

## Book Reviews

Jake Alimahomed-Wilson. *Solidarity Forever? Race, Gender, and Unionism in the Ports of Southern California*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, an imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, www.rowman.com, 2016. xi+205 pp., bibliography, index. US \$85.00, hardback; ISBN 978-1-4985-1434-7. (E-book available, ISBN 978-1-4985-1435-4.)

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), a dominant waterfront labour union along the West Coast of North America, has carefully cultivated a militant, radical image and brand that represents rank-and-file members and glorifies the long-time leadership of Harry Bridges, to almost mythical proportions. Oral histories — recorded, preserved, and made available through the efforts of officially sanctioned historians like Harvey Schwartz, and equally committed individuals and groups at local levels — have brought voice and content to this endeavour. What better than past and present longshore workers telling their stories and experiences in their own words?

Since its founding in 1937, the ILWU has outwardly abhorred all forms of discrimination on the basis of race or other lines of prejudice.

Jake Alimahomed-Wilson, an academic sociologist teaching at California State University, Long Beach, uses existing repositories of oral histories as well as some of his own conducted interviews and results from field study observation to explore the challenges and barriers facing black workers and women on the waterfronts of San Pedro, Long Beach, and Los Angeles at the hands of union officials and members, both historically and up to the present day.

Alimahomed-Wilson argues that institutionalized racial and gender inequality have been the lot of minority groups outside the overarching white, masculine longshore culture in the commercial ports of southern California for a long time. Persons of colour and women, or both, were denied fair opportunity for hiring and employment, consistently discriminated against and harassed, occasionally threatened with violence, and made to feel unwelcome on the waterfront. Nonetheless, they persisted in gaining recognition of their rights and fought back with targeted lawsuits to force the union and the employers' association to accept and integrate more of them. As a consequence, numbers of blacks, Latinos, and women slowly increased among longshore workers in ILWU Local 13, marine clerks in

ILWU Local 63, and unionized foremen in ILWU Local 94, though overall percentages still remain small and structural discrimination continues. Technological and organizational changes, in turn, created new job classifications and broke up the old gang system and its lingering culture.

The money spent by union locals in defending against lawsuits and reaching settlements with its own members, paid for by other members, is presented as a waste of resources in light of other priorities, when policies could simply be changed. Alimahomed-Wilson is almost sad to reach the conclusions that he does, given that the ILWU is still considered among the most progressive and principled unions in the American labour movement. Despite being aware of problems with racism and sexism, Harry Bridges and other international officers were reluctant to intervene in the affairs of autonomous union locals which were left to deal with matters themselves. Obviously, southern California ports were slower than other West Coast locations to catch up with the times, and integrate black and female workers more fully in the union.

Individual chapters draw extensively from oral histories and provide useful background biographical profiles for the longshore workers interviewed by Alimahomed-Wilson: Tony Salcido, a Latino involved in the union leadership who preserved much of the historical record; Elbert Kelly Jr., a black Vietnam veteran attracted to the civil rights movement and eager to con-

tinue the trail-blazing work of his foreman father; and Clovijeane Good, a black woman from an established longshore family behind a prominent court challenge, among others. From the Unemployed 500, when black longshore workers were deregistered from the union post-war, to the patriarchal networks that reserved spots on the waterfront for favoured family members, minorities struggled against discriminatory behaviour on the part of union locals.

The individual stories and recollections are important, though without further reference to documentary sources such as minute books, financial records, and voluminous legal proceedings, oral history alone has limitations. The examination for discovery before trial, for instance, represents a form of oral history, one taken under oath, transcribed, and subject to scrutiny by an opposing lawyer. Besides the oral history collections used by Alimahomed-Wilson, the ILWU Anne Rand Library in San Francisco has correspondence files arranged by union local and individual officials, as well as the international executive board minutes. Harry Bridges, who once graced the cover of *Time* magazine, knew his way around a courtroom, as evidenced by his vehicular homicide charges, deportation hearings, high-profile political trials, and divorce cases. In the British Columbia context, ILWU locals are relatively well-off financially and routinely engage in legal proceedings, either to benefit or defend against members. Exactly how much did discrimination actually cost

ILWU locals in southern California in monetary terms, and could they afford it as a part of doing business? This key question, so central to the overall argument, remains largely unanswered by the available consulted sources.

*Solidarity Forever?* has a high retail price, no discount being offered for availability in a digital format. Save for the front cover, the book has no illustrations or photographs. Missing from the bibliography is Russell Brewer's comparative study of organized crime and waterfront unions in the Long Beach and Los Angeles areas, *Policing on the Waterfront* (Oxford University Press, 2014). The basic index is quite disappointing, and surprisingly, omits most of the longshore workers named in the book. Maritime historians accustomed to rigorous research in libraries, archives, and museums should not be put off by Alimahomed-Wilson's sociological and ethnographic approach, which has some utility in challenging the mythology behind the brand and keeping the ILWU honest.

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Jaap R. Bruijn. *Zeegang Zeevarend Nederland in de achttiende eeuw*. Zutphen, Netherlands: WalburgPers, [www.walburgpers.nl](http://www.walburgpers.nl), 2016. 319 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. Euro 29, 50 €, hardback; ISBN 978-9-46249-098-7.

This finely-crafted book (translated as *Seafaring in the Netherlands in the*

*Eighteenth Century*) uses the personal histories, letters and memoirs of eighteenth-century Dutch sailors, to describe their lives at sea. Jaap Bruijn taught maritime history at the University of Leiden for some four decades, retiring in 2003. In this book, he has returned to where he began his research and writing began, exploiting and summarizing many things that he has learned through an extremely productive career. He specifically acknowledges the research and publications of his many students and other scholars whose work he incorporates in the book. There are numbers, for example, relating to the size of the maritime sector and how many men were mustered to man the ships, which helps establish a context for the personal stories. It is the concentration on the detail of people's lives, though, which gives the book an intimacy, in this case almost making the historian and his readers something of voyeurs. The personal touch of reporting events in sailors' lives, the straightforward writing style and the author's clear command of every aspect of the topic makes the book enjoyable and easy to read.

*Zeegang* enjoys two meanings: swells created by the winds which sailors faced and also the new sense of a sailor going to sea. Using the personal reminiscences of ten men who, for various reasons, chose a life at sea, along with many letters that other sailors wrote or received, Bruijn describes in 12 chapters various aspects of work and practices in the maritime world as well as the institutions which shaped those who

were involved and what they did. Where sailors came from, how they were recruited, work and life on board, the dangers faced, the kinds of goods carried or sought, the type of ships employed in different enterprises, the composition of crews, and life on land for the sailors and their families each get separate treatment. Bruijn identifies five different sectors of Dutch shipping — the trade to the East Indies and to the West, including Africa and the Americas, the fisheries, whaling, and the navy — and after an overview of the divisions, each is dealt with in a chapter. The Dutch East India Company gets extensive and detailed consideration, since the author has long been a leading figure in the study of Dutch maritime connections with the colony in southeast Asia. The other sectors are not, however, in any way under-represented. Recent scholarship on whaling, for example, where Bruijn has done work in the last decade, is easily integrated.

The Golden Age of the Dutch Republic and the Dutch economy may have been over by 1714, but the maritime sector still played a significant role in the Netherlands and in the world at large. In the long eighteenth century, from the War of the Spanish Succession in the opening years of the 1700s when the Netherlands lost any of its remaining status as a major power, through the Napoleonic Wars in the first decades of the 1800s, the maritime sector suffered from a long term decline. The Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, a by-product of the Netherlands' support for France and Britain's rebellious

colonies in North America, was a disaster for the Dutch navy, the fisheries and for shipping in general. The conquest by revolutionary France in 1795 which made the Netherlands an enemy of Britain again, had an even deeper and more sustained impact on the maritime sector. Overfishing, most notably whaling, and environmental changes along with increasing competition from British shipping, further damaged the position of the Dutch and employment opportunities for sailors. Still, many men found work, mixing sailing with jobs on land or signing on for the long voyage to Batavia (Jakarta) and then sailing on East India Company ships in the Far East before coming home, that is if they lived long enough to do that. Even that option disappeared after 1795 when the Dutch East India Company ceased operations. The slow contraction of opportunities forms the context for the lives of those who populate Bruijn's book.

The ten men whose stories form the core of Dutch eighteenth-century life at sea had very different origins and very different careers. They came from port towns and the countryside in the Dutch Republic and from other states to the northeast. Some ended life at sea after a number of voyages, others had short careers and retired quickly. Some died impoverished, while other rose to high office and lived in grand houses in the city or in the countryside. In four cases, it was the urging of grandchildren that led the men to describe their experiences at sea. For others, it was simply a desire to record the

marvels and the mundane which they had seen and known.

*Zeegang* demonstrates the learning Bruijn assembled over a career devoted to maritime history. The format does lead to some repetition of detail, though never obtrusively and always to make a pertinent point. The publisher has contributed to the quality of the book, using very good paper and illustrating it sumptuously with 51 images from the eighteenth century, 31 of them in colour. The extensive bibliography covers all the major works in Dutch on eighteenth-century maritime history and more. While grand themes of eighteenth-century European politics and society are not topics of the text, the author is able, through the use of a range of personal information drawn from varied documents including what sailors wrote, to create a sense of how one group of men and their families navigated within the context of those grand themes. The working sailor is at the centre of the book and, functioning in a dangerous and changing world, he comes alive thanks to the skilled writing and research of a distinguished scholar.

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Paul Carrol. *Illustrated Guide to Goderich Harbour & Waterfront compiled by Paul Carroll*. Goderich, ON: BPR Publications, [www.facebook.com/Books-Images-by-Paul-BPR-Publications](http://www.facebook.com/Books-Images-by-Paul-BPR-Publications), 2015. 135 pp., maps, illustrations. CDN \$30.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-9738680-0-5.

I recommend this work to the scholar interested in the development of harbours on the Great Lakes and elsewhere. Goderich provides a useful model that is applicable to many other locations. Typically, harbour development starts with a river giving access to a major waterway, an aboriginal community, arrival of the European settler, investment and then adapting to changing market conditions.

There is an illustration on almost every page, at times, several, all of them advancing the historical narrative that starts in the early nineteenth century. There are maps, portraits, landscapes photographs, all well chosen and cited. The cut lines accompanying each image are often extensive and thus, are an important part of the history adding to the text. Goderich is on a hill overlooking the harbour, so many of the illustrations are panoramas. The photographs dating from the mid-nineteenth century and later, the aerial images are especially rich in detail.

Schooners, watercraft for work and leisure, the canaller and the modern Laker are all documented going about their business. Today, the salt mine and grain are major industries with modern docks providing berths for the largest ships that can fit the Seaway System. There is a much reduced fishing industry, once prominent, and yacht facilities.

This softcover book is intended as a guide to the maritime history of Goderich Harbour; for the use of local residents and visitors and is organized into walks: The Bluff Walk, North Harbour Road, The

Beaches and Boardwalk, the Great Storm of 1913, and The Huron County Shoreline. Compiled by Paul Carroll, this publication is recommended.

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Eric Jay Dolin. *Brilliant Beacons: A History of the American Lighthouse*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, www.wwnorton.com, 2016. 560 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$29.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-87140-668-2 (E-book available.)

The history of American lighthouses is generally scattered among stories of individual lights, state or regional lighthouse histories, and tales of lighthouse keepers. Fewer than a handful of comprehensive narratives on American lighthouses exist; most notably, Arnold Burges Johnson's *The Modern Light-House Service* (1890), George Rockwell Putnam's *Lighthouses and Lightships of the United States* (1917), George Weiss' *The Lighthouse Service: Its History, Activities, and Organization* (1926), and Francis Ross Holland Jr.'s *America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History since 1716* (1972). Now comes Eric Jay Dolin's *Brilliant Beacons: A History of the American Lighthouse*, a meticulously researched chronicle of American lighthouses that gathers all of the aforementioned works into a single narrative while still offering something new for even the most widely-read lighthouse

enthusiast. The annexation of Puerto Rican lighthouses after the Spanish-American War is particularly new to the historiography of American lighthouses.

Certainly, *Brilliant Beacons* tells the story of Winslow Lewis and Stephen Pleasonton, the adoption of the Fresnel lens, and the reorganization of the Lighthouse Service into the United States Coast Guard. Dolin's history, however, goes much further. The author situates American lighthouses in the larger scope of United States History. For instance, *Brilliant Beacons* discusses the relationship between lighthouses and slavery, places America's beacons in the early nineteenth-century debates over internal improvements, and examines the impact of war and economic recession on the coastal aids to navigation.

One refreshing aspect of *Brilliant Beacons* is that Dolin does not single out Stephen Pleasonton for the delay in bringing the Fresnel Lighthouse lens to the United States. Rather, the author rightly spreads the blame to include Congress, the President, and other leading political figures. These individuals shared the responsibility of authorizing and appropriating funds for purchasing the Fresnel lens. As *Brilliant Beacons* claims, these individuals "could have forced any number of changes on Pleasonton," and their inaction "is an indictment of the system within which Pleasonton operated." (129-30) Indeed, while Pleasonton may have been against importing the expensive French technology, the Fifth Auditor was merely an agent of the Treasury bound by

and charged with administering Congressional appropriations for lighthouses. Congressional appropriations were often insufficient to build lighthouses, let alone purchase the expensive lens.

The delay in bringing the Fresnel lens to America was affected more by the precision of the lens and problems manufacturing high quality glass. These issues limited the French to manufacturing only one or two lenses a year in the first decade after its introduction. Limited production slowed the rate of technological diffusion and delayed widespread adoption of the technology until the mid-1830s. The adoption of the lens around the globe was not as immediate as some historians have implied.

My two caveats with *Brilliant Beacons* are Dolin's interpretation of the political debates surrounding the Fresnel lens and the discussion of science and technology prior to the establishment of the Light-House Board in 1852. Criticism of Pleasonton's administration is warranted; however, the complaint that American lighthouses were inferior to those in Europe because European lights utilized the Fresnel lens was secondary. (Even the Trinity House Lighthouse Board in Britain indicated there was little difference between the Fresnel lens and reflectors.) The real debate was about who was better suited to manage the Light-House Establishment; the military or civil servants. In the absence of war, the Army and Navy needed to make themselves relevant. They viewed the sciences of surveying and nav-

igation as their responsibility. After the War of 1812, the Army and Navy wrestled control of the Coast Survey away from Ferdinand Rudolph Hassler. The complaints against Pleasonton represented a similar fight to assume control of the Light-House Establishment. By 1832, military surveyors had failed to produce a chart of the coast and Hassler was reappointed as Superintendent of the Coast Survey. This was precisely when complaints started against Pleasonton's administration. The chief complainants were Army engineers, naval officers, and members of the Coast Survey who favored naval administration of coastal surveying and navigation. The Army and Navy attempted to replace their lost responsibilities for the Coast Survey by gaining responsibility for the Light-House Establishment. They triumphed with the creation of the Light-House Board. Four of the six board members were military officers.

The second concern is Dolin's discussion of science and the arts prior to 1852. Dolin does a great job discussing science and technology after the establishment of the Light-House Board, however, there was a great deal of science being performed in the Light-House Establishment under Pleasonton. In the 1810s, David Melville experimented with gas lighting in Newport, Rhode Island. Melville also invented a heating apparatus to prevent sperm-aceti oil from congealing in the winter. Benjamin Willard made improvements to his father's clock-work mechanism used in rotating

lights in the 1830s. The next decade saw improvements in burners, lamps, and reflectors patented by Benjamin Coston, Alonzo Farrar, and Benjamin Greenough. Thomas Tag, the United States Lighthouse Society's technical expert, detailed the scientific experiments and technological advances in the Light-House Establishment under Pleasonton in a series of articles for *The Keeper's Log* in the mid-2000s. Dolin references Tag's other works, so it is disappointing the author did not include this early science and technology in his narrative.

