

## BOOK REVIEWS

Patrick Beesly. *Very Special Intelligence: The Story of the Admiralty's Intelligence Centre 1939-1945*. London: Chatham Publishing, [www.chathampublishing.com](http://www.chathampublishing.com), 2006. xxiv + 296 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. UK£12.99, paper; ISBN 1-86176-277-1.

Philip Chaplin and Daniel G. Harris. *Observed Secretly: Northern Window*. Ottawa, ON: Helmsman Publications, 2006. xiii + 195 pp., photographs, maps, appendices, bibliography, index. CDN\$22.95, paper; ISBN 0-9737444-0-5.

Gathering intelligence information about enemy operations at sea was probably the most crucial activity of Britain's Royal Navy throughout the Second World War. Yet there are relatively few historical studies of naval counter-espionage and code-breaking available to this day. Two recently released books written by officers who were personally involved at the time, however, have filled this gap in public knowledge.

*Very Special Intelligence* remains the definitive study of Operational Intelligence Centre (OIC), the nerve centre of the British Admiralty in the Second World War. This unit of the Naval Intelligence Division collected, analyzed and disseminated information gleaned from every source that could detect the intentions and movements of German naval, air and maritime forces.

Despite his relatively junior rank of lieutenant, author Patrick Beesly served in a senior role at OIC from 1940 to 1945. He was personally responsible for tracking German surface raiders and locating U-boat wolf packs, which enabled him to authoritatively tell the full story. Originally published in 1977, and just re-issued, his book may puzzle some of today's readers by its lack of detail about the code-breaking methods at the now-famous Bletchley Park Government Code & Cipher School. That is because in the 1970s very little information about top-secret "Ultra" had been declassified from official archives.

This edition helpfully sets the significance of OIC's work in context with the addition of new commentary by two other

experts. An introduction by W.J.R. "Jock" Gardner of the Naval Historical Branch in London provides an instructive overview of the naval war and the role of Ultra. In his afterword, code-breaking expert Ralph Erskine summarizes the results of twenty-five years of research into the role of signal intelligence in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Beesly writes in a typical naval officer's straightforward unflappable style that makes the dramatic events seem all the more remarkable. He summarizes British naval intelligence throughout the war, and explains how the problems of the early years were eventually overcome by gradually breaking enemy codes. We learn much about "Enigma," Germany's ingenious cipher-machine, and the RN's repeatedly successful efforts to capture updated versions from enemy vessels.

He explains that German wireless traffic was by no means the only source of intelligence utilized by the Royal Navy. It also relied on reports by secret agents in Europe, photo-reconnaissance, radar and other techniques to track, contact and sink Axis shipping. Beesly ably documents the pursuit of the *Bismarck*, the audacious "Channel dash" escape of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, the Convoy PQ17 disaster, the Battle of the Atlantic and – most crucial of all – the war against the U-boats.

There were times when German submarine successes in the wholesale sinking of Allied shipping threatened the outcome of the war. Brave U-boat crews were ruthlessly efficient, pressing on despite losing 28,000 killed out of a total of 39,000 underwater sailors. Despite this high casualty rate, Gross Admiral Donitz's submarine fleet remained a formidable menace right up to V-E Day in May 1945.

It is heartening to learn that the naval intelligence departments of Britain, Canada and the United States rapidly formed a cordial, co-operative and entirely open relationship which lasted throughout the war. Beesly keeps himself modestly in the background during his account, while crediting his able colleagues of the OIC. Among the many mentioned are Vice Admiral

Sir Norman Denning, Captain Rodger Winn, a polio-disabled civilian lawyer who proved to have an uncanny instinctive genius as head of the tracking room, and Cdr Kenneth Knowles, USN. The author also gives generous praise to the hundreds of anonymous young women who worked long and weary hours at the Admiralty and Bletchley Park without an official word of thanks or recognition for their devoted and vital services.

The only weakness in *Very Special Intelligence* is the lack of any maps, which would have helped readers follow ship movements a bit better. Despite publication of all the later books on the subject, this reviewer considers Beesly's still best of the lot. Highly recommended.

Intelligence gathering is viewed through the other end of the telescope in *Observed Secretly: Northern Window*. It tells the little-known story of how British naval intelligence agents in Sweden worked covertly to help gather military and economic secrets. The "Northern Window" refers to Sweden, the neutral country that Patrick Beesly described as Britain's most vital overseas source of wartime information. One of its co-authors, the late Philip Chaplin, was a Second World War veteran of the RCN who then worked with the Directorate of History in Ottawa for many years.

The book focuses on the recollections of Daniel Harris, an RNVR lieutenant who served as a British Naval Attaché in Stockholm from 1940-1946, and was happily married there.

Postwar, he emigrated to Canada and had a distinguished career in our Naval Reserve. He maintained life-long business connections with Sweden, which awarded him prestigious naval and civilian awards. Proceeds from the sale of this book are being donated to the HMCS *Sackville* restoration fund.

The authors convey a strong sense of how frustrated a keen young officer like Harris must have been by the bumbling incompetence of some of the RN officers and consular officials he encountered early on. Fortunately, this deadwood was quickly replaced by more professional colleagues under command of the redoubtable Lt-Cdr H. Denham, who formed a highly effective British intelligence-gathering

team. Harris learned how to swim through the tricky minefield of intelligence work in a neutral country, where he had to be as wary of the Swedish counter-espionage service as of Nazi agents.

Under cover of diplomatic and social connections, Harris used his linguistic skill in Swedish to develop useful links with sympathetic Swedish military officers. Notable among the covert information they provided to the British Legation was knowledge about sudden movement of the German battleship, *Bismarck*. Harris pedaled his bicycle though the night to a local telegraph office to send a Most Immediate coded signal to the Admiralty. This unassuming, low-tech method launched the RN's epic hunt that sent the pride of the *Kriegsmarine* to a watery grave. Other valuable work of the naval attachés in Sweden included organizing blockade running of strategic metals, funnelling intelligence tips from the Danish and Norwegian Resistance movements, spreading pro-British propaganda and reporting secret peace proposals by Germany.

During a brief leave in Britain, Harris encountered a certain Lt-Cdr Ian Fleming, who was touting his plans for wildly impractical secret operations. Amusingly, Harris replied, "You've been reading too many spy-stories!" This is a tantalizing book at times, when the author briefly mentions some dramatic-sounding incidents, then passes on without giving any details. For instance, he mentions that Sweden allowed the British Royal Air Force to set up a station on Southern Oland to interrupt German V2 rockets, but we are told nothing further.

Daniel Harris recounts numerous events entirely from memory, so he is to be complimented for his near-total recall of half a century ago. The book could have benefited from an editor, though, to catch typographical errors and clarify a couple of anecdotes. Nonetheless, *Observed Secretly: Northern Window* provides rare insights into an obscure naval aspect of the Second World War.

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Chris Bishop. *Kriegsmarine U-Boats, 1939-45. The Essential Submarine Identification Guide*. London: Amber Books Ltd., [www.amberbooks.co.uk](http://www.amberbooks.co.uk), 2006. 192 pp., maps, illustrations, tables, index. US\$39.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-904687-96-2 and ISBN 1-904687-96-2.

It is said that an average of six books per year have been published on Nelson and the Trafalgar campaign in the 200 years since that battle. It was certainly true for last year's bicentennial. It would likewise seem that the six-per-year figure could probably be doubled for books about the Battle of the Atlantic and the *Kriegsmarine's* U-boats in the sixty-one years since that struggle.

They continue to pour forth annually in ever finer detail, from both well-known authors like John Keegan, and from unknowns – at least to this reviewer. Many are “I was there” memoirs by commanders and ordinary seamen; others deal with grand strategy and the sweep of events; many more concern the minutiae on both sides of the battle, Allied and *Kriegsmarine* and *La Marina Italiana* – technicalities, code-breaking, leadership, individual convoy battles, ship and U-boat histories, etc.

This volume is one of many on the organization, employment and results of U.4, the German U-Boat arm. It is essentially a reference book, with only a page or two of actual text interspersed between major tables. For a change, it is organized by U-boat flotillas, from No.1 to the 32<sup>nd</sup> (Training) Flotilla. After a three-page general introduction, there is a brief review of each flotilla's scope, locations and activities, a map showing its location, the flotilla commanders, an illustration of the flotilla insignia (if one existed, or the odd one used by individual boats), types of U-boats active in the flotilla, and the numbers of each type that served in that flotilla. The author also includes brief biographies of “Star Commanders” – those COs who became outstanding by their successes. For each flotilla, Bishop selects four to six actual boats and describes in detail their patrols, successes and eventual fates as well as providing drawings of each of those boats.

The main purpose of the book lies in the huge tables listing every boat that served in each flotilla, with its commission date, flotillas in which it served (thus boats reappear in various different flotillas), number of patrols and eventual fate. Of particular note are the hundreds of carefully-drawn illustrations of surely every existing U-boat class, modification and improvement from the earliest U IIB type to the end-of-the-war Type XXIIIs, as well of details of changes in conning tower design, weaponry and radar and electronic fittings. The few photos tend to be those found elsewhere, and of course the drawings. The illustrations, although of high quality and similar to those by John Batchelor in other publications, tend to be repetitive – as were the U-boats themselves. Each drawing is accompanied by a brief description of anything significant concerning that boat. Oddly, it is not clear who provided these drawings – it may have been Julian Baker and Patrick Mulrey, listed only on the publishing page, but they may have been the book designers. Other previous texts – all much larger in sheer volume, such as Kenneth Wynn's two-volume *U-Boat Operations of the Second World War* (Naval Institute Press, 1997) – list the commanders of each boat and the actual details of every war, training or transfer patrols, but this volume is quite adequate as a reference. It is also an indication of the sheer size of the *U-bootewaffe* effort from just before the war through to its end.

This is a volume for the reference shelf, albeit with interesting extra detail on badges, the development of the Dutch *schmorchel*, a few convoy struggles and some, although not all, “wolfpacks”. Its primary use will be for easy reference, as there is an index of every U-boat and its various flotillas, and a general index, although that refers largely to attacking warships, convoy numbers and the Star Commanders. Bishop has been able to incorporate the latest research regarding attacks on these boats, which makes it a valuable resource for cross-checking similar volumes produced many years ago. This volume includes the basics and is a handier, faster reference tool than most. Despite its cover cost of \$35.95 and

2006 publishing date, I found my copy in Coles for \$9.99 less a couple of discounts! I didn't ask why.

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Laurence Brockliss, John Cardwell, and Michael Moss. *Nelson's Surgeon: William Beatty, Naval Medicine, and the Battle of Trafalgar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, [www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com), 2005. xx + 216 pp., illustrations, maps, table, figure, notes, bibliography, index. US\$90.00, UK£45.00, cloth; ISBN 0-19-928-742-2.

By analysing the career of naval surgeon William Beatty (1773-1842), the authors present an interesting picture of British naval medicine at the turn of the eighteenth century. For the general context of naval medicine practised in the "wooden world", the authors rely heavily on the third part of the four-volume standard work of Christopher Lloyd (still the authoritative work). They have enlivened their text with examples of naval surgeons drawn from a prosopographical database (a listing of surgeons according to their appearance, personality, social status, career, etc., the construction of which is mentioned in the preface of this book).

Although this book is an interesting read, a few critical remarks might be made. One thing the reader misses is a comparison with the medical practice aboard the ships of other seafaring countries, such as Spain, France and the Netherlands. This may be because the outlook of the book is rather biased and one-sidedly British. James Lind, for example, is presented as the man who first promoted the use of citrus fruits as an antiscorbutic. This is not correct. Lind was the first to demonstrate scientifically the usefulness of this practice, but the practice itself had been known for centuries by many sailors who sailed the high seas, many of them not British. The practice of hygiene as applied on the British fleets was also common to the fleets of other countries and on those of the East- and West India Companies. What is not mentioned is that British sailors suffered more from scurvy during the age of sail than the crews

of other nations. The authors' statement that the Battle of Trafalgar was partly won because the men of the British fleet were healthier than their foes must therefore be explained from particular and incidental causes. Indeed, the statement might be true, but only because Nelson forced hygienic discipline on his crews. As a result, this healthier condition existed only during his command, and not before or afterwards. Furthermore, the authors admit that Nelson was very fortunate that the French fleet had just returned from the West Indies, with the medical consequences thereof.

Beatty's life is followed from the moment of his birth in Londonderry until his death in London. Apart from his professional life, his entry into the naval service, and his rise into the medical profession, not much is known about Beatty's personal life. The resulting picture of the man is somewhat spiritless. His education remains obscure; the authors make many educated guesses about his schooling by comparing it with that of other surgeons about whom more is known. Why Beatty chose a naval life remains an enigma: he may have been influenced by an uncle who was in the naval service. Most of Beatty's professional choices are explained with may haves, probablys and presumablys. His seafaring career before Nelson strongly breathes the air of Patrick O'Brian's novels.

It is not always clear what the authors mean by the term "doctor": in some cases, they refer to a surgeon, who turns out never to have been a physician. They do not entirely seem to grasp the function of a sea surgeon: the fact that his medical chest contained pestles, mortars, measuring glasses and syringes used for the preparation and delivery of prescriptions, definitely does not testify to Beatty's status as physician and apothecary as well as surgeon. Every senior sea surgeon of a sea-faring country would find these instruments in his chest, since a sea surgeon had to act as a physician, but he would never have that status unless he qualified as such at a university.

Beatty's character acquires a sharper focus when he becomes Nelson's personal surgeon during the Battle of Trafalgar at the moment he extracts the bullet from Nelson's

body. As the canonization of Nelson began, Beatty rode on its wake. Particularly striking is the description of Beatty fondling his watch in which the bullet was encased, reminding the onlookers that he was the man who nursed England's national hero at his death. The one thing the authors do make clear about their hero's character is that Beatty knew how to capitalize on that fact. Before Nelson's death, he was just an able surgeon, as were so many other surgeons in the naval service. His real career started with the death of Nelson. Soon afterwards, he was made physician of the Channel Fleet (for which he did have to obtain a university degree, which his connections arranged for him) and had his portrait painted. Although he was an able administrator, he cut no outstanding medical figure in the post. Becoming a licentiate of the London Royal College of Physicians, and Physician to the Greenwich Hospital (at the time, the zenith of a naval surgical career in Britain), Beatty demonstrated no interest in his own discipline. He must have been exceptionally clever in cultivating friends who would and could influence his career.

Beatty was not an exceptional man, surgeon or no surgeon, which is perhaps typical of many sea surgeons of his time. The one thing which differentiates him from his peers was the fact that he was there when Nelson died and knew how to turn Nelson's bad luck into his own good fortune.

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Brian Cudahy. *Box Boats: How Container Ships Changed the World*. New York: Fordham University Press, [www.fordhampress.com](http://www.fordhampress.com), 2006, xii + 338 pp., tables, photographs, notes, index, US\$29.95, cloth; ISBN 0-8232-2568-2.

Marc Levinson. *The Box: How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, [www.puu.princeton.edu](http://www.puu.princeton.edu), 2006. xi + 376 pp., tables, notes, bibliography, index, US\$24.95, cloth; ISBN 0-691-12324-1.

