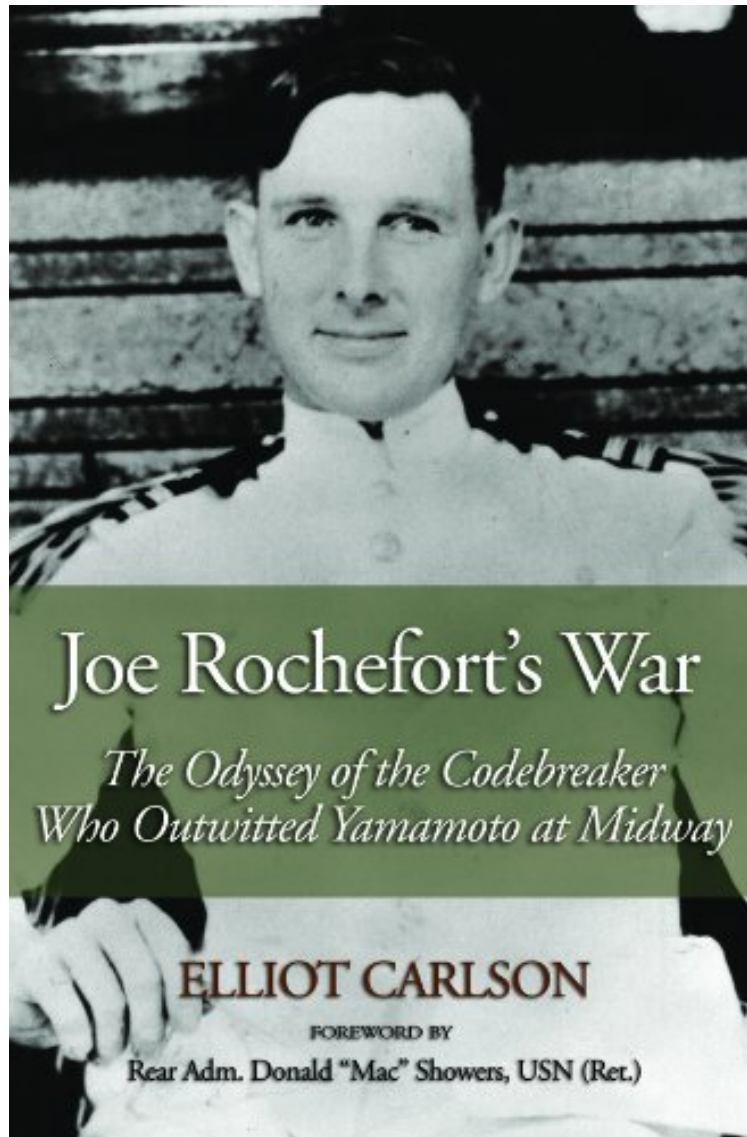


(Mobile pdf) Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway

Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway

Elliot Carlson

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Elliot Carlson : Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive look at a complex manBy Schatzi's MomAnyone