These concerns aside, Dolin's work is a well-written, meticulously-researched narrative that is worth the read. *Brilliant Beacons* is sure to replace Francis Ross Holland Jr.'s work as the most widely read and most often cited work among lighthouse histories.

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Roy A. Grossnick and Mark L. Evans. *United States Naval Aviation 1910-2010*. (2 vols.) Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil), 2015. Vol. 1, Chronology, xvi+747 pp., Vol. 2, Statistics, xvii+469 pp., illustrations, indices, glossary, tables. US \$132.00 (International Price US \$184.80), cloth; Vol. 1; ISBN 978-0-945274-75-9, Vol. 2; ISBN 978-0-945274-86-5.

This work is the fifth edition of the Naval History and Heritage Command's history of American

Naval Aviation, covering its first hundred years of existence. Split into two volumes, with the first being a chronology of important events and the second being a repository of statistics, *United States Naval Aviation 1910-2010* traces the branch's formative efforts toward powered flight beginning in March 1898 and continuing through to the modern advances and actions of the twenty-first century. The first volume is organized by decade, while the second is divided by subject matter. Both utilize data from the Naval History and Heritage Command archives and additional twenty-first century sources.

Volume I is virtually pure chronology, divided into thirteen chapters. The time periods contained within in these sections are largely divided by decade, with separate, in-depth chapters covering the First World War, the Second World War, and the Korean War. The preface does offer some background information on the work's lineage, and each decade's chapter is introduced via a page-long contextual description of Naval Aviation during that specific time frame, but otherwise, information is conveyed through date entries and their corresponding descriptions of events. The actual text for historically significant events can vary wildly. Sometimes, such as in the case of the EA-18G Growler's initial testing in 2007, the text can be a single short sentence. For more significant or involved events, like the attack on Pearl Harbor, there might be as much as a full page worth of detailed explanation accompanied by period

photographs. Black and white photographs are interspersed throughout the volume to illustrate people, aircraft, and events. It should also be noted that among the expected information on Naval and Marine Corps, there are actually events related to Coast Guard Aviation as well, such as an early Coast Guard helicopter rescue operation in September 1946.

Volume II is much more segmented, with 39 chapters contained within the seven categories of Aircraft, Personnel, Units, Ships, Deployments, Operations, and Other Actions. The chapters are largely chronological within their sections and are focused on detailing the minutia of Naval Aviation, from aircraft bureau numbers and designations to carrier deployments and squadron combat operations. A large portion of this data is in tabular form, with several exceptions. Chapters Nine and Ten are particularly interesting, detailing Naval Wings and Aviation Ratings, respectively. In addition to possessing data on the subjects, images of each wing variation and ratings patch are included as well, making it an excellent quick reference guide in addition to being a textual source. The wealth of information contained within these pages, along with the historical information provided to help place the raw data in context, is a truly impressive repository for anyone seeking to analyze a Naval Aviation document from the twentieth century.

Special note should be taken of this work's thorough glossaries and interesting index variations. The

glossaries precede the main body of text in both volumes, detailing all relevant military acronyms and abbreviations in a handy alphabetical reference form. The seven indices of Volume I, in the words of their introduction, direct the reader "to a specific area on the page by citing the date" (p. 605). The subject matter and time frame offered up by each index listing instantly offers a small contextual glimpse into the subject even before locating the actual text entry, something not associated with most other works.

The inconsistency in this work is the placement of photographs in Volume I. While the images are helpful in visualizing people, places, and events, there are a surprising number that appear to be placed on the wrong pages in terms of chronology. This occurs with both dated and undated photographs, with the distance from their subject's discussion varying from just a few pages to much larger spans. The most extreme example involves a photograph of the Vought XF5U-1 experimental airframe. Only mentioned in a November 1942 entry, a picture of the XF5U-1 suddenly appears amidst entries regarding the summer of 1948, 75 pages and almost six full chronological years after its relevance (p. 168, 243). The only other oddity was the decision to split the Vietnam War period between the 1960-1969 and 1970-1979 chapters, rather than possessing its own chapter like the two World Wars and Korea. A more detailed statement of sources for the volumes would be appreciated as well, for while it is stated in the

introduction that the records prior to the twenty-first century are all drawn from the archives of Naval History and Heritage Command, only the preface contains any mention of the source for data from the past fifteen years as being accumulated through “an exhausting effort” following the Navy’s cessation of certain publications and the lack of recent computerized transfers to the main database (p. vii). With the effort required to find this particular information, it would be beneficial to list the data locations to ease future scholarly research into the discussed subjects.

Given the wealth of information contained within their pages, both volumes of this latest *Naval Aviation* iteration make for an impressive historical resource. The chronology allows for an understanding of the service’s progression over the course of its evolution, and the statistics offer a wealth of raw data on a variety of important aspects. Combined together, these texts fully document the first hundred years of Naval Aviation, and make a fine capstone to the historiographical effort first undertaken a half-century ago.

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Clifford Jones. *The Sea and the Sky: The History of the Royal Mathematical School of Christ’s Hospital*. Horsham, W. Sussex. Privately published, [chmuseum@christs-hospital.org.uk](mailto:chmuseum@christs-hospital.org.uk), 2015. 350 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography,

index. UK £25 plus postage/packing at £5-00 UK, £15 abroad, paper; ISBN

Although this is an expensive and elusive publication, it merits attention. Christ’s Hospital is the school founded in 1552 by the fifteen-year-old King Edward VI, after he heard Bishop Nicholas Ridley give a sermon urging the rich to do more for the poor. The young king was deeply affected by the sight of starving children in the streets of London, and authorised the use of the old Grey Friars monastery, disestablished in the reign of Henry VIII, as a place to house needy children. It was turned into a school for boys and girls, and in 1673 ‘Housey’, as it is known by those who were students there, also became the site of the Royal Mathematical School.

Sir Robert Clayton, an alderman representing one of the livery companies in the city, and a former Lord Mayor of London, “very much by chance ... after he had been reading, for interest” about the French school of navigation established at Dieppe in 1666, had the idea of introducing a similar education for some of the boys at Christ’s Hospital. Sir Robert, Sir Patience Ward and one other alderman eventually achieved this objective by skillfully taking advantage of the school’s desperate financial straits (a disputed legacy) after the Fire of London, following the restoration of the Monarchy. Clayton persuaded Lord Clifford, the new Treasurer of the Exchequer, to have the Chancellor of the Exchequer recommend a “school to be erected

for the teaching of Mathematics, especially the two particulars Arithmetic and Navigation; and also that out of the said number [above 300] there may be annually elected such whose genius and constitution are proper fit for Sea Service..." On 19 August 1673 this was fixed with the Great Seal of the King.

Clayton's timing was good. Lord Clifford, a Roman Catholic, had been forced to resign on 19 June 1763, under the Test Act of 1672, but before that happened, the King had already approved the plan. The school was to maintain forty boys who would receive instruction specifically in mathematics and navigation. The Court of Governors of Christ's Hospital gave Clayton a vote of thanks and elected him a governor of the school in September 1763.

Clifford Jones, himself an "Old Blue", (the term used to describe people who attended Christ's Hospital school), has compiled this extraordinarily comprehensive, beautifully illustrated if sometimes confusing, history of those who, in the words of a classics scholar about to leave the school in 1877, "are conversing with the Mathematics, that they may better understand the speculation of the Heavenly Bodies, and survey the Globes of the World accurately, that they may traverse the oceans....". Jones goes out of his way to give credit to Sir Robert Clayton for his contribution to the founding of the mathematical school, and points out that Samuel Pepys (who took more credit than he deserved) did not take an interest in the school until after he became secretary of the

Admiralty. Even then Pepys, who was elected a Governor in February 1675/6, would, in 1689, reflect on "the unhappy choice made by my Royal Masters, its founders, of the place wherein they lodged the trust [of the mathematical school]".

The book comprises eighteen chapters, eleven of which are devoted to the first forty years of the school, from 1673 to the end of the seventeenth century, six to the nineteenth century, and one to the period 1902-2015. Eight appendices provide documentary sources and a bibliography, and most of them contain so much information that they merit inspection before turning to the entire text of the book. The first appendix reproduces the lists of "*Children put forth Apprentices in the practice of NAVIGATION according to his late Majesty's most gracious Purposes in this his Institution*", lists that were maintained in a record book from October 1665 to December 1887. The second appendix is a summary of 53 of the approximately 1,000 workbooks that are believed to have been kept by students, between 1755 and 1858. Appendix 3, "*A brief study of 'The Elements of Navigation' workbooks*" and Appendix 4, "*Masters of the Royal Mathematical School*" are all of particular interest, even though, as Clifford Jones explains, there are some minor errors in the lists of pupils. Appendices 7, 8 and 9 reproduce the letters patent of 1673 and 1675/6, and the supplemental charter of 1858. There follows the final appendix, a somewhat idiosyncratic bibliography that will challenge researchers attempting to follow up

the sources for this book.

The mathematical school had an uneven history, partly because “money was always tight at Christ’s Hospital”, partly because the duties of the Master were often unclear. The first master, John Leeke, began “with remarkable success” but by 1677 was disturbing the governors by his unwanted attention to private pupils on school time. The governors ordered him to no longer take private fee-paying students, to be in the classroom during teaching periods, and to improve the discipline of the boys, which by that time had become unacceptable. Leeke immediately said he would resign as of 25 March 1677, and the Council of Governors responded that he was not a fit master for the mathematical school anyway! Replacing him proved difficult, but Peter Perkins, considered suitable as “a sober, discreet, intelligent person of good life, government and conversation” demonstrated all these qualities. Unfortunately, he died less than two years later. His replacement, Robert Wood, proved unreliable and was allowed to resign on the grounds of ill health. Subsequent masters enjoyed longer terms of office but eventually resigned or were dismissed for various reasons until, in 1708, James Hodgson came to the school. The author, with John Robertson, of *The Elements of Navigation*, he eventually died in office in 1755. Thereafter, the list of masters includes many distinguished mathematicians, of whom William Wales (Master from 1775-1798) is the most celebrated. Previously Captain James Cook’s astronomer and navigator, he

is credited by some authors for giving one of his mathematics pupils in about 1782, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the inspiration for his poem, “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” written in 1797. (See Bernard Smith, “Coleridge’s *Ancient Mariner* and Cook’s Second Voyage”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. 19, No. 1/2 (Jan. - Jun., 1956), 117-154). In the nineteenth century, four of the seven masters of the school were themselves Old Blues, as was one more from 1919-1933.

Christ’s Hospital preserves the traditions of the Royal Mathematical School, and under a special presentation method, offers admission, through the school’s Council of Almoners, to the sons or daughters of personnel in the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines or the Royal Naval Reserve. In 2015 five students, three girls and two boys, were admitted, and it appears that the school will exist in perpetuity, even if only in name. Whatever the future holds, the history of the institution, like the history of Christ’s Hospital itself, deserves to have been celebrated. Indeed, what *The Sea and the Sky* suggests is that schools of navigation that influenced maritime endeavour, (such as the British Prisoner of War School of Navigation in France, 1805-14, described by Mark Gabrielson (*The Northern Mariner*, vol. XXV, No 1, 2015), deserve considerably more attention than they have received in the past. This handsome book is a welcome beginning to such endeavour.

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David W. Jourdan. *The Search for the Japanese Fleet: USS Nautilus and the Battle of Midway*. Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, www.nebraskapress.unl.edu, 2015. 424 pp., illustrations, appendices, index. US \$29.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-61234-716-5.

When it comes to the Second World War in the Pacific, one of the most discussed battles is Midway in June 1942. A moment of epic drama which saw the momentum of the Empire of Japan dramatically stopped, Midway is forever enshrined in memory by the image of American dive-bombers tipping over and four Japanese carriers left burning on the sea. Immortalized on film, on television, and in many books, Midway has to be one of the most easily recognizable moments of the Second World War. Accordingly, for another Midway book to appear on my shelf, it has to have something new and different in its approach.

David Jourdan certainly promises a dramatic change in his new book *The Search for the Japanese Fleet: USS Nautilus and the Battle of Midway*. This intriguing book approaches the battle from two very different perspectives. The first emphasizes the role of American submarines, especially the USS *Nautilus*, in the battle. *Nautilus*' attack on the morning of the battle distracted the Japanese, and more importantly, pulled an escort away from the fleet. It was the destroyer's

attempt to return to the *Kido Butai* that redirected American dive-bombers to the Japanese carriers. The *Nautilus* also plays a critical role in the second perspective of the book, the search for the Japanese carriers, specifically the Japanese aircraft carrier IJN *Kaga*, through her logs and after-action reports.

These twin perspectives offer an interesting intermixture of history and the modern search for the Midway wrecks. Jourdan is certainly well qualified to write such an account. As founder and president of the deep-sea exploration company, Nauticos, that conducted the search for the *Kaga*, he is excellently positioned to tell the tale of rediscovery. Through eleven chapters supported by a prologue, epilogue and five appendices, he weaves the tale of the battle of Midway into the account of how Nauticos became part of the search for the *Kaga*.

Jourdan uses the *Nautilus* log and patrol reports to help ground a timeline of the battle within geographic space. In the process, he reviews most of the known facts of the battle to produce an enjoyable narrative summary. He also goes into the difficulties associated with searching the sea for lost ships, something challenging enough in the case of modern shipwrecks let alone historic ones. When dealing with ships lost in the heat of battle, records tend to be, at best, partial and navigation difficult, creating a massive challenge in finding the *Kaga*.

The most interesting and important aspects of the book rest with the role of Nauticos in the search and the

problems it faced. Funding and official support are key aspects in such a quest. After all, research ships are scarce and gaining access to them requires serious political and economic support. The fact that the ships being sought are considered war graves makes the cooperation of the various nations involved especially important. Of particular interest on the Nauticos side of the experience is the discussion of the navigation challenges faced by the *Nautilus* and by extension, all ships involved in the original battle. Nauticos had to basically re-navigate the battle to help determine potential locations for the lost carriers and narrow down search areas to increase their chance of success. It was a very complicated and time-consuming process that would have been more interesting if Jourdan had provided more details about how it was done and a fuller discussion of the effort involved.

Despite being an enjoyable read, there are some major issues within the text. Most of the book is really a retelling of the standard history of the Battle of Midway. The inclusion of the *Nautilus* provides a change of perspective, but it seems overwhelmed by the repetition of the conventional narrative, which adds little new to our understanding of Midway. Likewise, the discussion of the re-discovery is also marginalized, making it feel grafted onto the story, or at best, tangentially important. This is sad, because it is the most intriguing aspect of the tale, being the most original, and seriously undermines the value of Jourdan's book.

There are also a couple of very

important limitations that need to be addressed. The complete absence of citations is not acceptable here and detracts from the value of the text. As a narrative, retold from secondary sources, the book should have been footnoted, especially considering that the works referred to are commonly available in today's mass-market publishing environment. Finally, it must be noted that the remains of the *Kaga* have yet to be located. Despite tremendous effort, all that has been found is debris identified as part of the ship. The fact that the carrier drifted for hours while on fire means that this debris could have been scattered at any point between when the ship was hit by the first bomb and the time it sank. The tomb of the *Kaga* and, of course, closure for all the families of those who went down with their ship, remain as elusive as the rest of the lost Japanese carriers. The result is a great read about the battle enhanced by the addition of the *Nautilus* and a discussion of some aspects of the search for *Kaga*. But the incomplete conclusion leaves the reader hoping for a second book to focus on the search for *Kaga*. That is the new ground-breaking research that we want to see.

