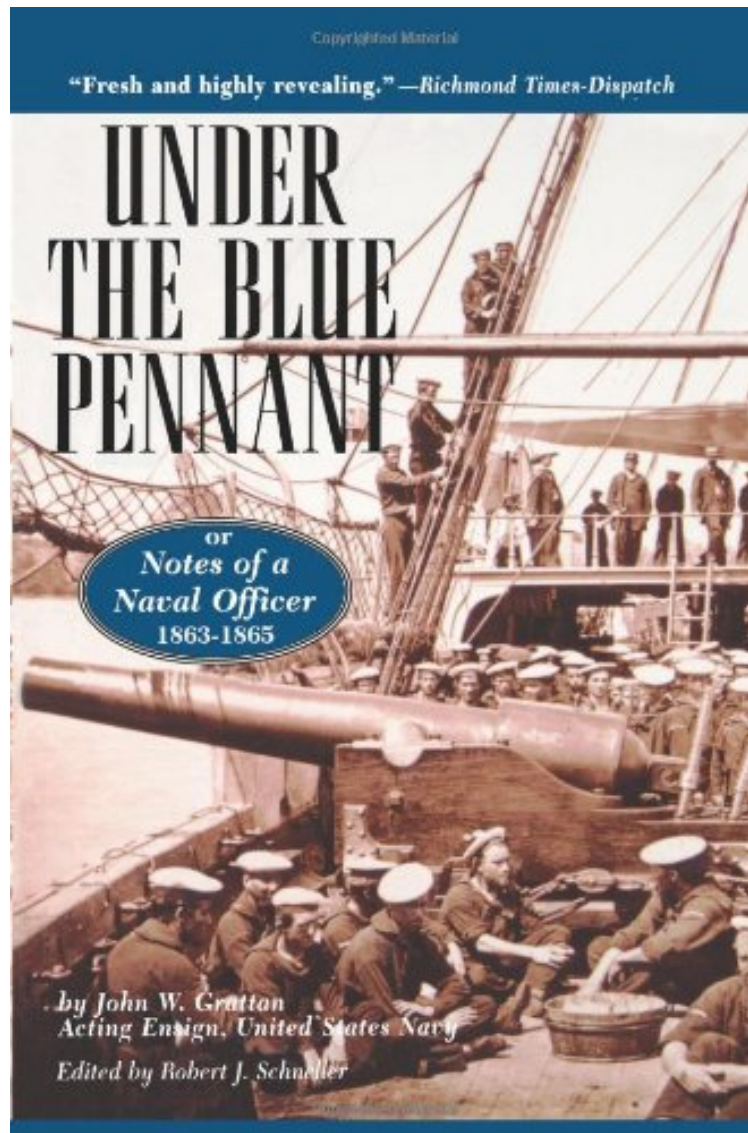


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Under the Blue Pennant: or Notes of a Naval Officer, 1863-1865

John W. Grattan, Robert J. Schneller
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John W. Grattan, Robert J. Schneller : **Under the Blue Pennant: or Notes of a Naval Officer, 1863-1865** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Under the Blue Pennant: or Notes of a Naval Officer, 1863-1865:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating Insight Into the US Navy in the Civil WarBy A CustomerIt is frustrating finding good books on the Navy during the Civil War, most everything published looks at operations on land. So it was fun surprise to find this book the other day. Grattan had a great "view" of the navy --

both its men (of high rank and low) and its operations. One gets an insight into life on ships for officers and enlisted, which is almost unheard of in Civil War publishing. Grattan is also candid in his opinions and one appreciates the frank assessments he makes. I was surprised at the length of the editor's introduction (50 pages) -- but it too was a pleasant surprise. Schneller's commentary is informed and well worth reading. I am glad to see that there is a publisher that still lets editors write long intros when warranted. The book has good maps and loads of illustrations, most all of which I have never seen before. The editor works at the U.S. Naval Historical Center, it appears he must know where all the good photos, paintings and woodcuts are kept. Bottom line -- Grattan and Schneller have teamed up after more than 130 years to produce a most fascinating book. If you are looking for something new and interesting on the Civil War, you will love their collaboration!

