

Echoes of the “London Flagship” in Recent (1999-2017) Books and Essays

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Popular media coverage of the First World War centenary typically omits mention of naval events or the key role of coalition warfare in the outcome. As the centenary of 1917’s Atlantic crisis of unrestricted submarine warfare approaches, the lay reader must search diligently for information about naval aspects of the war. A search of Google Images for “World War 1 remembered” shows only land war related items. BBC.co.uk has links to interactive guides about WWI,¹ but there is only one BBC interactive guide with naval aspects, titled “Jutland, Orkney & an ideal navy base”² with links to further information about the Battle of Jutland, Dazzle Camouflage, and the Scapa Flow Museum. Further searching reveals that the National Museum of the Royal Navy at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard has a Jutland Exhibit: “36 Hours: Jutland, 1916, the Battle that Won the War”. A web-site - Centenary News - has a link to an Irish Examiner (02-08-17) article disclosing planned centenary events in Queenstown (Cobh; Cork) for 4 May 2017³. The Royal British Legion web site has a “Jutland 100”⁴ section, with further links to the spectacular Jellicoe Jutland battle animation and web-site⁵. Wikipedia, and the naval history wiki “The Dreadnought Project” are rich resources, and rewards may be high for targeted topic searching, but piecing multiple discrete factual objects together into a broad overview or analysis will be challenging. Examples of productive Wikipedia search topics include, for example: “Rodman 6th Battle Squadron,” “Rodman Battleship Division 9,” “Sir Lewis Bayly,” “Convoys in World War I,” “Seymour Expedition Jellicoe,” and the like. On Wikipedia, a search for “London Flagship” returns no results.

A general search-engine query for “London Flagship Sims” yields an article by David Kohnen of NWC on the USNWC “MOC Warfighter” web site, titled: “*History MOC Warfighters Should Know, The “London Flagship”: Estimate of the Situation for U.S. Navy Operations in a World at War*”⁶ Happily, references in the Kohnen article provide a roadmap of links to legacy scholarship and memoirs:

1919 Hunter: *Beatty, Jellicoe, Sims and Rodman: Yankee Gobs and British Tars as Seen by an “Anglomaniac,”*

1920 Sims: *Victory at Sea;*

1921 Hale: *Naval Investigation;*

1921 Kittredge: *Naval Lessons of the Great War;*

1922 Taussig: *Destroyer Experiences during the Great War;*

1934 Chatterton: *Danger Zone: the Story of the Queenstown Command*

¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/0/ww1/25768752>

² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zxsppv4#zycgk7>

³ <https://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/special-report-100-years-on-cork-region-remembers-arrival-of-us-fleets-during-great-war-442325.html>

⁴ <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/ww1-centenary/jutland-100/>

⁵ <http://www.jutland1916.com/>

⁶ https://www.usnwc.edu/mocwarfighter/Article_M.aspx?ArticleID=41 [Sims – 139 mentions]

1939 Bayly and Voysey: *Pull Together!: the Memoirs of Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly*;
1942 Morison: *Admiral Sims and the Modern American Navy*;
1984 Hattendorf et al: *Sailors and Scholars*;
1984 Trask: *Introduction, Victory at Sea*, 1984.
1996 Still: *The Queenstown Patrol, 1917: The Diary of Commander Joseph Knefler*
Taussig, U.S. Navy, and the like.

Of these, *Victory at Sea*, *Naval Lessons*, *Sailors and Scholars* and several others are available freely online; the Morison biography is not yet available as an eBook or online resource.

Our panel, “Echoes of the First World War in the Twenty-First Century” at the 5th EMC Chair Conference asks us to assess the extent to which Sims and the “London Flagship” set key foundations in shaping U.S. Navy concepts of strategy, command, operations, intelligence, and combined and joint operations.

We may therefore ask at least two specific questions, using contemporary (1999-2017) scholarship as a source of truth:

** first, were the methods, structures, and key principles of coalition naval warfare that were developed ad hoc by Sims and the US Navy at the London Flagship in 1917-1918, emulated during World War II and subsequent conflicts; and,

** second, are the methods, structures, and key principles relevant today, or at least, does the 1917-1918 experience offer a useful perspective, 100 years on, to the lay reader, as well as to the specialist naval historian or educator, on how 21st century naval operations should be conducted?