Robert Dienesch  
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Angus Konstam. *British Light Cruisers 1939-45*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com), 2012. 48 pp., illustrations, bibliography, tables, index. UK £9.99, US \$17.95, CDN \$

18.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-84908-684-4.

The Royal Navy of the interwar years faced much the same problem of protecting long sea lines of communication as it does today; but in that period it had the advantage of empire and red on maps to help it make the case for the ships it needed to secure them. While the US Navy was focused on heavy cruisers to scout for their fleet during this period of treaties, economic boom and bust, and the various legacies of the First World War, the RN focused on light cruisers; trying to get as many useful ships as it could out of the tonnage it was allowed, in order to patrol the seven-tenths of the world's surface that connected an empire that covered almost a quarter of the world's land mass.

These are the ships which Angus Konstam examines, and the strategic scenario which was their backdrop. His work, however, focuses not on their peace-time duties, but on the Second World War when they faced their greatest difficulties. The author's pleasing style makes this small book as much a story as a fact-filled reference — flowing from paragraph to paragraph, from anecdote to anecdote, with an effortless grace. This is of great benefit as the topic is not a simple one. Light cruisers evolved and developed rapidly — perhaps faster than any other group of vessels in the RN, leaving a lot of ground for Konstam to cover, even though the format has forced him to limit his focus. As with all the Osprey series, the books are excellent

and always value for money for readers, but the 48-page limit does sometimes constrict things. In this case, because of the writing style and the images chosen, it certainly doesn't feel that way but, considering what was achieved in these few pages, it is not illogical to think what might have been encompassed with more space available. Nevertheless, the content is certainly fulsome.

Konstam begins by looking at the design and development of light cruisers, considering the factors and influences that went into the period and how they changed over time. After this, he dives straight into the ships themselves, firstly examining the always intriguing and often overlooked 'C' class vessels — First World War-era light cruisers that had been modified to AA Cruiser duty by/during the Second World War. Really good discussions of these ships are rare; in fact, this book and Norman Friedman's *British Cruiser* book published by Naval Institute Press are probably the best available. As usual, there is the Osprey limitation that, in contrast to Friedman's work, there are no references to follow. The suggested readings, however, do put forward some interesting prospects for the academic reader seeking more information. After discussing the 'C' class, Konstam moves on to the 'D' and 'E' classes which were still serving in the Second World War.

The review of the First World War legacy ships serves as a great foundation for the subsequent examination of the London Naval Treaty and its impact on the RN. Then Kon-

stam launches into the meat of this work with a discussion the *Leander* class, famous for the involvement of two of their number (HMS *Ajax* and HMS *Achilles*) with the sinking of *Graf Spee* — to which Konstam refers later in the book. After the *Leander* class, the book moves on to the *Arethusa* class, the *Southampton* class, the *Edinburgh* class (to which HMS *Belfast* belonged, featured in a particularly nice cut-out drawing (20-1), the *Dido* class, the *Bellona* class, the *Fiji* class and the *Swiftsure* class. Each class has its own pages, explanation and structure—allowing the reader to easily follow the evolution of the RN’s design, and observe how each class built upon the experience of the previous vessels.

After explaining each class, Konstam discusses their operation, weaponry and their sensors and fire control. Each area is rounded, developed and allows the reader to understand not just the plain facts, but also the context that give those facts meaning. What is particularly nice is the final Specifications section — providing a quick reference and displaying the information almost in the style of Janes’ Fighting Ships. This makes the information very easy to access, and just as importantly, easy to compare, as the classes are virtually lined up next to each other. Even without the rest of the book, this section is arguably worth the £9.99 cost; but it is only a section and this review is of the whole.

Konstam’s *British Light Cruisers* is an excellent book. If it is not perfect, that is only because it would be good to see what more could have

been encompassed with more space. The only real academic drawback is the lack of references, but the further reading section compensates for much of this. Finally, the quality of the work, the quality and quantity of information it provides, combined with the ease of access makes this very much a must-have for anyone interested in the naval history of this period.

Alex Clarke  
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Harold D. Langley. *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2015. 336 pp., notes, bibliography, index. US \$26.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-59114-178-5. Originally published 1967. (E-book available.)

Harold Langley’s classic *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862* was re-issued in 2015 by the Naval Institute Press. In both editions, Langley explores the impact that the spread of Jacksonian democracy and the rise of the common man had on U.S. naval regulations and traditions, derived from the autocratic rules and procedures of the eighteenth century Royal Navy. By the 1830s many of these regulations, procedures, and methods of operation seemed to be in conflict with America’s democratic ideals. Langley details how these objectionable regulations and practices in the U. S. Navy were brought to the attention of Congress,

and who led the process to reform the system and bring about change.

To examine the impact of nineteenth-century reform on the U.S. Navy, and more specifically, on the conditions of service of the common sailor, Langley pursues four major themes: first, the activities of societies committed to improving the lot of the common sailor, especially the American Seamen's Friend Society; second, the manpower shortage in the Navy with regard to American enlistees, accompanied by a history of recruitment practices; third, the agitation against corporal punishment for American sailors; and fourth, the campaign to abolish the American sailor's grog ration at sea and its connection with the temperance movement ashore.

He begins by describing how a group of American religious reformers, scandalized by the brutal aspects of the ordinary sailor's life, and the degrading effects of the grog shop and the brothel on seamen, and inspired by the Bethel Movement in England, founded the American Seamen's Friend Society (ASFS) in New York in 1826. Any individual, merchant mariner or sailor, could join the Society for a small annual fee, and any charitable or religious group whose purpose was the welfare of American seamen could affiliate as an auxiliary. The Society's goals were the establishment of respectable boardinghouses for seamen where attention would be given to their welfare; the founding of savings banks for the safe deposit of seamen's wages; and, the employment of missionaries to

frequent America's seaports, visit vessels, distribute religious tracts, and encourage seamen to attend public worship. The success of the ASFS, says Langley, was reflected in the creation of more than a hundred auxiliaries in the U.S. by the 1840s, and numerous Society "stations" overseas by the 1860s.

The Navy suffered from a serious lack of seamen in the early nineteenth century, especially of American-born seamen. Langley suggests this was due to perceived conditions in the service and restrictions on Black enlistment, resulting in an abnormally high percentage of foreigners manning U.S. naval vessels. To his credit, Langley does not shrink from discussing the disgraceful practice of crimping, often used as a naval recruitment tool. Not until the Civil War did Congress act to improve the conditions of enlistment, pay, and promotion in the U.S. Navy.

Perhaps Langley's most successful section in *Social Reform* is Part III, where he deals with the crusade to abolish flogging in the Navy as being out of harmony with the democratic spirit of the age. He recounts the history and effectiveness of flogging to enforce discipline in naval services, as punishment for drunkenness, desertion, and sleeping on watch, from the time of Henry VIII to the nineteenth century. The anti-flogging campaign began in Congress as early as 1820, with support coming from the ASFS's *Sailor's Magazine*, the published reminiscences of retired Navy men, an aggressive national press, and even from Herman Melville's popular

memoir *White Jacket*. Langley credits the political skills of Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire with helping to persuade Congress to abolish flogging in 1850.

Connected to the crusade against flogging was an anti-grog campaign, part of the nineteenth-century temperance movement, where many Americans saw society's ills stemming from the abuse of alcohol. Having succeeded in eliminating flogging, reformers next aimed at promoting national legislation to end the navy's daily ration of grog, or whiskey. Drunkenness had been the cause of flogging, reformers reasoned, so if the spirit ration were eliminated, better health and discipline would occur in the service. Improved conditions would attract a higher grade of enlistee, and harsh discipline would become unnecessary. Government, they said, had to be forced out of the liquor business.

Langley details the efforts of a varied group of reformers, including the ASFS, the *Sailor's Magazine*, naval physicians and chaplains, and state and national temperance societies, in organizing an anti-grog campaign to persuade Congress to abolish the spirit ration in the U. S. Navy. Success finally came in 1862 in the midst of the Civil War.

The author has accessed a vast array of sources to produce his *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862*, and he uses them all to good effect. His presentation and arguments are persuasive, though his study might have been improved with illustrations. Still, a social history of

a combat force is a welcome addition to the literature on America's Navy.

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Edward J. Marolda and R. Blake Dunnavent. *Combat at Close Quarters: Warfare on the Rivers and Canals of Vietnam*. Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, www.history.navy.mil, 2015. 82 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography. US \$21.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-945274-73-5. (E-book available.)

This work is an overall history of the United States Navy's riverine actions during the Vietnam War, serving as the fifth publication of the Naval History and Heritage Command's fiftieth anniversary of the U.S. Navy and the Vietnam War series. Arranged chronologically, *Combat at Close Quarters* covers American and allied riverine operations from French actions during the post-Second-World-War years through the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Primary emphasis is placed on American adaptability to the ever-changing scenarios of the riverine war, and the ability of junior and senior commanders to form effective policies and tactics in a field which had seen official doctrine routinely atrophy following the end of previous conflicts.

The main body of text following the introduction is divided into five chapters. The first of these, covering the First Indochina War and the French Navy's riverine operations, is

extremely brief, but offers a good initial background to the pre-American riverine campaign in South Vietnam, and what the US Navy was to face in the coming years. The early days of American naval advisors and the allotment of American equipment to the South Vietnamese Navy (VNN) is covered in detail before the authors get to the centerpiece of their history: the U.S. Navy riverine operations of the mid-to late 1960s. Throughout this section, emphasis is placed on the American sailor's ability to adapt. Given that "in 1965 no codified doctrinal or tactical manuals on river patrol operations or riverine warfare existed," the evolution of American combat actions and ship design from essentially nothing is quite impressive (20). From the early days of Operation Game Warden's River Patrol Force through the Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force (MRF), SEALORDS, and the Vietnamization of riverine operations at the end of the conflict, the authors detail numerous aspects of the riverine war in its different stages. Individual examples of strategies and situations are provided following descriptions of various operations or an evolution of tactics, such as a typical nighttime PBR boat patrol on the Long Tau River in 1967 and an MRF reaction to a nighttime ambush in December of the same year (23-24, 31). Additionally, first-person accounts by riverine crews are offered throughout the work. It is quite interesting when these recollections are used to compare different approaches to the same subject, thereby highlighting

the hallmark variance of the riverine campaigns. One such example of this involved the comparison of weapon preferences for four different PBR crews, with polar opposite opinions offered by men regarding the use of claymore mines and 60 mm mortars by their ships, resulting in four completely different load outs (55). These eyewitness accounts add a more personal level to the text, so often lost in routine reiteration of policies and procedures commonly found in operational analyses.

In terms of the work's general construct and composition, there are several useful maps spread throughout the text, along with a varied and interesting array of period photographs in both colour and black and white, along with period military artwork of discussed subjects. While the images all possess some form of description, the maps could be improved with a distance scale to aid in understanding, and a quick reference list to their locations within the text in the work's front matter. All of these forms of media, however, offer a great deal in terms of allowing one to visualize types of watercraft, personnel, and conditions in Vietnam, thereby enhancing the text. In the realm of detractions, the most glaring is the lack of any direct citations, with the authors relying on a Suggested Reading list instead. Its publication by the Naval History and Heritage Command lends credence to its content, of course, but this lack of footnotes or endnotes prevents scholars from easily cross-examining any specific points utilizing the same sources. The only other criticism of

note is in regard to the “Sidebars” secondary texts demarcated by green borders and backgrounds. While containing interesting and more detailed information on a variety of subjects, the placement of these blocks often interferes with the reading of the main text, creating a few jarring transitions. This, however, is more a stylistic choice than anything else. The only other critiques would be the need for an expansion on post-war applications of the lessons learned about riverine combat in Vietnam in the conclusion, and the inclusion of some form of historiography on the subject.

Overall, *Combat at Close Quarters* is a fine introductory work to the riverine operations of the American Navy in the Vietnam War. It offers a solid chronology, good first-person accounts of combat actions, showcases ground level and operational level flexibility, and drives home the effectiveness of America’s riverine forces. It is effective in establishing the importance of the river actions in Vietnam, and offers readers good suggestions of other works on the subject for their own further examinations. Given the fact that this is now the fiftieth anniversary of the Vietnam War, this is an excellent primer into one of the war’s more overlooked aspects.

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Arthur Nicholson. *Very Special Ships. Abdiel Class Fast Minelayers of World War Two*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing, www.

seaforthpublishing.com, 2015. 208 pp., illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. UK £30.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84832-235-6. (Distributed in North America by Naval Institute Press.)

If there are any warships that better illustrate the dash and glamour of the Royal Navy in the Second World War, I do not know what they might be. The fast minelayers of the Abdiel class were the epitome of that navy’s ability to go into harm’s way, accomplish an assigned mission, and get out no matter the odds against success. This aptitude was demonstrated in spades throughout the war, but particularly in the Mediterranean theatre where the ships of the class were routinely involved in escapades and scrapes that slower or less agile ships could not have survived. Accordingly, an aura about them grew and remains intact to this day, notwithstanding the fact that three of the six ships of the class were lost to enemy action.

Mine warfare suffers, perhaps, from being one of those features of war that is mentioned only in passing, without a great deal of discussion as to the mechanics of laying minefields, how they were planned and how they were maintained. Mines seem to be perceived as one of those background features of naval war of limited interest, albeit a necessary one to counter. Nicholson’s gripping operational history of the six ships of the Abdiel class fills, therefore, an important gap in the knowledge of naval warfare in the first half of the twentieth century.

The history of mines, largely an American innovation, really commenced during the middle decades of the nineteenth century with the conflicts of the Crimean War and the American Civil War. Nicholson provides a useful survey of the weapon's development in the final decades of that century, as well as the efforts to counter it and defend against the obvious menace that this new evil in maritime conflict represented. Mines played a prominent role in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, as well as during the global conflict that was the First World War. A number of Russian and Japanese battleships were lost during the former conflict, including vessels of the very latest type. The pattern was repeated in the First World War with the notable loss of *HMS Audacious* to a mine on 27 October 1914, a loss not publicly acknowledged until the war's end. Finally, of course, the critical role mines played in the fiasco that was the Dardanelles is well known where a single line of only 20 mines sank no less than three pre-Dreadnoughts in quick succession and so imposed the necessity for the bungled military campaign that followed that setback. Minefields, minelaying, and minesweeping became, therefore, an accepted part of the naval art during the First World War, an importance that did not diminish in the Second.

The Admiralty had converted other warships for the minelaying role, in common with most other combatants of the Great War. Germany, in contrast, constructed two purpose-built minesweepers

during the war, but they were not notably successful designs. The interwar period involved some tentative steps towards designing proper minelayers, with *HMS Adventure* (commissioned in 1927) representing the British effort. By and large, however, conversions remained the model.

Work on the Abdiel class of 'fast minelayers' commenced in the late 1930s as the looming likelihood of what became the Second World War was acknowledged and rearmament got underway. Nicolson describes the genesis of these warships well, including many design details and performance metrics. He has an interesting discussion on the matter of what speed these ships could achieve and concludes that it was approximately 40 knots at best, despite passionate claims from some of speeds in the mid- to high 40s. They were certainly the fastest ships in the Royal Navy and had few competitors elsewhere. Of direct relevance to their minelaying function was the innovative design of an enclosed mine deck, and a capacity of 160 mines. The ability to lay minefields relatively quickly via the mine-handling system on the mine deck was a major factor in the success of the vessels. Their fast speed, as well as capacious mine-handling spaces, made the Abdiel's ideal for 'secondary duties' at which they excelled. They were used extensively in the Mediterranean for a wide variety of missions, including resupply runs to Tobruk, transporting troops, VIPs and, *inter alia*, supplies into beleaguered Malta. Nicolson is not

writing hagiography, however. He discusses the shortcomings of the *Abdiel*'s, notably their short legs, and their relatively large machinery spaces that left them vulnerable to flooding in the event of bomb or torpedo hits. The mine deck also did not help in this regard. Nonetheless, the *Abdiel*'s excelled in their function and were virtually unique in the world and have so remained.

