

The Royal Navy and the War at Sea: a bibliography

General works and grand strategy

Roskill's four book official history still dominates the historiography of the Royal Navy's war at sea: either influencing historians' analysis, or more recently serving as a spur for revisionist interpretations. Barnett's history of the Royal Navy in the war is a more digestible single volume history, though still dependent on many of Roskill's sources and research materials. Redford is a more recent and much shorter overview. Three recent general histories of the Second World War at sea: Murfett, Symonds and Mawdsley, include much material on the Royal Navy's war, and place it within the context of the wider war at sea. Brown is a study of naval relations between two allies in the first months of the war. Bell provides an important analysis of Churchill's attitude towards sea power and his influence on its strategy and operations. Brodhurst is a biography of the Royal Navy's professional head in the first four years of the war, whilst Cunningham is the autobiography of its professional head in the last two. Simpson's work is an edition of Cunningham's private papers and official correspondence including his period as First Sea Lord. Faulkner and Rohwer are both useful works of reference. Gray, in a chapter which forms part of a much broader book, provides a succinct overview of the significance of the sea power in that war. O'Brien seeks to challenge the contemporary historical focus on land warfare in the Second World War, arguing that the air-sea war was much more important. Smith analyses the importance of 'logistics diplomacy' within the US-British alliance.

Barnett, Corelli, *Engage the Enemy More Closely: The Royal Navy in the Second World War* (London, 1991)

Bell, Christopher, *Churchill and Sea Power* (Oxford, 2012)

Brodhurst, Robin, *Churchill's Anchor, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound* (London, 2000)

Brown, David, *The Road to Oran: Anglo-French Naval Relations September 1939-July 1940* (London, 2004)

Cunningham, A. B., *A Sailor's Odyssey* (London, 1951)

Faulkner, Marcus, *War at Sea, A Naval Atlas 1939-45* (Barnsley, 2012)

Gray, Colin, *The Leverage of Sea Power* (New York, 1992)

Mawdsley, Evan, *The War for the Seas: A Maritime History of World War II* (Yale, 2019)

Murfett, Malcolm, *Naval Warfare 1919-1945: An Operational History of the Volatile War at Sea* (Basingstoke, 2009)

O'Brien, Phillips Payson, *How the War was Won* (Cambridge, 2015)

Redford, Duncan, *The History of the Royal Navy: World War II* (London, 2014)

Rohwer, J. and G. Hummelchen, *Chronology of the War at Sea* (2nd edn., London, 1992)

Roskill, Stephen, *The War at Sea, 1939-45* (3 volumes in 4 parts, London, 1954-1961)

Simpson, Michael, ed., *The Cunningham Papers Volume II: The Triumph of Allied Sea Power 1942-46* (Aldershot, 2006)

Smith, Kevin, *Conflict over Convoys: Anglo-American Logistics Diplomacy in the Second World War* (Cambridge 1996)

Symonds, Craig, *World War II at Sea, a Global History* (Oxford, 2018)

Home Waters, Northern Waters and the Atlantic

Haarr (2013) provides a detailed account of the first months of the War at Sea making considerable use of German as well as British sources. Levy is a history of a neglected force, the Home Fleet, and its operations during the war. Brown is a re-print of the Admiralty staff history of the Norway campaign with a new introduction. Kiszely is a detailed analysis of the British failure in Norway, from a tri-service and strategic perspective, whilst Haarr (2009) and (2010) provides a comprehensive account of naval operations, which again make much use of non-British sources. Gardner is a re-print of the Admiralty staff history of the evacuations at Dunkirk. Sebag-Montefiore is a broad-ranging account of the land campaigns leading to Dunkirk and the evacuation itself. Mace consists of extracts from reports of proceedings and other reports by Royal Navy officers involved in the evacuations. Grove's volumes are compilations of Admiralty staff histories covering operations against German surface raiders and major ships, plus two interrogation reports from survivors of the sinking of the Tirpitz and Scharnhorst. Llewellyn-jones is a further staff history, this time of the Arctic Convoys. Goulter analyses the RAF's bombing offensives against German shipping in northern waters.

