

QUARTERDECK



Author

Interviews:

Dewey Lambdin

David Donachie

January/February 2009

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Cover: Detail from a painting by English marine artist Geoffrey Huband for the jacket cover of *Sloop of War* by Alexander Kent.

QUARTERDECK

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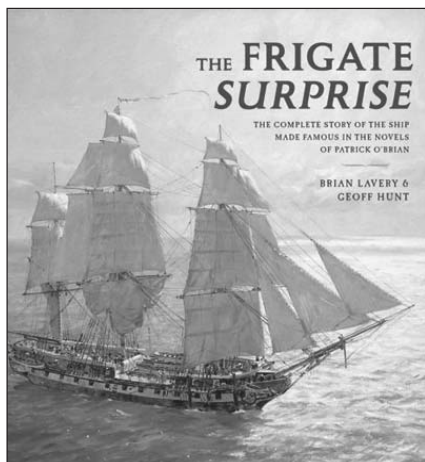
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SCUTTLEBUTT



GEOFF HUNT

English marine artist Geoff Hunt, will release his new book, *The Frigate Surprise*, which he co-authored with British naval historian Brian Lavery, in the US in May. This sumptuous new volume narrates the career of HMS *Surprise* from Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin novels in both her historical and her fictional roles, and presents an all-embracing construction and fitting history. In addition to historical illustrations, maps, artifacts, and photographs, thirty-five paintings, some specially commissioned, have been contributed by Geoff Hunt. Fifty line plans have been drawn by the marine draftsman Karl Heinz Marquardt.

S. THOMAS RUSSELL

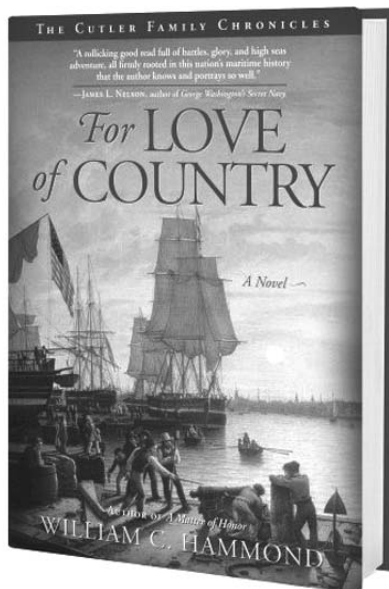
Vancouver Island-based author S. Thomas Russell is at work on a new naval fiction novel set during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and featuring Royal Navy Lieutenant Charles Hayden. The book's working title is *The Corsican* and follows *Under Enemy Colors*. No date of publication has been announced.

DEWEY LAMBDIN

King, Ship and Sword is the title of the sixteenth Alan Lewrie Naval Adventure by Dewey Lambdin. The book is due out in early 2010, following *The Baltic Gambit* (see page 5), which will be launched in mid-February.

PETER SMALLEY

The Gathering Storm, the fifth title in English author Peter Smalley's naval adventures featuring Captain William Rennie and Lieutenant James Hayter, will be launched in early July in the UK. It follows *The Hawk*, which will be released in a UK paperback edition in May.



WILLIAM C. HAMMOND

For Love of Country by American author William C. Hammond will be published in hardcover in April. This is the second title in the Cutler Family Chronicles, following *A Matter of Honor*, which is currently available in trade paperback.

NEW BOOK PUBLICATION DATES 2009 - 2010

US (United States)
UK (United Kingdom)
PB (Paperback)
TPB (Trade Paperback)
HC (Hardcover)

January

Troubled Waters (USTPB)
by Dewey Lambdin

February

The Baltic Gambit (USHC)
by Dewey Lambdin

April

For Love of Country (USHC)
by William C. Hammond

When Fortune Frowns (USHC)
by William H. White

HMS Cockerel (USTPB)
by Dewey Lambdin

May

The Frigate Surprise (USHC)
by Geoff Hunt and Brian Lavery

The Hawk (UKPB)
by Peter Smalley

July

The Gathering Storm (UKHC)
by Peter Smalley

October

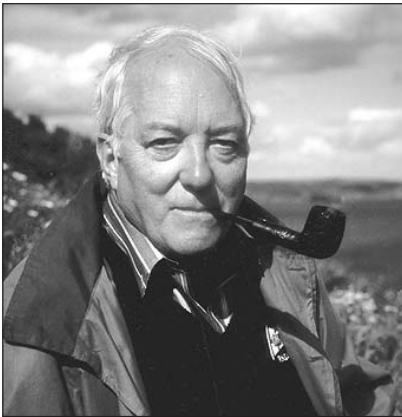
Invasion (USHC)
by Julian Stockwin

BY GEORGE!

Nautical Fiction

Those who go down to the sea in books – particularly nautical fiction – are blessed with a plentiful selection of stories these days, despite concerns about the state of the genre in these troubled times.

Over a decade ago, a fresh breeze brought Tall Ships Books – a small niche catalog and online business – into our lives, and Amy and I embarked on a journey through the literature of the sea.



Douglas Reeman ... A driving force in nautical fiction for over 50 years.

At the time, armchair admirals across America were thrilled about the new editions of Alexander Kent's Richard Bolitho novels, which were being published

in the US for the first time in years by McBooks Press. Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin novels were enjoying a resurgence on both sides of the Atlantic, and Dean King had recently released first editions of his two O'Brian companions, *Sea of Words* and *Harbors and High Seas*.

The nautical fiction genre was strong as we began learning the ropes of retail book selling. Alex Skutt and the staff at McBooks were leading the way with several series, including Dudley Pope's Nicholas Ramage novels, and several titles from Frederick Marryat's works written in the nineteenth century.