With this background in place, Nicholson then provides an operational history of the *Abdiel* class throughout the Second World War, commencing with that of *HMS Abdiel* herself and continuing thereafter to cover all six vessels. To say that they had an active time of it is massive understatement, and they paid the price—*HMS Welshman*, *HMS Latona* and *HMS Abdiel* were all lost during the war (*HM Ships Manxman*, *Apollo* and *Ariadne* rounded out the class). This entertaining, well written and immensely interesting history represents the bulk of the book. Included, as is typical of histories of this type, are a wide range of photographs, diagrams and maps. Particularly well done is a series of exquisite views of the six ships of the class in various guises and layouts. The story introduces the human element throughout with liberal quotes, photos and anecdotes from the crews who served in the ships from captain to ordinary seaman. The book is well produced, attractively laid out and well written. I have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone with an interest in this class of warships.

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Ryan K. Noppen. *German Commerce Raiders 1914-18*. Botley, Oxford: Osprey Publishing, Inc., [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com), 2015. 48 pp., illustrations, colour plates, bibliography, index. UK£ 9.99, US \$ 17.95, CDN \$23.50; paper; ISBN 978-1-4728-0950-6.

Ryan K. Noppen, having written earlier Osprey books on Austro-Hungarian battleships and Ottoman Navy warships, continues his study of lesser-known aspects of the Great War at Sea in *German Commerce Raiders 1914-18*.

Imperial Germany came late to the naval world (as related in Robert Massie's *Dreadnought*) but when the German Kaiser Wilhelm II decreed that Germany must have a world-class navy, the result was a blue-water navy capable of challenging Britain's Royal Navy in the North Sea. But that was not the only area of operations for the Kaiser's navy ("Kaiserliche Marine"): Imperial Germany acquired colonies in Africa, China, and the Pacific. Those, too, had to be defended at sea. Coaling stations had to be emplaced to supply German warships engaged in overseas operations and long-range radio stations were needed to communicate with them. Enemy commerce, wherever found, had to be interdicted. These strategic demands led to the development of commerce raiding ships.

The Kaiserliche Marine developed three categories of commerce raiders: light cruisers, converted ocean liners, and converted merchant freighters. The number of ships involved was small: five light

cruisers, six converted ocean liners, and three converted merchant freighters. These ships operated with mixed success throughout the world. When a German commerce raider engaged an enemy merchant ship, the initial goal was to capture the enemy ship, not sink it. For example, the capture of an enemy full of coal provided the commerce raider with a source of fuel.

The light cruisers were generally successful. Two became famous: SMS *Emden* fought an epic battle with the Australian cruiser, HMAS *Sydney*, while the Royal Navy's struggle to sink SMS *Königsberg*, operating off German East Africa, has been documented historically as well as cinematically. It served as the inspiration for C.S. Forester's novel, *The African Queen*, and the movie of the same name.

The converted ocean liners were less successful; being larger, their fuel consumption was greater than the cruisers. Three liners, SMS *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, SMS *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, and SMS *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, all captured enemy shipping, but the other three, SMS *Berlin*, SMS *Cap Trafalgar*, and SMS *Cormoran*, were unsuccessful combatants.

Probably the most successful commerce raiders were the three merchant vessels: SMS *Möwe*, SMS *Wolf*, and SMS *Seeadler*. Appearing to any ship spotter as ordinary, harmless merchantmen, the converted vessels could and did approach enemy merchant ships and sink them. Moreover, they could carry a large volume of coal, mines, and supplies in their cargo holds. Their relatively

slow speed decreased their coal consumption and thus, gave the merchant vessel *cum* raider a longer operational radius. *Möwe* and *Wolf* were conventional merchant vessels in appearance; *Seeadler* was a sailing ship. *Möwe* captured 40 allied ships, survived the First World War, reverted to a merchant vessel between the wars, was returned to German control, and even served in Hitler's Kriegsmarine in the Second World War. *Wolf* captured fourteen allied ships and also survived the First World War. *Seeadler*, captained by Count Felix von Luckner, sank fourteen allied merchant ships before running aground on a Pacific atoll. All sinkings were accomplished without a loss of life — a source of pride to von Luckner, who was the subject of two books written by journalist Lowell Thomas in the 1930s. *Seeadler* was the subject of a model kit in the 1950s and 1960s. (On a personal note—this reviewer's grandfather met von Luckner in 1931 and obtained his autograph. The autograph still remains in my possession, along with copies of both Thomas's books on von Luckner.)

The record of Germany's First World War commerce raiders remains a source of controversy to this day. Critics claim the commerce raiders only accounted for 5% of the merchant ship losses—the balance being taken by U-boats. But the commerce raiders did sink some shipping, and forced the British, French, and later, the American navies to send combat ships to hunt them down. Moreover, the Kriegsmarine revived the commerce raider concept in the Second World War —

and those raiders are famous.

Noppen's book follows the Osprey format and his previous works in this series. He writes well and the topical organization by ship is coherent. Useful specification tables appear at the beginning of each ship's description and the introductory narrative places the role of the commerce raiders in the context of overall Imperial German naval strategy. The photographs, many of them First World War era, are very helpful. Colour plates of each ship and a cutaway drawing of *Wolf* assist the reader and add to the presentation of this book. A bibliography lists pertinent works for those wishing to pursue further study of this subject.

In short, this is a valuable book. As with Noppen's other works, *German Commerce Raiders 1914-18* serves as a very useful introduction to its subject for the novice and a good short reference for the expert in this area. It is recommended.

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Denis Orde. *Nelson's Mediterranean Command*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword Books Limited, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2015. xv+228pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £14.99, US \$29.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-78346-290-2.

The title of Denis Orde's book, *Nelson's Mediterranean Command*, would suggest that it dealt with one or all three periods of time Lord Nelson spent on that sea. One might

fairly expect to read a recounting of his activities; the blockading, the diplomacy, the anxiety of searching for a missed enemy, the battle of the Nile, the choice to abandon that sea and chase the enemy across the Atlantic, along with an analysis of his development as an officer and tactician. It is not to be found here. While each of these events are mentioned (more in passing) this is a book about the naval career of Sir John Orde, a relative of the author. In particular, it concerns the dispute that erupted between Orde and Lord St. Vincent over sending Horatio Nelson into the Mediterranean Sea in 1798; the mission which led to the Battle of the Nile.

Sir John Orde's naval career is like that of most naval officers in the mid- to late-eighteenth century. To sea at a young age, Orde learned the workings of a ship, via midshipman to lieutenant to commander to captain and finally, to the Rear Admiral position that could lead to command of squadrons and possibly fleets. This last bit of the trajectory was, in Sir John Orde's opinion, derailed when Lord St. Vincent chose Nelson to enter the Mediterranean Sea and blockade the French ships in Toulon. Rear Admiral Nelson was junior to Rear Admiral Orde on the Admiralty's seniority list, and thus, the squadron that was blockading the Spanish Navy at Cadiz. Nelson's appointment to such an important task was viewed by Sir John as a slight to his honour, a questioning of his ability to lead. This insult needed to be addressed, namely with an apology and explanation from his

commanding officer, Lord St. Vincent. A letter campaign by Orde to St. Vincent and the Admiralty consumed much of Sir John's time for the next few years. His indignant behaviour led to his recall home, where he continued his demand for recompense on the issue. Failing to receive satisfaction, he actually went to Lord St. Vincent's country estate to challenge him to a duel. With the aid of the Admiralty, which forbid him from fighting Orde, St. Vincent finally distanced himself from the affair.

Orde also experienced a falling out with Nelson. When Lord Nelson was blockading the French ships at Toulon, in 1804, Orde was sent to blockade the Spanish ships at Cadiz. Problems in communications between the two Vice Admirals and Orde's access to prizes, that Nelson thought he should have a piece of, caused Nelson to sour on Orde, according to the author. Indeed, Nelson's letters, which Denis Orde quotes, are not very flattering of Sir John. As the French broke out of Toulon and headed out of the Mediterranean, Orde decided to leave the area off Cadiz, where he could have stayed and fought the French as they headed for that port. For this he was sharply criticized, his request for retirement was granted, but his request for a court martial to clear his name was denied.

In the end, a more mild and reflective Sir John Orde outlived both Nelson (at whose funeral he served as one of the four supporters of the Pall) and Lord St. Vincent (whom he survived by eleven months). His

place in naval history is largely that of the man who had felt slighted by Lord St. Vincent and an officer cut from a different cloth than Lord Nelson.

Several other, more minor inter-personal problems between officers are described within the book. The reader is offered some interesting narratives on the theme of the inter-personal relationships among those in command within squadrons. But Sir John Orde is the true focus of this volume, and in terms of failed inter-personal relationships, his is the most dynamic story.

This is a re-publication of the originally book, published in 1997. There is no new information added to this version, which is the most significant problem with the book. Much has been written about Lord Nelson since 1997 (just in the 2000-2005 list of books alone) and Orde's work would have benefited from including the insights of those authors. The book also contains some errors of fact that could have been corrected in a revised edition. One such error occurs during the discussion of the Seven Years War when Admiral Sanders, we are told, took the English Fleet up the Hudson River and captured Quebec (55). The good Admiral used the St Lawrence River, on which Quebec City was (and still is) situated. Denis Orde suggests that Nelson "had too few frigates" while looking for Napoleon and the French Army in the Mediterranean in 1798 and that his frigates were the first to see the French fleet in Aboukir Bay, on August 1 (106). Nelson's frigates had left the

Mediterranean when his squadron was blown off their blockade, at Toulon. He had no frigates during his chase of the French ships and their defeat at the Battle of the Nile.

The cover art is an image of Nelson's face (from the painting by Lemuel Abbott) overlaid on an image of a contemporary diagram of the Battle of Trafalgar, in which Orde did not participate. The twelve images in the book depict a number of the individuals mentioned in the text, including one image of Sir John Orde. The endnotes are sparse and the bibliography is now dated.

This book is for those interested in the career of naval officers in the era of Nelson. It will also appeal to people studying the dynamics between naval officers (in this case, the problematic dynamics).

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Norman Polmar and Edward J. Marolda. *Naval Air War. The Rolling Thunder Campaign*. Washington, D.C.: Naval History and Heritage Command, [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil), 2016. 67 pp., illustrations, bibliography. US \$25.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-945274-82-7.

Operation Rolling Thunder was the American bombing campaign against North Vietnam during 1965-68. In *Naval Air War. The Rolling Thunder Campaign*, authors Polmar and Marolda offer a concise view of the contributions of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps to that campaign.

Rolling Thunder was a product of

the Lyndon Johnson presidency. In 1965, the Johnson administration thought that a highly organized bombing campaign against North Vietnam as part of the American involvement in Vietnam would force the North Vietnamese to quit their military involvement in South Vietnam and thus, end their struggle to unify Vietnam. Moreover, the military doctrines in vogue at that time were "flexible response" and "graduated escalation." "Flexible response" is self-defining; "graduated escalation" meant to draw a line at the Demilitarized Zone of Vietnam, start bombing north of that line, and continue the bombing northwards until the North Vietnamese capitulated.

That strategy failed, as Polmar and Marolda immediately note. The North Vietnamese were implacable and determined to unify Vietnam under their rule. The American Administration—President Johnson, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, the American national security institutions, and often, the American military high command—all misjudged the North Vietnamese will to fight (as had the French when they fought in Indochina from 1946-54). Complicating the U.S. involvement in Vietnam from 1965-69 were two concepts: the competing priorities of Johnson's domestic spending for his "Great Society," and the Washington, DC micromanagement of military operations in Vietnam. Johnson himself many times personally selected bombing targets while Defense Secretary McNamara and his assistants chose the targets to be

attacked as well as the days and times of the attacks, and the ordnance used in those attacks. Polmar and Marolda quite rightly imply that these decisions should have been made by the field commanders.

*Naval Air War. The Rolling Thunder Campaign* is a short book, organized topically. Brief sections relate the start of the campaign, “Dixie Station,” where USN aircraft carriers were stationed, aircrew rescue, efforts to counter anti-aircraft missiles (an effort that the Johnson Administration, fearful that Soviet technicians were manning the missile sites, closely controlled,) the gradual intensity of the bombing campaign in 1965, attacks against petroleum, oil and lubricant sites, air combat over North Vietnam, the impact of the 1968 Tet Offensive on Rolling Thunder, and lessons that the USN and USMC learned from Rolling Thunder. The authors write clearly and avoid jargon. Abbreviations used in the narrative are delineated immediately as they appear. Interspersed throughout the narrative are sections dealing with types of USN and USMC attack aircraft used in Rolling Thunder, fires aboard ships assigned to Rolling Thunder, a biography of USN Admiral Ulysses S.G. Sharp, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Command during most of Rolling Thunder, the introduction of precision-guided munitions, and reconnaissance aircraft used in Rolling Thunder. While these sections break up the narrative, the interspersed sections do help illustrate what the authors’ relate in the narrative and clarify matters for

the reader unfamiliar with the Vietnam War. Polmar and Marolda heavily illustrated the book with many photos and paintings reproduced in colour—again, an asset to the reader. Maps of carrier stations and North Vietnam and a list of acronyms used are also included. The bibliography lists books and websites for further reading in this topic.

The authors do not concentrate on air operations to the total exclusion of naval operations during 1965-68; U.S.S. *New Jersey*, a Second World War-era *Iowa* class battleship, conducted offshore bombardment against North Vietnam. At various times, destroyers from the Royal Australian Navy also took part in offensive operations. The U.S. Coast Guard, which also sent units to Vietnam, is also mentioned in the narrative.

The Tet Offensive in early 1968 was a military defeat for the communist forces attacking South Vietnam, but turned American opinion against the Vietnam War. President Johnson suspended bombing missions against North Vietnam on 31 March 1968 and in that announcement, declared his intention not to run again for President. Reconnaissance operations continued until 31 October 1968, when Johnson suspended all combat operations against North Vietnam. Three-plus years later, the North Vietnamese attacked South Vietnam in force. At that time, the Nixon Administration gave the military much greater operational freedom. The authors note that the USN learned lessons from Rolling Thunder: more accurate offshore

bombardment, effective anti-aircraft measures, improved damage control for ships, and the establishment of the USN “Top Gun” school, which prepared pilots for air-to-air combat.

In the end, all the efforts of the Americans and their allies were for naught. On 30 April 1975, a final North Vietnamese offensive resulted in the surrender of the South Vietnamese government and the unification of Vietnam under communist rule. Rolling Thunder cost the North Vietnamese dearly in lives and treasure and aided the ground war by interfering with communist supply routes and delaying communist military operations. Polmar and Marolda note, rightly, that the failure was not for want of effort by the military personnel involved—their professionalism and dedication to duty is well-noted in this book—but that the directions given to the military from their top leaders were flawed.

*Naval Air War. The Rolling Thunder Campaign* is a brief but valuable resource for students of the Vietnam War. It accurately narrates a facet of the Vietnam War that is sometimes overlooked. It is recommended as a beginning volume for the reader unfamiliar with this topic and also as a good resource for those with a general interest in the Vietnam War.

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Geoffrey L. Rossano and Thomas Wildenberg. *Striking the Hornets' Nest: Naval Aviation and the Origins of Strategic Bombing in World War I.*

Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2015. xiii+277 pp., illustrations, maps, index, notes, bibliography. US \$49.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-61251-390-4.