To answer these questions, we have identified ten significant new [written since 2009] “centenary scholarship” resources on the naval aspects of the First World War, as resources.

We list them here, as follows, with brief commentary, divided into

A five general books on broad topics, such as Sondhaus: *“The Great War at Sea”*,

B two articles specifically about Sims as an iconic and significant leader, such as Hagan: *“William S. Sims: Naval Insurgent and Coalition Warrior”*, and

C three recent articles by David Kohnen, particularly *“The US Navy Won the Battle of Jutland”* and *“The Navy’s Great War Centurion”*.

The five general texts are, most recent first:

1 - Lisle A Rose: *America’s Sailors in the Great War: Seas, Skies, and Submarines* (2017). 344 pages; compelling and highly readable narrative, richly referenced, including to primary sources. New analysis of primary sources clarifies the specific process by which the British Admiralty ‘converted’ to convoying. In addition, the book provides a comprehensive examination of the

debates and processes by which the Wilson administration and Washington-based naval leaders managed the dilemmas associated with supplying resources to coalition warfare. This included the need to set aside key Mahanian doctrines. Among many other highlights, are marvelous narratives of the journeys of Taussig and of Rodman, with their small fleets, to European waters under challenging weather conditions. Reference to Sims, and to the London Flagship, occurs in nearly all chapters. There is a strong focus on naval aviation.

** *“Literally within hours of the president’s request to Congress [for declaration of war] and **while Sims was still at sea** on his way to London, an Anglo-French mission composed of top-level military and naval officials stationed in the Western Hemisphere was pulled together under instructions from Paris and London and sailed toward the United States. By **April 11** the Allied representatives were in conference at Norfolk with Daniels, Benson, Mayo, and other senior naval officials. A few days later, the meeting moved on to Washington. The Americans “possessed only the vaguest notion of the military and naval situation in Europe.” Wilson had wanted it this way in order to maintain his self-defined status as grand mediator **What the besieged Allies wanted most and immediately from their new associate were destroyers.** The Americans were initially cold to the plea, for they did not wish to weaken the battle-fleet screen. When the Americans continued to stand firm, Browning pleaded for just one ship “to have a great moral effect.” It was [Vice Admiral, Henry T.] **Mayo** who broke the logjam that Daniels and Benson had created. When Daniels turned to his Atlantic Fleet commander and asked if at least one destroyer could be spared, Mayo replied, **“We can send a division [six ships] and should not send less than that.” On April 13th, “specific terms of an agreement were drafted in Admiral Benson’s office.” Six destroyers were to be sent posthaste to Europe ...** Beyond these points, Daniels and Benson would not go. They and most of their subordinates were steeped in the **Mahanian dictum** that “the United States should not divide its battle fleet” and that the navy’s primary function was to guard the American coastline. Soon enough, however, events forced a dramatic turn.*

** *“**Convoys, in fact, had been in use since the earliest days of the war, albeit on a limited basis ...** protection of the Grand Fleet from U-boat attacks during its periodic sweeps of the North Sea depended absolutely upon its screen of swift, fast-acting escorts ... **Why could not British merchant ships, sailing collectively as its battleships were doing, be escorted in the same way?** Once he grasped this point, **Sims threw his considerable and ever-growing weight on the side of the convoy enthusiasts, making his argument with a force and frequency that the British dared not ignore. After all, the American admiral held in his hands the number of destroyers that could make the system work.**”*

** *“Even as he worked the convoy issue with colleagues in the deeply divided British Admiralty, Sims, joined enthusiastically by Ambassador Walter Hines Page, began bombarding the White House and Navy Department with cables [the first on **April 14, 1917**] insisting that the fleet release a substantial part of its destroyer force for duty in European waters ... The message was not well received. **Wilson shared with his navy subordinates a keen commitment to Mahanian principles, grounded in an obsession with maintaining fleet integrity in anticipation of major offensive actions.** Dribbling away fleet resources in attempts to prop up a wartime associate could prove feckless. Moreover, the president soon developed a skepticism about the Royal Navy that closely reflected that of David Lloyd George.*

