Book Reviews

Quintin Barry. *Suffern Versus Hughes: War in the Indian Ocean 1781-1783*. Series From Reason to Revolution 1721-1815 #125. Warwick, UK: Helion Books, www.helion.co.uk, 2024. 226 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. UK £ 25, paperback; ISBN 978-1-80451-339-2.

The American Revolution was a world-wide conflict. In addition to a set of recalcitrant colonists, the British were fighting Europe's major powers, which included Spain, the Netherlands, and, most important of all, France. By the period considered in this book, the conflict in North America was essentially over, but the war raged on in other areas of the globe as the British fought to maintain and even expand their empire. India was the prize.

Suffern Versus Hughes is Number 125 in publisher Helion & Company's 'From Reason to Revolution 1721-1815', a series that focuses on military and naval history. Quintin Barry's third volume for the collection focuses on the personalities and battles that the two protagonists (Pierre André de Suffern and Sir Edward Hughes) engaged in for their respective kings and countries on the far side of the world. The contest between these two men, and their respective nations, is a welcome addition to the maritime literature of this period and expands it beyond the usual confines of the Atlantic.

Berry produces a concisely written, compact book full of information. It runs to just over 200 pages. The nineteen short and readable chapters are arranged in three general thematic groupings. The first five set the stage, introducing the reader to the two admirals, the theater of conflict, and the conditions on the ground prior to the arrival of Suffern and Hughes in India for their multiple duels. The next four chapters expose the machinations of war. There was a covert British proposal to attack Spanish positions in the New World, which evolved into an operation focused on the Asian subcontinent after Britian's declaration of war on the Dutch. Then there was a French

counter to the not-so-secret operation. The initial Atlantic encounters between the British and the French in the race to the Dutch-controlled Cape of Good Hope may have foreshadowed events in the Indian Ocean. The wheels were set in motion for the two admirals to vie for supremacy in India. Thus are the vagaries of war.

Preliminaries settled, the meat of the book is contained in the remainder of the text. Battles for various ports and maneuvers at sea, politics on the subcontinent between the various Indian potentates and the European interlopers, as well as the five head-to-head confrontations between the two naval commanders are concisely presented. Here is where the reputations of these men were made. Barry, utilizing sources both complimentary and disparaging of the combatants, seeks a level of clarity in the fog of war. Was one commander bolder and more assertive while the other was more conservative and timid? Did available resources and considerations of outside factors – such as the English East Inda Company, French colonial governors, or other combatants – assist or hinder operations and affect potential courses of action? The author posits credible arguments for the actions taken by these men and their relative achievements in the rather unique and not always positive circumstances in which they found themselves.

The black and white illustrations and simple line maps are effective in their representation of the characters in the text, locating the areas in India referenced, or of following the line of battle. An appendix of the vessels available for each of the five battles allows the reader to gauge the resources available to each commander during their several clashes. The bibliography presents several sources that the reader may wish to examine if the topic is of a deeper interest than the limited amount of information that can be presented in the format of this text. A general index and an index of ships rounds out the back matter of the book.

For a relatively short monograph, Barry produces a readable and information-packed work. Although the American Revolution was basically over by the time that the struggles between Suffern and Hughes in the Indian Ocean took place, this treatment of these actions may be a welcome revelation for any enthusiast of that conflict. In addition, it will be of interest to those wishing to know more about the history of European activity in the Asian subcontinent or maritime and naval history in general. Although a specialist in late eighteenth-century French and British naval history might find the text basic, this reader believes that the book, like India was for the belligerent nations, is a prize worth keeping in one's collection.

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Eric A. Cheezum. *Chessie: A Cultural History of the Chesapeake Bay Sea Monster*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, www.press.jhu.edu, 2024. xii+274 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index. US $22.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-4214-4905-0.

In July 1978, people living in Northern Virginia, on the banks of the Potomac River, reported something unusual moving through the water, heading downstream. It was long, like a giant snake, swimming in such a way that its spine created humps emerging above the surface of the water. It looked like a sea monster! Other sightings followed in that same summer in the lower Potomac and then in the Northern Neck of Chesapeake Bay, around Kent Island.

These events marked the beginning of "the Chessie phenomenon". Eric Cheezum examines this phenomenon in *Chessie*, a book about how Chesapeake Bay residents, press, and naturalists responded to the presence of a mysterious creature in their waters.

The reported sightings in Chesapeake Bay continued into the mid-1980s. Local news media covered the sightings, naming the creature "Chessie." The sightings varied. Some described a creature with smooth humps, but some said the humps had spines. The estimated lengths varied. Most witnesses reported a single creature, but one reported four such creatures, each resembling a sea serpent about 30 feet long. One woman described an encounter with an animal that resembled a manatee or large harbour seal.

The varied sightings led to questions from reporters, the public, and marine biologists. Were all the sightings of the same animal? Was Chessie an animal at all? Was the animal dangerous? Should it be caught and studied?, protected?, exterminated?

Some experts were skeptical, often because the reports came from newcomers to Chesapeake Bay, tourists and suburbanites who used the bay for recreation. Some watermen, whose families had worked on the bay for generations, regarded the reports as bogus, produced by people who did not understand the bay and its creatures. Some experts speculated that the sightings may have been otters swimming in single file, rogue waves, a piece of tubing used for containing oil spills, or perhaps floating debris after a storm.

A breakthrough seemed to occur in 1982 when Robert Frew, a resident of Love Point, videotaped the creature. He described it as serpent-like, about 30 feet long. The videotape seemed to be a turning point in Chessie lore. Reporters descended upon Frew and his wife for interviews. The expanding publicity around Chessie and the videotape garnered the attention of the Enigma Group, who arranged a Smithsonian-hosted panel to discuss Chessie sightings and to submit the tape to expert analysis. The conclusion: the tape was authentic, but

of poor quality, and the object was a living animal. The mystery continued.

Nevertheless, as data and publicity grew, locals developed an affection for the creature, whatever it was. The *Bay Times* became a clearinghouse for information about Chessie, offering new subscribers a souvenir coffee cup featuring a cartoon of Chessie. Images of Chessie and the Chessie name became advertising devices. Some saw Chessie as a tourist asset. A charter boat offered an evening on the bay in search of sea monsters. Representations of Chessie constituted a cottage industry. A state senator proposed a bill to protect Chessie; the bill failed because senators did not really know what Chessie was.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) office in Annapolis capitalized on the Chessie craze with a Chessie coloring book for school children to teach about environmentalism. A costumed Chessie represented "Clean the Bay" initiatives at public events. Chessie made its way into two children's books. Chessie became a part of Chesapeakiana.

Cheezum presents the Chessie Phenomenon against the backdrop of rising cultural tensions in the Chesapeake Bay area in the 1970s and 80s as suburbia encroached on what had been the quiet, rural domain of farmers and watermen. With residential development came shopping malls, tourist haunts, traffic, increased costs of living, and more pollution in the waters of the bay. Chessie often became the vehicle for expressing and exploring the conflicts and environmental concerns that arose during this period.

By the mid-1980s, Chessie sightings waned, and so did Chessie's popularity. Then in 1994 a new Chessie emerged. A bull manatee was spotted in the Chesapeake, far from its natural habitat in Florida waters. The FWS caught the animal, named it Chessie, determined it was healthy, tagged it, put a transponder on it, and sent it back to Florida. The manatee reappeared over the next two summers, navigating the eastern seaboard as far north as Narraganset Bay, helping to highlight the dwindling manatee populations in Florida and serving as an indication of successful efforts to clean the bay. A new, caricatured Chessie became a mascot/spokesperson for local businesses, cultural events, and environmental efforts. The manatee visited the bay in 2001 and 2011 and was last identified near Fort Lauderdale in 2022.

This book serves as a reminder that maritime history is not solely about sailors and naval battles. Eric Cheezum has produced a highly informative, readable book that is more than a treatise on cryptozoology. It is a well-written, detailed, sociological study of how a community responded and adapted to a puzzling phenomenon in its midst. Expertly drawing from interviews, manuscript collections, and news reports, Cheezum gives us a portrait of Maryland's Eastern Shore during the late twentieth century. His narrative shows how public sentiment can coalesce around a single symbol

– a mysterious animal – and how that symbol first serves as a catalyst for local issues and then evolves into a symbol of local culture. The Chessie Phenomenon was sometimes exploited for profit and sometimes to promote a worthy cause. Cheezum does not solve the mystery of what Chessie actually was. Instead, he shows us how Chessie was like a Rorschach Inkblot, showing readers how people and communities interpreted an ambiguous phenomenon in ways that served their needs.

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Theodore Corbett. *The Promise of Freedom for Slaves Escaping in British Ships: The Emancipation Revolution, 1740-1807*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Books Limited, https://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/ 2024. xiii, 242 pp., illustrations, maps, endnotes, index. UK £25.00, US $34.95, hardcover; ISBN 9781 39904 820 0.

Theodore Corbett claims the emancipation of slaves by the British during the American Revolution was the critical impetus for the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807. He connects the emancipation to the British navy, which provided work for some and carried freedom seekers to new homes in Britain and its colonies. During the War of Independence some 30,000 Blacks left slavery under rebel masters for freedom in exchange for service fighting with the British. The book consists of 28 short chapters and covers the pre-revolutionary period through to the aftermath of the Abolition Act in 1807.

In the pre-war section, Corbett covers the slave trade and the American southern plantation system. The author makes clear the slave owners' fear of insurrections and the brutal suppression of those who rose up.

In chapter four Corbett introduces the role of religion, primarily the evangelical movement, as a significant catalyst for the abolition movement. The evangelical movement resurfaces throughout the text, sparking the thinking and behavior of various central characters in Corbett's narrative. In relation to the navy, while some naval officers were evangelical in their use of religion aboard ship, not all were, as Corbett recounts (p. 211). The evangelicals challenged the slave owners with Christianity's belief that all people were created equal. The evangelicals brought Christianity to the slaves and encouraged some to become ministers, spreading the word among other enslaved people. Both of these trends were resisted by the slave owners.

Five chapters centre around the Royal Navy's place in the freeing of slaves. Corbett notes that free Blacks could find employment aboard merchant and naval ships as seamen, which provided income and potentially a more inclusive

space than life ashore. Corbett states that as much as five percent of British navy sailors were Black during the Revolutionary War (p. 35). Later, he states six to eight percent were Black (p. 53). Evidence for either percentage for ships on the North American Station is missing. The origins of these seamen is not spelled out, thus the number that were freed slaves from the American colonies is unknown. The number that went to the navy was likely lower than those who went to the British army. The author also describes the employment of free Blacks in English shipyards and related industries. The full extent of the inclusivity of the wooden world requires further study.

Corbett takes a more positive perspective on impressment, suggesting men pressed "ultimately stayed in the navy" (p. 55). In light of the fact that leaving was considered desertion and received some of the harshest punishments, it makes sense that most stayed until released by the navy at war's end. He states that freed Blacks serving in the British navy so liked the experience that they became loyalists (p. 208). This statement needs support, even allowing for the fact that volunteering to fight with the British could imply an existing loyalty to the crown.

The author discusses the proclamations of Lord Dunmore (1775) and Generals Guy Carleton, Howe, and Clinton calling for slaves (and indentured non-Blacks) to fight for Britain against the rebels in return for their freedom. Corbett does not mention that it was just the rebels' slaves Dunmore wanted to free, not the Loyalists' slaves. The idea, as Corbett suggests, that "Dunmore was the first to bring white and black Loyalists together…" is a stretch (p. 76).

The settlement of the Black Loyalists in Britain and Nova Scotia is the focus of Corbett's post-war chapters. In both places the new arrivals met with prejudice and segregation. Low wages meant poverty and the need for local relief. The free Blacks became a cheap source of labour for the white community, causing additional tension with the lower labouring order over jobs.

An answer to these problems was the Sierra Leone scheme, through which British abolitionists resettled free Blacks in Africa. The colony was at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River in the heart of the slave trade. Corbett covers this bleak history, addressing numerous leadership issues and local challenges. He focuses on Thomas Thompson, a naval captain employed to escort the settlers to the new colony. Thompson seems to have been the only good leader the colony had, although he left after just two years. Lieutenant Henry Savage RN arrived in 1789 to find the colony in difficulty with local slave traders. Savage stayed long enough to arrange a resolution of the issues and then left after which the deal collapsed.

Corbett recounts the efforts to pass abolition legislation in Parliament culminating in the Abolition Act of 1807, which outlawed slave trade to Britain

or British colonies. It was not until 1833 that Parliament freed those in slavery within the confines of the Empire.

In his conclusion, Corbett references the calls by the rebels for liberty (at least for white males), and writes, "in the War of Independence the British formulated a kind of emancipation proclamation that totally subverted what seemed to them the most hypocritical cause…" (p. 208). He places "the War for Independence as the crucial event in the eventual abolition of the slave trade" (p. 208). These are bold conclusions that I do not think he has fully supported.

The question is whether the freeing of enslaved people during the American Revolution was truly emancipation in its fullest sense? Yes, people were released from slavery when they crossed from rebel-held areas into British-controlled spaces, including British ships-of-war. The biggest problem for Corbett's position is the contradiction that the British encouraged the slaves of rebels to gain freedom by fighting for the British, when the British would not allow their slaves freedom for fighting the American rebels. The suggestion that it was premised on abolition of slavery or even outright emancipation is spurious.

An example of the complicated story of the British navy's involvement in emancipation is that of John Perkins. Perkins, a mullato who may have been born into slavery, entered the British navy and ultimately received the patronage of Sir Peter Parker and George Rodney, rising to the rank of lieutenant commander. At the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, he used his prize money to buy land in Jamaica, "ironically employing slave labor" (p. 62).

Several maps appear within the text to help locate where events took place. The book has two sections of grouped images of people, places and events. All serve to help locate and illustrate the narrative. The index and endnotes are workable.

Corbett's bold assertion of an emancipation revolution beginning with the American Revolution will draw interest and further critique from those who study the abolition movement. As for British naval history, this book is a start, but more work needs to be done to flesh out the extent of the navy's role in providing space for Blacks to flee slavery. A strength of the book is Corbett's use of short biographic examples of free Blacks and abolitionists in each of the chapters to illustrate the chapter's point. Finding more of these stories will serve to expand our understanding of the lived experiences of the people who escaped slavery during the American Revolution and their subsequent lives.

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Paul Curtis. *Tales from the Great Passenger Ships: A Jaunt through Time.* Cheltenham, UK: The History Press, www.thehistorypress.co.uk, 2023. 288 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography. UK £18.99, paper; ISBN: 978-1-80399-211-2.

There is an adage among professional sailors that "anyone who would go to sea for pleasure would go to hell on a lark." Nonetheless, since Mark Twain recounted his 1869 "cruise" on the *Quaker City* to Europe and the Holy Land – "a picnic on a gigantic scale" – Americans (and others) have been fascinated with going to sea for fun. In 2023 more than thirty-one million people went on such a 'lark," that is, a cruise. Unlike a "voyage" (travel from one place to another) cruising embraces the journey itself. There is no need to worry about the speed of the vessel; it is simply a pleasure to be aboard. Having worked aboard ten ships, including a stint as entertainment director on board Cunard's RMS *Queen Mary*, few people know more about cruising and shipboard life, below and above decks, than Paul Curtis.

Ships are the largest man-made, movable objects on the planet. We christen and launch them with a great ceremony. In "The Building of a Ship," the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow caught the moment when a vessel comes alive:

She starts, she moves, she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!