James L. Nelson's Isaac Biddlecomb

novels, which focused on America's fledgling Continental Navy, were popular additions to the sea offerings. Richard Woodman's Nathaniel Drinkwater stories and C.S. Forester's Horatio Hornblower novels were mainstays in the genre. The Heart of Oak Sea Classics were the result of Dean King's wanderings through used book shops, where he looked for out-of-print titles. These also included a handful of Marryats and my favorite, *Doctor Dogbody's Leg* by James Norman Hall, co-author of *Mutiny on the Bounty* with Charles Nordhoff.

It was a thrilling period for nautical literature, with new titles being released almost monthly. To reach readers with reports on new titles and the ever-growing backlist, we launched our monthly newsletter, *Bowsprit*, which later evolved into *Quarterdeck*.

One of our first author interviews was with Douglas Reeman, whose novels written under his pen name Alexander Kent I had begun reading nearly thirty years earlier, soon after the debut of Richard Bolitho in *To Glory We Steer*. Douglas and his wife Kim (also an author) were extremely kind in their support of Tall Ships Books, and over the years have been frequently interviewed.

Richard Woodman, who had recently retired from a 37-year career at sea, was writing his Drinkwater novels, and was our next interview. He was soon followed by James L. Nelson, Dewey Lambdin, Alexander Fullerton, Dean King and David Donachie.

One day in 2000, English marine artist Geoff Hunt e-mailed to say a new author,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

The Baltic Gambit

By Dewey Lambdin

“Stunning naval adventure, reeking of gunpowder and mayhem.
I wish I had written this series.”

Bernard Cornwell

Captain Alan Lewrie’s life hangs in the balance as he arrives by coach, a tad hungover, at the Old Bailey in London as the year 1801 dawns. At the moment, Black Alan’s career in the Royal Navy is a shambles, which may not matter if he is judged guilty and his sentenced to swing.

From start to finish, this 15th installment in Lewrie’s naval adventures is vintage prose from novelist Dewey Lambdin.

After his narrow escape in court, Lewrie is at sea with himself on the streets of London, without a ship and a marriage on the rocks, all the while plotting personal revenge with the assistance of the shadowy Zachariah Twigg of the Foreign Office.

A young Irish lass called Tess, whom he chances to meet in an upscale bawdy house,

catches Lewrie’s fancy for a time, but with his personal matter seemingly avenged, he seeks an active commission and a return to sea duty.

A new government has been formed following the resignation of William Pitt the Younger, and Admiral the Earl St. Vincent has been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty. Lewrie gains an audience with

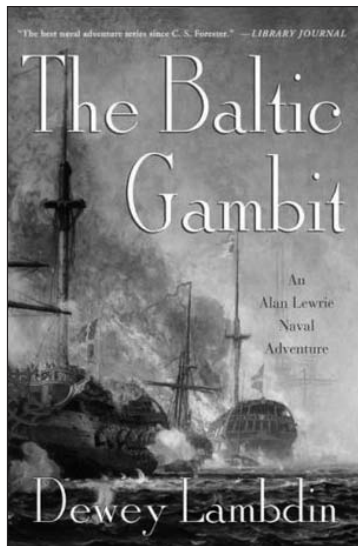
the First Lord, who remembers his service at the Battle of Cape St. Vincent, but promises only to “... enquire, Captain Lewrie. You *have* made for yourself an enviable reputation in the Navy ... at sea, at least, hmm?”

Within days, a letter from the Admiralty, delivered to the Madeira Club, orders Lewrie “to declare your immediate availability to take upon yourself the charge and command of His Majesty’s Frigate, *Thermopylae*, now laying at Great Yarmouth.”

Piped aboard his new command, Lewrie is greeted by his former first lieutenant in the converted bomb ketch HMS *Alacrity*, Arthur Ballard (pronounced Buah-LARD). The first officer leaves Lewrie with an uncomfortable wariness, which he can’t pin down.

Lewrie’s orders are to deliver a peace delegation to Russia, and is then pressed into service to help Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson defeat the Danish fleet at Copenhagen. For those who know history, the outcome of this engagement is never in doubt, but the author still has one surprise in store when the true purpose of the peace delegation is revealed.

Lambdin takes obvious pleasure in Lewrie’s debauchery and sheer audacity, as he ably rises above his social weaknesses to lead British Jack Tars into battle in the King’s sea service.



US HARDCOVER | 368 PAGES | \$25.95

DEWEY LAMBDIN

Stormy passage ...

“After I flunked out of UT-K (University of Tennessee at Knoxville) spectacularly, one of my instructors at Cumberland University ... said I should consider getting into the behind-the-camera side of screenwriting ...”

Dewey Lambdin’s journey to writing the popular Alan Lewrie Naval Adventures took him across rough, often stormy seas strewn with obstacles that would have deterred many would-be authors.

With the latest Lewrie novel, *The Baltic Gambit*, about to be launched in February, Lambdin described the passage that led to the creation and development of British naval officer Alan Lewrie in this interview with *Quarterdeck*:



Dewey Lambdin

What led you to a life as a novelist?

Drink and bad companions! Along with too much free time during a couple of stints of unemployment: one in Memphis in 1981, when I tried to write *The King’s Coat* the first time, before a new place as production manager at WPTY-TV; and a second in 1988 after the ad agency in Nashville I worked for went as belly-up as a dynamited bass. I’d always diddled with the idea, anyway, and wrote a lot in my spare time, playing with writing since I was ten or eleven.

Did anyone encourage you to write?

A couple of English teachers at Castle Heights Military Academy, who assigned me a lot of themes, essays, book reports and history reports, and said I had a flair. An English professor at the University of Tennessee, who submitted one of my essays for the *Theme Vault*, where it was published, and later ended up in a textbook. After

DEWEY LAMBDIN

I flunked out of UT-K (University of Tennessee at Knoxville) *spectacularly*, one of my instructors at Cumberland University (where I was getting my grades up) said I should consider getting into the behind-the-camera side of screenwriting for film and television. Then there was the head of the F & TV (film and television) department at Montana State, who assigned me a lot of writing projects, including my writing an original screenplay for my senior studio directing project.

