# BOOK REVIEWS

Robert J. Allison. *Stephen Decatur. American Naval Hero, 1779-1820.* Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, www.umass.edu/empress. 2005, viii + 253 pp., illustrations, notes, index, US $34.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55849-492-8.

Stephen Decatur is probably the best known hero of the early days of the United States Navy. At least ten American towns and cities are named after him, as are a dozen or more counties, innumerable roads, libraries and schools. The list of books about the man is almost as long, with such titles as *Hellfire in Tripoli* and *Stephen Decatur Gallant Boy: Childhoods of Famous Americans.* The current title is one of three major works about Decatur published in the past two years.

Decatur had very limited experience at sea when he joined the US Navy in 1798, which the author illustrates by repeating the oft-told story that the 19-year old midshipman penciled in the names of the rigging lines at their various belaying points so as to be able to respond to orders faster. By 1812, however, Decatur was ranked among the four most influential officers in the navy. His contemporaries, John Rodgers, William Bainbridge and Isaac Chauncey, were older than he was and had all been well-weathered sea dogs before beginning their careers, but Decatur's star had risen faster and more radiantly. While serving in the Mediterranean during the Tripolitan War, as the others had, he took the few opportunities that arose to distinguish himself, particularly in the destruction in February 1804 of the captured US frigate *Philadelphia,* which Bainbridge had lost at Tripoli. Vice Admiral Lord Nelson is supposed to have commented that Decatur's deed was "the most bold and daring act of the age" but the author points out the lack of contemporary evidence to prove this frequently-repeated line was ever uttered. Besides, such escapades as the *Philadelphia* raid and Decatur's several gunboat actions would have earned a Royal Navy lieutenant only a paragraph or two in *Naval Chronicle,* whereas Decatur's friends and superiors, not to mention the American press and public, latched on to his successes and lauded him with accolades such as *"the terror of the foe."* This acclaim earned him promotion to the rank of captain at a younger age than any other officer in the service.

When the War of 1812 began, there was tension among the senior officers as to who would get the most prestigious command afloat. Decatur, who had officially been a "commodore" since 1809, was able to get off on his own in the US frigate *United States* and won the second of three significant American victories over British frigates when he fought and captured HMS *Macedonian* on 25 October 1812; again he set himself apart by being the only commander to bring a prized British frigate into port. He spent the rest of the war under blockade until being captured in the *President* while trying to break out from New York in January 1815. An inquiry absolved Decatur of blame for the capture, but, as the author details, his anxiety over the loss left him desperate to redeem himself. He found a way to do this when ordered to serve as second in command to Bainbridge in an expedition meant to quell the latest hostilities in the Mediterranean. Through some conniving correspondence with the navy secretary, Decatur received permission to sail with most of the squadron before Bainbridge could. The "terror of the foe" then seized the opportunity to aggressively, and effectively, settle the issues before his superior could reach Gibraltar, earning Bainbridge's scarcely disguised enmity.

American naval officers of the period were constantly at odds with one another, waging bitter feuds and fighting duels. As already shown, Decatur was no stranger to such controversies, the most acrid being his conflict with Commodore James Barron, which dated back to 1807, and in which numerous officers were implicated. Publicly, Decatur deplored the practice of duelling as a means for resolving differences, but he failed to settle his long feud with Barron peacefully and suffered a meaningless death, at age 41, after meeting

Barron on the dueling grounds at Bladensburg. Thereafter, he entered the pantheon of immortal American heroes, a status he still very much enjoys.

There is much to commend in this treatment of Decatur's life. Robert Allison writes in a clear and engaging style, laying down the story in a straightforward chronology, covering all the main episodes, with much detail devoted to the Mediterranean campaigns in particular. He deals especially well with the social contexts of Decatur's life, creating some vivid images of his daily world and the people in it. He adds detail to aspects of Decatur's career that other authors have missed and he does not hide from pointing out the great man's flaws now and again. There is a nice little set of illustrations in the centre of the book and good sourcing of supportive evidence in the endnotes; curiously, there is no bibliography.

Allison is not as much at home when discussing naval matters. He provides a very basic rendition of Decatur's victory over the *Macedonian* rather than an in-depth analysis of the opposing forces and the engagement itself. There is not even a battle diagram of the event, which, arguably, was the most memorable and significant incident in Decatur's professional life. Decatur subsequently lied about the strength of the British ship to increase his financial reward, but this startling contradiction with Decatur's legendary sense of honour and devotion to his country, the strongest example of his egoism, is one area that still begs to be unexplored. The author should also have looked more deeply into the details of the War of 1812, which would have helped him to avoid such misconceptions as "Eleven thousand men on sixteen ships commanded by Sir George Prévost prepared to take control of Lake Champlain [in 1814]" (150).

Still, the book is a page-turner, being easy to read and informative. For those readers who are meeting the subject for the first time, Allison's *Decatur* is among the best biographies available.

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Malcolm Archibald. *Across the Pond. Chapters from the Atlantic.* Caithness, Scotland; Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com. 2001. viii + 192 pp., photographs, glossary, bibliography, UK £15.95, paper; ISBN 1-870325-33-8.

*Across the Pond* is a rich blend of adventure, heroism and danger about man's encounter with the Atlantic Ocean over two millennia. It ranges widely over a series of detailed incidents with the theme of the North Atlantic, but always in the background lie the dangers of the ocean that bred the hardy mariners who manned the transatlantic ships. It is astonishingly comprehensive: privateers and treasure seekers, sugar and slaves, airships and naval blockades are just some of the chapter headings.

In the late 1990s, Malcolm Archibald made his own transformation. After many years of being a postman in the Scottish borders, he decided to pursue his interest in American history into higher education and became a mature student in the history department of Dundee University. During his research on Columbus, Spanish galleys, whalers and the tobacco trade, the author found himself drawn further and further into the fascinating world of the North Atlantic. He graduated in 2001, is currently a history lecturer at a Dundee College and although this is his sixth publication, it is his first full length book. Such changes of career are not taken lightly, but the quality of writing in this book shows that his was a wise decision. His writing credentials were recently strengthened when, against a record two hundred and forty competing authors, he won the 2005 Dundee Book Prize with his first novel, set around the whaling industry in the 1860s and loosely based on his fourth-year dissertation.

This book is a history of how men from the Chesapeake, Solway and Seville, the Scouser, the Nova Scotian bluenose and the down east Yankee transformed the Atlantic from an impenetrable barrier into a route to riches and a highway for trade. It covers Atlantic exploration and exploitation, fighting and fishing, from the slavers and their cargo of shame to luxury cruises on Cunard's steamships. The author has delved deeply into the challenges

that faced the earliest Atlantic explorers. He cites the ancient Greeks, accustomed only to the perils of rowing along dangerous coasts, but who passed from the welcoming rich-blue Mediterranean through the Strait of Gibraltar into the huge swells of the Ocean Sea. The Vikings, whose seafaring vocabulary is still found in modern Gaelic maritime phrases as a linguistic DNA across forty generations, taught the land-based Celts how to sail into the northern Atlantic. Nor does Archibald neglect perhaps the most accomplished sailors of all, the fifteenth-century Portuguese navigational pioneers who ventured into the grey and stormy southern Atlantic to discover the western coast of Africa.

Some of the stories of Cabot and Hudson, and the many contenders for the first aircraft to fly across the Atlantic, have been told elsewhere. This is the first time, however, they have been gathered together in such detail in one book and written about from an individual point of view. Among those who particularly captivated the author were the "Packet Rats" - a tough bunch of hard working Liverpool men who would board the packet ships bound for New York in their bare feet with nothing more than a knife and a little food. The author relates the inequality of more recent times, when the two members of the British Parachute Regiment, one an officer and the other a sergeant, rowed across the Atlantic in 1966, yet received different classes of medal despite their achievement being identical. The book contains many good descriptions and histories of different classes of vessels, such as the clipper designs which first recognizes that the speed of a sailing ship depended on its taper aft. When large waves, known as green man-killers, broke on the stern and rushed the length of the ship, they often swept the unwary into the scuppers or at worst, overboard.

The author has successfully researched his sources and his material is well organized. The style of the work is fresh and very different from the usual brief histories. The events he has chosen to highlight are viewed objectively, immediately recognizable and presented in a realistic, convincing and sympathetic way. There are many relevant illustrations, including photographs taken by the author himself. It is a modestly priced and highly entertaining book that would appeal to the general reader interested in maritime history. There is an interesting but quirky glossary, but individual subjects of special interest to the reader would have to be identified through the chapter headings as, unfortunately, there is no index. An extensive four-page bibliography partially compensates for this. *Across the Pond* represents a considerable academic achievement for a new author, of whom we shall hear more in the future, and it makes a valuable contribution to maritime history.

Michael Clark
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Robert J. Cressman. *USS Ranger, 1934-1946: The Navy's First Flattop from Keel to Mast.* Washington, DC: Potomac Books Inc., www.potomocbooksinc.com, 2003. xiv+451 pp., photographs, tables, notes, bibliography, index. US $26.95, paper; ISBN 1-56488-519-7.

Robert Cressman, a well-known naval author with several books to his credit working out of the Naval Historical Center in Washington DC, turns his attention to the US Navy's first purpose-built aircraft carrier, the USS *Ranger. Ranger,* launched at Newport News on 25 February, 1933, was small in comparison to contemporary cruiser-conversions such as USS *Lexington* and USS *Saratoga* and never achieved the same notoriety from its peace- and war-time service. This book presents for the first time a comprehensive and lively history of the ship, the men who served aboard, and the planes which flew from her, based upon detailed research into available primary documentation and photographs.

Cressman divides the chapters into two parts; first chronicling pre-war activities, and then the ship's war service after US entry into the war in late 1941. *Ranger* took part in several fleet and tactical exercises during the second half of the 1930s, including Fleet Problems XVI through XIX, as the US Navy worked out how carrier aviation could be best integrated into fleet operations. Air and ship crews practice and

experimented with flying aircraft off the ship to distant targets and witnessed first hand the transition from slow, cumbersome biplanes to newer single-wing fighters and dive-bombers designed specifically for naval service, such as the Grumman *Wildcat, Avenger,* and *Hellcat* as well as the Douglas *Dauntless.* Distractions included cold weather trials in Alaskan waters, the fruitless naval search for missing celebrity flyer Amelia Earhart, and the ship's brief role in a Hollywood movie. As the United States was reluctantly drawn into war, *Ranger* was transferred to the Atlantic to enforce President Franklin Roosevelt's neutrality patrols and remained one of the few aircraft carriers available to ward off the threat of possible German surface raiders. *Ranger* later provided cover and support against the Vichy French fleet during the American landings in North Africa in 1942, joined the British Home Fleet at Scapa Flow for air strikes against German shipping along the coast of Norway, and finally trained numerous air units and crews for service in the Pacific and elsewhere. Despite limitations in design and construction which restricted operational employment, *Ranger* performed varied tasks and duties essential to the war at sea. Given the right people and definite jobs to do, even an older, partly-obsolescent aircraft carrier remained relevant and useful.

This book aspires to be more than just a straightforward ship history. Cressman sets bigger events and deployments within a narrative full of stories about people and the human side of those who came into contact with *Ranger* and her airplanes. The detail is both impressive and at times daunting. In addition to reports and reminiscences from American sailors and flyers, Cressman, for instance, describes the reaction of French pilots to flying against aircraft from *Ranger* and records the names of German aircrew lost in air-to-air combat over Norway. Among the most interesting are the experiences of American flyers who were shot down and entered into enemy captivity in North Africa and Norway. The inevitable crashes of airplanes onto the carrier deck also receive ample consideration, if for no other reason than a good documentary trail exists. Numerous large photographs with excellent captions complement the text and make excellent use of the book's larger format. Cressman has been relentless in tracking down minor details and ensuring accuracy in both his textual and visual sources.

In terms of research and presentation, Cressman has established a higher standard for ship histories with this book on *Ranger.* It combines popular story-telling without sacrificing academic rigour. Potomoc Books (formerly Brassey's) has done a good job on lay-out, though the paperback edition appears to wear quickly. A few line drawings showing the technical changes and alterations to *Ranger* over the course of the ship's operational service life might have been a good addition. This book complements other recent historical work such as Thomas Wildenberg's biography of Admiral Joseph Reeves (also published and distributed through Brassey's and warranting at least an advertisement or mention in Cressman's book). American carrier aviation underwent remarkable changes in technology and doctrine during this two-decade period, as reflected in the design and employment of *Ranger.* Cressman, Wildenberg, and other naval historians convincingly show that the foundation for wartime successes in carrier aviation stretched back to the days when *Ranger* was first launched. Thus, *Ranger* becomes an interesting single-ship microcosm of significant developments in carrier aviation over this important time period. This book will appeal to a specialist audience as well as the interested general reader.

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Nicholas Blake. *Steering to Glory. A Day in the Life of a Ship of the Line.* London; Chatham Publishing, www.chathampublishing.com, 2005. 304 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, cloth; ISBN 1-86176-177-5.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Royal Navy, along with its associated institutions, was the largest industrial organization in Britain. By 1810, in the thick of the Napoleonic Wars, it had grown even larger. This period, that of the

Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, has fascinated historians for almost two centuries and, because of the profound influence of the Royal Navy on the outcome of the wars, much attention has been focused on British sea power. Virtual libraries have been written concerning all matters pertaining to the Navy and the book under review will be a welcome addition to this body of work.

This book is written in an quasi-narrative style and to facilitate the text's flow, the author has created a fictitious 74-gun ship, HMS *Splendid,* with a fictitious crew and placed her with a fleet of RN ships that is on blockade duty in the Mediterranean Sea. The date is June 1810, and she has been dispatched to Minorca to obtain fleet supplies - water, beef and vegetables. Here the fiction ends; all the events cited in the book are based on the experiences of real people and the service histories of actual ships which the copious end notes elaborate in detail. It is fitting that Blake fabricated a 74-gun ship as his literary vehicle: not only were these vessels the most successful battleships in the RN at the time and, therefore, the most numerous, but also, blockading enemy ports was one of their fundamental functions.

Generally, Blake examines the conditions under which officers and men lived and worked while at war at sea aboard one of His Majesty's ships, and in so doing, he scrutinizes many subjects, some familiar, some obscure. All of his subjects have been thoroughly researched from which we may derive some new insight that could change our thinking about these conditions. This is the value of this book and here his sources are of particular interest because, along with the usual Admiralty Regulations and Instructions, letters, memoirs and reminiscences, Blake relies heavily on the records of courts-martial. These records are important; the Admiralty bureaucracy was punctilious by nature, especially in the case of courts-martial where punishment was being inflicted or death sentences imposed, as they may have had to justify their decisions. From the court martial records we get a detailed glimpse into the day-to-day life aboard ship because they concern every aspect of the lives of real human beings who were going about their business while under the strict regulations and customs of the Navy.

With this work the author has dispelled a number of myths that have enveloped his subjects in the past and, if he is not able to eliminate a misconception, he will explain it. For example, we are given plausible explanations for how the "holystone" got its name and that when the jolly boat was transporting animals, it was know as the "blood" boat. He also points out that the ambiguity of some standing orders making them impossible to obey; for example, the crew would be instructed to wash their clothes even though there was neither time nor space enough to do so, yet those who did not manage the task were subject to punishment.

One of the more interesting subjects Blake tackles is feeding the crew. He offers us more than the minimal "salt meat on certain days and fresh when it could be got," for as well as considering the customary Navy provisions, he studies in depth how fresh meat (in the form of live oxen), was obtained, transported, cared for, slaughtered, butchered, cooked and served. He also analyses the cooking capacity of the ship's stove, considering that some six hundred men had to be fed. By contrast, and as the crew of the ship was divided into a hierarchical system, albeit with some ill-defined areas, Blake explains not only how eating habits differed among the officers and crew but also how this affected their lives and finances. For the commander, who was at the top of the pyramid and expected to entertain important people, the contrast is extreme.

A less discussed problem concerning shipboard life was lighting the ship, particularly below deck, and how the lack of adequate lighting affected the lives of the crew. This was a common problem both ashore and afloat, but the problem was exacerbated by the risk of fire aboard a wooden vessel. Here the courts martial records show their worth as darkness incubates crime. Blake describes how the Navy issued lanterns, oil and candles to minimally light their vessels and analyses the amount of candles issued to the Navy in contrast to the amount required by the army.

These are but a few examples of what is to be found in this work and they are given to

show the diversity of the author's effort. However, despite the wealth of information available here and in other sources, it seems there is still much to know about life in the Royal Navy and I expect that without experiencing it ourselves we will never properly grasp social and working conditions aboard ship. Perhaps this is one reason why history is so fascinating. In all events, this is an interesting book and it is highly recommended as it goes a long way to further this understanding.

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Andrew David, Felipe Fernândez-Armesto, Carlos Novi, and Glyndwyr Williams, eds. *The Malaspina Expedition, 1789-1794: Journal of the Voyage of Alejandro Malaspina, Volume HI, Manila to Cadiz,* London: The Hakluyt Society, www.Hakluyt.com, in association with the Museo Naval, and with the assistance of the Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, both of Madrid, translated by Sylvia Jamieson, 2004. xxi + 487 pp., illustrations, charts, maps, bibliography, index. £55.00, cloth. ISBN 0 904180 84 0.

This third and final volume of the journal of Alejandro Malaspina, commander of the last major Spanish expedition to the Pacific from 1789 to 1794, covers the return voyage back from the Philippines. It takes in the passage south to New Zealand, a visit to the recently established British penal colony in New South Wales, a three-week stay in the Vava'u group of the Tonga Islands and the return via Spanish South American ports to the home country. A number of appendices flesh out the sparse details of the narrative for the reader. This fine volume fully lives up to the standards established by the previous two. Not only are the illustrations impeccable, but the translation is excellent. In the earlier volumes, the editors resorted to a cabal of translators, but this one is the work of Sylvia Jamieson, whose unique contribution is acknowledged on the title page.

After leaving the Philippines, Malaspina's two corvettes slowly worked their way south. When bad weather interrupted a planned pendulum experiment in southernmost New Zealand, Malaspina cancelled the experiment and head back across the Tasman Sea to Australia. Alarmed by the newly established British colony in New South Wales, which posed a direct threat to Spain's three hundred-year-old hegemony of the Pacific, Malaspina intended to take a secret look at the new penal settlement. Britain, friendly to Spain, had been given prior notice of his coming, and Port Jackson furnished him with a very welcoming reception. As one of the earliest foreign visitors, Malaspina provides a fresh and informative description of the new colony, enhanced by the editors with excellent illustrations from the expedition's artists.

His next stop, at Vava'u, the northernmost of the Tonga Islands, was the only occasion when the expedition experienced the full hospitality and allurement of a tropical paradise. History is replete with other and earlier accounts of the exotic societies of the South Pacific, but here for the first time is an Iberian account of the delights of *Cythera.* As a knight of Malta, Malaspina had sworn an oath of celibacy, and naturally expected a high degree of decorum from his fellow officers, but he was aghast at the unseemly behaviour of his men. More important to readers, however, is his interesting account of the hospitality of the local chief, who not only assisted him with obtaining water and the selection of a site for the observatory, but also provided a cornucopia of victuals for the two corvettes. Despite reciprocating the chiefs hospitality Malaspina feared the consequences of too long a stay and sailed as soon as supplies were complete.

