

Review of *Nightraiders*

A worthy companion to their earlier work *Home Waters* (reviewed in TON Talk 192, June 2018), the authors have bravely set out to document the whole of mine warfare activity in the vast Pacific War in just 370 pages.

Led by a massive build-up of US forces in response to the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour, there is a strong emphasis on minelaying by surface ships, submarines and aircraft throughout. The authors interweave contributions by other allied naval and air forces into their account of the many actions.

The account opens with a brief overview of how the Japanese conducted their Lightning War, expanding from their conquest of China in the mid-1930's through occupation of Indo-China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Dutch East Indies, Philippines, Burma until they were threatening Alaska and Canada in the north, India and Ceylon in the west, Papua New Guinea and Australia to the south. Their advance was held at Kodiak in the frozen north and Midway, the carrier battle where the two fleets did not come in sight of each other.

The main body of the book recounts how mainly US forces island-hopped right up to the home islands of Japan, where the two atomic bombs forced the surrender of that nation. Even if you have seen all the box sets about the War in the Pacific, it is probable that you will learn something new from the detailed accounts of the mining aspects of each of the fiercely-fought actions in that campaign.

There is a brief description of each action, enlivened with maps, excellent photos of the ships and men involved and dits [accounts of an incident or event in a sailor's life] recounting episodes of bravery and survival.

An extensive bibliography makes this book a valuable work of reference, listing each ship and C.O. plus numbers of mines laid and cleared in each engagement, together with identities of Jap ships sunk. The book is an exciting read and one that you can dip into time and time again.

Peter Down in *Ton Talk*