

BOOK REVIEWS

Patricia Athie. *The Burning Ashes of Time: From Steamer Point to Tiger Bay*. Bridgend, Wales. Seren Books Ltd., www.seren-books.com, 2005. 206 pp., illustrations, maps. UK £9.99, paper; ISBN 1-85411-4000-X.

This book is interesting, not because of its nautical historical value, but because it is a well written travelogue about a set of convoluted journeys in the interior of Yemen. The author, a travel writer and photographer, initially made a very sound connection between the waterfront area of a Welsh city and the rural communities of Yemen.

Muslim stokers from Yemen helped maintain the supply of superior, smokeless, Welsh steam coal to the widespread outposts of the British Empire. From the desert villages of their homeland, they filtered to the ships through the “colony” of Aden. They worked as stokers in the boiler rooms of British colliers. Then, as Cardiff was their most frequent port of call, they later found homes and wives in Tiger Bay in the heart of the Cardiff docklands. There some of them remained and established the first Muslim enclave on British soil. In the typical blunt colonialist thinking of the period, these Arab men were recruited because “they could withstand the ferocious heat below deck experienced in the tropics.” (p.19)

During the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, the British maintained stockpiles of good coal at various ports throughout the empire. These cornucopiae of fuel dumps ensured their naval and mercantile fleets had a consistent, reliable source of coal. Maintaining the stockpile was a business in itself and many

Cardiff-registered coal-fired colliers were used to carry out this task.

Athie has woven an appealing story out of long, deep research and much travel. It is not a footnoted academic account of her sources but a well written page-turner of a tale of exploitation, intrigue and first-person accounts of how the system operated. But the beauty of the book lies in her travel account. Strangely, she had found an uniquely Welsh ‘double woven’ blanket in the interior of Yemen and, after making the connection, set out to re-discover the blanket and on the way look for and talk to the men involved with the coal shipping trade. She was only partially successful and did not conduct systematic, structured interviews, thus the historical value of her research is diminished.

As a travelogue, it is a fine example of the genre covering the more remote regions of this planet. The text is liberally sprinkled with interesting photographs and useful maps, although the former suffer somewhat from the quality of paper used. The premise of this book was good, but those burning ashes unfortunately seem to have destroyed that part which may have been a valuable addition to a little known facet of nautical social history.

David A. Walker
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John Baldwin and Ron Powers. *Last Flag Down: The Epic Journey of the Last Confederate Warship*. New York: Crown Publishers, www.randomhouse.com, 2007. xii + 354 pp., illustrations, map, notes, index. US \$25.95, cloth; ISBN-978-0-307-23655-5.

Among the great sea stories to come out of the Civil War, the saga of the CSS *Shenandoah* ranks near the top of the list. Although the vessel's exploits are not as well known as those of another Confederate raider, the *Alabama*, the ship's history is no less fascinating. In October 1864, the *Shenandoah* slipped out of Britain avoiding the watchful eyes of U.S. and British officials. The ship had been built in England under the open ban against assisting the Confederacy. The vessel's papers listed it as the *Sea King*, but watchful eyes noted that the graceful lines of a screw sloop seemed to identify it more with a high-speed warship than a freight-hauling merchantman.

Armed and replenished at sea and commanded by Captain James Waddell, the *Sea King* was renamed the *Shenandoah*. With only half a crew, the sleek raider began an odyssey that rivalled any naval mission during the war. Waddell's orders were to create havoc among Union-flagged merchant ships in areas thought to be safe for those vessels. The captain and his ship proved very adept in this endeavour. Before their voyage ended, the *Shenandoah* would travel around the world and cripple the whaling industry of the United States.

Sailing south, the *Shenandoah* captured six vessels in the South Atlantic. Waddell destroyed five of them after rescuing all passengers and crews. The sixth was used as a companion transport for the captured seamen and passengers and dispatched to Brazil. The *Shenandoah* then sailed into the Indian Ocean to operate between the Cape of Good Hope and Melbourne, Australia.

Waddell and his crew made port at Melbourne in late January 1865. There, they replenished, received more crew members and headed north. The

Shenandoah found most of its victims among the U.S. whaling fleet. During the next five months, the raider destroyed four whalers in the South Pacific before reaching the Arctic waters. The *Shenandoah's* cruise took it to the Sea of Okhotsk and the Bering Sea, then across the Arctic Circle before sailing to the Aleutians. In June, Waddell heard that the army of Northern Virginia had surrendered in April, but he decided to fight on. He seized an additional 21 ships, capturing 11 in a single day. By August, Waddell had brought *Shenandoah* south, where he learned that the war had ended in April. The Captain and his officers decided not to surrender to a U.S. warship, but to stand down, convert the raider to appear more like a merchantman, and sail to England. The crew repainted the hull and stowed the guns below. They then sailed down the west coast of the Americas and around Cape Horn. The *Shenandoah* was successful in evading enemy warships and surrendered near Liverpool to the HMS *Donegal* in November 1865. CSS *Shenandoah* became the only Confederate vessel to circumnavigate the world. During the voyage, it never fought a battle with an armed adversary, but sank 38 enemy vessels. It never lost a seaman to action against any hostile vessel.

Last Flag Down: The Epic Journey of the Last Confederate Warship tells this story in a well written, fast-paced manner with a lively narrative. The book is solidly researched and illuminates the lives of the officers and crew and the activities of their ship. The map of the voyage, the engineering schematic, and the sail diagram are all very helpful information. The seasoned reader, however, may be left with many unanswered questions. The authors chose to write the book in a novel-like format, which will be fine for the general

reader, but will have scholars scratching their heads. There are only 56 notes in the entire 354-page book. Journal entries are extensively quoted, but there are few specifics about the entries. The absence of a bibliography is also a major detriment. The difference, sadly, reduces a potentially superb work into a very good book. Although flawed in this regard, *Last Flag Down* remains an excellent account of the exploits of the *Shenandoah*.

Gary D. Joiner
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Janet Bately and Anton Englett, (eds.) *Ohthere's Voyages: A 9th- century account of voyages along the coasts of Norway and Denmark and its cultural context*. Maritime Culture of the North 1. Roskilde, Denmark: Viking Ship Museum, www.vikinges.kibsmuseet.dk, 2007. 216 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, sources, index. €40.14, cloth; ISBN 978-87-85180-47-6. (Distributed North America by the David Brown Book Company, www.davidbrownbooks.com)

The voyages of the Scandinavian Viking, Ohthere, have a long and complicated past. In the ninth century, West Saxon King Alfred met with Ohthere who told the king, through a translator, about his voyages around the world. These stories were subsequently included in Orosius' *World History*, which was later combined with tales from the Viking traveller Wulfsten and translated into Danish in 1815. The stories were all but forgotten until twentieth-century scholars began to take notice of the early narratives.

By the 1980s, archeologists, linguists and historians recognized the narratives' many editions and began to discern inconsistencies. For example,

political and geographical boundaries were recorded differently in the texts. In addition, the texts left out important topics such as fishing and taxation, and yet they mentioned whaling on a grand scale "which most scholars find hard to believe." (p.77) The Viking Ship Museum, aware of such issues, called for a new study. In 2003, the museum held a seminar on Ohthere's voyages and encouraged scholars to contribute their work based on new archeological, historical and linguistic research. Their efforts became the basis of *Ohthere's Voyages: A late 9th-century account of voyages along the coasts of Norway and Denmark and its cultural context*.

The book is divided into six sections. The first section "The Source," is simply that, it has the narratives of Ohthere and Wulfsten written in Old English, copied from the British Library. The section also has excerpts from the Old English narrative beside the one translated into modern English to provide readers with an accessible version. The addition of translation notes with the comparisons provides the reader with a base from which to assess newer information.

Subsequent sections look at a variety of sources as well as newly-discovered information from several disciplines. For example, archaeologists examined material culture from graves to supplement written narratives. They surmised that because many grave goods had a foreign origin, that trade was a common, on-going practice between the Vikings and Europe in the ninth century. The written accounts back up the archeological finds. "The written source suggests a vast exchange system to which the northern regions essentially contributed slaves (above all from the British Isles and the Slav lands) and raw materials, notably

metal and minerals, oil, bone and walrus tusks, skins and furs.”(p.172)

While Ohthere’s account listed which items were traded regularly, some scholars question whether specific items were added later by scribes. For example, Ohthere failed to mention fishing as part of their trade. Scholars know, however, that fishing was one of the most important Viking commodities. With its light weight and protein-rich flesh, dried cod was essential nourishment for the Vikings on their voyages. To account for this discrepancy, some scholars suggest that, at that time, Vikings used fish only for themselves and it was not an item that was traded regularly. Rather, Vikings only started to trade cod in greater numbers as Europe turned to Christianity and the demand for cod increased. Other scholars posit that Ohthere did not think fishing was worth mentioning. Such issues reflect the complexity of interpreting early documents, especially those translated on numerous occasions and through several languages.

As a whole, the editors and the scholars who contributed to this book did an excellent job in using the latest discoveries in archeology and history to further expound on the early Viking narratives. Contributors to the seminar held by the Viking Ship Museum included several notable scholars from a variety of disciplines, such as Ian Wood, Stefan Brink, Peter Sawyer, Stephane Lebecq, Inger Storli, and Gerd Stamso Munch, to name but a few. Beautifully illustrated with photos and maps, this book is an excellent guide for any student interested in Viking culture and history. The arguments concerning language and the context of words were very informative and useful in understanding the translated text. Some words have different meanings in Old English, Old Norse and modern English.

The editors used an example of the word “deer” in modern English and compared it to a similar word from Old Norse which is non-specific, and means the same as the modern English word for “animal.” (p.36) Recent archeological finds, in conjunction with the narratives, help piece together the culture of the Vikings. Advances in the study of Old English and Old Norse help extract correct information out of the narratives to aid in the learning about the culture, geography and trade of the Vikings. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in Vikings and early seafaring history.

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Jan Bill (ed.). *Welcome on Board! The Sea Stallion from Glendalough: A Viking Longship Recreated*. Roskilde, Denmark: Viking Ship Museum, www.vikingeskibsmuseet.dk, 2007. 68 pp., illustrations, € 13,29, US \$24.00, paper; ISBN 978-87-85180-41-4. (Distributed in North America through the David Brown Book Company, www.davidbrownbooks.com)

In 1962, the discovery of a number of Viking-era ships on the seabed of Denmark’s Roskilde Fjord caused a sensation. While a remarkable find, more important is what the Danes have done with it. The ships have been on exhibition since their recovery and they have been so well conserved and documented that they could be reconstructed in full size. These reconstructions in themselves have inspired renewed attention to the original archaeological material. Building a ship is something quite different from writing an archaeological report about it: questions popped up which had never occurred to the

excavators. Over the decades, the Roskilde team have made themselves familiar with all aspects of the ships from excavation to reconstruction and learned a tremendous amount about their source material this way.

Skuldelev 2, one of the shipwrecks found in the Roskilde Fjord over 45 years ago, was built in 1042 in Dublin in the Scandinavian boat-building tradition. The book, *Welcome on Board!*, describes the discovery of the vessel, but mainly focuses on the construction of the replica ship and the preparations for its trip to Dublin and back.

In 1893, a replica of the Gokstad ship, the *Viking*, was sailed from Norway to New York and on to Chicago, partly as a publicity stunt, and partly as an experiment to prove that such a trip could really have been possible in the Viking Age. While there is no historical need to prove such seaworthiness today, the project of setting a well-reconstructed Viking ship afloat and taking it on a long tour can be extremely instructive.

The introduction of the book states that the ship itself is an experiment: one confronts it with the forces of nature. Although in general a lot can be learned from such an exercise, it is going a bit too far to call this experimental archaeology. One can, of course, measure and monitor how the ship behaves under certain circumstances, but an experiment means that not only is every variable controllable, but also, that the set-up is repeatable in all details, and that is not the case here. Nevertheless, the Roskilde crew will be making rigorously detailed reports and publishing them, as they did in the 1997 book about the reconstruction of *Skuldelev 3* (Andersen, Crumlin-Pedersen, Vadstrup & Vinner).

Is the *Sea Stallion* book only about

science? No. It is part of a series about the new ship itself and its voyage to Dublin and back to Denmark in 2007–2008. More than just a sea trial, the project will give rise to a number of books about the trip across the North Sea, as well as generating plenty of international press coverage (by, among others, the BBC) and a comprehensive website that is kept up to date. In this way, the trip will attract major funding with international cooperation as a key element. The Roskilde-Dublin project is functioning as a lever to facilitate different kinds of research which, just like the cooperation itself, will be of good quality.