Were you a reader in your early years?

My dad taught me the alphabet and fundamental reading when I was about four, so I was reading my own comic books and childrens' books when we were on Guam in 1949. I'd read cereal boxes, if nothing else was available! Being a guy, though, I was drawn to war toys and war stories. The fiction might have been beyond my innocent (hah!) sensibilities, but histories and nonfiction about the World Wars, the War Between the States, and the American Revolution could always get me, and I would load up on paperbacks when we'd do our once-a-month shopping trip to Knoxville. They kept me rapt, and *quiet*, which pleased my mother. Later on, more adult humor books, westerns and sci-fi captured my interest. And there were things like *Peyton Place* and the "racy" stuff that outraged our little Baptist community, that we *all* tried to read on the sly.

How is a new Lewrie novel, say *Baltic Gambit*, conceived?

From the research and a rough *curriculum vitae* that I drew up long ago. Lewrie's last adventure, *Troubled Waters*, was in the summer and fall of 1800, and 1801 was coming up, so it was natural that the next big naval event in history was the Battle of Copenhagen, and I began to read up on what happened. A friend loaned me Dudley Pope's *The Great Gamble: Nelson at Copenhagen*. I based my research on that, and it formed the outline of what Lewrie would be doing.

I attended a writer's roundtable at

"I work best, and my editors and publishers kind of insist on it, if I do a seven- or eight-page outline to please them, and work from that."

the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, one year where Bernard Cornwell was the guest speaker on historical fiction. He said that it was the real events that drove the plot, and the battle was the climax. What he did, and what I do, is find *where* in the lead-up to the grand events one wishes to start, and what Sharpe or Lewrie is doing – on the march or on passage. Sharpe has his worries and cares, and Lewrie has screw-ups to handle from his past or new ones to make.

Do you plan out an entire novel before you begin to write?

I've tried, a time or two, to just wake up with an idea in my head and sit down and start to type, and most times I end up with two hundred to three hundred pages of "Where is this going?" I work best, and my editors and publishers kind of insist on it, if I do a seven- or eight-page outline to please them, and work from that. The outline will reflect the research, and the actual historical events, and everything else involving Lewrie and his sins and misadventures is *roughly* laid out, as well. That's not to say that during the procedure of writing that he'll not forge his *own* way down the path.

How do you prepare yourself to "time travel" back to Lewrie's world when you're writing?

The history books and biographies that I use for research will put me in a "yore" frame of mind, to begin with. Then, it also helps to go back and re-read one of the previous novels to put me into the era. Sometimes, reading something contemporary by Fielding, Smollett or Cleland gets my brain working in an eighteenth century English syntax and word pattern. Immersing myself in all of that, the fantasizing, day dreaming and head-plotting, with significant dialogue with myself will usually get me ready to dip back into the past.

Would you have liked to have lived during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries?

DEWEY LAMBDIN

Someone once said that sheer terror is what happens to *you*, whilst grand adventure is what happens to some *other* idiot, *way over there*. Any sort of action adventure novel, from Clancy to Marryat to Forester to O'Brian, or me, is a fantasy of derring-do. A reader can sink into them, whether it's sci-fi or historical, space opera like David Weber's Honor Harrington series, or Cornwell's Richard Sharpe series, and, for a time, escape the mundane world and be *alongside* a hero.

The reality, however, is something else. When I write a Lewrie adventure I *am* in the eighteenth century, and, frankly, that's about as close as I wish to get. Think of it! No dentists, medical knowledge little better than the Greeks or Romans, no FDA, and suspect victuals. Step on a rusty nail or get wounded by a wood splinter, and if you *didn't* lose an arm or leg to the surgeon, you died of gangrene or lock-jaw. People stank, the cities stank; no central heat and air; no bathing. And, there's the horrid possibility that one wouldn't be the hero, just a spear-carrier, a commoner, a day laborer with no money, and locked in a class system that was brutal to anyone not of "the quality." I would still be *me*, without two pence to rub together, "as broke as a convict," as my grandmother Ellison used to say, chubby, balding and aging. Very few princesses actually kiss the toad.

What can you tell us about Lewrie's latest adventure, *The Baltic Gambit*?

It begins in early January of 1801, just after the Act of Union with Ireland. Lewrie has had a continuing legal problem, which will be

resolved, though in a very unpredictable way. He's free, but he's had to give up command of the *Savage* frigate, and it doesn't look like he'll get another.

He's beached in London. His wife still despises him, and he's lodging at his father's Madeira Club, and feeling very tempted. There's the Cossack girl from Wigmore's circus, Eudoxia Durschenko (and her terrifying father, Arslan), an exclusive new brothel in Pantons Street, a brace of Russian nobles, and an Irish girl named Tess. The Russians, the

"Someone once said that sheer terror is what happens to you, whilst grand adventure is what happens to some other idiot, way over there."

Swedes, the Prussians and the Danes, at the Tsar's pressure, have formed an Armed League of Neutrality to bar British trade in the Baltic, and Tsar Paul has seized over three hundred merchant ships and their crews, and marched the men to Siberia at the start of winter. Something will have to be done about it, a fleet must be sent to the Baltic to squash the League before the ice melts in the spring and all those new enemy fleets combine. Lewrie *will* get a new frigate, *will* go

to the Baltic, and run into an officer he always thought was a good friend aboard, who will sadly surprise him. It culminates in the Battle of Copenhagen, Maundy Thursday of April, 1801. It's Lewrie at his randy, rowdy best.

Can you give us a brief preview of the next(16th) book in the series, *King, Ship and Sword*?

