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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

by
Daniel C. Krummes, Director Emeritus
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

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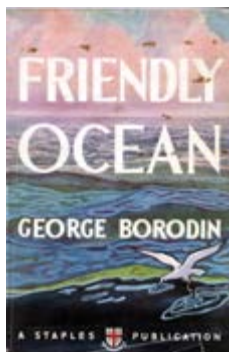
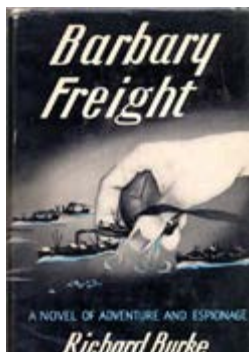
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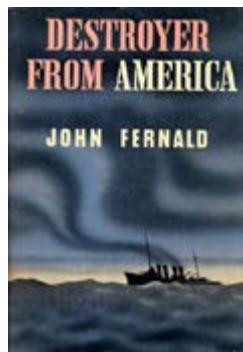
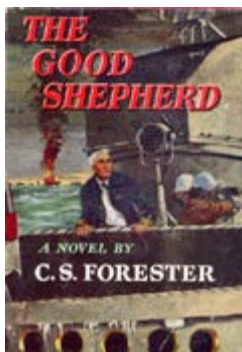
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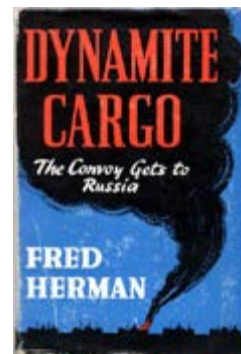
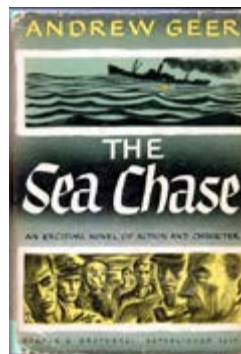
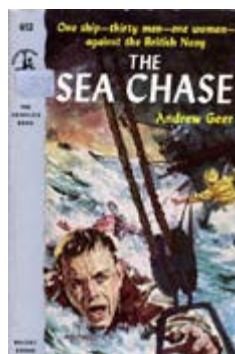
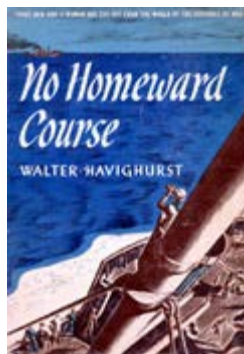
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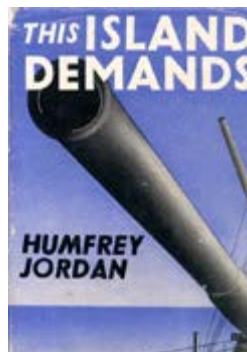
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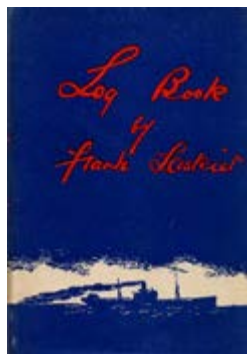
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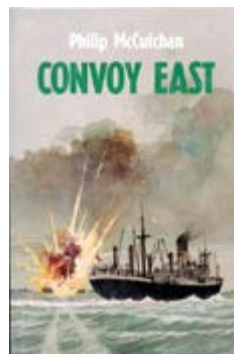
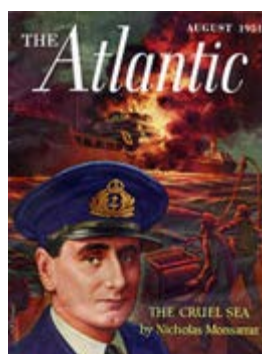
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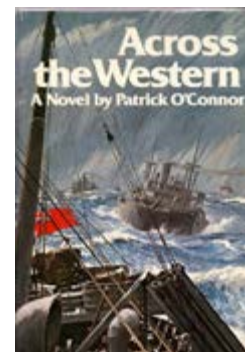
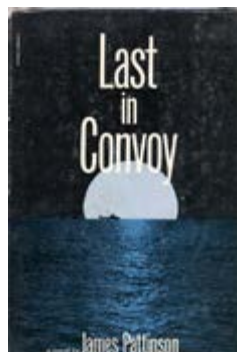
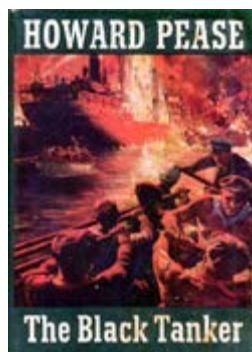
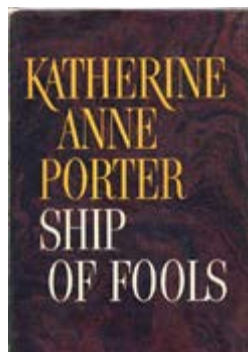
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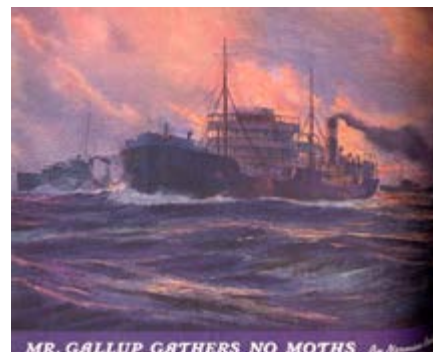
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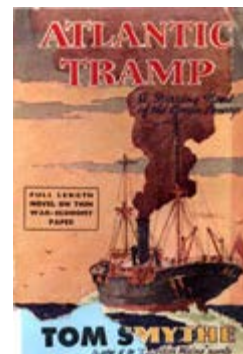
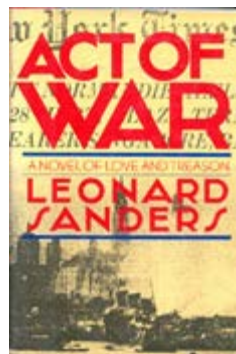
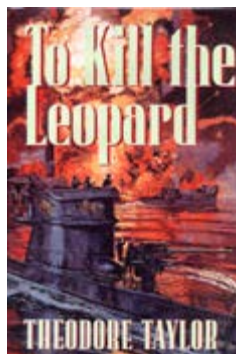
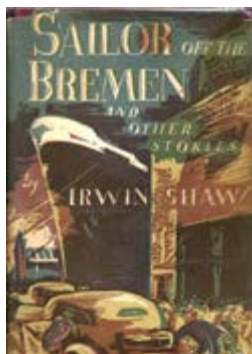
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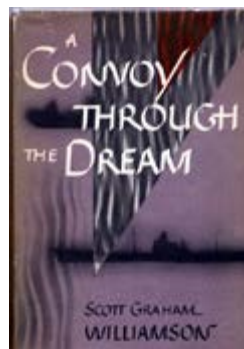
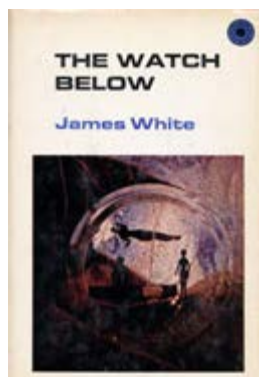
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"Sea Room for a Sailor." In: *Collier's Magazine*, vol. 111, no. 16, April 17, 1943, pp. 26 & 78-80. Illustrations by Percy Leason. [[Summary](#)]

"A Shift in Cargo." In: *Adventure Magazine*, vol. 108, no. 3, Jan. 1943, pp. 24-33. Illustrations by Gordon Grant. [[Summary](#)]

"Snoop Ship." In: *The Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 215, no. 11, Sept. 12, 1942, pp. 13, 38, 41-42, 44 and 46. Illustrations by Amos Sewell. [[Summary](#)]

"The Spy-Gazers." In: *Adventure Magazine*, vol. 110, no. 6, April 1944, pp. 110-119 & 159. Illustrations by Charles Dye. [[Summary](#)]

"Stars in his Head." In: *Adventure Magazine*, vol. 103, no. 3, July 1940, pp. 83-88 & 109-113. Illustrations by I.B. Hazelton. [[Summary](#)]

"Sub Conscious." In: *Collier's Magazine*, vol. 108, no. 14, Oct. 4, 1941, pp. 11-12 & 48-50. Illustrations by Hardie Gramatry. [[Summary](#)]

"Turtle Soup." *In: Collier's Magazine*, vol. 104, no. 26, Dec. 23, 1939, pp. 13, 54 & 56-57. Illustrations by Dan Sweeney. [[Summary](#)]

"Where we Aren't." *In: Liberty Magazine*, vol. 21, no. 35, Aug. 26, 1944, pp. 16-17, 60 & 62-64. Illustrations by Frank Godwin. [[Summary](#)]

Weidman, Jerome (1913-)

"Dummy Run." *In: The New Yorker*, vol. 19, no. 44, Dec. 18, 1943, pp. 24-28. Later published in *The Captain's Tiger* (New York, N.Y.: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947), pp. 60-71. [[Summary](#)]

The Hand of the Hunter. New York, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1951. 311 p. [[Summary](#)]

The Lights Around the Shore. New York, N.Y.: Simon & Schuster, 1943. 279 p. [[Summary](#)]

Wetjen, Albert Richard (1900-1948)

"A Deal's a Deal." *In: The Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 216, no. 34, Feb. 19, 1944, pp. 26-27, 58, 61, 63-64. Illustrations by Donald Teague. [[Summary](#)]

"The Extra Hand." *In: The Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 217, no. 24, Dec. 9, 1944, pp. 22-23, 56, 58 & 61. Illustrations by Donald Teague. [[Summary](#)]

"The Pleasure Is All Yours." *In: Liberty Magazine*, vol. 18, no. 29, July 19, 1941, pp. 12-14 & 55. Illustrations by Donald Teague. [[Summary](#)]

White, James

The Watch Below. London, Eng.: Whiting & Wheaton, 1966. 192 p. [[Summary](#)]

Williams, David (1931-)

Atlantic Convoy. London, Eng.: Cassell, 1979. 304 p. [[Summary](#)]

Williamson, Scott Graham

A Convoy through the Dream. New York, N.Y.: Macmillan Company, 1948. 278 p. [[Summary](#)]

Wilson, Sloan (1920-2003)

Ice Brothers: A Novel. New York, N.Y.: Arbor House, 1979. 517 p. [[Summary](#)]

Pacific Interlude. New York, N.Y.: Arbor House, 1982. 317 p. [[Summary](#)]

Voyage to Somewhere. New York, N.Y.: A.A. Wyn, 1946. 242 p. [[Summary](#)]

Wire, Harold Channing

"Big Day." In: *Maclean's*, vol. 56, no. 11, July 1, 1943, pp. 10-11, 48-49 & 65.
Illustrations by Harold Eldridge. [[Summary](#)]

Wolfe, Reese

"Coffin Ship." In: *Maclean's*, vol. 56, no. 5, Mar. 1, 1943, pp. 22-23, 32-34 & 36.
Illustrations by Charles Lasalle. [[Summary](#)]

"Sew-Sew Woman." In: *Adventure Magazine*, vol. 109, no. 3, July 1943, pp. 27-35. Illustrations by L. Sterne Stevens. [[Summary](#)]

"Slow Bell." In: *Adventure Magazine*, vol. 107, no. 6, Oct. 1942, pp. 51-63.
Illustrations by I.B. Hazelton [[Summary](#)]

Wood, James (1918-1984)

The Sealer. London, Eng.: Hutchison, 1959. 224 p. [[Summary](#)]

Woodman, Richard (1944-)

Dead Man Talking. London, Eng.: Severn House, 2002. 278 p. [[Summary](#)]

Worts, George F. (1892-)

"Five Who Vanished." In: *Collier's Magazine*, vol. 110, no. 52 - vol. 111, no. 9, Dec. 26, 1942 - Feb. 27, 1943, 10-part serial). Illustrations by Gilbert Darling. [[Summary](#)]

Five Who Vanished. New York, N.Y.: Robert M. McBride, 1945. 343 p.

Wynd, Oswald. (1913-1998)

The Forty Days. London, Eng.: Collins, 1972. 254 p. [[Summary](#)]

Y

Yaffe, James (1927-)

The Voyage of the Franz Joseph. New York, N.Y.: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1970. 448 p. [[Summary](#)]

Yonge, Roy

"Against the Clock." In: *Maclean's*, vol. 55, no. 17, Sept. 1, 1942, pp. 14 & 25.
Illustrations by Hedley Rainnie. [[Summary](#)]

Z

Zugsmith, Leane (1903-1969)

"Shangai to Manila." In: *The New Yorker*, vol. 17, no. 39, Nov. 8, 1941, pp. 15-17. [[Summary](#)]

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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

by
Daniel C. Krummes, Director
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

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<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/sfmystery/>

Finally, it should be noted that, unless otherwise indicated, the opinions expressed in this annotated bibliography are my own and do not represent those held by the Institute of

Transportation Studies or the Regents of the University of California.

Daniel C. Krummes, Director
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

Sept. 30, 2004

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Introduction

"How do you feel about the war, Sam?"

*"Well, sir, we got to win it. I been to countries that have met Hitler, and what I seen told me that we got to win it, and that **the merchant marine will do its part.**" - (fictitious) merchant mariner Sam Carter, as quoted in Richard Sale's 1943 short story, "Last Trip."*

The focus of this bibliography

This annotated bibliography looks at merchant shipping during the Second World War as depicted in English-language popular fiction. Included in the bibliography are short stories, novels and novellas, all of which were either published during the War (1939-1945) or in the nearly sixty years since its conclusion. The earliest citations come from 1939; the latest, 2004. All of the works cited in this bibliography are in English and were all published in the United States, Great Britain or Canada.

The works covered in the bibliography primarily reflect the civilian experiences of Allied (American, British and Canadian) merchant mariners and ship passengers, though a few examples of works presenting a German perspective have been located and included when published in English.