In like fashion, artists have embodied ships with the human experience of life and death. Just as Longfellow above described the first days of a vessel in poetry, in his painting HMS *Temeraire* the British artist J.M.W. Turner depicted the last days of an ancient lady being toward to its last berth.

Following the tradition of Longfellow and Turner, Curtis gives the reader the same sense of life. In 36 vignettes he captures the romance and tragedy of great ships from *Britannia* (1840 / 1154 tons) to the behemoth *Wonder of the Seas* (2022 / 236,857 tons). *Titanic, Empress of Ireland*, *Morro Castle*, and other casualties are chronicled, including at least one of recent memory, *Costa Concordia* where, to offer his guests a scenic view of Isola del Giglio, Captain Francesco Schettino took his vessel dangerously close to the island, and in doing so ran aground. Fortunately, as Curtis points out, such behavior is rare. Responsible captains care for the ship, the crew, and the guests.

While disasters at sea make exciting reading, they have been told so often they do not require repeating (*Titanic, Lusitania*, etc.). Curtis is at his best recounting personal anecdotes, including the time when, with only two days'

notice, he joined *Stella Polaris* as the ship's photographer. He was assigned to a cabin of six and told not to photograph any passengers unless they made a specific request. Under the circumstances, business was slow. Better times were ahead.

Entertainment officers, Curtis's later role, play a curious role aboard ship. On cruise ships at least four communities sail together. From the bridge, the captain and his officers command the ship. The deck crew keep the vessel neat and tidy and, when necessary, ferry guests ashore in tenders. The engine gang watches over all the ship's machinery, while the hotel staff and entertainment director see to the care and feeding of the guests.

On cruise ships, where pleasure is the goal, aside from a friendly hello or an invitation to sit at an officer's table, most guests are unlikely to have direct contact with the officers, deck, or engine crew. No such separation for the entertainment director. To the guests they are the most visible person on the ship. They stand at the gangway welcoming guests aboard. Later they might give directions to board the tenders and remind guests when they are due back aboard. They manage the evening's entertainment, introducing the various performers. They frequently walk about the ship greeting guests. They listen patiently as guests insist on recounting all their previous cruises. They stand ready to explain why there is not more room around the pool and, in some instances, explaining why tenders cannot be boarded in six-foot seas. For many of the guests aboard, the entertainment director is the "ship."

Curtis's well-chosen subtitle for *Tales from Great Passenger Ships* is *A Jaunt Through Time.* Well informed, Curtis writes with a graceful, sometimes humorous style. The book might have benefited from a proper index and more of Curtis' personal yarns would be welcomed. Nonetheless, when packing your suntan lotion consider bringing along *Tales From Great Passenger Ships*. You may be able to add a story or two yourself.

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Eric Jay Dolin. *Left for Dead: Shipwreck, Treachery and Survival at the Edge of the World.* New York, NY: Liveright Press, www.wwnorton.com, 2024. 320 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US $29.99, cloth, ISBN 978-1-324-09308-4.

Left for Dead is the sixteenth work of maritime non-fiction by Eric Jay Dolin. Once again, he skillfully pilots his readers on an absorbing and sometimes harrowing seafaring adventure. The *Robinson Crusoe*-like tale has multiple disasters, intrigue, and perfidy set against a wild South Atlantic background–

the West and East Falkland Islands–together with their lesser-known flora and fauna.

The author notes in his introduction that, while many of the incidents described in the book are dramatic and gripping, they have largely been forgotten in history. Few people have chosen to write about them since most of the characters were not especially historically noteworthy. The book is nonetheless a riveting glimpse of the dangerous and unpredictable world of maritime commerce and transport during the Age of Sail, when individuals under great hardship had the choice of acting nobly, immorally, or could occasionally vacillate between these two extremes. The action is set in an infrequently visited location and during the War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain.

Dolan begins his tale with background knowledge, helping to make the castaways' stories that follow quite graphic. The first part of the book describes the geography and geology of the paired Falkland Islands, which are separated by the Falkland Sound. This is followed by natural history descriptions of mammals, including fur seals, sea lions, elephant seals, sea otters, Norway rats, boars, and warrahs (Antarctic foxes). There is abundant bird life, such as a variety of penguins subspecies, albatrosses, geese, and annoying caracaras or rooks (carrion hawks). Although there were almost no trees, other flora, like sea cabbage, marram, tussac and scurvy grasses, wild celery, strawberries, mosses, and massive kelp forests, were in abundance. Add to this a singular quasi-hero of the adventures, a nondescript hard-working and loyal ship's dog named Cent.

Next comes the story of the first group of castaways. The *Isabella*, a Royal Navy ship, was transporting a group of families and some servants, in addition to a contingent of Royal Marines. These passengers were being transferred to a remote island as punishment for crimes committed in England and as a means of populating some of the Crown's distant territories. Five of the men had had relatively conspicuous social positions before being convicted and considered themselves to be in command of the ship. The vessel was wrecked on a rock known as 'eagle island', on the extreme southwest corner of today's East Falkland Island. Thus, we have the beginnings of a long story of survival featuring ingenuity, bravery, jealousy, immorality, and frank treachery. The first possibility of rescue came from the *Nanina,* an American merchant brig.

The *Nanina* was small and could not accommodate all the shipwreck survivors, but they tried to take as many as they could onboard. Then word reached them that the British and Americans were at war. Although the Americans humanely tried to rescue the survivors, they were outnumbered and, with the contingent of Marines, they were easily subjugated. According to the rules of contemporary maritime warfare, a seized American vessel such

as the *Nanina* could be a valuable prize in an admiralty court. Perhaps the Americans should first have learned how many people needed to be rescued. Because of the political war situation, they perhaps should have sailed off and left the shipwrecked people behind, even if doing so went against every humane impulse and certainly international maritime convention. Five of the men, separated from the main party, survived as Falkland castaways, both together and apart, for 543 days.

This complex tale evolves into many sub-plots: a mini rescue via *Young Nanina* (*Nanina's* shallop), minor sexual dalliance, deceit, marooning of members of the parties, and detailed accounts of hunts. Added to this are clever survival tactics, moral relapses, reprieves, and forgiveness. Also an arduous voyage to Uruguay, followed by a rescue out of Argentina via *Nancy,* a Royal Navy brig, but with a potential substantial monetary reward as an incentive. This multi-faceted story, with a sizeable *dramatis personae*, comes to a reasonable and largely just wrap-up. In a thought-provoking epilogue, the author brings the multiple story lines to their real-life conclusions.

The primary sources for this meandrous tale were Charles Barnard's logbooks of the *Nancy* and *Nanina,* plus Barnard's 1829 published narrative of his sufferings and adventures at the Falkland Islands, a journal of Henry Igman Defrees, and Richard Lundin's narrative of a voyage published in Scotland in 1846. This unusual story is captivating and, like Dolin's many other works, erudite and well-written. Some of the undertakings where the men are moving from island to island and harbor to harbor are difficult to follow. This may be a function of the map that shows multiple names for places, some of which are entirely missing. One might assume this is a function of the centuries-old sources that Dolan had to edit into modern prose. The reader would be well advised to remember that it was the taxing survival events that were important and not necessarily their exact geographic locations. *Left for Dead* is a fascinating if somewhat disheartening segment of the maritime history that took place in one of the world's most remote and inhospitable lands.

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Reuben Keith Green. *Black Officer, White Navy. A Memoir.* Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, www.kentuckypress.com, 2024. 236 pp., illustrations. US $30.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-98590-029-5.

I encourage minority service members and veterans to write their own stories. History needs these stories.' - R.K. Green

Green's *sea story* about his formative years and naval service career has

quite a few of those laugh out loud moments and a 'mostly happy ending'. Alas, these moments just aren't enough to counter the biggest danger of the story: 'the sailors themselves'. Nearly forty years after his memoir starts, Green shows that everything and nothing appears to have changed in the Navy in that time. And therein is the value of this text to strategic human resource and executive managers, policy makers and military careerists; it is a case study of consequence. History does indeed need these stories, the Navy particularly so, with it noted as 'being the most racist of the armed services' (p. 2).

Language choices in the text reflect a military story, with plenty of acronyms and slang that may stall a new reader who needs to refer to the index regularly for context. The occasional cuss is rarely presented out of context. Structurally, the story is relatively linear and visibly short enough to convince the reader they can complete it in a couple of sittings. An individual's progression through junior ranks and promotion to officer generally make for an interesting story. Yet Green's continues thereafter, with him gaining further engineering and surface-warfare qualifications, and decorations for employment achievements. Green's was not a linear career path by any means; his was an impressive naval career before the awful fact that all of this was achieved in the face of structural racism and unconscious bias. For some readers, this will necessitate pauses.

Green left high school early to pursue employment and, after a couple of small jobs and some soul-searching, joined the Navy as a sailor against his father's recommendations. In Green's words, he was a high school dropout; however, there is merit in considering school was not meeting his learning needs. The value of education during one's formative years cannot be understated, particularly noting Green's intelligence made him a qualifying candidate for service. The military is hierarchical in organization and people are often inclined to believe that organizational leadership also operates that way. This is misguided: organizational management operates that way, but leadership does not. Green notes this early in his memoir, observing one of his reasons for joining the Navy was that the most senior leader had given an order for the Navy to be an 'equal opportunity employer', a particularly attractive notion for a young candidate in the 1970s. However, power-distance relationships being what they are in the Navy, an order for a cultural change does not constitute one.

Every member of the military has the opportunity to be a leader, to demonstrate values through behaviours. Time and again, Green was faced with bias and bullying, to which he attempted to maintain his dignity without responding. His 'abuse meter redlined' (p. 92) and he had to fight back, although he learned with time. Yet, Green points out that seldom was any of this behaviour necessary; there are still choices and opportunities to set aside previous conditioning and choose growth.

Serving as the Engineering Officer in USS *Boone* (FFG-28) and while preparing for a deployment to the Middle East, Green faced a main engine room fire and, in his department, the subsequent, significant repair. His development of a critical items list was impressive and ahead of its time. But so was his appointment, as it was 1988 and only a few years prior he was a junior sailor. He had fast-tracked the time to qualification, which was a major career achievement, although the stress it placed on his body was enough to make his hair start falling out. The fact he had to develop a critical items list at all was resultant of the fickle behaviour of his supply officer. There are so many lessons to be learned from this case study, it ought to be commended and studied. Ironically, the ship's motto for USS *Boone* was 'don't tread on me'.

Those less inclined to read this work are always the ones who would benefit most from doing so! And they ought to be made aware of the value of Green's business case for strategic investment in diversity, equity and inclusion, in championing authentic mentoring and leadership programs, and promoting organisational values that include 'respect'. Make no mistake, creating a psychologically safe working environment starts with these investments at the highest level.

Reference to the modern workplace must also include the value of cultural competence. A diverse workforce needs to be respectful of that very diversity, which is something to be fostered right from the outset. It is also something to monitor; for example, Green's critical items list clearly evidenced conflict between the departments responsible for integrated logistics systems management, and this is but one of the many examples that he can offer.

Drawing on this, no doubt, was the way Green managed his outputs in his next roles, including the best job he had. Having the support and guidance of his supervisor meant Green was able to elevate the importance and scheduling of safety training, which had a direct and positive impact in the fleet. Training became more fun and the working environment more professional because of it. Unfortunately, this is a huge contrast to Green's next and final role, managing telephones. Green was to retire from naval service as a result of his experiences in this posting.

Green has been able to point out ongoing issues and clearly wants to help 'lead the way'. He has made some tangible recommendations for policy improvements that, if adopted sooner rather than later, would directly improve equity and inclusion in the context of a diverse military workforce.

This memoir is a valuable contribution to maritime, military and leadership studies; it is also an excellent case study for workforce planners.

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Brian Lane Herder and Paul Wright (illustrator). *British Pacific Fleet 1944-45: The Royal Navy in the downfall of Japan.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2023. 80 pp., illustrations, tables, maps, diagrams, reading list, index; US $31.00, paper: ISBN 978-1-4728-5677-7. (E-book available.)

The British Pacific fleet was neither needed nor wanted for the final operations around Japan, but it went anyways to fight alongside the Americans. With the surrender of the Italian fleet and winding down of the European war against Nazi Germany, the Royal Navy's battleships, aircraft carriers, and cruisers were short of useful employment, and the last opportunity for major fleet actions was now in the Pacific. Despite serious shortfalls in logistics, the British Pacific Fleet performed just enough fighting and left a favourable impression with American admirals it was associated with to get a little glory and a front-row seat to the signing of the Japanese capitulation in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945. The British Pacific Fleet (BPF) was symptomatic of a Royal Navy that chose prestige over practical expediency at the end of the Second World War.

Brian Lane Herder, the author of several Osprey offerings dealing with the Pacific, North Africa, and US Navy battleships and gunboats, is an academically trained military historian working as a legislative librarian and contributes the research and writing behind this No. 3 *British Pacific Fleet 1944-45* in Osprey's growing Fleet series. The United Kingdom-based marine artist Paul Wright, a frequent and highly regarded Osprey illustrator, provides accompanying original artwork in colour. The book follows the standard series format – limited to 80 pages in length with four unnumbered sections, a further reading list, and an index. Colour diagrams showing formations and cruising/fighting dispositions and maps are included, common to previous titles in the series. A selection of greyscale and colour photographs come predominantly from official repositories, museums, and photograph-licensing vendors. Those highlight ships, events, and personages mentioned in the text.

The first section describes the genesis of the BPF, its principal objectives, and its eventual deployment against Japan. Earlier in the war, Britain suffered terrible losses leading to the fall of Singapore, the main British fortress and base with naval facilities in Asia. A Japanese carrier task force ranged into the Indian Ocean, forcing Admiral James Somerville's eastern fleet to fall back on the Mombasa naval base in East Africa, not Madagascar (p. 6), which remained under Vichy French control until May 1942. Herder raises USN Admiral Ernest J. King's objections to sending a British fleet to the Pacific and the political decision at the inter-allied Octagon conference to do so. The next section gives details on the fighting strength of the BPF from the largest

battleship to the smallest XE craft (midget submarines). The centrepiece was a fast carrier strike force which adopted American task force nomenclature, either Task Force 57 or Task Force 37 depending which US fleet it was working with. Due to manning shortages, the Royal Navy looked to the Commonwealth and dominions for personnel to fill out ships and air crews. Herder states fully 25 percent of the fleet air arm contingent serving in the BPF came from New Zealand. Aircraft were a combination of British and American types, each used according to its strengths and weaknesses in the combat air patrol and strike roles. A very useful diagram with a text box explanation shows the three layers of air defence above the carriers and consorts in formation.

In the third section, American influence is shown to have been very important to the command and operation of the BPF. British Admiral Bruce Fraser insisted that US Navy practices and methods be adopted wherever possible, so that the British Pacific Fleet came to resemble and act just like another task force according to the latest US Navy tactical orders and doctrine. Much depended upon the rapport established between American and British admirals on the spot who made the relationship work with some degree of humour and mutual respect. In terms of intelligence, the BPF relied heavily on American sources, and information was shared almost completely between the two navies. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book deals with logistics. The British Pacific Fleet's main base was located in Sydney, Australia, far from the main area of active operations. A service squadron, known as the fleet train and designated TF-112, provided underway replenishment, repair, and other services at sea. A diagram and text box shows the standard logistic support group replenishment formation consisting of tankers with escort carriers and other convoying warships performing abeam and astern refuelling, at times simultaneously. The Royal Navy learned quite a bit about logistics from the Americans and pioneered many of its own methods and lessons, but even with only a partially filled-out British Pacific Fleet it was barely sufficient, and only then with considerable American assistance. The BPF intended for late 1945 and 1946 to assist in the invasion of Japan was probably logistically unsustainable and it is good that the war ended sooner than expected.

