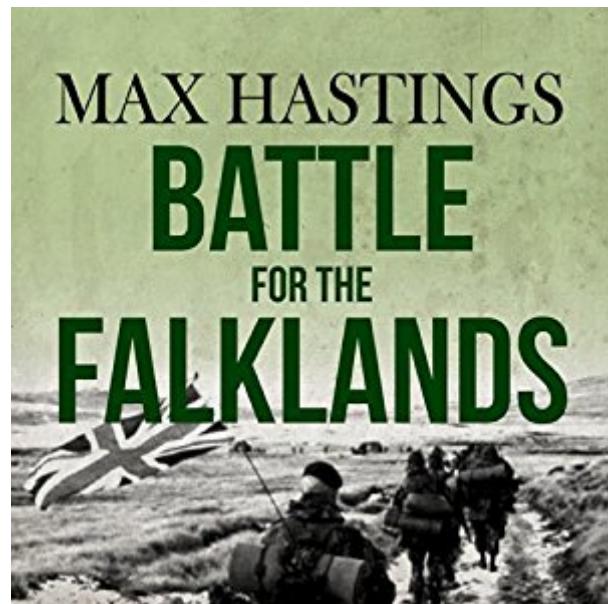


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Battle For The Falklands



Synopsis

The Falklands War was one of the strangest in British history - 28,000 men sent to fight for a tiny relic of empire 8,000 miles from home. At the time, many Britons saw it as a tragic absurdity, but the British victory confirmed the quality of British arms and boosted the political fortunes of the Conservative government. But it left a chequered aftermath; it was of no wider significance for British interests and taught no lessons. It has since been overshadowed by the two Gulf Wars, however, its political ramifications cannot be overestimated. Max Hastings' and Simon Jenkins' account of the conflict is a modern classic of war reportage and the definitive book on the war. Republished as part of the Pan Military Classics series, *The Battle for the Falklands* is a vivid chronicle of a call to arms and a thoughtful and informed analysis of an astonishing chapter in the history of our times. Max Hastings, author of over 20 books, has been editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Evening Standard*. He has won many awards for his journalism, particularly his work in the south Atlantic in 1982.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was purchased to replace my "Dog-eared" original copy, purchased in 1984. I followed the entire war through *The New York Times*, *The Record*, a North Jersey local paper and a copy of *Jane's Warships Catalog/Listing of Warship*. It was very much "living, breathing history", at the time. I was thrilled to find this book two years after the war ended. It was current enough to be very accurate but with enough time elapsed to be objective. The book was told, very much from the

British view but did mention the ironic point that the Argentine Pilots, considered themselves in the same "vein" as the British Pilots defending their Homeland during the 1940 Battle of Britain. The war changed and modified Royal Navy (RN) thinking and changed acquisitions, based upon their performance during the war. The Sheffield Class, Type 42, [The lead ship of this class was nicknamed, "The Shiny Sheff"] was a favorite in Royal Navy's (RN) thinking and acquisitions reflected this, until several were hit by the Argentine Skyhawks and burned. The Broadsword, Type 22, class of warships were being "retired" out of RN use but performed so well (damaged but afloat) that the RN began re-acquiring this class of ship. The RN also showed what the sub-sonic Sea Harrier/Harrier GR3 could do in the hands of a capable British Pilot ("VIFFing"-Vectoring In Forward Flight") where an aircraft comes to a halt in the sky, lets the aggressor aircraft "pop out front" and firing an AIM (Air Intercept Missile) at the formerly aggressive Argentine aircraft. Despite this, the Argentine Pilots displayed great courage in "pressing home" their attacks against British Warships. The Argentine Air Force attempted to protect their most capable aircraft, the French built, Super Entendard with the feared Exocet missile, by not using them and keeping them in reserve, if needed. The British SAS (Special Air Service) elite Special Forces ended that by destroying them on the ground, far away from the coast. The RN also successfully conducted a "modern times" attack and sinking of a cruiser/battleship the General Belgrano (ex-USS Brooklyn) by the RN Submarine Conqueror, with great loss of life. It is still a point of controversy but the Belgrano had entered the specified "Battle Area" and was "fair game" in the eyes of the British Fleet. The Belgrano was operating as the center of a Battle Group with Exocet missile ships. The war wasn't limited to sky and sea. The British Land Forces encountered a fairly stiff resistance, which is not difficult to understand as the Argentinian Defense Forces were using British, American and French, "frontline equipment". This caused a somewhat even match on the Infantry side of the war. The fight over Goose Green was monumental enough to be memorialized in a song: Island Of No Return by Billy Bragg. (YouTube). The War also pushed the British to upgrade their aircraft carriers away from just "Jump Jet" aircraft carriers to more "long range" fighters as the F-4 or F-14s. The Monroe Doctrine prevented the USA from providing "super-sonic" support of a large aircraft carriers, that Britain stopped producing, assuming that the Americans would always "fill that gap" under the NATO Agreement. The American Monroe Doctrine wouldn't allow a European Power to conduct an aggressive actions in "The New World" and was meant to prevent European colonial expansion. While the US didn't prevent the actions of one of our most consistent Allies, we did turn a "blind eye" to the Falklands War, as Britain was protecting their own territory. The Argentinians didn't believe the British would trouble them about territories (The Malvinas Islands) that the British were about to

