

## NEW DIMENSIONS IN CANADIAN NAVAL HISTORY

*By David Zimmerman*

In 1995, John Keegan, in Toronto, gave the inaugural address for the annual lecture series honoring the memory of journalist Barbara Frum. Despite the fact that Frum had been an avowed Canadian nationalist, Keegan's lecture, now the book *The Battle for History: Re-Fighting World War II*, failed to mention a single work written by a Canadian historian or one focused on Canada's contribution to the war effort. 1

Perhaps most remarkably, Keegan failed to broach the major revisionist interpretation of the war's longest campaign, the Battle of the Atlantic. This refighting of the historical interpretation of the Atlantic convoy battles is being led by a small group of Canadian scholars, the most important of whom is Marc Milner, professor of military history at the University of New Brunswick. Since 1982, with the publication of the proceedings of the first conference on the history of the Royal Canadian Navy, Milner (along with Michael Hadley, David Zimmerman, Roger Sarty, and others) has created an impressive body of literature on the campaign.<sup>2</sup>

The Battle of the Atlantic has not been the only aspect of Canadian naval history subject to

recent examination. Since 1982, a large number of articles, books, conference proceedings, and dissertations have appeared on a remarkably diverse range of issues. The explosive growth of writing in this field has created "the new Canadian naval history." Arguably, no navy in the twentieth century has been so meticulously studied. In large measure, this is the result of the small size of the RCN for most of its history and the paradoxical flourishing of naval history in Canada.

Keegan is not alone in ignoring Canadian naval history. His omission has been repeated by other British, American, and German naval historians; his sin is only more glaring because he demonstrated his remarkable ignorance in Toronto in a nationally broadcast lecture honoring a Canadian nationalist.<sup>3</sup> I do not wish to imply that all non-Canadian naval and military historians have emulated Keegan. A few, including David Syrett, John Hattendorf, Carol Broom Williams, Jock Gardner, and Philip Lundeburg, have benefitted by using the Canadian scholarship.<sup>4</sup> At least one American historian, Gary Weir, has made an important contribution to our understanding of Canada's part in the Battle of the Atlantic.<sup>5</sup> In Australia, James Goldrick has tried to emulate the Canadian model of scholarly naval history. The first scholarly conference on the history of the Royal Australian Navy held in 1989 included no less than four Canadian papers, three of which compared the naval experiences of

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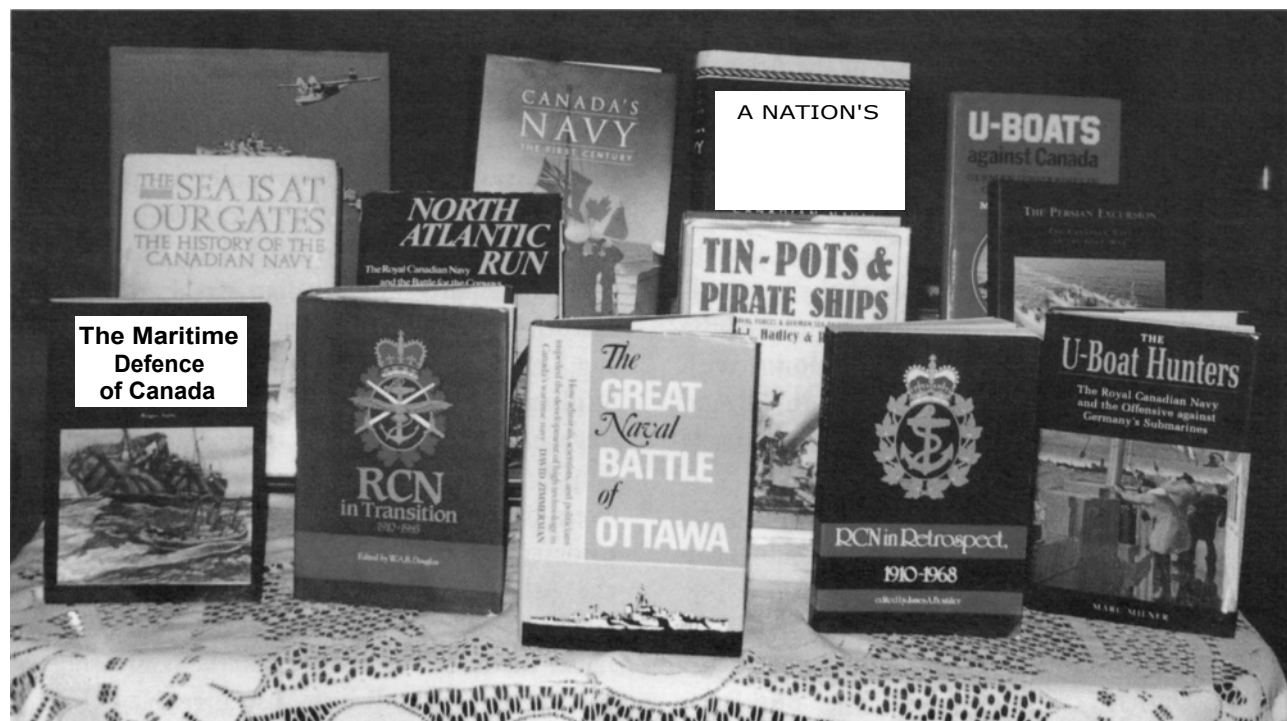
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these two Commonwealth partners.<sup>6</sup> Australia has had a far more extensive naval tradition, but far fewer scholars working in the field.