It should be emphasized that the bibliography's focus is civilian merchant shipping (and civilian merchant mariners), and *not* naval warfare. While a huge literature of popular fiction exists concerned with World War 2 naval life, naval espionage, naval engagements and sea battles, only a few of these works are included in this bibliography — and only when they are important towards understanding the role of merchant shipping during the War. Most, if not all, of the naval fiction included in the bibliography is concerned with the ocean-going convoy system made famous on the North Atlantic and also found on Indian and Pacific Oceans as well as Mediterranean Sea.

Why merchant shipping?

The civilian merchant marine, sometimes alternatively referred to as either the mercantile marine or the mercantile navy, was the transportation backbone of the Allied war effort. This was an era in which almost all transcontinental shipment of goods and transportation of passengers was waterborne. Civilian cargo ships (freighters), converted passenger vessels and a host of other types of ship transported foodstuffs, passengers, munitions and other essential supplies and equipment across all the world's oceans and linked the Allied nations into a cohesive fighting force.

The men who served as officers and crew aboard such vessels endured the most dangerous of wartime occupations. It was little known at the time and barely-remembered today that American, Canadian and British merchant mariners suffered the highest casualty rates of any

Allied forces, higher than soldiers, sailors or marines. Indeed, during the famed Battle of the Atlantic period alone 2,603 merchant ships were sunk on that ocean. Of Allied seamen, 30,248 lost their lives.

Merchant mariners and ocean-going shipping are today virtually absent from the public consciousness, due in no small part to the near total disappearance of the American and British merchant fleets. This was not the case during the first half of the 20th Century, a period when Britain had the largest merchant fleet in the world and the United States, likewise, boasted a large maritime industry which included shipbuilding as well as freight and passenger shipping.

Merchant mariners once played a much larger role in popular culture, particularly during the periods between the two World Wars, than they do today. They were often in the news (newspapers and radio in those days) as this or that ship effected a dangerous rescue at sea or perhaps when an elegant transatlantic liner set a new speed record. And the "romance" of a life at sea was an angle played up by dime novelists and bonafide literary talents alike, with vast quantities of steamship-related short stories, novels and novellas appearing each year in print.



Whether as officer or crew, though, civilian seagoing has never been regarded by the general populace as an entirely respectable career, certainly not one on par with professional naval career. Often looked down upon for their poor educations and rough, scandalous portside behavior ("scandalous" at least by the professed standards of the middle classes), merchant mariners were popularly viewed as somewhat shady characters who, because they could not adapt to the polite norms of civilized life, *had* to take up a life at sea.

World War 2 changed these attitudes, if only temporarily. Merchant mariners were still seen as rough and tough characters, but now they were popularly viewed and portrayed as rough and tough patriots doing their part – and a dangerous part it was – working with society in the overall War effort.

Why fiction?

Over the past sixty years World War 2-era merchant shipping has been dispassionately researched, documented and written up. Popular and academic works in the fields of history, sociology, psychology and dozens of other fields abound. Research has drawn heavily upon primary sources including official governmental narratives, studies and histories, shipping statistics, shipping line histories, economic studies, biographies, autobiographies and other works of non-fiction. The crucial role that civilian shipping played in the Allied victory is well-documented today as acknowledged historic fact.

One resource generally overlooked by those attempting to better understand Second World War merchant shipping (be they professional historian and layperson) is the realm of published fiction. Of particular note are those examples of so-called "popular" fiction which were written by contemporary authors in either direct response to the War (i.e., during the period 1939-1945) or later in somber, often angry reflection during the years following the cessation of hostilities. These works more often than not, consciously or subconsciously, capture the emotional tenor of the World War 2-era shipping milieu – how real (even if portrayed fictitiously) people thought and acted, what their emotions and beliefs were, in short, what it was like to be alive during those awful, dramatic (and often monotonous) days.

Popular fiction offers its audience an imaginative, often emotionally resonating take on the past. This is particularly true for the fiction profiled in this bibliography, much of which has long been forgotten as the public moved on to more current topics of interest (or abandoned the realm of popular fiction altogether for the mass media delights of television and the Internet). The genre's authors have been many and varied including exceptional talents (think Günter Grass or C.S. Forester, both of whom are represented in the following pages), paid-by-the-word hacks writing for pulp magazines and – the vast majority – competent professional writers.

Bibliography organization

This bibliography is arranged alphabetically by author, with annotations for each cited item.

Thematic content with reference to major works cited

The types of stories told, the basic premises and plots, the period detail employed and the formats in which such fiction originally appeared have varied considerably over time. One interesting way of comparing these works is to arrange them chronologically by date of publication.

Works published 1939-1945

These works were actually written during the Second World War, and encompass all war-related merchant marine / merchant shipping fiction published between Jan. 1, 1939 and Dec. 31, 1945.

Short stories account for most of the citations. This is a not surprising finding given that the 1930s and 1940s were an era in which popular weekly magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's* and *Liberty*, with weekly readership in the tens of millions, devoted many of their pages to popular fiction (including short stories, serials and novellas). A great many war-related merchant shipping stories soon found their way into these and other middle class targeted magazines.

Also to be reckoned with were garish pulp magazines such as *Adventure* or *Argosy* (the magazines were dubbed "pulp" because of the high pulpwood content of their paper pages, something which has rendered the paper brittle in the years since original publication). Writing published in the pulps was often (though not always) several pegs down the scale from the more polished works found in prestigious weeklies such as *The Saturday Evening Post*. Most pulps relied on fiction of a more sensational nature and targeted male readers (the exceptions being the pulp romance magazines aimed at a women's audience).

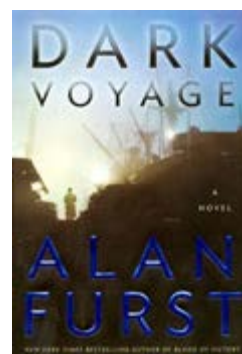
Most works written during this period emphasized the personal heroism and patriotism of Allied mariners. Realistic and graphic depictions of war-related violence at sea were downplayed and sanitized, much in the same manner in which such violence was depicted (or not depicted) in the Hollywood films of the era. Axis mariners and naval personnel are routinely depicted as sadistic and nefarious or dim-witted. Often morale-boosterism veered into propaganda.

Most of the works written during the period were not based upon first-hand experience, but rather relied upon the authors' imaginations, often coupled with background accounts of events as depicted in newspapers, magazines, radio and film.

Among the more interesting are such works as Kay Boyle's *"Frenchman's Ship"* (1942), Ray Bradbury's *"Undersea Guardians"* (1944), C.S. Forester's *The Ship* (1943), as well as multiple novels and short stories by James Hanley, Walter Havighurst, Humfrey Jordan, William Townend, Richard Howells Watkins and Albert Richard Wetjen. A personal favorite from the period: Tom Smythe's *Atlantic Tramp* (1942).

"First generation" works (published 1946-1965)

Novels dominate this era. Overall the works are more realistic, often portraying the horrors of war at sea in graphic detail. If war years sea fiction was about patriotism and bravery, the immediate postwar generation embraced realism. Most works now had a grim, gritty feel to them, evidencing a desire by their respective authors to tell it like it had been, with no



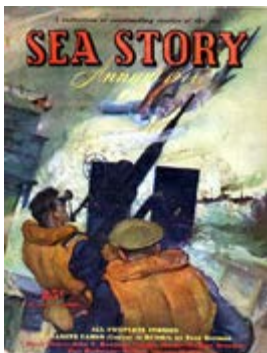
sugarcoating or varnishing of the nautical sea experience.

Many of the works are based upon actual first-hand experiences, and ring true emotionally. While heroism is still depicted, it is now tempered with a realization about the enormous costs (personal and societal) of war. Outstanding works of fiction during this period include U.S. Andersen's *The Smoldering Sea* (1953), C.S. Forester's *The Good Shepherd* (1955), Alistair MacLean's *H.M.S. Ulysses* (1955) and James Pattinson's *Last in Convoy* (1957). Towering over all is one of the masterpieces of World War 2 nautical fiction, Nicholas Monsarrat's gripping novel, *The Cruel Sea* (1951).

"Second generation" works (published 1966-1985)

The novels published during this time period run the gamut from the superb to the ridiculous. That all the works listed here are novels ties in clearly with the final demise of mass audience popular magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post*. The mass-audience short story had long been a mainstay of the popular magazine industry, and this type of fiction quickly faded into oblivion along with its host.

Many of the novels listed here were based upon the first-hand Second World War maritime experiences of their authors and these read "true," imparting to the reader a very real sense of what it was like to be a merchant mariner during the dark days of 1939-1945. The era produced what many consider to be both a masterpiece of nautical fiction and the masterpiece of World War 2 sea fiction: Jan de Hartog's *The Captain* (1966), a must read for anyone interested in the Battle of the Atlantic and in the human toll wreaked by the battle.



Other important novels from this time period include Brian Burland's *A Fall From Aloft* (1968), *The Bone Collectors* (1984) by Brian Callison and Antony's Trew's *Kleber's Convoy* (1973). Not surprisingly, all three deal with different aspects of North Atlantic and Murmansk Run convoy life.

Many other novels of this era are clearly so implausible and far-fetched that they add nothing to the reader's understanding of the War. This era seems to be the beginning of a genre of World War 2 popular fiction that can be best described as "toss in a famous person" (Winston Churchill seems to be a favorite) and have him (or her) interact with our hero or heroine (American author Herman Wouk was a master of the genre; pity he didn't really write any merchant shipping-related fiction!). In the merchant shipping realm one also encounters a variant of the genre: toss in our famous person and place him aboard a famous luxury liner such as the QUEEN MARY, QUEEN ELIZABETH or NORMANDIE, and toss in a Nazi plot or two. If you're into such beach blanket reading, you'll find a gem or two in this (and the succeeding) section.

"Third generation" works (published 1986 to present)

Merchant shipping-related fiction over the past nearly twenty years can be generally characterized as being richer in quantity than in fictional, emotional or psychological quality. Many of the novels included in this section (and nearly all World War 2 merchant shipping fiction written since the 1980s has been in the form of the novel) boast cardboard characters and increasingly implausible plots.

As first-hand memory and actual experiences in the Second World War have decreased, so, too, have emotional connections to the War. While today's authors may get their "facts" right (and strive mightily to demonstrate this to their readers), many are simply too distanced from the events of the Second World War to produce anything other than rather flat "historical fiction."

There are certainly exceptions, including the short stories of Emile Capouya, Edgar Cozarinsky's *The Emigré Hotel* (2001) and Alan Furst's evocative *Dark Voyage* (2004). Easily the most important work of this era is *Crabwalk*, Günther Grass' 2002 novel focusing on a horrific sea incident in the 1945 German evacuation of East Prussia.

Methodology / Bibliographic sources consulted

Formal research on this bibliography began in 1999 and remains ongoing. No earlier bibliographies on the topic have been located, nor have any repositories or libraries which actively collect World War 2-related merchant shipping fiction been identified.

Two major online bibliographic utilities aided greatly in the identification and location of materials: OCLC's *WorldCat* and the University of California's nine-campus *Mevyl Catalog*. An online version of the venerable *Reader's Guide to Periodicals* proved only marginally useful. Current (1995 to present) issues of the *New York Times Book Review*, *Publishers Weekly* and *The Times Literary Supplement* (London) were excellent sources for information on late 20th Century works (chiefly novels but also some short story collections). Scanning (in the traditional – and not computer – sense of the word) 1939-1945 hard-copy issues of the *Times Literary Supplement* for reviews of then-current novels and short story collections yielded many "finds" as well as serendipitous links to other works and authors that themselves led to additional works. The Internet version of *The Times Literary Supplement* (covering the period 1939-1990) also yielded important additional works.

Scanning popular weeklies and pulp fiction magazines published during the period 1939-1945 led to many of the citations found in this bibliography. I was able to locate and read through fairly complete World War 2 runs of *Collier's*, *Esquire*, *Liberty* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. More difficult to locate were wartime runs of popular pulps such as *Adventure* and *Argosy*.

Many works were found serendipitously during the course of many pleasurable hours spent browsing in second-hand bookshops located in Berkeley, Cincinnati, London (Ont.), Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Oakland, San Francisco, Seattle and the book-rich environs of the greater Washington (D.C.) metropolitan area.

I have read nearly all of the short stories, novels and novellas cited here. Many items came from my own personal collection, most others from either library collections of the nine-campus University of California system or through traditional interlibrary loans of materials. Several of the rarer books in this bibliography, unavailable through interlibrary loan, were located and read at the New York Public Library.