with an interest in military intelligence will find this a page-turner. While it (wisely!) doesn't get far into the nuts and bolts of code-breaking, it does make clear what kind of individual is needed in the absence of today's computing power: a maverick. Recall that JN-25 was not entirely an encryption, like Enigma, wherein one needed only to find the key. Instead, Rochefort and his team needed to do the equivalent of figuring out who had an encrypted phone number, given a directory (without today's reverse entries), after solving the encryption that overlaid it. That a small group of human brains could do this at all is a gargantuan accomplishment. In a wider context, the Navy after Pearl Harbor was a man awakened by a kick in the groin in strange surroundings. Its crown jewels were sitting in harbor mud, temporarily useless at best, so it couldn't even fight the last war (the one for which it was trained). It had aircraft carriers but no experience in their wartime use. Aircraft were substandard, their crews poorly trained thanks in part to lack of relevant prior experience to reference. Below the surface, the very marginally functional Mark 14 torpedo was a cruel joke compared to the enemy's weapon. Radar was a new toy that hadn't earned a reputation of reliability. And the enemy would surely strike again, soon, somewhere, and with a weapon honed by recent experience. Rochefort's story is part of the wider miracle, that of the ability of Americans to adapt quickly as needed to learn serious lessons, to adapt, and to prevail. Carlson's presentation is engaging and well worth the time. 38 of 40 people found the following review helpful. Wonderfully told, meticulously researched story of a remarkable naval personality.....By Long-Suffering Technology Consumer Those already familiar with the Battle of Midway probably know the basics: it was the first major US victory in the Pacific, crucial to both American morale and to turning back the Japanese advances in that theater. Those with this awareness probably also remember that the successes of US Navy codebreakers against the Japanese navy's principal operational code (JN-25), and the value these added in the allowing Nimitz to defeat Yamamoto in blue-water engagement centered on Midway Island in early June, 1942. To be sure, it was the fighting spirit, shiphandling and airmanship of the Pacific Fleet that ultimately won the battle. But it was the intelligence successes against JN-25 that allowed Nimitz to have his forces in the right place at the right time, thus realizing Joe Rochefort's vision of combat intelligence. In "Joe Rochefort's War", Elliot Carlson presents a wonderfully researched and engagingly narrated history of the events that led Joe Rochefort to the basement spaces at Pearl Harbor that would mine Japanese communications treasure for Nimitz. In doing so, Carlson does a masterful job of illuminating many of the organizational and cultural clashes present in the WWII navy (some of which would still be around when my service began more than 30 years later). Carlson pulls no punches in describing the the politics of the officer corps --especially the mid-20th century gap between Academy and non-Academy educated officers-- and the lack of regard "operational" officers held for intelligence (especially intelligence as unproven as the kind Rochefort was delivering...which was virtually the only intelligence available to fleet decision makers at the time). For those currently serving who are watching organizational battles over missions and resources: you'll be glad to know that nothing has changed since WWII. Carlson also debunks some of the popular Rochefort myths perpetuated by other accounts of Midway (including Hal Holbrook's characterization in the 1976 movie "Midway"). Carlson walks a fine line between the rather dry and very arcane discussions of the cryptanalytic techniques that Rochefort's crew developed, and the personal and organizational influences that shaped Rochefort's career. Carlson also adds enough operational details about the Battle of Midway without re-creating what has already been documented in many other works. While Rochefort is presented in a favorable light, "Joe Rochefort's War" is not a hagiography; some of the apparent unfairness in the way he was treated by some of his superiors is appropriately defined by Rochefort's emphasis on mission success over wardroom politics...which, like it are not, are a non-negotiable part of getting the orders you want and continuing to advance as a naval officer (even during wartime; wars end, but wardroom politics have a far longer shelf life!). Equally as interesting as the events surrounding Midway are the details of Rochefort's unconventional ascent from enlisted man to commissioned officer, and his post-Midway naval and civilian pursuits. This is a compelling tale of naval and intelligence successes and a remarkable leader at the intersection of his professional peak and world events, and Joe Rochefort was long overdue for this treatment. Travel through a naval career spanning three wars with Joseph Rochefort; you won't be sorry. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great story of a very great American hero unknown to most people. By Charles H. Starliper Joe Rochefort is a great American hero but very few have ever heard of him. This book tells a great story of facts that are shockingly unfair to Rochefort, a man who was so badly treated that it remained for President Reagan to award him his medal, posthumously, that he was deprived of by egotistical Naval officer "politicians." In spite of all that, this book gives us a great account of the man. Wish there were more stuff out on Rochefort.

Elliot Carlson's award-winning biography of Capt. Joe Rochefort is the first to be written about the officer who headed Station Hypo, the U.S. Navy's signals monitoring and cryptographic intelligence unit at Pearl Harbor, and who broke the Japanese navy's code before the Battle of Midway. The book brings Rochefort to life as the irreverent, fiercely independent, and consequential officer that he was. Readers share his frustrations as he searches in vain for Yamamoto's fleet prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, but share his joy when he succeeds in tracking the fleet in early 1942 and breaks the code that leads Rochefort to believe Yamamoto's invasion target is Midway. His conclusions, bitterly opposed by some top Navy brass, are credited with making the U.S. victory possible and helping

