

BOOK REVIEWS

Kenneth J. Banks. *Chasing Empire Across the Sea: Communications and the State in the French Atlantic, 1713-1763*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, www.mqup.ca, 2002. xxii + 322 pp., tables, notes, appendices, index. \$65, cloth; ISBN 0-7735-2444-4.

Kenneth Banks's book is a welcome addition to studies in North Atlantic history and the history of France overseas. Banks rightly notes that a variety of 'Atlantics' existed during the eighteenth century [6-7]. The British Atlantic has received disproportionate attention from historians, notably in analyses that relate overseas activity to communications and state formation. Banks's work is a sophisticated treatment of the French Atlantic in these contexts, and the patterns it reveals are important and distinctive.

The central paradox that Banks identifies is the absence, in the minds of both contemporaries and many later scholars, of any integrated sense of a French transatlantic empire during the eighteenth century, despite the existence of what became known as the *vieilles colonies*. The colonies on which this study concentrates are Canada (defined accurately in its eighteenth-century sense as referring to the colony centred in the St. Lawrence valley), the French Windward Islands (primarily Guadeloupe and Martinique), and Louisiana. Mentioned for comparison, but not analysed in detail, are other colonies such as Ile Royale and Saint-Domingue. The overall interpretive thrust is to explain the failure of the French state, despite its vigour in France itself, to impose a social and cultural order on its transatlantic colonies that would have justified then-conceptualization as an empire.

The strengths of Banks's work are evident at more than one level. This is a useful study of the detailed operation of French transatlantic networks, in such forms as minute delineations of ocean routes and the points at

which mariners considered that they had left 'European' for 'American' waters [70], or the dissection of merchant networks and their links with state-related patronage structures. Depending as it does on painstaking reconstruction from scattered evidence, this kind of analysis represents a considerable achievement. Banks also offers innovative discussion of distinctive elements of the role of ceremony and ritual in the French colonies, in contexts ranging from the celebration of royal births to the punishment of criminals and the repression of slaves. At a more general level, the study succeeds in its primary interpretive task. Defining the characteristics of the French Atlantic that might have formed the basis for a solid French imperial identity to emerge - principally including the continuous operation of the Ministry of Marine within the context of an authoritarian state, the linguistic ascendancy of Parisian French, merchant and religious networks, the firm establishment of legal codes, and a willingness to negotiate alliances with aboriginal inhabitants - Banks also effectively brings out the disparate and internally incoherent colonial configurations which emerged in spite of these factors. In the end, he argues, "France's far-flung colonial possessions offered too many challenges to the state and its control over communications". [218]

Weaknesses exist in this study, though they tend to be specific rather than general. Towards the more general end of the scale, greater attention might have been given to aboriginal-French diplomacy, which is conspicuously prefigured at the outset but receives relatively little hard analysis. In Canada especially, the fundamental vulnerability of the French *vis-à-vis* powerful aboriginal neighbours might usefully have been explored as an illustration of the interdependence of aboriginal, colonial, and imperial worlds. More specifically, the first of the substantive chapters - "The Rise of the French Atlantic to 1763" - is subject to certain of the characteristic quibbles that

syntheses attract. In matters of detail, for example, the reference to "the loss of the Quebec post and Acadia to Scottish Protestant pirates between 1629-1632" [18] conflates diverse elements of a complex episode, while the deportation of the Acadians many years later and the role of Nova Scotia Governor (but never General) Charles Lawrence in "American-controlled Acadia" is also over-simplified. [40] An interpretive issue is the short shrift that the sixteenth century receives in this chapter. Arguably, the origins of French transatlantic merchant networks and certain facets of elite rivalry might effectively have been sought in the period prior to when the chapter hits its stride in 1600. Finally, while the study's conclusion presents a cogent analysis of the central issues outlined above, it also extends into a comparison of twenty-first century Louisiana, Martinique-Guadeloupe and Quebec which some readers may find strained.

Yet none of this seriously dilutes the strength of a study that can justifiably stand on the quality of the research and analysis that underpin its conclusions. That the French state's "chase for empire left colonial societies stranded and as divided from the metropolis as they were from one another" [221] is a compelling inference from evidence ably marshaled and presented.

John G. Reid
Halifax, Nova Scotia

John R. Bratten. *The Gondola Philadelphia and the Battle of Lake Champlain*. College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University Press, www.tamu.edu, 2002. 235 pp., figures, tables, photographs, notes, glossary, appendix, bibliography, index. US\$34.95, cloth; ISBN 1-58544-147-3.

The Lake Champlain valley frequently saw invasion forces march its length and paddle its waters, one of the periods being the American War of Independence, 1775-1783. Rebel forces were the first to use the route when, under Major

General Richard Montgomery and Colonel Benedict Arnold, they stormed into Quebec late in 1775. Their campaign struggled through the winter before they withdrew to posts along Lake Champlain the following spring. Knowing that the British were planning to launch an attack from Quebec, the Americans began building a naval force to defend their position.

The *Philadelphia* was one of the vessels built in 1776 as part of the American flotilla. It was a gunboat or gondola (gundaloe, gun'low, gundeloe were various forms of the term), one of eight, flat-bottomed craft built in a dockyard at the southern extreme of Lake Champlain at Skenesborough, (now Whitehall), New York. The *Philadelphia* measured about 53 feet by 15 feet with a rail-to-bottom dimension of 4 feet; fully loaded, it probably drew less than two feet of water. It was powered by sweeps and a simple square rig on a single mast, and for armament carried a 12-pdr. gun in the bow and one 9-pdr aft on each side, as well as a number of swivel guns. The complement consisted of 45 officers and men who somehow managed to subsist in this crowded, open boat with nothing to protect them from the weather but a temporary awning.

In a clear and concise manner, well supported by documentation, John Bratten describes the building of the *Philadelphia*, the seven other gondolas and four galleys, and the outfitting of the other small vessels that eventually formed the American flotilla. Another strength of the book is that Bratten devotes nearly as much attention to the construction of the British squadron on the Richelieu River and contrasts it with the American program. The two forces met on 11 October, 1776 in Valcour Bay. During the indecisive battle the *Philadelphia* sank, having been holed by British shot. Arnold commanded the American force and escaped past the British in the night, although his vessels were eventually either destroyed or captured. Significantly, however, the presence of Arnold's flotilla delayed British plans and prevented them from executing their campaign until the following year, by which time rebel forces were

strong enough to win the victory at Saratoga.

The story of the *Philadelphia's* origins and brief career takes up the first 75 pages of this book, after which Bratten describes its salvage and presentation to the public, its structure and contents, crew and replica. Lorenzo E. Hagglund recovered the gondola in August 1935 using methods that are considered crude by modern archeological standards, but which reaped a spectacular harvest from the lake. Hagglund's intention was to have the Smithsonian Institution take ownership of the *Philadelphia* immediately, but 25 years passed before this could be arranged; Bratten fills in the details of the gondola's use during that period.

Howard P. Hoffman, a Smithsonian specialist in naval history, conducted a thorough survey of the craft, producing a report in the form of 16 sheets of plans depicting the *Philadelphia* as it must have been in 1776. From the information on these sheets, Bratten has composed two lengthy chapters about the vessel's construction and artifacts, plus a full catalogue, listing and illustrating the artifacts. He completes the book with a chapter about its original crew and the building, operation and sailing qualities of a replica of the gondola which was launched at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in 1991.

This excellent book follows in the wake of work done by Kevin A. Crisman (well known for his studies about the War of 1812 warships *Ticonderoga*, *Jefferson* and *Eagle*); indeed, Bratten acknowledges Crisman's advice and encouragement. It is the type of study that provides the facts and analysis, the diagrams and documentation sought by armchair naval buffs and academic researchers alike. For that reason, it deserves to be put on the shelf next to the best of the current naval studies.

Robert Malcomson
St. Catharines, Ontario

David Brown (ed.). *Naval Operations of the Campaign in Norway, April-June 1940*. London:

Frank Cass Publishers, www.frankcass.com, 2000. xxvii+198 pp., photographs, maps, plans, appendices, index. US \$ 54.50, cloth; ISBN 0-7146-5119-2.

The release of the official British history of the Norwegian naval operations of the Second World War provides fascinating reading as a tale of near-misses, bravery and blunders. It is clear that, with a little more daring, planning and luck, the British with their French and Norwegian allies could have, at least temporarily, dislodged the German invaders. Had the British not dithered over their deployment of troops already embarked on cruisers waiting to proceed to Norway; had the Norwegian government not attempted to avoid war by trying to maintain neutrality; had the Germans not been so daring in overturning much of the common wisdom regarding the use of naval power in the face of a superior foe, the outcome of the battle could have been very different.

While this book focuses on British naval operations, a companion work that included the German naval plans would have transformed an already excellent source of material into an even more intriguing study of the use of sea-power for assault of land targets. The attack on Norway was, perhaps, the only instance of German war plans being led by the strategic needs of the navy. The commander of the German Navy, Grand Admiral Eric Raedar, saw the advantage of Norway as a base for both his submarine and surface fleet. He also understood the need to protect shipments of iron ore from northern Sweden while they were vulnerable to British naval attacks. At the same time, members of the British cabinet, in particular Winston Churchill, also understood the importance of Norway. Thus, the battle for Norway really amounted to which side would strike first and how decisively. Ultimately, the British were more reluctant to violate Norway's neutrality, and the Germans, by the thinnest of margins, struck first. It needs to be remembered, however, that both the Germans and British were relatively unprepared for the attack. The German

commander selected to lead the ground assaults, General von Falkenhorst, had to buy a map from a travel agency to assist him with his preparations! He also needed Hitler's personal intervention to pry loose the necessary land forces from the other German commanders who were then planning the attack on western Europe.

The Germans gambled their entire surface navy on this attack. As the book shows, the *Kreisgmerer* paid heavily for their audacity. They lost three of their eight cruisers including the brand new *Blutcher*. They also lost most of their large destroyers during the battles for Narvik and many of their surviving units were damaged. Germany's willingness to take risks, however, allowed them to triumph. The actions of the German navy also demonstrated that, given the right conditions, it could be used to achieve strategic success.

The lessons learned are perhaps the most interesting element of the book. Britain's strengths and weaknesses read like a case study of how to apply the teachings of Sun Tzu and what happens when they are not. It is clear that the British could have defeated the Germans in Norway. First, and perhaps most fatal to the British effort, was the lack of decisive action at key moments. For example, loading and unloading the troops at Rosyth indicated British uncertainty about their objectives in Norway until it was too late. Then there were the differing orders that were given by General MacIntyre, commanding the land forces, and the naval commander, Lord Cork. The lack of a clear and coherent plan resulted in a series of lost opportunities which finally allowed the Germans to consolidate their initial victories.

This is a book that will appeal to those with an interest in both naval history and in the conduct of joint-force warfare. While some of the issues raised in the book no longer have applicability, there is an amazing amount that does. The need for good coordination between the different services remains as relevant as ever. While each service performed well at the

individual tactical level, the lack of a clear coherent plan doomed these efforts to ultimate failure.

The book contains a wealth of detail, including several excellent maps that clearly show the movement of all vessels. The problems with the book are minor, although its attention to detail may overwhelm some readers. There are also a few omissions in its analysis; for example, there is no discussion of the controversy surrounding the sinking of the aircraft carrier *Glorious*. Why were there no aircraft in the air when the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisnau* appeared? Was there a personnel issue that adversely affected the judgement of the captain of the *Glorious*? Nevertheless, the book remains a fascinating study of the attack on Norway and should be read by all interested in this campaign, in the use of sea power for amphibious attacks, and in the employment of joint forces.

Rob Huebert
Calgary, Alberta

J.R. Bruijn, A.C. Meijer and A.P. van Vliet. *Marinekapiteins uit de achttiende eeuw: Een Zeeuws elftal*. The Hague: Instituut voor Maritieme Historië, www.zeeuvsarchief.nl. 2000. 204 pp., plates, illustrations, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography. € 17,50, paper; ISBN 90-70534-31-2.

This collection of essays is the result of close cooperation between three institutions in the Netherlands: the University of Leiden, the Instituut voor Maritieme Historië in The Hague and, finally, the archives of the province of Zeeland in Middelburg. It consists of biographies of 11 eighteenth-century naval captains, each written by a student. The essays are preceded by two introductory articles; one dealing with the development of the admiralty in Zeeland from 1572-1795, and the other focusing on the lives of naval officers in the Netherlands between 1714 (the end of the War of the Spanish Succession) and 1795 (the beginning of the

Napoleonic era).

The introductory articles set the pace and the context for the biographies, which represent one of the great achievements of professor Jaap Bruijn c.s. Over the last eight or nine years, he has encouraged research on various individual naval officers working for one of the five admiralties in the Netherlands, or - by the nineteenth century - the Navy. Focusing on the people provides faces for large, abstract and impersonal organizations like admiralties. Also, by comparing officers, standards are set for successful or unsuccessful men in service.

All authors did an astounding job in reconstructing the lives of these officers in the service of the admiralty of Zeeland. In every study, the authors carefully consider the subject's birth, upbringing, career, family life and wealth (or the lack of it!) in order to enable the reader to compile his or her own picture of naval life in Zeeland during the eighteenth century.

The period is very well chosen. Due to the tremendous burden of the War of the Spanish Succession and the War of the Austrian Succession especially, recruitment caused major problems for the admiralty. Recruiters had to go out of their way to attract mariners. Not only did they go to many places in Zeeland, they sought sailors from the province of Holland as well, including many from Amsterdam and Rotterdam. At one time, recruiters were searching for crews as far away as Stockholm or Copenhagen! The admiralty temporarily raised salaries (or issued an embargo) to fight the competition of the more lucrative East and West India Companies.

What emerges from reading the articles is the picture of Zeeland as a socially- and politically-isolated area, where people knew each other and only a handful of families ruled the cities and towns. Protection, cooperation and the building of social networks were essential requirements for a career in the admiralty. In most cases, the naval officers belonged to the upper layers of society, either by birth or by wealth (or, of course, a combination of both!). Between expeditions, most officers created large

families, but due to the extremely high rate of child death, these families gradually decreased in size. Many officers had academic interests, and pursued or conducted academic research for the admiralty once they left active service. In times of trouble, several of the officers discussed in the essays developed plans for shipbuilding or recruiting techniques. Others decided to join the Dutch East or West India Company, or signed up for service in the British or Russian navies!

The articles are heavily annotated with extensive bibliographies to enable additional research. However, some critical remarks must be made. The book is filled with illustrations, in most cases contemporaneous with the person described, which is an achievement in itself. Unfortunately, the quality of the printing, combined with the size of the pictures detract from the high quality of the picture research; it sometimes makes them even redundant. [70, 116, 146, 151] Moreover, in their search for illustrations, the authors or editors concentrated on cartographic material, or paintings and prints of town scenes or portraits: only in two cases (a book on flag signals and a ship model), are three-dimensional objects used. The Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum in Amsterdam has a gold medal in its collection, consigned to Maarten Haringman (one of the officers being discussed). In another instance, several authors could have used a gorgeous goblet in a private collection dedicated to Captain Comelis Vis and his man-of-war *Zuyd Bevelcmd*. Adding images of these personal artefacts would have contributed to the quality of the biographies.

Writing history from within, using biographical data to explain, sustain or undermine the general view of a subject is a relatively new phenomenon. I cannot wait to see more biographies of Dutch mariners being published!

