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To Die Gallantly: The Battle of the Atlantic

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for shortsightedness and lack of cooperation. It was harder, it seems, to get the services together than the countries. "[T]here was deep resistance within Op-20-G [in charge of the Navy cryptanalysis effort] to the sharing of cryptanalytic information with any foreign government" and the department "was almost as cautious about sharing . . . information with the U.S. Army."

An arrangement was in place as early as December 1940 but broke down when the U.S. became convinced that Bletchley Park officials were less than forthcoming. Smith's prowess as a popular historian of World War II is evident as he traces the development of a lasting deal in juxtaposition with events in the theaters of war that provided impetus to an effective agreement. True cooperation began with the U-boat war in the North Atlantic. This cooperation grew to culmination in 1943 with the BRUSA (Britain-USA) agreement—"the written constitution upon which arose the Anglo-American cryptanalytic partnership that flourished during the final two-and-a-half years of World War II and, in modified forms, has continued until the present."

It is the chapter on BRUSA which is the heart of the book. As he did for *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA*, Smith has combed exhaustively and methodically the available sources, some through the Freedom of Information Act. However, with the exception of this section, for which he has utilized a recently declassified National Security Agency history of the period, there is little that is new and much that remains speculative or unproven. The book also disappoints on

the issue of Arlington Hall, about which far less is known than Bletchley Park, a shortcoming Smith readily acknowledges.

Postwar cooperation, the author maintains, was fueled as much by the inability of the partners to free themselves from each other's embrace (having shared their most intimate secrets, each could exploit the other far too easily) as it was by the Cold War. As Smith speculates on the basis of some credible evidence, the USSR had become a combined intelligence target even before the end of the war. While admitting the lack of open documentation establishing a continuing agreement between Washington and London, and providing little substantial evidence and much conjecture, Smith is surely on safe ground as to the existence of such an arrangement and the reasons therefor. Indeed, there is an interesting timeliness and irony. Britain, which entered these wartime agreements as the senior partner, now faces severe budget cuts aimed at its electronic monitoring headquarters at Cheltenham, which it fears (see *The Times* [London], 26 March 1995) may end the intelligence "special relationship." They will simply have nothing to bring to the table.

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Runyan, Timothy J. and Copes, Jan M., eds. *To Die Gallantly: The Battle of the Atlantic*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1994. 347pp. \$55

A number of books have appeared commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of World War II. Some have been good and some bad; this book belongs in the former group. It is a collection of essays on the Battle of the Atlantic that were initially presented at the 1992 annual meeting of the North American Society for Oceanic History.

These essays are for the most part, in fact, very good. The collection is quite eclectic, covering many topics not usually found in histories of the Battle of the Atlantic. Subjects are as varied as "Mahan's Principles and the Battle of the Atlantic," by R.A. Bowling, and Lawrence Suid's "The Battle of the Atlantic in Feature Films."

Following a brief introductory overview by Dean C. Allard (former director of the Naval Historical Center), the book is divided into four sections, each consisting of five essays. Section One is entitled "The Early Years." Two of its essays discuss aspects of the Atlantic strategy and the personalities involved, from the viewpoint of both the Americans and Germans. Of course there is an essay covering codes, ciphers, and radio intelligence, by Jurgen Rohwer, a doyen of military history. There are also two pieces about Brazil, a country that deserves far more attention for its part in the battle than it has hitherto received; Theresa L. Kraus writes about the U.S. plan to secure Brazil's air bases and also that country's cooperation in defense planning for the Western Hemisphere. There is also a short piece by John F. Bratzel in which he describes Germany's failed attempts to develop intelligence and sabotage networks in Brazil.

The second section, "The 'Happy Time,'" deals with warfare in the Atlantic from the outbreak of the war up to early 1943. Most notable is Marc Milner's essay on the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), arguing that the RCN has received little, if any, mention for its role in the Battle of the Atlantic. Continuing with this theme, Roger Sarty describes how the Royal Canadian Air Force also was a greater contributor to defeating German U-boats than is commonly believed.

"Turning the Tide," the third section, is the most "operational" portion of the book. Using numerous original documents, David Syrett, in his essay "Situation [was] Extremely Dangerous," describes the battles around three convoys—ONS 165, ONS 166, and ONS 167—in February 1943. Moving ahead two years to April and May 1945, Philip K. Lundeberg ably discusses Operation TEARDROP, in which he took part. TEARDROP was intended to thwart the threat of bombardment (which turned out to be nonexistent) of the U.S. East Coast by submarine-launched V-1s. Lundeberg survived the sinking of his ship *Frederick C. Davis* by the submarine U-546 (the U-boat was sunk in return). In addition to his description of the operation itself, Lundeberg recounts the brutal treatment received by the U-boat's crew at the hands of naval interrogators.

The final section, "Looking Back," is something of a misnomer. Except for James E. Valle's essay, "United States Merchant Marine Casualties," the issues it deals with are really those that do not fit in elsewhere. However, I did find it interesting, perhaps because of such

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unique topics as the Merchant Marine Cadet Corps, the history of the Port of New York during World War II, and Coast Guard Captains of the Port—an important job that is hardly ever noted.

To Die Gallantly is an excellent collection of top-notch essays that deal with subjects often ignored. It would be a welcome addition to anyone's maritime library.

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Syrett, David. *The Defeat of the German U-Boats: The Battle of the Atlantic*. Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1994. 344pp. \$35.95

Despite its subtitle, this work is limited to the critical months of the Battle of the Atlantic—April to December 1943. They mark the point when the most successful German operational and tactical strategy—the “wolfpack”—became untenable in the face of Allied countermeasures. In this book, David Syrett focuses on the factors that contributed directly to defeating wolfpacks. He covers the first years of the battle in a succinct chapter of twenty-four pages, while the last part of the war is barely mentioned.

Syrett argues that it was no single thing that defeated the U-boats but the combination of the increasing superiority of Allied intelligence, sensors, tactics, and weapons, the expanding role of air power, and of course the crippling penetration into German

radio codes, that diminished the effectiveness of the U-boats.

The increasing advance of Allied technology was apparent to U-boat headquarters (BdU) by May 1943. Losses in the costly convoy battles of that month reached such levels that U-boats were redeployed away from the critical North Atlantic routes. German efforts at technical improvements were slow and usually quickly countered. However, because of BdU's failure to understand the magnitude of the problem, it attempted to maintain the attack on Allied shipping with its usual response to increased Allied pressure—a shift of operating area, this time to the central Atlantic. But when U-boats again suffered serious losses at the end of June, BdU called off all wolfpack attacks until new weapons could be introduced. However, in the face of dwindling intelligence and continuous new Allied technology, the only new schemes pushed by BdU were for new torpedoes and antiaircraft weapons, which amounted to an attempt to patch a gaping wound with a Band-Aid.

The result could have been predicted, and the narrative of the renewed convoy battles reveals few surprises. When the U-boats attempted to attack shipping once more in the central North Atlantic in the autumn of 1943, they suffered heavily while inflicting only modest losses. Most of the Allied sinkings occurred in the very first convoy battle; within days, new measures had been developed to deal with the new German weapons. The final effort to employ wolfpack tactics came later that year when the Germans attempted to attack the Gibraltar–Great