King, Ship and Sword will likely be a February 2010 release. In October of 1801, HMS *Thermopylae* and Lewrie are blockading the island Texel off the Dutch coast, damned boresomely, when Lewrie learns that the war is over. The Peace of Amiens has been ratified between Great Britain and France. A few weeks later his frigate is ordered to Sheerness on the Medway to be paid off and laid up in ordinary (out of commission). By mid-December, he's in London, at the Admiralty, completing the process. What's he going to do with himself? Go home to Anglesgreen, the wife and children, just in time for Christmas? But *for how long* before the war breaks out again, as he and many others are sure it will? A year or two with his wife, who despises him?

Like porcupines making love, it's rather prickly! Then, in the summer of 1802, there's a trip to Paris, the lair of the enemy, a second honeymoon reconciliation – just in time to piss Napoleon Bonaparte, run into an old mistress, Phoebe Aretino, the French spy Claudia Mastandrea, the fiery Creole New Orleans patriot Charité de Guilléri, and his life-long nemesis, *Capitaine de Vaisseau* Guillaume Choundras! He and his wife have to flee to

DEWEY LAMBDIN

Calais for their lives, with the help of a clever, swashbuckling, bigger-than-life character.

And once the war breaks out again in May, 1803, he's back at sea in a 38-gun fifth-rate frigate, HMS *Reliant*, and off for the West Indies, the Gulf of Mexico, the Louisiana Territory once more, and the Mississippi River delta as part of a small squadron to pursue a French squadron with a specific mission. The fun stuff, the identity of the people he meets, I'll wait for readers to find out.

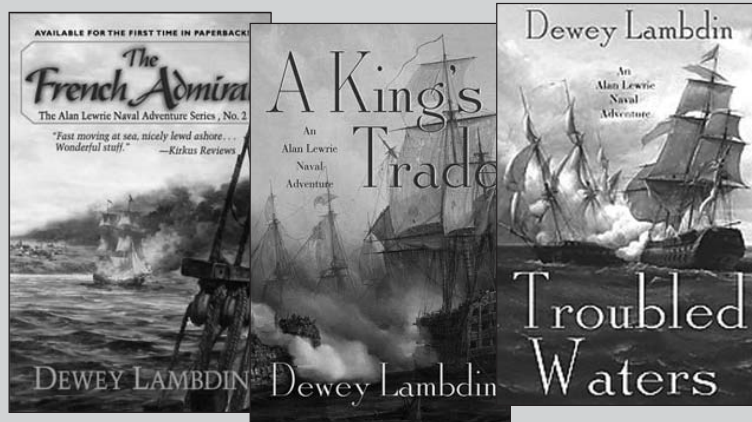
Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?

I'd like to tell them how grateful I am that people still buy my novels, and *seem* to enjoy them. I have had a great run at writing, since *The King's Coat* came out in 1989. Writing the Alan Lewrie series is the most fun a man can have, sitting upright at a typewriter in a bathrobe. I sometimes have to take a second look in the mirror to assure myself that, yeah, I'm that guy lucky enough to live my life. I can only hope and pray that it continues 'til I've run out of ideas, or the Napoleonic Wars come to an end and there's nothing more for Lewrie to do, for he's not the sort cut out for a peaceful life, a boresome one, to be frank, a *domestic* one.

I'd also like to say that it's grand to hear from people who like my books, and that though I'm not computer literate by any means, I still can respond to good, old-fashioned snail-mail, if they care to write me at 141 Neese drive, #G-20, Nashville, TN 37211.

Clear decks, and up spirits!

ALAN LEWRIE NAVAL ADVENTURES



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- 2 - *The French Admiral* ... \$17.95 | Trade Paperback
- 3 - *The King's Commission* ... \$7.99 | Mass Market Paperback
- 4 - *The King's Privateer* ... \$6.99 | Mass Market Paperback
- 5 - *The Gun Ketch* ... \$17.95 | Trade Paperback
- 6 - *HMS Cockerel* ... *McBooks Press edition available in April.*
- 7 - *A King's Commander* ... \$17.95 | Trade Paperback
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- 15 - *The Baltic Gambit* ... \$25.95 | Hardcover

DAVID DONACHIE

A Brit at Heart

“I don’t think it is appreciated in the USA that nowhere in the UK is more than one-hundred miles from the sea.”

British novelist David Donachie – Scottish by birth – lives and writes historical fiction in Deal, along England’s eastern English Channel coastline. The latest title in his John Pearce naval series, set in the period of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, *The Admiral’s Game*, was recently released; as was the third title in his Republic Trilogy, written as Jack Ludlow, *The Gods of War*.

Donachie discusses his approach to writing sea fiction and where his historical fiction is headed in this interview with *Quarterdeck*:



David Donachie

Did your early years in Edinburgh influence your literary pursuits?

Hard to tell. I don’t think it is appreciated in the USA that nowhere in the UK is more than one hundred miles from the sea, and Edinburgh is on the coast with its own long sandy beach, and had, when I was a lad, a working port in the suburb of Leith. There was, as well, a naval station at Rosyth, which at one time housed the battlecruisers of the 1914-18 Grand Fleet. Both my older

brothers were in the Merchant Marine, and I was always looking at maps to see where they were, so I guess the sea meant more to me than most youngsters in the city. But to be truthful, it probably owes more to my reading in later life – C.S. Forester, for instance. Also, maritime history is built into the DNA of we Brits – we remember when the atlas was mostly pink, and we know we owed that to the Royal Navy.

DAVID DONACHIE

No armed service is held in higher regard.

Did you read at an early age? To what sort of stories were you drawn?

Mr Midshipman Easy by Frederick Marryat and *Coral Island* by R. M. Ballantyne. I was also very taken with a prose version of the *Iliad* & *The Odyssey*. Great stories all, which is what I wanted to read. What I like most is to be acknowledged as that, a storyteller, though not in the same class as Homer.

What initially motivated you to write your first novel?

