

et Roads—is there a Nantucket Roads?—in Boston harbour, but these are minor. They could have been eliminated with better editing, as in some instances, the geography is correct, and in others, not. Minor quibbles for an otherwise fine monograph that synthesizes both original research and information from many secondary sources.

All at Sea, which is number 43 in the Helion *From Reason to Revolution 1721-1815* series that examines the changing nature of warfare during the period, should be of interest to any military or maritime historian. A distinctive study on the war as well as the logistical battles adds a creative perspective and appreciation to what the British navy and army had to contend with to fight an American rebellion cum worldwide conflict.

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Mark Jessop. *The Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Age. Senior Service 1800-1815*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword History, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2019. xi+180 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, US \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-52672-037-5.

As the title suggests, Mark Jessop explores the British navy's role in Britain's struggle against Napoleonic France and its allies in the first 15 years of the nineteenth century. The navy's primary role of protecting the island nation, its colonies and trade justified the idea that it was the senior service, dominating the army in terms of national importance. The cover image, an isolated Napoleon standing at the stern of HMS *Bellerophon* in 1815, with the surrounding water of Plymouth Sound packed with boat loads of civilians straining to get a

glimpse of the beaten enemy, symbolizes the navy's deliverance of Britain from the threat of foreign dominance. The title and the cover augur well, but the book fails to deliver.

Jessop begins by touching on the Battle of Copenhagen (1807) and the subsequent collapse of the Northern Alliance, the change of government in England, the Treaty of Amiens' short peace, and the six Navy Board commissions to examine corruption within the dockyards and supply chain. He moves to Napoleon's political and military machinations on the continent, followed by a return to war, the great increase of British ships-of-war and seamen, the Trafalgar campaign, and the naval tensions in the Baltic. The long blockade of the French and Spanish fleets after Trafalgar, the trade war between Britain and France and its allies, the war with America in 1812, the British condemnation of the slave trade, and the effects on Britain at the end of two decades of war round out the topics covered within the book. Most of these elements have their own chapter.

The author begins and ends each chapter with a fictional conversation, or series of fictionalized events, that serve to introduce and cradle the factual elements of the topic under discussion. The fictional characters are there to provide the reader with a sense of the emotional experience of people who lived through the circumstances, without any insight into the larger picture. They dominate the chapters. For example, the Battle of Trafalgar chapter follows "a rather large amateur poet and his even larger wife" (39) through their visit to Plymouth, as he attempts to write an epic poem on the victory and death of Nelson. The reader is not only given the description of the poet, his wife, and the events in their day, but many lines of rather poor poetry. There is only a

glimpse of Trafalgar.

The main issue with the book, however, is Jessop's choice of largely nineteenth-century sources to tell the fictional accounts and to present the historical facts. The most recent book in his bibliography is Alfred Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire 1793-1812* (1902). Not only is it the only book written in the twentieth century, but there are no current references that examine the era and address the shortcomings of earlier sources. This is painfully evident when he discusses manning of the navy and deals with the press gang (37-8). The present debate over the number of volunteers versus pressed men is absent, and we are left with the idea that the navy pressed all its crews, period. He also perpetuates the earlier generalization that there was high percentage of non-British men aboard, since refuted by current research.

Another problem with older sources is the errors in their recounting of events. When Jessop discusses the defeat of British frigates by American frigates early in the War of 1812, for example, he states that the USS *Constitution* had 32 guns while its opponent, HMS *Java* carried 38, a decided advantage (82). Yet a few pages later, when discussing the American frigates as a group, the *Constitution's* armament is correctly noted as 44 guns (89). The first source was M. Clark, a contemporary American writer (1813) striving to make the battle more heroic than it was. The second rating of the American frigates comes from H. Kimball who, writing a bit later (1836), got his figures correct. It is interesting to note that Jessop does not mention Sir Philip Bowes Vere Broke whose HMS *Shannon* defeated the US Frigate *Chesapeake*, 1 June 1813. In his account of the British burning President Madison's

mansion in Washington in August 1814, he erroneously refers to it as the White House, although it wasn't called that until 1901.

The factual side of each chapter is overpowered by the fiction, and without thorough analysis of the events and developments, the reader is left with little more than lists of ships, expenses, and extremely brief engagement details. There is minimal insight into the political wrangling, both within Britain and between European nations that raged throughout the era, affecting the course of the war and the Royal Navy's assignments. This drops the book into the murky void between non-fiction and historical fiction. Some less informed readers might have difficulty determining where the creative writing ends and the facts begin.

There are 17 images of nineteenth-century prints related to various events covered in the text, and 13 maps of locations relevant to the stories in various chapters, all of which are placed in the centre of the book. The useful index is extensive. As noted, the bibliography features late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources on the British navy, the French and Napoleonic Wars, and the War of 1812, which might be useful for students looking for a list of these sources. Anyone with prior reading or study into the events covered in the book will find nothing new here. It might possibly motivate an interested secondary school student to pursue the study of this dynamic period for the British navy and nation.

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P. Whitney Lackenbauer, et al. *China's Arctic Ambitions and What They Mean for Canada*. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, www.press.ucalgary.