

## Book Reviews

Geoffrey Bennett. *Freeing the Baltic 1918-1920*. Barnsley, South Yorks.: Pen & Sword Maritime, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2017. 263 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, US \$34.95: ISBN 978-1-147389-307-8.

This modern reprint of a book which first appeared as *Cowan's War* in 1964 and then again in 2002 under the present title, comes with a new preface and updates to the last chapter and appendices by Rodney Bennett, son of the author Geoffrey Bennett. Otherwise the pages, maps, and photographs are directly reproduced from the original first edition. Geoffrey Bennett, who died in 1983, was a serving officer in the Royal Navy known for his prose and writings on naval history, including a considered biography of Admiral Charles Beresford and books on naval battles in each of the two world wars. His written work combined the insights of a professional officer, with meticulous research in primary sources. The inspiration for this little known episode of Royal Navy operations in the Baltic Sea after the First World War started when Geoffrey Bennett served as the British naval attaché

in Moscow during the first decade of the Cold War and continued upon his return to London.

The book is essentially a biography of Rear Admiral Sir Walter Cowan, as the title of the first edition suggests, set in the context of Bolshevik consolidation and military operations during the Russian civil war, lingering German influence and meddling post-armistice in the eastern territories, and the aspirations and struggles of smaller Baltic nations created out of the former Russian empire—Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Finland. Cowan, described as a fighting admiral in the best traditions of the Royal Navy, experienced a varied career before and after his command of naval forces in the Baltic, a high point which garnered him the title Baronet of the Baltic. During the Second World War, he served with the commandos in a reduced rank and, while attached to an Indian Army mechanized unit, was captured by Rommel's *Afrika Korps* (later exchanged due to his age). Given vague instructions in 1919, Cowan led a force of cruisers and destroyers into the heavily mined Baltic Sea to assert British interests, shore up new governments in the Baltic states through demonstrations

of force and diplomatic efforts, deter substantial remaining German forces and their generals, and check the Red Navy from operating in an aggressive manner from its main base in Kronstadt near St. Petersburg. It was a fragile time between war and peace, when the stakes were very high for the players on the local scenes though a mere sideshow for Great Britain and higher political councils. Cowan and his warships operated actively for the rest of the year until the political situation stabilized and events allowed for their withdrawal.

The narrative presented by Bennett is somewhat dated by present standards of historiography, reflecting a style of writing in naval history now fifty years on. His descriptions of the Admiralty and men who rose to command over Royal Navy ships seem almost quaint at times, as much as Cowan's love for the hounds and hunting. Nonetheless, Bennett was the first to chronicle these relatively obscure naval operations and political events in the Baltic, and to integrate the use of translated Soviet historical accounts with personal papers and public records. No attempt has been made to list newer secondary sources in the bibliography and what might have been written since in English and foreign languages from the Russian Federation and present Baltic states belonging to the European Union, or released by way of archival files and collections. Much attention is given to the personalities of leading figures such as Major General Rudigen von der

Goltz and Baron Carl Gustav Mannerheim, one seen as obstructing Cowan's efforts and the other a man of action and strength in Finland. Of course, the book is at its best in describing the naval battles and operations that the inferior British naval forces under Cowan's leadership conducted against the Red Navy. Two Russian destroyers were captured and given to the Estonians, and motor torpedo boats launched surprise attacks sinking a cruiser shelling a shore fortification and then several battleships and auxiliaries right in the main Kronstadt fleet base. British naval aircraft and submarines also operated in the Baltic. Cowan took the initiative and achieved local command of the sea that enabled offensive actions. The Soviet fleet, with its superior numbers and larger naval units, kept to port and barely escaped disbandment at Lenin's hands due to Trotsky's convincing and the need for defence against White and supporting intervention forces during the civil war. Soviet sailors eventually mutinied in 1921. The British faced their own unrest and mutinies among dissatisfied sailors serving under harsh and isolated conditions, and Bennett goes to some length to absolve Cowan from responsibility for those in his own Baltic naval force. Cowan made high demands on his sailors and officers and was not known for his affection.

Reissuing the book, mostly in its original form with a new cover and title, makes the naval history of

Geoffrey Bennett more widely available, as older editions are out of print and fetch high prices in rare book shops. There is not really very much new here for naval historians or students of Baltic or Russian history. Rodney Bennett seems content to ride on the coat tails of his father instead of writing something else or substantially revising content.

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Jill Martin Bouteillier. *Sable Island in Black and White: Images of our Past*. Halifax, NS: Nimbus Publishing, [www.nimbus.ca](http://www.nimbus.ca), 2016. 136 pp., illustrations, maps. CDN \$15.95, paper. ISBN 978-1-77108-381-2.

Sailors usually steer clear of Sable Island. That has not always been possible. The illustration on page 28 of this book, Simon McDonald's 1890 shipwreck map, annotated in 1911 by Robert Jarvis Bouteillier, then the Superintendent of Sable Island, makes the point. At least 350 vessels are now known to have come to grief there since the sixteenth century. Reference to the internet will reveal various accounts that enlarge upon these tragedies, but what this book does, much more effectively than the internet, is to chronicle the experiences of a family living permanently on the island,

Between 1890 and 1919, while the Bouteillier family was growing

up, Dr. J. Dwight of the American Ornithological Society came to the island in 1898 to study bird life. Mr. Bouteillier's eldest daughter, Sarah Beatrice (Trixie) "...begged her father to build a small darkroom for her off the big kitchen... with just enough room for a small table, a shelf for her chemicals, and a rope to hang the photographs from...". She then started preserving Dr. Dwight's photographs. In 1901, Alexander Graham Bell, who first came to the island in 1898 searching for friends who had been among the victims of the ship *La Burgoyne*, driven on to the shoals surrounding the island, gave her a Brownie camera with which she preserved her own countless images and memories. Coincidentally, W.E. Saunders of the Ornithological Society was also visiting the island that summer (he published an article about this in *The Auk*, the society's journal) and Trixie may well have printed some of his photographs as well. In 1910, as she was approaching her thirtieth birthday, she left Sable Island for good. Her daughter Jill, who would hear all Trixie's stories about Sable Island, has now preserved and published a wide selection of the photographs.

Remarkable illustrations, most of them from Trixie's own camera, are reproduced on virtually every page of the book. The accompanying narrative is particularly effective. A tintype studio picture of Trixie, aged five, and her brother Dick, aged three, taken before the family moved to Sable Island, helps to put the book in proper context.

Subsequent photographs bring to life the activities of the family, the lifesaving crews under Mr. Bouteillier's direction, the many visitors who had enough imagination and confidence to venture out to the island, and the survivors of shipwrecks who, from time to time, found themselves guests of the Bouteillier family until they could be transported to the mainland.

Families whose living depends upon the sea accept danger and hardship, something that was especially true in the days before radar and other modern aids to navigation. Perhaps the great virtue of this book is that it reveals so well circumstances of the time. Jill Bouteillier has produced a wonderful record of the personalities who lay behind a truly astonishing record of lifesaving. She shows how, responsible as he was for the effective work carried out on Sable Island during these years, R.J. Bouteillier was a strong, calm man of 6' 3" who filled any room he entered.

"For almost thirty years, Bouteillier acted on behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia as Sable Island's doctor, lawmaker, dispenser of stores, minister and, most importantly, head of lifesaving."

Thanks to Dorothea Dix, the American philanthropist who had visited the island in 1853, lifesaving measures had long been instituted, and they provided the foundation on which Robert Bouteillier was able to build. He instituted telephones and cables to link the lifesaving

stations, and trained the lifesaving crews. And he established the circumstances in which gardening, domestic life, school, hunting, famous visitors, farming, entertainment and leisure, meteorology, among many other activities could thrive. Under his direction the Sable Island horses not only survived, but were put to good uses.

Sable Island is presented in this book in all its complexity. In my opinion, it is a wonderful contribution to maritime literature. It deserves a wide audience.

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Angus Britts. *Neglected Skies: The Demise of British Naval Power in the Far East, 1922-42*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2017. xii+242 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-157-9. (E-book available.)

Angus Britts' main argument is encapsulated nicely in his title. He contends that Admiral James Somerville's decision on 8 April 1942 to withdraw the Eastern Fleet from the Indian Ocean in the face of Admiral Chichi Nagumo's Indian Ocean raid "marked the moment the Royal Navy surrendered its supremacy in fleet combat." (182) Britts sees the seeds for Somerville's conclusion as having been sown with the decline of British naval air power in the 1930s,

when the Fleet Air Arm prioritized multi-role naval aircraft over single-purpose ones. This resulted in aircraft which proved woefully inferior to the land-based aircraft they faced during the early years of the war, and greatly reduced their effectiveness.

Yet, as Britts explains, these inadequacies did not become fully apparent until the British confronted Japanese forces in early 1942. This was because of the nature of the naval war in the Atlantic, where British disadvantages were offset by the limitations of their German and Italian opponents. For them, the battleship remained the primary weapon of surface naval warfare, with air power (land- or carrier-based) serving primarily in a supporting role. In the Mediterranean and Atlantic theatres, the British practice of deploying aircraft carriers singly as part of a mixed squadron of ships was effective in fighting against German and Italian naval forces. This proved completely inadequate against the Japanese, however, who deployed their carriers in groups and used air power as the primary means of attacking their opponents. Thus, when the Royal Navy confronted the *Kido Butai* in April 1942, the use of specialized attack planes deployed in large numbers from multiple carriers proved too much for the Eastern Fleet, leading to an order that marked the end of Britain's ability to defend her Australasian possessions from Japanese assault.

Britts notes that such an outcome was not unforeseeable, quoting from such contemporary figures as the German émigré strategist Herbert Rosinsky and Australian politicians Walter Moffitt Marks and Frederic (whose name Britts misspells as “Fredrick”) Eggleston, whose warnings about the Japanese threat were realized in the early months of the war in the Pacific. Yet Britts never explains why such Cassandra-like exhortations deserved to be taken seriously at that time, especially considering the range of dire predictions made by public prognosticators throughout the interwar era. (Marks was a particularly dubious forecaster, considering that in 1921, the year before he issued his warning of the Japanese naval air threat, he prophesized that Armageddon would be fought in Palestine in fifteen years between the British Empire and the combined forces of Russia, Germany, and France). Even more questionable is the author's heavy reliance upon counterfactual analysis to support his assertions. Spinning alternative strategies can be useful in delineating the options available to historical actors, but Britts' employment of them to play out the (unrealized) nightmarish consequences of British naval decline for an exposed Australia does nothing to support his central argument.

It also does not help that Britts' analysis relies on such a limited reading of the historical literature on his subject. Somehow, he has written a book about interwar

British naval development and the clashes between Britain and Japan in the Second World War that leaves out Norman Friedman's work on British carrier aviation, John Lundstrom's work on naval air combat in the early months of the Pacific campaigns, and (most unaccountably) David Evans and Mark Peattie's studies of the prewar development of Japanese naval and naval air power, among others. A more comprehensive reading of the available secondary sources would not only have resulted in a better-grounded study based on a wider range of supporting material, but would have better addressed some of the contrasting arguments already made by other authors about his subject. The timing of this book is particularly unfortunate in this respect, as it prohibited him from addressing the arguments made by Andrew Boyd in his recent book *Royal Navy in Eastern Waters, 1935-42: Linchpin of Victory*. While acknowledging Somerville's withdrawal as a strategic defeat, Boyd stresses its temporary nature by going detailing the redeployment of air and naval assets in the months afterward, which quickly reestablished British dominance in the Indian Ocean. Though this may have provided little comfort for the Australians, Boyd credits this with achieving one of the most strategically significant outcomes of the war—the maintenance of Allied supply routes to the Soviet Union through Iran, which facilitated the defeat of the Axis powers in Europe.

While Britts' lack of a response to Boyd's analysis is understandable, his failure to even address the Royal Navy's post-raid position in the Indian Ocean is emblematic of the overall problems with his book. He has provided readers with a tendentious study based on a limited study of the literature and reliant upon a needlessly constrained chronological approach to his topic. The result reads less as a book in which judgements were drawn from the evidence than one where the author reached his conclusions first and then searched out the evidence to support them. While those who share Britts' opinions will find much to like in its pages, anyone seeking an assessment of the Royal Navy's performance in the Indian Ocean in 1942 would be better served turning to Boyd's more deeply researched and judiciously analyzed study instead.

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John Brooks. *The Battle of Jutland*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, [www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org), 2016. xxi+567 pp., illustrations, map, tables, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$59.95, US \$49.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-1071501-40.

Jutland, like Trafalgar, like Pearl Harbor, is one of those seminal battles with a vast literature to accompany an equally contested view of its conduct, outcome and

significance. Which enjoys the greatest outpouring of academic and lay expertise is perhaps debateable, but Jutland is certainly in the front rank. What has John Brooks to add to the groaning bookshelves?

Quite a lot. The Battle of Jutland earned its controversy for two reasons. The first is that Great Britain had invested huge sums in its dreadnought fleet and was expecting the Royal Navy to win a thumping victory over the upstart German High Seas Fleet. Indeed, that victory was fully expected to occur within the opening weeks of war. By mid-1916 this had manifestly not come to pass, and when the long awaited battle finally occurred, its outcome was anything but a 'thumping victory'. Given the horrors of the land war, the disappointment and shock were severe. The second reason is the schism within the Royal Navy between the two British admirals, Jellicoe and Beatty, which led adherents of each to engage in vigorous and venomous dispute regarding how their 'man' had been let down by the other in one fashion or another. It is to the enduring credit of both admirals that they declined to participate in the wrangling that dominated the interwar era. The controversy shows little sign of any final resolution to this day.

Brooks, as with his earlier volume *Dreadnought Gunnery and the Battle of Jutland* (2005), returned to the primary sources of the despatches written by the commanding officers of warships, great or small, as well as those of the flag

officers, involved in the battle. As he notes in his Preface, these documents can be characterized as fresh accounts and largely free from the distortions involved in the controversies that later arose. They suffer, of course, from narrowness in view, as the perspective was, by definition, limited, and to a large degree, from what we would now term a positive spin in the account. Brooks also delved into the signal logs and the navigation documentation available in order to follow precisely the passage and conduct of the engagement. The labour involved in marrying together the contradictory snippets of information involved in this task was immense and all historians can profit from his Herculean effort. In addition, Brooks examined the papers of the principals housed in The National Archives at Kew (and elsewhere), as well as various German sources to provide corroborating detail from that perspective. He also took into account the early work on the battle by Sir Julian Corbett's *Naval Operations*, Vol. 3, (1939) and Arthur J Marder's *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, Vol. 3, (1978), along with a variety of others. He did not, however, explore the full historiography.

The book is organized into eleven chapters, with the first three addressing the nature of the two fleets, the technological developments in the decade prior to the outbreak of the Great War, and the organization of the fleets and squadrons. The technology chapter

explores signaling and formations, which are essential background for understanding how the admirals expected to control their fleets in battle. The next six chapters examine in immense detail the conduct of the battle, phase by phase. These chapters include a plethora of charts and tables that lay out critical details to illuminate and accompany the text. Indeed, there are no less than 146 tables that cover signals, effects of hits on various ships, ranges, and other useful matters. The assembly and analysis of complex and often confusing and contradictory data into a coherent whole is an immensely impressive achievement.

Brook concludes his account of the battle with a balanced and sound assessment of its outcome on the war at sea, as well as on the conduct and performance of the principal commanders. Here his conclusions are judicial. In a review there is not the space to summarize his conclusions, but they are fair-minded, comprehensive and reasonable. Beatty does not come out of it particularly well, but the performance of the other commanders can be characterized as a balance of the good and the less so in each case. This even-handedness fits the record of the events involved with the battle and might, perhaps, provide that 'final' assessment that history always strives to achieve but perhaps never can.

