few events in American history that cannot be said to have a maritime element." The questions that follow each selection are wonderful tools and resources in their own right, causing students to think critically, analytically, and constructively about what they have just read (or viewed).

Each of the selections was chosen on the basis of how it supported a series of themes that Smith identifies as central to understanding the American maritime experience. These include trade and its protection, (mercantilism, sea power); the dichotomy between power and degradation (the slave trade, corporal punishment); man's relationship with the marine environment (fishing, whaling and invasive species); and changes over time (technological and ideological). While there are certainly other avenues of investigation that could be employed, this quartet provides a useful tool for interpreting America's maritime history. These themes serve as a roadmap for those who are looking to better understand the relevance of maritime events to larger issues and serve to illuminate connections that might otherwise remain uninvestigated.

There are, as in any work, a few drawbacks to these volumes. Ancillary materials like maps, a timeline, and an index would be welcome additions. More disappointing is the fact that while the author describes contemporary students as increasingly visual learners, the selections are heavily skewed toward written texts. This, I imagine, is largely a consequence of printing costs and copyright issues, but I do wish that a collection of maritime images—in full colour—would be made available, perhaps as an on-line addendum. (Perhaps such a medium would also allow for audio sources, such as sea shanties and work

songs?) Still, these represent but minor warts on what is an invaluable teaching resource and highly entertaining addition to the field of American maritime history.

As someone who teaches a variety of courses dealing with American maritime history, I can attest to the need for such a collection of sources as *Voyages* provides. As someone who utilizes these volumes on an almost daily basis, I can report that I am rarely disappointed by the documents, and always heartened by the discussions they engender. It is the hope of this reviewer that as maritime history becomes easier to teach—thanks in no small part to volumes such as this and others planned by the National Maritime Historical Society (this is the kick-off of an educational series designed to produce effective curricular materials for the teaching of maritime history)—such courses will be found on campuses other than those of the state and federal maritime academies. *Voyages* is a welcome addition to the field and a first step, I hope, in a continued march towards document-based learning in American maritime history.

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Peter C. Smith. *The Battle-Cruiser HMS Renown, 1916 - 1948*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2008. x + 246 pp., illustrations, appendices, index. UK £ 19.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84415-745-7.

This is the story of a single life – a biography of the battle-cruiser HMS *Renown*. Until the arrival of HMS *Hood*, *Renown* and its sister-ship *Repulse* were the largest capital ships in the world. Built for duty in the First World War, *Renown* would live to fight in the Second World War and was kept busy during the fragile peace that

separated them. Sleek, fast and powerful, it was one of the last of Admiral Sir John Fisher's dreadnought-cruisers to be built. They had been conceived in his philosophy of "hit first, hit hard and keep on hitting" through superior speed and heavy armament and designed for a single purpose: to gain such a degree of ascendancy in any hostile encounter that British victory would be inevitable and enemy annihilation almost inescapable!

As everyone but the most dyed-in-the-wool landlubber knows, the life of a ship is at any point in time a reflection of the lives of her crew. Peter C. Smith's book on *Renown* has marked this essential truth by incorporating the comments and remembrances of a number of members of the ship's company into his narrative. This is not the sole source that the author draws on, however, and this book gives a lively and well-documented look at the highlights of *Renown's* career.

The organization of the material in the book has obviously been carefully considered, not only in order to include suitable anecdotes from the various members of the ship's company, but also to provide the true story of *Renown*, warts and all. While reading about the ship's collision with *Hood*, I suddenly remembered the incident of a gate vessel in Halifax being run over by a battle-cruiser I thought to be *Renown*. It was HMS *Revenge*, however, with the gate vessel being the former HMCS *Ypres*. Interestingly enough, *Revenge* had been laid down as *Renown*, but had had her name changed just prior to launching. I was wrong though, when I concluded this might have been the only Canadian connection with the ship or her crew. But I digress.

I found this book interesting, enjoyable and not a hard read. The style is relaxed; not quite a fireside chat, but not that far removed from it either. Still, it is the "colour commentary" added by crew

comments that takes this book above the ordinary.