Joost C. A. Schokkenbroek
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Timothy Collins. *Transatlantic Triumph and Heroic Failure: The Galvay Line*. Chester Springs, PA: The Collins Press/Dufour Editions, www.dufoureditions.com, 2003. 226 pp, US \$23.95, paper; ISBN 1-903464-20-X. Distributed in Canada and the United States by Dufour Editions, Chester Springs, PA.

The Galway Line of steamships, operating spasmodically between Galway Bay, on the west coast of Ireland, and ports along the North American coast from the late 1850s to early 1864, offers a cautionary example of misguided optimism and poor business management, coupled with bad timing and appallingly bad luck. Without doubt, the Galway Line was a transatlantic failure; but, notwithstanding the valiant effort of Timothy Collins to argue otherwise, there was little in the way of triumph or heroism in the checkered careers of the Line, its vessels, or its promoters.

The Atlantic Royal Steam Navigation Company, or Galway Line, was subsidized by the British government to carry mails year-round from Galway to the American ports of Portland, Boston, or New York, by way of St. John's, Newfoundland. Its main promoters were the opportunistic Manchester businessman and shipping magnate, John Orrell Lever, and Fr. Peter Daly, a Galway priest. The latter's entrepreneurial and political career rivalled, if not surpassed, those of his businessman contemporaries both in Galway (where he was Chairman of the Galway Town Commissioners and one of the Galway Harbour Commissioners as well as board member of the Midland & Great Western Railway Company) and in the larger sphere of transatlantic business enterprise. Lobbying relentlessly for private and government support, the two men had scarcely launched their ambitious shipping enterprise when a succession of vessel mishaps threw their line into a precarious financial position which it never could surmount.

The Galway Line story has been told in detail and with scholarly authority in David B. Tyler's *Steam Conquers the Atlantic*, and a

succinct, informed, and nearly contemporary account appears in W. S. Lindsay's classic *History of Merchant Shipping and Ancient Commerce*. That neither of these works appears in the remarkably unselective list of references in the brief volume here reviewed suggests the limited value this book may provide for maritime historians. That it has no index compounds the work's deficiencies. Poor editing or inadequate research also contribute to the book's problems: the shipping entrepreneur Edward Knight Collins, whose ancestors on his father's side came from Ireland to America in 1635 and whose mother was English, comes off as Edward Kevin Collins, an Irish-American businessman. Captain John Ancrum Winslow, of USS *Kearsarge* fame in the American Civil War, loses his last name at one point. Of Galway Line vessels, the iron-hulled paddle steamer *Pacific*, rated at ten knots, is identified as the fastest transatlantic steamer of her time, although the much larger wooden-hulled paddle steamer *Adriatic* (formerly of the American Collins Line) is rated at thirteen knots and is credited with setting transatlantic speed records. And needless digressions or barely tangential information appear throughout the account, as if there isn't really enough to say about the Galway Line to justify a book-length treatment.

What the author does offer is a thorough and well-informed discussion of the distinctive Irish context — social, political, and economic — of this early steamship venture. Drawing heavily on newspapers in the Galway region, he provides a good bit of incidental local history. In addition, there is a remarkable 30-page appendix containing examples of music and song more or less related to the Galway Line. Included here is the full piano score for "The Galway Packet Galop" and the words and music to a number of applicable sea chanties of the era. Another appendix provides a useful descriptive listing of each steamship that served the Line, however briefly. Some of these vessels are illustrated through an assortment of black-and-white reproductions of paintings, magazine illustrations, and photographs, all

placed together at the book's centre.

On balance, this work is severely limited. Despite the use of contemporary British government documents (primarily Parliamentary Papers) and local Irish sources, there is too much uncritical reliance on generalized secondary works and an apparent neglect of source material commonly used by historians. The whole, in this case, is considerably less than the sum of its many parts.

Edward W. Sloan
Madison, Connecticut

James Delgado. *Arctic Workhorse: The RCMP Schooner St. Roch*. Vancouver: Touch Wood Editions Ltd., www.heritaftehouse.ca, 2003. 70 pp., photographs, appendices, maps, drawings, index. \$15.95, paper; ISBN-920663-86-9.

Foot for foot and ton for ton, the *St Roch* has earned a special place in the maritime history of Canada. This diminutive 104-foot vessel built in 1928 served her RCMP masters in the hostile environment of the Arctic, yet still survives as a museum ship at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. As a floating detachment and supply ship, this tough-built auxiliary schooner is now forever linked with Arctic exploration, Canadian sovereignty and the quest for the Northwest Passage. Her chief claim to fame is that she was the first vessel to sail the Northwest Passage west to east and only the second to sail back again, east to west.

There are three big stories told here in seven chapters. The first is a straight up, succinct overview of Arctic exploration that has all the essential features needed to inspire further reading or just provide the essential story for the reader who wants to be well informed. Four chapters are devoted to the *St. Roch* and as Conrad would say, "... the men in them". It is these chapters that connect the hostile environment with the men and their ship. The final chapters are devoted to the preservation of the *St. Roch* and the 'Voyage of Discovery'

undertaken in 2000 by the catamaran *Naden* to bring attention to the 1940-42 historic west-east Arctic passage. This is not a history in the style of a Greg Denig but it does give an insightful picture of Captain Larsen and his influence, not only with his crew but also with the mandarins in Ottawa.

The perpetual problem of how to deal with specialized information without interfering with the flow of the story is dealt with by the clever use of six well chosen sidebar topics that include The Arctic, Maud, Life on Patrol, Henry Larsen, Navigating the Arctic and Characteristics of the *St. Roch*. The many photographs contribute to the story and are a good mix of ship views and people.

There are some quibbles. The measured drawings are not well reproduced and most of the text identifying details of the hull etc are smudged. The glossary is particularly important for new-entry readers but some of the definitions, for want of a little more precision, are incomplete. Two examples will suffice. The definition of windlass would have been better with the addition of the word, horizontal. The mental image of the mainmast would have been better served by using taller rather than "largest". The language of the sea is special and every attempt should be made to perpetuate its use, otherwise how are we to continue enjoyment of the literature of the sea by such authors as Conrad and Masefield. There is a useful index and a bibliography. The maps are useful but more would have been appreciated. It was nice to see a much maligned writer, Farley Mowat, quoted. I hope the future will see Delgado expand his comments on the subject of historic ship preservation.

Jim Delgado has mastered the art of a flowing narrative. This accomplished work of only seventy pages deserves to be part of any maritime library, first as a great story and second as an essential guide and reference work.

Maurice D. Smith.
Kingston, Ontario

Wade Glendon Dudley. *Splintering the Wooden Wall: The British Blockade of the United States, 1812-1815*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2003. xii+299 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$32.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55750-167-X.

It has been many decades since naval warfare in the Western Atlantic between 1812 and 1815 last captured the imagination of historians. During this dearth, studies of the military campaigns, the war on the Lakes, or the diplomatic and political background multiplied. The larger naval subject might have been killed by the effective treatment by A.T. Mahan a century ago, and by the narrative skill of C.S. Forrester almost fifty years ago. For the most part, British historians avoided the subject, as they have felt, wrongly, that the naval war went badly, while American historians were more likely to address this subject in the belief, also wrongly, that the naval war went well. American accounts tended to study the privateer war or single ship encounters. Canadian historians largely steered clear of the matter, perhaps overawed by Gerald Graham, who studied the topic in the 1940s, but who wrote as if he had dealt fully with every historical question worth raising.

New research in three recent doctoral theses has helped to revive interest in the topic. First came Faye Kelt's University of Leyden dissertation, published in 1997, a study of prizes seized in 1812-15 and brought into Nova Scotia and New Brunswick ports. Next came Wade Dudley's East Carolina University dissertation in 1999, of which the present volume is a refinement. The most recent is Marc Drolet's McGill thesis, an operational history of the North American squadron from 1807 to 1815, completed only last December. Two recent British publications should additionally be noted. In 1997, Roger Morriss published a fine biography of George Cockburn, who as a rear admiral, led the 1814 assault on the Chesapeake, under Vice-Admiral Alexander Cochrane's overall command. In 1998, Robert Gardner's

illustrated history of the naval war appeared featuring several useful essays on the naval campaign on the Lakes, the high seas and the American coast.

Splintering the Wooden Wall is an estimate of the success of trade interdictions by the British navy on the American coast from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Maine. The navy's task was made the more difficult partly on account of the so-called licensed trade. The supply of American grain to Wellington's army in the Peninsular War, begun in 1810, continued in the midst of the Anglo-American war through licenses issued to American merchant ships by colonial authorities. Unarmed vessels were issued nine-month licences to carry provisions (and from 1812, naval stores) from American ports between New York and the New Brunswick border. Despite penalties imposed by the US administration, upon its May 1812 declaration of war on those involved in this supply, the trade thrived as the British army continued to depend in part on American flour until the French army fled Spain.

Another major difficulty in interdicting American wartime commerce was the confused instructions given successive commanders of the North American squadron until 1814. If those in Halifax knew only in July 1812 that the Americans had declared war in May, it was November before the British government acknowledged the fact, and January 1813 before word reached Halifax. Throughout 1812 the initiative thus remained with the Americans. Even when Vice-Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren was named commander-in-chief in 1813, he brought with him peace overtures, a policy that made sense only in London, where all eyes were still focussed on Napoleon's defeat. When Cochrane took command of the North American squadron, he had 58 warships, used for all sorts of tasks from cruising and escorting convoys to refitting and blockading. Yet he believed that he needed 102 vessels just to blockade the coast. Only in 1814 did he command such numbers, when the US suffered the bulk of its losses at sea.

Dudley examines British-mounted blockades elsewhere and at different times in his effort to demonstrate that historians have exaggerated the effectiveness of the naval blockade of the American coasts in 1812-15. Rather his analysis suggests that to blockade a 1,500 mile coastline with several important ports and numerous minor ones proved as difficult on the French coast as on the American.

My own study of the matter shows how porous and partial the British blockade of the American coast proved. Drolet's findings are the same. Yet to claim, as Dudley does, that it was far less successful than the British blockade of the French coast between 1793 and 1815 requires far more evidence and analysis than *Splintering the Wooden Wall* provides. His treatment of this topic renders this part of the book unconvincing.

To judge the relative failure of the British blockade in the Anglo-American war, Dudley spends a great deal of effort counting both warships and merchant vessels lost. This is less effective than studying the impact of the war on the American economy, something with which he really never comes to grips. It is not a new topic. Buel's masterly study, published in 1998 on British naval supremacy during the American War of Independence could have been his starting point.

By contrast, *Splintering the Wooden Wall* has nothing to say about US grain or any other commodity prices. The expansive grain trade ought to have produced historically high prices and great prosperity for American farmers, as it did for those in the British Isles. Instead, Dudley notes that both the fishing fleet and the coasting fleet tonnage declined in 1811-14 by almost 60 per cent, while the value of trade fell by 82 per cent, even if some American privateers remained at sea. Despite these data suggestive that the war was a costly blunder by the American administration, Dudley concedes only that the British "went some way toward the 'annihilation' of American commerce". [143]

Another weakness is found in Dudley's analysis of the material support for British

wartime naval strategy. His characterization of the naval bases at Halifax and Bermuda leaves much to be desired. He wrongly believes that in 1814 the Halifax yard received some 300 artificers from England [61], when no such body was ever requested or sent. He also states that the Bermuda base was completed by 1814, and that its principal defect was the shallowness of the harbour. Both statements are inaccurate. Had he used readily available Navy Board documents, these errors could have been avoided.

This book usefully rekindles some of the most interesting arguments generated by the Anglo-American war. Perhaps the best part of the book is its close year-by-year description of the attempts by the British to impose a blockade on parts of the American coast. Unlike the war against rebel America in 1775-83, the British occupied no American port of any consequence. Other than in eastern Maine and islands off the Georgia coast, joint naval-military expeditions confined themselves to raiding, the most spectacular that on Washington itself.

Julian Gwyn
Ottawa, Ontario

James H. Ellis. *Mad Jack Percival : Legend of the Old Navy*. (Library of Naval Biography) Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, www.NavalInstitute.org, 2002. xx + 242 pp., illustrations, chronology, notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55750-204-8.

John "Mad Jack" Percival entered the US Navy as a master's mate and rose to the rank of captain, the top of the pre-Civil War naval service in which there were only three commissioned ranks - lieutenant, master commandant and captain. James Ellis characterizes this remarkable seaman as often rough, often ill, particularly with gout, but always with a keen sense of his duty. Born in 1779 on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, into a seafaring family, Percival attended school for

only nine months before going to sea in 1793 as a cabin boy on a Boston coaster. He was impressed into the British Royal Navy while in Portugal, and was apparently a seaman in HMS *Victory* briefly, before escaping while a member of a prize crew.

The author tells us that Percival joined the American Navy during the quasi-war with France, 1798-1801, but was discharged and returned to the merchant service. He re-entered the Navy in 1809 as a sailing master, but only began full-time service at the beginning of the War of 1812. Assigned to duty at the New York Naval Yard, he soon carried the fight to the blockading British fleet, capturing a British tender. He was sailing master in the US Ship-sloop *Peacock* when she captured HM brig *Epervier* off Florida in April 1814.

Percival's long post-war career involved epic voyages worldwide. Commissioned lieutenant in December 1814, he acted as first lieutenant aboard USS *Macedonian*, 1816-1820, where Ellis credits his seamanship with saving the frigate when she was dismasted in a hurricane. While in the Pacific from 1823 to 1827, Percival was detached to command the schooner *Dolphin*, with which he hunted down the surviving mutineers from the bloody takeover of a Nantucket whaler. He took the *Dolphin* to Hawaii, the first American warship to visit there, but became embroiled in controversy with local American missionaries. The high point of his career, however, was as captain of USS *Constitution*, "*Old Ironsides*," the most revered ship in the American fleet. He took her on an around-the-world cruise, 1844-1846, designed to show support for American maritime interests, to chart unknown waters and to generally show the flag abroad.

Perhaps conscious of his lack of formal education, Percival was ever attentive to the education and training of midshipmen and junior officers under his command. Several of his old mentors ensured that their sons were introduced to the Navy on his voyages. Percival was also a fierce, but apparently fair, disciplinarian, who flogged miscreants but watched after the health

and morale of his crews.

Percival was always mindful of economy in the service. He managed to refit the venerable *Constitution* at one-seventh of the cost estimated by the naval constructor. He believed that the Navy ration was over-generous, and demonstrated on the round-the-world cruise that the crew could be fed on three-quarters of the ration and the savings used for their spending money.

Ellis claims to have rehabilitated Percival from a charge by his only other biographer, David F. Long ("*Mad Jack*" : *the Biography of Captain John Percival, USN, 1779-1862*. Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1993), that he stole money from a trust fund for the relief of several injured sailors. Ellis has examined the same evidence and concludes that Percival's conduct was above reproach.

Percival became the basis for a number of fictional characters. Herman Melville sailed under him and created Lieutenant Mad Jack in *White-Jacket*. Later James Michener based a character on him in *Hawaii*.

The book is not without a few problems. The author himself concedes difficulty in separating truth from tall tales regarding Percival's career. He has not been helped by the strange editorial policy of the series, which limits notes to those for direct quotations. This inhibits further research. As an example, we are told in the text that Percival's name never appeared on the muster books of HMS *Victory* [9] during his pressed service, but the format does not permit us to learn on what evidence Ellis places him there. The "Further Reading" essay [229-232], while most useful, is too general to answer these sorts of questions.

