

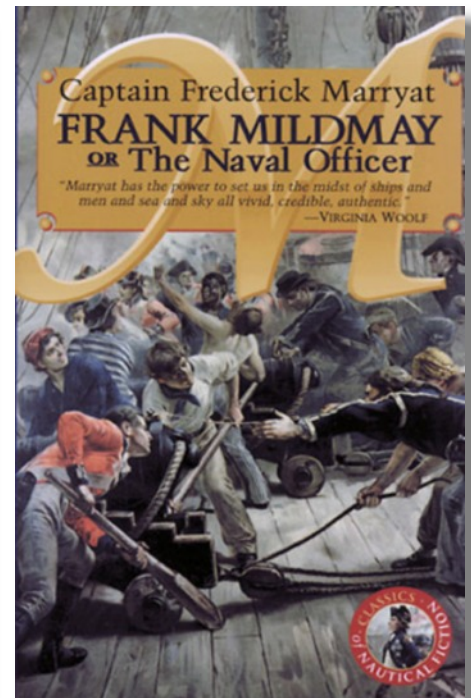
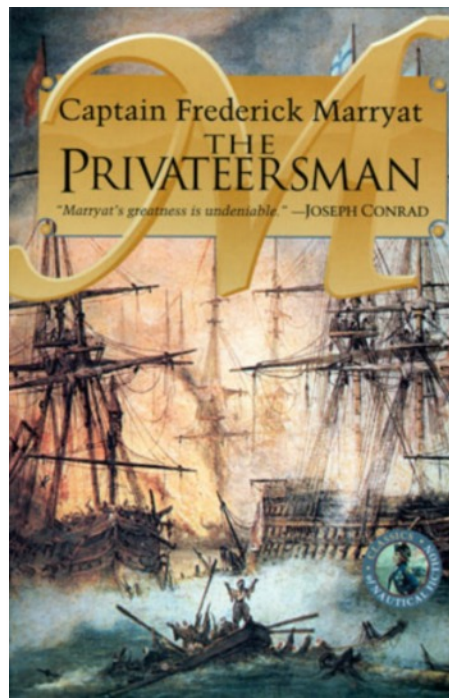
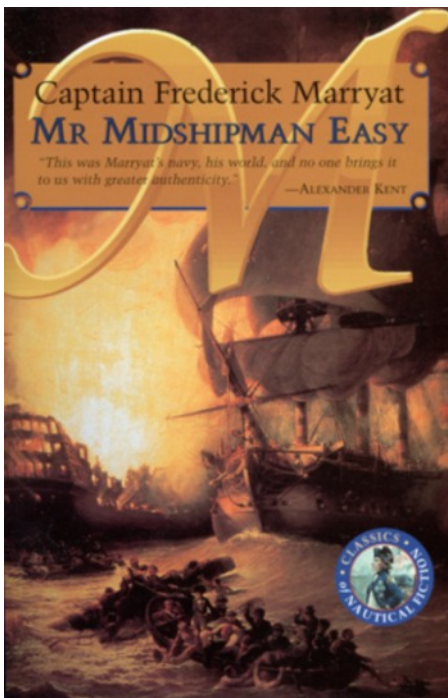
# QUARTERDECK

★ MARITIME LITERATURE & ART REVIEW ★

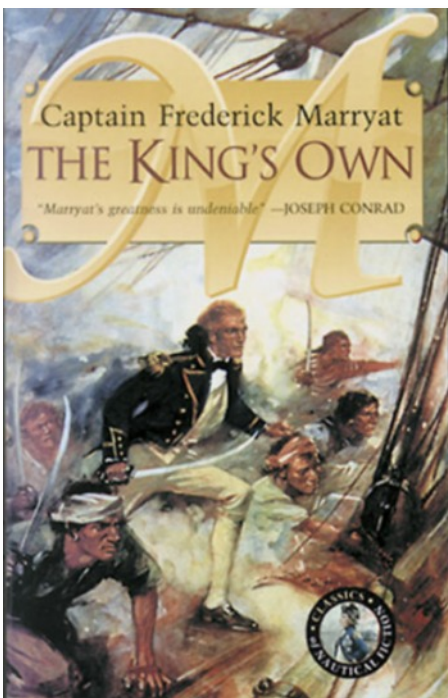


WINTER 2021





# CAPTAIN FREDERICK MARRYAT

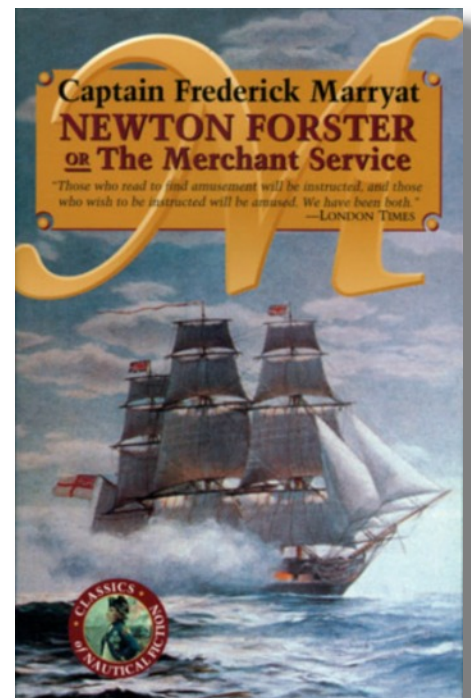


*"This was Marryat's navy, his world, and no one brings it to us with greater authenticity."*

— ALEXANDER KENT

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★ **QUARTERDECK** ★  
MARITIME LITERATURE & ART  
REVIEW



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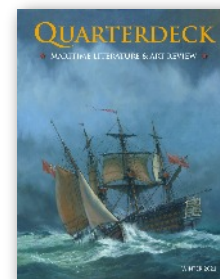
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On the cover: "Kydd,"  
an oil painting by English  
marine artist Geoffrey Huband  
commissioned for the cover of the book  
by the same title by Julian Stockwin.  
© Geoffrey Huband

© Tall Ships Communications



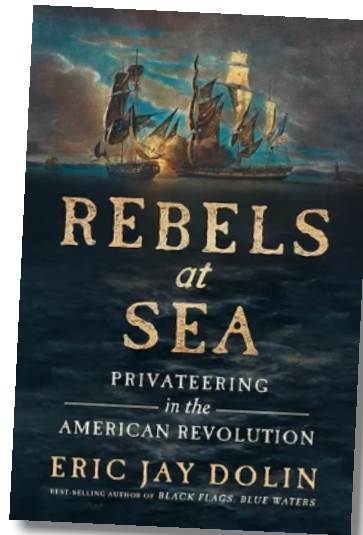


## Eric Jay Dolin

Best-selling historian Eric Jay Dolin reclaims the daring freelance sailors who proved essential to winning the Revolutionary War in his new book, *Rebels at Sea*, scheduled for launch by W. W. Norton on May 31.

The heroic story of the founding of the US Navy during the Revolution has been told before, yet often missing is the ragtag fleet of private vessels, from 20-foot whaleboats to 40-cannon men-of-war, that genuinely revealed the new nation's character – above all, its ambition and entrepreneurial ethos.

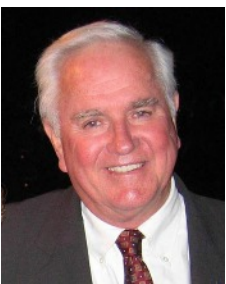
Dolin corrects that significant omis-



sion and contends that privateers, often seen as profiteers at best and pirates at worst, were, in fact, critical to the Revolution's outcome.

Armed with cannons, swivel guns, muskets, and pikes -- as well letters of marque granting them the right to seize enemy ships -- thousands of privateers tormented the British on the broad Atlantic and in bays and harbors on both sides of the ocean.

## John J. Gobbell

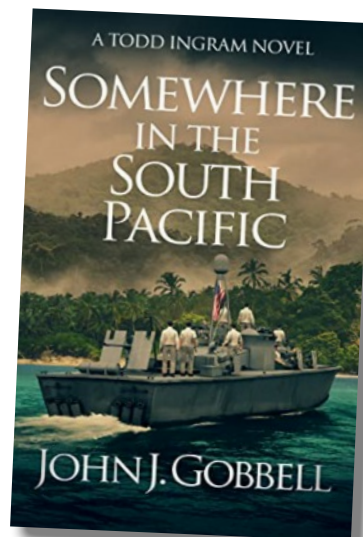


John J. Gobbell returns to World War II with his new novel, *Somewhere in the South Pacific*, which Severn River Publishing

will launch in June.

After surviving a near-suicidal mission on Mondo Mondo Island, Lieutenant Commander Todd Ingram is sent back to the States on a thirty-day leave – but the war waits for no one, and trouble is already rippling through the Pacific Theater.

Fresh from Stateside training, Lieutenant JG John Kennedy takes command of the PT 109, a torpedo boat



in desperate need of repairs, for the upcoming mission to retake the Western Solomon Islands. But the war isn't the only thing on Kennedy's mind: he's torn between his family's expectations and his forbidden love.

## BOOK LAUNCHES 2022

US (United States)  
UK (United Kingdom)  
HB (Hardback)  
PB (Paperback)  
TPB (Trade Paperback)  
EB (Ebook)

### MARCH

*Every Second Counts* (USHB/UKHB)  
by David Donachie

### APRIL

*Code of Honor* (USHB)  
by Robert Macomber

*A Shot Rolling Ship* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

*An Awkward Commission* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

*A Flag of Truce* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

### MAY

*Captain Hale's Covenant* (USHB/UKHB)  
by Thomas E. Crocker

*Rebels at Sea* (USHB)  
by Eric J. Dolin

*The Admiral's Game* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

*An Ill Wind* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

*Blown Off Course* (USTPB)  
by David Donachie

*Boat Troop* (USTPB)  
by Johnny "Two Combs" Howard

*Direct Action* (USTPB)  
by Johnny "Two Combs" Howard

### JUNE

*Somewhere in the South Pacific* (USHB)  
by John J. Gobbell



# Geoffrey Huband

A marine artist's journey through life's events

*"Douglas always said he believed it was 'fate' . . ."*

— Geoffrey Huband, RSMA

**RIGHT** Geoffrey Huband, who lives and works on the Cornish coast in England, is a Member of the Royal Society of Marine Artists.

**BELOW** Detail from Huband's preliminary sketch for his painting "With All Despatch," for Alexander Kent's Richard Bolitho novel of the same name.

**O**N A BRILLIANT AFTERNOON nearly twenty years ago, I found myself strapped into a vintage Jaguar, racing along a narrow leafy lane in Cornwall, with English marine artist Geoffrey Huband behind the wheel.

Looking back now, it could have been a scene from a 1930's black-and-white British film. Our destination was Falmouth, overlooking Carrick Roads on the ruggedly beautiful Channel Coast.

Years earlier, I had discovered the Richard Bolitho novels by Alexander Kent, the pen name for English novelist Douglas Reeman, in a local book shop. The stories memorialized the Georgian seaport and Bolitho's family seat.

As we sped along, I wondered whether seeing Falmouth or, more specifically, Bolitho's world, for the first time, would live up to scenes from the books as I imagined them.

By this time, Geoffrey had been creating evocative paintings for the covers of the Kent novels and Douglas's novels writ-



Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Huband, RSMA.

ten under his own name.

Over the years that Amy and I have visited England, in my mind, I have viewed sites, particularly those related to maritime Britain, through a historical lens, seeing them as they would have appeared in other eras and words written by authors.

Falmouth didn't disappoint.

As Geoffrey and I explored the town on foot, we paused at the wall beside the Church of King Charles the Martyr, where in the Kent novels, Bolithos had been celebrated for generations, including Richard after his death in *Sword of Honour*.

At the top of the road running along the churchyard wall, I imagined the Bolitho home standing, with "its square, uncompromising shape" and "familiar grey stone-work," a vivid image retained from the ➤







© Geoffrey Huband, RSMA.

books.

