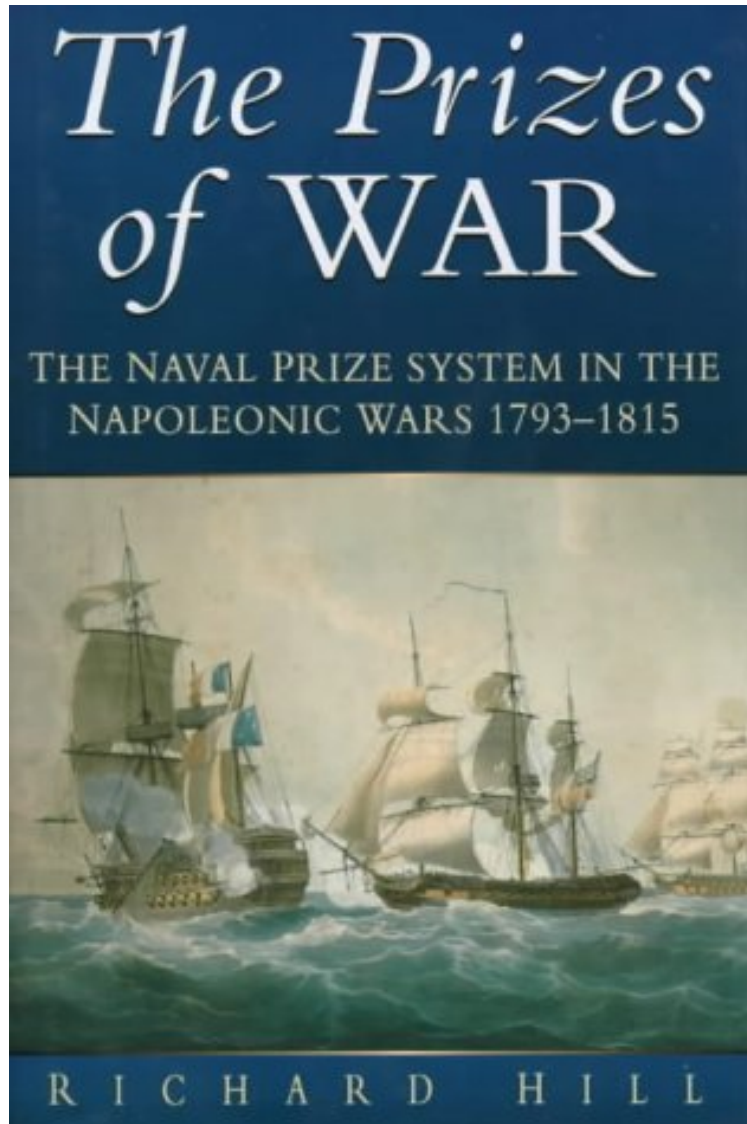


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Prizes of War: Prize Law and the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Wars 17931815

J. R. Hill, Richard Hill

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J. R. Hill, Richard Hill : Prizes of War: Prize Law and the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Wars 17931815 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Prizes of War: Prize Law and the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Wars 17931815:

A British warship makes a capture on the high seas during the Napoleonic Wars of 1793-1815. That capture might be an enemy warship or a privateer, an enemy merchant ship or a neutral suspected of running contraband. This is a commonplace incident in many naval novels about the period, as it was in the history of the time itself. But what happened after the capture? What process had to be gone through before the captors saw their prize money? This text explores fully the complexities of the prize system. The operation of the High Court of Admiralty under its great judge Sir William Scott; the responsibilities and rake-offs of agents, brokers, court officials; captains' knowledge of, and responsibility under, the law; the influence of government and Admiralty policy; how much of the proceeds the captors eventually saw and how it was distributed among the crew; and the delays that disfigured the system. All these are covered in understandable language that conveys an flavour of the time. Richard Hill has gone deeply into primary and contemporary sources in his research for this text. His conclusions explode many of the myths about corrupt courts, grasping or dishonest agents and venal government practices. On the other hand, where he finds evidence of scandalous proceedings or the evils of a system with built in delays, no punches are pulled. Some reputations of well-known figures emerge dented, others enhanced.