Review of Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783

Michael F. Russo
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, mrusso1@lsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/libraries_pubs
Part of the European History Commons, Military History Commons, and the Political History Commons

Recommended Citation
Russo, Michael F., "Review of Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783" (2009). Faculty Publications. 70.
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/libraries_pubs/70

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the LSU Libraries at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact geoste1@lsu.edu.
LJ Review Cover Sheet and Survey

Your name: Michael F. Russo
Your affiliation: Louisiana State University Libraries—Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Phone: (225) 578-6823
E-mail address: mrusso1@lsu.edu
Title of the book: Three Victories and a Defeat: the Rise and Fall of the First British Empire
Author or editor of the book: Brendan Simms
This book is recommended for: public & academic libraries
Comments for your editor:

Review

Author: Brendan Simms
Title: Three Victories and a Defeat: the Rise and Fall of the First British Empire
Publisher: Basic Books
Release date: January 2009
Number of pages: pages. 832
Features: 42 illustrations; 6 maps
Format: Unknown
Price: $39.95

Britain’s empire and security, according to Oxford University historian Brendan Simms (The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837, The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797-1806, et al.), were not so much the results of its vaunted and storied navy, but were, rather, the consequences of its many canny alliances on the continent. To forestall the always-anticipated attack by France, Britain’s Hanoverian kings cloaked their nation with an ever-shifting canopy of ententes, sometimes with the Dutch, sometimes the Russians, but always with someone who had an interest in containing the dreaded Bourbons.

The defeat of Britain by its American colonies marked the end of that phase of British history as well as a definite downturn in the empire’s fortunes. Yet again, Europe played a pivotal role in deciding England’s fate. Britain simply could not defend itself from the east while attacking to the west, and the colonists knew it.

Professor Simms has created a prolifically annotated and vividly detailed recounting of the eighteenth century watershed that temporarily sundered the British empire. It is an account that is profoundly scholarly, yet still accessible to the non-scholar.

Recommended for academic and public libraries.
Michael F. Russo
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana