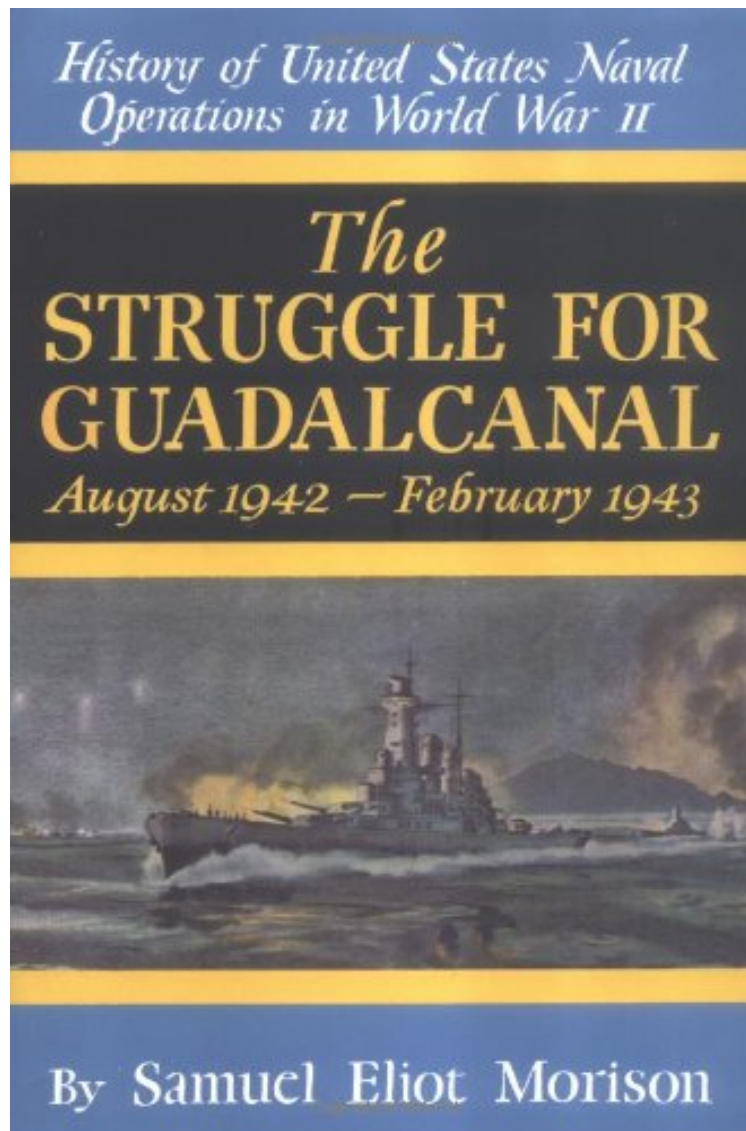


[Mobile library] The Struggle for Guadalcanal: August 1942-February 1943 (History of United States Naval Operations in World War II)

The Struggle for Guadalcanal: August 1942-February 1943 (History of United States Naval Operations in World War II)

Samuel Eliot Morison

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Samuel Eliot Morison : The Struggle for Guadalcanal: August 1942-February 1943 (History of United States Naval Operations in World War II) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Struggle for Guadalcanal: August 1942-February 1943 (History of United States Naval Operations in World War II):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful writing and rousing description of a key World War 2 battle

