



On Seas of Glory: Heroic Men, Great Ships, and Epic Battles of the American Navy

John Lehman

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In "On Seas of Glory" the U.S. Navy meets a storyteller worthy of its epic. John Lehman was Ronald Reagan's Secretary of the Navy, and the man most responsible for rejuvenating the service during the 1980s. Lehman here gives a sweeping narrative of the Navy, from the Revolutionary War to the present day, filled with the ships that dominated, equally titanic personalities, and the battles that made history. Lehman profiles naval greats -- from John Paul Jones and David Glasgow Farragut to Commodore George Dewey and FDR -- but also gives credit to the lesser-known sailors who have made the U.S. Navy the mightiest in the world. "On Seas of Glory" uses the diaries, memoirs, and letters of average sailors to reveal naval combat as though firsthand. A powder boy during the War of 1812 recalls running to fetch cartridges through torrents of blood; the letters of the author's own father show what it was like to survive kamikaze attacks off Okinawa at the close of World War II; and the bravery of naval pilot Tim Howard during Grenada proves the spirit of John Paul Jones is not dead. The sweeping narrative also highlights the warships that have dominated the seas of their day, and the battles in which they fought: "Constitution" vs. "Gurriere," Stephen Decatur's "United States" vs. "Macedonian," New Orleans, Manila Bay, Pearl Harbor, Inchon, and many more. Detailed battle maps illustrate actions great and small; woodcuts, paintings, and never-before-published photographs make war on the water still more vivid. Amid the smoke and fire, Lehman also makes an argument. He reminds us that the legends chronicled in these pages were real men and women, and that their heroism is no less needed today. With an insider's gusto and knowledge, he fights fiercely for the continuing importance of the Navy. Alfred Thayer Mahan, the intellectual godfather of the modern U.S. Navy, said that naval power exists not just to fend off the enemy but to smite him down. "On Seas of Glory" "On Seas of Glory" is the story of that smiting.

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