
The Battle for Jutland: One hundred years and beyond. *Is it over?*

Abstract: This paper was wrote to mark the centenary of the Battle of Jutland that was fought in the North Sea in 1916. It explores the future of debate over the battle. This paper is designed for a readership with some background knowledge to the period, battle and historiography. It is designed to be a thought provoking piece of research rather than an extended scholarship on the battle itself.

If the tale of King Arthur, the round table and the battle of Camlann was applied to the immortal memory of the world's most successful fighting sailor; Admiral Nelson and the Battle of Trafalgar then parallels could be created towards the idea of the return of the Admiral in the hour of the United Kingdom's greatest need. The tale of English heroism, clearly embedded into the British psyche in the early 20th century was coupled with the pinnacle of maritime supremacy in the era of empire and Britannia's supremacy in command of the seas. It was an ideology placed in the mind of the Royal Navy that the decisive battle, would come with the loss of a hero and spectacular epic conclusion that would decide the fate of the war and nation.

2016 will mark one hundred years since the clash of dreadnoughts, arranged into huge Naval fleets of steel, towering like castles in the new untested era of warfare on the oceans, known as the Battle of Jutland. The engagement, a titanic pitching of SeaPower of the Royal Navy and the Imperial German Navy in the grey wastes of the North Sea mark the principle Naval battle that dominated the First World War. The outcome of the battle was plagued in controversy, tarnishing the reputation of the Royal Navy and it's Admirals while undermining the understanding of the influence Sea Power has on the outcome of armed conflict. Historians

and onlookers pitched themselves at one another in their own 'Jutland style' battle for a century. If ever a phrase to symbolise both a gigantic pitching of enemies with no clear outcome could be used, then it seems a twist of fate to call it 'Jutland style'. This itself identifies the very problem at the heart of the battle: Who really won? This leads onto the theory of war being questioned: when and what is victory, at what level, at what cost and is it tactical, technological, strategic or some other dynamic and factors at play?

Nelson may have faithfully played the role of Arthur, dying at Trafalgar as the King apparently did at the Battle of Camlann. Nelson's captains or so called 'band of brothers', filled the role of the knights. The noble steeds alternatively being the walls of wood that were the warships in the age of sail. It's a fitting and romantic comparison, one that would not be out of place at Jutland. An epic finale at sea, that Nelson would have relished in commanding with wood replaced by steel and the canon and swords replaced with large calibre gunnery. The pressure of expectation from the public, driven by aspirations of continuing maritime dominance that had been hard won over a hundred years' prior, resulted in an oversimplification of the Royal Navy's role and what it's Admirals were expected to deliver. Just as the King Arthur legend, sufficient time has passed after Trafalgar resulting in the blurring of reality, myth and expectation. Trafalgar delivered a strategic success, the British Isles were saved from invasion yet the joint French-Spanish fleet was not entirely destroyed. Although with an inferior fleet by numbers, Trafalgar was both a tactical and strategic victory that came at significant cost. In 1916, Britain's empire was now so vast that protection of its dominance was far beyond the fear of invasion although aligned towards fighting one massive Naval battle. This had led to such a Naval expansion that numerical superiority had been potentially placed with far higher value than that of the reformation of tactics or quality of

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leadership. This highlights that the maritime environment was threaded deeply to national life and identity. It was just over one hundred years on from Trafalgar in 1805 and the nation appeared to still be lamenting the loss of Nelson. His persona becoming an immortal legacy of unquantifiable qualities. The precedent of this almost mythical leader was undermining the ability to understand the mind-set of a new Naval leader who was more relevant to the times and the changing face of maritime warfare. The most dangerous element of Naval policy in the early 20th century was the Royal Navy was expected to deliver a second bigger, better and more grandiose version of Trafalgar. The vast national expenditure and commitment to the Grand Fleet furthered public and political demand for a new victory. The fleet was filled with untested technologies in which some of its elements had aggressively charged ahead, while others lagged behind. Admiral Fisher, who pioneered reforming the British Navy in technology and training at the turn of the 20th century, had many of his theory's and technology untested on such a scale. The battle of Heligoland Bight and the Falkland Islands in 1914 followed by Dogger Bank in 1915 had given the Navy and public a taste of gun on gun action akin to the drama of the age of sail frigate on frigate engagements. This had stoked an appetite and faith that the wider fleet would function in a similar fashion but ignored that in the smaller engagements outcome was easier to manage when considering factors such as communication and weather.

