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Confederate Raider in the North Pacific, by Murray Morgan, and Gray Raiders of the Sea

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mid-'60s. It is disappointing, although understandable from consideration of both security and the magnitude of the task, that the level of coverage is not the same as that for earlier periods.

Who should be interested in *The Codebreakers*? This is the kind of book that can benefit all who hold positions of political or military leadership. It is instructive to see how naiveté about cryptology has had serious impacts on national policy and military endeavors. It is also important to appreciate the capabilities (and limitations) of both cryptography and cryptanalysis. This book provides those kinds of insights—and it is a most enjoyable read.

DALE PACE
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Morgan, Murray. *Confederate Raider in the North Pacific*. Pullman: Washington State Univ. Press, 1995. 336pp. \$19.95 (replication of a 1948 edition)

Hearn, Chester G. *Gray Raiders of the Sea*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1996. 351pp. \$16.95 (replication of a 1992 edition)

The recent success of Michael Shaara and son Jeff has created a wave of renewed interest in the American Civil War. These two reprints give some balance to this renaissance by covering a key element in its naval operations. The Confederate Navy usually gets short shrift on the Civil War scene. These two books, though quite different in their presentations, show dramatically how little it took in money and ships for the Confederate na-

val war on commerce to drive U.S.-flag vessels from the world's sea lanes.

Murray Morgan has written a saga of the cruise of one of the most successful commerce raiders, the *Shenandoah*. Morgan, a onetime writer for *Time* magazine, has written what is essentially a good sea story. The description of life at sea, the chase, and other nautical esoterica are most intriguing. (Remember the days when everyone in the wardroom was expected to be knowledgeable of not only the types of vessels using sail but also the name of each sheet of canvas?) Morgan reads best as a story, although his book is written as history: he uses numerous quotations from what must have been primary source material, but there is not one footnote or citation to be found. At times the story drags on, with much about maritime law and the rights of neutrals.

Chester Hearn's book is what Murray Morgan's is not—a detailed history. As history, it does not have the same excitement as Murray's, but it offers a comprehensive look at the eight Confederate raiders that drove U.S. bottoms to foreign flags.

Both books suffer from the deficiency most common in historical publications: a paucity of good maps placed where they are relevant to the narrative. Morgan's book, having only one cruise to deal with, is the better of the two in this respect, with a double spread map at the beginning. Hearn's book is blessed with eighty-seven illustrations, but they are grouped in one lump midway through the book. Since this wealth of material is published on forty sheets of the same paper stock as the text,

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there is no apparent reason why it could not have been interspersed throughout the text. Publishers are often the potholes on the road to reader comprehension.

Hearn's history may not read as easily as Morgan's journalistic style, but it does contain some excellent examples of leadership at sea, both good and bad. Although men of iron have been superseded, to a degree, by pear-shaped people with bulging eyes glued to electronic screens, the problems of cramped living for long periods at sea have not changed. The experience of these American naval officers of a different era can still provide valuable lessons. These are the stories of *American* naval officers. Whatever the color of their uniform, they are still part of our naval heritage, and their history is our history.

Finally, if I were preparing for a long deployment, I would ensure that copies of these two books were available in the ship's library and in the wardroom library (for vessels that still maintain that noble practice).

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Spencer, Warren F. *Raphael Semmes: The Philosophical Mariner*. Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1997. 250pp. \$37.95

Mention the battle between the CSS *Alabama* and the USS *Kearsarge*, and one name springs to mind—Raphael Semmes, captain of the doomed *Alabama*. Who is Semmes that we should remember his name over that

of the captain of the victorious *Kearsarge*? Warren F. Spencer, emeritus professor of history at the University of Georgia and author of *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, has written a biography of Semmes drawing on previously unpublished diaries and other private papers. Integrating this new material with Semmes's published memoirs, Spencer fleshes out the life of the man who seems to arrive on history's stage for one brief battle before departing again.

Semmes was born in Maryland in 1809 and entered the U.S. Navy as a midshipman in 1826. As was common at the time, he had many long, unpaid leaves between assignments. He used this time to read law in his younger brother's office; when Semmes made lieutenant in 1837, he had already established himself as a lawyer. His early experiences serving on several ships and his own interest in "natural philosophy" (that is, natural science) gave Semmes knowledge that would later serve him well as a Confederate commerce raider. Likewise, his experience as a lawyer would be to his advantage.

Like many other military leaders on both sides of the Civil War, Semmes gained firsthand experience during the war with Mexico. He blockaded the Mexican coast, commanding the "unlucky" USS *Somers*, which fulfilled its reputation by sinking in a sudden squall. Instead of being censured for this loss, Semmes was given orders to meet with Mexican officials to try to negotiate the release of one of his captured midshipmen. In carrying out these orders, Semmes found himself attached to the U.S.