Brown, David, ed. *Naval Operations of the Campaign in Norway, April-June 1940* (London, 2000)

Gardner, W. J. R., ed. *The Evacuation from Dunkirk: Operation Dynamo, 26 May-4 June 1940* (London, 1998)

Goulter, Christina, *A Forgotten Offensive: Royal Air Force Coastal Command's Anti-Shipping Campaign, 1940-1945* (London, 1995)

Grove, Eric, ed. *German Capital Ships and Raiders in World War II, Volume I: From Graf Spee to Bismarck, 1939-1941* (London, 2002)

Grove, Eric, ed. *German Capital Ships and Raiders in World War II, Volume II: From Scharnhorst to Tirpitz, 1942-1944* (London, 2002)

Haarr, Geirr H., *The German Invasion of Norway, April 1940* (Barnsley, 2009)

Haarr, Geirr H., *The Battle for Norway, April-June 1940* (Barnsley, 2010)

Haarr, Geirr H., *The Gathering Storm: The Naval War in Northern Europe, September 1939-April 1940* (Barnsley, 2013)

Kiszely, John, *Anatomy of a Campaign: the British Fiasco in Norway, 1940* (Cambridge, 2017)

Levy, James P., *The Royal Navy's Home Fleet in World War II* (Basingstoke, 2003)

Llewellyn-Jones, Malcolm, ed., *The Royal Navy and the Arctic Convoys* (Abingdon, 2007)

Mace, Martin, ed., *The Royal Navy at Dunkirk* (Barnsley, 2017)

Sebag-Montefiore, Hugh, *Dunkirk: Fight to the Last Man* (London, 2006)

The campaign against the U-Boat in the Atlantic

Barley and Waters is the British staff history of the Battle of the Atlantic, reprinted with a new introduction by Eric Grove by the Navy Records Society. Hessler, a former German naval staff officer, was commissioned by the British Admiralty to provide the perspective from U-Boat Command. Syrett (1994) analyses the final defeat of the U Boat wolf packs in 1943, whilst his later work (2002) is a

collection of intelligence reports derived from Ultra relevant to the Battle of the Atlantic. Gardner (1999) analyses in detail the significance of Ultra to defeating the U-Boat campaign. Milner provides a history of the campaign from the Canadian perspective, the first volume (1985) covering the period up to middle of 1943, and the second (1994) the period to the end of the war. Llewellyn-Jones (2006) primarily analyses the British response to German technological advances and tactical doctrine from 1944 and into the post-war years. Haslop is a comparative history of planning, training and the implementation of lessons learnt by both the British and Germans. Buckley's history covers the RAF's contribution to defeating the U-Boats, and Waddington analyses the importance of operational research techniques in the RAF's battles against the U-Boat.

Barley, F., and D. Waters, *The Defeat of the Enemy Attack on Shipping* (Aldershot, 1997)

Buckley, John, *The RAF and Trade Defence 1919-1945: Constant Endeavour* (Keele, 1995)

Gardner, W. J. R., *Decoding History, the Battle of the Atlantic and Ultra* (Basingstoke, 1999)

Haslop, Dennis, *Britain, Germany and the Battle of the Atlantic: A Comparative Study* (London, 2013)

Hessler, Gunther, *The U-Boat War in the Atlantic* (London, 1989)

Llewellyn-Jones, Malcolm, *The Royal Navy and Anti-Submarine Warfare, 1917-49* (Abingdon, 2006)

Milner, Marc, *North Atlantic Run: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle for the Convoys* (Toronto, 1985)

Milner, Marc, *The U-Boat Hunters: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Offensive against Germany's Submarines* (Annapolis, 1994)

Syrett, David, *The Defeat of the German U-Boats: The Battle of the Atlantic* (Columbia, SC, 1994)

Syrett, David, ed. *The Battle of the Atlantic and Signals Intelligence* (Aldershot, 2002)

Waddington, C. H., *OR in World War 2: Operational Research Against the U Boat* (London, 1973)

The Mediterranean

This theatre is well served by Admiralty staff histories, with Brown being a re-print of the two completed volumes of the theatre staff history, Llewellyn-Jones the staff histories covering the Malta Convoys, and Harrold the battle summary of the Battle of Cape Matapan. Simpson's (1999) edited collection contains the papers of the Royal Navy's Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean up to 1943. Simpson's (1996) collection contains the edited papers of Admiral Somerville, Commander of the Gibraltar-based 'Force H' from 1940 to 1942. Greene and Massignani is a comprehensive history of the naval campaign between the Royal Navy and the Italian Navy, providing an important Italian perspective to the campaign. Tomblin's history covers US and British forces in the Mediterranean during the later period when naval support for amphibious landings dominated operations.