The fourth section covers the battle performance of the BPF. Operations covered include air raids against targets on the island of Sumatra, participation with American naval forces in Operation Iceberg for the invasion of Okinawa, and various air strikes on Japanese airfields and other installations, including on the home islands. The Japanese resisted by launching waves of mass suicide attacks by kamikaze planes. British warships proved remarkably survivable in the type of naval warfare waged in those last months of the war. Herder gives more attention to the British Pacific Fleet's involvement in the surrender ceremony at Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945 than the multitude of tasks after

that date that challenged and engaged the British, particularly as a colonial (and earlier defeated) power trying to reassert its authority and sovereignty.

Whether the British Pacific Fleet is deserving of its own title so early in Osprey's Fleet series might be debatable, but the book furnishes a good summary of the Royal Navy's work with the Americans and its participation in the last naval operations against Japan, limited as it was. As is standard in the series, no references are given and further research can be done in the books and articles listed at the end, which includes two of Herder's other Osprey titles. The graphics and artwork stand out as the most original contributions to the topic. *British Pacific Fleet 1944-45* is recommended for readers interested in naval history, the war in the Pacific against Japan, naval carrier aviation, and the Royal Navy in the Second World War.

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Dwight Sturtevant Hughes and Chris Mackowski (eds.). *The Civil War on the Water: Favorite Stories and Fresh Perspectives from the Historians at Emerging Civil War.* El Dorado hills, CA: Savas Beattie, www.savasbeattie.com, 2023. xxx+305 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index. US $32.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-61121-629-5. (E-book available.)

Although the Civil War was principally fought on land, naval and mercantile maritime operations were a crucial component of the conflict. In a letter to James C. Conkling, President Abraham Lincoln wrote that "Uncle Sam's web-feet should not be forgotten. [The enemy appears] on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp."[1] In spite of this, comparatively little has been written about the Civil War's maritime events in comparison to its many land battles. *The Civil War on the Water* is an attempt to correct this gap. This new work is a compendium. It contains 44 essays, assembled in historical order, written mostly over the last decade by an eclectic group of maritime historians. The primary editor, Dwight Hughes, is the author or co-author of 19 of these snippets of Civil War maritime history, a celebration of Emerging Civil War's 10th anniversary. The narrations are quite eclectic in their focus, but they do offer fresh accounts on both familiar and less-familiar topics. They reassess

1 Roy P. Basler ed., Abraham Lincoln to James C. Conkling, Aug. 26, 1863, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln,* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, (1953–1955), vol. 6: 409–410.

several well-known marine battles, Confederate and Union ships, as well as disparate leaders and events. The work also adds additional information concerning Lincoln's Anaconda Strategy – the blockading of the Atlantic and Gulf coastline to cripple the Confederacy's economy, and in turn hindering its ability to wage war. This initiative required a large navy and, according to most of the writers, it may have been one of Lincoln's wisest wartime decisions. The largely seagoing Union Navy did much more than maintain a vast blockade; it became an effective arm in an integrated and combined military.

There are many graphic vignettes or cameos that give credence to Lincoln's point. Some are unusual, such as the coverup of privateering, which was frowned upon during this era. Also covered are the role of destroying lighthouses along the Confederate shores to make blockade-running difficult, a not well-known defeat of the Union's Marines in an early mêlée, and a look at the early years of the United States Naval Academy before some of its graduates became foes. There is also an unusual tale of the famous USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia* (ex-*Merrimac*) battle and the unheralded Confederate chocolate-brown ironclad CSS *Arkansas,* particularly at Vicksburg.

Several unsung heroes of the era and their feats are profiled, including the almost invisible mariner Captain Sidney Smith Lee (known as Smith), the older brother of General Robert E. Lee who had served as the second Commandant of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD. Smith Lee oversaw the batteries at Drewry's Bluff on the James River that protected Richmond, the capital city of the Confederacy. This fort later became the site of the short-lived Confederate Naval Academy. His son, Lieutenant Smith Lee Jr., served on the ill-fated ironclad *Louisiana* and later the commerce raiders CSS *Georgia* and CSS *Rappahannock*. Another under-recognized mariner was Sailing Master John Crosby, who was onboard the USS *Housatonic* when it was sunk by the first successful submarine, CSS *Hunley.* Later he suffered a similar sinking while serving on the USS *Harvest Moon*. Another was Commander Hunter Davidson, the controversial inventor of the electric torpedo (mine).

Additional topics include the story of how both brown-water navies added a new dimension to riverine warfare and how the dichotomy of two different command organizations at New Orleans led to the Union's conquest of this vital riverport. There is also geographic spread from a look at how Maine became the site for the Battle of Portland Harbor, which was partly fought in the cold waters of Casco Bay, to the pitched battle of Plymouth, NC, and the last decisive land and sea battle at Wilmington, NC. Finally, there is a discussion of the role of European-built vessels in the Confederate Naval Squadron, and the political kerfuffle around the loss of CSS *Stonewall*, the south's only seagoing ironclad.

In the book's final essay, Hughes places these wide-ranging events in perspective: "There are no monuments on the ocean, no crossroads in the great waters, no places echoing in the heart and mind like Gettysburg, Shiloh, or Chickamauga. … Names that resonate are long-gone ships such as *Alabama, Kearsarge, Florida, Shenandoah*. The mostly unknown men who sailed them carried the conflict to the ends of the earth through every extreme of sea and storm with no less conviction than land-bound compatriots. They struggled and fought and suffered even when the enemy was more often Neptune's wrath and Aeolus's breath. There were very few of them, comparatively speaking, but they had impact well beyond their numbers." (p. 281).

The collected essays that comprise the book are four-to-six-page vignettes that ramble like a literary slide show. Editors of a collection of essays usually attempt to make the writing appear uniform, but this compendium is at times a little uneven. Still, this ambitious work appends little-known obscure heroes, background events, and battle stories to the better-known elements of the Civil War's maritime history by craftily coloring both sides of conflict. This reviewer therefore recommends *The Civil War on the Water: Favorite Stories and Fresh Perspectives from the Historians at Emerging Civil War* to any "Civil War buff" without reservation.

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David E. Johnson and Gary Guinn. *Midwatch in Verse: New Year's Deck Log Poetry of the United States Navy, 1941-1946.* Jefferson North Carolina, McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 2023, 241pp., illustrations, bibliography, glossary, appendices, index. US $24.99, paper, ISBN 978-1-4766-8926-5

During the age of sail and the early years of steam, a good-natured New Year's custom occurred beginning at midwatch, the duty watch that occurs from midnight to 4 a.m. As eight bells chimed midnight on the special watch, the oldest man on board was assigned to ring those bells, followed by eight more by the youngest crewman. This was the only time when the midnight hour was marked by sixteen bells, symbolizing the passage of the old year to the new.

That ritual largely disappeared, but in the twentieth century a different New Year's tradition has emerged. Typically, a naval ship's official deck log is meticulously recorded, devoid of any creative flair. However, an exception developed on certain vessels during the initial four hours of the New Year's mid-watch. During this specific day and time, a relaxed adherence to the revered log regulations is permitted and, on many ships, it is encouraged

to mark the commencement of the New Year by composing a verse. This annual poetic deck log of the New Year fostered individuality and sporadically provided a glimpse into the vessel's shipboard life.

Nevertheless, Navy regulations remain unwavering. Even creative liberties are governed by strict Navy Regulations issued by the Chief of Naval Operations. The deck log succinctly and meticulously chronicles the daily locations and movements of the ship and records all significant events that transpire either aboard or in the immediate vicinity of the vessel. The log entries are painstakingly reviewed each day by a designated ship's officer to ensure clarity. Once approved, they become a legally binding administrative document.

In *Midwatch in Verse* each chapter focuses on a specific vessel that engaged in combat during World War II, beginning with an overview of the ship's history but then spotlighting its most important and most engaging actions and experiences. The book's authors then centre on one or more midwatch poems written during specified years and considers the elegiac poetic works as representative of a specific moment in history. Each chapter ends with a biographical sketch of the writer, thus bringing a note of humanity to the person who was caught up in war, perhaps allowing an additional understanding of World War II in an untraditional manner. According to the authors, during the writing of this book the poems were shared with many families. Many family members were unaware of the poems' existence and were surprised and delighted to learn about them. This became an unanticipated memorial to their loved ones, many of whom were no longer living. This also tells the stories of the wide range of navy vessels from battle ships, light and heavy cruisers, destroyers, LSTs to unnamed small patrol crafts. These vignettes are forgotten tales that needed to be told. Of particular interest were the poets' candid comments about their poems in one of the appendixes.

Poetry being part of sea lore was theatrically demonstrated in Gilbert and Sullivan's 1879 operetta *Pirates of Penzance*, where the Pirate King character asks:

> For what, we ask, is life
> Without a touch of Poetry in it?
> (The kneeling ensemble then intones)
> Hail, Poetry, thou heav'n-born maid!
> Thou gildest e'en the pirate's trade.
> Hail, flowing fount of sentiment!
> All hail, all hail, divine emollient.

Many of the notable nineteenth century poets were known for their sea focused works such as: Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach"; Lord George Gordon Byron, "The Sea"; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner";

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Secret of the Sea"; John Masefield, "Sea Fever"; Robert Louis Stevenson, "Requiem"; Lord Alfred Tennyson, "Crossing the Bar"; and Walt Whitman, "O Captain! My Captain!". These poets, while less notable, follow in this tradition.

Midwatch in Verse contains many poems, and as a reviewer I wish to share parts of three that are clever, touching or amusing. For instance, Lieutenant P.E. MacArthur, writing the New Year's Eve deck log entry on the USS *Washington,* opened his long and cunningly written poem with a repetition of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*. MacArthur borrowed from first stanzas and went on from there:

Once Upon a midnight dreary, while I slumbered weak and weary,
Dreaming of such far off places as New York and good old Philly,
Suddenly there came a tapping, and someone opened up my chamber door,
"Tis a visitor," I muttered as he uttered - "Twelve to four."
Only that, and nothing more.
Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
Groping blindly through the darkness, to the quarterdeck I wandered,
Then while I nodded, nearly napping, someone near me began yapping,
All about the boats and people somehow caught off on the shore,
And leaving me, said nothing more! (p. 111)

Another by Lieutenant W. E. Norton on the *USS Daly* in 1952 is an example of clever brevity:

My log has been writ, the saying's been said
To hell with mid-watches, I'm headed for bed. (p. 224)

Sometimes lines taken from inside a longer poem captured the mood eloquently, such as these from Lieutenant T.J. Thornton, which were penned in 1969:

We show no navigation light
For darken ship this New Year's night
LT Thornton the OOD
Says things look good, and we should see
A sunrise with the pass of time
To bring us into "69"
There are some things we hold so dear
Among them peace in this new year
Good cheer, good luck, a safe trip home
And with that though I'll end this poem. (pp. 231-232)

Some traditions of the sea have changed or persist in a modified form.

The poems and stories in *Midwatch in Verse* make them accessible to those who wish to explore this "salty" but sometimes stirring quasi-rite. Johnson and Guinn's book is both an enjoyable and often moving read for maritime historians.

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Sarah Kerr, *The British Lighthouse Trail, a Regional Guide.* Dunbeath, Scotland, Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com, 2019, xvi+302 pp., illustrations, maps, index, UK, GPP18.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-84995-449-2.

It seems appropriate that Sarah Kerr was raised on an island off the south coast of England and lives in the far north of Scotland since her book illustrates and details more than 600 lighthouses from the Channel Islands, Isle of Man, England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, where the bulk – 294 – are located. The data enables readers to follow a coastal trail of navigational aids including in the Bristol Channel and Thames Estuary, and on remote islands like Shetland, Orkney, the Western Isles, and the Hebrides.

This guide to "fixed structure[s] that w[ere] built to exhibit a light for the purpose of aiding maritime navigation and allow … access for at least one part of it" is not meant to describe approaches to lights from seaward (IX). The book tells us how to practically and wisely approach these engineering marvels from shore – and return in one piece. Kerr is a proven pharologist who spent months trekking coasts to remote lights, and photographing, documenting, and describing lighthouses. It is her wish to provide "a regional guide to lighthouses throughout the mainland and islands" meant to help readers "on your lighthouse trail as you travel to many of our nation's iconic, unique, and awe-inspiring maritime aids to navigation" (VII). She blends coverage of her chosen lights with hard data, vivid color photos and more than 25 maps. Many of the images show the vessels the lights are designed to protect in the near or far distance.

The book disclaims any use "to assist maritime navigation," and excludes unlit daymarks, light vessels, light towers without any access, those that have been de-capped or sealed off, and non-maritime lights. She covers traditional lights, covering position, location, establishment, notable designers, description, and characteristics, giving bespoke information on how to access sites safely and intelligently. Chart 1, Region 1, Shetland, covers no fewer than 49 lights from Muckle Flugga and its old sector in the far north and Fair Isle South, on a small islet south of Shetland. Who would have known there

exists such light diversity on such a relatively uninhabited set of islands, which boasts a lighthouse for each 500 inhabitants?

One visual anomaly which non-British residents may find novel is how comparatively few of the lights have the "typical" rounded tower look. Instead, many of the lights are in cubed and square structures which are metal-ribbed and appear rather squat and technical rather than soaring, spiraling, and romantic. The first four lights are surrounded by metal railings, don't appear more than two stories high, and are all square – and the next three are as well. They are modern and squat, more like guard towers and often with solar panels to underscore their unmanned nature; no corn-cob-pipe-smoking, bearded keepers wearing black with long-suffering spouse and free-ranging children on a quilt-sized garden hewn from rocky pools are in these images.

There is great contrast in the lights presented, often side-by-side, as in North Ronaldsay Old, which is surrounded by scaffolding and looks like a blender or auger, while Start Point and Noup Head are soaring white towers reaching into the heavens on breathtakingly stunning rocky outcrops. Some look like medieval castle turrets that could be from Robin Hood or Monty Python films, like Corpach or Gairlochy. Half of Monarch Isles and Gasker seem to have been drafted by the architect of His Majesty's Prisons, while Wick North Pier seems more insect-like, standing in a town setting with three quite rusted metal legs. Clythness is colored yellow, white, and red, and seems to fit more in the Algarve, just as some, like Lynmouth Foreland, seem Greek in their white paint nestled on rugged coasts.

With such hostile coasts, many UK ports are moles protected by massive sea walls, creating interesting lighthouse shapes, including Burghead North Pier, one of many lights that require a short walk to reach. The light looks more like a cenotaph with rusted chains around it or a cake of some sort, the top being the light. Near Naze could be the set of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, while on the following page Heysham South Pier appears to be R2D2 of *Star Wars* landed on a British phone booth.

Poetically named Plover Scar resembles the solo-style, spark plug lighthouse popular in the US. We learn that to reach it readers should park "just before the entrance to Cockerham Sands Caravan Park," then walk a mile "along the coastal path. At low tide it is possible to walk to the lighthouse with care." If getting stranded on the rock or in the trailer park doesn't appeal, we are told that Plover Scar "is also visible from a distance from the end of Slack Lane."