Suddenly things started to go badly wrong. Soon after leaving Vava'u, for reasons that he does not explain, Malaspina was confronted by a virtual mutiny involving both his seamen and the officers. Now in their fourth year at sea, desertion among the men had been rife. But why did the officers rebel? No doubt other still-untranslated Spanish accounts will reveal more, but at the moment, English readers have only one source to go by, Enrique Porrua's *The Diary of Antonio de Tova* (2001), which is

a complete blank from the time the ships reached Vava'u until this officer had recovered his composure a full year later. There was clearly something amiss. Malaspina had already abandoned a planned visit to Tahiti, but instead of continuing to the southern Chilean port of Conception, Malaspina made for the more northerly port of Callao, where he would have the support of a stronger military garrison. The mutinous outbreak had so seriously unnerved him, that upon arrival he immediately fled to the seclusion of a monastery to recover his equilibrium, leaving his officers and men free to roam the town.

Even in Callao Malaspina's troubles were not over. While there, he received news of the declaration of war by a republican France. Although enemy incursion into the Pacific was unlikely, Malaspina dared not jeopardize the irreplaceable scientific and political collection he had amassed at such great effort over so many years. His two corvettes were prepared for war and made their separate ways around the Horn, rendezvousing again at Montevideo. By now his manning problems had reached epidemic proportions, and he was forced to recruit a motley batch of ill-disciplined seamen for the final leg across the Atlantic. There were a few ships in port that needed escort, and thus we find him as the humble commander of a small convoy of merchant sail working its slow way across the Atlantic. The protection rendered by his two vessels was augmented by the addition of the frigate *Santa Gertrudis,* still in South American waters after earlier having added strength to Quadra's negotiations with Vancouver at Nootka. But relations between Malaspina and his officers were such that two of them preferred to take passage in the frigate.

Malaspina's journal ends here but this was not the end of the story. In the appendices, editor Carlos Novi and others recount the sad fate of the leader and the dispersal of his wonderful collection. Spain had invested much in this successor to Cook's expeditions and Malaspina's arrival was anxiously awaited at court. Ushered into the royal presence, instead of concentrating on publishing his report, he foolishly plunged into palace intrigue. Filled with an overweening sense of his own importance , but childishly inexperienced in the ways of court politics, Malaspina sought royal assistance to replace the existing administration. Quickly betrayed by a lady-in-waiting, he found himself instead, stripped of all rank and sentenced to life imprisonment. Eventually after seven years in a cold and draughty cell in northern Spain, friends in Italy, through the personal intervention of Napoleon Bonaparte, obtained his release. But he died a broken man.

His arch-enemy Godoy, Carlos IV's prime minister, saw to it that all mention of Malaspina's name was expurgated from the record, and only Galiano and Valdés' account of their side trip to British Columbia (to counter the publication of George Vancouver's journal) appeared in book form. Fortunately, work went ahead with the engraving of his hydrographie charts and the sketches of his artists.

Dolores Higueras adds a detailed catalogue of the multitude of source documents and their many locations. In the years since dispersal, these have found many different homes, and the process of retrieval is still in progress with interesting finds still surfacing. Her appendix will provide an indispensable tool for future generations of scholars. Other appendices include Bustamente's survey of the Malvinas, (of interest to British readers due to the 1980s Falkland Islands conflict), and there is full coverage of the ships and officers by Admiral Gonzâlez-AIler, the recently-retired director of the Museo Naval in Madrid.

It is invidious to find fault with such a fine and scholarly production, but two weakness are worth mentioning. Nowhere in the three volumes are the official Instructions to the expedition specifically spelt out. This leaves the editors free to chop and choose which they wish to comment upon. Thus the reader is left with no way of knowing how well Malaspina and his subordinates carried out their orders, or of comparing them with those of other expeditions. A more minor fault is that, in translating the biographies of Malaspina's officers, many are prefixed with the term 'Executive Branch'. This is not strictly correct. Unlike the British system, Spanish naval officers were divided into two categories: *oftciales de guerra,* who had to be of noble birth and to provide documentary proof of

such before being admitted to naval college; and *pilotos,* the pilots, officers of lower status but consummate, well-trained seamen qualified to command ships at sea. Pilots provided much of the "grunt" work undesired by their more aristocratic colleagues. There was never any equivalent in the British system.

This three-volume work, executed with such painstaking thoroughness by so many international scholars, is a major contribution to the history of discovery, although it is but the tip of the iceberg. Malaspina had planned a seven-volume work, with additional volumes devoted to the work of his artists and an atlas of his charts, and possibly others covering special aspects of their findings. Malaspina's had been not so much been a voyage of discovery, as a much needed scientific, economical and political examination of the Spanish Empire, undertaken at a time when major reforms were obviously required. He has only himself to blame, however, that it has taken two hundred years for his observations to see find light of day. The journal opens a fascinating door on the previously secretive world of the Spanish Empire when it was almost at the apogee of its power. A few short years later, the whole edifice was to crumble into dust.

There are flaws in the expeditions of all great explorers, but Malaspina's journal is a worthy successor to those of Capt. James Cook, the man he so sought to emulate. As such, this work should make a valued addition to the bookshelf of all serious students of the history of the Pacific.

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Anthony B. Dickinson and Chesley W. Sanger. *Twentieth Century Shore Station Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador.* Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, www.mqup.ca, 2005. xvii + 254 pp., maps, illustrations, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. CDN $49.95, cloth; ISBN 0-7735-2881-4.

Over the last two decades or so Tony Dickinson and Chesley Sanger have maintained a very high level of research and writing regarding sealing and whaling conducted from Newfoundland and Labrador. This book is no exception. In fact, in one hundred and fifty pages Dickinson and Sanger provide an outstanding overview of the intricate, complex history of shore station whaling in two regions of Canada - Newfoundland/Labrador and the area around Vancouver in British Columbia. More usefully, they discuss the interrelationship between these two regions in terms of transfer of labour and expertise. Some seven years ago both authors used this *Journal* as a podium for their treatise on the final phase of shore-station whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador during the period 1951-1972. In a sense, this present publication should be seen as a "prequel" to that study.

The history of shore-station whaling in Canada is complex; it not only encompasses a fairly long period (1896-1972), but includes several dozen larger and smaller companies that were involved in the industry. Moreover, a fairly wide variety of whale species were hunted and processed. Finally, although locally based, shore-station whaling must be characterized as being internationally focussed, be it with regard to the nationalities involved in the industry or the foreign markets for which oil, baleen and guano were produced. Taking all these elements in consideration, I can only but admire the two authors for the concise yet detailed and complete way they have put together the story. In ten chapters they discuss the establishment of the many different companies starting with the Cabot Steam Whaling Company and the first fin whale killed off Baccalieu Island on June 26th, 1896, their organisation, the involvement of Norwegian entrepreneurship and capital, the catch results and the economic importance of these companies for input (local employment) and output (revenues of the transport of whaling products to foreign markets, especially Scotland).

After periods of expansion and consolidation between 1898-1902, the industry grew in the following years until it reached the peak in catches and net profits in 1904. From the onset, the business was a big success. However, as in Norway some fifteen years earlier, success

was met by fierce criticism from locals who feared for their own fisheries. They objected to the whaling companies' practice of disposing of whale carcasses by leaving them afloat and complained about the resulting stench as they decayed. Thirdly, the rate at which whales were being taken elicited comments in local newspapers about the increasing need for regulation. As early as 28 July 1898, the St. John's *Evening Herald* stated: "We may soon expect the inevitable 'crank' advocating the legislation to prevent the killing of these huge monsters on the ground that the present industry will exterminate them" (28).

And legislation came in 1902 and 1904. On 22 April 1902, the House of Assembly passed an Act intended to conserve stocks and sustain shore-station whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Act had serious short falls: the killing of females was not prohibited, the catch per licensee was not restricted, nor was the number of licenses. The Act, however, did stipulate that the whole whale carcass should be utilized. This lead to the installment of guano plants to use whale meat as basis for fertilizer and feed.

A first decline in the whaling industry set in 1905 and lasted over a decade (until 1917). Mainly as a result of substantial financial involvement of the company of Christian Salvesen renewal and revitalization of the whaling industry in Newfoundland and Labrador took place between 1918 and 1951. This was followed by a second and fatal decline from 1952 to the total abandonment of shore station whaling in 1972. The Epilogue contains an impressively condensed account of the current state of affairs concerning the international regulation of whale hunting.

A first glimpse at the table of contents leads one to assume that Dickinson and Sanger's discussion of the rise and fall of each individual company would be dangerously repetitious. Not only do they masterfully avoid repetition, but they also tempt fate by daring to devote a chapter to the rise and fall of one particular station - the one based at Aquaforte and run by Andreas Ellefsen from Stokke, Norway. This reviewer could hardly discern any overlap with preceding chapters where Aquaforte is mentioned.

This book provides great reading for many different audiences with varied interests thanks to Dickinson and Sanger's prolific use of primary and secondary sources. Historians, economists, environmentalists but also genealogists will enjoy the fruits of their academic endeavours. Numerous people are mentioned in the text and appendices. Statistical information concerning workmen's wages, catches, catchers used is smartly interwoven in chapters and presented in full in separate tables. Each chapter contains a summary facilitating the understanding of the general outline of the story. In book reviews it might be customary to seek shortcomings but the only one I could find does not relate to the contents, but to the wrapping. Luckily, the sober, dare I say fairly poor, lay-out by no means diminishes the richness of sources and data at hand.

Joost C.A. Schokkenbroek
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Eric J Grove. *The Royal Navy since 1815. A New Short History.* London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, www.palgrave-usa.com, 2005. 224 pp., bibliography, index. US $23.95, paper, $75.00, cloth; ISBN 0-333-72126-8.

On 15 July 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte surrendered to Captain Maitland of HMS *Bellerophon* in Basque Roads, and was carried first to Plymouth and then into acrimonious exile on St Helena. If the summer of 1815 was the Royal Navy's greatest moment, in 1816 its ability to deliver power ashore, the central theme of its activity for the next ninety-eight years, was brutally demonstrated off Algiers. Dr Grove's book nearly starts with the story of how the Royal Navy attacked and battered the capital of an Islamic country. It ends before another example of the same activity, so the last episode is how the Royal Navy participated in bombarding Serbia as HMS *Splendid* made a significant contribution to the air campaign with her Tomahawks, re-supplying from US missile stocks in theatre. How are the mighty fallen. That the Algiers assault was also an allied

operation, for Exmouth's fleet included a substantial Dutch component, is not mentioned. So if Algiers is an example of the supersession of Dutch sea power by British, so Serbia is a telling example of the RN's supersession by the USN.

In 1815, the Royal Navy had reached a level of global authority that has only, perhaps, been exceeded by the United States Navy in the last ten years. That position of authority was sustained for nearly a hundred years, and then declined and disappeared over the next thirty. Nonetheless, the Royal Navy remained, at least until the end of the Second World War, the United Kingdom's principle line of defence. It absorbed a large proportion of the state's annual budget. It almost always used the most advanced technology available either in Britain or the world. It played a central role in the United Kingdom's defence, and was a maj or component in Britain's economy and industry. It ran the world's largest industrial undertakings. It was important within British society and culture. Now, none of those things are true.

Writing a history of the navy over 190 years gives Dr Grove a massive problem of compression. The history of the navy clearly encompasses ships, policy, finance, operations, technology, personnel, social issues within the service and with society in general, industry, and many other topics. Grove is interested in the Royal Navy as an instrument, the policies it served, the ships it acquired, and the operations it undertook. In those terms, he has written a lucid and skilful account of the navy since 1815. He has a good eye for the telling detail and never loses sight of the principle that the navy exists to deliver national force at, by or from the sea.

Grove has based his account almost entirely on secondary sources and his mastery of them is thorough and effective. While one or two recent works are missing from the bibliography, he has embodied most recent research about the Navy. Grove's navy was mostly forward looking and was generally enthusiastic about the benefits of new technology. He also stresses the ongoing challenge of changing circumstances, showing that new opportunities or problems were usually grasped quickly and effectively.

My difficulty with this book is identifying its potential readership. In Britain we seem to find the navy a problem, illustrated by the slightly embarrassed tone of the celebrations around the two-hundredth anniversary of Trafalgar. The navy is associated with much that we find difficult today. It had a habit of beating people who are now friends and partners. The Royal Navy has strong imperial overtones; indeed, much of the story in the nineteenth century is of the Navy travelling the world and imposing western values like the abolition of the slave trade, or western power on the inhabitants of foreign lands. It was the principle shield of Empire, and as long as the navy remained dominant, the Empire was secure. When that power waned, the Empire went with it. The navy's stock-in-trade was (and is) violence—.and it was usually good at it. It was a very male institution, with women conspicuous by their absence, except as a source of ship's names.

So who is this book for? Not for enthusiasts: they are not going to find enough detail about ships, guns, engines, uniforms or battles. Not the more politically correct: they are not going to be convinced and may be revolted. Not the informed: little of this is going to be new. Perhaps it will appeal to those who want to get some feel for the navy, for instance, potential recruits wishing to inform themselves before making career decisions, or those newly joined, wishing to understand their trade. Well, those readers will be the better for their reading of this book. It is a solid competent piece of work, and, some trivial errors apart, thoroughly to be recommended. It has few jokes, however, and no pictures or maps. The absence of maps is a handicap, and the lack of pictures surprising in a book with a hardback at such a frightening price.

Evan Davies
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Christopher Hilton. *Mayflower,* London: Sutton Publishing, www.suttonpublishing.co.uk, 2005. xvii + 238 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £20.00, cloth; ISBN: 0-7509-3654-1.

Despite the fact that the landing of the *Mayflower* has become the stuff of legend, it is surprising how little we know about this historic voyage and the subsequent struggles of its passengers in the New World. Most of us think we have some knowledge of the first American thanksgiving but the truth is quite different from the myth. With his new book, Christopher Hilton seeks the reality buried beneath the folklore.

Perhaps one of the most surprising things about the book is just how circuitous the route was from England to New England for a small group of marginalised Christians. Some tried (and failed) to make a life among the tolerant Dutch; the lengths they went to escape from their own country is shocking to our modern western sensibilities.

Hilton is an evocative writer, but he is not completely comfortable in this time period. He employs terms which are out of place in the early modern era: few - if any - historians would claim there was a "working class" in the first half of the sixteenth century (7). The concept of "realpolitik" belongs to a later period as well. While he is an empathetic biographer, he doesn't always see things through the eyes of someone who lived in the seventeenth century. Hilton's subjects would not agree with his statement that "The differences between the various Protestant groups.. .and the Catholic Church were great, but not greater than their similarities" (33). Even among Protestant groups, seventeenth-century believers thought these differences were so great that they were willing to flee three thousand miles away to escape the Established Church in England.

Hilton is correct to marvel at the radical nature of the *Mayflower* Compact and the settlers' desire to govern themselves. Yet, he fails to see it in its larger context. Many radical ideas came to light during the English Civil wars and the Interregnum in the mid-seventeenth century. When censorship slackened, it became clear that English men and women could conceive of some political and religious models that were very different from those to which they were accustomed. Perhaps the Pilgrim Fathers didn't take such an "extraordinary mental step" after all. Furthermore, Hilton is wrong to assert that the rulers of England were "absolute and all powerful." James I, the king when the *Mayflower* sailed, was frequently foiled by England's powerful Parliament. Furthermore, James' son and grandson both lost their thrones because of feuds with Parliament (in the English civil wars and the Glorious Revolution).

The author's task is not an easy one: there are disagreements about who should be included as "Pilgrim fathers," given that the Colony was forged by a rag tag and disparate group. What's more, it is not a name they would have chosen for themselves (199-200). There are many "blanks" in the written record and virtually nothing is left in the way of material culture (206). Hilton is left to speculate about what the participants would have felt and experienced in this strange new land. For instance, we know very little about what the women and children thought and felt. Hitlon is right to emphasize that they all went to bed hungry on several occasions and suffered grievously to survive.

On one hand, Hilton admires the settlers' courage which ultimately helped forge a nation: "Seldom, if ever, can so many people from the background...have had such an impact— however indirectly — on the world" (20). Yet, he also sees their weaknesses. He mentions that they declined Captain John Smith's offer to lead their trip. Smith had explored New England, made maps and written a book on the subject (93). Why would they decline? We are not provided with an explanation, but Smith asserted that their "humorous ignorance caused them for more than a year to endure a wonderful deal of misery with infinite patience" (95). The explanation may lie in their inflexible character. Hilton refers to them as "bigots" (200) who chafed against autocracy and uniformity in England, but sought to impose their own version upon their neighbours in New England. This suggests they weren't very "forward" thinking at all, but rather, simply out of step with the majority of their countrymen and women in England.

One of the most interesting aspects of the book is Hilton's colourful descriptions and photographs of some of the principal sites in the *Mayflower* story as they are today. This is especially important, given that precious little has survived. The author is also very good at

portraying the isolation of the struggling colony. His useful examples show that, at best, the colony was an afterthought to the mother country, and that cautious relations with the aboriginal people were both as a source of survival and a constant stress.

Hilton demonstrates that there is a great deal of myth that surrounds the *Mayflower* saga. For example, the Thanksgiving holiday should be credited to those settlers who spent time in Holland before arriving in the New World. Furthermore, it does not seem to have been an annual event during the Pilgrims' day. Hilton, however, is not anxious to destroy the myth: "myths have to be simple, to reassure and to give identity" ( 199). The author acknowledges the importance of such stories in nation-building. Even with the publication of books like this one, the myth of the *Mayflower* will likely remain intact....and maybe that's just as well.

Cheryl Fury
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Tora Johnson. *Entanglements. The Intertwined Fates of Whales and Fishermen.* Gainesville, FLA: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com. 2005. xvi + 289 pages, illustrations, maps, references, index. US $29.95, cloth; ISBN 0-8130-2729-7.

Tora Johnson tells Lloyd Sullivan, a Newfoundland fisherman she met while helping free a Humpback whale entangled in a gill net, that she is "interested in whales and fishermen, and how fishermen feel about whales" (185). His retort: "I'll tell you about whales. Soon, there'll be a million of 'em and no fishermen." This exchange pretty well sums up *Entanglements,* which purports to deal with the growing clash between whales and fishermen over the last three decades in Atlantic Canada and New England after a moratorium on commercial whaling caused a dramatic increase in the former while the crash of ground fish stocks brought about a serious reduction in the latter. It is more an American problem, however, than Canadian.

While entanglements in fishing gear have increased throughout the Atlantic provinces, the federal government has only seen fit to provide meagre financial support to a largely volunteer effort to free entrapped whales. This is primarily due to the fact that the one species that has not responded favourably to the end of whaling, the Northwest Atlantic stock of right whale, spends much of its time in the near waters off the heavily populated Northeastern coast of the United States. Even though it was the first to be declared endangered during the 1930s, following centuries of over fishing, the stock size has remained dangerously low. This is because human-whale interactions have again increased dramatically, with commercial whaling being replaced by ship strikes and entanglements. That right whales have been slow to rebound has acted as a catalyst. American authorities, prompted mostly by conservationists/ environmentalists, have introduced legislation that has thus far proved to be more effective at threatening fishermen than protecting whales. Because the stock's annual migration into Canadian waters is restricted to a relatively small portion of the Bay of Fundy during late summer and early fall, it has been relatively easy for Ottawa to impose regulations aimed at preventing collisions between ships and right whales. Other than this, there is no real Atlantic Canadian "problem" and the attempt to link the two is an uncomfortable stretch and, overall, a serious distraction.

While one can understand why Johnson was not able to resist the temptation of describing in great detail her involvement in often-dangerous attempts to free other species of whales entangled off Newfoundland ( the same opportunities apparently were not available south of the border), devoting no less than three separate chapters to it (Chapters 2, 9 and 10) is a serious digression. No matter how informative and entertaining, it adds little to the central themes addressed in this book. Strangely, Johnson clearly understands this. At the very end of the Introduction, for example, she expresses the hope that her efforts will help " head off two avoidable tragedies: the extinction of the North Atlantic right whale and the end of small-scale fisheries in the Northwest Atlantic" (5).

