

BOOK REVIEWS

Erminio Bagnasco and Augusto de Toro (Raphael Riccio, trans.). *The Littorio Class: Italy's Last and Largest Battleships, 1937-1948*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2011. 356 pp., illustrations, charts, plans, drawings, tables, appendices, sources, bibliography, index. US \$85.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-445-8.

Many years ago I ordered from the Italian Ministry of Marine two of their official histories, *I Cacciatorpediniere Italiana* on the history of their torpedoboats and destroyers, and *Gli Incrociatori Italiani* on their cruisers. Both were superlatively produced, large and useful references, although I was appalled at the cost—about 4,000 lire. I was much relieved to discover that it amounted to about \$8.00 Canadian! This volume, published by the Naval Institute Press and printed in China, still retains the quality of the earlier series, the original Italian edition being published in 2010. Notably, the translation by Raphael Riccio is also skilful, literate and, as far as I noted, flawless in idiomatic English. It is the quality one might expect from a book on Italian art and literature. With two fold-out charts illustrating changes in the ships' camouflage over time, external views of two of the ships, hull lines, longitudinal sections, and three-dimensional views of two of the fighter aircraft carried, this is quite a remarkable publication. It should assuredly be taken as a guide for others to copy, whatever the national ships.

Apart from its impressive appearance, the story of these three unique ships is complete and logically told. The authors open with a section on developing

Italian naval policy in the post-First World War era. They offer an interesting assessment from an unusual perspective, of the requirements and problems created by the various naval treaties, and Italy's ongoing efforts to be at least equal to France in those negotiations. Italy had several battleships remaining from the war, and made major modifications to some, from replacing entire propulsion units to rebuilding bows and sterns. Eventually, it became obvious that to be a major player in the naval game they required a new battleship design. The naval staff came up with, in my opinion, probably the most handsome of the battleship designs among all the nations—U.K., U.S.A., France, Japan and Germany—the Littorio Class. Only three ships were ever completed—*Littorio*, *Vittorio Veneto* and *Roma*. The latter was sunk by German aircraft after the armistice with the Allies in mid-1943 on the way to an assembly point. The fourth ship, *Imperio*, was launched as a hull, but never completed. *Littorio* was badly damaged by torpedo during the Taranto raid, as were two older battleships.

The second section of the book covers design details, all technical specifications, construction development and trials, including large tables of gunnery firing records—hits, misses, failures, and even, for gunners, “spread” and timing. For model-makers there are extensive close-up photos of upper deck and bridge details, paravane layouts on the foc's'le, and perspective drawings at various cut-away sections of the whole typical hull. The narrative text is excellent, even for a non-

constructor, being neither tiresomely detailed nor too sketchy. More finely detailed drawings and many photos, for instance, show such arcane locations as shell storage in the magazines, etc.

Probably of more interest to a general naval reader is the detailed operational history of each of the three vessels put into service. This includes both narrative and dated charts of their every movement and the ships' various commanders, useful if one is checking on where these threats to the Allies forces in the Mediterranean were at any moment during the war. The accompanying text is in chronological sequence, with adequate reference to larger events that influenced Italian operational decisions. Included are the Italian views of the Fleet Air Arm attack on Taranto, the battle off Sirte, one of the few actual fleet engagements with Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham's Mediterranean fleet, and other encounters. All of this information is supported by a multitude of photos, charts of the actions, and tables of results. The book ends with a very readable 11-page Comparisons and Conclusions, which give purpose to the whole. Comparisons are made and charted with the RN's King George V Class, the German Bismarcks, the USN's various classes, and the monstrous Japanese Yamato Class. The Littorios tended to be very "short-legged" in RN terms, that is, distance available for fuel load, not a major problem for the Italian Navy. Their battleships were not intended to be employed world-wide. Despite criticism in previous narrative histories, the Littorios' speed was about average for their comparative group. A few small items are interesting, such as these ships' auxiliary rudder systems in case the main rudder was damaged. *Note bene Bismarck!*

Most of the photos are of good quality, and given the subject, rarely seen elsewhere. The drawings of battle damage from shell and bomb hits reflect the authors'

exhaustive research. So do the five pages of references, with materials from Italian archives and elsewhere. There is a minimal use of footnotes, both on the pages themselves and as source references, which given the detail of the text and the authority of the authors are nowhere needed. There is even a series of marvellous coloured photos of a large model of *Roma* in 1/100 scale, in fact a whole chapter of "Modelling Notes."

Altogether, this is a fascinating and valuable book, certainly well worth the cost. It need not be read continuously, but rather dipped into and taken up for entertainment and education. "Coffee table" indeed.

Fraser McKee
Toronto, Ontario

Carlo Beltrame and Renato Gianni Ridella (eds.). *Ships and Guns: The Sea Ordnance in Venice and Europe between the 15th and 17th Centuries*. Oxbow Books, distributed in Canada by The David Brown Book Company, www.dbbconline.com, 2011. 132 pp., illustrations, notes, index. US \$60.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-84217-969-7.

This book consists of 15 short papers, written by experts in historical artillery and underwater archaeology, about naval ordnance in Europe from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries based on archival and maritime archaeological sources. The papers are grouped in three sections of equal length: Venetian (sixteenth to eighteenth century), Italian (fifteenth to seventeenth century), and finally, European ordnance of the fifteenth to seventeenth century. The use of many unfamiliar terms makes the book difficult to read and, because the papers are concise, a strong prior knowledge of the topic is required. Fortunately, the sections are well illustrated by photos and drawings of the various pieces and details. The papers are in chronological order and, in general, support

each other. The book reminds us that the “classic” muzzle-loading naval guns of the type familiar from the many popular films depicting the “zenith” of fighting sail in the 1700s and the Napoleonic wars were the product of centuries of development.

The first section on the Venetian pieces begins with the breech-loaded wrought-iron swivel gun made by hoop-and-stave technique. This type was in use for more than three centuries. Each gun had more than one chamber, so firing was faster than for normal pieces. The first paper looks at the morphology and construction techniques of Venetian artillery of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Venetian nomenclature for early artillery differs from that of other states, which causes problems when trying to relate them to other European weapons. Venetian pieces of the same calibre varied in length and weight; the lighter pieces were for naval use, while the heavier pieces protected fortresses and walled towns.

A work printed in 1486 includes probably the oldest known image of an artillery –armed galley, in this case with a hooped bombard at the stern. Since the galley was the main military vessel on the Mediterranean Sea during the period, its characteristics are discussed. Galleys were normally fitted with two masts carrying triangular lateen sails, but oars were used during battles, in manoeuvres to enter and exit harbours, and in case of windless weather. Propelled by 160-200 rowers, the ships could reach 7 or 8 knots for brief periods. Due to its shape and size, the galley’s main armament was carried at the bow; this was supported by lighter guns on swivel mounts situated around the ship. The papers look at the Venetians’ search for the “big” gun, in particular, during their struggle against the Ottoman Turks. Some interesting gun designs resulted, but these were put aside owing to Venetian successes and a prevailing conservatism.

The second section surveys Genoese, Florentine and Italian ships, which, like those of Venice, were divided into two categories: sailing freighters and oared galleys. In the last half of the fifteenth century, oared ships served only as warships, while sailing vessels carried out civilian functions, but could be armed or used as transports. The Italians began experimenting with the thickness of the gun barrel and reserved the thinner ones for ships because of weight constraints and the fact they were expected to fire only a few shots prior to boarding. By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, specific naval pieces began to appear, but with a lack of uniformity in the ordnance equipment. Field pieces, mostly bronze, were also taken on board to fill various needs. At the beginning of 1580s, cast-iron ordnance began to replace bronze guns; this was particularly true aboard merchant ships, since iron guns cost only one-fifth as much as a bronze piece of the same weight.

The last section looks at the main European combatants that we are more familiar with, such as Spain, Britain and France. In the mid-1540s, the British began to regularly produce long, cast-iron muzzle-loading guns, similar to bronze pieces. Cast-iron guns were not better guns, but they were cheaper, and merchant ships preferred them. The sixteenth century witnessed the greatest changes in ship’s armament in the British navy. Over the century, royal ships moved from deploying many small guns, mainly designed as anti-personnel weapons, to carrying a complement of heavy cannons capable of causing significant damage to an opponent’s vessel. Wreck surveys and inventories illustrate this change of tactics and warfare at sea, as well as the gradual rationalization of the types of guns carried. Another paper surveys the employment of mortars and the development of ships intended for that particular weapon; mortars offered

advantages over standard naval guns but required extraordinary skills and knowledge.

One of the papers concentrates on the armament of the Spanish Armada dispatched for the conquest of England in 1588. This plan was similar to the Terceira campaign of 1583, the final phase of Spain's annexation of Portugal. In the Spanish concept, ships served as both front-line fighting units and invasion transport; the capital ships of the Armada were to be mobile fortifications filled with troops and their equipment, a Mediterranean-rooted concept of naval warfare as an extension of land warfare as opposed to the mobile "weapons platform" tactics adopted by the British, that used superior manoeuvrability and fire from heavy artillery to prevent the troop laden Spanish ships from closing and boarding the English vessels. Once the fleets were tactically stalemated at sea, it was the weather, in the end, that made the difference.

In conclusion, the book is interesting and informative regarding the development and use of ordnance in the period preceding the more familiar seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The non-specialist reader would benefit, however, from a section explaining the terms for various types of artillery pieces mentioned, such as bombard, demi-canon, falconet, saker, etc. The book could also use a stronger concluding segment where the conclusions drawn by the different authors were linked to future developments in naval artillery and tactics.

Carl Gagnon
Ottawa, Ontario

George J. Billy and Christine M. Billy.
Merchant Mariners at War: An Oral History of World War II. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, 2008. viii + 232 pp., illustrations,

appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$30.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8130-3246-7.

The book presents stories of the American merchant mariners who fought in the Second World War through a collection of oral histories compiled from graduates of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point, New York.

It begins with a quote which expresses humility towards the oceans that recurs throughout the book: "water is unquestionably the most important natural feature on earth." In the introduction, the authors describe a particularly American approach to mobilizing, organizing and operating a merchant marine in wartime and integrating it with naval operations. The chapter headings coalesce around the main themes and are arranged in roughly chronological order: Around the World, Training at War, the Battle of the Atlantic, Convoys, Liberty Ships, the Murmansk Run, the Mediterranean, D-Day, the Vast Pacific, Weather, the Philippines, Prisoners of War, Navy, The End of the War, The Significance of the Merchant Marine, and Personal Thoughts.

The stories are based on 59 interviews conducted between 1990 and 1995 in which merchant mariners responded to the same set of questions intended to elicit the important facts. Standard questions were augmented by additional questions when warranted. The editors successfully balance the two major approaches of oral history regarding transcription from voice to text: summary versus verbatim. The resulting stories are in the form of short "edited transcriptions" of one to four pages. Some narrators appear in more than one section with their pieces linked by a reference. The editing is judicious; sometimes minimal which gives great immediacy to the account. This minimalist approach has some drawbacks, including the repetition that is characteristic

of spoken communication, but overall the verbatim passages give a good sense of action, and effectively establish general information. The short narratives also give a sense of action and encourage the reader to keep moving.

The common background of the narrators, who began their service as young officers in training, strong on education from the academy but limited in inexperience, gave them a unique perspective on the art and science of running a ship, and on the action that unfolded at sea. Many would go on to command ships and organize convoys in their own turn, so their accelerated wartime career progress provides a personal chronology that links to and illuminates developments in the war at sea. Most of the narrators were cadets in their twenties during the war, so the stories usually feature the cadets' attempts to complete sea projects, which was part of the syllabus at King's Point, while learning and performing the duties of junior officers in the ships. The introductory chapters and chapters on the weather, prisoners, significance of the merchant marine, and personal thoughts cover universal themes, while the remaining narratives concern individual battles.

The narrators are mostly kind to their allies. There is consensus that the British did understand the business of convoying, tempered always with the American impatience with authority and precedent and desire to use new technology and organization. There is a surprising degree of understanding of the events of convoy PQ17 which has haunted the Royal Navy since as a great defeat. The story is one of animosity toward none in a battle against the enemy and the elements: the sea and cold.

Illustrations include small black and white photographs of the ships and wonderful hand-drawn sketches by Robert Glenn Smith. The sketches range from the

epic (*SS Cape Cod. The First Convoy to Pass the Suez Canal When Reopened, 1943*) to the domestic (*My cabin 3rd Mate and GI Laundromat Eniwetok*) and a night battle (*SS Cape Cod. Submarine Attack off Sicily*). The sketches add texture to the stories and put the ships and people into human scale.

There is an admiring and particularly loving portrait of the Liberty ship which came to symbolize the will to win the battle for supplies in all theatres. A British design for a merchant ship combined with the American genius for industrial production helped produce one of the great standard ships of history, which were for the time rugged, big, and fast. All elements of Allied industrial mobilization were used to produce a huge fleet of 2,700 copies of a single type of vessel. New welding techniques speeded up production to just 40 days instead of months and years, even if the poorly understood hull structure stresses caused by welding resulted in some ships breaking in two. Even the manoeuvre of rejoining the hull segments became routine.

One surprising feature that emerges out of the wartime U.S. merchant service is its high degree of integration into the U.S. Navy. After shocking reverses in the face of German submarine attacks in the western Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, and Japanese mastery in the waters of South East Asia in 1942, the merchant marine developed into a highly effective force, growing in capacity and confidence.

A glossary or explanatory notes would have been useful, as would an appendix on the characteristics of vessels other than the Libertys. Sentences like "our designator was changed from AVG-11 to CVE-11, and everybody was curious as to whether they were accepting the Card with a C-3 merchant hull." (p. 117) could be made understandable to a wider audience.

The editors and many narrators emphasize the paramount importance of

merchant shipping in winning the war, which is why the editors insist on each narrator discussing the significance of the merchant marine and its effectiveness before relating the details of particular battles and other events. There is a lot of pride expressed in the success of the system of training exemplified by King's Point. There shines out a respect for people, the ships, and especially the academy. This attachment to the *alma mater* is perhaps natural given the fact that George Billy was chief librarian at the academy. It is worth noting that both editors have credentials and long experience as information specialists. They are also a father-daughter team and so represent a particularly close combination of talent that certainly contributed to the high quality of the final product.

This book should be in any library on the war at sea. Academic collections on the history of the Second World War and oral history in particular should include this work.

Kathy Crewdson and Ian Dew
North Bay, Ontario

Gordon S. Brown. *The Captain Who Burned His Ships: Captain Thomas Tingey, USN, 1750-1829*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2011. viii + 173 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. U.S. \$28.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-61251-044-6.

During the age of fighting sail, the United States Navy fought wars against the French in the so-called "Quasi War" of 1798-1800; against the Barbary pirates, in 1801-05 and 1815; and against Britain, in the War of 1812. Small as it then was, the American Navy had no shortage of officers whose actions and seamanship set a high standard for the service; men with names like Decatur, Hull, Perry, and Macdonough. Over the past decade, there has been an

outpouring of biographies about the early officers of the U.S. Navy.

Thomas Tingey (1750-1829) was a U.S. naval officer of that era, but despite his long service, he is not associated with a particular battle or ship. Gordon Brown's fine and concise biography is the first study of Tingey, the longtime superintendent and commandant of the Washington Navy Yard. Tingey was responsible for building and directing the yard where many of the U.S. Navy's ships were supplied, maintained, and kept "in ordinary." At the time, the Navy Yard was the largest business and employer in the new republic's new capital city. *The Captain Who Burned His Ships* is about a self-made man who served a key administrative and logistical role in the U.S. Navy's early years, and who, because of his power and connections, became one of the leading citizens of the District of Columbia.