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. The naval face of the Civil War

By Joseph T. Reeves "Under the Blue Pennant" is a rare, firsthand account of naval life during the Civil War. For that alone, it would merit recognition, but it is also a well-written, fascinating history of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Its author, John Grattan, served as a clerk to the Squadron's commander, which provided him an intimate glimpse into both major strategic maneuvers and into the daily life of the Civil War sailor on the Union side. Many modern military experts view today's joint operations between all services as a new approach to war. Grattan's account provides solid proof that the Union's leaders were planning and executing combined operations all along. Grattan recorded his experiences and observations in a clear, cohesive prose. What Grattan leaves out in background detail, is ably provided in editor Robert John Schneller's excellent introduction. Although quite lengthy, the introduction places Grattan's experiences into the overall context of the Civil War. "Under the Blue Pennant" helps feeling a gaping hole of Civil War literature by wonderfully illustrating the vital but long neglected naval side of the war.

"Rare . . . gives us insights into how Union naval officers thought, how they lived . . . entertaining and informative for the general reader and a mine of material for the specialist."-Journal of Military History "A small, long-submerged treasure that will reward those willing to give in to the unfamiliar waters of the Civil War's naval history."-Civil War Book Reviews "A surprisingly lively and modern read . . . a welcome addition to our knowledge of the lives of men who served in the Civil War."-Kirkus Reviews "Fresh and highly revealing." -Richmond Times-Dispatch

Now available in paperback, this highly acclaimed eyewitness account of the Civil War at sea provides fascinating insights into command decisions made on the bridge as well as life below deck. Recently discovered in the Library of Congress archives, this memoir was written just after the Civil War by John Grattan, an ensign in the Union navy who witnessed some of the war's most significant naval operations. Under the editorship of acclaimed naval historian Robert Schneller, Grattan's account of the crucial struggle for control of the Atlantic seaboard bristles with the tension of combat. With sharply etched details of blockade running, guerrilla warfare, fierce underwater battles, the brutal advance on Richmond, and visits to the front lines by President Abraham Lincoln, this rare memoir includes personal observations of key naval and military leaders and rescues less-celebrated heroes from obscurity. Sparkling with Victorian wit, this from-the-front report opens a window into the lives of ordinary soldiers and the men who led them into war.

.com The Union Navy played an essential role in winning the Civil War. Its blockade of more than 3,000 miles of Southern coastline, joint operations with the Union army, and pursuit of Rebel commerce raiders helped secure the 1865 Union victory over the Confederacy. While the majority of Civil War histories focus on the personalities and battles of the Union Army, few explore Union naval operations and their importance. John W. Grattan's journal, *Under the Blue Pennant, or Notes of a Naval Officer 1863-1865*, helps to fill this historical void. Grattan served for two years as clerk and aide to the squadron commander aboard the flagship of the largest Union naval command, the North Atlantic Blocking Squadron. Editor Robert J. Schneller presents Grattan's narrative essentially in its original form, adding a 50-page introduction and explanatory notes to provide important background information and place the narrative's events in historical context. The journal, written in unembellished Victorian prose, provides rare eyewitness observations of daily life at sea, the hopes and fears of inexperienced soldiers, and the military leaders that commanded them. Grattan's sketches provide glimpses of real war, and Schneller's illustrations and maps further bring to life an important episode in our nation's military history. --Bertina Loeffler Sedlack

From Kirkus sWhile researching another book, historian Schneller (*A Quest for Glory: A Biography of Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren*, not reviewed) discovered this never-before-published memoir of a young officers experience in the Union navy. Grattan was a young Brooklynite who served first in the army until 1862, then was mustered out probably for medical reasons and enlisted in the navy in 1863. Although his family origins are unclear, his writing and general literacy indicate that he was well educated and from a middle-class or higher background. Grattan was assigned to the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron and spent most of his naval career "under the blue pennant," or serving on a flagship. The memoir he later wrote paints a unique portrait of life in the Union navy, offering fascinating glimpses of Federal blockading actions which aided (invaluably) the cause of Northern victory. Also of note is the depiction of relationships between the officers and men of the navy and their African-American stewards (serving in the only available role for blacks in the navy). Grattan's writing is sharp and surprisingly unaffected by the flowery prose of typical Victorian memoirs;

although it does wax repetitive, overall this is a surprisingly lively and modern read. The authors profuse details show a side of the war effort that few readers could have imagined, such as dinners that would sound more believable on the Titanic than on any US naval vessel. His descriptions of combat are more than believable, though sometimes woodenly penned. Schnellers foreword places Grattan in a context that illuminates the memoir. And his notes (fortunately incorporated into the text, not printed as endnotes) are informative and easily read by the nonhistorian. A welcome addition to our knowledge about the lives of men who served in the Civil War. (45 photos, 5 maps, not seen) -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "Most entertaining and highly informative...I highly recommend it."--William N. Still, author of Why the South Lost