Douglas once told me, “The Bolitho house isn’t really in Falmouth. I just saw it one day, and I knew it was Bolitho’s house. It was in the wrong place, so I had to move it from its real location in a peaceful rural hamlet in deepest Cornwall, not far from the King Harry ferry.”

Nevertheless, on that sunny afternoon with Geoffrey, I “saw” the “big grey house” in Falmouth. And there was more to see that would have changed little since Bolitho’s time in the late 1700’s and early 1800’s.

Climbing along the headland jutting into the Channel, Pendennis Castle, constructed between 1540 and 1542 during Henry VIII’s reign, stood watch as it had for centuries. Across Carrick Roads’ dazzling blue waters on the Roseland Peninsula, St Mawes Castle was visible. The two artillery fortresses were built at the same time to protect the town and its surrounding waters from marauders.

**ABOVE** “With All Despatch” by Geoffrey Huband, RSMA. The painting was created for the cover of the Richard Bolitho title of the same name. The painting exemplifies the dramatic movement Huband brings to his work.

**BELOW** Detail from Huband’s preliminary sketch for his painting “To Glory We Steer,” for the Bolitho novel of the same name.



© Geoffrey Huband, RSMA.

Life can be a series of events for which we have no control and often lead from one to another over time. That Geoffrey and I were together in Falmouth was the result of one such event that had occurred many years earlier.

In 1985, Douglas and Kim Reeman were on holiday in Cornwall. Wandering through Mousehole, a small picturesque fishing village on the Channel, Kim admired a watercolor portraying a British frigate and cutter hove to and “speaking” that hung in a gallery window.

During a recent phone conversation from her home outside London, she recalled the day and the moment.

“I asked Douglas if this was good. And he said to me in this tense, quiet voice, ‘It’s good, very good.’ So I bought it for him.”

Geoffrey Huband was the artist.

Soon after, he received a letter from Douglas inquiring whether he would consider creating cover art for the Bolitho novels.

“Total astonishment,” said Geoffrey when asked about his initial reaction to the letter. “He was the author I admired most and read avidly. The lady who looked after the gallery sold the picture to Kim, so I knew nothing until Douglas wrote to me. Douglas always said he believed it was ‘fate’ that our paths crossed.”

The first painting commissioned by Douglas’s publishers was for *Honour This Day*, followed by *With All Despatch*, still one of my favorites, with two topsail cutters racing downwind engaging a French warship.

Over many years, every Alexander Kent title, in various editions, has featured Geoffrey’s paintings. ➤

Enervating scenes depict ships with taut sails driving through windswept seas, Jack Tars and marines in action on decks and in the rigging, flags and pennants flying, and cannon-fire erupting. More serene scenes captured men of war at anchor, with ship's boats pulled by oarsmen moving through anchorages. Geoffrey's work also appears on the novels published under Douglas's own name.

Our connection, leading to the Falmouth outing, unfolded from that fateful day in Mousehole.

In the early 2000's, Amy and I were at the helm of Tall Ships Books, specializing in naval fiction and history titles from the Age of Fighting Sail, including the *Times of London* bestselling Richard Bolitho novels.

During a conversation with Douglas in 2002, I mentioned that Geoffrey's paintings would make appealing fine-art prints. At his suggestion, I picked up the phone and rang Geoffrey at his home on Mount's Bay in Cornwall, with a proposal to publish fine-art prints featuring his work.

Over long-distance conversations, we put together a plan to produce high-quality prints and The Bolitho Collection was born, with two offering of three images each. Over two summers, Geoffrey visited us at our home in the rural rolling hills of eastern Iowa to sign and number them.

Subsequently, Amy and I traveled to Cornwall to visit Geoffrey and his wife Jacqueline and their daughter Sophie. It was during this stay that we made our journey to Falmouth, made possible by an event over a decade earlier outside a small gallery in Mousehole.

In late 2019, a few months before the worldwide pandemic, we finally met Christian Huband, Geoffrey and Jacqui's son, and his partner, Libby Watson. Christian works as a production designer in feature films. Among his credits are Justice League, Fantastic Beasts, In the Heart of the Sea,

© Geoffrey Huband, RSM/A.



**ABOVE** Geoffrey Huband completed a detailed preliminary sketch for his painting for the cover of the new McBooks Press edition of *Kydd*. The finished painting graces the cover of this issue of *Quarterdeck*.

and Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. Libby is a theatre designer in London.

Creative arts are indeed a family affair.

The thread from Mousehole to the present continues. In autumn 2022, McBooks Press will launch new editions of Julian Stockwin's Thomas Kydd naval adventures, with bespoke cover art from Geoffrey's easel, starting with *Kydd*.

Geoffrey's dramatic preliminary sketch for Kydd (above) illustrates an early passage in the book, as the young wigmaker, and other unfortunates caught by the press gang, approach the 98-gun Duke William in heaving seas. The final art appears on the cover of this issue of *Quarterdeck*.

"I am honoured that Geoffrey Huband has been commissioned to provide original artwork for the new McBooks covers for the Kydd series," said Julian Stockwin. "Geoffrey is a truly gifted marine artist whose atmospheric work captures the vivid reality of life at sea."

So, life's simple events matter. ■

— George Jepson



Detail from the Battle of the 1st of June by English marine artist Thomas Whitcombe (1763 - 1824) as found in *The Naval Achievements of Great Britain, From the Year 1793 to 1817* by James Jenkins.



# Sim Comfort

## A Yank's Passion for British Naval History

**A** HALF CENTURY AGO, Sim Comfort embarked on his life's voyage from America's heartland to London and, over time, a profound passion for the British Royal Navy during the Age of Fighting Sail. Comfort's initial introduction to Britain's rich naval history was a biography of Horatio Nelson. Then, a visit to the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich ignited a fervor for the Royal Navy's bountiful heritage that still burns today. ➤



Photo courtesy of Sim Comfort.

Sim Comfort



Settling in Wimbledon with his English bride, Mary, in the 1970's, Comfort frequented auctions in London, gradually building an impressive collection of swords, medals, coins, paintings, books and a myriad of naval items, while learning more about British naval history.

Julian Stockwin, author of the Thomas Kydd naval adventures, recalled that he "found it very hard to disengage from the delights in Sim's study," during a visit with his wife Kathy.

In 1974, Sim and Mary Comfort launched Sim Comfort Associates (SCA), a small specialty publishing house, to produce fine limited editions focusing on fighting sail. Their objective was to produce books "which will challenge the original in terms of craftsmanship and style" that would "last as long as the original copies."

SCA titles include: *The Elements and Practice of Naval Architecture* by David Steel, originally published in 1805; *The Elements and Practice of Rigging and Seamanship* by David Steel, published in 1794; and *The Naval Achievements of Great Britain, From the Year 1793 to 1817* by James Jenkins, first published in 1817.

In addition to producing the reprint editions, Comfort has authored *Forget Me Not, A Study of Naval and Maritime Engraved Coins and Plate (1745 to 1918)* and *Naval Swords & Dirks*, a two-volume boxed set about historic naval edged weapons.

In the wake of *Naval Swords & Dirks*, Comfort released *Lord Nelson's Swords*, a companion volume. These books are lavishly illustrated, with the histories behind various weapons offered in great detail.

Comfort's beautifully hand-bound editions, though pricey, are true collectibles, produced with the highest quality paper, color transfers, binding and images. Such excellence in



Photo by Kathy Stockwin.

Julian Stockwin admires an unknown Royal Navy lieutenant's bicorne hat circa 1812 - 1825 in Sim Comfort's collection.

*"When I visited Manchester for the first time, I felt really at home. . ."*

publishing only exists in specialty houses like Comfort's these days.

*Quarterdeck* recently caught up with Sim Comfort to reprise and update an interview we did with him a decade ago, where we learned about the course that took him from Missouri to England and a life steeped in Nelson's Royal Navy.

— George Jepson

*London is a long way from Missouri in America's heartland, not only geographically, but culturally, as well. Tell us about your journey and your transition to life in England.*

Well, yes, Missouri is a long way from England, but culturally there is much shared. My family was fairly Southern in their ways, so I grew up in a big white house with columns in front and Waterford crystal, Royal Dalton china, and Wedgewood figures decorating the

dining and living room. When one looks at the blade of the Confederate naval officers' sword made in Birmingham, England, [there] are bales of cotton and sheaths of tobacco, the two primary exports of the South. And it all went to England, particularly Manchester, which was known as Cotton King. When I visited Manchester for the first time, I felt really at home because the warehouses were just like those on the St. Louis levee, tall, three or four stories in red brick with tall windows.

I guess the other thing is that with the family name of Comfort, my ancestors were English and Presbyterians. After the Stuart Restoration in the mid-1600's was a very good time for Presbyterians to leave the country and seek a new life in America, which I'm pretty sure my family did. So lots of links with England, and I never felt really out of place, although I have ➤

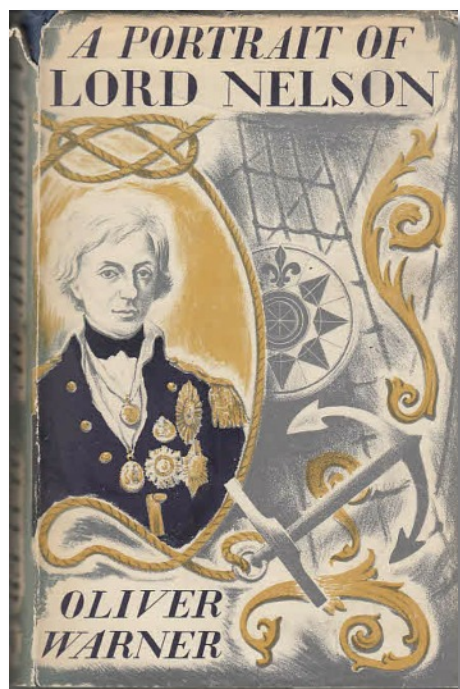
always remained a Yank; it's a lot more fun being a Yank in England than a morphed Englishman!

You have produced some of the most beautiful and high-quality volumes on naval history during the Age of Fighting Sail, emphasizing the British Royal Navy. What was the origin of your passion for things naval?

I think it was C. S. Forester's Hornblower books which caught my imagination. As I finished Webster Groves high school in 1960, the future loomed before me and I knew I didn't want to go to college, I wanted adventure and go to sea, although I'd never seen the sea. Anyway, I joined the United States Navy on my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and have to say, the navy really gave me just what I needed, although they never put me on board a ship. I was in the Naval Security Group and the navy just flew me from place to place.

I spent a year on Guam Island in operations, and while there, read all of the Hornblower stories. Fate dealt me a wonderful card. My shipmate had been transferred to the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington but couldn't take his bowling ball with him. So I packed and shipped it to him. He telexed me with a "thank you" and asked whether he could do anything for me. Jokingly, I replied, "Orders to London, please," and they came in two weeks later. What a wonderful thing to have happened.

In London, I was a librarian of codes and ciphers and didn't stand watches. So I enrolled in evening classes to study English history and literature. This grew into a full year of study in England after my discharge from the USN in 1964, all in the hope of matriculating to King's College,



University of London. But I failed all of the tests and had to return to St. Louis beaten. My failure was probably worth a bachelor's degree from an American university at the time because the English taught me how to



British Sea Service Pistol  
© Sim Comfort Associates

write and how to think. Everything was essay, essay, and more essays.

So, you returned to the United States? When and why did you return to England?

Having returned to St Louis, I took up classes at the local community college and worked door to door selling Fuller Brushes. If you ever want to learn how to become a salesman, then the Fuller Brush company certainly offers that opportunity. Hard work and I never made much money, but I learned a lot

which stood me well in the future.

During this time, I persuaded my English girlfriend Mary to come to Missouri, and we were married in 1967 with the proviso that we would return to England. And that we certainly did in February 1968.

You have read deeply into naval history set during the Nelson era. Do you also read naval fiction about the period? Who are your favorite authors?

