

1959

## Brassey's Annual 1958

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## BOOKS

Inoguchi, Riklhei, et al. *The Divine Wind*. Annapolis, Md., U. S. Naval Institute, 1958. 240 p.

An authoritative and detailed account of the desperate aerial kamikaze tactics employed by the Japanese against the United States Navy in the final stages of World War II in the Pacific. Written by two key officers of the Japanese Naval Special Attack Force, and ably translated into English by an American naval reserve officer, the book vividly portrays the story of the suicide pilots. This Force was originally organized in October, 1944 as a short-term project to assist the Imperial Japanese Navy in preventing the imminent American landings on Leyte. The initial objective was limited to rendering the flight decks of the U. S. carriers inoperative for about one week, so that Admiral Kurita's surface forces, including the big battleships MUSASHI and YAMATO, could strike the large concentration of American transports off the Philippine Islands without air opposition. The kamikaze concept, however, was subsequently adopted for all defensive operations as the best means to employ dwindling resources in aircraft and pilots against overwhelming enemy forces. The book contains photographs of kamikaze pilots, their planes, and some of the ships damaged by suicidal attacks. Also, at the end of the volume are appendices, itemizing in tabular form the results of all recorded kamikaze attacks during the entire campaign. The closing chapter of the book is a compilation of last letters written and sent home by some of the kamikaze pilots about to go on their final missions. The kamikazes were unusual in that their operations were sustained for many months, in contrast to the short duration of the traditional last banzai charges made by Japanese ground troops when faced by a hopeless situation. It is interesting to note that there was much adverse public opinion about the kamikaze tactics, even inside Japan, many people feeling that resort to such extreme methods was not justified and should not have been ordered.

Thursfield, H. G., ed. *Brassey's Annual 1958*. New York, Macmillan, 1958. 390 p.

*Brassey's Annual 1958* contains 29 well-written articles on various subjects of interest to officers of the armed forces.

The following are especially appropriate reading: Chapter 1, "The Object in War"; Chapter 2, "The North Atlantic Treaty Organization"; Chapter 5, "Naval Strategy Today"; Chapter 6, "Cold Weather Warfare Training in the Royal Marines"; Chapter 12, "Foreign Navies"; Chapter 14, "Limited War"; Chapter 15, "The Arab Shore of the Persian Gulf: Its Political and Military Problems"; Chapter 17, "Selection and Training for High Command"; and Chapter 22, "A Balanced Fleet."

Vulliez, Albert, and Mordal, Jacques. *Battleship Scharnhorst*. Fair Lawn, N. J., Oxford University Press, 1958. 256 p. *Battleship Scharnhorst* is the story of the wartime career of the second of the famous German battleships to bear this name. Strangely enough, it is the work of two French naval officers who certainly did a marvelous job of reconstructing history, not only from log books and contemporary documents, but from personal contact with several of the German officers who served on the *Scharnhorst*. For naval officers, many lessons in tactics and determination can be learned. Neither can one overlook the value of intelligence and the successes to be gained from careful planning, which was shown by the British on several occasions. At the same time, the authors generously recognize coverage on both sides, and this, too, cannot go unnoticed by the reader. At times the story drags in detail, but it reads easily, and for a naval officer who desires to read history to learn, it provides a good reference for surface ship encounters.

Hough, Richard. *The Fleet That Had to Die*. New York, Viking, 1958. 212 p.

This book is a straightforward account of one of the greatest sea disasters in history, the Battle of Tsu-Shima, May 26-27, 1905, and of the events which led up to it during the Russo-Japanese War — the first of the modern wars. *The Fleet That Had to Die* is, of course, the Russian Baltic squadron led by Admiral Rozhdestvensky. The author describes how Rozhdestvensky brought his coal-fired fleet of 42 cumbersome ships around Eurasia and Africa (18,000 miles) without benefit of any sure bases, only to meet with almost complete destruction at the hands of Admiral Togo, who had a highly trained fleet, securely based and serviced, which had been awaiting Rozhdestvensky for nearly five months. It was a victory for