For example, anyone familiar with the tours taken by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII, then Duke of Windsor) has not likely been aware of the fact that *Renown's* sailmaker and carpenter created a private facility for HRH to practice his polo without being seen by anyone but his coach. There are also anecdotes relating to Captain R. R. McGrigor (later admiral of the fleet and first sea lord). McGrigor was a remarkable ship-handler who on one occasion swung the ship around violently to comb the tracks of five torpedoes dropped by Italian SM 79 torpedo bombers. As one of the crew remembers "All the torpedoes were avoided save one ... By a miracle it reached the end of its run within yards of the target and sank slowly as the battle-cruiser raced past. It was a lucky escape ..." (p.135)

As a rear-admiral, McGrigor (Wee Mac) led Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) ships on several operations with the Home Fleet in 1944-45. He led Force 2 when HMS *Nabob* was torpedoed in August 1943; he was the senior officer (SO) of the JW / RA 62 and 64 convoys to Russia when RCN destroyers and/or escort groups formed part of the screen; he was SO of Operation Counterblast when a Home Fleet group, including HMCS *Algonquin*, beat up a German convoy off Norway. Later, he worked closely with the RCN when he was First Sea Lord in the 1950s .

Rarely do two members of a ship's company remember specific events in the same way. Smith's book highlights instances where a single event evinces a range of feelings below decks. The crew of *Renown* learned that their captain had requested permission to detach from Force H when the latter was pursuing *Bismarck*; his announcement of that fact ending in true naval fashion with "that is all." In many of the messes, "Thinking in our minds of what

that ship [*Bismarck*] had done to the *Hood*, that was plenty!" (p. 139) There was great rejoicing when the request was disapproved and "... just as well the Jerries couldn't hear the cheers throughout the ship at that announcement." (p. 139) Still, one member of the crew felt that the ship was ready to "have a go" when they were told to stand off and wait for the *Rodney* and *King George V* to arrive; "*Renown* was a really happy ship." (p. 139) This book is full of these sorts of recollections and they are a pleasure to encounter and compare with how ship's companies think of their ships today.

Of course, there are the standard ship's plans, photographs; a list of commanding officers and an index. Something one does not see often, however, is a listing of the ship's Battle Honours accompanied by an even greater rarity, an outline of the history of the ship's predecessors. The attributions of the previous ships of the same name, though relatively short, are very interesting in and of themselves. There is certainly enough here to pique the reader's interest in the history of these ships as well. For anyone interested in battle-cruisers or just a more in-depth view of a ship's life during war or peace, this book would be a valuable addition to your library.

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Gary Staff. *Battle for the Baltic Islands 1917: Triumph of the Imperial German Navy*. Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2008. xiii +178 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, index. US \$39.95; ISBN 9781844157877.

Author Gary Staff examines Operation Albion, a joint army-navy operation against

fortified Russian islands in the eastern Baltic Sea in October 1917. The mission was Germany's most significant amphibious assault of the First World War, and certainly the largest since the Danish War of 1864 and before *Weserübung* against Norway in April 1940. Although the battle was by no means the *Entscheidungsschlacht* between battle fleets envisioned by Mahan and Tiripitz, it nonetheless allows Staff to conclude, "The participation of the High Seas Fleet in the conquest of the Baltic Islands represents one of the many high points in its brief history." (p. xi)

Operation Albion's objective was the capture of Ösel, Dagö, and Moon islands in Estonian waters. The plan had two strategic elements. First, seizure of the islands would allow German forces to control the Gulf of Riga, which protected the German Army's left flank as it advanced northeast towards St. Petersburg (Petrograd), the Russian political capital. Likewise, since the islands also commanded the approach to the Gulf of Finland, their capture would permit the German fleet to manoeuvre more freely along the direct route to a seaborne assault on St. Petersburg, at the eastern end of the gulf.

Staff's precise and detailed description of these events, skillfully interweaving naval and land operations, provides the strength of this volume. The operation began on 12 October 1917 when the assault force penetrated Russian minefields to land troops on Ösel. German troops quickly advanced across the island, forcing the surrender of Russian troops by the 15<sup>th</sup>, and then proceeded to capture Moon Island by the 18<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, German torpedo boats, supported by light cruiser *Emden*, fought a series of skirmishes against Russian torpedo-boat destroyers in the narrow and shallow waters of Kassar Wiek (14<sup>th</sup>) and Moon Sound (17<sup>th</sup>). Although naval operations continued for several more days, the battle essentially

ended 20 October with the surrender of the Russian garrison on Dagö. German forces, who suffered only 400 casualties, captured 20,000 Russian troops and sank an obsolete battleship. The rapid and complete German victory allows Staff to properly conclude, "Operation Albion, the conquest of the Baltic Islands, had been an unqualified success." (p.149) Yet, ironically, he notes, the battle would never lead to its intended result. The Bolshevik Revolution, only a few weeks later on 7 November 1917, produced a new regime which quickly concluded a Russian-German armistice in December and negotiated a peace treaty, ending the war on the Eastern Front, in March 1918.