I mentioned Forester, who remains a favorite, but his characters can be a bit thin. In particular, the first two volumes of Julian Stockwin's Kydd novels are the finest depiction of life on the lower deck I have ever read. And being lower deck myself, I was really in tune with Thomas Kydd's plight.

Smitten by the rich British naval heritage, how did you initially pursue your interest?

I can tell you exactly how it started and what happened next. I took the English GCE (General Certificate of Education) A-level courses in English history and literature at Northwestern Polytechnic in Kentish Town in 1965. The GCE qualification was necessary to gain entry to university. Anyway, this school built in the nineteenth century hadn't changed its heating. So my first years in England, I just froze every winter. It was break time, and I was in the canteen with other students drinking probably the worst coffee ever brewed, and I asked them, "Who is England's national hero?" I was expecting the answer to be some King or Queen, but it was Admiral Lord Nelson. I had heard of him but didn't know anything about him, so I bought Oliver Warner's *A Portrait of Lord Nelson*, and the rest is history! ➤



He was larger than life, highly skilled, and became a post-captain at just twenty-one years of age in 1779 and this was a time where fine officers would spend most of their lives trying to attain that rank. He had only one mode, to attack, and it served him well as he was also fortunate to communicate what he wanted to happen from his fellow officers. And there was a great romance behind the man and his relationship with Emma, Lady Hamilton. His life contained everything one would wish to read about during the period of the long French wars.

Having found Nelson, my next great find was the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Here were Philip Annis and John Munday, who looked after the museum's edged weapons, and they were very kind toward the kid from Missouri. I remember once walking down the long History Gallery with them, and they would stop in front of a portrait of an important naval hero of the Georgian period and talk about his life just as if they had had lunch with him a few days ago. Such a rich naval history Britain has, that once you start, you continue and as you meet more and more of these remarkable seamen, you became more familiar with not just the war at sea, but the whole of the age. Not boring and has served many authors very well during the last hundred years or so.

#### How did you begin collecting naval artifacts and books?

I can remember walking down Edgeware Road in London on my way to the Navy Building in Grosvenor Square and passing a shop that sold arms and armor. In the window was a double-disc cutlass, and I knew this was the seaman's edged weapon during



Maggs Bros. Ltd, antiquarian booksellers by appointment to the Queen, in Berkeley Square, London, where Sim Comfort learned about Royal Navy literature.

the Hornblower period, so I bought it. Then this was followed by finding Maggs Brothers in Berkeley Square and Mr. John Maggs spending time with me by guiding my reading about the Royal Navy. Then the auction houses, which were like a museum when offering a good collection. The difference was that you could pick up the objects and learn from them and if they weren't too expensive, actually buy them!



British Naval Cutlass  
© Sim Comfort Associates

What was wonderful about this whole adventure was that I found more objects, pictures, and weapons related to naval officers and men of this period as I read more. Everything related to each other and helped to tell the story.

#### What motivated you to enter the book trade as a publisher of high-end volumes? What was your first venture?

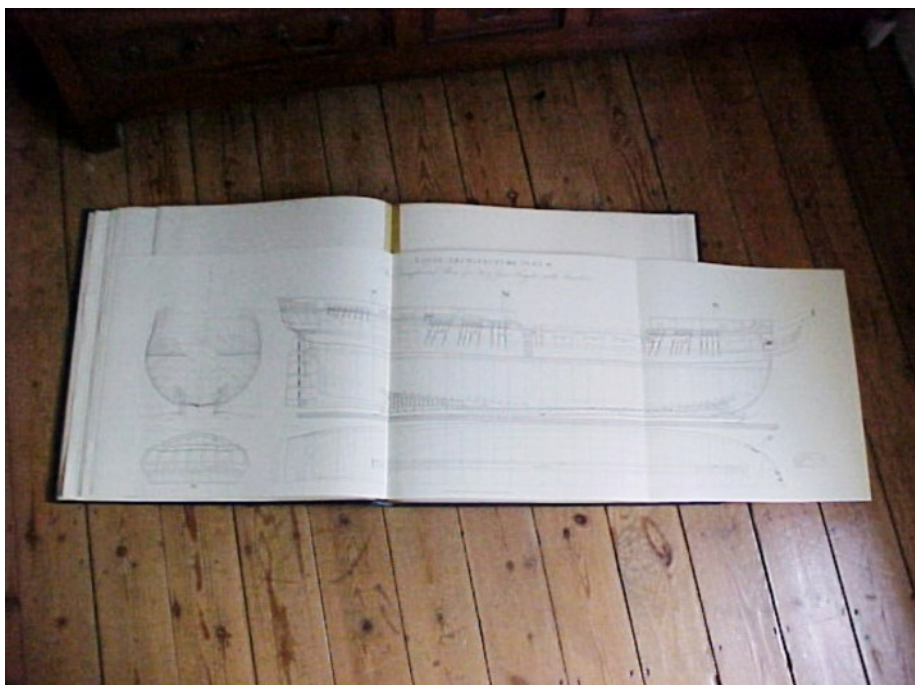
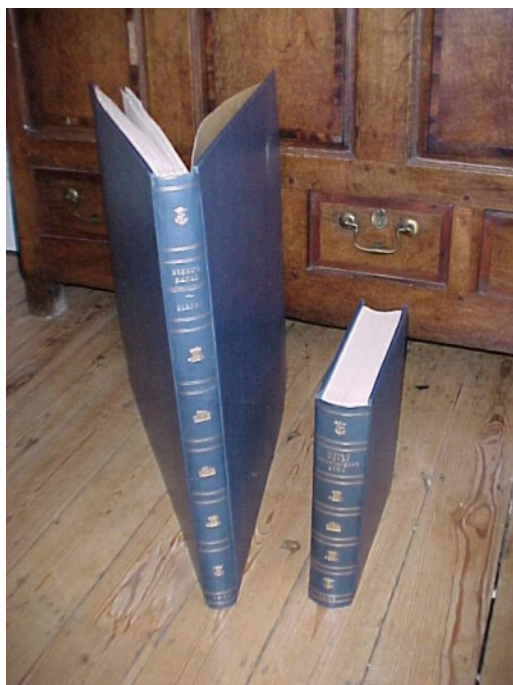
It really had to do with tax and my

family background. My grandfather founded Comfort Printing Company in St. Louis, and I used to work at the printing company during the summer. Have to tell you it was HOT! Big Heidelberg presses on a steel deck, and in the press room in July in St. Louis, I would guess the temperature was 120 degrees Fahrenheit. No air conditioning. So, I guess there is ink in my blood.

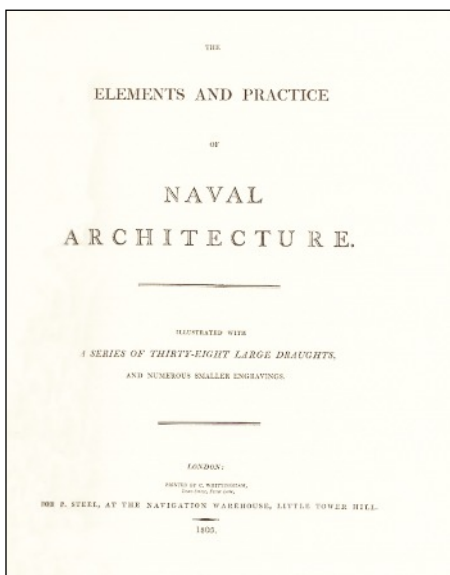
In the mid-1970's, I started to make serious money as a computer salesman in England, but the tax rate was seventy or eighty percent, and I was having trouble just making ends meet.

So I had an idea to produce *The Elements and Practice of Naval Architecture* by David Steel, published in 1805. I had managed to buy an original from Maggs, and I knew this work, if reprinted, would stand alone because nobody would ever try to reprint the elephant folio of 38 large ships' draughts.

I found an accountant who agreed that I could expense total production costs in the year of production, so instead of paying a lot of tax, I published my first book, with Her Majesty ➤



Photos © Sim Comfort Associates.



**ABOVE LEFT** *The Elements and Practice of Naval Architecture* by David Steel, originally published in 1805, comprises of two volumes bound in Blue Buckram with gilt title and devices housed in two green card cases, one of text and the other an elephant sized folio of ship draughts.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The draught of an Indiaman from the set's folio.

**LEFT** The title page for *The Elements and Practice of Naval Architecture*

Tell me about *Naval Achievements* by James Jenkins. How did you select this work?

Jenkins is really special, a wonderful book with the 55 Whitcombe color aquatints depicting single ship and fleet actions, and accompanying each plate is the dispatch letter from the victorious commander. Undoubtedly the finest contemporary color plate book from the Age of Fighting Sail. I bought a first edition subscription copy with the two additional portrait plates from Maggs and tried proofing some of the plates on a couple of occasions, but they always came up looking flat. Then it came to 1998, and I had sold the computer brokerage company, so I had an excess of cash.

It was the bicentennial of the Battle of the Nile, and I wanted to do something to commemorate Nelson's finest victory. I ran into Highway Pennington, who were possibly the finest color printers in England. They used stochastic/microdot technology for color printing, eliminating the traditional printer's screen and ➤

making a significant financial contribution! John Maggs helped me learn how to price a reprint (no more than 10 percent of the value of the original edition) and how to pack books properly. We have sold *Naval Architecture* worldwide, and our customers, mainly ship model makers, have all praised it because David Steel takes you by the hand and shows you exactly how to build the great wooden ships of the period.

How do you select the topics for your

books?

Everything has to relate to the same central theme, Fighting Sail 1793 – 1815. Very limited scope, but there has been enough to make the effort a success.

Was *Steel's Rigging & Seamanship* a natural follow-on from *Naval Architecture*?

Yes, it was the obvious thing to do, and with that, model makers have found exactly what they wanted regarding the fighting ships during the Age of Sail.



creating images with continuous color flow. To match the original Whatman paper used by Jenkins in 1816, I ordered Mohawk Superfine 148gsm from the States, but there was a problem. The ink would sink into the Mohawk paper and blur when printing the microdot color image. Disaster! It took two apprentices at Highways to go back to the original Jenkins plates, and it was apparent he had the same problem because he laid India paper down on the printing surface to act as a key for the aquatint plate. The apprentices didn't use India paper but printed a pale, thin white rectangle for each plate to act as a key and then printed color on top of that. Absolutely brilliant result!

*Naval Swords & Dirks* and your companion volume *Lord Nelson's Swords* are stunning displays of vivid photographs, illustrations, and prose. So how did you research these books?

Another mentor of mine has been the great American arms dealer, Norm Flayderman. Norm would build the best collection of something, then write the book about it and then sell the collection. The book was invariably the best on the subject because Norm's collection was the best. His *Scrimshaw and Scrimshanders: Whales and Whalemen* still stands as the number one reference on the subject. So I did the same thing, except I haven't sold the collections because I'm not a dealer. Nevertheless, I continue to enjoy these wonderful things.



My usual rule is to research an object after I've bought it. I know it should be the other way around, but if it looked like there is a good sea story behind it, I bought it, and if it ended up being a fake, I recorded it and got rid of it. However, this didn't happen very often, and my eye for objects has



**LEFT** The two-volume *Naval Swords & Dirks* package. **ABOVE** Lord Nelson's Swords. **BELOW LEFT** The hilt of the Duke of Clarence presentation sword by Samuel Brunn and attributed to Earl St. Vincent, as shown in volume one of *Naval Swords & Dirks*.

improved with time, and I have found wonderful things, particularly swords with a great story to tell. I use Gillian Hughes as my researcher at the National Archive in Kew, which keeps logbooks and pay books for the Royal Navy. It is just incredible what one can find amongst them.

*Lord Nelson's Swords* was different because it wasn't so much as drawing on new material, but more an exercise in joining up the dots and making the conclusions. Everything was out there, but nobody had brought the information together. It was a thrill to have done so with Graham Hunt, who I worked with on the book. With the book's publication in 2014, out went the call to anyone who had an oval side ring sword, identified through the Nelson portraits as Nelson's fighting sword, to contact the author. Seven years have passed, and more information has come forward that has fixed on this sword as Lord Nelson's fighting sword. Another wonderful result. ➤

Photos © Sim Comfort Associates.