By N. Wallach

In July of 1942, the Japanese started building an airfield on Guadalcanal. The Americans realized the problems it would create if allowed to exist and sent forces to stop the work and take over that airfield for themselves. The resultant six month struggles and battles are what are told in this fifth volume of the History of the U.S. Navy in World War 2. As is usual with Morison's writings, the way he chooses to describe the events and the battles is very exciting and clear. This is not an emotionless recitation of facts, figures, and dates. No, indeed. This is a richly told story with lots of emotion written a short time after the end of the fighting. Of course, since Morison is an American, and because he wrote this volume right after the events, and the book was originally published in 1949, the main viewpoint that he espouses is from the American Navy's viewpoint. Morison did not have access to Japanese sources for his writing which makes this book very one sided. That is not a major problem though, as it sets the scene and tells the story of the various battles in a comprehensive way. The focus is, as usual, on the Navy and its contributions, but there are several chapters in which the land battles that the Marines and Army fought are described as well. These are clearly provided as background material and these chapters lack the detail and verve of the other stories. There were many battles fought as each side attempted to supply their troops and take control of the waters around that island. One particular one got the nickname "Iron-bottom sound" because of all the ships that sank there as a result of the battles. While there were regular hostilities throughout the time period, several encounters were significantly larger and each of these battles is described in detail in the book. As an introductory and comprehensive review of what took place in the waters during World War 2, this series is outstanding and this volume on one campaign delivers the same kind of detail that the series as a whole is known for. The writer does not spare various commanders and flogs them for their mistakes which lead to defeats and deaths. Of course there are and were challengers to the opinions that Morison airs, and you can probably find facts and individual courses of action that can be argued over for all time. One example of this is Admiral Fletcher's retreat with his carriers just before the Battle of Savo Island. In this book, Morison makes his opinion clear that this was a major mistake that led to the one-sided result, however other books and research since that time has produced a view that puts Admiral Fletcher's actions in a better light. About the only other area that I would quibble with the author on is his determination that the end result of the battles was a "surprisingly even" set of losses. While reading through the book I was struck with how many more losses the American side suffered than the Japanese and how many more battles were complete American defeats than Japanese defeats. It appears to me that Morison decided that what evened the score was that America could support such losses much easier and replace them, while the Japanese could not; that many of the American naval defeats caused the Japanese to change their operations and therefore not land reinforcements on the island; and that ultimately, the Americans won the island despite these continuous naval defeats so that makes it even. A glance at the table he provides at the end amplifies my point: The Japanese lost one light aircraft carrier while the American lost two large carriers; the Japanese lost four cruisers and the Americans eight and so forth. Even at the end of the campaign, the Japanese managed to evacuate almost 12,000 of their soldiers in a series of operations undertaken by Japanese destroyers. Morison sneers that these soldiers were not of any use to the Japanese due to their condition - but does not highlight the fact that the destroyers managed this evacuation while running through a gauntlet of mines, airplanes, PT boats and submarines with very minimal losses. Nonetheless, the book's scope, the writer's prose, and the way in which this book covers this important campaign all make it a must read for anyone who wants to start understanding the naval campaign for Guadalcanal.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book was in very good condition and the content was very interesting

By Stephen O'Brien

This book was in very good condition and the content was very interesting. I first read this book when I was 14. I now read it differently after 28 years of naval service, many of those teaching and practicing naval tactics. The author of this book records the failures of the officers in command of these various naval battles but does not criticize them as they deserve. I'm guessing that there was more team playing when it was written. But the mistakes made were many and this author did not dwell on them and so an uneducated reader will not pick up on them.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best of the series so far!

By Joe

This is the 5th book of a 15 book series and is the best one so far. Any serious student of WWII should read this series as a primer to prepare him or her for further readings from newer sources as it becomes notable on how light in detail these books are but then again consider that they were first written in 1948 and many of the sources were still classified or unknown then. One case in point is the chapter on the Battle of the Eastern Solomons where Mr. Morris describes the attack on the American carriers and states that Shokaku sent some torpedo bombers along with a foot note saying that the numbers sent was not yet available yet I obtained the number along with the name of the lead pilot from John Lundstrom's "The First Team and the Guadalcanal Campaign" book which made for some fun research. Now that I have read this book I will take a break from the series in order to learn more details of the Guadalcanal campaign and read "Guadalcanal: The definitive account of the landmark battle." by Richard B. Frank.

This spectacular fifteen-volume series that charts the U.S. Naval operations during World War II with an insider's perspective. Morison, a Harvard professor, was given a special rank and writing post by FDR. He had active duty aboard eleven different ships, allowing him to witness many crucial battles in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Volume Five-the third on the war in the Pacific-is devoted entirely to the Guadalcanal campaign, in which the United States Navy experienced more fighting than in any three previous wars. Filled with many maps and file photographs.

About the AuthorRear Adm. Samuel Eliot Morison wrote many popular and award-winning books on maritime history. He was the recipient of two Pulitzer Prizes, two Bancroft Prizes, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.