

## Book Reviews

Doreen Armitage. *From the Wheelhoise. Tugboaters Tell Their Own Stories*. Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport, [www.mystic.org](http://www.mystic.org), 2003. 182pp., photographs, biographies, glossary, index. C D N \$9.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55017-293-X.

It is hard to avoid being a romantic when reading a well-written text about tug boats. This book charts an even course between the needs of the scholar looking for insight into the lives of twentieth-century tug men and the yearnings of an armchair enthusiast. The ship buff seeking technical information about the travails of tugging of all kinds on the west coast of Canada will find good detail. There is no Freudian analysis here, just straight-up, plain-spoken, compelling accounts.

The author, Doreen Armitage, is an experienced writer with an advanced interview technique. She does not go out of her way to avoid the use of technical language, in fact, "the terms used are those of the skippers." By adopting this approach the interviews remain authentic. The book includes a fifty-two item glossary. Read it first and the narrative will drop into place more easily. Nearly all of the sixteen captains featured started their careers as teenagers and then worked their way up to command - they came through the hawsehole. Captain Howie Keast's story is, with small variation, typical. He served as a deckhand in 1939 and then worked for only two firms, one for fourteen years, the other thirty. These captains are all of a certain type.

Seven chapters cover "Life Aboard" to "Rescues and Salvages." The explosions on the *Green Hill Park* in March 1945 have been described by other authors, but here you will find an account by the Captain of the tug who got the burning ship away from the dock. For many years, before the advent of the Coast Guard, tugs took on much of the rescue work. The lives of these men ranging from utter boredom to terror are well described. Easy it is to lose a tug or lives around self-dumping log barges.

The photographs, carefully selected and well reproduced, are from private collections and the Vancouver Maritime Museum, Library and Archives. They range from a photo of the SS *Beaver* dated 1888 to one of the modern *Seaspan Tempest* taking green water while coming home in the 1980s. Particularly evocative is the image of a three-masted ship being towed past the mouth of the Capilano River by the *Sea Monarch*.

*From the Wheelhouse* is a good fit between *Ships and Memories* by Eric W. Sager and *Windjammer and Bluenose Sailors* by Colin McKay. A worthy read.

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G.H. Bennett and R. Bennett. *Hitler's Admirals*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, [www.NavalInstitute.org](http://www.NavalInstitute.org), 2004. viii + 248 pp., index. US \$32.95, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-061-7.

In mid-1945, enemy forces occupied the territories of the once-mighty Third Reich. The *Kriegsmarine* (German Navy) was in shambles, its vessels strewn on the bottom of the world's seas. It was under these circumstances that a number of senior German naval officers sat down to write their reminiscences of what went wrong - and what went right - for their service during the war. They wrote at the behest of the British Admiralty Intelligence Division, which felt that essays, which were not as confrontational as interrogations, would allow the admirals to be more forthcoming their thoughts on the war. With potential war crimes tribunals looming on the horizon, the admirals also seized the opportunity to ensure that "their side" of the story was told.

These essays, completed in the autumn of 1945 and later deposited at the Public Records Office in London, remained largely untouched by historians until the father-and-son team of R. Bennett and G.H. Bennett recently

unearthed them. George Henry Bennett is the head of humanities at the University of Plymouth in Devon, and his father Roy, is a retired educator who served in the British Merchant Marine during the Second World War. The two have painstakingly gone through eight of the most important of these essays and their book, *Hitler's Admirals*, provides a fascinating examination of the wartime experiences and thinking of influential senior *Kriegsmarine* officers.

After beginning with an introductory chapter that puts the admirals' writings into excellent context, the Bennetts present extracts from the essays, organized into thirteen chapters based on geo-strategic themes and arranged in chronological order. The first three chapters cover the pre-war period up to Germany's failed invasion of England in 1940. These are followed by seven chapters covering the war on Allied shipping, the Mediterranean theatre, and the German campaign against the Soviet Union. Next are chapters on the Normandy invasion and the eventual German retreat and defeat. The book finishes with the admirals' general conclusions and verdicts of the war.

There is general consensus among the admirals that the Nazi political leaders' promise that war with Britain would be avoided resulted in the *Kriegsmarine* entering the war unprepared to face the island nation's naval might. The result was a series of *ad hoc* measures which led to some mixed successes (ie., the Norway campaign) but also some clear failures (ie., Operation "Sea Lion"). Nonetheless, the victory over France, in which the *Kriegsmarine* played only a small role, presented the admirals with the happy, though unexpected, problem of what to do with the newly acquired bases on the Bay of Biscay. The *Kriegsmarine* also played a minor role in the Soviet campaign, aided in part by the Rumanian Navy and the conspicuous inaction of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

Also of note are the two chapters on the Mediterranean, as they reveal significant differences of opinion over naval strategy between the *Kriegsmarine* commander-in-chief (as of 1943), Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, and the Mediterranean naval commander, Vice-

Admiral Eberhard Weichold. Whereas the former preferred a focus on North Atlantic U-boat operations, the latter ardently advocated a Mediterranean strategy as a means to strike at Britain. This argument persisted until Donitz sacked Weichold following Italy's capitulation in late 1943.

The admirals also reveal the importance that air power played in the war at sea. This included the failure of the *Luftwaffe* to provide adequate air support to naval operations, particularly much-needed maritime reconnaissance, compared to the effectiveness of Allied aircraft in hampering U-boat attacks. The admirals also comment on the ability of the Combined Bombing Campaign after late 1943 to destroy transportation facilities (especially rail), which hindered supply and, delayed efforts to bring the new Type XXI and XXIII U-boats into service. Due to their lack of knowledge about Ultra intelligence, however, the admirals do give too much credit to airborne radar for locating German submarines.

All admirals stress that the key to Germany losing the war was the failure of the "high command" (reference to Hitler himself is remarkably sparse) to recognize that the conflict was in fact a world war based on sea power. Due to the traditional German "continental" focus, the high command thus prosecuted a land-centric strategy that led to Germany's defeat. Instead of eliminating Britain, Germany opened up a "second front" against a seriously underestimated USSR. The resulting Soviet campaign seriously handcuffed the war at sea by drawing valuable resources away from the U-boat effort in the Atlantic. *Hitler's Admirals* therefore gives us an interesting look at national strategy - in particular land operations - through naval eyes, and will thus be of particular interest to the students of Mahan, Corbett and Clausewitz alike.

Conspicuously absent is an essay by the head of the German Navy from 1928-1943, Grand-Admiral Erich Raeder. However, as the Bennetts explain, this was not due to oversight, but to the fact that Raeder was in Soviet custody in 1945, and therefore unavailable to Admiralty Intelligence. The most glaring omission of

*Hitler's Admirals*, though, is the absence of a concluding chapter by the Bennetts which could have summarized and analysed the admirals' thoughts. Nevertheless, I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in the *Kriegsmarine*, naval policy, or sea warfare. Indeed, with defeat so fresh in their minds, these admirals provide a fascinating comparison to later reminiscent accounts of the war, notably Dönitz's *Ten Years and Twenty Days* (1959) and Raeder's *My Life* (1960).

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Betty Lowman Carey. *Bijaboji: North to Alaska by Oar*. Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, [www.harbourpublishing.com](http://www.harbourpublishing.com), 2004. 334 pp., maps, photographs, itinerary, index. CDN \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55017-340-5.

Last summer, as I passed through Sandspit airport on Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands), I noticed a small red dugout canoe. Time then did not permit me to read the accompanying label. It was with surprise that I read the jacket of this book and discovered that it contained the tale of this little canoe and the young woman whose life it changed.

Bill, James, Bob, and Jim are the names of the author's four brothers and from them comes not only the title of this book but also the name of her beloved canoe, *Bijaboji*. Betty Lowman Carey tells the story of the summer of 1937 when she rowed the inner passage from Guemes Island (one of the Gulf Islands in Washington State) to Ketchikan Alaska. The canoe, a small First Nations dugout, was found floating in the Straits of Juan de Fuca in 1931. After a fruitless search for its owner, the US Coast Guard transferred the canoe to the author's father. He gifted it to Betty for her eighteenth birthday. The canoe has remained with her ever since and plays the role of the main secondary character in this book.

*Bijaboji* is a charming account of a delightfully naïve and deeply independent young woman's coming of age. She is a

straightforward, strong, utterly dependable young woman who set out to row the inside passage, not as a lark or to prove something to the world, but as a summer holiday. There are hints, however, of a secondary motive in her writing, that of proving her strength of character to her father who, though he only appears physically after the voyage ends, was a presence Betty clearly felt throughout the journey.

Through the eyes of this young woman we are offered a glimpse into a time now past, when the canneries and logging flourished on the coasts of Alaska and British Columbia. One of the things that surprised me the most was the lack of isolation. This was a time when Ocean Falls, now an almost abandoned ghost town, was the second largest city in British Columbia, small homesteads dotted the coast, and every lighthouse had its own keeper. Betty rarely travelled for more than a day without seeing anyone and only spent fifteen of the journey's sixty-six nights camping. The other nights were spent as guests in people's homes, at logging camps, in fishermen's cabins or on boats. The communities and people she describes are formed of strong, hard working people. They are giving and helpful to her, trying in every way to ensure that the voyage is both safe and memorable. People fed her, and when she lost almost everything, refitted her and her canoe.

There are also hints throughout the book of a highly stratified coastal society that a young girl could glimpse but perhaps not completely understand. People appeared equal on the water but lived in separate and distinct ethnic communities. At one point, someone remarks that she couldn't make this voyage if she was an "Indian" thus, foreshadowing a sinister event that takes place later in the voyage. One evening, several young men, out for a bit of sport, stop Betty, believing her to be First Nations. The menace contained in their body language is quite evident in the author's text. She firmly believes that it was only the newspaper clipping with a photograph of herself she had received a few days earlier that prevented the situation from becoming very ugly-

Betty Lowman Carey has managed to

capture the ever-present danger of the coast. How the peaceful allure of the ocean can quickly be shattered, often with devastating results. In a few short seconds, she goes from a trip that is quite idyllic to a struggle for her very survival and the loss of almost all her possessions. Gone in no more than the blink of an eye are her oars, her canoe seat, her food, her cameras and all of her journals. In the description of this ordeal we see the steel in the author's character as she dismisses her self-pity and pushes herself to move forward despite her desperate circumstances.

The author has wisely resisted the temptation to add knowledge gained in her later years to this story. There are a few instances, however, where I wished for an additional chapter at the end letting me know what happened to some of the extraordinary people she met and clearly stayed in contact with. Once or twice, in the book, unfortunate ends are alluded to for a few people, but we aren't told what exactly happened to them.

During the sixty-six day voyage, Betty encountered only one large cruise ship. Today, numerous cruise ship companies make hundreds of voyages along this route each summer, exposing hundreds of thousands to the beauty of this coastal waterway. *Bijaboji* is a book that will be enjoyed by anyone taking this trip as it adds a personality, not only to the people who lived in the region almost sixty years ago but also to the coast itself, providing a glimpse of life as it was lived during the interwar years.

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Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle. *A Dune Adrift: The Strange Origins and Curious History of Sable Island*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., [www.mcclelland.com](http://www.mcclelland.com), 2004, 276 pp., map, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$ 34.99, cloth; ISBN 0-7710-2642-0.

Nova Scotia's fog-enshrouded Sable Island, a forty-one (or thereabout) crescent of ever-shifting sand located about two hundred and

ninety kilometres southeast of Halifax, has long fascinated scientific researchers, as illustrated by the Sable Island Green Horse Society website ([www.greenhorsesociety.com](http://www.greenhorsesociety.com)), which features an extensive - but not exhaustive - bibliography that includes several hundred Sable-related scientific articles and books. Of course, Sable has also figured prominently - and tragically - in the maritime history of the North Atlantic, and this latter aspect of the island's heritage has attracted many fiction writers and popular historians (the Green Horse Society bibliography contains only a very small sampling of this literature). For the most part, these authors have tended to ignore the large body of scientific writing devoted to the island and its remarkable ecology.

There have been a handful of writers, most notably Bruce Armstrong in his *Sable Island* (1981), who have tried a more synthetic approach, bridging the divide between the scientific and historical investigations of the island. Now, two Nova Scotian authors, Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle, have followed in Armstrong's footsteps, and the result is one of the best books currently available on Sable. (The quality of the book should come as no great surprise, given the fact that de Villiers previously won the Governor General's Award for Nonfiction in 1999 for his book *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource*.)

Over the course of sixteen chapters, in an approach very reminiscent of the noted *New Yorker* essayist John McPhee, de Villiers and Hirtle weave together a mostly compelling narrative that alternates between scientific topics - such as geology, oceanography, meteorology, and biology - and the history of human activity on the island since the sixteenth century. Like McPhee, they do not condescend to their readers. There is no over-simplification here. Historical developments are placed in their broader contexts, however complicated, and complex scientific concepts are fully explored, but in a clear and accessible manner. Most scientifically-challenged readers will likely marvel at the authors' lucid explanation of the Sable Gyre or their detailed discussion of the impact of wind and waves on the Sable eco-

system.

Nor are de Villiers and Hirtle content to merely explore the obvious and safe subjects. In the latter chapters, they tackle more contentious and contemporary issues, such as the environmental cost of oil exploration and the thorny political dimensions of Sable's recent history.

For the most part, their text is lively and assured. Aside from a map and a few diagrams, there are no illustrations in this book, but they are not needed when the authors can so successfully paint pictures with words, pictures that bring to life not only the fascinating natural world of the island, but many of the people who have been associated with Sable over the centuries. Furthermore, de Villiers and Hirtle's endnotes are appropriately informative, and their bibliography confirms the breadth of their research (mostly secondary sources), underscoring their use of important works not available to Armstrong, such as Janet Carnochan's *Shipwrecked on Sable Island* (1986), Barbara J. Christie's *The Horses of Sable Island* (1995), and James Rainstorpe Morris' *Sable Island Journals, 1801-1804* (2001). This is popular history - and science - of the best kind: well written and grounded in solid research.

As good as it is, though, this book is not without a few shortcomings, two of which in particular are worth mentioning. One is attributable to the authors; the other to the publisher. First of all, the book's historical narrative does flag a bit towards the end and even becomes a little disjointed. Perhaps some primary research would have helped to sustain the narrative. One glaring omission is the wireless station that was established on Sable Island in 1905. At one time tije Sable call signs (SD, MSD, and then VCT) mattered to ships in the North Atlantic. This is a particularly curious oversight when you consider that the authors live in Port Medway, in Queens County, Nova Scotia, not far from Liverpool, the home of Queens County's most famous author, the late Thomas H. Raddall, who served as a brass pounder on Sable Island during the 1920-1921 period and who wrote quite extensively about

his experiences as a radio operator in both fiction and non-fiction. (Judging from their bibliography, the authors are not familiar with all of Raddall's writings on this subject.) Sometimes, the best sources are under your nose.

Secondly, there is the matter of spelling. For some reason, McClelland & Stewart, the self-styled "Canadian Publishers," have reissued the American version of this book without revising the American spelling and other editorial conventions. For most readers this decision will hardly matter; for a few, the choice will be a definite annoyance.

However, these are minor caveats. This is a first-rate book that belongs on the same shelf as the works of Bruce Armstrong, Barbara Christie, Zoe Lucas, and the few other writers who have made lasting contributions to the popular literature on Sable Island and its many mysteries.

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Wade G. Dudley, *Splintering the Wooden Wall: The British Blockade of the United States, 1812-1815*. Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, [www.NavalInstitute.org](http://www.NavalInstitute.org), 2003. 248 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.95 cloth; ISBN 1-55750-167-X.

A book of this scope and breadth is both welcome and long overdue. For far too long those interested in the War of 1812, and specifically the Royal Navy's blockade of the United States, have had to rely upon historical accounts which only served to reinforce the myth, best articulated by Alfred Thayer Mahan, of British naval supremacy during this period. Wade Dudley has successfully, and forever more, shattered this long-standing myth.

Dudley, obtained his master's degree in maritime history and nautical archeology from East Carolina University and his PhD from the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa in 1999. He is currently a visiting assistant professor at his former alma mater East Carolina University.

A specialist in military and naval history, he has written both fiction and non-fiction, including *Drake: For God! For Queen! For Plunder!* His interest in blockade theory and the practice of blockade led to this book and continues to occupy his attention.

The author argues, convincingly I might add, that previous scholarship on the subject failed to recognize Mahan's bias toward a strong blue-water navy which caused him to "find a strength and effectiveness in the blockade of the United States that existed no more than his perceived "annihilation" of that nation's commerce" (4). This is not to suggest that Britain's wooden wall collapsed, for it did not, but rather to suggest that it was splintered and that it was far less effective than previous studies would have us believe.

At first glance, one would expect that the Royal Navy could impose its will upon the United States given its overwhelming naval superiority. At the outset of hostilities in 1812, the Royal Navy numbered six hundred and seven ships compared to sixteen warships and a few dozen gunboats, designed for coastal defence, of the US Navy. Such numbers, however, are deceiving and do not take into account Britain's commitment to European operations nor the size of the private navy of the US which would wreak considerable havoc over the course of the war. Other factors also explain the diminution of RN forces, namely the vagaries of weather, distance, desertion, navigational hazards and lack of adequate and up-to-date charts, the length of the US coastline, and the prevailing winds which favoured the escaping vessels and not the blockading force (similar to the advantage held by the British, in the English Channel, over the French during the Napoleonic War). Other factors which impinged upon the ability of the Royal Navy to enforce effectively its blockade were the constant shortage of personnel, both ashore and afloat, inadequate repair facilities in the western hemisphere (Halifax and Bermuda), and logistical problems - ie., obtaining the necessary foodstuffs required to mount any naval operation over an extended period of time. This placed Britain in a difficult, if not somewhat embarrassing, situation since it

relied upon New England for many of its supplies and foodstuffs and would continue to do so for much of the war under a licensing system.