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Appendix 1

Time Line of World War-2 Related Merchant Shipping Fiction Arranged by Year of Publication

1932

The Voyage by Heinrich Herm
Obelists at Sea by C. Daly King

1933

The Shanghai Bund Murders by F. Van Wyck Mason

1934

Death Strikes at Six Bells by Gregory Baxter
Murder - Made in Germany by Franz Liepmann

1936

The Forgotten Fleet Mystery by Geoffrey Coffin
They Blocked the Suez Canal by A.D. Divine

1938

Midnight Sailing by Lawrence G. Blochman
"Athens to Marseilles" by Marjory Stoneman Douglas
"Passport to Nowhere" by Budd Schulberg

1939

"Tin-Can Sailor" by Allan R. Bosworth
"Salute!" by Borden Chase
Secret Ship: A Sea Novel by E. Keble Chatterton
"Maiden Voyage" by Carl Clausen
"Cargo to Wanping" by LaSelle Gilman
After This by Ryland Kent
"Rangoon Adventure" by Edison Marshall

"A Ton of Gold" by Frank Richardson Pierce
"Sailor off the Bremen" by Irwin Shaw
"Lady at Sea" by Sidney Herschel Small
Made in the U.S.A. by Hans Otto Storm
"Happy Ever After" by William Townend
And Now England by William Townend
"Turtle Soup" by Richard Howells Watkins

1940

And Sudden Death by Cleve Adams
Journey into Fear by Eric Ambler
"The Day's Catch" by William Arthur Breyfogle
"In Command" by William Arthur Breyfogle
Hollands Glorie by Jan de Hartog
Murder in the Submarine Zone by Carter Dickson
"Assignment to Danger" by Karl Detzer
Titanic: A Novel by Robert Friedlaender
"Last Voyage" by Walter Havighurst
"Home is the Sailor" by John Hawkins
"Steady As She Goes" by Royce Howes
Wreckers Must Breathe by Hammond Innes
"A Troubled Sea" by Peter B. Kyne
The Crew of the Anaconda by A.G. Macdonell
"The Middle Watch" by Jacland Marmur
"Salute to Youth" by Jacland Marmur
"Sea-Dog's Revenge" by George Masselman
"Danger Zone" by Blaine & Dupont Miller
"Keeper of the Light" by William Byron Mowery
The Beauty of the Ships by John Owen
"The Cruise of the Lola Montez" by Louis Paul
"Wings of Wrath" by Oscar Schisgall
"Lover's Touch" by Paul Schubert
"The Dark Hour" by Daniel Wilbur Steele
"Rendezvous" by William Townend
Fifth Column Family by William Townend
Sink and Be Damned by William Townend
"A Berth in Bermuda" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Blessed Event" by Richard Howells Watkins
"A Gift to the Nation" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Stars in His Head" by Richard Howells Watkins

1941

"A Day in Port" by Margaret Culkin Banning
"Comin' At You" by Chase Borden
"Short of War" by Allan R. Bosworth
Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol by R. Sidney Brown
"Why Trim a Christmas Tree?" by Everett Rhodes Castle
"The Last Present" by Grant Deachman
"Fog Patrol" by Karl Detzer
"Ten Thousand Miles from Denver" by Michael Foster
"The Captain Lays an Egg" by R.V. Gery
"Above the Convoy" by Fulton Grant
The Ocean by James Hanley
"Four Lives" by Walter Havighurst
"Hearts of Oak" by Walter Havighurst
No Homeward Course by Walter Havighurst
"Suicide Ship" by Walter Havighurst
"Convoy Captain" by John and Ward Hawkins

"Torpedo" by Richard Sale
"Fu Manchu and the Panama Canal" by Sax Rohmer
The Island of Fu Manchu by Sax Rohmer
"Quite a Special Occasion" by Royce Howes
Appleby on Ararat by Michael Innes
This Island Demands by Humfrey Jordan
"Last Ship Home" by Frank K. Kelly
"Action Off Para" by Jacland Marmur
The Sea and the Shore by Jacland Marmur
"A Lady at Heart" by Blaine & Dupont Miller
"The Ship That Failed" by James Norman
The Black Tanker by Howard Pease
"Destroyer Man" by "Quarterdeck"
"Mr. Gallup Gathers No Moths" by Norman Reilly Raine
"Ocean Convoy" by Lewis Anselm da Costa Ricci
"Cape Spectre" by Richard Sale
"Short Voyage Home" by Richard Sale
"Warhead" by Richard Sale
"The Sergeant and the Ship" by John W. Thomason
Life Boat: A Novel by Signe Toksvig
"Sub Conscious" by Richard Howells Watkins
"The Pleasure Is All Yours" by Albert Richard Wetjen

1942

"Ten Were Sunk" by "A Convoy Gunner"
"Red Sadie and the Rising Sun" by Paul Desresco Augsburg
"Frenchman's Ship" by Kay Boyle
"Coastal Diary" by "Boston Blackie"
"You Always Remember" by Allan R. Bosworth
"Aloha Means Good-By" by Robert Carson
"Smoke on the Horizon" by George Harmon Coxe
"Adrift" by Edward Horace Crebbin
"In Mid-Channel" by Edward Horace Crebbin
"One Night in June" by Edward Horace Crebbin
"The 'Porcupine'" by Edward Horace Crebbin
"Raider" by Edward Horace Crebbin
"Warden of the Zone" by Jock Cunningham
"Major McGee Goes to War" by R. Ernest Dupuy
"Destroyer from America" by John Fernald
"The Dumb Dutchman" by C.S. Forester
"Intelligence" by C.S. Forester
"Caribbean Patrol" by James Edward Grant
"Asking for Disaster" by Harvey Haislip
"First Command" by Walter Havighurst
"The Fof of March Fifteenth" by Durand Kiefer
"Ranzo Goes to War" by Peter B. Kyne
Log Book by Frank Laskier
"Seasoned in Sail" by Rolland Lynch
"Dutch Treat" by Jacland Marmur
The Second Engineer by Elliott Merrick
"Honeymoon Incorporated" by Phyllis Morris
Men Without Country by Charles Nordhoff & James Norman
Hall
"Black-out" by Howard Pease
"Slicker" by Frank Richardson Pierce
"Action at Sea" by Thomas H. Raddall
"Mr. Gallup Backs a Cockroach" by Norman Reilly Raine
"Nothing to Report" by Richard Sale
"I'll Never Go Back" by Oscar Schisgall

Atlantic Tramp by Tom Smythe
"Masters' Conference" by George Stern
"Too Old for Service" by William C. Torode
"The Death Ship" by William Towend
Red Ensign - White Ensign by William Townend
"Action Offshore" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Mates" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Morale in the Margie" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Snoop Ship" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Slow Bell" by Reese Wolfe
"Five Who Vanished" by George F. Worts
"Against the Clock" by George F. Yonge

1943

"Hell Afloat" by Eustace L. Adams
Men in the Same Boat by J.D. Beresford
"Survival!" by Max Brand
"Judas Ship" by William Arthur Breyfogle
"Auld Acquaintance" by F.R. Buckley
Barbary Freight by Richard Burke
"Landlubber" by George Carouso
"Nitro to Murmansk" by Robert Carse
"Knoll Island" by George Agnew Chamberlain
"So Many - All Alike" by Dale Clark
"Emergency Assignment" by B.E. Cook
"The Statue in the Fog" by Stanley F. Donath
"No Credit to Breezy" by Richard English
"The Admiral Gets an Assist" by Jonathan Fettes
Vanishing Ships by Philip M. Fisher
"Gratefully Yours" by T.T. Flynn
"Hurry-Up Charlie" by Kathryn Forbes
The Ship by C.S. Forester
"I'll See You Again" by Elizabeth Foster
Action in the North Atlantic by Guy Gilpatric
"The Needle" by Herbert Gutterson
"The Cruise of the Bundle" by James B. Hall
No Directions by James Hanley
Sailor's Song by James Hanley
"Bait" by Joseph Harrington
"Kootenai Passage" by Walter Havighurst
"Midnight Sailing" by Walter Havighurst
Dynamite Cargo: Convoy to Russia by Fred Herman
"Battle Stations" by James L. Hill
The Story of Dr. Wasell by James Hilton
"Lifeboat" by Alfred Hitchcock
"The Man Who Wasn't Decorated" by Terence Horsley
East of Farewell by E. Howard Hunt
"Scrimshanker Jones" by Guy Jackson
Decency of Hate by Humfrey Jordan
"Command Performance" by Jacland Marmur
"Hero's Son" by Jacland Marmur
"You Can't Know Anything About It" by Eyrie de Lanux
"The Anchor from Murmansk" by Ben Merson
"Convoy Weather" by Blaine Miller
"Record Catch" by Henry Norton
"Jungle Jailor" by Brian O'Brien
"Lagos Roads" by Brian O'Brien
"Purser's Progress" by Tom O'Reilly
"Cargo for Vladistock" by Frank Richardson Pierce

"The Enemy Sea" by Abraham Polonsky
"The Ghost Ship" by David Allan Ross
"Flight of the Wankus Bird" by Richard Sale
"Last Trip" by Richard Sale
"Faith at Sea" by Irwin Shaw
"Delivery at Sea" by Harold Francis Sorenson
"Fire Eater" by Stewart Sterling
"Petticoat Influence" by George Stern
"Ship in Convoy" by John Strachey
"Without Convoy" by John Rhodes Sturdy
"The Expert" by Samuel W. Taylor
I'm a Stranger Here Myself by Anthony Thorne
"Last Lap" by Millard Ward
"Girl Adrift" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Lagoon of Lost Command" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Sea Room for a Sailor" by Richard Howells Watkins
"A Shift in Cargo" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Dummy Run" by Jerome Weidman
The Lights Around the Shore by Jerome Weidman
"Big Day" by Harold Channing Wire
"Coffin Ship" by Reese Wolfe
"Sew-Sew Woman" by Reese Wolfe

1944

Dark Voyage by Hugh Addis
"Siesta on the High Seas" by Edward Adolphe
"Mr. Angel Comes Aboard" by Charles Gordon Booth
"If I Must Die --" by Allan R. Bosworth
"The Ships Going to Glory" by Kay Boyle
Undersea Guardians by Ray Bradbury
"The Turncoat" by William Arthur Breyfogle
"The Childhood of Miss Churt" by F.R. Buckley
"Watch Below" by F.R. Buckley
"The Heart Returns" by Robert Carse
"Officer of the Day" by Donald Barr Chidsey
"Three Times and You're Out" by Donald Barr Chidsey
"Blow the Man Down" by Norbert Davis
"Bullets for the Bridegroom" by David Dodge
Some Follow the Sea by Gregor Felsen
"Nazis Is Mugs" by Jonathan Fettes
"Not for Glory" by Jonathan Fettes
"Sailor with Spurs" by Felix Flammonde (1944)
"Three Wise Men on a Raft" by Margaret Cooper Gay
"Monkey Business at Gibraltar" by Guy Gilpatric
"Mr. Glencannon Ignores the War" by Guy Gilpatric
"Repatriate" by Emily Hahn
"A Lesson in Knots" by Walter Havighurst
"Devil on His Tail" by John and Ward Hawkins
Day Without Evening by Humfrey Jordan
"The Girls of Tongatabu" by John Langdon
"The Carpenter Goes Home" by Frank Laskier
"Arctic Passage" by William Lynch
Very Ordinary Seaman by J.P.W. Mallalieu
"The Happiest Man" by Thomas Newman
"The Outcast" by Francis Parsons
"Victory of Dragons Reef" by Lyndon Ripley
"Bessie Arbruster Goes a Scuttlin'" by Ronald G. Sercombe
"Bessie Snags a Whoppersnapper" by Ronald G. Sercombe
Convoy Captain by Frank H. Shaw

"The Flame Tree" by Thelma Strabel
"Maitland's Reply" by John Rhodes Sturdy
"Court Ship" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Half a Jackass" by Richard Howells Watkins
"The Spy-Gazers" by Richard Howells Watkins
"Where We Aren't" by Richard Howells Watkins
"A Deal's a Deal" by Albert Richard Wetjen
"The Extra Hand" by Albert Richard Wetjen

1945

"Time Without Tears" by William Beebe
"Neapolitan Night" by Phillip Bonosky.
"Incident at the Wreck Buoy" by Elliot Coldman
"Left Undone" by Louise Field Cooper
"The Blue Mosque" by Eileen Davis
"The 17th Letter" by Dorothy Cameron Disney
The Singapore Grip by J.G. Farrell
"Goliath" by John Farrow
"The Homestretch" by Guy Gilpatric
"The Unbelievable Baroness" by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding
Sea Raiders Ho! by Rutherford George Montgomery
"Death at the Whistling Buoy" by Hugh Pentecost
Hull-Down for Action by Armstrong Perry
"Blitz on the Anthony J." by Si Podolin
"Overboard" by Chester L. Posey
"The Castaways" by Sidney Herschel Small
Sabina's Brother by William Townend

1946

Friendly Ocean by George Borodin
"Miss Ranskill Comes Home" by Barbara Bower
Deep Six by Robert Carse
Five Passengers from Lisbon by Mignon Good Eberhart
"Murder Haunts the Ship" by Mignon Good Eberhart
Wine for My Brothers by Robert Emmett Higginbotham
"Strange Woman" by William Holder
Landfall then Departure by Humfrey Jordan
Heart of Danger by Howard Pease
"Tugboat Annie Wins Her Medal" by Norman Reilly Raine
Voyage to Somewhere by Sloan Wilson
Williwaw by Gore Vidal

1947

"Maddon's Rock" by Hammond Innes
"Alfred and the Staff of Life" by Frank Laskier
Whiskey Galore by Compton Mackenzie
Andromeda by Jacland Marmur
"The Girl Who Waited" by Jacland Marmur
Passing By by Elliott Merrick

1948

"Menacing Cargo" by Robert Carse
"The Bosun's Mite" by Robert Carse
The Sea Chase by Andrew Clare Geer
"The Captain's Palms" by Thomas Heggen

Mister Roberts by Thomas Heggen
"Night Watch" by Thomas Heggen
"So Long Mr. Roberts" by Thomas Heggen
"Nitro Ship" by William Holder
The Ship and the Flame by Jerre Gerlando Mangione
"The Ransom of Peter Drake" by Jacland Marmur
"Sweet Tooth" by Jacland Marmur
A Convoy Through the Dream by Scott Graham Williamson

1949

Humiliation on the Mary by Basil Bleck
"Prey" by Edward S. Fox
Storm Below by Hugh Garner

1951

The Cruel Sea by Nicholas Monsarrat
"One for O'Brien" by George P. Morrill
The Ship's Company by William Townend
20th Meridien: A Novel by Robert J. Travers
The Hand of the Hunter by Jerome Weidman

1952

The Sea Waifs by Robert Carse, writing as "John Vail"
The Distant Shore by Jan de Hartog

1953

The Smoldering Sea by Uell Stanley Andersen
"Nobody But Nobody Undersells Uncle Sam" by Frank Sullivan