The Trafalgar mentality, coupled with changes in technology, Britain's role in the world, the enemy it faced, the people that commanded the Navy and the politics of the day was a dangerous concoction that only had two outcomes. One was to fulfil expectations, placing an even tougher burden on future generations. The other was a result that would be one that even if was strategically a victory would feel like failure. Jutland could never be a Trafalgar; this

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was set in motion long before the hulls of dreadnoughts were on the slipway or the Admirals of 1916 where embarked on their careers. It is partly because of the strategic scenario and tactical plot of Trafalgar but also the face of warfare that had so markedly changed. The generation of Jutland would have to fight it their way, not the 'Trafalgar way'. The spectre of Nelson and Trafalgar on Jutland was immortalised when Winston Churchill, famously described both the expectation of the battle and its leading figure, Admiral Jellicoe, by commenting "the only man who could lose the war in an afternoon".¹ Others would go on to argue 'The battle that could decide the outcome of the war'. Ultimately Jutland reached its own conclusion as Trafalgar did, fit for the strategic outlook of the era it was situated in. The Royal Navy remained in command of the seas which ensured that victory in Europe was possible, while keeping the wider empire secure and a United Kingdom free from direct threat. Jutland stopped the potential threat of invasion far earlier than Trafalgar so that the Navy's resources could be focused on ensuring the sea lanes could remain open. The Grand Fleet was far more pre-emptive than the reactionary strategy of the early 19th century. The argument could exist that the bottling of the Imperial German Navy post Jutland was the same as the destruction of the French-Spanish fleet. This however would overlook the weak material state the age of sail fleet was in post Trafalgar compared to the fleet of 1916 which could with ease return to the wider portfolio of operations and areas that SeaPower was influencing.

Some claim Jutland changed nothing. Those who focus on technological change study the role of the capital ship and new arenas of warfare while others consider it a decisive moment in Naval history. Only Trafalgar has had more focused attention with greater zeal and

¹ Heathcote, T, *The British Admirals of the Fleet 1734-1995, A Biographical Dictionary* (Great Britain, Leo Cooper, 2002), p.130.

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prominence then Jutland. Today Jutland maybe overlooked in British culture as it slowly dismantles its closeness with the Royal Navy. This is more likely to do with a more modern dynamic; the communication of the role of the Navy and the abolishment of the machine in which to carry it out than anything to do with Jutland's importance.

The debates that rage across every element of Jutland and the wider context are detailed elsewhere, some of which have been lightly touched in this paper. The historiography is substantial, by 1992 Rasor's annotated bibliography suggested that over five hundred items exist.² By 2016, this could be approaching double that figure, with new texts primed for the centenary. Jutland inspires debate because of so many aspects and dimensions of Naval warfare; the events, rationale and technology behind the battle let alone it's outcome. Historians who seemingly want to avoid it, get sucked in like a whirlpool to a sphere of debate and controversy. The human element, a clash of personality's and human loss provide a focus for such debates. The clash in command and control of the British fleet, principally between Command in Chief [CinC] of the Grand Fleet, Admiral Jellicoe and Commander of the Battlecruiser Fleet Vice-Admiral Beatty has consumed vast quantities of research efforts. Although vital to understanding the outcome of the Battle it has undermined both the public and politicians understanding of the importance of the battle.

If blame is assigned to Jellicoe and Beatty for not promoting Jutland as a major Naval success it would be ignore the controversy that raged long after events. You can understand Jellicoe's and Beatty's reluctance to stoke sensationalist levels of debate on Jutland. Respect

² Rasor, Eugene, *The Battle of Jutland, A Bibliography* (Westport, CT, USA: Greenwood Press, 1992), pp. 63-170.

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for Trafalgar but primarily unfinished business of the battle had placed both strains and restraints on either man. It was then a matter of personality over objective. Beatty would play a role in the shaping of onward Naval policy post war, Jellicoe would step into new roles, although relevant but lacking the power to influence it as prominently. Neither man would ultimately want to inadvertently undermine the role of SeaPower in Britain's defence posture. Admiralty indoctrination to promote the Naval message and not hamper it, had a role to play in the later analysis of the fighting. As much as the controversy has impact in the prominence of Jutland, the Admiralty rightfully urged caution and took the traditional position of purely a lessons learnt mantra for aspects of Naval warfare. Therefore, the path to historians being consumed with the goliath debate between Jellicoe and Beatty was sown in the years following the battle not the post 1960's birth of historical revisionism.³ The breaking of people into supportive camps of 'Jellicoes' and 'Beattyites' and British victory or loss versus German achievement furthered the problem of developing an authoritative final analysis. The contest over an authentic, accurate account of the battle therefore remained in the hands of the Naval service for many decades.⁴ The time or effort that was required to dissect, learn and properly investigate proceedings was deferred as Britain faced new challenges in the decades that followed and few wanted to touch the controversial topic.