Equally important, were the conflicting objectives of the Admiralty which prevented a decisive victory. For example, as Dudley observes, that the Admiralty, on 9 May 1812, ordered Vice-Admiral Herbert Sawyer, then Commander, North American Station, "to attack, take or sink, burn or destroy, all ships or vessels belonging to the United States or to the citizens there of in the event of war" (64-65), but forbade him from initiating offensive operations until a state of war existed. That formal declaration of war did not come until 18 June, when the US declared war on Great Britain. In the interim, all that Sawyer could do was concentrate his forces and wait upon events. The task facing Sawyer was daunting to say the least. His responsibilities included providing convoy escorts, patrolling the waters around Halifax naval base, seeking out and destroying enemy warships and privateers along over 1,000 miles of coastline, and capturing American merchant ships. He also had to establish a military blockade of the major American ports. Under his command he had one ship-of-the-line, six frigates, and sixteen un-rated vessels - hardly sufficient resources to impose a close blockade of the US. To make matters worse, between the receipt of those orders, the American declaration of war, and Sawyer's confirmation (27 June 1812) that a state of war did indeed exist between England and the US, the Royal Navy lost its best opportunity to cripple both the US Navy and merchant fleet when the fleet sailed on 21 June to escort homeward-bound ships. By the time Admiral Sawyer could assume offensive operations and impose the blockade the majority of the US merchant fleet was either safe in American ports or in neutral ports. The failure to strike a devastating blow against the US during the early stages of the war set the tone for the rest of the war. Simply put, the Royal Navy had insufficient forces in place to secure a victory at sea.

Later, half-hearted measures such as combining the North American and Caribbean

stations under Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren's command, who had replaced Sawyer, failed to shift the balance in favour of the British. Most of the ships under his command were already committed to convoy escort or patrolling duties. More importantly, Warren's squadrons - Halifax and Bermuda - were 1,700 miles apart and this combined command could hardly be considered a meaningful concentration of force. Together, the two stations could muster one hundred ships and it had been estimated in July 1775 by Admiral Palliser, RN, during the American Revolutionary War, that fifty warships were required in order to deal with the rebellion that was confined to the New England area. The War of 1812 stretched far beyond those narrow geographical boundaries. Experience would suggest that far greater numbers of ships were required to impose a military and commercial blockade.

Moreover, British offensive naval operations in Chesapeake Bay further weakened the blockade and must be seen as a diversion from the main objective. "A continued lack of ships, the wear of the Chesapeake campaign, and damage from hurricanes in late 1813 forced Warren to leave most of the coast either weakly patrolled or not patrolled at all" (111-112). With the extension of the blockade to the New England coast in 1813 Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Forrester Inglis Cochrane, who had replaced Warren as the commander at Halifax, was hard-pressed to effect a meaningful blockade upon the entire length of the American seaboard. Coasters, privateers, and warships continued to sail with virtual impunity in and out of American ports.

This revisionist account provides a useful overview of the history, theory, and practice of blockades, including comparative analyses of British blockades of Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Dudley's research is solid, his analysis incisive, and his prose lively. Moreover, more than thirty tables, charts, maps and illustrations serve to enhance his analysis and situate the reader in time and space. This is a first-rate book and a must read for anyone interested in the subject. It will, no doubt, serve to stimulate discussion and its contribution to

the scholarship cannot be denied.

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David Evans. *Building the Steam Navy. Dockyards, Technology and the Creation of the Victorian Battle Fleet 1830-1906*. London: Conway Maritime Press and English Heritage, [www.conwaymaritime.com](http://www.conwaymaritime.com), 2004. 208pp., illustrations, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. UK £30, US \$47.50, cloth; ISBN 0-85177-959-X. Distributed in North America by US Naval Institute Press.

Most people with an interest in maritime history, naval history especially, almost always focus on the ships. Ships are glamorous, majestic in appearance, travel to exotic destinations, and do dramatic things in battle. Behind the scenes, however, are the too-often neglected dockyards and the infrastructure that actually builds those vessels, and keeps them in service. In *Building the Steam Navy*, David Evans has shed some much needed light on the Royal Dockyards during the Industrial Revolution.

First, a word of warning... this reviewer knows nothing about industrial architecture: I've read this book from the typical perspective of someone with a reasonable knowledge of the evolution of warships during the period. This was the age that saw Nelson's ships-of-the-line transform into the majestic dreadnoughts that fought during the Great War - the size of the vessels often limited by the dimensions of the supporting dry docks (which, in turn, were restricted by a miserly Treasury). Thus, for me, Evans' work covers entirely new ground. Fascinating - but impossible to evaluate the purely architectural and engineering nuances in the book.

The author's background is different - he is an architectural historian. As one might expect, he does make a few minor mistakes when it comes to the warships (e.g. HMS *Dreadnought* was certainly not oil-fired (12), but they are trivial to the focus of the book: bricks and mortar, in part, but also the industrialization

of the dockyards-, and indeed, the industrialization of the Navy itself. Despite the subtitle - "Creation of the Victorian Battle Fleet" - shipbuilding per se is not described in much detail - even Chapter 1, "Building the Steam Navy" concentrates on the machinery and tools within the yards. Instead, we learn how the iron roofs covering the slips at Pembroke Dockyard played an important role in the evolution of free-standing iron structures; how the factories were used as instructional resources; and how the innovative design of the Quadrangle at Keyham is echoed in the modern open-plan factories. Indeed, covered building slips, exemplified by the ones in Chatham, would evolve into factory spaces themselves, arranged and fitted to allow the movement of heavy, awkward components (HMCS *Okanagan*, launched in 1966, was the last vessel built there). Colonel Greene's Boatstore in Sheerness (c1 860) used the type of framing adopted by the early American skyscrapers.

Not every good idea was followed through. One concept, a little before its time perhaps, was the use of HMS *Volcano* and other steamers as specialist repair ships during the Crimean War. As Evans points out, rather than building on this to evolve a mobile fleet repair capability, it was decided that individual ships would have their own workshops: lessons relearned in the twentieth century.

Although technology has evolved, people and administration haven't. There were turf wars during the period, between the engineers and the shipwrights, for example. No different from today, penny-pinching occasionally hindered progress. There were also layoffs and salary cuts, such as those in 1831, that led the reduced establishments of Portsmouth and Plymouth to work with private industry to build up their steam expertise. Moreover, each yard would do things slightly differently - in 1860 it was noted that the Admiralty-pattern anchors made by Devonport and Portsmouth were not identical, and that men transferred from one to the other had to be retrained. These are the sort of details teased out by Evans - how the factories were run, the acquisition of steam engines for the yards and

the development of machine tools, are described in much detail. The chapter devoted to coaling is tremendously good - I found it fascinating that in 1846 a scheme was submitted to the Admiralty that was for an early fore-runner of containerised shipping.

*Building the Steam Navy* does much to describe the infrastructure that built the Victorian and Edwardian Royal Navy. Perhaps its centrepiece is the evidence that the mid-nineteenth century Admiralty was in fact very progressive, and that the RN was at the leading (if not "bleeding") edge of industrialization and technological progress. Lavish illustrations depict details of the yards, the machinery, ships on the ways, and in many cases, what the facilities look like today. Any historian of the Royal Navy during the steam era will find this book an interesting read, and the background information it provides useful in later projects. I'm very pleased to have it on my bookshelves.

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Owen Beattie and John Geiger. *Frozen in Time. The Fate of the Franklin Expedition*. Vancouver, B.C.: GreyStone Books, [www.greystonebooks.com](http://www.greystonebooks.com), 2004. 278pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, bibliography, index. C D N \$24.95, paper; ISBN 1-55365-060-3.

Originally published in 1987, this revised edition delves into the perennial mystery of the loss of the 1845 British Royal Navy expedition to the Canadian Arctic, commanded by Sir John Franklin. Tasked to complete the mapping of the last leg of the Northwest Passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, they failed to return to England - 129 men and two polar vessels were lost in the attempt. Beginning in 1848 and continuing to the present, search missions sought first to locate the crew and, when hope of their rescue had passed, to learn how the best-equipped expedition of its time came to a drastic end.

Dr. Owen Beattie of the University of Alberta and his colleagues pursued a line of



forensic questioning into the Franklin expedition's demise through four Arctic field seasons and several years of research. The work began with a survey of the west and south coasts of King William Island along which Franklin's crewmen trekked in an attempt to extricate themselves from their predicament of ice-beset ships. It continued to the exhumation and autopsy of the three preserved bodies of Franklin crewmen in graves on Beechey Island, the expedition's first over-wintering quarters. It ended with evidence to support the theory that lead poisoning from improperly tinned foods was a major factor in the men's demise.

The authors set the historical context of nineteenth-century British exploration in the Canadian Arctic. They begin by describing the Royal Navy's acceptance of tinned foods and their alleged antiscorbutic properties after the voyage of Lieutenant William Edward Parry to Melville Island in 1819-20. This voyage was significant as it was the first to over-winter in the Arctic and to lose only one man to scurvy, although this is more likely attributable to their consumption of fresh game and sorrel rather than tinned foods.

The Royal Navy's use of tinned foods grew into dependence with the voyages of Captain George Back to northern Hudson Bay in 1836-37; Sir James Clark Ross to Somerset Island in 1848-49; Captain George Henry Richards to the Parry Islands in 1853; and Captain Leopold M'Clintock to the Boothia Peninsula in 1859. In their journals, each captain noted that the men suffered from *debility*, a malady distinct from scurvy, presumably the effects of unrecognized lead poisoning from tinned foods.

Captain John Ross's privately financed expedition of 1829-33 to the Boothia Peninsula and its achievement of surviving four Arctic winters present a contrast to the Royal Navy's increasing reliance on tinned foods and its crews' succumbing to debility. Ross's party's survival is due in large part to their practice of following the Inuit diet of fresh meat and fish.

Sir James Clark Ross's expedition of 1848 to relieve Franklin was well supplied with tinned foods "yet it is remarkable that the health

of the crew suffered more during this winter than on any former occasion" (48). Seven men died and Ross notes that *debility* caused much suffering.

With a background in forensic anthropology and an expectation that King William Island retained clues to the mystery, Dr. Beattie came to these isolated shores, where some 100 Franklin men died. When bone samples of crewmen recovered in the first field season were found to contain elevated lead levels, a possible culprit beyond the usual suspects of scurvy and starvation pointed the way to Beechey Island and the subsequent exhumation of the three crewmen buried there.

The additions to this revised edition are a seven-page introduction by Margaret Atwood and an epilogue. Ms. Atwood captures why the fascination with things Franklin and the Beechey Island burials in particular, persists—they have "defied the general ashes-to-ashes, dust-to-dust rule" (2). In the epilogue entitled "The Age of Lead," also the name of a Franklin-derived short story by Ms. Atwood, the authors reiterate the evidence in support of the lead poisoning theory:

- Lead levels in the Beechey Island bodies were "ten to thirty times higher than in modern unexposed individuals" (245); Their tinned food supply was the source of lead;
- Skeletal remains from another Franklin site on King William Island also contain evidence of significant, pre-mortem lead deposition and evidence of cannibalism, also encountered on bones from Dr. Beattie's KWI surveys. The authors bolster their findings by recounting another disastrous voyage, that of Commander George Washington De Long in 1879-81. Two-thirds of the men died. Scurvy and starvation played their inevitable roles but De Long in his journal and a Court of Inquiry identified lead poisoning as the source of debility and death.

Once again, this is a well-written, analytical, and rivetting account of nineteenth-century voyages to the Canadian Arctic, the Franklin expedition's demise and of the

twentieth-century investigations that identified the real culprit. The description of the difficulties and rewards in conducting Arctic fieldwork are realistic without being hyperbolic. The sensitivity with which the field crew conducted the exhumations and autopsies and their empathy for the sailors are touching - as if, the authors say, the years between the seminal events of 1845-48 and the denouement of the 1980s had vanished.

Margaret Bertulli  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

C. Herbert Gilliland. *Voyage to a Thousand Cares: Master's Mate Lawrence with the African Squadron 1844-1846*. Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, [www.NavalInstitute.org](http://www.NavalInstitute.org), 2004. 329pp., illustrations, map, bibliography, index. US \$27.95, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-329-9.

Accounts of naval officers trying to stop the slave trade have long been a part of popular and scholarly accounts of the British Royal Navy. The exciting but gruelling work of hunting slave smugglers occupied generations of British sailors on the Royal Navy's nineteenth-century African squadrons and offered some popular and professional redemption for Britain's central role in the slave trade in the previous century. The half-hearted attempts of the American government to stop the slave trade have received less attention. Herbert Gilliland's annotated journal of an officer in the United States Navy offers a rare and revealing glimpse at the American experience of anti-slave patrols in the mid-nineteenth century.

John C. Lawrence was a master's mate aboard the 16-gun ship-rigged sloop USS *Yorktown* from 1844 to 1846. She was sent to patrol West Africa using the Cape Verde Islands as a base, as part of a US African squadron under Commodore Matthew Perry formed after the Webster-Ashburton Treaty in 1842. Although both Britain and the United States had outlawed the slave trade in 1807, it was the British who mounted a sustained effort to stop

slave ships and free slaves and outlaw the trade through treaties. The United States did little until the American Civil War and American ship owners continued to play a large, covert role in slave smuggling, using the protection of the American flag. The Treaty attempted to control these slavers by establishing an American anti-slaving squadron to search American ships.

Lawrence describes the months of patrolling, re-supplying, shore visits and ship searches and ends with a climactic arrest of a hideous slave ship with tragic consequences. With a sense of humour and working hard on a literary style, his colourful descriptions of poor rations, miserable weather and sex-starved daydreams are entertaining universals of life at sea. His descriptions of lively sailing conditions and the chaos of loading supplies are especially vivid. Less appealing is his jingoistic hatred of the British and an odd sympathy with American slave owners, but as Gilliland points out, he is sometimes simply misinformed and other times carried away with romantic patriotism. It makes for a strong drama of conscience when Lawrence encounters first-hand the horrors of the slave trade. A notable element left out of many naval histories and biographies, is Lawrence's frank description of feuds, resentments and abusive behaviour between fellow officers. One such conflict has dire consequences for Lawrence although he achieves a posthumous revenge.

Gilliland has done a fine job of editing this account. His well-crafted commentary provides good political and operational context for Lawrence's ship and squadron. He makes excellent use of supplementary sources such as naval records and correspondence of others to fill in the blanks on what happened ashore and during the diary's gaps. There is also a good discussion on the limitations of the US squadron as its officer's did their best with a small navy and a distant supply base. Especially frustrating were the slave-trade-friendly American courts that made prosecution of captured slavers so difficult and even made it easy for the slavers to sue the US Navy officers that arrested their ships.

Gilliland's editing of Lawrence's

original diary has supplied missing punctuation, corrected some spelling and filled in abbreviations. Purist scholars might object but Gilliland is careful to explain his approach in his preface where he argues that Lawrence himself would have made these changes should he have ever wanted to publish. It certainly makes the diary easier to follow.

A simple map of western African is included, but the book could have used a more detailed map with some plotting of *Yorktown's* patrols for those not intimate with the South Atlantic and African coastline. It would also have been helpful to discuss the duties and work of a master's mate as much of Lawrence's daily routine and role in the ship can only be guessed at.

These are small blemishes, however, in a fine book which ends with a bitter irony evoked by Gillian's research. The slave ship captured by Lawrence's ship was the barque *Pons*. After conviction, she was sold and renamed *Cordelia*. In 1847, she was seized for overcrowding Irish famine immigrants. Considered as dangerously overcrowded with one hundred and ten Irish immigrants, when only rated for eighty it is a horrible irony that this same vessel as a slaver, crammed nine hundred people below her decks.

Dan Colin  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Nathan Greenfield. *The Battle of the St. Lawrence: The Second World War in Canada*. Toronto: HarperCollins Press, [www.harpercollins.com](http://www.harpercollins.com), 2004. xiv + 287pp., maps, tables, appendices, sources, notes, index. CDN \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 0-00-200664-2.

In what the *Globe and Mail* extolled as a model of popular historical writing, Nathan Greenfield here retells an already well-known story. He does so by mining the English-language secondary literature with telling effect. His peppy and graphic narrative combine fact and fantasy in an entertaining and often compelling way, though not without surmise and error.

As researchers and writers have long since shown in depth and detail, German submarines struck deep into Canadian waters from 1942 to 1945 with devastating effect. Intrigued by the peacetime conditions they encountered, they sank ships, laid mines, landed spies, attempted to pick up escaped prisoners of war, navigated under the ice, and established an automatic weather station. Penetrating the St. Lawrence River during what *The Ottawa Journal* called in 1942 the "Battle of the St. Lawrence," submarines sank twenty vessels, including Canadian warships, and the first American troopship lost in the war. Here, isolated communities along the Gaspé coast could actually hear and see the effects of German sea power: survivors of sinkings, bodies and flotsam washed ashore, quiet burials in remote rural cemeteries. The impact even forced the Canadian government to close down the St. Lawrence to all commercial shipping, thus diverting vital cargo by rail to American ports, and putting Canadian port labour out of work. The political fall-out strained federal-provincial relationships as anxious Quebecers sought answers to the apparent inability of the Canadian navy to defend its own shores.