1954

Proud Waters by Ewart Brookes
Soldier, Sail North by James Pattinson
Soldier Adrift by L. Steni

1955

The Good Shepherd by C.S. Forester
H.M.S. Ulysses by Alistair MacLean
Sea-Wyf and Biscuit by James M. Scott
The Three Brothers by William Townend

1956

Stranger to the Shore by Kenneth Dodson
Arctic Convoy by Henry Taprell Dorling
Levine by James Hanley
The Calendar Epic: A Novel of the Merchant Marine by James Kubeck

1957

A Wren Called Smith by Alexander Fullerton
"The Big Trip" by William Holder

"Captain Ruthless" by Jacland Marmur
Last in Convoy by James Pattinson

1958

South by Java Head by Alistair MacLean
Bright Web in the Darkness by Alexander Saxton
"The Foghorn" by Arturo Vivante

1959

The First Mate of the Henry Glass by Robert A. Hill
A Twist of Sand by Jeffrey Jenkins
Dark Sea Running by George Morrill
Leviathan by Warren Tute
The Sealer by James Wood

1960

Wolfpack by William M. Hardy
"Decision on the Beach" by Jacland Marmur
The Witching Ship by Frederic Morton
The Crippled Tanker by D.A. Rayner

1961

On Desperate Seas by James Pattinson
Stowaway: A Novel by Lawrence Sargent Hall

1962

"Nobody's Fool" by Peter De Vries
Atlantic Fury by Hammond Innes
Ship of Fools by Katherine Anne Porter

1964

Tropical Furlough by Gerald S. Johnson

1965

Morituri by Werner Jörg Lueddecke

1966

The Captain by Jan de Hartog
The Watch Below by James White

1967

An Operational Necessity by Gwyn Griffin

1968

A Fall from Aloft by Brian Burland
Rub-a-Dub-Dub: A Novel by Hamilton Maule

1969

Murphy's War by Max Catto

The Ship They Called the Fat Lady by William M. Hardy

Sailor: A Novel of the Sea by Ricahrd Jessup

1970

A Flock of Ships by Brian Callison

One in Ten Had to Die by Per Hansson

Islands in the Stream by Ernest Hemingway

The Voyage of the Franz Joseph by James Yaffe

1972

The Palermo Ambush by Colin Forbes

Renezvous - South Atlantic by Douglas Reeman

The Forty Days by Oswald Wynd

1973

Das Boot by Lothar-Gunther Buchheim

Kleber's Convoy by Antony Trew

"*The Jump*" by Arturo Vivante

1974

Trapp's War by Brian Callison

A Bridge of Magpies by Geoffrey Jenkins

1976

A Northern Saga by Steven G. Lawrence

Across the Western: A Novel by Patrick O'Connor

1978

The Judas Ship by Brian Callison

The Spoils of War by Douglas Scott

1979

Convoy by Dudley Pope

A Ship Must Die by Douglas Reeman

Atlantic Convoy by David Williams

Ice Brothers: A Novel by Sloan Wilson

1980

The Burning of the Ships by Douglas Scott

Last Voyage by Anna Clarke

1981

Lieutenant Cameron, R.N.V.R. by Philip McCutchan

Die for the Queen by Douglas Scott

Normandie Triangle by Justin Scott

1982

Queen's Mate by Terry Hughes

Act of War: A Novel of Love and Treason by Leonard Sanders

The Amindra Gamble by John Sherlock and David Westheimer

The Normandie Affair by Elizabeth Villars

Pacific Interlude by Sloan Wilson

1983

The Torch Bearers by Alexander Fullerton

The Trail of the Serpent by Jan de Hartog

1984

Empire of the Sun by J.G. Ballard

The Bone Collectors: A Novel of the Atlantic Convoys by Brian Callison

Star of Peace by Jan de Hartog

Chains by Douglas Scott

1985

San Andreas by Alistair MacLean

Sole Survivor by Ruthanne Lum McCunn

1986

The Convoy Commodore by Philip McCutchan

The Albatross Run by Douglas Scott

1987

Cameron's Troop Lift by Philip McCutchan

Convoy North by Philip McCutchan

1988

Convoy South by Philip McCutchan

1989

Convoy East by Philip McCutchan

1990

The Final Crossing by Harvey Ardman

Convoy of Fear by Philip McCutchan

1992

Convoy Homeward by Philip McCutchan

1993

"In the Sparrow Hills" by Emile Capouya

"The Other Rogozhin" by Emile Capouya

"A Parenthesis" by Emile Capouya
"Staring at the Sun" by Emile Capouya
To Kill the Leopard by Theodore Taylor
The Watery Hell by Ray Thompson

1995

Enigma by Robert Harris

1997

Murder under the Palms by Stefanie Matteson

1999

"Miscalculation" by Jan Burke
"The Siren's Song" by Frederic Raphael

2000

The Stollenberg Legacy by Brian Callison

2001

"Emigré Hotel" by Edgardo Cozarinsky (original Spanish language edition)
Thirteen Desperate Hours by Marill Johnson
Sea of Glory by Ken Wales and David Poling

2002

Blood of Victory by Alan Furst
Crabwalk by Günter Grass
Dead Man Talking by Richard Woodman

2003

Last Boat to Cadiz by Barnaby Conrad
The Keeper's Son by Homer Hickman
The Seas That Mourn by Patrick D. Smith

2004

Dark Voyage by Alan Furst

2005

"The Mozambique Channel" by Penelope Lively

2006

A Sea Change by Michael Arditti
The Last Full Measure by Hal Glatzer

2007

The Border of Truth by Victoria Redel



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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

by
Daniel C. Krummes, Director
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

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Appendix 3

Authors' Wartime Experiences

Ambler, Eric (1909-1998)

Wartime service in the British Army

Andersen, Uell Stanley (1917-1986)

Merchant seaman and U.S. Navy officer aboard a destroyer during World War 2.

Ballard, J.G. (1930-)

Born in Shanghai of English parents, J.G. Ballard lived a privileged International Settlement life until the Japanese took over the city in December 1941. Ballard's highly imaginative novel *Empire of the Sun* was based upon his wartime experiences in the Lunghua Civilian Assembly Center, a Japanese civilian internment camp.

Bosworth, Allan R. (1901-1986)

A photograph of Bosworth accompanying his Mar. 21, 1942 [Liberty Magazine](#) short story "You Always Remember" notes that the author was a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy at the time.

Brookes, Ewart (1901-)

Brookes was a junior officer in the British merchant marine before the shipping slump of the 1930s cost him his position, at which point he became a newspaperman. He joined the R.N.S.V.R. (The "Royal Navy Volunteer Supplement Reserve") at the outbreak of the Second World War and his first command, after a spell in destroyers, was a motor craft at Dunkirk ferrying troops from the shore to larger vessels. Shortly thereafter he was transferred to Dover and was given command of a minesweeping-patrol boat. While there he was credited with two and a half German aircraft shot down and was awarded a Mention in Dispatches. From there he went to Western Approaches to a larger command (an anti-submarine ship). He took part in the D-Day invasion and subsequently did minesweeping duties up the French, Belgian and Dutch coasts. He was awarded the D.S.C. (the Distinguished Service Cross) at this time and finished up the war as a Lieutenant Commander.

Buchheim, Lothar-Gunther (1918-2007)

German naval officer during the Second World War. Buchheim served as a Lieutenant aboard minesweepers, destroyers and submarines. Buccheim's 1973 novel *Das Boot* (in English, *The Boat*) is clearly autobiographical and is based upon his experiences as an

official naval correspondent detailed to the German U-boat service during the War.

Burland, Brian (1931-)

School boy during the Second World; sent by his family at the age of twelve from their home in Bermuda to England aboard a British freighter which sailed in a North Atlantic convoy.

Capouya, Emile (1925-2005)

American merchant seaman during World War 2.

Carse, Robert (1902-1971)

Carse wrote of himself in the Sept. 1943 issue of *Argosy*: "When I was seventeen, after the last war, I started going in the ships. The deepwater ships I worked ran foreign, to Northern Europe and the Mediterranean. Then I shifted to Panama and the West Coast. Back in New York after two and a half years of it, I was lucky enough to get and hold a place on the city side of the *New York Times* ... After Pearl Harbor, I broke out my A.B.'s ticket and went back into the ships. My first trip was to Murmansk, North Russia. We had a pretty hard time; the story "Nitro to Murmansk" ... gives most of the details. A [nonfiction] book I wrote about the Russia trip was serialized in *The Saturday Evening Post* and published by William Murrow with the title *There Go the Ships*. I'm now at the United States Maritime Commission Officers Training School in Fort Trumbull, New London, Connecticut, sweating it out for my third mate's ticket." Note that after the War Carse also wrote under the pseudonym "John Vail."

Catto, Max (1907-1992)

Served in the R.A.F. during World War 2. During the early days of the war he worked on the development of radar (he'd been trained as an electrician before turning to writing in the 1920s). Catto later became a member of General Eisenhower's D-Day staff.

A "Convoy Gunner"

The Atlantic Monthly for Jan. 1942 noted of this author: "From 'A Convoy Gunner,' an Englishman who shall be nameless, we are fortunate to receive a first-hand account of what it feels like to cross the perilous bridge to England when each dawn shows the convoy has drawn closer and smaller."

De Hartog, Jan (1914-2002)

Born in the Netherlands. During the Second World War he served aboard a series of oceangoing salvage tugs involved in North Atlantic convoy rescue work.

Dodson, Kenneth (1907-)

Wartime service in the U.S. Navy.

Fernald, John

Royal Navy lieutenant during the war; early on commanded one of the Lend-Lease U.S. destroyers given to Britain and actually brought the destroyer across the Atlantic to Britain.

Forbes, Colin (1923-2006)

Colin Forbes, a pen name employed by the English thriller writer Raymond Harold Sawkins, served in the British Army during World War 2 in North Africa and in the Middle East.

Garner, Hugh (1913-1979)

In a third-person, autobiographical note at the conclusion of his novel [Enemy Below](#) (1949) Garner says of himself: "During the last war he served throughout with the Royal Canadian Navy, mostly on corvettes, being discharged as a Chief Petty Officer, despite an inordinate fondness for Navy rum, and a fourteen-day vacation as a guest of the King in a concentration camp known as Point Edward Detention Barracks in Sydney, N.S."

Geer, Andrew Clare

Wartime service with the United States Marine Corps.

Hahn, Emily (1905-1997)

Foreign correspondent based in China and Hong Kong at the outbreak of the Second World War. After internment by the Japanese was repatriated to the United States in 1943 aboard the neutral Swedish liner Gripsholm.

Hall, Lawrence Sargent (1915-1993)

Wartime service, including three years at sea, as an officer with the U.S. Navy.

Hardy, William M.

Hardy served in the U.S. Navy during World War 2. He was an officer aboard the submarine *U.S.S. BILLFISH*, and served two war patrols in the Pacific aboard the boat. Hardy also served aboard a U.S. Navy submarine tender during the war.

Heggen, Thomas (1919-1949)

Junior officer in the U.S. Navy during the War; South Pacific service.

Hemingway, Ernest (1899-1961)

From July 1942 through early 1943 Ernest Hemingway, then living in Cuba, used his 38-foot diesel cruiser *PILAR* as a "Q-ship" and, with a self-recruited crew of heavy-drinking supporters, patrolled the waters off northern Cuba in search for the German U-boats which were at that period of the War attacking Allied merchant shipping in the Caribbean. Hemingway's operation was of a paramilitary sort, with permission to carry it out having been given to him by the Havana branch of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence. Though Hemingway and crew did once spot a U-boat (which totally ignored them), the *PILAR* never engaged in any action with the enemy whatsoever. Hemingway's Q-ship operations were suspended in 1943.

Herman, Fred

U.S. merchant seaman; extensive experience on the Murmansk Run.

Higginbotham, Robert Emmett (1916-)

Higginbotham first went to sea as a merchant mariner in 1937, serving aboard a freighter to the Baltic. He settled in New York City after that voyage, but returned to sea in Sept. 1941 on a ship bound for Spain. That ship was torpedoed in the Atlantic in Oct. 1941. Higginbotham survived that ordeal and spent the remainder of the War years at sea.

Hill, Robert A.

First Mate aboard a Liberty Ship during World War 2.

Hunt, E. Howard (1918-2007)

U.S. Navy officer during World War 2 with extensive North Atlantic convoy experience.

Innes, Hammond (1913-1998)

British Army officer during the Second World War.

Jessup, Richard (1925-)

U.S. merchant seaman and junior officer during World War 2.

Kubeck, James

U.S. merchant seaman during the War.

Langdon, John (1913-)

American merchant seaman during the Second World War. In a brief biographical statement accompanying his 1944 short story "The Girls of Tongatabu" Langdon wrote about himself, "At present, and for a year and a half, have been going to sea as an electrician. Before that I was two years in the shipyards."

Laskier, Frank

British merchant seaman during World War 2. Made wartime broadcasts about the merchant marine over the B.B.C. and subsequently embarked on a series of lecture tours both in England and also in the United States and Canada.

Liepmann, Franz (1905-1966)

German journalist and novelist, Liepmann was a member of the German Reichstag before the advent of Nazi rule. A liberal, and a Jew, he was thrown into a Hamburg concentration camp after the Nazi's seized complete power in 1933 and eventually went into foreign exile.

Lively, Penelope

Of English parentage, Penelope Lively was a small child growing up in Egypt at the outbreak of World War 2. With her mother and governess she was evacuated to British-controlled Palestine in 1942 when General Rommel's troops were poised for what many thought would be the German takeover of Egypt.

MacLean, Alistair (1922-)

Petty Officer in the Royal Navy during World War 2, primarily on the Murmansk Run.

Mallalieu, J. P. W. (1908-1980)

Royal Navy sailor during the Second World War with Murmansk Run experience.