This book is one of a series of military history monographs (28 to date) published by the University of Cambridge. The objective is to get

into the 'weeds' on various campaigns or military topics so as to provide a deep analysis into the subject. Brooks has clearly accomplished this objective in his account on Jutland. Anyone with an interest in the battle, or on the conduct of the war at sea during the Great War, will benefit enormously from this account. I can heartily recommend it—an important book.

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Mike Bullock. *Priestley's Progress. The Life of Sir Raymond Priestley, Antarctic Explorer, Scientist, Soldier, Academician*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. Inc., www.mcfarlandpub.com, 2017. x+ 197 pp., illustrations, map, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$38.95, paper; ISBN 978-0-7864-7805-7.

The publication of a biography on Sir Raymond Priestley is, as author Mike Bullock indicates, long overdue. Priestley supported the Antarctic expeditions of both Shackleton (on the *Nimrod*) and Scott (on the *Terra Nova*), served heroically in the First World War, served as Vice Chancellor for two universities (Melbourne and Birmingham), attended His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, on the Antarctic portion of an around-the-world trip, and was knighted for his work on higher education of the colonies. This was in addition to serving in numerous posts for the

Royal Geographical Society, working toward the establishment of the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge, and, at age 74, supporting the American Deep Freeze IV expedition. With such a list of accomplishments, and such a broad reach into the affairs of the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration, understanding Priestley's contributions is akin to understanding the age itself.

The Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration (between the later part of the nineteenth century and the end of the First World War) heralded an international race for the poles, extensive geographic and scientific exploration, and unparalleled adventure stories sprinkled with intrigue. These included Roald Amundsen's adventure race, in which he first reached the South Pole ahead of a party led by Scott, whose team died on return from reaching it themselves, 33 days later. Shackleton followed this with a heroic tale for the ages when his ship *Endurance* was ice bound and crushed, yet all of his party miraculously survived. These are the kinds of stories, during his harrowing experiences serving with both Scott and Shackleton, that we expect to find in a biography of Priestley.

While present, they are limited in treatment. The author outlines Priestley's major accomplishments by general category, attempting to treat them all equally. This means that some of the more interesting events get short shrift, while others (less interesting to this reader) re-

ceive more space than they deserve. Occasionally, Priestley's activities read like a laundry list of administrative and social meetings (93). In other cases, random jargon and out-of-place phrases—never explained—permeate the work, (e.g., “ICI,” “ragging,” and “Antarctic Circle Certificates”). The author's choice to divide the work into general categories rather than simply chronologically, makes several entire chapters seem out of place. One wonders why they were not threaded into the work at the appropriate point in the story (e.g. Chapters 10, 11, and 15).

Priestley's biography should, arguably, have been lengthy. Indeed, with so many accomplishments to enumerate, the work could have been far longer than the 175 pages (outside of appendices, notes, and bibliography) that Bullock accorded it. Ostensibly omitted was any significant treatment of Priestley's home life and, in particular, his relationship with his wife, though she is occasionally mentioned in passing. The effect is one of a professional edifice of a man, his *curriculum vitae*, rather than a thorough or intimate biography.

These limitations notwithstanding, several portions of the work were extremely interesting and will naturally encourage those who wish to know more about the Heroic Age to seek additional information. Among these, is the episode during the *Nimrod* expedition, when Priestley's party found themselves out to sea when the ice floe on which they were camped detached from the

glacial moraine. “While on the detached ice floe, the Party investigated every means of salvation, all of which proved impossible until, with the turning of the tide, they drifted back towards Butter Point, their only realistic escape route from their perilous predicament.” The entire episode occupied four short paragraphs, though it was one of the more interesting and harrowing portions of the biography. Another exceptional section discusses the miraculous survival of the *Terra Nova’s* northern party. After being dropped off at Evans Cove for an expected six-week stay with an eight-week food store, they managed to survive long enough to attempt a march to safety some nine months later. Responsible for rationing their provisions, Priestley played a key role in their survival. How the men maintained their physical existence, emotional comfort, and mental sanity is the most compelling portion of the biography.

A reader new to the historical subjects surrounding Priestley’s life may be entirely adrift in this biography, as the work lacks context and is, instead, heavy in details that may not be entirely useful. To a reader more familiar with the times and the context, these details become rich primary source material to enjoy the feel, language, temperament, and culture of the times. As the work is based almost entirely on the diary of Priestley himself, it is naturally authentic and genuine. The few photographs and single map included improve the

experience of the work as a whole and this reader wished that more of both had been included. If nothing more, the work whetted the appetite for more and inspired this reader to seek out the works of Priestley himself, as well as those of his contemporaries documenting their explorations.

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James E. Candow. *Cantwells’ Way. A Natural History of the Cape Spear Lightstation*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing, www.fernwoodpublishing.ca, 2014. viii+160 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, notes, references, index. CDN \$22.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-55266-672-2.

Candow, a retired Parks Canada historian and accomplished writer of Newfoundland history, combines archival materials, oral history testimony, and personal reflections to produce this well-evidenced, thoughtfully written, and emotionally engaging account of the Cape Spear Lightstation and its Cantwell family dynasty of keepers on the easternmost edge of North America. Despite its problematic organization and surprisingly light treatment of the site’s history, natural or otherwise, over the past quarter-century, the book presents a rare and welcome understanding of how people, place and technology interacted at one of Canada’s most

famous lightstations through a period of massive transformation.

While readers will recognize 'lighthouse', most will not be familiar with the moniker 'lightstation'. In fact, the latter term is most suitable as it describes the lighthouse proper as well as those ancillary structures in close proximity to it, including the fog alarm building. As Candow convincingly argues, the story of the lighthouse cannot be told in isolation from that of the associated structures and related technologies, the lives of successive generations of Cantwell family members who cared for the lightstation between 1846 and 1997, and the broader context of Newfoundland history. He delivers a reasonably thorough examination of these multiple facets, tracing the evolution of lighthouse development in Newfoundland as the island moved from its original role as a seasonal fishing station to permanent settlement, and its administration from a fishing admiral and naval commodore to responsible, commission and provincial governments. Overall, the story told here is a highly interesting and significant one, especially pertinent today as technology ever advances, automation continues to remove the human element from lightstations, and tourism seeks to capitalize on the days of yore.

There is some disappointment, however, with this book. Poor organization damages the continuity and clarity of its focus. Five chapters contain 16, 25, 19, 44 and 3 pages respectively, followed by a

five-page epilogue. Though chapter one provides a useful and logical introduction to the history and technology of lighthouses and fog alarms before moving onto chapter two and the origins of the Cape Spear lighthouse in 1836 and its long line of Cantwell family keepers to 1910. Chapter three focuses on "life and labour to 1914" without any justification for this arbitrary time period. It is assumed that the outbreak of the First World War led to a marked change in the way of life at Cape Spear, though how or why is never made apparent. Further complicating matters is the comparatively lengthy fourth chapter, "The Dying of the Light", which seemingly suggests that the lightstation and its keepers were on track for an inevitable demise for most of the twentieth century. The previous chapters do not make a case for a 'golden age' experienced prior to 1914, nor does chapter four indicate that the forces for change and the effects of these changes were of a similar nature through the tumultuous period characterized by two world wars, the Great Depression, Newfoundland's joining Canada in 1949, and the replacement of the original lighthouse with the current one in 1955.

The two latter developments seem obvious ones on which to anchor a concluding chapter that also combines an exceedingly brief chapter five and the epilogue. This leads to a further question regarding the lightstation's continued symbolic significance after it was destaffed on 31 March, curiously

marking the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Newfoundland joining Canada. Clearly there is nostalgia here for a bygone time, which is natural given the momentous changes experienced since Confederation, most notably the crushing collapse of the cod fishery and the moratorium of the early 1990s. It is too bad the author did not devote more thought to the place of the lightstation in the Newfoundland and Canadian public consciousness since then, for these images have been widely used by Parks Canada and the provincial government in their popular tourism campaigns. These problems should have been identified and addressed through the editorial process, though their cause appears to have been linked to both the author's gradual expansion of the project from the original Parks Canada commission and his eventual completion of this project in retirement.

Readers may want to obtain a sense of how other lightstations fared during the same period, which will actually enhance their appreciation for this book. Similar studies exist for the United Kingdom and the United States, though the topic has drawn very little in the way of scholarship on Canadian lightstations, apart from various Parks Canada publications. A further achievement of this book is its ability to interweave the human story of the Cantwell lightkeepers and their relationship with the natural landscape of the Cape, with the centuries-old narrative of scientific and technological inno-

vation and adaptation. Given that the only staffed lightstations in Canada reside in Newfoundland, New Brunswick and British Columbia, it is hoped that Candow's book, the best yet written, will help 'light' the way for similar projects.

This reviewer fondly recalls evenings with neighbours and friends stretched out on front lawns in east-end St. John's listening to the bellow of the 'foghorn' or following the rays across the night sky emanating from the Cape Spear 'light'. Most of us had never been to sea and never would, but the echo of that sound and the massive spotlight crossing the sky every few seconds were a reminder that others did. Of more importance to us was the comfort of home felt through that magical sound and light show. Candow's book revived these memories and gave them added value through the perspective of those responsible for providing such comforts.

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Quentin Casey. *The Sea Was in Their Blood: The Devastating Loss of the Miss Ally's Five-Man Crew*. Halifax, NS: Nimbus Publishing, www.nimbus.ca, 2017. 249 pp., bibliography. CDN \$22.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-77108-479-6.

Casey's *The Sea Was in Their Blood* recounts the events surrounding the loss of a fishing vessel from Woods Harbour, Nova Scotia, which cap-

sized in a storm on 17 February 2013. Based on the book's central theme, some readers might readily draw a premature comparison to Sebastian Junger's *The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Men Against the Sea*, which discusses the loss of the American fishing boat *Andrea Gail* in 1991. Casey, however, takes a more intimate look at the collective background and personalities of each of the *Miss Ally*'s crewmen and emphasizes the emotions and recollections of their surviving families and friends. Through this manner, Casey fully conveys to the reader the relationships these individuals had among themselves, their families, and among the general community of Woods Harbour.

Casey provides a comprehensive overview of Woods Harbour's natural and socio-economic backgrounds. Woods Harbour has always been synonymous with fishing; the industry dominates this small, rural community's economy and serves as the employment basis for most residents. Fishing in this region is inherently dangerous, and according to Casey, an average of five to six fishing-related deaths occurs in Nova Scotia each year. The industry, however, can provide quick financial stability for fishermen when catches and prices are high. The loss of the *Miss Ally* was not simply a setback for the town's economy, but was worsened by the loss of five young fishermen who were regarded among the community as prodigies in their field, especially Capt. Katlin Nickerson,

who at 21 years old, was Woods Harbour's youngest fishing boat captain.

The author made an exceptional effort to research not only Woods Harbour's background and the chronology of events leading the *Miss Ally*'s loss, but he also provides emotional perceptions from the family members and friends who knew each crew-member. The viewpoints and recalled memories from the community's residents are provided by interviews and day-to-day interactions that Casey had during his visits to the area. Some family members, understandably, declined to talk to the author, as the tragedy is still comparatively recent and is still a sensitive subject among the community. Ultimately, all crew-members are profiled in their own respective chapters. Their personal strengths and perceived faults are discussed, offering an encompassing view of their personalities. All traits are given directly from the crew's family and friends, and Casey leaves readers to determine for themselves whether the *Miss Ally* tragedy could have been avoided.

The book is very well written, and appropriate background information is interwoven with the events that occurred between the time the *Miss Ally* was initially caught in the 2013 storm and when the empty, overturned hull was eventually found, maintaining the senses of distress and urgency that the crew-members' family and friends experienced during that time.

Photographs of the *Miss Ally*'s crew, the boat's wreckage, and Casey's interviewees, are likely to bring a strong empathetic response from readers and will help them understand the close-knit nature of the Woods Harbour community. In a few instances, the author does express some personal statements that could be viewed as overly melodramatic, which lose their impact since the reader already knows the fate of the *Miss Ally* and its crew, but this is only a mild constructive criticism compared to rest of the book's excellent narrative.

This book is strongly recommended for general audiences who enjoy dramatic stories or are interested in the local history of Nova Scotia's fishing communities. The overall tone of the narrative is somewhat somber, and light elements of humour are mostly used when recollections are given about a crewmembers' past behaviour, but this in turn helps the reader closely relate to these individuals and understand how impactful their loss was to the community. Casey explains that several residents of Woods Harbour not only personally knew the *Miss Ally*'s crewmen who were lost, but they also knew fishermen who were lost at sea during previous storms. The residents of the Woods Harbour area have a uniquely strong character and fully understand the risks associated with the commercial fishing industry. Casey's book acts as a testament to that character and as a way to memorialize the *Miss Ally*'s crew.

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J. D. Davies. *Kings of the Sea: Charles II, James II and the Royal Navy*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2017. 288 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK 30.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84832-400-8.

*Kings of the Sea* is David Davies' latest non-fiction publication about the Royal Navy following the Restoration and follows upon his Samuel Pepys Prize-winning *Pepys's Navy: Ships, Men and Warfare 1649-1689*. Davies presents a different perspective, looking at how Charles II and James II as individuals had a direct impact on, took control of, and developed the Royal Navy as an instrument of state following the Restoration of 1660.

This book presents a kind of categorical contradiction, a meeting place between academic and public history. It appears to be designed for the general public, rather than academic specialists, since it looks, feels, and reads like popular history. The format, glossy pages, numerous images, sketches, and other illustrations sourced from the National Maritime Museum and other equally impressive sources all make it very attractive. Further, this book is published by Seaforth, a maritime imprint of Pen and Sword, rather than an academic press. To dismiss this book because it looks and feels like popular history would be to do

it, and readers, a great disservice. *Kings of the Sea* is the product of more than 30 years of research, writing and sharing his work with many different audiences. What is particularly useful is the way that Davies uses the structure in order to present different areas of argument and discussion, without making any section, or any piece of his argument, too intimidating.

The introduction and first two chapters, entitled “The Stuarts and the Sea I: Inheritance” and “Civil War and Restoration” establish the important historiographical and historical foundations necessary for understanding the rest of the book. Davies presents the common arguments, but also demolishes them. For example, he presents Charles II as a complex character, especially in comparison with his brother. The next three chapters (“His Majesty’s Ships I”, “His Majesty’s Ships II” and “The Royal Yachts”) present three different and important discussions. The first opens an in-depth discussion of the ships of the Royal Navy as symbols of the Stuart regime and also of Charles II and James II as individuals with different pressures, ideas, and tastes. The second chapter presents a fairly detailed discussion of the types of ships that were built and used from 1660 to 1688, such as the galley frigates. The latter chapter brings the topic back to the royal brothers specifically, through an exploration of their love of sailing and the importance of the royal yachts during this period. In each case, Davies effectively highlights the

complexity of the subject, using these topics to shed new light on the relationship between royalty and the Royal Navy.

The next four chapters address specific challenges to the established historical understanding. “Governing the Navy” examines the roles of both James II and Charles II in directly guiding the institution, especially important given the standard assumption that Samuel Pepys was in charge. For example, Davies quotes archival documents which discuss the personal role of Charles II directing the Navy’s operations (in particular from 1673-1679, and that of James as Lord of High Admiral (prior to 1673) and as King from 1685. In “The Precursors of Hornblower” chapter, Davies examines the officers of the Royal Navy during this period, building on his monograph *Gentlemen and Tar-paulins*. In “Sovereignty of the Sea” and “Dominion of the Oceans”, he provides a cultural, political and social basis for the discussion of Charles II and James II’s reasons for developing, fielding and using the Royal Navy. In each of these chapters, Davies provides a methodological basis for his argument and analysis, for example the social history perspective in “The Precursors of Hornblower.” Throughout each chapter, Davies always returns to the personal involvement of James II and Charles II.