Kerr recognizes the range of her audience, recognizing "a 'visit' to a lighthouse is down to personal choice or capability. To one person it may be simply seeing the lighthouse from any distance or taking a picture of it, while another person may consider touching the building or getting inside to be a true

visit" (viii). Whether walking the chalk cliffs of the Needles to St. Catherine's Oratory, which looks like a space rocket, or reading about Nab Tower, where the base of the light which was shorn off by a cross-channel ferry, you are bound to find something attention-grabbing, informative, and motivating in here, whether you travel by car, bus, boat, or never leave your chair.

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Robert Kershaw. *Dünkirchen 1940. The German View of Dunkirk.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2024. 352 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. UK £10.99, US $16.00, CDN $22.00, paper; ISBN978-1-4728-5439-1.

Robert Kershaw presents a detailed account of the battles that ended at Dunkirk in June of 1940, largely from the German point of view. A decisive event during World War II, Dunkirk was, in many ways, a victory for the two antagonists. The book is a meticulous description of the German blitzkrieg of France and the Low Countries during the early phases of the war in Europe. This was the reconquest of the territory by the Germans 22 years after the Armistice that ended World War I. The well-equipped Germans successfully defeated the French and Belgians over a formidable quagmire of canals and easily flooded fields. The British, against overwhelming odds, managed to successfully withdraw much of its army across the English Channel to fight another day and ultimately prevail some five years later. Although a great deal has been said about this event, including a well-received motion picture, the author focuses on a series of leadership miscalculations that occurred in the German Army and Air Force during the weeks that preceded these historic actions.

The most renowned episode concerned Hitler's controversial "halt order", which provided an evacuation window that ultimately saved many "Tommies", but also allowed the German marching infantry, their sometimes horse-drawn artillery, and their vital logistical support to close a gap behind the relatively fast-moving panzers. Also, during this time, the United States was reluctant to enter a European conflict. If the Germans managed to capture the British and Canadian forces, an invasion of the British Isles would likely have occurred and been successful. That outcome would have changed the world.

Kershaw reveals that the halt order was a major flaw in the complicated Nazi system of command and control. The OKW (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* or Armed Forces High Command), OKH (*Oberkommando des Heeres* or Upper Command of the Army), and tactical commanders in the field

were often ill-informed about each other's objective(s), concealing major flaws in planning and execution. Panzer generals at division and corps level wanted to attack and exploit their gains as quickly as possible. Infantry commanders were pleading for a brief pause to enable the slower moving troops to catch up. Hitler and his close advisors wanted to slow down the Panzer formations, but there was no unity of intent. Simply looking back at the outcome from the German's later point of view, it is challenging to see what the German Army (*Heer*) and Air Force's (*Luftwaffe*) capabilities were and whether they were ultimately employed in an appropriate tactical manner. Kershaw's text helps in remedying this historical imbalance by addressing the role of these poorly thought through tactics in the many catastrophic events that followed.

Dunkirk's geographic significance varied between the combatant nations. For the Belgians, it was a potential resupplying point for a counter offensive. The French viewed it as a fortified base from which to support an attack on a German thrust that might threaten Paris. The British, however, saw it as a transit camp for a sea route to home and safety. Finally, the Germans needed these coastal channel ports as resupply and reinforcement points for their control of this portion of western Europe.

As the German advance progressed, with heavy fighting between the forces, exhaustion took its toll and there was reluctance to risk life and limb when victory seemed so close at hand. With the impending collapse of the French forces, most German soldiers assumed that the British would surrender because escape to their homeland appeared improbable. Operations against Dunkirk were being prosecuted in an almost desultory manner despite German awareness that the British were slipping through their fingers and crossing the Channel. However, these escaping troops "were the vital seed corn for any future British Army, the experienced trained cadre around which it could expand" (p. 222). The German high command seemed to lack any urgency to finish off the British forces, and there appeared to be little difference between a land victory and total annihilation of the enemy.

Dünkirchen 1940 is a thought-provoking and extremely well-researched and well-written book about this turning point in the history of World War II. Kershaw's prose and his selection of quotes from veterans who participated in this event are frankly riveting. At times readers might feel that they were perusing the script for scenes of the film *Saving Private Ryan*. "With deafening crashes, bomb after bomb does destructive work. Red flames flicker in various places, thick smoke and sand clouds rise skywards, and large chunks of masonry spin through the air. The effect is overwhelming" (p.172). One note for the readers of TNM is that the maritime history in the book is thought-provoking, but scant. The book briefly touches upon the sinking of British destroyers and mentions the armadas of nondescript Dutch schuyts, tugboats,

drifters, and innumerable small craft. Still, it offers an unusual background to help one understand how and why the famous sea lift was accomplished. This work helps redress an historical imbalance by clarifying the complexities faced on both sides. I enthusiastically recommend Robert Kershaw's excellent work to those who wish to know more about this turning point in World War II from a unique and important perspective.

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Angus Konstam (Jim Laurier, illus.). ***Royal Navy Home Fleet 1939-41: The Last Line of Defence at Scapa Flow.*** **Oxford, UK, wwwospreypublishing.uk, 2024. 80 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. Price US $23.00, CDN $31.00, paper. ISBN 978-1-47286-1-148-1; and,**

Enrico Cernuschi (Edouard Groult, illus.). ***Italian Battlefleet 1940-43: 'La Squadra', the Pride of the Regia Marina.*** **Oxford, UK, wwwospreypublishing.uk, 2024. 80 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. Price US $23.00, CDN $31.00, paper. ISBN 978-1-47286-0-59-0.**

A relatively new offering from Osprey Publishing is a series describing various 'fleets' operated by a variety of nations during the twentieth century. Thus far there are ten in the series, with the Konstan volume representing the fifth and the Cernuschi the sixth. There are more being contemplated, including one that takes the story of the Home Fleet to the end of the Second World War. Conceptually, the notion of exploring a given fleet within a broader navy is an interesting approach to analyze the interplay between types of ships, their base or bases, and their operations under the pressures of war. Too often in more typical studies of warships that focus on technical or design elements, operations and performance is downplayed. This series attempts to provide both an exploration of the ships as well as how well they fulfilled their roles in wartime conditions and, as such, provides a useful companion to other Osprey series that examine, for example, ship types directly.

Organisationally the series addresses four specific areas: purpose; fighting power and technology; the 'how' of operations; and combat and analysis. This is followed by very brief suggestions for further reading (more below) and an index.

Konstam's assessment of the British Home Fleet in the first years of the Second World War will be explored first. It covers the period from the war's opening to the immediate aftermath of the *Bismarck* sortie in May 1941. The function of the Home Fleet was to deal with the German surface threat and

to defend the British coast in the event of an invasion attempt. The latter capacity was not put to the test, and the first goal was largely achieved with the destruction of the *Bismarck*. Thereafter, the Home Fleet shifted to support of the Russian convoys and dealing with the surface threat based out of northern Norway. This period is to be the subject of a separate book touched on above. The difficulties the British experienced in stretching their all too thin resources over all too many objectives are dealt with briefly but successfully.

The second section addresses the warships, technology, organisation, and the Home Fleet base at Scapa Flow. In terms of warships, helpful tables are provided that list them all (capital ships and cruisers by name, destroyers and minor warships by type and number) at the start of the war and then in mid-1940. The point is made that vessels were constantly cycled in and out of the Home Fleet to other areas as judged necessary by the Admiralty and to accommodate maintenance. Technology is explored as well by describing the interwar developments, notably radio direction finding, wireless communications, asdic and radar, and the capability and use of airpower.

The longest section covers how the fleet operated. This includes how the ships were organised into squadrons or flotillas. The doctrine discussed includes a review of how the various branches of Britain's armed forces worked together, noting the institutional and administrative difficulties (by no means unique) involved in securing smooth co-operation between services. Also addressed are the basic strategic and geographical issues with which the successive commanders of the Home Fleet had to contend. Finally, the important matters of intelligence, logistics and maintenance facilities, and Scapa Flow as a base.

The final element assessed operations. The highlights, beyond more details involving the inadequate Scapa Flow defences in 1939 and the sinking of *Royal Oak*, involved the ill-fated Norwegian Campaign, dealing with the Kriegsmarine's Atlantic surface raiders, and the *Bismarck* episode. These are all covered in a workman-like fashion. The volume concludes with an analysis of the Home Fleet's performance during the first two years of the war. It was a close-run thing in many respects, but the Royal Navy surmounted the challenges successfully and fulfilled the essential functions demanded of it.

Cernuschi's book on the Italian battlefleet has significant merit in that the historiography in English is light in its assessment of foreign archives. Cernuschi has thus provided an important and helpful window into the Mediterranean war from the Italian perspective by examining Italian primary sources (these are in the bibliography) and delivering a new perspective on Italian naval operations from June 1940 to September 1943. Cernuschi has published extensively in Italy as well as in translation with the Naval Institute Press. A recent work, *Dark Navy: The Italian Regia Marina and the Armistice of 8 September 1943*, with Vincent O'Hara, is an example of his, for English-

speaking audiences, groundbreaking work.

The book is organised in an identical fashion to Konstam's, albeit with some difference in execution. It is apparent that the structure was imposed as part of the arrangement for this series. The section covering the purpose of the Regia Marina's (RM) battle fleet includes a section on doctrine. It notes the continuities between the pre-Great War Italian ambitions and their interwar plans and assumptions. Fighting Britain was never intended. Indeed, Mussolini's foreign policy during the 1930s was unsurprisingly Mediterranean in focus, with only tentative links with Germany. Dealing with France was seen as doable, dealing with Britain less so. Consequently, warship construction plans, rarely in the event executed, were devised to match French activity. The overarching objective was to control the seas around Italy and the links to the North African coast, and to deny these to an enemy, then perceived as France.

The chapter on the fighting capabilities of the battleship force does explore the full range of Italian naval capacities as well as that of the Italian air force, the *Regia Aeronautica* (RA). The co-operation (or lack thereof) between the RA and RM mirrored that between the RAF and RN during the interwar period. Cernuschi includes a detailed discussion of the lack of naval aviation and the search for a carrier in the interwar period. This absence plagued the RM for the entire war. The review of interwar battleship development is well done and describes the modernisation of Great War veterans, e.g. *Conte di Cavour*, and the construction of the *Littorio* class. Finally, there is a short exploration of technical matters including shell design, armour, fire control doctrine and capabilities, and torpedoes.

The section dealing with operations examines command and communications, intelligence and deception, and logistics. It would have benefited from a table listing the various commands held by Italian admirals during the war period as the shuffling around can be confusing. A brief description of the structure of command for the RM would have been helpful in setting parameters for an unfamiliar audience. The section on intelligence was most interesting in that the Italians were very successful, including in counter-intelligence and code-breaking. British intelligence is assessed as inferior to Italian, which certainly challenges received opinion on the matter. Logistics is briefly dealt with and is presented as adequate to need, although oil was a pressing problem for the entire war and restricted operations.

The largest section of the book, representing about half of the 80 pages, covers war operations and analysis. The war between the RN and RM broke out in July 1940 with the action off Calabria, with the exit of France after its defeat by Germany. The description of the engagement can be characterised as a series of correctives of the official British accounts of the battle, which are useful in and of themselves. Cernuschi concludes that this was the biggest naval engagement in the European and Atlantic theatres of operations, which

went Italy's way. From there, much of the Axis effort of supplying by sea North Africa and the Balkans was highly successful until the very end in 1943. Engagements between the RM and RN were frequent during the post-Calabria period to 1943. Italian success or near success was matched by similar outcomes from the British perspective to the extent that honours can perhaps be described as evenly distributed. By mid-1943, Allied material superiority finally told the tale, and the RM was significantly outnumbered in all aspects of naval war by that point. Political and military factors, less so naval, led to the Italian Armistice in September 1943, with the surrender of the fleet as part of the arrangements.

The conclusion of the book assesses the performance of the RM's battlefleet. That performance is described as creditable and comparable in many ways to that of the RN in terms of matériel, gunnery, shell quality, and damage control. The RM was outclassed only in terms of technologies such as radar and in telecommunications. In essence, the RM was a thoroughly professional force that did its duty to a high standard throughout the war. Importantly, Cernuschi has delivered an interesting, useful, and revelatory exploration of the RM that challenges one-dimensional accounts common in English language historiography.

Both books are produced to a high standard with photographs to illustrate the text, as well as coloured diagrams illustrating battles, operational areas, or geostrategic matters. As is typical, the books include two-page original images of pertinent scenes that are well done and provide a good sense of the atmosphere experienced by participants in the two subject fleets. In terms of writing, there is unevenness in expression suggesting some haste in finalising the two books to meet a publishing schedule. Additionally, not all will agree with the authors' conclusions. This is always a danger in such short accounts that really do not permit a deep plunge into the topic or the standard academic apparatus of typical monographs. Food for thought is, however, provided by both. Lastly, the bibliographies, particularly Konstam's, are very brief indeed with some odd omissions. These do no more than suggest where more detail can be found.

I can recommend both as a useful introduction to the subjects they cover. Neither pretends to be comprehensive and that is inherent in the format. Cernuschi, in particular, provides information that will be new to many. Konstam provides a focus on a key British command that is more known by title than anything else. This particular series, 'Fleets', is an interesting initiative by Osprey and one worth exploring.

Ian Yeates,
Regina, Saskatchewan

James P. Levy. ***The Crisis of British Sea Power: The Collapse of a Naval Hegemon 1942.*** **New York, NY: Routledge, www.routledge.com, 2024. 158 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US $144.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-03243-777-4. (E-book available.)**

Less than a hundred years ago Great Britain was enjoying a centuries-long reign as the world's greatest naval power. Having recently seen off the most formidable threat to its hegemony since the Napoleonic Wars, its fleet was the world's largest, unsurpassed in the number of capital ships and with more aircraft carriers and cruisers than any other navy. So daunting were the prospects of matching it that the other major naval powers used diplomacy to regulate competition rather than getting into a potentially ruinous naval arms race with the cost of these agreements being the locking in of Britain's naval dominance. Simply put, nobody wanted to mess with the Royal Navy.

Today, however, the British navy no longer enjoys hegemonic status. For decades historians have examined this transformation from a variety of perspectives to explore how Britain lost its naval supremacy. In the latest contribution to this debate, James Levy searches for answers by identifying 1942 as the moment when he believes this hegemony vanished, and using the circumstances to understand why Britain was forced to give it up. It is a provocative, even feisty book that finds within the depths of the Second World War the point at which the British paid the price for a series of poor decisions, ones which forced them to cede their status to the United States.

Many of these decisions predated the war and reflected the larger economic and geopolitical challenges Britain faced during the interwar era. Although still a formidable economic power capable of drawing upon the resources of its empire, Britain was still coping with the enormous financial strain resulting from the First World War. This made participation in the interwar treaty system restricting naval arms attractive, as British finances were in no condition to support the sort of naval building needed to maintain British dominance against the superior resources of the United States. This changed in the mid-1930s, as the combination of the reemergent German challenge and Japanese expansionism in East Asia led to the passage in 1937 of a new naval expansion program, one intended to provide parity with the combination of these powers. Yet the new program was more modest than the one desired by the Admiralty and was far from complete when the war began.