The "Battle of the St. Lawrence" was not "Canada's unknown war," as some writers subsequently claimed. Eye-witness and human-interest accounts appeared in local and national newspapers almost immediately. The issue was debated in the Quebec legislature and the federal parliament. Of course, for reasons of national security (and ignorance of the facts) the full story could not be told until hostilities had ceased and, much later, researchers could consult formerly classified documents, and interview participants, both in Canada and abroad. Scholars have now studied the international records; their publications have illuminated the battle from all perspectives. Significantly, they have engaged audiences in a variety of forums from television to open-line radio. In commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the "Battle" in May 2002, the Musée naval de Québec and the Musée de la Mer (Rimouski) staged an important public conference in Rimouski, Quebec, the site of the

famous Father Point lighthouse, which had served as a beacon to German submariners and their victims. The conference inspired the museums to create a travelling historical display and websites. All this is rich treatment for an off-shoot of the Battle of the Atlantic (1939-45).

Selecting amongst all this data, Greenfield explains his eclectic approach as "an act of historical recovery"(5). Clearly, to his mind, other writers have missed something important. What this means is not far too seek. The frontispiece offers a petulant and cynical paragraph by memorist James Lamb presenting wartime propaganda as truth: "Only a Nazi could transform the sinking of helpless merchant ships and the drowning of unarmed sailors into Wagnerian heroics," Lamb claims in part. Greenfield repeats Lamb's polemics with approval in the Preface, and concludes among his appendices a speculative and inadequate exposé entitled "Anti-Semitism and the *Kriegsmarine*." These set-pieces form the conceptual book-ends.

Greenfield then expands the perspective on his narrative by inserting shaded historical sidebars - heading bars, actually - to contextualize the events. In principle, the idea is a good one. Frequently inserted, these "heading bars" consist of clusters of one-liner descriptive statements signalling what is happening elsewhere: for example, the launching of a new German submarine, Russian tank attacks against German lines, American operations in the Pacific, the Battle of Stalingrad.

But in all this his principal focus is on Nazi atrocities. Thus, for example, before commencing a section dealing with *U-517's* attack on HMC *S Charlottetown*, he inserts a heading-bar to inform us: "Four thousand five hundred miles east ... 5000 Jews are deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka death camp" (128); prior to a submarine attack against Sidney-Quebec convoy SQ-36 he announces in another heading bar that "Four thousand five hundred miles east, 6,000 Polish Jews are killed at the Treblinka death camp"(151); or again, when another one attacks Labrador-Quebec convoy NL-9 a bar announces that "Four thousand five hundred miles east.. thousands of

Jews are deported to the Treblinka death camp"(168). German torpedoes, we learn, are made of "Nazi steel shaped to kill"(5). An English invention, everybody's torpedoes were "shaped to kill." German submarines bear the symbol of their evil intent: "the day on which six thousand miles away mass deportations from Warsaw to the Treblinka death camp began, *U-132's* swastika-adorned conning tower broke the surface" of the *St. Lawrence* (75). Note: German conning towers were never so "adorned." Greenfield argues that German submariners can never be considered men of courage; they were all hard-core fanatics without conscience. To argue otherwise, he claims, would devalue the real courage of Allied combatants and their allegiance to a higher moral order. Such simplistic claims ignore the nuanced analyses of published scholarship, as well as the witness of Canadian officers of greater wisdom than Lamb.

It is true that the German navy fought in support of national objectives. We share the author's horror at the Holocaust. But the link with the *St. Lawrence* is forced. Besides, one cannot honestly expose the systemic evil of the Nazi regime - let alone the individual sailor's mind - in such an agenda-driven manner.

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Maura Hanrahan. *TSUNAMI: The Newfoundland tidal wave disaster*. Flanker Press, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, [www.flankerpress.com](http://www.flankerpress.com). 2004. 230pp., appendices. CDN \$16.95, paper: ISBN 1-894463-63-3.

The cover of Hanrahan's book has been nicely illustrated with the iconic image of the Lunenburg-built schooner *Marion Belle Wolfe* anchored in Burin North harbour with the Clarke house, which floated off from its foundation in Port au Bras, tied up to its stern for safekeeping. The schooner, however, did not retrieve the house (107); it was anchored for the upcoming winter and clearly has all its sails removed in the photograph. Another inaccuracy on the inside cover page is an outdated map of the "detail of

the Burin Peninsula most affected by the 1929 tsunami," long since corrected. Not a good start to a book which boasts of its reliance on historic fact!

The book is not a history of the event, but rather a form of an historic novel. In her Forward the author briefly describes the Burin Peninsula and notes that the tsunami of 18 November 1929 arrived quite unexpected by the people who lived on the Burin and "This book tells their story." In her afterword, Hanrahan notes that to do this she has reconstructed conversations, but otherwise "relies entirely on the historical record" and on ten interviews done by the author or her publisher, twelve letters received, as well as correspondence of the South Coast Disaster Committee of the time archived at the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The author's main sources were the surviving detailed claims made by each affected family which have been endlessly transcribed and published in 2000 by her publisher. She invents the names of the two "unheralded local men" who accompanied Nurse Cherry from Lamaline to Taylor's Bay, Point au Gaul and then on to Lord's Cove (209). She is also forced to invent almost everything about Captain Dalton of the *Meigle*.

In a traditional historical novel such as Hugh MacLennan's *Barometer Rising* or Robert MacNeil's *Burden of Desire*, both woven around the 1917 Halifax explosion, there is a plot. This novel really has no plot to weave it together. The closest Maura Hanrahan comes to a plot is in her "Part Two The Journey" (chapters 12-16), comprising the true story of Nurse Dorothy Cherry's journey from her station in Lamaline to Taylor's Bay, Port au Gaul, Lamaline, Lawn and apparently on to St. Lawrence over a five- or six-day period to render what little medical assistance and comfort she could. "Part 1 Waves," chapters 1-11, tells of the arrival of the tsunami. "Part Three Aftermath," chapters 17-24 and afterword, for which Hanrahan has the most historical data, reverts to more of an attempt to write a history of the government and community response to the disaster, with the transcripts of eleven or more primary sources,

whereas Part One and Part Two transcribe but one such primary source each.

The other problem is the author's failure to indicate in general what is fact and what is fiction. She does tell us that all her dialogue is "reconstructed," but leaves the impression that, except for this, the "book relies entirely on the historical record and on contributions from witnesses to the tsunami." Yet she has no footnotes or endnotes, no index and no complete bibliography to give the reader any direction whatsoever as to where the story is derived from the "historical record" and witnesses' accounts, or where it is recreated.

An example is found as Nurse Cherry journeyed from Point au Gaul to Lord's Cove retracing the route taken two days before to Taylor's Bay, then going beyond to Lord's Cove. "The road between Point au Gaul and Lord's Cove was all beach now. Instead of earth, it was filled with round grey, blue, and white rocks, smoothed by centuries of wave action, pitched there by the tsunami" (132-133). This reviewer knows from his own research on the tsunami-laid sediments found on the Burin over seven visits to the area involving six weeks that none of the 1929 trail from just beyond the head of Taylor's Bay to the head of Lord's Cove lay in the runup zone of the 1929 tsunami; it, and the road of today built along the same path, were too high above sea level and are too far away from the shoreline to have been affected.

Then as Nurse Cherry takes the long trip from Lord's Cove to Lawn on November 22, 1929, the author says, "The road to Lawn veered away from the sea, so it contained less debris deposited by the tidal wave" (134). Not so! The modern road built in 1983 does indeed veer away from the sea, and is the misplaced road on the erroneous road map included as the first page of the book. In 1929, however, the Lord's Cove to Lawn connection ran very much along the coast, and there are a number of places where it would have been intersected by the tsunami runup zone.

Hanrahan then has Nurse Cherry being taken on board the relief ship *Meigle* on the evening of Saturday, 23 November, in St. Lawrence, if I have sorted out her chronology

correctly (140-141). Yet the actual letter of the Hon. Dr. H.M. Mosdell, to the Colonial Secretary the Hon. A. Barnes, penned on board the *Meigle* and transcribed by Hanrahan verbatim one page later (141-142) has *Meigle* taking Nurse Cherry on board on early Tuesday morning, 26 November, in Lawn with no mention of a visit by the nurse onward to St. Lawrence.

There is a set of thirteen good but uncredited period photographs in the centre of the volume. This should be corrected in a second edition by noting that the photos on unnumbered pages 107, 108, 111 and 116 were taken by Father James Anthony Miller of Burin, the two on pp. 110 and 112 were taken by the MHA Hon. Dr. H. M. Mosdell during the relief voyage of the *Meigle*, as noted by his initials "H M M" on the prints, while the St. John's relief truck photo on p. 117 (and the cover) came originally from the Public Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The book presents this reviewer with a frustrating format, neither historical novel nor history and with little to help us sort out fact from fiction. While the author undoubtedly captures the flavour of the period and of the people, she does not entirely capture the history of the event.

Alan Ruffman  
Ferguson's Cove, Nova Scotia

Richard Harding, Adrian Jarvis and Alston Kennerley (eds.). *British Ships in China Seas: 1700 to the Present Day*. Liverpool: National Museums and the Society for Nautical Research, [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk), 2004. 255 pp., maps, illustrations, tables, notes. £24.95, paper; ISBN 1-902700-25-2.

China's maritime history has always been a topic of great interest to Westerners, in large part because of the role that the China trade has played in Europe since the sixteenth century, and in British history in particular. Thus it is no surprise that there exists a large literature on the topic in various European languages,

particularly, but not exclusively, in English. The present volume adds to that already substantial literature but does so in highly creative ways providing much information that was entirely new to the present reviewer, and eminently useful.

*British Ships in the China Seas: 1700 to the Present Day* presents published versions of papers offered at a September, 2002 conference held at Liverpool's Merseyside Maritime Museum. Among the twenty chapters, including a foreword by Alan Aberg, is one that is a highly interesting convolute deriving from the experiences of a number of participants in the China trade of the last sixty years or so. The chapters cover topics from the early history of the trade (Sutton, Bulley, Timmermans - including Timmerman's excellent chapter on the Portuguese side of the trade that somewhat exceeds the time constraints of the volume), through the nineteenth century imperialist heyday (Grove, Tuck, Shinn, Scholl, MacGregor, Connor), down to modern and recent times. The latter chapters, in some cases with an overlap to earlier periods, focus specifically on British shipping and shipping lines (Dick, Stuart, Stanley, Armstrong, Rabson, Cooper and Roberts) along with one on a military topic (Parkinson), with an aside on Chinese seafarers (Wu). Finally there is the convolute (by Kennerley), "China Seas: Some Maritime Reminiscences," a fascinating look back from an eye-witness perspective. The conference did yeoman service in collecting such material while it still can be collected, which will not be much longer.

While nearly every chapter breaks new ground in the particular views of past and present presented, and offers a wealth of new and largely unpublished information, the present reviewer found certain chapters of particular interest. One of them is Anne Bulley's "The Country Ships from India," one of the very few works of any kind devoted to the important "country trade." This trade is frequently alluded to in general histories but is generally poorly documented, unless one wants to wade through the relevant sections of specialized works such as Louis Dermigny's *La Chine et l'Occident, Le*

*Commerce a Canton au XVIIIe Siècle, 1719-1833*, four volumes, Paris: Editions Jean Touzot, 1964, which remains the definitive work on the topic but it is ponderous and not always easy to access. Also breaking new ground, from this reviewer's perspective, was Elisabeth Sinn's "The Gold Rush Passenger Trade and the History of Hong Kong 1849-1867," the first work to document fully the entirely voluntary side of Chinese migration to the Golden Mountain, generally California, and counter the prevailing view of the Chinese entirely from the perspective of "victim studies." Clearly, not every Chinese going to the Golden Mountain in the United States was a "coolie," as they are often characterized, and, as the undersigned has learned from his own research, the Cantonese (and Xiangshan) merchant communities, among other better-off groups in mid-nineteenth century China, were purposeful and fully empowered migrants to the New World, in many cases migrating for perfectly reasonable commercial motives (and keeping close contacts with the homeland for the same reason).

Also to be singled out among major new contributions is Glenn Timmermans' "Britain, Macao and Portuguese Ambitions in the South China Sea." He points out clearly and succinctly the obvious importance of Macao to the early British overseas endeavour in and about the China seas just as it was a centerpiece of an earlier trade controlled by Portugal before Portuguese decline in the seventeenth century.

The authors of the collection make few major errors in their accounts and the volume is well proof-read. The collection is also very well illustrated, including the trade era art discussed by Connor, always an intriguing topic, and the maps are generally excellent, although there are too few of them given the geographical obscurity of some of the places discussed (not all of them, to be sure, directly connected with China). The principal problem of the collection, if it is a problem, given the focus of the collection and the background to it, is that it, like most similar collections and books on the topic, it largely fails to take Chinese evidence into consideration. While this is irrelevant for many topics, it would greatly enhance others. It

would be nice, for example, to know how Chinese newspapers and commentators responded to some of the events discussed; for example, in Jonathan Parkinson's otherwise excellent "Some Early Activities of British Aircraft Carriers in Chinese Waters between the Wars." Perhaps here and in other areas a future collaboration between British and Chinese maritime scholars would be most helpful since maritime scholarship is a growing area of interest in China itself and among Chinese scholars located outside of China. Another problem with the book was a tendency to reinvent the wheel, in Lars U Scholl's otherwise highly useful "'Africa to the British, East Asia to the Germans'; Germany's Rise of an East Asian Power," for example, which fails to use Dermigny and goes over some of the same ground in excellent detail.

Nonetheless, these minor criticisms should not detract from what is an excellent and highly useful collection of articles. In addition, the publishers are to be commended for keeping the price down so that individuals and libraries will be able to afford this major work, as they should.

Paul D. Buell  
Seattle, Washington

Arthur Herman. *To Rule the Waves. How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World*. Toronto: HarperCollins Press, [www.harpercollins.com](http://www.harpercollins.com), 2004. xix + 648 pp., maps, notes, index. CDN \$37.95, cloth; ISBN 0-06-053424-9.

What is one to make of an author who grabs a broad theme and runs with it for all its worth? Arthur Herman has already done so with his hugely popular *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* - well, hugely popular with a particular segment of the population. The book was triumphantly given to me by my mother, herself a Scot, as proof positive of the self-evident, and long overdue. And, I must confess, I found it an interesting and entertaining read, if not entirely convincing. Herman has taken a

second crack at it with this volume on the Royal Navy's contribution to our world - no doubt, the RN was comprised of officers and men of Scottish descent.

There are two major problems with this sort of book in general terms and with Herman's in particular. The first is the obvious. Herman has painted his picture on an extremely broad canvas that covers some four hundred years of history - some elements are patchy as a result. It is rather difficult to master such an extensive subject even over some 570 pages of text. Inevitably, the sources of the book are exclusively secondary in nature as a lifetime of study would be required to master the primary record for such a period. As I have noted, Herman has been busy on other topics and so the time has simply not been available. As a result, some of the details are wrong - such as the assertion that Hawkins's ship *Jesus of Lubeck* had 64 guns and a crew of eighty (unless the 64 guns included individual matchlocks and pistols). There are many others throughout the text.

The second problem is that of proportion. The world is a complex one, even during the sixteenth century, the period where Herman's narrative rather sensibly commences, and seeking single explanations is to simplify far too much. As an example, to ascribe the unity of Great Britain to the activities of the Royal Navy is wrong in that such unity is hard to discern, let alone that it was due to an institution such as a navy. Cumberland's redcoats in the '45, Cromwell's puritan troopers in Ireland, and Edward I's medieval ministrations in Wales had rather more to do with it. Enthusiasm over the achievement of national unity in the constituent parts of Great Britain has varied significantly over the period in question and is by no means assured in a seemingly fissiparous future.

The book lacks a good summation. The broad themes Herman identifies are valid, and it would have been more than appropriate to pull the threads together and indicate what the abiding lessons from the Royal Navy experience actually are. The book's conclusion is a very brief review of the 1982 Falklands War, with the fundamental conclusion that those who serve in

today's Royal Navy would have not been out of place had they served in the periods of its world domination. While no doubt quite true, this seems an inadequate assessment. A more thoughtful conclusion would have helped - particularly in these days of self-doubt in matters nautical in countries like our own.

Herman's book suffers from a lack of decent maps and diagrams, as well as having no illustrations. The latter omission is remarkable in that this sort of book usually is accompanied by a selection of illustrations and photographs that support the text. There is little question that the book would have been enhanced by a judicious suite of illustrations. The maps and diagrams, however, are more disappointing. These are extremely uneven in quality, with some being quite adequate, such as that of the Falklands, and others embarrassingly bad, such as that of the Mediterranean or the Caribbean. These are disappointing weaknesses as they are something that can be easily remedied. Herman's editors and publisher let him down in this regard.

Yet despite the *caveats* noted above, Herman has written another winner. He is an engaging writer and he rollicks along at a good clip. He embraces his theme, set out in a brief introduction, and marshals his evidence to support it. The nagging sense of counter-arguments left unsaid, and an abiding suspicion of detail mar the discerning reader's enjoyment, but do not by any means destroy it. By the end of the book most readers will be convinced of the importance of the Royal Navy's role in this whiggish tome, even if some remain a little more sceptical. In short it is a perfect book for those who are not terribly well informed on the subject - they will be much better equipped after reading it. I need not add that a copy is winging its way to my mother to counter the Scottish volume!