In tracing the development of strategic bombing by allied naval aviators during the First World War, the authors focus on two American naval air services, the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps. Marines piggyback on Navy aviators to become the “Naval Aviator” to whom the book is dedicated. Since both were associated with the other allies, particularly before the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) became independent in the last few months of the war, American aviators are seen operating within British and, to a lesser extent, French air services. There is also a glimpse of the Italian/Austro-Hungarian theatre and connections to the origins of American aviation. The story is told against a backdrop of rapid technical change and a sometimes fast-moving ground war in the area.

The authors alternate successive American attempts to develop a naval bombing strategy with interludes of combat and logistical operations. They also claim turf for the U.S. naval air services, suggesting that strategic bombing was conceived and developed by naval aviators. Their attempt to cement the case for naval aviation services begins on page one, chapter one, by identifying Winston Churchill as the originator of offensive aviation, which is a large part of the definition of strategic bombing. The hornet’s nest in the book’s title is drawn from U.S. President Woodrow

Wilson's analogy of German submarine bases, such as Bruges, to a hornet's nest. He contrasted the allied goal of "crushing the nest" with the ineffectiveness of the anti-submarine war, which Wilson characterized as "hunting hornets all over the farm and letting the nest alone" (25). This coincides with a deeply-held belief among U.S. leaders that British initiatives had been ineffective because their leadership lacked inventiveness and aggressiveness.

The first chapter, "Blazing the Path", covers in some detail individuals and British organizations fighting the war in the air, which initially included the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) and RFC. In the next chapters, the authors trace the evolution of the U.S. Navy and Marine efforts to prepare themselves to prosecute the air war, increasingly focusing on the concept of a strategic bombing mission. The authors present all the pieces needed to recruit, equip and train in the U.S. and in Europe. In Europe there are fact-finding visits from politicians and planners, while individual aviators are integrated into the allied air services, including French and Italian units. The struggle to acquire equipment and supplies in the European theatre was never more than partially successful in the scramble against other entrenched services.

Finally in Chapter 16, "The Campaign Begins", the strategic bombing organization developed through the preceding months, was ready: "By the end of July 1918, the Northern Bombing Group seemed poised to begin independent oper-

ations." (172) This seems to be an attempt to gloss over and conflate allied services under an ill-defined, amorphous, allied naval aviation organization called the Northern Bombing Group that seems to exist almost apart from any national government. Its first assignment, to ferry the heavy Caproni bombers selected for the unit from Italy to the airfields of Northwest France and Belgium, ended with only eight machines being available—the rest having crashed along the way. Another proposal to launch aircraft included the use of thousands of sea-sleds to carry sea planes that were to be towed close enough to launch.

On several occasions, the attempt to race into action became a farce with wrong turns and slapstick worthy of the Keystone Kops. The authors do themselves credit by presenting these farcical episodes as well as the precise, military side of events expected in a military history. In most cases, the individual level of detail is quite helpful, offering a close-textured image of ordinary life that helps the reader understand such issues as the effect of the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919. The work often strays into what appears to be irrelevance, until the authors reveal the impact of certain events; for example, the inter-service rivalry between the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marines.

Sometimes this concentration on domestic arrangements reflects badly on the participant, such as the Marine officer who landed at Liverpool "had lunch at the Adelphi", and complained about "a quarter lump of sugar, no

butter, very little bread... and then it was on to London and the Savoy Hotel" (126). This is presented as though the diet represented some kind of a privation, when in fact it was the best to be had in a country enduring a blockade to starvation by U-boats and surface raiders.

There is only the briefest description of each technology and aircraft introduced, and no coverage of the overall technological development other than assertions that bombsights, bombs and suitable aircraft were inadequate. It would take another world war and 25 years of pressurized development of air warfare for the reality of heavier aircraft with better navigation and bomb-aiming equipment before naval aviation practice began to catch up with the original vision.

Chapter 19, "Lessons and Legacies", does not actually say that the hornet's nest had not been crushed by U.S. naval aviators, but does admit: "Naval aviation ended World War I without a mission or a doctrine." (210) The greatest contribution came from serving within other allied air forces.

The book is printed on permanent alkaline paper, intended to last a long time; a legacy intended for future generations. Maps are ultra-simple black and white line drawings, which are situated with the text related to the campaigns as they occurred through time. At one-third of a page, they are all small scale and require an atlas to follow. Photographs are low definition, almost newspaper quality. The worst thing about this work may be the dust cover. The art work is

dismal and one fears some of the "Advance Praise" might have been offered in advance of an actual reading of the text.

An organizational chart would have been helpful, for understanding the Northern Bombing Group, which was an ill-defined sort of seat-of-the-pants creation. A fuller list of acronyms or glossary would also be helpful, given the number of organizations involved, including RFC, RAF, RNAS, U.S. Navy and U.S. Marines. Existing abbreviations omit key organizations, like RFC and RNAS. The bibliography lists articles published in popular as well as academic sources. One wonders, for instance, what germane information was in Edith Culver's *The Day the Air Mail Began*, published in Kansas City in 1971 by the Cub Flyers.

Does this book work as an academic exercise? No. It covers the briefest period of time and is digressive in the extreme. Does it work as a kind of family history? Yes. The detail is opulent in areas that would probably be omitted in an academic history yet, at the same time, it presents a fascinating glimpse into life behind the lines in 1917-1919. As a commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War, the book may be intended for retired officers and contractors rather than academics who would appreciate the production values rather than the content.

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John Darrell Sherwood. *War in the Shallows: U.S. Navy Coastal and Riverine Warfare in Vietnam, 1965–1968*. Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage command, www.history.navy.mil, 2015. 425 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, bibliography, endnotes, index. US \$75.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-945274-76-6.

*War in the Shallows* describes the U.S. Navy's riverine and coastal operations in South Vietnam during the years of growing U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, 1965-1968. Each chapter focuses on one type of shallow water warfare. The work is based on declassified official documents, held largely at the Naval History and Heritage Command in Washington, DC, along with oral histories from 125 Vietnam veterans.

The chapters move back and forth between river and coast while moving forward chronologically. Riverine operations were focused in the Mekong Delta south of Saigon and consisted of patrols to disrupt the Viet Cong, amphibious assaults, and support for allied forces operating in the area. In contrast, coastal operations sought to prevent the North Vietnamese from moving supplies to their forces in South Vietnam by sea.

A background chapter describes the origins of the American naval advisory effort in South Vietnam as well as the structural challenges of the advisory system: yearly deployments, cultural differences, lack of a common language, and

insufficient training for advisors. Advisors were also hampered by the South Vietnamese Navy (VNN)'s crippling weaknesses: ineffective leaders, poor maintenance, personnel and administrative problems exacerbated by Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) commanders who viewed the VNN simply as a taxi service. The advisors were not helped by the consistently paternalistic American attitude towards the VNN.

In March 1965, as part of America's growing military commitment to South Vietnam, the U.S. Navy initiated Operation Market Time. Within a year, layers of radar, patrol planes, small warships, and surveillance centres had ended North Vietnam's use of large, steel-hulled ships to bring supplies south. Market Time's success against these larger infiltrators meant that the navy's greatest challenge off the coast of Vietnam was Vietnamization, rather than heavy enemy activity. Market Time, however, proved incapable of halting the flow of supplies transported by smaller vessels, such as wooden junks. In an effort to stem this flow and to establish control over the rivers of the Mekong Delta, the USN launched Operation Game Warden. Game Warden relied heavily on new, small craft with an unorthodox design history; the iconic Patrol Boat River (PBR). The PBRs initially focused their riverine patrols on searching sampans rather than supporting amphibious assaults by ARVN or U.S. troops, though this changed over time. Sherwood also describes the Navy-operated helicopter squadron that supported

the PBRs, one of the most decorated units in U.S. naval history.

Sherwood then turns to the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF), the product of pairing a U.S. Army infantry brigade with a collection of Navy landing craft, modified for riverine service. After describing the Force's origin and formation, he discusses the gradual improvements in Navy sailor training that occurred during the war. The MRF was commanded collectively by a Navy captain and an Army colonel who worked closely together to avoid turf struggles. In a series of intense actions in the Mekong Delta, the MRF inflicted and received heavy casualties in 1967. The Force's true test came during the Tet Offensive in January 1968. As Viet Cong and North Vietnamese force's launched heavy attacks throughout South Vietnam, the MRF played an important role in beating back attacks in the Delta. In combination with ARVN and other U.S. units, the MRF inflicted heavy casualties on the Viet Cong, turning the Tet Offensive into an operational defeat for the North, though a political defeat for the United States.

In contrast to the Navy's larger, blue-water warships, the small craft of Vietnamese rivers and coves gave junior officers and sailors unparalleled leadership opportunities. Within the confines of the Mekong Delta, young men were given authority they would receive on larger warships only after years of training and preparation.

While other works such as Schreadley's *From the Rivers to the*

*Sea* (1992) and Cutler's *Brown Water, Black Berets* (2012) have examined these coastal operations, Sherwood is the first to combine a large swath of official records with numerous oral histories. These oral accounts allow him to include dozens of personal stories that enliven the text and highlight a number of heroic actions for which the participants were decorated. The result is the definitive work on the subject that cements Sherwood's reputation as the reigning scholar of the U.S. Navy in the Vietnam War.

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Nancy Shoemaker. *Native American Whalers and the World. Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, www.uncpress.unc.edu, 2015. x+303 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, appendix, index. US \$34.65, cloth; ISBN 978-1-4696-2257-6.

*Native American Whalers and the World* is a complex tale and a scholarly, worldwide travel study about race, focused largely on indigenous American whalers. Shoemaker describes their identity and how, during the era of the whaling industry, ideas of race differed according to the situation, often with unpredictability. "The positions held by native New England whalers . . . wreaked havoc on simple narratives of white

encounters with natives from contact to conquest and expose the inherent flexibility of racial expectations to adapt to each situation.” (195)

It is likely that few readers have given much thought to the indigenous people who found employment at sea, far from the land with which most Indian tribes are so closely associated. There is substantial evidence that whalers commonly utilized Native Americans for labour. The New England whaling industry largely stretched from southern Cape Cod, the islands of Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket, through Buzzard’s Bay and west through the Connecticut shore around the New London area. This region was also the home of many tribes whose ancestors harvested fish from the local waters. Over time, white immigrants appropriated their best tribal lands either through purchase or confiscation. As whale ships sailed the world’s oceans, they found the South Seas and its many islands good hunting grounds for their quarry. While there, the whalers augmented their crew with skilled native islanders. Some served as common labourers while others, because of their extraordinary eyesight and hunting abilities, were accorded responsibilities as harpooners, boat steerers and in some cases, ship’s officers and even owners. Whaling was one of the few occupations where talent frequently transcended racial stereotypes.

Shoemaker’s book is divided into four sections, each concentrating on a different aspect of whaling and racial divides. The first, called “The

Ship”. takes the reader through the recruitment of a whaler’s workforce that could be comprised of white and black Americans, Indians, Portuguese-speaking Azorean and Cape Verdeans, Europeans chattering in other tongues, plus a sprinkling of Pacific Islanders, Asians, Africans, Hispanic South Americans and Inuit.

This disparate, polyglot band worked for the good of the ship and obeyed its rules in order to participate in the voyage’s profits. Rank dictated where one worked, slept and ate; and this, in turn, generated a shipboard culture and a bond as well.

The second group of chapters, called “On the Beach”, describes the impact that the whaleship’s sailors and their varied races had on the cultures with which they intermingled. Relations were frequently amicable, but in some cases, violent incidents occurred. Still, they were multi-hued, racially diverse ambassadors of the nascent United States. “They brought metal trade goods, diseases, and a sense of cultural superiority . . . [to the] darker inscrutable natives”. (7) This was a preview of America’s intrusion into far-flung societies via the oceans of the world.

Shoemaker’s third part, “Beachcombers”, examines in detail the effect of aboriginal Americans who left their ships in an attempt to integrate with primitive island people, namely those in Fiji and the New Zealand’s south island. They married, had children and acquired land, but their acceptance varied and they remained outsiders, but not because they were Indians. Ironically, they were largely considered white men,

foreigners and social intruders.

The fourth and shortest segment is titled "The Reservation." Here the author focuses upon how the colonists gained control of aboriginal lands and culture and marginalized the indigenous people economically and socially. Back home in New England, the Native American experience sharply contrasted with the acceptance and potential for advancement they had achieved as whaler crewmen. Instead, their actions made them "social derelicts, a degraded, abject, dependent people who barely even encountered Indians" — far from the portrait of the noble savage. (8) Although indigenous whalers earned enough money to support their families and developed highly sought-after specialized skills, the industry was rapidly disappearing like an outgoing tide. They earned the admiration of their shipmates, sometimes grudgingly, over the course of about a hundred years, but it did not last much beyond the later part of the nineteenth century.

*Native American Whalers and the World* is a monumental, erudite study of a fleeting industry that was buttressed by a racial and ethnic mosaic. It is a well-told tale of prejudice, perseverance, and pride of accomplishment, concluding in pointlessness as the whaling fishery became extinct. The author includes an abundance of notes and references for those who wish to delve more deeply into certain aspects of the work. The only disappointment this reviewer has relates to the limited discussion of native seamen and

women. There were brief discussions in various chapters about promiscuity, sexual conquest in foreign ports and attempting to join the society of the married when they chose to immigrate to South Sea island nations. Unfortunately, there was inadequate space given to the whalers' wives back home; female dependents who could go for years without seeing their husbands and raise their families with uncertain economic security in a mostly racially-segregated society ashore.

In Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Tashtego, the sole New England Indian, and the more central character, Queequeg, the wild South Sea Island cannibal, both held the responsible position of harpooner on the fictitious whaler, *Pequod*. For many bibliophiles, this American literary classic was their sole exposure to the nineteenth-century whaling industry, but Shoemaker adds a novel stratum to the social complexity contained within this ocean-borne industrial enterprise. In conclusion, *Native American Whalers and the World* is a welcome addition to the literature of whaling and maritime history. Scholars wishing to expand their knowledge in this neglected area of maritime sociology would do well by adding this book to their library.

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Paul W. Simpson. *Around Cape Horn Once More: the story of the French clipper ship Montebello*. Adelaide, South Australia: Clippership Press, paulsimo2010@yahoo.com.au, 2016.

125 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. AU \$15.00, US \$8.99, paper; ISBN 978-1365112010.

In the 1920s and 30s quite a large number of retiring shipmasters, who had started their careers in sail, were writing their memoirs. Meanwhile, authors like Basil Lubbock, conscious that the days of commercial sail were effectively over, published popular and factual books about the ships, their captains and crews, so the general public were more or less aware of what life in sailing ships had been like. Not so in the last four or five decades. Despite a bit of a revival of sail in the form of the training ships of the international Tall Ships fleet, we have become quite ignorant of the nautical world, past and present (except for huge cruise ships). It is, therefore, refreshing to read a factual account of the voyages of a real ship and her crew in the early years of the twentieth century.

This book describes the voyages of the French barque *Montebello* from her launch in 1900 to her loss on Kangaroo Island, South Australia in 1906, along with adventures of her crew and the subsequent careers of the two captains, Marchandea and Kervegan who had commanded her. The *Montebello* was a first class, steel sailing vessel of the French "bounty fleet". In 1888, France introduced the Navigation Bounty Act to build up her merchant marine and shipbuilding industries. The Act provided subsidies to builders of steel ships and to ship owners. It resulted in the creation of a magnificent fleet

of steel windjammers, some with four or five masts. The *Montebello*, however, was a three-master, slightly larger than average for her day. She was owned by the firm of Guillon et Fleury of Nantes, who operated fifteen ships at that time. Mr. Simpson has explained the bounty system very clearly.