Every second full page of this book features an excellent picture of the ship, making it a glossy and attractive guide. The text reads like an exciting little book for those who have not seen a Viking ship before. Page by page, the most important parts of the ship are described and compared to the original *Skuldelev* find, as well as other archaeological and historical sources. Unfortunately, the author does not offer references for those who want to learn more. The book presents a positive message and is a good souvenir for those who encountered the *Sea Stallion* on its trips, showing respect to both the ancient boat builders as well as the present ones — and maybe that was precisely the objective.

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Richard Blake. *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy, 1775-1815. Blue Lights and Psalm Singers*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, www.boydellandbrewer.com. 2008. 327 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. US \$95.00, UK £50.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84383-359-8.

At a time when cultural studies of Britain's maritime history are becoming more prominent, any book which takes seriously the role of religion should be warmly welcomed. Richard Blake, former council member of the Navy Records Society, has done a lifetime's research on piety in the late eighteenth-century Royal Navy. Historians have perpetuated a myth that naval piety was unusual; Blake presents a wealth of evidence that it was widespread.

In 1779, Richard Kempenfelt, the Channel Fleet's chief of staff, wrote in pious concern to his friend Sir Charles Middleton. Kempenfelt had observed how the French and Spanish nourished their ships' companies with daily offices and regular masses. English ships had once featured similarly well-organized spiritual care, but did so no longer. This lament of Kempenfelt's, Blake believes, "may be seen as the foundation document of a reform movement aiming to bring Christianity in to mainstream naval life in the late eighteenth century." (p.5) Instructions concerning religious teaching and liturgy aboard ship increased rapidly in number and detail from the 1780s into the nineteenth century. Blake uses these instructions together with a range of other primary sources to investigate the nature of divine service at sea, the formative years of the French Revolutionary War (where young James Gambier rose to prominence), the influence of "Blue Lights" evangelicalism on the naval officer ethos, the relationship between religious and combat enthusiasms, and the lower-deck "Psalm Singers."

Sensibly, Blake concentrates on the evangelicals rather than attempting a larger survey of religion: others can take inspiration from his pioneering work to give us studies of the navy's Catholics or Presbyterians. Blake is careful to indicate that by "evangelicals" he does not mean

only the Evangelical party of the Church of England, but also Methodism which in this period would begin to generate independent churches of its own. This is important because the "Psalm Singers" below decks were often Methodists, whereas the officers and chaplains were necessarily Anglican.

A shared evangelicalism did much to breach the class gap, as did the ongoing clarification of chaplaincy duties. Evangelicals tended to emphasise the duty of all Christians to spread the gospel, instead of relying on clergy to do so, but the chaplaincy reforms of 1806 and 1812 were nevertheless important. Chaplains had once been free agents responsible only to the captain; now they were regarded as part of the navy with defined duties and responsibilities. They were to educate and train the young gentlemen and boys (or to supervise the schoolmaster if there was one), to lead Sunday services (usually the offices of morning and evening prayer in this period), to give pastoral guidance to all, and to prepare the dangerously ill for death. The signatures of the first lieutenant and master were now required, in addition to that of the captain, for the chaplain to draw his pay.

Blake is careful to highlight the importance of lower deck piety. After the Great Mutiny, fears about disloyalty diminished, and gatherings aboard ship were permitted — even encouraged — for religious reasons. Artwork of the period shows all ranks gathered together for prayer and scripture reading. The goals of temperance and sexual continence were also shared across the class divide. One is inevitably reminded of Valerie Burton's pioneering work on the myth of "Jack Tar," and her findings concerning the self-conscious respectability of many sailors.

The absence of Burton's work

from Blake's bibliography raises a larger question about this book's distance from the relevant secondary literatures. With all due respect to N.A.M. Roger, Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir James Watt, and the present Lord de Saumarez, all named among others in the preface and thanked for their encouragement, a generation of younger naval historians has written, apparently in vain, on matters of direct relevance for Blake. He does not cite any of Margarette Lincoln's work, yet her *Representing the Royal Navy : British sea power, 1750-1815* (2002) takes up the question of religion at several points. Blake's discussion of the relationship between religious and fighting zeal would have benefited greatly from an encounter with the vast literature on eighteenth-century British masculinity, or of the work by Heather Streets and John Wolffe on masculinity, religion and heroism. A reviewer should be reluctant to promote her own work, but from *Imperial Benevolence* (1998) onward, I have written extensively about the crucial importance of Christian piety in the modern Royal Navy. Blake has many more colleagues than he seems to realize.

The empire is largely missing in action here: another puzzling lacuna. Missionary movements are mentioned in passing, but their close relationship with the navy warrants a more significant treatment. Possibly the most famous example concerns Captain Bligh's conversations with Thomas Haweis about the establishment of the first London Missionary Society mission at Tahiti, but there are many others, and the Royal Navy became a conspicuous partner in the missionary enterprise. No modern account of the evangelical movement is complete without a discussion of missionary zeal and its direct relationship with imperial expansion. At the most basic level, missionaries travelled regularly in naval

ships, using their time aboard to preach (if Anglican) and to teach or pray with the ship's company if the captain allowed it. Some captains, especially in the far-flung Pacific islands, conducted regular tours of mission stations, encouraging their crews to attend onshore services, and doing everything in their power to promote missionary prestige and success. No wonder the navy — symbol of Britain's growing imperial power — provided such a fruitful matrix for the blending of piety and manliness.

Never before has a historian focussed so squarely on religion in the crucial period 1775-1815, and the results are a vindication of the campaign for greater attention to be paid to the cultural history of the Royal Navy. Blake's meticulously organized, well-written argument is clear: that "The aspirations of the original Blue Lights were amply fulfilled when their Christian values became hard-wired into the Victorian naval profession." (p.293) We can only hope that others will answer his challenge to explore more fully the religious cultures of the Senior Service.

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Grant Brown Jr., *Ninety Years Crossing Lake Michigan: the History of the Ann Arbor Car Ferries*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, www.press.umich.edu, 2008. viii+286 p. illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. US \$24.95, paper; ISBN 978-0-472-05049-9.

The book is a chronicle of the rail ferries of the Ann Arbor Railroad and its successors. Ferries hauled rail cars to and from Frankfort, Michigan, and other ports on the

eastern shore across Lake Michigan to ports on the Wisconsin shore, Keewaunee, Green Bay, and Menominee, during the period 1892 to 1982.

In sixteen chapters the author expands upon the unrelenting challenges faced by the car ferries; the battles of the individual boats (as the ferries were termed) with Lake Michigan, especially battles with ice and treacherous weather in winter. The other major theme which runs through the book is the economics of the ferries as part of the rail transportation system. It is clear that the ferries' underlying economic situation was precarious throughout, beginning in the company's second year of existence when it went into receivership. The history is marked by long periods of penury with a few booms, such as those created by the world wars.

The introduction, subtitled, "Ice and Ice Breaking" introduces a force that figures from first to last, the ice. This force takes on a personality and so begins the tale that consumes the great bulk of the story: the battle of the vessels with winter storms and ice, while maintaining the railroad's schedule.

There is an account of the coming of the railway to the West and the factors that formed a perceived demand for a car ferry in the brains of entrepreneurs that, in turn, caused them to wander the country between Ann Arbor and Lake Michigan looking for a right-of-way for a railway ending in Frankfort, Michigan. This mania for railways swept outward from Europe to America and in the 1880s that tsunami reached into rural Michigan. The specific demand for a ferry service was created by the logistical nightmare resulting from the 12 days it took to get a railcar through Chicago. By contrast, under ideal conditions, the car ferry had a turnaround

time of five hours. The author traces the economics of the rail transportation system of the nineteenth century and its evolution through the twentieth century to 1982, when changes to the regulatory framework dismantled subsidies to rail companies, and the ferries ceased service.

In chapter one, "The Beginning," the author describes the conditions and personalities that built the railway. Brown looks in some detail at the people who were instrumental in building the service which started out as the Ann Arbor and Toledo Railroad. The book includes a look at the Scandinavians, particularly Norwegians, who predominated as captains of the ferries.

Most of the book is taken up by the operation of the ferries. The conditions of Lake Michigan —its harbours and the enormous waves peculiar to that lake —are described in detail, as is the weather on the lake in winter months with major storms and cold temperatures. These conditions made the keeping of schedules problematic in the extreme and set the stage for the passionate interplay among the major actors: the boats, the men and, above all, the weather, particularly ice in all its forms. The focus of the story is the captains on the lake, but it also covers promoters, engineers and capitalists who kept the fleet in existence.

Although this book tells a story about a vanished chapter in American history, the writing style is opaque. Events large and small often get similar weight, so the overall effect is jumbled.

An appendix gives information about the vessels and their disposition. There are many beautiful photographs of the boats. The cover photograph of a battered, ice-covered ferry belching clouds of black coal smoke captures the contents

perfectly. Other, undoubtedly stunning, photos are presented in such a small size that they are pretty awful. Drawings and plans of the typical vessel would have been more useful and worth at least a thousand words.

Four pages of eye-busting, execrable charts (pp. 214-217) purporting to show ice conditions could have been left out or reproduced in colour. The best maps are those photographed by the author using a digital camera. These are, presumably, official maps the source of which does not seem to be credited, raising questions of copyright.

The notes are illuminating. Newspapers and secondary sources predominate. Company records are the only primary sources since the principal characters in the book left little in the way of correspondence or other biographical materials behind.

This book a standard-format work of the University of Michigan Press. Errors of detail raise questions about the author's knowledge or the quality of the copy editing. Is there a Port Colburn in Ontario? What ship is the *Novadac*? I am familiar also with the vessels of the Paterson line which have "DOC" as the suffix. Could this be the *Novadoc*? These points jump out because I live in Ontario, but they beg the question, what other errors are there? On the back cover, some enthusiastic person writes: "In 1892 the Ann Arbor Car ferries shook the transportation world," and goes on to claim the invention of the car ferry concept for the Ann Arbor railway. This feat is also claimed for the Nova Scotia-to-Cape Breton car ferry in 1890 by Ted Rafuse in *The Railway to the Isles*. <http://www.nauticalmind.com/Railway-to-the-Isle-A-History-of-the-Strait-of-Canso-Railway-Car-Ferries-pr-70958.html>.

Clearly, the book needs more basic research.

The book should be of interest to people in Frankfort, Michigan. What the book illustrates best is the author's love of ships, his deep affection for the mundane and work-a-day Ann Arbor boats which culminates on p. 244. Here the deactivated ferries awaiting disposal are described in the same terms we would use for some revered deceased person lying in state. Although the author borders on being lugubrious, we also share his loss. The marine researcher interested in ships will learn little that is new, so this work does not belong in a library dedicated to marine research.

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Gabriel B. Collins, *et al* (eds). *China's Energy Strategy: The Impact on Beijing's Maritime Policies*. Annapolis, MD. Naval Institute Press. www.usni.org, 2008. xix+576 pp., illustrations, notes, index. US \$47.95, cloth; ISBN-978-1-59114-330-7.

Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes (eds). *Asia Looks Seward: Power and Maritime Strategy*. Westport, CT. Praeger Security International. www.praeger.com, 2008. vi + 276 pp., notes, index. US \$49.95, cloth; ISBN-978-0-275-99403-7.

Before the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent declaration of a "Global War on Terror" by the United States, it was common, even fashionable, to forecast a coming conflict between The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States, or more broadly, the West. Indeed, for many, China was on the verge of replacing the defunct USSR as the primary global impediment to "freedom and democracy," a dangerous but also somewhat worthy adversary who could provide a sense

of purpose for the American military in the aftermath of the Cold War. While it is undoubtedly true that continuing concerns over security in the Middle East and the broader ramifications of the Global War on Terror have captivated both policy analysts and the general public over the past seven years, the two volumes under consideration here reflect how strategic thinking about China in particular, and Asia in general, have evolved. Taken together, they show both the fallacies and the realities that lay behind such alarmist sentiments at the turn of the twenty-first century. They also serve to highlight how integral the Middle East and its energy supplies have become to the entire world, especially given the fact that the United States and China alone currently consume some 35 percent of the world's oil, a figure that is only projected to grow over the next two decades. Therefore, such informed considerations of the relationship between energy policy, national strategies, and international security are particularly salient at the present time.