** *“... [The Royal Navy] experimental convoy from Gibraltar ... Results were spectacular. On **May 20**, every ship arrived in England without incident. Just four days later [**May 24, 1917**], **the Royal Navy organized the first convoy from the New World** that sailed from Hampton Roads **Despite open reservations about British abilities and intentions, the White House and Navy***

Department proved game to try the system. The Allies, in turn, had their own reservations about American abilities ...”

** “Just hours after agreement had been reached [April 13, 1917] with the Anglo-French delegation in Washington to send a division of destroyers to the war zone, an obscure lieutenant commander named Joseph Taussig, who commanded the half-dozen ships of Destroyer Division 8, US Atlantic Fleet, was telephoned at home.”

** “At eight in the morning of April 23, 1917, Taussig’s little fleet sailed out of the Brooklyn Navy Yard for Boston ... Taussig and his captains... were prepared for the refueling exercise that would guarantee them passage all the way to Ireland ... Taussig – a veteran of Sims’s rigorous Atlantic destroyer flotilla – allegedly replied [to Bayly] “We are ready now, sir!” The American lieutenant commander and his British overseer quickly established a smooth working relationship. “This principle of cooperation” remained steadfast as the American destroyer presence at Queenstown grew ... “an American unit” commanded by Sims in London but always subordinate to British direction.”

2 - William T Johnsen: The Origins of the Grand Alliance: Anglo-American Military Collaboration from the Panay Incident to Pearl Harbor (2016). 400 pages; begins with a ~20-page chapter titled “Lessons Lived, Learned, Lost: Episodic Progress in U.S. and British Experiences in Coalition Warfare, 1900-1918”. The chapter mentions Sims ~35 times. Sims is again mentioned in Chapter 6 “Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Inching Towards Collaboration, Autumn 1940”. Organizational Charts by Kittredge are in Chapter 8: “Easier Said Than Done – Implementing the American-British Conversations-1 Report, April-July 1941, as are 17 photographs, including of Sims and Pershing. The book contains detailed footnotes with extensive primary references.

** “The assignment of Rear Admiral William S. Sims as the U.S. Navy representative in London may have been the most fortuitous circumstance that facilitated rapid amalgamation of U.S. and British naval forces.”

** “As liaison methods follow naturally from command arrangements, the [Bailey - 1940] committee next noted that they had relied on the historical example of U.S. and British naval cooperation in World War I, in particular the Sims mission.”

** “Hearkening back to Admiral William Sims’s position in World War I, Gbormely would command all naval forces in northern Europe if the United States entered the war. Gbormley arrived in England on or about 20 April [1941].”

3 - Lawrence Sondhaus: The Great War at Sea; a Naval History of the First World War (2014). ~420 pages, highly readable, richly referenced, including to primary resources. The principal chapter dealing with the London Flagship is “8. Submarine warfare: The great gamble, 1917-18”.

** “Rear Admiral William S. Sims, well-respected head of the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, soon became the central figure in overcoming Anglo-American naval differences. The Canadian born Sims, the navy’s leading anglophile, had distinguished himself at sea most recently as a destroyer flotilla commander (1913-15), but had served earlier as naval attaché in Paris and St. Petersburg, and thus was well suited to play an inter-Allied diplomatic role. He was already on his way to Britain when the United States entered the conflict....

