

1984

## The Old Navy: Rear Admiral Daniel P Mannix III

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### Recommended Citation

Peterson, John S. (1984) "The Old Navy: Rear Admiral Daniel P Mannix III," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 37 : No. 3 , Article 24.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol37/iss3/24>

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encountered then and there led to even greater emphasis on anti-aircraft armament and warning capability on the destroyers as the invasion of Japan was considered. The resulting increased 40 mm installations as well as the specialized *Gearing*-class radar picket designs are covered adequately.

There is a final chapter covering official ruminations on future destroyer designs based on the lessons of the war. The new ships always, as now, were larger than their predecessors. The book's conclusion provides a thoughtful review of fleet escort thinking on into the postwar years. Finally, there are appendixes on destroyer stability, war damage, basic Navy organization for 1934 and 1944, and lastly, a summary of destroyer characteristics by class. There is no listing of individual destroyer names and numbers. Perhaps there could be some criticism of the chronological detailing of events which occasionally overlap or are repeated. A complete reading is required to ensure capturing all of the detailed design considerations covered.

*Destroyers in World War II* should be in the library of anyone concerned with destroyers, past or future. Much of the information contained has been unavailable for too long. All we need now is to convince the publishers to print these priceless photographs on better paper.

RICHARD F. CROSS  
Alexandria, Va.

Mannix, Daniel P. IV, ed. *The Old Navy: Rear Admiral Daniel P. Mannix*

Published by U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons, 1984

III. New York: Macmillan, 1983.  
294pp. \$16.95

Compiled from letters, journals, and diaries, an excerpt from this memoir by Rear Admiral Daniel Pratt Mannix III has appeared in *American Heritage*, and the book has been selected as an alternate choice by both the Military Book Club and the Naval Institute Press. This does not, of course, guarantee that *The Old Navy* will necessarily be to everyone's liking. Some people may question the admiral's memory in spots, just as others may wince at his old-fashioned anecdotal style. Nonetheless, Daniel Pratt Mannix IV has done a commendable job in editing his father's papers. With assistance from the Naval History Division, he has produced a beguiling memoir of a navy moving from post-Civil War insularity to the threshold of world power.

The memoir opens in 1882 with recollections of Mannix's childhood in China as the son of a Marine captain on loan to the Chinese government as a torpedo expert. It concludes with his final cruise in command of a destroyer squadron in the Levant, a cruise which witnesses the consolidation of Turkey under Kemal Ataturk.

Most intriguing, and highly symbolic, is an early chapter concerning the Spanish-American War. Granted leave from Annapolis in order to take part in the war, Midshipman Mannix hustles aboard the USS *Indiana*. At the Battle of Santiago Bay, he watches a dejected Admiral Cervera being taken into custody, "I never

felt so sorry for anyone in my life," and along with the rest of Sampson's fleet receives prize money (Midshipman, \$267) and a tumultuous hero's welcome in New York Harbor. In retrospect, Mannix adds a passage that deserves quoting, as it epitomizes the nostalgia of a number of officers of his transitional generation:

"It is now fashionable to jeer at the Spanish-American War. Even so, it had something. The tropical setting, the background of palms, white surf and blue sky, the chivalry of the enemy, the shortness of range . . . the absence of submarines and the type of warfare they represent, the fact that it was largely a war of movement and things took place out in the open with flags snapping in the breeze, the sea salt in our faces, and our ships speeding through the water as blue as turquoise and white with foam, the staccato sequence of events, the fact that when it was all over we knew who had won."

Graduating from Annapolis, Mannix moves through a variety of duty stations which reflect the Navy's growing commitments. He moves with zest and with a resolve characteristic of his era. If, as an ensign, he cuts a foolish figure leading a shore party into Buffalo on the day of McKinley's assassination, he analyzes the fiasco and later earns promotion to Lt. (jg.) by coolly defusing a red-light district riot in Pensacola. Moreover, whether ashore or afloat, Mannix exudes a puckerish humor all his own. A fine raconteur, his best yarns are those

from his cruises to Edwardian England, Imperial Germany, Russia, and Japan during the Dreadnought Period. In Kiel, for example, he averts a duel between an American midshipman and a German officer by ordering a bowl of brandy "smashes" and then proposing toast after toast until all parties are too tipsy to do anything but sing "Oh Susannah." Bidding the Navy adieu, the Germans go ashore in ignorance of the apples adorning their helmet spikes.

By the time Mannix concludes a tour with the 1918 Yankee Mining Squadron, one can sense his disillusionment with the industrial commercial America which has evolved since his youth as a midshipman aboard sailing vessels. Increasingly, he has little use for civilians. One senses too, his impatience with the drift of post-WWI diplomacy. Assigned as an escort to foreign delegates at the 1921-22 Washington Disarmament Conference, he comes away unquestionably bitter. "It was at the height of the pacifist craze . . . we Navy men were ordered to be present but to keep quiet . . . I don't know what good it did to force us to be present except to humiliate us."

Nonetheless, through his final cruise—a cruise during which he swims the Hellespont—Mannix retains an optimism and vitality characteristic of a generation. Throughout the book one is reminded that "The Old Navy" is also the Navy which produced Admirals King, Nimitz, Halsey, and Spruance, a breed which would serve its

country well. Although Mannix retired in the 20s he was, in a sense, one of them. However quaint or long ago their Navy may seem, the reader is likely to agree with Daniel Pratt Mannix IV that we are living today on their bounty. In short, this entertaining memoir is highly recommended to The New Navy.

JOHN S. PETERSON  
The Military Bookman  
New York City

Woodward, David, *Sunk! How the Great Battleships were Lost*. Winchester, Mass: Allen and Unwin, 1982. 153pp. \$17.95

It is difficult to say exactly what audience Mr. Woodward had in mind when he wrote this book. Surely not lovers of the history and lore of the famous battleships since the organizing principle of the book, as evident in its title, is how they all were sunk. Battleship buffs, as we know, revel in the glory of the great ships, not in their demise.

Neither is Mr. Woodward apparently interested in writing for historians. Although the subject is obviously a historical one, the fifteen short chapters of the book are decidedly slanted toward the loss of a ship or ships rather than the full story. In short, this is a book about losers, not winners. To this writer it seemed odd indeed to look at Jutland, Tsushima, or Pearl Harbor from this restricted point of view. Admittedly, the reader will find himself leaving Mr. Woodward frequently and referring to his

library to get "the rest of the story."

The style of the author is patently anecdotal. Although Mr. Woodward refers to many sources, including correspondence and some personal conversations, there are no footnotes and there is no bibliography. In one instance, for example, in preparing the reader for Pearl Harbor, Mr. Woodward retells of his personal strategic talks, in 1932, with a certain unnamed and retired Soviet vice admiral, a conversation which, to him, clearly foretold of the rise of Imperial Japanese naval power.

All of this is not to say that the book is not interesting reading. Ranging from the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, when the Italian battleship *Re d' Italia* was rammed and sunk by the Austrian *Ferdinand Max*, to the sinking of the *Yamato* in 1945 at the end of World War II, the book is a fascinating collection of sea stories. The author knows his subjects well and has a winning way of retelling each incident. He often quotes unusual sources, such as the diary of the gunnery officer in the *Lützow* in action against the *Lion* at Jutland, or Commander Semenov, who, having no particular appointed duties in the *Suvarov*, watched and took notes at Tsushima, as the great Russian fleet was sunk before his eyes.

Since Mr. Woodward can obviously spin a yarn with the very best, perhaps it is his editor who should be faulted for the book's organizing principle of sunken ships instead of the overall excitement, glory, and