Turning first to the more general work, *Asia Looks Seaward*, the editors suggest that we are currently experiencing a sea change in maritime affairs as Western powers, with the notable exception of the United States, seem content to retreat from naval development, even as Asian nations, most obviously China and India, embrace it. As the editors observe, the last fifteen years have witnessed profound increases in technological advances and tonnage increases, along with increases in the numbers of ships in many Asian navies. Likewise, the three largest shipbuilding nations in the world are all Asian. Recognizing such facts, these authors, therefore, hope to begin the process of creating a more holistic analysis of Asian sea power, one which both recognizes historical precedents and considers new

realities. The first part of the book, encompassing chapters two through four, gives the historical background to contemporary Asian naval development, while the last several chapters delve into country-centered case studies. While lack of space prevents me from going into too much detail here, suffice it to say that the first part of the book will be of some use to novices in the field, but contains few insights of note for specialists or historians of the various regions concerned.

The book's later chapters, however, are much more eye-opening and provide a wealth of useful information and details concerning contemporary naval strategies (or lack thereof) among major Asian powers and interests. What is perhaps most interesting (and also reflected in the other volume under review here) is the range of interpretations concerning current and future naval goals and capabilities. For example, despite acknowledging that China's submarine production now exceeds that of the United States by five times, and that the Chinese are also aggressively exploring options for developing and deploying more mines, surface ships, amphibious forces, aircraft, missiles of all types and even space technologies (pp. 75-80), Andrew Erickson argues that China does not seem all that interested in extending its power projection capabilities. (p. 70) He also cautions, correctly in this reviewer's assessment, against assuming that China will use its weapons and capabilities the same way that the United States might under similar circumstances. Additional essays focus on such topics of Beijing's desire to create its own tanker fleet for the purposes of energy security and India's naval aspirations. One point worth repeating here is the realization by both Delhi and Beijing that energy and national security are intimately related and that

maritime power is more closely tied to economic interests than either land or air power. (p. 140) Another fascinating recurrent theme of this volume (as well as the other book) is the shadow cast by Mahan over contemporary Asia. The Chinese, in particular, seem to be quite enamoured of Mahan's theories and willing to adopt a "zero-sum" approach to naval and energy matters concerning oil. This plays upon popular fears of a "Malacca Dilemma" wherein the United States might attempt to blockade China's energy supply by closing off this vital chokepoint. The Japanese, on the other hand, have abandoned Mahan according to James R. Holmes, ceding strategic vision and initiative to their American allies (pp. 146-53.)

Although beginning their volume under the positive, albeit somewhat erroneous, premise that "historically China has not been aggressive and expansionist" (p. xviii), the authors of *China's Energy Strategy* paint a similarly gloomy picture of an impending maritime struggle between China and the United States centered primarily on access to global oil resources, which many in Beijing perceive as being controlled by the United States. This has led to the PRC adopting a wide spectrum of strategies to ensure its energy security ranging from so-called "Zheng He" diplomacy, whereby Beijing presents a slanted and distorted interpretation of Ming China's (1368-1644) supposedly peaceful engagement in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean (pp. 122-24), to more alarming policies of supporting repressive and dictatorial regimes in Sudan, Iran, and Burma in exchange for energy and other concessions. (pp. 423-26) It must be emphasized, nonetheless, that interpretations and predictions by the authors of this volume vary quite a bit with

some, like Dan Blumenthal, being very wary of Beijing's "great power aspirations" as representing a real threat to global security (p. 431), while others, such as Jonathan Pollack, find much ground for positive collaboration between the United States and China. (pp. 448-450)

Taken together, these two volumes represent a significant contribution to our understanding of contemporary Asian maritime strategy, goals, and interests. Most of the essays are well-written and clearly argued and draw from both historical sources and contemporary white papers, official reports, government publications, and scholarly journals. Most importantly, the contributors generally make extensive use of relevant primary language materials to get a better sense of what the real goals and intentions of America's potential allies and adversaries might be. Although the Collins volume in particular is repetitive at times, and could have benefited from a stronger editorial hand, both of these books should be read by anyone interested in better understanding the problems and prospects faced by the global community as we confront the rising naval power of Asia in the twenty-first century.

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Richard C. Davies (ed.). *The Central Australian Expedition, 1844-1846. The Journals of Charles Sturt*. London: Hakluyt Society, www.hakluyt.com, 2002. 440 pp., illustrations, map, biography, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$89.95, UK £50, cloth; ISBN 0 904180 80 8. (Distributed by in North America by Ashgate Press, www.ashgate.com.)

Charles Napier Sturt was born in India in 1795, the son of an East India Company judge. He was schooled in England from the age of five, but the family could not afford to send him to university. Instead, an aunt with influence secured him an army commission and Sturt joined the 39th (Dorsetshire) Regiment of Foot in 1813. He served in France under Wellington and in the war against the United States in 1814. Three more years in France followed and it was during this period that Sturt taught himself the basics of surveying. He was promoted to the rank of captain in 1825 and in 1827, the 39th arrived in Sydney with a convict shipment. Sturt's Australian career had begun. He was 31 years old with 12 years of military service, but he did not have much to show for it.

In Sydney, Sturt was appointed military-secretary to Governor Darling and obtained permission to lead an expedition looking for pastoral land and examining river systems. The expedition, from November 1828 to April 1829, was able to establish the main and also the many other tributaries of the river he named Darling. Altogether this was a successful expedition as was his second one, 1829-1830, to survey the Murrumbidgee River from its source to its mouth. This was a much longer trip and Sturt discovered that the Murrumbidgee joined a river he named the River Murray. Upon arriving at the Murray mouth, Sturt found that the relief ship had already left and his party was obliged to return partly by sailing upriver, but more significantly, by rowing the boat for about 900 miles in order to reach help on the Murrumbidgee. This greatly increased the stress on Sturt as the expedition was already very weary and short of food. Despite the serious and permanent effect it had on Sturt's health, the expedition had shown that Sturt had good leadership

qualities for both exploring and observing the natural environment. He had clarified various questions about inland rivers and whether the system ran usefully to the sea, but none of his efforts resulted in official credit or rewards.

In August 1831, Captain Sturt was in command of the troops on Norfolk Island, however, his health continued to suffer and he went on leave to England in April 1832. He was unsuccessful in gaining promotion and retired from the army in 1833, the year his two-volume work on the two exploratory trips was published. Sturt married in 1834 and received land grants near present-day Canberra in lieu of a military pension. On his return to New South Wales he bought additional land but he did not show much skill as an estate manager or developer and eventually sold up and moved to Adelaide permanently in 1838. He was welcomed there by Governor Gawler and offered the position of Surveyor-General in November 1838. Whereas Governor Gawler encouraged Sturt's aims and ambition, his successor, Governor Grey, did not and thwarted Sturt's attempts to achieve promotion in South Australia or other colonies and to achieve financial security. And yet it was acknowledged that Sturt had done good work on the official enquiry into relationships with the Indigenous people. Sturt was successful in obtaining official approval for a year-long expedition (not the two years he had requested) to explore the centre of the continent especially the area north-west from the River Darling. Sturt turned this into an expedition focussed on his own objectives and especially his continuing dream of discovering an inland sea.

The Central Australian Expedition (CAE) 1844-1846 cost £3,300 (£500 over budget) and took 17 months instead of 12.

No inland sea was found but they did discover the direction of the flow of waters for much of the area west of the Great Dividing Range. The knowledge gained was the most important aspect of the trip and the journals, which Sturt wrote nearly every day, were converted into book form during his stay in England from 1847 to 1849. The book was published in 1849 and Sturt returned to Adelaide as the colonial secretary, the post from which he retired at the end of 1851. With his eyesight failing, Sturt returned to England in 1853. He subsequently applied for several colonial governorships as his financial position continued to be precarious, but he was unsuccessful and never returned to Australia. He died in 1869 just before a knighthood was conferred.

Charles Sturt was not the most important explorer of Australia, however, his observations of the flora and fauna were significant, and his reports on Indigenous relations were valuable. The previous surveys and reports about rivers and connecting streams and their courses had been sketchy. Sturt's various expeditions greatly improved the geographical understanding, including the existence of Australia's two largest rivers, the Murray and the Darling. No one really doubted Sturt's leadership and heroism and he was always very considerate towards his men. But unlike the earlier explorations, the CAE did not discover useful agricultural or pastoral land, although subsequent colonists did settle much of it despite its essentially marginal nature. That said, the CAE was the worst expedition Sturt organised because the lack of water and provisions meant that there were cases of scurvy before the main and subsidiary journeys were completed. There was the death of Sturt's second-in-command and other cases of serious illness. Instead of the mountain

ranges which the authorities would have liked, Sturt found water courses, many of them dry, unsurprising in a drought year. Despite his considerable geographical and topographical knowledge, Sturt was still seeking the elusive inland sea on the CAE. He got to within 150 miles of the centre of the Australian continent, but found no sea. Latter day research has reduced the iconic status of Sturt and new books continue to be published; the most recent being in 2005. For many generations of Australian school children, however, Sturt was a hero and his memory is commemorated in various place names, buildings and even a university.

The significance of this book for maritime historians is restricted to those involved with riverine and inland waterway exploration. Sturt's journeys were original and as were most of his discoveries. The book is another publication in the prestigious Hakluyt Society series, and it has an excellent introductory essay by the editor, Richard C. Davies of the University of Calgary. The generous botanical, zoological, topographical and ethnographical annotations make this volume a very rich source for those researching the exploration of Australia or undertaking comparative Indigenous relations/ First Nations studies.

The area traversed by Sturt and the CAE remains as parched and forbidding as he found it, especially in summer or droughts. But it is now possible to pass through much of this area in an air-conditioned Mercedes tourist bus and there is even an isolated country store at Cameron Corner, the junction of the New South Wales and South Australian borders.

G. R. Henning
Armidale, New South Wales

Michael Franks. *The Basingstoke Admiral. A Life of Sir James Lancaster (c. 1554-1618)*. East Knoyle, Salisbury, UK: The Hobnob Press, www.hobnobpress.co.uk, 2006. xii + 231 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, sources, notes, index. UK £14.95, paper; ISBN 978-0-946418-59-6.

The image of Francis Drake, of audacious raids and captured treasure galleons, of “singeing the King of Spain’s beard” and the Armada, looms over popular impressions of Elizabethan seafaring to such an extent that it has long cast a shadow on the less flamboyant but more profitable activities of the chartered trading companies. The Muscovy (1555), Levant (1581) and, above all East India Company (1600) were all founded during the later Tudor era, and contributed far more to England’s commercial rise than did the ephemeral accomplishments of Drake and other adventurers in the Caribbean.

A case in point is the relative obscurity of Sir James Lancaster (c. 1554-1618) who, from even the most cursory examination, appears to have been a match for Drake in many respects. He, too, captained ships in both the 1587 Cadiz raid and the Armada campaign of the following year, and although he never circumnavigated the globe, he did lead a well-planned and highly successful raid against the Brazilian port of Recife, occupying it for a full month in 1595. Moreover, Lancaster straddled the divide between privateering and more legitimate (at least by modern standards) business pursuits in a manner that Drake never did, unless one counts the slaving voyages undertaken with Richard Hawkins. Lancaster was active for decades in peaceful overseas commerce, first as a member of the Skinners’ Company, one of London’s chartered guilds, for whom he

first appears to have travelled abroad, then for the Levant Company, and, finally, after his naval and privateering activities of the late 1580s and early 1590s, as one of the key figures in the East India Company’s early history, commanding the First Voyage of 1601-03. And although Lancaster never went to sea again following that epic trip, he remained active not only in the E.I.C.’s activities in London, but was also co-sponsor of several expeditions in search of a Northwest Passage, one of which led to his name adorning Lancaster Sound in Lat. 74° North.

So why is Lancaster virtually unknown today? To be sure, he lacked Drake’s flashy swagger, not to mention his talent for self-promotion, but a more likely reason is the paucity of evidence regarding Lancaster’s life. A handful of contemporary sources, all of them published either in Hakluyt’s *The Principal Navigations* or by the Hakluyt Society, deal in some detail with three of the major episodes in Lancaster’s seafaring career — a disastrous 1591-94 voyage to the East Indies, the Recife raid, and the first E.I.C. voyage — but the bulk of his life lacks any firm documentation. For instance, beyond the fact that he was a participant, nothing is known of Lancaster’s contributions to the Cadiz raid, the Armada campaign, or the disastrous 1589 Portugal expedition, in which he also took part.