Staff's subtitle, "Triumph of the Imperial German Navy," is pleasantly misleading. The campaign was, after all, a joint operation which Staff describes as using "all arms." (p. xi) He develops this assertion citing the role of U-boats, which reconnoitered and then interdicted Russian naval forces; bombers and dirigibles, which dropped bombs on Russian positions; battleships, which dueled with Russian coastal artillery; torpedo boats, which escorted minesweepers and fought off Russian counterattacks; and the Army's landing detachment, which used a cyclist brigade plus regular infantry to fight a small-scale *Blitzkrieg* in a war of mobility and manoeuvre. Staff, who repeatedly proves his ability to narrate complex action in clear and concise terms, concludes that the joint operations were a complete success and that "the cooperation between the Navy and Army was exemplary." (p. xi)

The author nonetheless notes that German adroitness was not the sole factor for victory. The evolving Russian revolution also played a major role. The Russians had long anticipated a German attack in the eastern Baltic. They therefore constructed an interlocking series of coastal artillery batteries and minefields, which intended to

produce the “maritime version of trench warfare,” (p.6) supported by a mobile naval task force. The initial, moderate revolution, which had broken out in February, nonetheless disheartened and undermined Russian land forces. Staff notes, “The morale of the Russian crews and garrison was . . . an imponderable circumstance.” (p.9) Army units and navy warships would not manoeuvre without first consulting soldiers’ or sailors’ committees, generating obvious operational difficulties. For example, Staff describes numerous instances when Russian troops simply melted away or naval crews refused to fight in response to German attacks.

The book suffers from an occasional and minor flaw. It has excellent tactical maps but lacks an operational map of the eastern Baltic. The author’s use of English, Russian, and metric measurements likewise causes slight confusion. Staff has nonetheless written, in John Keegan’s phrase, a fine “battle piece.” He notes in his introduction that he seeks “to present a balanced and accurate narrative that gives the reader a genuine feel for the time, experienced in part through the eyes of those who participated.” (p.xii) He has succeeded admirably in this task.

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Martin Stopford. *Maritime Economics* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, www.routledge.com, 2009. xxiv + 815 pp., maps, tables, figures, notes, references, index. £37.50 paper; ISBN 978-0-415-27558-3.

For 5,000 years, merchant vessels have served the world economy. Today, the shipping industry not only is the largest contributor to Europe’s balance of

payments, but also provides a sophisticated transport service that touches every person’s life. Yet how much do we know or care about how maritime economics works?

Martin Stopford has had a distinguished career in the shipping industry. He has been a director of a shipbuilder, an economist for an international bank, the head of research in a ship-broking company and a visiting professor at various business schools. He was recently awarded the Chojeong Book Prize for his academic and practical contribution to maritime transport.

This enlarged and substantially rewritten third edition applies historical and theoretical analysis to a practical study of the organization of contemporary merchant shipping. The economic aspects of the industry’s sophisticated logistics are explained, together with the methods by which ships are financed and prices and freight rates are determined. New chapters tackle tricky issues such as the return of capital in shipping, the geography of maritime trade and the building of huge container ports in Europe and the Americas to handle the expected domination of China’s exports. The book also covers subjects as diverse as running cruise ships, transporting minerals from Africa, Australasia and Russia, and operating oil and gas terminals in the Middle East. The problem of future regulations affecting ships when they are operating far from home is also discussed in detail, as is the influence of shipbuilders and engineering companies in creating more efficient designs for ships and ports.

The author makes the interesting point that, despite its economic complexity, ocean transportation still retains much of the competitive cut and thrust of the “perfect” market of classical economics. It is a fascinating aspect of the shipping industry that, while a \$100m bulk carrier is just as expensive an item of capital equipment as a

new factory to produce widgets, the investment in the factory would be decided only after extensive market research. Many shipowners still order a new vessel based mainly on a “feeling for market supply and demand.” Further, bankers will not lend the factory-owner 120 per cent of its cost, as they do to shipowners, nor will the factory spend much of its life in an alien environment on the other side of the world.