We learn little of Percival apart from his official life. We know that he married the much younger Maria Pinkerton, and that they were apparently childless, but we find out only in passing that he had an adopted daughter [156] and are told nothing of the nature of this relationship.

The style is lively and the tales of shipboard life convincing. At times, however,

Ellis's prose reads strangely like the nineteenth-century reports from which he is working. This is particularly evident in his descriptions of Pacific islanders and their reactions to Percival's incursions.

Although the volume includes ten pages of well-chosen, carefully-captioned illustrations, maps would also have been useful. The biography gives us valuable insights into officer relationships in the small, closed world of the U. S. Navy in the years after the War of 1812, at a time when that Navy was establishing a worldwide presence.

Owen Cooke
North Gower, Ontario

Barry Gough. *Fighting Sail on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay: The War of 1812 and its Aftermath*. St. Catherine's: Vanwell Publishing Limited, www.vanwell.ca, 2002. xxi+215 pp., illustrations, chronology, maps, photos, bibliography, index. \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55068-114-1.

This is an important book. Not only does Barry Gough provide much enlightenment on the War of 1812-14 in this distant corner of conflict, he also provides an intimate grasp of how the fringes of the British Empire were nurtured and protected by energetic and resourceful leadership in the face of overwhelming material odds. Moreover, Gough writes in a very engaging style, such that the book proved to be a rare reviewing treat: it was hard to put down.

Most histories of the 1812 War concentrate on the frigate actions which earned the Americans some early triumphs, to the huge embarrassment of the Royal Navy, and on the several American invasion attempts and related naval campaigns on the Great Lakes, particularly Lakes Erie and Ontario. The conflicts on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay have not been treated in exhaustive detail before, and the impression generally left is that the stakes were small there, the forces minuscule, and the results not really

significant for the wider issues of the war. It is Gough's aim to rectify this impression, and to demonstrate that the campaigns on the Upper Lakes were very significant, and had much more influence on the war than has been heretofore acknowledged.

The stakes were indeed high: the survival of Upper Canada as a British possession at the very least. The province did seem untenable, thinly populated as it was, and settled by many whose loyalties were uncertain. The Americans had much larger resources, especially in manpower. These considerations had prompted the British to maintain friendly relations with the native peoples all around the Great Lakes, thinking that if conflict did erupt with the USA, the Indian alliance would be crucial to any hope of success. In practical terms, this meant distributing food, weapons and gifts in the "north west" via the strategic post at Michilimackinac, and on into Prairie du Chien, well into what was technically American territory. With the Indians known to be leaning towards the British in this area, it was assumed the Americans would temper any aggression further east.

Right away the strategic importance of Lake Huron is apparent: it was the sole route by which lines of supply were maintained with the Indians. And on this line, Michilimackinac was the key, the emporium and choke point of the system. In fact, Gough has much of interest to say on the few choices open to the British commander, Captain Robert Barclay, RN, in the face of obvious American superiority in material terms. Thus, when the naval war on Lake Erie resulted in the American victory at Put-in-Bay, and the immediate retreat of British forces eastward, it seemed the Lake Huron route was cut, and the Indian alliance was doomed. Resourceful RN officers, however, kept some small vessels operating while an overland route was cut out from York to Georgian Bay, and the trickle of supplies continued. Brilliant actions resulted in the recapture of Michilimackinac and the capture of the two American naval vessels sent to control Lake Huron. As a result, the

Americans never realized the advantages of their victory on Lake Erie on Lake Huron, and when peace negotiations were opened, the British side was in a far stronger position than any had dared hope. The Americans had won on Lake Erie, but had lost on Lakes Ontario and Huron, and while their invasion attempts had all failed, British forces occupied Prairie du Chien, backed by an apparently firm Indian alliance.

Gough includes much material on the post-war years too, as each side strove for security on the lakes. Aside from directing attention to a "fringe" area of conflict, Gough provides a useful reminder of the maritime heritage of the Huron and Georgian Bay area: Fort Willow, Nottawasaga, the *Nancy*, Penetanguishene, all are illuminated in a way which will, sadly, be a surprise to many Ontarians, let alone Canadians. This is a recommended book. It is a very scholarly work with extensive research into documentary sources on both sides of the Atlantic, and a thorough sifting of secondary sources as well. Specialists will find it authoritative but it will also appeal to a non-specialist audience, as it is clearly written and well illustrated with useful maps. Quite simply, it is a good read.

Paul Webb
London, Ontario

Donald E. Graves. *In Peril on the Sea: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle of the Atlantic*. Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, www.rbstudiobooks.com, 2003. 252 pp., maps, photograph, tables, appendices, endnotes, bibliography, index. \$34.95, paper; ISBN 1-896941-32-X.

Sixteen months after the beginning of the [Second World] War, the RCN was on a disastrous course toward a crisis that was not of its own making but one it could not avoid." [60] With *In Peril on the Sea: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle of the Atlantic*, Donald Graves attempts to integrate Canada's naval

experience into the historiography of the greatest naval war in history. Commissioned by the Canadian Memorial Trust for publication on the 60th anniversary of the climax of the Atlantic Campaign, Graves elucidates the development and role of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) through an examination of the social, technological, and political factors that both shaped and explain Canada's contribution during the Battle of the Atlantic.

Though the main focus is the RCN and the Battle of the Atlantic, Graves does not simply throw his readers into the unforgiving swells of the North Atlantic as war commenced. The first two chapters briefly identify several contextual themes, including the historical importance of sea power and the nature of both submarine and anti-submarine warfare as it evolved during "The Great War" and throughout the interwar period. More importantly, Graves introduces the political factors that constantly seemed to plague the RCN throughout its history. For example, he notes that even though the Canadian Naval Service was created on 10 May 1910, the rise of Robert Borden's Conservatives in September 1911 "placed the Naval Service in 'suspended animation' while it worked out its own defence policies." [21] Similarly, in 1921, the Navy's budget was reduced by forty percent by the Liberal government because of popular distaste for both war and military matters.

The RCN managed to expand during the interwar period, however, thanks to the ingenuity and political savvy of various important figures. For example, Walter Hose, Chief of the Naval Service from 1922-1934, realized that there was enthusiasm in Canada for a naval service. Therefore, he transformed it into a reserve-based organization that drew members from across Canada, thus establishing a "small but visible naval presence across Canada." [35]

The heart of the book is an explanation of the RCN's evolution and the problems it faced during the Battle of the Atlantic. Canada's wartime naval experience can be divided into two convenient periods; from the start of the war to January 1943, and from February 1943 to the

end of the war. During the first period, 1939 - 2 January 1943, the RCN acquired a reputation as an inefficient fighting force. Graves cites numerous interrelated reasons for the RCN's poor performance, including technological deficiency, unbridled expansion, and political mismanagement that combined to seriously hinder the performance of the RCN.

He examines selective convoy battles and finds evidence that the RCN's troubles were not entirely its own fault. For example, he attributes the loss of 6 of the 58 merchant ships during the Newfoundland Escort Force's first convoy battle to the fact that the Canadian escort ships lacked radios and had to depend on unreliable and outdated signal lamps. And since Ottawa did not have concrete knowledge of the problems faced by its escort force, nothing was done. The final nail in the coffin, which forced Sir Max Horton, Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches, to remove the Canadian escort groups from the mid-Atlantic, was the loss of 14 out of 45 merchant ships from convoy ONS 154 during late 1942. By way of explanation, Graves notes that the escort's senior officer was inexperienced, pre-convoy training exercises were cancelled, and the convoy's path brought it close to two large U-boat concentrations.

During the second period, February 1943 to the end of the war, Graves argues that the RCN "had come of age as a professional fighting force." [74] Contributing to the RCN's new professionalism, was better training, better ASW vessels such as the frigate, and technological modernization for many of its ships. Reflecting this overall improvement, the RCN sank six of the 31 U-boats destroyed from November 1943 through April 1944 in the North Atlantic. Accumulating another five kills before the end of the war, RCN accounted for 33 Axis submarines destroyed in total. This is an impressive figure considering that Canada's navy matured and expanded from 3,252 officers and sailors manning 13 vessels in 1939 to 92,441 officers and sailors manning over 400 various vessels in late 1944.

Although the book is not a definitive nor completely original work concerning naval history, it does provide a human element to what is often a soul-less war of technological advancements. Found at the end of each chapter are extremely interesting primary quotations revealing numerous facets of naval warfare both on land and sea. They include such topics as rescuing survivors from torpedoed ships, convoy battles, seasickness aboard a corvette, medical care at sea, the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service, and even the experiences of one U-boat officer during the war.

In Peril on the Sea: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle of the Atlantic, though not the final interpretation regarding Canada and the Battle of the Atlantic, is a very useful introduction to the numerous problems faced by the RCN throughout its history. As expected, because of the complexity of the battle, certain parts such as the American and British efforts, and especially Ultra, are sometimes carelessly generalized. Also, Graves did not write a concluding chapter that summarizes the various arguments and themes that explain the RCN's evolution throughout the twentieth century. The work does, however, provide the general reader with a solid explanation, adequately elucidated, regarding the problems that Canada's navy faced and how these problems were surmounted.

Jason Warren
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Jim Gawler. *Lloyds' Medals 1836-1989: A History of Medals Awarded by the Corporation of Lloyd's*. Toronto, ON: Hart Publishing, 1995 (originally published 1989). 80 pp., illustrations, index of recipients. £8.95, paper; ISBN 0-9693732-0-1.

Given its relatively unknown publisher, this useful volume is likely unavailable except, as this reviewer obtained his, through used book dealers or in reference libraries. But as a

valuable reference tool for those writing merchant marine history, it deserves its place on the bookshelf. The author, Jim Gawler, spent his working life with Lloyd's, including managing the Secretarial Department which administered the awarding of eight classes of that insurer's medals for outstanding bravery involving shipping. On retirement in 1985, he undertook the production of this reference.

In a very brief introduction, he explains how Lloyd's Coffee House got into the shipping auction business and thence insuring, by about 1725. The awarding of medals, or "pecuniary gratuities" for saving lives from shipwrecks was at first only with the approval of "A General Meeting of Subscribers" - now referred to as "The Names". Gawler describes how this cumbersome arrangement progressed until 1837, when the first awards of specially struck medals of bronze, silver and gold were made. He also includes a somewhat startling full description of how the medal's image was chosen by William Wyon. Based on three and a half pages of Homer's epic, Wyon decided upon the figure of Leucothoe (daughter of Cadmus) casting her scarf to Odysseus when he was shipwrecked.

Then follows a selection of the awards from the various categories, illustrating how they came to be earned. The descriptions of the award actions are in order of the 'seniority' of the awards: Lloyd's Medal for Saving Life - gold (1), silver (275) and bronze (548); Lloyd's Medal for Meritorious Services - silver (435) and bronze (38); Lloyd's Medal for Services to Lloyd's - gold (15) and silver (11); and Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea - silver only (530). The figures in brackets indicate the total number awarded - up to 1,853 - by 1989.

Interestingly, the only gold life saving medal was awarded to then-captain E.R.G.R. Evans, later "Evans of the *Broke*" and Lord Mountevans, who went to the Pole with Scott, for saving lives off the China coast. When a local ship, *Hong Moh*, went on the rocks, Evans and others swam to the wreck in heavy seas and helped save most of the crew.

There are similar stories throughout the book featuring seamen, lighthouse keepers, Customs men, ladies, captains, naval personnel, "foreigners" and Englishmen. Even in its modest selection of tales, the book is a singularly even-handed cross-section of those who served at sea and, in many cases, risked or even sacrificed their lives to rescue others. Sometimes, only one participant received a medal; occasionally, such as when the crew of the *SS President Roosevelt* rescued the entire crew of the broken-down steamer *Atinoe* on 26-28 January, 1926 in very heavy and snowy weather, three silver and 17 bronze medals were awarded, two of them posthumously. These are brief glimpses of fascinating tales of bravery at sea, usually under terrible circumstances. The 26 medals for Services to Lloyd's are mostly given to its chairmen, although 7 of the 11 silver medals have been awarded to Lloyd's Signalmasters in the signal stations they established in 1852.

Although the book lacks a general index, there is a very useful index which lists recipients in sub-sections by class of medal. Once the recipient is found, there is a page reference for the story about the event that generated the award. A quite useful volume, one to be dipped into on occasion.

Fraser M. McKee
Etobicoke, Ontario

Rick M. Harbo. *Pacific Reef & Shore. A Photo Guide to Northwest Marine Life.* Madeira Park, B. C.: Harbour Publishing, www.harbourpublishing.com, 2003. 80 pp., map, photographs, index. \$9.95, paper; ISBN 1-55017-304-9.

Anyone spending time outdoors ought to have a field guide handy, especially when near the ocean - the first thing to reach for when trying to identify those curious little creatures found in a tidal pool. Here we have one by Rick Harbo, a marine biologist with several popular west-coast references to his credit. Just the right size to slide

into the side pocket of a windbreaker, this little book is an excellent example of the genre.

For each of the 313 entries, there is a small colour photograph, and a couple of sentences of description: typically size, appearance, and usual habitat, including depth range. In addition to the proper scientific name, there is only a single common name - invariably, different localities have different ways of referring to the same fish, and perhaps some alternatives could have been included. Entries are grouped into obvious categories: mammals and fish first; with invertebrates making up the bulk of the book. Plants haven't been neglected: 24 are listed. No doubt space restrictions meant that many rare organisms had to have been left out - there are only 38 species of fish, and none are the sort found in more open water, such as mackerel - but the chances are excellent that what will be encountered in the wild will be found here.

This is an ideal guide for the scuba diver. Even though there is no key to the entries by body shape or other characteristic, for the most part the photographs are clear enough to make a confident identification. Certainly the price is right, and the book is excellent value for money. Should this reviewer ever have the opportunity to try West Coast diving, this book definitely will be tucked away in his dry bag.

William Schleihauf
Pointe des Cascades, Quebec

Shirley Hewett. *The People's Boat, HMCS Oriole: Ship Of A Thousand Dreams*. Surrey, B.C. : Heritage House Publishing Company Ltd., www.heritagehouse.com, 2002. 174 pp., photographs, glossary, notes, index. \$26.95, paper; ISBN 1-894384-20-2.

Ships have a capacity to inspire love in those who come to know them well, and West Coast writer and sailor Shirley Hewett clearly has had a long love affair with the beautiful sail-training ketch HMCS *Oriole*, part of Canada's West

Coast navy. In her book, she sets out to write both a history of the ship, and to explain the abiding and affectionate relationship individuals have had with it since its launch in 1921. That she succeeds has as much to do with her own emotional feeling for the vessel as her warm and inclusive writing style.

The current *Oriole* is, in fact, *Oriole IV*, the fourth of a series of large sailing yachts. The first boat - as ships are traditionally called on the Great Lakes - was built in 1871 for the Gooderham family of Toronto. Hewett provides readers with a fascinating look at the sailing diversions of Toronto's wealthy elite and the founders of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club as she chronicles the long relationship of the Gooderham family with a series of magnificent sailing yachts that bore the name *Oriole*. That relationship ended, grandly, with the launch of the current boat in 1921, a powerful, steel-hulled ketch just under 100 feet in length. Built in New England, the ketch served for many years as the flagship of the RCYC and as Commodore George H. Gooderham's personal yacht. But it was with the advent of the Second World War that *Oriole* began its long and continuing relationship with Canada's naval establishment.