The final three chapters (“War-lords”, “Inglorious Revolution” and “The Stuarts and the Sea II: The ‘Jacobite Navy’”) bring this very

much to the forefront again as they consider James II's role as Lord High Admiral, the challenges of the Glorious Revolution in 1688, and the Stuart brothers' legacy in the years that followed.

This book highlights Davies' ability to communicate complex, academic ideas in an easily understandable manner. Each chapter presents a topic as it is generally understood, then calmly challenges it or adds complexity through the addition of quotations from archival documents. The author does not evaluate either sovereign's personal involvement as good or bad, but rather, as a factor in the Royal Navy's development, day-to-day activities, and institutional identity which resulted in nuances and contradictory details. Readers are expected to be able to handle the complexities and contradictions that Davies presents.

This book is highly recommended. For the enthusiast, it is both beautiful to look at and interesting to read. For the academic, it is a concise delivery of the most up-to-date scholarship on the Royal Navy following the Restoration. Perhaps its most important potential audience is future historians, for whom it could be the book that catches their imagination and introduces to them to complex historical discussions in a comfortable and inclusive way.

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Jonathan Dimbleby. *The Battle of the Atlantic. How the Allies Won the War*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, www.oup.com, 2016. xxx+530 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-19-049585-5.

As an official historian of Canadian naval and air force operations in the Second World War, it interested me to find that a new account of the Battle of the Atlantic gives lip service to only one Canadian naval historian of note, Marc Milner. One of Milner's books, *Battle of the Atlantic*, (2003) is listed in the bibliography and he is thanked for some illuminating insights, which can be taken to mean that there were gaps in Jonathan Dimbleby's knowledge. Milner, however, is never cited, and no reference is made to his three important books on the Royal Canadian Navy, *North Atlantic Run* (1985), *The U-boat Hunters* (1994), and *Canada's Navy: The First Century* (1999). Apart from William Sclater's *Haida*, a wonderful book that says very little about the Battle of the Atlantic, Dimbleby completely ignores the multitude of other Canadian studies that shed important light on the campaign, such as Roger Sarty and Michael Hadley's *Tin Pots and Pirate Ships* (1991), Brian Tennyson and Roger Sarty's *Guardian of the Gulf: Sydney Cape Breton and the Atlantic Wars*, (2000) and Sarty's *War in the St Lawrence: The Forgotten U-Boat Battles on Canada's*

*Shores* (2012). He has also overlooked James Pritchard's *A Bridge of Ships: Canadian Shipbuilding during the Second World War* (2011). All these and many other studies grew out of the Canadian official operational histories, *The Creation of a National Air Force* (1980), *No Higher Purpose* (2002) and *A Blue Water Navy* (2007).

The opinion of Captain Donald Macintyre, that almost every convoy escorted by the Canadians in February and March 1943 was a tale of disaster and sunken merchant ships, is included in the book. My own comment on these criticisms, (citing A.L.Hammond, 'Six months at Sea with a U-Boat killer', *Warship World*, 7/3 (2001), 22-4) appears in *A Blue Water Navy*, Volume II part 2 of the official operational history of the RCN, p. 466 (n.39):

Macintyre's criticisms of the RCN escort force in his memory were particularly stinging but he appears to have been a particularly 'pusser' officer. When he moved to the frigate *Aylmer* after *Bickerton* had been torpedoed, he immediately ordered the bridge crews to their cabins to shave and to change into proper uniform even though the U-boat was still undetected in the area. He also seemed to have something against the RCN. Known to be gruff and short of temper, he apparently mellowed after the war, but

a colleague noted that two subjects were still guaranteed to set him off, the RCN and Coastal Command.

The RCN, for all its shortcomings, like Coastal Command and Canada's Eastern Air Command, (which gets never a mention in this book), was indispensable to the defence of convoys in the North Atlantic, including routes in the St. Lawrence River and on the Atlantic seaboard. An account of the Battle of the Atlantic that says so little about the RCN and RCAF fails to tell the whole story. The safe escort, by Canadian ships and aircraft, of very large numbers of merchant vessels carrying vital supplies to their destinations in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and northern Russia, however unconventional and inefficient the escorting forces often were, was a remarkable achievement. If Dimpleby had consulted even a portion of the books listed in the bibliography of *A Blue Water Navy*, or consulted documents in the Canadian Department of National Defence and the National Archives of Canada, he would have been able to write a more complete account of this vast subject.

That said, this book is an important addition to the literature. In the preface are some observations that need to be kept in mind, especially by naval, air and military people for whom knowledge of the past is vital to the exercise of their profession. The author is on solid ground when he emphasizes the importance of Churchill, Roosevelt,

Stalin and Hitler, and their often wrong-headed decisions. It is worth saying, as Dimpleby does, that Hitler, the final arbiter of German strategy, made more wrong-headed decisions than the rest. When, in January 1943, Hitler replaced Grand Admiral Erich Raeder with Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz “the thrusting U-boat Admiral”, Dimpleby argues that he played into the hands of Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments. And Dönitz, although “an outstanding leader of men who was to pose a greater threat to the Allies in the Second World War than any other commander in the Third Reich” (27), seemed at first to be exactly the man needed to win the war at sea until the convoy battles of May and June 1943 left him fatally handicapped. The judgement that, after years of apparently unstoppable success, he suddenly had to withdraw his U-boats from their accustomed hunting grounds because it was no longer possible to wage war against convoys in the North Atlantic—“He had lost not only a record number of U-boats, but the tonnage war as well.”—while hardly an original observation, is supported here by an overwhelming body of evidence.

There are sound, if not always consistent, discussions of strategic issues. Dimpleby places less emphasis on the importance of Very Long Range aircraft than the evidence would suggest, and although he makes fair criticism of air force operations against the submarine threat, he downplays some of the amazing accomplishments of

Long Range aircraft, before Very Long Range Liberators appeared on the scene. See for example, Douglas, *The Creation of a National Air Force* pp 538-567, and especially on p. 540:

In December 1942 Canso A's of 5(BR) Squadron were joined by two similar aircraft from 162 A Squadron based in Yarmouth. Along with the 162 (BR) detachment came Eastern Air Command's most capable officer and the squadron's new CO, Squadron Leader N.E.W. Small. In order to extend the range of the Canso's beyond their normal 500 miles, 5 Squadron personnel, under Small's direction, began to strip some aircraft of excess weight, including extra guns, ammunition, and stores. In all, about 1200 lbs was removed, which permitted the Cansos to operate to about 700 miles. Thus, as the officers of 5 Squadron readily admitted, it was largely due to the efforts of Small that the Gander-based Cansos were able to make a series of promising attacks at maximum range during the early weeks of February. Tragically, Small was killed when his Canso crashed while taking off on 8 January, a result of equipment failure.

No mention is made of the long and fruitless negotiations with United States authorities to allocate Very Long Range Liberators to Canada's Eastern Air Command, nor that finally, in 1943, the British Cabinet Anti-U-Boat Warfare Committee diverted VLR Liberators to Eastern Air Command in Newfoundland. These delays were significant in the conduct of anti-submarine operations. (More editorial comment by air historians might also have revealed that the women who played such important parts in the anti-submarine war belonged to the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF, not WRAF).)

There are, however, many illuminating and sympathetic accounts of experiences among the ships' companies and other serving personnel who fought this great battle, and also among civilian passengers who, for one reason or another, found themselves exposed to the dangers of the sea in wartime. This reviewer, as an eleven-year-old boy, sailed from Liverpool to New York en route to Toronto in July 1940. The ship was "swarming with children", so the family friend with whom I was traveling reported. Excited to be going to sea in wartime, I was conscious of, indeed thrilled by the danger, but excited by the thought of seeing cowboys and Indians, the Rocky Mountains and Grey Owl. We were not fully aware of the terrible experiences of those less fortunate than we. People who have survived ocean voyages in wartime need to be reminded that they were extraordinarily lucky. A

particularly dreadful example was the *City of Benares*, bound for Canada, torpedoed on 17 September 1940. Of 407 passengers and crew 147 perished; of the 90 children only 13 survived. In one lifeboat were "...six small boys, two chaperones (a Roman Catholic Priest and [Mary] Cornish), a Polish shipping executive, forty British crew members...and thirty-two Lascars..." For seven days and nineteen hours, sometimes in dreadful weather, the boat drifted. When, after being sighted and rescued, they arrived safely in Greenock the ship's officer in charge of the boat, Fourth Officer Ronald Cooper, reported "...Everyone behaved very well, and a spirit of loyalty to orders and comparative cheerfulness prevailed..." (When reading this statement nearly eighty years after the event, it is difficult not to think of the contrast with experiences, more than sixty years later in the Mediterranean, by families in a variety of overcrowded vessels, trying to escape disasters of a different kind.)

In March 1943, after extraordinary exploits and improvements in anti-submarine warfare by the Allies, well explained (despite some of the surprising omissions concerning Canadian naval and airforce operations already noted), Dönitz had to call off U-boat operations against the Atlantic convoys. It so happened that only three months later this reviewer returned to England in the Escort Aircraft Carrier HMS *Pursuer*, with five other boys, as so-called "Guests of

the Admiralty". It must be said that the sailors on board that ship in July 1943 still considered the U-boat menace as great as ever. We had no idea how fortunate we were. The war at sea, of course, did not cease to be a critical factor in operations. The terrible losses endured by the convoys to Russia, and their strategic importance to the Anglo-American -Russian alliance, continued to demand enormous efforts and terrible sacrifice, and this is acknowledged, albeit briefly, towards the end of the book.

Despite the omission of Canadian, and even of some important American contributions to the defeat of the enemy attack on shipping, this is a well written book that complements the British official histories of what was, undoubtedly, the single most important achievement in the Allied defeat of Germany.

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David C. Evans (ed.) *The Japanese Navy in World War II: In The Words of Former Japanese Naval Officers*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2017. (Originally published 1968). xxi+568 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-59114-568-4. (E-book available.)

"History," it is said "is written by the victors," certainly the case for the orthodox school of historical

writing. This means that the story of the Second World War in the Pacific was originally told from an exclusively American perspective, skewing our understanding of events. It is usually only with the advent of revisionism that a more balanced account emerges, one that includes the experience of other nations.

For this reason, books like *The Japanese Navy in World War II* represent a fascinating view from the other side of the hill. Evans has combined a series of articles and writings into an anthology of Japanese naval understanding of the war that follows the war years chronologically and sheds light on central elements of the experience. Originally published in 1968, this book represented a solid groundbreaking moment in the historiography of the Second World War. The second edition (2017) reinforces the original text with additional articles covering gaps in the 1968 edition.

There are 17 chapters, each one covering a different aspect or period of the war as written by surviving participants. Each chapter opens with a short introduction explaining its importance within the book which spans the overall scope of the Imperial Japanese participation in the war. Starting with Shigeru Fukudome's remembrance of the Hawaii operation and Mitsuo Fuchida's discussion of the air attack on Pearl Harbor, the text follows the war across the Pacific. The result is a fascinating understanding of Japanese operations and

the unique challenges that they faced while conducting them. While some of the subjects touch on obviously key moments, like the battle for Midway, or the naval struggle around Guadalcanal, the real value lies in the inclusion of topics which are often forgotten or ignored. For example, Toshikazu Ohmae's discussion of Japanese operations in the Indian Ocean, Masataka Chihaya's "the Withdrawal from Kiska," and Atsushi Oi's "Why Japan's Antisubmarine Warfare Failed" are particularly unique for shining a light on aspects of the Pacific War that are rarely discussed. Japanese penetration into the Indian Ocean had a massive impact beyond the battles fought there. The continued operations by the Japanese carrier forces helped to degrade and weaken their operational capability prior to the Midway operation and potentially helped lead to the defeat there. The discussion of Japanese activity in Kiska, Alaska, looks at Japan's withdrawal from its only occupied piece of North America. Equally vital is the antisubmarine story. The longest U.S. naval campaign in its history, the submarine war destroyed Japan's ability to move and supply their forces and led to the starvation of the Japanese home islands. The Japanese perspective on this is essential to any understanding of the submarine war.

The story that unwinds within the text is remarkable, not just because it addresses key issues, but because it also reveals a very human side of the story that is often

overlooked. Mitsuo Fuchida's discussion of Pearl Harbor is a perfect example of this. His role is legendary, being the operational commander leading the first wave of the air attack. Often portrayed as villainous but precise, the attack on Pearl Harbor is usually seen as being incredibly well executed by the best in Japanese naval aviation. Yet we forget that these people were human, and therefore, subject to the same issues as all of us. It is surprising to learn that one of his greatest concerns that morning was not executing the plan or the thought that he was leading his nation into war. He was afraid of not being able to find Pearl Harbor. Odd as that sounds now, we forget that over-water navigation in the period was really an example of seat-of-the-pants flying and his concern was legitimate. The reader can feel his relief upon receiving a civilian radio broadcast that finally told him where he was and allowed him to home in on the islands.

Unfortunately, collections like this do come with some limitations and risks. The accounts from the Japanese side are, of course, written after the war. This leads to a few different issues that limit the value of these accounts. As written records are often lost and those that remain are almost impossible to access, these accounts are difficult to verify and by their very nature, become more of a memoir. They must be treated carefully and used with caution, making every effort to back them up with other sources. Like all memoirs, the narrator's

personal bias threatens to destroy their credibility. This is certainly the case with Fuchida and Masatake Okumiya's chapter on the Battle of Midway. Authors of the book *Midway: The Battle that Doomed Japan* (1955, 2001), Fuchida and Okumiya's account has serious issues for historians. Their version of the battle has been almost completely accepted in the United States for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is it comes from actual Japanese participants in the events. In fact, despite shaping the foundation of much of our understanding of the Battle of Midway, their account is now dismissed in Japan. Jonathan Parshall and Anthony Tully's book *Shattered Sword* (2007) has demonstrated the fallacy of their version of events. Caution is always urged when working with such memoir-like materials.

All in all, David Evans provides an incredibly valuable text that offers a great deal of information and an interesting first-hand perspective on the Pacific war. It is highly recommended for anyone with an academic or general interest, and will provide a great deal of new insight into the maelstrom of the Second World War in the Pacific.

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Barry Gough. *Churchill and Fisher: Titan at the Admiralty*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing,

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2017. 600 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography index. UK £35.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5267-0356-9.

In Greek mythology, Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, gave birth to the muse of history, Clio. Known for proclaiming, glorifying and celebrating of the past, eminent maritime historian Barry Gough cloaks himself in Clio's mantle by chronicling two British maritime figures from the turn of the twentieth century and First World War eras, Winston Churchill and Admiral John "Jackie" Fisher. His narrative emphasizes their dispositions and individualities by drawing upon a host of original documents.

Churchill and Fisher were, at times, both close allies and ardent adversaries, exemplars of the popular neologism "frenemies." Fisher was resourceful, self-reliant, quick to take the initiative and its accompanying responsibility. The admiral, who often quoted the Old Testament, frequently became offended and vengeful himself. Yet he was very popular with most fellow officers and the men who laboured on or below decks. He ardently believed that naval strength both protected and projected Britain's imperial power. Churchill, who became the First Lord of the Admiralty, (the American equivalent of Secretary of the Navy) was characterized as not particularly scholarly yet an appreciator of history, an outstanding writer and persuasive speaker. Staunchly cour-

ageous and exceedingly ambitious, Churchill had a pugnacious streak and could be reckless and blunt given his hard-right view of British politics and national interests. Bold and passionate in his beliefs, he was not afraid of ruffling a few overbearing governmental feathers, yet both men hobnobbed with the aristocracy, a political essential in the very class-ridden society of the day.