Brown, David, ed., *The Royal Navy and the Mediterranean* (2 volumes, London, 2002)

Simpson, Michael, ed., *The Somerville Papers* (Aldershot, 1996)

Simpson, Michael, ed., *The Cunningham Papers Volume I: The Mediterranean Fleet 1939-1942* (Aldershot, 1999)

Greene, Jack and Alessandro Massignani, *The Naval War in the Mediterranean, 1940-43* (London, 1998)

Harrold, J. E., ed., *Dark Seas: The Battle of Cape Matapan* (Plymouth, 2012)

Llewellyn-Jones, Malcolm, ed., *The Royal Navy and the Mediterranean Convoys* (Abingdon, 2007)

Tomblin, Barbara Brooks, *With Utmost Spirit: Allied Naval Operations in the Mediterranean 1942-1945* (Lexington KT, 2004)

War in the East

Goldingham's work is the multi-volume staff history and provides a comprehensive account of British naval operations in this theatre. Gill and Waters are the official histories for Australia and New Zealand respectively, and both range more widely than East Asia covering all significant operations by the RAN and RNZN. Both Boyd and Britts assess British naval strategy up to 1942, the former coming to significant new conclusions. Middlebrook and Mahoney remains the standard account of the loss of Force Z at the start of the Pacific War. Simpson's edited volume published by the Navy Records Society, includes Somerville's papers from his time as Commander in Chief Eastern Fleet from 1942 to 1944. Hobbs' and Robb Webb's accounts of the Pacific Fleet cover the same subject but in very different ways: the former is an operational and tactical narrative history, whilst the latter is a thematic analysis with considerable material on the early post-war period.

Boyd, Andrew, *The Royal Navy in Eastern Waters: Linchpin of Victory 1935-1942* (Barnsley, 2017)

Britts, Angus, *Neglected Skies: The Demise of British Naval Power in the Far East 1922-42* (Annapolis, 2017)

Gill, G. H., *Australia in the War of 1939-1945: Royal Australian Navy* (2 Volumes, Canberra, 1957-69)

Goldingham, A., *The War with Japan* (6 volumes, London, 1995)

Hobbs, David, *The British Pacific Fleet: The Royal Navy's most Powerful Strike Force* (Barnsley, 2011)

Middlebrook, Martin and Patrick Mahoney, *Battleship: the Loss of the Prince of Wales and the Repulse* (London, 1977)

Robb Webb, Jon, *The British Pacific Fleet: Experience and Legacy, 1944-1950* (Farnham, 2013)

Simpson, Michael, ed., *The Somerville Papers* (Aldershot, 1996)

Waters, S. D., *The Official History of the Second World War: The Royal New Zealand Navy* (Wellington, 1956)

Landings in France and North-West Europe

Invasion Europe is a publication by the British government combining three Admiralty staff histories: the Normandy landings (Operation Neptune), the invasion of South West France (Operation Dragoon), and the campaign in North-West Europe (including Operation Infatuate, the landings at Walcheren). In comprehensiveness it is still the standard account of the British naval side of these amphibious operations. Symonds is a recent account of Neptune, largely from the US perspective.

Brown, David, ed., *Invasion Europe* (London, 1994)

Symonds, Craig L., *Neptune: The Allied Invasion of Europe and the D-Day Landings* (Oxford, 2014)

Submarine warfare

The campaign against German U-Boats is reviewed above, but British submarine warfare had been a relatively neglected area. Hezlet's limited print-run account is a comprehensive narrative history, Haarr focusses on the first year of the war, whilst Redford is wider-ranging cultural history of submarines in the twentieth century. An Admiralty Staff History of submarine warfare remains unpublished but is available at the UK National Archives in ADM 234/380 to 382.

Haarr, Geirr H., *No Room for Mistakes: British and Allied Submarine Warfare 1939-40* (Barnsley, 2015)

Hezlet, Arthur, *British and Allied Submarine Operations in World War II* (2 Volumes, Gosport, 2001)

Redford, Duncan, *The Submarine: A Cultural History from the Great War to Nuclear Combat* (London, 2010)

Naval Aviation

Till was the first detailed academic study in this area since the Admiralty staff histories of naval aviation (which remain unpublished but are available at the UK National Archives in ADM 234/383 and 384). Brown is a thorough operational history, whilst Jones is a selection of documents published for the Navy Records Society: the two volumes published so far reach to the end of 1943. Approximately half of Gates and Jones covers the Second World War and is an overview of the history of maritime air from both a land-based and sea-based context. Buckley and Goulter review the RAF's involvement in two separate maritime air campaigns.