I was once asked that question on a radio show and I replied, given I have had more jobs than birthdays, “Desperation! I’ve tried everything else.” In reality, I sat down to write a radio play set in a London prison called Wormwood Scrubs – the idea of novel writing never entered my head, but I penned the word “Wormwood,” and then carried on to say, “It has to be admitted that Wormwood is a strange name for a naval officer, given ships are made of wood and their greatest enemy is worm.” Thirty days later I had a four-hundred-page novel. That was bought by a publisher, but, having acquired an agent, and been told he could get me a three-book deal, we sent it to everyone in London. No one wanted it, and neither, after it had been flogged round the houses, did the original editor. That novel, a sea story by the way, remains unpublished after eighteen years.

What was the driving force behind your Privateersman Mysteries, fea-

turing Harry Ludlow?

Desperation again! I had discovered that I could pen a novel, but I had turned down my first offer, so I set out, at the instigation of the same agent, to write two books. One was set backstage in the theatre, where I had worked on and off for twenty years. It was full of technical detail and involved the murder of someone I dearly would love to have bumped

*“No one bought
the first novel
based on my work
... Lesson for bud-
ding authors: write
about what you
like, not about
what you know!”*

off in real life. The second book was based on a very bad TV script I had written, really about the Ludlow brothers. But the notion was discussed that no one had ever done a crime series set in the Wooden World.

The result was *The Devil’s Own Luck*, with a murder set aboard a 74-gun ship. No one bought the first novel based on my work. Macmillan went for the second as soon as they read it. Lesson for budding authors: write about what you like, not about what you know!

Why did you write the Nelson & Emma Trilogy: *On a Making Tide*, *Breaking the Line*, and *Tested by Fate*?

Because no one had ever done it, which I have to say amazed me. England’s greatest hero and a man so written about that the number of books would sink his favourite ship, HMS *Agamemnon*. And what a story! Unprepossessing pint-sized son of a vicar rises to become Britain’s greatest admiral, loved by the people, a bane to his superiors, a champion to his men, and the warrior who kept Napoleon caged on land. It is easy to see now that a French invasion of England would have been near impossible, and Earl St. Vincent was right when he stood up in Parliament and said, “I do not say the French cannot come, I merely say they cannot come by sea.” But the public were nervous, and Trafalgar removed that fear. It was also a way to get behind the Nelson myth: there are those so besotted with that they behave as if their hero had no bodily functions. Nelson was not a saint, just a great man and a brilliant commander. What a hero, but vain and, while tremendously competent at sea, an onshore ditherer – a more complex man than the worshippers allow and irresistible as a subject for a book. It was going to be solely about Nelson, but what I did discover was this: you cannot in fiction leave out a major character like Emma Hamilton until Book 2. So I read up on her, and she was such a fascinating subject that I had to take her on from the beginning. Poor Emma is much maligned in history, but she was not only beautiful, she was clever, and there is no

DAVID DONACHIE

doubt Nelson adored her. His family, not least his miserable Parson brother, behaved appallingly to her and Nelson's love-child Horatia after Trafalgar. He, who had only been to sea once and disliked it, got an Earldom plus pension in perpetuity of £9000 a year, and he refused to give her a penny. If history sees her as foolish, think of the desperation of having no money and a small child to raise in the eighteenth century. The Nelson family could have taken care of her with ease; they did not, and neither did the British Government.

Would you have enjoyed living a life at sea during Nelson's time?

I doubt it, for as the philosopher Thomas Hobbes said, life was nasty, brutish and short. It was also damned uncomfortable: even admirals suffered from too long at sea and they had ample space. Captains likewise, but it went downhill from there all the way to a regulation fourteen inches (for Jack Tars) in a world that was usually damp, must have stank like a cesspit, one which had only a single overriding virtue: for the poor and uneducated it was better than life ashore. Imagine being on blockade off Brest for months on end. The food was indifferent and very bad for the men who ate it, while the treatment for everyday ailments was primitive: wounds were another matter altogether. If you have read the book on medicine in Nelson's time you will wonder how any of them survived. It was also a world of perpetual motion: anyone who has ever been in a trawler at sea will have some idea of the kind of permanent movement,

NEW NAVAL FICTION

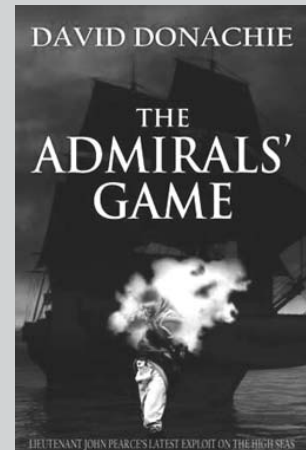
The Admirals' Game

By David Donachie

Since being illegally press-ganged into joining King George's Navy, John Pearce has overcome numerous adversities, which have secured him a position of command on board HMS *Faron*. Having successfully overcome the French at the Siege of Toulon, Pearce and his comrades, the Pelicans, now face the ongoing, bloody battle to defend the port.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Pearce's continuing conflict with Captain Ralph Barclay, the man responsible for press-ganging Pearce and his companions into the Navy, intensifies as Barclay faces a court martial for his actions. But with Barclay's superiors, Admiral Lord Hood and Admiral Hotham, in dispute over how to deal with Barclay's misgivings and with his wife, Emily, struggling to cope with his barbarous nature, Barclay's future looks uncertain. Pearce's hope for retribution may occur sooner than he anticipated, but would it be to his advantage?

As Pearce confronts assaults from both the French and from his superiors, it becomes clear that he and his comrades are part of a large and potentially fatal plan, where war becomes a calculated game to be won.



