

1990

## The RCN in Transition, 1910-1985

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tently cut into a fuel tank with their torches.

The author, a police officer and naval history buff, has made a few slips that should have been caught in the editing. At one point he identifies the *Deutschland* and *Bremen* as *U-200* and *U-201*; these were merely code names for the merchant submarine project. Later subs actually carried these numbers. Elsewhere he describes Captain Hansen of the Norwegian SS *Benguela* as a "British merchant officer" and refers to the "transport" *Lucia* as both SS and USS. (The *Lucia* was a cargo ship operated by the U.S. Army and taken over by the Navy, but sunk by the *U-155* before being commissioned.) Some of Messimer's technical descriptions are a bit weak, and on page 189 he misidentifies a UC-type minelayer as a UB-class boat. There are also a few gaps and loose ends in the narrative. Some information, such as the exact nature of the *Deutschland's* cargo on her voyage to New London, may not be available, but the details of her second war patrol as *U-155* could easily have been provided. The reader may also question whether some of the conversations (quoted verbatim) actually occurred, although they seem realistic enough in context. These are all minor flaws that do not detract from the basic quality of the book. The only serious omission is the failure to include outline drawings showing the ship's internal layout as either a cargo carrier or a warship. In all other respects the book is a useful and informative

history of one of the most unusual submarine developments of World War I.

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Douglas, W.A.B., ed. *The RCN in Transition, 1910-1985*. Vancouver, B.C.: The University of British Columbia Press, 1988. 411pp.

Edited by W. A. B. Douglas, official historian of the Department of National Defence in Ottawa, this collection of essays was published to mark the Canadian Navy's 75th birthday that occurred in 1985. The essays were written on time—but publishing is a slow process.

The period under review was a time of considerable change and naval development in the midst of intermittent political controversy—controversy which initially gave birth to the Royal Canadian Navy. Such controversy, at times, still appears to pursue that navy (now called the "Maritime Command" of the Canadian Armed Forces).

Dealing with the principal theme of "The Canadian Navy in the Modern World," the essays examine the importance of naval considerations to Canadian and North American national security interests. The close interplay of Canadian and American naval concerns, and Canada's "special relationship" with the United States is clearly demonstrated in most of the essays. The books also describe how Canada's

various military alliances have in turn influenced the development of Canadian naval forces.

Though military historians have made us aware of the outstanding calibre of the Canadian troops in the field who fought with such tenacity and courage at Vimy Ridge and in the 1918 offensives, the importance, quality and impact of Canada's naval forces are not well known. This book is, therefore, a welcome counterweight to a tendency, all too common among some Canadians, to underplay their own international significance. For example, Roger Sarty, in his essay, points out that during World War II, because of the effort made by the Canadians, Britain was not required to divert even one major antisubmarine warship from the strategically critical eastern Atlantic to protect either Canada's east coast or the shores off Newfoundland. Also, over the years, Canada has made her own contributions to the exercise of naval power in North American waters, as Professor Paul Kennedy of Yale University describes in his essay on the question of naval mastery.

Donald M. Schurman, formerly of the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario, suggests how the study of naval history can improve strategic military planning. He stresses in particular the wisdom of having and recognizing alternatives and of making the most of what is available and possible. In a time of economic restraint and doing more with less by all governments, this

advice seems especially appropriate in any decision-making context.

This collection is a useful, readable and welcome addition to the study of the Canadian Navy.

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Stewart, Richard A. *Sunrise at Abadan: The British and Soviet Invasion of Iran, 1941*. New York: Praeger, 1988. 291pp. \$42.95

This is a thorough look at the tactical, strategic and political aspects of the jointly planned Anglo-Soviet occupation of Iran in August 1941.

Richard Stewart first tells us about outsiders' efforts since the 18th century to gain influence in Iran, about Iran's gradual establishment of ties to Nazi Germany, and about the effect of the April 1941 Arab revolt which hardened British attitudes toward the region. However, most of the book is dedicated, detailed accounts of Reza Shah Pahlavi's attempt to preserve his Axis tie, while forestalling an invasion, to the Anglo-Soviet invasions which came anyway, and to their aftereffects. Stewart also includes some thoughts on the strategic and moral issues involved in neutral rights.

There was a four-way tug over the future of Iran. First, the Shah tried to balance the Soviets against the British, and then tried to balance both against Nazi Germany. He failed. Second, the Germans attempted to undermine the British South-