to change the course of the war. The author tells the story of how opponents in Washington forced Rochefort's removal from Station Hypo and denied him the Distinguished Service Medal recommended by Admiral Nimitz. In capturing the interplay of policy and personality and the role played by politics at the highest levels of the Navy, Carlson reveals a side of the intelligence community seldom seen by outsiders. For a full understanding of the man, Carlson examines Rochefort's love-hate relationship with cryptanalysis, his adventure-filled years in the 1930s as the right-hand man to the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet, and his return to codebreaking in mid-1941 as the officer in charge of Station Hypo. He traces Rochefort's career from his enlistment in 1918 to his posting in Washington as head of the Navy's codebreaking desk at age twenty-five, and beyond. In many ways a reinterpretation of Rochefort, the book makes clear the key role his codebreaking played in the outcome of Midway and the legacy he left of reporting actionable intelligence directly to the fleet. An epilogue describes efforts waged by Rochefort's colleagues to obtain the medal denied him in 1942—a drive that finally paid off in 1986 when the medal was awarded posthumously.

“Carlson, a career journalist, demonstrates his skill at storytelling throughout the book. For example, the description of the weeks before Midway reads like a Tom Clancy novel. Carlson mastered pertinent archival sources in the creation of this biography. Naval documents, oral histories, published memoirs, and even interviews with participants contributed to a fully researched study that left few stones unturned. This is a lengthy study of 456 pages, not including front matter, appendices, notes, bibliography, and index. Carlson's biography of Joe Rochefort is well worth the investment for those interested in the Battle of Midway, cryptanalysis, and naval culture.”—H-Net.org “Joe Rochefort's War is a story of a talented, sometimes abrasive, but always effective, officer battling the bureaucracy and unjustified criticism in a tradition-bound Navy. RAdm. Donald 'Mac' Showers, who worked with Rochefort in 1942, notes in his foreword to this book that it is 'an account that is long overdue.' (ix) Well told and well documented, Carlson's book has done a fine job.”—Studies in Intelligence “Carlson's book serves as an important contribution to U.S. Navy history and heritage in addition to the history of U.S. intelligence.”—Communiqué “Good intelligence wins battles and can even turn the scale in wars. Much of the writing about code breaking is too arcane to appeal to a wide readership but, just occasionally, one comes across a book which ties code breaking to the personalities involved, to bureaucratic politics and to the general course of a war. This is one such book... This well-written study is both gripping and moving; it makes an important and readable contribution to the history of the Pacific war.”—The Naval “Joe Rochefort's War is a brilliant triumph, reflecting both the author's astonishingly comprehensive research and his sympathetic but clear-eyed analysis... Carlson, in addition to his other virtues is a fine storyteller. Anyone interested in the Battle of Midway should want to know more about the obscured genius at its center. This superb biography delivers Rochefort in full—the achievements and the man.”—World War II “...Fills a gap in the general knowledge about the career and fate of an enigma of World War II in the Pacific.”—The Daybook “Elliott Carlson does an excellent job not only of leading us through Joe Rochefort's life, but also giving us a feel for how the U.S. Navy operated in the interwar period, its organization, how things really got done, it's politics, and the culture of the naval officer corps... Carlson is a journalist and this excellent biography has a journalistic flavor... Joe Rochefort's War is a very good read, a well-researched and fascinating biography of one of the truly great cryptologic warriors of World War II.”—Cryptologia “...Masterful book, likely to be Joe Rochefort's definitive biography... The book's chief virtues are its vigorous prose, remarkable detail, and balanced view of Rochefort as neither saint nor sinner.”—Virginian Pilot “This is an excellent read and study of the class-ridden, political World War II United States Navy.”—The Past In “Joe Rochefort's War will be required reading for Pacific war scholars for decades to come. As the most significant new book on the Battle of Midway since Jonathan Parshall and Anthony Tully's Shattered Sword (Potomac Books, 2005), Joe Rochefort's War will be remembered as 2011's most important contribution to Pacific war scholarship.”—Ian Toll, Naval History, April 2012 “There is always danger in works written well after the death of the main protagonist, but Carlson shows a general journalistic flair for objectivity in discussing Rochefort's critics as well as friends.”—The Japan Times, February 19, 2012 “This is an oft-told tale—one, as Elliot Carlson's new biography demonstrates, that has been woefully incomplete, or inaccurate, or both. Joe Rochefort's War is a brilliant triumph, reflecting both the author's astonishingly comprehensive research and his sympathetic but clear-eyed analysis. Unlike too many biographers, who either love or hate their subjects, Carlson clearly admires Rochefort's achievements, but is completely fair and candid about his flaws... Anyone interested in the Battle of Midway should want to know more about the obscured genius at its center. This superb biography delivers Rochefort in full—the achievements and the man.”—World War II magazine, May/June 2012 “This biography will become the definitive work on Joe Rochefort and it will also become one of the most accurate, and therefore, most valuable references for the Battle of Midway. No other book in print provides the level of detail that Carlson provides, and backs up... Joe Rochefort's War is required reading for those interested in the history of World War II in the Pacific.”—Cryptolog, Winter 2012 “A fine hardbound volume, one of the better offerings by Naval Institute Press... This is the Rochefort story that most of us have wanted to see for a very long time. Very highly recommended.”—Naval Intelligence Professionals Quarterly, Fall/Winter 2012 “The stuff of a wartime thriller. A code-breaker, stung by his failure to predict the bombing of Pearl Harbor, divines the enemy's plans seven months later, enabling one of the great American victories of World War II.”—The