The rising popularity of military history in the later half of the 20th century including the Laughton inspired rebirth of Naval history⁵ led to vast tomes of books and complex research of very specific elements of the battle. Historians would be pitched against one another, such

³ Harper, J.E.T., *The Truth About Jutland* (London: John Murray Ltd, 1927).

⁴ Bacon, Reginald, *The Jutland Scandal* (London: Hutchinson & Co Ltd, 1933).

⁵ Lambert, Andrew, *The Foundations of Naval History. John Knox Laughton, the Royal Navy and the Historical Profession* (Great Britain: Chatham Publishing, 1998).

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as Stephen Roskill, Arthur Marder,⁶ followed by Eric Grove, Andrew Lambert and Robert Massie.⁷ Julian Corbett, a principal influencer on the development of British Naval thinking could not avoid being dragged into the debate considering his standing relationship with Jellicoe and Beatty.⁸ By the end of the 20th century a book would rise to prominence as the vital ‘go to’ for Jutland, Andrew Gordon’s ‘*The Rules of the Game, Jutland and British Naval Command*’.⁹ Aptly named to explore the most controversial elements of the battle it became favoured with professionals, academics and the public alike. But Gordon failed in one critical area, he may very well have succinctly brought greater understanding of the battle into a single volume, favouring Beatty, but his book has inspired more debate, not closure. His book did not raise Jutland to prominence in the national psyche either. *Rules of the Game* itself become a point of controversy when it touched on issues such as Admiral Woodward’s command in the 1982 Falklands War and also that the understanding of warfare by Naval officers in a combined Ministry of Defence [MoD] was better than the Grand Fleet or Admiralty. Although this is not the place to explore these points’ in detail, future research may identify a Jellicoe versus Beatty situation of controversy was apparent in 1982. The key characters now being replaced by Woodward and the fleets amphibious taskforce Commodore, Michael Clapp. On the latter point, Smith would counter Gordon’s perspective on the institutional coherence of Naval officers in his thesis ‘*The End of the Admiralty and its Impact on British Defence Policy*’.¹⁰

⁶ Gough, Barry, *Historical Dreadnoughts: Arthur Marder, Stephen Roskill and Battles for Naval History* (Great Britain: Pen and Sword, 2010).

⁷ Massie, Robert, *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany and the Winning of the Great War at Sea* (England: Ballantine Books, 2004).

⁸ Gough, *Historical Dreadnoughts*, p.257-258.

⁹ Gordon, Andrew, *The Rules of the Game, Jutland and British Naval Command* (London: John Murray, 1996).

¹⁰ Smith, James W.E., ‘The End of Admiralty and its Impact on British Defence Policy 1955-1964’ [unpublished MRes thesis, Plymouth University, 2015].

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He went on to criticise, and question that Gordon's closeness to the Ministry of Defence, the Defence academy Shrivenham and favouring Beatty over Jellicoe had potentially disqualified him being able to state that a modern Naval officer was any better equipped to understand Naval warfare than one of the Admiralty era.

As the centenary of the battle approached, the British government was making preparations for four years of remembrance events to mark the First World War. Jutland, it's controversies of old would overshadow the planning of events. Rather than place Jutland in a more positive light and celebration as the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar in 2005 had been celebrated a decade prior. A much more reserved approach was taken. It would not receive national recognition in a religious service at St Pauls Cathedral as other Naval or land events of less stature had been, or the wider First World War would receive. Rightfully, the Naval staff of the early 21st century were focused on the immediate task of equipping the Royal Navy for the challenges it faced with an ever shrinking budget, not facilitating debate or educating the public on previous Naval achievements. The Naval staff of today are not equipped with the tools, training or authority to be able to devote resources and efforts to such an activity. Efforts to remember the battle and loss of life would fall to the responsibility of the public, museums, historians and descendants of the battle. With the Navy's work being mostly over the horizon today as it had been one hundred years ago, the issue of how to engage with the public to understand it's Navy would further hamper efforts to mark 'Jutland 100'. The failure to preserve Jutland veteran HMS Warspite in the late 1940s or a later battleship such as HMS King George V and HMS Vanguard has placed Jutland at disadvantage to the age of sail or modern Navy. For humans, the ability of tactile engagement, to see and smell can change perception in a very personal way, making it 'more real' and developing a closer connection to