In Canada, where the writing of history of national institutions is out of fashion, if not abhorred, Canadian naval history has been treated with outright disdain by the majority of historians. The navy is scarcely recognized as even existing in most university-level history survey texts or problem books.<sup>7</sup> The few Canadian historians who have integrated the work of the new Canadian naval history are the minority still interested in political, military, and diplomatic history.<sup>8</sup> While we have come to expect this parochialism from our colleagues in other fields of Canadian history, the lack of knowledge of Canadian naval history shown by our fellow military and naval historians is far more troubling. While it is impossible to excuse this abysmal lack of basic bibliographic research, it can also be said that Canadian naval historians have not done a good job of selling the wide-ranging importance

of their work to a wider academic audience, both at home and abroad.

In large measure, those who have written about the "new Canadian naval history" have not well analyzed the work that has been undertaken. W. A. B. Douglas, former director of the Directorate of History, has written several essays that examine the field.<sup>9</sup> The first, "Conflict and Innovation in the Royal Canadian Navy" published in 1977, traced many of the themes that have subsequently been explored by other historians. Examples of Douglas's themes include his desire to reinforce Gerald Graham's and Barry Gough's work that showed that navies—British, French, American, and British North American—played a crucial role in shaping our history prior to Confederation.") Douglas also called for the writing of social history of the Canadian navy, correctly predicting that in writing social history the records of the Mainguy Commission would be "a gold mine for the lucky historian who can stake his claim."<sup>11</sup> His most



An array of books on the Canadian Royal Navy.

recent survey of the field appeared in 1991 in the journal *The Northern Mariner*.<sup>12</sup> In his all-too-brief article, he examines some of the new literature, but spends more time musing about the value of naval history to the serving officer. This is certainly an important issue, particularly for an official historian, but it is not central to the development of the new Canadian naval history.

Marc Milner has published two essays more than a decade apart on Canadian naval historiography.<sup>13</sup> He has emerged as the leading light in the study of the Canadian navy through his numerous articles and, particularly, in his two books, *North Atlantic Run*, published in 1985, and *U-Boat Hunters*, published a decade later. Despite the addition of considerable new literature, his latest survey, first published in 1994 in a collection of international historiographical articles on maritime and naval history and revised in 1996, continues the major theme of his earlier piece, published in the journal *Acadiensis* in 1982. In both essays, Milner focuses on the failure to write a proper official operational history of the navy in World War II, an issue that the new literature, particularly his own, has rendered moot. Most of the rest of his later essay is a non-analytical listing of the literature. As fine a historian as he is, he appears to be too close to the subject to write effectively on the significance of this body of literature of which he is such an important part.

