



# THE ADMIRALS

WALTER R. BORNEMAN

READ BY BRIAN TROXELL

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States Navy was embroiled in a vast and grinding battle for the seas. Overarching strategy and crucial encounters at Coral Sea, Midway, and the waters around Guadalcanal tested the mettle of four of the greatest naval leaders of all time—Chester W. Nimitz, William F. Halsey, Jr., William D. Leahy, and Ernest J. King. All were graduates of the United States Naval Academy and each played a pivotal role in the evolution of naval warfare, from battleships to submarines and aircraft carriers. Both rivals and friends, they are the only four men in American history to be accorded the five-star rank of fleet admiral.

Nimitz led his men with common sense and unshakable confidence. After Pearl Harbor, he vaulted over senior officers to become commander in chief, Pacific Fleet. Always something of a brawler, Halsey qualified as a naval aviator at the age of fifty-two and made his mark with carrier assignments in the Pacific. Franklin D. Roosevelt summoned Leahy to the White House to become, in effect, a powerful combination of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, national security advisor, and presidential confidant. King took his training in battleships but quickly embraced submarines and aircraft. After Pearl Harbor, he commanded the entire U.S. Navy and proceeded to quarrel with his British allies and General Douglas MacArthur almost as vehemently as he fought against his enemies.

Despite each man's exasperating ego, Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King combined studied patience, street-fighter tactics, and nimble counsel to work together to build the modern United States Navy and win World War II. With the narrative gusto and incisive research for which he is acclaimed, Walter R. Borneman takes us inside the lives and battles of these remarkable commanders and paints an unmatched picture of strategy, fortitude, and valor.

WALTER R. BORNEMAN is the author of several books about American history, including *1812: The War That Forged a Nation*, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America*, *Polk: The Man Who Transformed the Presidency and America*, and *Rival Rails: The Race to Build America's Greatest Transcontinental Railroad*. He lives in Colorado.



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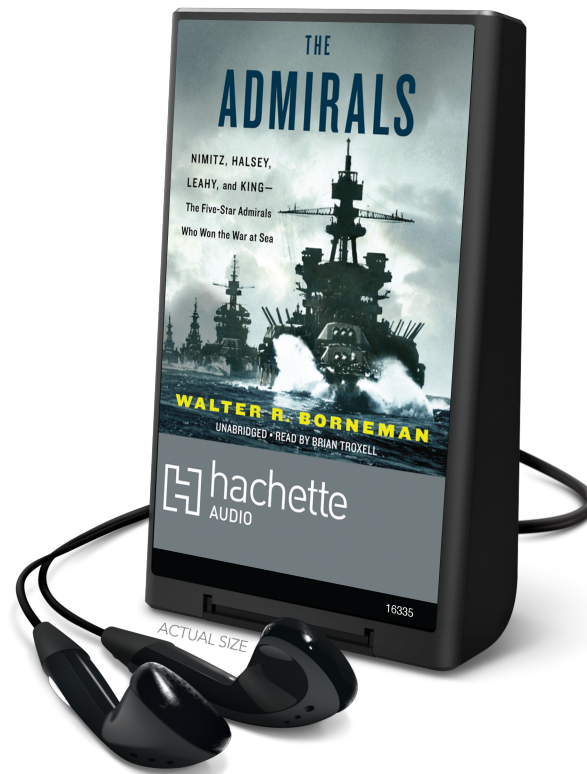
NIMITZ, HALSEY, LEAHY, and KING—  
The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea

WALTER R. BORNEMAN



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