peacefully, surrender to them. Their premature show of force cost them dearly. I believe the RN recently launched an aircraft carrier with catapults and an increased capacity for handling modern fighter, attack and support aircraft. The Falkland Islands currently have built "long runways" to accomodate more modern and leathal aircraft. basically an "unsinkable" aircraft carrier. I'm looking forward to reading this book for the fifth or sixth time. A great book never gets old. Highly Recommended. ☺

This is the most definitive work I have found on the Falklands War. Starting with the initial sneak attack by Argentina on sovereign British territory, the book explains both the diplomacy the Thatcher government did to get UN support, the creation of the task force, the Argies ability to strike and in the end the guts of the British foot soldier and marine who had to put boots to ground. This is a thrilling read...it respects Argentines, but it mainly shows how tough and professional the British military is. What a nation!

The Falkland Islands War was a strange event. I was only 12 at the time, but even so, I remember thinking it was very unusual that a war could start and end so quickly, between nations you would not consider traditional enemies. As the authors point out, it was the last of Britains colonial wars - fought to maintain prestige more so than because of the worth of the territory. Argentina invaded the Islands on the assumption that Britain would not fight for them. Obviously they underestimated the will of the British people, and especially that of the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, who quickly dispatched the largest task force she could muster to reclaim the islands. This book starts well before the war and explains the colonial situation and the history of Argentina's attempts to win sovereignty over the islands they call the Malvinas. It then moves to the details of the actual invasion and attempts to rationalise the motives behind the Argentine junta's decision. The book really hits its stride with the dispatch of the task force and the battles that then took place on land and at sea. The book was written shortly after the end of the war. Max Hastings is a journalist that accompanied the task force, and brings a level of authenticity that only a first-hand experience can give. Simon Jenkins's contribution was on the home front, detailing the cabinet and parliamentary discussions and direction of the war. That these two parts seamlessly mesh is a credit to the editor. Even though there was little time between the end of hostilities and the release of the book, the conclusions of the authors have stood the test of time. Unfortunately, we will likely never know all the details about the Argentine side (due to the instability of the government at the time), so most of the commentary and description of events is from the point of view of the British forces. The authors are careful not

to "cheerlead" the British side, and condemn both sides equally for failing to resolve the dispute peacefully. Most importantly, the book is very easy to read, and tells an exciting story besides. The conclusions are inescapable - the British won due to superior training, tactics, and motivation of the footsoldier on the ground. Full marks go to the Argentine Air Force for their spirited conduct during the hostilities, but air power alone cannot win a war. The authors also blame the situation on the lack of human intelligence (as opposed to signal or satellite intel) that totally missed the imminent threat to the Falklands from Argentina. They further argue for balanced armed forces because, as we rediscovered on Sept. 11, you never know what kind of threat you will face. These conclusions are applicable today, which tells for the universality and timelessness of this fine account.

A must read for anyone interested in the Falklands war. Both the political and military aspects of the conflict have been dealt with in detail. A reader with little interest in military history might still find the book provides a fascinating case study on foreign policy and diplomacy, while military buffs would find the level of detail of the many battles absorbing - with descriptions of both strategic choices (such as the attack on Goose green) as well as small unit actions that the British forces were involved in.

I was 12 years old for the Falklands War. I live in Chile and attended an English border school at the time. For many reasons the war was very 'close' to me and it caught my attention, but my age and access to information didn't allow me to have a real idea of what happened. Now, 30 years after I decided to close the gap and bought a few of 's recommended reading for the Falklands War. This is the first of 4 books I got and it was a great way to start. The mixture of both political and military scenarios provides a great and balanced vision of what happened. A must read if you are interested in the war.

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