enable greater understanding. Events for Jutland 100 would generally be reserved, although with state and crown attendance while receiving some media coverage as the centenary date approached. Naval tradition would ensure that the centenary and the loss of those of sea would not go unmarked. But it highlights one critical issue; out of hundreds of papers, books and research, closure on the outcome of the battle or it's controversy were still slipping through the hands of those who felt that injustice was being done towards the battle and its impact in military history was being overlooked. One controversy however demanded the attention of onlookers; the excessive criticism of the Grand Fleet's CinC, Jellicoe. The criticism had been founded directly after the battle, shaped by the media and ill-informed government, and promoted by numerous factors such as the self-managed popularity of Beatty. It was an issue that could be re-approached in a more credible manner now that the methodologies, sources and willingness has been built to tackle it. The grandson to Jellicoe would take on the challenge, although this would potentially raise criticism from some quarters of bias. Nicholas Jellicoe's objective would stand on the foundations of one hundred years of debate and lines of historical enquiry. With credible research, Nicholas would identify that tactical mistakes that led to speculation on the outcome of the battle were to be found on the decision making and actions of those under Jellicoe's command such as Beatty. The unravelling of Beatty as the self-proclaimed hero of Jutland critically destroyed many of the arguments over Jellicoe's tactical performance. In fact, it's achieved something far greater; the strategic performance of Jellicoe was to deliver a British victory, one grounded in rational decision making and thought processes in an organisation that was ready and able to fight. An organisation that was also able to think in theory and translate that into practice while dealing with new challenges at the same time as meeting the long term intentions of the state. The fundamental shift in the understanding of Jutland is perhaps the greatest act of remembrance that could be achieved at

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it's centenary. For those who support Jellicoe, this is a major victory, in due course a response maybe delivered by those who favour Beatty but that the wider influence and importance of Jutland is now more positive and understood cannot be questioned by either side.

A simple question remains: is the Jutland 'scandal', debate and controversy over?

At the eleventh hour, the injustice to Jellicoe and the debates around his decision making maybe over. Jellicoe may face further tests before being pitched to near prominence as Nelson but his reputation will be no longer incorrectly scorned. For some, aspects and debates of Jutland are coming to a close. A distinct trend to the battle being an British victory is now taking place. Efforts can now be focused away from being about one man versus another to all elements and aspects, just as Trafalgar has been analysed. Jutland has defined a Naval generation and a generation of Naval historians. Post 'Jutland 100' it will not define but will continue to shape and evolve Naval thinking. Jutland is entering a new, exciting and more engaging phase of understanding and relevance. Jutland 100 will reopen the capital ship debate, it will question the social class system more, it will ponder how Beatty was permitted to so freely flout Naval regulations which would not have been the case for other sailors in the fleet. Jutland will now have further impact such as the development of warships, the inherent link between the usage of Battlecruisers and there development is an example. This being pertinent to 2016 due to that a week before Jutland 100, the loss of Battlecruiser HMS Hood in 1941 was remembered. The mentality of wide spread blaming of equipment may need to be investigated and if it has become common place in navies.¹¹ While Jutland will draw the attention and

¹¹ Beatty's infamous comment during the battle "there seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today". Heathcote, *The British Admirals of the Fleet 1734-1995*, p.25.

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engagement of an wider audience on its impact to British affairs and what other military services around the world can learn from it. Jutland will now be honoured as one of the critical 'lessons learnt' case studies for both military and organisational development.

A false sense of security that the debate is over could easily be achieved. It is not over.

At the end of a Television programme which Nicholas Jellicoe presented his findings over his ancestor, the question of the outcome of the battle is presented.¹² American Naval historian Norman Freidman states;

'In the end the question is always who wins, and the British win. The British win because at the end of the day, the Germans are still stuck on their side of the North Sea. They don't get out, the one time they do come out, once they spot the British, they go back in. End of story. Jellicoe really can lose the war in an afternoon and he doesn't. That's called winning.'

Other historians think calling the battle a British victory is too strong.