Milner touches only briefly on the overall significance of the explosive growth in Canadian naval historiography, and he does so only in the context of pedagogical concerns. He argues that the maturing of the field should be marked by the introduction of university courses devoted to Canadian naval history, like the one that was offered by Michael Hadley at the University of Victoria in the early 1990s. He makes this case:

Those, like this writer, who teach both Canadian military history and courses in the history of sea power, also invariably set the Canadian naval story in a much wider con-

text. It forms a piece, sometimes bigger, usually quite small, of a much larger tapestry. Perhaps surprisingly, Canadian naval historians accept such an approach as a given. They do not see an independent existence for the RCN outside of the larger context of either the empire or the collective security organizations since 1945. In that sense, Canadian naval history is always subordinated to another mainstream military or naval (sea power) field."

I frankly disagree with Milner here. While I supported Hadley's efforts to experiment with a course on Canadian naval history, I think that he would agree with me that it was too specialized a subject for even a one-term seminar. Hadley discontinued the experiment after only three years. Rather, it is important to integrate the findings of the new Canadian naval history into broader courses that examine issues of national concern, such as foreign policy, military history, science and technology, sea power, or maritime studies in which the history of the Canadian navy can be seen as an important case study. It is one of the great strengths of Canadian naval history that it cannot be viewed in isolation. There is no Canadian Trafalgar or Midway that might lead us to this false corollary between the growing maturity of Canadian naval history and our ability to teach courses devoted specifically to it. In one of his early essays, Douglas pointed out that "Alfred Thayer Mahan's mystical, Eurocentric and blue water approach to naval history has little to do with the realities of the Canadian experience."<sup>15</sup> For the last eighteen years, Barry Gough has been teaching two courses on sea power at Wilfrid Laurier University with these reservations in mind. They are some of the few courses on the subject offered on a continuing basis at a civilian university in Canada. Gough takes an integrated approach in which the Canadian experience is incorporated into the broader context of international naval history.

This might lead to the assumption that Canadian naval history is perhaps cast in the mold of Julian Corbett's Clausewitzian approach to naval affairs. Yet, the new Canadian naval history is much more the product of the work of a previous generation of Canadian military historians, such as C. P. Stacey, George Stanley, Richard Preston, James Eayrs, and Desmond Morton. In 1989, Preston pointed out that Canadians have been at the forefront of the development of the new military history in the decade after World War II, an approach that combined "a professional military internalist approach and a civilian contextual method." Canadians led the way because they "long lacked a professional army" and "also because any Canadian military problems bore very heavily on Canada's social and political developments.... George Stanley's *Canada's Soldiers* is a case in point."<sup>6</sup>

The subtitle of *Canada's Soldiers* is *A Military History of an Unmilitary People*, and it can be stated safely that the work in naval history has also been heavily influenced by the fact that we are writing the naval history of an "unnaval" people. As a result, Canadian naval historians have been unable to escape the Clausewitzian dictates that link naval affairs to politics. The very birth of the Canadian navy was, after all, a political question that became a major election issue in 1911. It involved the first use of the closure of debate in the House of Commons, and marked one of the few times our appointed Senate has actually rejected a bill from the lower house. The political history of the Canadian navy has been mainly one of survival against political indifference, if not outright disdain.<sup>17</sup>

One of the most important aspects of the "new Canadian naval history" is this close linking of naval affairs to political decision-making. Despite the origins of the navy, policy affecting the service has more often than not been made within the private spheres of the institution, not

under the public gaze of Parliament and the media. Canadian naval historians spend much more time unraveling the mysteries of bureaucracy than analyzing parliamentary or military battles. This might make it boring to traditionalists, but it reflects a broader reality. Whatever government department or navy one might consider, most major policy is made internally. The approach taken by Canadian naval historians to link the internal decision-making process with operational performance, equipment acquisition, training, and the development of doctrine is a model worthy of emulation. The small size of the service allows for very detailed case studies.)<sup>8</sup>

Canadian naval affairs generally become the focus of the government only when the service's goals contradict political policy, usually economic, or when problems within the navy threaten or become issues of public concern. The navy has not managed to escape the regional politics that so often divide Canada into competing fiefdoms. Shipbuilding contracts are usually awarded on the basis of the regional interests in the ruling political party.<sup>19</sup>