Johnson is well qualified to take on this important task, he hails from a long line of

fishermen, was involved in the industry, is married to a fisherman, and over the past several years has written extensively on fisheries issues. She is also a marine biologist who considers herself "a conservationist" and as such has spent much of her career "advocating for and educating and writing about the natural world" (4). This background, she claims, gained her *"entrée* and trust among fishermen, scientists, and environmentalists and [gave her] a uniquely broad perspective." Johnson uses a somewhat unique, but quite effective, multifaceted approach. She draws upon her knowledge and experience, as well as information gleamed from secondary sources and interviews, to achieve her broader goals. They would have been more easily and certainly more effectively accomplished, however, had the discourse been restricted to just the American problem and the one species of endangered whale.

Chapters 1 and 2 provide contextual underpinnings for all that follows. The growing number of entrapments in New England waters and the very earliest attempts to free entangled whales in the mid-1980s are dealt with in the former, while the biology, nature, habits, and exploitation history of the North Atlantic right whale are considered in the latter. The following chapters outline how fisheries management programs intended to benefit fishermen and conservation legislation and practices designed to protect endangered species often clash, and that attempts to reconcile the two have thus far had little success. Johnson makes the point that she is dealing with an extremely complicated topic, fraught with issues originating with fishermen (and their institutions and officers), environmentalists, scientists, lawyers, politicians and legislation (regional, state, and federal), fisheries officials, fisheries advocates, media (public opinion), and the population at large. This convoluted web of environmental and human factors that has threatened the survival of both New England fishermen and right whales is then examined. Johnson's anecdotal and folksy style is particularly effective when describing the problems underpinning this conflict, and when discussing how they might be resolved. At the end of the day, though, she is forced to conclude that the United States' strategy of "pouring money and person-power at the whale problem" does not seem"to be working to protect whales from entanglement and fishermen from liability" (261 ). That is not to say that there is no hope. She concludes with a series of recommendations based on well-grounded principles of decision-making and management (263-5) which, if understood and accepted by all players, would greatly enhance the probability that there can be a successful resolution to this serious problem. This alone would make *Entanglements* a worthwhile purchase. Unfortunately, however, this is not an unqualified recommendation.

The main problem is not so much with Johnson's interview-derived information, but rather her use of secondary material. Identified only occasionally in the text, many sources are poorly chosen and sometimes seriously misinterpreted. Additionally, historical and contextual information especially is all too often flat out wrong. With so much "scientific" data available, for instance, it is difficult to understand why lengthy excerpts from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (one of the few historical sources cited) are used, not to indicate whaling practices, but rather to provide specifics on various biological characteristics of the North Atlantic right whale and its feeding practices (48-50). The author is sometimes all over the place. How is it possible to reconcile the claim that right whales today are but "the ragged remains of a vast tribe" with the assertion that they "may have been relatively uncommon even before the concerted Basque whale fishery reduced their numbers"(45)? Nor did Basques, Yankee and European whalers ever establish "seasonal tryworks for rendering blubber in nooks along the rocky coasts of Newfoundland … [and] … the remote shores of the island" (27). Even in southern Labrador, this form of whaling was restricted to less than sixty years during the sixteenth century and was conducted only by the Basques (44). Neither are mistakes restricted to secondary sources. Johnson, unfortunately, also violates the old saw that the use of flawed information provided by informants "is your problem, not theirs." The section dealing with the closure of the Dildo factory in Newfoundland and the actual

Canadian ban on commercial whaling, for instance, is incorrect (29-30). Worse still, it is credited to a non-existent (improperly identified?) informant.

So many mistakes cannot help but cast some degree of doubt on interpretation and presentation of fact and process derived from interviews and participation in conferences and meetings, the real strength of this book. This weakens what is, on the whole, an intelligent and fair assessment of a very important topic. Johnson, who also teaches geographic information science at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, drew thirteen maps and eight figures which are very well designed (and reproduced) and add clarity to the text.

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Henrik Juel. *Roar's Circle: A Viking Ship Returns To The Sea.* Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth Press, www, lutterworth.com. 2005. 160 pp., photographs, illustrations, glossary. UK £15.00, paper; ISBN 0 7188 3045 8.

In 1962, the hulls of five small vessels of the Viking era in European history, approximately 900 to 1100 AD, were found in the mud and silt of Roskilde Fjord, in Denmark. Apparently, they had been sunk to create a protective barrier against seaborne raids on the thriving town of Roskilde itself. One of the small vessels was a fishing boat, two were cargo carriers of the *knorr* variety, and two were "snakeships," the lethal and flexible oared warships usually associated with Viking exploits. The discovery of these vessels led to an extensive archaeological excavation to recover them, followed by the creation of a Viking Ship Museum nearby, and of an Institute of Maritime Archeology. In the decades following the discovery and excavation of the Viking vessels, both the museum and the Institute sponsored various research projects, one of which was an effort by the museum to sponsor a rebuilding of a working copy of one of the vessels, by a volunteer shipbuilding crew.

The vessel selected was one of the cargo vessels, a *knorr* of about 14 metres in length. Identified as Wreck *Skuldelev* J, this boat was an inter-island trading vessel, circa 1040 AD with some 85 per cent of its hull surviving the long immersion. The plan was to build a copy using traditional methods and tools, and then to add a conjectural sailing and rowing rig based on what is known of the square-sail rig and sailing methods used by the Scandinavian seafarers of that era. The team decided to make scale models of all the surviving parts of the wreck, then assemble them into a model of the hull, working with the parts until both the best fit and the likely construction and assembly methods had been determined. The major difficulty involved in the reconstruction of such vessels is the lack of contemporary drawings or designs, as boatwrights of the era built largely "by eye" and by tradition, as far as can be determined without drawings to guide their work. The modern reconstruction team, using Viking-era tools, had to do everything from felling trees to operating the boat's sailing rig in Viking fashion, relying on instinct as heavily as the original builders.

To build the boat, named *Roar Ege,* or "Roar's Oak Ship" - soon shortened to *Roar* - the Viking Ship Museum assembled a loosely-knit team of enthusiasts and volunteers guided by several individuals with considerable boat-building experience. Soren Vadstrup, the overall leader, had past experience in Viking replica construction; Ole Crumlin-Peterson, who had helped excavate the Roskilde ships, had founded the museum and Institute; Erik Andersen was a theorist on Viking ship technology; and lead boatwright, Thorberg Skawhewer, brought much experience to leading the actual hands-on work. In support of this core team, an enthusiastic party of some ten or so young volunteers supported the two-year construction project, which took place from 1982 to 1984.

The author, Henrik Juel, now a professor of Philosophy and Communications at Roskilde University, was one of these volunteers, seen in a photograph that accompanies the text, as a clutch of healthy, fit and attractive young Scandinavians who seem capable of building anything. *Roar* would try

that capability, and their patience, to their limits. Although a number of the volunteers had worked on previous Viking ship reconstructions, none had experienced the from-the-tree immersion in Viking methods the building of *Roar* was meant to require. The initial challenge to both experienced and novice volunteers alike was to learn and understand the design, nature and use of traditional ship-building tools from a 1,000-year-old tradition, and then to apply them in the construction of an historical vessel that required them to approach a skill level similar to that of long-dead boatwrights for whom this had been a life-long practice.

Juel's book takes the reader through the construction of the boat in a novel way. Rather than simply record the process, Juel sets the work in its actual context, in the fluid and often hilarious ebb and flow of the human relationships between the builders. Dialogue reveals as much about the young personalities and their interaction as it does about the technical problems being addressed and solved. As a result, *Roar's Circle* tells us as much about the lives, loves and feelings of an appealing group of young people as it does about the construction of a 1,000-year-old boat design. The reader is charmed by both.

The hull construction of *Roar* relied upon the physical reality of the wreck to guide the work, and that gave a solid basis to the claims of authenticity for the reconstruction. Where the replica's rebirth becomes problematic is in the conjectural reconstruction of the vessel's sailing rig. The rig of *Roar* is the traditional single square sail known to have been used by Viking vessels of the era, but the lifts, braces, sheets and fittings of the rig have no precedent in eleventh century examples, and are largely based on square-rig ship technology of a later era. As an example, the builders commendably used close-woven wool for their sail, but the sail fittings inexplicably are more of the sixteenth century than the eleventh. Reef points are provided, both near the head of the sail and near the foot, and in place of the *beitass,* or a long bearing-out pole which fitted into and advanced the windward clew of the sail to allow tacking, the riggers of *Roar* relied on a very Renaissance bowline leading to the forepart of the ship to keep the windward luff of the sail taut. The cris-crossed leather strapping known to be featured on Viking sails is not in evidence either. They are small technical points in an otherwise impressive achievement in the construction and operation of a thousand-year-old boat design. For Juel, who came to the project without knowing how to hold axe, and who is now the offshore coxswain of *Roar Ege,* building the boat was clearly a labour of love, as it must have been for all his agreeable companions in the project. Reading about it is no less a pleasure.

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Ann Larabee. *The Dynamite Fiend* Halifax: Nimbus Publishing Ltd., www.nimbus.ns.ca, and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 234 pp., photos, notes, index. $29.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55109-531-9 (Halifax edition) and ISBN 1-4039-6794-6 (New York edition).

*The Dynamite Fiend* is a biography of Alexander Keith Jr, a villain who committed serious crimes - forgery, embezzlement and murder (or perhaps it was manslaughter). A strange character, he was an apparently dedicated family man, who delighted in secrets and conspiracies and lived much of his life under assumed names. He could be extremely hospitable and charming and was able to fool many people much of the time. His place in Canadian maritime history is due to his involvement with Confederate blockade runners passing through Halifax during the American Civil War and the *Chesapeake* incident of 1864. His final criminal efforts involved planting time bombs on transatlantic liners in order to collect insurance on cargo purported to be on board. None succeeded but during the last attempt, his infernal machine blew up on the dock at Bremen before it could be loaded on to the liner *Mosel,* killing eighty-one people and injuring another fifty. Keith then tried to commit suicide by firing two pistol bullets into his head but did not die for another five days. There is no doubt that he was the perpetrator of the crime.

Alexander Keith Jr, born in 1827, was

known as Sandy to distinguish him from his uncle Alexander Keith, the brewer and prominent citizen of Halifax. He was first employed by his uncle and lived in his Hollis Street house (which still exists) but in 1863, probably after appropriating some of his uncle's money, he set up on his own. He worked in partnership with Benjamin Wier as an agent for blockade-running Confederate vessels and generally assisted Confederate agents passing through Halifax. He became known as the Confederate consul, an unofficial designation probably promoted by himself. The author plainly does not like Sandy Keith and usually refers to him in rather contemptuous terms. She also seems to consider all the southerners whom he entertained as moral reprobates and poseurs. To my mind this is a bit overdone, although it does not mean that Keith was in any way virtuous. For example, he handled large amounts of Confederate money, a lot of which stuck to his own fingers.

In December 1863, the coastal passenger steamer *Chesapeake* was seized shortly after leaving New York, bound for Maine. She was hijacked by a group of men, including several Maritimers, who claimed to be Confederate privateers. Eventually, the ship arrived at Sambro Harbour, near Halifax, short of coal. Here they were trapped by a Union gunboat; the crew abandoned ship and only one man was captured by the gunboat's crew. There were international complications to this affair and it was agreed that the man, George Wade, a New Brunswicker, would be handed over to Halifax authorities. When Wade was brought ashore, a group of men, including Sandy Keith, attacked the constable who tried to arrest him. Wade escaped in a fast skiff manned by two champion rowers. All the *Chesapeake* "pirates," as the Unionists called them, were spirited away from the area by Sandy Keith, Benjamin Wier and friends. Ms Larabee does not make a lot of this episode, but Keith was much involved.

During this period, Sandy Keith travelled to Montreal, Philadelphia and New York under the name of Thompson, attempting or purporting to buy equipment, even locomotives, to be shipped to Halifax and then on to the South. This is one of the most interesting parts of the book, involving Confederate and Union agents and code-breakers. Keith appears to have kept most of the money that had been entrusted to him. When the war ended, he fled from New York to St. Louis to escape the men he had swindled and then to the small town of Highland, Missouri. There, one of his creditors caught up with him and extracted $10,000 out of $40,000 owed - an immense sum at the time and equivalent to millions today. Appearing to be a wealthy man, in Highland Keith met and married a young Frenchwoman, Cecelia Paris, an accomplished young lady who was fluent in French, English and German. Keith, or Thompson as he should now be called, also started to learn German from Swiss settlers in Highland.

In January 1866, the Thompsons moved to Germany and settled in Dresden, where they were welcomed into the expatriate community in that city. Over the next few years they had three children. "Thompson" appeared to be an affluent American who made frequent mysterious business trips, some across the Atlantic. The author could not find out just what he was doing on these missions, but the family fortune was in steady decline. This led to his desperate attempts to sabotage transatlantic liners in which he had shipped valueless but heavily-insured cargo. He obtained timing mechanisms from a clockmaker, who seemed not at all suspicious of his motives. The author thinks he might have been involved in the disappearance of the Inman liner *City ofBoston,* but there is no evidence of that. The first known attempt was on the North German Lloyd ship *Rhein.* The bomb did not go off and had to be retrieved in New York by an accomplice. The second target was the White Star liner *Celtic.* Keith, now using the name Thomas, joined her at Liverpool, intending to get off at Cork, but when that call was cancelled, he had to retrieve his device from the hold and disarm it, jettisoning the dynamite through his porthole at night. The third attempt, in December 1875, was the North German Lloyd *Mosel,* when the stevedores dropped the bomb on the wharf resulting in the carnage described above and Keith's suicide.

The author's research in Germany,

America and Canada has resulted in detailed accounts of these events. German police records were still all available and included reports from the Pinkerton agency. Keith's gross habits come in for a lot of comment but he was able to impress people at all levels of society and was obviously a plausible rogue. *The Dynamite Fiend* is an interesting account of a nineteenth-century Nova Scotian rascal.

Charles D. Maginley
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Arne Larsson. *Ships and Friendships*. Leicester, U.K: Troubador Publishing, www.troubador.co.uk, 2004. xii + 392 pp., photographs, index. UK £19.99, cloth; ISBN 1-904744 52 4.

In the 1930s, a shy and awkward sixteen year-old took a memorable voyage across the Baltic Sea in one of his father's elderly cargo steamers. He was so fascinated that he vowed to leave school and join the family shipbrokerage business in Sweden. Today, few people, even those actively involved in merchant shipping, are fully aware of the role of a shipbroker, but in this gripping, moving and very amusing autobiography, the author recalls his career in shipping and the massive successes he scored as a shipbroker.

After training in shipbroking companies abroad, Arne Larsson or AL as he is known to everyone, returned to his father's company in Stockholm j ust prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. This memoir covers the six decades that AL traveled the world in pursuit of his business of chartering, buying, selling, operating, and even as a last resort, owning ships. He recounts his business failures and triumphs in South America, the United States, the Far East and Russia and describes the extraordinary characters that peopled his colourful life. Now in his eighties, his passion for shipping is undiminished and his chosen cable address of "Friendship" is more relevant than ever.

AL's unique perspective on the world of international shipping from 1938 results in a narrative that moves swiftly from place to place and, along the way, tells a deeply personal story of hope, triumph and loss. Sweden was neutral during the Second World War, but its vessels within the Allied blockade of the Baltic could trade between Denmark and the German North Sea, while those outside traded with the Allies. Both areas were profitable for shipowners with earnings up to 700 per cent higher than before the war and increased war bonuses for the crews of 300 per cent.

Of particular interest to maritime historians is AL's involvement in merchant shipping at the end of two wars, forty-five years apart, the Second World War and the Cold War. In 1946, the United States, in order to assist Europe's recovery and prevent a world slump, allocated by lend-lease hundreds of surplus vessels in the reserve fleet to private ship operators in Allied countries who had lost vessels during the conflict. AL foresaw how so many standard cargo ships and tankers being transferred to European shipowners at a fraction of their cost would change the global transportation of goods and raw materials for ever, and that shipbrokers would become the catalyst between owners and shipyards, banks, exporters and importers. Despite his father's company being blacklisted for trading with Germany, AL managed to secure three such ships and immediately re-sold one of them at a large profit.

In 1954, after being fired by his father, allegedly resentful of his success, AL started to build his own shipbroking empire, with a small loan, a strong liver, considerable good luck and, the most precious commodity in shipbroking, a worldwide network of friends. As a small boy, AL received some post-revolutionary Russian postage stamps and from that moment he developed a passion for all things Russian and it was with the Soviet Union that he developed his most exceptional business relationship. In the 1960s and 70s, the Soviet Union faced frequent crop failures and needed to import huge amounts of grain from the West which could not be carried solely by its depleted domestic fleet. The highly geared chartering market needed only a small increase in activity to send freight rates soaring and the Soviets regularly exploited this

fact by chartering scores more vessels than they actually required, then releasing some of them back onto a now higher freight market. With his connections in Moscow, AL was one of the shipbrokers who successfully anticipated these market peaks and troughs. Following the end of the Cold War and the fall of Communism, the ruble became worthless and AL marshalled his contacts to organize finance for huge shipping projects in the newly independent states, earning large commissions from all sides.

The general reader may not learn much about the mechanics of shipbroking from this book, but the foundation of the author's deals, large and small, was the shipbroker's creed that originated in London's eighteenth century coffee houses - our word our bond. Affairs of the heart also play a prominent part in Arne Larsson's intriguing tale, which makes parts of it read like *Lloyds' List* meets *Hello Magazine,* e writes frankly and openly about his four marriages and a string of international affairs, many of whom are cited in the book's dedication. Nevertheless, he has successfully used his sources and organized his material into an objective maritime biography. Although the index lists only people and ships, and the illustrations are from his family album, the book is a fascinating contribution to a lesser known aspect of maritime history. It is well worth the cover price, for both the general reader of history and the maritime historian.

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Karl Heinz Marquardt. *Anatomy ofthe Ship. The 44-gun Frigate Constitution.* Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2005. 128 pp., photographs, tables, drawings, sources, bibliography. US $ 42.95, cloth: ISBN 1-59114-250-4.

The dust jacket indicates, "This highly acclaimed series aims to provide the finest documentation of individual ships and ship types ever published." It continues: "The drawings are accurate, visually exiting and totally comprehensive, offering ship buffs, historians and model makers a novel insight into the technicalities of each type covered."

Contents include a forward, introduction, a time line of her career, design, specifications, and a description of the various details, as well as eight pages of photographs, followed by eighty-two pages of drawings, a list of sources, primary and published, a bibliography and acknowledgements.

Being well acquainted with the ship and much of the material available, it is my opinion that the author has simply retold the story in a different format. Had Marquardt used the wealth of information available on the subject, instead of limiting his research to the sources listed (plus F. Alexander Magoun's *The Frigate Constitution,* mentioned in his end notes and text, but not listed in his sources), the book could have been better.

Considering the inaccuracies, errors and incorrect terminology, it falls well short of its intended aim. On page 7, the author lists *Chesapeake* as being one of the first six frigates in the US Navy. Two pages later he states; "In June 1807 the British Frigate *Leopard* fired on the American merchantman *Chesapeake* in search of deserters..." referring to the well known incident between USS *Chesapeake* and HMS *Leopard* when *Leopard* stopped *Chesapeake* requesting the return of four men accused of being British deserters. Commodore Barron of *Chesapeake* refused. *Leopard* then fired three broadsides into *Chesapeake,* killing three and wounding eighteen, including Barron. *Chesapeake,* with only one exception, did not return fire. Barron ordered that her colours be struck, and *Leopard* again boarded and took the four men off. In one place, the author refers to the Dey of Algiers as the Bay of Algiers (8) when discussing the Treaty between the US and Algiers. He also refers to *Constitution* as "knotting at one time 9 miles an hour"(18). In one place he refers to the spar deck as the spare deck (24) and in another, hawse pipes are called iron hawse-hole sleeves (27).