In failing health at the beginning of the war years, George Gooderham parted with the vessel in a sale process that brought *Oriole* into the ownership of the Navy League of Canada. Through the war years and on until 1949, the ship carried thousands of teenaged Sea Cadets on training cruises on Lake Ontario, until interest in such training began to lag as the Korean War approached. Commissioned into the Royal Canadian Navy in June 1950, the ship then was moved to Nova Scotia, where it was involved in the training of junior officers. Ranging the cold seas of the Western North Atlantic, the ketch remained based in Halifax until the decision was made in 1954 to send her round to Esquimalt, on the West Coast, where she would continue to train junior officers, particularly with the VENTURE cadet programme. On the completion of that voyage round through the Panama Canal, *Oriole* had

arrived in the community that would welcome and embrace the ship as their own, and where she is based to this day as part of Canada's West Coast navy.

Hewett is an experienced writer and the author of two formal corporate histories, but chose to write *The People's Boat* in a relaxed style that sits well with the subject matter and her storytelling. The history of the boat is not so much simply a recitation of its voyages as what has happened to the remarkable men and women who have had contact with it, ranging from *Mutiny On The Bounty* skipper Ellsworth Coggins to HRH Prince Edward. Details of watch keeping in heavy seas, and the personal experiences of crew, trainees, commanding officers and guests - as Hewett was, for a voyage in New Zealand waters - mix with fascinating sidelights of the where-are-they-now variety to imprint the extraordinary affection in which the ship is held, and its impact upon individuals' lives. Perhaps only in Victoria, with its atmosphere of white-flannel gentility and links to a Victorian past, could such a relationship be maintained with a sailing yacht. It is clear from Hewett's text that *Oriole* has earned a place in the hearts of not only those who have sailed in the ship, but in the hearts of Victoria residents generally.

That warm blanket of affection should not mask the fact that *Oriole* is a strong, blue water vessel with some impressive achievements to her credit, including victory in the Victoria to Maui Yacht Race in 2000, and a stunning, first tall ship "across the line" performance in a tumultuous Tasman Sea race into Hobart, Tasmania during a South Pacific deployment. If Canada cannot maintain large, square-rigged sail training vessels for its naval officers' preparation, as many other nations do, *Oriole* nonetheless has carried the Canadian flag with deserved pride on the high seas, and Hewett does a good job in demonstrating why.

If there is one criticism, and it is a minor one, it has to do with the lack of footnoting in the text, where the fascinating depth and detail of Hewett's research leads one

to want to know where a particular story or fact came from. But the weakness is a minor one, and Hewett tries her best to include references and sources in her text. Certainly it does not detract from the enjoyment of a light-hearted and affectionate look at a dignified elder yacht that clearly captures the sailorly hearts of those who experience her. Hewett's strength is that she allows all of us to share some of that feeling.

Victor Suthren
Ottawa, Ontario

Poul Holm, Tim D. Smith and David J. Starkey (eds.). *The Exploited Seas: New Directions for Marine Environmental History*. St. John's, NL: International Maritime Economic History Association/Census of Marine Life, www.mun.ca, 2001. xix + 216 pp., tables, figures. US \$ 15.00, paper; ISBN 0-9730073-1-1.

This volume comprises papers presented by distinguished historians, scientists and economists specialized in matters of marine research, as part of a Marine Environmental History workshop held February 2000, at Esbjerg, Denmark. Funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation of New York, the meeting was designed to develop a research agenda for furthering knowledge and understanding of the history of marine animal populations. The publication consists of: Contributors' Notes; an Introduction by the Editors; and ten Contributors' papers, arranged in four groups, illustrating particular aspects of the developing field of marine environmental history. A short Epilogue describes a research agenda for the "History of Marine Animal Populations (HMAP)" generated at that same workshop.

The volume combines the approaches of maritime history and ecological science, the key to which is the integrated analysis of ecosystems and human societies. The editors in their "Introduction" discuss the characteristics of "Historical and Paleo-ecological Data Sources" followed by "Testing Ecological Hypotheses".

[xiv,xv] Such discussion clearly defines the nature of the data, the contrast between historical records produced by humans and paleo-ecological data emanating from naturally occurring ecological archives.

Although not so defined in the table of contents, the papers are arranged in groups illustrating particular aspects of marine environmental history. Group one comprises three papers concerned with the Newfoundland Grand Banks' fisheries which has the most comprehensive archives. In the first paper, Historians David Starkey, and Michael Haines consider primary data sources. In the second paper, biologist Ransom A. Myers uses the time series to test Scott Gordon's bioeconomical model of why natural renewable resource exploitation tends to be unprofitable over time. The third paper is a joint effort by biologist Jerry Hutchings and historian Sean Cadigan in which they demonstrate the interfacing of the methodologies of the historical and ecological disciplines.

The next group of three papers is concerned with the building of a history of marine animal populations:

(i) "Status and Potential of Historical and Ecological Studies on Russian Fisheries in the White and Barents Seas" by Julia Lajus, a Russian biologist, and nine specialists that have identified much data in Russian monasteries and state departments; (ii) "The Danish Fisheries, c. 1450-1800: Medieval and Early Modern Sources and Their Potential for Marine Environmental History" by historians Poul Holm and Maibritt Bager, demonstrates the wealth of primary source documents held in Danish archives for the provision of data from which to construct long term time series relating to the inshore fisheries of regions bordering the North and Baltic seas; and (iii) "Historical Approaches to the Northern California Current Ecosystem" by R. C. Francis, J. Field, D. Holmgren, and A. Strom, all practitioners in the field of fishery sciences. Their paper introduces the prospect of reconstructing past fish abundance by the study of fish scales in the sediment cores of the seabed.

Group three papers deal with southern hemisphere fisheries that have developed in comparatively recent times: (i) "Potential for Historical-Ecological Studies of Latin American Fisheries" by historian Chris Reid discusses the prospects facing scholars intent on studying Central and Latin American fisheries. He concludes that there is considerable scope to further understanding of the historical development of living marine resource exploitation in the region and, specifically in the Humboldt Current ecosystem, through historical and ecological multi-disciplinary studies [141]; (ii) "The South African Fisheries: A Preliminary Survey of Historical Sources" by historian Lance van Sittert discusses the importance of the Benguela Current in the development of South Africa's fisheries and the need for more detailed study of the information available; and (iii) "The Potential for Historical Studies of Fisheries in Australia and New Zealand" by Malcolm Tull, an economist, and Tom Polacheck, a fishery scientist presents a preliminary appraisal of primary sources that might prove valuable in investigating the impact of human harvesting on fish populations off Australia and New Zealand.

The single paper in Group four, "Examining Cetacean Ecology Using Historical Fishery Data" by Tim D. Smith, a fisheries biologist, describes a number of analyses that have sought to integrate historical and contemporary data relating to various whale populations. The paper illuminates the benefits to be had from the collaboration between historians and biologists.

Clearly, Marine Environmental History has been well served by the editors and contributors who have so concisely stated their case for the bringing together of history and ecology.

Len Forrest
Ottawa, Ontario

David Hussey. *Coastal and River Trade in Pre-industrial England: Bristol and its Region 1680-1730*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, www.ex.ac.uk, 2000. xvi+296 pp., tables, maps, illustrations, figures, notes, bibliography, index. £ 45.00, cloth; ISBN 0-85989-617-X.

The early modern port of Bristol has long been associated with deep sea and New World trades. Most residents of Newfoundland, Canada, are familiar with the exploits of John Cabot who sailed from Bristol to "discover" the island, or the Bristol region's connection to the early Newfoundland fisheries. David Hussey's work serves as a reminder that, although the association of Bristol with overseas commerce is not incorrect, there was more to the story.

Using an impressive range of both statistical and narrative sources, Hussey demonstrates that Bristol was just as important, if not more so, as a centre of regional coasting trade in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Bristol's true maritime importance in the pre-industrial period may have been miscast. The coastal trade specifically, and early modern shipping generally, have received less than thorough treatment from maritime historians, something that motivated Hussey in writing this work. Fortunately, this is changing and Hussey's work is an important piece of the puzzle for both coasting and the early modern period.

Using statistical data from the Exchequer Port Books, Hussey has attempted a reconstruction of coastal and riverine commerce for not only Bristol, but its entire region. The prominence given Bristol in the book's title may imply a narrower port study. One of the work's strengths, however, is that it goes far beyond this. Although Bristol is clearly established as the most important entrepôt in a regional trade network, the book never loses sight of the importance of centres such as Barnstaple and Gloucester. In fact, Hussey is careful to firmly embed Bristol within its regional hinterland, rather than simply place it in 'splendid isolation'. The value of the monograph is further enhanced in that it does not stop there, but

situates the region as a whole into a very wide context in the coastal sphere. For this reason, England's most important port, London, and one which would soon rival it, Liverpool, are also included as sources and recipients of Bristol's coastal trade. It is easy for works of this nature to try and exist in a vacuum, but Hussey manages to avoid this pitfall. This is not simply by bringing in ports father afield.

Like his predecessor for this period, Ralph Davis, Hussey makes the linkage - so often ignored - between commercial and naval affairs in deterring the scope of marine industry. Although not brought out as a major theme, the threat of privateers and enemy naval craft seem ever present in Hussey's narrative. Indeed, as he tells the reader, even the idea of what constituted a 'region' could be significantly reduced during the vicissitudes of war. Maritime researchers are sometimes content to parcel themselves off from navalists; Hussey is to be commended for reminding us of the firm connections between the two branches of seaward activity.

Hussey also succeeds in using his sources with considerable skill. With the Exchequer Port Books being statistical in nature, this work might have easily lost the human element in favour of numeric data which, if precise, is hardly conducive to holding the attention of general readers. Hussey occasionally slips into this trap, but by and large, he carefully weaves statistics together with primary and secondary narrative sources. Thus, we not only know the quantities and types of goods traded in the Bristol region (especially in the main sample year, 1699), but are introduced to many of the players in the game. Hussey likewise makes frequent use of tables and charts. These are helpful for visualising the data and are clearly and concisely analysed in-text.

There are a few caveats here. Hussey states that the idea for the work came to him while studying for his doctoral thesis [xi] and indeed much of the work itself reads like a thesis. The topical divisions do not seem especially imaginative, but are nonetheless quite

logical. The main source also presents some problems. A great quantity of data is, ironically, associated with gaps in the record which plague the author throughout. Hussey is quite honest in informing the reader of these limitations - perhaps too much. At times, more space seems occupied with what the data set cannot tell us than with what it can.

Nonetheless, these criticisms are minor. Hussey is to be commended for taking a fresh look at the city, its region and the larger issue of England's pre-industrial maritime trade. It is difficult to walk away from this book without taking seriously the author's contention that Bristol was at least as important a coasting as a deep-sea centre. He quotes author Daniel Defoe's words, "trade, like Religion, is what every Body talks of but few understand." [200] With this work Hussey brings us a little closer to that understanding.

David Clarke
Twillingate, Newfoundland

Alan G. Jamieson. *Ebb Tide in the British Maritime Industries. Change and Adaptation 1918-1990*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, www.ex.ac.uk, 2003. 239 pp., maps, tables, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. £37.50, cloth; ISBN 0-85989-728-1.

It is a good thing we Brits have given up being patriotic, for otherwise, this book would result in a significant rise in acute clinical depression. It charts the remarkable way in which Britain's maritime industries led the world at the end of 1918 and by 1990 had reached the position of near-inconsequentiality.

'Maritime industries' are effectively defined for the author's purposes, by his choice of chapter arrangement. Between the introduction and the conclusion, there are chapters on shipping, shipbuilding, ports and North Sea oil and gas. Deep sea fishing is passed over rather quickly, and one or two other areas, which some might consider maritime

industries, including consultancy in harbour design and port logistics, but above all the traditional invisibles - insurance, brokerage etc., are barely mentioned. For each of his chosen subjects, we find there is a definite hinge point occurring some time between the end of the Second World War and the oil price collapse of 1986.

The story unfolded in Jamieson's pages is one in which the first three of his four sectors vie with each other to produce the most rapid rate of decline. As a ports specialist, my sympathies lie with the port authorities who, attacked, derided and driven close to bankruptcy by their customers, were almost finished off" by successive governments' doubtless well-meaning interventions and vacillations. What is particularly sad is that the shipping industry, having forced the ports into incurring unsustainable levels of debt to meet their needs, couldn't even make any money out of it, and ended up variously scrounging for government subsidies, selling out to foreign owners, quietly going bankrupt or diversifying into the management of old folks' homes. Somehow, being mugged is even more annoying if the mugger leaves his swag on the bus on his way home. Just about the only success story Jamieson comes up with is P & O.

The shipbuilders, as Johnman and Murphy have shown, simply beggar belief. Jamieson does an excellent job of synthesizing their work with other recent studies to show quite how it came about that the industry could emerge in 1945 and enter the long boom with almost no competition (most other shipbuilding centres having been heavily war-damaged) and still collapse. Shipbuilders persistently failed to identify what the market wanted and to provide it: as Jamieson points out, when the market needed tankers and dry bulkers, the builders wanted to build passenger liners and, later, when the cruise liner boom started, British yards were offering tankers and dry bulkers. Again, he can really only find one success story by way of contrast, the development of the SD14 standard cargo liner, which could be built in large

numbers. The industry was nationalized and privatized again, it swallowed literally billions in government subsidies, and still it sank.

The fifth chapter of the book deals with the huge new opportunities offered to shipbuilders and shipowners by the development of North Sea oil and gas. Here was a last chance saloon for the former in building rigs, support vessels, safety vessels, pipe-laying vessels, and an opportunity for the latter to fill their boots with money operating the things. It was the same old story of missed opportunities, of willingness to diversify into anything that might make a profit, even in one example, speculating in vintage port! Government, as usual, helped screw things up by adopting a 'free trade' policy for support vessels, allowing foreign incursions into British 'blocks' at a time when British companies were prevented from competing in other countries' 'blocks'.

The author queries whether the maritime industries might form a paradigm for the post-1945 decline of British industry. My initial view is that it does not, for the British motorcycle industry led the world in 1948 and has virtually disappeared. The British car industry ranked second only to that of the United States yet the largest British-owned car manufacturer now is a firm called Carbodies, who make the familiar 'black cabs' you find in British cities. Buy a Rolls-Royce, once the proudest brand name in the world, and you get an up-badged BMW. One could go on with jet aircraft and computers. There was a deep and fundamental sickness in British industry in the post-war years, and it was certainly not confined to the maritime industries. Low investment in R & D (and often in plant as well), lack of market research, poor-to-dreadful labour relations, managerial luncheon suites whose occupants emerged in mid-afternoon, these were all parts of it.

This book is a rare animal, namely a broad work of synthesis. Maritime history as a sub-discipline is strong on highly-specialist and tightly-focused research, rather less so on this kind of work: we need more of it. Jamieson has

done a good job in 'zooming out' here, and it seems ungracious to suggest, as above, that he do so even further, but the versatility he has shown in previous publications suggests that he is just the man for it.

The notes and bibliography of this book are, despite its fairly broad nature, extensive, covering a large range of specialist works. While established specialists in the field will no doubt regard it as a useful and interesting work, those looking for a broader coverage will find, as I did, that this is a splendid 'one-stop-shop', saving them several inches of bookshelf space and, despite its high-ish price for its size, quite a lot of money too. I commend it to everyone except nostalgic Brits with suppressed suicidal tendencies.