Michael Franks has laboured mightily to fill in the numerous gaps, by scouring the records of the Skinners’ and East India Companies and searching elsewhere for clues about Lancaster’s activities, but in the end most of the gaps remain and much of his recounting rests on speculation. To flesh out the sketchy facts surrounding Lancaster, Franks has also incorporated a great deal of background information, on the spice trade, on the

Skinner's Company, on Puritanism (Lancaster appears to have been associated with some early Jacobean clerics of the Puritan persuasion), and on numerous other subjects or events to which Lancaster was linked. In some instances this information furnishes valuable context, in others it distracts from the focus of Franks' narrative, serving more as padding than as information relevant to the thrust of his tale. Is it necessary, for instance, that readers be told the history, prior to Lancaster's acquiring it, of the London house in which he lived during the later years of his life? (pp.131-32) Another example concerns Robert Southey's early nineteenth century moral strictures on Lancaster's behaviour toward the Portuguese at Recife, about which Franks observes "[i]t is difficult to make any useful comment on these tetchy criticisms," leaving readers to wonder why the subject was raised in the first place (pp.93-94.)

They will likely be frustrated with the presentation, too, which is annoyingly repetitive. On page 65, for example, Franks states that following a stay at the Cape of Good Hope during the 1591-94 East Indies voyage, the vessel "*Penelope* had 101 [men aboard] and the *Edward Bonaventure* 97." Not three sentences later, in the very next paragraph and on the same page, he notes parenthetically that on leaving the Cape "the *Penelope* had 101 [crew] and the *Edward* [sic] 97)." Such examples could be multiplied virtually *ad infinitum* and there are also numerous typographical errors — "company" is spelled both "compan" and "compeny" on page 130, for instance — which further detract from the readability. Yet despite these flaws, Franks' biography constitutes the most comprehensive modern account of Lancaster's naval and business careers.

John Beeler
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Norman Friedman. *Naval Firepower: Battleship Guns and Gunnery in the Dreadnought Era*. Barnsley, S. Yorkshire: Pen and Sword - Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2008. 256 pp., illustrations, photos, maps, notes, glossary, bibliography, index. US \$ 69.95, cloth; ISBN-978-159114-555-4.

Norman Friedman, a highly respected naval analyst and historian, is noted for his sophisticated studies of the origins and nature of naval ships and their equipment, the influence of materiel on maritime tactics, and for his strategic assessments of naval campaigns. Educated as a physical scientist and the author of numerous works on naval subjects, he is highly qualified to address the evolution of sea-going ordnance during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The title of this book is somewhat misleading since the volume does not attempt to cover all aspects of naval gunnery. Instead, it concentrates on the development of fire control equipment and techniques for battleship main battery guns. Fire control was an essential companion for the increasingly powerful ordnance deployed by the world's navies during the twentieth century. The ability to engage targets at sea was a particular challenge due to an attacking ship's movements in several planes, a problem that was magnified by the movement of the target itself. Those difficulties were compounded by the greatly increased ranges of naval guns that eventually allowed combat to take place at distances of twenty miles or more.

Friedman demonstrates that Britain's Royal Navy took the lead in developing modern fire control measures.

An important figure in this story was Admiral Sir Percy Scott who, prior to the First World War, pioneered the technique of controlling a ship's guns remotely from directors located on masts towering high above the ship. Scott also advocated the technique of keeping an enemy target under continuous aim. His contributions were refined and augmented by other British inventors working in the early twentieth century, including Frederic Dryer and Arthur Pollen. American gunnery specialists, notably William S. Sims, drew directly from the work of the British in developing fire control systems for the American navy, as did technical leaders from other nations. There were some national differences in the technology of these systems, but the basic designs and procedures found in each major navy were similar. The major new capability after that date was radar, which was applied to gunnery in the Second World War era.

Considering the prominence of British technology, it is not surprising that the bulk of this book relates to the Royal Navy. Considerable attention also is given to the American, and to a lesser extent, the German and Imperial Japanese navies. Further, Friedman provides some coverage of the French, Italian, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian-Soviet naval forces. But the information offered in these cases, while useful for comparative purposes, is cursory.

Friedman provides wide-ranging details on his subject. For example, the author's discussion of smokeless powder raises an interesting point. Friedman establishes that the new propellant actually was not very smokeless. Hence, it failed to solve the constant problem faced by battle commanders of knowing the location of both friendly and enemy forces.

Beyond his discussion of

technology, Friedman offers penetrating assessments of a number of engagements involving heavy guns. Often he offers important insights or reminders, as is the case, for example, in the author's commentary on the 1916 Battle of Jutland and the U.S.- Japanese actions off the Solomon Islands in 1942. In Friedman's assessment of Jutland he reiterates the conclusions of others writers that fear of enemy torpedoes was a major factor discouraging the Royal Navy from seeking a close-range engagement, despite the service's Nelsonian tradition. In recounting the bruising U.S.- Japanese night actions off the Solomon Islands in 1942, Friedman points out the formidable capability of the Japanese Long Lance torpedo in this theater, which was not understood by the Americans until 1943. On the other hand, the author calls our attention to the U.S. success in using radar-directed fire control during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. This triumph demonstrated that an important new fire control capability had become available.

Although this volume covers a highly technical subject, Friedman writes in plain, understandable English. A reader does not need to be a scientist, a naval engineer, or a naval officer to comprehend his account. The inclusion of numerous illustrations and drawings is also very helpful. They often are accompanied by lengthy captions that further promote the volume's clarity.

Friedman's praiseworthy contribution is to describe and assess an essential technology of the capital ship era. The volume deserves the attention of all students of naval affairs.

Dean C. Allard
Arlington, Virginia

Robert Frump. *Until the Sea Shall Free Them. Life, Death and Survival in the Merchant Marine*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2007. 341 pp., notes. US \$17.96, paper; ISBN 978-1-59114-284-3. (First published by Doubleday, 2002).

This book reads like a novel. It is gripping and exciting. The sub-title is a trifle misleading, however, as it takes as its primary focus the loss of only one vessel, the *Marine Electric*, an old Second World War T-2 tanker, that had been “supersized” into a bulk carrier, with the addition of a midsection. She became a coastal collier, running between Virginia’s Hampton Roads and the coal-fired power plants of New England. This ship foundered and sank in February of 1983, and all but three of the crew were lost. Subsequent inquiries resulted in an attempt by the owners and the original Coast Guard inspectors to lay the blame on the surviving chief mate, but this effort was eventually thwarted and substantial reforms occurred. It all transpired as the result of the combined efforts of a few dogged and determined individuals unwilling to let things continue as they were, and a relentless team of investigative journalists from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, to which latter group Frump belonged. Many of my previous reviews have denigrated a “mass media” approach to seafaring disasters, but this book illustrates the heights to which good investigative journalism can ascend.

As the book progresses, the applicability of the sub-title’s wording becomes clearer, as the case of the *Marine Electric* becomes a lens focused on the failings of the entire U.S. merchant marine system of its time. Owners retained elderly vessels and failed to perform all the

maintenance necessary for the complete safety of ship, cargo, and crew. Officers failed to bring these vessels’ shortcomings to public attention, for fear of losing their jobs. Coast Guard inspectors failed in their duties. And the end result was unavoidable losses of vessels and crew members when these old rust buckets almost literally fell apart.

The book is a trade paperback, with attractive layout and fonts, but no illustrations. It is divided into three sections. The first of these deals with the actual sinking—the events leading up to it, some personal and biographical data on the crew, and the rescue of the survivors. The second part covers the situation of the chief mate, Bob Cusick, after his return home and the initial official investigations into the sinking. It also follows the parallel lines of inquiry pursued by the investigative team from the *Inquirer*, and compares their findings with those from the hearings.

To illustrate specific points in his narrative, Frump has called upon not only expert opinions, but also past shipwrecks, including both wartime and peacetime sinkings. Each of these cameos sheds light on a particular aspect of the *Marine Electric* tragedy as well as the larger picture. Not only the physical disaster is addressed. The author likewise cites professionals and specialists in a broad range of areas such as psychology, ethics, and maritime law to help provide the reader with a thoroughly comprehensive array of data with which to assess the situation. Extensive research into the backgrounds of all of the *Marine Electric*’s crew and their families adds a compelling human connection often lacking in contemporary reportage, while a straightforward and dispassionate writing style avoids melodrama. Frump’s genuine sympathy for the people involved in the tragedy removes from the mind’s eye of the

reader the unlovely, but all too familiar, picture of a media investigator jamming a microphone into the face of a bereaved family member or friend and bellowing insensitive questions. In fact, Frump himself notes these ghouls, as they hounded Cusick, with the following: "The media were bombarding him, trying to mine this for all it was worth. They were true furies, dogging his every step." (p.159) Clearly Frump and his *Inquirer* compatriots were of a different breed, seeking to address and help solve the root causes of the maritime concerns, not to harass the individuals involved.

This section includes a connection with the late Nova Scotian singer-songwriter Stan Rogers, and his song, "The *Mary Ellen Carter*," which deals with a sinking and insensitive ship owners. Apparently, Cusick used his memory of Rogers' song to keep his courage up after the sinking and before his rescue. Later, during the primary investigations, Cusick wrote to Rogers, who then promised to write a song about the *Marine Electric* incident. He had even introduced the merchant mariner, who was in the audience, at his last concert before the aircraft fire in which he perished. This loss, on top of the loss of the *Marine Electric* crew, caused severe emotional distress to the already suffering Cusick.

The book's third and last section embraces the refusal of one of the Coast Guard investigators to back down under pressure, the tenacity of a diver hired by the survivors, the talents of the lawyers at the hearings, and the support of a group of bereaved relatives from a previous sinking. In the end, not all the desired reforms were achieved, but those that were were sufficient to scrap more than 70 other at-risk vessels before they took their crews down. The Epilogue tells the eventual

fates of several of the major players in the story.

Your reviewer found the entire piece riveting and detected only one minor and slightly amusing error on the next-to-last page (p.340), where, in acknowledging the author's most important supporting resources, it says "With the *Philadelphia Enquirer* and its remarkable editor, Gene Roberts, I almost certainly would never have written about maritime affairs..." clearly meaning just the opposite.

All in all, I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has any interest at all in the modern merchant marine, in labour relations, in the underdog getting the upper hand, or just in a darned good true story.

Morgiana Halley
Bangor, Maine

Angus Konstam. *Piracy. The Complete History*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2008. 336 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$24.95, cloth; ISBN 978 1 84603 240 0.

In recent years, author Angus Konstam has contributed several works to the field of maritime history. His latest offering, *Piracy. The Complete History*, provides readers with a very readable and affordable account that covers a large swath of history. It will no doubt be warmly received as the public seems to have an insatiable demand for all things piratical at present.

Konstam's publication record is very impressive: he has over 50 works in print, several of which focus on piracy: *Pirates!* (1998), *Pirates, 1680-1730* (1998), *The History of Pirates* (1999), *The Pirate*

Ship (2003), *Blackbeard: America's Most Notorious Pirate* (2006) and *Scourge of the Seas* (2007). This current book is the most ambitious in its scope and may well be the culmination of his previous research on the topic.

Without question, the strength of this book is its examination of a striking amount of global pirate history. Konstam begins in the ancient world, covers many chronological eras and geographical zones including medieval pirates, the Renaissance sea dogs, the Mediterranean corsairs, the 'golden age' and its decline, pirates in the Indian Ocean, Chinese pirates, modern piracy and fictional pirates. This book provides us with a wide view of piracy: most other offerings (including some of Konstam's earlier efforts) concentrate almost exclusively on the best known pirates and pirate haunts of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Although the author purports to "look a little more deeply into these key periods," the coverage is very uneven. (p.9) No doubt because of his earlier focus on seventeenth-century buccaneers and the golden age of piracy, Konstam concentrates much of this book on territory he has previously trod. Naturally, readers would expect a retelling of stories about Blackbeard and Captain Morgan, but the book is top-heavy with recycled research and sparse on information about non-western and modern pirates. His chapter on pirates in fiction is a mere five pages and barely scratches the surface of what could have been a fascinating study.

The book claims to be a history of piracy, but it would be more accurate to see it largely as a series of case studies of pirates: it is short on analysis of piracy in general, and long on narratives and description of individual pirates and pirate

"hot spots." Still, the numerous "characters" and their stories, portrayed against a changing backdrop of time and location will doubtless entertain readers.

Obviously aimed at a general readership, the book has very few references. From the notes and the select bibliography, it appears that Konstam's research is almost exclusively based on secondary sources. He did use primary sources, however, to a greater extent in his other works such as *Scourge of the Seas* and the same material serves as the focal point of *Piracy: The Complete History*. This book is a treasure trove of useful details and those more academic or curious readers would have appreciated knowing the basis of Konstam's analysis. Given the staggering amount of information Konstam provides, it is not surprising that some of the details get away from him. For instance, on page 50, John Hawkins' death is said to have occurred in 1592, whereas on page 70, he is sailing with his kinsman, Francis Drake, in 1596.