** “*A recent, exhaustive account of British naval staff work during the First World War **rejects the notion that convoy policy changed decisively with Lloyd George’s visit to the Admiralty on April 30**, and makes the case instead for a **gradual transformation from December 1916 onward**, after the changes that brought the **new prime minister to Downing Street and Jellicoe to the post of First Sea Lord**. Nicholas Black points out that Jellicoe approved the conveying of coal supplies to France on **January 16**, long before the Americans were a factor, and the conveying of Britain’s Scandinavian trade on **April 21**, before the supposedly decisive meeting with Lloyd George. Finally, on **April 27**, again before the prime minister’s visit to the Admiralty, Jellicoe approved a memorandum written the previous day by the head of the Anti-Submarine Division, Rear Admiral Alexander Duff, which cited the success of the French coal convoys, along with the entry into the war of the United States, as reasons to adopt a convoy system. Black’s account cites further evidence of Admiralty planning for “trial convoys” long before April 30. **He acknowledges, but also minimizes, the role of Henderson, and does not mention Sims at all.**”*

** “Holtzendorff’s conclusion, late in 1916, that unrestricted submarine warfare was “the right means to bring the war to a victorious end,” and [was] also “the only means to that end,” was based on the assumption that, should the campaign fail, the result would be a continuation of the stalemate until a compromise peace, not defeat. **But by bringing the United States into the war while also failing to stop the deployment of the AEF to France, the great gamble doomed Germany to lose the war.**”

4 - Liam and John Nolan: *Secret Victory: Ireland and the War at Sea* (2009). 317 pages. Secret Victory focuses on the role of Ireland, particularly Queenstown (Cobh, Cork) in the anti-submarine and conveying aspects of the First World War. Secret Victory is written in a novelistic style that represents a thoughtful distillation of the legacy biographies and memoirs of the principal actors. Sims and his assertive, efficient leadership and conduct of coalition warfare is featured, beginning with a chapter “The President’s Naval Aide” which gives a full life history of Sims, explaining his strengths and sources of power and leadership. There is no eBook available, but most of the book can be “pre-viewed” on Google Books.

5 - Elleman and Paine, eds: *Commerce Raiding: Historical Case Studies 1755-2009* (2009). Commerce Raiding is a 356 page book from the Naval War College Press, available as a free PDF download. It contains 16 chapters covering the period 1755-2009. Two chapters, each of 15 pages, deal with submarine warfare in World War 1 (“*Handelkrieg mit U-Booten*”: *The German Submarine Offensive in World War 1*, by Paul Halpern – and – *The Anglo-American Naval Checkmate of Germany’s Guerre de Course 1917-1918*, by Kenneth J. Hagan and Michael T McMaster). An additional two chapters deal with submarine warfare in World War 2. All of the chapters are well referenced and use primary sources. The Halpern chapter focuses on German strategy and decision-making. The Hagan-McMaster chapter focuses on Anglo-American cooperation. Hagan and McMaster focus on how the key actors, Sims, Jellicoe, Bayly, and Pringle, worked effectively together to conduct **destroyer** and convoy-support operations in the east Atlantic. They then turn to **battleship** operations involving the cooperation between Rodman and Beatty as US Battleship Division 9 traversed the Atlantic in November-December 1917, to become the 6th Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet. The symmetrical cooperative arrangements wherein **US destroyers were subordinated to Bayley**, and **US battleships were subordinated to Beatty**, are emphasized, but the array of ~45 **additional installations** and capabilities supported by the U.S. Navy, are also enumerated.

*** “The cooperation of Sims and Bayly and that between Rodman and Beatty protected the convoys of troopships carrying the balance-tipping force of two million American soldiers “without losing a single man.” But beyond the destroyers at Queenstown and the battleships at Scapa Flow, Admiral Sims, Commander, United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, directly or indirectly commanded naval detachments of varying sizes and compositions at Murmansk, in Russia, and in Brest and elsewhere on the coast of France; submarine chasers stationed at Plymouth, England; an American naval base at the British naval bastion at Gibraltar; more submarine chasers on the island of Corfu; the U.S. mine force in Scotland; all U.S. naval aviation bases; and six U.S. Navy port offices. Ultimately a total of 196 officers staffed Sims’s London headquarters.*

*** “There had not been anything remotely approaching this scale of overseas commands and operations in the entire history of the U.S. Navy, and the whole complex apparatus was improvised. There had been no prewar planning for co-belligerency with Great Britain, and as a result there had been no anticipation of this array of installations and operations. In a relatively brief period between April 1917 and November 1918, two British admirals and two American admirals had overcome their navies’ historical distrust of one another in order to forge a victorious Anglo-American naval alliance.*