UK Hardcover | 288 pages | \$29.95

John Pearce Novels

**1 - *By the Mast Divided*
(Unavailable at this time.)**

**2 - *A Shot Rolling Ship*
UK Trade Paperback | 360 pages | \$9.95**

**3 - *An Awkward Commission*
UK Trade Paperback | 360 pages | \$15.95**

**4 - *A Flag of Truce*
UK Hardcover | 416 pages | \$39.95**

DAVID DONACHIE

damp and endless noise that sailors lived with in the eighteenth century. That they stood it and seemed to enjoy it says a great deal about historical expectations. And yet the chronicles of the time talk of something better: of deep comradeship, of the chance of prize money, of seeing exotic places and engaging in battle with gusto, of pride in their ship, fleet and country. If I could have the latter without some of the former I would have loved it. And there is that special thing: even today, people who have served at sea have an affection for the life, which never, ever fades.

Firebrand John Pearce has come far in a short time following after being pressed in the Royal Navy, and it is only 1793 as *The Admiral's Game* opens. There is much to accomplish for Pearce in the years to come. Do you envision his career far into the future, or over a matter of months at a time?

When I sold the first John Pearce, I was asked how many novels the series might run to and answered, in an offhand way, around twelve. I was recently reminded of this and pointed out that we have set five books in the first year of a 22-year conflict (with a short pause), and having said that I leave your readers to do the math. There never has been another war, where a youngster could begin as a 13-year-old midshipman and end it as a senior captain, perhaps even an admiral.

The Royal Navy fought battles worldwide over five oceans in which individuals had to act independently of authority and live with the consequences of their errors, as well as the

plaudits that might come with success. It terms of stories there is an abundance, not a dearth.

For me, the story of John Pearce is continuous, in reality just one big book split into parts. It was very like that with the Privateersman books: each story tended to pick up at a very near point to where the last one finished.

With John Pearce I have a whole life laid out inside my head – full of ups and downs – and naturally the time must come when he decides on his future at sea as well as other mat-

“There never has been another war, where a youngster could begin as a ... midshipman and end as a senior captain, perhaps even an admiral.”

ters pertaining.

But I am also following other characters: Ralph and Emily Barclay, Midshipman Toby Burns (a coward so adept at appearing heroic), the slimy Cornelius Gherson, the Pelicans still living. And there are surprises there.

There is so much to write about I cannot see it ending – and I think at one book a year I may expire before the story.

What can you tell us about *The Admiral's Game*, without spoiling the plot for readers?

John Pearce wants something; his superiors have it and are prepared to manipulate him to get things their way. First he must go to Villefranche, on an apparently simple mission, then to Tangier, stopping on the way at Naples and encountering Emma Hamilton. The desire of the Pelicans to get free is still strong, while Ralph Barclay is still troubled both in his career hopes and his marriage. Toby Burns is given the task of leading men into battle: how will he cope? And admirals? Are they concerned for the men they lead, or their own reputations?

What is on Pearce's immediate horizon, following *The Admiral's Game*?

A return to England, a crisis in his life and thinking, a sight of the deepest barbarity of the French Revolution and a realization that his regard for Emily Barclay is stronger than he thought. But he has the ruin of Ralph Barclay in his sights, and freedom for his Pelicans. Will it all go wrong?

The Republic Novels, a trilogy written under your pen name Jack Ludlow, are now complete with the launch of *The Gods of War*. Do you have a new Jack Ludlow project in process?

Yes, set in the eleventh century, featuring Norman knights and beginning with a book called *Mercenaries*. Forgive me if I don't say more, but to do so is to give away a tremendous story. I will happily write about

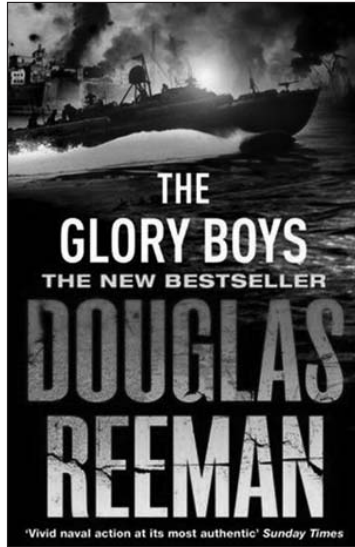
RECENTLY LAUNCHED

NAVAL FICTION

The Glory Boys

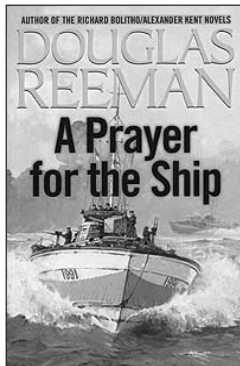
By Douglas Reeman

Already a veteran and survivor of close action in the English Channel and North Sea, Bob Keaton is ordered to the Mediterranean and beleaguered Malta in 1943. He is given charge of a newly formed flotilla of motor torpedo boats. Keaton's is a new war of stealth, subterfuge, and daring, in which the "Glory Boys" are only too expendable. Not published in the US, this new Douglas Reeman novel is a British import.

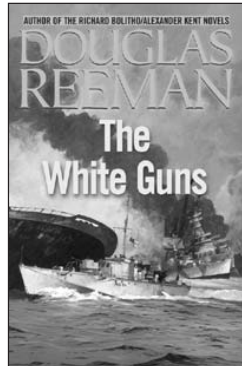


UK Hardcover | 312 pages | \$49.95

Also available ...



A Prayer for the Ship
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The White Guns
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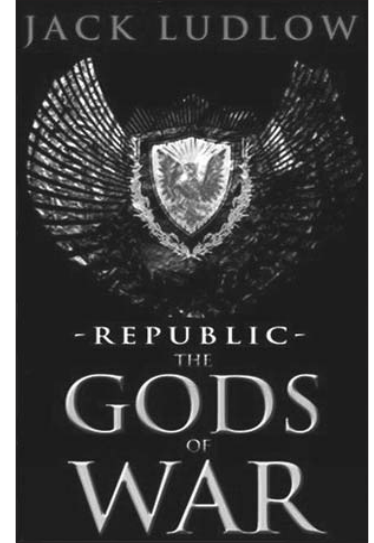
Visit Douglas Reeman online at
www.douglasreeman.com.