Brown, David, *Carrier Operations in World War II* (Barnsley, 2009)

Buckley, John, *The RAF and Trade Defence 1919-1945: Constant Endeavour* (Keele, 1995)

Gates, David and Ben Jones, *Air Power in the Maritime Environment: The World Wars* (Basingstoke, 2016)

Goulter, Christina, *A Forgotten Offensive: Royal Air Force Coastal Command's Anti-Shipping Campaign, 1940-1945* (London, 1995)

Ben Jones, ed., *The Fleet Air Arm in the Second World War* (2 volumes, Basingstoke, 2016, 2018)

Till, Geoffrey, *Air Power and the Royal Navy 1914-1945: A Historical Survey* (London, 1979)

Social histories and alternative perspectives

The last two decades have seen the emergence of naval histories of the Second World War that move beyond the operational accounts that dominated the first half century after the conflict ended. McKee's book was the first to appear, offering a history based on oral accounts and questionnaires held by the Imperial War Museum. Lavery's three books then followed as more general social histories. Prysor's history is a narrative of the Second World War at sea inter-woven with first-hand accounts of the conflict. Stanley and Spence are volumes in the National Museum of the Royal Navy's History of the Royal Navy series, each providing surveys of different thematic areas. Redford's book is one of the first works to apply a cultural historical approach to modern naval warfare.

Lavery, Brian, *Hostilities Only: Training the Wartime Royal Navy* (London, 2004)

Lavery, Brian, *In Which They Served: The Royal Navy Officer Experience in the Second World War* (London, 2008)

Lavery, Brian, *All Hands: The Lower Deck of the Royal Navy since 1939* (London, 2012)

McKee, Christopher, *Sober Men and True: Sailor Lives in the Royal Navy 1900-1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002)

Pryor, Glyn, *Citizen Sailors: The Royal Navy in the Second World War* (London, 2011)

Redford, Duncan, *The Submarine: A Cultural History from the Great War to Nuclear Combat* (London, 2010)

Stanley, Jo, *A History of the Royal Navy: Women and the Royal Navy* (London, 2017)

Spence, Daniel Own, *A History of the Royal Navy: Empire and Imperialism* (London: 2015)

Materiel

Friedman's many volumes provide thorough histories of the naval procurement of ships and weaponry, placed in the context of naval policy, strategy, technology and operations of the time. Brown is a history of warship design from the perspective of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors, the Admiralty's naval architects. Moore is a detailed account of the Navy's shipbuilding programmes during the war.

Brown, D. K., *Nelson to Vanguard: Warship Design and Development 1923-1945* (London, 2000)

Friedman, Norman, *British Destroyers and Frigates: The Second World War and After* (Barnsley, 2006)

Friedman, Norman, *Naval Firepower: Battleship Guns and Gunnery in the Dreadnought Era* (Barnsley, 2008)

Friedman, Norman, *British Cruisers: Two World Wars and After* (Barnsley, 2012)

Friedman, Norman, *Naval Anti-aircraft Guns and Gunnery* (Barnsley, 2013)

Friedman, Norman, *The British Battleship 1906-1946* (Barnsley, 2015)

Friedman, Norman, *Fighters over the Fleet: Naval Air Defence from biplanes to the Cold War* (Barnsley, 2016)

Friedman, Norman, *British Submarines in Two World Wars* (Barnsley, 2019)

Moore, George, *Building for Victory: The Warship Building Programmes of the Royal Navy* (Gravesend, 2003)

Intelligence

Hinsley's multi-volume official history of intelligence in the Second World War includes much material on naval intelligence, in particular on Ultra and its importance. Gardner seeks to move the balance away from claiming too much for Ultra's role in winning the Battle of the Atlantic, whilst Beesly is a history of the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre, from a former staff officer at that centre. Bath adds an important US perspective to trans-Atlantic naval intelligence co-operation.

Beesly, Patrick, *Very Special Intelligence* (London, 1977)

Bath, Alan Harris, *Tracking the Axis Enemy: The Triumph of Anglo-American Naval Intelligence* (Lawrence, KS, 1998)

Gardner, W. J. R., *Decoding History, the Battle of the Atlantic and Ultra* (Basingstoke, 1999)

Hinsley, F. H. et al, *History of the Second World War: British Intelligence in the Second World War* (5 volumes, London, 1979-1990)