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A New Force at Sea: George Dewey and the Rise of the American Navy

Ryan Wadle

David A. Smith

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creating an atmosphere reminiscent of a dramatic television episode, complete with elements of deception, discovery, and impending danger.

As the narrative of the rival spies unravels, the authors delve into the difficulties experienced by innocent residents of Honolulu, such as Douglas Wada's father, amid the wartime anti-Japanese sentiment and the establishment of internment camps. The authors seamlessly weave personal anecdotes into the broader backdrop of the main characters' efforts to shield Hawaii from succumbing to the same harmful mass internments of Japanese Americans witnessed on the mainland United States.

The historical perspective presented in *Ghosts of Honolulu* is not only informative but also thought-provoking. By exploring the nuanced layers of the key players, readers acquire an authentic understanding of the decisions made in a previously untold chapter of World War II history. The commendable character development in this work brings unsung heroes of U.S. intelligence to life, offering readers a deeper insight into the human aspects of war. The authors adeptly navigate the complexities of espionage and military intelligence, crafting a narrative that is extremely engaging.

This work exhibits a multitude of strengths, and among them is the vivid depiction of the high-stakes game of naval intelligence. The book addresses the broader implications of the intelligence operations depicted, showcasing the resilience and dedication of American patriots who worked tirelessly to protect their country while upholding its highest ideals. The themes of patriotism, sacrifice, and

the quest for truth permeate the story, resonating with readers on a visceral level. Moreover, this work sheds light on the origins of investigative techniques used by NCIS, with the different investigations employed during the war laying the groundwork for the organization as it stands today. The postwar realization of the need to distinguish between what is real and what is not led to the restructuring of the organization into the NCIS of the present day.

Ghosts of Honolulu is a masterfully crafted piece by debut author Mark Harmon. The work not only educates readers on the intricacies of naval intelligence during World War II but also captivates them with its rich storytelling. Harmon and Carroll have succeeded in presenting a compelling, historically accurate narrative. The book provides even more insight into a sector of World War II that is not as well-known as others, establishing a tremendous introduction with plans to continue exploring the inception and implementation of NCIS in future works.

GREG RODRIGUE



A New Force at Sea: George Dewey and the Rise of the American Navy, by David A. Smith. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2023. 376 pages. \$44.95.

George Dewey occupies a unique position in American naval history. An officer who served a remarkable fifty-eight years on active duty that bridged the Civil War era and the height of the steel and steam era, he commanded the Navy's Asiatic Squadron to a lopsided victory at the Battle of

Manila Bay in the Spanish-American War and became the only career naval officer to seriously be considered as a presidential candidate. Despite this record of accomplishment, he remains a relatively understudied figure with less than a handful of serious biographies having been produced on his career. David Smith's *A New Force at Sea* simultaneously fills an important gap in the literature on George Dewey and serves the history of the expansion of American naval power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Prior to the publication of *A New Force at Sea*, Ronald Spector's *Admiral of the New Empire: The Life and Career of George Dewey* (1974) long has been regarded as the best Dewey biography, and it remains an excellent work of scholarship. Smith's biography complements Spector's and adds critical details on Dewey's early life and personality. By far Smith's most significant contribution is his complex portrait of Dewey the man, and not just Dewey the naval officer. Growing up in a comfortably upper-class family in Vermont, Dewey lost his mother while he was in childhood, which, Smith contends, produced a family dynamic that contributed to emotionally stunted behavior that recurred throughout his life as well as to Dewey's general lack of discipline. Dewey's problems with discipline disappeared during his time at the nascent Naval Academy of the antebellum period, and he dramatically improved his class standing by the time of his graduation. Later, during the Civil War, Dewey's service under Admiral David Farragut proved extremely influential, with Dewey seeking to emulate Farragut's leadership qualities, including his attention to detail, embrace of new technologies,