One of the provisions of the Bounty Act was that at least three-fourths of the crew had to be French citizens (in the *Montebello* they all were). French sailors on bounty ships were comparatively well paid and received a pension after 25 years at sea. In return, they provided a ready reserve for the French Navy, which practised a partial mobilization every year. At that time, British and American sailing ships had citizen captains and officers but polyglot crews, often put on board drunk or drugged by the boarding house crimps just before sailing. (See John Masefield's more miserable poems to get the flavour of it). But French sailors who tended to hail from the same Breton regions and enjoy better food and pay, were generally immune to the blandishments of the boarding house runners and the *Montebello* never lost a man to them. That is not to say that they had an easy time of it. The *Montebello* was still a small ship by today's standards and she sailed the stormy southern ocean on her way to Australia and around Cape Horn. Crews had to draw upon their ultimate resources in energy and seamanlike skills just to survive. On slow passages, food could be nearly exhausted. The way the author, who obviously had access to the logbooks,

has traced all these long voyages gives the reader a true picture of what it was like for the crew of a sailing ship of the period.

Both of the *Montebello's* commanders were able and experienced mariners and popular with their crews. It was Captain Kervegan's misfortune to lose the ship when, in storm darkness and low visibility, she ran aground on Kangaroo Island while trying to reach Port Adelaide. With skill, bravery and determination the crew improvised a breeches buoy and got everyone, including the ship's dog, ashore on a remote uninhabited headland; but aid did arrive and eventually they were repatriated to France. Captain Kervegan also lost a subsequent command, the barque *Croisset*, on the coast of Ireland. The accounts of both shipwrecks make exciting reading. This did his career no good but he performed distinguished service commanding steamships in the First World War and died in 1963, a prominent citizen of the Nantes area.

A notable feature of the book is the illustrations, which include many representations of the ports and loading berths mentioned in the text. These are all contemporary with the story; many are old postcards. There are photographs of the wrecks of the *Montebello* and the *Croisset* as well as of the ships and crew members. There are, as is inevitable, a few typos but this is a most interesting, well researched little book.

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Mark Stille. *US Heavy Cruisers, 1941-45 Pre-war Classes*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2014. 48 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography, index. US \$17.95, CDN \$18.95, £ 9.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-78200-629-9.

Mark Stille. *US Heavy Cruisers, 1943-75 Wartime and Post-war Classes*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2014. 48 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography, index. US \$17.95, CDN \$18.95, £ 9.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-78200-632-9.

Any book carrying the Osprey name has a lot to live up to. These are books which, while not intended as academic tomes (and containing no referencing beyond a bibliography), still have a reputation for information quality, and most importantly, accuracy. Both these books live up to that reputation, providing exactly what their titles claim in a concise, understated way. Part of this may be due to Mark Stille's engaging writing style, which conveys the necessary information with no wasted words. With *US Heavy Cruisers*, especially the pre-war ones, that is fine line to tread.

As Stille points out, heavy cruisers were the core of the US Navy's reconnaissance efforts, as well as key to protecting its increasingly important (and by the Second World War, crucial) aircraft carriers. This protective role, when combined with the building limitations on capital ship construction imposed by

the various naval treaties of the 1920s and 30s, meant that heavy cruisers were the focus of much of the USN's building design efforts — as they sought to get the best ships they could from within the limits allowed by those same treaties that had halted the building of capital ships; something that is explained in detail in this book.

Methodically and logically presented, *US Heavy Cruisers, 1941-45 Pre-War Classes* begins by giving the reader the strategic background for the class, then moving on to discuss design issues and the effect of various treaties on development. The book then turns to the categories of weapons with which the cruisers were fitted. This is a perfect section to illustrate the book's appeal to different types of readers. It offers a useful, compact overview of pre-war cruisers for general interest readers. For the more demanding reader, approaching this book from a research or reference work perspective, this section provides useful definitions that are conveniently quotable or easily incorporated into a new work. The tables, and the quantity (and sheer variety) of images both enhance the book and make it easier to read, while providing a level of detail that even the most selective of academics would find useful.

Alongside this depth and thought, there is breadth. Stille includes decent sections on all the cruiser classes of this period; the *Pensacola*, the *Northampton*, the *Portland*, the *New Orleans*, and lastly, the *Wichita* class. He takes the time to cover all their quirks, highlighting the story of each

class, and their configuration. The narrative, combined with the illustrations enable the readers to create a very clear image of the ships for themselves, of the duties they performed, the sacrifices they made and most of all, the factors of their time that shaped them. With all these facts and the standard Osprey structure, the book should be formulaic, yet Stille's style has used the framework and content to create a thread that pulls the reader through it all, a thread which, at the end, makes them want to return to the beginning.

If there is one critique of this work, it is that it should not be a solo purchase. To obtain the full picture of heavy cruisers, one should buy the sequel and companion, *US Heavy Cruisers, 1943-75 Wartime and Post-War Classes*, also by Stille. During and after the war is when many of the developments undertaken before the Second World War, come to fruition, such as radar. Written in the same easy, informative style, this book focuses on US heavy cruisers at the beginning of the carrier age, when the loss of so many battleships at Pearl Harbor forced the US to rely on heavy cruisers for its principal surface-action vessels. Most importantly, from a design perspective, by 1943, the naval treaties of the inter-war years had ceased to have any influence over warship design and construction.

The ultimate example was the *Alaska* class, which displaced 34,253 tons fully loaded — not far off the 35,000-ton limit for battleships according to the naval treaties! This class was designed as heavy cruisers,

to fulfil the battlecruiser role of hunting down the 'super' heavy cruisers launched by other nations — a threat that never materialized. In the end, they became (as Stille notes) examples of the prolificacy of Second World War US naval construction. Despite their size, in actual form, shape, and layout, the *Alaska* class were very similar to the other wartime heavy cruiser designs — something that is very well illustrated by a number of full-page profile drawings and pictures. Among the most interesting pictures in the book are the ones of the *Baltimore* class vessel USS *Pittsburgh* after it lost its bow in a typhoon (they are similar to the pictures of the RN's *Tribal* class destroyer HMS *Eskimo* after she lost her bow at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Narvik); they really reveal the structure of the cruiser as it sits in water. (26)

In terms of structure, Stille's 1943-75 book is almost identical to the 1941-45 one. Both begin with the background, and a discussion of how the role of the heavy cruiser had changed over time. The second book highlights the concentration of heavy cruisers in the Pacific, in the war against Japan. It follows the heavy cruiser into the post-war period, describing how it remained relevant due to the capabilities of its main battery. The guns might have been developed for anti-surface warfare, but, as was proven in Korea and Vietnam, they were very capable as shore bombardment. After this, Stille examines the design of the heavy cruisers. After USS *Wichita* was built in 1939, there were no more treaty limits and designers were free

to design to role rather than rule. While many more light cruisers were built than heavy cruisers, the latter usually had more space, making them easier to upgrade with the dawn of the missile age, another reason they survived longer in service. The next section addresses weapons, and radar, giving the reader a solid framework within which to place individual classes. The logical progression makes it an excellent book for both the knowledgeable and those less informed about heavy cruisers.

Since one class built upon the previous one, the classes are discussed chronologically, starting with the *Baltimore* class, which were basically enlarged versions of the USS *Wichita*. This was the most numerous class built, with the first being commissioned in mid-April 1943 (USS *Baltimore*) and the last (USS *Chicago*) in January 1945. After extensive discussion and examination of the class and its record, the section finishes with a quick reference for class specifications, before moving on to the *Alaska* class. Only two of this super heavy cruiser class were commissioned, both in 1944, as Stille points out, too late to do more than act as escorts to the fast carrier forces.

The *Alaskans* did not arrive as late as the next class. The four completed vessels of the *Oregon City* class were all built after the Second World War, making them Cold War ships. *Northampton* was completed in 1953 as a command ship, rather than a cruiser, which allows Stille the opportunity to concisely explain the National Emergency Command Post

Afloat program. They were not, however, the last heavy cruisers built by the USN. The *Des Moines* class was built around a new 8-inch gun, like the modern *Zumwalt* class program. They were similarly very expensive, so only three were built. Although the *Des Moines* class cruisers ultimately proved to be very good warships, they were, nonetheless, built for a war which was over.

Both *Heavy Cruiser* books are excellent, with one flaw — they do not contain the notes and reams of primary source references of a Norman Friedman book, for example, with hundreds of pages of explanation and expressive prose. Nevertheless, together, the books act as an excellent reference guide and comparison point that is more compact and portable than a larger volume.

*US Heavy Cruisers, 1941-43 Pre-War Classes* and *1943-75 Wartime and Post-War Classes* make an excellent addition to any bookshelf. Anyone interested in the topic will enjoy Stille's style, and will, I hope, look for more of his work. Although either book can stand alone, it really makes sense to buy both of them at once. For less than £20.00, they would reward their owners handsomely.

Alex Clarke  
Epsom, Surrey

Barbara Tomlinson. *Commemorating the Seafarer. Monuments, Memorials and Memory*. Rochester, NY: Boydell

Press, [www.boydellandbrewer.com](http://www.boydellandbrewer.com) with the National Maritime Museum, 2015. xiv + 259 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$49.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-84383-970-5.

Richard Hakluyt (c. 1552 - 1616) commented about seafarers, "of so many, so few grow to gray heires". Because seafaring is such a dangerous occupation, the sea has claimed many, often in the prime of their lives. Such tragedies are bound to cause deep grief. Barbara Tomlinson's fascinating new book, *Commemorating the Seafarer: Monument, Memorials and Memory*, explores how groups and individuals have mobilized their mourning into tangible and lasting memorials to those who lost their lives at sea.

Although there is a growing literature on individual and collective historical memory, there have been a very limited number of academic studies on the nature of maritime commemoration. Tomlinson's book is an effort to build on the work of David Saunders' *Britain's Maritime Memorials & Mementoes* (1996) and David J Stewart's *The Sea and their Graves: An Archaeology of Death and Remembrance in Maritime Culture* (2011). Tomlinson's research and Saunder's grew out of a database project started in 1978 at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, UK. Initially, NMM personnel were interested in recording maritime-related sculpture held outside the Museum's collections; however, the parameters increased beyond that when it "became apparent memorials

provided much information of historical and cultural importance". (preface) The database has continued to expand, going on-line in 2002. These memorials provide source material for the maritime historian as well as information for family history researchers.

The author's research rests on her extensive career working with the Museum's collection, its database, as well as the UK War Memorial Archive. Tomlinson selects several case studies to explore the events and people that prompted the erection of these memorials and why they took the form they did. Almost all the memorials she examines date from after 1500 and consist of church and cemetery monuments, commemorative stained glass and public sculpture: "They are spread across the country in churches, cemeteries, streets, on hilltops or in other fairly public places... Whether tucked behind parish flower arrangements or standing in outside in the rain, they act as an expression of grief and a repository of individual and collective memory". (preface)

Tomlinson covers a lot of ground with the various examples. Much of her analysis focuses on naval memorials as the Royal Navy has had a profound effect on British maritime art and iconography, so much so that this comprises four chapters — roughly half the book. By comparison, mercantile commemoration is accorded a single chapter, as are memorials of maritime accidents. Given the paucity of memorials to fishermen, they only figure in a portion of a chapter.

While some of her case studies reveal forgotten catastrophes and dimly remembered maritime heroes, the author also accords room for some of the most famous shipping disasters and celebrated men such as Drake and Nelson. Although most of the book focuses on British examples, maritime disasters like the sinking of the *Titanic* were accompanied by such widespread grief that it was memorialized in various parts of the globe. It is striking how diverse the groups and individuals selected for memorialization were — everyone from the *Titanic*'s captain to the musicians.

Although the *Titanic* memorials are symptomatic of a long-term trend towards democratization of commemoration whereby those of more humble origins are memorialized along with the high-ranking and illustrious, Tomlinson dedicates a chapter to maritime explorers as they have historically been the ones whose image (or imagined image) has been most readily made into busts, statues or been featured on memorials. Such figures have often been intimately connected in the collective memory with civic pride and territorial acquisition. Yet, with changes in public attitudes, especially towards seafarers whose civic contributions were paid for by the profits from slavery, some of these memorials have been taken down. Others have been lost to enemy bombing during the war years, vandalism, theft, or neglect. The decline of churches, for example, reinforces the need for works like Tomlinson's.

Although the author argues that

the “material culture of commemoration over the centuries has been affected by contemporary politics, religious movements and artistic trends”, her analysis is very thin on these developments. This is the greatest weakness of the book.

The author has included roughly 100 black and white illustrations to augment the text. These images are understandably important to the book but they vary in quality, with some requiring better resolution. Although the cost of using colour photographs in publications is often prohibitively expensive, having a few colour images, perhaps of the stained glass, would have enhanced the look of the book. Barring that, a link to a web page with images would be helpful.

Tomlinson’s book, *Commemorating the Seafarer: Monument, Memorials and Memory*, brings to our attention not only the range of seafaring memorials, but it also demonstrates both the tragic cost of going to sea to trade, to fight, to fish, or to travel, not only in lives lost but also in tears cried by those left to mourn them. How people have fashioned their grief into lasting monuments to express their individual and collective mourning is a relatively new discipline but also an exciting field of study. Barbara Tomlinson’s book should appeal to a general audience of readers interested in maritime history, the history of death, and individual and collective memory. It is a welcome addition which enhances our understanding of maritime commemoration.

Cheryl Fury

Grand Bay - Westfield, New Brunswick

Jim Wellman. *Sea Folk*. St. John’s: Flanker Press, [www.flankerpress.com](http://www.flankerpress.com), 2013. x+217pp., illustrations, index. CDN \$1995, paper; ISBN 978-1-77117-224-0. (E-book available.)

Fishing for a living is one of the most dangerous professions. People die at sea from weather, fires, explosions, accidents, inefficient preparation, carelessness, equipment failures, and mostly being at the wrong place at the wrong time. When you add a demanding environment to this equation, the coasts of Newfoundland and northern Nova Scotia, the perils increase many-fold. The winters are long and harsh while spring and fall conditions can change capriciously with swiftness and violence. The Canadians who live in these coastal regions are self-reliant and resolute. They have an admirable sense of camaraderie that sustains them. During their long winters, their ability to provide food and other necessities for themselves and their families requires ingenuity, a great store of grit and seemingly, some help from Providence.

Wellman has collected 23 short vignettes focused on adventures, triumphs and calamities concerning fishermen, fisherwomen and those who process the bounty of the sea on land. With a few exceptions, almost all of the stories date from 2000 to 2013. The sites of these accounts cover a broad map of the rugged province stretching from St. John’s in

the east, along the northern coast through Fogo and Twillingate to the Grey Islands, Port aux Choix and Quirpon on the extreme northwestern peninsula to Corner Brook in the southwest. The eclectic anecdotes are, as the title states, about “*Sea Folk*,” their luck as well as their misfortunes. Some stories are moving and uplifting, others sad, but all display the fortitude of the people profiled.

Most of Wellman’s “*Sea Folk*” were fishermen, but they also hunted sea mammals when the need arose. One of the most heartrending and memorable tales concerns a band of seal hunters who set out as spring was arriving to harvest seals to provide meat for their dwindling winter stores. It was an April morning in 1917 when dozens of men from Joe Batt’s Arm, Barr’d Island and Fogo embarked upon jagged sea ice that hugged the rocky shore. They were armed with the implements needed for their quest along with food and water. Not too long after they headed to where the seals usually nestled to rest on the ice, “the wind quickly changed direction, causing the ice to break up and soon begin moving off shore. And then, to make matters worse, a thick fog moved in, closing down visibility to all, including the sealers left on the ice. Men scrambled madly in a feverish attempt to get back to land. Most did, but, as the day wore on, the realization came that not all the men made it back safely.” (42) Altogether six men died of exposure or starvation from this mishap, three of whom were brothers. Wellman’s tale

ends with a touching poem titled “Brothers Forever” written by Father Edward Brophy, a Newfoundland Catholic priest. A few selected stanzas offer a flavor of the fairly long requiem:

“It’s a Lovely day in Joe Batt’s Arm  
The sun is on the snow  
The men are going after seals  
No place better place to go.