Wall Street Journal, December 24, 2011 "...A literary masterpiece. This is a long overdue biography of an individual who helped shape the events of the Pacific War following Japan's raid on Pearl Harbor...packed with first-rate research and brilliant analysis."?Education About Asia, Winter 2012"Another home run for NIP, this is a fine, engrossing biography of one of the major, and largely unknown, figures of the Pacific war."?Honolulu Star-Advertiser, December 6, 2011"Elliott Carlson has written a fine biography, which is a worthy tribute to Rochefort without being a hagiography. It is thoroughly recommended to any one interested in Rochefort, or his key role in the Battle of Midway."? Intelligence and National Security"Joe Rochefort's War is a very good look at the effort that went into cracking the Japanese Navy's code. It also shows how petty some of the top Navy brass could be in not recognizing and rewarding the work performed by a young Navy Captain. It is a real shame that Captain Joe Rochefort was not given the Distinguished Service Medal that he so rightfully earned during his life. At least the medal was finally awarded posthumously to a Navy Captain whose efforts saved so many young men's lives and changed the course of the war in the Pacific Theater. Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway has earned a "WOW!" Rating."?The Lone Star Book , November 2011"An exceptionally well done 'man against the system' research effort."?Sea Classics, January 2012"For history buffs on your list...there is a lot of good history being written these days, but I very much enjoyed a fine story of a perhaps unfamiliar hero of World War II....Rochefort's brilliance and life of service, and his shabby backstabbing at the hands of lesser minds, makes a great story, and something new for the history fan on your list. Add a star if he or she especially likes sea stories."?Greenwich Patch, December 2, 2011"I have just finished reading Elliot Carlson's Joe Rochefort's War. It is 450+ pages, so it took about ten days to go through it. I recommend you get your hands on it. It is superbly researched and incredibly detailed. In my view, this book, together with Layton's And I Was There, Holmes' Double Edged Secrets, and Roberta Wohlstetter's old but classic Pearl Harbor Warning and Decision will be the authoritative sources for the intelligence history of Pearl Harbor and Midway. A superb piece of work!?"ADM Thomas A. Brooks, USN (Ret.) former Chief of Naval Intelligence"Joe Rochefort's War is an excellent biography but is also a fascinating look at the Regular Navy of the 1920s and 1930s and its culture during World War II. Naval history enthusiasts will want to read it."? Galveston Daily News, November 13, 2011"...a tour de force...an overdue historical note on the importance of U.S. Navy Capt. Joe Rochefort and his colleagues in cryptanalysis...This beautifully-written book shows "the Old Navy" at its best and its worst."?Defense Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy"Joe Rochefort's War is a fine hardbound volume, one of the better offerings by Naval Institute Press. This is the Rochefort story that most of us have wanted to see for a very long time. Very highly recommended."?The Battle of Midway Roundtable"Joe Rochefort's War is the book that all who are interested in the Battle of Midway have literally awaited for decades. Intelligence expert Joseph Rochefort was among a very few whose contributions to the victory were absolutely vital, yet his personal story has previously attracted only scant attention from historians. Elliot Carlson's fine new book reveals that amazing story in full, and it's one that everyone having a strong focus on World War II in the Pacific will want to know."