British Naval historian Eric Grove concludes:

'If Jutland had been the great strategic victory that people say there wouldn't have been this controversy, there wouldn't have been this 'back biting', there wouldn't have been this argument, there wouldn't have been these forgeries. everyone would have thought, what a good job we did. But we didn't do a good job and the result was years of controversy, decades, a century even'.

Debate over Jutland and the unlikelihood of it being over was symbolised in an alternative TV programme aired a few days after Nicholas Jellicoe's.¹³ It criticised Beatty's management and tactical deployment of the Battlecruiser squadron but barely mentioned the CinC and wider

¹² *Jutland: WWI's Greatest Sea Battle* (UK Television, Channel Four. 21/05/2016.)

¹³ *The Battle of Jutland: The Navy's Bloodiest Day* (UK Television, BBC 2, 29/05/2016).

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success of the fleet. Recognition of Jellicoe, still appears to be elusive a century on, prominently highlighting the exhaustive lengths academics must go to challenge perception while avoiding accidentally or otherwise from making incorrect assumptions or ill-informed judgments. By focusing on engineering aspects and reinvestigating matters that academics had resolved decades before it urges caution at believing the debate is over. It could even worry some that a century on, the disregard of generations of historians to answer the ‘Jutland question’ will result in eternal misunderstanding of events. A further issue will be the human story of experience’s and loss of life. A question exists of who is best placed to tell the human story and cost such as museums and who guards that this element does not overwhelm the ability to gain useful insight from the battle for both the public and professionals. It appears that Jutland still has far to go to raise its prominence and escape its past controversy’s.

Meanwhile in the United States at the Naval War College, Rear Admiral Howe III presented an ethics class in April 2016 titled ‘The Rules of the Game and Professional Military Ethics’.¹⁴ He summarised why he was referencing Gordon’s *The Rules of the Game*. One being the centenary but critically he went on to state:

- A) The professional and ethical responsibilities of the members of the profession.
- B) It highlights the enduring tension between obedience, compliance, judgment and initiative.
- C) The current head of the US Navy [CNO] encouraged the reprinting of the book which may give insight to his mind set and working ethic.

The Admiral succinctly states the relationship between Trafalgar and Jutland has relevance to maintaining US Naval supremacy in a ‘lull period of large Naval engagement’. He is aware

¹⁴ U.S. Naval War College, *Ethics 2016, Rear Adm. P. Gardner Howe III: The Navy Profession*, (Newport, Rhode Island, USA: U.S. Naval War College, 2016) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiRLNi62uPM>> [accessed May 29th 2016]. Jutland 100 Paper [Kings College London, Laughton Unit, 2016]: *The Battle for Jutland: One hundred years and beyond. Is it over?* Author: James W.E. Smith
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of criticism that is pointed at the book but highlights how the US Navy and potentially it's CNO can never undervalue the role of initiative in Naval personnel. If this is based on Beatty's now discredited actions at Jutland and based of Gordon's interpretation of the action, it could place a potential rogue mind set into the US Navy. One that could potentially discredit the US Navy's doctrine or professionalism while another Navy could favour a more Jellicoe style of long term strategically driven thinking to judgement and initiative. Evidence may be found a replication of this scenario exists in the Royal Navy. Attention to what key characters in military history influence new officers and how and by who teaches them maybe an issue that needs to be probed at training establishments such as Britannia Royal Naval College. Furthermore, particular attention for more senior command ranks should be now further encouraged to paying close attention to developments in the academic field and how that can enhance their profession. This reinforces the vital relationship and need for engagement between academics and practitioners. Significant progress, particularly in the build up to the centenary year of Jutland has been made since the publishing of *Rules of the Game*. It may indicate a call that analysing Jutland must move on to a new generation of thinkers, as they are more likely to escape some of, as Grove calls it, 'back biting' of the 20th century. The myth of 'the safety of invincibility' may have crept into modern planning because of the outcome of Second World War operations such as the annihilation of the Imperial Japanese Navy. This may result in stagnation of professional development of the military services and the avoidance of essential reforms. Although this cannot be covered here, it provides another example of the potency of Jutland's debates even today and highlights how previous engagements, such as Trafalgar can become both useful and clouding when it comes to the modern application of military power. This would further enforce Smith's concern for awareness of that thorough investigation should take place into an individual's suitability when considering granting

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considerable influence on an organisation and its doctrine and that it should not become a common occurrence, if at all.

