

2022

## Anson's Navy: Building a Fleet for Empire, 1744 to 1763

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### Recommended Citation

Romero, Michael and Lavery, Brian (2022) "Anson's Navy: Building a Fleet for Empire, 1744 to 1763," *Naval War College Review*. Vol. 75: No. 2, Article 17.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol75/iss2/17>

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and reconnaissance). The authors make a case that throwing everything, including the kitchen sink, into the rubric of network-centric-warfare systems has failed to deliver the payoffs promised. Instead, it is time to simplify the complexity; Cares and Cowden stress that only two core detection functions—search and surveillance—matter for operational-level naval warfare, and they explain why.

In their conclusion, the authors offer three salient recommendations to advance the operational art applicable to modern fleet combat:

1. *Inaugurate a new golden age.* Invest directly in elevating modern naval thought. Ultimately, the management of power and the fighting of wars are contests of ideas, and to stay ahead you need the best ideas.
2. *Play to learn how to win.* Subject new ideas to vigorous wargaming efforts through competitive, stressful play. Test, test, and retest to figure out which ideas work best.
3. *Take the new golden age to sea.* Even detailed plans fall apart once you make contact with the enemy. Practice how you expect to fight: out on the water, in the open sea.

*Fighting the Fleet* is a call to reinvigorate the study of combat theory. It applies not so much from the perspective of grand strategy as from the practical realization that to dominate the sea, leaders of a modern navy *must* master the operational art.

While the authors infuse a healthy dose of systems theory and warfighter calculations (salvo theory and the like) into this brief work, do not let that dissuade you from absorbing the book's

valuable lessons. Even a ground pounder like me understands that victory at sea is still a product of experienced, effective leadership. All naval leaders need to understand the fundamentals presented in *Fighting the Fleet*.

SCOTT F. PARADIS



*Anson's Navy: Building a Fleet for Empire, 1744 to 1763*, by Brian Lavery. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022. 288 pages. \$70.

When thinking of Britain's Royal Navy (RN) during the age of sail, one usually is drawn to events of the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century: great victories such as those of the Glorious First of June (1794), Camperdown (1797), the Nile (1798), and Trafalgar (1805), with Horatio Nelson reigning supreme.

However, the Royal Navy of the earlier eighteenth century was far less capable and organized than it would be by the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Despite the laurels won during the Anglo-Dutch Wars of the 1600s and the War of the Spanish Succession from 1701 to 1714, the Royal Navy was woefully ill prepared to fight the new conflicts that sprang up starting at the end of the 1730s. Not only did its naval tactics and leadership require reform, but several new warship types were needed to fight and win actions conducted in waters increasingly distant from Europe. Crucially, the Royal Navy rose to the myriad challenges facing it from 1744 to 1763—years in which the service, according to author Brian Lavery, “was reformed and made fit for purpose to fight even more intense conflicts at the end of the century and the beginning of the next” (p. 6).

Lavery is one of Great Britain's most prominent naval historians, having published over thirty books on British naval history from the age of sail to the modern day. Like his previous books *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men, and Organisation, 1793–1815* (1989) and *Churchill's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation, 1939–1945* (2006), *Anson's Navy* covers a distinct period in RN history. It was Lavery's goal to produce a synthesis of past writing from Sir Herbert Richmond, Sir Julian Corbett, and others with more-recent research. Scholars will appreciate the extensive bibliography encompassing several centuries of primary and secondary sources, while the book's easy readability will give the layperson a solid introduction to the period in question.

While never intended to be an encyclopedic work, *Anson's Navy* offers much that is relevant to modern-day navalists. An obvious parallel is that found between the Royal Navy's development of thirty-two-gun frigates by following French privateer designs and the U.S. Navy's recent adaptation of its *Constellation*-class frigate from the Franco-Italian multipurpose frigate (referred to as the FREMM).

In February 1744, the Royal Navy suffered a humiliating strategic defeat off Toulon, effectively shifting control of the Mediterranean to Spain and France. The senior British officers present, Admirals Mathews and Lestock, vociferously blamed each other for the failure; in the public investigations and spate of courts-martial that followed, Mathews and seven ship captains present at Toulon were dismissed from the service.