Fisher was interested in naval architecture, armament, gunnery, speed at sea, and converting the navy's fuel from coal to oil, the technology of day. In time, he came to appreciate submarines, airships and airplanes but always disdained the role of the Royal Army as a force to maintain Britain's place as the world's hegemon at the time. When he assumed the lofty position of First Sea Lord (roughly the Chief of Naval Operations), he was in his early seventies and had successfully orchestrated the building of the formidable dreadnoughts (First World War battleships), heavy cruisers and torpedo boat destroyers. He welcomed the opportunity to work with his younger friend, Churchill, in preparing His Majesty's fleet for what they both saw as a potential clash with Germany for sovereignty of the world's seas and seaborne commerce.

Churchill, who served as First Lord of the Admiralty, was a visionary of naval strategy as well as affairs of state, but he craved power, approval and attention—the reward for successful use of authority. At times he could be theatrical, an attribute in a politician for whom it

was essential to project strength and resolve rather than frailty and gloom. Churchill and Fisher were largely amicable warrior-politician partners in the build-up to what seemed like an inevitable war with Germany that was finally ignited by the 1914 assassination of Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand in the Balkans. During the war's prelude and its subsequent engagement, there came a series of challenges from governmental colleagues and naval subordinates. Gough visited the sea battles like those at Coronel, Dogger Bank, the first Falklands, Heligoland Bight, but rather than the battle's details, he focused on many of the Admiralty's trials, triumphs and political machinations. He also describes Churchill's brief, but little discussed, interlude as a combat army officer in Antwerp. A graduate of Sandhurst, Churchill participated in 15 Boer War battles and received many decorations for his bravery,

The author introduces the reader to a vast array of characters who both influenced, and were influenced by, Churchill and Fisher including Kings George V and Edward VII, four Prime Ministers, Field Marshall Herbert Kitchener, Admirals David Beatty, Charles Beresford, John Jellicoe and Richard Keyes, and politically powerful Reginald Esher, Reginald McKenna and Canadian Max Aitken (later, First Baron Beaverbrook). Gough uses each man's words to propel his narrative as robust evidence of the history of that time.

The two most significant naval engagements and highest toll-taking conflicts were those at the Dardanelles and later, off Jutland. Still the subject of analysis and debate today, the Dardanelles Campaign was arguably the turning point of both men's naval careers. Churchill became convinced that a strong seaborne offensive followed by an overwhelming surprise amphibious attack on this difficult terrain would end the war quickly. This was reinforced by the intelligence that the Ottoman defenders were running short of ammunition. Fisher disagreed and resigned as First Sea Lord over this dispute. The operation turned out to be a strategic blunder. The British navy lost three dreadnoughts and others were heavily damaged along with a heavy cruiser. In the *mêlée*, roughly 700 crewmen were killed. Also lost was a vast number of soldiers: roughly 165,000 Turkish, 120,000 British, 27,000 French, 28,000 Australian and 7,500 New Zealand troops, plus 145,000 Ottoman combatants. The campaign resulted in 302,000 allied and 250,000 Ottoman dead, wounded or suffering from widespread debilitating disease. Gough extensively covers the run-up and aftermath of this military misadventure and its impact on the careers of Churchill and Fisher.

The second well-known sea-battle was the Battle of Jutland (or Skagerrak), the last major sea battle involving capital ships. Although Britain suffered the larger loss of vessels and men, Germany's navy retreated to its homeports and was

never a major threat after this engagement. Neither Churchill nor Fisher was directly involved in this engagement, but they advanced the careers of Admirals Jellicoe and Beatty who led the British fleet in this encounter. Once again, Gough describes the Jutland attacks, but rather than dwelling upon the battle's particulars, he thoroughly debates their military and political impact.

Gough's highly detailed account of the lives of the two main figures is well documented through a host of primary source materials and carefully selected and evaluated secondary source documents from the books of Richard Ollard, Rud-dock Mackay, Geoffrey Penn and especially, the multiple works of Arthur Jacob Marder (a first cousin, once removed, of this reviewer.) Gough is thorough in his scholarship, although some points are both repetitious and redundant. This substantial 600-page book is enjoyable because of the author's erudite analysis and fluid prose. For a few brief examples: Fisher's "endless reforming zeal stood him apart from any other Sea Lord. . . He was forward thinking even if he did not understand the full intricacies of rapidly changing technology. [Yet] he was the last to realize his shortcomings—hasty actions, breaches of confidence, and vindictiveness toward those who stood in his way." (492-3) Churchill "was a self-absorbed man of destiny. . .He sought the limelight and danger. . .[and] showed an early capacity as a writer, and this

became his principle means of livelihood. ...Winston developed extreme ambition and a pugnacious will.” (147-8)

By addressing a vast range of complex military and political issues that were dispatched by men with strong personalities, Gough has done the muse Clio proud with *Churchill and Fisher*. This learned sojourn is an excellent book, one that is destined to become a classic in the literature of maritime history.

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David Hobbs. *The Royal Navy's Air Service in the Great War*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2017. xiii+528 pages, photos, maps, charts, bibliography, index. UK£35.00; US \$44.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84832-348-3.

Author and historian David Hobbs provides readers with a detailed history of the foundation and early accomplishments of the Royal Navy Air Service (RNAS). The book's publication coincides with the centenary (1918) of the British Royal Air Force, of which the RNAS was an important early building block. In the course of the First World War, the British Royal Navy invented naval air warfare with the first effective aircraft carriers, and by the conclusion of the war, the Royal Navy was training for a carrier-borne attack by torpedo-bombers. Brown explains in considerable

detail the operational and technical achievements of the RNAS and the dedicated individuals who attained these historic accomplishments. As early as 1914, the RNAS had 100 officers, and about 700 petty officers and men, in addition to 39 airplanes, 52 seaplanes, and seven airships.

The early twentieth century witnessed a naval technological revolution with the birth of dreadnoughts, submarines, torpedoes, mines, and aircraft. All of these inventions greatly increased naval power, but at the same time, each represented a serious threat to the world's naval fleets. The evolution of balloons and airships before 1914 played a vital role as observation platforms and as early bombers. Admiral Sir John Fisher encouraged and supported RNAS innovations to maintain Britain's lead in cutting-edge naval technology. This was the era of "New Navalism," with the world's great powers competing for a naval advantage and challenging long-standing British naval supremacy. The Anglo-German naval race was in full bloom. Germany's airships, or Zeppelins, were a force to be reckoned with and a continual RNAS target, along with their housing sheds. Though the RNAS had some success in shooting down the Zeppelins, they were a threat not only to naval vessels, but to British cities as well. (Interestingly, the first British airship, designed and built by Vickers before the war, was named *His Majesty's Rigid Airship Number One* {R1}.)

One early advocate of airpower was Winston Churchill, the first British cabinet minister to fly an airplane. As First Lord of the Admiralty (1911–1915), Churchill not only directed the RNAS but flew himself on occasion, much to the displeasure of his wife. Because Churchill clearly realized the future power and threat of naval aviation, starting in 1912, he worked with the British Navy League to promote the RNAS. Like Fisher, he understood that planes could sink ships.

In 1913, the British Navy League formed the National Aeronautical Defence Association (NADA). The RNAS had a combat role in the ill-fated Dardanelles Campaign (1915), and seaplanes were used for the reconnaissance of enemy Turkish forts. The results were less than satisfactory, however, as naval gunnery reports usually overestimated the damage done to the Turkish installations. Such overestimates led the British to mistakenly believe they could force a passage through the Dardanelles using ships alone without major losses. The combination of mines and the Turkish land-based guns were enough to repel the British-French fleet, resulting in total defeat for the Allies. In 1916, at the Battle of Jutland off the North Sea coast of Denmark, Britain launched a seaplane to observe enemy ships, but the effort failed due to miscommunication with the battlecruiser flagship HMS *Lyon*.

Hobbs includes interesting detail on Great Britain's struggle to

adapt ships as seaplane carriers that could hoist planes on and off ships. Britain developed the early aircraft carrier from existing warships by removing some guns from the deck and constructing a flat surface there. Originally, ships treated seaplanes as virtual cargo, sailing to a drop-off point before using a crane to lower the seaplanes into the water, where they then took off. Because warships had no platforms, pilots returning to convey their reconnaissance intelligence had to land in the water, where the seaplanes were hoisted back onboardships—that is, if shifting winds and tides hadn't caused the seaplanes to crash into the water or the ship. The logistics made the use of seaplanes extremely dangerous, and pilots' lives were lost. In addition to numerous photos showing this complex and risky operation, the book is well-illustrated, with many photographs from the author's large personal collection.

No "armchair historian," Hobbs is a retired officer of the Royal Navy and a seasoned pilot with numerous professional publications to his credit, including a publication award from the Australian Navy League. His breadth of experience includes stints as a museum curator and as a lecturer on naval aviation around the globe. His naval aviator skills enable his careful analysis of the RNAS' operational and technical challenges.

The book is technical, with generous aviation details, maps, charts, and photographs. The focus

is on the RNAS from its formation (1914) and war service to its merging with the new Royal Air Force in 1918, a merger David Hobbs laments. He agrees with the U.S. decision to maintain an independent naval aviation arm. For historian Hobbs, "The crowning achievement of the RNAS was the design, commissioning, and the preparation for operation of HMS *Argus*, the world's first true flush-deck aircraft carrier capable of launching and recovering aircraft and the progenitor of every subsequent carrier."

This book is not for the general reader, but for students of British military history, and naval aviation in particular. A more extensive running commentary on domestic politics would have been helpful, as it was the politicians who controlled and determined the ultimate fate of the RNAS. Still, David Hobbs is unmatched in his field, and the RNAS has found its definitive historian.

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Ming-Li Hsiao. *"The maritime industry to raise the nation and the shipping business to save the nation": the Japanese steamship rivalry in China: 1914-1945*. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, [www.press.ntu.edu.tw](http://www.press.ntu.edu.tw), 2017. ISBN 978-9-86350-252-4.

This book is a revision of Dr. Hsiao's Ph.D. thesis, which was

awarded by the National Taiwan University in 2011. The steamship business in China has been an international focus since 1862 and Kwang-ching Liu's 1962 classic, *Anglo-American Steamship Rivalry in China, 1862-1874*, made it clear that British shipping dominated the Chinese market before the First World War, after the Americans left. Hsiao's book addresses the situation after the Japanese penetrated the Chinese market, linking business, diplomacy and war together, all of which are all important components of modern Chinese history.

Hsiao's first chapter discusses earlier research on the topic, based on archival sources consulted in China, Japan, the United States, Great Britain and Taiwan. In the second chapter, he uses this rich material to explore the development of Japanese shipping in China after 1914, and proves that the Japanese expansion in the shipping business in the 1920s was largely the result of the profits made during the war, rather than from the later subsidies, as suggested by some studies. Furthermore, this chapter contains an accurate summary of the shipping world in the China of the 1920s, including a description of various shipping firms and their operations.

Since 1927, the Nationalist government had controlled most parts of China and the regime remained stable before the conflicts with Japan became intense in 1937. In chapter three, Hsiao argues forcefully that the relatively stable

political situation along with administrative modernization and reform caused the Chinese shipping industry to expand during this time, a period sometimes called “the Golden Decade”. While the Chinese generally dominated trade in southern China and the Yangtze region, Japanese business interests remained influential in northern China and Manchuria, the latter of which constituted the earlier Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Beginning in July 1937, military conflicts between Japan and China escalated. In April 1938, Japan passed a law ordering general mobilization and the government began to monitor all industries, including shipping, intervening further in shipping operations in 1939. Hsiao traces how Japan mobilized shipping before the Pearl Harbor attack, focusing on the way shipping responded to the mobilization, including the use of flags of convenience, by both the Chinese and Japanese shipping industries during wartime.

Japan declared war on China, the United States and the United Kingdom in December 1941. Chapter five, which discusses the destruction of Japanese shipping during the Pacific War, is the most interesting part of this book. The neglect of iron-ore and coal shipments from China meant that once Japan lost command of the sea, shipping was largely unable to meet the demand for fuel under the wartime plans. With Japan’s surrender in 1945, the entire shipping forces were destroyed. The rich narratives in this chapter could fill another book.

Japanese overseas shipping expanded after the military action towards Taiwan in 1874. No one denies the relationship between war and shipping in Japan before 1945. In his case study of China, Hsiao completes an excellent study on the rise and fall of Japanese shipping. He also offers wealth of information on the shipping activities in Chinese waters. It is a welcome and long-awaited book that should be read by students interested in East Asian history, especially the effect of war on shipping history.

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Larry Jeram-Croft. *The Royal Navy Lynx: An Operational History*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2017. xiii+289 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices. UK £25.00, US \$44.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-47386-251-7.

This work is a combination technical/operational history and oral narrative of both the Royal Navy’s Lynx helicopters and the crews who flew them in both the Falklands and the Persian Gulf, compiled by 30-year Royal Navy veteran, retired Commander Larry Jeram-Croft. Intended to “tell [the Lynx’s] story and put the record straight” regarding “the most successful weapons system deployed by the Royal Navy since 1945,” Jeram-Croft delves not only into the evolution of the airframe

itself, but also the experiences of aircrews under combat and extreme weather conditions. This adds a human element to the narrative and offers a variety of perspectives, all based on experiences with the Lynx. (xiii) The work is set up chronologically, following the path of the aircraft's origins and peacetime service through the Falklands Wars and into post-war improvements, concluding with the Lynx's service in the Gulf and the operations of the current Mark 8 version. Aircrew-produced cartoons and personal photographs are interspersed amidst official images throughout the text, and three appendices conclude the piece with a glossary of terms, technical specifications, and "A Dummies Guide to Flying a Helicopter" (284).

The sections covering the initial development of the Lynx, its later evolution, and primary peacetime roles are interspersed before, between, and after the two primary first-hand account sections discussed later in this review. Within these chapters, Jeram-Croft covers the origins of the Westland manufacturing firm, the Lynx design requirements, and the path from paper to prototype. Unique design elements, such as the monobloc rotor head and conformal geared gearbox, are described, showcasing how ingenuity and risk-taking helped craft "one of the first truly aerobatic helicopters in the world" (8-11). The Mark 3 and Mark 8 evolutions each receive their own short chapters, covering how lessons gained from testing and

wartime operations led to new improvements to the craft's sensors, armaments, and general capabilities. The final two chapters examine the Lynx's impressive history as a rescue helicopter and its service around the world, with the former making use of award citations to help illustrate activities, while the latter covers more unusual assignments, such as Antarctic expeditions, counter-drug operations, and postings to Gibraltar and the Indian Ocean.

Forty percent of the main text, a total of 111 pages, is devoted to recollections of the Falklands War, provided by Lynx crews and aircraft maintainers assigned to 13 different ships, along with accounts from 815 Squadron Headquarters Flights. Accounts are divided by ship, with each Flight member and assigned airframe noted before the account is relayed. These sections include talks of how crews used ingenuity to overcome unforeseen obstacles, such as repurposing parts of an office chair into a machine gun mount, or scavenging parts from a wrecked jet to jury-rig a repair when there were no spares available (45-47, 103). Accounts range from matter-of-fact to more dramatic in description, offering a variety of viewpoints that showcase not only the war the men fought in, but the versatility of the craft. Conflicting viewpoints between the personal accounts do arise, often in regard to the then-new Sea Skua missile system. One of the most interesting stories is the post-war correspondence and gatherings that several of

the Flight members have had with their former Argentinian adversaries. Given the state of international affairs regarding the Argentinians and their commonly expressed views surrounding Britain's rule of the Falklands, it is interesting to see the respect and camaraderie Argentinian veterans seem to have for the helicopter crews of the Royal Navy (51, 65-66, 84, 86-87).