Adrian Jarvis,
Liverpool, UK

Greg Kennedy (ed.). *The Merchant Marine in International Affairs 1850-1950*. London: Frank Cass, www.frankcass.com, 2000. 216 pp., index. £ 17.50 / US \$ 26.50, paper; ISBN 0-7146-447-1-4.

Nowadays shipping is a truly international business without borders. Individual ships can be built in one country, owned in a second, registered in a third, insured in a fourth, managed from a fifth and crewed by a mixed bag of nationalities. While it exemplifies globalization, the industry remains of vital strategic significance - the movement of oil, the fact that over three-quarters of US military supplies for the recent campaign in Iraq were transported by sealift, and the merchant ships which made the Falklands operation possible come to mind. Before globalization, shipping was more readily identified with its countries of ownership and operation and was therefore, a factor in international relations. This book is a collection of seven papers whose theme is the role of national merchant fleets in that era. It is, in the words of the editor, Greg Kennedy, not

about "how ships move things, rather it is a study of how nations use the non-fighting part of their maritime power." [1].

These are carefully-researched papers by academic scholars in Canada, the UK and the US. The final study, by Michael Hennessy, is a dispassionate examination of how the sizeable Canadian merchant fleet, built during the Second World War, was disbursed early in the Cold War. Hennessy shows that the government, while disinclined to encourage a national-flag merchant marine through tax incentives and unwilling to subsidize it, did attempt to preserve a critical mass of Canadian-built freighters as a strategic asset for the NATO shipping pool. This was achieved by encouraging reflagging to UK registry. The very first essay, by John Beeler, looks at the proposals to employ merchant ships as auxiliary cruisers for the Victorian Royal Navy. In a third paper, Orest Babij covers planning between the world wars for oil supply for the Royal Navy in a conflict in the Far East. William Wray writes that as the First World War began generating orders for goods and services, Japanese businessmen talked about "an opportunity that comes along once in a thousand years". Based on Japanese and English-language sources, his paper discusses how Japanese shipping, and in particular the largest company, Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK), was able to exploit opportunities caused by the war, and how its operations were affected by shipping control mechanisms by the US and other countries.

Two essays concern the demands on British shipping in the two world wars and provide instructive comparisons. Keith Neilson looks at the Great War and demonstrates that the "strategic sealift" under British control made an essential, if little-understood, contribution to victory. Britain went into the war with a dominant position in world shipping and was able to use her merchant marine to sustain her economy, the "linchpin of the Allied economic effort", both by carrying resources from around the world and by earning money through export cargoes and in cross trades. Moreover, during the last two years of the war, British ships

transported 45 percent of France's imports. Because the United States lacked sufficient sealift, Britain was heavily involved in moving American troops and logistic support across the Atlantic. All of this was achieved in the face of ongoing shortages of ships. Even before the German U-boat offensive - which did not start until February 1917 - there were serious shipping shortages as early as 1916. They resulted from a combination of factors, including the failure of the North American wheat harvest that year which created a requirement to divert ships to longer hauls from Australia and India. This study is particularly rewarding because it traces how developments in widely separated theatres of war and trades - sustaining the Italian and French economies, shipments to Russia, movements of grain, sustaining traffic across the North Atlantic to name a few - were interrelated.

Kevin Smith examines Britain's shipping requirements in 1940-41. When war came in 1939, Britain's merchant marine had roughly the same tonnage as in 1914, but now represented a smaller percentage - just under 30% compared with 44% - of an increased world total. Due to the evolution of the shipping industry, the 1939 fleet now included a tanker component, but its dry cargo carrying capacity was correspondingly almost a fifth smaller than in 1914. Faced with a grim strategic situation after the fall of France, Britain became desperately short of ships due to a confluence of factors including having to haul imports over longer distances. By 1941, the UK - which had filled a shipping vacuum for the United States in the First World War - was dependent on America for additional ships. Smith looks at how "logistics diplomacy" secured this assistance and hints that skilful negotiation by Sir Arthur Salter, Head of the British Merchant Shipping Mission in Washington ("a savvy politician as well as an experienced bureaucrat") [166], played a key role. Kevin Smith has described the intricacies of how wartime Washington tackled shipping issues in greater detail in his *Conflict Over Convoys* (1996); in some respects this essay is a telescoped version of the first part of that book.

Greg Kennedy describes American and British shipping competition in the aftermath of the Great Depression and the run-up to war, 1933-1939. He has characterized this as a "cold war" as the United States launched an ambitious program to modernize and subsidize its merchant fleet while the British shipping industry was recovering from the debilitating effects of the Depression. Kennedy argues that merchant marine issues in many ways affected the "competitive/co-operative" Anglo-American relations.

The Merchant Marine in International Affairs was published by Frank Cass as part of a welcome series of titles on naval history and policy. Its seven rewarding papers concern an era when shipping, only just revolutionized by power-driven vessels, underwent a series of economic transformations. The authors show how the British, American and Japanese merchant marines indeed played an important role in the relations between these nations as "the non-fighting part of their maritime power". This study sheds light on an aspect of maritime history which has received little attention. Recommended.

Jan Drent
Victoria, British Columbia

Dean King and John B. Hattendorf. *Every Man will Do his Duty, An Anthology of First-Hand Accounts from the Age of Nelson, 1793-1815*. London: Conway Maritime Press, www.conwaymaritime.com, 2002. xxxvii+425 pp., maps, bibliography, index. £6.99, paper; ISBN 0-85177-931-X.

This book is a collection of evocative accounts from the "age of Nelson" for a general audience. It is the latest instalment in a series of books designed to contextualize the historical fiction of such writers as Patrick O' Brian, Alexander Kent, and C.S. Forester. The editors previously produced *A Sea of Words*, a guide to the technical language used in this genre, and

Harbors and High Seas, a geographical companion, [xi] As John Hattendorf points out, the best historical fiction should raise "curiosity and deeper interest in the historical period in which the novels are set", [xxi]. Thus, the purpose of their latest offering is to "create a readable and interesting book that brings readers one step closer to original materials", [xxii] They succeeded admirably in this regard: *Every Man Will Do His Duty* eases general readers gently into the reading of primary sources.

The editors have selected excerpts of memoirs, diaries and accounts which they believe "touch on many of the highlights of the wars", [xxii] They are presented "in a way that leads the reader chronologically through the course of the period", [xxii] The book is divided into four parts: the Wars of the French Revolution; Peace; The Napoleonic War; The Napoleonic War Continued and the War of 1812. Why the Napoleonic War was included in two sections is not explained, nor is the reason behind the extremely short second section which consists only of a single excerpt. Presumably this is to indicate how brief the Peace of Amiens was (1802-3) in a age dominated by conflict.

The editors provide helpful notes at the beginning of each chapter to introduce the writers and something of their history and circumstance. At the end of each chapter are very brief epilogues. These commentaries are segues between the disparate chapters and give continuity to the work. There is also pertinent information in the table of contents and in notes at the back of the book. It would have been most useful if this information were placed within the chapters, rather than being scattered throughout the volume, especially since many non-academic readers will not be used to consulting endnotes.

Each excerpt bears the unmistakable imprint of its author which gives *Every Man Will do His Duty* its character. For the most part, the spelling has been modernized - no doubt to make it more accessible to a general audience. The exceptions are two passages by Jacob Nagle. Apparently his spelling was not corrected or updated at the request of the original editor, but

it is still jarring to the sensibilities of the modern reader. In addition, some accounts are rife with maritime terminology and it is odd that editors, who published a nautical glossary, were not more thorough in providing explanatory footnotes. Even for readers familiar with maritime history, the authors occasionally seem to be 'speaking in tongues'.

The book contains something for anyone interested in seamen's lives afloat and ashore during the age of sail: there are tales of adventure on the high seas, as well as the frustrations and boredom of the seamen's existence. Many of these accounts are especially effective in bringing the dangers of wartime seafaring to light and painting a gory picture of maritime battles. What emerges is, as the editors suggest, a portrait of a patriotic and diligent group of men. The reader should be aware that most of these writers were officers. How typical were they? These accounts were chosen because they made good fodder for historical fiction writers, but we have no sense of the larger extant body of writing from the period. More context would have been useful in this regard. There is also a question of reliability which the editors themselves raise. In the preface, Hattendorf states that "while we can be certain that most of these pieces were actually written by the seamen who participated in the events, a few raise doubts in the historian's mind", [xxii] This being said, should the reader not be given some indication which accounts are suspect?

These are all fairly minor criticisms of a book which will be well received by those interested in the period and the subject. It is a very affordable, illustrated with maps, and includes a thin bibliography and good index. It focuses on a tumultuous period of warfare in which the outcome had global implications. This work provides us with a wonderful window into the human cost of power politics fought on the oceans.

Cheryl Fury
Saint John, New Brunswick

Francis Mansbridge. *Launching History: The Saga of Burrard Dry Dock*. Madeira, BC: Harbour Publishing, www.harbourpublishing.com, 2002. xi+226 pp. photographs, notes, appendices, bibliography, index. \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55017-280-8.

In 1991-92, Versatile Pacific Corporation became insolvent and closed the gates on its North Vancouver shipyard. Thus ended years of demanding subsidies from municipal, provincial, and federal governments and a parent company diverting profits to troubled farm machinery manufacturing in the US Mid-West. The company, better known as Burrard Dry Dock, was the oldest and largest steel shipbuilding concern in British Columbia and among the last of its size on the whole North American West Coast. Three generations of the Wallace family had built ships and grown the business on the North Shore of Vancouver harbour. They sold out to Cornat Industries in 1972, and the company eventually ended up in the hands of take-over opportunist, Shieldings in 1988.

At the last moment, far-sighted staff from the North Vancouver Museum and Archives received permission to remove any records of potential historical value, literally gathering up 950 archival boxes worth of papers, blueprints, plans, and photographs from floors and drawers. Given that limits on access to still operating companies can often prove insurmountable and records from defunct companies are commonly lost, preservation of the Versatile Pacific fonds represents a boon for researchers in maritime, business, and labour history. Redevelopment plans for the former shipyard site and sea front currently include a museum and interpretation centre. Francis Mansbridge, the archivist at the North Vancouver Museum and Archives, documents the rise and fall of the local shipbuilding dynasty in a richly illustrated book which draws upon the extensive archival holdings.

Burrard Dry Dock, as Mansbridge ably describes, was the story of a family business, a community, and a province coming of age from

a wilderness resource economy into Canada's West Coast gateway to the world. Alfred Wallace, from a shipbuilding family in England, emigrated to Canada and opened a small wood boat-building firm on Vancouver's False Creek in 1894. The expanding business relocated to the foot of Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver, where Alfred built small ferries, tugs, schooners, and other ships. During World War I, contracts from the Imperial Munitions Board and Canada's new Government Merchant Marine launched Wallace Shipyards into constructing standardized steel freighters and a corresponding growth in plant and skills. As a major employer, Alfred wrung concessions from a hard-up city council and lobbied for federal subsidies. In 1923, he got a nod to proceed with construction of Vancouver's first floating dry dock and changed the company name to Burrard Dry Dock. Although ship repairs largely carried the company through the coming lean years, Alfred secured some notable shipbuilding contracts, including Canadian Pacific's elegant coastal liner *Princess Louise*, the R.C.M.P.'s Arctic vessel *St. Roch*, and Vancouver's first fire boat, *J.H. Carlisle*. Control over the company passed to Alfred's son Clarence, later to become British Columbia's Lieutenant Governor in 1950, and another less-accomplished son, Hubert. Under Clarence's helm, Burrard Dry Dock powered through World War II, first with naval construction of minesweepers and corvettes and then building of standardized merchant ships, alterations to US-built escort carriers, and conversion of Victory hulls to maintenance ships for the Royal Navy's Pacific fleet train. To meet the demand, a second yard opened on the Vancouver side of Burrard Inlet, and large numbers of new employees, especially women, joined the company's workforce.

Peacetime and the ensuing decades entailed few prospects for steel shipbuilding in British Columbia. Burrard Dry Dock instead bought out its main rivals and relied heavily upon government work occasionally thrown its way by the federal departments of National Defence and Transport. Norman Yarrows, in

Esquimalt, and Arthur Burdick next door, wisely decided to cash out their wartime gains, while the Wallaces still felt too much debt to the old man's memory to give up on the idea of big-scale shipbuilding. High labour, transportation and management costs placed Burrard Dry Dock at a competitive disadvantage compared to shipyards in eastern Canada and elsewhere as market conditions developed, especially the rising phoenix of Japan. Mansbridge's familiar mantras about West Coast alienation and Ottawa bureaucrats cannot explain away the huge cost over-runs in the 1950s destroyer escort and later Coast Guard contracts. The few bright spots in an otherwise dismal saga were specialized barges and equipment for the booming forestry industry and new passenger/car ferries when the W.A.C. Bennett government formed the publicly-run BC Ferries Corporation under flamboyant highways minister Phil Gaglardi. As Clarence reveled in a socialite's world and Hubert imbibed the bottle, the next generation of Wallaces, David and John, played second fiddle to non-family managers running the company. Disagreement about succession between Hubert and the "children" forced the sale to Cornat, perhaps the smartest move David ever made in the interests of the family fortunes.

Under the new owners, construction and refit of more ferries and several reinforced ice-breaking ships for a fleeting oil and gas boom in the North sustained the business in hard times. In 1981, the company installed a new floating dry dock in Vancouver harbour, funded by a combination of taxpayer and private monies and capable of lifting Panama-size ships. Fortunately, when the Polar 8 ice-breaker project in the 1980s came to naught and Shieldings liquidated the company, this public investment was protected and ideas to move the dry dock elsewhere were countered. The Port of Vancouver, while no longer a major centre for shipbuilding, still requires ship repair facilities for the commercial ships and cruise liners regularly making calls there. The dry dock remains Burrard's most enduring and practical legacy.

The large-format book is extremely well-put together. Mansbridge's narrative and photographs remain clearly focused on the ships and the people who built them. The shaded aside boxes with the backgrounds and memories of former employees provide a nice personal touch. A useful appendix table, prepared from statistics gathered by Roland Webb, formerly of North Vancouver and now working in Seattle for Todd Pacific Shipyard, lists all the known vessels constructed by the company from 1894 to 1988. The lay-out and editing are first-rate and certainly build upon the quality of a growing list of books dealing with West Coast maritime themes. Hopefully, they will find their target audience and prosper through sales. Mansbridge's book, which won the 2002 BC Lieutenant Governor's medal for historical writing, appeals to the interested general reader and undoubtedly the tourist trade once the doors on North Vancouver's newest museum open sometime in the future. It combines good public history, care of the archival profession, and a conviction not to forget British Columbia's industrial maritime past.

Chris Madsen
Toronto, Ontario

William M. McBride. *Technological Change and the United States Navy, 1865-1945*. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, www.press.jhu.edu, 2001. xiii + 333 pp, photographs, notes, notes on sources, index. \$ US 35.00, cloth; ISBN 0-8018-6468-0.

The United States Navy has traditionally been slow to appreciate the potential of new technologies to transform naval strategy. During the nineteenth century, it lagged behind its competitors in the transformation from sail to steam, as line officers, resentful of the intrusion of "non-gentlemanly" engineers into the wardrooms, relegated these newcomers to secondary status within the naval profession. Similarly, the United States Navy embraced the

battleship for over two decades after the First World War, while consigning innovative new technologies, most notably the submarine and the aircraft carrier, to secondary, supporting roles.

