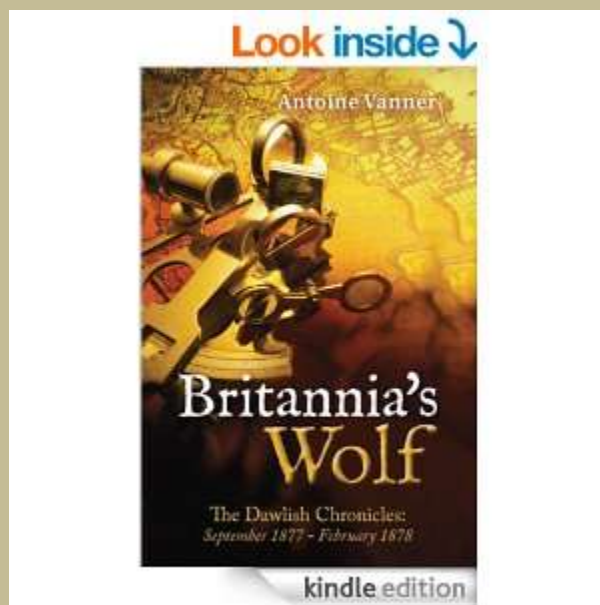


Britannia's Wolf

By Antoine Vanner



Reviewed by D. Andrew McChesney

In 1877, Commander Nicholas Dawlish resigns from the Royal Navy and is commissioned as Kaptan in the Ottoman Navy to help in that Empire's war against Russia. Taking command of the ironclad *Mesrutiyet* and a small flotilla of smaller vessels, Dawlish gains the confidence and respect of his Turkish comrades. Together they disrupt Russian supply lines in an attempt to stop the enemy's relentless advance on Istanbul. But power struggles at the top mean it's all for naught, and Dawlish ends up fighting on land.

In many ways, this story reflects what is currently happening in that part of the world. Not only are nations pitted against each other, but the various faiths seek to destroy or exact revenge for a variety of atrocities. There is also a connection with *A Place Called Armageddon*, by C. C. Humphreys, which tells the story of the fall of Constantinople several centuries earlier.

In Nicholas Dawlish, the author creates a character well in tune with the times. Here is a naval officer brought up in the tradition of sail, but who is well versed and in tune with the emerging steam powered and revolutionary ships of that time. He is also one aware of and perhaps hampered by then current social conditions. Throughout, he proves to be a person of humanitarian instincts and yet doesn't hesitate to fight, to kill, and even to maim, if it suits his purpose and the goals of those he has sworn allegiance to. Dawlish is on honor bound and driven to succeed.

This is a riveting, face-paced, and exciting story, making it imperative to read the next in the series, *Britannia's Reach*, at the earliest opportunity. The only distraction noted was in the unusual formatting of the book, with an extra line being skipped between each paragraph. Like discovering that one has begun a book utilizing single quote marks where one would expect double, or vice versa, one gets used to it. In all, the story flows, it's easy to turn to the next page and keep reading.