HISTORICAL FICTION

3 - The Gods of War

By Jack Ludlow

Lucius Falerius is dead, and Rome mourns the passing of its most powerful senator. It falls to his young son, Marcellus, to carry out his father's legacy and restore the rights promised to the defeated Sicilian slaves, yet there are those who will not see the honor of Rome compromised and the slaves assuaged. On the Roman border provinces there is trouble, and the legions move north to neutralize the threat posed by the Celts. The confederation of Celtic tribes is united under one chieftain, the formidable Brennos.



UK Hardcover | 365 pages | \$29.95

Also available ...



1 - The Pillars of Rome
UK Mass Paperback | 524 pages | \$17.95



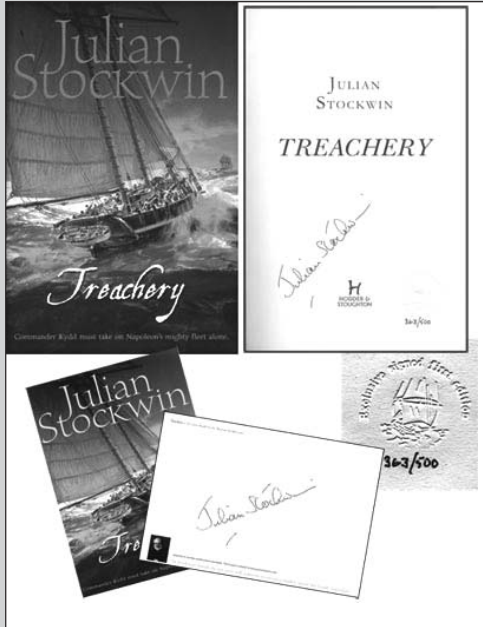
The Sword of Revenge
UK Mass Paperback | 368 pages | \$15.95
UK Hardcover FE | 368 pages | \$34.95
Signed by the Author (While supplies last.)

RECENTLY LAUNCHED

COLLECTIBLE EDITION

Treachery

By Julian Stockwin



McBooks Press is pleased to offer a small number of a special, limited-edition, signed and numbered set of Julian Stockwin's *Treachery*. The set includes the UK first edition, which is signed by the author, embossed and numbered on the title page. Also included is a signed commemorative postcard and a gold-on-black leather bookmark. These sets are strictly limited to 500.

Please be aware that this book has different titles in the United States and the United Kingdom. McBooks Press publishes the ninth volume of the Kydd series in a handsome US edition for \$24.00 under the title *The Privateer's Revenge* (see page 5). Hodder & Stoughton publishes the same volume in the UK under the title *Treachery*.

We are offering a small number of UK first editions sets to collectors of Julian Stockwin's works. The illustration above shows the book cover; the signed, numbered, and embossed title page; an enlarged detail of the embossing; and both sides of the signed commemorative postcard. The leather bookmark isn't shown.

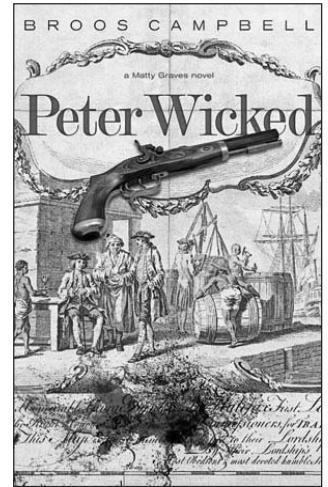
UK Hardcover First Edition | 344 pages | \$59.95
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NAVAL FICTION

3 - Peter Wicked

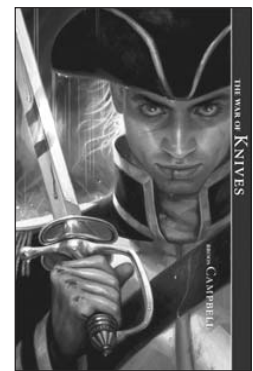
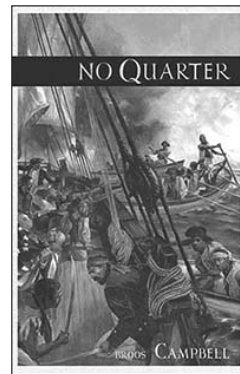
By Broos Campbell

United States Navy Lieutenant Matty Graves is still recovering from his ordeal during the slave rebellion in the French colony of Saint-Domingue when he is ordered to Washington to answer questions about the death of his former captain. On home soil he must deal with the mystery and shame surrounding his birth, as well as the attractions of his best friend's sister. But when he's offered a command of his own, he seizes the opportunity to make a name and fortune for himself – even if it means destroying those closest to him.



Hardcover | 272 pages | \$23.95
Signed by the Author
 (while supplies last)

Also available ...



1 - No Quarter
Trade Paperback | 272 pages | \$16.95

2 - The War of Knives
Hardcover | 320 pages | \$23.95

SIMON SCARROW - HISTORICAL FICTION

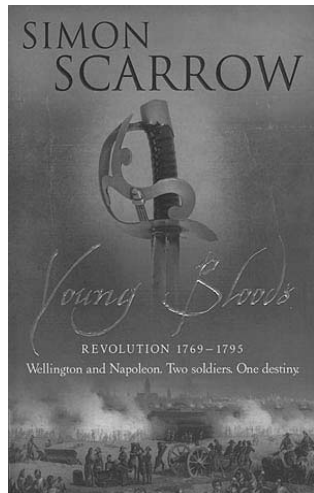
WELLINGTON & NAPOLEON

ROMAN LEGION SERIES

1 - Young Bloods

Arthur Wesley (aka Wellesley) was born and bred to be a leader. With a firm belief that a nation must be led by a king, red-coated British officer Wesley throws himself into serving his country and heads for battle against the French Republic.