Marmur, Jacland (1901-1970)

Polish-born American merchant seaman. During World War 2 was engaged in special work for the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information. Also during the War, as a correspondent for The Saturday Evening Post, went to sea with units of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Battle Fleet.

Maule, Hamilton

American merchant seaman during World War 2.

McCutchan, Philip (1920-)

Served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 aboard a variety of vessels including destroyers, cruisers and an aircraft carrier. Rose up the ranks from seaman to Lieutenant.

Monsarrat, Nicholas (1910-1979)

During the War served as an officer with the Royal Navy on escort duty in the North Atlantic.

O'Reilly, Tom (1906-1962)

New York City newspaperman O'Reilly (he had been a sportswriter before the War) served as a purser aboard an American South African Line freighter (a Liberty ship) during 1943.

Pattinson, James (1915-)

Served with the Royal Maritime Artillery from 1941 onwards aboard a series of "defensively equipped" British merchant vessels. Saw convoy action on the Murmansk Run, in the Mediterranean, the West Indies, the Red Sea, the North and South Atlantic and in Asian waters.

Pope, Dudley

Royal Navy service during the War. "Wounded and later invalided when his own ship was torpedoed in the "Battle of the Atlantic"— Book jacket blurb, *Convoy* (1979)

Posey, Chester L.

U.S. Navy junior officer who saw sea service in the Pacific during the Second World War.

Rayment, Will

Wrote under the pen name "Marill Johnson" (a joint pseudonym with co-author - and wife - Marilyn Rayment). "In 36 months of [World War 2] sea duty as Radio Operator on five

merchant marine ships, Will Rayment encountered air bombings, typhoons, and a tsunami while transporting volatile petroleum, munitions, landing craft, and troops. His tours on the tanker SANTA CRUZ, Liberty ships GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK and ALBERT A. ROBINSON, the refrigeration ship GROMMET REEFER and the Victory ship FERN VICTORY - along with his fellow seamen - were part of the contribution to America's war effort by much-overlooked and unsung heroes" - Book jacket blurb, *Thirteen Desperate Hours* (2001).

Rayner, D. A. (1908-)

Denys Arthur Rayner had a long and distinguished career in the Royal Navy. During World War 2 he served as commander on a destroyer, participating in the Battle of the Atlantic, for which he received two Distinguished Service Crosses.

Reeman, Douglas (1924-)

Served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 in all the major theaters of operations, from the North Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

Ricci, Lewis Andelm da Cost (1883-)

Wrote under the pen name "Bartimeus." Royal Navy senior officer employed as a "Naval Eye Eyewitness" during the War.

Saxton, Alexander (1919-)

During the Second World War Saxton, who'd been a merchant seaman earlier in life, trained cadets for the U.S. Maritime Service.

Scott, Douglas (1926-)

Served in the British merchant fleet during World War 2 as a junior officer. A brief biographical note found on the dust jacket verso of his *The Spoils of War* (1978) notes: "Douglas Scott is descended from a long line of Scottish seafarers. He went to sea [in 1942] at age sixteen as an apprentice deck officer on the FORT STAGER, a ship that quickly saw action in the Allied landings at Cape Passero and Salerno, and later was involved in operations around the world."

Smith, Patrick D. (1927-)

American merchant marine officer during the Second World War.

Smythe, Tom

British merchant sea captain who saw North Atlantic wartime service. Smythe's experiences were primarily aboard tramp freighters.

Stern, George

Royal Navy officer who saw sea service in small escort vessels on convoy and anti-submarine duties. Took part in the Dunkirk evacuation.

Sturdy, John Rhodes

American journalist who covered the early wartime delivery of U.S. outmoded destroyers to Great Britain by sailing aboard one of the vessels across the Atlantic. Subsequently joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve and served aboard a corvette engaged in North Atlantic convoy duty.

Thompson, Ray (1926-)

Ray Thompson served with the merchant marine during World War 2 as a deckhand and purser aboard cargo ships in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Thorne, Anthony

Royal Navy sailor with wartime service aboard an armed merchant cruiser.

Travers, Robert (1911-1974)

American merchant mariner. Throughout the War he served as Chief Mate on supply and ammunition carriers in the North Atlantic, Pacific and Persian Gulf.

Trew, Antony (1906-)

Royal Navy officer during World War 2. He served with the Mediterranean Fleet in the 22nd Anti-Submarine Group and in the Western Approaches commanded the destroyer Walker, primarily on Murmansk Run convoys.

Tute, Warren (1914-)

Royal Navy officer during the War, retiring as a Lieutenant Commander.

Vail, John (pseudonym)

SEE Carse, Robert

Vidal, Gore (1925-)

Served in the U.S. Army during the Second World War, with service in Alaska where he was posted to the Alaskan Harbor Detachment.

Vivante, Arturo (1923-)

A member of an anti-Fascist Italian Jewish family which had fled as refugees to England prior to World War 2, Vivante was interned as an enemy national when Italy entered the war in 1940. Only 17 years old at the time, he was placed initially in an English internment camp and then shipped trans-Atlantic aboard a converted liner to Canada where he was placed in another internment camp. He was ultimately released from the internment along with other "camp boys" (young Jews for the most part) after a drawn out legal battle in federal Canadian courts in which it was argued that Vivante and other camp boys were refugees and not enemy aliens.

Wetjen, Richard Albert (1900-1948)

Ran away to sea at the age of fourteen and had survived two shipwrecks by the time he was sixteen. Wetjen served in the British merchant marine during the First World War, earning two medals for service during that conflict.

Williamson, Scott Graham

Served as a counter-espionage agent for the Radio Intelligence Division during World War 2. His work took him to Washington, D.C., California, Florida, the West Indies, Africa and Southern France.

Wilson, Sloan (1920-2003)

U.S. Coast Guard officer during the War, serving initially on the Greenland Patrol and later commanding a Coast Guard manned Army supply ship and then an Army tanker, both latter vessels in the South Pacific.

Wood, James (1918-1984)

Served in the British Army during the War, was evacuated from Dunkirk and subsequently took part in the D-Day landings.

Wynd, Oswald (1913-1998)

Served in British Intelligence in Malaya during the early years of the War and was taken prisoner during the 1942 fall of Malaya and Singapore. As Wynd spoke fluent Japanese (he had been born in Tokyo and had lived the first 18 years of his life in Japan), he was made a POW interpreter by the Japanese. He subsequently spent 3 years as a prisoner of war in Japan.

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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

by
Daniel C. Krummes, Director
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

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Appendix 2

Subject Index to Works Cited in this Bibliography

(1) General Topics:

Black-outs and air raid alarms at U.S. West Coast cities

"Black-out" by Howard Pease (1942)

Capture and internment of merchant mariners

Vanishing Ships by Philip M. Fisher (1943)

"A Deal's a Deal" by Albert Richard Wetjen (1944)

Deep Six by Robert Carse (1946)

Levine by James Hanley (1956)

Empire of the Sun by J.G. Ballard (1984)

Merchant shipping convoys

Atlantic convoys [\(1\)](#)

The Crew of the Anaconda by A.G. Macdonnell (1940)

Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol by R. Sidney Bowen (1941)

"Sub Conscious" by Richard Howells Watkins (Oct. 1941)

Log Book by Frank Laskier (1942)

I'm a Stranger Here Myself by Anthony Thorne

"Flight of the Wankus Bird" by Richard Sale (Oct. 1943)

"The Homestretch" by Guy Gilpatric (1945)

A Convoy Through the Dream by Scott Graham Williamson
(1948)

The Three Brothers by William Townend (1955)

Dark Sea Running by George Morrill (1959)

The Torch Bearers by Alexander Fullerton (1983)

North Atlantic convoys

The Crew of the Anaconda by A.G. Macdonnell (1940)

"A Gift to the Nation" by Richard Howells Watkins (Mar.

1940)

Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol by R. Sidney Bowen (1941)

"Above the Convoy" by Fulton Grant (1941)

"Suicide Ship" by Walter Havinghurst (Mar. 1941)

"Quite a Special Occasion" by Royce Howes (May 1941)

"Ocean Convoy" by Lewis Anselm da Costa Ricci (June 1941)

"Four Lives" by Walter Havinghurst (Sept. 1941)

"Convoy Captain" by John and Ward Hawkins (Sept. 1941)

"Mr. Gallup Gathers No Moths" by Norman Reilly Raine (Oct. 1941)

"Hearts of Oak" by Walter Havinghurst (Nov. 1941)

"You Always Remember" by Allan R. Bosworth (1942)

"Ten Were Sunk" by "A Convoy Gunner" (1942)

"One Night in June" by Edward Horace Crebbin (1942)

Destroyer from America by John Fernald (1942)-[\(2\)](#)

East of Farewell by E. Howard Hunt (1942)

Log Book by Frank Laskier (1942)

Atlantic Tramp by Tom Smythe (1942)

"Asking for Disaster" by Harvey Haislip (April 1942)

"First Command" by Walter Havinghurst (April 1942)

"Action at Sea" by Thomas Randall (April 1942)

"Destroyer from America" by John Fernald (June 1942)-[\(3\)](#)

"Morale on the Margie" by Richard Howells Watkins (July 1942)

"Major McGee Goes to Sea" by Col. R. Ernest Dupuy (Sept. 1942)

"Snoop Ship" by Richard Howells Watkins (Sept. 1942)

Action in the North Atlantic by Guy Gilpatric (1943)

"Faith at Sea" by Irwin Shaw (1943)

"Without Convoy" by John Rhodes Sturdy (1943)

I'm a Stranger Here Myself by Anthony Thorne (1943)

"Convoy Weather" by Blaine & Dupont Miller (Feb. 1943)

"Auld Acquaintance" by F.R. Buckley (Mar. 1943)

"I'll See You Again" by Elizabeth Foster (Mar. 1943)

"East of Farewell" by E. Howard Hunt (Mar. 1943)-[\(4\)](#)

"No Credit to Breezy" by Richard English (April 1943)

"Sea Room for a Sailor" by Richard Howells Watkins (April 1943)

"The Admiral Gets An Assist" by Jonathan Fettes (Aug. 1943)

"Emergency Assignment" by B.E. Cook (Oct. 1943)

"Girl Adrift" by Richard Howells Watkins (Oct. 1943)

Some Follow the Sea by Gregor Felsen (1944)

"Three Times and You're Out" by Donald Barr Chidsey (Jan. 1944)

"Court Ship" by Richard Howells Watkins (Feb. 1944)

"Watch Below" by F.R. Buckley (Mar. 1944)

"The Spy-Gazers" by Richard Howells Watkins (April 1944)

"Watch Below" by F.R. Buckley (Mar. 1944)

"The Story of Maitland's Reply" by John Rhodes Sturdy (May 1944)

"A Lesson in Knots" by Walter Havinghurst (July 1944)

"Undersea Guardians" by Ray Bradbury (Dec. 1944)

"The 17th Letter" by Dorothy Cameron Disney (Dec. 1944-Jan. 1945)

Sabina's Brother by William Townend (1945)

Passing By by Elliott Merrick (1947)

"Nitro Ship" by William Holder (1948)

"The Bosun's Mite" by Robert Carse (Dec. 1948)
"Prey" by Edward S. Fox (Mar. 1949)
Storm Below by Hugh Garner (1949)
20th Meridian: A Novel by Robert J. Travers (1951)
The Hand of the Hunter by Jerome Weidman (1951)
The Distant Shore by Jan de Hartog (1952)
The Cruel Sea by Nicholas Monserrat (1954)
The Good Shepherd by C.S. Forester (1955)
Arctic Convoy by Henry Tapprell Dorling (1956)
Last In Convoy by James Pattinson (1957)
"The Big Trip" by William Holder (June 1957)
Bright Web in the Darkness by Alexander Saxton (1958)
Ship Afire! By Richard Armstrong (1960)
The Crippled Tanker by D.A. Rayner (1960)
Stowaway: A Novel by Lawrence Sargent Hall (1961)
On Desperate Seas by James Pattinson (1961)
The Captain by Jan de Hartog (1966)
The Watch Below by James White (1966)
A Fall from Aloft by Brian Burland (1968)
Rub-A-Dub-Dub by Hamilton Maule (1968)
Sailor: A Novel of the Sea by Richard Jessup (1969)
One in Ten Had to Die by Per Hansson
Rendezvous -- South Atlantic by Douglas Reeman (1972)
The Boat by Lothar-Gunther Buchheim (1973)
Across the Western by Patrick O'Connor (1976)
A Northern Saga by Steven C. Lawrence (1976)
Convoy by Dudley Pope (1979)
Atlantic Convoy by David Williams (1979)
The Bone Collectors by Brian Callison (1984)
San Andreas by Alistair MacLean (1985)
The Convoy Commodore by Philip McCutchan (1986)
"The Other Rozozhin" by Emile Capouya (1993)
To Kill the Leopard by Theodore Taylor (1993)
The Watery Hell by Ray Thompson (1993)
Enigma by Robert Harris (1995)
Sea of Glory by Ken Wales (2001)
The Seas That Mourn by Patrick D. Smith (2003)

"Murmansk Run" convoys

"Nitro to Murmansk" by Robert Carse (1943)
Action in the North Atlantic by Guy Gilpatric (1943)
Dynamite Cargo: Convoy to Russia by Fred Herman (1943)
"The Anchor from Murmansk" by Ben Merson (1943)
"The Expert" by Samuel W. Taylor (1943)
Some Follow the Sea by Gregor Felsen (1944)
"Dynamite Cargo" [condensed magazine version] by Fred Herman (1944)
"Arctic Passage" by William Lynch (1944)
Very Ordinary Seaman by J.P.W. Mallalieu (1944)
"Maddon's Rock" by Hammond Innes (1947)
The Sea Waifs by Robert Carse, writing as John Vail (1952)
The Cruel Sea by Nicholas Monserrat (1954)
Soldier, Sail North by James Pattinson (1954)
H.M.S. ULYSSES by Alistair MacLean (1955)
Arctic Convoy by Henry Taprell Dorling (1956)
On Desperate Seas by James Pattinson (1961)
The Captain by Jan de Hartog (1966)
Kleber's Convoy by Antony Trew (1973)
A Northern Saga by Steven C. Lawrence (1976)

San Andreas by Alistair MacLean (1985)
Convoy North by Philip McCutchan (1987)
The Watery Hell by Ray Thompson (1993)
Dead Man Talking by Richard Woodman (2002)
The Keeper's Son by Homer Hickam (2003)
The Seas That Mourn by Patrick D. Smith (2003)

Baltic convoys (Russian evacuation of the Baltics, 1941)

Dark Voyage by Alan Furst (2004)

Baltic convoys (German evacuation of East Prussia, 1945)

Crabwalk by Günter Grass (2002)

Coastal convoys (around Great Britain)

Landfall then Departure by Humfrey Jordan (1946)
"Masters' Conference" by George Stern (June 1942)
Soldier, Sail North by James Pattinson (1954)

Coastal Convoys (East Coast U.S.)