\*\*\*\*\*

The wind was still, sir, nar a drift  
The sun shone overhead  
When far away a grinding noise  
Filled all [the] men with dread.

The wind was calm and pleasant  
But a sudden shift in tide  
Revealed the water clear and cold  
An ocean deep and wide.

\*\*\*\*\*

It’s a perfect day on the ice today  
The gulls fly overhead  
Some men are lying on the ice  
You’d swear to God, they’re dead.

\*\*\*\*\*

The men and boys are called away  
To hunt the ice for seals  
But some at home still weep and  
mourn —

A wound that never heals.” (49-53)

*Sea Folk* was an enjoyable read for this reviewer who grew up in an American fishing port and spent some time working in Newfoundland. It might fulfill the desire of those who like to vicariously experience through literature, the tenuous life of those who “go down to the sea in ships.” It may also be a book for those who have had a close association with the sea and have salt water running in their veins — perhaps an untapped sentimental

multitude. Unfortunately, not all of Wellman's collected stories are gripping and some are, frankly, mundane. Although clear and concise, the narrative writing is sometimes plodding, offering little character insight. Lacking a coherent theme to suggest why each tale was included in this anthology, it almost appears as if the author had gathered a number of good stories but then found that he had to fill about two hundred pages to make a saleable book — so fill them he did.

*Sea Folk* reminds me of “screech,” a rum-like drink peculiar to Newfoundland, which is part of a strange ceremony involving kissing a cod and downing a shot of screech (Rhum) after shouting “long may your big jib draw.” Like this screech ritual, *Sea Folk* may not be for everybody. It would appeal to a special audience, a niche market of those who know and appreciate the hazards inherent in the lives of “fisher folk.”

Louis Arthur Norton,  
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James E. Wise, Jr. and Scott Baron.  
*At the Helm of USS America*.  
Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing, [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com), 2014.  
vii+242pp., illustrations, appendices,  
bibliography, index. US \$45.00,  
paper; ISBN 978-07864-7656-5.

In *At the Helm of USS America*, authors Wise and Baron tell the story of the USS *America*, a U.S. Navy (USN) super-aircraft carrier, and its 23 commanders spanning a thirty-

year service career.

*America* must have been a plum assignment for USN officers, since it led to an Admiral's rank for most of them. Of the carrier's commanders, 18 became Admirals, with two of them reaching four-star Admiral rank. Of those two, one, Thomas B. Hayward, became Chief of Naval Operations, the highest position in the USN. Another commander of *America* was briefly an interim Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, while another former commander became Inspector General of the USN. This impressive list of post-*America* careers indicates how important a posting to *America* was to a USN officer. Only the best were selected to command the ship as a step towards Admiral's rank. One thing all of *America*'s commanders had in common: they were all flight crew, although one later became a flight officer due to loss of vision.

Due to the ship's lengthy service career, her commanders experienced a variety of conflicts. Some saw service in the Second World War and the Korean War; others saw combat in Vietnam (one commander of *America*, Robert B. Fuller, was a prisoner of war who spent six years in captivity,) while the last captains of *America* saw service in Operation Desert Storm, the 1991 Gulf War as well as other conflicts such as the 1975 *Mayaguez* rescue, Lebanon and Libya in the 1980s, and Haiti and Bosnia in the 1990s.

The profiles of the commanders are as varied as the assignments of their ship. They came from all parts of the United States and via a range

of educational institutions. Only four of *America's* commanders graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy while others came from the Naval Officer Candidate, Naval Aviation Cadet, and the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs.

*America's* commanders shared more than flight crew experience: they were well-educated, knew both airmanship and seamanship, had integrity, set high standards of conduct and discipline for themselves and their crews, and were respected and often, even popular, with their crews. On his departure from *America*, Commander John J. Mazach, (October, 1989- February, 1991) was honoured by his ship's crew with a sign that read "We'd sail to hell and back with J.J. Mazach." The commanders' skills were recognized by the number of decorations they earned; among their many medals were awarded three Navy Crosses, five Silver Stars, twenty Distinguished Flying Crosses, and even one Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire!

The book is well illustrated with photographs of every commander plus many photographs of *America* at work. Most of the commanders' biographies are supplemented with first-person accounts of their naval service offering a wealth of detail that adds to book's interest. Despite the few slim exceptions, the biographies, personal interviews and oral histories greatly enhance the narrative.

The book also contains a brief summary of *America's* naval service. Over thirty years with the USN, *America* literally sailed around the

world several times, including three combat tours in Vietnam, and one combat tour each to Libya, the Persian Gulf, and Bosnia. *America* was decommissioned on 9 August 1996, due to post-Cold War defense-budget cutbacks. For several years, there was hope that *America* could be preserved as a museum, but those plans came to naught. (A comparison here — there were plans to convert HMCS *Bonaventure*, the Royal Canadian Navy's last aircraft carrier, into a museum and other uses. Those ideas, too, came to naught.) Finally, in 2005, the USN announced that *America* was to be used as a live-fire test and target evaluation ship to assess battle damage and thus, help plan the layout of future aircraft carriers. For over a month, the USN attacked *America* with various explosives designed to simulate torpedo, cruise missile, and small craft attacks. The stubborn old ship refused to sink. Finally, on 14 May 2006, *America* was towed out to sea and sunk. At the time, it was the largest warship ever scuttled.

In the final analysis, a ship, no matter how large or well-built and equipped, is only as good as its crew. The quality of that crew begins with the ship's commander, and it is clear from this book that *America's* 23 commanders were among the best of the USN. Many qualities of leadership can be gleaned from the biographies of the men contained in this book. It is a good read and is recommended.

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Captain Tom Woodfield, OBE. *Polar Mariner: Beyond the Limits in Antarctica*. Caithness UK: Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com, 2016. 244 pp., illustrations, charts. US \$25.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-84995-166-1.

Navigation in Antarctic waters is, without any doubt, among the most challenging and demanding tasks for any mariner. The ice, most extreme weather and sea conditions, incomplete surveys, and the more or less complete absence of all kinds of navigational aids are just some of the factors that make the waters off the Antarctic continent different from most other parts of the world's oceans.

Woodfield's autobiographical *Polar Mariner* is not only a most readable personal account of an entire career spent in Antarctic navigation, but a source of utmost relevance when it comes to understanding the maritime history of Antarctica. Most historical publications on Antarctica deal with either specific expeditions or the exploration of Antarctica at large and are focused on activities on the continent itself. While many books about the so-called heroic age of Antarctic history include at least a couple of chapters on the expeditions' ships and their crews, the majority of later publications tend to totally neglect the maritime component. The explanation for this might simply be that, after the Second World War, navigation in Antarctic waters had become relatively routine and that seafaring off Antarctica was just part

of the logistical framework necessary to support the various Antarctic research programs.

In fact, shipping in the waters off the Antarctic continent is, and was, never just routine. Woodfield's autobiography provides an impressive account of the maritime activities of the British Antarctic programs from the 1950s to the 1980s and clearly demonstrates that, while it became part of the standard logistical planning for any project, seafaring in and around Antarctica remained extremely different from routine navigation in other parts of the globe.

As Woodfield describes his service for the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDES) onboard the RRS *Shackleton*, the RRS *John Biscoe* and finally, the RRS *Bransfield*, and his journey up through the FIDES ranks to master, it becomes obvious that any research activity in Antarctica was not only heavily dependent on the service of the crews of these vessels, but, in fact, would have been impossible without them.

For the maritime historian, the most interesting part of Woodfield's autobiography is probably his discussion of the type of leadership required for ships operating in these areas. His reflections on the personal requirements necessary to command ships operating off Antarctica provide a most useful insight into the leadership style often so critical for a project's success or failure. Given the long duration of voyages in the Southern Ocean and the limited availability of ship-to-shore communication, Woodfield's contemporary

personal experiences as a mate and master compare quite easily to the stories of ship's officers serving a century earlier on Atlantic or Pacific routes.

The book contains a good number of charts and more importantly, photographs, both black and white and colour, illustrating the operations of RRS *Shackleton*, RRS *John Biscoe* and RRS *Bransfield*. The professional maritime historian, however, will miss the technical details of the ships and the general arrangement plans. Such plans, in particular, would have given the reader a better understanding of the differences between the vessels and the development of ship design for use in Antarctic waters. The unfortunate lack of any references, an index, or a bibliography somewhat limits the book's use for academic research, but, of course, it was not written as a history of Antarctic navigation. Instead, it is the autobiography of one of the most experienced Antarctic navigators of the second half of the twentieth century.

*Polar Mariner* is not a maritime history of Antarctica, which still needs to be written, but a most important primary source for such a polar history. It deserves high praise and is recommended to any polar historian interested in the maritime dimension of Antarctic history as well as to any maritime historian interested in the maritime history of Antarctica. The more casual reader interested in Antarctic history will enjoy it as an authentic and easily read story from the post-heroic, post-Shackleton age. *Polar Mariner* is an

account of pragmatic leadership under extreme conditions by one of the most experienced mariners in the period prior to the advent of satellite navigation and communication.

Ingo Heidbrink  
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Joel Zemel. *Scapegoat—the extraordinary legal proceedings following the 1917 Halifax Explosion*. Halifax, NS: The New World Press, www.newworldpress.com, 2014. xxi + 435 pp., illustrations, maps, timeline, appendices, bibliography, notes, index. CDN \$35.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-895814-62-0; ISBN 978-0-9684920-9-3 (cloth)

Joel Zemel explores the legal proceedings that followed the great explosion in the narrows of Halifax Harbour, 6 December 1917. The collision between the Belgian relief ship *Imo* and the French freighter *Mont Blanc*, filled with munitions, and the resulting explosion that leveled a portion of Halifax has been explored in a number of books and at least one film. Zemel has stitched together selected verbatim testimony from the Wreck Commission, subsequent civil proceedings and participants' correspondence into a sequential retelling of the tale from the collision to the end of the civil hearings.

Chapter 1 provides a brief history of Halifax, and its harbour, leading up to its role as a collection centre for trans-Atlantic convoys to Europe, during the First World War. Chap-

ters 2 through 5 detail the events of the morning of December 6, as SS *Imo* attempted to sail out of the lower basin at Halifax harbour and the SS *Mont Blanc* sailed in. The *Imo*'s use of horn blasts to declare its course to *Mont Blanc*, and the ship's speed and failure to steer the proper course in the narrows is brought out in a confusing swirl of eyewitness evidence. The fire and explosion end the introduction, with little said at all about the destruction in the city.

Chapter 6 deals with the establishment of the Wreck Commission to examine the issues of who was responsible for the accident, the role of the pilotage commission in the incident and the question of bringing munitions into the harbour. Justice Arthur Drysdale headed the Wreck Commission inquiry, along with two nautical assessors. Chapters 7 and 8 feature the questioning of *Mont Blanc*'s Captain Aimé Le Médec and pilot Francis Mackey by Counsel Charles Burchell, representing the owner of SS *Imo* (and its captain and the pilot, both of whom died in the explosion). Discussion of the similarity between French and English steering systems, the number of navigation horn blasts used and by which ship, and the failure of *Mont Blanc*'s pilot to warn those close to the burning *Mont Blanc* that their lives were in grave danger, dominate the lengthy excerpts of testimony cited in these chapters. The questioning by Burchell is repetitive and hostile, meant to rattle the witnesses and obfuscate his client's responsibility for the collision.

Chapter 9 turns its attention to

the question of why a munitions ship was allowed in the harbour in the first place and by whom. Zemel's belief that RNR Commander F. Evan Wyatt, the chief examining officer of the port of Halifax, would be made the scapegoat (thus the title of the book) for the failure of his superiors and those in office in Ottawa and London, England, is first raised here. No regulations existed to restrict munitions ships from entering the harbour and Wyatt did not know the true nature of *Mont Blanc*'s load. The *Imo* apparently disobeyed Wyatt's orders to wait until they received permission to leave before sailing. Chapter 10 sees the *Imo*'s counsel attack Commander Wyatt, attempting to cast doubt on his handling of shipping in and out of the harbour and his lack of awareness of the danger presented by *Mont Blanc*'s cargo. It is apparent that the pilots did not take his order to seek permission to leave seriously. Unfortunately for Wyatt, while he was in court defending himself, an oil tanker and a ship with munitions passed each other in the harbour, against new regulations set in place after the December 6 incident. The *Imo*'s counsel uses the event to further bury Wyatt. Chapter 11 opens with Wyatt suspended from duty two days after this incident. He blames the pilots for not following orders while the pilots, in turn, admit they did not listen to him, but claim he knew they disregarded his directions. The captain and pilot of *Mont Blanc* are also targeted for blame. The continuing pursuit of Wyatt, LeMédec and Mackey by various lawyers (though mainly Burchell)

spills over into the next two chapters. Zemel suggests that the search for someone to blame was spurred on by the local press seeking an inquisition, rather than an inquiry.

Chapter 14 contains the closing statement by Crown counsel, William Henry. It is the most succinct account of the facts presented before the Wreck Commission. In Henry's view, the *Imo's* pilot and captain were responsible for the collision by not following the order to notify the port inspector and by not moving to the proper side of the channel as they prepared to pass *Mont Blanc*. The pilotage in the harbour, in general, was also criticized. After its deliberation, the Wreck Commission returned with the exact opposite decision. They found the captain and pilot on *Mont Blanc* responsible for the accident, they saw Wyatt as incompetent and failing to provide for a safe harbour, and they absolved the *Imo's* deceased captain and pilot of any blame. Captain Le Médec, Mackey (the pilot) and Commander Wyatt were arrested and charged with manslaughter for the death of the Canadian pilot aboard the *Imo*. The first two men were released under a writ of *habeas corpus* and only Wyatt stood trial. The trial judge, Justice Russell, found no evidence to prove Wyatt guilty, and so instructed the jury, which after a short deliberation returned with a verdict of "not guilty". A civil court examined the matter of financial liability for the accident between the two shipping companies and decided the *Mont Blanc* was responsible for the accident. An appeal to the Supreme

Court of Canada found both vessels responsible, a decision upheld by the Privy Council, resulting in no payment of damages by either shipping company.

In chapter 17, Zemel makes the case that the Canadian Navy did not support Commander Wyatt to the degree that it might have. Removing him from his station as port examiner during the Wreck Commission inquiry, failing to provide a lawyer in a timely manner for his civil trial and his superior officers' tone when writing about Wyatt, is clear evidence of a desire to drop the man publicly associated with the explosion. After being cleared, Wyatt left the navy and went to live in the United States.

Zemel's epilogue retraces the facts of the collision and the Wreck Commission's search for a guilty party, rather than pursuing the cause of the collision between the *Imo* and the *Mount Blanc*. He finds the Commission to have been blinded by a predetermination that those on the *Mont Blanc*, which had carried the dangerous explosives, and the person who let it into the harbour (Commander Wyatt) were to be found guilty. Zemel holds the Federal government at fault for allowing the pilotage in Halifax (and elsewhere in Canada) to blithely carry out its function unchecked, and suggests the Navy's failure to properly organize and regulate traffic in the harbour as the primary causes of the accident. He does pass some blame onto the company that loaded the *Mont Blanc* with such a deadly mix of volatile material. He sees Wyatt, Le Médec

and Mackey as innocent.

The book contains an appendix with some documents, short excerpts of testimony, short biographies of military personal and civilians involved in the story, a section called "Elements of the Halifax Explosion", and two short lists of documents and of people interviewed by the Wreck Commission. This hodge podge of information is left for the reader to sort through and determine its importance. Much of it seems unnecessary and even redundant.