The sword is now with the National Royal Navy Museum, Portsmouth.

Tell me about *Matthew Boulton's Naval Medals*.

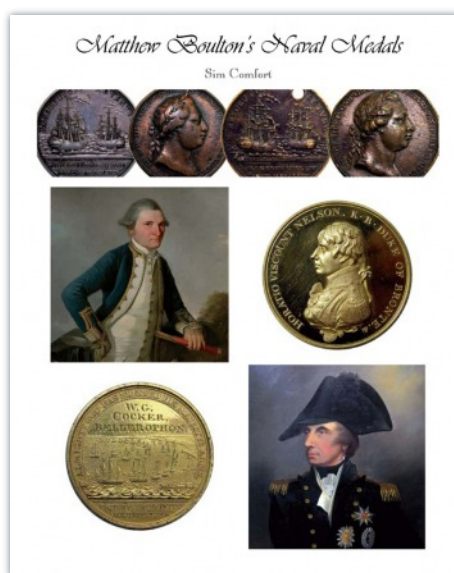
*Matthew Boulton's Naval Medals*. Again a very limited subject. Boulton made the Resolution and Adventure medal used by Captain Cook on his second voyage and presented to "such newly discovered peoples." He also struck the Davison Nile medal, commissioned by Alexander Davison, Nelson's close friend and prize agent for the Nile fleet. Lastly, his own Boulton's Trafalgar Medal went to all those before the mast that fought at Trafalgar. It's just the most wonderful collection of medals and sea stories related to the men who were there.

Unfortunately, Mary passed away in 2012, and for this book, my new wife Nikki acted as my sounding board for ideas and contributed a fair amount with her input.

Once you begin work on a project, do you have a specific model you follow?

Yes and no. I'm working with collections with objects already researched, so it is just a matter of deciding how to catalog/present them. For example, if the object is Royal Navy and I know the man to whom it belonged and his ship, I would tell the man's story, ship, and what happened when it was used or made.

Other than that, I have to be inspired to get on with writing. I don't suffer from writer's block. But other things are going on in my life, and sometimes writing has to take the back burner, but things tend to move along once I get going. Next comes editing both by myself and outside editors, to whom I am always most thankful as they help me focus on telling the story and picking up my less than perfect



**ABOVE** Sim Comfort presenting on his YouTube channel.

**LEFT** The cover for *Matthew Boulton's Naval Medals*.

they were one.

What has been your greatest joy as an author, editor and publisher?

When writing, I sit back now and again and think that what I just wrote was well said and a nice piece. Having said that, after the manuscript is in good shape and I have all of the images together, perhaps the most rewarding exercise is creating the book in Adobe InDesign. Wonderful software, and after completing a particularly handsome double-page spread, I do sit back and marvel at how fine it all looks. Again, being the publisher, I meet most of my customers, which is always a pleasure. So, writing and self publishing is definitely a rewarding occupation.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

Only that if you have a story to tell, have a go and see what you can put down on paper. You just might surprise yourself, and a lot of other readers! ➤

English.

Do you have another project underway?

I've discovered YouTube and have made a few short movies about naval swords and relics, which I've enjoyed doing. Just search "Sim Comfort Swords," and the titles will come up.

I'm currently coming toward the end of a new book about ship relics, usually small snuff or tobacco boxes made from the wood of fighting ships. I don't think many understand just how attached a man was to his ship, his home, his mates, where his adventures occurred, and possibly if he was lucky, with prize money, where he earned a small fortune. The man and the ship,



# NAVAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

FROM THE YEAR 1793 TO 1817

BY JAMES JENKINS



*“... the reprint of Jenkins is a quite remarkably successful piece of book production and I send you my hearty congratulations . . .”*

— Patrick O’Brian

**T**he *Naval Achievements of Great Britain, From the Year 1793 to 1817*, by James Jenkins, first published in 1817, is again available, with a new Foreword by Sim Comfort, in a limited edition of 600 copies. The copies numbered 1 to 150 are bound in half blue goat. Copies numbered 151 to 600 are bound in blue buckram. A green card case houses each edition.

From the modern naval novels of C. S. Forester and Patrick O’Brian, readers experience many hard-fought actions during the days of fighting sail. Both authors drew widely upon contemporary accounts to ensure historical accuracy.



cy. The flavor of shipboard life and the desperate struggle to win in single ship or fleet actions come alive within the reader’s imagination with their written descriptions and dialogue.

But was there something else to assist the author’s eye in seeing the condition and effect of the weather on a full-rigged man of war? Was there a source for viewing the positions of opposing fleets at critical moments in a major engagement or in the quick-witted maneuver of a frigate captain which exposed his enemy’s stern to a raking broadside?

“Yes” is the answer, and probably the most important contemporary visual source is found in *The Naval Achievements of Great Britain*. ■

Sim Comfort Associates: [www.simcomfort.co.uk](http://www.simcomfort.co.uk)



Gulls cavort around HMS *Warrior* at the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard in England.

Photo by George D. Jepson.

# Birds Over the Seas

BY ROY AND LESLEY ADKINS

Roy and Lesley Adkins are co-authors of *Jack Tar*, *The War for All the Oceans*, *Nelson's Trafalgar*, *Gibraltar*, and *Jane Austen's England*. Their latest book is *When There Were Birds: The Forgotten History of our Connections*.

nation of everyone attracted by all things maritime. Still, countless other birds are also inextricably linked with the sea.

Occasionally, unexplained instances of birds settling on ships occurred, as was told in the mid-seventeenth century

to Thomas Travers, rector of St Columb Major in Cornwall: "A ship out to sea, farther from land than any birds used to be found, discovered a bird aloft in the air, hovering over them, as high as they could discern; which bird descended towards them and at last alighted on the deck."

It turned out to be an exhausted woodcock, a large wading bird that was a culinary treat. Because it seemingly fell from above, this incident supported the theory that birds migrated to and from the moon.

It was also long believed that during the autumn, some birds hibernated or changed into different species. The reality is that they migrate thousands of miles across land and sea to spend the ➤

WRITING OUR LATEST book, *When There Were Birds: The Forgotten History of our Connections*, drew us

to the association of birds with the sea and the coast. Birds present a problem in that they have different names in various territories and eras. Still, we decided to focus on Britain and delve into the often surprising background to English literature, language, religion, social history, and the maritime past.

Birds know no boundaries, and as increasing numbers of sailing vessels ventured across the seas, an awareness of wildlife expanded. Gulls, albatrosses, and puffins probably loom large in the imagi-

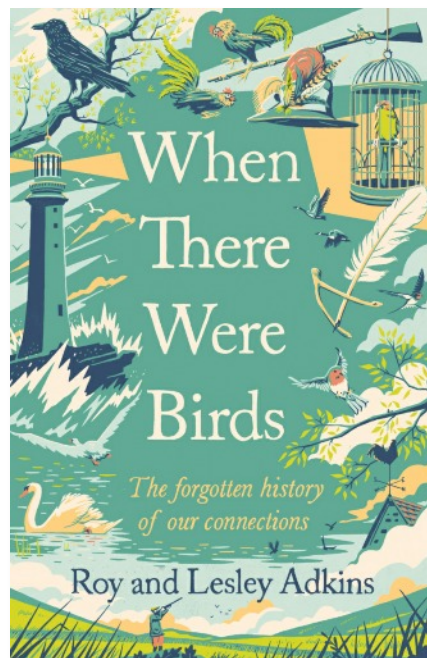






Photo courtesy of Roy and Lesley Adkins.

**ABOVE** Roy and Lesley Adkins, English historians whose work often follows the sea and British maritime history.

**RIGHT** One of the finest images of a goldcrest (Regulus regulus), Britain's smallest bird, by Francis C. Franklin.



© Francis C. Franklin / CC-BY-SA-3.0

winter in a warmer climate. In contrast, others leave colder territories like Scandinavia and over winter in Britain. Even when migration was better understood, it remained difficult to appreciate just how many species of birds were on the move, apart from the obvious ones like cuckoos and swallows that are part of Britain's heritage.

Migration is a perilous time for birds. Occasionally they landed on vessels in an exhausted state. When Edward Blyth was a pharmacist at Tooting in south London, his neighbor described a journey that he had made in September 1833 aboard a trading smack from London to Aberdeen, returning in October.

Numerous migrating birds alighted on the vessel. Fourteen miles off Whitby, "a flock of gold-crests settled on the ship's tackle; the little creatures, being much exhausted, suffered themselves to be taken with the hand . . . A woodcock likewise flew about the vessel for some time on this day, and alighted twice on

the deck." Goldcrests are Britain's smallest birds and in the autumn are joined by huge numbers from Scandinavia. They tended to arrive two days ahead of woodcocks and acquired the nickname of "Woodcock Pilots."

In November 1860, Edward Rodd, a solicitor and ornithologist at Penzance in Cornwall, said that a Norwegian brig came into port with six tree sparrows for him to examine: "It appears that when the ship was midway between the two coasts [of the North Sea], between the Dogger Bank and the Galloper Light, thousands of these Sparrows came on board, and the master kept half a dozen merely out of curiosity. He describes the birds as "an immense flock," the evidence of which appears to be conclusive from the extent of the droppings on board."

His nephew Francis Rodd was an expert on birds of the Isles of Scilly and a decade later recorded that a newly arrived ship had been a refuge for a large flock of starlings some 350 miles to the west. Worn out, they landed on the vessel and stayed until Scilly, though the crew cooked and ate some. Soon after, another vessel reported a mass of starlings 200 miles to the west. Again, some remained on the rigging until the ship anchored, and others were made into pies by the sailors. Many varieties of small birds were eaten on land, but opinions about starlings varied, with some rating them as delicious and others disgusting.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Lord Lilford mentioned rooks migrating to Britain for the winter: "I have often been told by seafaring men that they have occasionally found the rigging of their vessels crowded with Rooks in foggy weather whilst voyaging in the North Sea and Baltic Sea."

Almost a century earlier, in the spring of 1799, snowstorms hit much of Britain. One newspaper recorded: "the sea shores on the Eastern Coast have been almost covered with the Norway and Swedish Crows [probably rooks] which have perished in attempting to pass homewards, and have been washed back again to the land, from whence they set out." A mass of dead and dying birds washed ashore, usually termed a "bird wreck," is primarily caused by weather conditions. In 1923 Thomas Coward, an ornithologist from Cheshire, said: "I have ➤



*“The number of Solan Geese [gannets] that migrate past Cape Wrath is beyond anyone’s power to number . . .”*

**ABOVE** Solan Geese (gannets) swarming Vesta Skerry, a rock within a group of rocky islets a half-mile southwest of Muckle Flugga in the Shetland Islands, Scotland.

seen the east coast tidal litter full of Goldcrests which had failed to make the land.” Countless migrating birds perish like this every year, though we will never know the precise numbers.

One of the most disastrous seabird wrecks occurred in September 1859, washed up along the west coasts of Scotland and England. One master of a Royal Mail steam packet sailed from Glasgow to Belfast through miles of floating carcasses. A Belfast newspaper commented: “Several masters of coasting vessels which have arrived in Belfast within the last few days report having seen in the [North] Channel, and in the Belfast Lough, thousands of sea gulls and other sea birds dead, floating on the water.”

Birds are fatally attracted to lights, and as many of them migrate by night, lighthouses and lightships were a magnet. Some birds died, while others became confused until the spell was broken at daybreak when they could resume their flight. In Scotland in 1871, Robert Gray, a banker and ornithologist, recorded that large numbers of woodcocks reached the coast by night “and are well known to lighthouse-keep-

ers, who capture the bewildered travelers in considerable numbers. Some of these men have informed me that for seven or eight nights in succession the birds continue to arrive, and hundreds perish by striking themselves against the lantern.”

