

Part two, “Political Renewal: Civilian Diplomats and Administrators,” moves the focus to the second tier of the administration of military government. Here Harold Ingrams, who became head of the Administration and Local Government section of the Control Commission, preserves the link with the theme of empire. Ingrams was a colonial official who believed in the superiority of British institutions, especially the practices of British local government, which he also associated with the virtues of Christianity. Knowles provides an interesting account of the limits of men like Ingrams to impose their vision and of the success of the Germans subject to them in so many ways in defending their own preferences and traditions. Austen Albu and Allan Flanders came from a very different background, both being committed international socialists. They provide Knowles with the opportunity for suggesting that German exile socialists had more influence than is commonly assumed. Of the two, Albu receives more attention, though both are presented as frustrated by the limits of their influence and as pessimistic about the future as they left Germany. Although they facilitated the increasing assumption of authority by German politicians, their own experience was that of “outsiders in what was effectively a Military Government” (100). The fourth figure at this level, Henry Vaughan Berry, brought yet a different set of experiences. He had background in the occupation of the Rhineland and in the empire but also in the business world. Berry could look back on his time as regional commissioner in Hamburg with satisfaction, and, on his death, he was favorably remembered by Helmut Schmidt. Yet Berry’s undoubted success also came at the price of glossing over the legacy of the Third Reich—and British devastation of much of Hamburg. Among this group, the blend of recurrent themes, diverse backgrounds and experiences helps to produce a fine-grained impression of the experience of military government in an occupied country.

For part three, “Personal Reconciliation: Young Men with No Adult Experience but War,” Knowles selected John Chaloner, Michael Howard, Jan Thexton, and Michael Palliser as representatives of the “young officers.” As Knowles acknowledges, these men left less trace in archives, a deficiency he seeks to remedy by drawing on wider sources. That inevitably produces some imbalance compared to the presentation of the older and more senior figures. Nevertheless, he draws some clear general conclusions, portraying these men as pragmatic, concerned for their own future, but also conscientious. Chaloner receives more attention than the others because of his role in the creation of *Der Spiegel* and illustrates how much could be achieved by the initiative of even junior figures.

Although the biographical approach produces somewhat uneven results, as the focus moves to the more junior figures, it becomes increasingly interesting and productive. Personal recollections, some of them the product of Knowles’s own interviews, enrich this approach, but even without such sources, the biographical method may be worthy of imitation in the study of other occupations and other experiences of the transition from war to peace. Overall, this is a valuable contribution to any reading list devoted to this phase of British-German history or to the study of military occupation.

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RENATA ELEY LONG. *In the Shadow of the Alabama: The British Foreign Office and the American Civil War*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015. Pp. 254. \$37.95 (cloth).  
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This book tells an interesting story. Despite its subtitle, the focus is less on the Foreign Office than on the interconnected activities of Confederate agents and their British contacts—arms

manufacturers, shipbuilders, financiers, legal advisers, middlemen, politicians—as they conspired to provide the ships, weapons, and supplies that were so vital to the Southern war effort during the American Civil War. Attention is also given to US officials and their spies and allies, who tried to frustrate Confederate schemes, and to the lack of clarity within the British government, where there was no consensus about the nature and responsibilities of neutrality. The Foreign Enlistment Act of 1819 proved to be a cumbersome device and did not make for prompt or efficient decision-making, as British authorities tried to figure out how best to deal with the Confederates' plots and US complaints and warnings. The central event in the book is the escape of the “No. 290” or *Enrica*, which became the CSS *Alabama*, at the end of July 1862, just before a detention order reached its place of departure. The *Alabama*, of course, went on to destroy many US vessels. Compensation demands relating to the *Alabama* and other British-built Confederate ships led to serious disputation between the British and US governments after the war.

Most of the details of this history, and the personalities involved, are already well known. Renata Eley Long's claims about new discoveries are somewhat overblown, but still, she does an excellent job in demonstrating the links between the main movers. Pro-Southern networks in Britain were built on family and marriage bonds, business dealings, political ambition, gentlemen's clubs, City speculations, and prior transatlantic ties, and if genuine sympathy for the Confederate cause motivated some, for others the spur was nothing but the prospect of quick and considerable monetary gain. The most important revelations offered in the book concern a Foreign Office clerk, Victor Buckley, whose relatives included dukes and earls, a distinguished general, a Liberal MP, and an official in the royal household; Queen Victoria was Buckley's godmother. Buckley was also linked with some of the merchants and manufacturers who did business with Confederate agents during the war. Long identifies Buckley as the “mole” who tipped the latter off regarding the imminent seizure of the *Alabama*, but she fails properly to establish why he did it. Buckley might also have been the beneficiary of a subsequent Foreign Office cover-up. Long suggests that this was meant to protect Britain's international reputation, to help preserve the Foreign Office's esprit de corps and ethos of elitism and reticence, and to keep the queen's godson out of a scandal. Perhaps there was a cover-up, but supposition is not the same as evidence.