Even without the completed program, in September 1939 the Royal Navy possessed a fleet second to none in the world. And for the first year and a half of the war, it was more than up to the task of maintaining Britain's naval hegemony. Yet from the start of the war the Royal Navy suffered losses, most dramatically with the sinkings of the *Royal Oak* and the *Courageous* in the first

weeks of the conflict, but more regularly with cruisers and destroyers being damaged or destroyed in operations against Germany. Italy's entry in the war only added to the demands placed on the fleet. Levy pushes back vigorously against the traditional view of the Italians as cowardly and incompetent, noting their bravery in battle and stressing that their cautious deployments were the result of restrictions imposed by their high command rather than any reluctance by the sailors at sea to engage their enemy. By contrast the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, prioritized aggressiveness and criticized commanders who exercised too much caution. This may have been in keeping with the traditions of the Royal Navy, but it also contributed to a steady toll of losses that the British could ill afford to sustain.

These issues cohered into a crisis in December 1941 with Japan's attack on Britian's position in Southeast Asia. With the war in Europe still raging and many of its capital ships under repair or refitting, Britain could spare few assets to defend their possessions in the region. Those ships they did send – most notably the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* – were no match for Japanese air and naval power and were quickly sunk or withdrawn. When coupled with the crippling of the battleships *Valiant* and *Queen Elizabeth* that same month by Italian demolition teams, Britain's naval assets were stretched to their limit. Increasingly the Royal Navy could only support operations or reinforce their forces by stripping vessels from other theatres, which constrained their activities. The lowest point came in the spring of 1942, with the remainder of the Royal Navy's Eastern Fleet withdrawn westward to spare them from Japanese attack, the abandonment of convoy PQ-17 after an abortive sortie by German naval units in Norway, and the Malta convoys suffering fearsome losses to provide just a trickle of supplies to the embattled island. Although Britain's naval situation improved over the rest of 1942, much of the success it enjoyed was as a partner of the United States Navy, rather than as a hegemon in its own right.

Levy recounts this crisis through the many battles waged by the Royal Navy over the course of 1942. Not only does this make for entertaining reading, but it also conveys effectively how the inexorable pace of operations ground down Britain's naval hegemony. As Levy notes, though, this just laid bare the cumulative effects on British naval power of limited resources, advancing technologies, and outdated tactics. Although these long-term factors were more significant, they receive proportionally less attention in the text than do the battles. Examining these factors in more detail would have increased the book's value considerably, as would have a greater use of archival records as published works comprise most of the author's sources. Even without these things, however, Levy has provided readers with a thought-provoking study that makes a useful contribution to the debate over the shift in global naval

hegemony during the twentieth century.

Mark Klobas
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Eileen Reid Marcil. *The PS* Royal William *of Quebec: The First True Transatlantic Steamer.* Montreal: Baraka Books, www.barakabooks.com, 2020. 132pp. illustrations, bibliography, appendices, glossary index, notes. CDN $29.95, paper, $24.99, pdf. ISBN 978-1-77186-229-5 paper, 978-1-77186-252-3 pdf.

Eileen Marcil literally wrote the book on shipbuilding in Quebec with *The Charley-Man: A History of Wooden Shipbuilding in Quebec* (1995), *Tall Ships and Tankers: A History of the Davie Shipbuilders* (1997), and her 2019 *Northern Mariner/le marin du nord* article on Quebec builder John Goudie. As such, she is ideally suited to write the story of the *Royal William*, a paddle steamer designed and launched in Quebec in 1831 that became the first vessel to cross the Atlantic entirely under steam power. While other accounts of the ship have focussed almost entirely on that event, Marcil fortunately has provided a more rounded picture of the vessel and its times. The thin volume (fewer that 100 pages without the appendices) tells three linked stories: an introduction to steamship services in Canada before 1830, the history of the *Royal William* itself, and the struggle for recognition of the ship as the first to cross the Atlantic under steam power.

Even without being recognized for the first Atlantic steam passage, the *Royal William* was an important vessel in Canadian history. Steamship transportation on the St. Lawrence River and in the Gulf began in 1809 and was common by the early 1820s, when seven steamboats served the route between Montreal and Quebec. But the link between Canada and what were called the 'lower provinces' still required a sailing ship, and travel between Quebec and Halifax usually took three or more weeks. Recognizing the benefits of closer ties between the colonies and with subsidies approved by both the Quebec and Nova Scotia legislatures, a company was formed to build a steamship and provide the first regular service between the two ports. The majority of the shares were held in Montreal and Quebec, but there were also subscribers from Miramichi, New Brunswick, and Halifax, among whom were several members of the Cunard family.

Given her research history, it is not surprising that Marcil's coverage is particularly good with regard to the actual building of the vessel, which early in 1831 inaugurated service between Quebec and Halifax, touching at Miramichi, Pictou, and Charlottetown. Despite the apparent enthusiasm, the inter-colonial

passenger and freight steam trade did not turn a profit. The following year, in an effort to cut costs, the route was ended at Pictou with an overland stage to Halifax. A repeat of the low revenues the next year led to the steamer being sold in 1833. The dream of speedy intercolonial communication was deferred until 1840 when the first of the Cunard steamers, the *Unicorn,* took on the Pictou to Quebec mail service. The new owners of the *Royal William* took the ship to Boston, but no sale ensued, and they then decided to send the ship for sale in England. Leaving from Pictou, deeply laden with coal for the voyage, the ship made a relatively speedy trip of 28 days, achieved even though the vessel had to stop several times to remove encrustation from its boilers. Once in England, the *Royal William* was chartered to the Portuguese government and in 1834 was made a part of the Spanish navy and renamed the *Isabel Segunda.* The vessel was hulked in 1839, although the Canadian engines were used in a new hull.

The final section of the book deals with the hotly contested matter of the competing claims of other steam vessels – including the *Savannah*, the *Great Western*, the *Sirius* and the *Curacao* – to have been the first across the Atlantic. Marcil dispenses with these challengers and their advocates in smart order, either disqualifying them because they used their engines only for parts of the voyage or made their claims after the successful trip of the *Royal William.*

This is a very readable and beautifully produced volume and, although short, seems to include almost every piece of information about the *Royal William* that has survived. In the preface, usually almost an afterthought paid little attention by the reader, Elieen Marcil paints an impressive picture of her more than thirty years' interest in the vessel and the acknowledgements are a catalogue of determination and the lengths taken to track down models, accounts, official documents and paintings in private collections, museums and archives on several continents. The illustrations are of an outstanding quantity and quality and there are a remarkable number of models plans, drawings, views, and engravings of the ship and the port of Quebec that provide a window into the world of the *Royal William.* Although not footnoted, the volume does not lack for authentication as sources are recognized in the text and many are published at length in the eleven appendices to the volume. A glossary of nautical terms is of assistance with some of the nineteenth-century terminology and a decent bibliography is provided.

The book was awarded an Honourable Mention for the Canadian Nautical Research Society's Keith Matthews book award in 2021. It adds considerably to the information contained in Mario Béland's 2003 *Cap-aux-Diamantes* article, "Le Royal William: un vapeur légendaire de Québec", and certainly supports Béland's assertion that the ship should stand with the *Bluenose* in international maritime history as a symbol of innovation and know-how

inaugurating the era of modern navigation. Although the ship was honoured with a postage stamp in 1933 on the centenary of its crossing, the *Royal William* has, unfortunately, been generally ignored. Marcil's book may go some way in increasing the profile of this significant vessel.

H.T. Holman
Charlottetown

Edward J. Marolda and Adam Tooby (illustrator). *US Seventh Fleet, Vietnam 1964-1975: American naval power in Southeast Asia.* Oxford, UK: Bloomsbury/Osprey, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2023. 80 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, diagrams, reading list, index. US $23.00, CDA $31.00, GBP £15.99; ISBN 978-1-4728-5681-4 (soft); ISBN 978-1-4728-5680-7 (eBook); ISBN 978-1-4728-5682-1 (PDF).

The American war in Vietnam has typically been seen as land and air campaigns fought in and above the jungle and in river deltas and riverine estuaries. The participation of the US Seventh Fleet in this undeclared war following the Gulf of Tonkin resolution increased measurably in line with the number of American combat troops sent to Vietnam. Vietnam army veteran Edward Marolda, a retired senior historian from the US Navy and published expert on the US Navy's role in the Vietnam War, pens number four of Osprey's new Fleet series, focused on the Seventh Fleet in the Vietnam conflict from the commitment of US forces in 1964 to final withdrawal in 1975. Adam Tooby, a digital artist and illustrator known for his drawing of planes and aviation, provides original commissioned artwork.

The slim book follows the series standard format of 80 pages in length with four unnumbered sections or chapters explaining the fleet's purpose, its composition and fighting power, the doctrine and operational functions governing the fleet, and the overall combat record and operations during the conflict. Photographs are captioned and shaded text boxes provide further information and commentary accompanying the text and artwork. A map/timeline covers the entire period from 1964 to 1975 with chronologically numbered placement of significant and prominent events. Three-dimensional diagrams and plots in colour show the logistic support given to the fleet from the surrounding region and the dispositions and formations of the fleet related to specific functions and for specific named operations. A list for further reading, which includes six publications by Marolda, and a basic index appear at the end like other books in the series.

The US Seventh Fleet dated from the Second World in General Douglas MacArthur's South-West Pacific area command, but shifted from Cold War

deterrence to the projection of combat power from the sea off the coasts of Vietnam and adjoining areas. The US Navy went looking for trouble in the Gulf of Tonkin, which President Lyndon Johnson used as a pretext for a Congressional resolution authorizing a dramatic escalation of the American presence in Indochina to defend against Communist intrusion and takeover. A hot war ensued as the Americans launched tit-for-tat air strikes against targets in North Vietnam in retribution for attacks in the south and became engaged in ground fighting with ever increasing frequency. The administration also started Operation ROLLING THUNDER, an attempt to interdict inward supply routes using targeted bombing and further attempts to stop seaborne infiltration.

Naval aviation (Task Force 77) was the centrepiece around which the Seventh Fleet was built; it was made up of post-war oil-powered supercarriers and newer nuclear carriers carrying jet and propellor attack, reconnaissance, and electronic countermeasure aircraft, as well as search and rescue helicopters. Cruisers, destroyers, and escorts protected the valuable carriers with screens and also engaged in shore bombardment missions with guns and missiles. The fleet had an organic amphibious capability (Task Force 76) which was able to employ, lift, land, and support marines in a few major operations and numerous raids and sweeps. Logistics in the Seventh Fleet (Task Force 73) consisted of replenishment at sea by a service squadron equipped with newly designed ships and continually evolving techniques. Thus, the Seventh Fleet operated almost continuously at sea with most of its needs met through underway replenishment. Individual ships returned to shore bases in the Philippines and Japan for major repairs, refits, and bulk personnel shore leave.

Marolda notes that command and control of the Seventh Fleet was hampered for much of the period because of the propensity of the White House, presidential staff, and Secretary of Defense to intercede in planning and conduct of operations to prevent the conflict in Vietnam from escalating into a wider war with China or the Soviet Union. American military commanders worked under severe restrictions and limitations on what could done until President Richard Nixon arrived on the scene. The Seventh Fleet positioned itself in several stations or staging areas off Vietnam's coast to launch air strikes against land targets and support American and South Vietnamese ground forces fighting the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army. The US Navy's aircraft came up against North Vietnamese MIG fighters as well as ground-deployed anti-aircraft guns, light arms fire, and surface-to-air missile batteries supplied by the Soviets and Chinese. Those defences downed many American aircraft, and considerable effort was made to recover pilots and crews before they were discovered, captured, or killed. The enemy came to know this operating procedure and set ambushes and traps to catch the rescue

parties unaware and destroy more aircraft.

Especially after the 1968 Tet Offensive, the focus of the Seventh Fleet's air sorties was increasingly on targeting supply and movement along the Ho Chi Minh Trail and interdiction of coastal traffic bringing supplies by sea in small ships and trawlers. Neither side appeared to obtain an advantage while, in the face of mounting domestic opposition to the war, the Nixon administration planned to set conditions for the withdrawal of US military forces from Vietnam. Faced with a full-fledged invasion of South Vietnam in 1972 during the Nguyen Hue (Easter) offensive, a considerably augmented and bolstered Seventh Fleet held the line and renewed air strikes and sea bombardment against targets in North Vietnam. It mined the approaches to Haiphong and effectively closed that port to shipping. Tooby's artwork depicts a night action during Operation LION'S DEN when US surface ships engaged North Vietnamese torpedo boats off Haiphong.

Peace Accords in January 1973 led to the repatriation of American prisoners of war, commitments to clear or neutralize sea mines in Vietnamese waters, and finally the evacuation of the US embassy in Saigon and other friendly personnel by helicopter and boats. A good part of the Seventh Fleet departed for the Philippines while remaining units performed residual duties and responded to immediate crises, including the seizure of an American-flagged ship off Cambodia.

The *US Seventh Fleet in Vietnam* is another fine addition to Osprey's Fleet series authored by an acknowledged expert on the US Navy's part in that conflict. The book is a handy primer with pleasing graphic materials and illustrations to explain the significance of the fleet's deployment within a wider context. It is recommended for readers interested in the Vietnam War, naval operations involving power projection from the sea, naval aviation, and the United States Navy operating in green water littorals in the modern era.

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John R McKay. *Arctic Convoy PQ18: 25 Days That Changed the Course of the War.* Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword Maritime, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2023. xxviii+174 pp., illustrations, glossary, maps, index. UK £22.00, US $42.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39903-660-3.

Although it ended almost eighty years ago, no one would argue that the memory of the Second World War is fading away, at least not in the field of history. John R McKay's book is an excellent work that brings back one of the most important moments in the war to modern readers.

As the author suggests, and historians and readers would agree, images of the legendary moments of the war still live amongst us. The evacuation of the British forces from Dunkirk, Japan's sudden attack on Pearl Harbor, the Allied landings at Normandy: all these events were significant at the time, are exciting to read about, and some of them have been the subject of movies in recent years. However, there are a lot of events from the Second World War that are less recognized by the public. The logistics of the war is one of these less recognized topics, and certainly it should be more well known.

For all military historians and professionals, the importance of wartime logistics is obvious. And logistics are complicated when trans-ocean transport is involved. But without the efforts of numerous escorts and merchant vessels, Britian could not have made use of resources from North America, and the Allies could hardly accumulate enough military strength to strike back on the European Continent. However, the Battle of the Atlantic has received relatively less public attention than the more famous battles listed earlier. Those interested in the trans-oceanic supply lines will appreciate McKay's book on the Arctic convoy PQ18. The author demonstrates the harsh combat environment the sailors on Arctic convoys had to cope with. Even more so than Atlantic convoys, the Arctic convoys sailed in savage weather, through a freezing ocean, and on a route that came close to the Axis coasts. Apart from the submarine threat, they were sailing within the strike radius of Axis shore-based aircraft. As McKay emphasizes in the book, the sailors and vessels which participated in these convoys deserve a long-delayed recognition.

Apart from describing the harsh combat environment, McKay's book also points out the strategic importance of the Arctic convoys, especially PQ18 which is the "main character" of the book. At the beginning of the book, the author explains that the Arctic convoys delivered twenty percent of the supplies and equipment used by the Soviets on the Eastern Front. When one can imagine how terrible the consequences would have been without these materials, it is easier to understand the importance of the brave sailors and their convoys sailing in the forgotten Arctic waters.