*** “Highly personal and born in reaction to a lethal sea war of unprecedented magnitude, the alliance would fragment in 1919. It would lie shattered throughout the two interwar decades. But as soon as Great Britain went to war with Nazi Germany in September 1939 it was reconstituted and reshaped, often under the guidance of officers who had served in World War I as disciples of Beatty, Rodman, Bayly, or Sims. Notable among the understudies was Cdr. Harold R. Stark, the personnel officer at Sims’s London headquarters. He became Chief of Naval Operations in 1939, and the next year he wrote the comprehensive plan – known as Plan Dog For fighting Germany and Japan. In April 1942, Stark was sent to London to establish a naval headquarters modeled on the “London Flagship” of 1917-18.*

The two scholarly book chapters specifically about Sims are:

1 - Hattendorf and Elleman: Nineteen-Gun Salute - Case Studies of Operational, Strategic, and Diplomatic Naval Leadership during the 20th and early 21st Centuries 266 pages. (Chapter 1: "Radical, But Right - William Sowden Sims (1958-1936)" This collection of brief biographies of nineteen U.S. Navy admirals, from W. S. Sims, to Joseph W. Preuher, with insight focusing particularly on leadership skills in the operational and strategic arenas, was sponsored by the Naval War College's College of Operational and Strategic Leadership.

*** “As the [NWC] faculty ... look ahead and ask what the characteristics will be for naval leaders in the operational and strategic realm, historians can be of some assistance by asking what these characteristics have been in the past. The idea of strategic and operational leadership as a specific type of leadership has not been developed fully among naval scholars. Questions:*

To what degree are the characteristics of good operational and strategic leaders unique, personal, and inborn qualities?

To what degree do education and training develop these leadership characteristics? ...

To what degree does the experience of previous naval assignments play a role in developing these leadership characteristics?"

****** "Sims ... the unprecedented intimacy of his cooperation with the Royal Navy established a model for World War II. At the height of its power, Sims's London Flagship oversaw one of the largest assemblages of naval striking power in U.S. history: 370 ships of all classes, 5,000 officers and 70,000 enlisted men were distributed among forty-five bases in the British Isles and on the Continent. Winston S. Churchill: "the harmony and success of this cooperation form a new precedent, and one which is of the highest value to the future in which such vast issues hang on unity between our two countries in ideals and in action."

****** "From October 1902 until the end of Roosevelt's second administration in 1909, Sims savored his position as a protected insurgent. He leveraged friendships developed with British officers in China to confer with such senior gunnery enthusiasts as Admiral John Fisher, the First Sea Lord, and Admiral John Jellicoe, the Director of Naval Ordinance."

****** "When Fisher unveiled his stunning technological marvel, the Dreadnought, in 1906, Sims felt even more justified in proclaiming American warships obsolete ... Sims challenged Mahan ... in November 1907, Roosevelt appointed Sims to be his naval aide. From center stage, Sims for the next 15 months underscored Roosevelt's determination to construct a fleet centered on American derivatives of the Dreadnought."

****** "Lead[ing] the Atlantic Torpedo Flotilla from 1913 to 1914 ... Sims forged a Nelsonian brotherhood with his officers... They developed a coherent plan for using destroyers, a new class of fast but small vessels. To enhance destroyer performance and interoperability with larger warships, Sims, with the invaluable help of Newport alumnus Dudley W. Knox, promulgated a doctrine for its wartime roles and missions. Destroyers became the workhorses of the fleet, and destroyer commanders influenced by Sims cultivated an esprit de corps among their crews. This gunnery enthusiast and advocate of powerful battleships had recognized the importance of smaller, lightly armed warships to naval warfare. In less than three years, he would test his new understanding of the destroyer's importance when he was unexpectedly ordered to command all U.S. naval forces in the European war."