One of the revealing features of the Canadian navy is the remarkable political ineptness or naïveté of many of its senior naval officers. Occasionally, Canadian naval officers rise to political challenges, most notably Commodore Walter Hose's successful defense of the RCN in the face of massive depression era budget cuts of the early 1930s. More typically, however, the Canadian navy has attempted to promote policies out of step with political realities. This includes fleet planning after both world wars, the efforts made to thwart the unification of the armed forces in the late 1960s, and, most recently, the campaign to acquire nuclear-powered hunter-killer submarines. Another important dimension of civil-naval relations just now being uncovered is the occasional willingness of our admirals to act without the consent of their political masters, and, therefore, unconstitutionally. The most glaring example of this was our navy's sortie to sup-

port the U.S. Navy's blockade of Cuba during the missile crisis of 1962.<sup>20</sup>

The role of navies as an instrument of foreign policy is central to most policy studies of the world's great navies throughout history. This has been the focus of those who continue the tradition of studying the influence of imperial navies on Canadian history, most notably James Pritchard's work on the French navy in the eighteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Less work has been undertaken on the diplomatic role of smaller navies like our own. As yet, we lack a comprehensive history of this facet of our naval history, but it is clear that the navy continues to be as important to Canadian foreign relations as the RN is to Great Britain and the USN is to the United States.<sup>22</sup> The Fisheries Protection Service, the precursor of the RCN, owes its existence to the Canadian government's need to enforce our territorial sovereignty when the British found it diplomatically difficult to do so.<sup>23</sup> Sovereignty protection and enforcement remain a central function of our navy.

External influences have always shaped the role and structure of the Canadian navy. The navy was founded in 1910, in large measure to appease British demands that Canada make a contribution to imperial defense. Michael Hadley and Roger Sarty, in *Tin Pots and Pirate Ships*, revealed that Canadian naval policy development, or lack of it, was watched with great interest by Kaiser Wilhelm II.<sup>24</sup> Several studies have been undertaken on Canada's deep-seated mistrust of Japan prior to 1939, and the important ramifications this had for domestic, foreign, and defense policies.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1939, the shifting focus of the navy in terms of doctrine, equipment, training, and operational missions can be closely linked to Canada's transformation from a rather ill-tempered member of the British Empire to the closest ally of the United States, a founding member of the North

Atlantic alliance, and a leading advocate of collective security and peacekeeping. The navy's usefulness as an instrument of foreign policy has been increasingly appreciated by Canadian politicians and diplomats. The recent renaissance in diplomatic interest in the Asia-Pacific region is a key reason why our fleet has gone through a post-Cold War restructuring, with a shift of considerable resources from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

While political history, diplomatic history, and, particularly, military history, are not currently in vogue, practitioners of the new Canadian naval history have been exploring many contemporary historical issues. Perhaps the most heated debate in the field revolves around the social history of the navy, particularly in regard to the slow weaning process from Royal Navy traditions towards the creation of a uniquely Canadian naval service. The editors of the proceedings of the conference on the history of the navy held in Halifax in 1993 recognized the central importance of this question, and they entitled the work *A Nation's Navy: In Quest of Canadian Naval Identity*.

As Douglas predicted, one aspect of the debate centers on how to interpret the evidence presented to the Mainguy Commission that investigated the causes of several work stoppages or mutinies—their very definition of these incidences is a question of some dispute—that occurred in the three years after the ending of World War II. Were RCN officers pale imitations of their RN counterparts, right down to affected accents and mannerisms, or was the navy a distinctly Canadian institution long before 1945?<sup>26</sup> There is considerable evidence both ways. In the 1930s, there were some remarkable displays of Canadian nationalism by naval officers.<sup>27</sup> During the war, the navy successfully fought against considerable RN and USN opposition for independent command of the Northwest Atlantic area.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, Percy Nelles, chief of naval

staff from 1933 to 1944, argued that he should not press the Admiralty too hard for the latest equipment, believing that the paternalistic British would always act in the best interests of the RCN.<sup>29</sup> Regular force RCN officers almost always served in big ships, far away from the dirty escort war of the corvettes and minesweepers that were almost exclusively manned by reservists. These officers were often difficult to tell apart from their British counterparts. They did their initial training in RN warships and shore establishments. Nor was the wartime RCN reflective of Canadian society. A disproportionately large number of regular force officers were either Presbyterians or members of the Church of England, and of British heritage.<sup>30</sup>

Hadley has taken another tack by examining the popular image of the navy, rather than its actual identity:

Of course, image and actual identity may well be two quite different things. Yet the image—how the navy has understood itself and shown itself to the nation—is closely linked to how the public perceived it to be.<sup>31</sup>

This ambiguity of identity is not unique to the navy, for national identity—or the lack thereof—remains a central theme of Canadian history.