Zemel has attempted to use the words of those who testified to tell the story of the Halifax Explosion; an interesting approach. Unfortunately, the present editing of the verbal responses to commissioner or counsels' questions (plus portions of various correspondence and documents) form a choppy, and at times confusing, narrative, difficult to follow and comprehend. In the chapters that lay heavy emphasis on the restating of testimony, a summary pulling together the key facts established, or the relevant legal issues, is sorely missed.

There are an abundance of images in this book (167). The photographs are of the people, ships and locations involved in the events of that fateful December day, as well as those who conducted the investigation. Images of documents produced by the various inquiries also appear, as do a handful of maps and charts of the area in which the collision and explosion occurred. Some images appear twice in the book, for example two identical

photographs of the courtroom where the Wreck Commission conducted its inquiry are used, one on p. 91 and the other among a group of images between pp. 234-235. Similarly, individual pictures of four of the Supreme Court of Canada Justices appear in chapter 16 and again on p. 335 in a grouping of photos, a repetition that seems unnecessary. The list of images used in the text is alphabetical rather than in their order of appearance. Though the source of the image is clearly stated in the list, finding the image in the book is not always straightforward, as some photos are cited by the page on which they appear, while others are within groups of photographs that appear between pages. Elsewhere, the list of photos misplaces the image; for examples, the photo of T. R. Robertson, supposedly on p. 122, is not there, but the other one, listed on p. 333, is.

Both the preface and the bibliography note the key work done by other researchers and writers on the topic. Zemel's comments on these sources would be helpful for those entering into the study of this catastrophe. The rest of the book is not for a novice to the topic, since a reader requires some knowledge of the event to navigate through the text. The book will be of interest to those exploring the Halifax explosion, especially as a source of images.

Thomas Malcomson  
Toronto, Ontario

To the editors of *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du Nord*:

I regret that Howard Fuller has seen fit to dispute my review of *Empire, Technology and Seapower: Royal Navy Crisis in the age of Palmerston* in vol. 25, no. 2, and regret still more the tone he adopted in so doing. Academic debate should be conducted with due regard for basic human civility, including the avoidance of libel. I have no desire to fire fight with fire, nor shall I, but neither can I permit his charges and accusations to pass unanswered.

First of all, I did not “complain” that Fuller’s research and analysis followed that of Arthur Marder and Oscar Parkes: I merely observed that they did so. More substantively, I did not link his interpretation of Victorian British naval policy and strategy to those of Nicholas Rodger and Paul Kennedy. Indeed, while both scholars’ early work adheres to the “Dark Ages” trope that Fuller is so keen to defend, as one of the senior editors of *Océanides*, a forthcoming multi-author project exploring the role of the sea in the fates of nations, Rodger commissioned Andrew Lambert to contribute the chapter on the Royal Navy 1815-50, and me to write that on the period 1850-89, suggesting that whatever his previous views may have been, he now sees merit in the interpretative paradigm associated with Andrew’s and my work.

Second, Fuller’s hyperbolic language, of which I made notice in my review, has not abated: if anything it has increased in intensity. Neither I, nor Andrew, nor anyone whose work aligns in any way with ours has ever claimed that the Victorian Royal Navy was “all-powerful—always—against everyone and anyone”.(244) This continual misconstruction and misrepresentation of my and others’ views is so bewildering and so ubiquitous that it suggests Fuller is incapable dispassionately of parsing the meaning statements made by those with whom he disagrees. For instance, he uses Richard Dunley’s and Andrew Lambert’s wholly justified observation that “every great power with a significant sea coast had good reason to fear the power of the Royal Navy” to conclude that both are, by extension, claiming that it was indeed “all-powerful.”(246) I doubt any careful reader would extrapolate that conclusion from the very specific assertion made by Lambert and Dunley, any more, for example, than the statement “all western powers have good cause to fear the reach of the Islamic State” would today be taken to mean that it is “all-powerful.”

Nor does Fuller furnish the slightest evidence to support his claim that I have a “cult-like devotion not only to ‘Britannia’ but in the ubiquity of modern naval supremacy itself.”(244) Even the most casual familiarity with my work should lead a reader to conclude exactly the opposite. For instance, in *British Naval Policy in the Gladstone-Disraeli Era, 1866-1880* (1997), I explicitly state that “[i]f Britain did not have to concern itself unduly with outside threats—the occasional [invariably groundless] invasion scare excepted—its power to intervene in Europe was similarly circumscribed” and that the Schleswig-Holstein crisis (1864) “illustrated the limitations of a foreign policy that relied largely on seapower” in conjunction with short-term continental alliances “for coercion and enforcement.”(9) A page later, in listing the foreign policy crises of the period 1866-80 I conclude that only the Eastern Crisis (1875-78) “involved a region in which naval power could be utilized with any

degree of effectiveness.”(10) Moreover, like Andrew Lambert, I wholly subscribe to Sir Julian Corbett’s dictum that sea power in and of itself is not decisive. Nowhere have I ever stated or even implied otherwise. At the very least, Fuller owes his opponents the professional courtesy of accurate quotation, rather than the wholesale exaggeration and distortion that appears to be his stock in trade.

Not content with misconstruing others’ words, Fuller’s misrepresentation further extends to the use of quotation marks in a manner suggesting they are responsible for statements of which he is in fact the author: he comes very close to putting words in others’ mouths, to put it bluntly. “‘No, it’s not exactly written down,’ the revisionist historian adds,” British naval strategy and Admiralty policy “was both ‘too secret’ to show up in any surviving memo or even private correspondence and yet also ‘too broadly understood’ by savvy sea dogs...to even need [*sic*] to be clearly articulated.”(244-45) None of the phrases that he placed in quotation marks was made by me in my review or in any other place, nor by any other scholar whose work Fuller libels.

But, as a matter of fact, “it” *was* written down, which brings me to the most serious of Fuller’s accusations: that I have fabricated evidence (i.e., made stuff up) to buttress my interpretation. He is forced to concede that there are to be found contemporary statements lending support to my views, but dismisses them *prima facie* on the grounds that “they are comparatively very few indeed” [*sic*]. One wonders what basis of comparison is being used, for there seems to me no shortage of examples articulating the strategy of coastal assault to which to point. In the interest of space I shall confine my remarks to the evidence given by Vice-Admiral Robert Spencer Robinson to an 1871 Admiralty Committee on the design of British ships of war, appointed in the wake of HMS *Captain’s* capsizing in September 1870.

On 10 March 1871 Spencer Robinson testified in front of the committee regarding a class of four small monitor-style vessels ostensibly designed and built for defence of British coasts and harbors. He was at pains, however, to inform his questioners that

[m]y intention, and the intention claimed for the “*Cyclops*” and for that class, always included that you might use these ships in conjunction with your other ships of war to attack an enemy’s port in shallow water, where large vessels could not get in. Supposing you had the misfortune to go to war with some Power having ports chiefly in shallow water. In such ports these vessels of the “*Cyclops*” class would contribute a very valuable form of attack—I do not mean alone, but in conjunction with other vessels—in conjunction with the gunboats invented by Mr. [George] Rendel [of the armaments firm William Armstrong and Co.] and torpedo boats. Very often, indeed, in war, the surest defence is to be found in a vigorous attack. (“Report of the Committee appointed...to examine the designs upon which ships of war have recently been constructed...” British *Parliamentary Papers*, 1872, vol. 18: 614-15)

Nor is this by any means a lone example. In the space of less than six pages of testimony Spencer Robinson or members of the committee referred to coastal assault no fewer than a dozen times, among them the former’s unequivocal observation that

a larger monitor-type vessel, HMS *Glutton* “was an engine of war, for breaking into first class fortified harbours where there is plenty of water.”(617) So insistent was Spencer Robinson in emphasizing this coastal assault role that when one of his examiners omitted it from a statement of the purposes for which the *Cyclops* class was designed, he pointedly added “Yes, including the attack of an enemy’s harbours” not once but twice in succession.(617, questions 610 and 611). Were that not enough, in winding up his testimony he was about as explicit as was possible regarding the Admiralty’s intentions:

In our powerful iron-clad fleet there are vessels perfectly calculated to go into any deep water harbour, and destroy anything in it, if not kept out by torpedoes [i.e., mines]. On the other hand there are many ports less strongly defended, where 17 or 18 feet of water is to be found, and where this class [*Cyclops*] could go in and destroy the transports if the enemy were preparing an expedition.(619)

Not a single committee member, professional or civilian, questioned the veracity of his statements. In other words, no one expressed either surprise or reservations about the purposes for which the *Cyclops* class was designed and built. Indeed, the wording of several questions suggests that the principle of coastal assault was accepted by them without demur or doubt. Readers can thus judge for themselves if the tactical scenario to which I refer in *The Birth of the Battleship* is nothing more than “concocting wargames in my head” or “filling in the blanks with what I *wish* the past to be.”(246) Likewise, I leave to them to determine which “side of the firing line” is more culpable of “chronic lack of proper research methodology” or, at the very least, disregard of relevant evidence. (245-46)

What of Fuller’s claim that by depicting HMS *Devastation* as principally designed for a coastal assault role, I am trying to bang square pegs into round holes owing to its alleged unsuitability for that mission on account of its draft of more than twenty-six and a half feet? For starters, several of the French ships that would have been *Devastation*’s targets — the *Gloire*, *Magenta*, *Provence*, *Ocean*, and *Colbert* classes, plus *Couronne*, *Friedland*, and *Richelieu*, in sum twenty-three vessels (the whole of France’s pre-1873 first-class ironclad fleet, as a matter of fact) — had draughts as deep or deeper (mostly the latter) than *Devastation*’s. So, for that matter, did Russia’s sole pre-1880 first-class ironclad, *Petr Veliki* (*Peter the Great*). Moreover, the French naval arsenal at Cherbourg was planned and constructed as a deep water port. According to the 1882 edition of the Admiralty’s own *Channel Pilot* the depth of water on the inner side of the central harbor wall ranged between thirty-six and forty-two feet at low tide, and more than 900 acres of the roadstead carried thirty feet of water or more. That deep-draught British warships might venture where even deeper-draught French or Russian warships went is a possibility that Fuller seems not to have considered.

Given all of these facts, given Spencer Robinson’s explicit statements (and many such others besides), and given their unquestioning acceptance by the Admiralty Committee on the Designs of Ships of War, one wonders what quantity of evidence might convince Fuller that there might be merit to the conclusions I and others have reached regarding them, conclusions that he dismisses in such brusque fashion.

Rather than the quantitative standard that Fuller has employed (albeit inaccurately) to dismiss all contemporary references to coastal assault, I prefer a different yardstick: quality, i.e., who was making such references, and on what authority. For the record, Spencer Robinson was Controller of the Navy from 1861 to 1871, in which capacity he was the crucial link between the Board of Admiralty and the Constructors' Department. Put another way, it was he who informed the latter as to the wishes of the former regarding the overall features of warship design. Nobody, therefore, was more "in the loop" than Spencer Robinson as to the intentions of the Board regarding the design of the Royal Navy's vessels and the purposes for which they were built. And Alexander Milne, quoted in my review of Fuller's book, was First Naval Lord — the senior professional at the Admiralty — 1866-68 and 1872-76. As I asked in my review, are we to conclude, as Fuller would have us do, that these men, at the pinnacle of their profession, did not mean what they said or wrote: that they *were not serious*? *That they were only kidding*? Such a judgment simply strains the bounds of credulity, at least for me. Obviously, Fuller disagrees.

Yet, not content with ignoring abundant contemporary evidence that contradicts his views, and with charging his opponents with fabricating evidence to support theirs, Fuller also claims that I, not he, is guilty of substituting my opinions for the utterances of contemporaries: "revisionist scholarship tells us what people of the time really thought, and why, rather than the actual record of what those people said and what they did. Not only have myself and other historians been fooled but so were the historical actors themselves (!)".(244)

This charge appears to me little more than his disagreeable way of saying that I discount the alarmist contemporary rhetoric that informs his work. Yes, I do take the "sky is falling" sentiments habitually expressed by "disgruntled naval officers" and hawkish politicians and journalists with several grains of salt. Why? Why privilege George J. Goschen, William Gladstone, or Benjamin Disraeli, rather than Lord Palmerston or John A. Fisher? For the simplest and most fundamental of reasons: their views appear to me more broadly informed and less partisan than those of many other politicians and most naval officers. Indeed, I take my cue from the eminent Conservative statesman Lord Salisbury (Prime Minister 1885-86, 1886-92, 1895-1902), who observed in an 1871 letter to fellow politician Lord Lytton

[n]o lesson seems to be so deeply inculcated by the experience of life as that you never should trust experts. If you believe the doctors, nothing is wholesome; if you believe the theologians, nothing is innocent; if you believe the soldiers nothing is safe. They all require to have their strong wine diluted by a very large admixture of common sense. (Quoted in Algernon Cecil, *Queen Victoria and Her Prime Ministers*, 294)

Equally to the point, as regards the voices that Fuller chooses to privilege, today one finds no shortage of professionals, politicians, and pundits decrying the alleged inadequacy of America's armed forces despite their receiving greater funding than the rest of the world's combined. Few non-partisan observers take such doom-and-gloom pronouncements at face value. I see no reason why historians should be any less skeptical of similar claims made by Victorian naval officers or their political or press

allies. Readers of my work, in sum, will find no shortage of reference to contemporary views, *expressed in their own words*. What they will not find is an unquestioning and uncritical acceptance of *ex parte* statements made by men who clearly had axes to grind.

Ironically, Fuller's own work suggests the degree to which both the Russians and the French were convinced that the British were deadly serious in their plans for coastal assault. For instance he devotes several sentences to Russia's frantic efforts to strengthen the defences of St. Petersburg following the successful 1855 British assault on Sweaborg. (*Empire, Technology and Seapower*, 184-85) The point he seeks to make is that these measures would have made any such assault prohibitively risky. Others might instead read it as evidence of how worried the Russian government was that the British *just might do it*.

Likewise, when tensions with Britain were at a fever-pitch owing to the ironclad building race of 1858-63, France, fearing a preemptive assault on Cherbourg, hastily constructed three forts on the central harbor wall. Did their presence increase the risks involved in mounting such an assault? Of course. But would Louis Napoleon have gone to the trouble and expense of having them built had he not been genuinely worried about a British descent on his showcase naval arsenal? Fuller may pooh-pooh the concept of coastal assault: rival powers certainly did not.

One final point: in dismissing the "comparatively very few comments" regarding coastal assault made by Spencer Robinson and other contemporaries, Fuller evidently could not resist adding "[b]ut please read further, Professor [do I detect a hint of sarcasm here?]: such turret ships were designed to kill ships, not forts..."(246) For the record, it was Alexander Milne rather than me who referred to "the attack of an Enemy's fleet, forts, or harbours" (shouldn't Fuller therefore have written "but please read further, Admiral"?).

As for my own views, anyone can without difficulty find them, for they are clearly articulated in virtually everything I have written on the subject. For example, in a chapter published in a sesquicentennial commemorative volume on HMS *Warrior's* completion (2011), I state that the coastal assault ships that the Royal Navy built 1860-90 were designed for "steaming into a heavily fortified enemy naval arsenal, shooting up the shipping and quayside infrastructure, and standing a reasonably good chance of surviving the fire of shore batteries."("What Next? British Armoured design Policy in the Ramming Era, 1861-81" in Andrew Baines, ed., *HMS Warrior: 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*, 69) I am baffled as to how such an explicit statement could possibly be misinterpreted, yet Fuller appears to have done so.

I apologize to *The Northern Mariner's* readers for having gone on at such length, but am confident that any historian whose work had been as thoroughly and egregiously misrepresented as mine has by Howard Fuller would be similarly concerned with setting the record straight.

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