****** "He died ... just as the Navy was beginning actively to plan for innovative combat deployment of submarines and aircraft carriers. And so it was that the full flowering of Admiral Sims's influence came posthumously. It was in death, not in life, that the perennial outsider in the ultimate insider's organization finally came in from the cold. ... His credibility as an insurgent derived from repeatedly championing the causes that advanced the Navy's modernization and operational readiness. ... The astuteness of his strategic leadership was much less well recognized by contemporaries than by his successors and by historians."

****** "Sims perceived the importance of an Anglo-American alliance long before most of his naval brethren. ... Sims's destroyer decision ... was inspired principally by his dispassionate strategic assessment that the war hinged on achieving victory at sea; a "go-it-alone" approach by the Americans would hinder this predominantly British effort."

** “What made Sims an exemplary strategic leader was his demonstrated ability to rise above the common human trappings of pride and provincialism, and prevail against a conservative service culture that harbored deeper suspicions of Britain than of Germany.

** “He perceived security in international terms and felt no inhibitions about combined operations with other Western powers – even if that meant the U.S. Navy was the junior partner.

** “Sims was not merely a theater commander but an ambassador-in-uniform whose responsibilities included the cementing and maintenance of an unprecedented transatlantic coalition.

** “As the ranking U.S. naval officer in Europe, Sims, more than his seniors in Washington, was willing to accede to British operational control of his ships because it directly enhanced the prospects for victory.

** “At all levels of command – from the presidency of the Naval War College, from the bridge of the Minnesota or the Atlantic Torpedo Flotilla, to the wartime headquarters of the London Flagship – Sims esteemed above all a small, highly efficient, and dedicated staff to whom he entrusted responsibility for planning, operations, and management. To some, the ideal naval officer was an aggressive iconoclast and eminently adaptable to the variegated demands of the service. He invested heavily in his subordinates’ professional development, confident that their indoctrination and esprit de corps would produce great results. His unlimited faith in their capacity was matched by an inability to tolerate incompetence at any level of seniority.

** “It was his Nelsonian “take the fight to the enemy” approach that his officers idolized. ... It was no coincidence that Sims’s staunchest partisans were veteran members of his many staffs. His band of brothers remained true. Of all his characteristics, they most admired Sims’s readiness to sacrifice his career for unpopular causes that would contribute to the greater good of the navy and the nation. Such strength of character and patriotic altruism should never be allowed to become a thing of the past.”

2 - Ballard C Campbell (ed): The Human Tradition in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era 2000. 231 pages; Chapter 12 [21 pages] is “William S. Sims – Naval Insurgent and Coalition Warrior”; by Kenneth J. Hagan. [Note: Professor Hagan is also the co-author, with McMaster, of the chapter on submarine warfare in Commerce Raiding.]

** “Sims’s prediction [1922] about the battleship’s demise was born out on December 7, 1941 when ... one of the battleships sunk ... was the old Nevada, of which Sims had been the first commanding officer. The tragedy forced the U.S. Navy to depend almost exclusively on carrier-launched aircraft to fight the monumental and tide-turning World War II battles in the Pacific – Coral Sea, Midway, the Philippine Sea. In the entire four-year panorama of the Japanese-American war there would be but one solitary battle-fleet engagement conforming to the ideal that Mahan had ordained for the twentieth-century American navy... Like the Battle of Jutland in the previous war, its strategic impact was minimal. At the same time, unrestricted American submarine attacks on Japanese shipping proved once again that an island nation could not hope for maritime victory if it did not convoy its tankers, cargo vessels, and troopships.