In this survey of technological change from the American Civil War to the end of the Second World War, William McBride examines the tendency of military institutions to favour stability over radical innovation. He observes that in most instances, weapons or platforms that might undermine the dominant technological and strategic conventions of the day usually meet with hostility. The innovations that survive in this environment tend to be those that find a non-threatening niche within the prevailing paradigm. Thus, during the battleship era, naval leaders developed submarines and aircraft carriers as auxiliary vessels that would render the traditional surface fleet more effective. Naval aircraft, for example, would conduct reconnaissance, spot the fall of shot, and eliminate the enemy's aircraft, but they were not expected to sink enemy battleships. Ultimately, it was the big guns of the battle fleet that would accomplish this critical task.

McBride wisely avoids stereotyping naval leaders as simpletons blindly resisting the inevitable rise of new technologies, particularly the aircraft carrier. Battleships were, in fact, relatively safe from air attack during the early years of naval aviation, and it was not until the late 1930s that technology began to catch up with the prophecies of air power advocates such as Billy Mitchell. Even during the Second World War, battleships still had a useful role to play. McBride effectively challenges the common assumption that the battleship paradigm died in 1941 with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, noting that aircraft carriers and fast battleships formed a useful partnership throughout the Pacific War, when the former were still vulnerable to enemy gunfire during the night and in rough weather.

It was only after the Second World War that the battleship was finally supplanted by the aircraft carrier. But was one rigid technological

model simply replaced by another? The final chapter of this book, which provides a lengthy examination of the post-Second World War era, contends that the modern navy has been dominated by aviators who are every bit as myopic as the "battleship club" who ran the inter-war service. Since 1945, McBride charges, the United States Navy has consistently downplayed the vulnerability of aircraft carriers to new technologies while developing strategic missions that ensured these platforms would remain at centre stage. Submarines are being relegated to the periphery once again, he warns, so as not to threaten an entrenched technological paradigm. Nonetheless, McBride believes that in last decade new ideas and technologies have started to challenge the dominance of naval aviation. As in earlier times, war has served as a catalyst for fundamental changes, with the first Gulf War and subsequent military strikes against Iraq demonstrating to the author the first serious cracks in the Navy's emphasis on aircraft carriers.

The way forward is no clearer for naval officers today than it was sixty or a hundred years ago, and McBride sometimes seems to underestimate the difficulty of identifying the right path for the United States Navy in an era of uncertain strategic missions and rapidly changing technologies. The Navy's earlier failures, however, are now clear to see. McBride's conclusions about the years 1865-1945 are not always new, but both the general reader and the specialist should appreciate this well researched and clearly written survey.

Christopher Bell
Halifax, Nova Scotia

T.A. McLaren and Vickie Jensen. *Ships of Steel: A British Columbia Shipbuilder's Story*. Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, www.harboirpubusbJnp.com, 2003. 288 pp., illustrations, photographs, appendices, index. \$39.95 cloth; ISBN 1-55017-242-8.

This book traces the history of the McLaren family - a prominent British Columbia shipbuilding family - who helped form the backbone of the once vibrant Canadian shipbuilding industry. Not surprisingly, this story begins in Scotland and is brought to life by Arthur McLaren and Vickie Jensen, a maritime writer and editor of note.

William Dick McLaren, Arthur's father, graduated from Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College in mechanical and electrical engineering. In 1919, he established Coaster Construction Company Ltd., based in Montrose, Scotland, where he hoped to carve out a niche with his partner building small self-dumping hopper barges. By the early 1920s the company was converting World War I minesweepers into excursion vessels as well as building purpose-built excursion ships. A number of these vessels were purchased by the Union Steamship Company in Vancouver, British Columbia. During the lean years the two partners established Allied Builders Ltd., which built pre-fabricated concrete homes. Despite their best attempts to keep the business afloat the shipyard and manufacturer ceased operations in 1927. With few prospects in Britain, he traveled to Vancouver where he found work as a consulting engineer. The following year, his wife and three children emigrated to Canada.

Shortly after the Second World War broke out, McLaren was approached by local businessmen to establish a new shipyard on the south shore of False Creek. The company, known as West Coast Shipbuilders Ltd., received orders in 1941 to start building 10,000 ton Park and Fort cargo ships at their four-berth facility. William became the shipyard's general manager and was responsible for laying out the new yard, recruiting the workforce and overseeing the construction of the ships. During the war the shipyard built fifty-five of these vessels to British and Canadian accounts, a truly remarkable feat. The end of the war, however, brought about a major downturn in province's shipbuilding industry as the market was flooded with surplus shipping.

In 1946, W.D. McLaren left the company but continued to work as a consulting naval architect. His son Arthur, with a mechanical engineering degree from the University of British Columbia and several years of working for his father, stayed with West Coast Shipbuilders and became the new shipyard manager. While BC shipyards continued to fill a number of both government and commercial orders, the workforce was a fraction of what it had been and many yards were not working to their full capacity. In late 1945, West Coast Shipbuilders began work on the *Anscomb*, a 180-foot twin-screw vehicle and passenger ferry, which would ply the waters of Kootenay Lake. Thus began the McLaren family's 58-year association with préfabrication and modular shipbuilding. Not surprisingly, this type of endeavour presented all sorts of challenges, not the least of which were logistical. Working in the field, far from the main shipyard, complicated the construction process as crews had to work within the limits of what was available in the field and what the railways could carry in terms of load and width restrictions. It was a steep learning curve for all involved. As Arthur McLaren observed, "West Coast had trained its unskilled men [during the war] to build one type of ship over and over in the yard. While they became proficient at their jobs, the experience they had was doing the same ship 55 times, not building 55 different ships. It became obvious that our wartime crews were specialists, not shipbuilders. What we needed now was men who could build a vessel in a remote area under conditions that taxed experience and ingenuity". [72]

In 1948, Arthur McLaren established Allied Builders Limited, borrowing the name from his father's old construction company, and leased a section of the False Creek yard from the owners of West Coast Shipbuilding. With limited capital and a small yard, Arthur concentrated on constructing small all-steel vessels such as boom boats for the logging industry, tugs, and fishing vessels. Later, the company built larger barges and tugs for

Northern Transportation Company Limited (NTCL) and the Department of Transport, such as *Dumit* and *Miskanaw* which were built to ferry supplies to the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line stations which were then under construction. In addition, the company built a number of fresh-water ferries for operations on various lakes and rivers throughout the interior of the province. Allied Shipbuilding also played a key role in designing and building the province's saltwater ferry fleet.

Perhaps the most important technological modification was the roll-on and roll-off loading which significantly sped up the loading and unloading of vehicles. When BC Ferries increased its fleet's carrying capacity in the 1970s with the "C" Class ferries, it was Arthur who oversaw their construction and modification. Two decades later, Allied Shipbuilders was awarded the contract to build two 200-foot bow sections for the massive Spirit class ferries then being built by a consortium of BC shipyards. The most challenging aspect of the project was ensuring that the various components, built in separate yards, all fit together. By the late 1990s, McLaren and Sons, the design division of Allied Shipbuilders, was hard at work on the revolutionary 360-foot Century Class vessel for BC Ferries. Finally, Allied played a minor role in the construction of the controversial high-speed aluminium catamaran ferries which were decommissioned and put up for sale shortly after they entered service.

The continued growth of Allied Shipbuilders led to the opening of its new shipyard in North Vancouver in 1967. In 1979, Allied closed its repair yard in Coal Harbour which it had acquired from Burrard Shipyard and Engineering Works in 1961, and harmonized the company's operations at its new north shore facilities. It was at its Coal Harbour location that Arthur's three sons had cut their teeth in the business. In the mid-1970s, the first tugs, supply vessels and icebreakers, including the new blunt spoon bow icebreakers, designed for operations in the western Arctic Ocean came

off the ways at the new facility. Unfortunately for the McLaren family, the arctic boom turned to bust in the mid-1980s when oil prices plummeted and the family-run business returned to its roots building smaller all-steel vessels and, more recently aluminum ships, the repair business.

Arthur McLaren died in February 1999 having been president of the Association of Professional Engineers of BC and a fellow of both the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers and the Royal Institution of Naval Architects. He succeeded his father - William Dick McLaren - who died in 1953, and now Arthur's three sons administer their family's 76-year heritage. The story of shipbuilding in British Columbia in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries cannot be told without reference to the McLaren family.

This illustrated autobiographical history of three generations of the McLaren family is an engaging account of the trials and tribulations of shipbuilding on the West Coast told in the words of Arthur McLaren and fleshed out by numerous recollections of his colleagues and a wealth of marine photographs. Equally impressive, are the appendices which provide a detailed list of the more than 250 vessels built by Allied Shipbuilders and their specifications, and a chronological list of British Columbia shipbuilders and the number of vessels constructed in those shipyards. This book will serve as a useful guide for anyone interested in the history of British Columbia shipbuilding.

Shawn Cafferky
Victoria, B.C.

Louise Nichols. *Quite A Curiosity: The Sea Letters of Grace F. Ladd*. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, www.nimbus.ns.ca, 2003. 200 pp., photographs, endnotes, glossary, bibliography. \$18.95, paper; ISBN 1-55109-416-9.

Grace Ladd was one of hundreds of women from maritime communities along the eastern shores

of North America who, for most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were regular seafarers. The remarkable stories of these women and their families are slowly being recovered from the wealth of journals, memoirs, and letters they left behind. Grace Ladd's 'sea letters' are part of this legacy, and help chronicle a unique period of maritime history.

Grace was a 21-year-old bride of nine days in 1886 when she set sail from New York, bound for Shanghai, aboard the *Morning Light* with her husband Fred Ladd, captain of the 1,320-ton wooden barque. Grace's delightful letters to her father Charles Brown, that began on her honeymoon voyage and continued regularly until his sudden death in 1899, make up the main content of this book. The letters, from the pen of an intelligent, inquisitive woman, give a fascinating account of one family's life at sea and in ports around the world.

Grace's daughter Kathryn, who made her first voyage before her second birthday, adds her adolescent voice to the story through the words of a travel journal she kept during the family's final sea journey - a pleasure trip to England in 1915 - and the transcript of her late-in-life recollections, recorded on film and audio tape.

Grace Brown, born in 1864, and Frederick Ladd, six years her senior, were both from distinguished Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, families. Their wedding voyage was the beginning of a long and adventurous life at sea. Aboard the *Morning Light*, and later the steel-hulled *Belmont*, Grace sailed almost continuously with Fred, until his retirement in 1915. Their children, Forrest, born in 1890, and Kathryn, born in 1901, completed the seafaring family.

Grace's letters are lively and articulate, and she writes of her experiences with humour and delight. But along with the adventure, Grace's letters also bear witness to the many challenges of life at sea. After recounting a number of mishaps that had been plaguing them on one particular voyage, she writes: "There is

nothing but the actual life to knock the romance out of 'going to sea'. [90]

Nichols writes a fine introduction that adds background and context to Grace's letters; family history and a glimpse into the workings of the merchant marine culture of which the Ladds were part. She discusses how the letters and journals of Grace and hundreds of her sister sailors are helping break down the stereotype of fragile Victorian women and their stifling family life. These personal documents show how shipboard living blurred the lines between the domestic sphere and the workplace, and reveal that many seafaring couples, like Grace and Fred, had remarkably egalitarian relationships.

The book is illustrated with family portraits, as well as a number of delightful snapshots of the children at play and the crew going about their shipboard tasks. Nichols also includes photographs of the artefacts or "curiosities" Grace collected in her travels, passed down through Kathryn to the Yarmouth County Museum.

A particularly engaging aspect of the book is the way Nichols fills in the gaps between Grace's letters and rounds out the story after the letters end. In addition to newspaper clippings and official records, she draws on meticulous notes Charles Brown kept of his daughter's years at sea. He recorded dates, ports of departure and arrival, time at home, and other family milestones, which Nichols uses to map out Grace's travels and give them a time line. As well, from Charles Brown's journals, the reminiscences of Kathryn Ladd, and Fred's captain's log, Nichols adds other voices to the narrative, a privilege not often possible when working with a collection of letters. She adds her own commentary, and weaves all these voices seamlessly into the text.

Clear and informative endnotes complement the narrative, and Nichols provides a useful bibliography. She also adds a helpful glossary of nautical terms and phrases, although the way these terms are marked with an asterisk in the text, sometimes several in one sentence, is a bit disruptive.

Nichols' understanding of women's personal narratives and her engagement with the subject add a warmth and personality to the book that make it more than a well-researched historical document. She brings history into the present by sharing her own experiences and conversations with people who knew Grace and her family. The full circle of her research, from Grace's opening honeymoon letter to the end of the book, is nicely symbolized by the image of Nichols holding Fred's wedding ring, dropped into her hand by a relative of the Ladds.

Joanne Ritchie
Ottawa, Ontario

Wesley Olson. *Bitter Victory. The Death of HMAS Sydney*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, www.NavalInstitute.org, 2003. ix + 436 pp., photographs, illustrations, glossary, appendices, bibliography, notes, index. US \$ 22.95, paperback; ISBN 1-59114-066-8.

The controversy surrounding the loss of the Australian cruiser HMAS *Sydney* in November 1941, along with her entire complement of 645 officers and men, has been the subject of a number of books, reports and intense speculation over the ensuing years, including a 1998 parliamentary inquiry into the sinking. In this meticulously researched and in many ways, definitive book, author and self-taught Australian naval historian, Wesley Olson attempts to answer the many unresolved questions surrounding *Sydney's* tragic and mysterious wartime loss.

Sydney, under the command of Captain Joseph Burnett, RAN, sailed from the Western Australian port of Fremantle on a routine mission on 11 November 1941. Her task was to escort a troopship to the Sunda Strait. After handing over her charge to a British cruiser, *Sydney* independently commenced the return passage to Fremantle where she was expected to berth on the afternoon of 20 November, but she never arrived. Although a search was launched,

perhaps belatedly, and later expanded, no trace of the ship was found other than a single battle-damaged Carley float and a lifebelt. It was only after more than 300 German survivors were rescued from life rafts during the ensuing days, that the story was pieced together through exhaustive interrogation. As a result, it was established that *Sydney* had been involved in an intense, close-range action with the disguised German auxiliary raider HSK *Kormoran* posing as the Dutch merchantman *StraatMalakka*. This short but devastating action resulted in the loss of the enemy ship which had sunk or captured 68,274 tonnes of Allied shipping, while the badly damaged and burning *Sydney* was last seen as a glow on the horizon by the survivors of the *Kormoran*.

To the people of Australia, *Sydney's* wartime loss was a national disaster, which cut a deep wound into the nation's psyche. Why did *Sydney* sink? How did she disappear virtually without trace? Why were there no survivors to describe their ship's final moments? Olson, who previously published two reports on the loss of the *Sydney* for the Western Australian Maritime Museum, has produced both a compelling narrative and the most convincing explanation yet for the loss of the ship.

Initially published by the University of Western Australia Press in 2000, this ground-breaking work, in my opinion, finally lays to rest any notion of a conspiracy surrounding the loss of the *Sydney*, which has been the theme of a number of previous books on the subject. By examining every piece of available evidence and carefully reconstructing the event through eyewitness accounts and close contact with former members of *Sydney's* crew, Olson has very convincingly concluded that the primary cause of *Sydney's* loss was Burnett's fateful decision to close within 1,500 metres of the disguised German raider. He also makes the very pertinent point that, despite six decades of perceiving *Sydney's* tragic loss as 'something shameful', Captain Burnett and the men under his command fought gallantly and upheld the proud traditions of the Royal Australian Navy

during the action which resulted in the destruction of the *Kormoran*.