Those manning lighthouses and lightships were in a position to gather information about bird migration. From 1879 lighthouse keepers were asked to fill in questionnaires, and the results were extraordinary, showing that unimaginable numbers of birds passed over the seas in all directions.

One of the ornithologists involved was John Harvie-Brown, and the following year he remarked: “Almost all records of birds caught or killed, or striking at the lanterns, are noted on dark or cloudy nights, with fog, haze or rain, or snow and sleet. The isolated stations, such as the Bell Rock, are most deadly; many are stunned and killed, and blown

into the sea, at such localities. Birds on such nights often remain around the lights all night or rest on the window-sills of the tower and balconies, or endeavor to obtain entrance to the tower. Whenever dawn appears they resume their flight towards the nearest land.”

Cape Wrath lighthouse is at the most north-westerly point of the British mainland, and in 1879 its keeper, John McGill, said: “The number of Solan Geese [gannets] that migrate past Cape Wrath is beyond anyone’s power to number, but I have as near to it as possible.” That summer, McGill had kept a log of the numbers of gannets passing by in the daytime, including:

*July 14th 600 to 700. 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Wind E. Clear<sup>2</sup>  
15th 200. 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. <sup>2</sup> E.  
Haze...  
Aug. 1st. 100 to 300. 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. <sup>2</sup>  
W. Haze, rain.*

Harvie-Brown summarized the birds that ➤



were visible from the lightships in the North Sea, between the French, Belgian and English coasts:

“Migrants have passed the stations at all hours of the day and night, flying at no great altitude and in almost all winds and weather. When the nights are dark and cloudy, no stars appearing, in rain, fogs and snowstorms, flocks of birds ... will crowd round the lanterns of the light-ships; many strike the glass and are killed, falling on deck or pitching overboard. On these nights birds will often remain for hours in the vicinity of a light, circling round and round, evidently having lost their way; at the first break in the clouds, the stars becoming visible, or the first streak of early dawn, they will resume their flight to the nearest land.”

Another ornithologist, William Eagle Clarke, was a curator at the Royal Scottish Museum. He spent five weeks, from mid-September 1903, onboard the Kentish Knock lightship in the North Sea, over thirty miles from the Essex coast and fifty miles from the French coast. The vessel had a revolving white light and a powerful siren used in times of fog and haze. He observed thousands of birds, a “feathered stream,” moving in different directions, and some even settled on the lightship.

Although oceans and seas are vast places, naval and merchant seamen at night would likely have noticed birds passing overhead or further in the distance, especially when the birds called to each other. The presence of birds was perhaps so commonplace that it was simply not worth mentioning in official logbooks when noting so much else. Eagle Clarke was focused solely on the birds, and on October 8th, he recorded a considerable fall in temperature, followed by deteriorating conditions:

“The weather, which had been fine up to 9 a.m., rapidly changed, and by noon it had become, in nautical parlance, a ‘dirty day’ – a character which it maintained to the end. The



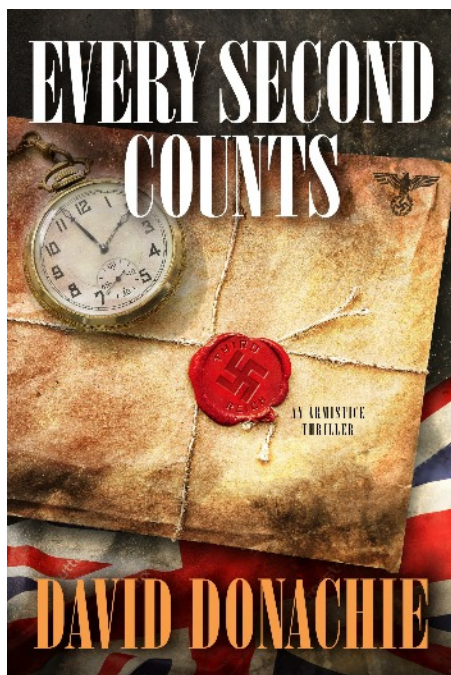
rain, which fell steadily at first, became a down-pour, and finally torrential. Indeed, so rain-laden did the atmosphere become, that it was necessary to sound the fog-horn, whose hideous yells added a weird accompaniment quite in harmony with a scene which, apart from its intense interest to a naturalist, was dismal and depressing in the extreme. There were squalls at intervals, which lashed the rain against my face with such violence as to cause the skin to tingle for a considerable time.”

All through this weather, he witnessed an incredible daytime movement of birds:

“How the migrants braved such a passage was truly surprising. How they escaped becoming waterlogged in such a deluge of wind-driven rain was a mystery. Yet on they sped, hour after hour, never deviating for a moment from their course, and hugging the very surface of the waves, as if to avoid as much as possible the effects of the high beam wind. It was surely migration under the maximum of discomfort and hardship, indeed under conditions that approached the very verge of disaster for the voyagers.” ■

**ABOVE** The Kentish Knock Lightship in a 1903 painting by English artist Marian Eagle Clarke (1908 - 1927).

Visit the Adkins online at  
[www.adkinshistory.com](http://www.adkinshistory.com).



## *Every Second Counts*

BY DAVID DONACHIE

McBooks Press, US Hardback

**\$27.95**

MARCH

**J**ULY 1940. It's a month since the defeated and battered British Expeditionary Force and other allies were evacuated back to England from Dunkirk. They've escaped the Nazi blitzkrieg but left their equipment behind.

Invasion threatens and, in Whitehall, London, there's increasing sentiment to accept Adolf Hitler's proposed armistice and commence peace talks on the Isle of Wight, a position supported by the *Daily Mail*, who see the German leaders as "being magnanimous."

At Number 10, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, once determined to continue fighting, has resigned with a successor yet to be named. At this point, David Donachie takes a turn from recorded history with a plausible "what if" scenario had Churchill left office.

Billy Houston, a thug and Hitler admirer on the run from authorities,

needs money to support the fascist "cause." During a botched burglary, he commits murder and discovers he has in his possession Britain's plans to thwart invasion.

No patriot, Billy hopes to get the information to the right people, leading to a "German takeover of Britain." Within hours, a milkman having discovered Houston's victim, Adam Strachan, Deputy Director of Counter-Espionage at MI5, notified of an important "flap," is on the case. The missing defense plans must not reach German hands.

David Donachie steepes his debut historical thriller in the aura of World War II England, from the shadows along London's blacked-out streets and seedy narrow lanes to the thinly guarded Channel coast and the Isle of Wight, while broaching the day's British politics.

Even as Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax, "a candidate to replace Churchill," seeks to turn doubters in Parliament toward appeasement with Hitler, the hunt for the top-secret documents focuses on Houston, whose fingerprints at the crime scene reveal his identity.

Hitler's peace delegation will arrive aboard the Kriegsmarine heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen* in the Solent. Houston contacts sleeper *Abwehr* agent Rudy Graebner, operating undercover in the Spanish embassy, who forms a plan to deliver the defense plans to the Germans ahead of any armistice talks.

Working with Scotland Yard, Adam Strachan has a daunting task. Houston and Graebner are one step ahead on a murderous path across Southern England while the clock ticks away and Britain's immediate future is anything but secure.

David Donachie is at his best, spinning a sizzling, suspense-filled yarn set against an epoch-making time in British and world history. ■



## *Andalucia*

BY MICHAEL AYE

Bitingduck Press, US Trade Paperback

**\$20.78**

AVAILABLE NOW

**U**NDER ORDERS to return to England, Captain Sir Gabe Anthony, sailing from the West Indies aboard His Majesty's 44-gun frigate *Ares*, is bound for Portsmouth, with his wife Faith and their son, his immediate future uncharted.

It's spring 1782, and the Royal Navy has recently defeated a French fleet at the Battle of the Saintes. In America, the war with the Colonies appears to be lost, and Britain seeks to protect its valuable investments in the Caribbean.

Catching up with Admiral Sir Samuel Hood's fleet en route to England, *Ares* and the British ships are victorious in a brief battle with four French ships damaged at the Saintes.

Arriving at Portsmouth, Gabe receives new orders from the Port Admiral to immediately depart by coach to London and the Admiralty, a summons that has "the smell of the For- ➤



eign Services office.”

Not surprisingly, British foreign agent Lord Randy Skalla is behind Gabe’s recall. Discreetly established at the Crown and Sceptre, a London inn, Gabe is his choice to lead a secret mission against Spain, a former ally that has broken its treaty with Britain to side with the American Colonies and France.

In retribution, Skalla informs Gabe that he will lead a small squadron as commodore aboard *Ares* to locate Spain’s Manila and Acapulco silver galleons, thought to be on the Pacific side of South America, attack them, and seize their silver-and-gold treasure.

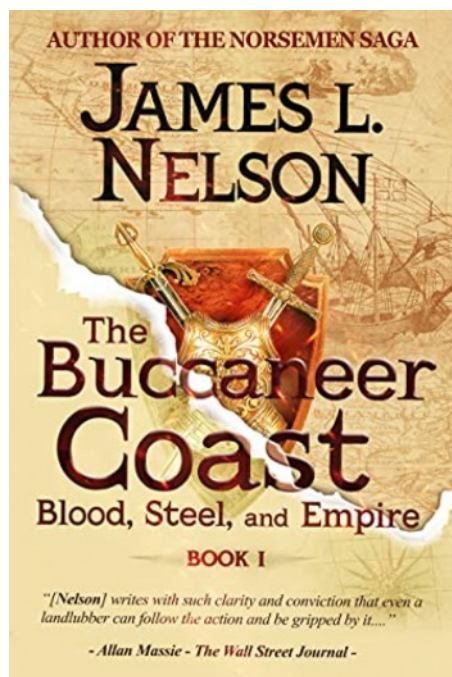
*Andalucia*, Michael Aye’s ninth and next-to-last Fighting Anthonys adventure, is another brisk, page-turning narrative, a family chronicle with a familiar cast of characters. Cracking the pages, readers connect with old friends again.

Returning to Portsmouth, while *Ares* prepares for sea, Gabe has time with Faith, reacts to his mother’s plans, and learns something surprising about young Midshipman Noble “No” Pride Stanhope.

Sailing under his broad pennant, Gabe’s squadron – the frigate *Active*, the Honourable East India Company armed ship *Windham*, and the schooner *Pickle* – sets a course for the South Atlantic. Ahead lies the Strait of Magellan and, eventually, Potrero Bay, Costa Rica, pursuing the Spanish galleons *Andalucia* and *Seville*.

As in previous Fighting Anthony titles, *Andalucia* is rife with thundering ship-to-ship actions, cutting out missions and bloody boardings, and in quieter times, romance.

Michael Aye spins a first-rate yarn enriched with crisp prose, well-developed characters, and deep command of the British Royal Navy during the Age of Fighting Sail. ■



## *The Buccaneer Coast*

BY JAMES L. NELSON

Fore Topsail Press, US Trade Paperback

**\$14.99**

AVAILABLE NOW

**I**N 1629, on Hispaniola, an island in the Caribbean Sea under Spanish rule, French, English, and Dutch pirates had established bases on the north and west coasts while “battling for possession of the nearby island of Tortuga.”

As two hunters stalk wild pigs with flintlocks and “big sinewy” dogs in “an open country of tall grass and stunted, straggling brush” in suffocating heat, armed and mounted Spanish *lanceros* appear, intent on killing the pair.

With long, sea-bleached hair tied in a queue hanging down his back, the big man is a hardened boucanier with a past called Jean-Baptiste LeBoeuf, unleashes his savage prowess with a musket and blade to the charging horsemen.

Offshore, the Spanish galleon *Nostra Sennora de Regla*, carrying Don Alonso Menéndez de Aviles, struggles in a rising sea and wind before a raging hurri-

cane, which eventually drives the ship onto Hispaniola, scattering mortals, cargo, and treasure across the sand.

On a sandbar on the northwest shore, a “mostly whole” brigantine called *Nostra Sennora de Santiago* lies close to the site where LeBoeuf, a buccaneer band, and their women, primarily prostitutes banished by the French from Paris to Hispaniola, camped.

