



# T E Lawrence and the Red Sea Patrol: The Royal Navy's Role in Creating The Legend

*John Johnson Allen*

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Although many books have been written about T E Lawrence and the Arab Revolt, none before has fully explored the pivotal role of the Royal Navy in the Red Sea at the time. This is the first book to be written about the Navy's role in the success of the Arab Revolt in the creation of the legendary figure of Lawrence of Arabia. Following extensive and detailed research into the activities of the ships of the Red Sea Patrol by the author, a maritime historian and former Merchant Navy officer, it has become evident that, without the work of those ships, the Arab revolt would have failed and T E Lawrence would have remained an obscure officer in the military bureaucracy of Cairo.

Lawrence was very aware of the importance and relevance of the Royal Navy in their operations in the Red Sea and commented on it on many occasions, notably in 1918, saying 'The naval side of the operations, when the time comes to tell of it, will provide a most interesting case of the value of command of the sea.'. Until now, nobody has investigated this angle in any detail. By doing this so comprehensively, this book gives a fresh dimension to the Lawrence of Arabia legend.

## REVIEWS

One of Johnson-Allen's strengths is his earlier experience as a Merchant Navy officer. He understands the topography of the Red Sea coastline and also makes good use of the ship's logs at the National Archives. Johnson-Allen brings and engaging light to bear on a key aspect of the Arab Revolt.

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