If the importance of the Arctic convoys is not enough to encourage a reader to take a look at the book, McKay should be credited for selecting PQ18 as its subject. From McKay's point of view, PQ18 was crucial after the disaster of the previous convoy, PQ17, a massive mistake by the British Admiralty. The failure of PQ17 damaged the new relationship between the USSR and the Western Allies and encouraged the German efforts to hamper (or even destroy) the sea routes supplying the Soviets. PQ18 not only carried materials, it also had the burden of restoring the relations with the new ally. Churchill was determined to prove the route was possible. This explains why the convoy was protected well, and why the attention, effort, and even lives went into PQ18, as

well as all other Arctic convoys during the war. Readers will also appreciate the author's efforts to reconstruct the war experiences of PQ18 convoy. From chapter to chapter, McKay demonstrates the decision to send the convoy, and its intent, the German reaction, the action of the combatants, and their feelings and emotions. If all this is not enough, the author even explains some technical details, such as the limitation of Asdic. All these elements join and ensure a reader will not become bored while reading the book.

If there is anything in the book that may attract controversy, that might be the chapter titles. They are all named by dates, so the first chapter is "2-5 September 1942". However, considering the nature of the convoy and the actions taken during the journey by the 39 merchant vessels and their escorts, it makes sense that McKay divides the books this way. To conclude, McKay's *Arctic Convoy PQ18* is a worthwhile publication for those who are interested in the Second World War, especially those who are interested in the logistics of war. The book describes one of the most important convoys of the Second World War and is well-written and well arranged. It is a great tribute to the sailors and merchant mariners who fought and fell.

Kater Yip
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John William Nelson. *Muddy Ground. Native Peoples, Chicago's Portage, and the Transformation of a Continent.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, www.uncpress.org, 2023. 275 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index. US $99.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-4696-7519-0. (E-book available.)

Muddy Ground is an atypical maritime history focused on a sporadic swampland near Lake Michigan's southern end. Flowing south or southwest was a vast maze-like but shallow riverine highway or "murky waters covering muddy ground" that enabled people to reach the Mississippi River and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. Nelson presents an erudite work that steers his readers through an unusual maritime history of Chicago, which played an essential role in the development of much of the settlement of America's Great Plains area.

The book's second chapter is an identity guide to the native peoples who lived in the vicinity of Chicago's portage area. These Indigenous people inhabited this part-time aquatic land but also made portages and used lightweight birch bark canoes to travel over vast stretches of the of the American mid-west. They engaged in hunting the animals found in the area for pelt trade and occasionally used this quasi-maritime scheme to wage war against neighboring tribes. The most important was the Anishinaabe peoples,

but closely followed by the Dakota, Iroquois, Winnebago, Illinois, Kickapoo, Miami, Shawnee, Sauk, Osage, and Fox, among others, but also includes the Métis, a people of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry in the Great Lakes region and elsewhere.

Chicago (*Shikaakwa*, *Checagoe, Chikagou*) was located at an ecological transition zone called an ecotone, an area between the tall prairie grass and the woodlands of the Great Lakes basin. It had a great variety of animals, but the most desirable for the fur trade were the American bison and beaver. The beaver functioned as nature's engineers by excavating, logging, and building landscapes that caused environmental changes. Their extensive dam network helped keep the marshland flooded. Native tribes competed for the region's natural resources, developed trading relationships with one another, and eventually with the colonists who ventured into this land. Initially the French moved west out of Canada and then, to a lesser extent, the Spanish ventured out of the south and southwest, followed by the British who established small settlements near the Great Lakes. The aftermath of the American Revolution largely resulted in Americans supplanting the British as an avalanche of settlers came looking for new land. The aftermath of War of 1812 became an expansion inflection point as it was thought necessary to construct forts to protect the settlements. The stretches used for portage improved by connecting new courses, thus drawing new traders to Chicago's nexus of wetland canoe routes. The Anishinaabeg tribes who largely controlled the area both opposed and facilitated the growth of Chicago as a portage focal point at various times. This portage site, along with its wetlands and nearby occasionally sodden prairie, held an advantage for the Indigenous people who knew how to exploit and protect the natural resources of the marshland environment better than the colonists.

The biggest transformative event was the 1825 opening of the Erie Canal connecting the waters of the Hudson River with Lake Erie. This circumvented the labor-intensive portage around Niagara Falls. It was surmised that by digging a canal at Chicago, the United States could prosper from an internal transportation network of uninterrupted waterways and a new wave of immigrants would follow the Erie Canal westward from Buffalo and then onto Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, inhabiting and improving the land while demanding access to the eastern markets through these transportation improvements.

In late 1826, Illinois recorded 35 white male citizens (eligible voters) residing at Chicago. Fourteen owned taxable properties, mostly associated with fur trade storehouses. The newly arrived agrarian settlers, however, viewed the local environment with skepticism. Fur traders relied on seasonal flooding to facilitate their passage between the Chicago and the Des Plains Rivers

and learned to cope with annoying disruptions. The immigrating Americans, however, determined that the swamps were a dangerous impediment, a potential unhealthy ecosystem that allowed malarial mosquitoes to breed as well as inhibited agricultural development.

By 1830, there were alterations in Chicago's waterways that made the Chicago River a serious exit from and entry to Lake Michigan, plus a channel to help negotiate around the perennial sand-silting that the weather produced at the end of the lake. The revamping of the lakefront became increasingly more complex. Before long, the railways competed for the movement of goods, growing the city into the commercial center. Most of the Indigenous people departed; however, a remnant remains even today. Although a functional waterway was built and is still used, ironically Chicago became a national transportation hub for both rail and air traffic. There was a steep cost, however. The cityscape greatly changed the intricate natural ecosystems in this primal region. Chicago now faces several environmental crises that can be traced back to its beginnings, which were built upon fluctuating wetlands and intertwined rivers.

John Nelson's *Muddy Ground,* a scholarly and uncommon maritime history, delves deeply into the development of the heartland of the United States. Although the author's prose is at times somewhat academic, this unusual and significant work is one that I recommend to scholars who are interested in the development of middle America.

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William D. Riddell. *On the Waves of Empire: U.S. Imperialism and Merchant Sailors, 1872–1924.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, www.uillinois.edu, 2023. 240 pp., notes, bibliography, index. US $110.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-252-04516-5. (E-book available.)

The period between 1872 and 1924 was filled with numerous innovations within the various industries of the United States, whose growth fueled the national expansion that would take the nation from Reconstruction to a fledging empire on the world stage. Crucial to these innovations, and this growth, were swarms of workers, both domestic and immigrant, who, as time progressed, would engage in resistance to and protest against their exploitation. While the growing field of labour history has done much to study those labourers toiling ashore and underground, less has been written about those whose work was done in the merchant marine. These merchant sailors, as William Riddell

contends, existed in a special world, separate from those of other labourers, where they held both more and fewer rights, and where their work necessarily bridged the gap between the foreign and domestic spheres.

Riddell begins his discussion of the place of merchant sailors within the expansion of American imperialism with the story of the "Arago Four," four sailors who deserted their ship in Washington in 1895 in protest of the dangerous and harsh working conditions. The ship's captain, not wishing to lose profitability, had them returned to the ship by local authorities, and, when the ship next docked in San Francisco, the offending sailors were arrested for desertion, launching what would eventually become a Supreme Court trial. The sailors' defense, which was financed by the International Seamen's Union (ISU), was predicated on the Maguire Act, which forbade imprisoning sailors who had deserted from vessels in the domestic trade. However, the prosecution countered that while the sailors had deserted during a domestic leg, the ship's eventual destination was a foreign port, meaning the ship was engaged in foreign trade and thus not subject to the Maguire Act. The eventual Supreme Court decision came down against the sailors, arguing that the Thirteenth Amendment was not applicable to maritime labour as their movement between domestic and foreign spheres rendered them an "exceptional" class of labourer who surrendered their liberty to their employers with few protections. For Riddell, this decision highlights the core of maritime labour in the expanding United States; maritime labourers were vulnerable and the decisions about what policies to support were guided by a desire to protect their interests at home and abroad.

A keystone of these concerns can be seen in reactions to the growing populations of non-white foreigners that were being encountered as the United States expanded its interests. Whereas all white workers feared the potential of being replaced, Riddell sees sailors as being particularly threatened in their day-to-day lives as they were actively venturing forth into the parts of the world where those populations were most readily encountered. Yet, far from causing the sailors to reject American imperialism, these experiences pushed merchant sailors to more fully support white settler colonialism as a means of restricting the mobility of these non-white labour pools. Similarly, as steam power de-skilled the sailing profession and encouraged more companies to believe that any person could be made into a sailor, the ISU and other maritime unions increasingly supported racial exclusionary laws for maritime labour. In this way they helped to ensure not only that the Constitution followed the flag into the Pacific, but the racialized systems of power imbalance and disenfranchisement as well. Such exclusionary actions, Riddell argues, would ultimately doom the maritime unions of this era. By the end of the First World War, these groups represented a major source of organizational power, but they

were no longer ethnically homogenous, and, with leadership locked into now-outdated ideas of the need to protect whiteness, it would not be long before membership began to fracture away to the rival IWW (Industrial Workers of the World).

Gathering a better understanding of marine labour and its roles within American imperial expansion is crucial for the formation of a fuller history of the United States and where it is today. This book, with its accessible language, will allow both general and specialist audiences to garner information of interest and importance to them, and, aspirationally, allow for the writing of better labour and imperial history moving forward. Astutely written and timely, this book will prove to be a must add for most any collection.

Michael Toth
Fort Worth, Texas

Arthur G. Sharp. *The* Bear *and the* Northland*: Legendary Coast Guard Cutters in the Alaskan Ice.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing Co., 2023, 213 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US $39.95, paperback: ISBN 978147692111.

The United States Revenue Service cutter *Bear* and its replacement in Alaskan waters, *Northland,* are legendary in Alaskan and Coast Guard history. *Bear* served from 1884-1927 and *Northland* served in various capacities from 1927-1946 (except for 1938-1939). Both ships served as the Alaskan "911", successfully completing diverse missions that included enormous humanitarian relief operations.

The two former sealer/whalers-turned-cutters belonged to the Coast Guard's predecessor, the United States Revenue Cutter Service (1894-1915) and before that, the United States Revenue-Marine (1790-1894). Founded originally as an armed maritime customs enforcement service, its ships and personnel performed diverse actions and undertook a multitude of responsibilities, especially on the Alaskan frontier. *Bear* and *Northland*'s varied voyages went beyond the Alaskan coast to include maritime patrols off the coasts of Hawaii and Greenland. Both cutters had remarkable histories and author Arthur G. Sharp provides an engaging and well-documented account of the efforts of *Bear* and *Northland.*

When *Bear* began service under the Department of Treasury, the Territory of Alaska was less than twenty years old as a U.S. territory. It was vast, sparsely populated and contained all the challenges of law and order both ashore and afloat. Those who worked for the Revenue Cutter Service of the nineteenth century and sailed in its ships were comprised of skilled navigators

and mariners, judges, law enforcement specialists, and others tasked with preventing the maritime frontier and its adjacent islands and lands from descending into anarchy.

The author provides a flowing and well-researched account of the challenges and exploits of *Bear* and *Northland* throughout their combined service of 63 years. He documents their many activities, from breaking ice paths to chasing smugglers, escorting ships filled with miners' gold, rescuing explorers and mariners, and transporting reindeer.

Of the many exploits of *Bear* under its longest serving commanding officer, Michael A. Healy, known by many as "Hell Roaring Mike," one of the most important was the transfer of reindeer from Siberia to Alaska to avert disaster among malnourished Inuit in 1890 and 1892. This began what would result in the transfer of thousands of reindeer to Alaska in the 1890s. Due to the depletion of whales, fish, and other resources due to foreign vessels working in the Alaskan waters, Healy's humanitarian actions were instrumental in replenishing the scarce food supplies for the Inuit. However, Healy was also a controversial figure and Sharp gives a good recounting of Healy's widely-reported 1896 court martial and its many dimensions.

Although much of the book focuses on maritime operations in waters of the Pacific Ocean and Arctic Ocean, there were also operations near Greenland. Perhaps the most unusual of these was *Northland*'s 12 September 1941 capture of a German-controlled Norwegian sealer, which became the first American capture of a naval vessel in World War II. As a result of the capture of *Buskø* (*Buskoe*), *Northland* also learned of a German radio station on the coast of Greenland and raided it, capturing the station, its codes, and German plans for other stations in the region.

Not only is Sharp's book a good history of the work of *Bear* and *Northland,* it recounts the solid chain of succession and leadership of their commanding officers. He provides organizational insights and shows the importance of individuals as well as institutions in mission success and legacies. The Coast Guard motto *Semper Paratus,* "Always Ready", epitomizes the endeavors of *Bear* and *Northland* and Sharp's book provides a solid history of those efforts.

Timothy J. Demy
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John Darrell Sherwood. *A Global Force for Good: Sea Services Humanitarian Operations in the Twenty-First Century.* Washington, D.C.: Naval History and Heritage Command, Department of the Navy, www.history.navy.mil, 2024. 450 pp., illustrations, maps, glossary, endnotes, bibliography, index. ISBN 978-1-943604-87-6 (hardcover); ISBN 978-1-

943604-86-9 (PDF) (free PDF download available).

In times of natural catastrophe and emergency navies are often called upon to lend assistance at home and abroad. These various types of operations fall under various monikers according to the context, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) being among the largest and most complex. Even though armed forces are equipped and constantly train for the primary business of war, humanitarian operations require major deployments and specialized capabilities, especially when events happen unexpectedly, and a quick response is desired to prevent further loss of life or to restore some normality in crisis situations. Some critics contend that too much focus on such humanitarian missions detracts or degrades from war preparedness, and that militaries are ill-prepared to take them on or that they represent a very expensive solution for work better performed by civilian agencies and private contractors. John Darrell Sherwood, a historian with the Naval History and Heritage Command in Washington, D.C., dispels this notion in a well-documented official history of the US Navy's involvement in some contemporary large-scale HADR operations, and instead he argues that these missions, which exercise command arrangements, test capabilities and responses, demonstrate the value of goodwill, build partnerships and trust, and deliver urgent and necessary aid to the suffering, are worth the effort and deserving of greater attention. The book, which takes its main title from a US Navy publicity campaign that aimed to show a kinder and gentler side of the navy to promote recruitment, basically presents three case studies: the 2004 earthquake and tsunami off the shores of Indonesia (Operation UNIFIED ASSISTANCE); the 2005 decimation of New Orleans when a Category One hurricane made landfall (Joint Task Force KATRINA); and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami off the Japanese island of Honshu that caused not only widespread deaths and damage but a nuclear accident at Fukushima which released radiation in surrounding areas (Operation TOMODACHI).

Sherwood draws upon unclassified official documents, after-action reports, oral history interviews conducted by himself and others, war college and research tank analyses, as well as available public affairs and media sources. In each case, the context and background behind the specific disaster and the response are explained from the US Navy's perspective in order to find consistent themes, lessons learned, and commonalities. All three locations were accessible by sea or within reach of sea-based platforms employing aerial means. The US Navy, as befits a superpower, has one of the most forward deployed and capable navies in the world, and had warships and resources in situ or within sailing distance when the calls for assistance were made. Given the diplomatic, political, and legal circumstances, the US Navy consciously

assumed a supporting role to the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), to civil authorities at the federal and state levels domestically in the United States, and to the Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF). Initial efforts focused on search and rescue, preliminary recovery, and provision of basic needs such as fresh drinking water, food, and shelter. Useful assistance was provided by a variety of types of ships. The availability of rotary wing aircraft to fly in supplies and perform a multitude of tasks with minimal presence on land remained very important. There are also complications. In New Orleans, the much smaller US Coast Guard held the advantage of having dedicated equipment and a law enforcement mandate unimpeded by legal restrictions governing the employment of the military on US soil under the likes of the *Posse Comitatus Act.* Although symbolic, the US Navy's reserve hospital ships, manned by regular navy and civilian medical professionals, lacked readiness, speed, and enough landing platforms to be truly effective in the intended role of providing advanced medical assistance and comfort.