"Three Times and You're Out" by Donald Barr Chidsey (1944)
"The 1th Letter" by Dorothy Cameron Disney (serial: 1944/45)
The Keeper's Son by Homer Hickam (2003)

Mediterranean convoys

Log Book by Frank Laskier (1942)
The Ship by C.S. Forester (1943)
Heart of Danver by Howard Pease (1943)
"Ship in Convoy" by John Strachey (June 1943)
"Flight of the Wankus Bird" by Richard Sale (Oct. 1943)
"Monkey Business at Gibraltar" by Guy Gilpatric (1944)
"The Homestretch" by Guy Gilpatric (1945)
Heart of Danger by Howard Pease (1946)
A Convoy Through the Dream by Scott Graham Williamson (1948)
"The Bosun's Mite" by Robert Carse (Dec. 1948)
The Cruel Sea by Nicholas Monserrat (1954)
Dark Sea Running by George Morrill (1959)
Trapp's War by Brian Callison (1974)
The Spoils of War by Douglas Scott (1978)
Chains by Douglas Scott (1984)
Convoy East by Philip McCutchan (1989)
Convoy of Fear by Philip McCutchan (1990)
Dark Voyage by Alan Furst (2004)

Malta convoys

The Ship by C.S. Forester (1943)
"Ship in Convoy" by John Strachey (June 1943)
Arctic Convoy by Henry Tapprell Dorling (1956)
Trapp's War by Brian Callison (1974)
Convoy East by Philip McCutchan (1989)

Convoy of Fear by Philip McCutchan (1990)
Dark Voyage by Alan Furst (2004)

Atlantic convoys to and/or around Africa

"Lagos Roads" by Brian O'Brien (1943)
"Purser's Progress" by Tom O'Reilly (1943)
Murphy's War by Max Catto (1969)
Convoy by Dudley Pope (1979)
The Torch Bearers by Alexander Fullerton (1983)
Convoy Homeward by Philip McCutchan (1992)

South Atlantic convoys

This Island Demands by Humfrey Jordan (1941)
I'm a Stranger Here Myself by Anthony Thorne (1943)
"Purser's Progress" by Tom O'Reilly (1943)
A Flock of Ships by Brian Callison (1970)
Rendezvous -- South Atlantic by Douglas Reeman (1972)
A Bridge of Magpies by Geoffrey Jenkins (1974)
Convoy South by Philip McCutchan (1988)

Indian Ocean convoys

Log Book by Frank Laskier (1942)
"Purser's Progress" by Tom O'Reilly (1943)
Soldier Adrift by L. Steni (1954)
Stowaway: A Novel by Lawrence Sargent Hall (1961)
Rendezvous -- South Atlantic by Douglas Reeman (1972)
A Ship Must Die by Douglas Reeman (1979)
Cameron's Troop Lift by Philip McCutchan (1987)
Convoy South by Philip McCutchan (1988)
Convoy East by Philip McCutchan (1989)
Convoy of Fear by Philip McCutchan (1990)
Convoy Homeward by Philip McCutchan (1992)

Pacific & South Pacific convoys

"Menacing Cargo" by Robert Carse (1942)
"Red Sadie and the Rising Sun" by Paul Deresco Augsburg (1942)
"Seasoned in Sail" by Rolland Lynch (1942)
"Five Who Vanished" by George Worts (serial: 1942/43)
"Hero's Son" by Jacland Marmur (1943)
"Cargo for Vladistock" by Frank Richardson Pierce (1943)
"Ghost Ship" by David Allan Ross (1943)
"Coffin Ship" by Reese Wolfe (1943)
"Siesta on the High Seas" by Edward Adolphe (1944)
Bullets for the Bridegroom by David Dodge (serial: 1944)
"Half a Jackass" by Richard Howells Watkins (1945)
"Overboard" by Lieut. (j.g.) Chester L. Posey (1945)
Voyage to Somewhere by Sloan Wilson (1946)
The Smoldering Sea by U.S. Andersen (1953)
Pacific Interlude by Sloan Wilson (1982)
The Watery Hell by Ray Thompson (1993)
Thirteen Desperate Hours by Marill Johnson (2001)

Caribbean Convoys

"Purser's Progress" by Tom O'Reilly (1943)

Japanese merchant and/or naval convoys

Sea Raiders Ho! by Rutherford George Montgomery (1945)
Wolfpack by William M. Hardy (1960)
The Forty Days by Oswald Wynd (1972)
Cameron's Troop Lift by Philip McCutchan (1987)

Shipbuilding and work in wartime shipyards

"Comin' at You" by Borden Chase (1941)
"Quite a Special Occasion" by Royce Howes (1941)
"Hurry-Up Charlie" by Kathryn Forbes (1943)
"Big Day" by Harold Channing Wire (1943)
Bright Web in the Darkness by Alexander Saxton (1958)

Survival in a lifeboat or life-raft after sinking of a merchant vessel by the enemy

The Ocean by James Hanley (1941)
"Ocean Convoy" by Lewis Anselm da Costa Ricci (1941)
"Nothing to Report" by Richard Sale (1942)
"First Command" by Walter Havighurst (1942)
"Slicker" by Frank Richardson Pierce (1942)
"Against the Clock" by Roy Yonge (1942)
Men in the Same Boat by J.D. Beresford (1943)
"Survival!" by Max Brand (1943)
"Landlubber" by George Carouso (1943)
"Nitro to Murmansk" by Robert Carse (1943)
"Emergency Assignment" by B.E. Cook (1943)
Sailor's Song by James Hanley (1943)
"Bait" by Joseph Harrington (1943)
"Lifeboat" by Alfred Hitchcock (1943)
"Jungle Jailor" by Brian O'Brien (1943)
"Last Trip" by Richard Sale (1943)
"The Expert" by Samuel W. Taylor (1943)
"Lagoon of Lost Command" by Richard Howells Watkins (1943)
"If I Must Die -- " by Allan R. Bosworth (1944)
"Three Wise Men on a Raft" by Margaret Cooper Gay (1944)
"Devil on His Trail" by John Hawkins and Ward Hawkins (1944)
"The Happiest Man" by Thomas Newman (1944)
Hull-Down for Action by Armstrong Sperry (1945)
Sabina's Brother by William Townend (1945)
Friendly Ocean by George Borodin (1946)
"Maddon's Rock" by Hammond Innes (1947)
Passing By by Elliott Merrick (1947)
The Sea Waifs by Robert Carse, writing as John Vail (1952)
Sea-Wyf and Biscuit by James M. Scott (1955)
The Three Brothers by William Townend (1955)
A Wren Called Smith by Alexander Fullerton (1957)
Ship Afire! by Richard Armstrong (1960)
On Desperate Seas by James Pattinson (1961)
Atlantic Fury by Hammond Innes (1962)
An Operational Necessity by Gwyn Griffin (1967)
Sole Survivor by Ruthanne Lum McCunn (1985)
"The Other Rozozhin" by Emile Capouya (1993)
To Kill the Leopard by Theodore Taylor (1993)

Wartime civilian passenger transportation by sea

Evacuation of civilians (including women & children)

"The Last Present" by Grant Deachman (1941)
"Dutch Treat" by Jacland Marmur (1942)
The Story of Dr. Wassell by James Hilton (1943)
"Battle Stations" by James L. Hill (1943)
"The Man Who Wasn't Decorated" by Terrence Horsley (1943)
"Left Undone" by Louise Field Cooper (1945)
Andromeda by Jacland Marmur (1947)
South by Java Head by Alistair MacLean (1958)
The Witching Ship by Frederic Morton (1960)
The Pride and the Anguish by Douglas Reeman (1969)
The Trail of the Serpent by Jan de Hartog (1983)
The Final Crossing by Harvey Ardman (1990)
Crabwalk by Günter Grass (2002)
"The Mozambique Channel." by Penelope Lively (2005)

Freighter travel by civilians

"Rendezvous" by William Townend (1940)
Friendly Ocean by George Borodin (1946)
The Sea Chase by Andrew Clare Geer (1948)
Morituri by Werner Jörg Lueddecke (1965)
A Fall from Aloft by Brian Burland (1968)

Repatriation ships (civilian internees and diplomatic personnel)

"Intelligence" by C.S. Forester (1942)
"Ghost Ship" by David Allan Ross (1943)
"Repatriate" by Emily Hahn (1944)
"Death at the Whistling Buoy" by Hugh Pentecost (1945)

Refugee ships (political and religious refugees)

"A Lady at Heart" by Blaine & Dupont Miller (1941)
"The Statue in the Fog" by Stanley F. Donath (1943)
"Death at the Whistling Buoy" by Hugh Pentecost (1945)
The Ship and the Flame by Jerre Gerlando Mangione (1948)
The Voyage of the Franz Joseph by James Yaffe (1970)
Star of Peace by Jan de Hartog (1984)
"The Siren's Song" by Frederic Raphael (1999)
"Emigré Hotel" by Edgardo Cozarinsky (2001)
A Sea Change by Michael Arditti (2006)
The Border of Truth by Victoria Redel (2007)

Repatriation ships (Civilian internees & diplomatic personnel)

"Left Undone" by Luise Field Cooper
"The Grey Funnel Line" by John Rhodes Sturdy
"The Foghorn" by Arturo Vivante (1958)

Wartime military sea transportation

Hospital ships

"Battle Stations" by James L. Hill (1943)
Five Passengers from Lisbon by Mignon G. Eberhart (1946)
"Murder Haunts the Ship" by Mignon G. Eberhart (1946)

San Andreas by Alistair MacLean (1985)

Prisoners transportation

"The Castaways" by Sidney Heschel Small (1945)
A Wren Called Smith by Alexander Fullerton (1957)
"The Jump" by Arturo Vivante (1973)
The Spoils of War by Douglas Scott (1978)
Queen's Mate by Terry Hughes (1983)
Cameron's Troop Lift by Philip McCutchan (1987)
Convoy Homeward by Philip McCutchan (1992)

Troopships

"Officer of the Day" by Donald Barr Chidsey (1944)
"Overboard" by Chester I. Posey (1945)
Soldier Adrift by L. Steni (1954)
Leviathan by Warren Tute (1959)
The Spoils of War by Douglas Scott (1978)
Normandie Triangle by Justin Scott (1981)
Chains by Douglas Scott (1984)
"Staring at the Sea" by Emile Capouya (1993)
"Miscalculation" by Jan Burke (1999)
Sea of Glory by Ken Wales (2001)

World War 2 survival in a lifeboat or life-raft

"Adrift" by Edward Horace Crebbin writing as "Sea-Wrack" (1942)
"In Mid-Channel" by Edward Horace Crebbin (1942)
"The Second Engineer" by Elliott Merrick (1942)
"The Cruise of the Bundle" by James B. Hall (1943)
"You Can't Know Anything About It" by Eyrie de Lanux (1943)
Tropical Furlough by Gerald S. Johnson (1964)
Dead Man Talking by Richard Woodman (2002)

World War 2 wartime atrocities committed against Allied merchant seamen

"Intelligence" by C.S. Forester (1942)
An Operational Necessity by Gwyn Griffin (1967)
Murphy's War by Max Catto (1969)
The Forty Days by Oswald Wynd (1972)
Atlantic Convoy by David Williams (1979)

World War 2 civilian passenger sea transport

Evacuation of civilians (including children)

"Last Ship Home" by Frank K. Kelly (1941)

World War 2 military sea transportation

Prisoners of war transportation

The Forty Days by Oswald Wynd (1972)

Post-War sea transportation of "war brides"

"Strange Woman" by William Holder (1946)

The World War 2 American-sponsored "Bundles for Britain" war relief program

"The Cruise of the Bundle" by James B. Hall (1943)

(2) Specific Events:

The tragic (and futile) early 1939 "Voyage of the Damned" of the liner ST. LOUIS (Hamburg-America Line) to Central American, Caribbean and U.S. ports with a passenger list of European Jews attempting to flee the Nazi Germany and find safe haven

"Keeper of the Light" by William Byron Mowery (1940)

The Ship and the Flame by Jerre Gerlando Mangione (1948)

The Voyage of the Franz Joseph by James Yaffe (1970)

The May through June 1939 "Voyage of the Damned" undertaken by 900+ German Jewish refugees aboard the Hamburg-America liner ST. LOUIS in which the refugees attempted to find safe haven in North America

A Sea Change by Michael Arditti (2006)

The Sept. 1939 through early 1940 voyage of the German freighter *ERLANGEN* after the vessel escaped Australia and attempted to elude the Royal Navy across the Pacific and Atlantic in order to make her way back to Nazi Germany

"The Sea Chase" by Andrew Geer (1948)

The Dec. 1939 scuttling on the liner *COLUMBUS* (North German Lloyd) off Cape Hatteras as she tried to evade British warships

"Last Voyage" by Walter Havinghurst (1940)

The May 26-June 4, 1940 seaborne evacuation of Dunkirk

Landfall then Departure by Humfrey Jordan (1946)

The April 1940 unsuccessful attempt to commandeer the neutral American freighter *CHARLES R. McCORMICK* (McCormick Steamship Company) by Nazi armed forces invading Bergen, Norway

"Slow Bell" by Reese Wolfe (1943)

The Aug.-Sept. 1940 voyage of the neutral Portugese liner turned chartered Jewish refugee ship *QUANZA* (Companhia Nacional de Navegaco) from Lisbon to New York, then on to Vera Cruz, Mexico and back to Newport News, Va.