While discussing launching problems, under the date 1797, Marquardt indicates "Excessive pressure on the ship's keel during extra weeks on the (launching) slip brought on a permanent hog (bent keel)" (10). What he fails

to mention, however, is that Humphreys (her designer) was not concerned, since, following her launch, he wrote to the secretary of war indicating; "…that without straining or hogging more than one & a quarter of an inch, as you will see by the enclosed certificate." Over *Constitution's* two-hundred year career, the hog increased to fourteen inches. While recognizing the 1992-1995 rebuild, Marquardt does not mention that one objective was to remove the hog as far as possible, using a framed study model of Humphrey's original design, built by the Naval Historical Center Detachment in Boston. A supporting document prepared by Patrick Otton, titled "USS *Constitution* - Rehabilitation and Restoration," details the strengthening initiatives undertaken to restore *Constitution's* structural integrity using Humphreys' original specifications, including replacing the original twelve diagonal braces, now laminated from white oak, each measuring 34 feet long, 12 inches deep by 24 inches wide. These had disappeared during various rebuilds between 1820 and 1992. The initiatives reduced the fourteen-inch hog in her keel to less than two inches, proving Humphreys design, and structurally restoring her to her 1797 condition. The plate on page 60 shows the diagonal riders, using broken lines to do so; another drawing on page 75 also shows them.

The photographs and drawings are well produced. Unfortunately, twelve plates cross the gutter, making them virtually useless. While the dust jacket states that the book is "Complete with a 1/150 Scale Fold-out Plan," there are no foldout plans as is normally understood; plans are, however, reproduced on the back of the dust jacket; a poor substitute at best. If two-page foldouts can't be provided, the drawings on either side of the gutters should have generous overlaps to allow copying and re-aligning the sections accurately.

While Marquardt is an internationally acclaimed draughtsman, it appears, at least from the sources and acknowledgements (128), that the drawings used in the book probably came from the USS *Constitution* Engineering Drawings Compact Disc, Naval Historical Center Detachment, Boston, as the author thanks "those individuals and institutions that helped with the photographs, literature and drawings."

The back of the dust jacket claims that the author has produced "for the first time an accurate set of plans for the frigate as she would have appeared during the Anglo-American War." In fact, the plans and book by Laurence Arnot titled *USS Constitution 1812-1815* published by Bluejacket Shipcrafters in 1991 was published fourteen years earlier. Preparation of the plans and book included extensive consultation with three of USS *Constitution's* former commanding officers, including Cdr Tyrone G. Martin, author of the definitive history of the ship - *A Most Fortunate Ship*. Martin also supervised the overhaul of the ship for the nation's bicentennial in 1976. Mr. Donald A. Turner, director of the USS *Constitution* Maintenance and Repair Facility located in Boston National Historic Park, and the staff of the USS *Constitution* Museum and Library also provided much information. Erik A.R. Ronnberg Jr, undoubtedly the foremost model-building maritime historian in the US, provided technical advice regarding the drawings and plans. Aimed at the advanced model-builder, the plans, book, and (if needed) kit provide the material and step-by-step instructions to model the ship to her 1812 to 1815 configuration.

While the drawings and photographs in Marquardt's book would be a useful reference to a model builder or ship buff, I would suggest looking elsewhere for historical documentation.

Roger Cole
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Faye Kert. *Trimming Yankee Sails: Pirates and Privateers of New Brunswick*. Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, www.gooselane.com, 2005. 105 pp., illustrations, maps, photographs, glossary, select bibliography, index. C$14.95, US $12.95, paper; ISBN 0-86492-442-9.

This slim little paperback is the sixth volume in the "New Brunswick Heritage Series," published by Goose Lane Editions and the Military and Strategic Studies Program at the University of New Brunswick, with the cooperation of the

Canadian War Museum, and the first in the series to examine a nautical subject. Readers will quickly discover that the title is a bit misleading, for in fact New Brunswickers had few opportunities - and often little desire - to "trim Yankee sails." After all, New Brunswick did not yet exist during the war for American independence, and as author Faye Kert explains here, New Brunswick was forbidden the right to issue letters of marque for much of the War of 1812, so that the few merchants of that colony who wished to invest in privateering had to do so through Nova Scotia. The only other war in which letters of marque were issued would be the American Civil War, and by then, England and her empire had signed the Treaty of Paris (1856) which outlawed privateering, so that only the United States of America and the Confederate States of America engaged in the practice. As a result, there is very little material on "pirates and privateers of New Brunswick" that Kert can analyse, and though she is arguably the foremost authority on the subject of British American privateering during the War of 1812 - she is the author of *Prize and Prejudice: Privateering and Naval Prize in Atlantic Canada in the War of 1812* (St. John's, 1997) - she seems hard pressed to make a book out of New Brunswick's limited experience with privateering. The book has only three chapters (the two-page epilogue hardly seems to count): two chapters on the War of 1812 and one on the *Chesapeake* affair of 1863. While the series may have demanded a short book, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a longer one might not have been possible, for in truth there were very few "New Brunswick privateers."

The reasons for this have much to do with the cultural and social characteristics at the time of the British American Atlantic colonies generally and of New Brunswick in particular. Although war was declared in June 1812, Great Britain did not formally authorize privateering until October. This was out of recognition that New England by then had developed into an important source of provisions, oats and hay for New Brunswick, which still lacked the population or degree of economic development to be agriculturally self-sufficient, as well as for the British military fighting the French in Europe. Imperial authorities wanted the flow of American goods into New Brunswick to continue. The merchants of that colony, in turn, needed New England as a convenient outlet for New Brunswick lumber and fish. Even after colonial authorities began to issue letters of marque, few of the merchants of Saint John were enthusiastic about engaging in hostilities with their neighbours. Instead, letters of marque were used to disguise a vigorous but now thoroughly illicit trade between New Brunswick and adjacent American states. It was to put an end to this that the authorities finally withdrew permission for New Brunswick to issue letters of marque. As a result, much of Chapter 2, on activities in 1813 and 1814, is devoted to re-telling the stories of several privateers owned by New Brunswick merchants but with bonds posted by Nova Scotia merchants.

While Kert is able to provide a basic social, economic and political context for these developments, it is a shame that more details could not be given about the size, nature, and characteristics of the commercial community of Saint John that invested in privateering. Carl Swanson and David Starkey have both shown that privateering was very much a profit-driven commercial enterprise, so that the history of privateering in any given community or region really needs a thorough explication of the social and commercial context for its true significance and impact to be understood. Some of this is suggested by Kert, but one is left hungry for more.

A very different story unfolds in the third chapter. Here Kert recounts the 1863 hijacking by Confederate sympathizers of the *Chesapeake,* a commercial steamer that ran between New York City and Portland, Maine. The plan was to outfit and operate the vessel as a privateer against Northern shipping. Kert includes the story here because some of the ringleaders and participants were from New Brunswick, and because the vessel put into New Brunswick briefly following its capture. The whole incident became something of an embarrassing fiasco because so many laws were violated by the hijackers (who had quickly been captured) as well as by American and British colonial authorities. Eventually the hijackers

were released, in part out of sympathy for the Southern cause, in part because the incident threatened to inflame Anglo-American relations that were still tender because of the infamous *Trent* affair in 1861, not to mention the activities of British-built Southern commerce raiders like CSS *Alabama.* Nothing of significance was achieved by the plot, though several individuals on the British American side later rose to prominence in Canadian politics and law.

Overall, then, *Trimming Yankee Sails* promises more than it can deliver. General readers will be entertained by the colourful anecdotes described therein, while more discerning readers may gain some insight into the nature and limitations of New Brunswick privateering as well as the nature of that colony's relationship with its American neighbours. Those wanting a more detailed and thorough treatment of the motives, expectations, and procedures that lay behind colonial privateering should turn to *Prize and Prejudice.*

Olaf Uwe Janzen
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William Marvel, ed. *The* Monitor *Chronicles - One Sailor's Account - Today's Campaign to Recover the Civil War Wreck.* (The Mariner's Museum). New York: Simon & Schuster, www.simonsavs.com. 2000. 272 pp., photographs, bibliography, index. US $35.00, cloth; ISBN 0-684-86997-7.

The Mariner's Museum, of Newport News, Virginia, is the custodian and home of artifacts recovered from the USS *Monitor,* and has an extensive archival collection of documents relating to the career of the ship. From one of these holdings comes the core of *The* Monitor *Chronicles*—the letters of George Greer, who served in *Monitor* from her first commissioning through her foundering on New Year's Eve, 1862. The book's publication coincided with important survey work on the wreck during the summer of 2000, leading to the recovery of her engine in 2001 and its conservation by the Mariner's Museum.

The target audience for *Chronicles* is the general public rather than the specialist, but the more academic readers will not be unhappy with the final result. There are unobtrusive footnotes, usually pointing to the 31-volume *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion,* and the well-written text doesn't oversimplify nautical or military matters. The focus of the book is Greer, and his letters home, and what they tell us about life in the *Monitor* and the Union Navy. This is not, strictly speaking, a ship's history since *Monitor* occasionally recedes into the background, although she never leaves the stage. Frequently, small details like her being painted a "light lead" colour in August 1862 can sometimes be teased out.

This reviewer is familiar with the broad outlines of the American Civil War, and generally conversant with the naval technology of the day - an "educated layman," of sorts. Other than the action at Hampton Roads, I've not read much about the rest of *Monitor's* career. I didn't know that she spent so much time actually out on campaign, albeit usually lying at anchor in one backwater or another. The editor has interwoven lots of useful background information about the land actions being assisted by the Navy, so the reader is always able to understand why things were going on as they did. Just like her First and Second World War namesakes, *Monitor's* real war was in support of land operations. Indeed, the fight against the CSS *Virginia* is given a surprisingly small amount of space in the book, which considering how often the battle is recounted, is probably not a bad thing at all.

The illustrations for the book have been well chosen, and are a good mix of people, events, artifacts and *Monitor* herself. One quibble is that each chapter is fronted with a full-page photograph of one of Greer's letters, artistically, but not clearly, focussed. It does look nice, but some of that space would have been better used by reproducing the period illustrations at a much larger size - those coloured lithographs deserve better, and the blueprints of *Monitor* (14-15) are absolutely tiny! It would seem that the book's graphics designers did not have the readers' interests at heart, but were much more concerned with

superficial appearances.

Textually, the book can be repetitious in places. Big chunks of the letters show up as sidebars, and make fascinating reading. But too frequently, paragraphs from those letters show up again in the text itself (124,126). That space could have been put to better use had the editor expanded on some tantalising tidbits: the "submarine *Alligator,"* for example (105).

These are small complaints, however, and overall the book is a fine addition to anyone's library. Not only are George Greer's letters colourful - "Gluttonous Hogg" is how he describes one of his captains (115) - but the faithful transcription of the original spelling and grammar is more than just charming. The fact that there are several uses of "leftenant," by someone as proud of his native-born American status as Greer, hints that the Commonwealth pronunciation of "lieutenant" may have been quite common in the USN until a surprisingly late date. Through these letters, *Chronicles* opens a window into the life of the Civil War lower deck, and highlights such matters as the importance of having political influence, even to reach the lowly rank of third assistant engineer.

In short, although not perfect, this is a book which is an informative and enjoyable read, a substantial souvenir for the Museum's visitors.

William Schleihauf
Pierrefonds, Québec

Sam McKinney. *Sailing with Vancouver. A modern sea dog, antique charts and a voyage through time.* Victoria, B.C.: TouchWood Editions Ltd., www.heritagehouse.ca, 2004. xiii + 210 pp., maps, place names glossary, bibliography. CDN $ 17.95, paper; ISBN 1-894898-12-5.

When he turned 70, Sam McKinney felt a need for adventure. So he bought a boat from a man who was selling one because *he* was turning 70, and set out to follow the trail of Captain Vancouver, a ghostly wake on the waters of Washington State and southern BC. Through a spring and a summer, in a 25-foot sailboat, McKinney trekked through the straits, sounds and passages of the vast inland sea mapped by Vancouver in 1792. He recorded his thoughts and experiences, and kept a log that became a book, *Sailing With Vancouver.*

It's part history and part sea story, sometimes both at once. The combination seems like a description of McKinney himself, a portrait of the artist as a septuagenarian. Professionally, McKinney is an historian and a former research associate at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. For recreational, he's a manner, a self-described "modern sea dog," who drinks rum for breakfast, and smokes a pipe before the setting of the sun. Unfortunately, he says so little about himself that one is left with the impression of an old duffer, a Don Quixote at sea. In truth, McKinney has traveled thousands of miles by ship and boat - by river, lake and ocean - writing books about his unconventional voyages.

As a sea story, *Sailing With Vancouver* starts like a trusty old outboard: it only needs a few good pulls to get it going. The first is encouraging. McKinney is riding the huge swells off Cape Flattery, heading in from the Pacific in the company of phantom ships, Vancouver's *Discovery* and *Chatham.* But this soon sputters into a history of European explorations of the western coast, a short biography of Vancouver, and a lengthy explanation of how McKinney came to be out at sea that day. Another pull, and McKinney is dogging Vancouver's ghost up the watery roller coaster of the Strait of Juan de Fuca (known by today's yachtsmen as "Juan de Paca" for its stiff breezes and currents and chop), scared by the winds and high seas, musing on the discomforts of the men of *Chatham* and *Discovery.* Again the story stalls, but soon begins to hum along nicely, a joy to read.

McKinney is an engaging writer, adept at describing both the things he can see and those he can only imagine. He uses the journals and jottings of Vancouver and his companions to great effect, combining well-chosen passages with his own observations to peel away time and make the reader a shipmate of Captain Vancouver. He cruises up the mainland coast to see for himself how Vancouver failed to notice

the great Fraser River flowing into the Strait of Georgia. He follows the explorers as they trek up one long inlet after another, often wearily but occasionally in high excitement, in the unlikely chance that this one, or the next one, might prove to be the fabled Northwest Passage that Vancouver was tasked to either discover or disprove.

The book is at its best when McKinney lives up to his promise of "sailing with Vancouver," when he's sharing an anchorage with *Discovery,* or travelling in company, but two hundred years later, with the ships' boats that did the bulk of exploring and charting.

"I followed the boats down Hood Canal and it was largely as Vancouver described it: depressing. I thought its waters flat and lifeless and the shoreline marred by the tacky houses and small communities that straddled the highway running along the west shore of the canal. And "hideous monsters" (imagined here by Vancouver's sailors) do exist in Hood Canal in the form of the long, grey submarines docked at the Bangor naval base, each boat equipped with enough atomic bombs to destroy most of the world" (52).

But McKinney strays often from the wake of *Discovery,* towing the reader like a dinghy on its leash through places and times that Vancouver never saw. Readers unfamiliar with the area might well appreciate his wanderings through the abandoned leper colony of the Darcy Islands, a modern-day Nanaimo, or an old Mayne-Island hotel demolished fifty years ago. But this sort of material feels incidental here. Perhaps McKinney wasn't confident that the idea of "sailing with Vancouver" would provide enough material to fill a book. Or perhaps he took on a task too great to be told in just two hundred pages. His histories of things other than Vancouver's expedition, though always entertaining, are brief and scattered, like a shotgun siege on history.

Accompanying the text is a series of maps. But they don't do justice to the story. A reproduction of Vancouver's original chart is shrunken to an unusable size. The four modern maps are frustratingly short on place names.

In the end, I was disappointed that McKinney gave up his chase at Cape Caution, where Vancouver turned toward the open sea - and Hawaii - to conclude his west-coast explorations of 1792. Vancouver would return the next year, continuing north from there with *Chatham* and *Discovery.* He would complain bitterly of weather and geography; he would bury a sailor in one of the most desolate places on earth. And I badly wanted to follow along with him and McKinney through that lonely and beautiful land. If McKinney ever picks up his quarry again, and continues to the north, I'll be the first to buy his book.

Iain Lawrence
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Thaddeus D. Novak, P.J. Capelotti (ed.) *Life and Death on the Greenland Patrol, 1942,* Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, 2005. xx + 205 pp., illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, references, index. US $59.95, cloth; ISBN 0-8130-2912-0

Every sailor who has endured cold, seasickness, exhaustion, who has lived in close proximity to messmates as often as not tolerated rather than liked, especially when extreme discomfort and danger prevail, who has dreamed when being soaked to the skin of remembered favourite foods and delicacies that are only available on return to home port, who have missed their loved ones, who have had occasion to doubt their own seamanlike qualities, and have at times resented as well as admired the authority of both good and bad officers and senior hands, will identify with Thaddeus Nowakoski, "ski" to his shipmates, Ted Novak to the world at large.

This diary, published in the series "New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology," (James Bradford and Gene A. Smith, editors), is a classic of its kind. It is hard to disagree with the publisher's statement that "Novak's account will be of significant value to students of the US Coast Guard and of naval service in wartime" and that "his illumination of the small details of a sailor's life and perceptive observation of the arctic region and its little-known people will appeal to anyone interested in maritime history" (4).

Ted Nowakoski had been laid off by the Chrysler Motors Dodge main plant in Detroit, where he was a labourer, when he decided in 1941 to join the Coast Guard, rather than being conscripted under the *Selective Training and Service Act* passed in 1940. The second youngest of twelve children, his elder brother was a veteran of the First World War. "Seeing him, I often wondered if one day I would become a blood-and-guts, mud-spattered Yankee doodle, dog-faced yard bird in the same trenches of France's Argonne Forest where the Germans mustard-gassed Ben while trying, fortunately without success, to shoot holes in him"(4). During the course of the Second World War, two other brothers joined the US Navy and a third became "an army yard bird." They all survived, he recounts, although all became casualties.

A strapping young man twenty-one years old, six foot two and 176 pounds, Novak evidently went through his early training with flying colours because he was hand-picked in June 1942, as a seaman first class, to serve in one of the ten wooden fishing trawlers that Commander, later Rear Admiral Edward H. "Iceberg" Smith located and commandeered, in order to remedy a desperate shortage of escort vessels for the Greenland Patrol. The *Nanok* (Novak speculates the name is a corruption of "Nanook"), 120 feet overall in length, 24 *Vx* foot beam and 12 foot draft, had a crew of twenty-one men and two commissioned officers. We become familiar especially with the chief, George Talledo (mostly American Indian), the cook, Russell Clark, several other messmates, and the captain, Lieutenant (JG) Magnus C. Magnusson, the erstwhile Danish consul in Boston. When the United States entered the war, "Iceberg" Smith evidently persuaded Magnusson to join the US Coast Guard. Two other personalities, the first unlikeable, as well as incompetent, executive officer - "Where did this asshole come from?," writes Novak - and his replacement, had a lasting impact on Novak's life on board. Discipline and routine, customarily more informal than in large vessels, was particularly idiosyncratic in *Nanok* because Magnusson, an old sea dog from Iceland with apparently thirty years of sea experience, had no use for rank and little or no knowledge of Coast Guard protocol or regulations.

*Nanok* provided escort and supplies, and performed other vital services for the air and weather stations in Greenland. Novak served in the vessel from June to December 1942, performing every kind of duty, from keeping watches to chipping paint, often in the most extreme weather conditions and at risk to life and limb. Discharged from the Coast Guard owing to a back injury, quite possibly the direct result of this service, he appears not to have returned to sea, but his six months in *Nanok* had given him enough experience, and suspense, to fill a lifetime.