The 50-page section covering Lynx operations in the Persian Gulf from 1980 into the present day makes up another large percentage of the text. The arrangement is similar to that of the Falklands chapter, with the focus being on the accounts of three ship flights during the First Gulf War's Operation GRANBY. The most detailed of these accounts is offered in the HMS *Gloucester* Flight's recollection of the 30 January 1991 Battle of Bubiyan, in which the ship's operations room narrative is paired with debriefings for a minute-by-minute account of the Lynx actions (188-197). The section concludes with a statement regarding the Mark 8 Lynx's continued service in the Gulf, transcribing a 2005 article describing the newer challenges faced by the heavier variant helicopter as seen by the Flight of HMS *Argyll*.

Of particular interest is chapter eight, entitled "There But For the Grace of God Go I..." and recounting various "lucky escape" incidents with Lynx helicopters over their service life (215). This

includes wire strikes, tail rotor failure, formation tip strikes, sliding off a ship, ditching, and rough weather scenarios. While these incidents were often hair raising, Jeram-Croft points out that such occurrences come from a long service life around the world and in varied conditions, and that compared to other naval helicopters, "the Lynx has an excellent safety record, which is a tribute to its design and the quality of those who have operated it" (236).

In terms of possible improvements, there are a few that come to mind. The captions of photos and cartoons throughout the work are often written in the manner of a personal photo album. While this does convey the sentiments of the author and Falklands/Gulf contributors and are an interesting aesthetic choice, they are sometimes less than explanatory. If these captions were followed up by more technical or analytical comments, particularly relating to the comics that were designed specifically to entertain Royal Navy helicopter crews, they might be more effective. The other possible improvements lie within the notation of the work itself, specifically the lack of footnotes, bibliography, and index. While the absence of footnotes and a bibliography is not a problem in the first-hand accounts due to their nature, the historical and technical sections of the work could benefit greatly from their addition. Without such notations and sourcing, there is no easy way for interested readers

to carry out research of their own using the same materials, or examine other data within said sources that may have been left out of this work. The lack of an index reduces the reader's ability to quickly reference the work when searching for specific subjects, such as certain ship crews, discussions regarding certain systems, and the like. By adding these features to future editions, Jeram-Croft could extend his work's accessibility and usefulness further for the scholarly community.

*The Royal Navy Lynx: An Operational History* is an excellent primer on the experiences of those who have flown the Lynx airframe over the past four decades. Jeram-Croft's personal experiences as an aircraft engineer and pilot of the Lynx undoubtedly helped fuel his passion for this project and gave him access to resources used in its writing. The firsthand accounts of the Falklands and Gulf conflicts are of special interest, as they offer insight into often-overlooked parts of those military actions, and help explain why certain design choices were made in the evolution of the Lynx airframe. While the inclusion of citations and an index would be desirable, this work does stand as an excellent compendium of Lynx helicopter history and crew experiences from the days of initial testing to the present.

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Richard Larn. *The Isles of Scilly in the Great War*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Pen & Sword Military, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2017. 176 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. UK £12.99, US \$24.95, paper; ISBN 9788-1-4738-6766-6.

Like politics, all wars are local. Historians record the sweep of armies across vast plains and deserts, chronicle strategic and tactical bombing campaigns that wreak havoc on an enemy's industrial infrastructure, and tell of vast fleet actions that determine control of the world ocean. But beneath it all (sometimes quite literally), are millions of more or less hapless civilians, countless tens of thousands of whom were brutally executed in twentieth-century wars while others were bombed or burned to death or turned out of their homes. Still other relatively fortunate ones, in physical safety far from battlefields, waited in trepidation for the ring of the doorbell and the heartbreaking telegram.

There are relatively few studies that concentrate on twentieth- and twenty-first century "peoples' wars." Yet the fate of home fronts caught up in total war could be as poignant as that of soldiers, sailors and airmen. Recently, the United Kingdom publishing house, Pen & Sword, has set about rectifying the omission, issuing a series of short monographs under the overall title "Your Towns & Cities in the Great War."

Throughout that 1914-18 conflict, each British settlement, large

or small, suffered uniquely. The villagers on the Isles of Scilly were never invaded nor seriously bombed. Yet, along with half a thousand other untouched fortuitates throughout the country, “from August 1914 onward the town hall on St. Mary’s was deluged with government orders and instructions regarding war aliens, Defence of the Realm Act, the possibility of air raids, travel restrictions, economy of food and coal and recruiting.” (21) After 1915, Scillonians rather abruptly found themselves in the midst of a new and frightening form of warfare. The waters that lapped their shores became a torpedo junction as Germany’s U-boat campaign emerged and intensified. A Home Guard of “Local Defence Volunteers” was organized, uniformed and armed; a Coast Watch was formed. A Royal Navy Auxiliary Patrol fleet (RNAPS) comprising some 20 armed trawlers and drifters was hastily mustered and based on St. Mary’s Island. So, too, by mid-summer of that first full year of war was created an “embryonic” Royal Naval Air Station that by 1918 had grown to substantial proportions. Hotels and homes were requisitioned for hospitals and headquarters. Late pub openings were forbidden.

Much wartime life was shaped by wrecked and sunken ships that provided a lively business in scavenged goods. By 1917, “many items of cargo were now being washed ashore all around Scilly including dozens of dead horses and mules on Bryher and St. Agnes that

had to be buried.” Evading the local customs officials provided a great deal of entertainment for the locals who melted barrels of lard in pans to eliminate sand and stones, the residue then being used for a variety of purposes. “Great slabs of expensive candle wax measuring 18 in by 18 in and 2 in thick came ashore for a time, which were melted down and poured into candle moulds saving the islanders money.” On the “off islands” the emergency lockers of wrecked ships’ lifeboats were rifled and pillaged for their “sealed tins of thick, hard ship’s biscuit, 8 in tins of dried vegetables or a dried meat compound known as Pemmican, all of which were welcome additions to an already lean Scillonian diet” (115). Amidst this activity the inevitable casualty announcements appeared in ever growing numbers as the war on the Western Front less than a hundred miles away, steadily mounted.

The author shrewdly eschews dry recitation in favor of copious quotations from surprisingly dramatic distress messages and signals as the U-boat war approached the Scilly shores and adjacent waters from Penzance on the nearby Cornish coast round to the Lizard Peninsula. The author is quite good at depicting tensions over shipping losses that mount steadily into 1918, then ebb as the enemy is gradually subdued. His relatively brief narrative, buttressed with several score contemporary photos, is worth the read.

I have only one complaint, but it is significant. In his zeal to provide an immediate audience with a dramatic narrative of its past, he fails the general reader in providing any kind of geographic guide. This reviewer, who has never been to the islands, was forced to constantly consult internet maps of the Scillys which proved unsatisfactory. Overall, however, Larn is to be congratulated in providing a compelling template of local wartime history that can be more generally applied as a growing number of scholars seek out this hitherto largely neglected corner of social history.

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Brian Lavery. *Wooden Warship Construction. A History in Ship Models*. Barnsley, S. Yorks.: Seaforth Publishing, [www.pen-and-sword.org](http://www.pen-and-sword.org), 2017. 128 pp., illustrations, appendix, bibliography. UK £25.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-47389-480-8.

Brian Lavery is one of the world's leading naval historians. His works are wide in scope, covering not only eighteenth-century warships, but the Royal Navy in the Second World War and other topics. This slim volume is one of those dealing with Royal Navy ships built between 1715 and 1815. It is the third in a series that uses the beautifully preserved contemporary models in the National Maritime Museum at

Greenwich and the Science Museum in London to illustrate, in considerable detail, how the ships were built. The previous volumes in the *History in Ship Models* series are *The Sailing Frigate* and *The Ship of the Line*. This book is devoted to the way the ships were constructed, the shipyards and the skills of the shipwrights who built them.

In seven chapters, Lavery describes the phases in the construction of a ship in the order they occurred. First, the assembly of materials, the shipwrights and other workers. This is greatly aided by photographs of models or dioramas of shipyards; especially by a model of Chatham Dockyard made in 1772-74. It shows ships in various stages of construction and in drydock, timber of all kinds neatly laid out ready to be shaped and used, and the stores, sail loft, residences and other buildings. These dockyards were large and important industrial endeavours.

Then comes chapters entitled Starting the Ship, Framing, and Outside Planking, Inside the Hull and then Fittings (steering arrangements, capstans, pumps, and so on) and finally the work that had to be done after the ship was launched. They are all illustrated by photographs of ship models and some paintings. (Launches with all the shipping bedecked with flags were a favourite subject for English marine artists). Lavery does not cover masting and rigging, but there are many books that deal with that subject.

Nowadays, it is possible to produce books with superb colour illustrations at a rather reasonable price. This is one of the best. If you have the other two books in the series, you should add this one. It would also interest and perhaps, inspire ship modellers as well as making a good addition to any nautical library.

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John M. McManamon. *Caligula's Barges and the Renaissance Origins of Nautical Archaeology under Water*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, www.tamu.press, 2016. 288 pp., illustrations, map, bibliography, index. US \$65.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-62349-438-4.

The first thing a reader must understand about *Caligula's Barges and the Renaissance Origins of Nautical Archaeology under Water* is that it is not actually about Caligula's barges, the ancient Roman vessels located in lago di Nemi outside of Rome. Nor is it about the scientific origins of what modern scientists think of as Maritime Archaeology. It is about so much more. McManamon uses the fifteenth-century discovery and novel investigation of the Nemi shipwrecks as a cornerstone around which to explore the interconnected subjects of maritime transportation, naval warfare, exploration, infrastructure, naval maintenance, and

salvage. All of these forms of seafaring and underwater intervention are analyzed the context of the humanistic philosophical movement that is characteristic of early modern Italian scholarship.

The book opens with a discussion of Battista Alberti's ~1446 attempt to salvage one of the vessels on behalf of Cardinal Prospero Colonna, on whose family property lago di Nemi was located. Colonna recognized the vessel's antiquity and sought to tie its presence to the greater ancient Roman landscape in the area. As with many shipwrecks today, the vessels were discovered by local fishermen working on the lake. This was a period of great experimental engineering. Alberti used his research in the study of the *Ars Technica* to design and rig a rafted hoist with which he recovered pieces of hull and other artifacts.

This discussion of Alberti's initial investigative work at the site is followed by the analysis of the site and its materials by Biondo Flavio. Flavio was considered an expert on ancient Roman history, and would act as a sort of local tour guide for Cardinal Colonna, who in return, provided Flavio access to his extensive library. The third humanistic scholar who discussed the Nemi shipwreck in his scholarly writing is Pope Pius II. McManamon then contrasts the approaches of the three scholars to provide a holistic view of Renaissance scholarship towards ancient antiquity at that time: technical (Alberti), geographical/historical (Flavio), and socio-religious (Pius II).

McManamon then veers from a focus on scholarship centered on the Nemi shipwrecks and the socio-technical innovations that supported interest in them and their study. Much of the remaining text follows several interwoven themes: the history of early modern Italian scholarship, the wealthy landowning elite that controlled the Roman region, and the role of the church in both; harbour and river infrastructure design in support of military activities; swimming and diving as a social skill and profession in both ancient and early modern times; the integration of ancient Greek and Roman boatbuilding techniques into early modern naval architecture; and the theoretical and experimental efforts in engineering breathing apparatuses for traveling and working underwater. Extensive space is also given to the discussion of the etymology of ancient Greek and Roman boat nomenclature. The depth of research undertaken on these topics is evident, though how they relate to the central theme of the book—the origin of scientific analysis of submerged material culture—is sometimes unclear. McManamon does occasionally pivot back to the Nemi shipwrecks indicating to this reviewer that the function of these shipwrecks in this book is primarily to provide a concrete archaeological example of early modern Italian interest in humanistic technical exploration and control of submerged spaces.

The biggest limitation of the book, though this is by no means a denigration of it, is that it is not at

all for the casual reader or perhaps even the historian or archaeologist unfamiliar with ancient Roman or early modern boatbuilding, maritime engineering, and humanistic scholarship. While comprehensive, well documented, and very well written, there is an assumption that the reader has a foundational knowledge of ancient boatbuilding and vessel structure; early modern boatbuilding, engineering, and craft specialization; Italian renaissance scholarship, writing and publishing; and a basic knowledge of the Latin and Italian languages. Considering the breadth of scholarship that this volume covers, I do not think it would be possible for the author to approach it otherwise.

The biggest drawback of the publication is the lack of illustrations. The nine provided primarily depict lago di Nemi plus a couple additional images of free-diving apparatus designs. Much of the book, however, includes detailed descriptions of technical and/or artistic drawings of ancient and early modern boats, bridges, underwater infrastructure, and underwater intervention machinery and personal gear. It is clear that the author had access to these documents; but in many cases, it is very difficult to picture what these images may have looked like, as there are either no extant physical examples of what is depicted, or for which testable prototypes were never built.

*Caligula's Barges* is a meticulously researched book that illustrates in great detail the

importance of contemporary academic and socio-religious worldview for understanding the choices that were made in early modern Italy for the practical, technical, literary, and philosophical study of the visible, ancient Roman world. Tangible material culture, exemplified by the Nemi shipwrecks, provided the means through which Roman ecclesiastical elites, such as Cardinal Colonna, could link the power of the church as well as their own social and fiscal power to that of the Roman Empire, and create a narrative that positioned themselves as inheritors of its authority. Understanding the processes that inform how scholars choose archaeological sites to study and subsequently interpret provides insight in how we conduct research today. This book is highly recommended.

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Salvatore R. Mercogliano. *Fourth Arm of Defense. Sealift and Maritime Logistics in the Vietnam War*. Washington, DC: Naval History & Heritage Command, [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil), 2017. 78 pp., illustrations, map, table, bibliography. US \$19,00, paper; ISBN 798-0-945274-96-4. (Free e-version available.)

The Fourth Arm of Defense, by Salvatore R. Mercogliano, documents the development of the modern marine logistics supply chain that evolved as a result of the

U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Despite the horrors of war, conflicts can often have positive outcomes in terms of technological and managerial improvements. World War 2 (WW2) is remembered as the dividing line that ushered in the industrial era known as the Jet Age. The prosecution of Vietnam War has received less attention. As a “limited conflict”, rather than a war of survival, it is most noted for advancing the use of helicopters, napalm and peace protesters. Mercogliano presents a very different account of this engagement. Through the lens of the sealift and maritime logistics he recounts the effort required to support 10 years of military engagement in a theatre of war located half way around the world. The lessons learned in Vietnam shaped the development of military logistics and propelled the use of containerized shipping that subsequently revolutionized world trade.

The maritime logistics of the Vietnam War is an interesting story on many levels. The book has five sidebars that put a human face on the hard facts and illustrate some significant events. Risk and heroism, challenge and innovation, failure and achievement are all addressed in short vignettes. The text is accompanied with excellent photographs and maps that document changes in the logistical system between 1965 and 1975. The narrative of the book is set out in chronological order from the build-up to the final withdrawal of refugees.

The term “fourth arm of defense” is attributed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt as his description of the merchant marine during WW2. Mercogliano draws attention to the pivotal role played by these civilian sailors and the strong leadership of the U.S. Navy in meeting the herculean task completed by 6,799 voyages to southeast Asia.

New challenges awaited the U.S. military’s supply chain at every turn in Vietnam. The first issue was capacity. Some 1,500 vessels were anchored in reserve thanks to the building program of WW2, but many of these ships were obsolete by 1965. The merchant marine was more modern, but also had a commercial market to serve. Once sealift capacity had been established, the reality of delivering freight emerged as the next barrier. The “last mile problem” is a classic issue in logistics, but for the military planners in Vietnam it quickly became a crisis. By November 1965, 122 fully loaded ships were waiting at anchor off Saigon and nearby holding areas. Inadequate port facilities were compounded by the lack of ground transport. Goods had to be transhipped to WW2 tank landing ships (LSTs) and transported to beaches or ramps positioned along the coast. The Mulberry harbours, another legacy of WW2, were adapted to relieve the backlog of waiting ships.