Ian Yeates,  
Regina, Saskatchewan

Werner Hirschmann with Donald E. Graves.  
*Another Place, Another Time: A U-Boat Officer's Wartime Album*. Toronto: Robin Brass



Studio and London: Chatham Publishing, 2004. 246 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$ Can 44.95, cloth; ISBN 1-896941-38-9.

This nicely-produced war memoir is a collaborative effort by Werner Hirschmann, a former U-boat engineer officer, and Donald Graves, an experienced military historian. It is based primarily on an earlier unpublished memoir, wartime diaries and fascinating albums about his naval service compiled by Hirschmann, a Torontonian since 1953. Donald Graves is the author of the succinct and engaging *The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle of the Atlantic*. Many of the high-quality production standards of this earlier work, also published by the same Toronto firm, Robin Bass Studio, are found in *Another Place, Another Time* - well-reproduced photographs with informative captions, clear maps and attractive page lay-out and sturdy binding. Hirschmann's collection of photographs is extensive and many of his pictures are several cuts above ordinary snap-shots. Don Graves supplemented the private photos with a comprehensive set of Canadian interior views of Hirschmann's last boat, *U-190* taken after the submarine surrendered off Newfoundland in 1945. Graves has also fleshed out Hirschmann's reminiscences with interviews with three former shipmates and contemporary documentation.

U-boat books obviously feed a thriving niche market. Given the ongoing torrent of such works, it's worth considering whether *Another Place, Another Time* offers new insights. In fact, this account is unique because it tells how the young Hirschmann (barely 22 years old in May 1945) experienced German wartime officer and submarine training. His operational patrols in the Mediterranean and Atlantic were punctuated by attacks by Allied ships and aircraft. His last boat, *U-190*, sank the Bangor escort HMCS *Esquimalt* off Halifax in April 1945, just three weeks before the German surrender and several days after the last reliable radio messages had been received from the Reich. The Hirschmann-Graves narrative, however, is not about operational details, but rather how a young officer progressed through successive stages of

preparation and then experienced the tedium and excitement of long patrols during the final fifteen months of the war.

Werner Hirschmann started his basic training as a regular officer and engineering specialist in October 1940. This was followed by twelve months of workshop and academic courses at the German naval academy broken by four months of seamanship on a destroyer. As it happened, his ship, in common with others of her class, was plagued by machinery problems but did escort the new battleship *Bismarck* to Norway in May 1941. Along the way Hirschmann explains how officer trainees were taught social etiquette and how to handle alcohol. He then moved on to qualify as a submarine engineering officer. The first phase was four grinding winter months in U-boat training flotilla in the Baltic. Hirschmann was sent to join a submarine based in La Spezia as his class joined operational boats in March 1942 for the next stage of their preparation. By this time, U-boats operating in the confined Mediterranean were having a difficult time. A classmate was promptly lost when his boat was sunk and Hirschmann's boat was destroyed with all hands one year later. Fortunately for Hirschmann, his U-boat experienced mechanical problems and aborted an operational patrol in the Western Mediterranean after eight days. The young midshipman enjoyed sightseeing in Tuscany and a spell at a U-boat rest hotel close to a beach, but was frustrated by the desultory progress of the overhaul of his boat by Italian workers.

Hirschmann then returned to the Baltic for five months of classroom instruction and ten intensive weeks diving, surfacing, maintaining trim and operating all machinery systems in a training flotilla. As this phase progressed the pace was stepped up by a special team of seasoned officers who created emergency conditions. The picture which emerges is of a very thorough training system staffed by instructors with operational experience and supported by extensive resources. When Hirschmann finally qualified as a submarine engineering officer in mid-March 1943, almost twenty-nine months had elapsed since he had

joined as a 17-year-old.

By the spring of 1943, U-boats assigned to operations, now seriously obsolete, were suffering steady attrition. Hirschmann was fortunate in being appointed to a new boat in the Baltic training force. His flotilla was used to give prospective commanding officers day and night torpedo firing practice against live targets. The routine was arduous and not without risk because the realistic training led to collisions with the German escorts screening the target ships and other U-boats. Eventually, seasoned by his seven months in the intensive torpedo-firing tempo, Hirschmann was assigned to an operational boat based in Lorient. His submarine, *U-190*, returned safely to Lorient in June 1944 after a barren patrol off the west coast of Africa, having spent most of the final homeward passage submerged and creeping along the northern coast of Spain.

During their slow progress across the Bay of Biscay, the crew learned about the D-Day landings in Normandy. Out of touch with events at the time, Hirschmann and his comrades talked about the landings as "just another phase of the war" and compared them with the failed Dieppe operation two years earlier. Once back in Lorient it was business as usual even as the Allied armies pushed across France. *U-190* started a post-patrol refit and an insouciant Hirschmann journeyed across Europe to attend a snorkel familiarization course on the Baltic coast as his boat was to be fitted with the new device. As during other intervals between times at sea, Hirschmann made the most of opportunities to seek out the fairer sex, to sample nightlife in Paris and to socialize with his fellow officers in France. Meanwhile, the Allied advance progressed but *U-190* escaped, using her new snorkel extensively on a lengthy passage to Germany via Norway. After lengthy modifications to enable *U-190* to dive more quickly she returned to Norway in February and set off for the western Atlantic and a patrol off Halifax.

When Germany surrendered Hirschmann and his comrades were homeward bound south of Newfoundland. Interestingly, they had surfaced only three times in over forty

days and had a roaring alcoholic celebration of the German National Holiday on 1 May while submerged. They surrendered to Canadian warships and Hirschmann was subsequently in a prisoner of war camp in Gravenhurst, Ontario until June 1946 and then spent a further year as a POW in England before returning to Germany. Canadian sailors spent several days with the author and a few of his comrades as *U-190* proceeded to Bay of Bulls. Although only twenty-two but with the perspective of almost five years in the navy, he was surprised to learn that the young wartime-only officers he was dealing with had been university students.

Hirschmann underlines that for him the war was a sort of backdrop to everyday life and that he would have been a naval officer in any case. He and Graves have described how an operational U-boat functioned, and Hirschmann, looking back after over fifty years as a Canadian, remembers the adventures he experienced long ago "in another place, another time." Hirschmann writes that U-boat sailors avoided talking about "politics, war aims or the reason for being out there in the first place" (164) and that's how these topics are handled in the book. The value of *Another Place, Another Time* is its first-hand descriptions of all aspects of wartime service in U-boats. The Canadian aspects - the glimpses of how members of the *Kriegsmarine* saw their Canadian captors with their informal ways and of how POWs experienced Ontario - are a bonus.

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Frederick H. Hocker and Cheryl A. Ward (eds.). *The Philosophy of Ship Building. Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Wooden Ships*. College Station Texas, TX: Texas A & M University Press, [www.tamu.edu/upress](http://www.tamu.edu/upress), 2004. Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology Series, in association with the Institute of Nautical Archaeology. 384 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, index. US \$75.00, cloth; ISBN 1-58544-313-1.

How far have we come and where are we going? Based on its title, one might think this was a highly specialized book. And in a way it is, given the list of specialists who contributed to it. Together, the ten articles, all by different authors, make this book an excellent in-depth introduction to various aspects, mainly archaeological, of wooden ship studies.

In fact, the book has been in production a long time. The first essays were written almost fifteen years ago when the idea of preparing a "festschrift" for J. Richard Steffy originated. Thankfully, although many of the authors submitted their texts over a decade ago, they have been given an opportunity to update their articles. The subjects are not new, but the authors present the most current features, data and insights for each of their sites. Included among the contributors, for example, are Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, Patrice Pomey and Lucien Basch, who belong to the pioneer generation of maritime archaeologists. *The Philosophy of Shipbuilding* can be divided in two segments; the first series of contributions outlines the current state of knowledge in the different old world ship-building traditions; the second series of articles presents different kinds of source material such as ancient models and historical evidence.

In gathering together such a collection of papers written at different times, by so many authors there are often problems of blending different writing styles and presentation techniques. Editors Hocking and Ward, however, have generally succeeded in harmonizing the different styles of text, captions and literature references into a focussed thematic volume rather than a mere collection of articles. For example, they have combined all references into one 12-page bibliography, and they have included a glossary as well as an index. Virtually all the articles have a pleasant length of 15 to 20 pages, including many illustrations, which contributes to the book's readability and its use as an informative introductory work.

In style, the book brings to mind Richard Steffy's approach to archaeology, not just gathering the evidence, but incorporating a conceptual framework for the research, seeing

through social relationships, politics, almost reaching back into the world in which the ships were once built, used and discarded.

The subjects range from the combination of philosophy, practice and research to the antique ship building traditions, from early medieval north(western) Europe to shipwrecks found in a large lake in the United States. There is no ethnographic article on existing wooden ship building practices, but such have been published in numerous other places. While most articles feature old world sites, where Steffy did a lot of his work, like the Kyrenia project, his work is hardly mentioned or described directly. Rather, the articles are more an example of the professional world in which he moved and helped to develop into its present form.

The introductory chapter, written by coeditor Hocker, tries to explain the reasons and goals for this volume. Thankfully, when discussing philosophy, practice and research, Hocker makes clear that philosophy alone does not make a professional ship archaeologist and neither does mere practice. "A purely technological approach puts shipbuilding in a vacuum, where voices do not carry (...) those voices can tell us how people of the past thought about the products they made and used (...) how they organised their perceptions of the physical world."

Hocker pleads for formulating larger research goals, based on the excavation data from the 1960s and 70s, to prepare for new excavations in the coming decades. After giving his thoughts on different systems of classification for vessels, he attempts a kind of psycho-archaeology, seeking a typology according to the distinctions that might have been perceived by the original builders and sailors of the ships. Much of his introduction focusses on the long-held division between shell-based or skeleton-based construction, with a short excursion to bottom-based vessels. The clarity with which he describes the different steps of thinking makes it easy to grasp or debate.

The contributions to this volume indicate where ship archaeology has come from,

and although the content does not quite live up to the ambitious title, it is a good indication of where the editors and authors were aiming and what they think is possible in maritime archaeology over the next few decades. The value of this work lies in the overall picture it gives of the current state of knowledge and research in this field. As the authors suggest, it is up to those of us, present and future, who are active in maritime archaeology to make the next leap forward.

Since nobody starts into wooden ship archaeology from scratch, this book offers beginners a good introductory plunge into the subject. Those already acquainted with wooden ship archaeology will enjoy the familiar references in this book, but will also find a lot of new information and a good description of the latest developments in the field.

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Verne Huser. *On the River with Lewis and Clark*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, [www.tamu.edu/upress](http://www.tamu.edu/upress). 2004. Number Nineteen: Environmental History Series. 224 pp., photographs, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$40.00, cloth; ISBN 1-58544-320-4.

This book falls somewhere between a work of history and a specialized travel experience. It is a good book, but difficult to review, given the many issues it raises. Let's start at the beginning of the story.

As many Canadians know, in 1793 Alexander Mackenzie discovered a river-based overland route across North America to the Pacific Ocean. He was not interested in scientific exploration, because he worked for the North West Company, which was competing with the Hudson's Bay Company for greater profits in the British fur trade. Few of Mackenzie's records survived, and although his accomplishments became well known, his full account of his adventure was not published until 1801.

Throughout the eighteenth century, both the French and Spanish had explored the interior of the continent far to the south of Mackenzie's rivers. For example, in 1792 and 1794 Jacques d'Eglise travelled up the Missouri into the Mandan country of present-day North Dakota. He was the first Spanish subject in the region, reporting that the Mandans had told him of English-speaking trade contacts. Exploration like this did little to clarify ambiguous treaties between France, Spain and the United States, moreover indigenous peoples had their own views on trade and politics.

US President Thomas Jefferson often claimed that "Commerce ... not war ... is the great engine by which we are to coerce ..." native peoples. Following the news of Mackenzie's achievement in 1793, Jefferson sought ways to expand American influence, outflank British trade routes, establish new American trading patterns, and at the same time acquire scientific data on the western half of the continent. The opportunity came in 1803. France had regained Louisiana from Spain, and that year Bonaparte sold it to the Americans. These lands covered much of what later became thirteen states, and the Louisiana Purchase was, and still is, an event as significant in American history as independence from Britain and the framing of the constitution, **i**

A year before France transferred Louisiana to the Americans, Jefferson had directed that US Army Captain Meriwether Lewis begin planning a river-based expedition through these lands to the Pacific. The federally-funded "Corps of Discovery" travelled three years out and back - 1804 to 1806 - and the officers recorded information on the geography, waterways, flora, fauna, weather and natives across central and western North America. Lewis and his friend William Clark carried with them a copy of Mackenzie's travels, and the Corps made it to the Pacific, but like Mackenzie found no direct route through the Rocky Mountains.

The emphasis of this unusual book is on the rivers, rivermanship, and the river craft used by the expedition. Verne Huser has spent more than forty-five years as a professional river

guide, and he wrote the book as a complement to the Lewis and Clark journals, hoping that: "Knowledge of the rivers, of their basic functions and common characteristics, and of the most fundamental means of negotiating them should help all readers" (x).

Although an exploration story lends itself to a chronological structure, Huser's work is thematic, and therefore subject to some repetition. The book is organized into eight chapters, beginning with "The Ways of Wind and Waters," which, in my opinion, most CNRS readers will understand and enjoy. In chapter 2, "The Travelers," Huser reviewed the Corps team, which numbered about fifty souls over the three year period, and included several French-Canadian rivermen and *engagés*. This chapter is painstakingly researched and well-organized.

Chapter 3 returns to the river with "The Benefits and Hazards of River Travel" and four chapters follow on "The Crafts," "The Rivers They Travelled," "Travelling Upstream and Down" and, finally, "River Incidents." The book ends with a chapter "Off the River" and a summary titled "The Impact of the Lewis and Clark Expedition." Huser's view is clear: "When we begin to destroy natural systems and our historical perspective, we lose both our past and our future. By looking back on the Lewis and Clark expedition, perhaps we can regain a little of both" (185).

Included is a useful table on distances travelled, as well as a bibliography and an index. Strangely, Alexander Mackenzie is not listed in the index nor is his account in the bibliography.

Huser's central thesis is that you cannot fully understand early nineteenth century river exploration unless you travel the route yourself, at the same time researching the natural environment of central and western North America. He is probably right, and for readers interested in the expedition as river travel, then and now, the book is essential. His work, however, is one of extremes: strong on rivermanship and river ecology, and weak on the wider historical and environmental significance.

Huser does not place Lewis and Clark and their immense work into the context of the age. Jefferson was a man of his time, and his

United States was as much a product of the period as was the keen interest in science: surveying, navigation, and recording scientific data. So in an age that considered science and technology as the equal of commerce, was the Corps of Discovery equipped and trained as well as others? Because their records survived, (unlike Mackenzie's), did this extensive data contribute to a wider scientific understanding of the vast North American environment? Did environmentalists benefit from this research?

Grappling with these questions caused me to read widely. I looked at Jon Kukla's article in *History News* (Winter 2005) "A Noble Bargain and Its Centenaries," Professor Derek Hayes' masterful work on Mackenzie, *First Crossing* (2001), Richard Dillon's biography of Lewis, (1965), and then I examined Thwaites's eight volumes of the Corps of Discovery's final report (reprinted from 1814 in 1904-05). I learned that Lewis received advice from scientists, his Corps carried modern instruments - sextants, octants, and a chronometer - and that they devoted a great deal of time recording their findings and sketching accurate maps. Sadly, Huser did not develop the linkage between river navigation, map-making, record-keeping, and the use made of this environmental data.

Why does this matter? Because without an explanation of the effects of the expedition, the experience is reduced to a grand and unique American adventure: Lewis and Clark discover the west. The reality of the expedition, though, was that it relied on the knowledge, experience and expertise of the many explorers, native peoples, fur traders and missionaries who had worked throughout the region for over a century. What made the government-funded Corps different was that while they were pursuing a continent-wide revision in fur trade economics, their findings also included important scientific observations on the environment.

Events, including Lewis's probable murder in 1809, delayed the release of the expedition's scientific information. Eventually, in 1814, the records were published, and in the preface Jefferson described Lewis as having "fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by

ourselves." Scientists everywhere benefited from the report, but scientific progress was not the only result: commerce and sovereignty also gained from the expedition experience.

All that said, after you read this often repetitious, yet remarkable and highly readable book, you will probably agree that Huser gives us a thorough understanding of Lewis and Clark's experience in western river travel. That was his aim, and if you are a serious river boat handler or rafter, you will not be able to put this book down. In addition, an actual trip in a period vessel is only a phone call away, and on page xiii author-guide Huser included his contact particulars in Great Falls, Montana.

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Stephen Howarth. *The Royal Navy's Reserves in War and Peace, 1903-2003*. Barnsley: Leo Cooper, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2004. xii + 196 pp., photographs, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £ 19.95, cloth; ISBN 1-84415-016-X.

For a Canadian reviewer, the fascinating feature of this book is the absolute similarity in the progress made by the smaller and newer Canadian navy and its reserves compared with the much older Royal Navy. Howarth's tracking of the development of the Royal Navy's first permanent reserves - Royal Naval Reserves with some mercantile or at least commercial fishing experience, and their Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves with practically no such background—leaves anyone with experience with the similar Canadian reserves with a major sense of *deja vu*. Time and again in their relatively brief 90- and 100-year histories issues of progress, problems and successes in both services are almost identical, quite a first for Canadian naval students. One suspects that American, Australian and other naval readers will be similarly attracted to the surprising similarities, especially when comparing dates.