The US Coast Guard has a reputation for hard service. (Once when taking a Canadian frigate into a New England harbour, with instructions to berth at a jetty where the chart showed insufficient draft, we hailed a coast guard vessel with our problem and received the reply "we thought they only asked the Coast Guard to do that.") Novak has certainly reinforced that impression. His reminiscences reveal the lengths to which Coast Guard sailors went to prove their mettle. On one occasion, *Nanok's* tow line to a scow containing irreplaceable scientific equipment parted, and the efforts to recover the tow in heavy seas and a howling storm beggar the imagination. After capsizing the dory in the first attempt, in which Novak was lucky to escape with his life, three other volunteers leapt from the deck on to the scow. "Wind tears away Talledo's sou'wester hat. It shreds his foul weather jacket, and then his rubber trousers tear off and fly away! Clark and Connors fare the same. In semi-darkness, the scow and ship drift apart. The scow can no longer be seen.... We watch the hawser and after an eternity its limp form springs to life and stretches taut!.... We still don't know the fate of the three men on the scow." When dawn broke the next day and the storm had abated the three men emerged safely from the cabin on the scow. "Cookie" Clark tumbles out, stiff-legged. He puts a fist into each armpit, flaps his elbows up and down as wings. He loudly crows "cock-a-doodle doo" like a rooster...Skipper pretends anger and disgust. Even though he cusses Clark's nonsense, he is obviously relieved of

great tension and concern" (94-5).

Problems encountered and solved in Greenland inured the crew to hardship, and turned them into an impressive team, superbly held together by "Maggie" Magnusson. The return passage to Boston in December demanded all their skill and endurance. A storm that struck and increased in fury along the west coast of Newfoundland pushed them to their limit. Another trawler sailing in company, the *Natsek,* went down with all hands in the Strait of Belle Isle, presumably capsizing from the weight of ice on her superstructure. Novak, who remained on the wheel for a straight seventeen hours at the height of the storm, describes the moment when *Nanok,* heavily laden with ice in spite of the ceaseless efforts to chop it off, rolled over on her starboard side until he lay under the wheel pushing up at its spokes while the captain had one foot on the starboard bulkhead and one foot on the deck, pulling at another spoke of the wheel. Only extraordinary efforts in the engine room, which had flooded, allowed the vessel to survive this catastrophic situation. The end of their odyssey came a week later when *Nanok* berthed at Constitution Wharf in Boston, a memorable episode described with splendid élan.

Novak apparently had no idea that keeping a diary in time of war was a court martial offence until Chief Talledo told him so, a week before their return to Boston. The crew had been told to hand in their cameras, but nobody mentioned diaries! He wrote it up at odd moments in his bunk, not telling anyone in case he would be teased about it, and he admits to editing the original with reference to ships' logs, maps and charts before turning it over to the Coast Guard historian's office in 1994. Since then P.J. Capelotti, a reserve enlisted man attached to that office (and a lecturer at Pennsylvania State University) has evidently gone over the manuscript and prepared it for publication. We owe a debt of gratitude to those who have allowed us access to this unique personal memory, especially to the late Ted Novak for putting it all down, and to George Talledo for not reporting his transgression It is truly regrettable that the book is so expensive, and one hopes that a cheaper edition might one day find its way into print.

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Adam Nicolson. *Seize the Fire. Heroism, Duty and the Battle of Trafalgar.* New York, NY: HarperCollins, www.harpercollins.com. 2005. 368 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. CDN $36.95, cloth: ISBN 0-06-075361-7.

2005 was, unless you are absolutely dead to matters nautical, which cannot include any readers of the *Northern Mariner,* the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. Not surprisingly, there has consequently been a plethora of books and articles on the subject and of its deified hero, Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson. One may be forgiven for thinking that there is surely little left undiscovered about either the man or the battle. Trafalgar is without doubt the quintessential naval battle, the one engagement that virtually everyone has heard about, even if only by name. Given its iconic status and the passage of two centuries, there really isn't much new to discover, albeit minor details do emerge on a regular basis. What then justifies the writing of yet another book on a subject that is so well documented, interpreted and indeed, glorified?

Adam Nicolson, the son of Nigel Nicolson, the publisher and author, and the grandson of diplomat Harold Nicolson and the ever-entertaining author Vita Sackville-West, has produced a gem of a book that deserves to be on the shelf of everyone who wants to get a clear understanding of the battle and the brilliant admiral who orchestrated one of the most crushing defeats of an enemy at sea in recorded history. Trafalgar absolutely deserves its iconic status, and Nelson, if not his apotheosis, his reputation as one of the greatest admirals to ever serve his country and his profession.

What Nicolson has done with his version of the battle is to explore the minds and world view of its participants. This is an angle that modern readers need to grapple with if they are to understand Trafalgar beyond the superficial level that, frankly, most of us have of

the battle and of Nelson himself. And, make no mistake, it is a world view that is quite alien to ours, and yet with distinctly modern tinctures that are altogether familiar. If the past is a foreign country, to paraphrase L.P. Hartley, it is not wholly so and Nicolson has done a tremendous service in bringing this world into a sharp focus, greatly improving our conception of the both the battle and its significance and the habits of mind of those who fought it - from all sides: British/English, French and Spanish.

The book is divided into two separate parts. The first, entitled "Morning" devotes several chapters to exploring the backdrop to the battle - not just the campaign per se, but also the protagonists, the sailors, the officers, their cultures and nationalities, and their ships. Chapters are titled with suitably active adjectives such as "Boldness" and "Zeal,"thereby providing a tone to the work that unifies the discussion - always very wide ranging - at hand. Nicolson's contribution is his discussion of the intellectual climate of the period and hence, the motivations ofthe participants and their state of mind. As well, he covers the engagement's importance at the time and how this evolved as the nineteenth century progressed. Indeed, the sense of the "heroic" and "self-sacrifice" for one's country, of "duty" underpinned much of the ***Zeitgeist*** of that century, only to be superseded by the carnage on the Western Front. The gap between the perceptions of the battle and warfare in general between the participants and the public were as wide as ever, a gap important in the development of the Victorian world view. The first half of the book covers the engagement from the time that the two fleets glimpsed each other to that point at which the battle got underway. The second part, entitled "Battle" describes the battle itself.

Naval engagements fought in the Age of Sail were often extraordinarily bloody affairs, particularly in light of the heightened sensitivities of the present day, and made the more chilling by the slow deliberate pace at which they unfolded. Modern readers are intellectually aware that a ship-of-the-line moved through the water at speeds of up to ten knots, generally far less. At Trafalgar the wind conditions were such that the two fleets were closing at less than half this speed. The crews of the ships had time to have both breakfast and lunch while in full awareness of impending battle. The ponderous nature of the drama that was clearly in full process of development as the morning wore on, must have been excruciating to endure. For those of us of today, intellectually comfortable with a far more clinical and supersonic type of warfare, it is debatable whether we could endure the strain.

Nicolson is particularly strong in his description of the approach of the two fleets, the inevitability of the engagement, and the apparently sure knowledge among the Spanish and French fleets that they were very likely to be crushed, and the technical aspects of the routines in the three fleets that made this so. One small example will have to suffice for many. The swell was moving from the west, coming from behind the British ships and toward those of the Combined Fleet. This made laying and firing the guns as their ships rolled difficult - not beyond that of well trained and experienced crews, but certainly not something the French and Spanish sailors could achieve with any consistency at all. In fact, some crews in the Combined Fleet had difficulty firing their guns more than once every five minutes, while the British could manage at least three and sometimes five shots in the same period.

Nelson's approach is often viewed by casual observers as being the very antithesis of sound. Surely, most would argue, the key to naval fighting is to seek the weather gauge, and strive to cross the "T" of the opposing fleet. This classic manoeuver permits the full force of one's own fleet to inflict maximum damage on the enemy's, while it is powerless to reply. Yet Nelson was fully aware of what he was doing, knew the weaknesses of his enemies, understood what the sea state (slow rolling swells) meant for his ships, and indeed held the weather gauge. Vitally, Nelson also knew the value of leadership and ensured that his flagship, HMS *Victory,* along with HMS *Royal Sovereign* under Collingwood, his second in command, led the two columns as they tore into the numerically superior Combined Fleet's ragged formation.

Sure enough, the period during which his ships could not respond was trying but,

critically, not too trying. Once the poorly managed ships and guns of his enemies came under fire from his superbly trained crews and cleverly manoeuvred ships, the battle was virtually over. Nelson counted on the separation of the Combined Fleet's van by his two divisions to effectively knock them out of the battle. Once Nelson had 'set the table', there was nothing more for him to do, and events unfolded as expected - his death at his moment of triumph was almost too poetic. The crushing defeat endured by France (the Spanish were stoic, if scarcely enthusiastic, participants in the venture) ended Napoleon's ability to defeat Great Britain and, in the event, his dream of European unity under the joys of French hegemony (that dream was left to later generations, but I digress).

The book is graced with excellent maps and illustrations. The diagrams of the battle are particularly good in this reviewer's estimation as it provides a larger scale view of the battle and situates it geographically and tactically far more clearly than is typical. The selection of paintings includes those that are now iconic as well as others, but includes sharp comments that are characteristic of the author's approach.

I unhesitatingly recommend this book. It is an important and worthy addition to any library, and is essential reading for scholars of the period. Nicolson has accomplished the improbable with *Seize the Fire:* a fresh examination of a potentially tired subject that is a genuine contribution to the literature of both the battle and Nelson.

Ian Yeates,
Regina, Saskatchewan

Victor T. Sharman. *Nelson's Hero. The Story of his 'Sea-Daddy' Captain William Locker.* Barnsley, S. Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Books Ltd., www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2005. xiv + 210 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £ 19.99, cloth; ISBN 1-84415-266-9.

William Locker was captain of the frigate HMS *Lowestoffe,* the first ship in which Horatio Nelson sailed as a lieutenant. The book is organized around Nelson's correspondence with his old mentor until Locker's death in 1800, with the letters serving as informal markers along Nelson's road to fame.

Victor T. Sharman is a British businessman with a consuming interest in the Nelsonian navy. The book was published in association with the Nelson Society, of which the author is a former chairperson. He was also a member of the committee of the National Maritime Museum organizing the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar.

The book had its genesis in a letter of February 2nd 1799, (page xi of the preface), in which Nelson seems to attribute his success to lessons learned from his one-time commanding officer. "I have been your scholar; it is you who taught me to board a Frenchman by your conduct in the *Experiment,* it is you who always told me 'Lay a Frenchman close and you will beat him'" Struck by this comment, Sharman felt the need for a biography of this hitherto little-known personality.

Locker came to the notice of Edward Hawke and John Jervis during the Seven Year's War, when as a lieutenant in the frigate *Experiment,* he led a boarding party that captured the *Telemarque* against heavy odds. His later career was not particularly distinguished, although quite typical of the vast majority of naval officers who performed perfectly well throughout their service but never had an opportunity for special distinction. The author recounts Locker's story in considerable detail up until his departure from the *Lowestoffe* in 1780, establishing the picture of a consummate professional and a truly good man. After that his uneventful life provides little material, and the author's focus shifts to Nelson.

The sub-title of the book is somewhat misleading in so far as it suggests a long period of mentorship. Nelson served in the *Lowestoffe* for only about four months before Locker gave him command of an American prize, informally renamed the *Little Lucy,* in which vessel Nelson operated semi-independently for the next eight months. On Locker's recommendation, he was then appointed to Admiral Sir Peter Parker's flagship to be positioned for fast promotion. Arguably, it was that recommendation, rather

than any tactical advice, that constituted Locker's most important contribution to Nelson's success.

The earliest and most numerous letters were written in the West Indies in the mid-1780s. They illustrate in much greater detail than most secondary works the typical naval gossip of the time, and the day-to-day concerns of the professional sailor. With Nelson's elevation to post captain and commodore the perspective changes. Again highly detailed, and often composed very soon after the event, the correspondence deals with the decisions of British commanders and with actions against the enemy. For students of Nelson and of the war in the Mediterranean from 1793 to 1797, this is the most valuable section of the book. A second major shift seems to coincide with Nelson's achievement of flag rank. His letters become much less frequent, less detailed and less timely: the letter that sparked Sharman's interest was his first to Locker since before the Battle of the Nile six months earlier.

In addition to using standard archival material and secondary sources, the author has obtained background from one of Locker's direct descendants. The bibliography is quite extensive but does not include some of the latest works. Citations refer to chapter endnotes and for the most part are excellent, with the notable exception that most letters are not referenced to their sources. They all come from one of three works listed in the bibliography, but it is usually not possible to identify which one. When a letter is reproduced in its entirety this may not matter much, but when only an excerpt is included, a reader seeking more detail would have difficulty locating the complete text.

Sharman has not included the entire body of the Nelson to Locker correspondence. He does not discuss his rationale for choosing some letters as opposed to others, and after analysis, this reviewer could not discern any consistent pattern. The book's historical context is merely sketched, and maps and plans are totally absent.

Neither the letters nor the connecting narrative reveal anything new about Nelson or his times, but building the story around his correspondence with a single person adds an interesting new perspective The book is not (1) a new analysis of Lord Nelson's career; (2) an introductory work on Nelson and the navy, or (3) an exhaustive analysis of the Nelson-Locker correspondence. But in this reviewer's opinion, the author never intended it to be any of these things. He set out to write an interesting account of a special relationship between a typical naval officer and his brilliant protégé, and in this he has succeeded. The book might well stimulate the casual reader to delve further into the fascinating subject of the Georgian navy. For readers of this journal, any value probably lies in the picture it paints of the ethos of the naval profession, as revealed in letters intended to be read only by a close professional friend.

Bryan Elson
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Harold G. Simms. *One Hundred Forty-one Wooden Ships, 1872 - 1922. Amos Pentz Master Shipbuilder of Shelburne, Nova Scotia.* Published by the author, 2004. x + 331 pp., photographs, maps, appendices, bibliography, footnotes, indices, US $38.00 plus postage, cloth; ISBN 0-9759498-0-2. (Available from the author, HG Simms, P. O. Box 204, Norwell, MA., 02061, USA. E-mail: 7129@comcast.net)

There is a caveat surrounding most self-published books - they are perhaps unworthy of a commercial publisher's interest and investment. I do not know whether the author of this book chose to publish it himself or failed to find a suitable publisher, but to me there is no question of this book's suitability. This handsome, large-format volume ably covers, in meticulous detail, the life and achievements of one of Nova Scotia's more eminent ship designer-builders.

The book is divided into two sections. The shorter first section is an introductory biography of Amos Pentz, starting from his family's roots in Germany, through their emigration to Nova Scotia, and ending appropriately, with his obituary. The second, longer portion describes and outlines the individual careers of each of the various ships

built by Pentz during his productive working life. His shipbuilding career is divided into specific chronological periods and each is prefaced by additional notes regarding Pentz' parallel personal life.

The Pentz family emigrated from the Left Bank Palatinate (of the Rhine) in what is now Bavaria, and landed in Halifax in 1751, to settle in Lunenburg two years later. A century and three generations later, Amos was born in 1849 in Beach Meadows, Nova Scotia, the son of seaman John Martin Pentz. At fifteen, Amos went to Shelburne to apprentice in a shipyard, and continued at a Jordan Falls yard partially-owned by his older half-brother. It was there, at 21 years of age, he is credited with building the first of the one hundred and forty-one vessels, a 100-ton brigantine, *Qui Vivi.* Several vessels followed during his early married life in Jordan Falls before the family moved permanently to Shelburne.

Apart from some of the early Jordan Falls vessels, Pentz never built in a shipyard bearing his own name. His career was spent working for other yard owners, including every Shelburne ship builder. In 1900, Joseph McGill offered him the job of building a schooner as the yard's foreman builder was occupied with another vessel. This was the start of Pentz's 22-year reign as master builder and foreman at McGill's. Together Joseph McGill, the astute owner-manager, and Amos Pentz, the master-builder, made the McGill shipyard Shelburne's (and possibly Nova Scotia's) pre-eminent ship builders for almost half a century.

At this point the author begins his written portraits of the Pentz fleet, frequently augmented with good, though small, photographs. Herein lies the principal value of this book, each vessel is followed from launch to final disposition, presenting a cross- section of a half century of Nova Scotia vessels with only one thing in common - their birthplace. The length of these descriptions varies with the research data and life-spans of the vessels, some of which, like us, led more interesting lives than others. They were mostly schooners and many went into the fishery, but there is variety and Pentz was, at times, on the cutting edge of design. For instance, at the beginning of the last century he designed and built the first two steam fishing vessels in the province, perhaps in Canada. That they were not a complete success lies in their operation, not in their design and construction.

This catalogue of Pentz vessels is a valuable source of information about this period of wooden Nova Scotian vessels. The era covered is the twilight of wooden sail and steam shipbuilding. Though none were very large, the tern schooners built for the French, and those which ended up in the Portuguese White Fleet had productive lives. Another tern spent a useful career in South African waters. Simms opens a window onto the working lives of these sail transports. One schooner was used to collect tropical birds for Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology; another was the mother ship to an aerial survey of Labrador timber resources; quite a few found themselves in the rum running business. In fact, it seems that few spent their entire lives as fishermen or cargo carriers. It is interesting to note the large percentage of vessels which were lost running ashore, suggesting that even during this relatively late period, navigational skills were still wanting.

The most entertaining as well as informative aspects of the book cover the many stories which Simms has unearthed about the working lives of the people who managed and operated the vessels his grandfather built. It is also noteworthy that for a few years about 1910, many schooners were designed by Thomas F. McManus, the Boston Naval Architect noted for his Indian Head and knockabout designs. McGill's and other Shelburne yards built many schooners to his designs, especially those destined for Newfoundland customers.

The splitting of the indices into General, Persons, Ships and Business is useful and makes locating information a little easier. The ships are listed chronologically through the text and there is also an alphabetical list of the craft with basic specifications and name changes. Unfortunately, there are many irritating though minor errors, which might have been eliminated by an editor. The author also seems fascinated with footnotes with a couple on the pronunciation of words and others simply

covering terms and definitions included in the Glossary. It is abundantly clear that this advanced genealogical study came about after long and extensive research in archives, newspaper morgues, registers and many other sources over an extensive period of time. It is an affectionate introduction, examination and useful documentation of a shipbuilding ancestor well deserving of such dedication.

David Walker
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James Pritchard. *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, www.cambridge.org, 2004. xxvii +484pp, illustrations, maps, tables, footnotes, appendices, bibliography, index. US$75.00, cloth; ISBN 0-521-82742-6.

Awarded the Canadian Historical Association's prestigious Ferguson prize in 2005, *In Search of Empire* is Professor Pritchard's third and most ambitious book. While his first two works on aspects of the French navy in the 1740s and 1750s were derived almost entirely from his own research in French manuscripts, this book depends greatly on the author's grasp of a rich and wide-ranging recent historiography. In many ways, the book is a serious attempt to demonstrate how far our understanding of French America and the West Indies has advanced since the shadow of his original mentor, William Eccles, first appeared. Eccles himself never cast his net as widely as Pritchard has here, even with his *France in America* (1972). Perhaps this book is also a return to the subject of Pritchard's PhD thesis, *Ships, Men, and Commerce: A Study of Maritime Activity in New France, 1701-1744.* (University of Toronto, 1971 ), but a subj ect he has transformed both by his years of teaching and the vast expansion of the historiography.

The most useful aspect of this book is the inclusion of all of France's fourteen colonies in the Americas and Antilles. Those who lecture to undergraduates in comparative European colonial history will find this particularly useful. The administrative structure, demography and society, economy, politics and the role of the military and navy form the principal elements.