It was fifty years ago that 58 truck bodies were carried by sea from a terminal in New Jersey to Texas. This innovative venture by a hard-driving entrepreneur named Malcolm McLean was the start of a transformation in how freight is moved around the world. Today, goods are manufactured in the most economical locations in a supply chain made possible by the circulation around the globe of some 15 million ubiquitous containers. Several books appeared in 2006 to mark the golden anniversary of containerization. While the two reviewed here cover some ground in common, their subtitles accurately suggest their differing scope. Both trace the evolution of container ships and terminals and describe in particular how US shipping companies adapted – or did not – to containerization, and how they have now been absorbed into offshore conglomerates.

Marc Levinson's focus, however, is much wider than the story of container shipping alone. A former writer for *The Economist*, he examines the impact of containers on manufacturing worldwide and traces their significance as a key driving force behind globalization. *The Box* is a truly rewarding and informative read because of Levinson's exhaustive research and grasp of economic developments and their interplay. His reporter's eye for telling details and crisp style bring this story alive.

Brian Cudahy is a ship history enthusiast who has published several books about marine and transportation history. While the wider ramifications of containerization receive mention, his focus in *Box Boats* is the successive generations of US container ships, and in particular, the vessels operated by Sea-Land Service, the company founded by Malcolm McLean. This book is illustrated with excellent photographs and there are numerous tables in the text tracing in detail every ship acquired by Sea-Land and the various names given to each vessel.

The difference in approach of these two books is perhaps illustrated by how both authors cover the evolution of container terminals in the Port of New York. Levinson provides a handy sketch map (p. 79) which helps readers unfamiliar with New York geography to

grasp why new terminals in New Jersey enjoyed advantages of location. Cudahy describes in some detail how ships manoeuvred in the waterways leading to the new terminals but assumes that his readers are familiar with the area.

Because containerization reduced times in port, the first generation of purpose-built container ships operating between Europe and the Far East were able to handle six or seven times as much cargo per year as their conventional predecessors. Levinson shows that the relentless drive to lower the per-box cost of shipping led to ever-bigger ships with their economies of scale which called at bigger but far fewer ports. Ports have become distribution centres and are no longer necessarily located near large manufacturing facilities. While containerization took off in the 1960s, it was not until the late-1970s that the real cost of shipping goods internationally began falling rapidly. Levinson notes that reliable data to demonstrate just when the widespread use of containers for shipments at sea and on land began reducing costs is not available and cannot be derived from available statistics. As late as the mid-1970s, shipping wheel rims from Michigan to France cost 23 per cent of the value of the cargo (p. 254). A combination of factors then caused rates the drop. Today, the cost of shipping goods accounts for one per cent or less of retail prices.

It costs roughly 34 cents to ship a pair of shoes that retails for \$45 in North America from a factory in Asia and \$12.50 to import a television set that sells for \$2,500. Low freight rates made locating factories in areas with lower labour costs more profitable. Low transportation costs and improvements over the laborious freight-handling methods of earlier containers paved the way for “just-in-time” manufacturing with its cost savings through minimizing inventories. Toyota originated this concept in the early 1980s and the results are universally experienced today (p. 265).

Container shipping required enormous amounts of capital. In the drive for economies of scale, successive generations of container ships have grown steadily larger. The biggest are now larger than fleet aircraft carriers. Sophisticated data processing systems are

required to track individual containers. Competition and the ongoing need for capital have steadily reduced the number of container shipping companies. Two of today’s largest operators, Evergreen of Taiwan and Maersk of Denmark, did not start operating container ships until the early seventies. Neptune Orient Line of Singapore, another surviving giant, was formed in 1968 just as containerization was beginning to revolutionize transportation at sea. Two shipping companies with illustrious histories, P & O Lines and Canadian Pacific Ships, had transformed themselves into major containership operators but were absorbed by larger entities. In 2005, Maersk took over P&O-Nedlloyd and CP Ships became part of the TUI Group of Germany, whose holdings include Hapag-Lloyd, itself the result of a fusion of two shipping companies with long histories.

Both books trace the history of US flag shipping companies over the last five decades and are therefore valuable as succinct surveys which explain how, even though American companies were the first to use containers on a large scale, they have disappeared into foreign ownership. The demise of United States Lines in late 1986 – at the time the largest US bankruptcy – because of poor business decisions by Malcolm McLean is an extraordinary tale. Levinson, in particular, sketches in European and Asian container shipping companies as well, but both books tell their stories largely by following the fortunes of Sea-Land, the company built up by Malcolm McLean. The Vietnam War provided a substantial boost for container shipping for several reasons. The US military came to realize that using containers enabled them to reduce inefficiencies and bottlenecks in Vietnam. The proportion of the vast quantity of equipment and supplies being sent out from the US carried in containers increased steadily between 1966 and 1973. McLean seized the opportunity to start using vessels returning empty across the Pacific to haul containers from Japan. Levinson’s coverage extends to many other factors contributing to the evolution of containerization. He describes how today’s major container shipping ports have gained their pre-eminent positions and the fascinating story of how longshoremen’s unions in the US, Britain

and the Netherlands variously reacted to the threat of containerization representing substantial savings by reducing the number of dock workers.

Containerization has transformed the transportation of freight over the past fifty years. *Box Boats* is a well-illustrated and workmanlike history largely focused on Sea-Land Service, the pioneering container shipping company, and its ships. *The Box*, on the other hand, is an informative and crisp economic history of containerization and how it has enabled globalization to work. Its coverage is wide – everything from economic impacts to how major ports around the world were changed, from the transformation of dockside labour patterns to the development of seamless methods for handling containers from manufacturing centres inland to ocean passages and then onward to their ultimate destinations on another continent. All this is linked to the fortunes of individual container shipping companies. Marc Levinson's *The Box* is an outstanding book – readable, thoroughly researched, vastly informative. Highly recommended.

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Arthur Donovan and Richard Bonney. *The Box That Changed the World: Fifty years of container shipping – an illustrated history*. East Windsor, NJ: Commonwealth Business Media, [www.cbixmedia.com](http://www.cbixmedia.com), 2006. xxiii + 262 pp., photographs, illustrations, notes, index. US\$59.95, cloth; ISBN 1-891131-95-8.

This excellent book is worth the time and attention of anyone interested in understanding the nature, origins and future status of the modern shipping revolution. It tells a remarkable story of how containerization – using truck-trailer-sized boxes to move goods by sea and across land by road and rail from place of origin to end user – helped unleash the forces of globalization by creating dependable global supply chains that are “just-in-time”. It shows how containers possessed the potential in the mid-1950s to so reduce costs and increase

efficiency as to transform maritime shipping from centuries-old practices in a single quantum leap forward. The story centres on the career of Malcolm P. McLean who, while he did not invent the “box” container, did start the first successful ocean service and demonstrate that it could work. In 1956, McLean loaded 58 “boxes” on board the deck of a converted oil tanker. Fifty years later 78 shipping lines deliver annually 2.8 million containers carrying \$115 billion worth of cargo to the port of New York/New Jersey alone.

Arthur Donovan is emeritus professor of maritime history at the US Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point, New York, where he was head of the Humanities Department before his retirement in 2003. He is the author of several books on diverse topics, most recently *The Abandoned Ocean* (University of South Carolina Press, 2000). Joseph Bonney has been a reporter and editor covering shipping and transportation for more than a quarter of a century. He was managing editor of *American Shipping* during the 1990s, and is currently editor of *The Journal of Commerce*.

The authors divide their account into two roughly equal parts of three and four chapters, respectively, and conclude with a third much briefer, two-chapter section. Part One treats the pre-McLean origins of the container, Malcolm McLean's long journey to the Port of Newark, and the early maritime ventures of McLean and his first competitors. The authors argue that McLean was an entrepreneur who saw trucks as boxes and ships as ferries or bridges, rather than a trucker or a shipper. In addition to technical problems, of which there were many, intermodal transportation – the coordinated movement of freight without handling the goods involved using two or more modes of transportation – encountered regulatory problems that were equally as challenging. Railways objected strenuously to containerized freight while railway executives found it nearly impossible to view two modes of transportation as complimentary rather than competitive. Labour unions were more far-sighted. Recognizing the inevitable victory of mechanization on the waterfront, the president of the International Longshoremen's Association

negotiated a series of contracts that secured cash bonuses, fringe benefits and “guaranteed” annual income for dockworkers who lost their jobs to containerization. Union dockworkers are among the highest paid blue-collar workers in the US.

Part Two traces the difficult extension of containerization shipping from American to international markets. This initially generated a great deal of scepticism as American shippers moved into highly competitive international markets from heavily protected domestic ones. The Vietnam War played an important cushioning role during the 1960s and early 1970s, but competition quickly appeared from new shippers in Taiwan and established carriers in Europe and Japan; today the original American container lines have been taken over by foreign corporations.

Containerization was both cause and symptom of profound changes in world shipping patterns. Containerized shipping reached Pacific markets at the same time as Japan’s postwar reconstruction was complete and higher value manufacture goods were being produced for export and the four Asian tigers began rapidly to industrialize. By the mid-1980s Hong Kong and Singapore had replaced New York and Rotterdam as the world’s top container ports. Finally, containerization overthrew the established order of shipping. Illustrious names disappeared or were submerged in the face of oversupply of container capacity, and new independent and established companies arose on the ruins of the old.

Fifty years on, the world of maritime commerce has been transformed. But the “box” may well prove to be the author of its own misfortune. New problems have appeared that may well transform the next fifty years as radically as the last half-century has been. With one-fifth of the containers at sea being empty, repositioning is only one of a number of serious problems. The size of ships is the least of them. The time and expense of shifting containers from one mode of transportation to another is probably more serious. The capital costs of infrastructure investment in new container-handling facilities, port expansion, railway cars, lines and classification yards, not to mention roads, are staggering. Nation states are fiercely

competing with one another for the new and growing business. Fifty years from now the concept of road, rail, and maritime transportation systems may have been consigned to the dustbin of history as intermodal freight transportation becomes so seamless and integrated into a single logistics system that people will have difficulty conceiving that separate systems once existed. Will new, immensely strong, lightweight, collapsible containers made of carbon fibres replace the current steel reinforced aluminum boxes? “Out-of-the-box” thinking will certainly be needed to prevent the greatest revolution in maritime shipping since the marine steam engine from becoming a victim of its own success.

*The Box That Changed the World* is one of at least three studies published in 2006 to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Malcolm McLean’s great experiment. The authors remain level headed throughout their history; little appears that is nostalgic or nationalistic. This book is recommended because, although subsidized by members of the shipping industry, the topical analysis is clear and uncluttered, the narrative is very well written, and it is lavishly illustrated with countless photographs, many of them in colour, each carefully chosen to illustrate something mentioned on the same or facing page of text. The book is very good value for money; its reasonable price is made possible only by the support of several shipping lines and container ports.

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Col. David Fitz-Enz. *Old Ironsides: Eagle of the Sea*. Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing (Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group), [www.rlpgrtrade.com](http://www.rlpgrtrade.com), 2005. xxi + 281 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, notes, glossary, bibliography, index. US\$28.95, cloth; ISBN: 1-58979-160-6. Distributed by the National Book Network.

Of all the world’s famous warships, the U. S. Frigate *Constitution* is certainly among the best known. Launched in 1797 as one of the first ships ordered specifically for the US Navy, the



*Constitution* steered to glory under a series of skillful commanders, especially during the War of 1812. The brilliance of its design and its great size and strength prompted Horatio Nelson to predict trouble for the Royal Navy long before HMS *Guerriere*'s shot were seen to bounce off the frigate's timbers, earning it the name of "*Old Ironsides*". The ship was, and is, the epitome of a proud naval tradition as well as a symbol of American devotion to the icons of the nation's heritage, for the *Constitution* has been faithfully, and ambitiously, preserved for the public in Boston. It is the oldest commissioned warship still afloat anywhere.

The acknowledged leading expert on the *Constitution* is Tyrone G. Martin. During his 26-year career in the U. S. Navy he served between 1974 and 1978 as the ship's 57<sup>th</sup> captain and went on to write authoritative books and articles about the frigate and many other naval topics. His key work is *A Most Fortunate Ship: A Narrative History of "Old Ironsides"* (Naval Institute Press, 1997).

The current title pales in comparison to Martin's book. David Fitz-Enz states that he is an ex-military man and "not an academic historian", as if these qualities should exempt him from writing an authoritative account. His goal is to present the story of "a national treasure" through "two hundred years of threat and conflict that can be found nowhere else" (p. xvi). Such poorly conceived sentences as this one typify the author's weak mastery of his topic, since the ship's actual "years of threat and conflict" ended in 1815. The author also lost sight of his objective, since only 35 of the book's 230 pages of text are devoted to the *Constitution*'s career after 1815.

The book begins with a rambling discourse on naval construction wherein we learn that there was no "road rage" in the 1790s, that rope has been found in the tombs of the Pharaohs and that a 74-gun ship could not catch the *Constitution* "because of the added weight of the guns" (p. 16). There are few other references to the *Constitution* in this chapter (and next to no details about its actual construction) and even fewer to be found in a subsequent 20-page chapter about sea power. Here we read about Czar "Nikki" and Kaiser Wilhelm dividing up

the oceans, and Dewey at Manila Bay, China's place in the twentieth century and the Cuban missile crisis, but nothing about the "national treasure". Similarly, in the 24-page chapter comprising one of the most convoluted explanations about the causes of the War of 1812 ever to reach print, the *Constitution* is mentioned once.

The author's acknowledgments indicate that he met many naval and military authorities and visited numerous institutions, but there is no mention of the weeks of hard slogging required to research in depth and learn his topic. His visits left him with a superficial understanding, at best, of the *Constitution* and its times. The book is laden with errors and misconceptions, the result of inadequate fact checking. For instance, while condemning impressment, Fitz-Enz claims "a considerable number of the crew of HMS *Victory* at Trafalgar were not British, and many of those men were American" (p. 114). Someone must have told the author this and he repeated it without looking into available sources such as the Ayshford Trafalgar Roll, which shows 822 seamen and marines mustered aboard the *Victory* at the battle, 750 of whom were born in the British Isles and 19 in the United States. The book features simplistic and almost absurd descriptions of life at sea: "in the winter . . . above 45 degrees latitude . . . sea spray collects in the form of ice on exposed surfaces like masts, yards, sails, rails, hulls and decks at temperatures below freezing . . . [F]ew ventured north or attempted to swing around the tip of South America" (p. 153). Only the most devoted of naval students will agonize to see HMS *Newcastle* referred to as a "ship of the line" (p. 191), but any thoughtful reader will puzzle over the mindset that implies, not once but twice, a link in significance between the date of the battle of Plattsburgh (11 September 1814) and events of that date in 2001 (pp. 184, 281).

This book wanted some serious editing and a total revision to undo the zigzag meandering across time lines and concepts, to cull sentences such as the ones quoted above, to force Fitz-Enz to deal with the ship and leave out discussions of international politics and his own frequent references to his army career and

travels. At the very least, the publisher should have had someone instruct the author in how to present a single theme and carry it coherently from beginning to end of a paragraph.

In short, apart from some nice illustrations and a pretty book jacket, there is nothing in this book to recommend it to readers.

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Norman Friedman. *The Naval Institute Guide to World Naval Weapon Systems, Fifth Edition*. Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, [www.usni.org](http://www.usni.org), 2006. li + 868 pp., photographs, addendum, index. US\$250.00, cloth; ISBN 1-55750-262-5.