For those looking to study world pirates over the *longue durée*, this book is a worthwhile purchase. It features colour plates and black and white illustrations. It will give readers sufficient helpings of their old pirate favorites as well as introduce western readers to pirates of other cultures and eras. Konstam also examines some of the "lesser" pirates of the Anglo-Atlantic world. One of the author's constant themes is that piracy was not nearly as lucrative as we may imagine, so these case studies in failure are instructive.

Konstam demonstrates that our fascination with piracy, while fevered at present, has not always been constant. He argues — quite rightly — that the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie trilogy has done much to rekindle our love affair with pirates on

film and elsewhere. Yet, throughout his books, Konstam protests that pirates should not be romanticized and that even the most infamous had very short careers. He realizes that he will never diminish our love affair with these rogues but hopes his works will allow us to see them in a more accurate way, “less encumbered by the pirate mythology.” (p.319) Despite such statements, Konstam seems as fascinated with pirates as his readers, and book sales rely on the fact that none of us are in any hurry to lose our illusions about these seafaring knaves. He cuts to the heart of the matter when he states, “pirate reality will always be every bit as colourful as pirate fiction.” (p.316)

Cheryl Fury
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John Sutton Lutz (ed.). *Myth & Memory: Stories of Indigenous European Contact*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, www.ubcpres.ca, 2008. 236 pp., maps, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$32.95, paper; ISBN 978-0-7748-1263-4.

First contact: those two words conjure up a myriad of images. Within the historical imagination of North America, imagined pictures of first contact often take the form of Native people — horrified or amazed — pointing towards large and impressive European sailing vessels. Contemporary artistic renderings and travel narratives implanted this vision in the brains of many Euro-Americans, and for many of them, this image has been difficult to dismiss. Aboriginal people, however, have always held different images of first contact within their collective consciousness. John Sutton Lutz and his fellow contributors attempt to explore the Aboriginal perspective of inter-

cultural contact in *Myth & Memory: Stories of Indigenous European Contact*.

Lutz’s edited collection examines a wide geographical and chronological area. Essays, written by an interdisciplinary team of scholars, discuss topics ranging from sixteenth-century Virginia up to twentieth-century British Columbia. The chapters follow and build upon four common themes: currency, performance, ambiguity, and power. Many of the chapters heavily engage with Marshall Sahlin’s and Greg Denning’s theories on intercultural contact as performance (both cultural and spiritual). Each chapter also grants indigenous actors agency within the contact narrative. J. Edward Chamberlin does this through an examination of the cultural currency of oral tradition. Keith Thor Carlson, Patrick Moore, and Judith Binney also explore the validity and the importance of oral tradition to the past. Wendy Wickwire furthers Moore’s, Binney’s, and Carlson’s argument about Native oral tradition and calls for it to be incorporated into mainstream historiography. Beyond the exploration of the Aboriginal oral tradition, John Lutz and Michael Harkin discuss contact as a form of spiritual performance, while I.S. MacLaren examines the intertextuality of the European contact narrative and Richard Dauenhauer and Nora Marks Dauenhauer explore the liminal role of the interpreter.

Myth & Memory injects an interesting and crucial “new” narrative into the historical record. Aboriginal perspectives are all too often lost in a sea of European voices trumpeting their role in history. Yet, even though the book provides the public with a new way to think about the inter-cultural interaction between Native and newcomer, it suffers from a geographical bias. The majority of the essays in the volume discuss the Native people of the Pacific Northwest. One

chapter on Roanoke, Virginia, and another on New Zealand prove to be random outliers in the scope of this work. Either narrowing or expanding the book's geographic focus could strengthen the volume. Should the editor wish the book to deal primarily with North America, extra content on the Atlantic coast's Aboriginal contact narrative must be added. If the editor, however, desires this work to discuss first contact in British-held colonies, the book requires chapters on Australia, Canada and the Cape Colony. Either way, a central focus on the Pacific Northwest does not provide the inclusivity promised in the book's title.

Myth & Memory is not a work of maritime history. While European colonizers arrived to the "new world" on frigates and barques and colliers, Lutz and his fellow contributors do not address the very first moments of colonization when sailors, hardened from months at sea, rowed the ship's longboats across the harbours and bays of North America to meet the indigenous population of the continent. Instead the volume focuses upon the aftermath of that contact. Lutz's work provides an important perspective to the contact story, but another work that examines the very first moments of contact between sailors and indigenous people told from an Aboriginal perspective is still needed.

Kelly Chaves
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Kenneth R. Martin. *"Patriarch of Maine Shipbuilding": The Life and Ships of Gardiner G. Deering*. Woolwich, ME: Jackson Parker and Tilbury House Publishers, www.tilburyhouse.com, 2008. 216 pp., illustrations, appendices,

bibliography, index. US \$60.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-88448-307.

A biography of Gardiner G. Deering (1833-1921), ship carpenter, schooner builder and schooner owner of Bath, Maine, this book describes the development and flourishing of his career, focusing on the operation of Deering's shipyards, his relations with his partner, his contributions to the construction methods used on the great schooners, the operations of his schooner fleet, and the individual careers of his schooners.

Gardiner Deering was a significant player in the wooden shipbuilding industry in Bath, the most productive shipbuilding community in Maine, the most productive state in the United States in the wooden shipbuilding era. Born in Edgecomb, Maine, he moved to Bath as a child, with his family, and followed his father's trade of ship carpenter. He went to sea briefly, but returned to the Bath shipyards. In 1866, he formed a shipbuilding partnership with William T. Donnell. They built small schooners at first, mostly fishing vessels on contract, and eventually began building larger freighting schooners on their own account. After the dissolution of the partnership in 1886, the men divided up their fleet and each continued building on his own. Donnell owned the shipyard, so Deering went elsewhere in Bath. He rented the Houghton yard for a time, then purchased part of the Hagan yard, and finally bought the former Chapman & Flint yard. From 1866 to 1919, he built 99 vessels, ranging from a 32-ton fishing schooner to a 2,114-ton five-mast coal schooner. His strong preference was to continue the shipyard tradition of handwork, declining to invest in powered machinery. He was not averse, however, to design innovations, happily promoting his own framing design for the replacement of

hanging knees. He built some long-lived vessels, too, an unusual circumstance in the coasting trades. A church-goer and teetotaler, he followed the honored Maine tradition of never retiring, staying active in his yard until a few weeks before his death at age 88 (although his three sons had taken over many of the yard's responsibilities). He left a personal estate valued at \$420,000, not including shipyard stock.

For a small city (the smallest in the state), Bath has succeeded in attracting many authors to write about it. There have been five book-length general histories published (one co-authored by Martin) and several pictorial histories. There is William A. Baker's amazing two-volume *A Maritime History of Bath, Maine, and the Kennebec River Region* (1973). There have been two histories of the current shipyard in town, Bath Iron Works (Snow, 1987, and Eskew, 1958). Other single shipyard/fleet histories have included Hennessy's *Sewall Ships of Steel* (1937), Martin and Snow's *The Pattens of Bath: A Seagoing Dynasty* (1996), Snow and Lee's *A Shipyard in Maine: Percy & Small and the Great Schooners* (1999) and Hughes' recent *So Ends This Voyage: The Sailing Vessels of Trufant & Drummond of Bath, Maine* (2008). Martin's latest must be seen in the context of this group, on which he has had no little influence.

This is a thoroughly professional piece of maritime history. Technically, it is a vanity press book. The publisher is Jackson Parker, who is a descendent of Gardiner G. Deering. Unlike Hughes (above) and many others who attempt to write their own families' maritime stories while knowing little of maritime things, Parker essentially hired a neighbour to do the job — both men live in the Woolwich, Maine, village of Days Ferry. Since the neighbour was a maritime historian, the

outcome was good.

Martin makes two small errors in the beginning of the story. First, he says that Deering was fourteen when his family moved to Bath, and indicates that he was working in shipyards soon after, attending local schools only briefly. In fact, if the Deerings came to Bath in 1837 (as Martin says more than once), Gardiner Deering would have been four, and would have been subjected to a local grammar school education before learning his trade. A second quibble is with the description of Deering and William T. Donnell becoming close friends while working in the Hitchcock Brothers shipyard after the Panic of 1857. In fact, the Hitchcocks did not continue building after the death of Henry Hitchcock in 1856. If they became friends there, it was earlier, while Donnell was still a teenager and Deering was in his very early twenties.

The successes of the book are far greater. Martin describes well the business conditions as Deering & Donnell, and later Deering alone, leap into the building of wooden sailing vessels while the rest of the world is looking to steam and steel. Time and again, Deering started building another big schooner when conditions in the shipping business were poor. He made risk and hard work substitute for luck and caution, and died a wealthy man. Depending heavily on Snow & Lee's *A Shipyard in Maine*, Martin gives a good understanding of the coal trade and coasting trades in general. He does a masterful job of explaining the friendly breakup of the Deering & Donnell partnership, something I have been trying to teach (rather less successfully) to docents at the William T. Donnell House. He also goes where few family-published histories would — recounting the dissolution of the family in the squabbling over the money after the Old

Man's death. In this case, this was a significant part of the story because of his sons' involvement in the shipyard, and the continuation of the Deering fleet's operation.

The illustrations here are another success story. Drawn largely from a private collection, the 140 photographs and other illustrations give a vivid and detailed look at the Deering fleet. A few of the photographs are reproduced poorly, but the overall affect is excellent (although one might wish for a local map).

All in all, this is an excellent and objective fleet history.

Nathan R. Lipfert
Woolwich, Maine

William F. McNeil. *Visitors to Ancient America. The Evidence for European and Asian Presence in America Prior to Columbus*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co. Inc., www.mcfarlandpub.com, 2005. xii + 306 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$45.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-7864-1917-2.

Visitors to Ancient North America takes the reader where many speculative works of alternate prehistories have gone before. Through the use of strawmen—"many people believed it was impossible"—and ignoring the principles of archaeological parsimony and Occam's razor, the volume attempts to support the theory of pre-Norse visits to the New World. Much of this is familiar ground to anyone who has studied the works of Barry Fell, Frederick Pohl, Thor Heyerdahl and Farley Mowat, and the result in this case is a kind of chronological stew that posits multiple ancient sea voyages to the Americas by any number of restless Europeans.

The volume concentrates largely on North America. Somewhat strangely, however, to reach his conclusion that: "Intentional, planned, round-trip voyages between Europe and ancient America, were possible" (p. 40), the author examines prehistoric Polynesian deep-ocean voyaging, Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* expedition in the South Pacific, and his voyage from Africa to the Caribbean on *Ra II*. The book is filled with such non sequiturs. Because the Polynesians reached Hawai'i, then Vikings could have reached North Dakota. (It is perhaps worth noting that when the German adventurer Dominique Görlitz tried recently to sail a reed ship from New York back towards Africa, he didn't make it halfway before the experimental craft broke up and sank.)

Failed experiments don't make an appearance in *Visitors*. And even the recapitulation of Heyerdahl and *Kon-Tiki* is filled with errors, often in the same sentence. Heyerdahl was a zoologist, not an archaeologist; *Kon-Tiki* was a pre-Incan design, not Incan; the voyage ended not at Papeete but on Raroia. As this reviewer tried to point out in *Sea Drift: Rafting Adventures in the Wake of Kon-Tiki* (2001), failed transoceanic experiments seldom make the history books—but can be hugely instructive nonetheless. But such research into the multitude of archaeological experiments would have taken the author deeper into the subject than merely the *National Geographic* articles cited as source material in *Visitors*.

Another of the author's ideas is that the "art of Polynesian navigation boggles the mind of today's American archaeologists." (p. 21) Actually, it doesn't. From Finney's early experimental archaeology with *Nalehia* to the experimental voyage by Pialug, Lewis, and Finney in *Hokule'a* to the thirty years of

experimental voyages since, today's experimental archaeologists and ethnographers have explored deeply into the methodologies of Polynesian deep-ocean voyaging. Equally strangely, the magnificent Satawalese navigator Pius Mau Piailug is not named here, but mentioned as a Micronesian, then a Polynesian. The author writes, in what must be a slip of the fingers, that Polynesians in prehistory were able to arrive "precisely at a predetermined location, Hawaii." One wonders how an undiscovered destination can be "predetermined," but perhaps one is missing the point.

At another junction, the author claims that as the "twentieth century got underway, archaeology in the United States descended into the scientific equivalent of the Dark Ages." (p. 14) This will surprise most students of archaeology. American archaeology did not enter its truly scientific era until the twentieth century, when it was professionalized through the work of, among many others, Max Uhle (culture change), Alfred L. Kroeber (seriation), Nels Nelson (stratigraphy), Jesse Figgins (Folsom culture), Gladwin and Gladwin (descriptive methodologies), A.E. Douglass (dendrochronology) and Franz Boas (artifact sequences)—to say nothing of Walter Taylor and Lewis Binford in the post-war years. The author seems to believe that because these scholars were not occupied with solving the riddle of the lost tribes of Israel by excavating the mounds of the Mississippi, all of American archaeology was a waste of time.