Brown has been able to assemble only fragmentary information about Tingey's origins. An Englishman by birth, Tingey served as a midshipman in the British Navy, including running a tiny outpost in Labrador in the 1760s. Unsupported by powerful friends or an influential family, his Royal Navy career stagnated, and he resigned his commission and migrated to Philadelphia before the American Revolution. There is no evidence that Tingey served afloat during the Revolution. After the war, Tingey was the master of Philadelphia-based ships trading to India, making three voyages on behalf of the prominent Willing family. As the United States prepared for a maritime war with France in the late 1790s, the Navy bought into the service the Willings' ship *Ganges*, and Tingey followed her into the service with a commission as captain. Although Tingey took several prizes in the Caribbean, including one that led to a significant Supreme Court case on the nature of undeclared wars, *Bas v. Tingey* (unfortunately, relegated here to brief

mention in an endnote), the *Ganges* saw no combat. Still, Tingey struck his superiors as a “judicious, attentive, Active officer.” In 1801, when the Jefferson Administration came to power and initiated large naval cuts, Tingey was one of the few captains retained. He was given command of the Washington Navy Yard, where he remained until he died.

Brown demonstrates that “[r]unning a navy yard was a complicated and ticklish job,” calling on Tingey’s pragmatism, integrity, sense of order, and unctuousness towards political authority. Brown touches all aspects of the Navy Yard’s management during Tingey’s long tenure. The Navy Yard served as an incubator for technological progress in the early republic, including the development of a 21-inch cylinder steam engine used to generate power for the machine tools at the Navy Yard after 1810. Tingey made difficult decisions about hiring, firing, and pay, reflecting changing budgets and larger economic cycles, while crushing nascent labour organizing. A slave-owner himself, he balanced the racism of his white workers with the need to hire slaves and free blacks for certain types of jobs and to depress wages; in tough economic times, Tingey fired African-Americans to keep white Yard workers employed. Tingey also contracted for the Navy Yard’s supplies, sometimes for the benefit his family and friends. Although he oversaw the creation and development of the Yard’s infrastructure, Tingey had to order the burning of the ships and installation to avoid capture by the British army invading Washington in the summer of 1814. Out of the smoldering ruins, Tingey rebuilt; after the War of 1812, Tingey directed the Navy Yard’s transformation into a shipbuilding centre and the mechanical craft shop for the entire navy.

All of these topics Brown handles in a brisk and economical fashion. His

insights into Tingey as a businessman and civic leader are shrewd. At the conclusion of *The Captain Who Burned His Ships*, the reader has a nuanced sense of Tingey as an affable, able, “organization man,” loyal to his family and friends, fond of dancing and organizing parties. Brown has a deep understanding of the history and topography of the development of Washington, D.C., and Tingey’s contribution to that process. Brown makes a few trivial mistakes on naval matters, such as calling the *Merrimack* a frigate and asserting the *Norfolk* was built by public subscription. He also makes some inaccurately broad assertions about Congress supposedly approving the 1807-09 embargo “almost without debate,” and about only one Representative defending the ocean-going navy in the legislative debates in the era of Jefferson’s gunboats. In addition, one might wish that Brown had provided readers with more information about certain recurring issues, such as, how ships were placed “in ordinary”, how maintenance at the Washington Navy Yard compared with other contemporary British or French practices at, say, Chatham or Toulon, and whether Tingey knew about and adopted foreign methods (and if so, how he learned of those ideas or innovations). But in fairness, Brown did not write a book on the early history of ship maintenance; he wrote a book about a man’s life and world. *The Captain Who Burned His Ships* is a distinctly successful biography, focused, nicely written, and informative about a man and an aspect of the early navy that had garnered little attention. Among the recent biographies of early American naval officers, it is one of the best.

Frederick C. Leiner
Baltimore, Maryland

Jim Christley. *US Submarines 1900-35*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2011. 48 pp., illustrations, index. UK £ 9.99, CDN \$19.95, US \$17.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-87908-185-6.

This is first of three volumes by Jim Christley, a retired U.S. Navy submariner, on USN submarines (along with *US Submarines 1941-45* and *US Nuclear Submarines: The Fast Attack*) for Osprey Publishing's growing collection of easily-accessible naval history texts. It packs a basic narrative, illustrations, schematics, and more into just 48 glossy pages. This is the commendable purpose of Osprey's works, albeit with the obvious drawback of limiting their utility for the serious scholar. For the interested casual reader, however, there is something to appreciate in this bare-bones approach.

The book begins with an introduction to the philosophical and practical development of the submarine as an important vessel in the USN's fleet. From their rather humble origins in the U.S. Civil War—when submarines were arguably more novelty than naval in their utility—submarines benefitted from the same radical modernization drive that propelled the creation of the USN's first great surface fleet at the turn of the nineteenth century. While the surface fleet certainly witnessed important design innovations during this critical period, one could argue that its true "modernization" came in the form of re-imagined strategy and tactics (premised largely on the theories of Alfred Thayer Mahan). For Christley's submarines, however, the emphasis is upon design and engineering modifications. The reader will find significant detail on all manner of design elements—from battery types and ballast tank placement to the thickness of marble slabs upon which electrical relays and panels were mounted. The author next

narrates the physical construction of the USN's first true "fleet" of submarines (A-through G-classes). Additional details are offered on offensive and defensive armaments, as well as communication and navigation equipment. Christley concludes with a few hundred words covering the scant action seen by this submarine fleet in the 1910s and 1920s.

Ultimately this reads like a chapter from a fuller work of greater significance. While both visually pleasing and easy to read, from a scholar's perspective volumes of this brevity are of little use without more detail and—especially curious from a publisher's standpoint—without a list of sources used and/or "for further reading." Even if the publisher imagines these texts for the most general of audiences, the nibble is too small to satisfy and yet offers no trail of crumbs to the rest of the meal. Very narrowly conceived, the work cannot diverge into such topics as: how scientific and technological changes affected the fleet (rather than merely documenting which were adopted in design and construction); how the Navy Department integrated the type into war plans (rather than merely narrating a few engagements in World War I); how the U.S. Navy itself viewed the vessels, whether they remained a novelty or whether the ruthless effectiveness of Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare conclusively proved their necessity in modern warfare. These are important questions if the work is to live up to its rear-cover billing, let alone contribute particularly meaningfully to the history of the U.S. fleet. What little information it does provide may interest the casual reader who is undaunted by technical jargon and engineering specifications. But it will most likely present itself to the academic or professional reader as something of a dead-end with no signs pointing to more substantial scholarship on what may well be an important and underappreciated period in

the development of the modern United States Navy. Perhaps as one bound chapter in Osprey's wider collection, this volume could be good value; but it is difficult for this reviewer to offer a convincing recommendation for the work on its own.

Matthew A. McNiece
Brownwood, Texas

Margaret Cohen. *The Novel and the Sea*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, www.princeton.edu, 2010. xii+306 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$39.50, cloth: ISBN 978-0-691-14065-0.

Maritime historians often find entertainment by reading maritime novels. All are familiar with novels by Cooper, Conrad, Defoe, Forester, Hugo, Marryat, O'Brian, Melville, Stevenson, and Verne. Others have read the stories set at sea by Hemingway, Kipling and Poe and the "salty" poetry of Coleridge, Masefield and Longfellow. From the title and her introduction, Margaret Cohen's book promises to add welcome background and perhaps new direction to a pleasurable pursuit.

Maritime novels were modeled upon heroism of fictional protagonists, seamen with a gritty glamour sailed on ships that transported goods, people and information. They battled storms, calms, shoals, shipwrecks, sharks, whales, mutinies, warring foes, pirates, cannibals and disease—especially scurvy. Governments and wealthy corporations supported maritime transportation, expending resources on exploration, technology, marine architecture, navigation and other forms of research. These were the fertile places of inspiration for new or unusual adventures, the genesis of the novel of the sea. The romance more commonly portrayed in the literary world had a slightly different twist. This romance was heroism,

the challenge of navigation, men at dangerous work and men believing in supernatural powers that controlled events both inside and outside a ship's wooden walls. It described the sea-fictional travels of nations across a tempest, a literary field appealing to all armchair sailors.

Cohen first reconstructs the history of sea adventure fiction on the emergence of what she calls "craft," training and experience to contend with the unforeseen. Craft also is a form of collectivity, since most situations involve a crew as opposed to a single individual. In general, it is the sum of the ability to control a complex vessel, its successful navigation and ultimately, any heroism that emanates along the way. The author then applies the craft to occurrences at sea, heroes and heroines and examples within novels where they appear. The primary source for this chapter, the roots of fiction, is non-fictional such as the logbook of Captain James Cook's HMS *Endeavour*. In a later "interlude" chapter, the author investigates the sublimation of the maritime experience in the visual arts, literature and aestheticism in general or unfettered imagination. She also explores the motives of some of the better-known fictional characters from their survival to quests for power, riches, knowledge and/or their love of pure adventure. This is reflected by seascapes that illustrate oceanic moods either during times of tranquility or more often through men and their ships coping with the perils of storms.

The chapters that deliver closer to what the book's title promises are devoted to the maritime novels of the early nineteenth through the twentieth centuries. In what Cohen calls "Sea Fiction beyond the Seas," she focuses on familiar works. She makes the case for the role of the sea and those who worked upon it as the drivers of this form of adventure novel. In thoughtful, well-structured arguments, the author plumbs the seaman's language and

underlying thought behind various methods of narration. She searches out clarity of purpose by “transmuting maritime adventure fiction into the artist’s exploration of a murky realm—a boggy, soggy, squitchy scene—in search of . . . something.” (p.213) There are some uncommon interpretations of the meaning of the works of various authors and even a “how about that” moment. She points out that the two tentacles in Victor Hugo’s octopus drawing in his *Toiler’s of the Sea* form Hugo’s initials.

In order to create compelling fiction, one must draw both from real life experiences and imagination. The latter may be in the form of art or poetry. Taken together they can generate useful insights into the craft of novel writing. Cohen however sometimes laboured use of mixed metaphors, Captain Cook’s log, paintings of the seventeenth-century Dutch masters and the British artist, James Turner, as well as poetry, especially that of Byron, Camões, Coleridge and Falconer, often produce sea smoke rather than a hoped for beacon-light. Although the diversity of these references gives the book an effluvium of erudition, it also causes the reader to tack into the shoal waters of disconcerting digressions. At times one had to check one’s thematic compass bearings while navigating through this work in their attempt at understanding of the origins and evolutions of writing maritime fiction.

The overall style of the book is a text for sophisticated students of English literature. One could easily envision each chapter as excellent fodder for a seminar or two. It is not a book to read casually by the fireside while enjoying the inspiring clearly written prose. Although carefully constructed, *The Novel and the Sea* is “awash” with jargon and obscure terms. Having a dictionary close at hand is almost a necessity. Occasionally, one finds oneself re-reading sentences and paragraphs, not for

enjoyment, but for understanding.

In summary, *The Novel and the Sea* is a challenging read for the average armchair sailor referred to above. An expert in the field of comparative literature, Margaret Cohen makes plentiful pedantic points concerning this literary genre. Since the book appears to be written for use in comparative literature classes, it is difficult to follow at times and unfortunately it is not for everybody.

Louis Arthur Norton
West Simsbury, Connecticut

Nola Cooke, Li Tana, and James A. Anderson (eds.). *The Tongking Gulf Through History*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, www.upenn.edu, 2011. x + 222 pp., notes, glossary, index. US \$59.95, cloth; ISBN: 978-0-8122-4336-9.

What most of us know or remember about the Gulf of Tongking is the 1964 Incident, when the destroyer USS *Maddox* clashed with North Vietnamese torpedo boats and, as a result, President Lyndon Johnson escalated the conflict into a full-fledge Vietnam War. In the decades that followed, the region was the scene of conflict not only between the Vietnamese and Americans, but also between Vietnamese and Chinese. Today the area is at peace and, in fact, the gulf has become an important economic development zone for both China and Vietnam, a project begun in 2004 known as “Two Corridors and One Rim.” This current economic resurgence actually harks back to an ancient past when the region was the economic hub of China’s overseas trade in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. The new economic policy clearly traces a regional contact zone that has existed for several thousand years. Yet we know very little about the gulf’s past.

The Tongking Gulf Through

History is an important book that fills a gap in our knowledge of the region's long history. The editors, Nola Cooke, Li Tana, and James Anderson, are all experts on Vietnamese history, and the contributors include an impressive assortment of scholars in different disciplines from around the world. The book consists of an Introduction and nine chapters, and is divided into two parts. Part I concerns the archaeology and history of ancient Jiaozhi, the name that China had given to the region about two thousand years ago; Part II discusses the gulf region between the tenth and nineteenth centuries.

Going beyond the standard written sources commonly used by historians, the studies in this volume introduce new evidence derived from archaeological research, material culture, and fieldwork. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the authors provide a useful trans-national history of the region's waters, shores, and immediate hinterland to illuminate a rich and diverse history and culture. The contributors correctly challenge earlier nation-centered studies to reveal a "horizontal" history that is much more multifaceted and nuanced. Over the past two millennia, the gulf region has seen many appellations, and a large number of people and ethnic groups have inhabited its land and sea. What emerges from this book is a complex pattern of interrelationships and overlapping networks of exchange and cultural interactions. Only a hundred years ago this area was still a wild frontier with shifting borders and highly mobile populations. Today some of that wildness remains given the area's heavy economic reliance on contraband trade.

Tucked away in the northwest corner of the South China Sea, the Gulf of Tongking borders northern Vietnam and China's three southern provinces of Hainan, Guangdong, and Guangxi. Today the region is known locally as Beibu Wan (in Chinese)

and Vinh Bac Bo (in Vietnamese), both literally the Northern Region Gulf. A thousand years ago it was called the Jiaozhi Ocean (Jiaozhi yang). During the ancient Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE), the gulf was a wealthy commercial zone centered on the ports of Xuwen, Hepu, and Rinan: exporting Chinese silks, pearls, and ceramics and importing spices and maritime exotics from Southeast Asia and beyond. Local craftsmen not only produced goods (including glassware discussed in Brigitte Borell's chapter) for export but also for the local consumption of an estimated one million people who lived in the area by 2 C.E. As several chapters make clear, at different times in the past, the driving forces for change were not central governments but rather local polities and powerful, ambitious individuals. Although the gulf remained a vibrant inter-regional trading zone, its overseas trade declined over the next several centuries as new ports opened first in China in Guangzhou (Canton) and Quanzhou and later in southern Vietnam in Hoi An and Saigon. The social fabric also changed dramatically, as the Sinic-speaking settlers concentrated chiefly in urban centres and a large variety of ethnic "minorities" (such as the Li and Lao discussed in Michael Churchman's chapter) inhabited the spaces between.

Prior to the tenth century, several successive Chinese dynasties dominated the gulf region, but afterwards, a noticeable divergence developed between China and Vietnam. After the collapse of the Tang Dynasty in 907, all of the major southern areas claimed independence and several local kingdoms emerged. The most important and long-lasting was the Dai Viet state, a kingdom that would evolve into Vietnam. Besides a general sporadic economic decline, the gulf also experienced numerous, almost continuous, conflicts that have lasted until modern times. Although many scholars depict these conflicts as

China's attempts to reclaim lost territory, the authors clearly show that the region's history is much more complex, involving not only competition between the Chinese and Vietnamese states, but also and in particular, rivalries between several local polities (as discussed in chapters by James Anderson and John Whitmore). By the end of the fifteenth century, as Li Tana notes, there was a "serious decline in the gulf's commercial vitality" (p.15), and by the nineteenth century, according to Nola Cooke, the gulf region had become socially and politically marginalized.

This is a rich and absorbing book that explores the social, economic, and political history of small but important corner of eastern Asia. It makes an important contribution and offers fresh insights on the maritime history of the Gulf of Tongking.

Robert J. Antony
Taipa, Macau

James R. Fichter. *So Great a Profitt: How the East Indies Trade Transformed Anglo-American Capitalism*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, www.hup.harvard.edu, 2010. 384 pp., map, charts, tables, notes, bibliography, index. US \$35.00, UK £25.95, Euro €31.50 cloth; ISBN 978-0-674-05057-0.