The exigencies of war demanded capital investment and innovation to deal with the volume of supplies necessary to sustain

500,000 troops in the field. New wharves were constructed, harbours dredged and mooring points established to unload petroleum products through underwater hoses to tank farms on shore. It was also recognized that loading ships and hoping that the right materials met the needs in the field was inefficient. The logistical system was changed from “push” to “pull” as troop demands determined what was loaded.

The time to unload ships at the Vietnam ports became a key bottleneck in the supply chain. Malcolm McLean had recognized this problem at the U.S. ports, and in 1956 he demonstrated the benefits of containerization. In 1965, McLean went to Vietnam to convince the military that containers could help in the war effort. After initial resistance, the idea was embraced and championed from within. The impact of containerization was so great that by the end of the conflict 10 percent of all freight was carried in containers. With the \$450 million that McLean earned during this period, containerization made it past the tipping point and experienced rapid growth for the next 35 years.

In this very readable monograph, Mercogliano sets out a broad array to topics and themes. This is a story about war, and there are casualties in the merchant marine. The logistics system was recognized by the enemy as a key target. Viet Cong sappers were a constant threat to anchored ships and dredges. Tugs pulling barges up the rivers were

always at risk of attack from the shore. These subjects, like a mutiny and refugee evacuations, are treated with dispassion and respect.

For such a slim monograph, *The Fourth Arm of Defense*, carries a large cargo of information and colour for those who are interested in military or business logistics. It is hard not to be impressed by the scale of their accomplishment, and to appreciate how lessons learned in the Vietnam sealift continue to shape the world for decades afterward.

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Malcolm Muir, Jr. *End of the Saga. The Maritime Evacuation of South Vietnam and Cambodia*. Washington, DC: Naval History and Heritage Command, [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil), 2017. 67 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography. US \$19.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-9452474-92-6.

The fall of Saigon was America's Dunkirk. But, whereas Britain's evacuation of the Continent in 1940 was prelude to ultimate victory, the American departure from Southeast Asia 35 years later marked the end of a failed war. The final, often panic-stricken days were so traumatic that they have received almost no attention from American journalists or academics. The CIA tried to suppress, then blocked for years, much of Frank Snepp's *Decent Interval* (New York: Random

House, 1977; republished in full by University of Kansas Press, 2002): David Butler's *The Fall of Saigon* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1985) never received the attention it deserved.

Now in a short, workmanlike monograph, academic military historian Malcolm Muir seeks to reconstruct the maritime aspects of those few somber weeks when tens of thousands of Cambodians and Vietnamese fled their homelands to avoid the North Vietnamese Army and the Khmer Rouge. In a sudden rush, American naval and air force staffs had to plan massive air, riverine, and sea evacuations from Phnom Peng, Danang, Cam Ran Bay and Saigon. The enterprise displayed "the disconcerting spectacle of the abandonment of allies and, on a more human level, of a host of individuals who had worked and fought for common aims."<sup>(1)</sup> Nonetheless, Muir insists that "behind the undeniably tragic elements of the picture, the evacuations highlighted the skill and courage of American uniformed personnel. . . . Despite a tangled command structure and amid an atmosphere of intense crisis and extreme danger, American sailors, marines and airmen saved tens of thousands of people with a minimal loss of life." (1, 62)

Some evidence supports his contention, some does not. At moments of crisis, cool headedness and even sensitivity often prevailed among those on the ground. When an aghast Philippine Government—confronting the prospect of

some 70-80,000 refugees suddenly flooding the country—initially balked at allowing dis-embarkation, an admiral on the scene not only concluded that it was “an inhumane policy,” but also “suggested” to a superior that Manila’s willingness to allow the relative handful of Americans to transit but not the mass of Vietnamese “would be considered a racial thing in the United States. . .” (45). He won his point despite the fact that the great majority of fleeing Vietnamese were not poor farmers but “people of means and education.” One aircraft carrier sailor recalled that many refugees were not “in wretched condition. They were from Saigon, a big city, and were mostly middle class.” (37). Indeed, some came aboard their rescue ships with shoe boxes full of gold.

But cool calculation could also produce callousness. Vice Admiral Steele, the commander of Task Force 76 off Saigon, later remarked that he was “reluctant to pick up a whole lot of” those fleeing by sea “unless it was quite clear that if we didn’t do it, they were going to die.” Having witnessed earlier maritime evacuations from Danang and Cam Ran Bay, Steele, “had this feeling that we were taking poor people who were probably going to be alright, who the [incoming Communist] regime on top wasn’t going to touch very much. They wouldn’t be taken away from a life they knew.” (41) Having moved his fleet further offshore to discourage refugees, Steele had his people tell those who still managed to reach his

ships that “if they had the means to get back to shore,” they should “go home.” (ibid.)

And the indelible images remain, especially of those 400 odd souls together with the South Korean embassy staff who might have been rescued at the last moment, but were not. Muir admits that “Six more CH-53 flights could have rescued those individuals, but U.S. command authorities never learned of their existence and thus, did not order more missions.” One rearguard marine, who was rescued, remained eternally bitter: “That morning, there was [sic] kids, women, children, and ever since then I’ve felt like a coward because I ran out on them. Those people deserved to get out of there [but] our government had turned and run out on them.” (27)

Evacuations, even those successful operations like Hungnam in December 1950, are among the bitterest experiences of war. Cambodia and South Vietnam were no exceptions despite the competence and grace under pressure frequently displayed by those charged with impossible tasks. Eventually, thousands of Vietnamese, relatively well-housed in Guam, would reach the United States to enrich their lives and ours. Their ordeal was the culmination of years of miscalculation on the grandest of scales; Malcolm Muir has told the final chapter, as well as any author could, in an un-indexed 63-page study. He makes a strong, if not indisputable, case that nothing so

became America's Vietnam adventure like the leaving of it.

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Gary J. Ohls. *American Amphibious Warfare. The Roots of Tradition to 1865*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2017. xxiv+274 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-088-6.

In *American Amphibious Warfare The Roots of Tradition to 1865*, part of the series *New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archeology*, Gary J. Ohls describes and analyses major amphibious landing and defensive deployments by U.S. forces from the Revolution to the Civil War. Employing a case-study approach, he examines the operational and strategic significance of seven American amphibious actions, and assesses their impact on U.S. traditions and planning today. In so doing, he gives us an appreciation of the origins of American amphibious warfare, and a comprehensive history of U.S. naval and military manoeuvres since 1776.

Ohls' introduction reminds us that amphibious warfare did not start in early America, and provides us with a useful chronology of the subject. He cites in particular Athens' amphibious victory over Sparta at Sphaeria in 425 BC, Alexander's amphibious defeat of

Persia at Tyre in 332 BC, Caesar's twice successful amphibious invasions of Britain in 55-54 BC, Britain's victorious assaults at Louisbourg in 1745 and 1758, and Wolfe's attack from the sea at Quebec followed by Britain's triumph over France in Canada in 1759.

Turning to America, Ohls tells us that in 1776 in the midst of Colonial rebellion, and in an effort to end the conflict, Britain assembled her largest amphibious force up to that time to seize New York City, and sever New England from the rest of the continent. The "ease with which" the British Navy "could operate on the multitude of waters surrounding New York" pleased the British command "as much as it dismayed General Washington" (17). Of British victory Ohls concludes, that "at no time in the eighteenth century did any military force execute amphibious evolutions more skillfully" than the British did at New York (29), but Americans learned important lessons too. Washington lost the battle for New York, but through his "operational agility," he saved his army and the Revolution through his strategy of defensive amphibious withdrawal and retreat.

Five years later, Washington achieved a complete and final victory over British forces at the amphibious siege of Yorktown in a joined and combined allied operation involving French and American armies in conjunction with the French fleet on the littorals of Virginia. The most complex

operation of the Revolution involved diverse forces drawn from widely scattered points in North America and the West Indies, all converging in a timely fashion. Ohls credits the allied victory at Yorktown to Washington's superior strategic thinking. He recognized that French naval power coupled with U.S. ground forces were the key to American independence. "At Yorktown Washington orchestrated the use of naval power, amphibious evolutions, and traditional land operations to win a tactical and operational victory," which became "the most important American offensive amphibious operation of the war" (59, 60).

Moving on to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Ohls informs us that the capture of American ships and the enslavement of their crewmen by Barbary corsairs fueled a hue and cry in America for a maritime force able to protect U.S. commerce abroad. In the mid-1790s, government obliged by creating a Navy Department and launching several new frigates. In the Barbary War against Tripoli (1801-05), offensive amphibious operations proved a major element in American victory as the U.S. established roots in expeditionary warfare that have grown and expanded into the twenty-first century. Ohls details the first American expedition to foreign shores where amphibious operations displayed America's military and naval might against an enemy in support of U.S. diplomatic goals. The capture of the coastal city of

Derna by U.S. amphibious forces compelled the Pasha of Tripoli to accede to American demands in the matter of tribute, hostages, and ransom for American mariners.

Discussing the War of 1812, Ohls identifies several waterborne operations, both British and American, but focuses on the American preservation of Baltimore, in what he calls the finest example of a defensive response to an amphibious invasion at the time. Having already sacked Washington, British invaders set their sights on Baltimore as the "richest and most democratic city in America and one that should be 'laid in Ashes'" (100). According to Ohls, an important characteristic of an amphibious operation involves integration between naval and landing forces, and the inability of the British to achieve this task at Baltimore in 1814 is the lesson to be drawn here. U.S. leaders built their defenses to prevent a joint concentration by the enemy against their city. The battle of Baltimore would provide Americans with a body of information from which to base future defensive amphibious actions.

In the 1840s, offensive amphibious operations became a key part of America's war with Mexico (1846-48), and here Ohls describes various patterns of amphibious manoeuvre. In the conquest of California, small amphibious incursions contributed to an overall synthesized amphibious campaign. From San Francisco to Monterey, San Pedro,

and San Diego, and along the shores of the Gulf of California and the Mexican Pacific Coast, American commanders successfully inserted small amphibious forces at points of enemy weakness, avoiding direct attacks on strongly-held positions, thereby undermining Mexico's will to resist. Thus, U.S. leaders based their California campaign on the principle of operational manoeuvre from the sea, he says, long before modern naval and military thinkers developed it as a standardized doctrine for amphibious warfare.

Meanwhile, and simultaneously, on the other side of the continent, the successful U.S. landing at Veracruz in 1847, a large-scale amphibious operation that led to victory in the Mexican War, "foreshadowed American amphibious actions in World War II...and established the U.S. as the preeminent amphibious power in the world" (152-53).

Ohls concludes his study of American amphibious warfare in the 1860s, detailing Union attacks on Confederate-held Fort Fisher, North Carolina, during the Civil War. Aimed at closing the port of Wilmington, through which Lee's Army of Northern Virginia obtained foreign supplies, Yankee success in securing Southern littorals made a major contribution to Northern victory in 1865, and added to the American amphibious tradition in ways useful to the future.

Ohls builds a strong case by claiming that American amphibious operations prior to 1865 presaged, and also inform, U.S. amphibious

policies today. Moreover, his sources, inclusive of materials from national and military archives, published primary and secondary texts, and military publications and directives, amply support his argument. The battle maps are helpful, and the photo presentation embellishes Ohls' scholarly study. In an attempt to fill what he calls a gap in the historiography of America's naval and military story, his *American Amphibious Warfare The Roots of Tradition to 1865* succeeds admirably.

William L. Welch  
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Michael Pasdzior and Peter Haefcke. *Europas Atlantikküste / Europe's Atlantic Coast*. Hamburg: Koehlers Verlagsgesellschaft, www.koehler-books.de. 2015. 236 pp., photographs by Peter Haefcke and Michael Pasdzior. EURO 49,00€ cloth; ISBN 978-3-7822-1239-7.

This fine collection of photographs is actually two coffee-table volumes in one. Perused in one direction from left to right, starting with the cover-page, it presents Peter Haefcke's striking black-and-white photographs. Flipped over from bottom to top, then read in the usual manner, one discovers a volume of Michael Pasdzior's coloured photos, together with its own distinctive book cover. The two photographers have been travelling companions for many years, always seeking out coastal scenery. Their contempla-

tive volume—seascapes and sites from Portugal, Spain, France, England, Scotland, Ireland and Iceland—is a distillation of haunting, enchanting and austere beauty.

Each half of the volume is introduced by a separate commentator: Britton Scholz, known in Germany for her interviews of prominent personalities from the world of arts and fashion, introduces the Pasdzior collection of coloured photos; she does so in typical Q&A format, without playing the critic. By contrast, art curator Dr. Henriette Väth-Hinz, who introduces the Haefcke collection of black-and-white pictures, espouses the professional art critic's approach of reflecting on the meaning and style of the complete oeuvre. Both interlocutors are competent and perceptive, and both approaches have their advantages: one triggers thoughtful responses to well-prepared questions, and the other conceptualizes an integrated mosaic. English translations accompany the German text, though occasionally in abbreviated form. For her part, Scholz drew out the two photographers, both of whom were present at the Pasdzior interview. As it turns out, neither one of the photographers seems particularly keen on scholarly interpretations of their camera work. They are both too down-to earth for that. As Haefcke interjected, "My opinion is that a picture either appeals to you or it doesn't." Or again: "my photographs are a

testimony to how I see the coast, they don't need much explanation." His colleague Pasdzior would agree.

Pasdzior himself follows intuitive principles that have evolved during the practice of his art. Capturing atmosphere, mood, and a sense of mystery are key among them. He finds himself drawn to photographing people in strange, and yet quite ordinary, situations. He exploits the opportunities provided by grey days for capturing the contrasting movements of light and shadow. He tends to look at coastlines from a distance, and to pick out traces of human life along the shore. By contrast, Haefcke focuses in the raw power of nature, and characteristically, as Henriette Väth-Hinz explains, exhibits an "eye for the unspectacular in a spectacular setting." He "gets closer to the borderline between water and rock."

The photographs in this album are not commercial art typical of travelogues and advertising, though both of the cameramen have worked in these areas. Instead, they set off on their annual journeys in order to escape such constraints. For both of them, these wanderings are liberating experiences. Asked during his interview with Britton Scholz how they go about seeking sites and scenes to photograph, Pasdzior quickly responded: "My proven guideline is a quotation by Picasso: 'I don't search. I find.'" That seems a guiding principle for both photographers on their vagabonding along the coasts of Europe.

Väth-Hinz's reflections on this seemingly undirected and unplanned approach inspired her to cite from German novelist Hermann Hesse's novel *Siddharta* (1922) for illustration. As she doubtless would have known, *Siddharta* is a richly poetic expression of Indian philosophical thought—with a tip of the hat to Buddhism. The novel promoted the notion of an unfettered, sensuous apprehension of life. In the abbreviated lines of the English translation from Hesse which she chose: "To search means having a goal. To find, however, means to be free, to be open, to not have a goal." The thought runs as a counterpoint to those of Picasso which photographer Pászior had taken as his guiding principle. Significantly, both *Siddharta* and Hesse's bestselling *Der Steppenwolf* (1927)—from which the Los Angeles rock band took its name in 1967—had played key roles in the free-spirited Hippy movement. Hesse's influence earned him the sobriquet of "Saint Hesse among the Hippies," especially for his impact upon student life in California during the 1960s.

This volume of photographs makes for wonderful browsing. Each photograph tells a unique story; each story contains alluring sensory appeal; and each implicit story lays itself open to the interpretation and enjoyment of each individual viewer. As to what they ultimately mean, photographer Michael Haefcke put it in the clearest light: they are yours to ponder, "they don't need much

explanation." In the words of art curator Henriette Väth-Hinz: "They are pictures that make waves." And she's right.

Michael L. Hadley  
Victoria, British Columbia

David Paul. *Liverpool Docks. A Short History*. Oxford, UK: Fonthill Media, [www.fonthillmedia.com](http://www.fonthillmedia.com), 2016. 190 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography. UK £16.99, US \$29.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-78155-518-7. (E-book available.)