*The Naval Institute Guide to World Naval Weapons Systems* is a complete guide to the weapons currently in service in ships, submarines, and naval aircraft around the world. It is divided into nine major chapters, some of which deal with systems, such as those devoted to Combat Direction Systems, Shipboard Guns and Gun Systems, and Strategic Strike Systems; while other chapters deal with the overall waging of war, such as Strike Warfare, Anti-Air Warfare and Anti-Submarine warfare. In each of these numerous systems, both sensors and weapons are included.

Each chapter presents an overview of the current state of naval weapon development. Some topics include: current testing activities within the system under discussion; which new systems have been introduced since the last edition; and which systems are no longer in production and are considered obsolete. An example of this is the section "Shipboard Guns and Gun Systems" listing under Italy: OTO-Melara (manufacturer): a new compact light weight 5"/54 gun is being developed, which weighs 30 per cent less than its predecessor and has a low faceted RCS (Radar Cross-Section) shield, stealth configured (p. 456).

In the introduction, Friedman identifies the four naval developments which stand out in this edition: (i) the rise of what now is called

network-centric warfare – the means of seeing and engaging targets, which creates a shared tactical picture that allows many units to deal with an array of point objects; (ii) the impact on the US Navy of the global war on terror; (iii) the rise of new developers of sophisticated naval systems, in particular, command and control systems; and (iv) the continued, even greatly accelerated, impact of Moore's Law (estimating the rate of improvement to computers), which drives naval systems into the use of commercially-available technology.

The prefatory notes provide a generic background foundation of the current technology status of radar, electronic warfare, sonar, infrared and optronic devices, laser and missile guidance. The author, who has written extensively on the design of naval systems and their platforms in earlier publications, offers in these notes some of his own analysis assessment and insight on current development efforts. This section also provides an explanation of designation systems. For example, AN/SPS 501 indicates the US triservice (AN) designation system, SPS is a naval radar and 501, identifies the country of origin, Canada. Therefore, 501 is the first Canadian naval radar.

*The Guide* employs a rather unique way of ensuring that it incorporated the latest developments in naval weapons as the publication deadline drew near. The inclusion of an Addendum allowed the publication of a number of additions from the St. Petersburg Naval Show in July 2005, such as the 3S90E.1 modular launcher for the *Shtil* (9M317ME: SA-N-7) missiles, which was shown there for the first time.

The reader should keep in mind, above all that this is an unclassified book, a compilation of information from the open literature, from declassified documents and from brochures provided from the manufacturers of the equipment. Official documents generally are not declassified for some considerable time after their origination, typically at least twelve years in the United States, but often as long as thirty years in Great Britain.

In conclusion, the periodical *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy* (August 2006) described the *Naval Institute Guide to the*

*World Naval Weapon Systems* as “The 21st Century’s equivalent of what *Jane’s Fighting Ships* was in the pre-World War II era”. It, therefore, becomes prudent to mention the other well known naval weapons reference publication, *Jane’s Naval Weapon Systems*, which can be obtained for US\$1,190 for a soft bound book, or for US \$2,255 for an online subscription, which will give the customer a full research capability, a minimum five-year archive and monthly updates. The price differential notwithstanding, Friedman’s *Naval Institute Guide to the World Naval Weapon Systems*, should be the preferred choice for most users of this publication. This assessment is based on the analytical insight offered on the design and operation of naval weapon systems, aided by an extensive collection of excellent photographs which accompany Friedman’s very thoughtful text.

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Peter Goodwin. *The Ships of Trafalgar: The British, French and Spanish Fleets, October 1805*. Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, [www.usni.org](http://www.usni.org), 2005. 256 pp., maps, illustrations, tables, appendices, bibliography, index. US\$55.00, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-824-3.

In his introduction, Goodwin notes that full comprehension of the events off Cape Trafalgar on 21 October 1805 requires an understanding of the ships to set alongside the studies of strategies, tactics and the biographies of the human participants. To that end, he has compiled the stories of all 73 vessels that were present, from the mighty *Santísima Trinidad* to the cutter *Entreprenante*. For each one, he has provided information on basic dimensions, armament, designer, construction, service history (especially focussed on events on the great day itself), maintenance history and ultimate fate. There are lines plans for most, with a scattering of other illustrations. Much of the material on Nelson’s fleet is drawn from original records (Captain’s logs, Progress Books, etc.), with extensive direct quotations. Information on the

ships of the Franco-Spanish Combined Fleet, however, is predominantly secondary and relies heavily on the now-dated work of Laird Clowes.

Inevitably in such a catalogue, there is a great deal of repetition, much of which could have been avoided if Goodwin had not waited until he was mid-way through the French fleet before referring his readers to the entry on one ship for details of the voyaging of others that were in company. Readers certainly did not need to be told twice (under the entries for *Berwick* and *Pluton*) that Commander Maurice was honourably acquitted for the loss of HMS *Diamond Rock*.

Trafalgar aficionados will require a copy of this book on their shelves and it will satisfy their every desire for specific details of the individual ships involved in their battle. It does not, however, provide the technical information on manning, fitting, arming and operating warships in 1805 that is generally applicable to all such vessels. Hence, it supplements rather than replaces previous works by Goodwin, Lavery and others.

For the rest of us, the obsessive focus on one single day can be a distraction. The book would have been more useful if it had featured a systematic sample of each of the three navies, rather than those vessels present for a particular event. Nevertheless, it is fascinating to explore this sampling of the breadth of the contemporary Royal Navy’s technology and experience, thereby escaping from the prism of *Victory* which can dominate so much of the modern literature. The comings and goings of assorted ships, their frequent refits, the distinctly more varied careers of frigates when compared to ships-of-the-line, and much else leap from the pages. So, too, do the differences between the three navies – the English keeping the seas as their enemies lay in harbour, the French fleet with a median age of only seven years (having lost so many ships earlier in the war), compared to the median age of 21 for the Spanish fleet, and so forth.

Much of this book is, however, the raw material of history rather than a finished study, and what readers take from it will depend on what they bring. There is, for example, a clear pattern of captains of English First Rates being

transferred into smaller ships – a practice that appears to be repeated demotion of flag captains unless one understands that, at the time, junior captains were often placed under the immediate tutelage of an Admiral before being entrusted with their own Third Rates. Unfortunately, the material is not always as raw as it should be. The lines and other plans are consistently “drawings by the author”, leaving readers to guess at how precisely they duplicate the original source material. Meanwhile, Goodwin inserts figures on the amount of timber needed to build each ship and the acres of woodland felled to provide it – numbers which appear to be derived from Charnock’s generalizations, although they are presented as specific information.

To this catalogue of the ships of Trafalgar, Goodwin has appended a four-page introduction on the importance of the documentary sources, plus the crucial roles of naval stores and dockyard production, without which there would have been no fleets able to fight. The former theme is left to speak for itself throughout the catalogue, but the latter is taken up again in an eight-page “conclusion”, too much of which is simply a crude attempt to estimate the total amount of timber, blocks, copper, rope, canvas and armament afloat off Cape Trafalgar on 21 October. Without comparative information on total national production of such commodities, or their cost relative to the size of the national economies, those estimates have limited value. (Besides, the million square feet of sheathing copper on the 73 vessels amounted to 0.04 square miles in area, not the 190 that Goodwin claims!)

Its weaknesses notwithstanding, this book is a unique and valuable supplement to the corpus of work on sailing warships. It is also required reading for anyone fascinated by those few hours of concentrated violence off the Spanish coast.

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Iain Gordon. *Admiral of the Blue: The Life and Times of Admiral John Child Purvis, 1747-1825*. Barnsley, S. Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Books Ltd., [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2005. vi + 272 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, appendices, references, index. UK£19.99 (CDN\$29.15), cloth; ISBN 1-84415-294-4.

Although the jacket “blurb” of this book tells us that John Child Purvis had “a long and distinguished career at sea”, it seems to have been such a very dull career that it is not long before one begins to develop the suspicion that the writer felt obliged to use up all the laborious fact-gathering that emerged in the research for his previous book on the son of this biography’s subject: Richard Fortescue Purvis (*Soldier of the Raj*).

Certainly, that fact-gathering was meticulous, and perhaps some readers will see some merit in religiously reporting all possible facts, such as, for example, the repetitive lists of all the ships that sailed in company with Purvis round Corsica in 1794. Others, particularly those who have some knowledge of British naval history, will feel that the story would have been enlivened by a discussion of the running feud between the senior naval and army commanders during that campaign.

Apart from an interesting alternative view of Nelson’s arbitrary decision to change the Nile prize agent from our hero’s brother George to the opportunist Alexander Davison (who was later to be imprisoned for corruption and conspiracy), it is not until well into the second half of the book that some really interesting events start to unfold. In 1806, Purvis gained his flag and a few months later took over command of the squadron blockading Cadiz.

One of the main concerns at the time was the ships in Cadiz harbour. The remains of the Allied fleet which took refuge there after Trafalgar, these warships were quietly rotting away for lack of maintenance. Some of them were not, however, in such bad shape that they could not have been repaired swiftly by crews brought by the rapidly approaching French army; it is Purvis’ efforts to get the Spanish to alleviate this, and other threats such as cutting the city’s water supply, that hold real interest.

Another major problem was that, since the Spanish had turned against the French, they had accumulated numerous French prisoners whom they kept in appalling conditions on those same ships; when the advancing French army made their inevitable arrival in the city, these prisoners (some 13,000 by Purvis' reckoning) would immediately provide them with reinforcements.

Anyone who has read of the Peninsula campaign will be aware of the intransigence of the Spanish; Purvis had the same experience. The book underlines this by providing a full record of his exchange of letters with various Spanish officers and politicians, as he tried to get them to take any form of action to defend themselves. That Purvis managed to keep hold of his exasperation and continue to write polite letters to them demonstrates an amazing restraint. This portion of the book is sufficiently interesting and valuable that one can almost forgive the overall faults: idiosyncratic spelling of place names (for instance the Spanish outpost in Morocco is referred to several times in Chapter Eight, its accompanying map and in the index, as Cueta and in Chapter Nine by its correct name of Ceuta); and even the numerous errors of fact. It would be unfair to blame all of these errors on the author, who is not a naval historian, but one can certainly lay blame on a publisher who regularly produces books on naval history and should thus know where to find someone to check the basic facts about the Georgian navy – for instance, the system by which post-captains were upgraded to admiral by their seniority, not, as the author informs us, in relation to Nelson as a reward for exceptional services (pp. 64-5).

There are some sparse notes and an equally sparse bibliography of other books, which demonstrate the author's newcomer status in this field; one would have expected to find several Navy Records Society volumes and a lot more references to documents in the National Archives. It does, however, give a detailed listing of the Purvis papers at the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich, England), together with a genealogical table, some maps, listings of ships in various fleets, and a mixture of photographs of portraits and locations in both their contemporary and modern form.

For those readers who have only a casual interest in the accuracy and fine detail of this period of British naval history, all of this will go unnoticed, but these readers will be the very ones who find Purvis' career on the dull side. He may have been a worthy man, and a conscientious officer, but he was not one of those whose name will be remembered as being associated with heroic deeds.

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Barry Gough. *Through Water, Ice and Fire: Schooner Nancy of the War of 1812*. Toronto: The Dundurn Group, [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com), 2006. 213 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, notes, selected bibliography, index. CDN\$24.99 / UK£12.99, paper; ISBN 10: 1-55002-569-4.

The story has often been told of the schooner *Nancy* and its minor role in War of 1812 events. It was among the dozen or so Canadian and American merchant vessels operating on the upper Great Lakes before the war and which were pressed into public service during the conflict. The Canadian carriers performed the critical role of maintaining British supply lines and supporting military activities through 1812 and part of 1813. After the Americans won the battle of Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie in September 1813, and invaded southwestern Upper Canada the next month, the *Nancy* was one of only three schooners on the waters above the Detroit region. Its master narrowly avoided capture by the Americans on the St. Clair River before sailing to the British post on Michilimackinac Island. A Royal Navy detachment handled the *Nancy* in 1814 and used it to supply Michilimackinac from a depot at the Nottawasaga River at the southern end of Georgian Bay. To prevent its capture during an attack by an American squadron in August of that year, the crew burned the schooner in the mouth of the Nottawasaga. Lieutenant Miller Worsley, RN, subsequently led the capture of two American gunboats left to blockade the northern waters.

Barry Gough is a Canadian historian of some stature, being the past president of the Organization for the History of Canada and the official historian of HMS *Haida*, as well as a Clio Award winner and a professor emeritus of Wilfrid Laurier University. He is also a sailor who has traveled on the lakes. This book is actually Gough's second go around on the topic of the upper lakes naval war, the first being *Fighting Sail on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay: The War of 1812 and its Aftermath* (2002). In the introduction to the current title he claims that his *Fighting Sail* placed the *Nancy* in its historical context for the first time ever (p. 18) and then goes on to write that he now wanted to tell the story as it ought to be told, as an adventure of the *Nancy* and her gallant little band of seamen amid the broader dangers of the War of 1812 (p. 18).

As indicated above, the truth is that there is not much to tell about the *Nancy* as it was a bit player until the day of its fiery end in 1814. And Gough does not introduce any new sources of information in *Through Water* that might have added to or reassessed what has been previously written about the schooner. Gough devotes two chapters to explaining the larger events of 1812 and 1813 that affected the *Nancy* directly and indirectly. He is correct in describing the importance of naval supremacy on the lakes and the critical link between control of the fur trade and influence on aboriginal nations. But the treatment is superficial (supported by few archival sources), resulting in misconceptions. For instance, Gough's mention of only the North West Company leaves readers uninformed about its rivals in commerce and their overall impact on governmental decision making. Similarly, in discussing the American strategy for 1813 campaigning, he incorrectly credits Commodore Isaac Chauncey for sweeping revisions to American battle plans without identifying the roles played by the members of the Madison cabinet, plus other individuals and environmental factors (p. 71).

Gough presents the chronology of events here in a clearer manner and with fewer repetitions than in *Fighting Sail*, but there are an awful lot of errors in fact and terminology. For

instance, the *Caledonia* is described as a schooner on p. 51 and, correctly, as a brig two pages later. The Secretary of the Navy ordered Chauncey to the lakes in 1812, not the Secretary of War (p. 62); The *General Hunter* was a British warship captured at Put-in-Bay rather than one of two vessels destroyed at York in April 1813 (p. 78).

It is veritably impossible to produce a book of any length without allowing miscues to reach print. Enlisting the help of other authorities to vet the work is essential during the revision and editing phase, but Gough does not acknowledge the assistance of any specific readers. Copy Editor Lloyd Davis is credited as having contributed to the preparation of this book so some of the responsibility for the factual and conceptual errors must rest on his desk. He should have pointed out to the author that he depicted supplies traveling *down* the St. Lawrence River to Lake Ontario not once but twice (pp. 27 and 64) and from Lake Erie down the Maumee River to Fort Meigs (p. 84). Elsewhere he has the Nottawasaga River emptying into the southern extremity of Lake Huron (p. 27). We read that Commander Robert Barclay lifted his blockade at Erie, in part, because he lacked fresh water (p. 90); so does that mean that Lake Erie contained only salt water in 1813? And Davis should have urged the writer to avoid such dubious terms as the natural defensive sandbar (p. 79), enemy resourcers (p. 111) and cabin-feverish winter (p. 117). At least we can let Gough off the hook for the washed out quality of some of the illustrations and the presentation of contemporary maps/charts on a scale that makes them all but indecipherable; someone in the Dundurn production deserves that rap.