James Fichter certainly chose an ambitious topic for this comparative study of British and American maritime and economic development during the years collectively called "the French Wars," roughly 1793-1815. He meant this to be an introduction and causative explanation for the massive industrial development of both of these western economies in the nineteenth century. From what sources did the capital emerge that enabled the mature development of capitalism in both of these countries, and how did their different forms

of maritime trade influence each other in this process? In the pursuit of answers to this and related questions, and in offering an explanation of the role of East Indian trade in this equation, Fichter is largely successful.

Comparative studies are, by their very nature, fraught with dangers. Should one emphasize one country over the other, or alternatively, should one attempt to be overly even-handed in dealing with each country in every circumstance? This book seems to navigate this potential Scylla and Charybdis, between a rock and a hard place, dilemma rather smoothly. Fichter maintains his thesis of the mutuality of developments in American and British maritime commerce in the years following the American Revolution and even during the War of 1812, as the latter part of the Napoleonic wars in Europe is usually referred to in the United States. For New Englanders, this period is especially important as it includes the Jeffersonian embargo of 1808-1809 that had devastating consequences for many maritime families. I was particularly struck by the following phrase uttered in 1808 by an American consul in Bordeaux, France, who stated that "from the Baltic to the Archipelago nothing but despair and misery is to be seen. Grass is growing in the streets of this city." Compare this to the exact same period across the Atlantic in the maritime port of Portland, Maine, where a prominent local historian reported that, "great distress prevailed throughout the community, and the grass literally grew upon the wharves."

The author seems also to have sailed smoothly between the related fields of political/military history and economic history. While some maintain a strict separation between these disciplines, Fichter demonstrates that they can and should be analyzed together. The many connections between military and technological developments on the one

hand, and maritime commercial and economic growth on the other, form a central element in his writing. The intersection of these disciplines often provides the most revealing aspects of his research. *So Great a Profitt* will most profitably be used in upper level college courses and graduate level studies on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond.

A few criticisms will be offered here before a discussion of the books strengths. A chronology of major events contained in this book would have been useful, especially for those not well versed in British or American history of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. This would have been of particular value when changing from one topic or one country to another. In the small number of cases where foreign phrases are used for illustrative purposes, an instant English translation in the text or at least as an endnote would have been appropriate. These phrases are highly desirable but not always universally understood. While there was a wonderful world map in the front piece of the text, and several detailed graphs and charts, there were no illustrations especially of the central personalities discussed. Even if only used occasionally, such illustrations would have been a good addition.

The strengths of this work are numerous. First and foremost, there is the depth and breadth of archival sources from such disparate places as Spain, Indonesia, USA, France, Great Britain, South Africa, Netherlands and Mauritius. Together with the copious endnotes, this book provides a virtual treasure trove for historians and researchers. Many will use these primary sources as a starting point for their own studies branching off from this work. The chapter structure is clear and distinct. Ten chapters seems to be the right division for the time period covered, especially with a useful introductory chapter on the period of

the American Revolution that set the stage for what was to follow. Fichter resists the temptation to go much beyond 1815 stating, "Just how capital shaped the nineteenth century is, however, another story." But he has set up that other story very nicely.

Fichter's back and forth between merchants and politicians in Great Britain and the United States did not seem disjointed as he was able to tie these together thematically. As the point was to show the interconnectedness between these national classes of merchants, this became a plus. The author wove a tapestry containing famous names such as William Pitt, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Nathaniel Bowditch, and Thomas Paine, with other less famous or well-known personalities on both sides of the Atlantic who played central parts in his economic narrative.

One of the central themes of this work is the way that American merchants took full advantage of the French wars, and their neutral status during the greater part of this period, to further their own economic opportunities, especially when it came to the "re-export boom"—the process of shipping otherwise contraband items first to America and then on to otherwise forbidden ports in Europe and elsewhere. The expansive role of ships' captains was also of great interest as they had great leeway in determining where and when to discharge their cargoes. These decisions often meant the difference between profit and loss, and these captains sometimes seemed more like common peddlers of goods, however allowing many to graduate "from the captain's cabin to the merchant chair themselves."

Fichter is often at his best when dealing with the topic of free trade versus monopoly. Many subscribe to the thesis that "monopoly breeds indolence"—this is illustrated by the success of smaller American merchants who appeared to have great flexibility and lower costs *vis-à-vis*

British traders who were often connected with the British East India Company. The demise of the monopoly trading status of the Company, as it is called, first in India and later in China, forms a central core of this work. As the Company became less profitable in the early nineteenth century, the American model was often used to support the already strongly-held *laissez-faire* principles of many British merchants and politicians. Without going overboard on this topic, however, Fichter reminds us that free trade is amoral—it contributed both to the end of the slave trade (and later slavery itself) but also to the rise of the smuggling of opium and the Opium Wars and the attendant miseries that so devastated many Chinese. He states, “If anything, freed from the Company’s minimal regulation and oversight, private merchants were more pernicious than the Company was.”

James Fichter has offered us a well-researched, well documented, and well-written account of international maritime trade at the start of the industrial revolution just before and during the early nineteenth century. It offers us, at the dawn of the twenty-first century valuable lessons. One prominent British politician is quoted as saying, “Government or Parliament never meddle with these [economic] matters at all but they do harm.” This sounds similar to pronouncements that are often heard today on the political campaign trail as the U.S. enters a presidential election year, and is resonant of campaign slogans heard only recently during British Parliamentary elections. *Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose*. (The more things change, the more they remain the same).

Michael C. Connolly
Portland, Maine

Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood and Mohammed-Salah Omri (eds.) *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel’s Maritime Legacy*. London: I.B. Taurus Publishers, www.ibtaurus.com, 2010. 319 pp., maps, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography. UK £54.50, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84885-163-4.

This book of thirteen essays emphasizes the maritime dimension of the Mediterranean. The authors from the United Kingdom, the United States, Italy, Greece, Algeria, Spain, France and Malta collaborated to honour the influential historian Fernand Braudel, author of the book, *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l’Epoque de Philippe II* (1949). The essays address the trade between different parts of the Ottoman Empire and the consequences of the increased British and Dutch shipping in the Mediterranean after the seventeenth century, with impressive archival research, using microhistory to exemplify the multi-cultural exchanges.

The chapters describe slow and humdrum activities. They highlight the local and the particular in order to emphasize the ordinary, opening our eyes to individual lives. The authors make careful and original use of archives and materials in local languages. By reducing the scale of inquiry, they “avoid the temptation to simplify the relations among people, phenomena and events.” (p.39-40) The microhistory scrutinizes details of the past, looking for meaning. The “grand narrative” drops to the background. Real people emerge.

Befitting a collection that engages with Braudel, four chapters follow his lead, examining the history of Northern Europeans in the Mediterranean. In a footnote-packed essay, Maria Fusaro reviews the scholarship since the 1949 publication of *La Méditerranée*. Braudel’s research and perspectives continue to

inspire researchers today. Daniel Panzac explores primary sources about diseases and plagues in archives in Marseille, Paris, Venice, Dubrovnik, and Malta, finding descriptions and statistics about the plague. With data from 16,153 ships, Panzac proves that one percent had the plague aboard and that in 96 percent of plague cases the system of prevention succeeded. Colin Heywood focuses his essay on the English in the Mediterranean, examining the accounts of William Blois (d. 1612), an Ipswich merchant. He funded the 1628 voyage of the *Prudence* from England to Livorno, Constantinople, Zante, Negroponte, Smyrna, Cyprus and Aegean islands. By 1630, the ship returned to England, where the master William Mellow died soon after. The micro-historical approach emphasizes the specific and unique, but also represents broader trends. Donna Landry taught me a new word in her history of thoroughbred horses in England: *hippagogoi* are ships that carried horses from Muslim lands northwards. She explores how during the eighteenth century, stewards of great estates and landowners bred their horses with Eastern strains, exemplifying East-West cultural exchanges.

Three chapters address North African areas. Fatiha Loualich focuses on the daily interactions among the corsairs of Algiers, studying in the archives of Algeria, France and Turkey. These pirates made choices about human dilemmas—providing for families, bequeathing to their heirs and responding to fate. For example, Al-Mukarram Ahmed al-Djnadi died in 1705 while at sea on a corsairing voyage. His wife, Amina bint Balqasim, and son, Mohammed, sold many of al-Djnadi's possessions at an auction while holding on to some jewelry for later. Salvatore Bono explains the project to create a dictionary of possibly five million slaves in the Mediterranean world 1500-1900. With records spread in multiple areas, the project

investigates the capturing, ransoming, converting, assimilating and death of as many of these individuals as possible. Nabil Matar studies the people of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, who believed that "God had given Muslims the earth and the sea to the Christians." As the British and French rose to supremacy in the Mediterranean, North African rulers and people believed in this story of decline, even though seventeenth-century Algiers was the strongest naval power in North Africa and Mulay Ismail of Morocco had a legacy of maritime power. By the 1700s, British and French navies had bombed cities, destroyed fleets and weakened the ports of these kingdoms. Matar, as an expert on Europe through Arab eyes, uses documents in the national archives of England and France, illustrating the destruction of facilities in Tangier, Algiers and Tripoli.

Three essays by Ann Williams, Simon Mercieca and Molly Greene describe the central history of Malta, located literally and symbolically in between the eastern and western halves of the Mediterranean Sea. Using archives on Malta, the historians examine the Order of St. John. Williams recounts the history that brought the Knights from Rhodes to Malta in the sixteenth century and how they benefitted from corsairing. She carefully reads notarial documents, showing that even their untidiness can hint at important facts. Simon Mercieca focuses on the maritime caravans sponsored by the Knights. He also details the lives of the non-Maltese who married Maltese women. The emphasis on individual lives remains foremost. Molly Greene examines the lawsuits brought by Ottoman subjects in Maltese courts. Muslims and Christians from Anatolia and the Aegean islands had settled in Egyptian ports. When their ships were attacked by corsairs from Malta, these individuals sought redress and hoped for restitution in

Malta. The Maltese records also show the commerce between Ottoman ports, such as Rosetta which became the main supplier for Thessaloniki, which depended on Egypt for rice, coffee, indigo, cotton, henna and spices.

Two essays examine Greek shipping. The essay by Eloy Martín-Corrales shows how, after the 1782 Hispanic-Ottoman Treaty, Greek-Ottoman merchants increased their trading connections to Spain and to Spanish America. They participated in transporting Spanish products, and in exchange, they returned eastward with colonial products from Cádiz. When free commerce to the Americas opened up after 1778, Greek-Ottoman merchants traveled regularly to ports of Spanish America. The chapter written by Gelina Harlaftis demonstrates the scholarly collaboration that is creating a database of Greeks shipping. More than twenty researchers from five countries are working in the archives of eighteen European cities with over 24,000 entries in six languages to show how Greek shipping constituted an “Eastern Invasion” within the Mediterranean in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

Mohamed-Salah Omri concludes the book, explaining how writers of fiction have had the most influence in teaching others about the Early Modern Mediterranean. From Cervantes to contemporary authors in North Africa, the stories reveal reversals of fortunes, unexpected layers and accommodation to change. Readers learn from the selected past and draw parallels to their own existence. Looking at five novels written between 1929 and 2007, Omri explains how these writers, like Braudel, “accumulate detail, multiply references, stylize the Mediterranean and take sides in conflicts and antagonisms.” (p.296) These essays are imaginative presentations of history,

reconstructing the past with admirable historical research.

James B. Tueller
La’ie, Hawai’i

Robert Hay. *Landsman Hay*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing. Distributed in North America by Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2010. xii + 223 pp., map, notes. UK £13.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84832068-0.

Landsman Hay is a new edition of Scottish landsman Robert Hay’s (1789-1847) experiences on the lower deck of Royal Navy ships during the French wars, 1803-1811. The fourth title in Seaforth Publishing’s new series “Seafarers’ Voices,” edited by BBC writer Vincent McNerney, the book continues the series format by abridging the text (here from 55,000 to 45,000 words), including a page-long Editorial Note, providing a lengthy introduction (28 pages), plotting key locations on a single map, and keeping endnotes brief (42 notes). Of the four reprinted “Seafarers’ Voices”—the first three being Jean Marteilhe, *Galley Slave* (concerning 1702-13); George Shelvocke, *Privateer’s Voyage* (1719-22); and John Newton, *Slaver Captain* (1750s)—*Landsman Hay* gives the most information about the day-to-day life on board ship and the greatest amount of general maritime history information. Hay’s experiences on board ship, while absconding, and while trying to avoid press gangs during the British wars with France make for an enjoyable read.

Robert Hay’s narrative focuses on his time in the Royal Navy, 1803-1811, including coastal excursions, his three desertions, and a five-year voyage to India (1804-1809). He relates how he grew up in Dumbarton Scotland, his father a weaver, and how after a smattering of schooling, he

was sent to work in a cotton factory and later “on a loom to ply the shuttle” (p.37). By age fourteen, he journeyed west to Greenock to seek maritime adventure. By then he had developed “a pretty strong inclination for reading” (p.37), which would help his advancement at sea and spur his future literary ambitions. The reader learns details about his navy life on board the transport cutter *Prince William Henry*, larger tender *Maria*, schooner *Eling*, the three-decked guardship *Salvador del Mundo*, and then finally the 74-gun HMS *Culloden*, on which Hay spent his remaining teenage years, mostly stationed on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts of India. As do other travel narratives, Hay’s extols the novelty of faraway lands under the influence of the sun’s “vertical rays” (p.98), with an extended discussion of flora and fauna and the peoples he meets. His five-month recuperation in a Madras naval hospital in 1805 gives insights into colonial medical practice.

Of particular interest is Hay’s shipboard education. On his first cruise, in the English Channel, Hay began to find his “sea legs.” He was “taught to box the compass, steer in moderate weather, heave the lead, go expeditious aloft and to be of some service once I was up” (p.58). Working as servant to a Lieutenant Hawkins in 1804 gave Hay access to books and nautical instruments. He pored over John Hamilton Moore’s *Practical Navigator*—a standard textbook—a mathematical scale, quadrant, and coastal charts. Moore’s book, discussing sailing triangles, explained how “trigonometry might be converted into our knowledge of navigation”, (p.68) and Hay tried to learn how to measure the sun’s meridian altitude by lighting a candle, on the lieutenant’s dressing table, to represent the sun. He continued his educational improvement on the *Culloden’s* voyage to India, as he “desired to learn the art of keeping the account of the ship’s way”

(p.92), and then “picked up ... a knowledge of the carpenter business” (p.144). Hay’s memoirs remind us about the importance of informal education in the early nineteenth century British world.

Readers will enjoy the maritime imagery and language related by Hay and his acquaintances: a ship captain in Greenock liked “the cut of his jib” (p.45); a “fancy brab sky-scraper from the Spanish Main” (a triangular straw hat, p.46); “to come Paddy over us” (p.49); “the luckless wight of a greenhorn” (p.51); “mounted the Jacob’s ladder” (p.78); coming across an officer’s “hawse” (p.119); “bousing” up someone’s jib (p.124); “the spreading of the Devil’s tablecloth” (p.150); “God sends the meat, but the Devil sends cooks” (p.152); and “He was half seas over, as the phrase goes” (p.157). Referring to preparations to depart Portsmouth for the East Indies in July 1804, Hay recalls verbatim the language between officers and crew, as in “Clap on the cat fall there in the waist, and hoist away” (p.82). Toward the end of his maritime career, in the merchant’s service in Kingston, Jamaica, Hay writes out an English song sung by a gang of slaves who did the “harbour work” (p.180).