Pritchard's main theme is that by 1730, France had failed to establish an American empire. For him the principal enemy of empire formation was not Dutch, Spanish or English/British rivalry, but the French government itself. Without knowing his definition of empire, readers might be at a loss to understand his point. If, in 1730, in a London coffee house you asked any British sea officer or member of parliament if the French had yet established an American empire, his answer, I believe, would have been quite different from the one Professor Pritchard provides.

Though his enormous effort in researching and writing this book have been recognized in a well-deserved manner, I must query some of his statements. He asserts that "the overseas authority of the early French state of Louis XIV and his successors was not well-developed, elaborate, or effective" (230). To one who has studied the simultaneously developing English/British colonial empire, this seems curious, as elsewhere he remarked that "French colonies were state directed - indeed French authorities were obsessed with regulation and control..." (71). No French colony experienced the level of neglect by the Mother Country to equal the "salutary neglect" characteristic of the experience of the British mainland American colonies until the mid-1740s. We British empire enthusiasts consider the seaborne empires of France, Spain, and Portugal as examples of "close" control by the metropolitan authorities. How else could the French state, for instance, have prevented printing presses from being established in the colonies? The British government, by contrast, did not prevent and could not have prevented the publication of some five thousand books and dozens of newspapers in colonial America before 1776.

The author states that colonial "populations were among the most free during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (70). How could this have been true, as the bulk of the inhabitants were slaves? By the author's own count, in 1730 Saint-Domingue, Martinique, and Guadeloupe had an estimated population of

180,600, of whom 88 per cent were slaves. Did "free" apply only to"white settler populations"? He correctly asserts in his chapter 'Settlements and Societies' that the "population and social makeup of each colony was like nothing found in France," as all were "multiethnic and multicultural" (72).

Pritchard's useful discussion of the various colonial economies suggests that North American fur rescued "a dying European industry" (123). Nothing that I have read, for instance, in the work of Bernard Allaire *(Pelleteries, manchons et chapeaux de castor. Les fourrures nord-américaines à Paris, 1500-1632* (Paris: Presses de l'université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1999, indicates that the long-standing industry of the furrier was declining in France. Indeed, the opening up of Russia to European trade in the sixteenth century had already stimulated the industry before North American furs arrived in France in any great quantity. Throughout the chapter in which fur, along with tobacco, fish, and sugar are considered, almost nothing is said about the fluctuating volume of furs exported to France, the very reasons they were harvested. Rather, the focus is on tax revenue raised in France by these imports. Curiously, the highly regulated French state apparently collected few trade statistics so that Dr Pritchard is reduced to counting ship movements, without any idea - except perhaps for slavers - what they were carrying and in what quantities.

When he informs us that with "little currency, capital, or credit, French colonists remained prisoners of their metropolitan creditors, who held them in a remorseless grip" (229), he forgets that credit was the sinew of trade. Any trader or merchant, French or otherwise, was simultaneously both debtor and creditor. To be in debt was to be the recipient of credit. If the metropolitan credit was "little," as he states, then colonial debt was likewise "little." Interest, the cost of debt, merely reflected the fluctuating price of money. If to have credit extended directly expanded business opportunities and wealth, which in turn would raise the living standards of the debtors, the manner in which this may have affected the French colonies is something that might well be undertaken in future research.

Pritchard's most valuable contribution is the last section of his book, which describes the impact on the colonies ofthe Franco-Dutch Warof1672-78, the Nine Years' War, 1688-97, and the Wars of the Spanish Succession, 1702-13. All three began in Europe but had, on occasion, a profound impression on the colonies. Pritchard's detailed understanding of the fluctuating naval and military implications ofthe wars is masterly.

If this book proves to be Professor Pritchard's final major contribution to our understanding of the early French seaborne empire, it marks forty years of largely delightful and rewarding toil in the archives of the French Republic. We thank and salute him, as he focuses on new lines of historical inquiry.

Julian Gwyn
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Brian Richardson. *Longitude and Empire, How Captain Cook's Voyages Changed the World,* Vancouver, BC; UBC Press, www.ubcpress.ca 2005. xvi +240 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $ 85.00, cloth; ISBN0-7748-1189-7.

It must be a daunting task to write yet another book on James Cook. There is probably no explorer about whom more has been written than that eighteenth-century Englishman. The publications include biographies, books about his voyages of exploration and the ethnographical collections he brought back, the drawings and paintings, navigation, cartography, astronomy, his discoveries in relation to contemporary explorers like Wallis and Bougainville, and of course Cook's murder. One wonders if it is reasonably possible to present new views on the voyages and the man who is generally regarded as the greatest explorer in history.

Before Cook's time, the Pacific was virtually unexplored: it was an empty space on maps and charts. By the end of his third voyage, after his murder, there was little left to discover, and most of the credit goes to him. The jigsaw

puzzle ofthe earth's surface had almost been put together: remaining *terra incognita* included the Arctic regions, the Antarctic and the interiors of the continents that would all have to wait until more peaceful times. Cook's voyages took place on the eve of a period of major changes and great political and social turmoil. The American and French Revolutions were followed by the rise of the British Empire and its naval power, and international stability. Meanwhile, Cook's voyages were not forgotten. They had made a lasting impact, not only by his accomplishments but also by the work of those scholars who sailed with him. The question is: was their impact so powerful that people afterwards looked at the world anew, or were they an important element in an ever-changing world? In *Longitude and Empire,* Brian Richardson, a librarian at Windward Community College in Hawaii, has taken it upon himself to show how Cook's voyages changed the world. Although he quite rightly approaches the issue from various aspects, I have chosen to reflect on navigation only. As the word *Longitude* in the title implies, it must be a crucial point in his argumentation.

In the first part of the book, Cook's navigation is discussed and compared with that of Drake and Anson. Drake circumvented the globe two centuries before Cook, when the knowledge of navigation and cartography was at an infinitely lower level than in the 1760s. Wishing us to believe that little had changed in the intervening period, the author writes that until Cook's time, ships still only "sailed down the latitude," that is in east-west courses. This is not true. In 1500, Cabrai ventured into the Atlantic to find a favourable wind for the crossing to the Cape of Good Hope (and unexpectedly reached Brazil). From the early seventeenth century onward, ships of the Dutch and English East India Companies navigated the Atlantic and Indian Oceans toward the Cape, the Arabian peninsular, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and beyond to China, sailing oblique courses, while profiting from prevailing winds and sea currents. It's true, they used established routes, something that could not be said of Anson's exploits when he sailed in South American waters, in the 1740s. The problems Anson encountered dramatically underlined the need for a practical solution to find longitude at sea. The process toward such a solution was already underway. It had started with the founding of the Royal Society, and the *Académie Royale de Science,* followed by the establishment of the observatories in Greenwich and Paris, the passing of the *Longitude Act,* and the invention of the octant. Improvements accelerated in the second half of the eighteenth century with the method of finding longitude through lunar distances (lunars), and the construction of marine timekeepers. The accomplishment was mainly shared between German, French and British scholars, scientific instrument makers, and seamen. The lunar method was primarily based on tables compiled by the Germans Tobias Mayer and Leonard Euler, and before Maskelyne it was used at sea successfully by the Frenchmen Lacaille and Pringé. John Harrison received the prize for longitude, but technically the work of his French contemporaries Le Roy and Berthoud was equally important. Their timekeepers were successfully used in the Pacific by explorers like Laperouse and D'Entrecasteaux, less than a decade after Cook. These men too contributed to the changing of the world. When scholarship and technology came together in the 1760s, it was too late for Anson, but not for James Cook. He succeeded in employing the methods of longitude using lunars and a timekeeper. He was, in fact, the right man at the right time, and without this remarkable person, the modernization of navigation and cartography might have taken longer. I agree with the author that Cook was more than an historical agent who discovered various places (172).

*Longitude and Empire,* however, does not place these developments in the wider context in which they occurred, but tries to persuade the reader that progress was due to Cook's voyages alone. Besides lacking a somewhat broader view of what was going on in navigation, the author is not always critical about his sources. The journal of Cook's first voyage soon became immensely popular, and it is referred to abundantly in *Longitude and Empire.* By order of the Admiralty, Dr John Hawkesworth, a well-known journalist, edited it and was paid the handsome sum of £6000 of which the explorer never saw a penny. But

above all, Cook was mortified by the result: it was not the book that he had written. It is therefore surprising that "the focus [of *Longitude and Empire]* will be to determine how the voyages, as printed text written in the first person, with Cook as the main character, imagine the world" (16). The fact that the two versions are sometimes compared does not clarify matters very much. Hawkesworth soon died, but Alexander Dalrymple, the cartographer of the East India Company, did not. He remained Cook's adversary, accusing him of not having put enough effort in looking for the Great Southern Continent. Rather than drawing this to the reader's attention, the author somewhat glorifies Cook as "the voice of Enlightenment exploration" (12), and as "a geographical Linnaeus" (101).

Unfortunately, the book includes a number of errors. The crew facing bitter cold "in their cabins" (51) is an anachronism. It would take over another century before members of ship's crews got anywhere near to having cabins; on his first voyage even Captain Cook shared (with Joseph Banks). The explanation of how latitude is found at sea (32) is unsatisfactory, and not fitting Cook's standard of navigation. The sentence "Calculating the current time was relatively easy, assuming that the sky could be clearly seen"'(34,1 have not lifted this out of a context), sounds like witchcraft. On the same page it is explained that the lunar method did not depend on knowing the time on the prime meridian. It most certainly did, albeit not by a timekeeper, but through times on the prime meridian that were predicted by astronomers, and printed in lunar tables.

In the end, it must be asked what role Cook's navigation played in the forming of the British Empire? It was significant indeed, even though numerous Pacific archipelagos were to become French colonies. But as a hydrographer, Cook was surpassed within two decades by the Frenchman C-F Beautemps-Beaupré, and the man whose talents in organizing the British Hydrographie Department eventually contributed substantially toward the creation of the empire, Francis Beaufort.

The concept of this book is interesting, but the author has certainly not convinced me that Cook's voyages changed the world in the way he has laid down in *Longitude and Empire.*

W.F.J. Môrzer Bruyns
Bussum, Netherlands

Ricardo Perez. *The State and Small-Scale Fisheries in Puerto Rico.* Gainesville, FLA: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, 2005. xix + 218 pp., maps, figures, tables, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. US $59.95, 0-8130-2901-5.

It is difficult to place this book, a reworking of Dr Pérez' dissertation. The author states his argument as being that government retarded fisheries development in Puerto Rico by limiting opportunities for capital accumulation in fishing communities. That thread certainly runs through the work, but it is both less and more than that: Pérez' thesis is not proven, yet it does not encompass more than a fraction of the ideas presented. If it is thus hard to say what this book is, it is easy to say what it is not. For Canadian readers, a study of the social anthropology of communities engaged in the marginal fisheries of the Caribbean region would be of great value as a contrast to the well-documented, larger-scale but still small-boat fisheries of Newfoundland. This is not such a study. Rather, it is firmly anchored in a Puerto Rican context, even though that required the author to add an apologia for its focus on a group, commercial fishermen, comprising much less than one tenth of one percent of the island's population.

Puerto Rico, like most other Caribbean islands, has only limited fishery resources and even more limited development of a fishing industry. Into the mid-twentieth century, near-shore fishing supplied but could not satisfy local demand, while there was much inefficiency and wastage of the catch through lack of appropriate technology and infrastructure. From the 1930s, the Puerto Rican and American federal governments undertook the usual range of programs intended to overcome obvious problems and modernize the fisheries, with the usual equivocal and often dismal results. There was concurrent industrial development on land,

following boom and bust cycles partly driven by government policies. That development had an impact on the fisheries, expanding markets for seafood, providing alternative employment opportunities but also causing environmental degradation. The interactions between, and inconsistencies of, these various development policies were doubtless important in shaping the coastal communities, but it is less sure that they were so overwhelmingly central as to justify Perez' insistence on viewing those communities through the lens of inadequate governance.

The author selected three adjacent communities for study. One has developed a small but prosperous fishery, primarily SCUBA diving for lobsters. The second has only some desultory commercial fishing, mostly netting of finfish, while the third is inland, and its residents only fish at the borderline between recreational and subsistence activity. Sadly, Perez' sample of interviewees was drawn neither randomly nor systematically across those communities, nor did he distinguish the three in most of his analyses, thus confounding their fundamental differences with all other factors shaping the answers to his questions. His analysis of those answers, the sole original information that this book provides, too often took the form of naive interpretations of simplistic numerical data, coloured by the author's own preconceptions. Beyond the numbers, it is clear that the author has great empathy for his subjects, but it is not so evident that he ever understood them. As a result, fascinating insights too often lie just beyond the reader's grasp.

Moreover, the analytical results, and such brief descriptive comments on the fishermen and their communities as Perez provides, are scattered as small nuggets amidst an almost-impenetrable thicket of anthropological theory (seemingly designed to include citations of every paper the author had read), discursive treatments of the tangled history of industrial development in Puerto Rico, and much else that is extraneous to any discernable theme. The material actually relevant to the book's title or its author's declared argument could, with advantage, have formed a brief and concise essay, distilled from the original dissertation format.

There is an important story to be told of fisheries development and modernization in the Caribbean basin. When someone is ready to tell that tale, this book will provide one of the valuable case studies. Most readers would be well advised to wait for Dr Pérez' work to be thus reassessed and placed in a broader context.

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Norman Polmar. *The Naval Institute Guide to the Ships and Aircraft of the US Fleet* (Eighteenth Edition). Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2005. x + 649 pp., photographs, illustrations, appendices, index. US $76.46, paper; ISBN 1-59114-685-2.

One navy stands head and shoulders above the rest: every other fleet falls far behind the United States Navy, not just in raw numbers but especially the ability to project power, anywhere in the world. Since 1939, the "periodical" *Ships and Aircraft of the US Fleet* has been an important one-stop source of non-classified data. This latest edition, the eighteenth (the previous version, the seventeenth, was published in 2001 ) is no exception. It could be described as a "handbook," except it's too large and heavy a volume to fit comfortably in the hand. As you might expect, this book is chock full of valuable data.

The USN is continuing to shrink in numbers of ships, and its personnel are being stretched operationally, while at the same time being challenged by the "transformation" required by new technologies, the requirements of brown-water and expeditionary warfare, and political/economic pressure at home. As the proverb has it, "may you live in interesting times," and *Ships and Aircraft* provides a snapshot as of 2004/2005, a very challenging period for the American Navy.

The bulk of the thirty-four chapters is devoted to hardware, especially ships, type by type, class by class. Yes, battleships are included, probably for the last time; *Iowa* and *Wisconsin* are due to be struck off strength in 2007. The inclusion of the USS *Constitution*

(338) is a particularly nice touch. Besides the technical particulars for each class (typically displacement, dimensions, propulsion, crew, armament, radars and fire control, etc), the origins of the class and often the source of the ships' names is included. Of particular value, however, is the trenchant analysis included in each chapter: both with regard to the warship type as well as for most of the individual classes. An excellent example is the few paragraphs devoted to the cancelled "Land Attack Destroyer" (DD21) program, which has been superseded by today's DD(X) (133). Ships of the US Coast Guard and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are also included.

Aircraft, fixed-wing and rotary, are given the same treatment, including lists of squadrons and the type of aircraft flown. The growing importance of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) is shown by their thorough coverage in chapter 29. Weapon systems: guns; mines; missiles (including airborne); nuclear weapons; and torpedoes are described. As with most entries, various types not only have their unclassified performance data listed, but often include such information as their cost. An interesting example is the "no frills" anti-surface torpedo requested by then-Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, $200,000 each as opposed to the $2.43 million dollar unit cost for the Mk 48 ADCAP (538).

Electronics - electronic warfare systems, radars, sonars, torpedo countermeasures, and weapons control systems - are summarized in chapter 31. The explanation of the cryptic joint electronics type designation (e.g. the AN/SPG-60 fire control radar) in Figure 31-1 is very useful. No doubt page 540 will be much photocopied! One quibble is that not all the various radar and other antennae described are illustrated, which will be source of frustration to anyone trying to untangle the electronics suite aboard a modern warship.

Even more useful than the details of ships and weapons will be the chapters covering the structure of the USN. Chapter 4, "Defense Organization," lays out, in a very understandable way, the American Department of Defense, and the myriad associated organizations, including the unified combat commands and joint task forces. Subsequent chapters deal with the organization of the navy itself, not neglecting the Military Sealift Command and the US Marine Corps. Concisely explained, this sort of background material can be hard to find in one spot, particularly when deadlines are pending.

Finally, six appendices summarize naval force levels from 1945 onwards; the various ship-building programs; transfers of ships to foreign powers between 2000 and 2005; those naval and coast guard vessels preserved as museums; a brief history of the aborted "Arsenal Ship" program; and an explanation of the popular term "transformation."

The book is profusely illustrated throughout, with a nice mix of photographs that clearly show identification features of some ships, while others are simply impressive shots of warships. For all it's undoubted value, *Ships and Aircraft* is restricted to a single nation: any analyst interested in the navies of the world will still need ready access to one of the standard (and pricey!) references, such as *Jane's Fighting Ships*. That being said, anyone writing about the US Navy as it is today will want to consult this book frequently.

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Portia Takakjian. *Anatomy of the Ship, The 32-gun Frigate Essex.* London, Conway Maritime Press, www.conwaymaritime.com, 2005. 128 pp., photographs, tables, drawings, sources, bibliography. UK£ 25.00, cloth; ISBN 1-84486-013-2 (Available in the United States and Canada from the US Naval Institute Press, www.isni.org, US $42.95.)

The aim of the Anatomy of the Ship Series is to provide the finest documentation of individual ships and ship types ever published. The drawings are accurate, visually exciting and totally comprehensive, offering ship buffs, historians and model makers a novel insight into the technicalities of each type covered.

This book is a reprint of the 1990 version published by Conway Maritime Press. The late Portia Takakjian was a book illustrator

and draughts-person for over twenty years, including being the senior illustrator-draughts-person at Columbia University's Lamont Observatory. While her model building started as a hobby, she advanced to the professional level, with models in private, industrial, and museum collections. She was one of the few individuals who taught model-building courses in a formal classroom environment. She mastered the extensive inventory of skills needed to take a framed ship model from research and draughting stages through to the completed model.

The format of the *Essex* book differs slightly from others in the series: starting with the acknowledgments and followed by the introduction section, containing design and construction details, including information on the various rebuilds during the ship's career. This is followed by segments on the colour scheme, flags, rigging and sails, her service history, a career summary, and sources used. (The author apologizes for the fact that space constraints limit the bibliography.) The excellent selection of photographs occupies eight pages and includes photographs of models built before and after Takakjian's earlier work on *Essex* was published. The drawings, superbly executed by the author and highlighting her draughtsmanship skills, take the remaining 95 pages. What the publisher describes as "Complete with a 1/144 Scale Fold-Out Plan" is printed on the back, or inside of the dust jacket. This is not what is normally understood as a foldout; namely, two pages with only one end secured at the gutter.

USS *Essex,* designed by William Hackett, was launched in 1799. While rated at 32 guns, she invariably mounted more. Her comprehensive refit, completed in 1809 by Josiah Fox, was recorded in detail by him. Later, the Peabody Museum of Salem released the *Essex* Papers by Phillip Chadwick Foster Smith, along with drawings by the late William Avery Baker. Using these and other sources, including a contemporary watercolour painting in the Peabody Museum, Takakjian undertook a detailed study and interpretation of William Hackett's draught of *Essex.* This draught has long been a subject of controversy due to what many feel was its unpolished state, questionable draughtsmanship, and confusing lines. Takakjian, following an exhaustive analysis, is cer-tain that the draught was, in fact, a working drawing used by Hackett to make changes as he worked out design and construction details. The author presents her analysis of the draught and Hackett's methods clearly, logically, and methodically. Not only did she create superb drawings of the vessel, she built a model of it, verifying her interpretation. This model was featured in a monograph entitled *32-Gun Frigate Essex: Building a Plank-on-Frame Model.* It was published in 1985 by Phoenix Publications, Inc. and contains many photographs and illustrations of the model.