Lessons were quickly learnt. Within weeks of *Sydney's* loss, the Admiralty, obviously prompted by her sinking, issued a warning on the dangers of closing with disguised enemy raiders. Prior to this, Admiralty instructions were for enemy merchant ships to be captured rather than sunk, which could lead to a British warship being severely damaged while attempting a capture. Olson's book also highlights the role of the press and public pressure, particularly grieving families of the missing ship's company, in seeking answers to the tragic loss of *Sydney*, even in those halcyon days of World War II. Perhaps the most puzzling aspect of *Sydney's* loss was the lack of a board of inquiry to investigate her loss, which even in wartime, was accepted practice.

This attractive and substantial book is very well illustrated with plans, diagrams, photographs and maps, and contains a wealth of detailed background information essential to understanding how both *Sydney* and *Kormoran* were fought and operated on that fateful day. In an attempt to understand why *Sydney* was lost following the engagement, it also very effectively looks at design deficiencies and case studies of action damage where other Australian and British cruisers of the same or similar classes suffered similar damage and were saved or, without good fortune, were lost.

Without a surviving eyewitness to *Sydney's* sinking, and in the absence of the wreck being located and inspected, no one can categorically state how or why *Sydney* was lost with little or no trace and why there were no survivors to describe their ship's final moments. Similarly, no one knows for certain why Burnett decided to take *Sydney* so close to the disguised German raider. Olson, with his meticulous, analytical and pragmatic approach, together with very carefully considered speculation where appropriate, has in my view, admirably and very convincingly succeeded in providing the most plausible answers to the many unresolved

questions surrounding *Sydney's* tragic and mysterious wartime loss.

Allan du Toit
Canberra, Australia

Mitch Peeke, Steve Jones and Kevin Walsh-Johnson. *The Lusitania Story*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, www.NavaUnstite.org, 2003. xiv + 175 pp., photographs, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 1-59114-473-6.

On May 8, 1915, the magnificent Cunard passenger liner, RMS *Lusitania* was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland and sank in just over 18 minutes, taking 1,201 lives with her to the bottom. Today, her loss remains one of maritime history's most controversial disasters. In their new book, the authors, members of the *Lusitania* Historical Society, bring a fresh insight into the sinking through analysis of existing documents, reports and research. They also have the advantage of an excellent working relationship with the American multi-millionaire Gregg Bemis, Junior, who is the current owner of the wreck of the once great liner.

The book begins with an excellent account of the events that led to the construction of *Lusitania* and her sister ship, *Mauretania*. The Cunard Line's years of dominance on the North Atlantic disappeared as German liners surpassed their ships in both speed and luxury. Worse still, J. P. Morgan's International Mercantile Marine was purchasing rival firms at a record rate, threatening to create a monopoly, against which even Cunard would fall. Enter the British Admiralty and their agreement with Cunard, drafted in 1903. The authors quite rightly stress the importance of this pact, as the agreement and its provisions as to vessel construction are critical to the ship's fate. The chapter on the ship and its construction points out that the design of the inner hull contained a number of weaknesses that would play a major part when the ship was torpedoed.

Throughout these early chapters and up to the launch of the great liner and its outfitting, the authors maintain an uncomplicated approach; perhaps missing some of the poetry conjured up by John Maxtone-Graham in his book *The Only Way to Cross*. His chapter on the construction and launch of *Mauretania* makes for an interesting companion piece to this new book, as the two sister ships were always so closely linked. While Maxtone-Graham was writing primarily for those who had experienced the age of the great liners, this book will appeal to both historians and those looking to expand their knowledge of this particular chapter of maritime history. The authors have a very readable, straightforward approach, which constantly keeps the story moving. Only occasionally does one want more. Six pages of text are devoted to the stunning interiors of the ship, yet only two illustrations by John Gray on the back of the dust jacket give the reader any indication of the true beauty of the ship.

The actual sinking of the ship and the subsequent inquiry provide the real drama in the story and the authors are at their best here. Having already discussed the potential weakness of the hull design, they incorporate the research into the actual cargo *aboard Lusitania* carried out by Colin Simpson for his 1972 book on the ship. They also use the log entries of Walther Schwieger, the captain of U-20, who fired the fatal torpedo, to illustrate the fact that the ship's cargo, its location and a tragic bit of luck all conspired to create an epic tragedy. The graphic account of the attempts to lower the lifeboats on the port side is particularly well done.

Peeke and Walsh-Johnson have previously written an excellent biography of Commodore William Turner, the veteran Cunard Line captain who commanded the ill-fated ship the day she was torpedoed, and so can be forgiven a slight bias when it comes to assigning blame for the sinking. The chapter on the subsequent inquiry and the attempts by the British Admiralty to make Turner the scapegoat reads with a great deal of ironic humour.

The continuing story of the *Lusitania* rests in about 300 feet of water off the Irish coast. The authors conclude with a brief chapter on the exploration of the wreck site and the events that caused the sinking of the great ship. Here again, more photographic images of the wreck site would have proved useful and something to consider for a second edition.

The appendix includes a complete passenger and crew list, as well as the text of the 1903 pact between Cunard and the Admiralty. Key statistics of the ship are provided and the Society's website address is listed for those wishing to further investigate the disaster. One small complaint; the names of those that survived are listed in a bold text so faint that those with poor eyesight would be hard pressed to tell the difference. This is something else that could easily be corrected in a second printing.

In conclusion, the members of the *Lusitania* Historical Society are to be congratulated for their efforts. If the exploration of the wreck site continues, it is hoped that they will revisit their work and produce either a second edition or an updated version, which could incorporate any new material that comes to light. A solid piece of work and one that has much to offer to those looking for new insight into an old tale and those who are just beginning to appreciate the tragedy of RMS *Lusitania*.

Richard Macmichael
Halifax, Nova Scotia

R. W. Richards. *The Ross Sea Party, 1914-17*. Bluntisham, UK: Bluntisham Books, www.bluntishambooks.co.uk, 2003. Facsimile edition, originally published 1962 by the Scott Polar Research Institute; 44pp., illustrations, map. £14.95/US\$26.00, cloth: ISBN 1 85297 077 4.

Accounts of polar exploration, and particularly Shackleton's *Endurance* expedition, (or more properly the Imperial Trans-Antarctic

Expedition), have been enjoying a resurgence in popularity in recent years. That in part may have been why this slender volume has been republished. R. W. Richards was a member of the party of men that laid supplies depots for the second half of Shackleton's intended crossing of the continent from the Weddell Sea to the South Pole to McMurdo Sound in the Ross Sea. The account of their struggles is no less epic than that of Shackleton's boat trip to Elephant Island and then on to South Georgia for help. Their ship *Aurora* was ripped from her moorings in a savage storm and disappeared approximately six weeks after they had laid her up in winter quarters, but before the majority of the supplies had been landed. Nonetheless, falling back on materials abandoned at Hut Point by earlier expeditions, the stranded men set to their task, knowing that if they let their mishap stop them, Shackleton and his party would perish. The depots were laid at great human cost for the journey that Shackleton never made. When the remnants of the party returned to Hut Point, "it was over 10 months since we had left from this hut to go sledging. We had not been able to remove our clothing to wash in the whole of this period, and it was pretty difficult to do anything about it even now. ...From this time on, it was a question of waiting to see what the next summer would bring forth in the way of relief. We were not altogether optimistic as I think most of thought *Aurora* was lost and it was questionable whether any relief could be organized in time." [39] But the *Aurora* had not been lost and sea, and finally she was able to return to rescue the marooned men.

R. W. Richards, the author of this work, was a Australian physicist who had sailed with the expedition and was a member of the sledging party. Forty years later he wrote this account. It was first published as an occasional paper by the Scott Polar Research Institute in 1962, and is now being reissued. The tale will be familiar to many through Lennard Bickel's *Shackleton's Forgotten Men* (New York, 2001). Bickel had the use not only of this record but also the opportunity to interview Richards when he was

84 and still with a sharp memory. Bickel's more comprehensive work will be of greater interest to the general reader. Specialists and collectors of antarctic accounts will be delighted to have this new edition of a work that is seldom seen in the second hand market.

William Glover
Kingston, Ontario

Peter Robson and Betty Keller, Robb Douglas (photographer). *Skookum Tugs: British Columbia's Working Tugboats*. Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing www.harbourpublishing.com, 2003. 144pp., photographs. \$49.95, cloth; ISBN 1-55017-275-1.

The tugs of the British Columbia coast are prolific and unique. They are an integral part of the region's history, and form an important cog in the industrial machinery of the region. While their photogenic quality has been caught before, this book really captures their essence and importance and provides an insight into those who make their lives aboard them.

As explained in the foreword, "Skookum" comes from the Chinook trade language and has entered the vocabulary of most British Columbians. It means strong or sturdy (and in my experience, can also mean genuine). It is certainly an apt word to describe the powerful, and often small tugs working the B.C. coast. These purposeful craft have evolved for very specific types of work, and the book's chapters outline their various jobs.

The ubiquitous tugs have endeared themselves to many by their stubborn and persistent look and their constant busyness. Robb Douglas' images give very clear definition to the work of these boats. Although the photographs are documentary in that sense, they are composed and lighted in a way seldom seen in shipping books. There are many dramatic angles, night-time and low-light photographs, and several in conditions that most photographers would consider marginal at best.

The results speak for themselves in their portrayal of the conditions on shore and at sea. Reproduction in the book is also of very high quality on large pages (10 inches by 12 inches), which gives the images additional impact.

Douglas has also taken the time to show the underwater shapes, propellers and other features of tugs rarely seen by casual watchers. He has followed the action by helicopter and boat in all kinds of weather to capture the feel of time and place in which the tugs must work.

Nor has he ignored the crews. Many photos illustrate the hard and dangerous work aboard the tugs, whether on deck, in the wheelhouse or out on log tows. There is, however, one posed portrait of a female deck hand which seems out of place and somewhat sexist to this reader.

The text and captions give further insight into the lives and labour of the people who run the boats, and also explain in easily accessible language, many of the features of the tugs, their work and the activities and character of the crew.

Towing log rafts was once common in many parts of the world, but it has reached a high art in B.C. Seemingly tiny tugs manage to move huge floats of logs with only one or two deck hands, in a constantly flowing river, often choked with other traffic. It is truly a fascinating sight, and well captured in this book.

Another unique aspect of B.C. towing is the huge tipping barges which load logs by their own cranes. A big tug tows the barge to the booming ground where it purposely floods it tanks to tip the barge deck and slide the logs off into the water. The tug, and life aboard are very different from the small booming tugs, but part of the same industry, with people moving back and forth between.

Barge tows exist worldwide, but each area is slightly different, and perhaps no where has such a wide range of towed commodities as B.C. Douglas illustrates a good range of these to show the importance of tugs in so many aspects of the province's economy.

Ship berthing has become the domain of specialized tugs worldwide but again, BC has developed specific types for its own conditions. Whether dealing with container ships or huge bulk carriers, BC tugs are generally smaller but more powerful than others. That their crews are excellent ship handlers should come as no surprise. They are able to do things with their tugs that others would not attempt, thanks to skill and experience.

The last chapter, entitled "Boredom and Terror", attempts to explain how tug workers deal with the "hours and hours of boredom interrupted by moments of sheer terror", and why they chose such a line of work. It comes down to camaraderie and independence, summed up by one skipper: "The office can send down all the damn memos they want. But eventually we gotta leave the dock and do our work."

This book could easily be mistaken for a coffee table picture book, and it would certainly succeed on that level. The photographs are superb and often spectacular, complemented by a well written, informative and lively text. It gives a broad overview of the British Columbia towboating industry, and some insights into the lives of the workers. Technical information is presented in a clear way, and should be accessible to a wide range of readers.

Mac Mackay
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Georg Steller. (Margritt Engel and Karen Willmore, trans.) *Steller's History of Kamchatka. Collected Information Concerning the History of Kamchatka, Its Peoples, Their Manners, Names, Lifestyle, and Various Customary Practices*. Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska Press, www.uaf.edu, Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series 12, 2003. xiv + 298 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. US \$27.95, paper; ISBN 1-889963-49-6.

In 1740, Georg Steller, a German-trained scholar affiliated with the Russian Academy of Sciences, arrived in the Russian Far East as part of the Second Kamchatka Expedition (1733-1743). His mission was to report his observations to the Tsar. The present volume represents an attempt to translate a linguistically complex text of some of Steller's observations during his time on the Kamchatka Peninsula. As a glimpse of an exotic region shortly after its colonization, *Steller's History of Kamchatka* is a fascinating read. The author had a limited understanding of the native cultures, his Christian paternalism sometimes got in the way, but the book nevertheless offers a relatively systematic and sympathetic description of the region's geology, climate, plants, animals, people, and politics. It also, albeit with difficulty, can illustrate the state of natural science in the eighteenth century. As a text for primary research, however, this translation is seriously flawed.

Because a critique of *Steller's History of Kamchatka* hinges on the translation's reliability, explicating its technical problems necessarily precludes a description of its contents. Margritt Engel and Karen Willmore based their translation on German publisher J. B. Scherer's 1774 *Beschreibung von dem Lande Kamtschatka*, first printed 28 years after Steller's untimely death. The Engel-Willmore translation is mostly loyal to Scherer's printing, but this means that they relied on someone else's rendition of Steller's manuscript rather than, as the translators note in the preface, the original manuscript, which had resurfaced in a Russian archive at least seven years before the present book was published. Why the translators (and University of Alaska Press) continued to rely on Scherer's 1774 publication is a matter for speculation, but readers should note that a more authoritative text is extant, especially when translators sometimes guess at Steller's meaning (see e.g. p.28, fii.24; p. 100, fh.8).

Engel and Willmore also used a translation strategy that distorts Steller's historical context. Many times they replace Steller's phrases with modern names,

particularly in reference to plants and animals. The translators intended to bring clarity to the text, but they have actually altered both the meaning and implications of Steller's observations and, by extension, the text's historical relevance. For example, the chapter on fishes of Kamchatka is a very early and fascinating description of some Pacific basin fishes, but Engel and Willmore repeatedly replace Steller's phrases with modern names for species such as Dolly Varden trout and steelhead, chinook, red, chum, and silver salmon. Not only are these names exotic - "chinook," for example, was an early-nineteenth-century derivation of a Columbia River village - but their classification as salmon is also anachronistic. It was not until Johann Walbaum's publication of *Petri Arredi Sued Genera Piscium* in 1792, that any of these fish were classified as Pacific salmon, and, in another strange irony, the Kamchatkan names that Walbaum used remain the standards for modern ichthyologists.

These are not merely technical criticisms. A careful reading reveals that Steller struggled to understand Kamchatkan nature, but the translators cloud his experiences by creating more clarity than he actually expressed. For example, when Steller mentions the "well-known steelhead", [105] he not only invokes a thoroughly alien phrase but the attached footnote shows that the Scherer printing had in fact read "common salmon, *somga* in Russian". [122, fn. 13] This means that Steller either had located an Atlantic salmon or, more likely, had misidentified steelhead as *Salmo salar*. His ambivalence is even more obvious when describing Pacific salmon as looking "very much like a salmon" [110] and as "salmon-like species". [120] Steller had entered a strange environment, and his remarks (as represented by Scherer and re-represented by the translators) reveal how a formally trained scientist fell back on only partly-satisfactory analogies to make sense of novelty. In this and many other instances, Engel and Willmore have obscured the past by trying to make it more accessible.