Hay dates his memoirs to 1821, a decade after he began his years of shipboard education. The extant text was written by someone who had attained a high level of literacy—perhaps a level of prose-writing that would have exceeded Hay’s talents. Consider the following passage—describing the ship’s crew—which suggests an editor:

“Costumes ranged from the kilted Highlander, to the shirtless sons of the British prison house, to the knuckle ruffles of the haughty Spaniard, to the gaudy and tinselled trappings of the dismissed footman, to the rags and tatters of the city beggar. Here, a group of half-starved and squalid wretches, not eating, but devouring with rapacity, their whole day’s provisions at a single meal; there, a gang of sharpers at

cards or dice, swindling some unsuspecting booby out of his few remaining pence. To the ear came a hubbub little short of Babel: Irish, Welsh, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Swedish, Italian, together with every provincial dialect prevailing between Land's End and John O'Groats. There was poetry being recited; failed thespians with their mutterings; songs, jests, laughter, while the occasional rattle of the boatswain's cane, and the harsh voices of his mates, blended with the shrill and penetrating sound of their whistles, served at once to strike terror into the mind, and add confusion to the scene (p.53)."

Though one suspects that such literary flourishes exceeded Hay's expository skills, the passage demonstrates the wit and verve that make *Landsman Hay* an exciting read.

Stephen D. Behrendt
Wellington, New Zealand

David Hobbs. *A Century of Carrier Aviation: The Evolution of Ships and Shipborne Aircraft*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2010. 304 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. US \$69.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-023-8.

A Century of Carrier Aviation: The Evolution of Ships and Shipborne Aircraft documents the progress of aircraft carrier development in the British and American navies. David Hobbs uses a wide range of historical data and archival photographs, supplemented by photographs from his personal collection, to document the evolution of regular naval vessels into the large aircraft carriers of today. The format of the text and the inclusion of so many pictures give the impression Hobbs was writing for the general public. The solid presentation and wealth of historical data,

however, will appeal to the academic or professional historian as well.

David Hobbs served 33 years as a fixed- and rotary-winged pilot with the British Royal Navy. During that time he logged 2,300 hours of flight time and 800 aircraft carrier landings, 150 of those at night. His experience led the Ministry of Defense to ask him to develop carrier operating procedures for the *Invincible* Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) carriers. As part of this process, he developed the Deck Approach Projector Sight allowing Sea Harriers to land more safely at night and during hazardous weather conditions. He was also the Royal Navy representative on the Information Exchange Project for the AV-8B Harrier 2 sea trials. After his naval career, Hobbs served as Curator for the Fleet Air Arm Museum in the village of Yeovilton located in Somerset, England. During his time as Curator, he travelled to Australia, the United States, France, and New Zealand lecturing on British naval history and his experiences in the Royal Navy.

Hobbs' carrier service, his work with the Ministry of Defense, and his curatorial experience give him a comprehensive understanding of the inner workings of carrier operations and their history. His firsthand knowledge of carrier life allows him to write from a perspective unmatched by most historians who might lack such familiarity with naval carrier operations. This experience has helped him author six books on naval history, including a comprehensive encyclopedia of British aircraft carriers, earning him the Aerospace Journalist of the Year Best Defense Submission in 2005.

In this book, Hobbs chronicles the development and use of aircraft carriers from a British perspective. Although the U.S. Navy was instrumental in the implementation of aircraft carrier design, British innovation supplied most of the

development. Hobbs' brief introduction pays tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the British while offering an overview of their efforts. The author also provides a reader-friendly explanation of the basics of flight and the further complications of carrier-based operation. The book does a good job of describing the evolution of carrier technology from the earliest attempts at carrier-based operations to the creation of the modern carrier. Hobbs has even included a chapter detailing plans for ships and aircraft that were never developed and explaining how they were supposed to operate.

Although a book about the evolution of such a large and complicated machine of war could be expected to be overly technical, Hobbs avoids this problem. The book is easy to read, while providing in-depth information about the history and development of ships and aircraft and their workings.

Without becoming mired in jargon-laden explanations, Hobbs' information is presented in a manner that satisfies both the lay and academic audience. A glossary of acronyms used throughout the book eases any confusion for those unfamiliar with naval and aviation terms. The illustrations also provide excellent visual references to the many ships, planes, and concepts encountered in the book.

Hobbs draws on his own experiences for portions of this book, which adds a personal feel, but does not rely solely on himself or his photographs to tell the story. A quick glance through the bibliography illustrates the wealth of sources Hobbs had at his disposal, including Royal Naval documents, logs, operations manuals, technical studies and personal accounts. He also uses The United States Department of Defense documents and U.S. naval personnel accounts. Many of the illustrations used throughout the book come directly from British, American and

Australian naval manuals.

For those looking for information about carrier evolution and operations, this book will fill the niche for academic and casual readers alike. Well written and easy to understand, the book provides ample documentary evidence as well as many wonderful historical photographs to illustrate the British effort and innovation that made modern aircraft carrier operation possible.

Baird Ullrey
Pensacola, Florida

E.R. Johnson. *United States Naval Aviation 1919-1941: Aircraft, Airships, and Ships Between the Wars*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., www.mcfarlandpubs.com, 2011. 338 pp., illustrations, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index. US \$45.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-7864-4550-9.

The period from 1919 to 1940 has often been called "The Golden Age of U.S. Naval Aviation." During this time, the U.S. Navy created an aircraft carrier force and flew brightly coloured biplanes and then monoplanes with distinctive squadron markings. The aircraft of that time must surely have appealed to the many children reading magazines and watching movies. In *United States Naval Aviation, 1919-1941, Aircraft, Airships, and Ships Between the Wars*, E.R. Johnson has produced a comprehensive guide to the aircraft, airships, and aircraft carriers of that memorable period. All three American maritime air arms—Navy (USN), Marine Corps (USMC), and Coast Guard (USCG)—are included.

The book begins with an introduction that describes the external influences on the development of naval aviation during this era; the First World War and the naval treaties of the 1920s and 1930s, and then moves to descriptions of

fleet tactics, government support for naval aviation and individuals. Johnson identifies the chief figures in American naval aviation—Rear Admiral William Moffett, the “Father of U.S. Naval Aviation,” Fleet Admiral Ernest King, who became Chief of Naval Operations in the Second World War; Fleet Admiral William Halsey, Admirals John S. McCain (father of the present Arizona Senator & 2008 presidential candidate); and Marine Corps General Roy Geiger, who is known as the “Father of USMC Aviation.” The developments of U.S. Marine Corps and Coast Guard aviation are included and are helpful.

The book is divided into three parts: Heavier-Than-Air Development; Lighter-Than-Air Development; and Aviation-Related Ship Development. These sections comprise the heart and *raison d’être* of this work. The Heavier-Than-Air segment, Part One, (aircraft) occupies over two-thirds of the book. Every aircraft flown by the USN, USMC, and USCG during the interwar period is identified and described by means of technical specifications, photographs, three-view line drawings, and a narrative about each aircraft’s service life. Unfortunately, the line drawings are not drawn to a constant scale and no scale is given for each drawing. This is likely due to size limitations; some aircraft, such as the flying boats, would have taken up too much room if drawn to a constant scale of, say, 1/72 or 1/144, although a scale for each drawing would have been helpful. This section shows ALL the aircraft listed in USN, USMC, or USCG records during the interwar period, even autogiros (an early form of helicopter) and gliders. There is also a colour section showing the many varied and bright markings used during this period. While not 100 percent colour-accurate, owing to the limitations of the printing process, the drawings do give a good impression of contemporary colour schemes. Those wishing more detailed

colour information must look to the many references available on this subject.

Part Two describes the airships and blimps used by the USN during this period. As with the aircraft, the technical specifications and service record of each airship is related—including the doomed airships *Akron*, *Macon*, and *Shenandoah*. As well as informing his readers that the U.S. Navy used blimps as convoy escorts throughout the Second World War Two, Johnson points out that, amazingly, the blimps’ ability to operate at low altitudes and speeds meant that they could observe the presence of enemy submarines better than regular aircraft. Not one ship was ever lost within a convoy escorted by a blimp. The last blimp did not leave USN service until 1959.

The final part lists all the aircraft carriers, seaplane tenders, seaplane-equipped warships from battleships to gunboats and Coast Guard Cutters. The service lives of the carriers are detailed, again with technical specifications.

Appendices list foreign aircraft and airships used by the USN, USMC, and USCG during this time, identify racing and experimental aircraft, and offer an explanation of naval aircraft, airship, ship, and unit designation, and the status of naval aviation of all three services in December, 1941. The first appendix offers some surprises and evidence of Johnson’s thorough research: even foreign aircraft used by US Naval attachés are illustrated. This could be an area of study for future historians as well as a unique subject for modelers. A glossary of naval and aeronautical terms rounds out the book’s supporting material.

Johnson’s research is impressive and thorough. As both an attorney and private pilot, he combines personal knowledge and research skills to make this book a definite contribution to historical aviation literature. It is an excellent

reference work for the aviation or naval historian. Since some of the aircraft and ships have been the subject of numerous other works—for example, the F4f Wildcat fighter, the SBD Dauntless dive bomber, and the various aircraft carriers—*Langley*, *Lexington*, *Yorktown*, *Ranger*, *Enterprise*, and *Wasp*, those wishing additional information on these subjects can look elsewhere for more details. *United States Naval Aviation, 1919-1941* deserves a place on the bookshelves of aviation enthusiasts. It is recommended for its encyclopedic treatment of its subject, thorough research, and good information.

Robert L. Shoop
Colorado Springs, Colorado

John Jordan and Stephen Dent (eds.). *Warship 2011*. London: Conway Publishing (Anova Books Group) www.conwaypublishing.com, 2011. 208 pp., illustrations, tables, maps, notes, sources. UK £30.00, US \$56.95, cloth; ISBN: 978-1-8448-6133-0.

This latest edition of *Warship* contains a variety of interesting articles of the kind we have come to expect from this prestigious annual. The genesis, design, construction and service record of warships, old and new, are a recurring theme. This year Stephen McLaughlin describes the first Russian ironclads, the *Pervenets*, *Ne tron menia* and *Kreml*, completed 1864-1866. Before these ships could be built, ironworks and shipyards capable of building in iron and slipways had to be constructed, so building these modest vessels contributed to the modernization of Russian industry. Although soon obsolete, they proved to be reliable and remained in naval service in secondary roles into the twentieth century. Another nineteenth-century ship of some significance is the French armoured cruiser *Dupuy-de-Lôme*. Luc Feron has described

the purpose, design and tribulations of this unique ship, praised so highly when under construction, but a failure in service. By the time the engineering defects had been corrected during several overhauls and a partial reconstruction, the hull had become rotten and the design obsolete. A sale to Peru in 1911 was not, in the end, completed, and the ship was laid up until 1918 when it was converted to the cargo vessel *Peruvier*, which failed to complete its first voyage. A hard luck ship if there ever was one.

In the previous year, 2010, Conrad Waters described the latest air defence escorts of the European navies. This year he has done the same thing for the amphibious assault ships in the navies of France, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The most modern examples are the French *Mistral* class and the Spanish *Juan Carlos I* and these are compared and described in detail.

Ships planned but never built are always a feature of *Warship* annuals. "High Speed Thoroughbreds," an article by Trent Hone, explains the rationale for the six large battle cruisers that the United States Navy started to build at the end of the First World War. The various stages of the design process are illustrated, revealing that the remarkable version usually found in reference books, with boilers on two levels and seven funnels (looking like five in beam-view as there were two pairs) was not the final design: a 1919 revision would have produced a much more elegant silhouette. Although the battle cruisers were cancelled by the 1922 Washington Treaty, two ships, *Lexington* and *Saratoga*, were completed as aircraft carriers and the author notes that as such they could carry out all the functions envisaged for the battle cruisers and much more besides. Another battle cruiser design is described by John Jordan. A series of blueprints dated 1927 were discovered in the French archives showing well-developed plans for three alternative

designs of battle cruisers for the French Navy, the third one with enhanced protection, larger guns and less speed, making it closer to a fast battleship. The *Dunkerque* and *Strasbourg*, which were built a few years later, were smaller and quite different although, like two of the battle cruiser designs and the First World War battleship classes cancelled earlier, they featured quadruple turrets. On more or less the same theme, David Murfin has contributed an article on the evolution of the design of small cruisers for the Royal Navy inter-war period. This culminated in the *Dido* class. The title “Damnably Folly?” comes from one of Admiral Fisher’s intemperate statements.

A most interesting article is “Bussei’s Hydrofoil” by Enrico Cernuschi. While its main subject is the attempt to develop a hydrofoil torpedo boat for the Italian Navy during the Second World War, it includes the whole history of hydrofoil development since as early as 1861; but it was Ettore Bussei who, by continuous experimentation during and after the war, worked out the principles of a practical hydrofoil vessel. Canada’s *Bras d’Or* is mentioned.

Two naval actions are described. The Battle of Casablanca between the French naval forces and the U.S. Navy’s force covering that section of the invasion of North Africa in November 1942 is treated by Vincent P. O’Hara. The French, although surprised, put up much more than a token resistance and, had the four torpedoes fired by a French submarine hit the carrier USS *Ranger*, the result could have been different. In “Battle at Valparaiso,” Colin Jones speculates on what might have happened if American and British naval squadrons present had intervened when the Spanish naval force prepared to bombard Valparaiso in 1866. It is difficult to understand why Spain found it necessary to send a naval force to attack its

former colonies on the west coast of South America, but it met with no success.

There are two articles about accidental losses: the capsizing of the Japanese torpedo boat *Tomozuru* in 1934 by Hans Lengerer, and the wreck of the cruiser HMS *Effingham* in 1940 during the Norwegian campaign by Richard N. J. Wright. Wright’s research indicates that the Board of Enquiry, hastily convened just after the fall of France and the withdrawal from Norway, did not actually find the real cause of the navigational error which he deduces was simply mistaking a leading mark. The usual book reviews and photographic essay, the latter showing groups of Royal Navy warships in various ports between the wars, conclude this year’s annual.

C. Douglas Maginley
Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia

Glenn A. Knoblock. *Black Submariners in the United States Navy, 1940–1975*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. Inc., www.mcfarland.com, 2011. (Originally published 2005). ix + 484 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$45.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-7864-6430-2.

Although marginalized and often abused by society at large, African-Americans have consistently participated, often with distinction, in America’s wars. The U.S. Navy in particular has a long tradition of Black servicemen, and now servicewomen as well. The submarine service is no exception, though what is exceptional is that African-Americans on board submarines have often avoided much of the prejudice endured by their counterparts on ships and in the other branches of the military. Historian Glenn Knoblock illuminates their stories and depicts a navy in transition, overcoming its institutional prejudices and ultimately allowing African-Americans

equal standing with their brethren. Yet his work is, at its core, an intensely human story, and the reader sees the evolution of the U. S. Navy from the perspective of ordinary men who endured tremendous hardships, and experienced great victories, beneath the surface.

Knoblock's interest is in the perspective of the Black sailors themselves, and as such, his background discussion is rather cursory. Readers interested in the overall story of changing racial perceptions in the United States or the forces that led to integration in the Navy will have to look elsewhere. The secondary source base for what context Knoblock does provide is a bit thin as well, with the great bulk of citations going to Jack D. Foner's *Blacks and the Military in American History* (Praeger, 1974). What it lacks in context, though, *Black Submariners* more than makes up for in conveying the personal struggles and successes of African-American seamen. Knoblock relies chiefly on oral histories, and fills his account with anecdotes that range from humorous and inspirational to truly disheartening, showing that the experiences of this group were far from uniform.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Black sailors were confined to the role of stewards, and they could never hold a rank superior to the lowest enlisted White sailor. In fact, in the years after the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Navy phased out Black servicemen altogether, and the service only began accepting them as stewards again in 1932, when the numbers of Filipinos who normally staffed that position became too small. Despite their secondary status, stewards aboard submarines enjoyed dramatically better conditions than those aboard the Navy's surface vessels. The confined conditions onboard submarines fostered a measure of camaraderie, and submarine officers tended to be more attuned to the well-being of their

crews, including those who cooked their meals, than their counterparts on the surface.