The Border of Truth by Victoria Redel (2007)

The Oct. 1940 voyage of the *NEA HELLAS* (Greek Line), the last passenger liner in regular trans-Atlantic service (sailing from Lisbon to New York), filled with such noted European refugee intellectuals as Heinrich Mann, Alfred Döblin, Alma Mahler Werfel and Franz Werfel

"Emigré Hotel" by Edgardo Cozarinsky (2001)

The 1940-1946 International Red Cross "repatriation" Sservice carried out by the liner *GRIPSHOLM* (Swedish-American Line), ferrying Allied & Axis diplomats, innocent civilians, POWs and wounded to their home countries

"Repatriation" by Emily Hahn (1944)

The 1941 Russian sea evacuation of the Baltics

Dark Voyage by Alan Furst (2004)

The The Feb. 5, 1941 wreck of the freighter S.S. *POLITICIAN*, which included in its cargo 264,000 bottles of

bonded whiskey bound for America, on the shoals of Eriskay, off South Uist in the Outer Hebrides Islands of Scotland and the ship's subsequent "unofficial" salvage by whiskey-thirsty local islanders

Whiskey Galore by Compton Mazkenzie (1947)

The Dec. 7, 1941 Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor

"Honeymoon Incorporated" by Phyllis Morris (1942)

The Dec. 1941 fall of Shanghai

Empire of the Sun by J.G. Ballard (1984)

The Dec. 1941 through April 1942 actions of the U.S. Navy submarine tender CANOPUS (former Grace Line's cargo-liner SANTA LEONORA of 1919) in the defense of Manila, the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island against invading Japanese military forces, and the ship's subsequent April, 10 1942 scuttling

The Ship They Called the Fat Lady by William M. Hardy (1969)

The Feb. 1942 fall of Singapore

Mr. Glencannon Ignores the War by Guy Gilpatric (1943)

"The Turncoat" by William Arthur Breyfogle (1944)

Andromeda by Jacland Marmur (1947)

Sea-Wyf and Biscuit by James M. Scott (1955)

South by Java Head by Alistair MacLean (1958)

The Pride and the Anguish by Douglas Reeman (1969)

The Forty Days by Oswald Wynd (1972)

The Singapore Grip by J.G. Farrell (1979)

The Feb. 1942 destruction of the liner *NORMANDIE* (French Line)

"Frenchman's Ship" by Kay Boyle (1942)

"Midnight Sailing" by Walter Havinghurst (1943)

Normandie Triangle by Justin Scott (1981)

Act of War by Leonard Sanders (1982)

The Normandie Affair by Elizabeth Villars (1982)

Murder Under the Palms by Stefanie Matteson (1997)

The Mar. 1942 Fall of Java to Japanese Imperial Military Forces

The Story of Dr. Wasell by James Hilton (1943)

The Mar. 12-24, 1942 escape by sea from Java of the Koninklijke Pakervaart Maatschappij coastal liner *JANSSENS* commanded by Captain G.N. Prass with hundreds of refugees aboard including Dr. Corydon Wassell and the injured U.S. Navy personnel whom he had been caring for in Java

The Story of Dr. Wasell by James Hilton (1943)

The May 13, 1942 torpedoing and sinking of the Mexican oil tanker POTRERO DEL LLANO off south Florida by a German U-boat, an event which triggered Mexico's entry in the Second World War as an Allied nation in late May 1942

"Sailor with Spurs" by Felix Flammonde (1944)

The June-July 1942 ill-fated "Murmansk Run" convoy PQ-17

Dead Man Talking by Richard Woodman (2002)

The July 1942 - early 1943 operations of Ernest Hemingway's "Q-Ship" (his 38-foot diesel cruiser PILAR) in anti-submarine patrols off the north coast of Cuba

Islands in the Sun by Ernest Hemingway (1970)

The Nov. 1942 attack on the oil tanker *SAN DEMETRIO* (Eagle Oil Company) while in convoy in the North Atlantic, her abandonment and subsequent re-boarding by her surviving crew & eventual successful voyage to Great Britain

"First Command" by Walter Havighurst (*April* 1942: a prediction into the future?)

Ship Afire! by Richard Armstrong (1960)

The Nov. 1942 Allied invasion of North Africa ("Operation Torch")

The Watery Hell by Ray Thompson (1993)

The Nov. 23, 1942 sinking of the freighter *BENLOMOND* (Ben Line) and the subsequent 133 day ordeal /survival-at-sea on a small life raft by Chinese steward Poon Lim

Survivor by Ruthanne Lum McCunn (1985)

The Feb. 1943 sinking of the former Merchants & Miners' passenger ship *DORCHESTER* while serving as a troopship in the North Atlantic

Sea of Glory by Ken Wales (2001)

The Feb. & Mar. 1943 efforts of Allied code breakers at England's Bletchley Park research installation to break the "Shark" U-boat communications variant of Germany's military Enigma code book

Enigma by Robert Harris (1995)

The April 2, 1943 sinking of the English liner *CITY OF BARODA* (Ellerman's Line) by a German U-boat off the coast of Southwest Africa

A Bridge of Magpies by Geoffrey Jenkins (1974)

The documented collaboration of the Italian Mafia with the Allies during the lead up to and after the July 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily

The Palermo Ambush by Colin Forbes (1972)

The July 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily

Chains by Douglas Scott (1984)

The Sept. 1943 Allied landings at Salerno ("Operation Avalanche") as part of the invasion of the Italian mainland

The Spoils of War by Douglas Scott (1978)

The Mar. 3, 1944 sinking of the Greek freighter *PELEUS* by a German submarine in the South Atlantic, and the submarine's subsequent strafing of survivors in their lifeboats in attempt to kill the entire crew

An Operational Necessity by Gwyn Griffin (1967)

The June 1944 D-Day seaborne Allied invasion of German-

occupied France

Landfall then Departure by Humfrey Jordan (1946)

The Sept. 1944 post-Second Quebec Allied Powers Quebec Conference trans-Atlantic eastbound crossing of the QUEEN MARY with Prime Minister Winston Churchill aboard as VIP passenger

"Humiliation on the Mary" by Basil Bleck (1949)

The Jan. 30, 1945 sinking of the German passenger ship WILHELM. GUSTLOFF (Hamburg-Süd Line), filled with over 6,100 German refugees aboard, in the Baltic Sea after having been torpedoed by a Russian submarine

Crabwalk by Günter Grass (2003)

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1. Listings are for only those items for which it is impossible to distinguish a more specific Atlantic region (e.g., North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Murmansk Run, etc.).
 2. Novel first published in Great Britain in May or June 1942.
 3. Short story, which appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* shortly after Fernald's novel of the same name had been published, makes use of the novel's climax.
 4. This condensed version of Hunt's 1942 novel appeared as an extended short story in the Mar. 13, 1943 issue of *Liberty Magazine*.

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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

by
Daniel C. Krummes, Director
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
University of California, Berkeley

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Appendix 4

Cruel Seas Goes to the Movies

"Across the Pacific" (1942). Based upon Robert Carson's 1941 multi-part serial "Aloha Means Good-By." Director: John Huston. Script attributed to Richard Macaulay. Music by Adolph Deutsch. Actors: Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor and Sydney Greenstreet. Additional notes: *This movie was originally about a Japanese plot to blow up Pearl Harbor, but filming has just begun in Dec. 1941 when the Japanese actually attacked Pearl Harbor - so the locale was changed from Pearl Harbor to the Panama Canal and the cast never actually got "across the Pacific."*

"Action in the North Atlantic" (1943). Based upon Guy Gilpatric's 1943 novel Action in the North Atlantic. Director: Lloyd Bacon. Script attributed to Guy Gilpatric with additional dialogue by W.R. Burnett and A.I. Bezzerides. Actors: Humphrey Bogart, Raymond Massey, Alan Hale and Ruth Gordon. Additional notes: *Guy Gilpatric was nominated for an Oscar in 1944 for his screenplay.*

"The Cruel Sea" (1953). Based upon Nicholas Monsarrat's 1951 novel The Cruel Sea. Director: Charles Frennd. Script attributed to Eric Ambler. Actors: Jack Hawkins, Donald Sinden, John Stratton, Denholm Elliott, John Warner and Virginia McKenna.

"Das Boot" (1981). Based upon Hans-Günther Buccheim's 1973 novel Das Boot (in English, The Boat). Directed by Wolfgang Petersen. Script by Wolfgang Petersen. Actors: Jürgen Prochnow, Herbert Grönemeyer, Klaus Wennemann, Hulbertus Bengsch, Martin Semmelrogge and Claude-Oliver Rudolph. "Das Boot" was originally shown on German television as a 5 hour mini-series which was cut to 149 minutes when commercially released as a film. A "Director's Cut" of the film has been reissued and clocks in at 209 minutes. In the U.S. the film originally appeared in German with English subtitles; it was subsequently dubbed into English and retitled "The Boat."

"Empire of the Sun" (1987). Based upon J.G. Ballard's 1984 novel Empire of the Sun. Director: Steven Spielberg. Script attributed to Tom Stoppard. Music by John Williams. Actors: Christian Bale, John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson, Nigel Havers and Ben Stiller.

"Johnny Angel" (1945). Based upon Charles Gordon Booth's 1944 novel Mr. Angel Comes Aboard. Director: Edwin L. Marin. Script attributed to Steve Fisher. Actors: George Raft, Claire Trevor and Hoagy Carmichael.

"Journey Into Fear" (1942). Based upon Eric Ambler's 1940 novel Journey Into Fear. Director:

Norman Foster. Script attributed to Joseph Cotten. Actors: Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dolores del Rio, Ruth Warrick, Agnes Morehead, Everett Sloane and Hans Conried. Additional notes: *It is widely believed that Orson Welles directed this film, or at least large portions of it.*

"Lifeboat" (1944). Based upon "an original screen story" by John Steinbeck which was published under Alfred Hitchcock's byline in the Nov. 13, 1944 issue of Collier's Magazine; script by Jo Swerling. Director: Alfred Hitchcock. Actors: Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, Walter Slezak, John Hodiak and Hugh Cronyn, Additional notes: *The Collier's short story actually appeared 11 months after the Jan. 1944 release of Hitchcock's movie.*

"Mister Roberts" (1946). Based upon Thomas Hegge's 1946 novel Mister Roberts. Directors: John Ford and Mervyn LeRoy. Script by Joshua Logan and Frank Nugent. Music by Franz Waxman. Actors: James Cagney, Henry Fonda, William Powell, Jack Lemmon, Ward Bond, Nick Adams and Betsy Palmer. Additional notes: *Jack Lemmon won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in the film.*

"Morituri" (1965). Based upon Werner Jörg Lüddecke's 1963 German-language novel Morituri. Director Bernhard Wicki. Script attributed to Daniel Taradash. Actors: Marlon Brando, Yul Brynner, Trevor Howard, Wally Cox and Janet Margolin. Additional notes: *Alternate film title (Great Britain), "The Saboteur, Code Name Morituri."*

"Murphy's War" (1971). Based upon Max Chatto's 1969 novel Murphy's War. Director: Peter Yates. Script attributed to Stirling Silliphant. Actors: Peter O'Toole, Siân Phillips, Philippe Noiret and Horst Janson. Additional notes: *Scene of action in the novel (the coast of the Belgian Congo) changed in the film version to Venezuela.*

"Passage to Marseille" (1944). Based upon Charles Norhoff and James Norman Hall's 1942 novella Men Without Country. Director: Michael Curtiz. Script attributed to Casey Robinson and Jack Moffitt. Cinematography: James Wong Howe. Music: Max Steiner. Actors: Hunphrey Bogart, Claude Rains, Peter Lorre, Sydney Greenstreet, Philip Dorn and Michèle Morgan.

"The Sea Chase" (1955). Based upon Andrew Clare Geer's 1948 novel The Sea Chase. Director: John Farrow. Script attributed to James Warner Bellah. Actors: John Wayne, Lana Turner, Tab Hunter and James Arness.

"Sea Wife" (1957). Based upon James Maurice Scott's 1955 novel Sea-Wyf and Biscuit. Director: Bob McNaught. Script attributed to: George K. Burke. Actors: Richard Burton, Joan Collins, Cy Grant, Basil Sydney and Joan Hickson.

"Ship of Fools" (1965). Based upon Katherine Anne Porter's 1962 novel Ship of Fools. Director: Stanley Kramer. Script attributed to Abby Mann. Actors: Vivien Leigh, Simone Signoret, José Ferrer, Lee Marvin, Oscar Werner, Michael Dunn, George Seagal, Elizabeth Ashley, Lila Skala and José Greco.

"The Story of Dr. Wassell" (1944). Based upon James' Hilton's 1943 novelistic biography The Story of Dr. Wassell. Director: Cecil B. DeMille. Script attributed to: Charles Bennett. Actors: Gary Cooper, Laraine Day and Dennis O'Keefe. Additional notes: *This movie was released on July 4, 1944.*

"Whisky Galore!" (1949). Based upon Compton MacKenzie's 1947 novel Whisky Galore. Director: Alexander Mackendrick. Script attributed to Angus MacPhail. Actors: Basil Radford, Joan Greenwood, Gordon Jackson, Wylie Watson and Bruce Seton. Additional notes: *Alternate U.S. novel and movie title, "Tight Little Island."*

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New additions

Buchheim, Lothar-Gunther. (1918-2007)

The Boat. [1973] New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975. 463 p. Translated from the German by Denver and Helen Lindley.