While the debate on the "Britishness" of the old navy continues, historians are also beginning to examine other issues related to the social history of the service. Two papers in *A Nation's Navy* deal with the issue of language. I argued in my paper on the social background of the wartime officer corps that no national institution can be truly Canadian unless it allows full participation by Francophones and Anglophones. Language should become a more central issue as work continues on the official history of bilingualism in the armed forces. One of the remarkable stories yet to be told fully is how the armed forces, so often out of step with mainstream Canadian society, have emerged at the forefront of efforts to

integrate French and English in a harmonious work environment.<sup>32</sup>

The education of naval officers has been the focus of several studies, and remains an issue of current concern for the service. After the closing of the Royal Naval College of Canada in the early 1920s, junior officer education in the interwar years was primarily conducted in Royal Navy vessels and at the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. There was a marked disparity between the amount of advanced education received by regular officers in the course of their careers and that of volunteer reserve officers when they entered the navy during the war. Most reserve officers had some form of post-secondary education, while regular force officers ended their formal academic education when they were eighteen years old. Bill March has shown that the navy had to be forced by the other services and the minister of national defense to accept a North American model for officer training in the post-war period. It may be this lack of advanced education that accounts, at least in part, for the ineptness of many senior naval officers.<sup>33</sup>

Barbara Winter has undertaken some preliminary research into the Wrens during World War II. She has shown that most women's experiences in the navy were markedly different than in the other armed forces, since their role "was not as limited and circumscribed as that of their CWAC (Canadian Women Army Corps) counterparts."<sup>34</sup> No work has yet been undertaken on the reintroduction of women into the RCN during the Cold War. Of course, the most interesting story concerning women is only now unfolding. It may be only a matter of time before a woman "drives" one of our frigates or destroyers.

Race is explored in Scott Sheffield's 1995 master's thesis on the recruitment of Canada's First Nations people into the armed forces during World War II. Sheffield shows that, of the three services, the navy was the most discriminatory on the basis of race. The RCN followed the RN's lead and, except for stewards, remained a "white

man's" enclave. There is much more work to be done here, particularly in the postwar period.<sup>35</sup> Sheffield's thesis and my own study of the wartime officer corps suggest that we need a general study of naval recruitment policy and the naval aspects of wartime manpower policy if we are to have something approaching a complete understanding of the management of this militarily and politically crucial resource.

There are several aspects of naval social history that have not yet been subject to serious scrutiny. One remarkable oversight is the absence of a comprehensive study of the volunteer reserve system established by Halsey in the 1920s. It was the volunteer reserve establishments that made the navy a truly national institution. The importance of the RCNVR in World War II cannot be overestimated; it was and remains a crucial source of personnel and an important symbol of the navy in communities often several thousand kilometers from the sea.

Recruitment, training, and service life in the last fifty years are just now coming under close scrutiny. A 1998 master's thesis by Tyrone Pile indicates that there are intriguing parallels between the personnel problems in the three years after 1945 and those of today. They include the navy sacrificing morale and long-term training in favor of maintaining an overly large operational fleet. Postwar personnel questions are examined in depth in Wilf Lund's recently completed Ph.D. thesis entitled "Rise and Fall of the Royal Canadian Navy, 1945-1964: A Critical Study of the Senior Leadership, Policy and Manpower Management." Lund argues persuasively that personnel problems continued until the armed forces were unified in the mid-1960s.<sup>36</sup>

The historical study of Canadian science and technology is still in its infancy, but some of the most interesting work has been undertaken on the navy. My own work on wartime failures to provide escort vessels with the latest anti-subma-

rine warfare equipment indicates that there were much more than internal problems that hampered the navy's high technology war. Robert Fisher has shown how developments in German naval technology had an impact on the RCN during the campaign. Historians have shown that the naval staff failed to comprehend fully the intricacies of the high technology war against the U-boat, and spent far too much time planning for a postwar fleet of carriers and cruisers rather than worrying about the poor performance of small Canadian escort vessels in the Battle of the Atlantic. Canadian science and advanced technology industries, however, were not up to the task of producing, in a timely fashion, sophisticated electronic equipment.<sup>37</sup> This has important ramifications for those writing business history, a theme carried on in Michael Hennessy's articles on the postwar navy and merchant marine.