A disproportionate section of the book, over half in fact, is dedicated to the Second World War, and the chapter addressing postwar developments offers considerably less detail. Nonetheless, Knoblock does an excellent job tracing the rapid evolution of the role of Black sailors in the submarine service. With President Truman's desegregation of the military in 1948, African-Americans could enter the Navy in capacities other than stewards, and current stewards had the opportunity to transfer to other roles. Progress was not immediate, however, as many stewards chose to remain in positions they found familiar and in which they enjoyed a measure of respect. Large numbers of incoming Black recruits found also themselves in the steward's branch even after desegregation.

Many submarine stewards faced racism in the Cold War as they had in earlier conflicts, but could take "consolation (in)... the fact that their fellow stewards on such ships as aircraft carriers, cruisers and the like had it much worse." (p.185) Still, the integration of the armed forces initiated a process of change that could not be reversed. In 1970, Admiral Elmo Zumwaldt, Jr. was named chief of naval operations, and set about rectifying lingering discrimination issues in the Navy. To accomplish this, he sought the counsel of former steward Melvin Williams, who had served with distinction even in a marginalized role to become steward for the Secretary of the Navy. Williams convinced Zumwaldt to completely overhaul the branch, renaming stewards "Mess Management Specialists," (now culinary specialists) and eliminating the most degrading functions of the position, such as shining officers' shoes. Knoblock ends his work on a high note, describing Williams,

who entered the Navy at a time when the best he could hope for was to act as a personal servant for high ranking officers, watching his son, Melvin Williams, Jr., assume command of his own submarine.

Over 120 pages at the end of the book are devoted to biographical sketches of African-Americans who served in the submarine service. This seems an odd decision by the publisher as these merely provide the source material that Knoblock used, without the analysis and context that the reader already has from the book itself. Most readers will skip this section entirely, and it is doubtful that any will want to read it as a whole. This coupled with Knoblock's cursory discussion of the postwar years, mars the book somewhat, but his work still provides an excellent introduction to the experiences of Black submariners, and it will certainly be of interest to anyone interested in the history of African-Americans, desegregation or the modern United States Navy.

Thomas Sheppard
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Angus Konstam. *Yangtze River Gunboats 1900-1949*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2011. 48 pp., illustrations, chronology, bibliography, index. UK £9.99, US \$17.95, CDN \$ 19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-84908-408-6.

This book reminded the reviewer of two movies on the same topic: *The Sand Pebbles* (1966) and 1957's *Battle Hell/Yangtze Incident: the Story of HMS Amethyst*. Aimed at a general readership, it provides a light account of one aspect of China's maritime history. The book is divided into several unequal parts and features many colour plates of gunboats, combat recreations and black and white photos that may be useful, but with no

scaled line-drawings of the crafts, modelers will have to look to other sources before attempting such a project.

The book begins with a short chronology and discussion of the circumstances that brought foreign powers to operate gunboats on China's rivers, specifically the Yangtze River, from the second half of the nineteenth century to the end of the Second World War. This particularly long river was navigable from the sea for about half its length, making it a natural conduit for Western trade. After the Second World War, China was no longer prepared to accept the old agreements, marking the end of the employment of these gunboats.

The second part oversees the development of Yangtze River gunboat forces by various nations. During the Great War, China remained neutral and most foreign gunboats were withdrawn, leaving only the American forces until they too entered the war. After the war, foreign powers returned, with the exception of Germany and Russia, but the instability in China meant that the foreign powers were more inclined to impose law and order. Over the following decade, foreign workers experienced many problems and many left China by the end of the 1920s. In 1931, Japan annexed Mongolia and General Chiang Kai-Shek succeeded in unifying most of China. In July 1937, the Chinese built a boom across the river preventing 21 European and American gunboats from reaching the open sea and Japanese forces shot at two British gunboats. Finally, in December, Japanese aircraft attacked and sank the American gunboat *Panay*. This incident caused outrage in the United States and hardened the American attitude toward Japan.

The beginning of the Second World War reduced the number of gunboats as well as seriously affecting trade with China. By late 1941, many American vessels had

left China and the remainder were either captured or sunk after the attack on Pearl Harbor. By the end of the war, the era of gunboats was over and, with the Communist victory in 1949, westerners were no longer welcome. The last incident involving a foreign warship on the river featured the sloop HMS *Amethyst* in April 1949. While on the river, the ship was fired upon and ran aground. It escaped ten weeks later and safely reached the open sea. This incident marked the end of a century of gunboat diplomacy on the Yangtze.

The next “chapter” looks at the influence of the Yangtze River on the design and development of gunboats. They needed a shallow draught while propellers and shafts had to be protected against grounding. They had to be small and manoeuvrable, but large enough to be impressive. Speed was essential whether to escape from trouble or to force their way through the rapids of the Yangtze gorges to reach the upper river. Before the Great War, gunboats were warships designed for somewhere else or ageing cast-offs; after the war, they were purpose-built river boats, although often designed by people who had little idea of what the service was actually like.

The next segment describes life aboard these gunboats. The ships lacked the most basic comforts, but the service was popular because Chinese crewmen performed the more menial duties. Commanding officers had substantial living quarters and, while an officer’s life was reasonably comfortable, it was less true for the ship’s company. Much time and effort were spent on ceremonial duties, courtesy visits and keeping the ship spotless. Gunboats were not bound by Chinese laws, however, and benefited from diplomatic immunity in China. The last part of the book lists the British and American boats providing data on their characteristics and short history of their career.

This book offers an introduction to the topic but a solid background is required. It is light and inconsistent in detailing only a few national boats and actions, mainly British and American, while barely mentioning other foreign gunboats. The book needs a general map of the Yangtze River to position the reader and support the text. The author introduces abbreviations, such as KMT and CCP, without explanations. Furthermore, the author concentrates on the last half-century of gunboats on the river. The biggest inconvenience is the absence of a conclusion for many of the secondary subjects it covers. Did the gunboats succeed in their missions? Which nations succeeded in meeting the design criteria? Which design was the best and why? What was life really like onboard? On a positive note, the book has a very concise bibliography that could be useful to expand research on the topic, although only for the British and American navies. In conclusion, this small book generates more questions than it answers.

Carl Gagnon
Ottawa, Ontario

Andrew Lambert (ed.). *Ship: A History in Art and Photography*. London: Anova Books, www.anovabooks.com, 2010. 378 pp., illustrations, index. UK £30.00, US \$39.95, CDN \$47.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84486-0760.

Andrew Lambert and more than 20 authors have put together a wonderful book containing images of 360 ships, “taking care to address form, function, meaning and image, nationality, success and failure, fame and notoriety—in fact and fiction, history, art and film.”(p.1) The editor and his authors are aware of the fact that their selection is highly debatable. So there is no reason to argue about their choices which

try to cover mainly European and American merchant vessels and warships. The time-dimension reaches from pre-1500 to 2010. Generally, each image of a vessel occupies more than half a page, while the remainder of the page is devoted to a very brief description of the painting, the photograph, the poster or the model of the ship depicted.

The most interesting part of the book—apart from the pleasure of looking at the pictures—is Andrew Lambert’s introduction. I cannot remember ever having read such an enthusiastic *tour de force* through the history of the ship. Again and again we are confronted with superlatives or dramatic wording. “The ship is the single most important artefact created by the human intellect.” (p.1) The ship is a “social construction.” (p.1) Building and operating ships “may explain the emergence of more democratic political institutions in seafaring communities.” (p.1) Ships can make “the transition to icons of disaster, hubristic emblems of human frailty in the face of the natural world.” (p.4) “The history of the ship is the history of man as a creative animal.” (p.4) Lambert’s intimate knowledge of the development of the ship through the centuries enables him to provide a condensed overview which is an appropriate introduction to the subject. This is a coffee table book that will be enjoyed by the ship lover. The maritime historian with a more scholarly interest will most likely be less impressed, but will admire the broad sweep through the history of the ship and competent introduction and descriptions.

Lars U. Scholl
Bremerhaven, Germany

Christopher Langtree. *The Kelly's*. London: Chatham Publishing, www.chathampublishing.com, 2003. 224 pages, illustrations, appendices, sources, index. UK £30. (CDN \$47.00 at Amazon.ca), ISBN 978-1-86176-166-8.

Going to conferences is regarded as a time to share information, and this year’s CNRS conference certainly was an opportunity to gain information that I did not previously have. Having built a model of HMS *Kelly* and wanting to show it off, I presented a paper about the ship, its namesake, its captain, and my model. The next morning Karl Gagnon showed me one of his treasured books—this book. I immediately realized that it answered some of the questions which I had posed the previous day, and so I ordered it to glean as much new information as I could.

So this book review is out of the ordinary. It has not been done as the result of a publisher wanting critical reaction or advertising, but out of a sincere belief that members of the CNRS need to know about this book.

When one thinks of destroyers, one often thinks of them operating in flotillas rather than as single ships. Yet, there are Second World War destroyers that come to mind because of their individuality, such as HMS *Kelly* (Capt. Mountbatten), the inspiration for the movie *In Which We Serve*. The book is named after it because HMS *Kelly* is perhaps the most famous of the Royal Navy’s 24 J-, K- and N-class destroyers of in the Second World War. They were built to one of the best wartime destroyer designs: strong hull, seaworthy, manoeuvrable, effective armament, able to survive incredible amounts of damage, and favourably compared to those of other nations (p. 202).

The photographs are generally excellent, and if they are not, it is because the original is of poor quality. They help

identify the camouflage sported by the ships at various epochs during the Second World War and on very close inspection (sometimes only available from the author's original photograph) indicate what equipment had been installed. Most pictures come from the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich) or the Imperial War Museum (London), Dutch and Australian museums, with identifying catalogue numbers, but some are from private collections. The former four sources mean that originals can be purchased by aficionados—like me.

The book starts with a thorough analysis of the design process for the J- and K-class destroyers, showing us some of the design options and telling us about some of the philosophy behind the design considerations. Ship stability and a small ship profile were definitely concerns and both were achieved by having only two boiler-rooms, one funnel and no ballasting. Ballasting was added later when equipment changed, particularly the installation of radar antennae and heavier anti-aircraft guns. A two-page spread diagram of the shell-plating and a table of the thickness of the plates are just two indicators of the thoroughness of the research.

One chapter is devoted to armament and another to camouflage. The paint colours and markings used by each of the 24 ships at various times are listed. Over the next twelve chapters, Langtree describes how each of the 24 ships contributed to the war effort—in flotillas or as individual ships when necessary. No small amount of research went into that! He strives to keep from being tedious, and is moderately successful. Also, he provides the critical post-mission analyses of battles or skirmishes prepared by superiors, which this reviewer found most interesting. The last chapter is an overall evaluation of the ships and a comparison with ships of other nations (United States, France, Germany,

Italy and Japan). The author found them “a highly successful design. They formed the basis for future classes of fleet destroyer and proved to be sturdy and adaptable.” (p.208) The value placed on the *Kellys* is perhaps illustrated by the fact that they continued to be repaired, improved and updated throughout the whole war.

My only word of adverse criticism is the use of an apostrophe in the book's title, whereas in the text of the book “the *Kellys*” is correctly spelt. The *Kellys* is used to refer all 24 ships in the general sense.

Well done, Christopher Langtree.

David H. Gray
Ottawa, Ontario

Mark Lardas. *American Light and Medium Frigates, 1794-1836*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2008. 48 pp., illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. US \$17.95, CDN \$21.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-84603-266-0.

Mark Lardas' continuation of his earlier study of American heavy frigates is an informative conclusion to the set. The author's perspective as a naval architect, engineer and ship-modeller offers a slightly different presentation of the topic from what a less technical historian would provide in so compact a book. The purpose of the book is to examine American shipbuilding policy in contrast with European trends as well as to analyze the resulting frigate operations. Lardas argues that American naval successes against the French in the Quasi-War of 1798-1800 resulted in poor shipbuilding policy decisions which led to specific naval failures against the British during the War of 1812. To support this argument, Lardas examines the operational successes of the ten frigates constructed between 1798-1800 as well as a number of similarly sized British and French ships that

were captured and inducted into American naval service.

As a very brief introduction to the topic, *American Light and Medium Frigates* serves admirably to whet the appetite for further research into design aspects that naval historians or those interested in American naval history may be less familiar with. Lardas also provides a very concise, engaging and informative narrative on the more political aspects of American shipbuilding policy. This narrative illustrates the influence of operational results from the Quasi War, of small-ship advocates like Thomas Truxtun, the naval architects who designed the ships, and the ship-building cities that provided smaller frigates and other “conscripted” warships on United States Navy shipbuilding decisions. The author’s argument that the United States Navy made a fundamental policy error in building light frigates, however, is less convincing without a corresponding study of heavier American frigates for side by side comparison. In addition, the author sometimes switches between referring to groups of ships by the number of guns carried, and the average weight of the broadside guns, which can be confusing.

The book’s beautiful drawings, photographs and illustrations add depth, and will help the reader navigate the technical classifications. The illustrations demonstrate what each vessel looked like, and delineate the visual differences between the types of ships discussed, as well as between individual ships themselves and the weapons employed. Overall, this book is an excellent introductory or quick reference work for those who are not familiar with the United States Navy in the age of sail.

Sam McLean
Mississauga, Ontario

Roger Litwiller. *Warships of the Bay of Quinte*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, www.dundurn.com, 2011. 197 pp. illustrations, notes, glossary, bibliography. CDN \$28.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-1554889297. (E-publication \$13.99.)

The Canadian navy has a long tradition of naming warships after geographical places in Canada. The practice started as a deliberate wartime exercise in public relations to foster connections between cities, towns, and small communities far from the sea and the nation’s naval service. The majority of Canada’s population lives away from coastlines, though for many people water is never far away with ready access to lakes and rivers, whether for work or recreational play. While ferries and working commercial boats may be familiar sights, warships are generally more unusual in Canadian inland waters. That said, several shipyards built escort vessels and minesweepers on the Great Lakes (normally demilitarized by bilateral agreement with the United States) during the Second World War. The idea of giving at least some of these warships names from nearby communities and areas appeared particularly fitting. Roger Litwiller, a ship enthusiast, paramedic by occupation, and proud resident of Trenton, traces the background and operational histories of six Canadian warships carrying names associated with the Bay of Quinte, an area popular with summer tourists, wine connoisseurs, apple lovers, and cottagers along the north shore of Lake Ontario between Toronto and Kingston. In other words, the Bay of Quinte represents a pretty spot with many charms and more than just passing ties to the water.

The book is organized into chapters for each of the named warships: HMCS *Napanee*, HMCS *Belleville*, HMCS *Hallowell*, HMCS *Quinte*, HMCS *Quinte (II)*, and HMCS *Trentonian*. The first two and last were built in Kingston, the third at

Montreal, the fourth North Vancouver in British Columbia, and the fifth at Port Arthur (Thunder Bay). Five were the products of Canada's wartime emergency shipbuilding program and saw active service on escort duty in the North Atlantic and as far away as the Caribbean and France; the other, a minesweeper commissioned in 1954, was part of a naval armament program at the time of the Korean War. The text describes the origins of the names, entry into naval service from the building yards, detailed narratives of operational activities, interesting aspects of the personnel who served on the warships, as well as final disposition upon decommissioning. A number of graphics and photographs illustrate the discussion, and tables at the end of each chapter give details on commanding officers, battle honours, and basic specifications. In that sense, Litwiller's book strives for something more than just the standard pictorial histories common in the maritime publishing trade, in the Canadian context represented best by Ken Macpherson's still much sought-after desktop books on Canadian warships. Macpherson, by the way, provides a short foreword to *Warships of the Bay of Quinte*, obviously pleased that someone younger shares his passion and continues on the cause of celebrating the ships of Canada's navy.