These cases studies identify and return to theme of Jutland's vital relevance to a lesson's learnt culture and to current and future Naval thinking. It also highlights the critical necessity of a thorough research methodology for maritime historians. This permits them to easily see if their research resonates with modern affairs or has relevance to a wider audience. These few examples present professional reasons why the debate over Jutland is far from over. Other instances maybe found to further identify the likelihood of another one hundred years of debate. Examples of this could be a modern obsession with other emphasising engineering discussion and lowering the priority of tactics. Historians will be keen to avoid that branding the battle as 'deciding the fate of the war' or 'the battle that won it' as land focused thinkers will keenly deploy the one hundred years of debate against such trivialisation. This type of argument has always presented a problem for those in Naval research. The ability to communicate complex ideas of sea dependency or how SeaPower and maritime strategy influences land has never been easy if based purely on a specific event. The fact the Grand Fleet was able to continue its operations, the Royal Navy could continue to combat the submarine threat and maintain economic blockade are some of the rationales that supports how Jutland influenced the outcome of the land battle. Without SeaPower, Britain's position would be untenable and the land campaign unsustainable, from this the theory of why the Naval campaign of the First World War decided its outcome gain's credibility over land power. Looming in the background will those who misunderstand SeaPower, waiting to reflect on the huge investment in Naval forces resulted in not the desired income. Although research exists to the advantage of the strength as mentioned earlier, this identifies an issue at the heart of communicating the

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capability of the SeaPower and the necessity to situating maritime strategy in the far wider context. It cannot be overlooked how the narrative of Jellicoe and Beatty continued after Jutland, with implications and influence up to the Second World War. Historians have put considerable effort into how Jutland shaped Naval policy, in particular Jellicoe's later tenure as First Sea Lord¹⁵ and Beatty's management of Naval aviation and future force readiness.¹⁶ Recent trends in the role of academics and historians versus popularity, engagement and sensationalism may also have a factor to play. Nicholas Jellicoe summed this up by commenting: 'I think we're all struggling to balance the need for public debate and over simplification'.¹⁷

It cannot be misconstrued that Jellicoe and Beatty's memorials, products of their time, are not in Jutland square but in Trafalgar square, overlooked by Nelson's column. Their effigies can now become memorials to one hundred years of debate rather than unsurety over the outcome of the battle in relation to the security of Britain. They are part of Trafalgar square as a symbol to that a Navy can only be as strong as the quality of its personnel. The injustice against Jellicoe maybe over, we may understand more about the battle, the life of sailors and the battles impact and influence than ever before. Jutland is now entering a new phase, that it was part of a wider, more important 'Battle for Britain'. It wasn't Trafalgar but it was the most important sea battle of its era and technology. Placing it in the wider context of a 'Battle for Britain' will inevitably open up debate about if it was an event that could have decided the

¹⁵ Macfarlane, Alan, J., 'A Naval Travesty: The Dismissal of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, 1917' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2014).

¹⁶ Such as Beatty's management of the 1921-1922 Washington Naval conference, his role in the founding of the Royal Air Force and how he faced declining defence expenditure.

¹⁷ Nicholas Jellicoe, 30th May 2016 09:10 BST.

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outcome of the First World War. This will feed through to discussions on the influence that SeaPower has on land, maritime strategy and focus on continental versus global strategy. The Royal Air Force's masterful deployment of the semi mythical-legend of the air campaign of the summer of 1940, branded as the 'Battle of Britain' has relevance to Jutland.¹⁸ Generations of historians and public engagement have forced the air campaign into the national psyche just as Trafalgar was. In recent years, both the importance of the air campaign but also the impact of the battle has been challenged. It has not been to downgrade the actions and heroism of those involved but has empathised the air campaign as part of a wider Battle 'for' Britain. A battle in which if other elements failed, such as the war at sea, it would have been possible to have an air campaign whilst more serious situations arose such as national starvation. Criticism is further emphasised at how the air campaign is placed at the core of those who are proponents of so called 'AirPower'. The British Army and Royal Navy are far more reluctant to place Trafalgar or the Battle of Waterloo at the heart of its doctrine, preferring the lessons learnt culture then singular dependency on events that feel too far offset to modern times. Trafalgar and Waterloo maybe their identity but they are not vital to understanding their existence. AirPower proponents have a far smaller timeline and engagements to learn from hence why they must turn to scenarios such as 1940. This in itself may question the value of land based AirPower if few examples can be found to genuinely authenticate the rationale for independent Air Forces. Unlike the RAF's loosening grip over the myth of the Battle of Britain, the campaign of Jutland can now move to emphasise the Navy's role in a Battle for Britain in the First World War. Britain's dependency on the sea and its lines of communication, while being able to support the Army becomes more pivotal to the debate over how a war on any scale can

¹⁸ See Cumming, Anthony J., *The Royal Navy and the Battle of Britain* (Annapolis, MD, USA: Naval Institute Press, 2010).