Stopford despairs of the over-simplified view of the supply-and-demand driven tramp market that if two ships are chasing one cargo the market will drop, but, if one vessel has the choice of two cargoes, it will rise. Nor does he support certain shipping economists of the 1980s, who believed that freight market cycles lasted seven years and thus, with reasonable luck, a fifteen-year time charter would produce two sets of profits to compensate for the losses over the other twelve years. In his view, supply-and-demand forecasts are no longer optional when ordering a ship or deciding on a charter. They must, however, be relevant, national and based upon detailed research if shipping operators are to take less risk and reduce the resources used in transportation

The author has used a wide range of sources to analyze the historic and economic aspects of the shipping business on an annual basis since 1741 in the form of text, graphs and tables. He has also compared cycles in the tramp market between 1869 and 1936 and in bulk shipping from 1945 to 2007 to assess how shipping companies survive economic depressions. Developments since the 1980s of so-called flags of convenience, or flags of necessity according to some shipowners, are accompanied by new chapters on the geography of sea trade, specialized cargoes, merchant shipbuilding and recycling. He has updated chapters on the challenges of understanding trade theory and its effect on freight market cycles. A major but risky

innovation that few other books have dealt with in such detail is the complex subject of freight derivatives and indices, but Stopford describes them all clearly and in layman’s terms.

With the advantage of two previous editions, Stopford has produced over 800 pages, 200 illustrations, maps, technical drawings and tables, extensive notes and references in a most comprehensive text and reference source for the global shipping industry. Although the suggested reading includes very few non-English texts, his skillful handling of his subject will give economists a unique perspective on the evolution of the maritime industry’s mechanisms and institutions. It will also remind historians of merchant shipping’s well-documented evolution over many centuries.

There is no doubt that this important book should be on the shelves of every merchant shipping company, government trade office and economic department. It is very readable for both the amateur and professional maritime historian and economist and it should be required reading for all students of politics, maritime policy or history. Reading it, those who specialize in one area of maritime industry might be surprised how little they know of other sectors.

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Craig L. Symonds. *Lincoln and his Admirals*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, www.oup.com, 2008. xiii + 430 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$ 27.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-19-531022-1.

In the author’s words, *Lincoln and his Admirals* is about the emergence and

growth of Abraham Lincoln as a wartime commander-in-chief. While the book focuses on the relationship between the President and the Navy, it more broadly addresses “the problems and issues that made their way to Lincoln’s desk.” Lincoln, writes Symonds, “grew into the job [of Commander-in-Chief] during his metamorphosis into greatness.”(p.xiii)

Symonds identifies three phases in Lincoln’s growth. In 1861, the newly-seated president deferred to military and naval officers for expert professional advice on the war. In the second phase, roughly encompassing 1862 and 1863, we see Lincoln as an increasingly activist commander-in-chief, coordinating between the Army and Navy and pushing his subordinates to act aggressively. In the final phase, with proven leaders who understood his strategic vision, Lincoln again delegated military questions to focus on “the larger question of how to reconstruct a post-war America...”(p.xii).

Symonds reminds us that at the beginning of the war, Lincoln knew nothing of naval matters — even less, one infers, than the former militia captain knew of the Army. His pragmatic approach caused him to cast a wide net, consulting both greybeards, such as General Winfield Scott, and younger men, like David Dixon Porter and Montgomery C. Meigs. During the first months of war, however, events pressed heavily, and Lincoln had little time to assess the advice he received to determine which was sound and which was not. His inexperience led to errors such as the fiasco surrounding the attempted relief of Fort Sumter. The resulting missteps were learning experiences, not least because the President learned which commanders, and which cabinet and subcabinet officers, he could trust.

Lincoln’s growing activism during the middle years of the war marked his “growing view that professional expertise

might be less valuable in war than a clear head and an energetic spirit.” (p.155) In part, activism came from strategic vision; Lincoln’s insistence on opening the Mississippi River, for example, led him to take personal interest in developing a force to do the job. Lincoln’s activism, however, also illustrates his underlying pragmatism. The Union command system had a critical flaw: the only superior that Army and Navy officers had in common was the President himself. Lincoln’s pragmatic approach made it clear to both services that he expected both cooperation and aggressiveness.