At the end of the book, Long states that the postwar settlement of the *Alabama* claims was a turning point in Anglo-American relations that helped bring about the cooperation and friendship of the twentieth century. She also contends that developments in the American Civil War period changed British government and society: aristocratic control was reduced, the “Age of Empire” gave way to the “Age of Capital,” and the future belonged to the type of ruthless entrepreneurs who had connived to aid the Confederacy. It is a pity that these larger themes are not addressed earlier in the book—at greater length and more analytically—because, as they stand, Long's closing remarks are little more than afterthoughts. But they are important; they ought to be substantiated.

To be fair, though, this book does not purport to be an in-depth academic study. It barely engages with the relevant historiography. Its research basis is adequate, but a great deal in the book is not documented or referenced. Most of the works listed in the bibliography are not cited directly in the text, and the bibliography mixes together unpublished manuscripts, contemporary published sources, and secondary works willy-nilly. Long's brief introduction includes a “Note for Historians,” in which she explains that her book is “essentially a primary research-based work” that “sheds new light” but “does not seek to be a purely academic, revisionist text challenging the prevailing narrative offered in secondary sources.” Long's interest is really in “personal stories” and how “key actors” influenced naval and diplomatic events during the American Civil War (2).

The book is generally well written and easy to follow. Sometimes a name might be spelled incorrectly, or the title of a publication not italicized, but overall the style is impressive. Nevertheless, some readers will find the many asides (“personal stories”) distracting and even

irrelevant. Some will be irked by Long's reliance on melodramatic language. Phrases like "a curious twist of fate" appear quite often. We learn early on that "the young Victor Buckley would become a pawn in a very dangerous game" (10), and as for his wife, Mary Stirling, "fate was holding a place for her within the footnotes of history" (22). Meanwhile, Long indulges in a lot of guesswork, qualifying many statements with such words as "probably," "apparently," and "it is reasonable to suppose." Such qualifications may express admirable caution, but in excess they undermine reader confidence. More serious, perhaps, are various simplistic and ill-informed interpretations—about the queen's influence over government policy making, for instance, or the pro-Northern stance of Lancashire textile workers, both of which are exaggerated. The book also has some factual errors. For example, the Disraeli ministry of 1868 did *not* have a "slender majority" (170).

When read alongside more scholarly works on British aspects of the American Civil War, this book will be found useful, albeit with the limitations indicated above.

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ANGUS McLAREN. *Playboys and Mayfair Men: Crime, Class, Masculinity, and Fascism in 1930s London*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017. Pp. 264. \$24.95 (cloth).  
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Angus McLaren's *Playboys and Mayfair Men: Crime, Class, Masculinity, and Fascism in 1930s London* furnishes readers with an intriguing account of the Hyde Park Hotel robbery of 1937, in which four young "gentlemen" conspired to steal Cartier jewelry worth a fortune and bludgeoned Etienne Bellenger, the firm's representative, in the process.

Part one consists of five chapters narrating the circumstances of the robbery, the police investigation that followed, the life trajectories of the suspects from birth to prosecution, the trial, and its aftermath. The last of these charts the perpetrators' efforts to return to society life. Reclaiming wealth and reputation, as well as marriage prospects, after such a public downfall and during the opening salvos of the Second World War proved challenging for the four "Mayfair Men," requiring name changes and appeals to benevolence of aristocratic connections for work, social, and political promotion. At least one of the robbers was unable to escape the shadow of his crimes, embarking on a life of serial thefts followed by ever-lengthier prison sentences. Yet McLaren ably evokes how the privileges enjoyed by the four from their birth continued to elicit (undeserved) sympathy from both penal institutions and those in the robbers' wider social circle, creating opportunities for social mobility that would have been denied to criminals of any other class. This point demonstrates the fundamental grip that class, and the romance of the Mayfair "set," continued to exert on the British cultural imagination in an era regarded as increasingly democratized through the dramatic postwar extensions to the franchise and the election of the first Labour government in 1924. The section also showcases McLaren's detailed biographical research into the social actors involved and their milieus in the fashionable haunts of 1930s London. Providing extensive insight into the way connections were forged among the upper classes, and the kinds of businesses and institutions they patronized (particularly in regard to hotels), the book closely examines the "cultural capital" wielded by the Mayfair Men. Assuring them a status that sent shockwaves through the elite households and schools from which the robbers emerged once they were sentenced, their punishment (which for two of them included fifteen and twenty strokes of the lash, respectively) stoked wide-ranging debates about corporal punishment. Part one thus seeks to immerse the