I imagine that a portion of the reading population will not notice the errors and enjoy this book anyway. But more experienced readers will find that it is just not up to standard. As a result, the best coverage of the *Nancy* story continues to be Ernest A. Cruikshank's article entitled "An Episode of the War of 1812: The Story of the Schooner *Nancy*". It was published in 1910 in the *Ontario Historical Society Papers and Records*, (not the *Ontario History Review* as

Gough reports on p. 17) and republished in Morris Zaslow's *The Defended Border* in 1964.

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C.I. Hamilton (ed.). *Portsmouth Dockyard Papers 1852-1869: From Wood to Iron*. [enquiries.archives@hants.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries.archives@hants.gov.uk), 2006. lvi + 450 pp. Illustrations, maps, footnotes, appendices, glossary, index UK£30.00, cloth; ISBN 1-85975-759-6.

This volume is the tenth to be published as part of the *Portsmouth Record Series*, and the second to focus on the dockyard. Whereas the first such volume dealt with the impact on Portsmouth yard in the midst of war with rebel America from 1774 through 1783, this second study is far less well focused. It is neither clear why 1852 was selected as the starting date nor why 1869 ends this edited calendar of documents. If 1869 witnessed the introduction of a series of administrative reforms for the home yards, including Portsmouth, such reforms had little long-term impact. In the absence of a pool of talented managers, the largest industrial complex in Britain successfully resisted reform, so making its history "a long sustained but remorselessly repetitive story" (p. lv). John Martin, for instance, appointed Storekeeper (a senior yard manager) at Portsmouth when over sixty, was hardly a symbol of the parliamentary urge to reform. Martin had spent most of his career at the Bermuda yard when the overseas yards "were infamous for slack habits of business" (p. liv).

Although the Crimean War (1854-56) occasioned no dockyard reform, matters of dockyard defence afterwards came under some scrutiny. With British attacks on such Russian maritime fortresses as Sevastopol and the development of long-range guns in the late 1850s, new defence plans for Portsmouth and other dockyards were initiated at great cost. It seemed to have occurred neither to the navy nor the army that the defence of Portsmouth depended solely on a modern steam navy and not on outdated fortresses, however newly

gunned. Sadly, the editor passes over this without comment. This critique applied equally well, perhaps, to all the other exposed home yards, and to those overseas, such as Halifax, which, incidentally, receives no mention in the editor's compilation.

Curiously, the editor provides no discussion of the changing size and composition of the Portsmouth dockyard workforce, nor its relative size compared to other home yards. Though data survive in annual House of Commons sessional papers, the editor largely confines them to an appendix (pp. 396-97). He includes but two documents relating to the matter: workforce pay in 1862-3 (#212, p. 173) and workforce size in 1867-8 (#217, p. 175). As he never discusses the data's significance, we learn nothing about the changing relative size and importance of Portsmouth dockyard within the context of all the home yards. Nor is there discussion of the type of workforce which emerged with the growing application of technology to shipbuilding and ship repair.

The data compiled from the sessional papers show that in 1852-3 there were 10,667 artificers, and other workers on the establishment in the home yards, less than 10 per cent worked in the so-called "steam factories" at Woolwich and Portsmouth. By 1869-70, the workforce (establishment and hired workers) had grown to 11,875 men, when the steam factory workers composed almost 19 per cent of the workforce. This was hardly a revolutionary change, though steam factories had been established since 1855 as well at Sheerness and Devonport (ex-Plymouth). In the interval, Portsmouth ceased to have the largest workforce establishment of artificers and labourers, having been overtaken by Devonport. A study of the gradually changing workforce composition, had the editor attempted it, might have provided supporting evidence to indicate how tenacious the Navy as a whole, and hence the dockyards, remained in the comfortable era of sail before ship boilers became sufficiently reliable and robust enough to replace the Navy's faith in sails alone. It would be many decades after 1869 before welders replaced shipwrights as the most common skilled workers in any dockyard.

None of this was discussed by the

editor. Instead the book's Introduction (pp. xv-lv) rather disappointingly focuses on administrative changes recommended by parliamentary inquiries, and then resisted or embraced by dockyard managers.

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David Hepper. *British Warship Losses in the Ironclad Era, 1860-1919*. London: Chatham Publishing, [www.chathampublishing.com](http://www.chathampublishing.com), 2006. xvi + 168 pp., photographs, bibliography, indices. UK£25.00, cloth; ISBN-13: 9781861762733; ISBN-10: 1861762739, US\$49.95 (St. Paul, MN: MAI Publishing).

David Hepper's *British Warship Losses* is a reference rather than an analytical work, and as such it succeeds admirably. The work is arranged chronologically, with indices that enable the reader to locate an incident readily by the name of the vessel or of the commanding officer. Hepper draws predominantly on Admiralty documents, but as he notes in a short essay on sources, contemporary newspaper reports or other secondary sources were used when necessary. In general, "the larger the ship, the greater the amount of material" (p. vii). Each entry includes a citation to its sources.

Hepper's analysis is limited to his preface, in which he contrasts modern marine casualties with those of the Royal Navy "at the height of its prestige and power." His observation that without modern navigation aids and radar, "the sea can be a very hostile place during a moonless night and poor weather," is precisely on target (p. vii). In the fifty-five years before the outbreak of the First World War, the RN lost 88 ships, all but one to collision, grounding, or weather. More remarkably, fourteen of those years show no losses.

The detail this work provides and its chronological format make the absence of analysis both engaging and provoking – presented with an array of data, the reader is driven to try to discern patterns and trends. For example, the average number of yearly losses

slowly declined through the 1890s and then turned upward again. It appears that the development of the torpedo boat and destroyer in the early twentieth century increased the number of collisions in step with the number of small, fast, fragile vessels commanded by relatively junior officers. Handicapped in peacetime by the low silhouette that worked to their benefit in war, the early submarines suffered from being run down by larger vessels.

The beginning of war in 1914 added enemy action to the hazards, and the RN's yearly losses rose from one vessel in 1913 to over 240 in 1917. The need for high-speed close-quarters manoeuvring made collisions frequent, and operations in vile weather made strandings similarly common. More strikingly, the book's chronological arrangement highlights the emergence of underwater threats. In 1914, the RN lost an average of 1.5 ships per month of war to torpedoes, with the loss rate peaking at four ships per month in 1917. In 1914, mines accounted for just over one ship per month of war; in 1915 nearly four ships per month, and by 1917, eight ships per month, not counting vessels that simply failed to return. In terms of numbers, minesweepers suffered most, and Rudyard Kipling's "Epitaphs of the War" came immediately to mind:

*He from the wind-bitten north with ship and  
companions descended.*

*Searching for eggs of death spawned by  
invisible hulls.*

*Many he found and drew forth. Of a sudden  
the fishery ended*

*In flame and a clamorous breath not new to  
the eye-pecking gulls.*

A more technical pattern emerges from a review of the losses due to grounding: the crew's intuitive desire to lighten ship was counterproductive. Removing weight reduced the draft, but rarely enough to let the ship pull free, and the increased buoyancy allowed the sea to pound the vessel against the bottom or drive her farther aground. Either way, a ship that might have been salvaged became a total loss.

Hepper's data provide a rich vein for researchers to mine, but both scholars and casual



readers alike will find that this valuable reference is well worth its price.

William Roberts  
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Andrew Lambert. *Nelson: Britannia's God of War*. London: Faber & Faber, [www.faber.co.uk](http://www.faber.co.uk), 2005. xxviii + 446 pp., maps, illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. UK£8.99, paper; ISBN 0-571-21227-1.

One of Britain's premier contemporary naval historians, Andrew Lambert, has taken up the cudgels and has written a profound biography of Britain's premier naval hero – Nelson. The inevitable question arises as to why anyone would feel the need to pen yet another biography of the iconic Nelson – what new could there possibly be to say?

This is a fair question. Lambert answers it by noting that it was his students, or rather the queries from his students, combined with long periods of reflection teaching naval history had afforded him that persuaded him to embark on this biography. In particular, there are new things to say regarding Nelson's historiography, his place in the British, or specifically English, pantheon, and what he meant to the naval community. It is a well-worn truism that each generation must write its own history in light of its own priorities and tastes and "truths". Perhaps there is room for yet one more book on the naval historian's or enthusiast's bookshelf on Admiral Horatio Nelson, hero of Trafalgar and saviour of his nation at its time of greatest peril. Lambert also honestly acknowledged that the happy coincidence of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar wouldn't hurt publishing prospects.

Now that that anniversary of blessed memory is safely past, is Lambert's tome a worthy addition to one's library?

First, a quick sketch of the book's structure seems appropriate. The introductory chapter covers the historiography of Nelson and how he was remembered over the generations.

From there, a series of chapters cover the major incidents and progression of his career – familiar

enough to most of the readers of this review, but artfully drawn out in a thoroughly modern interpretation that is immediately relevant to a modern audience. The book concludes with two key exemplary chapters discussing Nelson's apotheosis and a further analysis as to his meaning over the past two centuries. A number of maps helps illustrate either the strategic situation or the tactical details of a given battle – these are adequate and serve the purpose well enough. In addition there is a selection of paintings, most of them iconic and thoroughly familiar to anyone with a smattering of exposure to naval history. Lambert's commentary on the paintings is original, insightful and pointed.

Lambert usefully addresses the question of Nelson and his meaning by noting that the man transcends the facts and has a spiritual dimension that has resonance and significance to this day. This transcendence clearly existed in his own time, making Nelson larger than life and crucial to the British war effort in a way that is quite unusual and even unique. (One hesitates to use the word "unique" given its regular abuse, but in this case, it suits.)

The reaction of the country on his death makes this quite clear, as was the well-attested reaction of the navy from the most humble to Nelson's peers in rank and authority. His funeral procession by barge up the Thames and his burial in the intended and appropriately opulent sarcophagus of Cardinal Wolsey was certainly further indication of Nelson's place in the English imagination. Indeed, as Lambert notes, Nelson had become England's god of war, a living symbol of English resistance to tyranny and the "Corsican Ogre", of physical and moral courage, of devotion to duty and of rare and comprehensive political insight. Nelson, in short, was irreplaceable and undeniably "unique" – a man transfigured by his heroic death at the moment of his greatest and most comprehensive triumph into the pantheon of the gods. A very English god, no doubt, but a god nonetheless.

Others might cavil at this description with particular reference to Nelson's behaviour after his victory over Napoleon's fleet at the Nile in 1798, and his dalliance with Emma Hamilton, the wife of the British plenipotentiary at the

Kingdom of the Two Naples. For many, his affair with Lady Hamilton remains a blot on his reputation and an inexplicable breach of conventional values. Lambert addresses this sanctimony head on. Far from a two-year AWOL situation in Naples, Nelson was engaged in critical work securing British interests in the Mediterranean. This quite naturally involved work ashore in Naples. There was nothing untoward in his behaviour or activities in this regard. Indeed, his judgement and the activities he engaged in or caused to happen while there were of significant value in furthering those British interests. Lambert also places the affair with Emma Hamilton in context. While noting that such behaviour was absolutely a breach in terms of correct behaviour it wasn't as exceptional as Victorian writers would have us believe. Many naval officers had irregular private lives, one thinks of Augustus Hervey in the mid-eighteenth century as an example, and that the disapproval registered by many biographers was misplaced. Critically, for Lambert as well as Nelson's contemporaries, duty came first, was seen to come first and absolutely did come first.

Lambert is a good guide through such thickets, bringing a modern sensibility to questions that, in some ways, are closer to how Nelson and his contemporaries looked at things than perhaps how later generations of the "great and good" perceived them. He is particularly strong in his discussion on what Nelson meant in his time, as well as how this has evolved over the past two centuries, and into our present day. Nelson remains a potent symbol to Britain as the recent bicentennial celebrations of Trafalgar demonstrated, and he remains the epitome of naval leadership and surely will, as long as navies continue to exist into the future. All will be grateful to Lambert's students over the years that pushed him to writing this excellent volume – indeed, it should have a place on your bookshelf.

The only caveat I have, or rather recommendation, is with the quality of production of the paperback edition of the book – the edition used in this review. Faber paperbacks are not that robust and I suggest that a hardcopy edition be secured for your library.

There is no question that this is a book that all interested in Nelson should get without delay. It is excellent.

Ian Yeates  
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Joshua E. London. *Victory in Tripoli: How America's War with the Barbary Pirates Established the US Navy and Built a Nation*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com), 2005. xii + 276 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. US\$24.95/CDN\$31.99/ UK£15.99, cloth; ISBN 0-471-44415-4.

Predatory attacks on shipping in the early-modern Mediterranean provide fascinating subject matter. Corsairs representing the Barbary states of North Africa developed a system of prize taking and tribute extraction from the merchant shipping of numerous Christian states. Recent scholarly attention has highlighted the role of enslaved Christians in shaping western perceptions of extra-European cultures (as in Linda Colley's recent work *Captives*). From a maritime perspective, the Mediterranean was an arena intertwined by numerous societies, their diplomatic relations, and international trade (as Peter Earle outlines in his *Pirate Wars*). Privateering by Muslim sailors challenged the legal regime in the Mediterranean. Although labelled "pirates" by Christians who feared both enslavement and Islam, corsairs did not violate any laws of the Barbary states and operated with permission from their governments.

Joshua E. London outlines the diplomatic and operational story of American involvement with Barbary. Of central interest is the war with Tripoli (1801-1805). Following its break with the British empire, America's shipping no longer received protection from the Royal Navy nor from corresponding treaties between the British and Barbary governments.

The Americans were, therefore, required to send consuls to each state and negotiate their own arrangements. The demands of monetary payments, presents and delivery of naval stores by the leaders of Tripoli proved too extravagant

for a struggling nation depending upon its foreign trade. When negotiations over the delivery of tribute failed, Tripoli declared war on the US in May 1801. What followed were several largely ineffective attempts at blockade by successive US naval squadrons. The Americans suffered the humiliating capture of the frigate *Philadelphia* in October 1803, until a daring raid led by Lieutenant Stephen Decatur blew up the ship the following February. The principal American success came via a bold overland expedition designed to forcibly replace Tripoli's head of state, Yusuf Qaramanli, with his brother Ahmad, a man more amiable toward American interests. Operating largely on his own initiative, diplomat-turned-general William Eaton assembled a mercenary force anchored by a small detachment of marines to attack Tripoli overland across the desert. Eaton captured the city of Derna in late April 1805, and defended it against counter-attack. At this juncture, the American consul-general, Tobias Lear, orchestrated a diplomatic solution to the war, thereby ruining Eaton's plans. Eaton and his group had nevertheless worried Tripoli's government and thereby contributed to a quick conclusion to hostilities.