This edition of the Anatomy Series suffers the oft-repeated complaint of pages where plates crossing the gutter are effectively useless, and the plan on the back of the dust jacket is a poor substitute for true foldout plates. Two-page foldouts would be a distinct service to readers and model builders using these publications. Unfortunately, in this book, the printer added a unique touch of his own to the eighteen plates crossing the gutter by mis-aligning many vertically. While most are minor misalignments, one is a full three-sixteenths of an inch out. This is downright shoddy reproduction.

While there are a few minor proofreading errors, for example, on two drawings on page 92 illustrating anchor stowage and handling gear, the details are in many cases wrongly identified. In addition, while some items are numbered, the corresponding description and number is missing in the legend. I suspect that this occurred when the information on Takakjian's drawings was transferred to the printing plates, but I don't really know.

This book is an example of what can be achieved when someone with all the requisite skills undertakes such a task. With the above noted exceptions attributed to the publisher, the book is recommended for advanced model builders, ship buffs and historians. Advanced scratch model builders, however, would need to produce one-piece drawings from the plates that cross the gutters to allow them to build a model.

Roger Cole
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Daniel Vickers with Vince Walsh. *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, xiii+336 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, endnotes, index. US $35.00, cloth; ISBN 0-300-10067-1.

In *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail,* historian Daniel Vickers returns again to a theme he first explored in his 1994 work *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1850:* why did individuals choose to go to sea during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries in New England? But Vickers' work is more than just a collective biography of the seamen of Salem. Through exhaustive research and fluid writing, the author is able to convey to the reader the ways in which seafaring changed during this period, and what these changes meant to Salem (and by extension, the rest of maritime New England). *Young Men and the Sea,* then, is as much a story of the maritime industry in this region as it is a detailed assessment of the motivations that drew fishermen, naval officers, privateers and merchant seamen to their respective trades.

Vickers relies on demographic data to recreate the world of a typical Salem mariner. He is able to redress a growing reluctance on the part of many historians to rightfully acknowledge the central role that maritime affairs played in colonial New England. Indeed, while most associate Salem with the witchcraft hysteria of 1692, few recognize that sailors, many of whom squared equally poorly with the social norms of landed New England society as did witches, constituted the central cast of characters in the long span of Salem's history (51). Salem, so often depicted as an agrarian community, was in fact, among the most maritime of all Atlantic Basin communities, and maritime labour was, for many, a defining part of their life. Rather than rushing precociously into the interior, early New Englanders stayed close to the sea, recognizing the pivotal role that maritime connections would play in their infant society. The earliest New Englanders, then "by necessity, had become maritime peoples," albeit ones who relied chiefly on coastal commerce during the first few decades of settlement (11). Indeed, most men in colonial Salem spent a considerable part of their lives employed on the water; the ubiquitous maritime components of New England society meant that this coastal shipping, boating and fishing defined the life cycle of almost every man and boy who dwelled in this ocean-fronting society. Those left behind were similarly affected. Given the dangers that accompanied a maritime career, men often paid for their choice of career with their lives. Rates of widowhood in Salem were roughly double that of surrounding agricultural communities. Moreover, with men removed from home on frequent seafaring expeditions, women assumed a degree of economic independence unknown in other communities.

Vickers then traces the changes that marked maritime life in the eighteenth century. Where seafaring had once defined a goodly portion of most men's lives, it was now becoming a transitional occupation that was no longer the expected, nor accepted, norm. Young men were still expected to spend time before the mast, "but to remain a sailor into middle age, after any realistic hope of promotion had vanished, was now seen as a mark of exceptional poverty and social dependence"(l 19). In addition, the maritime trades were becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous. While seafaring had always been a dangerous occupation, "mariners in earlier times knew what they were getting themselves into; their nineteenth century counterparts frequently did not" (187).

The changing nature of American maritime commerce, from coastal runs in familiar waters to transoceanic commerce that girdled the globe, was probably most to blame for the changing nature of the maritime community. The result was predictable: as fewer local sailors stayed with the trade, more immigrants took their place. Larger ships, that were more complex to handle, replaced coasting schooners, and masters came from a different social class than the men they commanded. Where masters had formerly been drawn from the local community, and had frequently come up through the hawsepipe, they were now the

product of a middling gentry class, while the rest of Salem became increasingly economically diversified.

The impact on maritime labour was telling: earlier, masters had chosen their crews based on personal friendship or family connection; in that environment, an "inheritance of obligations" protected seamen, though it may have "cut against the grain of economic exigency" (129). Now, with crews unknown to masters, seamen faced a harder lot. Freed from parochial obligations, masters were more inclined to treat their crew harshly, and admiralty courts, unlike their terrestrial brethren, were unwilling to loosen the bonds that kept a master in control of his crew. Not surprisingly, rates of desertion skyrocketed during this period. As seafaring became less localized and less predictable, older sailors from sundry parts of the world replaced the local boys who had previously composed Salem's merchant marine. These local boys, for their part, were increasingly drawn into other activities, as Salem became an industrial town: "where white canvas once billowed, black smoke now belched" (212). While maritime labour had once been the defining aspect of a Salem youth, it was now the province of an increasingly marginalized class.

*Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* is an important work that redirects the attention of scholars back to the maritime dimensions of New England's history. Moreover, Daniel Vickers is able, through exhaustive and compelling research, to show the changes that characterized maritime labour during the first two and a half centuries of Salem's existence. One wonders how these changes manifested themselves in other parts of the Atlantic seaboard, and if patterns observed in Salem would be repeated in Philadelphia, Charleston or other ports. A comparative analysis of such scope might also illustrate general trends within the Atlantic maritime economy that this localized study of Salem was unable to fully illuminate. Still, these are minor quibbles and Dan Vickers should be commended for an excellent demographic study that should stimulate similar works on other parts of the Atlantic World. *Young Men and the Sea* deserves a wide audience and guarantees an engaged readership.

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Pieter van der Merwe, (ed.). *Science and the French and British Navies, 1700 - 1850,* Greenwich, UK: National Maritime Museum, www.nmm.ac.uk, 2003. vii + 160 pp., illustrations, endnotes, index. ISBN 0-948065-51-6.

Conference proceedings can be a "hard sell." They may be too broad ranging in subject or the papers too uneven in quality to justify their commonly high cost. *Science and the French and British Navies, 1700-1850,* the proceedings of the 8* Anglo-French Naval Historians' Conference in 2001, jointly organized by the National Maritime Museum of Greenwich and the Service Historique de la Marine, is an attractive little volume that merits serious attention. The contributors are almost evenly divided between France and Britain, and are for the most part historians well established and respected in their fields. The work presented here by the younger scholars suggests that they are well on their way to comparable seniority and respect.

The book opens with what was presumably, the keynote address of the conference by N.A.M. Rodger. With his hallmark characteristic of sweeping research (the notes cite works in French and Dutch), Rodger reviews the relationship of Enlightenment scientific work and attitudes, first to the French navy, and then to the British. It is a comprehensive overview which aptly sets the stage for what follows. The French were more rigorous in their separation of "pure" science from practical work, and their naval officers, more mindful of the social imperative of being gentlemen, were less likely to stray from theoretical work. This survey is followed by a succession of neat, tightly written articles closely focussed on specific topics. Together they combine to make a very satisfying whole.

The next two chapters each examine a national "feature" as near as possible to the

period defined by the conference dates. Gloria Clifton, author of the invaluable *Directory of British Scientific Instrument Makers, 1550 - 1851,* discusses London mathematical instrument makers. The different social distinctions of Britain (instruments makers could become important members of the Royal Society), coupled with workplace regulations that on the one hand, did not confine them to one guild and on the other, permitted masters to take on several apprentices simultaneously, gave Britain a real advantage in the eighteenth century in both the development and production of sextants and other important navigational and surveying instruments. The French advantage during the same period lay with their Dépôt des Cartes et plans de la Marine. Although France had one; the British office of the Hydrographer of the Navy was not established until 1795. Pascal Geneste, an archivist and for three years the director of the Archives Centrales de la Marine at Vincennes, reviews the history of the Dépôt from its establishment in 1720 to 1850. He shows how, "the Depot, from its humble beginnings as a simple store of technical documents, became ... a true hydrographie manufactory, with an exclusive monopoly, a very rapid rhythm in the growth of its collections and total autonomy of production" (44-45).

Alain Morgat, curator of the Bibliothèque Centrale du Service Historique de la Marine, introduces the theme of exploration with his look at the Lapérouse expedition, which was viewed from the very beginning as a continuation and completion of Cook's work. Morgat enumerates the examples of the English influence as well as the similarities between the Cook and Lapérouse, including the coincidence of their fates. This is followed by "Exploration and Colonization in the Pacific: Three French Voyages under the Bourbon Restoration and the July Monarchy" by Hélène Biais, a senior lecturer at the Université de Champagne-Ardennes. All three expeditions had strong commercial overtones, and resulted, ultimately, in French claims to the Marquesas Islands and Tahiti. They could be contrasted with the contemporary Untied States Exploring Expedition, or the slightly later overland Palliser expedition in western Canada.

The next two papers examine important aspects on the Royal Navy during the French wars. First, Roger Morriss writes about "Practicality and Prejudice: the Blockade Strategy and Naval Medicine during the French Revolutionary War, 1793-1801." He corrects the imbalance of attention on the fight against scurvy, pointing out the important contributions of senior naval officers, bureaucrats, and many ships' surgeons, while specifically downplaying the role of Physician of the Channel Fleet Thomas Trotter. Jonathon Coad, a vice president of the Society for Nautical Research, writes about "New Ideas and New Materials: their Impact on the Royal Dockyards during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars." Pointing to the appointment of Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Bentham (brother of the political philosopher Jeremy) as the Inspector-General of Naval Works. Coad joins those who argue that the RN was much more progressive in its adoption of science and technology than those who repeat the canard about "Their Lordships' bounden duty..." want to think. Bentham was responsible for introducing automation to the dockyards to the fullest extent of existing technology. This including machine production of blocks and the adoption of steam pumps for drydocks.

The three final papers look at topics of the post-1815 period. Randolph Cock, a speaker at the CNRS 2004 conference, examines the role of Hydrographer of the Navy Sir Francis Beaufort in supporting science alongside his survey work. Ann Savours (who, like Roger Morriss and Nicholas Rodger, requires no introduction) examines three less well-known Antarctic voyages of John Biscoe, Henry Foster and James Clark Ross in the 1830s and 40s. Finally, Christian Borde, a senior lecturer at the Université du Littoral-Côte-d'Opale de Boulogne-sur-Mer examines why French governments at various levels have claimed that Frédéric Sauvage invented the propellor, and convincingly refutes them.

This collection makes a very useful contribution to the history of science in these two navies and is easily recommended to all who are working in the field. As the papers are all about ten pages in length, it is a very readable

introduction to the field for those with a more general interest.

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Clive Wilkinson. *The British Navy and the State in the 18th Century*. Rochester, N Y ; The Boydell Press, www.boydellandbrewer.com, in association with the National Maritime Museum, 2004. x + 246 pp., illustrations, footnotes, appendices, bibliography, index. US $90, cloth; ISBN 1-84383-042-6.

"What has become of the Navy or what has become of the money granted for it?" demanded the Earl of Bristol in 1779 ( 165). Historians have often debated the Royal Navy's preparedness in the later eighteenth century. Scholars have usually concentrated on personalities such as the first lords of the Admiralty, whose policies have been variously praised or blamed. The role of Lord Sandwich has been prominent in these debates, with historians lining up for or against his responsibility for the neglect of the navy before the American War of Independence. Sandwich complained that he inherited a "paper fleet" of technically extant but largely useless ships. Others accused Sandwich himself of creating this problem.

Clive Wilkinson sets these personalities in context through a vigorous engagement with the primary sources of naval administrative history. Too often, historians (like first lords) relied on material compiled for Parliamentary reports or other official inquiries. Wilkinson questions this methodology, pointing out that recent research on dockyard operations has highlighted inaccuracies in contemporary reports. He pushes behind the official statistics and rhetoric to consider the operations and limitations of naval administration as a *system.*

At the heart of his meticulously researched argument is a careful examination of the process of financing and reporting which created relationships between the Treasury, the Admiralty, and Parliament. One of Wilkinson's greatest achievements in this analysis is clarity: his prose is lucid, his explanations are organized around useful chapter sub-headings, his publisher had the wisdom to allow footnotes, and his many charts and tables help the reader to grasp the points at hand. One of most important of these concerns the naval debt. Wilkinson shows how this debt was far from a problem; in fact, it was "the very engine that made [the Navy] work effectively" (64). It was also a vital tool of ministerial accountability. Creative accountancy might help to rationalize the reason for an increase in naval debt, but the increase still had to be accounted for in Parliament. Wilkinson mounts a convincing challenge to the traditional view of naval finance as inept and "medieval" (65).

A detailed description of the system of naval administration is followed by chronologically-organized chapters that discuss the period from the end of the War of the Spanish Succession to the end of the American War of Independence. The main themes here include the growing commercial demand for naval protection, the dock and yard infrastructure which limited the pace of new shipbuilding, expanding international and imperial naval commitments, and the varying personal influence of successive first lords. Wilkinson also considers the problems posed by shipboard environment (especially on the health of crews and the longevity of ships), the development of modern managerial systems in the navy's civil branch, and the mutually reinforcing relationship between the navy and Parliament. All of this successfully reinforces the book's main thesis: that sound management, (mostly) competent leadership, and an increasingly managerial Admiralty all helped to keep Britain ahead of its rivals in the later eighteenth century.

The historiographical location of this book was its only puzzling quality. The work of Daniel A. Baugh, especially his *British Naval Administration in the Age ofWalpole* (1965) is frequently cited, and Baugh himself wrote an enthusiastic forward for the book. Wilkinson notes that his study was "intended more to complement" Baugh's work than to revise it (36). Much has changed since the 1960s, however, in terms of how historians deal with administrative systems. One does not have to

agree with Michel Foucault to understand that broader cultural contexts are crucial to understanding both the shape and the *power* of systems. Wilkinson knows this at some level, as when he reminds us that the Admiralty was part of "a broad and complex naval organization, itself integrated into the machinery of government" (20). His bold venture into the dynamics and minutiae of that machinery is original, and his case for a less personality-driven analysis is compelling. What is missing, however, is an analysis of the *system* as such. After all that has happened in the structuralist and post-structuralist historiography of administrative systems, this silence is striking. This is indeed a book which complements, rather than revises, the work of previous generations.

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Glyndwr Williams. *Buccaneers, Explorers and Settlers. British Enterprise and Encounters in the Pacific, 1670-1800.* Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., Variorum Collected Studies Series, www. Ashgate.com, 2005. xii + 300 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, index. US $109.00, cloth; ISBN 9 780860 789673.

Glyndwr Williams is an extraordinary Welsh historian who has become renowned as the leading scholar of Pacific exploration active today. In this dense tome, his publishers have collected seventeen of Williams's papers on a wide range of Pacific exploration topics and assembled them in a compendium volume of scholarship as broad in its revelations of Williams's knowledge as it is deep. That there is a strong thread of continuity and logic common to all the articles is evident, but the physical presentation of the papers oddly retained the pagination and the fonts from their original publications, giving the book a discomfiting air of stapled-together term papers quite at variance with the quality of their content, and causing an eyebrow to raise at the extraordinarily high retail cost of the book.

That Williams is the successor to J. C. Beaglehole in his mastery and comprehension of the British presence in the Pacific Ocean of the exploratory age is demonstrated clearly, and the particular value of this book is the exposure it gives to the extent of British interest and activity in the South Pacific before the great voyages of Anson, Wallis, Byron and Cook; an activity little known and understood by those who feel B ligh ' s *Bounty* was sailing into waters unknown to Englishmen. As Williams reveals, that was far from the case. In the beginning of the era covered by the book, the Pacific was for all intents and purposes a Spanish domain, if any European power could have been said to dominate so vast a sea. It was the *Mar del Sur,* and British incursions into Pacific waters were largely those of sporadic piracy. It was the eighteenth century, that most momentous of epochs, that brought the disintegration of Spanish primacy in the South Sea, its termination marked by the Nootka Crisis and the passing of initiative in Pacific voyaging to Great Britain. Williams's various essays present an invaluable picture of how all this came to pass.

Before the dawn of the eighteenth century, the commitment to exploration and scientific inquiry for its own sake that would be demonstrated by Joseph Banks, the matured Royal Society, and even the mentality of enlightened seamen such as James Cook, was not important in English minds. If anything drew the subjects of the Stuarts, William and Mary, and Queen Anne into the impossibly remote South Seas, it was the lure of gold from the Spanish Empire and loot from its settlements. Formalized and short-lived "companies" and the free-wheeling flotillas of outright pirates were the first English presences into the Pacific, reappearing there more than a century after the extraordinary voyage of Sir Francis Drake around the world. The goal was fairly simple: to secure some of the "wealth of the Indies" that was flowing into Spain from its worldwide empire. The struggle soon became a clash between the efforts of the Spanish to limit or exclude British trade with the Pacific world, and British attempts either to obtain legally negotiated rights to conduct that trade or to carry out a mixture of illegal trade or outright plunder without regard for legality.

In the event, the illegal penetrations of

the South Seas were by far the more successful, and built a growing body of knowledge in British seamen of the vagaries of Pacific navigation. But, as Williams points out in one paper, as long as the principal aim of British Pacific navigation was the securing of Spanish loot, British ships plied only the known routes of Spanish shipping or coasted the semi-settled Pacific side of America, looting its communities or trading with them as time, inclination and chance provided.

The spark that would ignite an interest in plunging into the limitless expanses of the Pacific simply to see what lay there would not be struck until the cataclysm of the Seven Years' War decided which European nation would be paramount in North America. Britain's victory left a humiliated France to consider the loss of its fledgling worldwide empire in Canada and India, and to reconsider the arguments, that had been raised by French geographers for several decades, that a potential new empire might lie in the unexplored Pacific. Neither Britain nor France had been ignorant of the vast Pacific Basin's potential, and the British had undertaken several half-hearted attempts to launch exploratory voyages. Of these, the most successful British Pacific voyage between 1700 and 1750 was Commodore George Anson's medically disastrous circumnavigation of 1740-1744. It was, however, a naval expedition intent not on exploration but on disrupting Spanish trade as part of the conduct of the War of 1739-1748, and it resulted in the death by scurvy of most of Anson's crewmen—thereby revealing a major inhibition to Pacific travel.

With the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, both Britain and France undertook, for the first time, expeditions into the Pacific motivated as much by exploration, scientific inquiry and pure interest, as by a desire to seek new territories ripe for trade or conquest. Within a decade of the Treaty of Paris, Byron, Wallis, and Cook had led formal expeditions into the uncharted Pacific, and the French had sent Bougainville. Notwithstanding the abilities of Bougainville and his scientific team of embarked observers, it would be the achievements and observations of British navigator James Cook and his naturalists that would provide the widest exposure of what lay in the Pacific to waiting European minds. In the latter part of the book, Williams focuses not only on Cook's navigational and exploratory achievements, but also on their impact and significance. He examines in detail the misgivings of Cook and of subsequent observers about the tragic impact of European contact for the Pacific island populations, and explores the philosophical and psychological impact of Cook's geographical discoveries on European thinking.