The third phase of Lincoln’s evolution emerged in the autumn of 1864. By mid-September, victories at Mobile Bay, Atlanta and Winchester had derailed the Confederate hope of a Republican defeat at the polls, and the war was on a downhill slide. With leaders who would aggressively fulfil his strategic goals, Lincoln could attend to post-war issues, such as the future of the freed slaves and the re-integration of the former Confederate states.

Symonds highlights three major themes. First, rather than acting hastily, Lincoln displayed “inspired patience” in dealing with the many crises he faced. Second, when he did act, he moved pragmatically, seeking “new and creative ways” to fulfil his responsibility. Third, Lincoln embraced new technologies as well as new ideas, applying gentle prodding where needed to get them adopted. Symonds applies these themes to topical areas, such as the “politics of promotion” and the Union’s policy toward escaped slaves. In many places, he uses relatively minor Navy involvement as a starting point from which to address Lincoln’s handling of the issue in the broadest national sense.

Gideon Welles and Gustavus Vasa Fox, respectively secretary and assistant secretary of the Navy, are key characters, and Symonds clearly reveals their

personalities. The “blunt, challenging, cantankerous, and tiresomely earnest” Welles became a cabinet mainstay, in part because he loyally and competently supported Lincoln and had no ambition to be president. Meanwhile, both Lincoln and Fox helped to moderate Welles’ “judgmental worldview.” Welles “generally played the ‘bad cop’” while Lincoln was more understanding of human frailty (p.260). The President often softened Welles’ correct but harsh judgments and moderated his disputes with other Cabinet officers. Fox, a former Navy officer, cultivated unofficial relationships that provided “back channel” information and kept the Navy Department in touch with the operating forces. His role as a “friend at court” enabled officers to be candid about their commands without risking Welles’ wrath.

Despite its title, the book is more about Lincoln and his Navy Department than Lincoln and his admirals. With the exception of John A. Dahlgren, whose Washington Navy Yard posting resulted in unlimited access to Lincoln, and ultimately gained him the president’s favour, the admirals are usually offstage, appearing only when their actions or inactions are of “national moment.” The book might benefit from a more analytical comparison of Lincoln’s interactions with generals and admirals — to what extent did Lincoln correspond with, or deal directly with, his admirals as he did his generals? Did the president receive differing inputs from his commanders and his secretary of the Navy, and if so, how did he resolve them?

The twelve pages of illustrations are nicely chosen and clearly captioned. The maps cover almost every Navy theatre of war, although the Red River campaign, the subject of Chapter 10, is absent. The editing shows some lack of familiarity with technical detail. For example, the 15-inch Dahlgrens described as “the largest naval

guns deployed in the nineteenth century” were eclipsed as early as 1881 by the 16-inch guns of HMS *Inflexible*, and “Old Ironsides,” not the armoured *New Ironsides*, which carried “fifty big guns.”

Well-annotated and well-illustrated, this volume provides a cohesive view of Lincoln’s performance as Commander-in-Chief that will be interesting and useful for scholars and casual readers alike.

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Michiel van Groesen. *The Representations of the Overseas World in the De Bry Collection of Voyages (1590-1634)*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, [www.brill.nl](http://www.brill.nl) (Library of the Written Word, 2) 2008. xiii + 563 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. €99.00 / US \$129.00, cloth; ISBN 978 90 04 16449 9.

This book deals with the history of the publishing firm of Johan Theodoor de Bry (1527/28-1623) and his two sons, and the books they published. De Bry, a protestant, was born in Liège in modern-day Belgium, and was trained as a goldsmith, a profession that would prove to be of great importance to his success as a publisher. As a goldsmith, De Bry learned the art of finely engraving metal, and it was this skill that he put to use to engrave prints for publication; he became one of the best engravers in this field at the time in Europe. His prints became so popular that, in order to detect illegal copies by others, De Bry included secret marks in his engravings. During the last quarter of the sixteenth century, engravings on copper allowing for infinitely sharper and more detailed and attractive prints, were increasingly replacing the cruder woodcuts. Having lived in the Lutheran city of Strasbourg for some time,



whether for religious or commercial reasons, De Bry moved to Antwerp (where he collaborated with the well-known Plantin and Moretus families of printers and publishers), and later to London. There he was commissioned to copy a number of charts from the Waghenaeer's *Spiegel der Zeevaart*, the influential Dutch navigational manual and pilot book. This book had been translated and edited by Anthony Ashley and published in English in 1588 as *The Mariner's Mirror*. In the late 1580s, De Bry shifted from his activities as a goldsmith to become a publisher and bookseller in Frankfurt, the home-city of his wife, and the foremost centre of the book trade in Europe. He remained in Frankfurt, except for an eleven-year religious exile to Oppenheim.