Despite the war effort, the Americans still paid cash to free its captured citizens and the government of Yusuf Qaramanli remained in power. The whole affair caused some consternation back in the United States as the rather unceremonious peace terms fed into the debate between American politicians who favoured diplomacy versus those who favoured action. Barbary was soon forgotten as issues of trade embargo and war with Britain took precedence, effectively eliminating US trade in the region. The threat to American shipping from Muslim attack ended only with the overwhelming naval presence assembled for the 1815 campaign against Algiers. Finally, American freedom of shipping in the Mediterranean was secured as was the sovereignty and honour of the young nation.

London writes for a popular American audience and therefore "refrained from using footnotes or otherwise littering the text with source citations and references" (p. 243). A large bibliography is provided, listing secondary

sources, manuscript collections, and numerous printed primary sources. The narrative is framed with heroics and adventure and effectively employs personal memoirs and correspondence from the principal American mariners and diplomats. A vivid tale emerges of men caught between the task at hand and the sometimes incomprehensible actions of both their adversaries and the government supposedly supporting them. London argues that the best method for securing American freedom of trade lay in the development of naval power. Unfortunately it took time to marshal adequate resources and convince detractors, such as the indecisive Thomas Jefferson, that force alone would eliminate the Barbary threat. The expansion of the United States Navy resulted from efforts of those Americans who believed diplomacy with the Barbary states only served to sully American pride and honour.

Readers should be aware that, in the interest of lively storytelling, an unfortunate ethnocentrism creeps into the narrative. Most examples reflect an occasional inability to separate the author's arguments from opinions of contemporaries. Thus, the Dey of Algiers becomes a "shaggy, shabby, piratical Turk" (p. 5). Meanwhile, "[t]he tall, dark-haired, broad-shouldered, earnest twenty-five-year-old Stephen Decatur had a warrior's mentality and the charisma of a natural leader" (p. 160).

The most obvious examples of such bias relate to the interchangeable use of the terms corsair and privateer with pirate throughout the text (sometimes in the same sentence as in "pirate corsairs", p.27). Pirate is a convenient adjective to describe a despised adversary, but the maritime definition of piracy refers to the indiscriminate taking of prizes by parties bearing allegiance to no flag beyond their own. This cannot be said of the Barbary corsairs. London continues to refer to Tripolitanian warships as pirates, even after there was a declared war against the United States (pp.99-104). Overwhelmingly, Christians regarded the Muslim corsairs as pirates because their interdiction of shipping and custom of enslaving captives differed from the rules under which most westerners believed they operated. But to continually refer to Barbary corsairing as

piracy within a modern analysis does little to help analyse and explain the multi-ethnic environment of the early-modern Mediterranean world that led to its particular system of tribute and trade war.

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Kevin D. McCranie. *Admiral Lord Keith and the Naval War Against Napoleon*. Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, [www.upf.com](http://www.upf.com), 2006. xv + 256 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US\$55.00, cloth; ISBN 0-8130-2939-2. (New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology Series)

Admiral Lord Keith is hardly a household name. Although Keith was given a wide range of commands in the Royal Navy, he is not associated with any famous battles and “biography has been dominated by studies of men victorious in combat” (foreword). To some extent, Keith was lost in the shadow of more famous contemporaries like Nelson. Historian Kevin McCranie examines George Keith Elphinstone’s career and produces a very thorough analysis of a highly competent – but not particularly inspiring – workhorse of the Royal Navy during the age of sail.

It is the “Great Men” who tend to command our interest but the simple fact is that the Navy relied heavily upon men like Keith. His career was far more typical than that of icons like Nelson. Keith’s career in the Navy reveals a great deal about advancement and the challenge of controlling the seas for Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He was a captain during the American War of Independence and went on to hold four very different commands between 1795-1815. Certainly, the author is correct in emphasizing the impressive “geographic diversity and the range of his objectives” (p. xiii). Furthermore, McCranie asserts that the “diversity and longevity of his naval service meant that he played a major, if under-recognized, role in the implementation and the crafting of British naval policy” (p. xiii). By reading the book, we come

to appreciate the difficulties inherent in holding several different commands over the years and having to make critical decisions with little or no consultation with Whitehall. Keith’s job was especially difficult, given the problems associated with joint operations and how stretched Britain’s naval resources were globally during this time.

One enduring theme throughout the book is the importance of patronage. Although Keith was a member of the Scottish nobility, he lacked wealth and was tied to his patrons for advancement. Even though he could rely on the friendship of the Prince of Wales, Keith was still vulnerable to whomever was in ascendance at the Admiralty. Commands were obviously very political and having allies in high places was vital: we are told that “Keith created a tangled and constantly changing web of powerful supporters” which “did not rest on friendship or even admiration” (p. 182). Although Keith actively courted favour, there were times when his lack of influence in the Admiralty cost him, although his long career testifies to his success in ingratiating himself with the “right” people.

We are also shown just how demanding a naval career was. While he spent increasing amounts of time ashore because of ill health during later life, there is no doubt that Keith was afforded little time ashore with his family throughout his career. Instead, he was forced to negotiate his way around the rocky shoals of politics and patronage as well as global diplomacy and warfare. We find little of Nelson’s infamy or passion in Keith, but we do come to admire his dedication and lifetime of service. His greatest success is arguably amassing a considerable fortune from prize money, thus making up for the lack of means in earlier life.

By his own admission, McCranie finds Keith a “fascinating, complex and difficult character who in many respects epitomized the British navy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries” (p. xiv). For the most part, the author seems to respect his subject but does find him petulant and difficult at times. Keith’s contrary behaviour with Wellington’s army in 1812 is a case in point. While McCranie can appreciate that taking a subservient role to the

land forces galled this navy man, he also admits that Keith's poor attitude towards joint forces made a taxing exercise even more so.

Although McCranie points out that Keith could be "arrogant, abrasive" and "dictatorial" (p. 184), the reader comes to admire his sense of duty and treatment of those he felt to be his equals. One of the most interesting sections of the book is Keith's brief relationship with the defeated emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte.

While the Admiral was accustomed to carrying out orders, he allowed Napoleon to keep his sword despite orders to the contrary: this was a mark of respect from an aging adversary and exemplified Keith's understanding of honour among warriors.

We may well agree with the biographer that Keith "proved steady, capable and able to meet the challenges he faced" (p. xiv); however, this will hardly earn him a place in the pantheon of naval heroes. No doubt Keith's role has been under-appreciated, but McCranie's description of his subject won't endear Keith to us: "Even though he had some reprehensible personal traits, they were shared by many of his contemporaries" (p. 188). Like McCranie, we may not always like the personality of this "sullen old Scotchman" (p. 122) but he was doubtless an "important functionary" in Britain's naval manoeuvres.

This well-written and researched biography does illuminate several themes in the career of a high-ranking naval officer during a critical time. McCranie's analysis may well have rescued this capable commander from obscurity and he has unmistakably demonstrated that the business of "seeking for Bonny on the sea" was often far from glorious.

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Keith McLaren. *A Race for Real Sailors: The Bluenose and the International Fisherman's Cup, 1920-1938*. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, [www.douglas-mcintyre.com](http://www.douglas-mcintyre.com) 2006. 250 pp., photographs, maps, appendix, glossary, bibliography, index. CD\$29.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55365-161-8.

Not for nothing is the effigy of her victory still on our coinage after so long. *Bluenose* is as much at the heart of Canadianism as the beaver, the maple leaf and the RCMP. To the older generation of Nova Scotians, *Bluenose* was too close to their hearts for a book to ever be written about the International Fisherman's Races during their lifetime. But now that they are long gone, the tale can at last be told, chronicling all the pain and anguish that they suffered. Keith McLaren has done a fine job in recounting the *Bluenose* story without glossing over the more difficult parts – problems that at times threatened to put an end to any attempt to get the vessel competing again.

In 1920, the return to peacetime marked the resumption of an America's Cup series that had been interrupted by the war. Nowhere was interest in racing keener than in the seaport of Halifax, centre of Canada's Grand Banks fishery. The blustery weather under which local yachtsmen raced was in sharp contrast to the more effete conditions that more prestigious New York Yacht Club was prepared to tolerate – cancelling a race, for example, because of 23 knots of wind. The proprietor of the *Halifax Herald*, who had his ear close to the groundswell, decided to offer a trophy for international competition between the fishing fleets of the world, open to all comers. That the race swiftly narrowed down to only two competitors was natural, given the circumstances, and this book tells of the battles that ensued over the next two decades between the fishing fleets of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Little could anyone have visualized the problems that would develop. The Americans being closer to their markets, built their schooners to handle fresh fish and get it quickly to the market. Canadian vessels, on the other hand, were saltbankers, schooners designed to catch their fish and salt it down before moving to their markets. There was, thus, a natural inferiority in speed between the Canadian and the American craft. One up to the Americans.

The race gave designers on both sides of the border an opportunity to build faster and more competitive vessels. Bill Roue responded with the *Bluenose* and Starling Burgess with the

*Mayflower*, both very different designs than the traditional Grand Banks vessels, finer in line but also able to carry a much greater spread of canvas. There were murmurings about neither being *bona fide* fishermen, but the race committee in Halifax, anxious for a win, endorsed *Bluenose*. The stalwart fishermen of Gloucester were not about to have a business syndicate, with no connection to their industry, muscle in on their bailiwick, and banned the *Mayflower*. As a substitute, they sent *Elsie*, woefully inadequate to match the new brand of racing schooner.

Over the years, American-designed schooners copied *Bluenose's* profile in an vain effort to beat her, but without success. As befits competition between fishermen, racing rules were at a minimum, but as each series progressed more and more clauses were added, often in a very makeshift way, that is, between races, after a series had started. In 1923, the committee disqualified *Bluenose* for going the wrong side of a buoy in the middle of a series. In disgust, Captain Angus Walters took his vessel back to Lunenburg and said he would not race again.

For seven years the bitter wrangle continued between Gloucester and Halifax, but Angus could not be persuaded to agree to a formula for a continuation. The difficult relations were made no easier by a catastrophic decline in the number of sailing schooners still fishing the Banks, their markets being rapidly taken over by steam trawlers. An equally serious cause of decline was the American Prohibition Laws which turned many a sound hull to the far more lucrative Rum Row trade.

Prospects for a race revived with the fortuitous creation of the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*.

Built as a schooner rather than a fisherman, she was finally accepted as *bona fide* by Gloucestermen keen to get their hands on the trophy that had so long eluded them. Angus Walters, now one of the last Lunenburg schooner men still fishing, at first refused to race again, at least under the International Fisherman's rules. He did however, agree to race in Gloucester for the lesser prize of a "Sir Thomas Lipton Cup", one of many such distributed to yacht clubs around the continent

by the wealthy tea baron. In this substitute series, *Bluenose* was beaten for the first time in her career.

In the midst of the Depression and amid rumours of war, 1937 first saw the image of *Bluenose* on the Canadian dime. This may have been the catalyst needed to convince Angus to race the *Thebaud* in American waters. But he insisted on the proviso that half the races should be off Boston, where he was sure of a more friendly reception.

Both vessels were feeling their age. *Bluenose* had already had an engine fitted and most of her sails were far from new. *Thebaud* was perhaps in better condition, but money was far too tight for either craft to be brought up to full racing efficiency. Nevertheless, the 1938 Racing Series assumed the now well-established pattern of Angus manoeuvring for all he could get, and endless bickering with the race committee. After a long, drawn out series, he just managed to get his beloved old schooner across the line in the last race when his rigging came tumbling down about his ears.

Because there is never likely to be another book as comprehensive and well researched as this work, there is a need to be somewhat more critical than usual in the review of such a unique contribution to Canadian history. Firstly, the choice of title is unfortunate. The phrase "A Race For Real Seamen", originally created by some tabloid news hound in Halifax, would have made any Grand Banks fisherman squirm with embarrassment. The word "sailor" conjures an image of Jolly Jack coming ashore, and is normally applied to the crew of warships. Sailing people rarely use the term, and this is *a book about sailing!*

There is a further problem with the title. In an abstruse endnote (p. 87), the author juggles with the various terms that were employed to describe the prize, before selecting the word "*Cup*". But the official title inscribed on this emblem for competition in the North Atlantic should surely be the one used, "The International Fishing Vessel Championship Trophy". Why therefore not the word "*Trophy*"? This misuse of the word "*Cup*" denigrates the whole book.

The author has wisely concentrated on

the races, rather than the complete story of *Bluenose*. Therefore, his introduction and historical background are brief. This is no reason, however, for contending that “until the turn of the twentieth century fishing methods remained virtually unchanged from the days of the earliest Basque fishermen” (p. 13). There is a good reference readily available, *M.B. DesBrisay's History of the County of Lunenburg*, first published in 1898, and frequently reprinted, that gives a far more correct account of the Lunenburg fishery from its earliest days.

Information on the building of *Bluenose* is sparse. Bill Roue's previous experience was limited to the design of small racing yachts. Smith & Rhuland built by traditional methods, and the sole drawing of her lines supplied by the designer may well have been the first time that their shipwrights were required to work from the creation of a naval architect. Although, as the author points out, Roue agreed to raise the forecastle 18 inches to make her drier, he overlooks a more important change. When framing up, the shipwrights' experienced eye found the vessel still too tender forward. They therefore opened out the frames of her forebody to give greater driving power. (When asked to build *Bluenose II*, they were so aghast at the concept of a replica of their sacred vessel being used as an advertisement for a brewery, that they deliberately built her *without* incorporating this critical change. The difference accounts for the latter not being so fine a seaboat).

More discussion of her design would have been useful, but this is lightly skipped over. *Bluenose* may have been built for speed rather than fish-carrying capacity, but her power came from her 10,000 sq ft of canvas, at least a third greater than that of the more conventional saltbankers. This made her so tender, that her more solidly built counterparts could pass her with ease coming in over the Sable Bar in a blow. Reefed far down, she was quite unable to carry their spread of canvas.

The author is overly concerned with the modern style. Bill Roue's name was never spelt with an é, and C.H.J. Snider, the editor of the *Toronto Telegram*, who did so much to

publicize the races, would have turned in his grave by being repeatedly referred to as “Jerry”. Throughout the book, the author irritatingly uses the term “boat” to define schooners which any Grand Bank fisherman would have automatically referred to as “vessels”.

Fortunately, one can find nothing but praise for the illustrations, a quality we would naturally expect from the author of the enchanting *Light on the Water* (1998). McLaren has a great eye for a good photograph, and has gone to considerable extremes to locate the best archival photographs, many never published before.

Although there is excellent coverage of the American side, the work fails to bring out that fully two-thirds of the schooner captains working out of Gloucester and Boston were “White-washed Yankees”, skippers from Newfoundland and the Canadian Maritimes who had moved to New England. Ben Pine, Angus Walters' archival, was one of these. This little known aspect of the events puts a somewhat different complexion on the rivalry between the two factions.

The beauty of the International Fishermen's Trophy Races was that, for once, Canadians out-trumped the United States at their own game. In the whole history of the America's Cup, as long as the trophy stayed with the New York Yacht Club, Americans never lost a single protest. Now it was time for the Halifax Race Committee to play our southern neighbours at their own game. In this, as the author effectively brings out, they were aided and abetted by their Gloucester counterparts, who were not about to let outsiders muscle in on what was essentially a race between professional fishermen.

