

farmers or barkeeps.

Surprisingly, Dancy demonstrates that, press gangs aside, the navy always had volunteers. To begin with, life on land was difficult, and the navy offered recruitment bonuses, camaraderie (too often underestimated by historians, the veteran Dancy declares), advancement, regular meals, a rum ration, a structured work routine, and prize money shares. Sadistic officers were the exception. “Tyranical officers did not rule sailors of the Royal Navy,” Dancy writes, “and those that did exist in naval service were often not promoted to command. The men of the lower deck disliked officers who treated them poorly, and the fact that well-known and successful officers were highly respected by their men goes to show the difference in efficiency between a happy and a miserable crew.” (100) So how many men were pressed? By Dancy’s calculations, it was only one in five. The rest were motivated young volunteers.

The Myth of the Press Gang is best digested in small doses. It is certainly not a beach read, but for sheer power of statistical persuasion, it represents one of the most impressive maritime history arguments in years. Hopefully, other researchers will consider Dancy’s methods and apply them to different historical problems. The possibilities are endless.

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Aidan Dodson and Serena Cant. *Spoils of War: The Fate of Enemy Fleets after Two World Wars*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2020. 328 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, bibliography. UK £35.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5267-4198-1. (E-book and Kindle editions available.)

The fate of the warships of the defeated nations of the First and Second World Wars is perhaps one of the most overlooked aspects of modern naval history, as their destinies rarely receive more than an afterthought. It is an abyss that this book attempts to cover. Author Aidan Dodson needs little introduction, as several of his works have already been published by Seaforth. Although not a professional naval historian, he has established an excellent reputation—especially on the First World War era. His co-author, Serena Cant, is well known as a specialist in shipwreck documentation for the early twentieth century and has previously published works in this field. This volume finds both of them boldly straying from their previous eras of expertise to the Second World War.

This work is divided into two major parts, fittingly devoted to each of the world wars, and it is generously illustrated with well-chosen photographs. Part I is presented in three sections, while Part II is broken down into five sections. Each part is presented in three distinct segments, i.e. *Endgame*, *Under New Management* and *Appendices*. These are buttressed by a brief preface, an even more concise introduction and supplemented by a very short concluding essay entitled *Retrospect* in Section 9. The appendices are conveniently located in three locations. The first is presented before Part I, in the form of a helpful Table of Conventions and Abbreviations, while the others are to be found at the end of each Part. While this is unorthodox, it is effective, because it places the various tables and appendices closer to their subject periods. Nonetheless, one wonders if the book was originally planned as a two-volume set.

The *Endgame* chapter in Part I details the road to the defeat of the Cen-

tral Powers and the surrender details and schedules for their warships. The sub-sections for each of the Central Powers detail the surrender and the ultimate disposal of their individual vessels. The next section explains the actual process and rationales that dictated the final dispositions of these ships. The subsequent history and fate of those that went on to serve in any navy—including the soon-to-be-recreated German Navy—are highlighted. The last section is a full blown collection of appendices that describes the fate of even the most minor warship. Strangely, in Part II, each of the major Axis Powers is given a more individual *Endgame* section, but the one on Italy includes the minor Axis powers of Romania, Bulgaria and Finland as well. The rest of this part mirrors the structure of Part I.

In general, the transition from final battles and surrender of the warships in both parts is swift—akin to boarding a high-speed moving train. Overall, the amount of information provided is very concentrated yet detailed. Surprisingly, most of these warships were destined to be scrapped, while a precious few, mostly submarines, were retained for experiments, construction analysis or museums. Additionally, the authors have tried to correct many errors regarding the fates of the surrendered ships, and explain why vessels that were allocated to one power were scrapped or otherwise disposed of by a nation other than the one they were allocated to. They have also attempted to clear up many of the misidentifications that seem to plague the extant documents of the period.