There is also a general trend in the volume to discuss only those investigators the author defines as "courageous," which seems to be another way of saying that he agrees with them. Early archaeological and forensic scholars such as Thomas Jefferson, James H. McColloh, and Samuel

G. Morton spent years studying Moundbuilders and Native Americans and concluded there were no significant differences between the two. You would not know that here.

This work could have had some real value if the author had not tried to yoke a Heyerdahlian *uber*-theory onto what could have been a nice little synthesis of data on evidence for Norse exploration of North America, a vastly complex and fascinating subject on its own. The author had evidently read far more widely here than in his transoceanic speculations, and the result is more appealing, even if still freighted with errors. The authenticity of, for example, the Kensington Stone and the Vinland Map are taken as evidence of the chimerical voyage of the medieval Paul Knutson. There is scant evidence that this expedition ever left port much less fetched up in Minnesota carving obscure and highly problematic runic inscriptions and then burying them in, conveniently, the exact field that would be owned by a Swedish immigrant five centuries later. In a typical sentence, the author writes that the "rest of [Knutson's] story is conjecture but, based on the evidence, it could have happened." Such a construct is fine, but unseemly in a book that expends much energy to convince us that modern archaeologists are not sufficiently rigorous in their scientific method.

The author has written prodigiously on the subject of baseball, and it would be tempting to conclude that he had taken a Ruthian swing and simply missed when it comes to his analysis of ocean voyaging and its relation to mythical voyages to the Americas. It is probably more accurate to compare this work to a batter's seasonal average and say that, overall, he finished up somewhere just below the Mendoza Line, that very real

boundary where a player's defensive strengths cannot be overcome by his offensive liabilities.

P.J. Capelotti
Abington, Pennsylvania

Robin L. Rielly. *Kamikazes, Corsairs, and Picket Ships: Okinawa, 1945*, Casemate Publishing, www.casematepublishing.co.uk, 2008. 448 pp, illustrations, maps, tables, notes. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-9320-3386-1.

Robin L. Rielly's 2008 publication is an informative review of the roles of picket ships and combat aircraft during the American invasion of Okinawa during the Second World War. The book is the result of exhaustive research and an intimate knowledge of the battles waged in the Pacific at that time. The author relays day-to-day accounts of U.S. naval engagements with Japanese kamikazes, relying on archival research and war reports to accurately describe how these battles were fought and the additional horrors wrought by suicidal warfare.

The author begins by describing the nature of radar picket duty and conveying its significance for the U.S. Navy in this operation. Once the American troops landed on the beaches of Okinawa, it was vital to have a method of advanced warning of air attacks headed for the captured airfields. For this reason, the planners of the invasion set up a ring of radar picket stations around Okinawa. It was these ships and planes that bore the brunt of the attacks from the Japanese fighters.

Rielly's first chapter contains excellent descriptions of the picket ships. Using action reports and other wartime documents, the author explains the purposes

of individual ship types and the tactics used for each type during picket duty. This analysis helps to shed light on the great losses suffered by the radar picket ships in the Pacific.

The chapter on aerial combatants is equally detailed. The combat air patrol made up a prime component of radar picket duty, scouting the skies and warning the ships of incoming bogeys. Rielly effectively uses photographs throughout these chapters, offering the reader an authentic representation of how these ships and aircraft appeared. Drawing on eyewitness accounts and data from action reports, the author compares the abilities of various American and Japanese fighters, and includes a detailed chart that provides a visual aid to distinguishing the numerous types of aircraft involved in the war.

Throughout the publication, Rielly gives seemingly endless accounts of the relentless Japanese raids on American vessels. A considerable portion of the book is spent describing, in concise yet illuminating detail, the sea and air engagements fought between U.S. radar picket duty craft and the Japanese fighter planes. The battle narratives provide the reader with a sense of the ever-present danger and the high stress levels that both seamen and pilots faced during the operation. Rielly recounts the loss of *Bush*, remarking that she was the first vessel sunk on radar picket duty: "*Pakana* reported that many of the survivors were in very poor condition, having suffered from shock and exposure after nearly ten hours in the water. A number had to be given artificial respiration..." (p.119.) In another account, a lieutenant recalled "for a week, we fired on, or reported, dozens of raids, and lost count very quickly. The strain became almost intolerable. We were gaunt and filthy, red-eyed and stinking..." (p.346.)

Though the content of *Kamikazes, Corsairs, and Picket Ships* is well-organized, engaging, and revealing, it could have used another proofreading. There are several typographical errors, a few inadequate designations for abbreviated terms, and inconsistencies in measurement conventions. A few representative examples follow: “part of the problem lay in the great differences in speed...” (p.40); after the Air Defense Command’s Control Center is spelled out for the first time, ADCCC should be written in parentheses to clearly designate the abbreviation (p.49); and, 159’ is used on page 25, but 159 feet is used just two pages later.

A more adequate use of maps would also help a future edition of this book. Though the Hagushi beachhead, obviously a strategic location in this war, was referenced on numerous occasions, it was never shown on a map. Early in the book there are several references to other places in Japan that could also be illustrated more clearly on the given maps. (p.14) These should be delineated since the publication is largely about the tactical positioning of naval craft at various locations in the Pacific.

To conclude, *Kamikazes, Corsairs, and Picket Ships* is an enlightening and captivating account of radar picket duty during the U.S. invasion of Okinawa in 1945. Rielly’s superb use of sources and photographs paints a vivid depiction of the air raids encountered by these picket vessels and combat air patrol. The author’s work also illustrates the bravery of all participants in this bloody war, from the unwavering loyalty of Japanese kamikaze pilots to the exhausted U.S. Navy seamen who slept at their guns while awaiting the next air raid. This book is a worthy resource for anyone interested in naval war tactics and battle strategies during this era

of maritime history, and is a good portrayal of the lives of the seamen and pilots involved in naval combat.

George Schwarz
Falls Church, Virginia

Nathan Richards. *Ships’ Graveyards: Abandoned Watercraft and the Archaeological Site Formation Process*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, www.upf.com, (in cooperation with the Society for Historical Archaeology), 2008. xix + 255 pp, illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. US \$65.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8130-3257-3.

The field of underwater archaeology has been, for many years, preoccupied with the study of shipwrecks — vessels lost, dramatically and tragically, through accident, storm, violence, warfare, and all manner of misfortune. Other types of maritime sites have, however, become the focus of scientific inquiry, including wharves and landing areas, careenages and repair facilities, dockyards and construction sites, and the remains of vessels that were intentionally discarded. Just as worn-out vehicles today are often collected in junkyards, exhausted watercraft were generally abandoned in specific places in the past. *Ships’ Graveyards: Abandoned Watercraft and the Archaeological Site Formation Process* by Nathan Richards is perhaps the first, and certainly the most thorough, study of ships that were abandoned when they reached the end of their useful lives. Although most of his test subjects were stripped of artifacts and any useful items (“material culture” is the archaeological term), the place and manner of their discard provides Richards with a source of information filled with meaning and clues to cultural processes. Further,

Richards argues that the traditional methods of studying *wrecked* ships must be re-examined and re-evaluated for the study and comparison of *abandoned* ships.

Ships' Graveyards is divided into eight chapters presenting the historical background and cultural significance of these sites in a logical manner. Richards examines "Abandoned Watercraft in History and Archaeology" (Chapter 2) to set the stage with the how and why of vessel discard, relating disposal of a once-valued tool to changes in society and technology, and describing the types of discard and reuse such as ritualistic deposition (ship graves and offerings), structural adaptation (landfill and buildings), salvage (dismantling for recycling), and conflict-inspired abandonment (scuttling to avoid capture or to create obstacles). Chapter 3 relates "The Abandonment Process and Archaeological Theory," a thoughtful argument for maritime archaeologists to expand upon historical particularist methodologies traditionally used in the examination of shipwrecks, and to embrace more generalist, comparative, and thematic approaches that are appropriate for intentionally deposited vessels. Chapters 4 and 5 are case studies of "Watercraft Abandonment in Australia," describing the reasons shipowners discarded their vessels, including discussion of economic factors, environmental aspects and distribution of abandonment areas, and changes in transportation technology. Signatures, or signs, for recognizing reuse, discard, and abandonment of watercraft in the archaeological record are the topics of Chapters 6 and 7. "Archaeological Signatures of Use" (Chapter 6) focuses on evidence of conversion and modification during a vessel's life and on signs of postabandonment use, such as breakwaters and even artificial reefs, which affect the

archaeological site formation process. "The Signatures of Discard" (Chapter 7) describes the unique archaeological evidence of watercraft disposal, including hull reduction to minimize navigational threat, behaviours and processes associated with salvage and scrapping, and methods of scuttling to ensure a vessel remained discarded. Together with an introduction (Chapter 1) and conclusion (Chapter 8), these chapters present a rational and coherent discussion, liberally augmented with examples, case studies, photographs, and informational tables that illustrate the author's points.

I can find little to fault. Although *Ships' Graveyards* focuses primarily on watercraft abandonment in Australia, examples from other locations and countries are incorporated as well if not as thoroughly. Given Richards' propensity for comparison, however, this work can, and should, serve as a foundation for additional studies. Illustrations and photographs are rendered in black and white only, which is unfortunate but is the decision of the publisher. Colour would enhance the numerous photos of abandoned vessels used in the study and would render some tables easier to understand, but it is a minor quibble.

An important note about *Ships' Graveyards* of which readers should be aware: this volume won the prestigious Dissertation Prize offered by the Society for Historical Archaeology in 2004. The prize is awarded annually to a dissertation that is "considered to be an outstanding contribution to historical archaeology" (<http://www.sha.org/documents/2009disspri z.pdf>) and is, to date, the only dissertation focusing on a maritime topic to have won. That Richards' ground-breaking work should be so recognized and honoured is, I believe, merited and appropriate. Awarding

of the prize also indicates the respect and attention that maritime sites, shipwrecks or otherwise, can command from our terrestrially-focused colleagues.

While somewhat expensive (although not terribly so, considering the usual cost of academic books), *Ships' Graveyards* will undoubtedly prove useful for a wide audience. Maritime history enthusiasts will appreciate the description of a topic that rarely has been presented, while professional archaeologists can use Richards' research to add to their body of knowledge. Students of underwater archaeology will find the book a useful text and reference, and perhaps even a source of inspiration for their own research. In particular, cultural resource managers — those responsible for the preservation of maritime heritage sites for the public benefit — can find in *Ships' Graveyards* data to inform and direct their management and interpretation of discarded watercraft. Overall, this study of abandoned vessels and of the cultural activities surrounding their modification, reuse, and disposal adds greatly to our knowledge of past human behaviour, which is, after all, the purpose of archaeology.

Della Scott-Ireton
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Joost C.A. Schokkenbroek. *Trying-out. An Anatomy of Dutch Whaling and Sealing in the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1885*. Amsterdam: Aksant Academic Publishers, www.aksant.nl, 2008. 366 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. € 29.90, cloth; ISBN 978 90 5260 283 7.

Joost Schokkenbroek's *Trying-out, An Anatomy of Dutch Whaling and Sealing in*

the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1885, is the product of distinguished scholarship on a maritime subject that never ceases to attract and sustain interest. The term "trying-out" refers to the process of catching, butchering and rendering out sea mammals in order to obtain a variety of products. The Dutch, as a sea-going people, were involved in this maritime activity from the earliest times, although this work largely deals with the history and story of the industry in the nineteenth century.

Schokkenbroek brings a well developed personal background to this research from his position as Curator of Material Culture at the Netherlands Scheepvaart Museum in Amsterdam for the past twenty years, and earlier as a staff member of the New Bedford Whaling Museum in the United States. The text is a very well written, enjoyable and readable manuscript supported by voluminous research which also has resulted in a substantial number of graphs and tables.

As an introduction, the author provides an excellent background on Dutch whaling and sealing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There can be no question about the substantial nature of the Dutch industry if it is realized that as early as 1721 there were some 258 ships employing 11,000 men setting sail each year for Spitsbergen and the Davis Straits alone. After the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, the nineteenth century would see an enormous growth in the Dutch whaling and sealing industry as the result of substantial government encouragement under the leadership of King Willem I (1815-1855). The Royal Government sought to stimulate the industry through a "Premium System" which provided a subsidy to Dutch entrepreneurs engaged in the trade. The activities of Dutch whalers were extended

to the South Seas and the Antarctic region which commands the author's attention. The profitability of the whaling and sealing industry from the Dutch perspective is discussed in detail with special reference to a number of Dutch companies whose records have survived. Upon the return of a Dutch whaler from a successful voyage the distribution of commodities and clients reveals who bought what in order to justify the industry. Remarkably, Schokkenbroek was able not just to explore major companies but to uncover substantial information on the lives of ordinary sailors engaged in the often arduous pursuit of whales and seals. All aspects of their lives and work are discussed in this work.