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be lost or won. This would be further replicated in friction between historians over the ‘Battle of the Atlantic’ that raged between 1939-1945 and that of the air campaign of 1940. If German submarines had sunk enough shipping and Britain had lost command of the seas, then the capitulation of Britain due to scarce resources was far more likely than if it has lost the air campaign. New research is now further expanding how the Royal Navy would have decided the outcome of the final push for the Nazis invasion of Britain if the RAF had failed. Jutland 100 therefore is an evolutionary step change in describing the role of the Navy in Britain’s affairs by focusing a fleets actions in the context of a national battle and its need to fill core national requirements which can make all the difference on the path to victory or defeat.

For Naval theorists, Jutland will take on more importance than Trafalgar. Setting Jutland in the new context of the ‘Battle for Britain’ reopens debate on the role of Navies. This provokes debate over the theories of American Naval theorist Alfred Mahan versus Corbett’s. Alternatively, Jutland’s leadership issues retain relevance to modern military training and strengthens Mahan’s and Corbett’s commitment that the study of history is vital to evolve military theory. However, in Corbett’s case his role in the official accounts of the Battle and his proximity to key characters including the Committee for Imperial Defence may require further lines of enquiry. If some of Corbett’s methodologies and motivations can be bought into question, considering his prominence in British Naval thinking, then this could result in timely rethink of past and current British maritime doctrine. Closer inspection of the mechanics of the role of individual inside the Admiralty at the period is vital to understanding the narrative of the debate. The possibility of the degradation of the importance of Corbett would have significant impact not just on the Royal Navy but military theory as whole across the world. This may not have a negative effect if credible alternatives that strengthen maritime

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understanding are developed. Meanwhile theories over how to maintain or gain maritime supremacy and its relationship with the complete destruction of the enemy, which maybe build on incorrect interpretation of Trafalgar, may need exploring with Jutland as a critical case study. For western nations, and in particular the USN and RN, over confidence and the myth of invincibility may need to be addressed. Tackling this issue increases in importance if this attitude is infiltrating political circles leading to incoherent or unsuitable planning and funding of defence policy. This gains further credence in an era of war like peace or lull in identifying an immediate, direct or obvious Naval threat.

The memory of the battle Jutland now faces uncertain times. It may have a temporary halo effect from commemorations but keeping the narrative of events alive maybe unavoidably tied to debate. The controversy itself may be the critical factor which stops Jutland falling by the wayside. If the British Admiralty intended to use some elements of the battle and wider Naval campaign to bolster Naval policy without the controversy and considering the changes to warfare, then it may have been an effective policy in the decades that followed in the build up to the Second World War. However, a modern Navy, tied to centralised defence will struggle to find relevance. Relevance, in particular to command and control should be a clear objective of historians if they believe the battle should be remembered. Trafalgar and Lord Nelson may continue to engage with their very public presence such as Nelson's Column and HMS Victory but the Navy of the First World War has a unique advantage. The public of today are able to reach back through more modern mediums such as audio, visual and living memory to the period of 1914-1918. If these tools are deployed correctly, then these assets can reach out to modern generations who are more attuned to various types of media. This may keep Jutland's memory alive for the preservation of future generations.

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In conclusion, Jutland can now escape being overshadowed by Trafalgar, it need not be compared. If there was any error executed by the Royal Navy of the early 20th century it was that they needed to better 'Britannia's god of War' Admiral Nelson and the role of Trafalgar in defining Naval identity. Instead efforts should have been comprehensively focused on achieving the goals of the era not past ones. Nelson was a guiding force to future generations to always maintain a habit of victory not relieve past glories. Emphasis should have been placed on continuing organisational development such as command and control to ensure communicating and proving beyond doubt SeaPower's indispensable and wide reaching utility and capability. If greater understanding of Jutland reaches professional circles, then for Navies it would be healthy to realise that ripping up the 'rule book' or the burden of history is both healthy and productive when faced with how to communicate an effective Naval message and reforming command and control. Some historians claim that Navies do not study failure. Modern Naval training is acutely aware of how to learn from failure at least on an operational and engineering level.¹⁹ If the accusation is aimed at a strategic, tactical or command and control level then Jutland and its debates disproves that Navies are unwilling to learn from failure. Navies ability to learn from both the good and bad of the past, and discard outdated expectations is critical to organisational success. In his thesis, as Smith defines 'the Naval message' he qualifies this point as 'Naval institutional coherence' and 'Naval memory' with it being integral to the 'the Naval message'. Without the Admiralty, the Royal Navy will struggle more with this concept than the United States. The Royal Navy will have to search through all its engagements, putting them all on a more equal footing than a typical British class room