*** “In the Atlantic, the British and Americans – unstintingly reinforced by the Royal Canadian Navy – once again instituted a well-coordinated system of transoceanic convoys. Countless naval escorts protected the vital shipments of materiel flowing from North America to England and the Soviet Union, and a highly sophisticated campaign of antisubmarine warfare steadily depleted the numbers of U-boats sent to sea by Nazi Germany.*

*** “The Anglo-American naval coalition first forged by Admiral Sims in 1917 was revived and solidified into another historic victory at sea. Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, it is the bedrock of American foreign policy and naval strategy.*

*** “To use a nautical term, the transatlantic partnership is “180 degrees out” from what Passed Midshipman Sims knew on board the Tennessee, when the Royal Navy loomed as the world’s most lethal threat to American national security. That William Sowden Sims helped in ways small and large to end a century of mutual hostility between the two major English-speaking powers, is certainly the most significant and lasting transformation brought about by a man who always sought change while wearing a uniform that symbolizes permanence, conservatism, and tradition. He was the perennial outsider in the ultimate insider’s organization. As he himself said of the navy at the height of his power and prestige: “I have never liked it. I would rather have been in a productive occupation. There has never been a time when I have not been uncomfortable in a uniform.” Paradox defined the man.”*

The three published, or in-press articles by David Kohnen are:

1 – Kohnen 2016: “History MOC Warfighters Should Know, The “London Flagship:” Estimate of the Situation for U.S. Navy Operations in a World at War” – online article (NWC) accessed 03-20-17 at https://www.usnwc.edu/mocwarfighter/Article_M.aspx?ArticleID=41. This 9,000 word (~28 page) essay is a superb summary, background, and geo-strategic overview for the questions our panel is considering. It is richly referenced primarily to books and other secondary sources, and contains 14 photographs or illustrations. ‘Sims’ is mentioned 140 times; King 56 times, Knox 31 times, London Flagship 27 times, Mayo 27 times, Jellicoe 17 times, Benson 14 times. Major headings address the evolution of the organizational structure of the US Navy to coordinate new global responsibilities in the early 1900’s, the creation of the CNO role, the “War College Afloat”, the “London Flagship”, the “Grand Fleets”, the “Victory at Sea”, “unresolved questions of control shaping the organizational relationship between the Royal Navy and the U.S. Navy, and the impact of World War 1 on naval professional education at the Naval War College and beyond, including the “Knox-King-Pye board and report.

*** “Within the U.S. Navy, many thought that the “Chief of Naval Operations”, in the form passed by Congress, represented the ashes of a once good idea.” ... As the U.S. Navy sailed into the uncharted waters of coalition warfare, the relationship between the CNO and the seagoing fleet organizations ... remained ambiguous.*

*** Carrying wardroom traditions from the age of sail into an era characterized by technologically advanced warships of steam and steel, Sims presided over spirited historical debates to examine the nexus between strategy and tactics. From these foundations, Sims and his staff developed totally new tactics for maneuvering destroyers in unison using a wireless communication system of fewer than thirty-one words. Following the flag of Sims, the Atlantic Fleet destroyers developed tactics which the U.S. Navy eventually adopted for application in larger warships.*

**** Sims concluded that “the only way to *throw the weight of the U.S. Navy into the war without delay was to use its available units to strengthen the weak spots in other Navies* and thus effect a more vigorous conduct of the war already so thoroughly underway in all areas. *There would have been much wasted effort and time if any attempt had been made to take over any particular area and operate it entirely with U.S. Naval Forces.*”**

**** “First World War adventures in European waters fueled strong professional alliances among U.S. Navy veterans of the London Flagship and Atlantic Fleet. Common wartime experiences inspired U.S. Navy professionals to address underlying questions of strategy and command. Similarly, the ASecNav, *Franklin D. Roosevelt, drew clear conclusions from his experiences on the European front during the First World War.* He frequently interacted with members of the London Flagship and CinCLant staffs. Significantly, *Roosevelt remained very interested in the careers of Knox, Stark, and King.* As President of the United States, Roosevelt solicited advice from *Knox* on questions of American naval policy after 1933. As the CNO after 1939, *Stark* also shaped the Roosevelt naval strategy of Anglo-American collaboration. After 1941, Roosevelt empowered *King* to execute American maritime strategy, coordinate combined operations on a worldwide scale, and establish the U.S. Navy as the underlying foundation for the American concept of a United Nations after the Second World War.”**

2 - Kohnen 2016: "*The US Navy Won the Battle of Jutland*" (NWC).

