

1959

The Fleet That Had to Die

Richard Hough

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Hough, Richard (1959) "The Fleet That Had to Die," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 12 : No. 5 , Article 7.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol12/iss5/7>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

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

the Japanese far more spectacular than Jutland. The Russians lost 5,000 men, eight battleships and seven cruisers; Admiral Rozhdestvensky (wounded and half out of his mind) surrendered, in company with large numbers of his sailors. Richard Hough says that he assembled his material from contemporary accounts, official and otherwise, and from captured papers and diaries. This book is considered background reading for all officers, mainly because it is an accurate account of one of the two genuine "fleet actions" (the other being Jutland) that were ever fought along classic, Mahanite lines during the period from the end of sail to the coming of the airplane.

PERIODICALS

Keirn, Donald J., Major General, United States Air Force.

"A-Power for Aircraft." *Ordnance*, January-February, 1959, p. 568-570.

A description of the problems, current status and future outlook of the Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion Program (ANP), with some views on the strategic implications concerning their operational capabilities.

Grewe, Wilhelm G. "The Berlin Crisis." *Vital Speeches of the Day*, February 1, 1959, p. 226-229.

The German Ambassador to the United States explains why the so-called "free city" proposal is unacceptable.

Klein, J. K. "The Soviet Espionage System in Germany." *Military Review*, February, 1959, p. 77-80.

A very interesting article, pointing out that Soviet underground organization activity is more intense today than at the time of the Weimar Republic.

Witze, Claude. "Too Tough to Tackle?" *Air Force*, February, 1959, p. 35-40.

An interesting discussion of the feasibility and advantages of SAC's use of the ALBM (Air Launched Ballistic Missile).

Kranish, Arthur; Sakell, Achilles N.; and Eller, E. M., Rear Admiral, United States Navy (Retired). "Who'll Pick Up the Free Man's Burden?" *Navy*, February, 1959, p. 6-17.