Of particular interest to naval historians should be the linking of the history of technological issues with the operational narratives supplied by Milner and Doug McLean. Of note here is the work on late war (mid-1943 and after) anti-submarine warfare (ASW), in which the transition to modern techniques of fighting submarines began to develop. Milner and McLean demonstrate that, despite technological shortcomings, by the end of the war, the RCN's mainly volunteer reserve escort vessel commanders were at the forefront of developing new tactical doctrines for dealing with snorkel-equipped German submarines.<sup>38</sup> Technical/scientific and the operational histories can be combined to provide a more complete understanding of how technology influenced tactics in the Battle of the Atlantic.<sup>39</sup>

Since 1945, the navy has become one of the most technologically innovative organizations in the country. Canadian naval developments include the designing of the St. Laurent class ASW frigates, the subsequent introduction of helicopter landing systems for many of these ships, and work on towed-array sonar.<sup>40</sup> Many of these technologies have been adopted by other

navies worldwide. Although we do not have a comprehensive history of postwar technological developments, it is apparent that, even with limited resources, by developing technologies to suit requirements of central concern to our dedicated ASW forces, it has been possible for the Canadian navy to be at the forefront of some important innovations. There were also some technological failures during this period, most notably the Canadian hydrofoil project.<sup>41</sup> There remain significant gaps. For instance, no one has examined the dismantling of the navy's scientific and technological infrastructure, a process that began in the early 1970s and continues today.

For the naval historian, often more interested in battle than bureaucracy, Canadian naval history provides little in the way of traditional ship-to-ship actions, although Canadian destroyers and MTBs did participate in some remarkable surface engagements against the Kriegsmarine.<sup>42</sup> In both world wars, however, ASW warfare was a dominant concern of the RCN. *Tin Pots and Pirate Ships* presents in loving detail the almost comic opera-like attempts of our ill-equipped and poorly trained patrol fleet to ward off the World War I U-boat menace. More seriously, this book and Hadley's *U-Boats against Canada* show that our country has not remained immune to enemy action along our coasts.

Milner, Hadley, and McLean have explored the development of naval ASW warfare during World War II. In addition, there have been several case studies of specific convoy battles and escort groups.<sup>43</sup> The Directorate of History and Heritage of the Department of National Defense is working on a comprehensive operational history of the RCN in this conflict. Douglas's *The Creation of National Air Force*, the second volume of the official history of the Royal Canadian Air Force, provides a thoughtful analysis of the role of aircraft in the Battle of the Atlantic.<sup>44</sup> Several articles examine Canada's substantial role in intelli-

gence gathering during the campaign.<sup>45</sup> The complexity of protecting convoys and approaches to harbors dwarfs all other forms of warfare, and Canadian historians have provided the most comprehensive and most original body of literature on wartime ASW. Roger Sarty's *Canada and the Battle of the Atlantic* is the best single-volume history of Canada's role in this great campaign. It is the first study to integrate the RCN's and RCAF's

Postwar operations of the Canadian navy that have been studied include a recent popular examination of its role in the Korean War and the official history of the Canadian Armed Forces in the Persian Gulf Wars.<sup>47</sup> What is lacking is a comprehensive study of the navy's involvement in international policing since 1945. The navy's role in UN operations may be the least known of Canada's contributions, but it has proven to be highly effective in transporting the Canadian army to the Middle East in 1956 and, more recently, in enforcing UN sanctions off the coasts of the former Yugoslavia and in the Persian Gulf, and in support of the army operations in East Timor and Haiti.

As a reflection of the sheer volume of scholarship in the field, two one-volume histories of the RCN appeared in the 1990s. Tony German's *The Sea Is at Our Gates* was a bestseller but it is not up to the standards of the scholarly works described above.<sup>48</sup> Far superior is Milner's *Canada's Navy: The First Century*. Milner has written a compelling history building "on an ever growing body of literature prepared by one of the most remarkable group of historians working anywhere."<sup>49</sup> Most importantly, he has provided the first comprehensive account of the navy since 1945. Yet, Milner's work is not equal to the very best comprehensive naval histories, as exemplified by N. A. M. Rodger's *The Safeguard of the Sea*. He carefully integrates traditional operational narrative with administrative and social history.<sup>50</sup> Milner fails to do this, particularly in his strictly operational account of World War II.