De Bry specialised in travel literature, but he was not the first publisher in this genre. Montalboddo in Vicenza, preceded him in the early fifteenth century, while others included the Venetian, Ramusio, and the perhaps better known Oxford scholar, Richard Hakluyt, with whom De Bry collaborated. He also worked with Cornelis Claes in Amsterdam, another well-known publisher of nautical and cartographic works. Thomas Harriot, Jean-Jacques Boissard, Walter Raleigh, Jan Huygen van Linschoten, Olivier van Noort, and Henry Hudson were among the authors whose travel books were published by De Bry. The De Brys did not print the books themselves, but they did make the engraved illustrations that were bound in the volumes. The output of the firm was impressive; in the period 1590-1623 this amounted to 192 titles, an average of five and a half volumes per year. In addition to Latin, De Bry publications in English, French, German, Italian and Dutch found their way to collectors and libraries (including universities) throughout Europe. After De Bry's death, his widow and sons-in-law continued to run the firm for a few years; the last publication appeared in 1634.

Collecting of De Bry's books went on, but by the 1650s the volumes were regarded as "rare" books, a collector's status which they have continually retained to this day.

The scope of the book under review is broader than maritime history and the history of travel alone. It covers the history of a major European publishing house that had ties with the centres of commercial expansion at the end of the sixteenth century, England and the Low Countries. It discusses the firm's products, their influence on travel literature in Europe and, importantly, the perception of the world beyond Europe, the discovery of which had started only about a hundred years earlier. In the first chapter the author provides an overview of, and a wealth of information on, European expansion and travel books before the era of De Bry. In the next two chapters, the De Bry family is discussed, as is their business, and the place of their works within the world of travel books. In the following chapters, various aspects of De Bry's publications are analysed, especially his representations of exotic subjects such as of plants, animals, clothing, tattoos and body piercing, eating (including cannibalism) and drinking. Van Groesen then continues to examine such subjects as De Bry's audience (collectors, private and public libraries, both Protestant and Roman Catholic), encounters with Catholic censorship, and the firm's method of distributing books to their clients.

Van Groesen is a lecturer in American and Early Modern History at the University of Amsterdam, and his thorough study deserves the attention of maritime historians. It is a well-written and adequately illustrated reference book on the reflection of sixteenth-century western discoveries in print, and their influence on the readership.

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Daniel Vickers (ed.). *The Autobiography of Ashley Bowen 1728-1813*. Peterborough, ON and Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, www.broadviewpress.com, 2006. 144 pp. appendices, bibliography. CDN \$18.95/ US \$15.95, paper; ISBN 15511-781-9.

The first American sailor to write his own biography, Ashley Bowen went to sea at age eleven. After coming ashore for the last time, he spent the rest of his days as a ship-rigger in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and died in poverty. His was a world of hard knocks, difficulty and deprivation, but he had a strong, even prickly disposition, and he was well able to look after himself during the many trials that beset him. He had admirable stamina. He had a powerful intellect and was as diligent in his work as he was royal in his attachments. One of his captains, Hall, was a beater, and desertion from the ship was attempted. At one stage, Bowen sought shelter by hiding in the stinking bowels of the vessel. He dodged the fevers of the West Indies, where the burden of mortality was large. He caught smallpox at home. He was mindful of sailors' rights. Of religious persuasion he was an Anglican; of liberties, a Tory. There is a streak of John Locke in his rhetoric and argument, giving credence to the argument that New Englanders, possessed a powerful vision of human rights and community values. But he had an enduring attachment to everything British, as one Massachusetts observer noted, with a bit of regret. Navy, Church and State Bowen faithfully adhered to, and when he died the Congregational minister prayed at the house and the English Episcopalian one at the grave. He was interred at the New Marblehead burial ground in such a location as to be within view, as it were, of the Anglican Church, St. Michael's! He died at age 86.

