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A Call to the Sea: Captain Charles Stewart of the USS Constitution,

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The focus of “Mr. Secretary” (as he was known) was maintaining England’s independence from the maneuverings of Spain, France, and Rome. Budiansky describes how Walsingham’s skill in gathering and analyzing information complemented (if not always easily) Elizabeth’s talent for political and diplomatic intrigue. England, at the time a small fringe state tottering between Protestantism and Catholicism, was vulnerable to the machinations of the great powers of the day. Walsingham played critical roles in countering plots against Elizabeth, the most famous being that of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Walsingham’s role in the defeat of the Spanish Armada provides a textbook example of what intelligence can and sometimes cannot provide. He developed a comprehensive collection plan and employed a network of agents throughout Europe to gather information. He never blindly trusted any one source, using multiple agents against the same target. As the Armada preparations came to a head, Walsingham commissioned naval reconnaissance missions of key Spanish ports, and although his work provided strategic warning to the crown and the Royal Navy, contrary winds prevented tactical warning.

Walsingham understood that intelligence must support decision making—after all, he was a major player in both domestic and foreign policy—and ensured that the information he provided was focused on those ends. Upon becoming Principal Secretary, he was informed that the job required him to know everyone and see everything. By the time of his death, both his supporters and enemies believed him unsurpassed in this regard.

While Walsingham’s network did not survive him (he left no written legacy for his successors to follow), the memory of his effectiveness lives on.

If this book has a fault, it is the lack of discussion on Walsingham’s impact on later incarnations of the British secret service. Nonetheless, several maxims attributed to him remain sound guidance for today’s intelligence and policy professionals. “Knowledge is never too dear” speaks for the value of good intelligence. “An habit of secrecy is both policy and virtue” reminds us that success requires constant effort. Finally, “See and keep silent” remain watchwords for today’s intelligence professionals, as they were in the past.

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Berube, Claude, and John Rodgaard. *A Call to the Sea: Captain Charles Stewart of the USS Constitution*. Dulles, Va.: Potomac Books, 2005. 299pp. \$35

Charles Stewart was one of the preeminent officers of the early sailing navy. He is best remembered for the brilliant victory he gained over HMS *Cyane* and *Levant* as captain of USS *Constitution* during the War of 1812. Less well known, however, are the significant contributions Stewart made to the sea service over the remainder of his career—a career that witnessed the birth, growth, and evolution of the Navy during its first six decades of existence. As a central figure of the formative period in the Navy’s history, Charles Stewart has long merited greater scholarly attention than he has heretofore received.

In *A Call to the Sea*, Claude Berube and John Rodgaard redress this neglect with the first book-length study of Charles Stewart's life. Both Berube, a Brookings Institution LEGIS Fellow, and Rodgaard, an intelligence analyst, are Navy Reserve officers with numerous historical publications to their credit. Their portrait of Stewart is drawn from a range of secondary sources, as well as research in manuscript collections that document the public and private dimensions of the 1812 hero's career.

A Call to the Sea examines the major personalities, places, and events that shaped and defined Charles Stewart's life, from his birth in Philadelphia on 28 July 1778 to his death ninety-one years later at Bordentown, New Jersey. Among the career highlights that Berube and Rodgaard explore are Stewart's participation in three wars (the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary Wars, and the War of 1812); his service as commander of the Mediterranean, Pacific, and home squadrons; his role as a naval administrator, first with the Board of Navy Commissioners and later as commandant of the Philadelphia Navy Yard; and his consideration as a presidential candidate in the elections of 1840 and 1844. The authors also shed light on Stewart's private life

and relationships, in particular his troubled marriage to Delia Tudor of Boston, which ended in divorce in 1828.

Berube and Rodgaard have produced a biography that is highly favorable to its subject. The authors give Stewart high marks as a combat commander, as a mentor influential in shaping the Navy's junior officer corps, and as an administrator receptive to the technological and social changes that were altering the face of the Navy during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

A Call to the Sea is an informative biography of one of the antebellum Navy's most intriguing and distinguished officers. As such, it should appeal to a wide general audience. Naval historians, however, may well be disappointed with this work. Berube and Rodgaard have failed to exploit fully the large body of official papers that document Stewart's sixty-two-year naval career, some of which are readily available in print. This, coupled with the authors' overreliance on secondary sources in assessing Stewart's life, has resulted in a biography lacking in critical rigor and fresh interpretive insights. For this reason, the definitive biography of Charles Stewart remains to be written.

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