We have not yet developed a uniquely Canadian definition of sea power, but one is gradually emerging. Certainly, the very notion that a navy needs a great battle fleet to be effective as an instrument of policy is challenged by the Canadian experience. The importance of small navies operating in international alliances cannot be measured simply in terms of their combat capabilities; they must also be seen as symbols of national resolve. In an alliance structure, a junior partner can specialize, making itself an indispensable adjunct for a far larger naval power. Canada's naval history also shows that there is danger in placing too much reliance on geography and allies to guarantee national survival. The Battle of the Atlantic was almost lost on several occasions, and while Canada made truly Herculean efforts to commission a large number of escorts, it could not equip them or provide sufficient numbers of trained personnel until after the decisive engagements in the spring of 1943.

Small navies often must contend with fiscal constraints far greater than those experienced by a major naval power. After postwar reductions, the navy in the 1920s consisted of just two small destroyers and a handful of minesweepers. The small size of the interwar RCN, which grew to just eleven ships in 1939, greatly diminished the overall quality of the greatly expanded wartime service. Fiscal constraint and manpower shortages have been a fact of life in the navy since 1945. Almost every vessel in the service was obsolete by the end of Pierre Trudeau's prime ministership in the early 1980s. Even today, despite the completion of twelve of the superb city-class frigates, the navy is living with part of the legacy of the dol-drum of the Trudeau years. Maritime Command is still flying Sea King helicopters that are over thirty years old.

I have outlined only a few of the highlights of the historiographical legacy of the last twenty years. I have barely mentioned the large numbers of popular histories, memoirs, and reference works that continue to appear in large numbers.<sup>51</sup>

The depth and diversity of study about this small naval service, not yet ninety years old, is remarkable. There is no sign of a slowdown in the pace with which new works are appearing.

The biggest misunderstanding of Canadian naval history is that it can be ignored. John Keegan in *The Battle for History: Re-Fighting World War II* missed the corvette. Nor can it be said that Keegan would have had any difficulty in finding evidence of the new Canadian naval history. Milner is to be commended for his efforts to promote the history of the Canadian navy to an international audience and integrate it into the broader context of the naval history of World War II. Some four years before Keegan came to Toronto, Milner published a thorough summary of the literature on the Battle of the Atlantic in a leading British military history journal that argues forcefully that the campaign has to be included in any discussion on the new historical writings about the war.<sup>52</sup>

Engaging the attention of other Canadian historians is a much more difficult task. Canadian history is so polarized ideologically that the small cadre of historians interested in institutions and issues of national concern have felt compelled to break away from the Canadian Historical Association and form a separate organization. Naval affairs are simply ignored by the intolerant majority, despite the high quality and diversity of the work being produced. Just one anecdote will illustrate the magnitude of this bigotry. When Milner's *North Atlantic Run* was being considered for the Macdonald Prize, the historical association's annual award for best book in Canadian history, only one judge placed the book on the top ten list. When the one judge who had Milner on his list asked the others about this anomaly, they replied that they had not even bothered to open it up because of the subject matter. Yet Milner's book is arguably one of the most important books on Canadian history published in the last two decades. Like Rodney Dangerfield, Canadian naval historians often feel that they do

not get any respect. Given the efforts of the last two decades, the practitioners of Canadian naval history deserve greater respect from their fellow historians, both in Canada and abroad.