For years, Bowen has been a subject of literary studies, and the late, lamented Philip Chadwick Foster Smith

published his *Journals* in 1973. But the present work is about Bowen's recollection of his life as a mariner. From assorted merchant experiences, Bowen found himself in the Royal Navy during the Seven Years' War, joining at Halifax in 1759 just in time for the campaign in the St. Lawrence River. Taking Marblehead men with him to Halifax he joined the marine service. He brought 17 seamen with him, which yielded a handsome personal bounty, or favour, from the Crown. He makes more than a cameo appearance in the affairs of that conflict in Nova Scotian and Canadian waters. He chose the *Pembroke*. He thus encountered Captain John Simcoe, R.N., James Cook's friend. He was with James Cook, sailing master of the *Pembroke*, in the St. Lawrence survey. In Cook he found a fellow spirit, an agreeable associate. He witnessed the French fireships coming down upon British ships and how the British sailors parried this blow. He recounts some generalities of British naval and military movements, and he kept a journal of occurrences that he had apparently drawn on for these recollections. He also met General Wolfe. His is not a fundamentally important source for the history of the campaign but it is a significant ancillary one. Bowen was at Quebec when it fell to British arms. Through later years Bowen hung to the role that he had played in the conflict but, more, to the glory of the achievements of Britannia. He never could fathom that the young United States would every share in the glories of the Royal Navy, so strong was his attachment to the British service. As a ship captain he was not entirely successful, and the small schooner that he captained overset at a Boston wharf and filled with water, although the crew was saved. A pall fell over Bowen, though he had many friends and admirers. This book is a wonderful window on a maritime world now lost, and the editor and publisher are to

be congratulated on bringing it to the wider audience that it deserves.

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John White. *Endgame. The U-Boat Inshore Campaign*. Brimstone Port/ Stroud, Gloucester, U.K. The History Press, www.thehistorypress.co.uk, 2008. 128 pp., illustrations, drawing, map, postscript, bibliography, index. UK £12.99, paper; ISBN 978 186227 485 3.

Most histories of the Battle of the Atlantic give the impression that from about mid-1943 on, the advent of widespread air cover, the almost-continual breaking of the Enigma codes and the availability of more and better trained RN and RCN escort support groups, the end of the war was pretty much a foregone conclusion. An increasing application of pressure on the U-boats at sea, the introduction of new weapons like the ahead-throwing mortar "Squid," bombing of enemy bases and factories and better anti-submarine defences in the waters around the U.K. and in the Mediterranean, would all see the assured victory.

This small and well-researched book succinctly points out that the war was by no means "all over but the shouting." It is a most valuable addition to the corpus of histories on the U-boat campaigns, and at a mere £12.99, it should be included in any library covering the battle. Although the early "Atlantic" Type VII boats had indeed become virtually passé, with the advent of the *schnorchel*, they were given a new lease on life, and in fact, were employed right to the last days of the war in May 1945. It was only the delays resulting from strategic bombing attacks on manufacturing facilities ashore and aerial mining of training areas in

the Baltic that delayed the introduction of the far superior new models, Types XXI and XXIII, so that only a few entered operations, and these near the very end of hostilities. Even so, one- and two-man miniature submarine pests flooded in significant numbers into the Channel and North Sea in late 1944 and for the first four months of 1945, causing their share of worry and sinkings right up to the last ship lost — the Canadian-flagged *Avondale Park* on 7 May 1945. Just to re-emphasize Canada's part, *Jaber Park* had been sunk on 13 March by a two-man *Seehund* miniature in the North Sea.

These new boats in Germany's campaign around Britain — that "inshore campaign" of White's title — proved to be very difficult to detect and track with the asdics of the day which lacked the discrimination to identify a submarine among innumerable bottom debris echoes from sunken ships, rocks and even mines. The hunting groups did have their victories, and White gives examples of these, but success was much more difficult to achieve, and although he gives no tables, the results per escort ship and per attack were considerably less than against the standard Type VII and Type IX boats without *schnorchel*. Even when the Admiralty knew through Enigma decrypts that individual boats were at sea, and even where they were heading, they proved the very devil to actually find.

By late 1944, the German Kriegsmarine leaders knew the struggle would eventually be lost. Even so they pressed on with new developments in boats capable of increased submerged speeds with the object of reviving the successes of 1940-2 in severely disrupting Atlantic shipping, thus hindering the resupply of the Allied armies in Europe, and giving the Reich a bargaining chip to be played in peace negotiations. To the final hours of the war, U-boats of all types still represented a major

threat in all areas from west of Ireland to off the Dutch and Norwegian coasts. In the end, the Kriegsmarine were operating out of Norway and northwest German ports to and beyond the last day. It was, for the Allied forces, something of a new but equally difficult battle, albeit with different frustrations than the old shortage of escorts.