Both the British and Canadian navies had ad hoc maritime forces established and abandoned to meet temporary maritime

emergencies. The Royal Navy had River Sea Fencibles, the Naval Artillery Volunteers and other "reserves" that can be traced back to the 1600s, but they were never made permanent. Once a panic was over, reserves were abandoned. The Canadians had, the Provincial Marine on the Great Lakes, as well as temporary Naval Brigades often created to resist anticipated American intrusions when the supposed protection of the far distant Royal Navy was slow in arriving. But in Britain, it was not until 1903 that a first permanent, navy-supported and recognized RN Reserve was created, a reserve that has survived uninterrupted to this day. Similarly, only seven years later, the *Canadian Naval Act* of 1910 provided for a Naval Reserve Force and a Naval Volunteer Force, although the first actual recruits, into the Royal Navy Canadian Volunteer Reserve, were not signed on until 1913. The famous R.C.N.V.R. was not so named until 1923, although that was simply a change of name from the R.N.C.V.R.. Sadly in a way, it took two wars for reserves to prove to all what they could really accomplish.

The RNR, (and RNVR, now, like ours, combined into the single reserve), was perhaps fortunate in that from the outset they were able to enlist well-connected members of the aristocracy to support their efforts. Such names as the Marquis of Graham, the Hon. Rupert Guinness (later Captain the Earl of Iveagh) and the Marquis of Dufferin (a cousin of the British Prime Minister!) figure large in this history, where they became early senior officers who often had personal connections with the Naval Board. Although Canada lacked such lustre, we did have the most active support of Captain Walter Hose, who became Canada's senior naval officer shortly after the end of the First World War and who was an enthusiastic naval reserve supporter.

The author of this history, son of naval historian David Howarth and an ex-reservist himself, does a most complete job of recounting the diverse histories of the RNR, RNVR and various subcomponents such as the WRNS (the "Wrens"), the RNV (Wireless) Reserve, five RNVR Air Divisions and their 13 squadrons, which will sound familiar to Canadians involved

in the 1950s. Sometimes in Canada we lead the way, amalgamating the RNR and RCNVR in January 1946, the RN not until 1958, and even then only in name, with two separate "lists" until the 1960s, and Wrens not integrated into the Reserves until 1977. Maybe this is a slight sign of the Royal Navy's much longer and thus more ingrained naval history, making it harder for them to change old habits than the brash new Dominion with only a nodding dedication to such niceties. Howarth points out another advantage whereby all reserves in the U.K. are within forty miles of the sea, most of them in fact on salt water tributaries. With growing active support, and many redundant vessels, each division acquired ships, which were practically their only accommodation for training.

After sterling performances in two global maritime wars, the reserves slowly, slowly, became entrusted with more responsible jobs. The "regular" navy often took considerable convincing, but in the 1970s the RNR took on the manning of the River Class mine warfare vessels - exactly the same as the Canadians have now done with the MCDVs or Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels. In both cases, as Howarth comments, "It took time for the Navy to grow accustomed to these interlopers." He tells us all we could want to know, from a general overview even to specific unit levels, about Royal Navy Reserves - their growth, contractions in peacetime, and expansion again into wider responsibilities. Though hardly a page-turner, the story nevertheless makes for interesting reading for those who have followed a similar path elsewhere. It makes for a very worthwhile reference for any similar ventures.

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William James. *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812: A Full and Correct Account of the Naval War Between Great Britain and the United States of America, 1812-1815*. London: Conway Maritime Press, [www.crysalisbooks.co.uk2004](http://www.crysalisbooks.co.uk2004), new

introduction by Andrew Lambert, xv + 408 pp., 4 illustrations, 121 appendices, index. UK £25, CDN \$61.95, cloth; ISBN 0-85177-987-5.

One of the biggest gaps in the literature covering the War of 1812 is the absence of a recent, in-depth analysis of the naval war. The topic is a broad one, dealing with not just the famous, and lesser known, single-ship engagements but also the blockades, seaboard campaigns and the contests on the northern lakes. Historians wishing to make reference to material of this breadth are still limited to the classic works by Alfred Mahan (1905), Theodore Roosevelt (1882) and William James (1817). The latter book, James's *Naval Occurrences*, is now available at a price which puts it in the range of most serious students and libraries.

William James was educated in law and worked for the Supreme Court in Jamaica from 1801. He was in the United States when its government declared war on Britain in June 1812, and was detained as an enemy alien until escaping to Halifax in November 1813. Having been familiar with Royal Navy officers during his years in Jamaica, James was incredulous about the veracity of American reports concerning the victories of the United States Navy during such single-ship actions as the *Constitution* versus the *Guerrière*. He, therefore, applied his professional fact-finding skills towards investigating the widely published claims. When he reached Halifax he continued his research and, determined to set the story straight, published a pamphlet in 1816. Its success prompted him to elaborate on the subject and the current title was the result. James's *Naval Occurrences* (1817) was well received by the Admiralty, which led him to write a fuller account of the war (1818) and then a six-volume study (1822-24) of the Royal Navy during the wars with France and the USA. The books were all critical successes and influential in their time. Captain Sir George Collier, for instance, was so dismayed by James's criticism (in the multi-volume set) of his failure to capture the *Constitution* in March 1815 near the Cape Verde Islands that he committed suicide by slitting his throat. James died after a brief but

painful illness in May 1827, leaving his wife in penury; his books were not financial successes.

This title is typical of historical studies of the early 1800s in that it is marked by rabid nationalism and patriotic hyperbole. James's goal was to see the 1812 naval war "freed of American dress" and to show that "no events recorded in the annals of our country, reflect a brighter lustre upon the character of the British seamen" (262). At length, his style becomes annoying enough to justify shelving the book alongside others of the period (as well as a few recent titles).

There is some gold to be gleaned from James's labourious arguments, however. For one thing, he met and discussed the affairs with the American and British officers and seamen involved, and so we get a view inside the mind of a man of the times which helps us better understand how naval contests were construed by James's contemporaries. He explores in great depth the true meaning of "weight of metal," long guns versus carronades and rating versus actual firepower. Similarly, he goes beyond stated complements and examines the nature of the various crews involved: how many seamen, able and ordinary, boys and marines; how many men away in prizes; how many ill. He details the warships themselves, comparing opponents, their size, state of repair, speed and service records. James's point is always to prove that the published American reports failed to explain that "no American ship of war... captured a British ship of war, of the same force" (262), which he succeeds in doing although his pro-British spin should make any reader apprehensive. On occasion he clearly skirts some contentious matters; short shrift is given, for instance, in this book to Collier's failure to capture *Constitution*. Nevertheless, James reminds the modern reader about some important issues involved in warfare during the age of fighting sail. He provides a wealth of facts and figures for historians to use as spring boards for their own studies and the collection of documents in the 121 appendices is a worthwhile resource.

For all its faults, this is a classic and should be on the shelves of serious students of naval history. The introduction by Andrew

Lambert presents some context for the book and seems designed to make the reader reach for Roosevelt's *Naval War* which was written, in part, to refute James. How unfortunate it is that more than 100 years have gone by without the arrival of a comparable study of the topic, a classic for this century.

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Colonel Robert Holden Mackenzie, *The Trafalgar Roll: The Ships and the Officers*, London, Chatham Publishing, 2004 (originally published 1913) 336 pp., index, US \$ 34.95, cloth; ISBN 1-86176-228-3;

Edgar Vincent, *Nelson: Love & Fame*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, 640 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index, US\$ 35.00, ISBN cloth, 0-300-09797-2

The subject of Nelson and Trafalgar, in this decade of bicentennial celebrations, has become a virtual industry. At about the time of the Trafalgar centennial, Colonel Robert Holden Mackenzie participated in a similar industry, somewhat less prolific but enormously significant nevertheless, and produced a listing of the officers who fought in the Battle of Trafalgar, with short biographies of most, and potted histories of the ships engaged. It has been a classic reference for generations. In the new reprint Colin White, of the National Maritime Museum, writes a helpful introduction pointing out the principal errors and omissions. There are not many of them.

Reading *The Trafalgar Roll* as a whole, rather than using it as a reference (which I confess has been my usual practice), gives personality to the ships as much as or more than to the people. Colonel Mackenzie prepares the reader for this in his preface, where he cites Alfred Thayer Mahan's dictum: "In naval biography and history, distinguished ships have a personality only less vivid than that of the men who fought them." One gets a vivid impression in this book of the desperate struggle and its bloody consequences. His excellent description



for instance of the 98-gun *Téméraire* coming up to support the *Victory*, after Nelson had fallen, is just one of several that show how hard won was this battle.

Mackenzie, a Royal Marine officer, wrote before the 1914-18 war. He might have approached the subject differently had he been exposed to the disappointments and tragedies, as well as the successes, of the Royal Navy in the Great War. He could not however have been very much more careful of fact, or very much less rodomontade in his marshalling of the names and events. As Colin White observes in his introduction, this was one of several studies that sought to make tactical and strategic sense of Trafalgar, like Julian Corbett's *The Campaign of Trafalgar* in 1910, which was followed in 1813 by the Admiralty report on Trafalgar, heavily based on Corbett's work. D.M. Schurman's 1981 biography of Corbett notes on pp. 124-7, "The Admiralty were mistaken in one thing. They regarded their pronouncement as final or semi-divine. In fact, the god of tactics had already given utterance." The "semi-official" biography by John M'Arthur and the Reverend James Clarke, published in 1809, and other accounts published later in the nineteenth century, (I have a wonderful illustrated edition of Lord Charles Beresford and H.W. Wilson's *Nelson and His Times*, published at about the turn of the century that, although it conveys the atmosphere of the period most effectively, is little more than an abridgment of several previous accounts), focus so much on the Nelson legend that the details of the fighting age of sail are buried in hero worship. Mackenzie brought balance to the subject, suggesting that Nelson's achievement rested on the efforts of his predecessors as well as the so-called 'band of brothers' he had inspired.

This reprint is complemented by modern research now available on-line, ([www.ageofnelson.org](http://www.ageofnelson.org)), also available on a compact disc from the same source. Although the information on-line is more extensive and detailed (identifying men of the lower deck as well as officers, and with a great deal of supplemental information), the book remains unique. It has stood the test of time. It can with

advantage be used in conjunction with the world wide web; scholars can now make best use of it for a general impression of the battle, and use the demographic information on the web for detailed analysis of the ships' companies. Whatever use is made of it, *The Trafalgar Roll*, especially with Colin White's introduction, will always be a valuable addition to a naval library.

"Nelson decades" have not of course been necessary for the production of Nelson biographies. The extraordinary qualities of the man are timeless in nature, and they need to be seen in terms of the age one lives in. It is true that there is added interest because of the Trafalgar bicentennial, and Edgar Vincent, a one-time naval officer, business consultant and head hunter, may have taken advantage of this, but he also adds usefully to the generally very impressive selection of biographies that have been re-assessing Nelson over the last half century. He emphasises the humanity of the man, warts and all. Besides documenting the affection and concern that Nelson had for those who served under him, Vincent shows how Nelson understood and used patronage to advance in the service. Concluding his account of the disaster at Tenerife in 1797 Vincent quotes a well known letter to Sir Snape Hamond, Controller of the Navy: "My pride suffered; and although I felt the second attack a forlorn hope, yet the Honour of our Country called for the attack, and that I should command it. I never expected to return and am thankful." Vincent's one sentence comment: "For such reasons he sacrificed his men" (218). Contrast this with Nelson's agony, writing to St Vincent after the disastrous assault on the French at Boulogne in 1801, when he had not himself been able to join his sailors in the fighting and had no wound to salve his conscience. In this case, as Edgar Vincent wonders, why did Nelson launch the attack in the first place? Was it "a boiling over of his seemingly inexhaustible store of aggression?" (450).

Vincent portrays Nelson's complexity in extensive samples of the letters with which eighteenth century correspondents did credit to their age. Lavinia Spencer, wife of the First Lord, calling Nelson a "dear little creature"

must, says Vincent, "distinguish him from every other hero in the British pantheon" (305). In Nelson's own letters "there is no distance between what he feels and what he says, never a hint of cleverness, sophistication or literary effect. However tortured, bitter or jealous he may be feeling, there is always a parallel stream of kind and loving feeling, and the sense of his vulnerability" (405). His passion for Emma Hamilton, and his consequent rejection of the long-suffering Fanny, are laid bare both in his letters and those of Emma and Fanny. When, in possibly fearing to encounter Fanny he absented himself from his father's deathbed and funeral, Vincent rightly suggests "an inner coldness and emotional emptiness in a man who was otherwise so public in displaying his feelings" (467).

Not only was Nelson a heroic fighting admiral and superb tactician (building, as Mackenzie hinted, and as others have pointed out in the recent literature, on the experience of his predecessors), but he was a brilliant administrator. It is true that his methods did not sit well with some of his superiors, but as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean he proved incomparable. Here Edgar Vincent, (and possibly this is the head-hunter and business consultant speaking) makes the telling observation that "Nelson was working on entirely modern principals. To him track record and potential were just as important for operational appointments as they are seen today.... The only thing that is different today is the vast amount of effort that goes into producing no better outcome than the eighteenth century navy - a handful of brilliant and successful men, a great leavening of mediocrity, many unlucky, and vast numbers of unsung heroes" (500). That being said, there is no better account than in this biography of the amazing efficiency and readiness of Nelson's Mediterranean fleet, the health of his people and his grasp of detail.

All this provides the framework for the four victories (Cape St Vincent, The Nile, Copenhagen and Trafalgar) that set Nelson apart as a great captain of war. They are familiar stories, well told, and if they do not add greatly

to our knowledge of the events, although I was glad to see that Vincent acknowledges the work of John Harbron, whose *Trafalgar and the Spanish Navy* is often overlooked, the overall context in which Vincent puts these campaigns and battles tells us much that is new about the man whom Mahan rightly called the embodiment of sea power. It, too, deserves a place in any naval library.

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Vincent P. O'Hara, *The German Fleet at War, 1939-1945*. Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, [www.NavalInstitute.org](http://www.NavalInstitute.org). 2004. x + 308 pp., maps, tables, illustrations, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$32.95, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-651-8.

Vincent O'Hara of San Diego is a self-described business consultant, researcher and cartographer. Dissatisfied with what he believes to be an undue emphasis on the U-boats in the German navy's (*Kriegsmarine*) role in the Second World War, he has penned this, his first book, to redress that imbalance. He suggests that the German navy fulfilled many of its assigned tasks, ranging from protecting vital sea lanes to protecting the flanks of Fortress Europe, from denying the Allies' ability to project power across the open seas to projecting its own power wherever feasible.

Despite the Allies' overwhelming supremacy at sea, O'Hara argues, the *Kriegsmarine* fought more sea battles than the Italian, Japanese, or American navies - sixty-nine, to be exact. These ranged from such epic sorties as those of the "pocket" battleship *Graf Spee* in December 1939, the battleship *Bismarck* and the heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen* in May 1941, and of the battleship *Scharnhorst* in December 1943, to the inconclusive actions off Kolka Lighthouse in July 1941, and to the equally inconclusive third patrol of German torpedo boats out of Le Havre in June 1944. The book ends with the light action off Sworbe (Svôrbe) Peninsula in November 1944. All of the

encounters are enhanced by superbly drawn maps.

O'Hara uses the terms "surface engagement," "surface action," and "sea battle," interchangeably, but he is careful to define his terminology. All three descriptors just cited refer to encounters between "purpose-built surface warships displacing at least five hundred tons full load" that included exchanges of either "torpedoes and/or gunfire" (viii). In each of the actions that he describes in painstaking detail, the author follows a standard routine for the chapter headers: time, type, weather, visibility, sea state, surprise, and mission. O'Hara's research in primary sources is limited to several citations for US Navy vessels and two for British Admiralty files; in the main, he relies on published secondary works, including Eric Groves's welcome 2002 two-volume republication of official British after-action reports on encounters with *German Capital Ships and Raiders in World War II* (London, Frank Cass).

While the book basically consists of a recitation of the selected surface actions between 1939 and 1945, O'Hara nevertheless suggests some conclusions. First, "luck" played a large role in several of the major naval actions in open seas. This was certainly the case with both *Bismarck* and *Scharnhorst* when a "lucky" shot (torpedo or shell) disabled both ships quite unexpectedly and quite unpredictably. Second, British gunnery was largely poor, a claim O'Hara bases on statistical compilations of the number of large-calibre rounds fired at the two German ships just mentioned. Third, British battleships such as the *Prince of Wales* suffered from serious design flaws, mostly with regard to the main turrets, the "bane of her class" (81). Fourth, German battleships and cruisers suffered not only from over-complicated machinery, but especially from a "systemic failure," namely, "excessive caution in the face of the enemy" (259). Fifth, Carl von Clausewitz's proverbial "fog of war" played a major role, especially in night encounters. There, the author relies on Admiral Andrew Cunningham's prescient conclusion that, "In no other circumstances . . . does the fog of war so completely descend to

blind one to a true realization of what is happening" (200). Sixth, O'Hara suggests a tactical observation: that in rough weather out at sea with good visibility, "the better gun platform prevailed," but that at night in littoral waters, "the better torpedo platform prevailed" (199). Finally, and most contentiously, he argues that the mere threat posed by *Bismarck*, *Tirpitz* and *Scharnhorst* acted like a "chain around the neck of the British navy," that is, that it proscribed greatly its freedom of action. In fact, O'Hara claims that the fateful *Bismarck* operation (*Rheinübung*) was "in some respects" a German "strategic victory in May 1941" (95). Such a sweeping claim should spark future reexamination of the Royal Navy's surface strategy of 1941-44.