¹⁹ Such as damage control and firefighting.
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style exercise of ‘who or what is better than another’. Jellicoe’s signal to the 2nd Battle squadron ‘Manoeuvre well executed’ can now take on new meaning. Trafalgar need not be tied with Jutland again. Jutland was always about the wider picture, the Battle for Britain and the endurance of Naval power. At Jutland 100, the battle can now stand on its own credibility, it’s legacy secure as a vital foundation, equal to Trafalgar, of a lessons learn mantra. In the next one hundred years it will now be known as a success due to the evolving understanding of its impact across a broad spectrum of the UK’s national narrative. The debate is far from over but will mature to respect Jutland in entirely new perspectives compared to the previous century. The evidence now exists to change perception of Jutland. The grand challenge of the previous century was to get to the truths of the battle, the next century will be to change the perception of it. However, it will be seen in the next century as a not so obvious victory but one on a grander, strategic scale with wider reaching implications, then the smaller mindedness of just another tactical victory that has dogged its reputation to date. Newer generations will become exhausted by the arguments of old as they will not overlook that the habit of victory was maintained, the Naval service was improved and refined permitting Jutland to forge its own legacy free of Trafalgar. Lessons learnt from the First World War were fed into practice for the Second World War, enabling it to continue vital organisational development.

In short, at Jutland 100, it appears that support across a broad spectrum of evidence and research is favouring a final understanding that Jutland is another victory of one of the world’s most successful fighting forces: The Royal Navy.

Essential reading:

Brooks, John, *The Battle of Jutland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
Reginald Bacon and John Harper, *The Jutland Scandal* (United Kingdom: Frontline books, 2016).
Jellicoe, Nicholas, *Jutland: The Unfinished Battle* (Great Britain: Seaforth Publishing, 2016).

Recommended onwards reading:

Bennett, Geoffrey, *The Battle of Jutland* (Great Britain: Batsford Ltd, 1964).
Books, John, *Dreadnought Gunnery and the Battle of Jutland* (Great Britain: Routledge, 2005).
Churchill, Winston, *The World Crisis 1911-1918* (London: Penguin Classics, 2007).
Corbett, Julian, *Naval Operations, Vol.III* (London: Longmans Green and Co, 1923).
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H.W. Fawcett and G.W.W. Hooper, *The Fighting at Jutland* (Glasgow: Maclure, MacDonald and Co, 1921).
Jellico, J, *The Grand Fleet 1914-1919, Its Creation, Development and Work* (London, Cassell & Company, Ltd, 1919).
Konstam, Angus, *Jutland 1916* (Great Britain: Aurum Press Ltd, 2016).
Marder, Arthur J., *From Dreadnought to Scapa Flow. Vol III, Jutland and After, May to December 1916* (Great Britain: Seaforth Publishing, 2014).
Massie, Robert, *Dreadnought, Britain, Germany and the Coming of the Great War* (England: Random house, 1991).
Massie, Robert, *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany and the Winning of the Great War at Sea* (England: Ballantine Books, 2004).
McCartney, Innes, *Jutland 1916, The Archaeology of Naval Battlefield* (Great Britain: Conway, 2016).
Ed. Michael Epenhans, Jorg Hillmann and Frank Nagler, *Jutland World War I's Greatest Naval Battle* (United States of America: University of Kentucky, 2015).
Nigel Steel and Peter Hard, *Jutland 1916, Death in the Grey Wastes* (Great Britain: Cassell, 2003).
Schleihauf, William, *Jutland: The Naval Staff Appreciation* (Great Britain: Seaforth Publishing, 2016).
Tarrant, V.E., *Jutland, The German Perspective* (London: Brockhampton Press, 1995).

There are more books, journal papers, archival materials, cultural memorabilia, museum exhibitions and further sources available than stated here.

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