Often underrated capabilities such as naval construction, airfield rehabilitation, clearance diving, and salvage became hugely important in successful completion of the HADR missions. In Japan, the need for radioactive detection and contamination added another dimension that the US Navy was prepared for through its own nuclear power community, enabling them to offer advice to civilian authorities and the American ambassador, and making sure its own operations proceeded unhindered. Simultaneously the US Navy undertook a major evacuation of dependents of service personnel and American civilians wanting to return to the United States and other safer areas.

The diplomatic benefits can be significant. Through the HADR, the US Navy reestablished working relations with the military in Indonesia, which had been isolated by sanctions. Forming part of a pan-government response in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the US Navy helped reassure the American populace, and their response reinvigorated a rocky relationship with the Japanese about the continued US presence in Japan. US naval leaders knew when to leave and handover to civilian authorities, which allowed them to bask in the good press from the efforts made.

Instead of a dry official history replete with statistics about sailing days and supplies delivered, Sherwood has also personalized the narrative by drawing upon the individual recollections of participants about their experiences, from admirals and generals right down to the enlisted ranks. Extracts from the oral history interviews are used extensively throughout the text. The US Navy had dedicated teams and sections devoted to capturing the reminiscences of those involved, and these add immense depth to the analysis and explain some of the decision-making and approaches at the time. The captioned colour photographs are also frequently connected to the personalities discussed and

were selected from the navy's immense holdings. Four professionally drawn maps are also included. Official histories, even on a narrowly focused topic such as HADR, benefit from access to government resources, documentation, and staff. An academically-trained professional historian like Sherwood brings all the strands together in a very readable form. His coverage of the Canadian contribution to the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts is balanced and insightful, although the inference that it went some way in making up for Canada's decision to sit out the 2003 invasion of Iraq is peculiarly American.

A Global Force for Good is recommended for readers interested in the US Navy, modern humanitarian operations with a maritime dimension, sea-basing, and capabilities such as rotary wing, amphibious, diving, medical, and salvage, as well as the implications of operating (and fighting) in radioactive environments. A PDF version of the book is available for free download from the Naval History and Heritage Command website if a trip to the Washington Navy Yard is not in the cards to pick up a hardcopy.

Chris Madsen
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Brendan Simms and Steven McGregor, *The Silver Waterfall: How America Won the War in the Pacific at Midway* (New York: Public Affairs, 2022). 290pp, index, tables of losses, notes. ISBN: 9781541701373.

I was told once, back in my early graduate days, that if you wanted to make money writing military history, especially American military history, write about either the Civil War or Patton. As crazy as that sounds those subjects seem to be incredibly popular. However, I think that is incomplete. It would be more accurate to say, write about the Civil War, Patton, or the Battle of Midway. The drama and pivotal impact of Midway captures the imagination of readers and almost guarantees sales. Some incredible heroes come out of the battle and, of course, it is the end of Japanese expansionism in World War Two and starts the road to Japan's defeat. Sadly, it also runs the risk of beating a dead horse dropping anything new into the historical dialogue. The subject of many books, articles, documentaries and two Hollywood blockbusters, Midway is a tale repeated often in many ways. Needless to say, it has also been a favorite in classrooms. It is with this in mind that Brendan Simms and Steven McGregor's book *The Silver Waterfall: How America Won the War in the Pacific at Midway* enters the historical discussion.

Simms and McGregor bring quite a bit of experience to the work. Simms has written on the Battle of Waterloo, on Hitler's gamble of declaring war on the US, and a biography of Adolph Hitler. This is the first book for McGregor,

who was an infantry officer with the 101st Airborne Division and was wounded in combat in the Sunni Triangle of Death. Over the course of 290 pages, broken up into seven chapters, their text looks at Midway from the perspective of the Dauntless dive bomber and its role. More than half the text fixates on the development of the dive bomber and the role played by three individuals (engineer Ed Heinemann, Admiral Chester Nimitz, and pilot Norman Jack Kleiss) in the run up to the battle. In this way the authors argue that the Dauntless was clearly the key to victory. The second half of the text provides a rather straightforward history of the battle and the aftermath. Backed up by a table of losses, the text presents a unique view of the battle of Midway to say the least.

While lively and interesting to read, the text is a very jaundiced interpretation of the battle of Midway that falls short in several ways. The emphasis on Nimitz, Kleiss and Heinemann is interesting but bizarre. As Commander in Chief, Pacific, Nimitz definitely plays a key role in the run up to the battle. And as the designer for the plane that the authors emphasize as being deeply critical to victory, of course Heinemann should be discussed. Kleiss, as one of the Dauntless pilots, had a unique perspective of the battle. However, the discussion of these three individuals is fundamentally flawed. The most important is the authors' emphasis that these three individuals were of German descent, which is meaningless. All three were American citizens by birth, they were all raised in the US, and none of them had ties to Germany. The authors' emphasis that German-Americans were fighting to defeat the Axis implies that there is special significance to their ethnic background. There is nothing genetic about being German that makes them better at being soldiers, sailors, or airmen. The inclusion of that into the text seriously undercuts its credibility.

The emphasis on the Dauntless dive bomber is also slightly disruptive to the text. Yes, the dive bomber played the critical role in the destruction of the four Japanese carriers. However, it did not do that in a vacuum. It was part of a larger team effort that saw thousands of people working in conjunction to produce a critical victory. The torpedo bombers and fighters were important, as were the crew of the *Nautilus* and the men who manned the carriers and supported the flight operations. Victory was not simply the product of a few pilots. Likewise, the argument that America won the war in the Pacific at Midway is somewhat simplistic. The advance of the Japanese was definitely curtailed, but it was certainly not a cut and dried fact. The American Navy had a healthy respect for the Imperial Japanese Navy and the raw power that it could still project. With two effective carriers left in the Pacific, the US fleet remained vastly outgunned, and it was still a long road to victory with no guarantees.

The text has some incredible human interest and that is a definite advantage. Kleiss as a pilot had a different perspective of the events and of course he isn't well talked about in other literature. Thus, a small window was opened into the lives of the people involved. However, the text suffers from several key failings that can't be overlooked. The battle of Midway is one that has been written about prolifically to say the least. Gordon W. Prange's work, Jonathon Parshall and Anthony Tully's monumental book *Shattered Sword*, and David Evans and Mark Peattie's *Kaigun* all stand out as exceptional and important works. In the light of such incredible resources, the constant use of Fuchida's writings, which have been discredited in Japan since the late 1950s, is perplexing. Fuchida's work was self-serving and fundamentally flawed, yet the authors here perpetuate the flaws. Simms and McGregor discuss codebreaking, but fail to reference probably the pivotal book on the subject, John Prados' *Combined Fleet Decoded*. The authors even equate Star Wars and the battle of Midway at one point. And the total absence of a bibliography hurts the value of the text as well.

The result of these and other issues is a text that suffers from serious credibility issues. What starts as a book with great promise becomes a simple rehash of a tale well told by others. If you are interested in Midway and don't know where to start, I would be hard pressed to recommend this text for you. It carries a lot of baggage that will muddy the water and thus be counterproductive. On the whole, I don't recommend this text for anyone.

Robert Dienesch
Belle River, Ontario

David A Smith. *A New Force at Sea: George Dewey and the Rise of the American Navy.* Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2023. 384 pp., illustrations, notes, biography, index. US $443.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1 -68247- 570-6.

An average American today might be hard pressed to identify George Dewey. Admiral Dewey was an outstanding naval commander. During the Civil War he took part in many major naval battles. He later commanded American forces at Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War. This victory was won with only the loss of a single crewman and no major vessels, while destroying nearly the entire Spanish Pacific fleet in the Philippines. Nationally acclaimed, he was promoted to become Admiral of the Navy, the highest-ranking naval officer in American history. The admiral's celebrity led to a very short-lived candidacy for President. More positively, he was a leader influencing the

building of a world-class, modernized, steel-hulled Navy prior to World War I. The negative effect, however, led to America becoming a colonial power and a maritime custodian of both the mammoth "moats" of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

The early chapters of Smith's book focus on George Dewey's background as the relatively well-off son of a physician growing up in the modest capital of Montpelier, Vermont. In his youth, Dewey became "soldiery", graduating from Norwich Military Academy. Subsequently he become a midshipman at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis, graduating third of nineteen in his 1858 class. This was just three years prior to the Civil War. As a lieutenant in the Union Navy, he served in the Gulf of Mexico and then inland, engaging in riverine battles. During this period, he was highly influenced by Admiral David G. Farragut and took part in the battles of Mobile Bay, Forts Jackson and Saint Philip, and finally was a member of the occupying forces at New Orleans. Later he served as the executive officer onboard the Union vessel *Mississippi* that took part in the Battle of Port Hudson, a clash that was instrumental in assisting Ulysses Grant's siege of Vicksburg. Among his most famous Civil War victories was near Fort Fisher on Cape Fear, which was called by some the "Southern Gibraltar." Its fall was arguably the most decisive battle of the Civil War fought in North Carolina and is considered by some the maritime equivalent of Appomattox. This successful land/sea assault on Fort Fisher was considered the first true coordinated fleet action of the US Navy in history, a complex operation that greatly affected Dewey's postwar strategic thoughts in the intervening years.

After the sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor, the United States declared war on Spain and ordered the then-Commodore Dewey to take his recently constructed armored fleet to attack the Spanish armada based in the Philippines. This was brilliantly accomplished from his flagship *Olympia* but presented unexpected consequences. His steam-powered vessels required coal, replenishment of ammunition, and had other vital logistical needs, but these were not available from neutral powers to either of the warring nations. Now an emerging power in the gigantic Pacific, its vastness became a problem for the Americans. Compounding his troubles, Dewy had earlier encouraged local native insurgent Emilio Aquinaldo, who later led a rebellion against US occupation.

The Battle of Manila Bay turned George Dewey into a national hero. He made many appearances around the country before huge crowds, participating in grand victory parades and even having a temporary triumphal arch constructed in his honor on New York's Fifth Avenue. Dewey made the cover of popular magazines, and his likeness appeared on the wrappers of consumer products. For a brief time, he declared his willingness to "stand for" (rather

than campaign for) being a candidate for President, but soon showed lack of interest, asserting that the office is not difficult because it consisted mostly of executing the law.

Dewey went on to assert great influence in modernizing the Navy during the Theodore Roosevelt administration. Long before his death in 1917, he also predicted that an upcoming war would likely entangle the United States against Germany. His influential friend was Alfred Thayer Mahan, who regarded battleships as the preeminent weapon for any future war. Dewey, however, thought that leadership and an operational sense of how to combine daring with prudence was the key to success in battle. History has proven that Dewey, the distinguished senior admiral who was often depicted in his white naval uniform, was correct.

David Smith's *A New Force at Sea* is a carefully constructed scholarly work as well as a pleasurable read. It is a fast-moving, well-documented biography of a hero who has faded from consciousness somewhat because of the era in which he lived. The author successfully humanizes Dewey's sometimes complex character by relating his fondness for his dog "Bob," how he overcame hero worship that might have challenged an ordinary man, and his personal relationships, the loss of his first wife Susan Goodwin and a later marriage to Mildred "Millie" McLean Hazen that precipitated ugly religious prejudices. Smith clearly succeeds in telling the story of "The Rise of the American Navy," the book's subtitle. I highly recommend this fascinating work, which sheds fresh light upon a true naval hero from the late nineteenth century who made the United States into a two-ocean naval power.

Louis Arthur Norton
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Mark Stille. *Japan's Indian Ocean Raid 1942: The Allies' Lowest Ebb.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Books, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2023. 96 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, index. UK £16.99, Cdn $33.00, US $25.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-47285-418-6.

The sub-title of Mark Stille's latest book prepared for Osprey is indeed well chosen. The start of the Pacific War was a catalogue of disasters for the Americans, the British and the Dutch. Whatever might have gone wrong did go wrong and, combined with setbacks in the European Theatre in the same timeframe (through the late summer of 1942), it was an unmitigated series of setbacks, to put it mildly. The 'incredible victory' at Midway stemmed the tide in June 1942, but the struggle remained on a knife's edge into early 1943. The episode Stille covers here is the raid in April 1942 by the Imperial Japanese

Navy into the Indian Ocean. The raid, designed to cover Imperial Japanese Army operations in Burma and to keep Britain on its back foot, largely succeeded and thereby contributed to the woeful catalogue of Allied naval and military defeats that characterised this period of the Second World War.

Stille has organised his account by examining first the commanders of both sides, noting motivations and intentions on the Japanese side, and the very mixed capacity of the British to meet the challenge. This is not to imply that the Japanese leadership was entirely sound. Indeed, both sides struggled throughout the raid to manage their side of the episode. From the Japanese perspective, the outcome was a disappointment in that the successes achieved were clearly anything but conclusive, with the British suffering significant but not catastrophic losses and the survival of the British Eastern Fleet. At the conclusion of the raid, Japanese attention immediately turned to the more significant task of eliminating the remnants of the American Pacific Fleet, which led to their crushing defeat at Midway.

The second part of the book explores the warships available to both sides for the Indian Ocean raid. The Japanese were better equipped, most notably with the five carriers of the Striking Force (although one was under repair), which were accompanied by a fast battleship squadron of four ships. The British fleet in the Indian Ocean was very much a ragtag collection of older ships unpractised at working together. Two modern carriers were assigned to the Pacific Fleet, although these were smaller than the Japanese carriers, as was a powerful but elderly battleship squadron. Stille concludes, rightly, that the Japanese were far better equipped for modern war in comparison with the British at this stage. Additionally, British intelligence and assessments of the IJN were inadequate and unrealistic (in common with Americans before Pearl Harbor). This section includes a detailed order of battle for the two sides in addition to the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the naval and air forces involved.

The subsequent parts examine the plans of both sides, covering Japanese offensive intentions regarding British shipping and naval forces in the Ceylon/Bay of Bengal operating areas, and British dispositions made necessary after the disasters in Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and initial defeats in Burma, as well as the conduct of operations during April 1942. Essentially, the raid went entirely in Japan's favour, with the British suffering losses of an obsolete carrier and two heavy cruisers, along with a number of lesser warships. As well, the Japanese successfully bombed targets in Ceylon and threatened the east coast of India. The objective of covering troop movements in Burma was entirely successful with the transport of troops to Rangoon. The subsequent campaign went to the borders of India itself. What was not successful was securing the destruction of the British Eastern Fleet, which was largely due

to weaknesses in Japanese aircraft search techniques combined with bad luck allowing the Royal Navy to escape as lightly as they did. It was a near run thing.

Stille is even-handed in his analysis of this episode, pointing out weaknesses in ships and their designs or capabilities, operational techniques, and leadership on both sides. Some of his judgements are perhaps overly harsh, such as his description of Vice Admiral Nagumo's handling of his carrier force as 'incompetent' for example. This does not allow for the fact that there had been little opportunity to gain war experience in this, the fourth month of a carrier-oriented maritime war. Indeed, some of Vice-Admiral Somerville's mistakes were similar in nature. Stille does, however, make an astute observation regarding Somerville's reckless actions in seeking to attack Nagumo's carrier force, following the RN doctrine of 'offensive action' under virtually all circumstances. Somerville's decision in this regard can perhaps be blamed on criticism from Admiralty to Somerville when he was commanding Force H in the Mediterranean for a lack of 'offensive spirit' against an Italian force. While it is certain that offensive action is desirable, there is a role for judgement. Throwing one's ships away in an entirely unequal contest is rarely justified. Surviving to husband resources and permitting their growth, reverting in due course to an aggressive posture, is strategically sensible. It is a fine distinction to be sure.

