



(BOOK 8)

## **DUNKIRK**

### **Author: Sinclair McKay**

If you are looking for a Christmas present for anyone that is interested in military history you could do a lot worse than give them this book. I have read much about the subject and seen the films but I still found this book absorbing and instructive. In May 1940 about 338,000 British and French troops had been driven back into an area around Dunkirk by the rampaging German army. To evacuate all the allied troops to safety seemed an impossible task and yet the impossible was achieved.

At short notice and under a security blanket a fleet of small craft was assembled in south coast harbours and then, with crews of both professional and amateur sailors, these were sailed to Dunkirk to pick up the stranded troops. The Royal Navy did all that could be done using destroyers and similar warships to protect and assist the evacuation but those involved in the evacuation suffered heavy losses from bombing, strafing and shelling.

One of the “little ships” that played a valuable role in the Dunkirk evacuation was the London Fire Brigade fire boat, *Massey Shaw*. All those that crewed the *Massey Shaw* for the evacuation were regular members of the LFB or were members of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Their valiant efforts in completing no less than four round trips to bring home hundreds of soldiers gets a special mention in Sinclair McKay’s book.

The evacuation was given the code name ‘*Operation Dynamo*’ and it is such an outstanding piece of British military history that it is worthy of being recorded with diligence and honour. Sinclair McKay has done this by telling his version of the story in this superb book. The Dunkirk evacuation was such a complex event that no author can hope to capture all the elements of it in one book but I thoroughly enjoyed reading McKay’s approach to doing so.

## **JOHN CRAIG**

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