For the Germans, a shortage of available torpedoes (although their quality remained reasonable and new "hunting" models were developed) became a continuing and growing problem, as did the gradual breakdown of the land transportation systems to get them to the remaining boats. This contributed to the end game in the final month of the war. But for the U-boat-hunting escorts, the Battle of the Atlantic was very much still on — right up to 8 May 1945.

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Flint Whitlock and Ron Smith. *The Depths of Courage: American Submariners at War with Japan, 1941-1945*. New York: Berkley Caliber Books (Penguin Group), www.uspenguin.com, 2007. xix + 428 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$16.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-425-22370-3.

There is something about the sea that catches the imagination. Whether old tales from the age of sail or new accounts from the age of steam or nuclear power, the sea draws the imagination of many and this is particularly true for tales about submarines. Fascinating, exciting and by their very nature, exotic, these tales appeal to young and old alike. The latest addition to this body of stories is Flint Whitlock and Ron Smith's *The Depths of Courage: American Submariners at War with Japan, 1941-1945*.

Claiming to be a new account of the submarine war, it is, in fact, a hybrid between a memoir/biography of Ron Smith and a popular account of the submarine war from December 1941 through the end of the war in 1945. Smith's wartime experiences form a central thread in the narrative with wider ranging stories of the submarine war fleshing out the tableau to provide context and a sense of the overall events. The result is a merging of Smith's wartime experience prior to his enlistment, through his various postings until the end of the war. In the process, the book provides a general overview of the submarine war including discussions of some of the key moments and people involved.

As a popular history, the book is a success. Well written with a flowing narrative, it provides a sense of what happened during the war without bogging the reader down in technical details or complicated theories. It is certainly on par with the many other popular accounts that have already found their way into print. For those interested in the naval war but not well read in the field, this book would be an excellent addition to their collection. For scholars or someone looking for a solid study of the submarine war in the Pacific that tries to explain how and why events happened as they did, I cannot recommend this book. While the personal narrative of Smith's experiences is fascinating to read, and it does reveal a great deal about life below decks, the book fails to examine the submarine war in any really qualitative way. Like most popular accounts written after the war, many of the stories are simply the retelling of tales already told by authors like Theodore Roscoe, Clay Blair Jr., or Samuel Eliot Morison. No new material, insight, or analysis is provided to the reader. With the exception of the limited oral history use, the book is simply a repetition of past works.

From a scholarly perspective, there are other difficulties to consider. There are

significant problems with the sourcing of the text. The book relies quite heavily on information from secondary sources or the internet. This lack of primary materials is a major handicap when it comes to the quality and the credibility of the work. The internet does not support them either. While it can be a benefit, the web can also be a dangerous tool. There are no standards, no peer review process, and in many cases, no real method of assuring the accuracy of information. Add to this the facts that sites come and go regularly, and it produces some questionable work. In fact, several of the web sites mentioned in the book, at the time of this review, had already ceased to function. The result is a book which lacks credibility and value.

This problem is intensified by the extensive use of oral history. While valuable for bringing in the remembrances of the veterans, and something to be lauded at any time, oral history poses many challenges. Memories change over time and, with the passing of some sixty years, the memories of Second World War veterans are no exception. Careful documentary support to jog memories, cross checking of information to validate facts, and a good solid interview methodology are needed to be successful. While there is no way to validate methodology, the lack of primary sources in the text likely means a lack of documentary support for the interview process. To make matters worse, with the exception of the Ron Smith's interviews, all the rest are one day affairs. Indeed, twelve different interviews were all conducted over the course of two days, 3-4 September 2005. How much of value can be found in such interviews is questionable.

Sourcing aside, the text does not analyze the war or contribute to our understanding of why the events transpired the way they did. Other authors have raised key issues like torpedo problems, or a lack of aggressive skippers when examining the

war effort yet Whitlock and Smith barely mention them. When they do mention these issues, the torpedo problems for example, it is mentioned several times but always in passing. No analysis or critical assessment is done. Signals intelligence, something that has rarely been discussed in the context of the submarine war, gets at best two or three comments. So as a history of the submarine war, *Depths of Courage* falls short. It skims the surface of the events but provides no depth. A great entertaining read, I would recommend this book to anyone interested in good rousing tales. For anyone looking for something with more substance I would not recommend the book. For something with real historical value, this book falls short of the mark.

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