Napoleon Bonaparte joins the French military on the eve of the Revolution. When anarchy explodes in Paris, the young artillery officer is thrust into the forefront of a revolutionary army poised to march against Britain.

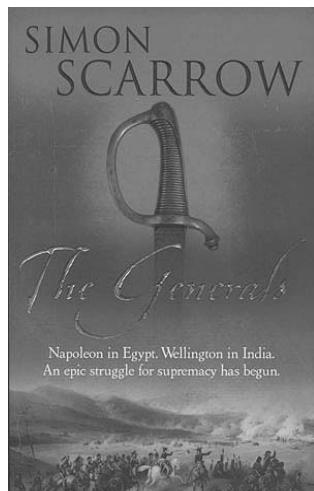


Trade Paperback | 597 pages | \$19.95

2 - The Generals

In the the turbulent aftermath of the French Revolution, Napoleon Bonaparte is accused of treachery and corruption. His reputation is saved by his skill in leading his men to victory in Italy and Egypt. Wellesley, in India, leads vast armies against a series of powerful warlords in campaigns that will result in the creation of the Raj. The future Duke of Wellington returns to

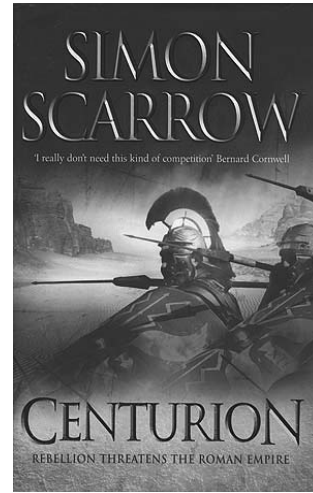
England a hardened veteran and more determined than ever to end France's domination of Europe.



Trade Paperback | 629 pages | \$19.95

8 - Centurion

A gripping new novel featuring Roman army officers Macro and Cato on their most dangerous mission yet. In the first century AD the Roman Empire faces a new threat from its long-standing enemy Parthia. Parthia is vying with Rome for control of Palmyra, an officially neutral kingdom. Palmyra's royal household is on the brink of open revolt, and so a task force under the command of experienced soldiers Macro and Cato is dispatched to defend its king and guard its borders.



Trade Paperback | 533 pages | \$19.95

Roman Legion Novels ...

1 - Under the Eagle

Trade Paperback | 256 pages | \$14.95

2 - The Eagle's Conquest

Hardcover | 320 pages | \$14.95

3 - When the Eagle Hunts

Trade Paperback | 2288 pages | \$14.95

4 - The Eagle and the Wolves

Trade Paperback | 320 pages | \$14.95

5 - The Eagle's Prey

Trade Paperback | 308 pages | \$14.95

6 - The Eagle's Prophecy

US Hardcover | 502 pages | \$24.95

7 - The Eagle in the Sand

UK Mass Paperback | 512 pages | \$21.95

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Julian Stockwin, would soon release his first novel, *Kydd*. The novel – like the Patrick O’Brians – would featured Geoff Hunt cover art. Stockwin’s debut was a resounding success and the tenth title in the series, *Invasion*, will be published in October.

The launch of new titles was a special occasion, which was much anticipated by readers. *Bowsprit’s* scope widened and readership grew with each issue. Keeping readers updated on publication dates for new novels and related volumes of naval history was a joy for an old journalist. As new shipments from publishers arrived, were processed and dispatched to readers around the world, Tall Ships Books continued to grow.

As the years passed, there were plenty of ups and downs within the publishing world that affected our nautical fiction niche. Major publishing houses seemed to focus more on mega-sellers, mostly nonfiction books like new fad diets or celebrity biographies. Along the way, a few nautical fiction authors were suddenly without a publisher, despite the fact that they had a solid core of readers. From the outside looking in, it appeared as though the “suits” or “bean counters” were making decisions, without regard for loyal readers.

About two years ago, Amy and I decided to make a change in our lives and Tall Ships Books was absorbed by McBooks Press. Since then, *Quarterdeck* has continued, thanks to McBooks publisher, Alex Skutt.

In recent months, Alex and I have discussed the state of nautical fiction. Despite the worldwide economic situation, our consensus is that the genre is as strong as ever in terms of available titles and new authors being published. Indeed, there may be a greater number of nautical fiction authors today than when we took on Tall Ships Books.

Alexander Kent celebrated his 50th anniversary as a published author last June and is currently finishing a new Adam Bolitho novel, *In the King’s Name*, which is due out later this year. Stockwin and Lambdin continue to publish a new title in their series each year, while the O’Brians, Woodmans, Nelsons, and Dudley Popes remain in print. Woodman is presently writing a three-volume history of the British Merchant Navy.

New nautical fiction authors continue to abound, including Peter Smalley (Captain William Rennie and Lieutenant James Hayter novels), William C. Hammond (Cutler Family Chronicles), Bross Campbell

(Matty Graves novels), Michael Aye (The Fighting Anthonys) and S. Thomas Russell (featuring Royal Navy Lieutenant Charles Hayden).

In the months to come, there are more new titles on the way, like the recent standalone *Mutiny on the Bounty: A Novel* by award-winning author John Boyne or *The Antigallican* by Tom Bowling – not to mention new series titles. So don’t fret about a scarcity of new titles. Nautical fiction’s sails are full and there isn’t a lee shore on the horizon.

George Jepson

Over the Bar ...

We were saddened to learn that Colin White, Director of the Royal Navy Museum at Portsmouth and highly respected naval historian, died on 25 December 2008 after a brief illness.



Colin White

White is best known for his work on the life and letters of Horatio Nelson. His book, *Nelson - The New*

Letters was winner of the 2006 Distinguished Book Award, presented by the Society for Military History.

White was so closely identified with Nelson that the historian Andrew Roberts called him the admiral’s “representative on earth.”



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