?Ronald W. Russell, editor of The Battle of Midway Roundtable and author of No Right to Win: a Continuing Dialogue with Veterans of the Battle of Midway"In Joe Rochefort's War, Elliot Carlson has successfully peeled back the decades of myth and misperceptions around the man, the analyst, and his role in the first year of the Pacific War. At home in naval intelligence, and an exceptional officer serving with the Chief, U.S. Fleet in the Pacific in the 1930s, Rochefort was, by the time he arrived at Pearl Harbor in mid-1941, in a position to transform the roles of both naval cryptology and intelligence. Carlson reveals, in detail, Rochefort's true role as an intelligence analyst who took the work of the code breakers and other cryptologists, turned it into usable intelligence, and reported it directly to Admiral Nimitz and his staff prior to the crucial battles of the Coral Sea and Midway. In a fast-moving narrative, Carlson demonstrates how Rochefort's considerable analytic skill and epic work habits made possible those pivotal victories; not some "magical" process. Rochefort was very much the model for the modern intelligence analysts who support commanders in the field."?Robert J. Hanyok, Pacific War historian and co-author of West Wind Clear"In Joe Rochefort's War Elliot Carlson has achieved a remarkable synthesis, a narrative that at once captures the atmosphere of the dawn of U.S. Navy codebreaking, the ethos of the Old Navy, and the towering contribution of this man, responsible in great measure for one of the most incredible victories in American naval history. Carlson sheds a bright light on an often-mentioned but little understood figure amid cataclysmic events."?John Prados, author of Combined Fleet Decoded"Elliot Carlson's Joe Rochefort's War is one of the most important books on the Pacific War to appear in many years. It is nothing less than a tour de force. Never before has the complicated story of U. S. naval codebreaking in the opening phase of the war been told so fully and so well, and in such a fair and judicious fashion. It is absolutely essential for a fuller understanding of the terrible surprise at Pearl Harbor and the rapid resurgence of the Pacific Fleet that culminated in the decisive victory at Midway."?John B. Lundstrom, author of Black Shoe Carrier Admiral: Frank Jack Fletcher at Coral Sea, Midway and Guadalcanal"This is the perfect match of author and subject. Calling Elliot Carlson's research 'thorough' is an understatement. He has delved into an amazing trove of records and recollections. For years, myth and mystery have surrounded the story of Joe Rochefort's battles against Japanese codes and the cruel bureaucracy of his own Navy. Here, instead, is Rochefort as a real human being, and he turns out to be even more interesting than the myths."?Paul Stillwell, editor of Air Raid: Pearl Harbor!"Brilliant biography...instantly accessible

and a real 'page turner'." Naval Books of the Year column in Warship, 2013 "For those who specifically seek another "window" into Pearl Harbor and Midway, for those who are interested in the development of naval intelligence, and for those who are buffs of the Navy's role in the Pacific Theater through 1942, this is a "must" read and well worth the price. The discussions of bureaucratic Navy politics and the career impact of personal rivalries are also instructive. Adequately supported by photographs, Elliot Carson has provided detailed end notes, a glossary, a bibliography, and index. He deserves recognition for this major contribution to the history of the Pacific War." The Journal of America's Military Past, November 2012 "Joe Rochefort's War is a worthy addition to naval intelligence historical literature and is recommended...for reading by current naval intelligence specialists. The challenges, pitfalls, successes and disappointments experienced by Rochefort and his colleagues in the great maritime battles of the recent past are as relevant today as they ever were." Headmark, the quarterly journal of the Australian Naval Institute, published out of the Australian Capital Territory About the Author Elliot Carlson is a longtime journalist who has worked as a reporter, editor and staff writer for such newspapers and magazines as the Honolulu Advertiser, the Wall Street Journal and Newsweek. A graduate of the University of Oregon and Stanford University. He holds degrees from Stanford University and the University of Oregon and lives with his wife in Silver Spring, MD.