This is not an academic book and is not footnoted. It is a short account of the IJN's 1942 Indian Ocean incursion that, in common with all Osprey Book's productions, is lavishly illustrated with photos, paintings, and diagrams. The production quality is very high. A brief bibliography is provided that includes both older sources and more current ones, as well as a select number of primary sources (generally official accounts both British and Japanese). Overall, it provides an excellent introduction to the subject and will give all readers a succinct overview of the entire episode from the perspectives of both sides. I can recommend the book on that basis.

Ian Yeates,
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Mark Stille. *The Battle of Leyte Gulf: A New History of the World's Largest Sea Battle.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2023. 320 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, bibliography, notes, index. US $30.00, UK£25.00, CDN $40.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-4728-5175-8. (E-book available.)

Leyte Gulf: A New History of the World's Largest Sea Battle by Mark E.

Stille is the latest book to enter the rather large collection of texts about this particular event. Stille attempts to re-assess many of the pivotal decisions, along with characters that made those decisions, to provide a new perspective on the battle. In this, he is largely successful.

Stille provides quite a bit of background detail to set the scene, going back to the 1898 war between the United States and Spain that garnered control of the Philippines for the US. This represented a strategically notable acquisition for the US considering the Philippines' geographic location in the Pacific Ocean. Both the US and Japan referred to the Philippines' strategic importance in pre-war strategy documents, and both foresaw the difficulty of defending the Philippines in the event of a war. This strategic importance was demonstrated as the Japanese advanced southwards in 1942. As Stille states early in the book: "Seizure of the Philippines was an important aspect of the Japanese campaign because of the islands' location astride the sea lines of communications (SLOCs) between Japan and her newly-won resource areas in Southeast Asia." (p. 22)

Stille provides an excellent overview of both the American and Japanese command structures in October 1944, outlining both strengths and flaws, and crystallizing just how dysfunctional the Japanese structure, in particular, was. He delves into the personalities of the main decisionmakers, providing some context to their actions and decisions.

He provides excellent detail about both sides' plans leading up to the encounter and delivers a compelling analysis of just how flawed the Japanese plan was from the start. He also describes in detail the disparity between the two sides, showing just how much American forces had advanced since 1942, while Japanese forces had regressed. The degeneration of Japanese air power is an excellent example.

Stille gives us context for the relative positions of Japanese and Allied forces describing, for example, how the air battle off Formosa influenced the Battle of Leyte Gulf, as well as the necessary, but ultimately disastrous, division of the Imperial Japanese Navy's fleet. He goes on to provide a quick overview of the amphibious invasion of Leyte before getting into the meat of the naval battle.

Stille's main aim here is to analyse the most controversial decisions of the battle, and, in this regard, his analysis is sound and well-reasoned. Criticism of commanders and their decisions is balanced and backed with evidence. Criticism of Oldendorf for not pursuing Shima's Second Diversionary Attack Force with greater alacrity at Surigao Strait is mild, and criticism of Halsey's actions during the Battle off Samar is balanced, with attention also given to Kinkaid when questioning why the San Bernardino Strait was left unguarded. Japanese decisions, such as Kurita's decision to order a 'general attack' rather

than forming a battle line after initially spotting Clifton Sragues Taffy 3, are well analysed and placed into proper context.

The most controversial decisions–Halsey's decision to leave San Bernardino Strait to pursue Ozawa's carriers and Kurita's decision not to push into Leyte Gulf following the Battle off Samar–are given dedicated chapters. Stille's analysis is fair and balanced and, as such, quite compelling. He goes beyond analysis of the tactical situation and considers the personalities of the people involved, as well as the extremes of stress and exhaustion all were working under. His assessment of both decisions is quite sympathetic. His greatest criticism is reserved for Halsey, not for his decision to pursue Ozawa's force, but for his tardy response after receiving Kinkaid's distress signals that Taffy 3 was under attack.

Leyte Gulf: A New History of the World's Largest Sea Battle is probably not for the casual reader with a passing interest in the Battle of Leyte Gulf. However, those seeking a deeper dive, whether familiar with the events or a relative newcomer, will surely find something of interest in Stille's work. Highly recommended.

Petar Djokovic
Canberra

Jonathan White. *Shipwrecked: A True Civil War Story of Mutinies, Jailbreaks, Blockade-Running, and the Slave Trade.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, www.rowman.com, 2023. 336 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US $29.95, UK £22.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5381-7501-9. (E-book available.)

From the title, a reader might think the story told in this book took place almost entirely at sea, during the American Civil War, culminating in a tragic shipwreck. They would be wrong. This book covers the story of Appleton Oaksmith's life at sea, the consequences of which repeatedly left him beached. It is also about his mother, Elizabeth Oakes Smith, a poet, writer and abolitionist. She was an early feminist with a strong bias for her favourite son, Appleton. Oaksmith's father, Seba Smith, was a journalist and publisher, who quickly faded from the story.

As a young man, Oaksmith joined a merchant vessel sailing from New York to San Francisco to escape a failed relationship. He kept a detailed diary in his first years afloat, providing details of his early voyages. He also wrote a lot of poetry, some of which appears in the text. Oaksmith will not be remembered as a poet.

For the first year he sailed up and down the west coast from San Francisco

to Panama City. He witnessed the effects of the devastating 1851 San Francisco fire. He purchased a share in a ship and served as captain, heading south first to Nicaragua and then on to Peru. During the second part of the voyage, some of his crew plotted to mutiny. Oaksmith and loyal crew members subdued the mutineers, putting them ashore in Peru. From Peru he sailed to Rio de Janeiro. It is here that he had his first association with a slave trader, after which he departed on a voyage to Africa. Although he takes goods to the mouth of the Congo River, he does not appear to be involved in the slave trade at this time. His vessel runs aground, and local Africans threaten to seize the ship. With the help of a British naval vessel, Oaksmith and his crew repulse the assault. He then sails for New York, returning after three years at sea. This early part of the book holds the most detailed description of his life at sea.

The majority of the book revolves around Oaksmith's involvement in the slave trade, and Abraham Lincoln's efforts to stamp out slavery and the slave trade. On the eve of the Civil War, with the decline in whaling, there were many New England ship owners who sought money by smuggling captives from Africa into slavery in Cuba or South America. Backers from New York City reaped a tidy profit from the illegal trade. Lincoln's government, most notably Secretary of State William H. Seward, wanted to stop the American participation in this trade. To that end they sought out and seized the ships, prosecuting the masters and owners. White tells the story of Captain Nathaniel Gordon who was tried in 1861 for operating a slave ship, found guilty and hanged. Gordon's fate serves as the backdrop against which White projects the rest of Oaksmith's story.

Oaksmith outfits a ship, the *Augusta*, in 1861, for what he claimed was a whaling expedition, but what the authorities saw as a slaving voyage. Imprisoned in New York City awaiting trial, he is charged with fitting out another ship for slaving, the *Margaret Scott*, in New Bedford. Oaksmith is then transferred to Boston to ensure a conviction, which was not a sure thing in New York. Found guilty of slaving in the Boston trial, Oaksmith escapes from prison before his sentencing. How he managed to decamp is unknown, although dressing as a woman might have been involved.

Oaksmith surfaced in Cuba from where American officials wanted him returned. Without an extradition treaty, Seward approved a plan to return a Cuban national living in America, wanted by authorities in Cuba, in return for the kidnapping of Oaksmith and his return to America. The capture misfires, allowing Oaksmith to escape once again. He next appears in the Deep South at the close of the Civil War under the name Captain John McDonald. After the war, Oaksmith secured a divorce from his first wife and married his cousin. He only told his wife six months later, at which time he took their three children from her.

Oaksmith moved his new wife and children to London, England, where he worked various jobs, secured British citizenship, and struggled with debt. In 1871, Oaksmith and family returned to America settling in Morehead, North Carolina. He was elected to the state legislature, speaking against the Klan and supporting the rights of African Americans.

Woven into this story of Oaksmith's escape from jail, life in exile and his return are the efforts of his mother, Elizabeth, to clear her son's name. She sought clemency for him from every sitting president during the course of his remaining life. None of her efforts bore fruit. One major blow came from Appleton's first wife, who got her cold revenge by personally relating the story of her abandonment to President Andrew Johnson, then considering Oaksmith's clemency. At times Elizabeth's story overwhelms that of her son, becoming the central focus of the book. Indeed, after the early sea-going experiences, his time afloat is passed over without much detail. The book drifts away from being the story of a mariner.

The sea held one last punishment for Appleton. While out cruising in Bogue Sound, his small sailboat was driven under by a strong wind. His three daughters, who were with him, drowned, while he and his son survived. This tragedy broke his spirit; he never recovered. He died in 1887. He received a well-attended funeral with Masonic honours, while his mother died alone and was buried in the presence of only the grave diggers.

The twenty-seven illustrations in the book are of the various people and places mentioned within the text, and add a welcomed visual element. Appendix 1 is a family tree for the Oaksmiths, while Appendix 2 relates the tales of two other ships, taken as slave ships, in which Oaksmith may have been involved, though the evidence is thin. The "selected sources" provides a thorough list of archival material and published primary sources, with the word "selected" appearing to apply to the secondary sources consulted for the book.

Although the book is not quite what the title suggests, it does provide an interesting look into the efforts to stop the outfitting of slave ships in the northeast, in particular New York City and Boston, during the Civil War. White's discussion of Lincoln's choice not to interfere in court decisions and Seward's focused effort to bring Oaksmith to justice are important additions to the historiography.

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Steven J. Zaloga and Adam Hook (illustrator). *Allied Warships vs the Atlantic Wall: Normandy 1944.* Oxford, UK: Osprey Books, www.ospreypublishing, 2023. 80 pp., illustrations, maps bibliography, index. UK £15.99, US $23.00, CDN $31.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-47285-415-5. (E-book available.)

No. 128 in Osprey's Duel Series focuses on the 25 June 1944 action between the German Batterie Hamburg, which was part of the Atlantic Wall near Cherbourg, France, and a naval bombardment group led by the USS *Texas*. Steven Zaloga, a military historian with a technical background in defence and the arms trade, is the author of several books in other Osprey series, including three volumes on the genesis, purpose, and effectiveness of the Atlantic Wall, D-Day fortifications in Normandy, and a battle history of the defence of Cherbourg against the Americans. Adam Hook, who collaborated with Zaloga on the last two volumes in the Fortress Series, furnishes commissioned colour artwork depicting battle scenes and side profiles of casements, ships, turrets, and ammunition.

The illustrated book follows the series format that delves into the weapons, tactics, and context behind a particular action, battle, or campaign. After a short introduction and chronology, unnumbered chapters describe the design, construction, and organization of the German coastal artillery fortifications, and evolving Allied ideas on naval shore bombardment before and during the war. It also describes the action between the battleship group and battery, the strategic situation surrounding the Normandy landings, and the outcome of the afternoon battle with some technical analysis. It ends by describing the respective post-war fates of the battery (reversion to private property) and the *Texas* (museum ship). The text draws extensively upon archival sources, but references are not given, similarly to other books in the series. A bibliography of further reading is provided.

Perhaps more propaganda than real defence, the string of coastal fortifications comprising the Atlantic Wall lay only partially finished by June 1944, strongest on those parts of the coast where an Allied landing was considered more likely. The British and Americans generally avoided defended ports and other strongpoints during amphibious operations, based on hard-earned experience from the commando raid against Dieppe, French resistance to landings in North Africa, and the retaking of Sicily and withdrawal of German and Italian forces across the Strait of Messina.

The naval bombardment mission gave older warships like the USS *Texas,* first built in 1914, a new lease on life as naval operations turned decisively toward carrier aviation and submarine warfare. Counter-battery fire from warships accompanying landing beach forces served to distract coastal batteries, directing attention away from more valuable transports and, if lucky,

silencing the threat from land-based artillery long enough for the build-up of forces ashore. Due to the inherent inaccuracy of munitions and methods of the period, and advantages of fixed defences on land over moving ships at sea, the likely result of shore bombardment was to suppress, rather than destroy outright, opposing artillery batteries. Protective concrete casements were almost impervious to bombs due to their thickness and strength, and open kettle pits were easily cleared of debris and guns put back into action short of direct hits. Again, the fact that the Germans had neither sea nor air assets to effectively counter Allied landings and sink Allied warships left the burden on coastal defence batteries that eventually ran low on ammunition and were left with exhausted crews. Allied warships on the other hand could be switched out and return to bases in the United Kingdom for repair and replenishment once their part in the operations was completed.

Zaloga weighs the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Batterie Hamburg versus the USS *Texas* in combat. Separate purple text boxes provide background on Vice Admiral Carleton Bryant, commanding Bombardment Group 2, and Captain Charles Baker of the American battleship, as well as the reserve marine artillery officer *Oberleutnant* Rudi Gelbhaar in charge of the German battery. Unlike other books in the series, little information is given on the personnel manning the 240 mm gun battery and the warship since the focus remains predominantly on construction details and the guns. Due to the absence of surviving German records after the surrender, Zaloga reconstructs the likely procedures and firing sequence during the engagement using Kriegsmarine doctrine manuals. Ships logs and war diaries on the American side however exist, giving details down to the hour and minute.

The USS *Texas* and another battleship, USS *Arkansas,* had been originally tasked with a fire support mission against the Batterie Gatteville and several other gun positions, but aerial reconnaissance revealed limited activity at their pre-assigned target and it was decided to put the naval ships at the call of the army, which employed forward observer teams to spot and correct fire from seaward. The *Arkansas* fired first with 16 armour piercing rounds against Batterie Hamburg, which responded with its own salvos hitting or near missing the American warships several times over the next three hours. Although the Germans subsequently claimed to have sunk no less than three warships during the artillery engagement, the entire naval bombardment group retired from the area. *Texas* suffered with only minor damage to the conning tower and there was more extensive damage to the destroyer *O'Brien,* which had been straddled by shells that knocked out its radar and killed persons on the bridge and an anti-aircraft gun crew.

The analysis chapter concludes that the Batterie Hamburg still remained operationally effective by the end of the engagement and enjoyed better

accuracy in firing than the warships' guns, but in the end only 5 shots out of some 98 fired found their marks. The presence of the artillery batteries around the strategic French port nonetheless deterred further amphibious landings and naval operations off the coast. Cut-off and isolated from the rest of the naval fortress at Cherbourg, Batterie Hamburg first fired on advancing American tanks and then negotiated a surrender.

Allied Warships vs the Atlantic Wall is another solid contribution in Osprey's Duel Series that offers an engaging and informative narrative and stunning illustrations and photographs. Hook's drawings are slightly cartoonish in appearance but are accurately rendered and appropriate to the content. The book, though focused on a single engagement between large battleships and one coastal artillery battery, would be quite useful for staff rides and battlefield tours in Normandy that walk the ground of German defences in occupied France and consider Allied attempts to overcome them. This short primer is recommended for readers interested in the Second World, amphibious landings and subsequent operations in Normandy, and for those looking for obscure technical details of the guns and hardened coastal defences of the era.

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