While the colour cover painting is striking and the illustrations inside well-chosen, the narrative in the chapters is the real strength of the book. Litwiller, by accounts an amateur historian, has researched to the level of academic historian by pursuing sources in Ottawa at Library and Archives Canada and the Department of National Defence's Directorate of History and Heritage, as well as local libraries and hidden gem holdings such as the Archives and Collections Society in Picton. He successfully transposes the local onto the national and international stage. The service lives of the individual warships are

significant for participation in select convoy battles, the escort of submarine U-190 surrendered to the Canadians in May 1945, and operations after the Allied invasion of France. Grounding and salvage of the minesweeper HMCS *Quinte* offers another interesting, often neglected, aspect of naval activity. Such misfortunes commonly result in boards of inquiry to establish the facts, and even courts martial to assign personal culpability, as in this case, on charges of hazarding HM ship. Litwiller never mentions what punishment the commanding officer actually received. The descriptive narrative, based on good research in primary sources, consistently demonstrates that warships and those who serve in them share distinct experiences. The crews of the Canadian warships, unlike geographically recruited battalions and regiments in the land forces, did not come from the same locale or region. In that sense, the name was commonly the only tie back to the Bay of Quinte.

Canada's current classes of patrol frigates and minesweepers bear the names of Canadian cities. Port visits and presence during important public events and statutory holidays reinforce civic connections with the navy. These gracefully maturing warships, notwithstanding refits and up-dates meant to extend operational serviceability (Canada is renowned world-wide for keeping older ships sailing longer than other navies), are due for replacement over the coming decades. The government has committed to a major domestic shipbuilding programme behind fleet renewal, based on awarding long-term contracts to private companies for two centres of excellence. Will any naval vessel ever be named after a locale in the Bay of Quinte again? Litwiller ably presents the legacy. It never hurts to ask.

Chris Madsen
Toronto, Ontario

Frank McLynn. *Captain Cook: Master of the Seas*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, www.yalebooks.co.uk, 2011. xx + 490 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index. US \$35.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-300-11421-8.

So we have another biography of James Cook. At first glance the book looks impressive. It is thick (nearly 500 pages) with a large section of colour illustrations and fifty pages of endnotes. The publisher is one of the most impeccable American academic bodies with a fine track record while the author is an academic historian with twenty or so books to his name. So where did it all go wrong?

In dealing with Cook, one man represents both a tremendous benefit and, at the same time, a huge problem. John Cawte Beaglehole lies at the heart of Cook scholarship. His editions of the journals of Cook's three Pacific voyages, published by the Hakluyt Society, represent some of the foremost historical research of the twentieth century, while his magisterial Cook biography, published after Beaglehole's own death, remains the definitive work on the explorer. As such, all writers coming after Beaglehole, including this reviewer, draw extensively from his works. Beaglehole did not get everything right, however; he missed some things, and his coverage of Cook's life before the Pacific is not nearly as good as the Pacific part. Later writers have also taken Beaglehole to task for some of his interpretations, for example, his negative attitude to Johann Reinhold Forster.

Anyone attempting a new biography, therefore, has a daunting task in front of them, given that Beaglehole has covered most things. What could or should we expect from such a new work? For a start, new information not available to earlier writers; and new perspectives or interpretations of existing information

assuming a better understanding of past events now exists. So does McLynn offer either of these in his book? The answer is a loud no.

As stated above, McLynn is the author of many books already. His Wikipedia entry calls him an author and journalist, so he knows how to write, and this book is very readable, flowing along at a merry pace. Wikipedia also lists his previous books, including biographies of such diverse persons as Charles Edward Stuart, Henry Morton Stanley, Robert Louis Stevenson, Napoleon, Carl Jung and Marcus Aurelius. Cook is, therefore, the latest in a long line. But that body of work suggests something else: that McLynn is a butterfly writer flitting from subject to subject. He acquires a superficial knowledge of a subject, writes a book on it, and then moves quickly on to his next project.

That this is the case with his Cook book comes across strongly. There is a lack of feel for matters surrounding Cook and there are just far too many errors for anyone who had studied Cook properly. For example, Elizabeth Cook's father was Samuel, not John, Batts while her cousin, not her brother, was a watchmaker. It was Nathaniel Portlock, not Porlock, on the third voyage and James, not William, Patten who saved Cook's life on the second voyage – and there are many more of these mistakes. One or two errors could be explained away by poor proofreading, but there are just too many for this excuse to hold.

Beaglehole was least successful when covering Cook's early life and McLynn is equally sketchy about this period. He manages to introduce several unproven anecdotes, including the "South Seas Shilling story" at Staithes, before invariably dismissing them as being without substance. He even suggests that Thomas Skottowe may have been Cook's real father! And an incident at Quebec that happened to Thomas Bissett (that of nearly being

captured by North American Indians while surveying in a small boat) is applied incorrectly to Cook.

Chapter 2 begins on page 18 with a reproduction of a chart of Halifax Harbour by James Cook. Unfortunately for McLynn, the chart is by a different James Cook. Proper research would have revealed to him that three James Cooks operated as Royal Navy masters in Nova Scotia in the 1760s and all drew charts. Similarly, the first illustration in the book, opposite page 172, purports to be the first portrait of James Cook done in 1759. While none of the three accepted portraits of Cook by Dance, Webber and Hodges really resemble each other, this portrait (allowing for its being about 13 years earlier) looks nothing like any of them. It would be interesting to know on what evidence this portrait can be said to be of Cook.

McLynn can write, but I find it somewhat pretentious that he litters his text with so many foreign phrases; for example, *via dolorosa*, *coup de théâtre*, *fidus Achates*, *bien pensant* and *coup de foudre* crop up regularly. On one hand, McLynn adds accents to French names (La Pérouse) but largely ignores them in Pacific words, so that Hawai'i appears as Hawaii and Māori appears as Maori (Māori is also a plural, so there is no need to put Māoris). Given that we no longer use Otaheiti for Tahiti, it seems strange that Omai continues to appear when that man's name was Mai.

McLynn criticizes Cook for not understanding the complexities of Tahitian society. One of the pluses of the book is that McLynn does provide an explanation of that society but he is able to do so with two hundred years' hindsight. Sadly, he does not offer similar backgrounds to Tongan and Māori society, which were equally complex to the outsider. Cook was no anthropologist, so to expect him to grasp these matters in a matter of a few weeks and with the added problem of not being able to

freely converse because of language is unrealistic.

Having done some research on James Wolfe, the "victor" at Quebec in 1759, I do not pretend to be a particular admirer of the general. McLynn, though, positively detests the man and every mention is accompanied by a vicious put down. Meanwhile, Cook is several times compared with the explorer of Africa, Henry Stanley, whom McLynn obviously admires. The following strange comment occurs on page 1: "In both men the early years and subsequent trial of surviving the snobbery of their 'betters' left a legacy of subterranean rage, more easily visible from an early age with Stanley, but in Cook's case slowly germinating with ultimately fatal results."

To my mind, McLynn's understanding of Cook could not be more wrong and he does little in the book to substantiate his statement. To use a twentieth-century expression, Cook was a "working-class Tory." He accepted how society was, even taking comfort from it, and would have been appalled by later events, such as the French Revolution, had he lived to witness them. He believed in hard work and, through it, the possibility of some advancement. His ultimate downfall owed nothing to a "subterranean rage" about class. This piece from McLynn sets a tone for the book which should make the reader wary of what is to follow. Other throw-away assessments appear.

Finally, McLynn dwells upon gales as well as 100-foot waves throughout the book. Strangely, 100-foot waves are given a separate appendix. Ship's logs of the period dutifully recorded the weather, so every wind or calm was mentioned. Since this was long before Beaufort developed his terminology for different winds, Cook and others used gale to describe any moderate to strong wind. Besides, for Cook, storms were a fact of life and represented just one

of the many risks of going to sea.

While too many books are published about Cook (repeating the same old facts and adding nothing fresh), there is probably space for a good, new biography. Unfortunately, this is not that book.

John Robson
Hamilton, New Zealand

William H. Miller. *SS Nieuw Amsterdam: The Darling of the Dutch*. Stroud, Glos.: distributed by Casemate Publishing, www.casematepublishing.com, 2010. 96 pp., illustrations, bibliography. U.S. \$34.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-84868-366-2.

William Miller's *SS Nieuw Amsterdam: The Darling of the Dutch* is an outstanding paperback history of the great Dutch liner *Nieuw Amsterdam* in which my brother and I had the pleasure of a westbound crossing in June 1969. As students returning home after a year attending British universities, we were hardly in a financial position to cross in anything other than tourist class, but that was no hardship on board the celebrated "Darling of the Dutch." Our cabin was at the water line, however, and I never will forget my brother's comment that: "If she springs a leak, we are going to have wet feet fast." There was little danger of that eventuality.

Unfortunately Miller spends almost no time or space on anything but the first class experience. First Class was magnificent, but in any comprehensive history of the vessel, her other two classes certainly warranted more consideration. The absence of any references to the magnificent photographic collection of the Netherlands Maritime Museum in Amsterdam reduces the impact of the illustrations in the 96-page paperback. Significant "Tourist Class" photographs exist in that outstanding collection! Nevertheless, if just from a "First Class"

perspective, the volume is well illustrated. The cost of the book at \$34.95 is pricey for a paperback, which undoubtedly will reduce sales and is to be regretted.

It also should be realized that Miller has covered the subject before in his hard-bound volumes distributed in North America by W.W. Norton & Company, so this new effort does not represent the only source of information from this author's prolific pen. The book's bibliography lists only 13 works and ignores such first-class sources of information as N.R.P. Bonsor's *North Atlantic Seaway* and the Steamship Historical Society of America's "Steamboat Bill" (now, "Motorship"). Nevertheless, anyone fortunate enough to obtain a copy of William Miller's *S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam, The Darling of the Dutch* will be delighted to add it to their maritime collection.

William H. Flayhart III
Dover, Delaware

William Michael Morgan. *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry over the Annexation of Hawai'i, 1885-1898*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2011. x + 230 pp., notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-529-5.

In April 2008, a group calling itself the Hawaiian Kingdom Government occupied Honolulu's Iolani Palace to protest the United States' 1898 annexation of the archipelago. Though the demonstration fizzled out after a couple of days, it reminded the world of the passionate emotions that the annexation still stirs over a century later. Into this milieu enters William Morgan's monograph that studies the ebb and flow of events of the 1890s that ultimately led to the American seizure of Hawaii. Using primary sources from Hawaii, the United States, Britain, and Japan, Morgan provides a new and thorough

retelling of the annexation process, even if his work is somewhat overly-analytical.

Morgan purports to offer a comprehensive study of Hawaiian annexation, “an interlocking analysis on three levels: global, national, and local” (p.4), deftly portraying the process as a result of seemingly unconnected events, fortuitously-placed personalities, and both long- and short-term developments. The author essentially begins the work with European contact, the diseases which so decimated the population that by the 1890s, only one-third of the islands’ residents were Polynesian. Reciprocity treaties with the United States in 1867 and 1877 encouraged the sugar industry but also necessitated an influx of labour, mostly Japanese. The sugar boom splintered the island’s politics after the 1874 ascension of King Kalākaua, as white sugar planters wanted closer economic integration with the United States while native Hawaiians desired to maintain Hawaiian culture. This fragmentation led to the 1887 Bayonet Constitution, which severely restricted the Hawaiian monarch, and when rumours spread in 1893 that Kalākaua’s successor, Queen Lili’uokalani, was to impose a new constitution, whites overthrew the monarchy. Contrary to previous studies, Morgan asserts that while U.S. officials in Hawaii at the time, most especially Minister John Stevens, were not actively complicit in the overthrow, their inactions fed the rebels’ confidence. In Washington, Grover Cleveland’s new anti-expansionist administration (1893-1897) commissioned the Blount Report, which found annexation unpopular in Hawaii and Stevens’ actions unauthorized, and attempted to restore Lili’uokalani, which Morgan calls a “fiasco” (p.135) because the plan ignored power realities on the islands. Cleveland then ironically surrendered the issue to Congress and effectively created what Morgan calls an “informal protectorate” (p.136) by disallowing other

nations to imperialize the islands.

A series of subtle trends in the mid-1890s, according to Morgan, ultimately paved the way for annexation by 1898. The first of these was the naval ideology of Alfred Thayer Mahan. “Mahan probably did more,” the author writes, “than any other person to explain Hawaii’s immense strategic value to the United States.” (p.154) Indeed, Mahan wrote many articles after 1893 to convince Americans of the strategic value of the islands to provide a coaling station, to defend an isthmian canal, and to protect the Pacific coast. The Republicans agreed and won control of Congress and the Presidency by 1897. Nonetheless, the Hawaii issue would have remained dormant, Morgan finds, unless something catalyzed action. Providing that catalyst was massive Japanese immigration to the islands, which had “immense consequences for eventual annexation” (p.188). Coming off the successes of the First Sino-Japanese War and revision of many unequal treaties with the European powers, Japanese Foreign Minister Count Okuma pushed for greater immigration to Hawaii and, once there, for the immigrants to have equal rights, including suffrage. Even though Okuma’s brinkmanship regarding Hawaii ended with the fall of his cabinet in November 1897, Washington’s Republicans feared eventual Japanese domination of the islands and pushed through annexation by July 1898. In short, Morgan concludes, Hawaiian “annexation was more heavily influenced by strategic factors than any other imperial acquisition or policy” and was ultimately spurred by the fear of Japanese expansion.

Morgan should be commended for both his analysis and his balance. He brings important concepts to the discussion, especially the Japanese threat as an impetus to annexation, much of which is lacking in the extant literature. Likewise, Morgan’s study is balanced: he denigrates the actions of U.S. officials in the 1893 coup as

inappropriate, but also surmises that Hawaiians wanted to maintain the monarchy as “the end in itself” rather than finding “schemes for improving people’s lives” (p.54).

Even so, one minor problem mars Morgan’s study: especially in the first half of the book, Morgan’s over-analysis hinders his narrative flow. As a former foreign service officer and, presently, a professor of strategic studies, analysis has clearly been at the centre of Morgan’s professional career and it shows in *Pacific Gibraltar*. For example, Morgan spends two pages analyzing why the *Boston* sailors decided to bivouac at Arion Hall, rather than elsewhere in Honolulu, when they landed on 16 January 1893, only to admit that “the positioning of the landing was far less important than the landing itself” (p.94) because any location in the compact city would have been effective. Likewise, Morgan admits that “all analysis, [of Congressional debates on annexation] including this one, are subjective,” (p.229) because the Republicans already had the votes and most of the so-called debate merely justified their votes to constituents. Nonetheless, the former analyst then spends about six pages reviewing it anyway! Morgan’s analysis is adept but often unnecessary and distracts from an otherwise well-written narrative.

While it is perhaps unfair of the reviewer to laud then to criticize Morgan for his analysis, this book focuses more on interpretation than on narrative. With the exception of the Japanese threat, much of the factual information has long-since been available and, while most of Morgan’s analysis is well substantiated and adroit, the reader very easily loses the larger narrative. As such, this book is best positioned for scholars of America’s imperial expansion around 1900 than any larger audience.

James Knarr
Lincoln, Nebraska

Peter Pigott. *Sailing Seven Seas: A History of the Canadian Pacific Line*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, www.dundurn.com, 2010. 228 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography, index. CDN \$35.00, hardback; ISBN 978-1-55488-765-1.

This book deserves a place in every Canadian library, public or private. Peter Pigott pulls off a rare hat-trick; his book is well written, entertaining and informative. *Sailing Seven Seas* is essential reading for anyone interested in the era of great ships and trans-Atlantic crossings, transportation and infrastructure, social hierarchies or business history. The author’s writing style is cool and crisp and a story which could have been dragged down in detail is, instead, moved along at a refreshing clip.

