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The Advent of Steam: The Merchant Steamship before 1900

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had little experience and was thrown into battle prematurely. In Trask's eyes, Pershing was surely a flawed commander, one whose star might have fallen had the war continued into 1919.

It is Foch, rather than Pershing, who emerges as the hero of this volume. Foch realized that attrition and not maneuver would win the war, after Germany expended its last reserves in Ludendorff's abortive spring and summer offensives of 1918. Through a series of counteroffensives and eventually a general offensive, he made the most effective use of his national contingents, including the AEF, despite the difficulties that arose in dealings with what Trask calls the timorous French commander, Henri Petain, the unimaginative Douglas Haig of the British Expeditionary Forces, and the stubborn Pershing.

In the final analysis, Trask puts the performance of the AEF in proper perspective. Its greatest contribution to ultimate victory lay in its presence, which allowed release of veteran Allied divisions from tranquil sectors and gave Foch the superiority in manpower he needed to fight his war of attrition and sustain his coordinated operations in late 1918. It was those offensives, not the AEF acting alone, that broke the back of the German army and the will of the German nation to prosecute the war.

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Gardiner, Robert J. and Greenhill, Basil, eds. *The Advent of Steam: The Merchant Steamship before 1900*. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1993. 190pp. \$50

This is the fifth volume of Conway's ambitious, twelve-volume *History of the Ship* series, and like its predecessors it is worthy of more than a casual glance. The editors look at the early development of steam propulsion in merchantmen from its introduction as a motive force until its supplantation as a form of propulsion power. The publisher has once again brought together an outstanding and well known team of authors, including the Rev. E.C.B. Corlett and Dr. Andrew Lambert, under the leadership of this volume's reputable consultant editor, Dr. Basil Greenhill.

The book is divided into ten chapters, which for the sake of convenience can be separated into two distinct groups. The first, comprising the first five chapters, outlines the evolution of steam in shipping, while the remaining five chapters can be described as providing a technical history of that evolution. The editor's approach is chronological, but there is a fair amount of overlap between the chapters. Each chapter is well written—even the more technical ones are a joy to read—and they all bear the stamp of thorough and devoted research. Readers may be surprised at Greenhill's assertion that the *Savannah* actually made most of its famous double crossing of the Atlantic under sail, not steam power. Another interesting point, raised in the third chapter, is that Robert Fulton's first steamship was never named the *Clermont*.

All of the chapters are profusely illustrated with line drawings (most, unfortunately, with no indication of scale) and reprints of contemporary drawings, photographs, and comparative tables. Some of the latter provide a statistical summary of steamships relevant to each particular chapter, while others compare such important details as engines, voyages, areas of service, and a host of other data. Each chapter is footnoted and supplemented by an excellent selected bibliography; the index is accurate and useful. Robert Gardiner, the consultant editor of this series, has thoughtfully provided a brief glossary of naval terms and abbreviations, and a preface.

Given the number of contributors, one is surprised by the degree of agreement regarding the main themes: the surprising staying power of sail-powered vessels; the relatively slower adoption of steam by merchant companies, as opposed to navies; and steam's long gestation period in the American inland and the British coastal waters. According to the editors, all three points can be explained by cost-accounting methods—the rate of return offered by sailing ships and steamships—a factor that national navies could afford to ignore, because their prime goal was not the pursuit of profit. Regarding the final theme, because of the very nature of their technology, the early steamships were originally confined to coastal and river areas; steamships only supplanted sailing ships when they became ocean-capable and more profitable. The slow improvement in the technology of engines, propellers, and hulls (iron and steel) had a gradual

rather than a revolutionary effect on shipping. This partially accounts for the fact that wind-driven merchant ships survived well into the first half of the twentieth century.

Overall, Conway has again provided us with an outstanding reference work that will benefit all but the most dedicated specialist. It is a welcome addition to this series and is highly recommended to readers with an interest in the history of these ships.

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Moncure, John. *Forging the King's Sword. Military Education between Tradition and Modernization: The Case of the Royal Prussian Cadet Corps, 1871–1918*. New York: Peter Lang, 1993. 323pp. \$58.95

The Prussian Cadet Corps was founded by King Frederick William I in 1717 and was abolished in March 1920 under Article 176 of the Treaty of Versailles. In time, a system of eight preparatory schools fed into the Central Cadet School at Berlin-Lichterfelde, which annually supplied about 250 officers (or one-third of commissions) to the regular army. Because of the destruction of the cadet corps records during the Second World War, Moncure meticulously used fragmentary evidence to reconstruct a data base on 11,157 cadets for the years from 1871 to 1918.

Cadets entered schools at age eleven (much younger than their counterparts at St. Cyr, Modena, West Point, or Sandringham), and the cost of their