## NOTES

1. John Keegan, *The Battle for History: Re-Fighting World War II* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).
2. James Boutilier, *The RCN in Retrospect* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1982); Marc Milner, *North Atlantic Run* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); Marc Milner, *The U-Boat Hunters: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Offensive against Germany's Submarines* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Michael Hadley, *U-Boats against Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985); and David Zimmerman, *The Great Naval Battle of Ottawa* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989).
3. Just one recent example of the failure of naval historians to recognize the significance of the Canadian work is the collection of eleven essays in the proceedings of the second Yale–Naval War College Conference, *Doing Naval History: Essays towards Improvement*, John Hattendorf, ed. (Newport: Naval War College Press, 1995). Only James Goldrick's paper makes reference to a work on the Canadian navy, and only to my own book. Goldrick's paper was also the only one in the collection not actually presented at the conference. Interestingly, while Canadian naval history was ignored, the work of other Canadian historians, including John Ferris, Don Schurman, and Wesley Wark, were cited in a number of the essays.
4. John Hattendorf, "International Naval Co-operation and Admiral Richard G. Colbert: The Intertwining of Career and an Idea," in *The RCN in Transition, 1910-1985*, ed. W. A. B. Douglas (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), 233-54; David Syrett, "The Safe and Timely Arrival of Convoy SC 130, 15-25 May 1943," *American Neptune* 50 (1990): 219; "The Battle for Convoy SC-121, 6-10 March 1943," *American Neptune* 57 (1997): 37; Kathleen Broome Williams, *Secret Weapon: U.S. High-Frequency Direction Finding in the Battle of the Atlantic* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996); J. W. R. Gardner, "An Allied Perspective," in *The Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-45* (London and Annapolis: Greenhill Books, Naval Institute Press, 1994), 516-37; and Philip Lundeborg, "Allied Co-operation," in *The Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-45*, 345-70.
5. Gary Weir, "A Truly Allied Undertaking: The Progeny of Britain's Empire Liberty, 1931-43," in *The Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-45*, 101-17.
6. T. R. Frame, J. V. P. Goldrick, and P. D. Jones, *Reflections on the Royal Australian Navy* (Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 1991); James Goldrick, "Strangers in Their Own Seas?: A Comparison of the Australian and Canadian Naval Experience, 1910-1982," in *The RCN in Transition*, 325-34.
7. J. L. Finlay and D. N. Sprague, *The Structure of Canadian History* (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1997). This standard survey text makes only one cryptic reference to the creation of the RCN. No mention is made of the navy during the Second World War.
8. David J. Bercuson, *Maple Leaf against the Axis: Canada's Second World War* (Don Mills, Ont.: Stoddart, 1995).
9. W. A. B. Douglas, "Conflict and Innovation in the Royal Canadian Navy," in *Naval Warfare in the Twentieth Century*, ed. G. Jordan (New York: Crane Russack, 1977); "Canadian Naval Historiography," *Mariner's Mirror* 70 (1984): 149-59; "Naval History

the State of the Art," in *Military History and the Military Profession*, ed. David A. Charters, Marc Milner, and J. Brent Wilson (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1992), 73-90; "The Prospects for Naval History," *Northern Mariner* 1 (1991): 19-26; and "Marching to Different Drums: Canadian Military History," *Journal of Military History* 56 (1992): 245.

. Gerald Graham, *Sea Power and British North America, 1783-1820* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1941); W. A. B. Douglas, "The Anatomy of Naval Incompetence: The Provincial Marine of Upper Canada before 1913," *Ontario History* 81 (1979): 3-26; Barry Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971); and Barry Gough, *Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-90* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

. Douglas, "Canadian Naval Historiography," 358.

12.. Douglas, "The Prospects for Naval History," 19-26.

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14. Milner, "The Historiography of the Canadian Navy."

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27. David Zimmerman, "The Social Background of the Wartime Navy: Some Statistical Data," in *A Nation's Navy*, 257.
28. Wilf Lund, "The Royal Canadian Navy's Quest for Autonomy in the North West Atlantic," in *The RCN in Retrospect*, 138-57.
29. Zimmerman, *Great Naval Battle*, 141-43.
30. Zimmerman, "Social Background," 256-79.
31. Michael Hadley, "The Popular Image of the Canadian Navy," *A Nation's Navy*, 35-56.
32. Zimmerman, "Social Background"; and Serge Bernier, "HMCS *Ottawa III*: The Navy's First French-Language Unit, 1968-73," in *A Nation's Navy*, 310-24.
33. "P. Willet Brock, Commander E. A. E. Nixon and the Royal Naval College of Canada, 1910-22," in *The RCN in Retrospect*, 33-43; "Big Ship Time": The Formative Years of RCN Officers Serving in RN Capital Ships," in *The RCN in Retrospect*, 74-95;
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