The book's major failings consist of a decided lack of interpretation of key strategic and technological issues. Not all readers will be familiar with these. For example, Admiral Erich Raeder's "double-pole" surface strategy of 1939 is never explained. Use of German works on the topic by eminent authors such as Werner Rahn and Michael Salewski would have remedied this omission. The role of Allied code-breaking (ultra) is neither described nor evaluated in its role as a cause of German failures. Again, reference to scholars such as F.H. Hinsley, David Kahn and John Winton would have fleshed out this critical aspect of the surface war at sea. The impact of British radar on surface actions is also largely left to the reader's imagination. In short, O'Hara's major contribution to the literature consists of a rich detailing of near forgotten German surface engagements rather than of new analysis or interpretation.

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Tom Pocock, *Stopping Napoleon. War and Intrigue in the Mediterranean*. London: John Murray, [www.johnmurrays.co.uk](http://www.johnmurrays.co.uk), 2004. xx + 262 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, index. UK £ 20.00, cloth; ISBN 0-7195-6290-2.

For many, the war at sea ended after Nelson's apotheosis at Trafalgar on 21 October 1805. True, there was the occasional nautical element associated with the British conduct of the land war in the Peninsula - if nothing else, the initial trip to Lisbon and before that, the evacuation at Corunna. And, of course, there was the spot of bother with Brother Jonathon in the inconsequential spat of 1812. But on the whole, the naval war was reduced to dogged blockade and convoy work, certainly little of drama - even though many grasp the criticality of those activities to Napoleon's eventual defeat at Waterloo in 1815. Tom Pocock's new book, *Stopping Napoleon*, puts paid to that notion and consequently fills an important gap.

Pocock's book covers an era with which the author is already familiar, having earlier penned biographies of Sir Sidney Smith and Captain William Hoste, both prominent members of the *dramatis personae* in this book. *Stopping Napoleon* takes as its theme the war in the Mediterranean and is essentially divided into sections that cover the high points of a war that ebbed and flowed with wider events. The British interest in that theatre was its ongoing anxiety over the dilapidated Ottoman Empire and seemingly perennial French ambitions to strike at British India via this route. Much diplomacy, military and naval effort was expended in seeking to thwart Napoleon in this regard.

The opening chapters detail the struggles centring on the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The Bourbon monarch had been driven from the Naples half of his kingdom and was confined to Palermo in Sicily. British policy was concentrated on preserving him there, and, if possible, restoring him to Naples (perhaps it need not be noted that Nelson himself, when not distracted with private pursuits, had spent a great deal of effort in Naples in the years after the Battle of the Nile on essentially the same enterprise). These efforts were attended with success as the capture of the Island of Capri attested, and the sharply fought military engagement at Maida in Calabria (1806) - the first real victory the British Army had achieved over the French.

The next phase was directed against the

Ottoman Empire with Vice-Admiral Duckworth's naval assault on Constantinople through the Dardanelles. The motive was essentially to support Britain's Russian ally, and to thwart ongoing French intrigue. The attack proceeded without sufficient military support and despite the forcing the Straits, Duckworth's squadron could only glower impotently at an unco-operative Porte who refused to capitulate. The return journey to the Aegean was rather more difficult, and Duckworth was obliged to lick his wounds after suffering significant damage to his ships from the Dardanelles' many forts. The French, who were pulling the strings behind the scenes, were delighted, but at the end of the day were unable to secure any real advantage with their success. The whole incident was again attempted in all essentials by Churchill in 1915 with rather less success - again, the lack of military-naval co-ordination was the key factor in explaining the failure.

While Duckworth was having his futile adventures off Constantinople, another British force secured Alexandria. This expeditionary force suffered disastrous setbacks at the hands of the Turks and was eventually evacuated to Sicily. Both fiascos were overshadowed by events in Europe where Napoleon had recently humbled the Russians, (at Friedland in June 1807) and had drawn them into his Continental System. England was alone - again.

Pocock then turns the focus of his narrative on the Adriatic and the intrigues associated with the Venetians, and the uncertainty in Britain as to where they ought to attempt to prosecute the land war with Napoleon, Spain or Italy. We now know of course what the decision was, but in late 1807 the question was still an open one. The loss of Capri to Marshall Murat, soon to be declared King of the Two Sicilies by Napoleon, however, and arrival of Lt-General's Moore and Wellington in Portugal and Spain in 1808 - 1810 decided the issue. Meantime in the Adriatic, an active naval war was conducted, designed to deny the Illyrian hinterland to the French in favour of the Austrians and the Ottoman Turks. It was during this phase that Captain William Hoste secured his impressive

victory over a superior French fleet at Lissa.

This theatre of war was full of incident that deserves to be better known. The forces engaged were usually small, certainly in comparison to those involved elsewhere, but the military and naval competence displayed by the British as they engaged in a seemingly never-ending series of single ship actions, cutting out expeditions, captures of ports and fortresses, various trade interdiction activities and so forth is the stuff of the Hornblower/Bolitho/Aubrey adventures. It was in the conduct of these numberless small-scale actions, here and elsewhere, that the Royal Navy achieved its apparently effortless superiority over its various opponents: setbacks were brushed off and triumphs were trumpeted in the press in London. And, significantly, Napoleon's ambitions were constantly denied in this theatre, and consequently everywhere else.

It might be noted, in passing, that part of the British preference for peripheral warfare can be traced to these experiences. The British had their own ambitions of linking up with Continental allies through this Mediterranean backdoor, notably the Austrians, but also with the Russians and Germans, and powerful arguments were raised for fighting in Italy rather than Spain which was somewhat more distant from the main theatres of war.

*Stopping Napoleon* is a good read and is good narrative history - it explains what is going on clearly, and relates the events it describes to the wider story with frequent references to developments elsewhere. As I have already noted, the book fills a knowledge gap that is perhaps inevitable given the general lack of 'big events' in a period full of them. Nonetheless, these 'small events' had important consequences and had a significant influence on the conduct and ultimate success of the wider war.

There are a couple of minor bones to pick. The maps included are oddly placed (some in the front, some in the text), and can only be described as barely adequate. The lack of a good map of the Adriatic theatre, as an example, is an odd omission. There are occasional infelicities; the use of the term "battleship" is anachronistic,

for example. For this period, ship of the line is appropriate. And, there is the occasional slip; for instance on page 223, Pocock mixes up the participants at the two engagements that were a prelude to Waterloo: The British/Dutch Army fought at Quatre Bras, and the Prussians at Ligny, rather than vice-versa. These are small matters, and I have little hesitation in recommending the book.

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Diana and Michael Preston, *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind. Explorer, Naturalist and Buccaneer: The Life of William Dampier*. New York: Walker & Co., [www.walkerbooks.com](http://www.walkerbooks.com), 2004. 372 pp., maps, illustrations, notes and sources, bibliography, art credits, index. US\$ 27.00, cloth; ISBN 0-8027-1425-0.

William Dampier was born in 1651, in East Coker, Somersetshire and first went to sea at the age of seventeen. Soon after, he sailed to Java as an able seaman in an East Indiaman. He joined the Royal Navy in 1673 and fought during the Third Anglo-Dutch War, but was released after less than a year due to ill health. Dampier next sailed for Jamaica to manage a plantation, but after learning that he was expected to perform menial tasks rather than manage, he left the colony and travelled to Campeche, Mexico, where he worked as a logwood cutter. There he was drawn into the world of buccaneers that held his attention for the rest of his life. Dampier returned to England for a short time in 1678 and married before departing the next year for the Caribbean, where he joined a party of buccaneers under Bartholomew Sharp. Dampier took part in an attack on Portobello on the coast of Panama and then raided and plundered along the Pacific coast of South America.

Dampier was a hapless pirate, and when that part of the world became too hot for him and his shipmates he sailed away, eventually arriving in Virginia. In 1683, once more lured by dreams of Spanish gold, he departed with Captain John Cook for Africa and

then around Cape Horn to the Pacific Ocean once again. Three years of plundering brought Dampier few rewards, though he did visit some interesting places including the Galapagos Islands. By 1686, he was tired of it all, and, after joining Captain Swan in the appropriately named *Cygnets*, Dampier sailed from north western Mexico for the East Indies lured by dreams of capturing the fabled Manila Galleon. For the next five years he voyaged throughout Asia, visiting the Spice Islands, China, the Philippines, Australia, Sumatra, and Indochina. He returned to England in 1691. His first circumnavigation had taken twelve years.

In 1697, Dampier published *A New Voyage Round the World* in which he described his travels. The book's success brought Dampier to the attention of the British Admiralty, and in 1699 he received command of H. M. S. *Roebeck* and orders to explore New Holland or Australia. Dampier sailed east around the Cape of Good Hope to Australia and on to New Guinea and Batavia (today Jakarta). During his return voyage to England, Dampier's ship sank in the South Atlantic. He faced a subsequent court-martial, but in 1703 Dampier was again at sea this time in command of a private two-ship privateering expedition around the world. During 1708-1711, while sailing as navigator on yet another privateering voyage around the world, this one commanded by Captain Woodes Rogers, Dampier finally succeeded in capturing a Spanish treasure ship. But after circumnavigating the globe an unheard of three times, he withdrew from the sea. Dampier died, presumably peacefully in his bed, in London, in 1715 after an extraordinary life as buccaneer, pirate, navigator, hydrographer, natural historian, ethnographer, author, and captain in the Royal Navy.

This is the sixth biography—not to mention other specialized studies—of William Dampier to be published in the last seventy-five years. Why such an interest in this seventeenth-century Englishman exists today is largely due to his publications. Dampier was a hopeless leader, lacking in self-awareness. He was also a poor mediator and a luckless pirate. His greatest interest may have been in gold, but his great

talents were literary and scientific. His was a reasoned curiosity.

*A New Voyage* and two other travel books are less narratives of journeys undertaken than records of Dampier's keen observations of the botanical and anthropological worlds written by a careful, if self-educated, scientific observer. Dampier's work has attracted virtually all subsequent explorers and naturalists. Both James Cook and Charles Darwin sailed with copies of Dampier's work on board. Equally important, Dampier's work influenced Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift and the likes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. His books contain many of the first descriptions in English of the world's flora and fauna and indigenous peoples.

Unfortunately, there is nothing very striking about this newest biography. The author and her husband decided to follow, at least partially, in Dampier's path, but the journey appears to have had little impact on the result. Although a popular writer with three other books to her name and relying heavily on Dampier's writings, this detailed, even well-researched account is flat, discursive, and uneven. It does not replace Christopher Lloyd's brief biography written nearly forty years ago or the new one by Anton Gill that appeared just seven years ago. Readers attracted to the world of pirates and perhaps fans of Patrick O'Brien's novels may enjoy this book, but they may also wish to read Dampier himself. His works are available in the magisterial, but scarce, two-volume edition edited by John Masefield, published in 1906, and in a somewhat abridged edition of *A New Voyage* edited by Mark Belden with a forward by Giles Milton that appeared in 1998. A review of this volume and the Gill biography appeared in *The Northern Mariner*, 9, 4, (Oct. 1999), 74-5.

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Dr. Alfred Price. *Aircraft versus Submarine in Two World Wars*. Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Press, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2004, (Distributed in North

America by US Naval Institute Press), xiv + 242 pp., maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, US\$38.95, cloth; ISBN 1-84415-091-7.

This classic survey of the contest between aircraft and submarines was first published in 1973. Dr Price, a prolific author of air warfare books, brings an elegant pen to his complex subject, providing a concise and readable survey of how aircraft evolved into deadly submarine hunters by 1945.

Both aircraft and submarines were relatively new technologies at the outset of the First World War. Yet even before that conflict dramatically accelerated their use, warriors and analysts had considered how aircraft could be used effectively to combat submarines. Price starts his account by reviewing some of the remarkably prescient assessments made pre-war, before covering the development of antisubmarine aircraft during the Great War. Most readers will not be surprised to learn that an aircraft's deterring presence - its 'scarecrow' role - proved its most important impact in these early days. Aircraft did occasionally destroy submarines, but problems with weapons limited their destructive power in this conflict.

Little progress in the capacity of aircraft to destroy submarines occurred during the inter-war period. Indeed, at the outset of the Second World War British pilots discovered that their main weapon was as likely to damage their own craft as the enemy vessel. The development of truly effective weaponry took years of warfare, and it took a great deal of effort to perfect an air-dropped anti-submarine bomb. Dr Price does an excellent job of weaving together the various strands of how Britain's Coastal Command identified operational problems and, supported by the scientific community, developed effective solutions. The majority of the book deals with the Second World War from 1941 until the spring of 1944, the space of time where aircraft evolved from partially effective 'scarecrows' into devastatingly effective U-boat killers.

That Coastal Command is a central focus of this book is reasonable, given the important role of this force in the book's subject.

Dr Price endeavours, with moderate success, to provide coverage of the antisubmarine development of US naval aircraft in his survey. He skips briefly over the Axis, covering Germany and Italy in one short paragraph and only a half-dozen pages on Japan. The result is that a general reader will come away reasonably well informed of the impact of aircraft on the Battle of the Atlantic, but not all that well informed regarding other campaigns where aircraft battled submarines. This limitation does not materially undermine the main themes examined by the author, but does underline the selective nature of this survey.

The most interesting theme examined by Dr Price is the long and difficult effort involved in making Coastal Command an effective submarine hunter and killer during the Second World War. New weapons, sensors, tactics, training and doctrine were all necessary for aircraft to become the deadly killers they became in 1943. Price is especially good at noting how the British developed effective mechanisms to bring together operational crews and the scientific community. Operational research and technical research staffs made absolutely vital contributions to Coastal Command's campaign against U-boats, and the interaction of these respective researchers with frontline crews was essential to the development of practical and effective solutions that would actually work in combat. The German failure to develop similar mechanisms to integrate operational and scientific staffs until well into 1943 gravely undermined the effectiveness of U-boats in combat.

Aircraft became so successful that they changed the nature of U-boat warfare, forcing the German crews to begin to operate as submarines instead of submersibles. The difference may seem semantic, but is actually profound. U-boat wolf pack tactics demanded rapid travel over distance, which diesel boats could only accomplish while surfaced. Tactically proficient and technically superior aircraft with the range to roam the Atlantic (or transported by carriers to mid-ocean) drove U-boats from the surface. Initially the Germans accomplished prolonged submerged operations by retrofitting

older boats with a breathing tube known as schnorkel. As the war ended, the German navy also sought desperately to introduce a revolutionary new submarine designed to operate for long periods at high speed below the surface, the Type XXI. The result of the success of aircraft as U-boat killers was to therefore drive their enemy undersea, where they again became extremely hard to locate and destroy. Dr Price argues that the Type XXI would have inflicted heavy losses on Allied shipping, given its relative invulnerability to aircraft.

Any book on naval history reprinted three times is likely worth reading, and this is not an exception. Dr Price adroitly selects examples and quotes to buttress his arguments, keeping readers interested at the same time. General readers will find this a very good overview of the subject, and specialist historians cannot afford to ignore the volume. The lack of footnotes, or even a preface to this edition, makes using the book as a reference problematic, however. There have been advances in historical understanding of the use of aircraft against submarines in the two world wars since 1973 that is not reflected in the book. More specialized books that deal with specific aspects of one country's anti-U-boat air campaign have appeared, and are not to be found in the bibliography. This book does have limitations resulting from its age and lack of references, but it nonetheless remains a classic account of its subject.

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Marcus Rediker. *Villains of All Nations. Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*. Boston: Beacon Press, [www.beacon.org](http://www.beacon.org), 2004. 240 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, index. US\$ 24.00, cloth: ISBN 0-8070-5024-5.

As long as there have been ships to sail the seas, there have been pirates to terrorize them. Between the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, piracy reached a golden age, ending with a decade of unprecedented

violence rulers of nations and empires and those who defied these very notions by being "villains of all nations." In his latest book, Marcus Rediker examines Atlantic piracy in the years 1716-1726 and argues that the rejection by these pirates of everything for which those in power stood made them class heroes in the popular imagination.

Well written and clearly argued, *Villains of All Nations* is accessible to the newcomer to maritime history, but in its clarity it does not lose an ounce of academic integrity. Already well-established in maritime history, and having dealt with pirates in an incidental manner in other works, Rediker now breaks into the field of piracy scholarship and tips his hat to such prominent scholars as Robert C. Ritchie, David Cordingly, and C.R. Pennell. While he acknowledges the groundbreaking work of others, Rediker has done some interesting research of his own as he sailed around the world on the SS *Universe Explorer* studying global piracy with a group of students in the spring of 2001.

Rediker begins his book by introducing both sides in what he calls a dialectic of violence between pirates and the nation-state, and shows how each side used terror to accomplish its aims. Then, in a chapter entitled "The Political Arithmetic of Piracy," he goes on to show just how successful pirates were in terrorizing the nation-state - especially by interfering with trade. Rediker then zeroes in on the pirates to show what sort of people became pirates and concludes that, above all else, they tended to come from the lower classes. He is careful here to make the point that even those who became pirates after their ship was captured most often did so voluntarily. This is key to his argument since he maintains that, compared to life onboard merchant or naval ships, a pirate's life had its advantages - not least of which was an atmosphere of egalitarian democracy. It will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Rediker's work that he goes on to argue that these pirates banded together against the common enemy of authority - defiant, even in death.