Pigott orders his subject matter chronologically starting with the Act of Parliament that first granted the Canadian Pacific company the right to run ships on any water that reached or connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway and ending with the shipping line’s demise in 2005. In exploring this history, the author touches on the evolution of trans-Atlantic commerce from cargo to passengers, the competition between shipping lines for both, the pressure for ever-shorter crossing times and the social status of all on board, crew and passengers. In some respects, it is this latter aspect which is most fascinating. The glamour and prestige of passengers on these beautiful ships are well documented in book, film and lore, but Pigott takes the time to remind us of the grim and grinding work of the crew, their low pay and a shipboard class system as rigid as any found on land.

The title of this book is a bit of a misnomer; little is mentioned of the art of driving these great ships. Pigott acknowledges this in his introduction: “*Sailing Seven Seas* is about people—stewardesses and captains— and the ships

they knew—the Princesses, Empresses and Beavers.” On this point, the author succeeds admirably and in fairness, Pigott warns that “Readers with nautical interest are warned that they will find little here that is new.” What is described, however, usually flows from accident reports of the shocking number of accidents involving Canadian Pacific ships. The worst was the sinking of the *Empress of Ireland* off Cap-de-la-Madeleine in the St. Lawrence, a tragedy which cost over a thousand lives including children. The author’s decision to omit the fact that over 50 percent of the crew survived the sinking, while a mere 20 percent of the passengers escaped the calamity is surprising to say the least.

One need not be a nautical expert to include relevant safety records in the history of a shipping line. On this point, the author must be faulted. He relies uncritically on past exonerations, never considers the possibility of bribes, power and pressure being exerted on the boards determining fault and completely fails to compare CP’s safety record against those of other shipping lines.

Balancing this oversight is the author’s solid reporting on the technological advances that changed the industry. Improvements in radars, radio, signalling and navigational tools are described against the back story of the unrelenting push towards sophisticated and safer ocean travel.

Depending on one’s preferences, one can either appreciate the author’s “six degrees of separation” approach to the passenger list of the wealthy and the powerful or critique the lack of similar information about the steerage passengers. If people are the focus of this work, then we learn too little about most of them and too much about a few. Is it really necessary to note that one passenger later gave birth to the man who would eventually help design the Avro Arrow?

In the end, a disconnect is created between the somewhat critical examination of the line as discussed in the introduction and the occasionally fawning reports which fill the rest of the chapters. This is largely because the author too often writes his history in isolation from the other shipping lines. Besides a comparison of safety records, it would be useful to know how the shipping line did in terms of profits, troop transportation and government subsidies. How did the cost of travel with Canadian Pacific compare to other lines? Where did the ships make their money—from steerage or first class? Did the company charge so much to carry soldiers home after the First World War that thousands and thousands of Canadians were left stranded in post-war France for over a year? Certainly other shipping companies did.

One cannot fault an author for limiting his approach but Pigott does such an excellent job of describing the shipping line as part of national Canadian history that one is left hungry for more. What made the “Canadianization” of these ships so successful? What impact did its branding have on Canadian culture? Was there backlash when the ships sank? Did the truth about steerage ever eclipse the selling of luxury?

This is a fascinating book on a little-explored subject in Canadian history. Canadians would be well served by more writing by this author since his work is both interesting and essential.

Post Script – On October 14th, 2011 the Globe and Mail reported that the last remaining CP steamship, the SS Keewatin, is returning from Michigan to Port McNicoll, Ontario, where it will be the centrepiece of the revitalization of that port.

Barbara Winters
Ottawa, Ontario

James Pritchard. *A Bridge of Ships: Canadian Shipbuilding during the Second World War*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, www.mqup.ca, 2011. xxv + 438 pp., illustrations, figures, tables, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$54.95, cloth; ISBN 978-07735-3824-5.

The achievement of Canadian shipbuilders and their allied industries during the course of the Second World War is simply astonishing. Surprisingly, this remarkable industrial effort has remained relatively unheralded—overshadowed perhaps by a greater public interest in the wartime achievements of the Canadian military—until now, that is. In this remarkable book, author James Pritchard, a past President of CNRS and professor emeritus of history at Queen's University, tells the complete story in great detail of just how that wartime effort came about.

Shipbuilding in Canada has never been viewed by the public, and especially not by the federal government, as critical to national industrial strength. In the twentieth century, the industry underwent a series of boom and bust cycles with its normal state being closer to bust. It was only during the two world wars, and for all-too-brief periods after the cessation of hostilities, that prodigious output was achieved as the industry thrived on the desperate need for ships to support the Allied war effort. During the First World War, Canada's shipbuilding capability proved to be a critical asset for Britain when Canadian yards turned out submarines, anti-submarine trawlers and drifters, deep sea cargo ships and tankers in relatively significant numbers for the account of the British government. It was a remarkable achievement, even if it was essentially a "build-to-print" operation.

In the early 1920s, the federal government attempted to capitalize on the capability built up during wartime and keep employment levels up after the war was

over. It established the Canadian Government Merchant Marine (CGMM) which was operated by Canadian National Steamships. Unfortunately, CGMM was never successful and failed to achieve one of its aims of keeping the shipbuilding industry thriving. The government lost interest in providing on-going subsidies to keep shipbuilders afloat. Canadian ship owners had little incentive to use Canadian shipbuilders since a favourable tariff structure meant they could build ships in Britain much more cheaply.

The onset of the Depression of the 1930s exacerbated the decline of the industry so that by the onset of the Second World War, it was barely surviving, uncompetitive internationally and technically backward. There was very little specialized allied industry to outfit any ships, and there was an extremely limited naval architectural design capability in Canada. This is what makes the results obtained during the course of the Second World War even more surprising: that it could be developed from such a moribund state into the largest industry in Canada devoted to the war effort in the space of barely four years—even if it was, again, a "build-to-print" process.

The book is organized logically to describe comprehensively the organization that the government put into effect to manage and run the expansion of the industry; how it coped with the demands being placed by ever-increasing requirements for shipping as the war progressed; the impact of material and labour shortages on the competing demands of new building and ship repair; and, ongoing labour and safety issues. The author has constructed the chapters so that each is, in effect, a self-contained analysis, with its own introduction, main part and conclusion. This is particularly well done since it does not disrupt the overall flow and cohesion of the narrative. There is an

abundance of data presented in tabular form which at times can be overwhelming.

The early chapters addressing the situation in the first years of the war paint a picture of a government scrambling to come to grips with the daunting task facing it with respect to shipbuilding. There is much to be critical about during that period. Politics and regional interests, always a major factor in Canadian government procurement, loom large and the role played by C. D. Howe, the so-called “Minister of Everything,” is carefully scrutinized. The author reserves his strongest criticism, however, for the actions of Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and its leadership in its handling of the crises in shipbuilding and ship repairing. He also takes to task some naval historians for seemingly seeking to gloss over the inadequacies of the leadership of the RCN during those crucial early years by pointing their fingers in other directions.

One minor complaint, in the glossary and several times in the text, is the definition of the abbreviation “rpm” when referring to ship propulsion. It is defined as “rotations per minute” when the correct term is “revolutions per minute.”

There is no doubt that this work is the most comprehensive and accurate of the few that have been written on this subject. It is an objective analysis of an incredible industrial achievement and it is a tribute to those who built the ships and made an essential contribution to the war effort. The publisher states on the jacket, as does the author in the text, that the industry has disappeared from the land and from memory. Hardly; as recent events in ship procurement indicate. Canadian shipbuilding is essentially in a state similar to that in which it was in 1939—on life-support but not dead. It will never thrive in Canada, but the life-support mechanism is government contracts—just as it has been for nearly a century. And there are symbols of that great effort still around. The Naval

Memorial in Halifax, the corvette HMCS *Sackville*, is a product of the wartime shipbuilding program. On the West Coast, the former HMCS *Cape Breton*, a wartime “Victory” product of the merchant ship program at the Burrard Shipyard in Vancouver, is an artificial reef near Nanaimo, BC. Her stern section, rudder, propeller, main engine and shaft line are in North Vancouver awaiting display in the planned Maritime Centre.

Michael Young
Ottawa, Ontario

Martin Robson. *Not Enough Room to Swing a Cat: Naval Slang and its Everyday Usage*. London: Anova books, , 2010. (Originally published in 2008). 176 pp., illustrations, appendix, further reading. UK £7.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84486-073-9.

There are already a number of books that categorize and define traditional navy slang, but Martin Robson’s colourfully titled work, *Not Enough Room to Swing a Cat*, adds much to this genre. Instead the format of many lexicons on the subject, the author focuses on slang terms that have worked their way into the common vernacular. Robson’s book serves as an excellent introduction to the world of naval slang by dealing with phrases and terms that most readers will find somewhat familiar. This is not to say that the work is without criticism, but the author’s attempt to create a book that explains many nautical phrases used ashore in a surprisingly wide variety of places, is successful.

The layout of the book is simple and serves its intended purpose. Arranged thematically rather than alphabetically, the chapters each address a particular theme from grog and insults, to corporal punishment at sea, with the result that pieces of slang around similar topics are kept together. A brief historical overview of

each theme and its subject matter quickly captures the reader's attention. Each term is typically accompanied by a description detailing its application outside of the nautical world followed by its traditional meaning and origin, as can best be determined by the author. Humorous illustrations depict a literal interpretation of the slang presented, serving as a pleasant visual accompaniment to the work. The index provides a useful list of terms covered within the book. Robson's style offers an enjoyable read that avoids becoming too dry and academic while still delving into the actual origin of these phrases and their contextual place within modern language. He admits that he is not attempting to create a dictionary of terms or another lexicon of naval slang, so those interested in finding this level of usefulness from the work are advised to look elsewhere. In fact, the author even recommends several books to those wanting a more complete lexicon.

Due to the book's emphasis on the casual enthusiast of nautical history, *Not Enough Room to Swing a Cat* falls short of being an academic resource, though it could be used as a good starting point for those interested in pursuing further research. Veterans of the subject matter will likely recognize the majority of the slang and may be disappointed that a number of the terms seem to lack a source or point of origin. Someone new or relatively unread in nautical subjects would find this book an excellent way to familiarize themselves with phrases they encounter on a daily basis.

Not Enough Room to Swing a Cat, does not cover all of the slang terms and phrases associated with the sea, but given how enjoyable this book is, a second installment should certainly be considered. Despite any shortcomings, Robson has taken a unique approach to covering the subject matter presented in this book, which should have a broad appeal to those

interested in nautical history or the evolution of the English language.

Tristan Danner
Pensacola, Florida

Norman Sparksman. *Jottings of a Young Sailor*. Ely, UK: Melrose Books, www.melrosebooks.com, 2008. v+157 pp., illustrations. UK £12.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-906050-35-1.

Norman Sparksman was born in Richmond, near London, in 1920, and moved with his parents to Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1925. He was educated at Methodist College, Belfast, and served in the Royal Navy (RN) from 1941 to 1946. *Jottings of a Young Sailor* is a self-depiction of his experiences as a "Hostilities Only," rating (1941-1942) and later, as an officer in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) (1942-1946).

The author gives no reason for writing this book, nor any objective for its publication. The "About Norman Sparksman" blurb inside the back cover states that he is a Life Member of the Russian Convoy Club and a Holder of the Arctic Emblem issued by the British Ministry of Defence, as well as the 60th Anniversary Commemorative medal issued by the Russian government. What sources, other than personal memory, were consulted in the production of this story are not given, with one exception, a photograph of the "Painted Hall, Greenwich College" (when the author was in attendance in 1942, the name in fact was the Royal Naval College, Greenwich). Whatever his reasons, he has written a spirited, revelatory, and engaging story of a young man's passionate desire to serve his country at sea, despite the impediment of less-than-perfect eyesight that required the wearing of corrective glasses.

Always interested in the sea, ships

and anything maritime, Sparksman was a member of Ballyholme Yacht Club. He first applied for membership in the RNVR in 1938, and again, at the outbreak of war, in September 1939. On each occasion he passed a written examination in seamanship, navigation, etc., and then an interview board on their practical application. Similarly, he passed both medicals except for the eyesight test, which he failed because of "mild myopia," known more generally as "short sightedness." It was the first of many setbacks throughout his life caused by defective sight.

Still anxious to go to sea, Sparksman applied at the naval recruiting office where he was accepted as a volunteer (there was no conscription in Northern Ireland), enrolled as an ordinary seaman telegraphist, and then sent home to await his call-up. Almost two years later, on 18 June 1941, he was told to report to the signals training school in Devonport, one of the three Naval Divisional Ports (Portsmouth and Chatham were the others).

Part way through his telegraphy course, Sparksman was selected for officer training. This involved two months pre-sea training; six months sea time on the lower deck on active service; an interview board presided over by one's seagoing captain; successful completion of three junior officer courses at naval training schools; and finally, passing an Admiralty selection board. He accepted, on the understanding that he could serve at sea as an officer and then re-mustered as a CW (Commissions & Warrants) candidate in the Seaman Branch. After two months of basic seaman training at HMS *Raleigh*, Sparksman joined HMS *Edinburgh* in November 1941 at Vaalfjord, Iceland. *Edinburgh* was a Town class cruiser, first commissioned 6 July 1939 (displacement: 13,000 tons; speed: 32 knots; armament: 12 x 152 mm in three turrets, 12 QF 101.6mm). The ship was engaged in patrolling the straits between

Iceland and Greenland and escorting convoys to and from northern Russia.

As part of the escort for Convoy QP11, HMS *Edinburgh*, carrying over five tons of gold bullion (U.S.S.R. payments for war materials), departed Kola Inlet, 28 April 1942. Barely 24 hours out, *Edinburgh* sustained two torpedo hits from a German submarine. The crippled ship was endeavouring to return to Kola Inlet when it was hit by a third torpedo from a German destroyer the following day. Survivors were taken off and *Edinburgh* was given the *coup de grace* by a torpedo from a British destroyer. Sparksman survived wearing only shirt, trousers and gym shoes and spent three months at Vaenga on the north coast of Russia with little or no food. Eventually, he took passage to Iceland, then to Liverpool, and so back to Devonport. He had been away nine months, some three months of which had been spent ashore in Russia. During that time, he had successfully appeared before an interview board conducted by his captain, also a survivor from *Edinburgh*. After a spell of leave, followed by further courses at HMS *King Alfred* (officer-training school at Hove, Sussex) the author was commissioned sub-lieutenant RNVR.

Selected to be a gunnery officer of Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships (DEMS), Sparksman underwent a six-week gunnery course. Although he did well on the course, fate continued to frustrate his desire to serve at sea and he was appointed as a DEMS gunnery inspection officer, first at Belfast and then in April 1945 at Calcutta, India. The end of the war in August 1945 changed the role of the DEMS inspector from arming to disarming merchant ships. Finally, in June 1946, Sparksman was released from Naval Service. His resettlement leave expired on 14 August 1946, from whence he became once more a civilian.

Jottings of A Young Sailor is an

eyewitness account of five years of naval service during the Second World War that takes the reader along to service ashore and afloat, from the Arctic Ocean to the Bay of Bengal and places along the way, in the progress of a “raw recruit” to lieutenant, RNVR. It is the story of staunch fellow who comes across as a convivial messmate, regardless of the mess.

A good read for plane or train.

Len Forrest
Ottawa, Ontario

David J. Stewart. *The Sea, Their Graves: An Archaeology of Death and Remembrance in Maritime Culture (New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology)*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, 2011. xv +259 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$69.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8130-3734-9.

Do sailors and their culture have a different view of death and the afterlife than the rest of society? And if so, how do their memorials—tombstones, memorial plaques, epitaphs, and the like—reflect and reveal these differences? It sounds fascinating, and it is ground that hasn’t really been covered in maritime archaeology, so there ought to be a lot of interesting new information here. After all, the sailor’s whole view of the world, as a culture often set apart by class, economics, and sheer physical distance has always been considered out of the ordinary, and sometimes almost mythical in quality.