The author generally does a first-class job of describing the racing and the incessant infighting that went on both during and between each Series. But towards the latter part of the book, his interest tends to flag and the politics of racing assumes more importance. This is especially true of the last Series, which although sometimes bogged down by incessant wrangling was wonderfully described at the time by Gordon Sinclair of the *Toronto Star*, a story McLaren forgets to tell.

Perhaps the biggest criticism of the book is that it fails to convey the salty tang of the ocean that blows in from Chebucto Head or Cape Ann. Too many years have passed, and there are too few old timers left today who remember those heady days when *Bluenose* reigned supreme. Although the author worked two summers aboard her successor, he is not a sailing man, and therefore does not convey their language.

Nevertheless, we are lucky to have such a thoroughly researched book. Despite the serious shortcomings described above, this is a work that is likely to become a classic in its field, and as such is a worthy and long overdue addition to our national history. It is therefore recommended to all readers.

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Chris Mills. *Lighthouse Legacies: Stories of Nova Scotia's Lightkeeping Families*. Halifax, NS: Nimbus, [www.nimbus.ns.ca](http://www.nimbus.ns.ca), 2006. viii + 240 pp, map, photographs, bibliography, index. CDN\$24.95, paper; ISBN 1-55109-561-0.

It is harder to imagine a more solitary yet ultimately rewarding profession than that of a lightkeeper. Entrusted with the safety of all shipping within the range of their light, it was a very demanding and sometimes incredibly lonely job that could tax both your stamina and your resources to the limit. In some cases the light was manned by a small crew, and in others an entire family was living in seclusion at the light, whether it was on a rough stretch of coast or on an isolated island. On some islands, the position of lightkeeper was a family tradition, with the job being passed like a torch from one generation to the next. In his excellent new book, Chris Mills shines a light on the lives and careers of the men, women and families that tended the lights of Nova Scotia.

One of the chief strengths of the book is the passion that Mills has for his subject matter. He has actually worked as a lightkeeper in Nova Scotia, starting with a three-week assignment on Cross Island. Over the next nine

years, he saw service at eleven lighthouses across Canada and developed a love for the lights and their stories. Each chapter of the book deals with a different facet of the history of lightkeeping, from the building of the lights to the lives of the people who worked in them and the technical skills required to ensure safety at sea. Each chapter is richly detailed with the tales of the lights, either those directly related to Mills or those that he has carefully researched.

Mills is able to consistently find just the right tone for each chapter. While the life on a rugged section of coast could be wearing and lonely, it is surprising to find that many of the stories related in the book are full of warmth and good humour. This extends to some of the photo captions, which have a touch of whimsy about them, including one for a photo of lightkeeper Walter Mclaughlin, who spent thirty-five years as the mainstay at the lonely station at Gannet Rock. Mills uses humour effectively throughout the book, with truly delightful sub-headings such as *I'm Never Gonna Be On No Space Shuttle* and *Holy Jesus! You Saw Old Jim Burgoyne!*

Mills uses the firsthand accounts of keepers and their children throughout the book to illustrate the theme of each chapter and has some tremendous photographs at his disposal to further document his stories. The lives of the wives and families of the keepers are detailed with great affection, with tales of real sadness and heartache being related. Mills uses these tales to underscore the loneliness that was often felt on isolated outposts. It is hard not to feel for Marjorie Fairservice, a young mother trying to raise her family in almost total seclusion from the rest of the world, enduring day after day of foul weather and isolation and living a life where all she wanted to do was to climb the tower and cry. Mills finds a sense of real strength in these tales, and in particular takes pleasure in telling us the story of Evelyn Richardson, a beacon to all wives, who raised her family and found time to petition for better conditions and equipment for keepers across Canada.

Mills tells of the weather conditions faced on the coast, using more great photography to illustrate his points. Lighthouses have also been the subject of tales of the ghostly, supernatural and downright weird. Mills



introduces some of the most famous and chilling of these in a suitably creepy chapter that mentions lighthouses haunted by spectres as diverse as Sambro Island's famous "Double Alec" and Admiral Horatio Nelson, who haunts the light on Kent Island and has been a source of wonder to the many generations of the Kent family who have tended the light.

Like Evelyn Richardson, Mills has some criticism for the government and how the gradual automation of lighthouses across Canada has led to the ultimate decline of a truly noble profession. In some cases, a keeper's position which had been passed down from one generation to the next was rudely phased out by the stroke of a bureaucrat's pen. Today, groups such as the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society continue to raise awareness for the lights and their upkeep in an age when there is no allowance for day to day maintenance, something that was always a part of the keeper's life.

This is a splendid book, rich in detail and lovingly crafted by an author who really loves his subject matter. Highly recommended.

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J. Forbes Munro. *Maritime Enterprise and Empire: Sir William Mackinnon and his Business Network, 1823-1893*. London: Boydell and Brewer, [boydell@boydell.co.uk](mailto:boydell@boydell.co.uk), 2003. x + 525 pp., illustrations, maps, tables. UK£75, cloth. ISBN 0-85115-935-4.

*Maritime Enterprise and Empire* is a richly textured analysis of Sir William Mackinnon's Indian Ocean-based business network. Drawing on detailed archival research and a thorough knowledge of networking theory, as well as the current controversies in British imperial historiography, J. Forbes Munro has written an impressive study. Mackinnon's rise from obscure birth in Campbelltown on the edge of the Scottish Highlands to become one of Britain's great ship owners is the story of Victorian legend. His British India Steam Navigation Company, BI to contemporaries,

became, after his death, the foundation of the current Inchcape Group.

This volume is divided into eighteen chapters in three unequal parts plus a separate introduction. In the twelve-page introduction, Munro outlines his main themes. At the core of Mackinnon's business network were five trading houses, which he or his family controlled. In turn, these inner-core partnerships managed the affiliated firms through interlocking shareholdings, directorships, and agency contracts. There was a further element to this network, an outer layer of allied or associated businesses. It was Mackinnon's successful handling of this third component that demonstrated his entrepreneurial skills and made him a businessman of the first rank.

Part One, "Enterprising Scots", covers the time period 1823-1870. Mackinnon's early years were not particularly auspicious. It was not until he left for India in 1846 to join family acquaintance Robert Mackenzie that Mackinnon found his true calling. The partnership, Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co, became the first of the young Scot's profitable enterprises. He quickly realized that there was more profit in the Indian import-export business than there was in trading in the interior. By the early 1850s, Mackinnon was at the centre of three family-owned British-Indian trading houses based in Glasgow (Wm. Mackinnon & Co), Liverpool (Hall Mackinnon & Co) and Calcutta (Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co). Between them they owned a small number of sailing ships that helped connect their trading entities. This network was briefly extended to Australia. Business was profitable, particularly the trade to Calcutta, but by the end of the decade the partnerships were still relatively modest concerns. Among the investments made by partners in the Mackinnon firms was the Calcutta and Burmah Steam Navigation Company formed in 1856. Initially a single ship company operating in the coasting trade on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal, it was transformed into the British India Steam Navigation Company after William Mackinnon was able to win the Indian government's mail subsidy in 1862. The contract was awarded to the small firm with the energetic managing

partner because of Mackinnon's developing friendship with Sir Henry Bartle Frere, a member of the Governor-General's Supreme Council, and from April 1862 Governor of Bombay. Frere was not only an up and coming Anglo-Indian bureaucrat, he was a true believer in the privatization of government services. By 1864, BI had the mail contract from Calcutta to Bombay and Mackinnon's fortune was made. In the same year, he took control of the *Nederlandsch Indische Stoomvaart Maatschappij* (Netherlands India Steam Navigation Company, NISM). The network now controlled coastal shipping in India and the Indonesian archipelago. Taking advantage of his networking skills and his personal friendship with Frere, Mackinnon extended BI's routes to the Persian Gulf.

Part Two, "Suez and After", deals with Mackinnon's maturing business network. Once more Mackinnon was able to use his contacts to extend the shipping business to Zanzibar. He was fully aware of the possibilities the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 opened up for the United Kingdom-India trade. Not wanting to antagonize the powerful P & O lobby with a direct London-India service, however, BI's first line through the canal ran from London to the Persian Gulf via Aden and Karachi. Mackinnon only opened a London-Calcutta service in 1874. It was during this period that he cemented a relationship with the Dumbarton shipbuilder, Peter Denny. Denny became BI's favourite builder, producing 30 ships of 65,000 tons for Mackinnon's firm between 1870 and 1872. This was more than two-thirds of the tonnage added by BI during the decade. Denny also became a shareholder in the new syndicate, British India Association, that Mackinnon established to operate the London-Calcutta service. While the new trans-Suez service was profitable, the same cannot be said for the coasting run to Zanzibar. Indeed, the east coast of Africa provided little freight and BI's continued interest can only be explained by Mackinnon's fascination with the "dark continent".

As Mackinnon grew older, he found it more difficult to profitably adapt to changing

times. He survived the collapse of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878, but only after a long court case. During the 1880s, BI's services remained profitable but the NISM came under sustained attack from a resurgent Dutch nationalism. This chauvinism was no more than the Dutch version of the exaggerated European nationalism that created the race for Africa. It swept away the NISM's monopoly and then its very existence in 1890. But Mackinnon's real failure took place not in the Indonesian archipelago but in Africa. Out of his depth, he fell under the spell of the great unexplored continent and more particularly one of its greatest exploiters, Leopold II of Belgium. Mackinnon was taken in by Leopold's visionary schemes and it is perhaps fortunate that the Scotsman did not live long enough to learn the truth about the Congo Free State. Mackinnon, however, did invest heavily in the Imperial British East Africa Company (BEA). From the start, this colonial trading company was a failure as a business enterprise. The BEA suffered from conflicting commercial and political goals. But Mackinnon's major problems stemmed from the fact that the territory that became Kenya not only had a weakly developed market economy but its trade with the outside world was meagre. When Mackinnon died in 1893, his African fiasco was forgiven by his contemporaries as a noble failure because they believed he had put the Empire ahead of personal gain.

Today, Sir William Mackinnon is not remembered for his African adventures but rather, as the man who founded the British India Steam Navigation Company. His career can easily be held up as the epitome of business networking. The author has done full justice to this canny Scot. *Maritime Enterprise and Empire* is not only essential reading for scholars interested nineteenth century maritime history, but it is also indispensable for students of business history.

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Robert C. Parsons. *Ocean of Storms, Sea of Disaster: North Atlantic Shipwrecks of the Strange and Curious*. Lawrencetown Beach, N.S.; Pottersfield Press, [www.pottersfieldpress.com](http://www.pottersfieldpress.com), 2005. 255 pp., illustrations, sources. CDN\$19.95, paper; ISBN 1-895900-74-3.

Of the thousands of shipwrecks, sinkings and other North Atlantic marine disasters, only the small proportion involving either great loss of life or human survival in spite of insurmountable odds appear to have piqued the interest of the average reader.

While Robert Parsons has included a number of stories familiar to most of us with an interest in North Atlantic and East Coast shipping in this collection of essays, he has also, through a diligent search of Atlantic Provinces newspapers and other sources, rediscovered many long-forgotten tales of shipwrecks and other unexpected occurrences.

Among the 60-or-so essays which comprise the main content, the author has revisited such well-recorded incidents as the *Arctic* disaster, the sinking of the *Atlantic*, the wreck of the *Humboldt* and the *LaBourgoune-Cromartyshire* collision. The student of nautical history will, however, find the subject matter of many of the other essays to be quite fascinating.

This group includes the story of Ida C. Howard, the daughter of Captain Howard, master of the brig *George S. Berry*, who helped foil a mutiny; the loss of *Lightship No. 19*; and the strange tale of George Lohnes, who spent ten days alone adrift on a newly-built 70-foot wooden harbour tug. While there appears to be something for everyone in this interesting collection of nautical tales, it does have a number of major problems.

For example, a knowledgeable editor might have been expected to note and correct the description of the S.S. *Commonwealth* as “a steam-powered tern schooner” and also the statement that “the Italian barque *Bozzo* was steaming from London to Baltimore.” Something might also have been done about the recurring misuse of nautical terms, such as masts being supported by lanyards, and average-sized vessels being constantly referred to as “great

ships”.

Geography appears to be another of this writer's problems, and in his account of the wreck of *Lightship No. 19* we find him locating the community of Liscomb about 100 miles south of Halifax, instead of that same distance to the northeast. This results in his final paragraph making absolutely no sense.

Many of the other errors and omissions could have been easily avoided had the author undertaken a little bit of research, instead of relying solely on old newspaper reports. In the case of the *Humboldt* essay, this would have enabled him to determine that his so-called “Diamond liner *Cabot*” was not, in fact, a large passenger vessel, but a little, 465-ton Black Diamond Line collier owned by the Dominion Coal Company.

Incomplete essays which leave too many questions unanswered are another problem. In one instance, we have the story of the wreck of the *William and Mary* and the abandonment of the vessel and most of its passengers by Captain Stinson and most of his crew. On arriving in New York, the captain claimed that the vessel, with between 170 and 185 passengers still on board, had sunk within minutes of its abandonment. This proved to be a pack of lies, especially when the passengers, who had been rescued the following day, arrived in New Orleans. This is a great story, but it has no ending, as Parsons has neglected to recount the fate of Captain Stinson and his cowardly crew.

The assumption that the reader will know what the author is talking about also raises questions, as in the story of the rescue of four survivors from the *Columbian*, after 14 days in an open boat, by the United States Revenue Cutter *Seneca*, which happened to be on ice patrol in the area. Luckily, in this instance, the question as to what was the Ice Patrol and what was a United States Revenue Cutter doing in the North Atlantic were answered with one telephone call to a friend knowledgeable in such fields. It turned out that a few years after the *Titanic* disaster, the United States had organized a North Atlantic Ice Patrol, based at Halifax, to which Department of Revenue cutters were assigned prior to the formation of the Coast

Guard. This essay is particularly disjointed, and it is unfortunate, since knowing that these four survivors – referred to as “castaways” by the author – owed their lives to the *Titanic* disaster would have tied things up very nicely.

Irrelevant illustrations present a further problem. The author has used, in addition to contemporary newspaper clippings, prints from such publications as *The Illustrated London News* and *Harper's Weekly*. While one cannot deny that these are wonderful examples of their genre, only 3 of 29 illustrations bear any relation to the essay they accompany. Knowing that the drawings were not based on actual experience of the events, one questions the decision to use them at all.

In conclusion, Mr Parsons' collection of essays leaves much to be desired. Had a little more care been taken with editing, checking out supporting material and research, and the inclusion of an index, this book could have provided readers with a most enjoyable read and the marine historian with a useful reference.

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Dudley Pope. *Flag 4: The Battle of Coastal Forces in the Mediterranean, 1939-1945*. London: Chatham Publishing, [www.chathampublishing.com](http://www.chathampublishing.com) reprint 2006. xv + 300 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, index. UK£9.99, paper; ISBN 1-86176-067-1.

Flag 4 is the naval signal for “attack with torpedoes”, and this book is an account of the role of the motor torpedo boats of British Coastal Forces in the Mediterranean during the Second World War. It is based on official documents and interviews with the officers who commanded flotillas and the men who participated in this perilous campaign, obtained in the early 1950s before, as the author says, their memories faded. It is a stylishly written book, as befits the author of the Lord Ramage series of eighteen sea novels and some ten books of naval history.

