



First Rate: The Greatest Warship of the Age of Sail

Rif Winfield

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In the sailing era, the warships called First Rates were the largest, most powerful, and most costly ships to construct, maintain, and operate. Built to the highest standards, they were lavishly decorated and given carefully considered names that reflected the pride and prestige of their country. They were the very embodiment of national power, and as such drew the attention of artists, engravers, and printmakers. In this first history of the major ships in the Royal Navy during the Age of Sail, virtually every British First Rate from the Prince Royal of 1610 to the end of sail is represented by an array of paintings, drawings, models, or plans. This spectacular collection of illustrations, many in full color, is a celebration of these magnificent ships, combining an authoritative history of their development with reproductions of many of the best images of the ships, chosen for their accuracy, detail, and sheer visual power in an extra-large format that does full justice to the images themselves. It also includes comparative data on similar vessels in other navies, so it is a book that all with an interest in wooden warships will find both enlightening and a pleasure to peruse.

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