In painting a picture of pirates as class heroes, Rediker steps on some difficult territory. His narrow focus in terms of both time and geography, however, allows him to make a strong and solid argument backed up with a wealth of primary evidence such as government reports on the political state of Great Britain and its colonies, early colonial newspapers, records of trials for piracy, contemporaneous letters, captains' journals, and sermons by Cotton Mather. The amount and corroboration of evidence used by Rediker makes him difficult to argue, even if the reader is left with the strong suspicion that he is leaving plenty of important but contradictory evidence out.

Many of the illustrations in the book are from Captain Charles Johnson's *A General History of the Pyrates*. In addition to satisfying a curiosity as to what real pirates may have looked like, they provide clues about how popular imagination viewed these figures. The best in this regard is an illustration by an unknown artist which appeared on the frontispiece to a Dutch translation of Johnson's book. The illustration, called "An Allegory of Piracy," serves an important purpose for Rediker in his chapter on the female pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read, since it enables him to point out the striking similarities in composition between it and Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People* which appeared nearly a hundred years later. He argues that the liberty seized by Bonny and Read, and pirates in general, was the same, but it took a different path - from ship to art salon - thus strengthening his point that low culture affects high culture. Again, one might think that Rediker is going too far here, since the end of his study marks the end of piracy as a serious threat, but he is careful to point out that it is in the popular imagination that this final decade of the golden age of piracy found its most long-lasting success, and that is a point that is hard to argue.

In *Villains of All Nations*, Marcus Rediker gives his full attention to the romantic rebels he has hitherto dealt with incidentally in *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* and *The Many-Headed Hydra*. Anyone familiar with Rediker's work will recognize his history-from-

the-bottom-up approach in this book as he sets out to argue that the pirates who terrorized the Atlantic in the final decade of the golden age of piracy were class heroes who challenged authority not only by robbing and destroying property and interfering with trade, but by refusing to show allegiance to any ruling power.

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Victor Suthren. *The Sea has No End. The Life of Louis-Antoine de Bougainville*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com), 2004. 224 pp., notes, bibliography. CDN \$ 35.00, cloth; ISBN 1-55002-518-8.

Louis-Antoine De Bougainville made a Pacific voyage at much the same time as James Cook yet, whereas the name of Cook is known worldwide, Bougainville's name is more associated with the flower named after him. Cook's journals and charts revealed his skills as a describer and cartographer which opened up the Pacific to European eyes. In comparison, Bougainville's voyage was hastily conducted and, although he was in charge of the expedition, the charts were made by naval officers lacking Cook's skills and experience. Bougainville was further handicapped by the fact that those in command above him, who initiated the expedition, were to leave power soon afterwards, thus depriving him of the necessary support required to gain attention for what he had achieved. Nevertheless, that voyage and his other achievements in life make for some fascinating study.

The life of Louis-Antoine De Bougainville proved to be perhaps even more colourful and extraordinary than any expectations of the wealthy and influential French family into which he was born in 1729. A gifted scholar, he wrote a textbook on calculus when still in his twenties. A talented military officer, he also led a very full social life which introduced him to many of the female beauties of Paris. War took him to the New World to gain first-hand involvement as a military officer. Here

he witnessed the struggle on land between France and England for the crown of Canada as well as gaining first hand experience of the problems within the French civil and military system. Educated as a gentleman within the military establishment, however, he was never at ease alongside the native Indian allies of the French and was often sickened by their cruelty in battle. The defeat of the French at the battle of Quebec was disheartening, but even more so was the pointed finger at his indecision, leaving the question as to what might have been, had he been more decisive. Returning home to exchange military life for that of the navy, Bougainville made commendable attempts to create a French settlement and stronghold in the Falklands and this was followed by a brave voyage of exploration and investigation across the great, almost unknown ocean of the Pacific. His accounts of the voyage and Tahiti in particular made some impact on French society, although it failed to achieve the more lasting impact of Cook's voyages, which opened the eyes of Europeans to the Polynesian way of life. Forced to reduce his activity for some years, he still participated in the French support for the American colonists in their fight for independence. Eventual success at Yorktown brought some recompense for the fateful day of defeat years before at Quebec, but was to be followed by a reprimand and a ban from the French court for what was described as lack of seamanship and cowardice. His return to life in Paris brought him close to death during the revolutionary period before his final years brought him Napoleon's friendship. Quite rightly, the author deems this man's fascinating career should be brought to more popular prominence. Had it been a work of fiction it would have been exciting; that it is fact is even more fascinating.

If popular knowledge associates Bougainville with the Pacific, even if it is just the flower and the town named after him, it will surprise many that, as with Cook, Bougainville devoted several years to Canada. Although gained at the same time as Cook, Bougainville's experience was as a military rather than a naval man and, of course, as a warrior on behalf of

France he was a member of the losing side. Dispirited and downhearted at the loss of Canada as well as his own part in that loss, his return to France carried with it with the consequent inability to continue his military career, although he was later to return to North American shores to participate in the American Revolution against England, culminating in independence for the Americans.

Bougainville's time in Canada brings the reader to the end of the first half of this book with the remainder devoted to the rest of his life and in particular, an account of his voyages to the Falklands and to the Pacific. As the latter is already well known, one wonders if the author might better have devoted a greater part of the book to the North American period as he did in his earlier work about Cook, "To go upon Discovery." The campaign in Canada is illustrated by three sketch maps, but surprisingly no such aid accompanies the accounts of his Falklands venture or his Pacific voyage. The remaining chapters deal adequately with Bougainville's latter years in France, his imprisonment and brush with death during the Revolution, and finally his friendship with Napoleon and subsequent elevation within the nobility.

Good use is made of original material and the most important detailed works on Bougainville, all of which are well documented in the copious end notes and bibliography. The book is chronologically organised and has a detailed table of contents listing, though it lacks an index.

A handy volume, well researched and in a style easy to read, *The Sea has no End* achieves the author's aim in succinctly telling the fascinating life story of Antoine Louis Bougainville. It will be welcomed by those desirous of initial knowledge of Bougainville, or even just a good read, and will without doubt lead to a thirst for more.

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Gary E. Weir and Walter J. Boyne. *Rising Tide. The Untold Story of the Russian Submarines That Fought The Cold War*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003. xiv + 354 pp., photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$40.00, cloth; ISBN 0-465-09112-1.

In an effort to give a balanced viewpoint to Cold War submarine operations, Gary Weir and Walter Boyne have addressed the subject from the former-Soviet point of view, through a collection of stories which provide a unique insight into some of the constraints faced by the Russians. Using heretofore-unobtainable access to primary sources, both archival and human, the authors graphically depict a culture of determined professional seamen who accepted enormous risk and hardship to confront western naval superiority. *Rising Tide* concludes with the challenges faced by the Russian submarine service today in maintaining combat readiness in a fiscally restrained environment.

Recent accounts of Cold War submarine operations have tended to be a popular recounting of a number of specific events that have captured public interest. Notwithstanding their familiarity, they all have their place in telling the story of an exciting, but incredibly secretive, period of modern naval history. With this in mind, a book on the subject co-written by Dr. Gary Weir, a well-recognized naval historian with direct access to primary source information, gives readers cause to anticipate a more complete account of Cold War Soviet submarine operations than previously written. Very easy to read, the book has extensive endnotes, an excellent technical appendix for those not familiar with the detail on specific classes of submarines, and a first-rate bibliography. The book is handsomely bound in cloth and the photographs are unique and personal in nature.

For the historian, the authors expertly explain the common beginnings of western and Soviet submarine development, as well as the impact of submarine operations in the Second World War, in both the Pacific and the Atlantic, on the Cold War. Moreover, their crisp logic trail effectively describes how the post-Second

World War Soviet naval expansion kick-started a huge American anti-submarine warfare (ASW) research and development campaign in the 1940s and 1950s that led to enormous technological leaps in underwater acoustics, nuclear propulsion, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. But perhaps the most interesting aspect is their first-class recounting of a system that ceaselessly pushed the technology edge by promoting tolerance of high-risk defects, while simultaneously enduring massive personnel problems. Finally, their detailed research into the first-hand accounts of recent Soviet/Russian submarine disasters is quite revealing.

Ironically, I was disappointed with *Rising Tide*, as the reader is led to believe that this is a balanced professional study of West versus East submarine conflict in the Cold War. What I found was not the solid historical monograph I anticipated, but rather a collection of stories, superbly told, that are interlaced with a number of excellent précis of contemporary historical events. The authors would have been better served, however, had they avoided the frequent use of sensationalism in their writing, which tends to alienate the informed reader. For example, on pages 155 to 157, the narrative is much more reminiscent of a Cold War spy novel than a historical account. Moreover, the book would have benefited greatly from a thorough proof reading to correct the numerous, but simple, factual errors that detract from the overall credibility and suggest that it was rushed into publication. For example, on page 63, the narrative would have the reader believe that USS *Nautilus* was underway four days before she was launched. Finally, while I laud the authors for examining a subject as important as this from the Russian perspective, the book comes across as far too American-centric, when discussing western submarines, showing a distinct lack of understanding of the breadth of Allied Cold War submarine operations. On page 60, the authors misunderstand the roles of conventionally powered submarines in a balanced fleet and why most nations that can have both, do so.

I think it fair to say that the authors conducted an impressive level of research into a

wide area and did well to select key events to tell a story that spanned over half a century. Unfortunately, they have not been totally successful in marrying their two distinctive writing styles, as the narrative erratically jumps from such diverse genres as a scholarly monograph to almost spy-novel sensationalism. Finally, the simple low-level inaccuracies are troubling and cause one to subtly question all their new research. This book could be a significant contribution to the bookshelves of established maritime historians, but not in its current form. Simply put, it is a popular account of Soviet submarine operations during the Cold War, and regrettably, I could not recommend it to any serious historian at this time.

Norman H. Jolin  
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Kathleen Broome Williams. *Grace Hopper. Admiral of the Cyber Sea*. Annapolis, MD; US Naval Institute Press, [www.NavalInstitute.org](http://www.NavalInstitute.org), 2004. xvii + 240 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, further reading, index. US\$32.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55750-953-2.

This book is not only a biography of Grace Hopper, a pioneer in the early days of computers, but it is also the story of the development and integration of computers in the US Navy from World War II to the mid-nineteen eighties. Beginning with the Bureau of Ships Mark I computer project at Harvard University during the war to the advent of micro computers and the development of ADP (data processing) standards forty years later, the author discusses the role Grace Hopper played as mathematician, programmer, innovator, and advocate for this new and highly technical field.

There is no more knowledgeable historian than Williams to write about Hopper and the development of computer science as her two previous books, *Secret Weapon: U.S. High-frequency Direction Finding in the Battle of the Atlantic* and *Improbable Warriors: Women Scientists and the U.S. Navy in World War J*, dealt with scientific topics and the role women

played in scientific and technical developments during the war.

Carefully researched and documented, the book follows Hopper's life and career from her childhood and education to a position of prominence in her field, both in industry and the military, and, finally, her promotion to flag rank in the Navy and her final years. Hopper's personality - her intellect, dynamism, single minded dedication to her work, and her love of the Navy - emerge in this work. Williams, while sympathetic, is not uncritical of her subject, especially regarding Hopper's views on women's issues and the feminist movement of the seventies and eighties. Hopper was no feminist and achieved success in her field by dint of brilliance, hard work, and a strong, forceful, and focussed personality. She did not feel that her gender held her back in the Navy or in the civilian sector, and she was not a champion of women's concerns in the Navy. Socially, she was no pioneer, but in her field she certainly was. The author, however, dispels the myths surrounding Hopper (that she coined the term "bug" and that she alone created Cobol), which she herself did not strenuously deny.

Hopper received a PhD in mathematics from Yale and taught at Vassar College, her alma mater, before joining the WAVES in 1943. For most of her subsequent career, which included civilian employment with Eckert-Mauchly in the UNIVAC Division in Philadelphia, she was involved in projects for the US Navy as a reserve officer. And she had the distinction of being the oldest serving officer in the Navy and the last Second World War WAVE to retire when she left the Navy in 1986. Retirement did not end her career, however, as Hopper promptly got a job with Digital Corporation in Washington, DC. Only the infirmities of old age spelled the end of her active career.

Hopper's achievements were many: she was a principal in the invention of the compiler and of Cobol, she wrote programs for different functions, and she worked to standardize computer programming languages. She convinced the Navy to use Cobol and was involved in setting up NAVDAC. Possessed of

indefatigable energy, Hopper taught evening courses at universities, took correspondence courses, gave countless speeches, was involved in professional organizations, travelled extensively, and was mentor to her juniors, while working to justify ADP to the Navy and to overcome bureaucratic resistance to change. For all intents and purposes, she was a workaholic and computers were her life.

Rewards and recognition came to Rear-Admiral Grace Hopper, both in life and after her death in 1992. She received thirty-four honorary degrees, Won the National Medal of Technology in 1991, had several naval installations named after her, and in 1996 the guided missile destroyer *Hopper* was launched. Her greatest personal satisfaction, however, was serving in the Navy and working on the Mark I. And it was the Navy that benefited greatly from her work.

The biography contains photographs of Hopper, an impressive bibliography, and a suggestions for further reading pertaining to women in the military and computer science. Professor James C. Barber, series editor, provided the foreword, and the preface and introduction are combined. It is unfortunate that Hopper did not leave more personal papers, but despite that, the author has consulted oral histories, interviews, dissertations, and published works to create a first-rate scholarly biography.

Williams does a fine job of introducing the reader to the rather arcane world of early computers and ADP and, thus, placing Hopper in context; however, while her knowledge of the historical development of computer science is impressive, the technical details might be a bit dry for the general reader. For those with knowledge and background in the field, an interest in this unique woman, and the intersection of science, industry, and the military in the creation of this technological revolution which has now become part of everyday life, this book will be worthwhile reading.

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David Wragg. *Second World War Carrier Campaigns*. Barnsley; Pen & Sword Books, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk). 2004. 250 pp., photographs, notes, chronology, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, cloth; ISBN 1-84415-052-6.

While an interesting idea, any attempt in a 250-page volume to meaningfully describe, within the framework of an evolving military context, all significant aircraft carrier operations of the Second World War is likely to fail. Such an overly-ambitious publication must perforce treat the subject matter superficially, creating a narrative and analytical framework of limited utility. So it is with this book.

There might yet be hope for such an undertaking if the author were to prove uncommonly knowledgeable and capable of offering efficiently managed, insightful analysis. But this is distinctly not the case with David Wragg, author of this puzzling publication. In seeking to tell all, he winds up saying very little and renders the book unhelpful even as a quick reference or a beginners' guide. Not only is his work so obviously not a useful addition to the literature, one is even hard pressed to identify a valid point to the undertaking, even when judging it as a non-academic work.

Wragg offers no reasoned basis for his ill-conceived, superficial offering. His claim that he will examine "[t]he different theatres of war ... showing how each contributed to the development of the carrier and naval strategy" (3) is not even close to being borne out. There is no proper introduction covering each national navy's carrier development, doctrine, or strategic needs. He proceeds chronologically without distinction to theatre or navy, which creates the jarring need to frequently re-orient oneself to the particulars of the national navies concerned and their evolving operational and strategic contexts -the latter which Wragg only spasmodically and superficially provides. This somewhat British-centric work fails to deliver the basic information essential to understanding the pre-war and wartime evolution of carrier-building programs and some of the innovative design and technological features on which they were based. Moreover, there is no cohesive

assessment of carrier-borne aircraft, their technical and rôle variations, or their performance comparisons in selected service environments. There are only the briefest mentions of building schedules and the incorporation of lessons learned from combat.

The reader is left with a very disjointed series of generally poorly written battle vignettes. One operation after another is skeletally described, evidently borrowing only from secondary sources, without interpretive impact or analytical framework (his dogmatic quips do not exactly meet this professional standard). Glaring examples of poor style and worse history abound. Devoting less than two pages to "Tackling Vichy France" is hopeless as a strategic and operational review. The section on Operation Torch, is shockingly superficial. Here, he strings together a couple of anecdotes, offers nothing on the nature of French defences, and proceeds to nearly ignore the carrier operations themselves. In fact, his episodic recapitulations are frequently so mired in broad and unfocussed attempts at describing prevailing naval situations, that carrier operations appear awkwardly appended and scantily addressed. The author's thirteen-page description of Leyte Gulf must rank among the worst accounts published of that famous and critical engagement. Wragg's understanding of naval history and historiography leaves much to be desired as attested to by his embarrassingly weak bibliography. To cite but a handful of examples: it is as simplistic to suggest that as a result of the British raid on Taranto in November 1940 the "battleship [was] rendered obsolete overnight" (2) as it is bizarre to state that the Italian fleet on that occasion "suffered greater damage than the German High Seas Fleet at Jutland" (22). He also curiously suggests that the US submarine campaign against Japanese shipping remains "unsung" in the naval literature. More importantly, and tellingly, ultra decrypts and their influence on strategy and operations are almost entirely ignored. Almost incredibly, the loss of *Ark Royal* in 1941 obtains a single paragraph.

Wragg does not tell a good story: the information flow is repetitive, uneven and

awkwardly expressed. Annoying tangential detail, unfounded remarks and simplistic opinions clog the narrative, itself rife with speculative "what ifs" and "should have beens." He displays an unfortunate tendency to introduce events, ideas, and individuals without first properly contextualizing them, which contributes a stream-of-consciousness incoherence to the text. His prose is also peppered with ludicrously over-laden sentences and numerous grammatical errors (especially the inability to discern between "sank" and "sunk"). He also devotes much space to warships' commanding officers, the names of every ship (carriers or not) involved in a given operation, the numbers and types of aircraft embarked, and losses in aircraft and men, the whole normally without benefit of any qualitative assessments. Oddly, there are no comparative tables of ships or aircraft which would seem *de rigueur* for such a work.