A mere hamlet on the muddy shores of a stream called Liver Pool and the river Mersey, the place that became Liverpool had little going for it in the early thirteenth century. Developing slowly over time, Liverpool ushered in 200 years of wealth and prosperity in 1790, with the construction of the first of many locks. The first—experimental—lock was built in the style of the day, brick by brick. Locks alongside the Mersey connected Liverpool to world-wide trading routes and enable its evolution into a major centre of the trading universe. It was a tempestuous journey. From Liverpool, textiles, rum and manufactured goods found their way to Africa, from where more than a million African slaves were transported to the Americas. Liverpool gained power and wealth from the slave trade while American goods like sugar, tobacco and cotton formed the main cargo for Great Britain in this triangular trade. The

city entered an era of unprecedented commercial expansion that resulted in a significant population increase. By 1815, fifty years later, the population of Liverpool had quadrupled to 100,000 people. The abolition of slavery in 1833 put an end to a flourishing business and unimaginable human suffering.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the city profited from the mass migration of people seeking a better life in the New World and the age of luxury cruising. In all, nine million people sailed from Liverpool, most bound for the United States and Britain's colonies. After the First World War, the port of Liverpool sunk into a slow decline. The docks were alive when people did most of the work. From the start of the container era, however, automation took over; dockworkers were made redundant; docks fell into decay; and shipping companies moved out or went bankrupt. Finally, the citizens of Liverpool came to their senses and began redeveloping the city, sending it into another phase of revival.

The introduction of the shipping container heralded a new era, changing the shipping industry forever. The result was more cargo handled by fewer people, automated, never-ending, just-in-time delivery. Mass transport by ever-larger container ships required more space than the dock area had ever had. The recently developed project, Liverpool2, promises a new era for Liverpool. The history of Liverpool is not just about trade; the

city is now home to communities from all over the world.

Along with a fascinating history, the author presents interesting pictures; ships, cargoes and quays, sailors, dock workers, shipbuilders, truck drivers, agents, and, of course, the spectators. To wrap nine centuries of history in less than 200 pages requires not only skillful restraint, but also mastery of the word.

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Graham Pitchfork. *Shot Down and in the Drink. True Stories of RAF and Commonwealth Air Crews Saved from the Sea in World War II*. London: Osprey Publishing, [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com), 2017. xii + 276 pp. illustrations, bibliography, index. UK £10.99, US \$15.00, CDN \$20.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-4728-2727-2.

The term, "Air Force" immediately conjures up images of warplanes and courageous pilots. But an air-crew's worst nightmare must surely be to be shot down by enemy fire or downed due to mechanical failure over water. The possibility of being lost at sea is ever-present. In response to this danger, by the Second World War, Great Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) developed an air-sea rescue (ASR) system consisting of sea-going rescue launches and air-sea rescue aircraft. *Shot Down and in the Drink* chronicles this little-known and often overlooked,

but absolutely vital component of the RAF.

Author Graham Pitchfork, a retired RAF officer, begins his narrative with the background to the ASR system and the need to develop it. Since most British combat flights were over land, not water, during the First World War, there was not a major need for an ASR system. But by 1935, with the Royal Air Force based literally world-wide and the impending Second World War, the RAF Air Staff approved the development of High Speed Launches (HSLs) that could quickly reach a downed aircraft and rescue its crew. (Curiously, the author does not mention the part that Airman E. Shaw, better known as T.E. Lawrence—the famous “Lawrence of Arabia”—played in developing HSLs. Shaw/Lawrence developed and tested several rescue craft for the RAF.)

Pitchfork describes the ASR system’s early organization, aircrew training, survival equipment, and location aids. The balance of the book is organized geographically: the succeeding three sections relate ASR operations in Northwest Europe, the Mediterranean and West Africa, and India and the Far East, respectively. An epilogue rounds out the narrative. These sections recount some of the incredible rescues made by the ASR system—landing aircraft in difficult seas, landing larger flying boats on the sea, and the launches rescuing aircrew near occupied

territory and rescuing men under fire.

The author writes well and his narrative does not lag. The bibliography lists the many primary as well as the secondary sources used, providing the narrative with a sound historical base. He includes enough detail, down to the serial numbers of the distressed aircraft, the rescue aircraft, and/or launches involved, to satisfy even the most meticulous reader. He also names the personnel involved, both rescued and rescuers. The photographs illustrating the narrative are helpful and well-chosen. The various aircraft used (there were many aircraft types throughout the Second World War) and the variants of the launches developed are related. The narrative highlights the vital work of the Vickers Warwick aircraft, a development of the Wellington bomber, which was used extensively in ASR work. The Warwick freed up other aircraft types for combat service and, as such, it found its service niche. Nor does Pitchfork overlook the Royal Navy’s (RN) contribution to the ASR work. He properly notes that the RN had 78 launches of various types stationed at bases around Great Britain and often participated in ASR work, either on their own or in conjunction with the RAF’s ASR system.

Pitchfork’s book is a valuable contribution to Second World War literature. It fills an important gap in our knowledge of how downed aircrews were rescued, whenever and wherever possible. The often-

ignored Air-Sea Rescue service was responsible for saving many aircrew, Allied as well as enemy; the gratitude of the saved airmen towards their rescuers must have been inestimable. The book's organization and the stories included therein mean that *Shot Down and in the Drink* can be read in individual sections or in a straight-line narrative. It is recommended. A companion volume, *Shot Down and on the Run*, furnishes a number of good escape stories from enemy territory, which also complements the many works available on Second World War prison escapes.

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Diana Preston. *Paradise in Chains. The Bounty and the Founding of Australia*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Press, www.bloomsbury.com, 2017. xii+333pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$30.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-63286-610-3.

"He was gone—the finest seaman under whom I have ever had the good fortune to sail. From the bottom of my heart I wished him God Speed." So ends *Men Against the Sea* (1932), the second volume of the classic Nordhoff and Hall trilogy *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The trilogy—republished regularly in virtually every decade since its first publication—has not only gripped the imaginations of generations of

readers. It has lent persuasive currency to foundational myths about Captain William Bligh (1754-1817) and European exploration and settlement in southern seas. Indeed, as historian Leonard R. Guttridge has pointed out, few episodes of revolt and high seas endurance have triggered such a wealth of literature as the *Bounty* affair. He cites "the intimidating bibliography" of Gavin Kennedy's *Bligh* (1978) in support of that view. Yet, despite a virtual industry of works on the subject, Guttridge's own *Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection* (1992) points out that, "the story of the *Bounty* is, after more than two hundred years, what it has been all along, an authentic mystery played out amid lonely seas and upon corruptive tropic shores" (11). "If solved," he adds, "the riddle of the *Bounty* would long ago have lost its attraction."

Diana Preston's magisterial *Paradise in Chains* draws upon rich archival and secondary sources to weave a graphic and compelling tale. With access to both digitized, and original documentation, her deeply textured historical writing elicits the craft of the accomplished novelist. She blends swiftly moving narratives with insightful character sketches; she embeds private fates in the broad political and social context of Great Britain's imperial ambitions; she marshals fine details about technology, shipping, criminal law, personalities, race relations, and, of course, human violence. It was literally "in chains," in the words of her title,

that convicts were transported to Australia; and “in chains” that captured mutineers crossed the seas homeward to face British courts. And metaphorically, it was “in chains” that the Aboriginal inhabitants of Australia forfeited their ancestral lands to the violence of British ambitions and exploitation. Preston might well have sub-titled her book *The Bounty and the Theft of Australia*. For the convicts transported there in chains, this proved to be no paradise. Many attempted to escape their sea-bound prison. In one gripping adventure, nine fugitive adults and two children took an open boat north along the eastern seaboard of Australia, and through the dreaded Torres Strait to safety: 3,254 nautical miles in 69 days. The daunting voyage challenged Bligh’s own open-boat record of 3,618 nautical miles with 18 of his loyal crew.

The ubiquitous character of William Bligh draws it all together. We read of his “tantrums” at sea, and witness his impetuous and explosive behaviours which many regard as the cause of the mutiny. The narrative reveals him as what Preston calls “a blamer,” always blaming others for every adversity that befell him, however petty. We learn of his corrupt dealings in squirreling public monies into his own pockets both aboard ship and during his appointment as governor of New South Wales. As Preston notes: “the well-documented evidence of the corrupt land deal [in Australia] gives credence to some of

the allegations of financial and commissary irregularity leveled against Bligh” by contemporary witnesses. We encounter vivid scenes underscoring “his reputation as a quarrelsome leader” (261). Bligh did resort to flogging, though arguably, somewhat less frequently than others of his rank and station. Still, Preston’s judgement is balanced, though the evidence she marshals inclines more toward Bligh’s vices, and downplays his scant virtues. Certainly, he emerges as a highly competent skipper, navigator and explorer. But in interpersonal matters, he was a tartar, completely insensitive to the effects of his excoriating language, and often erratic and unbridled treatment of individual members of his crew.

Despite the splendid panorama of the Bounty Affair which Preston has created, we are left with a hung jury as to precisely who was the catalytic villain in the mutiny. Bligh himself blamed it upon “the allurements of Tahiti,” the island paradise, which reduced his crew to a life of lassitude and lust. Yet, the key piece of evidence will always be missing. “Since Fletcher Christian, its instigator, left no known written records of his thoughts either before or after the mutiny,” Preston writes, “no one can be sure of the precise cause” (278). Yet she concludes both justly and graciously, that on the basis of Christian’s remarks relayed orally by witnesses, Bligh’s abuses had put him in a disturbing state of mental turmoil such that he could

bear it no longer—and snapped. In her words, the roots of the mutiny lay in Fletcher Christian’s “unwillingness to tolerate any more of what he considered undue abuse from Bligh” (278).

On Bligh’s return home to England after the mutiny, he was the darling of the nation. His best-selling book, *A Narrative of the Mutiny* (1790), captured the public imagination. An adoring media did the rest. But by the time some the alleged mutineers had been brought back for trial, British authorities had scented a shift of political winds. The French Revolution was now in full course, and Thomas Paine had defended the French “principles of freedom” in his *Rights of Man* (1792). Admiralty scheduled a trial sympathetic to the defendants for a time when Bligh—their key witness—was once again out of the country.

A riveting, insightful read.

Michael L. Hadley  
Victoria, British Columbia

Kevin Rowlands, ed. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Gorshkov: The Challenge of Sea Power in the Modern Era*. Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2017. x+178 pp., notes. US \$21.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-68247-159-3.

When it came to naval theory, most people who have an interest in the subject know the names of Alfred Thayer Mahan or Sir Julian Corbett. After all, these are the authors who

really established naval theory. Mahan and Corbett, however, represent the pre-Second World War era of writing regarding the use of naval power. They also reflect the study of the greatest naval power of the time, Great Britain, in an effort to understand how fleets are used to build and preserve a great empire. One name that rarely receives a great deal of attention is that of Sergei Georgiyevich Gorshkov. Writing in the post-1945 period, he represents a decidedly modern interpretation of naval power. For nearly 30 years, Gorshkov, a Soviet naval officer whose career eventually saw him rise to the rank of Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union, oversaw the rebirth of the Soviet Navy from a largely coastal force to one of the most powerful maritime forces that the Russians ever possessed. In the process, he managed to give the Soviet Union unprecedented influence far from Soviet shores and a power to rival the United States.

A prolific author, Gorshkov wrote many articles over the years, mostly published in *Morskoy Sbornik*, the Soviet/Russian Naval Digest. Rowlands’ book is an edited volume of some of the most significant of Gorshkov’s writings. Broken into seven parts, each section emphasizes a specific theme of importance. Bracketed by an introduction and notes, Rowlands presents chapters entitled Teamwork, Ethos, Science, Art, and larger issues like Navies, Power, Prosperity, Sailing the Global Commons, and The Lessons of

History. Each of these sections opens with a discussion of the key issues of the subject, followed by one or more articles by Gorshkov. The introduction plays a particularly significant part of the work. Gorshkov proved to be an incredibly complex individual. His role as a war hero was matched by his political role within the Soviet Union, an architect of the Soviet fleet, and strategist. It is his role as the author that links these worlds together. His writings were meant to help educate the Soviet Navy's personnel about what he saw as the key issues affecting the fleet.

The scale of his writing is most impressive. Gorshkov addressed almost every aspect of the naval experience from the situation of the lowly sailor through to high level strategic thinking. Starting with sailors and the ethos of the fleet and how this helped to build up the *esprit de corps*, Rowlands demonstrates the scale of Gorshkov's writings. While the first two sections cover the basis of the fleet, its sailors, the rest of the book focuses on the fleet itself. This includes the significance of science, strategic thinking and the art of using the fleet, the relationship of the fleet and Soviet Power as a world-wide tool. In the process, the breadth of Gorshkov's thinking matches that of Mahan and Corbett at so many levels, but on a decidedly modern level. The role of the submarine, nuclear power, and power projection is clearly balanced with the idea of a large surface fleet.

The only notable liability of the text is the fact that this is the "selected" writings of Gorshkov. By the very nature of the sources selected, the reader is guided towards an understanding of the man and his influence, but it always leaves the reader wondering what other work did he produce? Are there other articles or treatises of his that might present a slightly different perspective? And, of course, the question remains, will those articles, too, see publication in the west? This is not meant to disparage Rowlands' work at all. The need to be selective of the texts used immediately leads to speculation about what did not appear, and what might be even more valuable but still restricted by language and access. Perhaps that is one of the greatest strengths of the text, the fact that it encourages our desire to look for more on Gorshkov and his influence.

On the whole, this is an incredibly useful text. Its value is even greater considering that this represents Cold-War-era Soviet naval thinking and as such, represents an incredibly rare look into the development of Soviet theory and doctrine and the forces that shaped them. It is strongly recommended for anyone deeply interested in the history of sea power during the Cold War. In fact, anyone interested in Soviet history might want to look through the writings, especially Gorshkov's role as a political leader and the extent that the party and Soviet political system shaped him and his

work. All told, an incredibly enjoyable read and one definitely recommended.

Robert Dienesch  
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Aaron Saunders. *Stranded. Alaska's Worst Maritime Disaster Nearly Happened Twice*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com), 2015. 144 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-4597-3154-7. (PDF available.)

Next October 25 will be the one hundred anniversary of the loss with all on board of the CP coastal steamer *Princess Sophia*, roughly 30nm north of Juneau, Alaska. It remains the heaviest loss of life at sea—over 343 victims—on record on the northwest coast of North America. Several books have already been published about this marine disaster with its poignant story of a doomed vessel perched on a reef with rescue ships unable to help because of prolonged heavy weather. Aaron Saunders interlaces the story of the *Princess Sophia* with that of a P&O cruise ship, the MV *Star Princess*, that struck a rock in the same area on 23 June 1995; fortunately, without any casualties and without loss of the ship.

Saunders is a Vancouver-based journalist who specializes in writing about cruise ships and itineraries. In his “Notes on Sources”, he explains that the focus of his narrative about the *Princess Sophia* is to portray what happened on

board while passengers and crew were hoping for rescue. Because no paper records survived the sinking, just why the ship was off her normal southbound track during her nighttime passage down the Lynn Canal from Skagway to Juneau remains unknown. Her 61-year-old master, Captain Locke, was very familiar with the passage. Departure from Skagway had been delayed by three hours because a train bringing passengers from the Yukon had arrived late. The next scheduled port was Juneau. Visibility was limited in snow and there were strong northerly winds. *Princess Sophia*, running at an estimated 11 to 12 knots with heavy winds from astern, drove on to a ledge known as Vanderbilt Reef in the darkness at 0210, doing extensive damage to the hull before her momentum was stopped. Tides can reach 15 feet in the Lynn Canal. The subsequent Canadian official inquiry determined that the time of stranding was close to high water in “an abnormally high tide arising from various causes.” The reef, which is extensive and in places dries to 12 feet at low water, was submerged at the time of grounding. At that time, it was marked only by a small unlighted buoy. *Sophia* would remain on the reef for nearly 40 hours while the continued high winds and surf were judged too severe for various vessels summoned promptly by radio to attempt rescue. Eventually, while the rescue craft sheltered in the evening darkness during a new blizzard, another high tide and very

strong northerly winds lifted *Princess Sophia* clear and twisted her almost 180 degrees off the reef and into deeper water where she foundered.