Across the island in Santo Domingo, the ruling Spanish have settled to protect themselves from the filibusters, or buccaneers, drawn to the vast silver shipments and other good passing along trading routes in the Caribbean.

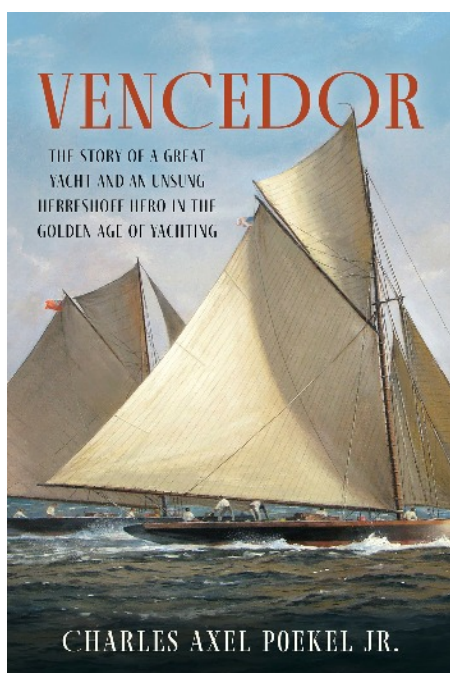
*The Buccaneer Coast*, the first book in James L. Nelson’s new Blood, Steel, and Empire series, paints a striking picture of piracy against the broad canvas of the Caribbean in the early seventeenth century.

Though devastating to shipping and the islands, the hurricane has a silver lining for LeBoeuf, who takes possession of the brigantine, intent on making her seaworthy. But, at the same time, his fellow buccaneers, perhaps short-sighted, only desire to divide the ship’s cargo among themselves.

Nelson’s crackerjack narrative, filled with twists and turns, moves swiftly along with disparate characters, including Henriette de Labonté, formerly a *femme de chambres* to the French queen. The governing Spanish, including Don Alonso, seek to sustain dominance in the Caribbean. LeBoeuf and the buccaneers, a “cast apart,” endeavor to improve their lot in life.

*The Buccaneer Coast* describes the era with brutal true-to-life accuracy, at times with cringe-worthy savagery. These were, after all, pirates and despots in a barely civilized part of the world.

Once again, James L. Nelson reaffirms that he is a master of high-seas adventure. ■



## *Vencedor*

BY CHARLES AXEL POEDEL JR.  
Sheridan House, US Hardback

**\$27.95**

AVAILABLE NOW

IN OCTOBER 1887, Thorvald Julius Schougaard Poekel, a young Danish naval engineer, stepped ashore in Boston from the Cunard Line steamship *Scythia*, with his worldly possessions packed in a large wooden trunk.

At age twenty-five and single, he set his sights on a promising new life in America. Once established, he planned to bring his parents over from the “old country.”

As a boy, he was fascinated with boats in the town harbor at Naestved, “mesmerized with how a man-made piece of wood could conquer the water and slide effortlessly across it.” By 1883, he was an established engineer in the Royal Danish Navy, “known for his analytical thinking and cleverness.”

Soon after arriving in Boston, Poekel learned that “there were opportunities for employment as a naval engineer” at the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company in Bristol, Rhode Island. The Herreshoff brothers – John and Nathaniel

– hired the young immigrant, assigning him to the drafting room.

The threesome worked together during the HMCO’s most remarkable years – “the golden years of yachting” – building the world’s fastest racing sailboats, including several America’s Cup defenders.

In 1895, the Racine Boat Manufacturing Company in Wisconsin hired Poekel and his nearly nine years of priceless experience working under the master designer, Captain Nat, away from Herreshoff.

A decade ago, Charles Poekel, Thorvald’s great-grandson, launched his quest to learn more about his forebear after visiting the Herreshoff Marine Museum in Bristol. Asked about Thorvald’s time at the company, a representative surprisingly told him that no one named Poekel had ever worked for HMCO.

And so, a mystery was born. On construction prints for famous Herreshoff boats, including the 1895 America’s Cup yacht *Defender*, “T. Sch. Poekel,” as he wished to be known, was clearly inscribed, a rarity because Nathaniel Herreshoff typically signed prints alone.

At Racine, Poekel immediately established himself designing and building the 133-foot-long steel-plated steam yacht *Pathfinder*, resembling a torpedo boat, and the celebrated 45-foot mahogany racing yacht *Vencedor*. The cutter represented America’s freshwater yachtsmen against the Canadian yacht *Canada* in the inaugural race for what became Canada’s Cup.

Charles Poekel casts a wide net from Bristol, Rhode Island, to Chicago and the Great Lakes – “that great unsalted sea” – to search for the truth about his great-grandfather. The result is a captivating chronicle embodying America’s rich yachting history. ■

– George Jepson



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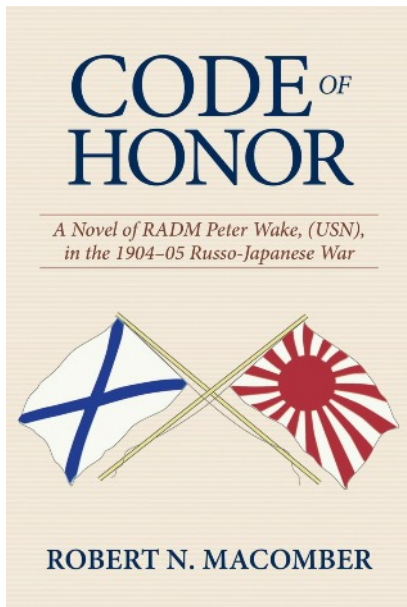
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## NAVAL FICTION



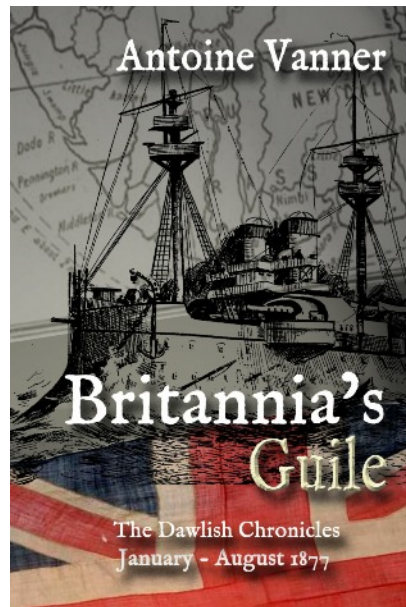
### *Code of Honor*

BY ROBERT N. MACOMBER

On a hot June day in 1904, the Russo-Japanese War rages in Korea. Rear Admiral Peter Wake is a special assistant to President Theodore Roosevelt. After defusing the Perdicaris Hostage Crisis in Morocco, Wake and his unique team head for Hamburg and St. Petersburg on a diplomatic mission, a façade for the false-flag operation to obtain Germany's plans to invade the United States. As Wake hobnobs with Kaiser Wilhelm II and Czar Nicholas II, he reconnects with intelligence contacts. Then, in a perilous evening in St. Petersburg, the dreaded Russian Okhrana traps him into joining the Russian fleet as a neutral observer on their 18,000-mile voyage around the world to engage the vastly superior Japanese fleet – a certain death sentence.

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*Naval Institute Press, \$29.95*  
US Hardback  
APRIL



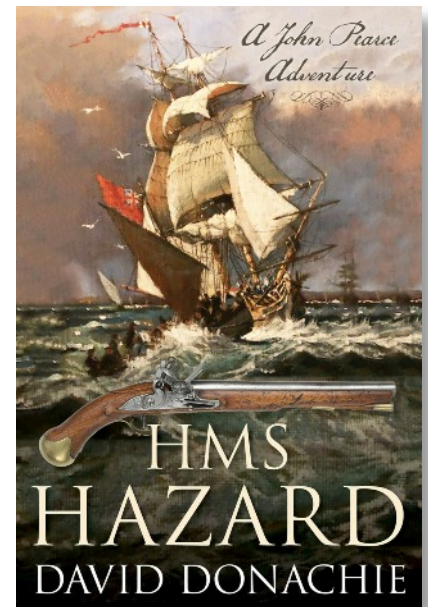
### *Britannia's Guile*

BY ANTOINE VANNER

1877: Lieutenant Nicholas Dawlish is hungry for promotion. He's chosen service on the Royal Navy's hazardous Anti-Slavery patrol off East Africa for the opportunities it brings to make his name. But a shipment of slaves has slipped through his fingers and now his reputation, and his chance of promotion, are at risk. He'll stop at nothing to save them. But greater events are underway in Europe. The Russian and Ottoman Empires are drifting ever closer to a war that could draw in other great powers. And Britain cannot stand aside – a Russian victory would spell disaster for her strategic links to India. The Royal Navy is preparing for a war that might never take place. But a handful of powerful men know how unexpectedly vulnerable Britain will be if war comes.

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*Old Salt Press, \$12.49*  
US Trade Paperback  
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### *HMS Hazard*

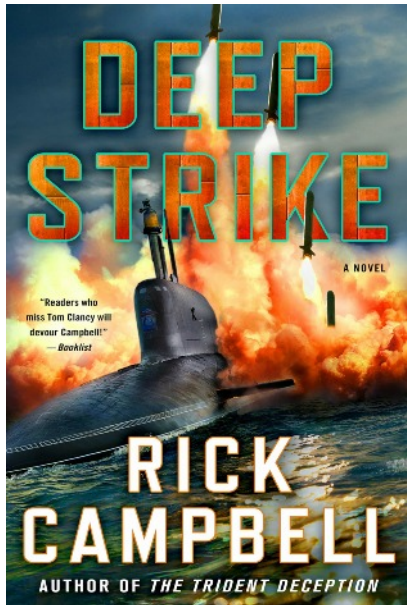
BY DAVID DONACHIE

1796: John Pearce is stuck with a difficult mission, a raw crew of Quota Men forced to enlist in the Royal Navy, four brand new midshipmen, as well as Samuel Oliphant, companion cum spy, whom he finds a constant irritant. Commanding HMS *Hazard*, a sound and fast warship, his primary mission is to head for the Mediterranean Fleet and warn Admiral Sir John Jervis of impending danger he will face, fighting a combined French/Spanish fleet. But there is a serious distraction, the imminent arrival of a Spanish vessel from South America carrying silver, for which the Spaniards are waiting before declaring war. Stop that, and they will lack the funds to engage Britannia. Can John Pearce resist the lure of such a valuable capture and risk his ship in a dangerous battle to gain it?

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## NAVAL FICTION



### *Deep Strike*

BY RICK CAMPBELL

A shoulder-launched missile attack on a vehicle convoy leaving the UN headquarters in New York kills several diplomats. The killer behind the attack is a disgraced former Special Forces operative, Mark Alperi. But before US intelligence operatives can catch up with him, Alperi is already onto the next phase of his plan. With funding from the nearly shattered ISIS, Alperi plans an attack on the US that will be more devastating than 9/11. He bribes a desperate Russian submarine commander to launch a salvo of missiles at various targets along the East Coast of the United States. When the Russian submarine sinks the US sub tracking it, the US military is alarmed. It becomes a race against time to find the Russian sub and sink it before it can launch a devastating nuclear attack.