As if things were not bad enough, near the end the book devolves into a series of wild speculations on what alternative strategies certain nations might have adopted, e.g., whether the Italians should or should not have attempted to invade Malta. The best and most interesting chapter is the final one, "The Fleet at Peace," in which Wragg discusses the disposition of the belligerents' aircraft carrier fleets into naval reserve, merchant service, transfers to other navies, or scrapping. It, too, is marred by an extremely abrupt ending. One redeeming feature, at least, of an extremely disappointing book is the high quality of the numerous, often little-known photographs. One expects far better from Pen and Sword Books.

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J. Revell Carr. *All Brave Sailors. The Sinking of the Anglo-Saxon August 21, 1940*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, [www.simonsays.com](http://www.simonsays.com), 2004. 384 pp., photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$26.00, cloth; ISBN 0-7432-3837-0.

With my interest in Second World War convoys, I have read many "survival in lifeboat" stories, but this one has a unique twist. It was conceived, not from a desire to recount a personal experience, nor from a journalist's fascination with the "good story," but from the mute appeal of a museum artefact. The boat itself inspired the research which in turn gave rise to the book - a fascinating concept.

Carr is a good writer, and the book reads easily. He has also done extensive background work. Predictably, the most comprehensive and reliable data concern the lifeboat's fate after its arrival on Eleuthera. As the director of the institution which housed it for so many years after its storied voyage, Carr was privy to all the relevant documentation, including the amusing auction which pitted Sir Harry Oakes against his wife, with the lady winning the day, getting the boat, and eventually donating it to Mystic Seaport Museum. Carr was also personally involved in communications with various seamen's surviving family members which resulted in the eventual transfer of the craft from Mystic Seaport to the Imperial War Museum in London, where it now comprises a portion of the "Survival at Sea" exhibit.

There is no doubt as to the thoroughness of Carr's research methods, but there is a *frisson* of "fiction-based-on-fact" that runs up one's spine on reading accounts of the words, feelings, actions and reactions of the men in the little boat. This is probably because Carr was obliged to rely on second-hand accounts rather than primary data. The closest he can come is the jolly boat's own log. Guy Pearce Jones's book, *Two Survived*, which was published in 1941, and a much later publication, *The Most, [sic] Amazing But True*, written by Douglas F. Storer, a colleague of Ripley, the *Believe It or Not* man were both based on live interviews with the two surviving victims of the *Anglo-Saxon* sinking and the jolly boat ordeal. Ripley was prone to sensationalism, and there was also still a perceptible tendency toward the florid and fictive prose of the previous century when describing privation, suffering, and heroism. It is most likely this, rather than any

shortcoming of Carr's, that evokes skepticism in the reader.

The volume is attractive, with a sturdy binding, good paper stock, and a readable font. The evocative jacket art derives from photographs of the boat, which is depicted accurately, while its two occupants appear merely as shadowy figures. Addenda are extensive, culminating in an extensive bibliography and functional index. Appendix A compares naval ranks in the US and British Royal Navies with those in the German *Kriegsmarine*. Appendix B comprises the diary log kept aboard the jolly boat during the ordeal, accompanied by letters of accreditation to the Secretary of the Admiralty from the office of the C-in-C in Bermuda. Then follows what I conceive to be the book's major shortcoming - the notes.

It is not that the author has been lax in any of his citations, but they are presented in such a manner that they do not merely annoy a casual reader but may gravely hamper a serious researcher. Notes are always bothersome, but here they frequently become exasperating. The main text gives no indication end notes exist - no identifying numbers or symbols to act as a guide. If one reads straight through a book, without first examining all the addenda listed in the table of contents, no notes appear to be present. Even more confusingly, the end notes are linked back to the text by page numbers and short fragments from the openings of the sentences to which they refer. Yes, it is just as hard to locate the applicable text as it was to read that last sentence, perhaps harder. The relevant information is not so much "offered" as "grudgingly made available, if one is willing to search." For example, the first of the five notes for page 301 is linked to "*That June he*" and provides no more relevant data than "*Ibid.*" referring back to a newspaper article cited on the previous page. In addition, more lengthy notes are scattered between those linked to specific text, so the whole seems disconnected and chaotic. As notes are intended to be precise and enlightening, these are a severe letdown.

Other than a few minor quibbles, where my received information differs slightly from Carr's, I have only one criticism of the text itself. Altogether too much space appears to have been given to the history of surface raiders in general and to the construction of the *Widder* and the *Michel* specifically. This information seems superfluous to the theme of the book, which is the voyage of the jolly boat and the survival of its two ultimate occupants, Widdicombe and Tapscott. The addition of information regarding others of the *Anglo-Saxon's* crew, the German crew members, and other victims of attacks by Ruckteschell's vessels lends support and credence to the rest of the text. So, also, do data about Ruckteschell's personal history and his tactics. The use of surface raiders during the American Civil War seems totally extraneous.

My final assessment is that the book is a readable and worthwhile addition to a library dealing with the Second World War, but the prospective reader or purchaser should bear in mind its shortcomings and weight them carefully before making a final decision.

Morgiana Halley  
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Michael Simpson, *The Life of Fleet Admiral Andrew Cunningham. A Twentieth Century Naval Leader*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis Group, [www.tandf.co.uk](http://www.tandf.co.uk), (Frank Cass Series), 2004. xxv+310 pp., photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$45, cloth; ISBN 0-7146-5197-4.

The portrait of Andrew Cunningham drawn by Professor Simpson is of a sea dog imbued with the Nelsonian offensive tradition who felt himself unsuited for staff work, despite the fact that he climaxed his career as the Royal Navy's First Sea Lord in the concluding years of the Second World War.

From early in his career, Cunningham was associated with his service's destroyer force and with duty in the Mediterranean. His first destroyer orders came as early as 1903, six years

after he entered the navy as a youth. Later, during the First World War Gallipoli campaign, the destroyer he commanded provided especially effective gunfire support for British forces ashore. In the immediate post-First World War years, he commanded a flotilla of destroyers and greatly improved that force's tactical efficiency and smartness.

After promotion to flag rank, he assumed command of the Mediterranean destroyer force in 1934. As a senior officer, he wrestled with the strategic dilemma posed in the next year by Italy's Ethiopian adventure. Royal Naval leaders were convinced they could defeat Italy, but only at the cost of scuttling longstanding plans to send a major battle fleet to Singapore to counter Japan. In the end, Italy had its way in Ethiopia without facing British armed opposition. But the crisis benefitted the Royal Navy by showing how unprepared it was, in many respects, to wage modern warfare.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Cunningham commanded the entire Mediterranean Fleet, a billet he considered to be the finest appointment in the Royal Navy. That force soon was put to a severe test as it faced Italian and then German forces in the narrow middle seas. Cunningham especially learned to respect the offensive power of enemy land-based air, including the highly effective German dive bombers. Simpson's often gripping account of the bitter struggle for the control of the Mediterranean Sea between 1940 and 1943 is a highlight of this volume.

Despite Cunningham's initial lack of appreciation for air power, his force undertook the classic 1940 carrier raid against the Italian fleet at its base in Tarante. Professor Simpson notes that British plans for this operation went back to the 1935 Ethiopian Crisis. One wonders whether Cunningham and his associates also had memories of the Royal Navy's plan of 1918 to launch an eight-carrier, torpedo-plane assault on the German fleet at its North Sea bases, a scheme that was of fundamental importance in the birth of the British carrier force.



The Mediterranean fleet's triumph at Taranto was followed in March 1941 by the Italian defeat in the Battle of Matapan, which Simpson identifies as the greatest victory of Cunningham's career. Matapan included a classic night surface action, a tactic that Cunningham had developed for decades. He also made good use of the aircraft from the single carrier available to the admiral at this time and of communications intelligence intercepts.

The striking successes at Taranto and Matapan did not continue. Later in the spring of 1941, the Royal Navy was forced to evacuate British forces from Greece and then from Crete in the face of determined German opposition. The losses suffered by the Mediterranean fleet in these operations were so heavy that they threatened Allied control of the eastern Mediterranean and of Britain's ability to resupply the key British base in Malta. During this dark period Cunningham became especially critical of Winston Churchill for his incessant and often bizarre ideas, as well as for London's failure to provide the air support that his force so badly needed.

In the spring 1942, by which time most of the major ships of the Mediterranean fleet were either lost or under repair for battle damage, Cunningham was ordered to strike his flag and come ashore. But his formidable reputation as a fighting admiral served him well when, between June and October 1942, he headed the British Admiralty Delegation in Washington. Here Cunningham was an effective advocate of the proposed Allied landings in North Africa.

Later in 1942, Cunningham returned to the Mediterranean as the naval commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force that eventually launched landings in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. As Eisenhower's naval deputy he willingly subordinated himself to that officer, despite his initial belief that the inexperienced Ike had many shortcomings.

Cunningham became the First Sea Lord in October 1943, serving in that capacity until June 1946. Simpson states that the admiral never really enjoyed this position, since, in the grand Nelsonian tradition, he disliked desk work and

felt that he lacked administrative talent. Nevertheless, Simpson believes that the admiral handled his duties with skill at a time that the British world position was rapidly declining. Not the least of Cunningham's triumphs, the author suggests, was his ability to manage Winston Churchill. From Cunningham's point of view, he prevented the prime minister from inflicting serious harm to the naval service.

Michael Simpson bases his biography upon extensive research in the sources. The author displays a full understanding of modern scholarship on the Second World War. He depicts Cunningham's historical role, but also draws a picture of the admiral as a human being. In sum, Professor Simpson deserves congratulations for an important contribution to modern naval history.

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David Laurence Jones. *See this World Before the Next: Cruising with CPR Ships in the Twenties and Thirties*. Calgary, Alberta: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, Fifth House, [www.fitzhenry.ca](http://www.fitzhenry.ca), 2004. 208 pp., photographs, index, CDN \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 1-894856-34-1.

It is probably safe to say that most Canadians are unaware of the rich history of the railway system that spans our country, even when they are riding the rails themselves. Fewer still are aware that at one time, Canadian Pacific also owned a fleet of grand passenger liners that could be found in major port cities around the world. David Laurence Jones, who is the manager of internal communications for Canadian Pacific Railways has already written two superb books on the history of the rail service provided by his company and in this book, he has turned his attention to the era of ocean travel that Canadian Pacific dominated in the twenties and thirties.

Jones is to be commended for his efforts. Afficionados of the liner era tend to focus on this period more than any other so there is a great deal of competition from other authors who have also covered this time frame. This is an era when reliable older liners, such as *Aquitania* were rubbing shoulders with up and coming new stars, such as *Normandie* and the first *Queen Mary*. Each ship was expected to be the pinnacle of shipbuilding, with more amazing interiors than the competition and equipped with all of the modern luxuries expected ashore. Entertainment directors were required to keep everybody happy and amused throughout the trip, not too difficult on a four-day Atlantic crossing, but certainly more challenging on an extended tour or World Cruise.

Canadian Pacific found itself at the centre of the whole industry, being one of the few major lines that could offer services on both the Atlantic and Pacific. Their fleet of vessels was outfitted with the best the British Empire could offer and provided service to parts of the world that conjured up images of exoticism, grand vistas and architecture. Jones conveys this aspect of the era with great ease, thanks to his writing style and the massive collection of images that has been made available by Canadian Pacific's archives. With the possible exception of the Cunard Line, no other company has done as successful and commendable job of maintaining their history as has Canadian Pacific. Indeed, the photography in the book is worth the price of purchase alone. As each page is turned, more and more wonders await, from the Pyramids and the Wailing Wall to the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall of China, Canadian Pacific could take you there in luxury and style.

The book begins with a look at the creation of Canadian Pacific's dream of extending its rail service onto the world's oceans, setting the context for the rest of the book. He also examines the lives of the crews of the fleet and the roles they played in making the company so successful. This is an area often ignored by other books about the liner era and is most welcome.

Too often the focus is on the glamour of the passengers and the grandeur of the ship

with little mention of the men who in some cases spent their lives in service aboard an individual ship. From the captains and the doctors to the barbers and cabin boys, Jones provides insight into their work and lives.

A few chapters are devoted to a typical cruise and the diversions that were provided, not only in terms of sights and scenery but also to the evening's entertainment offered to the passengers. Jones and the Canadian Pacific Archive provide a wonderful glimpse into this aspect of life aboard ship with plenty of photos of deck games, dancing and pampered passengers in a wide array of silly hats. It's all great fun and really captures an image of an entire era, when people had money to burn and the idea of the Stock Market crashing would have seemed ludicrous.

The final chapter sums up the success that Canadian Pacific enjoyed during the era, when their epic journey around the globe was referred to as "The Greatest Cruise of All." Jones uses a number of personal reminiscences by former passengers to add flavour to this chapter, any one of which gives a terrific idea of what a cruise with Canadian Pacific was like.

David Laurence Jones has a wonderful lightness to his writing style that helps carry the reader along on this nostalgia-filled cruise through the twenties and thirties. The selection of the photographs used in the book must have taken months, but they add so much to the narrative that it is certainly worth the effort. One of the catch phrases of the liner era was "Getting There is Half the Fun" and one expects that the author had a great deal of fun selecting the images for his book.

This is a wonderful read and a good recommendation both for those who remember the era and for those who are willing to learn.

Richard MacMichael  
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Rick James. *The Ghost Ships of Royston*. Underwater Society of British Columbia, [www.uasbc.com](http://www.uasbc.com). 2004. 61 pp., photographs, maps, references. C D N \$13.00, paper; ISBN 0-9695010-9-9.

This is an amazing little work in a soft-cover private printing from the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia. One would reasonably, but wrongly, expect many shortcomings.

The introduction alone includes not only a recent photograph and a laser-generated chart of Royston's breakwater, but also a map of the general area, noting relevant ports with similar breakwaters. The text of this section incorporates a thumbnail history of the construction, driving directions to the site, and a *caveat* warning the reader that it is both illegal and unsafe to venture onto the breakwater. It notes that the area is posted against trespass, and describes the conditions which make it dangerous. Next comes an explanatory segment, describing how lumber companies have built breakwaters to aid their operations. There follow chapters on the vessels sunk to construct the breakwater. Most, though not all, are limited to the history of a single vessel, and each includes interesting and little-known data that required extensive research.

The chapter about the *Laurel Whalen* contains data from contemporary newspaper articles describing her launch and early service. Reports from shipping industry publications describe her later years, supplemented by quotes from local residents about their memories of the vessel. Similar material is presented for each of the ships in the breakwater.

Good-quality black-and-white photographs abound throughout, and the accompanying text is both concise and precise. Each caption not only describes the content of the photograph, but also the provenance of the original, with a number of the credits going to noted BC maritime researcher and photographer Alfred C. (Fred) Rogers. Some of the photos show the ships in their earlier years, or in varied stages of disrepair, while others give assorted views of the breakwater, focussing on the

specific hulk under discussion. A number of the more recent photographs are the work of the author himself, revealing James to be an excellent documentary photographer, as well as a thorough researcher and first-rate writer. One is never bored, but neither is one in doubt of the accuracy of the data. Where facts could not be documented, or the material reported is fictive in nature, (as in the story of an old woman putting a curse on the *Melanope*) this is clearly stated. Likewise, when a vessel's documented history appears to put her in more than one place during a given time period, it is so noted, with the author's "take" on which of the scenarios is the more likely, as with the CPR tug *Qualicum*.

Similarly, in the chapter on "West Coast Whalers," James begins the closing passages with the following information: "Comox Logging bought both the *Black* and the *Blue* from Capital Iron in 1947. However, there is actual physical evidence of only one whaler visible at Royston." He then goes on to give his reasons for thinking the *Blue* may possibly be the more likely candidate.

The other chapter which treats more than one vessel is that dealing with the three RCN frigates among the Royston hulks. Among these is HMCS *Prince Rupert*. One fascinating fact about her is that retired Lt. Cmdr. Robert Draney had been her captain. When he returned to civilian life after the war, and took a mate's job on a tugboat, they were hired to tow a gutted hull from Victoria to Royston. Lo and behold, it was his old command. He could just make out the number on her stern.

With my personal interests, I found the Second World War ships and the tugs of primary interest, and my favourite was the *Salvage King*, which was both. James, however, betrays no such bias in his writing. Each vessel receives equal attention, and the wealth or paucity of data attached to each is governed only by the availability of such data to a determined seeker.

The penultimate chapter covers the hulk breakwaters at Kelsey Bay, Oyster Bay, and Powell River - all in British Columbia —

comparing the situation in each with that at Royston. Perhaps the most interesting is the one at Powell River, which is comprised only of ferro-concrete vessels, less prone to rapid decay than wood or metal hulls.

In the final chapter, James states his conclusions regarding the state and potential fate of all the hulk breakwaters in British Columbia, and of Royston's in particular. His final statement about these ships is: "...they have not only provided over fifty years of service as a hulk breakwater but constitute an important maritime heritage site."

Perhaps the most interesting scholarly aspect of this little gem is the way the author has organised his references. They are divided into the same chapters as the book itself. Thus, if you are interested specifically in seeking more data on the four-masted iron barque *Comet*, which was built to a special design for carrying cased kerosene, you can go to that section of the references and find seventeen sources listed, including personal communication from individuals, a newspaper clipping, and articles in serial publications as well as books.

This is truly a work well-done. Both enjoyable and useful, it would grace any maritime library, and its price puts it within the reach of even the most prudent.

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