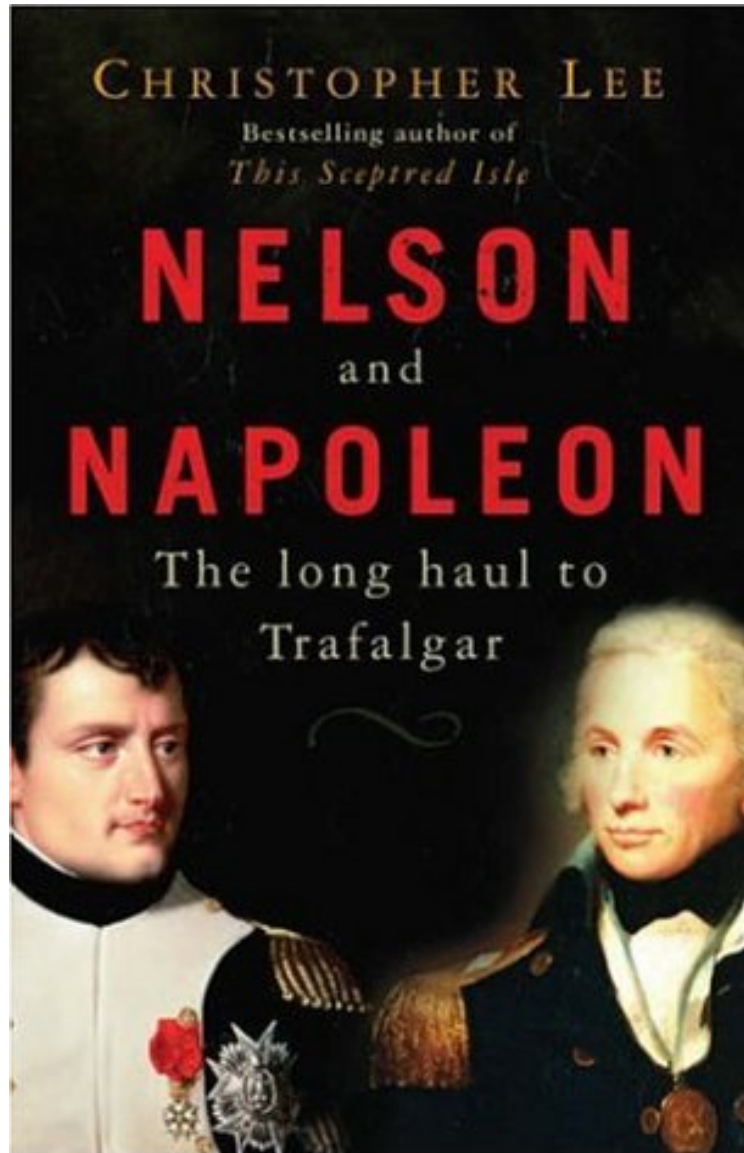


(Free read ebook) Nelson and Napoleon: The Long Haul to Trafalgar

Nelson and Napoleon: The Long Haul to Trafalgar

Christopher Lee

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Christopher Lee : Nelson and Napoleon: The Long Haul to Trafalgar before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nelson and Napoleon: The Long Haul to Trafalgar:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. WORTHWHILE BUT WITH IRRITATING BLEMISHES By Positive Almost 400 pages, good coloured plates, 3 clear and helpful maps, useful appendices and bibliography, good paper (for sake of technicalities). On the whole a deeply researched study of Nelson, extending ones knowledge of his whole role as the Trafalgar victor. Napoleon emerges as a more cardboard cut-out figure, largely because he is treated

in the usual fashion as leader who "did not understand sailors and the sea", and the foil for Nelson. It is certainly a thought-provoking book for anyone interested in the subject to read and absorb. Some chapters are better than others. The book is best when explaining the ships, seamen and tactics of the rival navies, and gives clear and vivid accounts of Trafalgar. On the other hand the biographical backgrounds of Nelson-- what shaped him as a leader--serves little purpose. Not only is it sketchy, but it is also constantly interrupted by explanations of events, and other people, which tell us nothing about him, or Trafalgar. For instance, do we really need to know that Lord North resigned in 1782, or that chaplains enjoyed an improved status? Admittedly he had more words in which to do it, but Sugden tells us about the making of Nelson whereas Mr Lee does not. As for Napoleon, there is next to no explanation of how his success in land war influenced his naval thinking but failed to translate into success there. There are one or two good insights from French historians about Napoleon the improviser and chancer, but otherwise he seems to feature only as a foil for Nelson. As for Villeneuve (Nelson's opponent at Trafalgar), Mr Lee prejudices us by dismissing him as a fool and a failure BEFORE suggesting why--indeed the book has a general tendency to give flip judgments which are then inadequately evidenced. (The Spanish admiral Gravina is praised, but no reason is given as to why, for example). Chapters 10 ("Corruption") and 12 ("The Melville Affair") are interesting accounts of controversies about political management of the Royal Navy (Addington and St Vincent v Pitt and Dundas), but are not made relevant to Nelson and Trafalgar, and merely break up the flow. What did Nelson think of these controversialists and what did they think of him? How exactly did the return to office of Pitt or the attacks on Dundas (Melville) shape the buildup to Trafalgar? There are also some odd statements here. Dundas is said to have helped Pitt "improve the daily lives of a rapidly growing electorate" in the 1790s--quite wrong. Middleton (Lord Barham) is dismissed as an "old buffer", without reference to his important work before the war. Soldiers and sailors are described as having the means--literally--to weaken the nation, because their political loyalty was strained. Why "literally"? And what evidence of this is there? (the remark is not followed up). These two chapters in particular also jump from statement to statement without apparent relevance. Just what has Pitt ennobling his banker to do with him returning Middleton to the Admiralty, and what has that to do with Nelson and Trafalgar? (We are not told). So, do get this but better to invest in Sugden--and in my view even the two chapters on Christopher Lloyd's 1954 book "The Nation and the Navy" provide a clearer and more understandable account of the subject in very condensed form. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Expands on the Common Story By John Matlock Having just passed its 200th anniversary, the Battle of Trafalgar was the deciding battle that enabled Britain to rule the waves for the next century and more. In this book Mr. Lee, the author of the award winning radio history of Britain, 'This Sceptred Isle,' takes a view of the battle and of the key commanders. The title of the book reflects the main subjects, a rivalry of commanders that had gone on for years. The secondary commanders such as Villeneuve, Cornwallis, Collingwood are likewise covered in detail. This is a well researched, well written history of the battle and the people. There are a lot of histories of Nelson and Napoleon, this book has a lot more on their lower level commanders. Perhaps best however, is the final fifty pages or so. Here is where the battle itself, and the aftermath is described. In addition there is a very interesting "What If." "What if Nelson had lived?" Blind in one eye, he was losing his vision in the other. Politically astute and extremely popular, could he have become Prime Minister, what about his temper - not good in a politician. Very interesting book.

Horatio Nelson is Britain's greatest naval hero, and Trafalgar in 1805 is her greatest naval victory. Through the prism of the events of the preceding years, historian Christopher Lee reexamines the myths surrounding Trafalgar. He also paints a detailed picture of the personalities and the intrigues, particularly the creation of Nelson as national hero and his intense rivalry with Napoleon. Finally, he explores the "what ifs" of Trafalgar—for instance, what if Nelson had lived? This is an illuminating account of a victory that changed the course of the Napoleonic wars and led to Britannia ruling the waves for more than 100 years. Christopher Lee is the author of the prize-winning history of Britain, *This Sceptred Isle*.