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0521531209 - The Baltic and the Outbreak of the Second World War

Edited by John Hiden and Thomas Lane

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This book is the first to highlight the importance of the Baltic region in the approach to war in 1939. Amid the welter of publications on the origins of the Second World War none has sought hitherto to focus on the Baltic region, where peace finally and irrevocably broke down. Central strategic and international issues of the interwar years are thus illuminated from a fresh perspective by a distinguished team of specialists that includes a number of native Baltic historians.

The themes discussed by the contributors have recently acquired renewed relevance, as the Baltic republics have asserted their rejection of the incorporation within the Soviet Union following the Nazi–Soviet pact of 1939. *The Baltic and the outbreak of the Second World War* will make an important contribution to the perennial debate on the immediate causes of the conflict, and should interest specialists in a variety of fields within international relations, modern European and diplomatic history.

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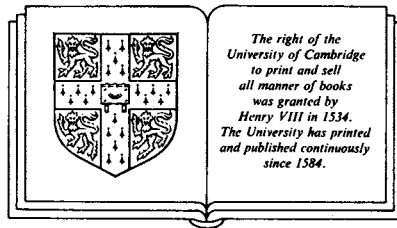
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THE BALTIC AND THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

EDITED BY

JOHN HIDEN AND THOMAS LANE

Department of European Studies, University of Bradford



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For Juliet and Jean

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Notes on contributors

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Mieczyslaw Nurek is a member of the Historical Institute at the University of Gdańsk, Poland. He has written *Poland in British Foreign Policy 1936–1941* (Warsaw, 1983) and on the policy of Great Britain in the Baltic Sea region between 1935 and 1939.

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Preface

The origins of this book lie in a conference held at the University of Bradford in March 1990 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War. Originally scheduled for September 1989, the conference was unavoidably delayed, happily with no adverse effects on interest and attendance. The success of the meeting encouraged the editors to believe that the papers might be of interest to a wider audience. We are grateful to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press for concurring with this opinion and agreeing to publish this volume.

Five of the following chapters (by Hiden, Prażmowska, Ahmann, Salmon, and Lane) were originally presented as lectures at the Bradford conference. They have subsequently been expanded and revised. Two of the remaining three contributions were to have been conference papers but unavoidable difficulties prevented their authors travelling from Eastern Europe. We are delighted that their papers will now make a belated appearance, also in revised and expanded form.

The Bradford conference was organised by the Baltic Research Unit at Bradford University. The unit has developed close relations with academic and government representatives in the three Baltic republics and Poland. The editors have thus been able to draw upon the ideas and discussions currently underway amongst the emerging generation of historians in the Baltic region.

The editors wish to thank Richard Fisher of Cambridge University Press for his prompt encouragement of our proposal to publish and his sound advice. We are indebted to Pat Wilson for sterling work at the word processor and to our families for their customary encouragement and forbearance.

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