By contrast, on 15 June 1744, Captain George Anson, commanding HMS *Centurion*, returned from a cruise around the world that had lasted almost four years. Despite its various

serious costs, Anson's circumnavigation was hailed as a resounding triumph. Its crowning achievement was the capture of a Spanish treasure ship in the Pacific Ocean, from which every (surviving) able seaman came away with approximately twenty years' wages in prize money. Anson promptly ascended to the Admiralty, and, following his victorious command at the first battle of Finisterre in May 1747, he was ennobled as the first Baron Anson. He served as First Lord of the Admiralty from 1751 to 1756 and again from 1757 to 1762.

*Anson's Navy* describes the transformative period in the middle of the eighteenth century during which, Lavery contends, the stage was set for the Royal Navy to achieve its later dominance in the Napoleonic Wars. Through thirteen chapters, Lavery gives attention to a multitude of factors that affected the development of the Royal Navy: the workings of Parliament and the British cabinet, cooperation and competition between the Admiralty and navy boards, the state of British colonies worldwide, and (naturally) the ships and men of the service itself. Lavery skillfully weaves these factors into a coherent and digestible whole; the reader need not fear being bogged down by minutiae.

Despite his long tenure at the Admiralty, Lord Anson detested the constant political wrangling of the British government, yet he often got his way by cannily circumventing regulations and actively avoiding the attention of Parliament (p. 14). In this fashion he pushed through the development of seventy-four-gun warships and true frigates, the appointment of favored candidates as naval surveyors and master shipwrights, and the rise to prominence of several veteran officers of the circumnavigation. By the end,

despite an inauspicious beginning and the subsequent controversial execution of Admiral John Byng (and the end of Anson's initial term as First Lord), the Royal Navy had reinvented itself successfully under fire, becoming the dominant naval force in Europe by the end of the Seven Years' War (1763).

Lord Anson did not take office with specific reforms in mind; instead he repeatedly responded to demonstrated deficiencies in the Royal Navy. On the other hand, he left for the attentions of future First Lords such as Sandwich and St. Vincent the reform of the royal dockyards. With the establishment of the Impress Service, Anson's administration made the practice of impressment more efficient, though not more palatable to British mariners.

Lavery's work compellingly illustrates how the Royal Navy under Anson's leadership took the first critical steps needed to face a resurgent France at the turn of the nineteenth century and to ensure that Britannia would continue to rule the waves.

MICHAEL ROMERO



*George C. Marshall and the Early Cold War: Policy, Politics, and Society*, ed. William A. Taylor. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2020. 310 pages. \$29.95.

Almost everyone reading this journal knows that George C. Marshall is one of the most important figures in the history of the national security of the United States. His role as U.S. Army Chief of Staff dominates the historical literature, but his achievements as Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense also were huge.

It was to study these later achievements that William A. Taylor assembled this anthology, which focuses on Marshall's record during the early portion of the Cold War. Since a variety of authors are involved in these types of projects, there is always a range in the quality of the contributions. The authors of the various chapters are a diverse mix, ranging from junior assistant professors to emeriti, but the bulk seem to be at the junior associate level. It is a credit to Taylor's editorial and administrative skills that the variance in the quality of the offerings is rather small.

The topics the authors explore include universal military training, the effort to mediate the Chinese civil war, the creation of an independent U.S. Air Force, the National Security Act of 1947, the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. strategy, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Korean War, and the racial integration of the armed forces. While Marshall was a major player in affairs of state for the whole period between 1939 and 1951, his presence throughout was less than total; for instance, despite the authors' assertions in the chapters on the National Security Act of 1947 and the desegregation of the military, he barely played a role in those evolutions. Some of the material is hardly new; the chapters on the Marshall Plan and nuclear weapons are short versions of the authors' books on the same topics.

Like all editors of books of this type, Taylor ties all the essays together in an introduction and a conclusion. These sections in anthologies often are not that useful, but Taylor makes some solid points in his conclusion about the importance of tying defense and foreign policies to social values, and also regarding the importance of alliances and how to make them stronger.