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St. Martin's Press, \$27.99

US Hardback

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### *Command and Control*

BY ANTOINE VANNER

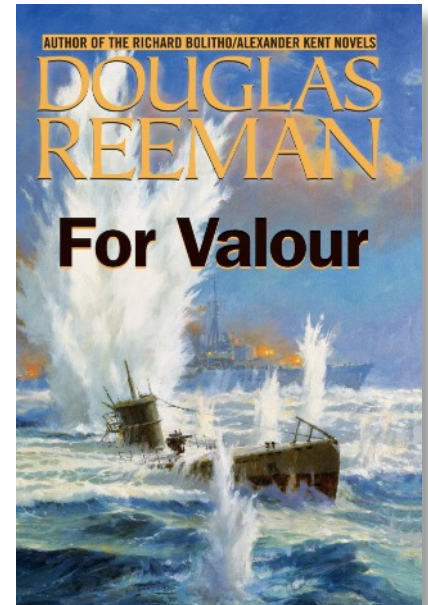
As a string of unexplained attacks pushes superpowers to the brink, the clock is ticking toward the start of World War III. Don Riley, head of the CIA's Emerging Threats Group, has never seen anything like this. Riley and his team must identify national security threats before they become tomorrow's bad news. But shortly after an Iranian vessel delivers a surprise attack on a US Navy Warship in the Arabian Gulf, seemingly unrelated attacks crop up around the globe. As a result, the US military rushes into full-fledged shooting wars on multiple fronts. Now Riley must sift through the layers of deception in time to discover who-or what-is behind these events before the clock reaches zero hour.

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Severn River Publishing, \$19.99

US Trade Paperback

JANUARY



### *For Valour*

BY DOUGLAS REEMAN

Commander Graham Martineau was awarded the Victoria Cross for pressing home an attack against impossible odds. Few survived, and a crimson ribbon remains the haunting symbol of the sacrifice of a ship and her men. As captain of the crack Tribal Class destroyer HMS *Hakka*, Martineau must again call from ordinary seamen the ultimate in courage and prepare to defend to the death vital convoys to Russia. There is no hiding place in these bitter Arctic seas, where a pitiless enemy awaits a fatal rendezvous.

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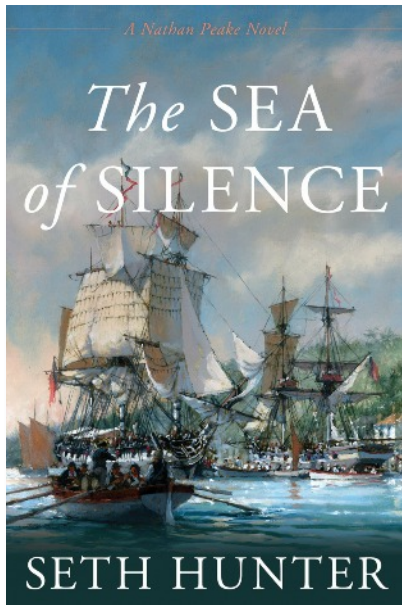
McBooks Press, \$19.95

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## NAVAL FICTION



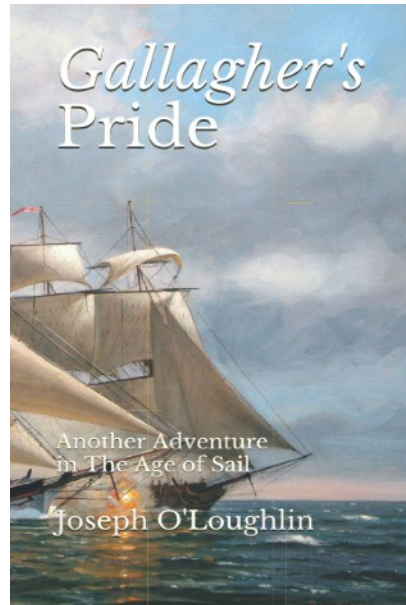
### *The Sea of Silence*

BY SETH HUNTER

War with Napoleonic France moves to the Americas as Captain Nathan Peake, freed from service in the Royal Navy, is secretly commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson to command a naval operation in the Caribbean Sea and frustrate plans to establish a new French Empire in North America. Napoleon Bonaparte has dispatched his victorious army with a vast fleet to the Caribbean. This adventure leads Nathan into a running battle with the French Navy in the troubled waters off Saint-Domingue, an increasingly desperate involvement in one of the most brutal colonial conflicts in history, a dangerous liaison with Pauline Bonaparte, sister of Napoleon and wife of the French commander, and a battle of ideas and ideologies that persists to the present day.

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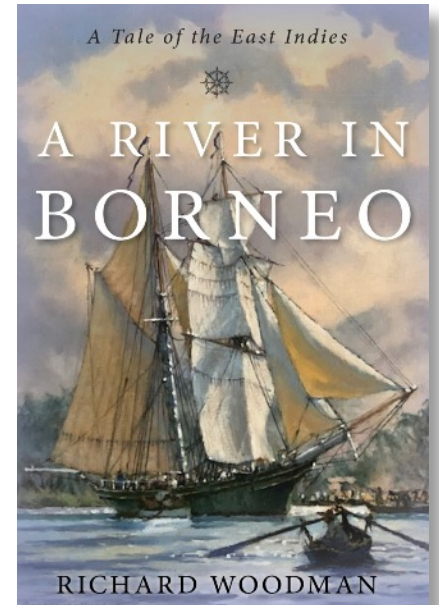
### *Gallagher's Pride*

BY JOSEPH O'LOUGHLIN

From Ireland to America, from the Napoleonic Wars to the War of 1812 and beyond, follow the adventures of a young Irish American naval officer and his family through poverty and oppression into freedom and opportunity. Join us on a journey of growth, rebellion, love, success, failure, redemption, and the joy of lives lived fully. In Gallagher's Pride, Jack Gallagher brings his family out of jeopardy in Ireland to the bustling city of New Orleans to learn the cost of seeking glory, and the immeasurable value of family and a young country full of promise.

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### *A River in Borneo*

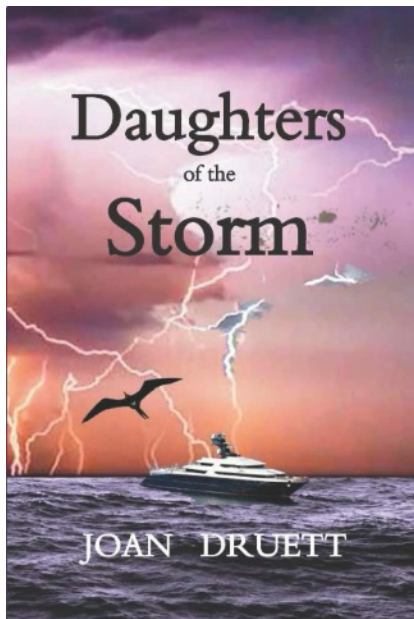
BY RICHARD WOODMAN

It is the summer of 1964 during the Far Eastern war called "Confrontation." A British Royal Marine patrol has orders to penetrate Indonesian Borneo to locate a river thought by Allied intelligence to be used by the Indonesians to build up supplies before launching a major attack on Sarawak. Charged with this mission, Lieutenant Charles Kirton makes a most extraordinary discovery amid the dense mangrove swamps bordering river in Borneo. Not only does this discovery enable Kirton to fulfil his mission but it is quite coincidentally intensely personal and unpleasantly macabre. From this highly-charged opening sequence, the story flashes back a century to 1867, revealing the truth behind this strange event. Woodman's compelling tale has echoes of Joseph Conrad.

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## MARITIME THRILLERS



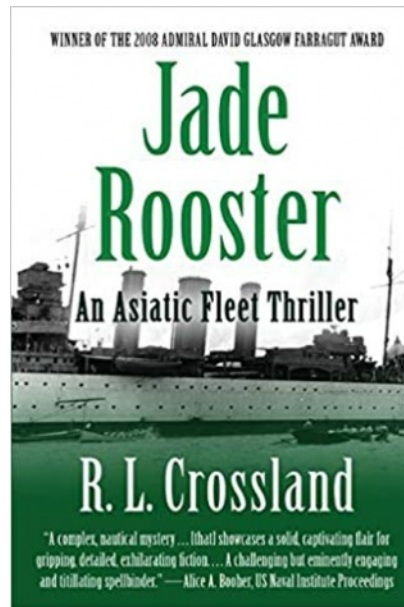
### *Daughters of the Storm*

BY JOAN DRUETT

Three young women, including an American shipping tycoon's wife, give birth in a tiny South Seas fishing village as a tropical storm rages and destroys the clinic. No records survive. No one knows which baby belongs to which mother. Twenty-one years later, the American kidnaps all three young women and takes them to sea on his megayacht, determined to find which girl is his daughter. But the boat is old and no longer seaworthy. As the strange voyage progresses through tropical Polynesia to New Zealand, something malign stalks them. Storms rage, and the engines give out. Reefs and atolls threaten. There's not just a question of identity at stake, but survival, too.

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Old Salt Press, \$19.95  
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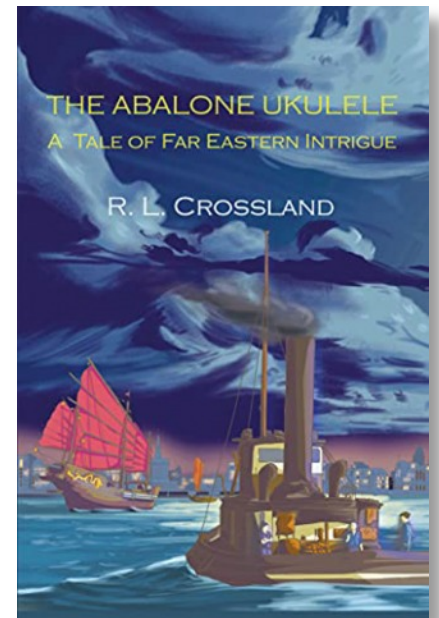
### *Jade Rooster*

BY R. L. CROSSLAND

Two Americans, a naval petty officer and a shipping agent are drawn into the undercurrents of early 20th-century Yokohama, Inchon, Manila, and Shanghai as they investigate four grisly beheadings and a missing sailing ship. Smoldering insurgencies in Korea and the Philippines backlight USS *Pluto*'s course between violence, betrayal, and hope. Blending the historical authenticity of Patrick O'Brian with the crackling dialogue of Raymond Chandler, Crossland establishes himself as a unique voice in nautical fiction.

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US Trade Paperback  
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### *The Abalone Ukulele*

BY R. L. CROSSLAND

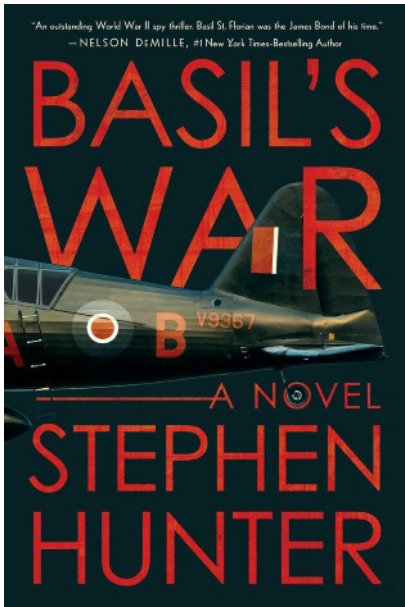
Three ordinary men – a disgraced Korean tribute courier, a bookish naval officer, and a polyglot third-class quartermaster – must foil Japanese subversion and, with sub rosa assistance from Asiatic Station, hijack that gold to finance a Korean insurrection. Three ordinary women complicate their efforts: an enigmatic changsan courtesan, a feisty Down East consular clerk, and a clever Chinese farm-girl. The tale wends through the outskirts of Peking to the Yukon River, and from the San Francisco waterfront to a naval landing party isolated on a Woosung battlefield; from ships of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet moored on Battleship Row to a junk on the Yangtze; and from the Korean gold mines of Unsan to a coaling quay in Shanghai.