Dudley Pope did not serve in this theatre of war but was a cadet in the Merchant Navy until wounded in the Battle of the Atlantic. He then spent seventeen years in Fleet Street as a naval correspondent, while writing several books in his spare time, including *Flag 4* published originally in 1954. He became a full-time writer in 1959 and, on publication of his first Ramage novel in 1965, he and his wife set sail for the West Indies where they cruised and lived until his death in 1997.

The author sees the European theatre of the Second World War falling conveniently into four parts: Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain; victory in the Atlantic and D-Day; the Battle of the Mediterranean; and the final crushing blow of the Second Front. He argues that it was British naval success in the Mediterranean that finally stopped the Axis advance, made a German victory impossible, and gave the Allies time to regain their strength and plan for the final assault on Europe. Germany knew the strategic importance of the Mediterranean to Britain and had built up a fleet of motor torpedo boats before the war, circumventing naval treaty obligations by mass-producing them as coastguard cutters. They even withdrew planes from the Eastern front to combat the smallest fighting ships of the Royal Navy. These motor torpedo and gunboats were able to fight in the shallowest waters, penetrate minefields and hide in the inlets of enemy-held islands.

Pope believes that the war at home has been fully documented in existing literature and in the introduction he asks rhetorically why the almost incredible story of Coastal Forces in the Mediterranean was so scantily reported in communiqués and newspapers. The book is not a diary account of the work of individual boats, as set out in some war memoirs, but is a broad and detailed record of the war at sea in the Mediterranean. The first half concentrates on the prominence of British MTBs in clandestine operations in which they landed spies, operated Special Boat Squadrons in support of British and American troops in North Africa, made night assaults on enemy coastal convoys off

Yugoslavia and Southern Italy, and then hid before daylight brought the inevitable swarms of *Luftwaffe* to attack them. Encouraged by signals from Churchill that they were putting up “an extremely sporting fight”, the high-powered British MTBs and American PT-boats were the only surface craft able to continually seek out and attack the enemy. The turning point came in 1943, when the offensive at sea passed into the hands of the Allies, and the second half of the book emphasizes the frustrating politics and strategies of the combatants working with groups of partisans in the Adriatic and Balkans.

Since many of Pope’s potential interviewees had already returned to their home countries, their personal contributions do not contain as much oral history as he probably would have liked, but he has achieved his aim of preserving their role in the conflict. He has skilfully organized his primary sources of naval contact reports, cabinet memoranda and captured German documents translated specifically for this account with the whole-hearted cooperation of the Admiralty. Their censors also dealt lightly with his manuscript, which had to be cut by more than a third due to space limitations in an already-lengthy book for its type.

The narrative is lively and the author has been careful not to detail incidents which, while probably interesting in themselves, are similar to ones previously told. He has made little attempt to give physical descriptions of places, but to be fair, probably because of space limits, and he recommends readers consult their own maps. The index is limited to names of ships and personnel rather than battles and places, and operations are classified by their codename and flotillas identified by their number, but there are four appendices listing torpedoes fired and enemy ships sunk.

Unlike some other war histories, the author’s attention to detail is remarkable and woven into the narrative are eyewitness accounts retold with all the vivid style that typifies his novels. By incorporating much new evidence, and despite lacking a bibliography, the book will appeal to both naval historians and general readers of military history. Although occasionally let down by a limited knowledge of the wider historical context, Dudley Pope has

gone some way to explaining why the Allies – and the Axis – fought so hard for a large expanse of sand and water.

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Sheli O. Smith. *The Low-Tech Archaeological Survey Manual*. Columbus, OH: The PAST Foundation, [www.pastfoundation.org](http://www.pastfoundation.org), 2006. vi + 62 pp., photographs, illustrations. US\$15.93, paper (coil bound) or US\$10, downloadable pdf; ISBN 978-1-4243-1031-9.

Sheli Smith’s purpose in writing this guide is to lay out a basic survey manual primarily for use on underwater archaeological sites, including both the search for, and the recording of, such sites. The author’s intent is to focus on basic, pragmatic, “low-tech” site-search and recording methodologies that can be used by those with limited resources.

The author has completed this text in nine well-organized chapters. There are three evident strengths throughout the book which will endear the author to those who have to actually do, or teach others how to do, underwater archaeological surveys.

The first thing that stands out about this manual is that it is rife with good, common sense suggestions based on direct practice. There is nothing like practical experience to deflate an idea that sounds like it will work beautifully when discussed on the surface, but then quickly unravels when taken underwater. Ms Smith draws directly upon her own experience and that of others working in the field. Most important in the author’s approach is the idea of keeping things simple – whether it is in laying an underwater baseline or taking a measurement. Her section on tools, for example, extols the virtues of the five-gallon bucket and the many uses it can be put to. On underwater sites, there is nothing like a simple device that is cheap, multi-purpose, and has very few, if any, moving parts to corrode.

The final chapter of the text is entitled “Just Lists”, where the various techniques she discusses are broken down into lists of materials

that must be taken to the field in order to complete these tasks. Again, useful practical advice and a reminder that valuable field time can be lost without such planning.

The second important strength is cost consciousness. This inexpensive book emphasizes a frugal approach that is so often necessary, as the costs of underwater surveys are usually exponentially higher than for land-based surveys. There are innumerable examples of using cheap, commonly available materials that will do the job well without resorting to commercial fabrication. A “junkyard” and “Home Depot” approach is most often essential to the success of a survey.

Thirdly, there are excellent illustrations throughout the text. Grasping a concept of how something will work is often more difficult for underwater applications. Illustrations, such as the “Bob-O-Bar”, are of great help. Many variations of this underwater draughting machine are found in the field, and by providing a quick, clear snapshot of what is being described, Smith allows her readers to discuss and devise what is best for their particular site application. The survey patterns, datum lines and measuring techniques are also well illustrated.

Under the subject of survey systems, the book illustrates three basic survey techniques that can be used in both clear and limited-visibility situations. Visibility permitting, one of the most successful and common methods for locating underwater sites is the towed search, where a diver or divers are towed behind a boat on a surface-oriented fixed course. Because of safety considerations, procedural details and boat availability, this technique may have been considered too “high tech” for this particular publication.

Within the photography documentation chapter there could be more information on underwater photography and underwater video recording. The fastest way to obtain the most site information, visibility permitting, is through the use of underwater photomosaics and video mosaics with scale. The author states that the strengths of underwater video are in recording action, wide expanses of features and site changes. These are excellent points. Capturing

the site-recording methodologies and work on the site is important, as it can provide understanding of the work and ultimately support for such work. Smith also states, “Moreover that video can be used later for detailed analysis and mapping.” This could be elaborated on somewhat.

For a variety of reasons, underwater archaeological surveys most often do not include the recovery of artefacts. Given this fact, the section on surface photo recording of artefacts might be better spent elaborating on the underwater photo or video recording of artefacts, more particularly, the inclusion of an example of a cheap two- or three-dimensional scale.

The author stresses consistency in recording, stating, among other points, “I am a firm believer in developing the site map in the field as you go. That way if there are miscalculations, wandering baselines or transposed numbers they can be caught and remedied.” This is absolutely excellent advice that cannot be overemphasized. The same point could also be made for the overall archaeological record which is the field notes. The author states that everyone should be keeping a field notebook and transcribing underwater data to it. Again excellent advice. This could be taken a step further by following the same advice as used in the site map, which is to develop the overall archaeological records as the project proceeds.

Too often, individual field notes are considered the property of the writer when it should be emphasized that they are a part of the project record. These records should then “belong” to the survey-sponsoring organization and be archived and available for future work or reference. This process includes cataloguing and filing in a central location all underwater recording sheets and field notes, which should be kept in the same standardized format by all parties.

Overall, this text is an invaluable tool for underwater archaeology site surveys. Further, if it doesn’t offer the exact tool or methodology for completing a survey task, it gives something that can be modified or altered to better suit the needs of the individual task or project. It puts together in a simplified format, most, if not all, of the approaches to tasks that

are undertaken on underwater sites. Those involved in underwater archaeological instruction will find it of particular benefit. It is highly recommended.

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Dana Story, *Frame Up!: A Story of Essex, its Shipyards and its People*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, [www.historypress.net](http://www.historypress.net), 2004. 122 pp., photographs. US\$19.99. paper; ISBN 1-59629-019-6.

Maritime historians, not unlike their colleagues in other areas of historical inquiry, often find themselves at a loss looking for source material that sheds nuanced perspective on the everyday workings of artifact production. This can be frustrating for those studying shipyards, particularly given the foundational role these enterprises played in supporting maritime activity that was at the heart of a locale or region's identity. Given the advances made in researching the shipbuilding industry – momentum generated by labour history, the history of technology, tall ship restoration, and the wooden boat movement – the re-issuing of Dana Story's 1963 *Frame Up!: A Story of Essex, its Shipyards, and its People* could not be more timely. Story, who passed away in 2005 at the age of 85, was among the last of Essex, Massachusetts' legendary line of shipbuilders, a group that launched approximately 3,300 vessels from the late-eighteenth through mid-twentieth century.

*Frame Up!* mixes personal memoir with the informal narrative of a local chronicler who saw the community's shipbuilding history as not only a bulwark of its identity, but as a means to insure awareness of maritime/environmental connections that continue to consume Essex and the Massachusetts North Shore today. Not surprising, Story's shipyard is now the Essex Shipbuilding Museum with *Frame Up!* taking form as living history, along with Story's other written works: *Growing Up in a Shipyard*; *The Building of a Wooden Ship*; and *The*

*Shipbuilders of Essex*.

*Frame Up!* epitomizes Story's accessible style; indeed, the book reads as though you are sitting alongside the author at the shipyard as he tells stories passed down through past generations, as well as events he experienced himself. Having been raised around, and worked in, his family's shipyard – to say nothing of his experiences around Essex's other shipyards and supporting industries – Story provides elaborate details of the personalities and skills that animated the everyday rounds of this occupation. Specifically, Story takes us from half-hull model, to the lofting floor, to framing, planking, caulking, and ship joinery, and ultimately to the ship's launching. Rarely is the execution of these tasks so ably described in technical terms and so humanly rendered in terms of the social, economic, and emotional aspirations each worker and community member brought to these tasks.

Story's keen observations provide a fuller view of how the town of Essex and its surrounding environment (both natural and humanly-wrought) framed the context of the community's shipbuilding. Obviously, shipbuilders were not immune from local and national political affairs, the town's cultural activities, and other occupations that were quintessential parts of coastal Massachusetts life. Having spent a lifetime in the community, Story is able to shed ethnographic insight on the cultural temperament that drove Essex and linked its people and institutions. Story's sympathetic treatment of the community's Yankee culture is understandable, given his status as a native-born son, and he gives less attention to the influx of Irish, Portuguese, and Italians who were increasingly affected by Essex's shipbuilding industry during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Going beyond contextualizing industries that directly supported shipbuilding, *Frame Up!* also describes other signature occupations such as salt hay farming, the harvesting and exporting of beach sand and ice, and, of course, the community's legendary reputation as a clamming centre. Given the time period in which he came of age, Story astutely chronicles Essex's transformation from a

shipbuilding community to a popular tourist resort. Although not an environmental history, *Frame Up!* leaves readers with an unmistakable understanding of how the Essex River has structured life in the community for centuries.

In *Frame Up!*'s concluding chapters, Story provides important details on the carnivalesque atmosphere surrounding ship launchings as well as an intimate portrait of his father, Arthur D. Story, during his tenure as owner of one of Essex's most renowned yards. Story's careful description of the various methods used to launch a vessel, as well as the impact of weather and river conditions on this process, provides important information often obscured or missing in the historical record. Contending that media coverage added to the fanfare surrounding ship launchings, *Frame Up!* leaves little doubt that the celebrations accompanying these events embodied the full range of sentiment associated with vessel construction.

Ship launchings provide an apt transition to Story's focused account of his father's life. The elder Story presided over the final glory days of Essex shipbuilding – a career consisting of boats built for the most prosperous years of Gloucester's fishing industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to those built for the more celebratory and boosteristic aims of competing for the International Fishermen's Trophy. The younger Story's account of his father's life shows the parallelism between the elder's political and social life and the manner in which he managed his shipyard. *Frame Up* documents A.D. Story's contractual relations with clients, his cooperation with other Essex shipbuilders, and his desire to build boats on speculation simply to keep his workers employed.

While *Frame Up!* is not an academic treatment of Essex shipbuilding, it is a rare account of its production and social life from the standpoint of an insider. Dana Story makes the frequently arcane details of ship construction accessible to a wide audience. Few writers could so clearly portray the views and habits held by shipyard workers and community members alike. In ably documenting elements of Essex's shipbuilding industry, Story has also

provided valuable comparative material for those researching similar topics in the United States and Canada.

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John Lester Sutherland. *Steamboats of Gloucester and the North Shore*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, [www.historypress.net](http://www.historypress.net), 2004. 160 pp., photographs, appendices. US\$19.99, paper; ISBN 1-59629-000-5.

Gloucester lies at the head of a sheltered inlet on Cape Ann, on the north shore of Massachusetts Bay. Much of the city's fame is derived from the tall, elegant Banks schooners which once called the port home and whose story, romanticized in Kipling's 1897 *Captains Courageous* and the 1937 motion picture of the same name, has been well recorded in numerous publications. Until now, however, little has been written about the coastal passenger-cargo steamers which connected Gloucester with Boston, the fishery-related industries, or the indispensable harbour tugs, which moved the schooners from berth to berth and towed them out to sea to begin their long voyages to the fishing banks.

In *Steamboats of Gloucester and the North Shore*, John Sutherland combines historical essays, photographs and personal reminiscences in a commendable effort to correct this omission.

In his first essay, the author provides some background on Gloucester industries, with notes on the day boats, gill-netters and waterfront industries. In the next three chapters, he records the history of the Boston & Gloucester Steamship Co., and the early days of steam passenger and freight service between Boston and the North Shore.

The first steamer on the Boston-Gloucester run was the *Yacht*, c.1841, which maintained a somewhat irregular service until 1847, when the Gloucester branch railroad was opened. She was followed in 1849 by the *Jacob Bell*, and in 1859 the Boston & Gloucester Steamship Company inaugurated year-round



service with the steamer *Mystic*. At this point Sutherland's account of the company history varies to some extent with that of Fred Irving Dayton in his classic *Steamboat Days* (New York, 1939). Dayton records that the *Mystic* was taken over by the US Government in 1863 and lists a number of successors, none of which lasted for any length of time. It is also recorded by Dayton that in 1875 the company was reorganized and two small steamers, the *J.W. Todd* and *Ella Knight*, were placed on the run until 1876, when the *George A. Chaffee* was purchased.

From this point on, apart from there being no mention in the text of the *City of Haverhill*, which called at Gloucester between 1902 and 1903, and the omission of any photographs of the *Mascotte*, which the company purchased in 1923 and ran until September 1925, the author has compiled an accurate and profusely illustrated history of the Boston & Gloucester Steamship Company until its dissolution in December 1926.

His focus on the company's second vessel, the 561-ton *City of Gloucester*, added to the roster in 1884, and 718-ton *Cape Ann*, built in 1895 to replace the aging *George A. Chaffee*, is understandable, as his father, William J. Sutherland, began his career with the company as an oiler in 1910 and subsequently was employed as acting-second engineer on both the *Cape Ann* and *City of Gloucester*. He obtained his marine engineer's ticket in 1920 and, just prior to the company's demise, joined the Mariners Towboat Company, in January 1924.