and acceptance of personal risk in times of danger. Fortunately for Dewey, his meritorious service during the Civil War advanced him up the ranks high enough that the post-Civil War stagnation of officer promotions merely slowed Dewey's career advancement, instead of ending it. His command of the Asiatic Squadron both before and during the Battle of Manila Bay reveals an officer well prepared for the strains of command and ultimately who thrived when put to the test in battle against the Spanish fleet. The victory, however, led to several months on station that taxed Dewey's abilities, with him having to balance fending off potential naval and diplomatic challenges to control of the bay and islands and interacting with Filipino leaders such as Emilio Aguinaldo all while being at the far end of Washington's reach. In the end, by the time Dewey departed Manila, he had decided that American control of the islands was preferable to granting independence to the Filipinos.

Even as the narrative builds toward Manila Bay and its immediate aftermath, Smith continues to provide insights into Dewey's personal life and behavior. He paints a portrait of Dewey as a charming man blessed with a dapper sense of style and personal social graces that drew attention from those around him. His first marriage ended tragically with the death of his wife, Susan, days after giving birth to their son, George, in 1872. The strains of service and perhaps the effects of Dewey's childhood led Dewey to leave his young son in the care of his wife's family for many years. Dewey eventually remarried in 1899, with Mildred Hazen of Washington, DC, and their sometimes-troubled marriage was caught in the wake of Dewey's public fame in the years after his victory at Manila Bay. Smith outlines

numerous examples of how Dewey's success became a cultural phenomenon, leading to parades, the writing of songs, memorials, and even advertisements for products that Dewey never endorsed. Yet, as Smith relates, Dewey struggled to manage his image, leading to an awkward public controversy after he transferred to his wife ownership of a home that public donations had bought for him in 1899. Seemingly overnight, an adoring public turned on Dewey, although the flap was forgotten quickly. Still, Dewey's brief presidential campaign in 1900 was notably half-hearted and awkward, and he sometimes grew defensive of his record, particularly his management of the Philippines in the months after Manila Bay before U.S. occupation forces arrived.

Smith provides ample coverage of Dewey's life throughout the volume, but his emphasis on Dewey's career largely ebbs after narrating the admiral's command of the U.S. fleet during the winter 1902–1903 maneuvers that President Theodore Roosevelt sought to use as a deterrent against German encroachment in the Western Hemisphere. Dewey continued to serve as president of both the Navy's General Board and also the Joint Army-Navy Board until his death in 1917, but these years of largely institutional service are covered relatively briefly. Readers more interested in Dewey's twilight years will still be better served by Spector's volume.

This gap in coverage aside, Smith has provided audiences with a thorough and engaging study of George Dewey's life and career that takes care to examine Dewey as a man, a naval officer, and a prominent public figure of his day. It not only adds to the scholarly record of Dewey and the U.S. Navy during the

period but also makes for a stimulating read for the general public.

RYAN WADLE



Spanish Warships in the Age of Sail, 1700–1860: Design, Construction, Careers and Fates, by Rif Winfield et al. Barnsley, U.K.: Seaforth, 2023. 392 pages. \$100.

Sometimes, research projects take you deep into the weeds of your subject; if you are trying to put yourself in the shoes of a participant in an obscure engagement, or if you are writing a historical novel, you might urgently need to know precisely when the *Santa Águeda* thirty-four-gun frigate of 1775 was in service. You might also need to know its length, beam, and details of its armament, or who its builder was, or what happened when it underwent a major refit. If you find yourself in a situation like that, this is the book for you. The final three hundred pages consist of a reference guide to every ship in the Spanish navy. As the subtitle says, each entry covers the ship's design, construction, career, and fate.

There is good scholarship in the reference entries. Take, for example, the entry on one of the largest ships in the age of sail, *Santísima Trinidad*. The authors explain that it initially was built in 1767 to carry 112 guns on three full decks, but then expanded twice. Doing so was “illogical,” the authors explain, because when it was launched, it quickly became clear that it was already too big. It “veered to leeward and heeled over badly in rough seas, resulting in difficulties in aiming her guns”—which was ironic given that its primary purpose was to be the largest floating battery in the world.