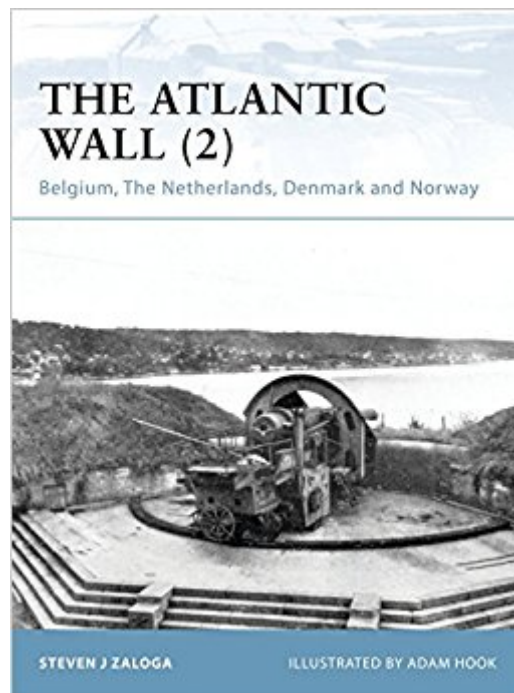




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# **The Atlantic Wall (2): Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark And Norway (Fortress)**



## Synopsis

Germany's Atlantic Wall was the most ambitious military fortification program of World War II. Following its conquest of Western Europe, Germany had to defend some 5,000 kilometers of Atlantic coastline from the Spanish border to the Arctic Circle. The United States' entry into the war and the inevitability of an Anglo-American landing in Western Europe resulted in the fortification of this coastline along its entire length. Focusing on the northern Atlantic Wall in the Low Countries and Scandinavia, this title addresses the special defensive features and unique aspects of fortification in these countries, such as the early focus on fortifying Norway, due to early British commando raids; the greater use of turreted naval guns; and the establishment of first-line Flak defenses in the Low Countries to counter the Allied strategic bombing campaign.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“...a clear and interesting work, in a field where too little of the source materials is in English.

It is unreservedly recommended to anyone with an interest in World War 2 Coastal

defense.” —[Bolling Smith](#), *Coast Defense Journal* (March

2010) “Other recommendations for specialty military history collections include... Steven

Zaloga's *The Atlantic Wall* (2), covering Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway as it

surveys Germany's ambitious Atlantic Wall program of World War II.” —[The](#)

*Bookwatch* (January 2010) “Author Steven J. Zaloga takes us through the planning, design

and implementation of these defenses while giving us a look at what it was like to live with these

structures. The illustrations of Adam Hook allow us to have a look inside many of the different defenses and see how they were designed to work and complement each other. Thankfully, many of the massive and even smaller defense positions are still extant and the book has a considerable number of period and current photos of these sites. There is even a section on visiting these places, many of which are easily accessible and part of museums and memorials. In all a fascinating look at some of the more interesting defensive structures of WWII. A book that you are sure to enjoy.

—• —â ¢Scott Van Aken, Modeling Madness, [www.modelingmadness.com](http://www.modelingmadness.com)  
(February 2010)

Steven J. Zaloga received his BA in history from Union College and his MA from Columbia University. He has worked as an analyst in the aerospace industry for over two decades, covering missile systems and the international arms trade, and has served with the Institute for Defense Analyses, a federal think-tank. He is the author of numerous books on military technology and military history, with an accent on the US Army in World War II as well as Russia and the former Soviet Union. The author lives in Abingdon, Maryland.

Had valuable information which allowed me to determine the location of the fortifications.

Osprey books are always well done.

good

The Atlantic Wall (2) is the second volume in Steven J Zaloga's in-depth look at the coastal fortifications Germany built along its Atlantic seaboard in the Second World War. As in the previous volume, Zaloga provides a wealth of information in a limited space about the topic and it is particularly rewarding since the geographic area covered - Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway - is outside the norm for books on the Atlantic Wall. However, while the previous volume only covered German fortifications in France, this one has to cover four countries and this proves rather difficult in a 64-page format. In order to assist in packing in information, the author employs fourteen data tables, which succeeds in delivering useful information, but reduces the readability of the volume. Overall, the Atlantic Wall (2) is a must-have for serious historians or WW2 aficionados, but it lacks the readability for general audiences that the first volume possessed. The volume begins with a 19-page section on design and development that follows from material discussed in the

previous volume about Hitler's Atlantic Wall program. In short, the bulk of German resources for coastal fortification went toward France, but Hitler wanted at least the major ports in Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway fortified enough to prevent an easy Allied landing. This section includes one table that compares bunker construction along the various sectors of the Atlantic Wall and a map showing the artillery batteries in Belgium in Holland. This section includes a bewildering array of sub-topics, including how the Germans designated coastal defenses sectors, coastal artillery weapons, fire control radars, controlled minefields, Kriegsmarine coastal commando units and rocket-propelled depth charges (that was a first for me). Although this is all very good material, it is not packaged very well and seems to jump rapidly from one unassociated topic to the next. Furthermore, some of the material is covered in other Osprey volumes; for example, the section on the Kriegsmarine special units is very similar to the new volume on German Special Forces (this is not the author's fault, but Osprey's, which should have deconflicted this to avoid duplication). The next section, A Tour of the Sites, is 27-pages long but has barely 8 pages of text because it is crammed with 13 tables. The data in these tables is very interesting for specialist readers, but it will probably induce death-by-statistics for general readers. The section also contains a map of Atlantic Wall defenses in Norway and Denmark. The final 7-page section covers the sites in combat, which focuses on the defense of the Scheldt Estuary in October-November 1944. The author assesses that the minor battery MAA.202, which was armed with British anti-aircraft guns captured at Dunkirk, may have been the most destructive Atlantic Wall fortification in these four countries, since it did inflict serious losses on British landing forces. The volume concludes with brief notes on the sites today and a useful bibliography. Graphically, this volume is very good, with superb B/W period photos (many unusual ones), as well as color photos of the sites today. The eight color plates are also excellent, including Batterie Fjell in Norway (the 11-inch gun turret from the battlecruiser Gneisenau) and the 16-inch gun turret at Batterie Trondenes in Norway. This volume has covered a topic that has almost always been neglected in favor of coverage of the Atlantic Wall in France and the author has covered it well. Indeed, this volume is a bonanza of fresh information. However, there was just too much information to cram into this tight format and the result is a volume that lacks readability or appeal for a wider audience.

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