William Sutherland's tales of life in Gloucester, as recorded by his son, plus the author's own entertaining reminiscences of adventures and misadventures during a lifetime spent around the waterfront, add a very human touch to what, apart from its concentration on marine-related industries, would otherwise be just another local history.

This is particularly true of the latter portion of the book, comprising a detailed history of towing in Gloucester harbour, and a series of brief essays on various aspects of that work, entitled "Delivering Water", "Working the Lines" and "Salt, Coal and Lumber". These are followed by a number of brief notes ranging in

subject matter from "Those Aging Schooners" to "Working the Essex River" and "Accidents and Mishaps".

Apart from the irrelevant inclusion of an account of the 1989 loss of the side-wheeler *Portland*, Sutherland's *Steamboats of Gloucester and the North Shore* provides us with a rare insight into many aspects of life and commerce in a major fishing port.

There are a few problems with the individual components of this book. Their manner of presentation and the almost random order in which they have been published leaves much to be desired. This suggests a sad lack of editorial influence and inevitably creates confusion in the mind of the reader. It should also be noted that, while the author's collection of essays and his five appendices, consisting of ship lists, crew lists and employee lists, will be of considerable interest to those familiar with the area, without a general index and a map of Gloucester Harbour, Sutherland's commendable effort is unlikely to appeal to a wider readership.

This is really too bad, as these are fascinating stories, well told and superbly illustrated and, when sorted out and read in the proper sequence, they are both informative and highly entertaining.

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M. Brook Taylor. *A Camera on the Banks: Frederick William Wallace and the Fishermen of Nova Scotia*. Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, [www.goose.lane.cam](http://www.goose.lane.cam), 2006. 152 pp., photographs, map, sources, bibliography, index. CDN \$24.95, US \$19.95, paper; ISBN 0-86492-441-0.

Born into a Scottish seafaring family in 1886, Frederick William Wallace moved to Quebec with his parents in 1904 and subsequently achieved fame as a journalist and writer of fiction and history. He also dabbled in movies and composed a well-known sea shanty, and if he did not coin the phrase "wooden ships and iron men," he certainly popularized it. He was no dilettante either, for he made seven working

voyages aboard bank fishery schooners between 1911 and 1916. Wallace and the photographs that he took during those voyages are the main subjects of M. Brook Taylor's book.

Taylor begins by plunging the reader into the 1911 Digby fishermen's regatta, which Wallace had come from Montreal to cover for *Canadian Century* magazine. The regatta would serve as Wallace's entrée into the world of Digby bank fishermen, enabling him to fulfill the dreams of nautical adventure that his globetrotting father had inspired in him since childhood. By 1916, Wallace had amassed enough personal experience to draw upon for the rest of his days, proving Jack Kerouac's dictum that every life contains the seeds of myth.

As Taylor states in the acknowledgements, this book places "images rather than words at the centre of the tale." Most of the photographs are from the collection of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax and are likely to be familiar to readers and museum-goers interested in the Atlantic Canadian fisheries. To his credit, Taylor goes one better by rescuing the men in the photographs from the oblivion to which working people are usually consigned. He gives us their names and family backgrounds, while Wallace's photographs convey their warmth, courage and hard-earned wisdom. As fishermen, it was perhaps inevitable that some of Wallace's subjects would later die accidentally at sea, although ironically few are likely to have been as reckless as Wallace, who would go to any lengths to get a photograph (and, in the process, to gain acceptance).

Although there is much to like here, problem areas abound. Taylor offers a curious interpretation of the *modus vivendi* to the 1888 Chamberlain-Bayard Treaty, which established a license system for American fishing crews to obtain commercial privileges in Canadian territorial waters. By describing the system as something that Great Britain "granted" to the United States, Taylor forgets (or dismisses) the international joint high commission that negotiated the agreement in Washington. He would also have us believe that the migration of fishery labour from Nova Scotia to New England was a product of late-nineteenth-century

conditions, whereas Nova Scotia's "whitewashed Yankees" had long followed the path blazed by Newfoundland fishermen in the mid-seventeenth century. Labour mobility has been and remains a hallmark of the northwest Atlantic fisheries.

On the whole, Taylor skilfully handles the intricacies of fishing and sailing terminology (although a fisherman "pays" out his line, he does not "play" it out). Still, in a book rife with technical details and in which the word "camera" figures prominently in the title, it is odd that, other than passing mention of a box camera, we learn nothing about Wallace's camera or how his work compares with photo-documentaries of a similar nature. Taylor's admission that some of the images were cropped or detailed for inclusion in the book makes it impossible to assess Wallace even on such basic grounds as composition.

The publisher's hand is palpable, with the lack of endnotes, insertion of sidebars and occasional use of the historical present suggesting that a popular readership was intended. The text is scholarly, however, and at times, highly specialized, begging the question of why there are no endnotes, only a note on sources that is followed, unnecessarily, by a selected bibliography. Surprisingly, Harold Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy* (Toronto, 1940) is not cited.

Every book must stake its claims to significance, and it is here that Taylor strains credibility. His assertion that Wallace had photographed "the last age of unassisted sail" is so muddy as to be meaningless, as is his declaration that there is "no comparable contemporary collection" of photographs. The adoption of auxiliary engines in the northwest Atlantic fisheries was a protracted affair that followed a different schedule depending on the nationalities involved. As Taylor notes, the process was already underway in Nova Scotia during the period covered by this book, but he neglects to add that it had yet to run its course as late as 1939. Moreover, Alvaro Garrido has shown that pure sailing vessels persisted in the Portuguese White Fleet until 1958, forty-two years after Wallace's final fishing voyage. The

White Fleet has its chroniclers, including Alan Villiers, *The Quest of the Schooner Argus: A Voyage to the Banks and Greenland* (New York, 1951), and Patricia Doel, *Port o' Call: Memories of the Portuguese White Fleet in St. John's, Newfoundland* (St. John's, 1992). The Maritime Museum of Ilhavo holds an extensive collection of photographs of the White Fleet; Villiers' photographs (and film footage) can be found at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

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Michael Whitby, Richard Gimblett, and Peter Haydon. *The Admirals: Canada's Senior Naval Leadership in the Twentieth Century*. Toronto, ON; Dundurn Press, [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com), 2006. 414 pp., photographs, tables, notes, bibliography, index. CDN\$25.99, paper; ISBN 10: 1-55002-580-5.

This volume is a compendium of the papers presented at the Sixth Maritime Command Historical Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia in September 2002. The goal of the conference was to fill a gaping lacuna in the historiography of the RCN, namely, the biographies of the senior leadership. The book opens with an introduction by Michael Whitby, head of the ongoing official history of the navy project, and is followed by short essays or papers written by nine separate authors on the eleven Chiefs of Naval Staff (CNS) who served from 1910 to 1968. The conclusion of the unification crisis or disaster, depending on taste, was the dividing line selected since that was when the post of CNS disappeared and was replaced with the Commander, Maritime Command. The book concludes with a series of short vignettes prepared by many of those who served in that latter role. This is a nice touch, as the holders of the appointment had to deal with crises and challenges that were as difficult in their way as any faced by their predecessors.

There is not the space in a short review to examine each paper and the attempt will not be made. I will note, however, the short

biographies of the first two holders of the office of CNS who were, in my estimation, the critical players in the development of the RCN over the sixty-year period covered by the book. These two men, Rear-Admiral Charles Kingsmill and Commodore Walter Hose, established the RCN and dealt with enduring themes that resonate to this day.

Admiral Sir Charles Kingsmill, the first Director of the Naval Service, was critical to the development of the navy, as noted by author Richard Gimblett, because he set the tone of much of what was to follow. Kingsmill, a member of the Ontario Liberal aristocracy, had a full, if not particularly spectacular, career in the Royal Navy. He finished up a captain, but was promoted Rear-Admiral on taking up the appointment in Canada as the first DNS. Despite a lifetime of living in England, or in the British milieu of the RN on numerous overseas stations, Kingsmill had a realistic appreciation of what was required in the establishment of the RCN and was a robust defender of Canadian national interests. He never compromised those interests or principles in favour of British interests, and consequently, firmly established the principle of creating a navy that was Canada's and not a detached RN squadron. Kingsmill was also realistic in his grasp of what was affordable and hence "doable". He well knew that Jellicoe's analysis of the kind of navy Canada "needed" after the First World War was not remotely probable in terms of securing political or financial support. He did, however, insist on a bare minimum. When this was rejected in early 1920, Kingsmill retired in frustration. Nevertheless, Kingsmill had established the RCN as a viable instrument of national policy, had fought for Canada's interests against a paternalistic Royal Navy, and had set the professional tone crucial for its future.

The second critical personality was Commodore Walter Hose, the DNS who replaced Kingsmill, and served for 13 lean years of biblical proportions. Hose is important given his role in ensuring the survival of the RCN – the 1920s were bleak as far as the navy was concerned, and it came within an ace of suffering the same fate as the nascent RCAF,

which was absorbed by the militia at this time. Given the wholly inadequate funding available for the RCN during this period, Hose took the heroic decision, as recounted in William Glover's paper, to establish the reserve division system across Canada at the expense of a sea-going fleet. This was intended to be a temporary expedient, as indeed it was, but ironically, it saved the RCN from oblivion.

Like Kingsmill, Hose had his start in the RN – he retired in his late thirties as a commander, in order to seek the advantages of promotion in the infant RCN. In the RN, Hose had a modest career and was not obviously destined for anything particularly spectacular in terms of achievement. He was competent, as were virtually all officers in the RN as simple survival demanded it, and was well regarded by superiors. He might best be described as a plodder who got the job done, but not much more. As did Kingsmill, Hose had a solid grasp of what the RCN required in order to survive. He perceived the need to secure public support for the navy, hence the stroke of near genius with the establishment of coast-to-coast reserve divisions, that it had to be affordable, and that it had to serve national interests – not imperial ones. The end of his tenure in 1933 saw the RCN in much better shape than it had been in 1920, let alone the locust years of the mid-1920s. Modern ships were operating out of Halifax and Esquimalt, new ones were on order and en route. And, the reserve divisions rendered excellent service in the war that was on the horizon.

What were the themes that these first two DNS/CNS office holders dealt with? There are several. The first is the perennial difficulty the RCN has had in securing the attention of the political leadership of the nation. Despite the essential importance of seaborne trade to the Canadian economy, a navy designed to help safeguard it has simply never been regarded as particularly important in political terms. In consequence, neglect and paucity of financial resources is a never-ending problem. Part of the explanation for this circumstance is the book's second theme, the Canadian penchant for relying on someone else to do the heavy lifting in regard to defence issues. In Kingsmill's and Hose's

days, this burden was borne by Great Britain; towards the end of the period, this responsibility was assumed by the United States.

A third theme has been the ongoing resentment and frustration with the paternalism of either the British or American guarantors of Canadian sovereignty. While the RCN has always taken pride in its professional competence, occasionally in defiance of reality, its independence has always been fundamentally compromised in fact, given the relationship with either of Great Britain or the US. It is rather difficult to declare one's independence in naval matters when others provide the training, the ships, the equipment and the doctrine. The fact that this dependence is appropriate given the financial resources available ought to make its acknowledgement straightforward, but it never is. The final theme is the "Britishness" of RCN culture. This has been a sensitive issue for much of the period covered by the book and has echoes into the present. Indeed, the issue was of significance with regard to the "mutinies" of the late 1940s and 1950s, and was identified as such by Vice-Admiral Mainguy (a subject of the book). At one level, given the professional relationship between the RCN and the RN throughout the period, it is scarcely remarkable that the officers and men adopted manners, attitudes and habits of thinking from Great Britain. As well, Canada was far more "British" for much of the period than is generally understood today – in other words, national circumstance reinforced a natural tendency. This question is of less relevance in the modern navy, but the fact remains that the RCN has many cultural links with the RN, as do all our Services with their equivalents in Britain. Perhaps growing national self-confidence permits the relationship to be acknowledged without compromising pride. That said, the question of the RCN's adoption of American cultural norms has rarely triggered the same degree of hand wringing as did the British circumstance – an interesting difference.

Any student of RCN affairs will recognise the ongoing nature of all these issues: *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

One final comment. The book suffers from a lack of data – a fact that cannot be

corrected, as the records are simply not there. For example, Gimblett notes the lamentable fact that most of Kingsmill's papers were destroyed in the 1930s as they were assessed as unnecessary. More importantly, the apparently lacklustre personalities of most of the subjects of the book could be simply a function of what records do exist. The Silent Service has not helped its cause owing to the universal reticence of its most senior members to write down much regarding their experiences, motivations and intentions. The fact that they are thus perceived as rather grey men is surely no surprise. Perhaps this lack of definition will inspire more recent holders of the office of professional head of the navy to leave a fuller record behind.

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Rif Winfield. *British Warships in the Age of Sail, 1793-1817*. London: Chatham Publishing, [www.chathampublishing.com](http://www.chathampublishing.com), 2005. 432 pp., photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. UK£50.00, cloth; ISBN 1-86176-246-1.

In the last two decades, the British Navy has become quite a growth industry for academics, researchers, military analysts, ship enthusiasts and writers of stirring salt-water fiction. The Royal Navy may nowadays be in the second class, as far as relative sea power is concerned, but books about its influence on world history, its organizational and social structure, and its ships and equipment seem to appear every few months. This book is about the RN's ships during the heyday of fighting sail and is a worthy companion to other well illustrated, large-format books on the same general subject by Lavery, Harland, Marquardt, Harbron and others.

Rif Winfield has set himself, and achieved successfully, an enormous task: nothing less than listing every British warship that floated during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, with the addendum of the 1816 expedition against Algiers (the 1812-14 war with the United States fitting within this time frame). The larger ships are catalogued by

rate and class; small unrated ships by type. Their designer, builder, dimensions, armament, cost and a concise history of their service, including their commanders, is given in every case and the same information is provided for captured ships. The amount of research necessary can be imagined, but the author has generously acknowledged the contributions of a large number of collaborators and previous publications, such as *The Sailing Navy List* by David Lyon.

The book is illustrated by small black and white reproductions of paintings showing identified ships, a number of elevations and lines plans and, in the case of some of the captured vessels, by examples of Beaugean's superb drawings. What would normally be appendices are in the first part of the book along with the preface where they are, in fact, more useful. Among them is a concise chronology of the naval wars from 1792 to 1817 which can be used in conjunction with the ship histories.

This book would appeal both to students of the naval wars of the period and to those fascinated by the statistical details of the ships. It could be very useful to writers of "cannon and cutlass" fiction – the successors to C.S. Forester, Patrick O'Brian, Alexander Kent, et al. They could then place their heroes in actual ships and actions (like Kent's hero Bolitho) or make sure they were in imaginary, but realistic ones, (like O'Brian's Jack Aubrey). The popularity of such novels has created a large population of knowledgeable enthusiasts who are prepared to discuss cross catharpins with Aubrey or boxhauling with Bolitho without ever having set foot on a wooden deck! For both writers and readers, books like this are a great help in placing the events of the period, real or even fictional, in perspective.

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