Groundings along the indented coastline were not uncommon in those pre-radar days. *Princess Sophia* had gone aground in 1913 not far from Vanderbilt Reef, and on her northbound voyage days earlier, had been diverted to assist another passenger ship that had stranded south of Prince Rupert. The subsequent Canadian official inquiry did not speculate on what led to the grounding. The inquiry did conclude, from the evidence of the rescue craft, that the weather had moderated until the afternoon of the first day the ship was aground and that passengers could have been transhipped “without very much, if any risk to life.” It balanced this opinion, however, with an observation that the passengers on board included large contingent of captains, crews and officers of Yukon River steamers along with men familiar with travelling by coastal steamer and that their views “would prevail” in making a decision about attempting to land passengers that fateful forenoon. The inquiry ruled that, in the circumstances, the decisions of the Master not to attempt rescues could not be faulted; “the ship was lost through peril of the sea.” Aaron Saunders cites the admirably clear notices about exercising “extreme care” in “thick weather” issued to the captains of the CP coastal service (55). None of the books

about the disaster—including this one—have probed the extent to which the company’s ships, in fact, slowed in poor visibility in familiar waters. Saunders does re-cycle speculation that echoes from the ship’s whistle might have been in use to determine location in a channel (59) but does not address whether this technique would have been valid in falling snow. He speculates that Captain Locke and his Chief Officer might have wanted to press on smartly down the Lynn Canal despite restricted visibility because this was to be their last voyage south for the season. (27) In fact, a further voyage had been scheduled to call at Skagway on 3 November (Coates and Morrison, *The Sinking of the Princess Sophia* (1990), (195). As for ‘gremlins’ in the narrative, no less an authority than Salmon Rushdie recently told a CBC Victoria radio interviewer that critics seemed to read his books far more carefully than editors or publishers. *Stranded* gives the number of people lost in *Princess Sophia* as 353 (41) and 343 (112); it also places Sidney on Vancouver Island as southeast instead of north of Victoria (52).

Saunders provides a fine description of how the 63,000 ton *Star Princess* grazed a marked rock south of Vanderbilt Reef in “Midnight Sun” dark twilight at 0142 on 23 June 1995, 77 years after the *Sophia* disaster, resulting in two long underwater gashes and 7 million dollars’ worth of repairs plus 20 million in lost revenue while under repair in Portland. The

ship's captain took charge promptly and all 1,568 passengers were subsequently landed safely. This narrative is based on a US National Transportation Safety Board Report which found the pilot to be a fault, but also pointed to the failings in "bridge resource management" because the ship's officers on watch did not work effectively with the pilot. They had, in fact, plotted a fix 12 minutes prior to the grounding that put them on the dangerous side of their planned track. More seriously, they failed to project their track forward, which would have shown that they were steering directly for an obstruction and did not remonstrate with the pilot. It's interesting that according to the Safety Board Report, Captain Robert Nerup, the 57-year-old pilot on watch was an Annapolis graduate with 24 years of naval service. He had then spent 15 years as a State of Alaska marine pilot. He had apparently done 300 to 400 transits of the Lynn Canal as a pilot and was well familiar with *Star Princess*, having navigated her for some 10 trips. The ship's officers were Italian; the well-qualified Second and Third officers were on the bridge monitoring her progress but did not question the pilot's actions because as one told the Transportation Safety Board, "he is a professional...he knows where we should be." (126) Captain Nerup had been using a medication called Effexor for three years to deal with depression following a collision which had resulted in his losing his licence as a pilot for six months. He

hadn't told the pilots' association about his medication use. He had been off duty for 16 hours before taking over the watch, but it was determined that he suffered from a sleep disorder that might have caused fatigue; the Safety Board concluded that Effexor use did not contribute to the accident. As so frequently happens, several factors resulted in *Star Princess* standing into danger, including how the pilot apparently became distracted while managing a passing situation with a northbound cruise ship. The other liner passed abeam just as *Star Princess* struck the underwater rock. The Safety Board ruled that he "was not adequately responsive to the threat of grounding". (Safety Board Report, p. 31).

Dundurn has produced this book in an attractive soft cover format. Very few photographs exist of *Princess Sophia* because CP apparently suppressed them after the disaster but *Stranded* is illustrated with several good pictures of her sister ship and other contemporary vessels, all reproduced in a large format. Strangely, it is bereft of any photographs of *Star Princess*, a well-known cruise ship that has continued to operate under several names, and was most recently renamed *Columbus* in 2017 and currently sails under the UK flag. There is a useful diagram of *Princess Sophia*, but the book lacks a single map. This seriously detracts from the reader's understanding of the stories of these two groundings. In fact, they happened so close to

each other that a single map would have sufficed.

*Stranded* is a fluid telling of the stories of two passenger ship groundings in Alaskan coastal waters. The account of the sinking of the *Princess Sophia* in 1918 is not as comprehensive as that found in other books about the tragedy, and, frankly, offers nothing new. The story of how *Star Princess*, a well-found, modern cruise ship came to grief in the same area almost 80 years later, is on the other hand, well told and includes interesting insights into the relationship between a marine pilot and the ship's officers.

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Charles Stephenson. *The Siege of Tsingtau. The German-Japanese War 1914*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword Military, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2017. 256 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-52670-292-0.

Prior to the First World War, Imperial Germany acquired colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. All of those colonies were sites of combat in that war. The conflict for Imperial Germany's African colonies has been written about; but little about the First World War in Asia or the Pacific. Stephenson's *The Siege of Tsingtau. The German-Japanese War 1914* is a

comprehensive look at this little-known aspect of The Great War.

Beginning in the 1880s and continuing into the first decade of the twentieth century—the Pacific became a theatre of competing interests. Imperial Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II acquired colonies in the Pacific such as Samoa, the Caroline Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Marianas, Palau, part of the Solomon Islands, the Bismarck Archipelago, and forced China to grant Germany the territory known as Tsingtau. Imperial Japan emerged from isolation, defeated China in the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War, defeated Imperial Russia in the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War, and asserted its new-found strength. The United States of America defeated Spain in the 1898 Spanish-American War and acquired Pacific territories such as Guam and the Philippine Islands. As well, Great Britain had established a Pacific presence through its possession of Hong Kong, Malaya, various islands and its newly independent former colonies, Australia and New Zealand. When the First World War broke out in August, 1914, it was inevitable that the Pacific would be involved. While the German island colonies were quickly overrun by Australian and New Zealand forces, two German forces had to be reckoned with: the German East Asiatic Cruiser squadron under Graf von Spee, and the German colony at Tsingtau.

Stephenson begins his account with the German acquisition of the various Pacific islands and Tsingtau

and then relates political and military background of the various countries involved, and how they interacted with each other prior to the war. It is noteworthy that, during the American Navy's blockade of Manila Bay in the 1898 Spanish-American War, a German naval force at first refused to honour that blockade and caused a minor international incident.

Stephenson completes the British side of the story by showing how Australia and New Zealand—literally across the globe from the mother country, viewed the emergence of Imperial Japan as a threat and the plans that Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, made for defence of those countries.

The heart of the book comes in three chapters: one describing the defenses of Tsingtau, the weaponry fortifications therein, the initial Japanese attacks on Tsingtau. Interestingly, both the Japanese and Germans made early use of aerial reconnaissance and bombing: the Japanese had four airplanes used for those purposes, and the Germans had one lonely aircraft and pilot which performed the same functions for the defenders.

Following that is a chapter on the activities of the German East Asiatic Cruiser squadron under von Spee. This force represented a threat to Australia and New Zealand and had to be dealt with. One German raider, the *Emden*, detached from the squadron and conducted a successful raid on British shipping and ports in the Indian Ocean. The main body of von Spee's squadron

met a Royal Navy force at Coronel off eastern South America and sank three British ships. (A fuller account of Coronel, and von Spee's ultimate defeat at the Falkland Islands can be found in Robert Massie's book, *Castles of Steel*.)

The chapter following the account of von Spee deals with the actual siege of Tsingtau. The German forces there, augmented by the Austro-Hungarian cruiser, *Kaiserin Elizabeth*, were heavily outnumbered by an Anglo-Japanese force. Though the German garrison resisted to the fullest, the outcome was never in doubt. The siege and battles lasted a week before the German Governor, Meyer-Waldeck, surrendered. In contrast to its treatment of prisoners of war in the Second World War, the German and Austrian prisoners of Tsingtau seem to have been reasonably well-treated.

The book ends with an interpretive chapter describing the meaning of the brief German-Japanese portion of the First World War. He rightly notes that this conflict was a mere sideshow to the main conflict in Europe, and the outcome of the Pacific conflict was of very little consequence. Its real significance came in the next war: the Japanese took possession of many of the former German island colonies. Though the Japanese did not start to fortify those islands until 1940, the familiarity with those islands gained by the Japanese in the 1920s and 1930s gave the Japanese an edge in the next war.

Stephenson is an excellent writer; the narrative rarely flags. He shows mastery of the many primary sources he used—many in German and Japanese, and some dating back a long time. He has included good organization charts of the combatants, relevant maps and charts, and the photographs show much of the fighting. In fact, at least one of the German fortifications still exists and a recent photograph of same is included.

In recent years, the long-vanished German colonies have received attention from writers. The struggle for Imperial Germany's African colonies was well-chronicled in Byron Farwell's 1987 book, *The Great War in Africa*. That work was joined in 2017 by Robert Gaudi's *African Kaiser*. Further, Osprey Publishing's *Men-at-Arms # 490: Imperial German Colonial and Overseas Troops 1885-1918 (2013)* is an overview of all of Imperial Germany's colonies. *The Siege of Tsingtau* complements those books in that it fills in an often-overlooked portion of the First World War and thus, completes the historical picture. The expert or the reader unfamiliar with this topic will learn much from this work. It is recommended.

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Joseph A. Williams. *The Sunken Gold: A Story of World War I Espionage and the Greatest Treasure Salvage in History*.

Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press, www.chicagoreviewpress.com, 2017. ix+ 326 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$26.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-61373-758-3.

On 25 January 1917, HMS *Laurentic* struck German mines off the coast of Ireland, and sank with the loss of 354 lives, and 44 tons in gold destined for a still-neutral America to purchase arms and supplies as Britain struggled to win victory in the Great War of 1914-1918. Williams' *The Sunken Gold: A Story of World War I Espionage and the Greatest Treasure Salvage in History* is the first full account of *Laurentic's* sinking, the heroic eight-year ordeal to recover her treasure and the revolution in deep-sea diving techniques that made the salvaging of *Laurentic's* bullion possible.

Built in 1908 for the White Star Line, Williams calls *Laurentic* a "Titanic in miniature".(5) Though one-third *Titanic's* size, *Laurentic* lacked nothing by comparison in terms of luxury and grace, inclusive of all the amenities, appointments, and innovations, and in general opulence. A popular vessel in White Star's fleet, *Laurentic* crossed the Atlantic regularly, connecting Liverpool with Montreal and Quebec City. With the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914, however, the Royal Navy impressed her into military service and refitted her as an armed merchant cruiser.

By 1915, with the land war in Europe at a stalemate, to challenge

Britain's superiority at sea, Germany focused on sinking Albion's merchant ships in a campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare. Based on notions of surprise attack and ambush, victims of submarine warfare, belligerents as well as neutrals, complained that German policy violated the traditional rules of war, allowing enemy merchant ships to be detained and searched, and their personnel disembarked to places of safety, before a prize was dispatched. But, as *Laurentic* departed Liverpool for North America with her cargo of gold in January 1917, Germany was already determined to intensify her underwater naval campaign.

When *Laurentic* was sunk off Ireland, Britain's Sea Lords focused on recovering her cargo, but they had to keep salvaging operations quiet, since they feared alerting the Germans to the presence of the gold. To begin with, any salvage team would be exposed to the full run of North Atlantic weather, winds, currents, and tides, so the Sea Lords chose their most experienced officer to head the risky mission, Lieutenant Commander Guybon Damant. Damant requested a command vessel, not overly large, and seaworthy enough to keep a good position over the wreck. "I had had enough experience of diving in the open sea to realize the most important thing is to be able to hold your ship vertical over the wreck, the smaller the ship the easier she is to hold." (105) His vessel needed flexibility too, as she

would be heavily anchored and used as a platform for his divers and the derricks needed to haul up debris from below. Damant chose the mooring lighter *Volunteer* at 135 feet, calling her a "bug trap." With her single, squat funnel and spidery mast, she was indeed, less than beautiful. *Volunteer* was crowded as well with a crew of 35 officers and men, plus diving equipment, dresses, boots, helmets, air pipes, a steam-driven air compressor, and a recompression chamber.

Williams details the problems faced by Damant in accessing *Laurentic's* gold. His divers were clad in canvas diving dress, with heavy boots, and huge metal helmets, tethered by lifelines and air pipes, often tangled, to *Volunteer* at surface. Too often divers contracted "the bends," or decompression sickness, which was why Damant, a renowned expert in the recompression process, was assigned to head the mission. At sea bottom, the wreck of *Laurentic* was compacted accordion-like due to storms and shifting waters. Tons of her plating and bulkheads had to be exploded and removed to locate her gold, with the whole operation constantly exposed to lurking German U-boats. Then, with only a portion of the gold recovered, in late 1917, the Admiralty abruptly suspended salvaging operations.

With the *Laurentic* mission halted, Damant was transferred to England on "special service." Britain was suffering tremendous shipping losses from Germany's relentless U-boat attacks. First Sea

Lord Jellicoe called it “the greatest peril which ever threatened this country and the Empire.” (145) British Naval Intelligence had worked tirelessly throughout the war to gather strategic information on the movement of German U-boats. But without inside knowledge, it became impossible to effect a successful antisubmarine plan. Direct access to submarine cipher keys, code and signal books, minefield schematics, and other secret documents was vital. These materials could be found *inside* the wrecks of sunken German U-boats that littered the English Channel. If divers could obtain this material, it would assist British codebreakers, and win the war. In 1917-18 Damant and his *Laurentic* team, with their diving expertise, provided this “special service.” By war’s end, Williams estimates, that Damant’s divers had surveyed or explored at least 15 different U-boat wrecks and gathered secret materials which, according to British Naval Intelligence, was of the “highest caliber” (176, 192), contributing significantly to Allied victory in the First World War.

With the Great War ended, Damant lobbied the Navy to resume the salvaging of *Laurentic*, and in 1919 his diving team returned to the site of the wreck. Despite various obstacles, by 1924, after eight years and seven salvaging seasons, his divers had recovered 99 percent of *Laurentic*’s gold, thought to be lost to the sea. In recognition of his services to the nation, Damant was

made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).

Williams tells one of the great sea stories of the First World War, involving U-boats, lost treasure, tenacious divers, and the recovery of gold bullion, a story of human persistence, bravery, and patriotism. He also deals with behind-the-scenes British politics, as well as scientific advancements in diving technology. His research is meticulous. He has combed the National Archives and the National Maritime Museum in London and the Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, UK for his sources. He discovered an unpublished memoir written by Damant, and he interviewed Damant descendents. Pictures, photos, diving diagrams, and maps further enhance his study. Students of the Great War, historical technology buffs, and Royal Navy aficionados will find this book a rewarding read.

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