

# The World's Merchant Fleets 1939 The Particulars And Wartime Fates Of 6000 Ships

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at the outbreak of war in 1939 over 600 ships traded across the world's oceans and they were to become the pawns in the global conflict which was to permeate the operations of every shipping line on every continent this book gives the details of all those ships which were extant in 1939 and describes the fate of all those which were lost between 1939 and 1945

the mediterranean fleet entered the 1930s looking back to the lessons of Jutland and the first world war but also seeking to incorporate new technologies notably air power unfortunately in the depression years of the early 1930s there was a lack of funds to remedy deficiencies the problem became critical during the Abyssinian crisis of 1935 the crisis wound down by mid 1936 but the respite did not last long in June 1936 the Spanish Civil War broke out and the mediterranean fleet was soon involved in evacuations of British and other endangered foreigners from Spanish ports as well as the protection of British flagged merchant ships in the war zone in addition to the Spanish Civil War there was an increase of tension with Germany in 1938 that culminated with the Czechoslovak crisis in September the situation of the mediterranean fleet and its possible actions had the Munich Agreement not been reached are described the Spanish Civil War ended in 1939 with the victory of the nationalists and the mediterranean fleet was

again involved in evacuations by now the prospect of war with germany and possibly italy was quite clear and serious preparations for war continued the plans for war in the mediterranean are reproduced in detail

this book marks the first comprehensive history of britain's naval bulwark the home fleet it illuminates the vital role that fleet played in preserving britain as a base of operations against hitler we see portrayed the hard days of blockade patrol and battle that encompassed the home fleet's war and we see how that war was made harder by weaknesses at the admiralty and by the damaging interference of the minister of defence winston churchill

for more than a century the u.s. navy's battleships cruisers destroyers submarines and amphibious warfare vessels have depended on a small group of specialized auxiliary ships to provide fuel food ammunition parts and other material support and services without these workhorse vessels the u.s. fleet could not have won in world war ii and it could not today deploy and remain on station in the far distant waters of the world this book provides the rosters histories specifications and illustrations of 130 different auxiliary ship types in the last 100 years including the little known ones the latest expeditionary fast transports and future towing salvage and rescue ships

the german fleet at war relates the little known history of the kriegsmarine's surface fleet with a focus on the sixty nine surface naval battles fought by germany's major warships against the large warships of the british french american polish soviet norwegian and greek navies it emphasizes operational details but also paints a broad overview of the naval war the book addresses the lack of information about the specifics of naval engagements in world war ii and provides a database of naval engagements for comparison and analysis but unlike most reference works it has a continuous narrative and a theme the result is a unique overview of the german and allied navies at war that provides new appreciation of their activities and accomplishments

a complete history of naval combat in the mediterranean and north african campaigns throughout wwii in the early summer of 1940 the kingdom of italy joined with nazi germany by challenging britain for dominance in the mediterranean region with france on the verge of collapse and britain facing imminent invasion the italians seized upon a rare opportunity to re-establish control heavily outnumbered the british mediterranean fleet and its ground and air forces braced for a long and bloody conflict blue water war tells the story of this epic struggle the fighting across the mediterranean and middle east was waged at differing times against the combined forces of italy germany and vichy france over a wide area stretching from the coastal waters of southern europe to madagascar and from africa's atlantic coast to the persian gulf utilizing a variety of weapons including warships submarines and aircraft along with sizable merchant fleets the british and their subsequent american partners maintained vital lines of communication conducted numerous amphibious landings interdicted axis supply activities and eventually eliminated axis maritime power within the theater in turn these actions facilitated multiple allied victories that helped secure the defeat of the european axis

this is the first of three volumes detailing the history of the fleet air arm during the second world war it deals with the formative period between 1939 and 1941 incorporating an in depth coverage of significant operations including the norwegian campaign and incidents involving the loss of and damage to aircraft carriers including the sinking of ark royal a wide range of official documents are used to enable the reader to appreciate the complexity of the operations and how the royal navy adapted to the use of air power

in the second world war

no weapon platform sank more u boats in the second world war than the allied aircraft whether it was an american plane operating from american escort carriers us aircraft from royal air force bases or british aircraft from bases throughout the world these officers and men became the most decisive factor in turning the tide of the battle of the atlantic against the german submarine threat while the german crews could threaten escort vessels with torpedoes or avoid them by remaining submerged their leaders never developed an effective strategy against aircraft however the allied aircraft did not enjoy much early success british canadian and australian air crews that fought the u boats from 1939 until 1941 achieved few triumphs they possessed neither the aircraft nor the bases necessary to deliver consistent lethal attacks against german submarines in 1941 the royal air force finally began implementing an effective aircraft response when it initiated training on the american built consolidated b 24 liberators supported by other types then in service these four engine bombers would prove to be decisive with america s entry into the war the united states navy and the united states army air forces also began employing liberators against the u boats so that by mid 1943 the admiral karl dōnitz commander of u boat forces withdrew his submarines from the north atlantic in recognition of the allied aircraft s new dominance from dōnitz s retreat to the end of the war allied aircraft continued to dominate the u boat battle as it shifted to other areas including the bay of biscay dōnitz eventually ordered his u boats to remain on the surface and engage allied aircraft as opposed to submerging this approach did lead to the demise of some allied aircraft but it also resulted in even more u boat being sunk most critically dōnitz acknowledged with his new policy that he knew of no tactics or weapons that would defend his submarines from allied aircraft in the end it was a matter of choosing whether his submariners would die submerged or die surfaced either way allied aircraft prevailed the allied air campaign against hitler s u boats is the most comprehensive study ever undertaken of this most crucial battle which helped turn the battle of the atlantic irrevocably in favour of the allies

this impeccable myth busting study of wwii maritime operations sheds new light on the conflict with sharp analysis and an international perspective the sunday times uk command of the oceans was crucial to winning world war ii by the start of 1942 nazi germany had conquered mainland europe and imperial japan had overrun southeast asia and much of the pacific how could britain and distant america prevail in what had become a war of continents in this definitive account evan mawdsley traces events at sea from the first u boat operations in 1939 to the surrender of japan he argues that the allied counterattack involved not just decisive sea battles but a long struggle to control shipping arteries and move armies across the sea covering all the major actions in the atlantic and pacific oceans as well as those in the narrow seas this book interweaves for the first time the endeavors of the maritime forces of the british empire the united states germany and japan as well as those of france italy and russia

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