Several detailed appendices provide an overview of the Dutch involvement in the industry as well as crew lists, special references to the Nautical College in Harlingen, and the results of the auctions of whale and seal products in 1837-1838. The work concludes with a superb bibliography that represents an outstanding compliment to the study and will provide many future researchers with a solid foundation from which to pursue their studies.

Joost C.A. Schokkenbroek has produced a major contribution to maritime history in his *Trying-out, An Anatomy of Dutch Whaling and Sealing in the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1885*. There is no question that this book should be included in the orders for every significant library collection since it represents a monumental addition to the maritime literature of the subject and the period.

William Henry Flayhart III,
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Captain Ian Tew. *Salvage, A Personal Odyssey*. Rendlesham, Suffolk: Seafarer Books, , 2007. 293 pp., illustrations, maps, UK £ 19.95, US \$ 24.95, paper; ISBN US 978-1-57409-256-1.

“No Cure, No Pay,” those are the terms of the Lloyds Open Form of salvage agreement under which a salvor operates. When he takes on the onerous responsibility to salvage a ship, he receives nothing however much money, effort and sweat he puts into the job, if the elements or any other cause defeat him. Salvage is no business for the faint hearted. Captain Ian Tew joined Selco Salvage of Singapore in 1974, and *Salvage* is his account of the next ten or eleven years of his life spent largely in the busy waters of the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the Far East.

The author descends from a seafaring family. His grandfather, Cdr. R. D. Graham, was a renowned transatlantic sailor and his mother sailed across the Atlantic at the age of 88. Ian went to sea as a youth, joining the British India Steam Navigation Company. He was a junior cadet officer onboard the *Dara* when an extremist's bomb blew up the vessel in the Persian Gulf, leading to largest loss of life on a British ship in peacetime since the *Empress of Ireland* (not the *Titanic* as stated here): 238 people perished. It was a harsh introduction to the adult world. After obtaining his second mate's certificate, Tew served with the Ellerman Line and the Indo-China Steam Navigation Company before gaining his foreign-going master's certificate at age 25. He joined Selco six years later. Tew's years with Selco were, as he says, a personal odyssey during which he matured, gained experience, and learned the demanding salvage business before rising to command some of the world's supertugs.

The book's contents are arranged in

28 brief chapters organized into five parts. Each chapter deals with a single salvage job. Successes are recorded together with failures, tows and rescues. The first part deals with the author's salvaging apprenticeship. The second, third and fourth parts refer to three tugs he commanded while he worked his way up in the second largest salvage organization in the world, and finally the fifth part deals with his arrival at the pinnacle of his career as salvage master — someone who might command a fleet of tugs, barges, lightening ships or tankers during a single salvage operation. This required iron nerves and a good understanding of human nature both professionally and commercially, for always in the background was the “No Cure, No Pay” condition. No more firefighting foam in the Persian Gulf? Why, charter a jumbo jet and fly in a load from Europe — all in the belief in your own ability to complete the job and achieve success.

This is a vivid, action-packed account — an enormous barge laden with expensive oil drilling equipment adrift during a hurricane in the English Channel; a freighter aground on a reef in the South China Sea, hundreds of miles from land, with a tropical storm approaching; a coaster aground on a shoal on top of a group of wrecks whose masts poked up around her like skeletal fingers seeking to pull her down into the sea; a surf-battered trawler on a coral reef with her bottom ripped out; a supertanker loaded with 350,000 tons of crude oil aground; a Very Large Crude Carrier on fire, hit by a missile in the Persian Gulf during the Iraq-Iran war. When Captain Tew hauled the supertanker off a reef in the Persian Gulf it was the biggest tanker anywhere in the world to be re-floated without spilling a drop. The tugs play a big part in these stories, as do their

courageous Filipino officers, crews and divers, professionals to their fingertips. Professionalism is a prerequisite to survival in this game. The descriptions of the tugs, among the largest and most powerful in the world, are sufficiently to satisfy those interested in technology, but not so exhaustive as to discourage other readers. The same may be said of the manoeuvres employed in salving a crippled ship or casualty, as it is known in the business.

Captain Tew's attention to detail, such as weather conditions and accurate times and the sequence of events, mark him out as a professional mariner. His account is accompanied by simple line drawings to aid in understanding the complex manoeuvres of the tugs at work including how the tugs use winds, currents and tides to increase their towing power when hauling a ship off. The specialized language of deep-sea towing — pelican hook, nylon stretchers, fishplates, messenger, tow wire, forerunner, chain bridle and ground tackle — is carefully explained. This reviewer would have liked to learn more about the complicated business of laying out ground tackle, i.e. anchors to hold casualties while they are being pulled off. The dramas recounted pay tribute to the ships and men with whom Captain Tew worked. The scores of coloured photographs, telexes sent and received during operations, and excellent charts add immeasurably to comprehension. Captain Tew takes his readers inside the operations of a little-known branch of today's shipping industry. If there is one failing, it is the omission of an afterward, for the book ends too abruptly.

This is not a history, but a fascinating, real-life account. It is recommended to any one interested in the sea and all who go down in little boats. This is about a very special kind of

seamanship, about men who face up to danger and display courage and resourcefulness. It also provides plenty of insights into the commercial realities and human stories behind the headlines of maritime disasters. It makes great reading for both professional mariners who will recognize one of their own, for ship enthusiasts and even for armchair-bound historians.

James Pritchard
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Maik-Jens Springmann and Horst Wernicke (eds.). *Historical boat and ship replicas, Volume 2. Historical boat and ship replicas - conference-proceedings on the scientific perspectives and the limits of boat and ship replicas, Torgelow 2007*. Friedland, Germany: Steffen Verlag, www.steffen-verlag.de, 2008. 183 pp., illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography. € 24,80, cloth; ISBN 978-3-940101-25-9.

In 2006–2007, the European Union funded a cooperative project called Lagomar involving the partnership among museums in Germany, Poland, Russia and Lithuania. The emphasis was on the southern Baltic Sea lagoons, their nature and culture heritage and various perspectives on regional development (www.lagomar.de). As part of the collaboration, databases were developed, some replica ships were constructed and several conferences were held, the proceedings of which have either appeared or will appear.

While Volume 1 will be about maritime archaeology, GIS and museology, the current volume, Volume 2, is about boat and ship replicas in general. Volumes 3 and 4 will deal with one specific reconstruction project each, the Polish Klucz Niedamir

project and the German Uecker-Randow Cog, respectively. Up to the end of 2008, Volume 2 has been the only one published.

EU projects like Lagomar usually have to maintain a balance between political objectives and those of the share-holding (museum) partners. In a reconstruction project, numerous issues arise: science plays a role, as do traditional shipbuilding techniques and eventually, education and tourism. No single ship reconstruction project can be successful in meeting all these competing objectives.

The 25 papers in the present proceedings are divided over five chapters, each of them designed to answer a specific question. Where the first three chapters are aimed at archaeology, history and traditional crafts as sources for replica ship building, the last four papers attempt to satisfy political and tourist industry objectives. Making the effort to see the new ships from other perspectives is of important added value. Political and tourism-economic objectives are often the key reasons for generating the large investment required for such a project. Science usually takes a back seat, but no major project can go ahead without a scientific base. The present proceedings clearly prove that point since the core chapter concerning the scientific merits of the Lagomar project contains ten of the 25 papers.

The present proceedings are not intended to give a full overview of ship reconstructions undertaken in the past few decades, or even to offer an overview of the present situation. There are just too many projects going on worldwide for this. Instead, papers have been invited from archaeologists, historians, engineers and craftspeople. Clearly, these professions have evolved independently and only at conferences like this one at the Ukranenland

museum in Torgelow, Germany, in 2007, do they occasionally touch each other. Unfortunately, Scandinavia seems to be somewhat underrepresented in this volume, as is Russia. Germany, on the other hand, is overrepresented (one-third of the contributors) but that probably is due to the fact that the conference took place there. The conference was an attempt to start a European-wide network of replica ship projects, but although the proceedings reflect the many contacts initiated, no such umbrella group appears to have come into existence so far.

Some papers reflect decades of dedicated research and experience, others seem to be of more of a hypothetical nature. For example, when building full-scale replicas, how far can one trust small-scale ship models from the past, or depictions on rocks or in paintings? Where existing models do not suffice, can one safely use “common logic” or nautical architectural analyses to fill the gaps? Another difference becomes apparent when comparing chapters: some authors have ample references to their own and other work, while others, mainly in the last chapter on economics and tourism, unfortunately stand on weaker ground with no references at all. This is remarkable because even in these fields, much research has been undertaken and published. Perhaps the involvement of more mainstream professionals in the areas of tourism, marketing, finance and management would have strengthened this chapter. Unfortunately, the nature of such collaborative proceedings does not allow authors to really pursue their subject in depth.

To some extent, the different approaches in the first three chapters (sources of replicas, historical techniques and scientific influences, respectively) are not that clear. Some papers in chapter 3 which discusses scientific influences when

a model is built could just as well have been included in an earlier chapter, where the sources of such full-scale ship reconstructions are discussed, like the article about the Ebersdorfer Cog Model as base for a reconstruction (to be described in full in the 4th volume of the Lagomar series).

Seldom is the word “experiment” used in this book, and that is correct: a reconstructed ship in itself is not an experiment, and neither is the experience gained by constructing it. If the goal, however, was to reach beyond the simple ‘re-production’ of a vessel, albeit a unique one, and feed the knowledge acquired back to the original source, only then it would be an experiment in an archaeologically scientific sense. That the building of ships and boats based on historical or archaeological sources serves many other disciplines besides science, such as social history and economics, is one of the clear messages of this book. In his paper, Crumlin-Pedersen, for example, reflects on fundraising, public activities and meeting safety regulations as some of the challenges he and his colleagues had to master in order to sail the *Sea Stallion of Gwendallough* from Denmark to Ireland and back in 2007–2008. Their ship served as both a research project and a fund-raiser for future experimental and maritime reconstruction activities. Science as a source and as an outcome is one of several ‘modules,’ albeit an important one, in these multidisciplinary projects.

The bandwidth of proceedings contained in this volume is very wide: it is an accomplishment that the editors have been able to combine all these papers in one volume.

Roeland Paardekooper
Eindhoven, the Netherlands.

Freeman M. Tovell. *At the Far Reaches of Empire. The Life of Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra*. Vancouver, BC; University of British Columbia Press, www.ubcpress.ca, 2008. xvii + 463 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, glossary, chronology, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$ 85.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7748-13662.

A comprehensive look at the life of the great navigator Bodega y Quadra has long been needed for students of discoveries and explorations in the Pacific, principally the Northwest Coast of North America. That need has now been filled, and very admirably, in this labour of love by a retired Canadian ambassador and diplomat now living in Victoria, BC. Freeman Tovell's *magnum opus* had been brought into print by courtesy of the labour of his friend Robin Inglis, who has guided and aided many of us who work in the field of Northwest Coast history. The end result is a triumph, and a great tribute to the historical zeal of Freeman Tovell.

Capitán de Navío Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra was arguably the most important Spanish naval officer on the Northwest Coast during the eighteenth century. He lived in an era crowded with imperial rivalries, wars and threats of wars, and confusing identities and ideologies; it was also an era of cross-cultural encounters between Europeans and many different linguistic groups and tribes on that coast. At and near Nootka Sound, Bodega y Quadra had an enlightened policy toward the Nuu-chah-nulth; and his close association with Maquinna, their chief, is a matter of record. He had a long service on the Northwest Coast, and it suited his overarching ambition. He was not born in Spain, an apparent disadvantage to early promotion and renown. Bodega y Quadra

was a Peruvian Creole, a disadvantage in comparison to all those Spanish-born aristocrats whose entry to the officer corps of the Spanish Navy was axiomatic by virtue of genetic lottery. But he received high praise for his service from the Viceroy of New Spain. His ambition led him into ruinous debt. His 1775 voyage in the *Sonora*, and his subsequent voyage of 1779 were earlier northwards thrusts, but his employment as Spanish commissioner to Nootka to work out details there with Captain George Vancouver will always be central to his story. I found welcome the scholarly detachment that the author has shown on the subject of Spanish actions during the Nootka Sound crisis; this is often lacking in Spanish-centered work which tends to be terribly apologetic or self-justificatory. Tovell is brutally frank about Estibán Martínez and his heavy-handed actions against James Colnett, the abused British mariner. He is equally impartial in explaining how his subject was able in that same theatre of rivalry, trade and friendship — Friendly Cove, they called it — to entertain Vancouver sumptuously at table and yet, without rancour, hold firm on his diplomatic position. Would that all diplomatic differences could be solved over a bottle of *fino*. Subsequent explorations to determine the limits of discovery closed his guiding work for science and empire.