A minor problem with this volume is that it is finely focused on the fates of vessels belonging to the defeated powers. In Part I, the Russian ships that were surrendered to Germany after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk are ignored. Part II also offers little or no coverage

of the various vessels obtained by Germany from other fleets, except for those that were surrendered in 1945. An anomaly in Part I is that the authors do not adequately discuss why Turkey was allowed to retain the *Yavuz*, the former German battlecruiser *Goeben*. Another issue with this volume is that the authors really do not adequately address the Allies' "pre-Scapa Flow scuttling" disposal plans for the first generation of German dreadnoughts that were not originally interned. It is also interesting to note that France advocated that Germany be allowed to retain some light cruisers that were built in 1912, in an attempt to delay her building ships of this type until 1932. In Part II, efforts by the Western Allies to ensure that the USSR would not receive many modern units stand out. For example, the Italian *Vittorio Veneto* class battleships were intentionally rendered permanently inoperable. The Americans also rapidly disposed of the Japanese type I401 submarines for identical reasons. The Western Allies tried to ensure that the German Walther type U-boats were not transferred to their former ally. For their part, it is clear that the Soviets withheld knowledge of some captured German vessels from their Allies.

Overall, this volume offers a fascinating survey of problems of integrating these ships into relatively modern navies as indicated by the experiences of the Soviet and the French navies which were the primary operational users of surrendered warships. It also provides a valuable glimpse into what the Allies of both World Wars learned from these vessels. The authors, however, fail to fully explain why Great Britain ultimately decided against incorporating the *Vittorio Veneto* into its Pacific fleet. Nor do they adequately explain why most of these warships were not offered to other nations that were either neutral

or only nominally involved in either conflict. Despite these minor quibbles, this is a well-written and heavily researched work that deserves to be on the shelf of anyone with a strong interest in naval history and warship design.

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Nathaniel Fanning (Louis Arthur Norton, ed.). *Sailing Under John Paul Jones. The Memoir of Continental Navy Midshipman Nathaniel Fanning, 1778-1783*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., www.mcfarlandbooks.com, 2019. viii+171 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$39.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-4766-7960-0. (E-book available.)

Historical memoirs transport modern readers across time and space into the lives of people from another age. Revolutionary-War-era mariner, Nathaniel Fanning, produced an account of his years at sea and his fight against the British. His version, written in the early-nineteenth century, was published by a family member posthumously shortly thereafter. Fanning is most memorable for sailing with John Paul Jones during the epic battle between the *Bonhomme Richard* and HMS *Serapis*. Fanning's *Narrative* has been republished on several occasions. Louis A. Norton, professor emeritus from the University of Connecticut, takes his turn at the wheel to navigate readers through the story with this edition.

Editors have license to massage the material they choose to focus on. They shape the nature of the narrative through their choice of words, what to add or cut, how to (re)arrange material, and other literary devices. Great license indeed! Norton's preface notes that, "This present edition is an attempt to make more accessible for contem-

porary readers an eyewitness account of events during a notable moment in American history"(1). He also states that Fanning's "... writing can be challenging to understand..."(2) To overcome the temporal linguistic artifacts and conventions, as well as the author's self-proclaimed lack of education, the editor modernizes language, undertakes some textural reorganization, constructs chapters, and corrects spelling and grammar. Comparisons of Norton's manuscript with other editions, including a well-known 1912 version by Barnes, confirms his declaration to update for the modern reader. In addition to alterations of text, Norton offers a short overview of Fanning's career, as well as presenting a list of naval vessels named after Fanning in a short postscript. He also inserts notes and an index. Thus, editing's double edged sword; we lose a fragment of Fanning's essence and era through the filtering of an editor, but gain depth of understanding by the addition of material that assists in creating historical context.

Firsthand narratives of Revolutionary War participants at sea are rare. Michael Crawford, in one of his edited works, puts the number at twenty-nine. Thus, Fanning's story contributes a unique perspective to the times, and as such, is an important contribution to the historiography of the war. Fanning sailed as a midshipman with Jones, who he has much to say about. And from his telling, Fanning had a particular impression that may not have accorded with the contemporary hagiographic view of the American naval hero. In addition to his association with Jones, Fanning's life during the Revolution is a fascinating porthole into the perspective of an American mariner and patriot. As well as being taken prisoner by the British on several occasions, he also traveled the coast of France and presents a firsthand description of it, rarely expressed.