

The book is a recommended reading for scholars of the Western Front, Royal Artillery, or students of military thought and evolution. It is also of great use for those who study learning curve and how systems create and sustain momentum. The book is a concise, yet expansive, work.

ANDREW BREER
King's College London

Shawn T. Grimes, *Strategy and War Planning in the British Navy, 1887-1918*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2012. 263pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-8438-3698-8. Hardback. Price £70.00.

The historiography of the Royal Navy in the first two decades of the twentieth century is an active and contentious field. It is, therefore, surprising that the subject of war planning has been under-represented in the scholarship. Until recently, historians have tended to limit discussions of war planning to that directly relevant to financial, technical or other elements of naval policy. This has partly resulted from difficulties in interpreting the complex and frequently contradictory statements by the Admiralty and leading naval figures on the subject; a problem exacerbated by the limitations of the surviving archival collections. Shawn Grimes' book positions itself directly in this gap in the literature, taking naval planning, and the bodies which conducted it, as its subject.

Strategy and War Planning begins by exploring Royal Navy planning for war with the Dual Alliance of France and Russia, before rapidly moving on to look at the rise of Germany as the key threat envisaged by the Naval Intelligence Department. Grimes highlights the continuity which runs through British planning from the late 1880s until the outbreak of war, something that, he argues, derives from a combination of structural and personal factors. In particular the author emphasises the connections between the naval intellectual renaissance of the 1880s and 1890s and the development of British war planning. As is mentioned above, naval planning is difficult subject matter to pin down, and Grimes does well to offer a detailed survey of developments across the period. At each step in this process the author goes to considerable lengths to demonstrate that the plans were taken seriously by the Royal Navy and were not, as is frequently suggested, a mere smokescreen. This is achieved by linking planning with exercises, manoeuvres and construction to present a more holistic picture of how the service viewed planning issues. This clear narrative of British naval planning has, until now, been largely absent from the literature and represents the book's greatest strength. In providing this picture, *Strategy and War Planning* helps to lay to rest the old argument that the Royal Navy did not have plans

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to conduct a war with Germany, an important contribution in the broader historiography on how and why Britain went to war in 1914.

This is not to suggest that the image of naval planning presented by the book is a wholly positive one. Many of the plans outlined in *Strategy and War Planning* are incompatible, and at times plainly contradictory. The author largely leaves it up to the reader to make their own minds up regarding the viability of the various operations described. In particular, one is left wondering what Grimes' views are on the recurrent theme of littoral and amphibious operations on the German coast.

It should be noted that, despite the title, this is a book about war planning, not strategy. Strategy is a combination of the policy ends which are desired to be achieved, and the means which will be used to achieve them. *Strategy and War Planning* focuses on the latter and not the former. Indeed it does not really engage with the political side of the Royal Navy's strategic development at all. At times, this can lead to some slightly strange conclusions. In particular, Grimes underplays the fundamental challenges facing the Royal Navy from 1905, resulting from the possibility of Britain fighting a war with Germany in support of France. This does not undermine the importance of the work in terms of setting out naval war planning, but it does mean that it needs to be read with a clear sense of the political and policy context.

Strategy and War Planning is an important new work which adds considerably to the scholarship on the Edwardian and First World War Royal Navy. In charting the course of naval planning, the book provides considerable scope for engagement from all sides in the current debate. Beyond this the book, together with other works recently released on naval policy by Stephen Cobb, Nicholas Lambert and Matthew Seligmann, highlights the need to return the Senior Service to what remains a largely khaki debate on British strategy prior to 1914.

RICHARD DUNLEY
The National Archives, Kew

Jenny Macleod, *Great Battles: Gallipoli*. With foreword by Hew Strachan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-19-964487-2. Hardback. £18.99.

Jenny Macleod is Senior Lecturer in Twentieth-Century History at the University of Hull and a respected and well-known historian of the 1915 Gallipoli campaign. The choice of title of her latest endeavour, *Great Battles: Gallipoli*, may cause a bit of confusion for my fellow 'Drums and Trumpets' brand of historians and military buffs. This is because the Great Battles series from Oxford University Press tells 'the story