Alas, all the meaty and stimulating differences one might hope to find out about aren’t in this book—perhaps, as the author continually reminds us, because sailors and their culture aren’t all that different, after all. Historically, the sailor was ultimately tied to the land, especially at the end of life when it was usually people and memorials

on land which left the evidence, even though the sailor himself might have been lost somewhere beneath the trackless ocean, never to actually be returned to a landside grave.

Nevertheless, there are certain aspects of the sailor’s life, and death, that truly do set him apart. One is the relative peril that constantly hangs over him. Using historical and modern statistics, the author points out that no profession is more dangerous or has a higher rate of work-related death and injury. The only profession that comes close is logging. So death is an ever-present possibility and has built a culture that grins and bears it, and wherever possible, jokes about it and sloughs it off, even as it hangs overhead like the sword of Damocles. It makes for a folk group, as the author labels it, that is very mutually supportive of its own.

Another thing that sets apart end-of-life issues for maritime culture is that unlike most who more predictably live, die, and are buried on land, the sailor quite often died at sea, and was either missing entirely or was formally buried at sea, so nothing remained of him on land except for the occasional memorial stone. Denied the usual closure that a landside burial brings, memorial stones and church-wall plaques have often been the only way to both keep alive memory and register separation. It is quite similar to the sort of grief and frustration endemic to families of those missing in action (MIAs) in modern times, though the author unfortunately doesn’t explore this parallel.

Finally, the sailor has had a traditional skepticism toward religion, and maritime folklore is rampant with stories and myths concerning ghosts, spirits, and how to handle them which somewhat parallel landside beliefs but which are not subsumed by traditional Christian doctrines as they tend to be on land. Despite great efforts to convert seamen during the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the church never really made significant inroads upon the world of the seafarer. If there is any real difference of attitude toward death and dying between sea and land, this is where the story lies. The sea is a world apart, almost like the afterlife itself. The author touches on it, but doesn't really give it sufficient due. Why did the seafarer steadfastly remain, in essence, somewhere between an agnostic and a pagan, with more belief in spirits than in the Holy Spirit? The author conveniently refers us to the excellent work of Horace Beck, who does indeed cover this much more thoroughly, but only suggests further reading.

Throughout, the author refers to folklore and folk music as possible keys for insight, but he appears not conversant enough in either to complete the task, and his occasional misreferences to both demonstrate they are not his strong suit. That is too bad, because this book almost gets you there. It spends most of its time in scholarly setup (and sometimes apologies) of the ways of classifying the subject, with too little time in coming to grips with the heart of it or drawing needed conclusions. As a first step in approaching the subject from a purely archaeological point of view, it may serve its purpose, but it would be nice to see a follow-up that explains just why the sailor regards death as he does, and what the shape of that regard, from an inner viewpoint, really is. Lots of circumstantial evidence here, but what it points to, in the end, is not at all clear.

John Townley
Sea Cliff, New York

Michael Sturma. *Surface and Destroy: The Submarine Gun War in the Pacific*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky. www.kentuckypress.com, 2010. Distributed in Canada by Scholarly Book Services, www.sbookscan.com. x + 248

pp., illustrations, tables, appendix, notes, maps bibliography, index. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8131-2996-9.

On 22 May 1946, Captain G.M. Gilbert, a U.S. Army staff psychiatrist at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, noted in his diary that Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet had sent a statement to the tribunal in response to a request for information. "Yes," the Admiral had written, "the United States, like Nazi Germany, had engaged in unrestricted submarine warfare from the outset." German admirals, Dönitz and Raeder, were delighted. "You see," Raeder cried out, "*unrestricted warfare!*—anything is permitted as long as you win! The only thing you mustn't do is lose!" (G. M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary* (Signet paperback ed., 1961), 316)

At first glance, Michael Sturma's short book seems to be about a very esoteric part of the Pacific War; surface action by American and British submarines against Japanese small craft. These included junks, sailing vessels and very small steamers that did not merit a torpedo spread, or even a single "fish," but that nonetheless, might be carrying materials of war. Such targets became increasingly attractive, though not necessarily important, as the war progressed and the bigger Japanese merchant ships, especially the all-important tankers, were sent to the bottom. So, one thinks, Professor Sturma has written a mildly interesting study of a remote corner of a very large conflict. Nothing could be further from the truth, for in fact, the author has elevated his subject to a compelling meditation on the nature of modern war.

Many of the small craft flagged with the Rising Sun carried at most two or three Japanese military people; many others were manned exclusively by civilians (including women and youngsters) or, equally often, by Korean or Malay

nationals. "In reality," Sturma writes, surfaced "submarines often sank vessels" at close range with their 3-, 4-, or 5-inch deck guns and smaller arms "with no knowledge of their cargoes and little regard for crews and passengers. The prospect of being spotted by enemy planes tended to deter hanging around to help survivors." (p.98) Set against such callousness (to put the best face on it) is the incontestable fact that in this area of warfare as in all the others, the Japanese far outran their Western antagonists. On the relatively few occasions when enemy submarines attacked British and American vessels on the surface, "the Japanese propensity toward atrocities" was striking (p.53). Moreover, on several occasions, Allied submarine crews inadvertently sank Japanese prison ships and learned first-hand from the few survivors their awful mistreatment at Japanese hands. Coupled with the Pearl Harbor attack, such incidents understandably created a certain bloodlust among the submarine crews.

The most inexcusable American action of the war occurred in January 1943 when Dudley Walker ("Mush") Morton's *Wahoo* torpedoed the Japanese troop transport *Buwo Maru* north of New Guinea, then surfaced to machine gun survivors. Morton and his crew insisted that they were fired upon from the water and the commander Pacific Fleet Submarines, Admiral Charles Lockwood, backed him up. But the incident seemed inexcusable to many and it has tarnished Morton's reputation to the present day. Nonetheless, many an American and British submariner agreed with Morton that the Japanese were fanatic fighters who had to be wiped out wherever and whenever found. They carried such sentiments into battle, and often acted upon them. Sturma also includes a number of acts of generosity among Allied submarine crews. Filipino and Malay survivors were taken aboard and brought to freedom when possible. In other instances, survivors were

given food, water, and the best course to steer toward land.

In the end, however, many Allied submariners could not escape the implications of the kind of war they were fighting, which, the author brilliantly demonstrates, was very much like the Allied war in the air against both Germany and Japan. Both the air and submarine campaigns were indiscriminate wars of attrition designed to destroy in every way conceivable the enemy's ability and will to fight. Total war against soldiers and civilians alike was the inevitable result and as the author notes, whereas civilian deaths in the "Great War" of 1914-18 accounted for about five percent of total casualties, the figure rose to fifty per cent for the Second World War. Yet as Sturma notes, only wars of attrition from the air and beneath and on the surface of the seas could bring the enemy to its knees. "According to the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, bombing did more than anything else to convince Japanese civilians of the futility of continuing the war. Submarine attacks on small craft off Japan's coastlines reinforced the same message." (p.168)

One can debate Professor Sturma's argument, but that simply reflects the enduring value of his work. Highly recommended.

Lisle A. Rose
Edmonds, Washington

Jean Sutton. *The East India Company's Maritime Service 1746-1834: Masters of the Eastern Sea*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, www.boydellandbrewer.com, 2010. xiv + 320 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, tables, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. US \$115.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84383-583-7.

Jean Sutton is the grand dame of the shipping history of the English East India

Company. In 1981 she published *Lords of the East. The East India Company and its Ships*, a highly innovative study of the commanders of English East Indiamen and the hiring of these ships. This book was revised and reorganized in 2000 with the addition of an extra chapter on the China voyages. But Sutton's story of the commanders and their ships was not yet complete. These men and their ships had played a larger role in the Company's service than she had yet described. With this book, she focuses on the members of one family—the Larkins—with three generations of commanders. William Larkins, from Dover, was the first one appointed as an officer on board an East Indiaman in 1746. His grandson, Tommy Larkins, who returned from Canton in 1833, was the last of the family commanders.

The book covers almost a century of East India Company trade to India and China. It concludes with a fascinating summary of the major and minor changes in shipping and the commodities transported during this time span. To mention just one change: India was the centre point of William Larkins' shipping activities while Tommy visited India only once; he always sailed to China, of course, for tea. The Larkins' careers as officers, commanders and ship owners in Company service take up 13 chapters, and Sutton places them handsomely within the wider context of the Company itself. She uses the complete genealogical and other details about the Larkins made available by a descendant of this family to great advantage.

Sutton's book is the story of the great British expansion in India, the seemingly limitless demand for Chinese teas in Britain, overseas wars with France, the decay of the great Dutch East India Company (VOC), corruption at home in London and in Asia, the end of the so-called hereditary bottoms, the increase in ships' tonnages and British mastery at sea in the

nineteenth century. Nor does it overlook related issues such as the lengthy trial of Warren Hastings, a great hero in the Larkins family, and the increasing scarcity of timber for shipbuilding. The author tells her story well and it makes for good reading. We follow William or Thomas, not William and Thomas Larkins! In the course of the book the general story gradually prevails. Each chapter is followed by references and some excursions. What might improve story is more information about the financial aspects of the voyages for the Larkins. The position of commander of an East Indiaman was supposed to be extremely lucrative; many often became ship owners of one or more East Indiamen. While there are references to great profits, there is no indication of the rising social status of the Larkins family ashore. From about 1800 on, the benefits of command in the shape of private trade outward- and homeward- bound, and profits from transport of passengers steadily declined. Tommy Larkins is said to have finished his life in poverty. Apparently, no financial data was available in the Company's archive and in the family papers.

The English East India Company did not own its ships; it hired its means of transport. Both ship owners and commanders had the customary rights of the hereditary bottom and perpetual command. After four voyages, ship owners would offer a new ship to the Company and the commander was entitled to its command. This system led to high freight tariffs and an abundance of ships. Not until the late-eighteenth century, in 1796, was this system abolished and an open tender of ships introduced. All other European East India companies owned their ships and had their own seafaring personnel from boys to commanders on their payroll, which was cheaper. The author does not refer to this striking difference. For one who is more familiar with the Dutch East India Company, it is interesting to read about the great power struggle in India between Britain

and France and the natural presence of their naval forces in Asia. Financial compensation became available in 1767, when Parliament accepted the dividend bill, in which the Company would pay £ 400,000 to the government annually. In contrast, the first Dutch man-of-war did not appear before 1784!

There are useful details about life on board and the way commanders and their mates operated. William Larkins was in command of the first flush-deck East Indiaman, *Boscawen*, in 1748, when its third deck saved ship and crew in a tremendous storm (p.40). Sutton refers to advances in methods of navigation: taking lunar observations, using the Hadley's quadrant, the introduction of the *Nautical Almanac* and the chronometer and other improvements. There is also much on life at Canton and Whampoa, although the author seems to have missed Paul A. Van Dyke's *The Canton Trade. Life and Enterprise on the China Coast, 1700-1845* (Hong Kong, 2005) with its detailed information about the workings of the Canton port system. Nevertheless, Jean Sutton must be thanked for a fine, human-scale book.

Jaap R. Bruijn
Leiden, The Netherlands

David J. Ulbrich. *Preparing for Victory: Thomas Holcomb and the Making of the Modern Marine Corps*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2011. 336 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$35.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-903-3.

David J. Ulbrich's *Preparing for Victory* is a complimentary look at Thomas Holcomb, commandant of the United States Marine Corps from 1936 through the middle of the Second World War. Although most of the book focuses on those years, this is a complete biography, covering its subject's entire life,

from childhood, through his service in the Corps, his final role as U.S. minister to South Africa in 1944-48, and his retirement. While Holcomb does not have the public reputation of other commandants, such as John Lejeune or Alexander Vandegrift, and scholarship on his career remains comparatively sparse, Ulbrich argues that Holcomb was a key leader in the Marines' development, a man who "molded the Corps into the modern amphibious force that helped win the Pacific War." (p.1) Although Holcomb was not a combat commander in that conflict, the book sets out to prove that his work in Washington was critical to the American war effort in the Pacific.

Organized chronologically, *Preparing for Victory* focuses on the qualities that Ulbrich believes made Holcomb a superior leader and administrator. In addition to historical analysis, the author brings in concepts from the fields of leadership studies and organization theory to explain Holcomb's success. In what amounts to more than a narrative of Holcomb's career, the reader is treated to periodic discussions of Holcomb's "emotional intelligence" and his utilization of "progressive management techniques" that streamlined and rationalized the Corps' administration.

Ulbrich's book highlights the interpersonal skills that accounted for Holcomb's success predating his term as Commandant. His analysis shows that Holcomb was not only a talented and conscientious officer, but also had a knack for making friends in high places. A decorated combat commander in the First World War, in peacetime Holcomb impressed superior officers like Lejeune and made connections with key civilians such as Franklin Roosevelt, a personal friend. In addition, Ulbrich argues that during the 1920s and 30s, Holcomb played a key role in the development of the amphibious assault and base defense doctrines that gave the Marines a key role in the Navy's war plans. Coupled with his personal

qualities, these experiences explain why Holcomb jumped over eight senior officers to become Commandant in 1936.

Once in power, these qualities aided his ability to overcome bureaucratic hurdles. Ulbrich shows how Holcomb's personal touch eased relations with important congressmen and senators, as well as skeptical Navy Department superiors. Despite the Marine Corps' formal status as an appendage of the Navy, the trust that senior naval officials had in Holcomb allowed him to run the Corps almost as an independent organization. This success extended to Congress, where Holcomb's relations with the House and Senate naval committees at the height of the Great Depression secured adequate funding for the Corps in a time of miniscule defense budgets.

During the Second World War, Holcomb's interpersonal skills helped smooth over teething problems in the heretofore untested amphibious warfare doctrine. When problems arose between Navy and Marine commanders at Guadalcanal in 1942, Holcomb went to the Pacific and, in an ad-hoc conference with local naval commanders, convinced them to sanction Marine command of future amphibious operations, a task that aided combat efficiency during the war and met a long-term organization goal of the Corps. Upon his return to Washington, he was able to persuade Admiral King, the Chief of Naval Operations, to cement this pragmatic solution in official Navy doctrine.

Preparing for Victory identifies three main strands of success for Commandant Holcomb. From the 1920s on, Ulbrich paints Holcomb as intimately involved with the development of the Corps' two main wartime missions: the defense of island bases in the Pacific, and amphibious warfare. Not only did these roles give the Corps a distinct mission, but they also gave them a key role in the Navy's plans for war with Japan, which enabled Holcomb to carve out a specialized niche for the Marines in appropriations,

acquisition, and combat.

At the same time, Holcomb's administrative skills benefited the Corps. As Commandant, Holcomb rationalized the administration of the Corps, Ulbrich argues, creating a standalone organization that was not a mere appendage of the Navy. This structure also ensured that the Marines had the ability to develop independently such technologies as the Higgins boat and the "Alligator" amphibious tractor, both crucial for Pacific War landings.

Lastly, Ulbrich argues that Holcomb succeeded in projecting a public image of the Corps that ensured it remained an "elite" service even in an age of mass conscription. While this area is marred by an almost apologetic discussion of Holcomb's prejudices towards women and minorities, it is one of the book's strongest themes. The discussion of how Holcomb took advantage of modern advertising techniques to burnish the image of the Marines and ensure the "right" sort of recruit was an important component of Holcomb's stint as Commandant and one of his key legacies.

Overall, then *Preparing for Victory* is an excellent book for anyone interested in the history of the Marine Corps or military leadership. Ulbrich has focused his scholarship on Holcomb since his M.A. thesis and the years of research come through in his mastery of the details of Holcomb's life. While his tone is at times too hagiographic, it does not affect the soundness of Ulbrich's conclusions. Perhaps Holcomb did not "save" the Corps, as Ulbrich suggests, but the reader comes away convinced of Holcomb's importance to the Marines and victory in the Pacific War.

Ryan Peeks
Chapel Hill, North Carolina