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New Academia Publishing, \$26.00  
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## HISTORICAL FICTION



### *Basil's War*

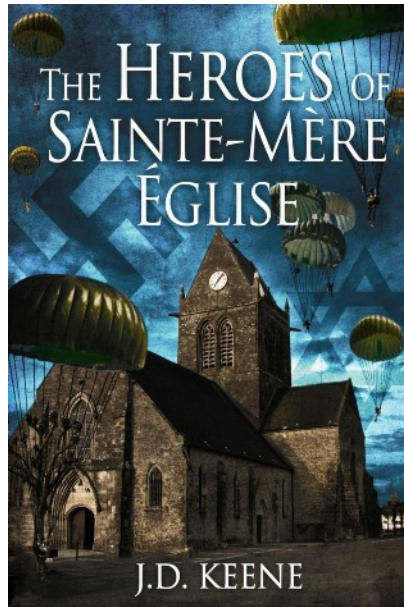
BY STEPHEN HUNTER

Basil St. Florian is an accomplished agent in the British Army. Still, his current mission, going undercover in Nazi-occupied France during World War II, might be his most challenging assignment yet. He will be searching for an ecclesiastic manuscript that doesn't officially exist, one that genius professor Alan Turing believes may hold the key to a code that could prevent the death of millions and possibly even end the war. St. Florian isn't the classic British special agent with a stiff upper lip – he is a swashbuckling, whisky-drinking cynic and thrill-seeker who resents having to leave Vivien Leigh's bed to set out on his crucial mission. Despite these biases, Basil's Army superiors know he's the best man for the job.

*Mysterious Press, \$23.95*

*US Hardback*

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### *The Heroes of Sainte-Mère-Église*

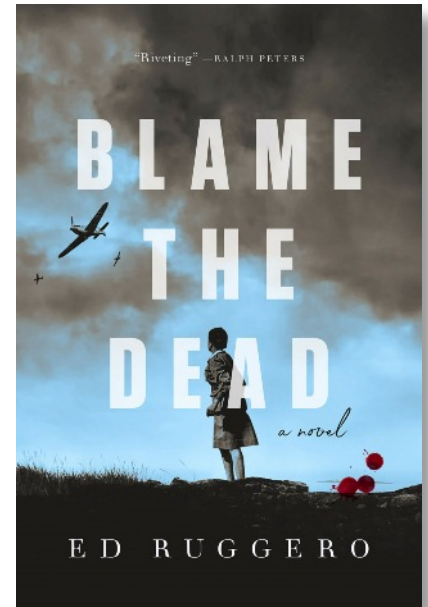
BY J. D. KEEN

On May 10, 1940, the German war machine waits for the order from Adolf Hitler to start the western Blitzkrieg. Six hundred kilometers away, WWI veteran René Legrand plows his fields near the peaceful village of Sainte-Mère-Église. Since the last war, Legrand has tried to forget the horrors he inflicted as a deadly assassin in the French Army, unaware that he will soon need these skills again. His youngest son, Jean-Pierre, lives the life of a typical thirteen-year-old. Still, events will soon force him to become a man, and along with his father, brother, and a small group of citizens, they harass their German occupiers. These and others are the heroes of Sainte-Mère-Église.

*Independent, \$14.99*

*US Trade Paperback*

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### *Blame the Dead*

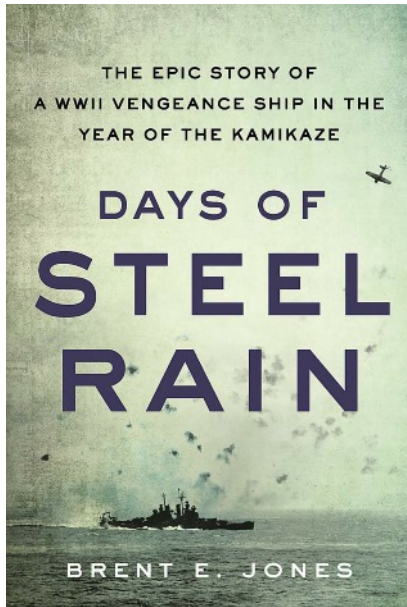
BY ED RUGGERO

Sicily, 1943. Eddie Harkins, a former Philadelphia beat cop, turned Military Police lieutenant, reluctantly finds himself first at the scene of a murder at the US Army's 11th Field Hospital. There the nurses contend with heat, dirt, short-handed staffs, the threat of German counterattack, an ever-present flood of horribly wounded GI's, and the threat of assault by one of their own – at least until someone shoots Dr. Myers Stephen-son in the head. With help from nurse Kathleen Donnelly, once a childhood friend and now perhaps something more, Harkins soon realizes that the unit is rotten to its core. As the battle lines push forward, Harkins is running out of time to find one killer before he can strike again.

*Forge Books, \$18.99*

*US Trade Paperback*

MARCH



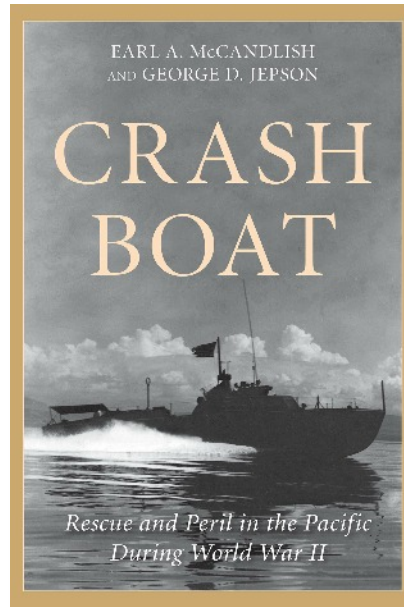
## *Days of Steel Rain*

BY BRENT E. JONES

Sprawling across the Pacific, this untold story follows the newly-built “vengeance ship” USS *Astoria* crew. US Navy Captain George Dyer, who vowed to return to action after suffering a horrific wound, lies at its center. He accepted the ship’s command in 1944, knowing it would be his last chance to avenge his injuries and salvage his career. Yet, he found that just getting the ship into action would prove to be a battle. The reluctant ship responded to challenges that its men could never have anticipated. From a typhoon where the ocean was enemy to daring rescue missions, a gallant turn at Iwo Jima, and the ultimate crucible against the Kamikaze at Okinawa, they endured the worst of the final year of the war at sea.

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*Hachette Books, \$19.99*  
*US Hardback*  
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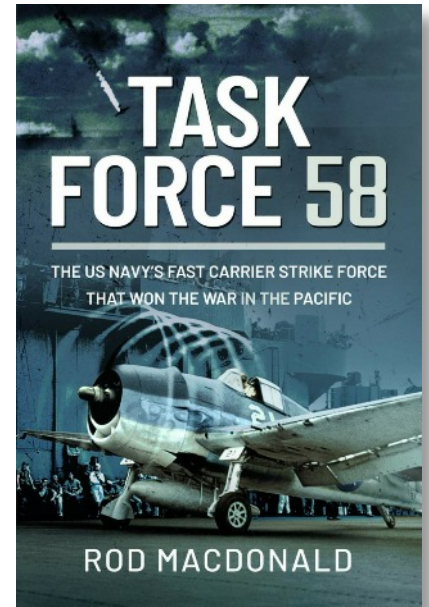
## *Crash Boat*

BY GEORGE D. JEPSON

This memoir is the compelling story of an American crash boat nicknamed *Sea Horse* crewed by unknown heroes during World War II in the South Pacific. These young Americans did dramatic rescues of downed pilots and clandestine missions off Japanese-held islands at great peril and with little fanfare. It chronicles ordinary young men doing extraordinary things, as told to George D. Jepson by Earl A. McCandlish, commander of the 63-foot crash boat P-399. The *Sea Horse* and her crew made over 30 rescues, fought a fierce gun battle with enemy forces, experienced life from another age in isolated native villages, were ordered on boondoggle missions and played a supporting role in America’s return to the Philippines.

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*McBooks Press, \$27.95*  
*US Hardback*  
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## *Task Force 58*

BY ROD MACDONALD

The new breed of American fast aircraft carriers could make thirty-three knots, and each carried almost one hundred strike aircraft. Brought together as Task Force 58, also known as the Fast Carrier Task Force, this armada at times comprised more than one hundred ships carrying more than ten thousand men afloat. By 1945, the carriers could launch more than one thousand combat aircraft, fighters, dive- and torpedo-bombers in under an hour. Rod Macdonald covers the birth of naval aviation, the appearance of the first modern carriers in the 1920s, through to the famous surprise six-carrier Kidō Butai Japanese raid against Pearl Harbor, and then the early US successes of 1942 at the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway.

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*Naval Institute Press, \$42.95*  
*US Hardback*  
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© Paul Garnett

## FOLLOWING SEAS

HMAV *Bounty* - December 23, 1787

BY PAUL GARNETT

**Q**UARTERDECK and McBooks Press lost a great friend in November 2021 when Boston marine artist Paul Garnett crossed the bar at age 70.

Primarily self-taught, Paul was an acclaimed artist, sculptor, and photographer. In the late 1980's, he was a shipwright aboard Metro Goldwyn Mayer's ship *Bounty* from the 1962 movie *Mutiny on the Bounty* starring Marlon Brando.

A Signature Member of the American Society of Marine Artists, Paul's love of the sea began at an early age and played out on canvas throughout his life. His first drawings were of USS *Constitution* in Charlestown, Massachusetts. And each of his deeply researched paintings "tell a story."



Paul Garnett  
1951 - 2021

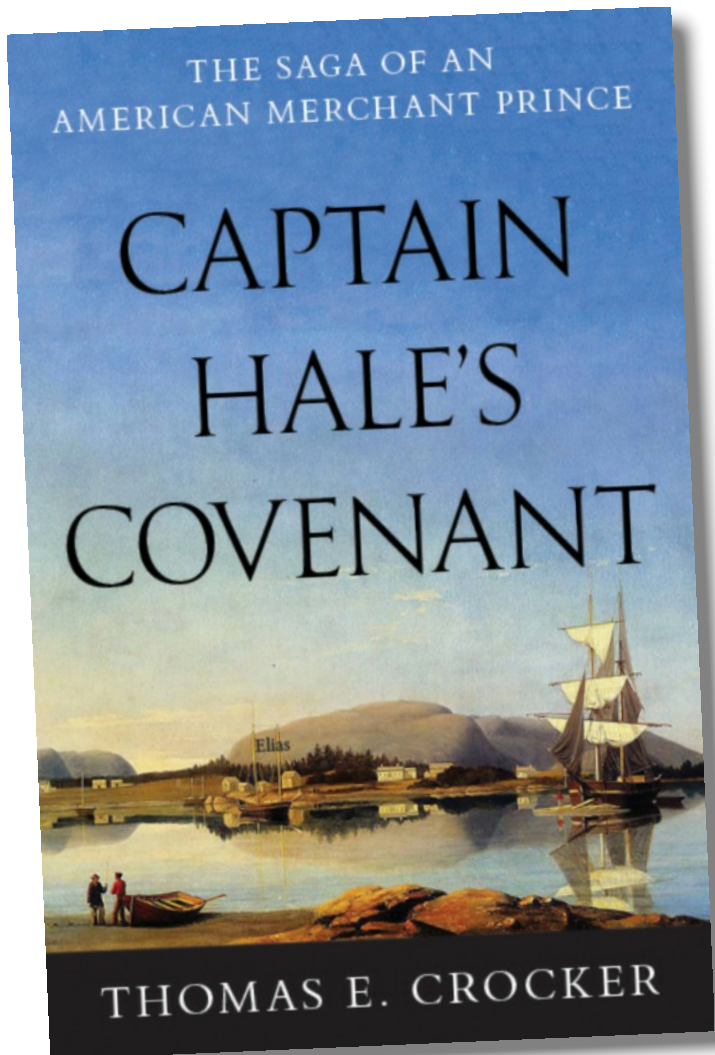
"Following Seas" (above) depicts HMAV *Bounty* in the English Channel on her departure from Spithead in 1787, bound for Tahiti and infamy in the South Seas. The *Bounty*, a favorite subject, was the "other woman" in his life, after Barbara, his wife, and partner of 51 years.

Over the past twenty years, Paul's work frequently appeared in the pages of *Quarterdeck* and on the covers of McBooks Press novels.

His paintings have been exhibited in museums, private homes, the J. Russell Jinishian Gallery in Stonington, CT, the Camden Falls Gallery in Camden, ME, and the former Mystic Seaport Gallery. Additionally, his paintings have appeared on cd covers, magazines worldwide, and television and movie backgrounds.

[www.paulgarnett.com](http://www.paulgarnett.com)

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