For this richly-referenced, 22-page article published by the Naval War College, David Kohnen examined ~17 years of correspondence between Sims and Jellicoe following their first meetings in China during the 1901 Boxer Rebellion. The correspondence revealed a deep relationship between the two, who had strong common interests, and also special expertise in gunnery, ordinance, and ship-design experts. The article details the evolution of the Jellicoe-Sims relationship during the 1910 Royal Navy's hosting of the battleship USS *Minnesota* and its fleet in London, subsequent annual visits by Sims to England, and, most importantly, early access by Sims to detailed descriptions of the battle of Jutland written by Jellicoe and others. Of critical importance is how Jellicoe's 'special information about Jutland', provided to Sims soon after the battle, enabled Sims to analyze the battle and to argue against proposed American modifications of its ship construction program, which would have reduced the number of battlecruisers in favor of more battleships. In addition, the article details how Sims made the study of Jutland a prominent component of the NWC curriculum, as early as November 1916. Sims's critical contributions to the American analysis of Jutland cemented his reputation and credibility with Assistant Secretary of the Navy F.D. Roosevelt, earned him an opportunity to testify before Congress on the fleet construction program, and further to be given the Presidency of the Naval War College in 1917, and soon thereafter, the assignment to London, to liaise with the Royal Navy, with promotion to rear admiral.

**** “Seizing on Sims’s assertions [*lessons of Jutland with respect to the effectiveness of battlecruisers*], Assistant Navy Secretary Roosevelt fostered a political alliance with Virginia senator Claude A. Swanson. Together, *Roosevelt and Swanson circumvented Daniels in their effort to continue the construction of battle cruisers for the U.S. Navy. In the winter of 1916, Roosevelt used Sims and the findings of the Naval War College war-game report on Jutland to frame future American naval policy.*”**

**** “Following his testimony on Jutland in Congress, Sims received orders to the Naval War College. In February 1917, he assumed duty as the President of the College. Sims then received secret orders to sail for London with verbal authorization to assume rank as a rear admiral on 21 March. Concurrently, Navy Secretary Daniels and CNO”**

Benson directed Sims to act as the Navy Department liaison to the Admiralty in London. The United States declared war on Germany while Sims was at sea in April [6th, 1917]. Shortly after their first meetings in London, Sims and Jellicoe built on their personal friendship to facilitate the broader collaborative relationship between the Royal Navy and U.S. Navy.

3 - Kohnen 2017: "The Navy's Great War Centurion" (Naval History, April 2017). This 5-page article has the sub-heading: "Against the background of a disjointed U.S. Navy hierarchy, Rear Admiral William S. Sims arrived in London in the spring of 1917 and pioneered how U.S. naval officers would approach multinational command." Sections of the article are titled: "The Selection of Sims"; "The Mysterious Mr. Davidson"; "Taking Stock of the Situation"; "Bespoke in Savile Row"; "American Revolution in Naval Command"; "SIMSADUS".

** "Sims shattered the Navy Department's organizational routines, first by articulating the unspoken strategic reality of an Anglo-American naval alliance and then by pioneering operational ties between the British and U.S. navies.

** "At a critical turning point in maritime history, Sims tested and at times acted beyond the limits of his rank in dragging the U.S. Navy onto the international stage. He referred to U.S. naval headquarters in Grosvenor Square as the "London Flagship," which by implication asserted command over operations at the front.

** "Although the U.S. Navy largely muddled through in World War I, Sims and his London Flagship set the precedent for how U.S. naval officers evaluate questions of multinational command. Having served on the Atlantic Fleet staff during the war, Ernest King later claimed in memoirs that he had never been "one of the group of Sims's devoted disciples and followers." In fact, Sims was one of King's true mentors and clearly shaped his approach to questions of combined and joint command. His World War I experience enabled King to understand the challenges involved with synthesizing Anglo-American strategy as Chief of Naval Operations during World War II.

** "The generations of Sims and King set the foundation for the U.S. Navy of the 21st century. For these reasons, contemporary naval thinkers may draw from the rich perspectives found in the past while framing the future history of the U.S. Navy and its maritime partners in global strategic affairs."