

the horrors of the trade in humans, the profits reaped, the company fortunes made, and the mansions built. For anyone who thinks of the slave trade as a distant event from British shores, this book shatters the illusion. The direct benefit is traced right back to the docksides, bank vaults, factories, and the front steps of the great homes of Liverpool.

The book presents three maps and 68 images (many in colour) of the slave merchants, seamen, places, ships, and victims of the slave trade. Though not noted on the abbreviation page, those attributed to NML are from the National Museums Liverpool, providing the reader with a glimpse of the International Slavery Museum's Liverpool exhibit. It is an impressive array of images that help to give life to this horrific story. Just the pictures in this volume, alone, could provide the visual stimulus for a teacher to capture the minds of their students as they broach the topic.

The bibliography is thorough, with the archival sources focused, naturally, on Liverpool. The index is workable. While written for the general public, this book will be of use to academics studying the slave trade's influence on economic and urban development in slave trading nations. As noted above, it would be a valuable resource for teachers engaged in introducing the story of slavery to their students.

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Tom Womack. *The Dutch Naval Air Force Against Japan. The Defense of the Netherlands East Indies, 1941-1942*. Jefferson, NC; McFarland & Co., Inc., [www.mcfarlandpubs.com](http://www.mcfarlandpubs.com), 2006. 207 pp., abbreviations, illustrations, appendices, charts, endnotes, bibliography, index. US \$35.00, paper; ISBN 0-7864-2365-X.

The prime objective of Imperial Japan when initiating combat in 1941 was to give that nation access to the natural resources of Malaya (now Malaysia) and the Netherlands East Indies (NEI—now Indonesia.) In December 1941, Japanese forces attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the then-American colony of The Philippines, the British colony of Hong Kong (which was defended in part by two Canadian Army battalions,) and then Malaya. The ultimate objective, the NEI, was the last attacked.

The Dutch forces in the NEI had an impossible task—the NEI was spread out over thousands of miles of the Pacific Ocean and contained literally hundreds of islands, both large and very small. The Dutch military in the NEI was only adequately equipped and trained, the troops were largely indigenous peoples of the NEI (of doubtful reliability in combat) and spread across the vastness of the territory. Those troops—air, sea, and land—faced a combat-tested enemy in the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy and their respective air forces. Moreover, the NEI had an additional handicap: the Dutch homeland had been conquered by Nazi Germany in May 1940, and the Dutch government was in exile in London. These facts made it difficult, if not impossible, for the NEI forces to be properly reinforced and equipped.

Nevertheless, when Japanese forces finally confronted them, the Dutch forces resisted. The naval battles in the NEI have been chronicled and more recently, the air war over the NEI has received attention from historians. But one facet of the NEI campaign was little-known; that of the Dutch Marine Luchtvaart Dienst (MLD—Naval Air Service) against the Japanese forces. In *The Dutch Naval Air Force Against Japan*, Tom Womack fills in a gap in Second World War history.

Unlike the Imperial Japanese Navy

Air Force (IJNAF,) the British Fleet Air Arm, or U.S. Naval Aviation, the MLD did not possess truly dedicated combat aircraft such as fighters, dive bombers, and torpedo bombers. They were equipped with flying boats of various ages and effectiveness, all of which had some offensive capabilities against enemy ships and some defensive capability against enemy aircraft. In part, this made sense; flying boats were the best technology of the time for maritime reconnaissance and search and rescue. But those aircraft proved to be ineffective overall against the IJNAF's fighter aircraft—the A6M Zero, the best carrier-based aircraft of its day. MLD squadrons were small, containing three or four aircraft at the most. Individual MLD aircraft or in pairs or small groups, did attack Japanese shipping and achieved some results. No matter how brave the MLD's aircrews were, the result was inevitable—the almost total destruction of the MLD and the Japanese conquest of the NEI. In April 1942, after the Japanese victory in the NEI, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands awarded the MLD the highest Dutch medal for bravery, the Militaire Willemsorde der 4e klasse, in honour of the force's efforts against Japan.

Womack's book covers the MLD's efforts. His book contains ten chapters covering the MLD's equipment and operational doctrine; prewar incidents between the Japanese and the NEI; the MLD's efforts in December 1941, and its efforts after the U.S. Navy evacuated its units from the Philippines; initial Japanese invasions and the NEI's defensive efforts; the air assault on the island of Java, which was the capital of the NEI; the collapse of Dutch resistance; and the post-conquest effort to rebuild the MLD in the USA—which gave the Dutch the ability to have an effective naval air arm post-war. The narrative is complete and well-written. Womack embeds photo-

graphs of aircraft, MLD bases, and personnel within the text, bringing it to life. Tables and maps, also embedded into the text, help clarify where MLD bases were located, anti-aircraft equipment, operational spheres of Japanese air superiority, and the strengths of the IJNAF and Imperial Japanese Army Air Force (IJAAF) units employed against the NEI. The endnotes contain much substantive information as well as sources for further study.

The appendices are equally valuable. Each MLD squadron is listed together with its commanders, bases, each aircraft in that squadron, and the fates of those aircraft. Further appendices list each MLD aircraft by type, and its eventual fate, technical specifications for the MLD aircraft; technical specifications for the IJNAF and IJAAF aircraft operational in the NEI, and a listing, together with ultimate fate, of each Dutch seaplane tender ship. Following the appendices are three charts, showing MLD losses by month, MLD losses by its principal aircraft types, and MLD aircraft losses by cause. The bibliography lists a large number of relevant primary and secondary sources. The cover has a dramatic photograph of a Dutch Fokker seaplane just launched from the light cruiser, Hr.Ms. *de Ruyter*.

This is a valuable book. The information it contains is complete and will satisfy even the most meticulous researcher. It illuminates a previously-overlooked part of the early Pacific War and pays tribute to valiant aircrews and their ground crews. While the conquest of the NEI was really a foregone conclusion, Womack's book shows that the MLD made that military success was far from easy for the Japanese. It is recommended for students of Dutch military history, the early Pacific War and naval aviation in general.

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