Throughout, the author has used all the best sources, both Spanish and British, and the work is a model of scholarship. It will be a valuable source for all future students to consult, and it takes its place beside that of Warren L. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven, 1973). Highly recommended.

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Birgitta Linderöth Wallace. *Westward Vikings. The Saga of L'Anse Aux Meadow*. St. John's, NL: Historic Sites Assoc. of Newfoundland and Labrador. www.historicsites.ca, 2008. 127 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, appendices, bibliography. CDN \$24.99, paper; ISBN 0-919735-09-6

Westward Vikings, The Saga of L'Anse Aux Meadow by Birgitta Linderöth Wallace is a genuine masterpiece about the Viking settlement site at L'Anse Aux Meadow in northern Newfoundland. The work shows great scholarship, is very well written, and is enhanced with a magnificent selection of illustrations, maps, and tables. The reviewer had the pleasure of visiting the site of the first Norse settlement in North America a few years ago. It would have greatly enriched the experience to have been able to devour such a superb archaeological and historical description before making the trip.

Wallace opens with a survey of the "Vinland Sagas" in an effort to show the place of Viking westward voyaging within the realm of early medieval literature. Such magnificent works as the "Erik the Red Saga," the "Greenlanders' Saga," and the "Leif Eriksson Saga" are presented in a particularly meaningful manner. The tales of ancient voyages of explorations and discovery come alive again after a thousand years and command the reader's attention.

The L'Anse Aux Meadow site is described and discussed in great detail. Both the principal early discoverers, as well as the twentieth-century archaeologists who rediscovered the settlement, receive appropriate recognition. The dedicated, if not heroic, efforts of Helge and Anne Stine Ingstad, first visited the site in 1960, and then began a life-long labour of love from 1961. Their exploratory excavations soon

revealed the enormous and complex nature of the ancient Norse settlement in North America. The work of the Ingstads over the next decades provided us with much of what we know about L'Anse Aux Meadow and significantly enriched our knowledge of this remarkable achievement.

The lay-out of the buildings on the site is described in detail with "hut profiles" and appropriate diagrams. The design and construction of the Norse buildings are well presented. Clearly they were built to withstand the harsh conditions of an Arctic winter with which the intrepid Viking voyagers were certainly familiar. The house furnishings represent highly creative and sophisticated use of natural resources, such as a birch-bark cup sewn with spruce roots.

Radiocarbon analysis of artifacts at the site provides archaeologists with a range of some 148 dates. The scientific process involved is described with enlightening detail, providing one of the best brief explanations of the radiocarbon method this reviewer has ever read. The end result reveals dates between 925 and 1025 with a detailed "Key to Norse Radiocarbon Dates" that enriches the section a great deal.

The vast majority of the Norse inhabitants of L'Anse Aux Meadow were men, conveying the impression that the site should be regarded as more of a "trading post" rather than any attempt at "colonization." These men were predominantly ship owners and their hired crews intent upon trade. The average population appears to have been between 65 and 90 individuals. Periodically, in May-June, some of the inhabitants of L'Anse aux Meadow undertook return voyages of some 2500 km to Greenland, or, in some cases much further to Iceland.

During the same period, there were also some exploratory trading expeditions down the North American coastline when it was hoped that weather and ocean conditions would be favourable.

L'Anse Aux Meadow was abandoned around 1025, simply because it was too far from Greenland, its population base was too small for successful colonization, and the native peoples turned out to be far more numerous and belligerent than originally thought. The author makes a forceful statement that L'Anse Aux Meadow represented a specific historical site in a much broader region known as "Vinland." The geographical term "Vinland" probably referred to the entire Gulf of St. Lawrence region, at a minimum.

Birgitta Linderoth Wallace has produced an outstanding work of both archaeology and history. Rarely has this reviewer read a book which he has found so appealing and enjoyable. Anyone even hoping to have the pleasure of visiting L'Anse Aux Meadow must have this essential work in order to get the most out of the experience. Those less fortunate in their travel plans will still find this work one to be savoured and treasured.

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Greg H. Williams. *World War II Naval and Maritime Claims against the United States: Cases in the Federal Court of Claims, 1937-1948*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, www.mcfarlandpub.com, 2006. v+194 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, index. US \$75.00, paperback; ISBN: 978-0-7864-2501-3.

Greg H. Williams strives to create a complete historical narrative out of the

many federal court cases filed against the United States during the Second World War. He presents a short survey of each war-related case brought to the American court of claims between the years 1937 and 1948. The cases represent Volumes 97-139 of cases decided in the U.S. Federal Court of Claims. In doing so, Williams provides a primer for anyone interested in learning about wartime legal jurisdiction and admiralty law. Although the author means well in attempting such a vast subject, readers cannot view the book as anything more than a briefing on these historical events, especially considering the amount of unreferenced information from a 'wide variety of sources,' as well as the disorganization inherent in each vignette. (p.1.)

The preface is a one-page memo that contains a note on sources and a general summary. From there Williams goes on to present each case in a standard format. He allows only a few pages to explain the details of what happened and why. Within these summaries he inserts a great number of statistical facts and long quotes, perhaps in an effort to support the validity of his narrative. Because the audience is left to assume where the facts originated and who recorded them, the importance of his statistics and quotes is somewhat devalued. Overall, the author is succinct, sparse and efficient. Better organization within each case study, however, would have added significantly to the narrative. The glaring lack of citations and his heavy incorporation of bulky block quotes create a muddled text that requires patience and skill to simply differentiate when Williams' analysis shifts to incorporate another aspect of the legal arguments.

The author tells the story from the singular position of the Federal Government — its actions and reactions to international

and domestic pressures building up with the encroaching world war. (p.3) The entire book then, becomes a defensive argument against the many private companies seeking reparations for their help during the periods before, during and after American involvement in the Second World War.

The few appendices are a mixed bag concerning overall effectiveness in understanding the material presented. The first and second appendices — “Shipping Terms” and “Acts of the United States Congress” — are important inclusions because they aid those not experienced with nautical terms. The appendix entitled “Acts of the U.S. Congress” also aids readers unfamiliar with the legislative statutes by providing the original source material. Conversely, the third appendix relates to one specific case, the *John Lykes*. The *John Lykes* case study brings to light not only a specific ship that aided in the removal of thousands of American citizens and prisoners of war from the Philippines, but also of those citizens who secretly aided prisoners of war in Camp O’Donnell. Although the stories of such citizens are interesting, the addition of an appendix containing a detailed list of items one such citizen sold to aid the military is not necessary. The chart showing the number of goods Miss Utinsky sold in 1943 could have fared much better within the five pages that mention her.

Williams’ *World War II Naval and Maritime Claims against the United States* has the potential to be an interesting book on the subject of early-twentieth-century American admiralty and legislative law in light of the Second World War. In its place, however, is something akin to a pamphlet. Williams provides just enough information to spark interest, but leaves the reader unequivocally adrift because the book lacks depth. In order to understand the entire

event, readers of this book must search elsewhere to place the information in a meaningful context. Overall, while the book is a good supplement or quick reference, its lack of a full narrative means it falls short of being useful to the casual researcher.

Greg Williams served in the United States Navy for four years before settling in Oregon. Since then, he has published two books with similar subject matter: *Civil War Suits in the U.S. Court of Claims* in 2006, and *Civil and Merchant Encounters with United States Navy Ships, 1800-2000*, in 2002.

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Richard Woodman. *The Battle of the River Plate: A Grand Delusion*. Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, www.navalinstitute.org, 2008. 164 pp., illustrations, maps, Roll of Honour, bibliography, index. US \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-040-5.

This book is the latest in the publisher’s “Campaign Chronicles” series and the first to examine a modern naval battle. It is a fresh look, by a noted maritime historian and author, at a well-known and seemingly critical clash that occurred very early in the Second World War.

The engagement between the German *panzerschiffe* or “armoured ship,” *Admiral Graf Spee* (popularly, if erroneously, labelled a “pocket battleship” by the British at the time), and the British cruisers *Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles* was fought in the South Atlantic during the day and into the late evening of 13 December 1939. It took place off the entrance to the wide estuary of the Rio de la Plata and

close to the coast of Uruguay (the name for the battle comes from the British appellation for the river, since in Spanish, *plata* means silver). Just before midnight, the *Graf Spee* anchored in the neutral harbour of Montevideo and remained there until 17 December, when she proceeded seawards and was scuttled in the estuary by her crew.

The British rejoiced in their victory. It was perceived, and spun by the propaganda machine, as a great naval feat in the grand Nelsonian tradition — the mighty Royal Navy vanquishing the latest in Nazi technology. Furthermore, it was a tremendous boost to civilian morale in Britain. The British commander, Commodore Henry Harwood, was knighted and promoted to rear-admiral.

The book focuses less on the actual battle and more on the story of the final voyage of the *Graf Spee*. Woodman's chronology takes the reader from 5 August 1939 through to the ship's final moments at sunset on 17 December. The first date marked the departure of the naval support tanker *Altmark*, loaded with naval stores, food and ammunition, bound from Germany for Port Arthur, Texas, to load 9,400 tons of diesel fuel. The stores, food, ammunition and fuel were specifically intended for the support of the commerce-raiding operations of the *Graf Spee*. *Altmark* would later earn its own place in naval history.

Graf Spee departed from Wilhelmshaven on 21 August 1939 and reached the North Atlantic undetected by the Royal Navy. By 29 August, it had made a *rendezvous* with *Altmark* to top up fuel and supplies and the two ships proceeded in company into the South Atlantic. It was not until 30 September that *Graf Spee* first fired its guns in anger to sink a British merchantman. From then until 7 December,

the *panzerschiffe* would roam the South Atlantic, with a brief foray into the Indian Ocean, all the while sinking nine British merchant ships and making prisoners of their crews.

The author describes each encounter in detail. He has used eye-witness accounts extensively which adds to the authenticity of the chronology. A significant focus is on Captain Hans Langsdorff of *Graf Spee*. Much has been written about the raider's somewhat enigmatic commander, in particular, his reputation as a humane warrior and his courteous treatment of the merchant sailors who became his prisoners. Woodman explores this aspect of the story, especially the rapport that developed between the German captain and some of the shipmasters who became his captives. The author also deals neatly with an issue which became a hot topic after Langsdorff had committed suicide — was he a dedicated Nazi?

The author's sympathetic concentration on Langsdorff and his personality is balanced to a certain extent by the biographical treatment of the key British players, notably Commodore Henry Harwood.

The second half of the book deals with the events leading up to the actual battle. The extent of the Admiralty effort to locate the German raider and then bring adequate forces to bear is described in detail. The signals intelligence, known as Ultra, that later helped the British win the war at sea, was of little help at this early stage of the war and it was only the trail of sunken ships that gave any clue as to *Graf Spee's* general whereabouts. This, coupled with Commodore Harwood's often inspired assessment of Langsdorff's probable course of action, led the three British cruisers to

find him.

The author deals with the actual fighting phase in a concise and effective way. He shows how the “fog of war” played its part in influencing Langsdorff’s thinking about the size and composition of the force opposing him. Even late into the engagement, the German captain thought he was facing much stronger forces than he really was and this eventually influenced his decisions about internment in Uruguay and the scuttling of *Graf Spee*.

The last two chapters deal with the aftermath of the events and include an analysis by the author. Richard Woodman astutely observes that the later dramatic and daring capture of the *Altmark* in a Norwegian fiord and the release of her merchant-mariner prisoners, all victims of *Graf Spee*’s guns, did more for the image of the Royal Navy in the eyes of the British public than did the battle itself. He also points out the delusion of the victory for the British in that it reinforced the orthodox view of the German naval threat — an orthodoxy that would be rudely overturned as the U-boat campaign gained strength.

As is to be expected from Richard Woodman, this book is well-written and researched. Woodman has a crisp style which makes for an easy read. The photographs and illustrations are excellent and the use of insets for sidebar commentaries and biographies is effective. It is a very interesting new look at an historic battle which still has fascination today and would be a welcome addition to any library.

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