Williams's final paper deals with the scientist who participated in James Cook's first voyage, and rose to subsequent primacy in the intellectual world of late Georgian Britain, Joseph Banks. As the companion of Cook, president of the Royal Society, and a personally wealthy naturalist with a keen sense of both scientific inquiry and patriotism, Joseph Banks became the singularly most effective promoter of British investigation and expansion into the Pacific world revealed by Cook's explorations. Banks did so in a lifelong context of competition with the French. By the time Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 and essentially put a bloody end to that centuries-old conflict, Banks had laid the foundation for a British national expansion into the South Pacific. Eventually, this led to the creation of Australia and New Zealand, anchoring one vast corner of the great canopy that was the British empire of the nineteenth century. Williams's remarkable line of thought from the plunders of seventeenth century pirates to the glimmerings of Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth is clear in this valuable volume, deserving of a place on the bookshelf of Pacific scholars. The only regret is that the publisher presented the gold of Williams's thoughts in a cardboard box of shortcut book design. They deserve better.

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Gregory D. Young and Nate Braden. *The Last Sentry: The True Story that inspired the Hunt for Red October*. Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, www.Navalinstitute.org. 2005. xi + 250 pp., photographs, maps, appendices,

glossary of Russian terms, notes, bibliography, index. US $ 28.95, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-992-4.

"I am convinced that a revolutionary consciousness will catch fire among our people" - Soviet naval officer Valéry Sablin in his farewell letter to his parents. *The Last Sentry* is the extraordinary story of an idealistic Russian naval officer who seized control of his ship in 1975 and planned to use it as a platform from which to single-handedly launch a popular uprising. He aimed to purge the regime of corruption and establish a genuinely democratic system, which he believed could still be based on Communism.

The authors both have military pasts. Greg Young was a US Navy aviator when he first became interested in the story while doing research for an academic thesis twenty-five years ago. Nate Braden served in the US Marine Corps as an intelligence officer. Their narrative is based on interviews with Valéry Sablin's widow, as well as Russian and western television films about the incident and published Russian-language accounts. After six decades of communism, Leonid Brezhnev's Soviet Union of the seventies had ossified into what the Russians termed the *Stoya* or stagnation. Young and Braden draw heavily on secondary sources when layering descriptions of the Soviet state and its armed forces into their narrative to provide context. At the end of the book they provide a potted history of the Cold War from the US perspective after 1975. The best parts of the book by far are those which concentrate on Valéry Sablin and the actual mutiny.

A third generation naval officer, Sabin's career had been a model one. He was a product of the prestigious Frunze naval academy in Leningrad which preserved a degree of continuity with the tsarist institution whose premises it occupied. After nine years in the fleet, culminating with time as Executive Officer of an escort, Sablin elected to specialize as a political officer and spent four years at the Military Political Academy in Moscow. Here he read voraciously through the standard writings about Communism and concluded that the regime was perpetuating a self-serving system of nepotism which did not reflect its inspiring slogans. Sablin next joined the new anti-submarine destroyer *Storozhevoy (Sentinel),* of a class designated by NATO as Krivak I. As political officer, he was primarily responsible for inculcating ideology. His broader responsibilities included maintaining morale. *Storozhevoy's* had a crew of 194— 15 officers, a leavening of 14 mostly young *Mitchmaniy* or Warrant Officers and 164 conscripts in their late teens and early twenties.

During his twenty-seven months in the ship, Sablin became convinced that he had a mission to act. Strong-minded, he gained a reputation for stubborn independence. The authors quote his superior in the political officer chain:" He had a character all his own, with several idiosyncrasies. He liked to do things on his own terms" (80). His twice-weekly indoctrination sessions gave him regular contact with all ranks. It appears that Sablin was genuinely interested in people and got to know most of the crew through one-on-one chats. Meanwhile, he decided that he could somehow trigger a regime change by appealing to the Soviet people through the mass media. He had no network of like-minded dissatisfied citizens and did not share his plans in advance with his wife or parents.

Sablin eventually decided to act when *Storozhevoy* was about to go into refit. Four officers, including two key individuals, and some of the crew were on leave. Sablin took a single, 20-year old sailor who admired him into his confidence. Locking the commanding officer up on a pretense while the ship was in Riga, Sablin outlined his intentions to his fellow officers and the warrant officers: they would take the ship to Leningrad to launch his revolution. Dissenters were given a chance to opt out and be confined. Only three (all junior) of the eight other officers present supported Sablin, and one of these quickly defected, escaping to raise the alarm. Five warrant officers were in support and three opposed. Even though Sablin was the only individual with a weapon, it is telling that he was able to confine so many dissidents without a struggle. One of the officers who opted out told a post-Soviet rehabilitation hearing years later that he and the others hoped that Sablin's plan would succeed. Valéry Sablin

next addressed the ship's company who supported him.

*Storozhevoy* put to sea. Within hours, she had reached the Baltic but was surrounded by naval and border guard warships. Aircraft appeared overhead. Sablin broadcast a manifesto to the Soviet people, but because of his sketchy planning, it never reached its intended audience. It was impossibly lengthy, and was transmitted encoded because that is how his poorly briefed young radioman had always cleared outgoing traffic. Warships ignored orders to fire on *Storozhevoy*. After repeated radio orders to stop, the Soviet high command instructed aircraft to disable the ship. Strafing and bombs put the rudder out of action and holed the hull. By now support from the crew was wavering; the dissidents were freed. Sablin and his young collaborator were subsequently tried. Soviet justice prized confessions, even in closed trials. Valéry Sablin was interrogated for weeks and mistreated. When his wife and son were eventually allowed a ten-minute visit in prison, he joked about wanting a dentist because his front teeth had been knocked out. Because of their strong sense of collective identity and tumultuous history, treason is a word with much more powerful connotations for Russians than for the citizens of nations with a long liberal democratic tradition. Eventually confessing to treason, Sablin was executed and his collaborator sentenced to eight years in prison.

The Soviet military hierarchy was obviously shaken by the *Storozhevoy* incident. Crew members were personally questioned by senior officers and then dispersed to other ships; their former ship was transferred to the Pacific with a new complement. The Swedes and others had intercepted radio traffic during the pursuit of *Storozhevoy*. Within days the Soviets set a battered target vessel adrift so that it would wash into Swedish waters to provide a credible cover story. Two weeks later, a freshly-painted Krivak class destroyer bearing *Storozhevoy's* pennant number ostentatiously cruised the western Baltic. During a naval visit to Denmark the following year, the Commander of the Baltic Fleet, who had been appointed when his predecessor was sacked in the wake of the seizure, indignantly shrugged off press questions about a mutiny: in the Soviet Navy? Impossible. Tom Clancy (then an insurance salesman) used Greg Young's original thesis as the inspiration for his best-selling *Hunt for the Red October,* changing the premise to a planned defection rather than a political act.

*The Last Sentry* is illustrated with unique photographs provided by Sablin's widow. Unfortunately, they are reproduced in a dull finish but the book has been bound in the trademark US Naval Institute sturdy binding. Valuable annexes reproduce contemporary documents. The authors are occasionally careless about details and thus do not clarify how *Storozhevoy,* described as making her escape to the open Baltic at her maximum speed of over thirty knots, was overtaken by slower pursuers. There is confusion about how many men rode with Sabin on his fateful adventure: on page 94 the figure given is 194— possibly the number on *Storozhevoy's* books— but page 163 says 162, probably the correct figure. These are quibbles. Overall, *The Last Sentry* is a stimulating examination of Valéry Sablin's quixotic revolt. The narrative, in combination with the annexes, provides insights into a bizarre incident and how the Soviet Navy functioned three decades ago.

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Bert Wyatt. *The First Casualty.* Weardale, Co. Durham, UK; The Memoir Club, www.thememoirclub.co.uk, 2005. xvi + 240 pp., photographs, illustrations, maps.
UK £ 12.95, paper; ISBN 1 -84104-131 -9.

Fishing has always been a hard life. Even today, fishermen continue to be lost at sea with little notice taken by anyone outside their community. In 1974, the deep sea trawler *Gaul* (Hull, UK) disappeared, along with her entire crew. In *The First Casualty,* Bert Wyatt tells what is known about the tragedy, and outlines suggestions as to the cause of her loss.

In some respects, this is a curious and not entirely satisfactory book; no index, no footnotes, and no bibliography (though some

primary source documents are cited in the text). The foreword is by Robert L. Tate - at first glance, an unusual choice, in that he is a Brigadier General, retired from the United States Air Force. As one reads the story, however, his background and knowledge of NATO intelligence gathering mechanisms makes his contribution somewhat less surprising. Ever since she was lost, there have been suspicions that *Gaul* was on a mission for the Royal Navy, collecting intelligence on Soviet naval operations.

The basic facts are straightforward. The factory freezer trawler *Ranger Castor* (1,106 GRT) was one of a group of four sister ships, ordered in 1969 by the Ranger Fishing Company, and purchased by Hellyer Brothers (a subsidiary of British United Trawlers) in 1972. Renamed *Gaul,* she departed Hull on 22 January 1974, with a crew of thirty-four, plus one stowaway. After a stop in Norway to exchange mates, she proceeded to the fishing grounds off the North Cape where she arrived on 29 January. Typically for that area and that season, the weather was bad. A "moderate gale" was blowing on 8 February, when *Gaul* made routine radio signals to several other trawlers in the vicinity. Her last transmissions, private messages from two of her crew, were sent at 11:00. She then disappeared. Lost with all hands - all too common a fate, for deepwater fishermen the world over. Wyatt notes the statistic that between 1940 and 1987, Hull lost one hundred and fifty-six trawlers and "several thousand" fishermen (24).

The resulting enquiry delivered it's verdict on 11 October: *Gaul* foundered after taking a series of heavy seas on her trawl deck when she was broadside on, which caused her to capsize. Nevertheless, rumours continued to circulate, and some of the families of the crew remained unsatisfied. Eventually, in 1997, an expedition was mounted to find the wreck (a joint effort of the UK's Channel 4 and the Norwegian NRK). To no-one's surprise, the trawler was found - in less that five hours! - some seventy miles north of North Cape. She was sitting almost upright, pointing into what would have been the wind when she was lost, and appeared to be virtually undamaged. Running a few yards from the wreck was a large, taut, cable, that some felt looked quite different from the usual run of cables found onboard ship: the American SOSUS (Sound Surveillance System) was suspected.

Additional surveys took place in 1998, and then again in 2002. No divers went down (the wreck is in some eight hundred feet of water, deep but not out of the question), but remotely operated cameras penetrated part way into the vessel. A new enquiry was held to examine the new evidence, and revisit the old. No doubt to the dismay of the conspiracy theorists, the new conclusions, although different from those in 1974, did not blame any outside agency for the tragedy. Instead, the report (the overview is quoted verbatim in the book) determined that she had probably been running before the wind on a southerly course, and took water in through the open chutes in the stern, that passed below onto the factory deck. When the crew realized what was happening, and tried to bring the vessel into the wind, the resulting surge of water below caused *Gaul* to capsize. To this reviewer, based on what is presented in the book, this is a very plausible, indeed a convincing, explanation. Wyatt makes much of the fact that the *Gaul* is sitting upright on the bottom, thinking that this contradicts the capsizing theory: he does not seem to realize that it is quite common for capsized vessels to right themselves as they sink.

The roughly two decades between *GauPs* loss and the latest enquiry saw a certain amount of government (including naval) disinterest, much of which has been recounted here. Tedious reading, but important for anyone trying to understand the entire episode. Rather more interesting is the description of how the Royal Navy made use of volunteers in the trawler fleet to photograph any Soviet warships encountered, known as "Operation Hornbeam." Some people believed that the *Gaul* had been intercepted by the Soviets while performing such activities.

There are a handful of illustrations scattered through the book. Unfortunately, the photographs are very poorly reproduced, and several of the underwater shots nearly impossible to figure out. Overall, *The First Casualty* is worth looking at if you have an

interest in the modern British deep sea fishing industry, or the Hull-based trawler fleet that once was. It may not be the final word on the loss of the *Gaul.*

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H.P. Willmott. *The Battle of Leyte Gulf. The Last Fleet Action.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, www.iupress.indiana.edu. 2005. xii + 399 pp., photographs, maps, tables, appendices, bibliography, index, US $35.00, cloth; ISBN 0-253-34528-6.

The series of violent naval clashes around the Philippines in late October 1944 have collectively come to be known as the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Willmott, an acute if often caustic observer notes, however, that none of the action actually took place there. Four major encounters are usually included in this battle, occurring on 24 and 25 October 1944: air attacks on the Japanese fleet transiting the Sibuyan Sea, 24 October; the night engagement in Surigao Strait between dreadnoughts of the Japanese and American navies; the attacks on the Japanese decoy fleet off Cape Engano; and the Japanese attack on American light carriers off Samar on 25 October. Just listing the scope and variety of these actions, which are only the major events, suggests how monumental in scope this "battle" truly was.

Willmott starts by placing the battle in the greater context of the Pacific war. He argues that after their loss in the battle of the Philippine Sea in June 1944, the Japanese navy was really already defeated. But they were far from ready to acknowledge their real situation, and the Americans failed to realize the scope of their success. The Japanese did recognize that desperate measures were now required, and they prepared a series of plans to counter the next, inevitable, American advance. These plans centred on the Philippines, whose capture would isolate Japan from the resources that had been the original reason for war. Loss of these resources, especially the oil found in what is now Indonesia, would rapidly undermine Japan's ability to wage modern war. This stark possibility coloured Japanese planning, which came to include near suicidal aspects. The degree to which the plans were intended to provide a suitably heroic final mission for Japan's remaining warships is one of the more contentious aspects Willmott highlights when reviewing Japanese preparations for the battle. The final Japanese plans proved complex and disjointed, and the wonder is that they came so close to success in certain parts of the battle.

A key aspect of this battle is how much it was part of a continuous and ongoing series of operations that cannot be understood in isolation, a point Willmott is continually at pains to make. The dynamic and interactive nature of these operations is demonstrated by the impact of USN carrier operations the week before the battle of Leyte Gulf. Operating against Formosa (Taiwan) and Okinawa, these major air attacks provoked a significant Japanese response. Despite enormous Japanese claims, only a couple of Allied warships were seriously damaged. On the other hand, massive numbers of Japanese planes, intended as the key striking force to be used in the Philippines were lost. The loss of land based aircraft elevated the role of Japanese warships from supporting to central in the ensuing battle.

Willmott continues his assessment of the battle well into November, pursuing his argument that the Battle of Leyte Gulf was part of the larger Pacific war dynamic. He particularly stresses the growing impact of US carrier-based aircraft being projected further into heretofore Japanese controlled waters. The result was an increasing strangulation of Japanese shipping, already started by submarines but significantly accelerated by carrier aircraft. Willmott argues that Japanese efforts to attack Leyte Gulf barely adjusted the timetable of US operations, reflecting the diminishing ability of the Japanese to affect the pace and outcome of the war.

The main focus of the book is at the command and operational levels, supported by reference to strategic aspects needed to understand the factors affecting commanders. Tactical engagements are not often discussed, although Willmott has carefully identified

participants and losses, providing clear tables to assist readers in grasping the results of engagements. The focus on the levels of warfare most concerned with major decisions allows Willmott to tease out nuanced aspects of the battles, and he is skilled at parsing situations and historical evidence to winnow out every last possibility. His prolonged discussion of some points requires close attention on the part of readers. General readers may find it a little tedious, but the thorough dissection of ideas, including historiographical aspects when necessary, provides an extremely good overview of this battle. He clearly is a master of the voluminous literature on this battle, and the Pacific war in general.

The supporting parts of this book are quite well done. There are nine clearly drawn maps that sketch the strategic setting, the major engagements, and also two subsequent US carrier operations in November after the battle. Nine detailed tables set out statistical information on a range of relevant subjects, providing support for the author's arguments. There are no less than fourteen appendices where the author lists orders of battles, ship fates, shipping losses and reasons for losses, and even engages in a detailed analysis of Halsey's notorious decision to leave the Straits of San Bernardino unguarded on the night of 24 October. Finally, eleven photographs provide pictures of the principal leaders and warships studied in the book.

There is unlikely to ever be a last word on a battle as vast and momentous as Leyte Gulf. Willmott's assessment is an excellent summary of all that is currently known, and provides an insightful and aggressively argued perspective that covers the operational and command aspects quite well. Though not always an easy read, this book is one that expert and even general interest readers should not pass by.

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Colin White (ed.), *Nelson: The New Letters,* London; Boydell and Brewer Press, in association with the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Naval Museum, 2005, xxix + 509 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index, US $39.95, paper; ISBN 1-84383-130-9

In a brief literary survey of the Nelson decade by Eugene Rasor, one of this world's more indefatigable bibliographers, fifteen of 242 entries cite Colin White, Deputy Director of the Royal Naval Museum.) White's substantial contribution to the Trafalgar bicentenary includes the so-called Nelson Letters Project, which has turned up more than 1300 previously undiscovered or overlooked letters. Five hundred and seven of them appear in this volume.
Because there is so much new material, and because it covers "almost every important stage in Nelson's career" the editor writes that "... in a sense, this book is almost Nelson's autobiography" (xv). "Almost" is the key word. One may see the events of Lord Nelson's life through his own eyes when reading his enormous and masterful epistolary output, and these selections have certainly enhanced our understanding of the man and his work, but they still do not constitute the whole man or the whole life. Even combined with the preceding and very large published collections, there are irreplaceable gaps. As White points out, Nelson burned all Emma Hamilton's letters to him, and it is only through Fanny's letters to Nelson's agent Alexander Davison - not included in this book - that we have found out previously unknown aspects of the marriage breakdown. As the most reputable of his countless biographers have demonstrated, Nelson was a brilliant apologist for his own interests, and he really has to be seen through other eyes than his own in order to assess his true worth.

Biographies now appearing do make use of the Nelson Letters Project - a triumph of team research - but their documentation goes well beyond Nelson's own output. That being said, the selections published in this volume are an indispensable source for any reassessment. White has organized the material chronologically, except for an opening section that he calls "The Man and the Admiral." Each section has a very useful introduction that places the letters in context and directs the reader to specific examples illustrating certain

characteristics or events. Three excellent appendices provide the chronology of Nelson's career, his ships, and "A Nelson's Who's Who" by John Graves of the National Maritime Museum. In his introduction, White explains the provenance of his material, which has come from archives and libraries in Britain, Denmark, Germany and the United States, and from some private collections, and in some cases from previously published letters that had been too extensively revised by their editors. Maps and illustrations complement the text very well.

In the section on "The Man and the Admiral," White takes examples of letters that reveal Nelson's family ties, his friends and lovers, his popular image, his dispensation of patronage and his humanity. He has not included letters showing how Nelson himself used the patronage system to advance in the service, but throughout the five chronological sections that follow may be found his numerous letters to the Duke of Clarence by which he maintained that important connection to the future monarch. More might have been made of this trait. Edgar Vincent in his 2003 biography *Nelson: Love & Fame,* Andrew Lambert in *Britannia's God of War* and Roger Knight, whose *The Pursuit of Victory* is the latest biography of Nelson, all cite examples of Nelson's skill in self-advancement . Knight, after writing his book, observes that Nelson "still remains elusive; while his letters are open, illuminating and entertaining, they rarely reveal what he was feeling. In spite of a mass of surviving evidence, it is not clear exactly what drove Nelson to achieve such eminence." That observation sums up both the strengths and limitations of the Nelson letters. Neither expect to learn a great deal that biographers have not already told us, nor to learn everything there is to know about him, but read the letters, enjoy them, reflect on them and relish their quality.

Thus the extraordinarily powerful Nelson legend goes on. Clearly, no naval library should be without this book.

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