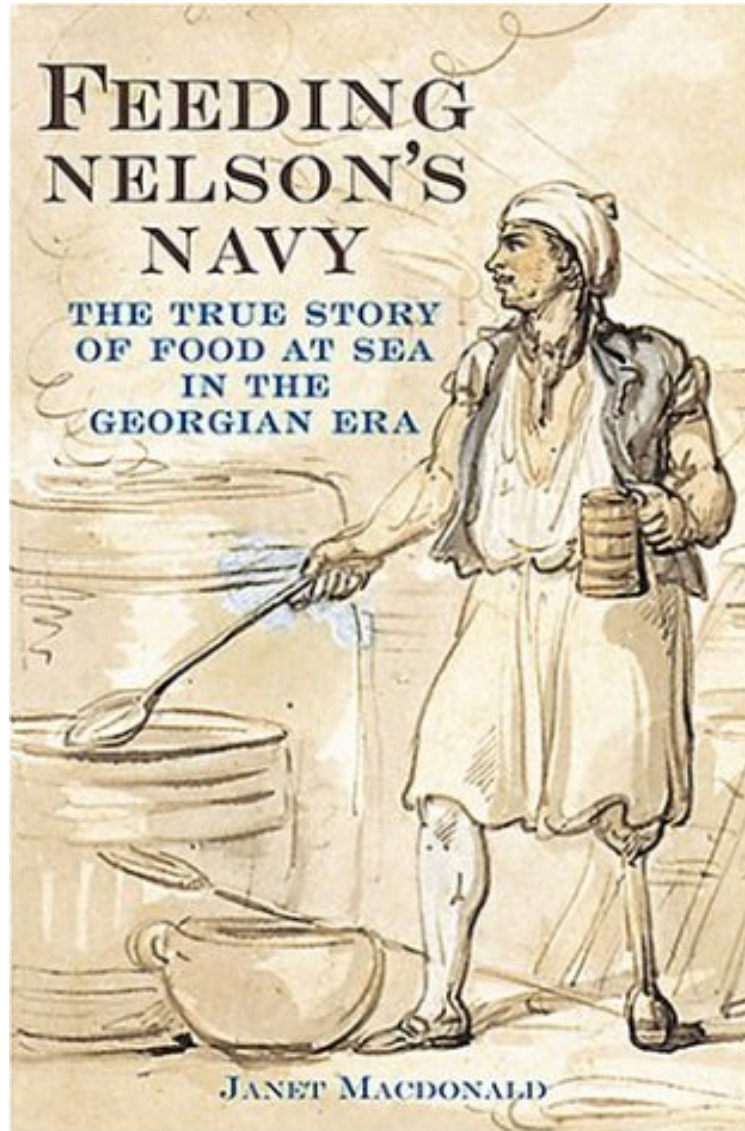


(Download free pdf) Feeding Nelson's Navy: The True Story of Food at Sea in the Georgian Era

Feeding Nelson's Navy: The True Story of Food at Sea in the Georgian Era

Janet Macdonald

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Janet Macdonald : Feeding Nelson's Navy: The True Story of Food at Sea in the Georgian Era before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Feeding Nelson's Navy: The True Story of Food at Sea in the Georgian Era:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive yet readable lookBy A Florida ReaderThis is a (surprisingly) interesting look at how the British navy was fed during the era of the French Revolutionary and

Napoleonic Wars. It doesn't just limit itself to a look at the food and drink of the sailors and officers, but also looks at the whole chain of procurement, packing, delivery and storage of food and drink. Anyone with an interest in the period might have picked up bits and pieces of the process from a number of sources, but this book does a fantastic job of looking at it in great detail through a well done narrative. It is pleasantly readable as well. It should be a mandatory addition to anyone's library of the navy of the Nelson era.⁹ of 9 people found the following review helpful. A Remarkable Case of Research
By HMS Warspite
In "Feeding Nelson's Navy", author Janet MacDonald has put together some remarkable research to lay waste the myths of shipboard feeding in the British Navy during the Napoleonic Wars. The British Navy, in the long struggle against Revolutionary and then Imperial France, kept tens of thousands of men at sea for months on end. Popular myth has them subsisting on rotten salted meat and weevily bread. MacDonald shows the sailor aboard the average British warship ate a sufficient and reasonably nutritious diet. Official rations were based on biscuit (pilot bread for today's readers), salt beef, salt pork, cheese, peas, oatmeal, and beer. These were the foods which kept best in a world without refrigeration or canning. Other foods were provided when available, and the British Navy lead the way in experimenting with dried vegetables, "portable" soups, and lemon juice to stave off nutritional diseases such as scurvy. The British Navy's ability to supply its sailors with a good ration through years of war were thanks to the efforts of the Navy Board and its victualing system. MacDonald's description of its business techniques may be daunting for the reader, but the lesson is that the system was made to work, around the fleet and around the world, in a consistent manner. No other navy of the period enjoyed so much consistent success at sea. Along with the details of the ration cycle and the mechanics of the supply system, MacDonald provides considerable insight into "messing" at sea, a vital and often unremarked portion of naval culture. This book is very highly recommended to students of the Nelsonian Navy and of the Napoleonic Wars. MacDonald has mined this particular academic niche to its reasonable limits.⁰ of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must have for your sailing library...
By Frank E. Ellison
Great historical work for those of us who love sailing and sailing lore...

The prevailing image of food at sea in the age of sail features rotting meat and weevily biscuits, but this highly original book proves beyond doubt that this was never the norm. Building on much recent research Janet Macdonald shows how the sailor's official diet was better than he was likely to enjoy ashore, and of ample calorific value for his highly active shipboard life. When trouble flared and food was a major grievance in the great mutinies of 1797 the usual reason was the abuse of the system. This system was an amazing achievement. At the height of the Napoleonic Wars the Royal Navy's administrators fed a fleet of more than 100,000 men, in ships that often spent months on end at sea. Despite the difficulty of preserving food before the advent of refrigeration and meat-canning, the British fleet had largely eradicated scurvy and other dietary disorders by 1800. This was the responsibility of the Victualling Board, a much-maligned but generally efficient bureaucracy that organized the preparing and packing of meat, the brewing of beer, the baking of ship's biscuit, and all the logistics of the Navy and on an industrial scale unparalleled elsewhere. Once aboard ship food and drink was subject to stringent controls to ensure fairness, and this book takes a fresh look at the tarnished reputations of Purser and Cook, before turning to the ways both officers and men were able to supplement their official rations, including the keeping of livestock on board. A chapter compares provisions in the other major navies of the time, and the book concludes with recipes for some of the exotic sounding dishes, like lobscouse, prepared by naval cooks. While Feeding Nelson's Navy contains much of value to the historian, it is written with a popular touch that will enthrall anyone with an interest in life at sea in the age of sail.

About the Author Janet Macdonald has written a number of books on cookery subjects, and this one is based on her current research into naval victualling for a higher degree at the Greenwich Maritime Institute.