Although translation is an inexact art, accuracy is the foundation of scholarship and this text is wanting.

Steller's observations could provide useful points of reference for research on the aboriginal cultures and environments of the Pacific Rim, his comments about relations between the native peoples and their Russian rulers could provide insights into the contentious subject of colonialism, but this book contains too many flaws to be considered reliable. The series editor, Marvin Falk, should have held the translators to a higher standard, and he should have pushed for a format that retained Steller's original phrases and relegated modern names either to footnotes or to brackets, as was done in some cases such as pink salmon. [115] The press, moreover, should have patiently waited for a careful translation of the original manuscript. Because none of that transpired, this book raises too many doubts to warrant recommendation.

Joseph E. Taylor III
Ames, Iowa

John Thomson, (ed.). *Elephant Island and Beyond: The Life and Diaries of Thomas Orde Lees*. Bluntisham, UK: Bluntisham Books, www.bluntishambooks.co.uk, 2003. 339 pp., photographs, maps, drawings, bibliography, index, £24.95/US\$45.00, cloth; ISBN 1-85297-076-6.

"The aristocracy of Antarctic exploration", Thomson begins, discouragingly but truthfully, "does not include the name of Thomas Orde Hans Lees..." [1] Thomas Orde Lees (1877-1958), a captain in the Royal Marines, was a member of Sir Ernest Shackleton's 1914-1916 *Endurance* expedition. The expedition has gained fame for the way Shackleton coped with disaster after the *Endurance* was crushed in the ice. With a small crew, he set off on an heroic open-boat journey leaving most of the men behind on Elephant Island to await rescue. Cooped up in a tiny hut made from two

overturned boats, existing largely on penguins, this hungry, filthy, miserable group of men grew to dislike Orde Lees more and more. It has been suggested that in the last resort he would have headed up the menu. Apart from this unenviable distinction, Orde Lees is best remembered for the diaries he kept. The absence of a published version of such an essential and heavily used source as the Orde Lees diaries was a significant lack in Polar literature.

Orde Lees and I are connections (we share Irish relatives) and this may predispose me towards him. Yet, if I could have chosen a polar figure to claim kinship with, Thomas Orde Lees - exasperating, eccentric, endearing - might well have been the man. After the expedition, he campaigned to have RAF planes outfitted with parachutes. Authorities thought that parachutes would encourage cowardice and would not in any case be effective at low altitudes. To prove them wrong, in 1919 Orde Lees jumped off Tower Bridge, a height of barely 150 feet. For many years this remained the lowest voluntary parachute jump on record. The jump showed not only that Orde Lees was fearless and athletic - in effect, he was one of the pioneers of the extreme sport of BASE jumping, or parachute jumping from fixed objects - but also suggests a need to show up authority.

His conflicted attitude towards authority is also pointed up in an anecdote related in Roland Huntford's *Life of Shackleton* (1985). As a young Marine officer Orde Lees was reprimanded for carrying parcels while in uniform. According to Huntford, "He responded by having the buttons of his tunic reinforced so that he could hang his shopping down his front." [536] By seeming to take authority so seriously, he made authority and its rules look ridiculous. Walking along with parcels bumping against his middle he would have made himself look ridiculous too, but he seems to have had the born entertainer's lack of false shame. This was an aspect of his personality that flowered in old age when he delighted to entertain children. There is a wonderful photo of him as Father Christmas. [314]

The bulk of the book, about 250 pages, is the diaries. They are not printed in full, being hundreds of pages long. Thomson does provide synopses of omitted material, but it seems that ellipses are not always noted, perhaps as too distracting. Compare for example, the entry for 19 February 1915 as presented in Huntford [416] and Thomson. [42] In any event, the diary is still a great read. Orde Lees was vivid about daily life in such extraordinary conditions, and acute, unsparring and often very funny about himself and others. He could also genuinely admire men such as Shackleton and Frank Wild, while at the same time honestly expressing what he did not like about them.

There is well-researched biographical material on the rest of his life - his parachute jumping, his years in Japan and New Zealand, his two marriages. Renee, his daughter by his first marriage, made him the father-in-law of the Oxford philosopher, Sir A. J. Ayer. One chapter presents what evidence there is for a plot to kill and eat him. A truly startling revelation comes at the beginning. Orde Lees was the son, not of his father's wife, but of his father's mistress. He grew up believing that his birth mother was a dear family friend and that he was born in 1879 rather than 1877.

The book is a welcome addition to Bluntisham's 'The Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration' series. It is also a happy fit of author and subject. This is John Thomson's second book related to the *Endurance* expedition. The first was about his fellow New Zealander, Frank Worsley. Orde Lees spent the last, and perhaps the happiest, years of his life in New Zealand. The major collection of his records is in Wellington's Alexander Turnbull Library. As books go these days, it is reasonably priced. It should afford a great deal of pleasure to Antarctic buffs and to anyone who would enjoy learning more about a fascinating and quirky character.

Anne Morton
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Glyn Williams. *Voyages of Delusion: The Quest for the Northwest Passage*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, www.yale.edu/yup, 2003. xx+467 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, index. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 0-300-09866-9.

Voyages of Delusion by Glyn Williams will undoubtedly stand as the authoritative piece on eighteenth century quests for that "will-o'-the-wisp of northern geography" [20] - the Northwest Passage. Misguided adventurers, inaccurate and incomplete information, ignorant speculators, and the uncompromising elements come together in rich narrative and confirm the "delusion" of the voyages. The strength of Williams' book lies in his detailed and exciting prose seamlessly interwoven with primary sources - many unpublished papers, journals and letters from Hudson Bay Company Archives - integrated with new and archival maps and drawings. The result is an indispensable contribution to any library building its collection on exploration in general and on eighteenth century Arctic exploration in particular.

The elusive Northwest Passage captivated the imagination of explorers and governments alike, and in the eighteenth century centered on a passage to the Orient from Hudson Bay. Unlike the deluge of publicity and activity of the nineteenth century voyages further north, this era's quests were little recognized by the public of the time. Anyone familiar with the Arctic is aware of its inherent and timeless dangers: deadly cold; ice that can trap and crush a hapless ship; white-outs, fog and snow that make visual bearings impossible; months of unremitting darkness; violent tides and storms that toss and destroy ships; and the magnetic North to confuse a seaman's compass. In the eighteenth century, add death from scurvy, malnutrition, unsanitary ship and shore conditions, frostbite and complications from amputations, plus alcohol consumption that impaired both body and mind. One wonders and marvels at the vision, tenacity, and sheer force of will (or folly) that drove men to explore this

region - many of whom never lived to tell their tale. Williams explores Old World hopes, dreams, and speculation as they collided with New World realities of the Arctic's uncharted lands, uncompromising terrain, and unforgiving climate. He elicits compassion for the sailors' plight, outrage at comfortable London officials passing judgment on the men in a land they have never seen, and awe for those who challenged an unpredictable region where survival rests on the thinnest of threads.

Williams delves into two approaches to the elusive Passage: from Hudson Bay in the east and from the Pacific Ocean in the west. Not only has Williams utilized primary documents of the time, but he has also employed twentieth century archeological and anthropological discoveries. One example suffices to illustrate the strength of this technique, but numerous examples exist. In Chapter One, Williams painstakingly details the multiple motives, personalities, preparations, and expectations of James Knight's 1719 expedition to find the Northwest Passage. Financed by the Hudson Bay Company, Knight's two ships had an inauspicious start, "vanished from European view, and their fate became one of the most baffling mysteries of northern exploration". [25] Williams recounts how neither the Company nor the British government were inclined to search for the ships. A popular scenario was subsequently built upon Inuit stories and wreckage from the ships and an abandoned building found later in a remote harbour. But archeological digs and anthropological evidence made by investigative teams in 1970-71, 1989, and 1992 dispelled the popular myth. And yet, the Arctic did not give up its secrets: "where and how the men died; how long they survived; the part played by the Inuit" [45] remain a mystery to this day.

Over one-third of the book is dominated by the indomitable Irish MP, Arthur Dobbs. His twenty-year quest helped launch two expeditions, as well as post-voyage inquiries of the failed voyages. He even had his (hidden) hand in a book critical of the Hudson Bay Company. The Hudson Bay Company was in the

Arctic, aware of its harsh realities, weary of speculative maps and glowing scenarios of the riches to be found after discovery of the Passage, unwavering in its campaign to retain exclusive rights to its Charter lands, and only reluctantly shedding its climate of secrecy. Williams is blunt in his assessment of key characters in the various dramas. Dobbs' quest for the Passage served as a cloak for his interest in breaking the Company's commercial monopoly and receiving a charter of his own. [190] Captain Middleton, who sailed in 1741, was a skilled "navigator and hydrographer", [209] while John Rankin was "a worthless officer whose mendacity helped to wreck the career of his former captain", [209-210] and Hudson Bay Company factor James Isham was "in some ways the unsung hero". [210]

By relating the concurrent Pacific exploration, first by the Spanish and Russians and later by the British and French, Williams puts the Passage in the context of European competition for claims to the New World. The stories of Vitus Bering and James Cook, pioneers who lost their lives even as their legacies remain, are exciting and tragic. But it was Captain George Vancouver's meticulous charting of the west coast in the 1790s that closed the door on the century and the belief in a Passage. Vancouver "saw his mission, not as an attempt to discover the passage but as one to prove, once and for all, that it did not exist". [402] In the end, it was Alexander Mackenzie, taking an overland route from the interior to the Pacific Ocean, who became the first European "to cross the American continent north of Mexico". [397] And it was not until 1903 that a ship traversed a water Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Only then was "the sailor dream of five centuries [realized]: The Near Way to the Far East is North" (Vihjalmur Stefansson, *Northwest to Fortune*, 1958).

Undoubtedly an indispensable and integral addition to any library on Arctic exploration, Williams' book will serve researchers well. Although there are no footnotes, the bibliographic sources in Appendix II are

extensive. Excellent explanatory captions accompany the archival maps and drawings. Perhaps the only criticism is the length of the paragraphs. The very detailed narrative captures the reader's attention, and paragraph breaks bring a welcomed pause and chance to digest the material. With paragraphs often a full page, the text and reader could use more such breaks. But this is so minor compared to the contribution of this book to the literature, that such a challenge is a very small price to pay.

Elizabeth Elliot-Meisel
Omaha, Nebraska

Andrei A. Znamenski. *Through Orthodox Eyes: Russian Missionary Narratives of Travels to the Dena'ina and Ahтна, 1850s-1930s*. (Translated by the Author). Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska Press, www.uat.edu, Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series 13, 2003. xiii + 346 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$27.95, paper, ISBN 1-889963-50-X.

For centuries, Russia's expansion of territory and sphere of influence was accompanied by the conversion of indigenous peoples to Russian Orthodox Christianity. Orthodox missionary work, however, differed significantly from its Roman Catholic and Protestant cousins in a greater emphasis on the preservation of native language, culture and custom. By the 1850s, Orthodoxy was an integral feature of life in Russian America and ecclesiastical authorities anticipated a future for the Church linked to continually expanding mission work and increasing numbers of native converts.

Through Orthodox Eye: Russian Missionary Narratives of Travels to the Dena'ina and Ahтна, 1850s to 1930s provides a look at part of the Russian Orthodox missionary work in Alaska through eight decades of missionary reports on these people of south-central Alaska by six churchmen; several other documents are appended. Andrei Znamenski compiled and translated these primary

documents. His thorough analytical introduction is helpful, especially for the non-specialist.

In these reports, prepared in the field for diocesan officials, a number of themes persist. First, and perhaps most interesting to the general reader, is the climatic and geographic reality of Alaska itself. Travel - the lifeline of missionary effort - presented challenges in every season, by land and by sea, and is an integral feature of the reports. Another theme is change - generally interpreted negatively - for both the Orthodox clergy and Alaska natives connected with the sale of Alaska in 1867. Perhaps the consequence the missionaries felt most acutely was diminished financial support for Alaskan missions, largely because of diocesan restructuring and relocation accompanying this altered political reality.

As the title suggests, the authors of the documents had an Orthodox - and, by extension, European Christian - perspective, and they evaluated indigenous traditions and practices according to European norms. When the latter clashed with the former, European values won. Orthodox churchmen insisted that polygamy and shamanism - ancient features of native culture - were incompatible with Christianity and worked tirelessly to eliminate them. Beyond this, missionaries sought to cope with the reality of native life.

The clergymen were troubled by the vulnerability of the native population to starvation, epidemic disease, syphilis and alcoholism. Funeral liturgies were matter-of-factly reported, death unremarkable, except in one instance where an old man died from gangrene over several days, and in another where travel dogs died from starvation. The health conditions that the missionaries themselves found most limiting included diminishment of hearing and eyesight, toothaches, and weariness.

The missionaries emphasized the factors they believed made native life difficult - communities dependent on a subsistence existence not strictly nomadic, but still mobile; and individuals with essentially good character still lazy and improvident - and understood how

difficult it was to superimpose Orthodox liturgical life on native patterns of living. Over time Orthodoxy became so much a feature of indigenous culture that it helped define native identity, yet these documents suggest how tenuous Orthodoxy's early hold on the indigenous population could be. For their part, the missionaries were hampered by limited language skills - a troubling fact, especially since Bishop Innocent had made fluency the missionary standard years earlier. They relied on indigenous and Creole interpreters to explain the faith and depended on the local laity to maintain the faith during the months and years between visits.

As decades passed, missionaries tracked problems associated with the Americanization of Alaska - low levels of financial support from the Church and lack of respect for Orthodoxy by non-natives. Alcohol remained an intractable problem. Brotherhoods - essentially self-help organizations formed by natives under the auspices of the Church to solve community and personal problems - promoted temperance.

Other long-term worries included behaviour by the Americans that "poisons children" and violated social norms; insidious notions about race that divided the community; and where to fix loyalty in Alaska's changing circumstances. The missionaries had a unique perspective on both education and government. Traditional parish schooling was displaced by a segregated government-financed system, exacerbating divisions among white, Creoles and natives.

Through the early twentieth century, Orthodox clergymen expressed frustration with American attitudes towards native Alaskans. Their own criticisms notwithstanding, they feared the forces - "alien" missionaries, bureaucrats and businessmen - arrayed against traditional culture. Priest Pavel Shadura identified the two tenets of official policy that threatened the indigenous population: first, "These officials shared the same opinion... the sooner these dirty and ungrateful nationalities

are wiped out from the face of the earth, the better for the nation. They also stressed that the natives would be replaced ... ," and second, "In some localities the United States government now preserves Alaskan natives for demonstrative purposes as rare specimens". [271]

Well into the new century, attitudes, alcohol and perennial difficulty in obtaining work seemed ready to overwhelm both missionaries and natives alike. Yet the final report (1937-1940) ends on a hopeful note: drinking declines, employment improves, and roads, cars and trains trace this once-isolated territory.

Though the text suffers from small grammatical flaws, Znamenski's work is a welcome addition to the literature on Russian Orthodoxy in America. The general reader will find many thought-provoking observations about life in coastal Alaska a century ago.

Judith Ball Bruce
Sandston, Virginia