Originally published in Germany in 1973 under the title Das Boot, Buchheim's autobiographical novel looks at the Battle of the Atlantic from a German U-boat perspective. The book is arguably revisionistic, boasting a humane submarine commandant - called alternately the "Old Man" or "Herr Kaleun" (the standard naval abbreviation for his full title, Herr Kapitänleutnant) - who deeply regrets the necessity of sinking civilian vessels, professional, competent officers and a crew of decent, often unwarlike men nicknamed the "children's crusade" because of their extreme youth (most of the crew are in their late teens). Indeed, the only fervent Nazi shipboard - the sub's arrogant First Watch Officer - is pretty much disliked by one and all, and often openly mocked by the Old Man himself. Buccheim aptly captures the tedium of underwater patrol work, the adrenaline-filled moments of stalking and torpedoing Allied convoy vessels. His taut descriptions of the flip side of pursuit, when the U-boat itself has become prey to attacking Allied warships, is admirably done: claustrophobic, shattering, tedious and fearsome.

As the novel moves towards its close, most readers will feel a grudging respect for officers and crew of the U-boat. But that respect turns to horror in a penultimate scene in which a neutral passenger liner, lights blazing, is torpedoed off the coast of Spain because the U-boat's officers cannot decide whether she is Spanish or an enemy vessel. Luckily the torpedo is a dud and subsequent interrogation of the ship's captain by the Old Man reveals that the liner is indeed Spanish and is en route to South America with over 2,000 passengers. The ship is allowed to sail on, unmolested. But in the novel's most chilling scene, Herr Kaleun tells his officers that had their torpedo not been a dud and had it sunk what turned out to be a neutral ship, they would have had to have destroyed all evidence of their misdeed - and that would include machine gunning to death all survivors. "Only dead men tell no tales," observes the novel's narrator (a young naval war correspondent serving aboard the sub, a role in which Buchheim himself had served during the War).

Das Boot became a bestseller in Germany and was published in the United States two years later under the title The Boat. It was turned into a masterly German television miniseries by Wolfgang Petersen in 1981 and subsequently re-cut into a feature film which was released worldwide in 1981 (see Appendix 4, "Cruel Seas Goes to the Movies" for additional film details).

Citation added 3-21-08

Forester, C.S. (1899-1966)

"Intelligence." In: *The Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 215, no. 18, Oct. 14, 1942, pp. 19, 77-80 &

82. Illustrations by Harold von Schmidt. Later reprinted by Forester's Gold from Crete: *Ten Stories* (Boston, Mass.: Little Brown & Company, 1973), pp. 71-89.

British Intelligence learns that particularly vile U-boat skipper Lothar Wolfgang von und zu Lowenstein (his "hobby" is taking photographs of drowning Allied mariners and other innocents who'd been aboard ship's that he's torpedoed; his prize photo is of a drowning woman and child who'd been passengers aboard the ATHENIA, sunk on Sept. 3, 1939) has orders to sink a huge liner-cum-troop transport, the fictitious QUEEN ANNE (the ship is certainly modeled after either the QUEEN MARY or QUEEN ELIZABETH). Back in the 1930s navy officer Capt. George Crowe ("C.B., D.S.O., R.N.") had often encountered the loathsome Nazi at international yachting events. He thinks he knows his man, psychologically speaking, and lays a trap to lure the German and his U-boat away from the troop ship. The lure? A faked up freighter that has been converted to look like the FROTtingham (i.e., real life Swedish America Line vessel GRIPSHOLM), a diplomat exchange ship that is supposed to be sailing from New York to Europe. Aboard the real diplomat exchange ship will be a German enemy of Lowenstein's; Crowe figures that the U-boat commander will take the opportunity to sink the supposed diplomat ship, thus eliminating a personal enemy and making it appear that the U.S. Navy has e sunk the neutral vessel. Right on cue Lowenstein goes after the faux-FROTtingham. In short order his German sub is destroyed by Allied navy forces. The German vessel goes down with all hands but one: the cowardly Lowenstein, who has elected to save himself. Forester closes the tale with war criminal Lowenstein about to be captured.

Citation added 3-16-08

Hall, James B.

"The Cruise of the Bundle." *In*: *Story: The Magazine of the Short Story*, vol. 23, no. 103, Sept./Oct. 1943, pp. 72-78.

Hall's ironic World War 2 tale begins with a look at East Coast society lady do-gooders who have set up a local "Bundles for Britain" program more as a means to advance their social careers than anything else. He then contrasts them with the merchant mariners who, in a chartered rustbucket of a freighter (the fictitious S.S. KARAMAR, dubbed by the local press the "S.S. BUNDLE"), must actually transport the cast-off goods across the hostile North Atlantic. The ship's overage captain, officers "either ... too young or too old" (as a once-famous Hollywood canteen song put it) and bottom-of-the-barrel mariners all must put up with a vessel that's just this side of being a jinx ship. So over the Atlantic the BUNDLE limps, ever so slowly at 7 knots that she must sail out of convoy. Nearing Britain, the ship is spotted by the Luftwaffe, bombed and strafed, and sunk. Only one of her crew survives, and none of the junk assembled by the society dames reaches its destination. Hall angrily concludes his story, by noting "Back in the States, the Ladies heard nothing of the BUNDLE, but the publicity had done wonders."

Citation added 3-8-08

Schulberg, Budd (1914-)

"Passport to Nowhere." *In*: *Story: The Magazine of the Short Story*, vol. 12, no. 70, May 1938, pp. 55-77.

This dark tale of an accomplished Polish Jew's futile attempt to emigrate to pre-War Palestine is set in the late 1930s. Schulberg's protagonist is Nathan Solomon, an artist (a painter) who quits his native land in the late 1920s after a pogrom had killed his lover (a young Christian woman). Over the next few years he moves on to and is forced out of Berlin and then Paris in the wake of Europe's rising fascism. Failing to obtain French citizenship, Solomon decides to move to Palestine and accordingly books a 3rdClass ticket on the Italian steamer VENUS DE MILO sailing out of Marseilles. Aboard the ship he's befriended aboard by a Jewish American couple on a holiday cruise to the Holy Land and also by a wealthy 1st Class woman ("an adventurer") who admires his painting style. The author draws a riveting portrait of shipboard life, with particularly fine descriptions of 1st and 3rd Class social conventions. When the ship arrives in Palestine Solomon is denied entry because he does not have enough cash with him to prove that he's not be a burden to the mandated territory. 1st Class passengers eventually take up a collection to aid the Jew, but the DE MILO's captain refuses to allow him the money

because, as an Italian shipmate sailing an Italian vessel, such "would not please the Fascists" (i.e., Italy's rulers). The Italian captain forcibly keeps him aboard the DE MILO while the ship is docked in Palestine, carries him back to Cyprus and then hustles him ashore there. Without money, Solomon is nonetheless at least temporarily safe. Schulberg angrily closes his story noting that "darkness was the only refuge now" for a Jew like Solomon.

Citation added 3-4-08

Bonosky, Phillip.

"Neopolitan Night." *In: Story: The Magazine of the Short Story*, vol. 27, no. 115, Sept./Oct. 1945, pp. 49-54.

Bonosky's gritty World War 2 short story about four American merchant seamen out for a night of shore leave in recently Allied liberated Naples is a raw, lurid example of realism in fiction. For three of the seamen this was a return visit to the southern Italian city; accompanying them this evening is Mario, a young Italian-American crewman, on his first overseas voyage. Only part of the city is open to Allied soldiers and merchant seamen, and that section is heavily patrolled by M.P.s who make certain that no one ventures out of this secured zone. Incredible poverty, filthy living conditions and casual prostitution assault the visitors. Though his older, war-seasoned compatriots take it all in stride, Mario is repulsed by the depravity which he encounters. Looking for cheap booze, the Americans are eventually brought to a hovel of a one room apartment where they are offered, in addition to liquor, the sexual services of the family's youngest daughter. While the older men take their turns having sex with her in broad view, Mario resists - even when the seamen strip him naked and toss him onto the soiled mattress where the pre-pubescent girl awaits him. Sitting over in at a corner table, eating pasta, is the girl's young brother, who watches his sister having sex and, along with the rest of his family (including the prostituted girl) and the seamen, find it greatly humorous that Mario refuses a sexual encounter. Horrified by what he has seen, Mario quickly pulls his clothes back on and runs back to the quiet and safety of his ship.

Citation added 1-22-08

Marmur, Jacland. (1901-1970).

"Decision on the Beach." *In: The Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 232, no. 45, May 7, 1960, pp. 37, 114 & 116-119. Illustrations unattributed.

Marmur's tale of one man's ultimate redemption is set in the late 1950s with a crucial flashback to World War 2 in the Pacific. His protagonist is Peter Ringat, Chief Officer of the San Francisco-based freighter BALLARDINE. Marmur opens his story by introducing a drunken Ringat making a scene in a San Francisco waterfront dive, a condition not atypical of the officer when in port (Marmur makes it clear from the outset that Ringat never takes a drink while at sea). A flashback to the Second World War finds peacetime merchant mariner Ringat serving as a U.S. Navy junior officer aboard a destroyer sent to pick up an Allied "coast watcher" off a beach located on a Japanese-controlled island leading to the Philippines. Ringat is detailed to take a whaleboat in, which he does successfully. However once on the beach and after the coast watcher has been found, patrolling hidden Japanese soldiers attack the Navy detail. One member of his crew is pinned down in the dense beach undergrowth and Ringat is forced to make the decision to abandon the man to the Japanese in order to save a coast watcher who has information of strategic importance for the looming invasion of Leyte. The abandoned man is killed, and Ringat is so haunted by this over the years that he turns to drink. Marmur's story reaches a climax with the BALLARDINE now back at sea in mid-Pacific. In the midst of a terrific storm the freighter comes upon a sinking sailing schooner and Ringat makes a heroic effort to rescue all of the ship's crew. It transpires that one of Ringat's own men has the same surname (Jensen) as the man Ringat had abandoned in the Philippines and indeed had had a father who'd died in the Pacific. When the younger Jensen is swept overboard during the rescue effort, Ringat gives up his own life to save the man. Whether Jensen was indeed the son of the man abandoned by Ringat is left unclear, but that being said, the thrust of Marmur's narrative is clear: Ringat has paid, with his own life, his self-imposed debt. Marmur's story closes simply and powerfully: "What mortal is there who holds righteousness or virtue deep enough to pronounced judgement on the greater value of one life unlive above another?"

Citation added 1-11-08

Langdon, John. (1913-)

"The Girls of Tongatabu." *In: Story: The Magazine of the Short Story*, vol. 25, no. 110, Nov./Dec. 1944, pp. 87-91.

South Pacific wartime conditions have isolated the British-controlled island of "Tongatabu" in this comic short story so the appearance of an American freighter seems to be good news for both the ship's women-hungry crew and the bumboat operators and "easy women" of the island. Aboard the unnamed vessel old timer Swede ("the four-to-eight oiler") regales newbie crewman "Samish the scullion" with tall tales of licentious island living ("the gals drag you into the bushes here," he tells the incredulous youngster). Alas, British officials decree no shore leave. And though the crew contrives to smuggle some women aboard via the ubiquitous, constantly circling bumboats, their efforts come to naught. And gullible Samish? Well he seems to have at least learned a thing or two about tale telling from Swede: we last see Samish writing a letter to his younger brother, extolling the free love atmosphere he claims to have encountered with the women of Tongatabu!

Citation added 1-2-08

Lanux, Eyrie de.

"You Can't Know Anything About It." *In: Story: The Magazine of the Short Story*, vol. 23, no. 102, July/Aug. 1943, pp. 48-52.

Lanux's brief, two-part short story is set in New York City during the early days of World War 2 and focuses on young Mary Caruthers, a female volunteer at a rest-and-relaxation club for merchant mariners. Her primary duties include pouring out generous cups of tea for the weary men, filling in as an occasional fourth at bridge and, perhaps most important, chatting with the mariners. We encounter Mary on her first day at the club, and her attempts at making polite chit chat are somewhat forced, particularly in light of the grim wartime stories of survival at sea after the torpedoing of their ships that many of the men share among themselves and with her. Mary meets a young mariner at the club that day, has a brief relationship with him, and, in the second part of the story - set a couple of weeks later - is in a waterfront bar with him just before his departure back to sea. Though the mariner (Eddie) has enjoyed his time with Mary, he matter-of-factly lets her see that the sea is his first priority, though he at least promises to try and stay in touch with her. Lanux's story is not an upbeat one and doesn't conclude on either an optimistic or patriotic note. This makes it far more interesting to the modern reader than the typical (and often sentimental) short stories of the era which were then flooding mainstream mass circulation magazines such as Collier's, Liberty or The Saturday Evening Post.

Citation added 12-26-07

Mason, F. van Wyck. (1901-1978)

The Shanghai Bund Murders. New York, N.Y.: Grosset & Dunlap, 1933. 298 p.

War-torn China, circa 1933, is the setting for Mason's political thriller, much of which is set aboard the "squat little river steamer" KIANGSU during a voyage from Nanking to Shanghai. Traveling first class are an international cross section of passengers including a supposed English tea trader (he's really a German spy/agent), a pair of annoying American female tourists, an Austrian-born "coaster" (i.e., a lady of quite ill repute), a suspicious Chinese gentleman, an American mercenary and, not one, but two intelligence officers (one British and the other Mason's continuing character, American spy Capt. Hugh North). Before you know it the British officer has been murdered and his American counterpart is engaged in finding out just what happened. Mason's plotline, particularly once the KIANGSU reaches Shanghai, is a complicated one but his basic storyline traces the efforts by a German conspiracy which is attempting to foment the expulsion of British and American commercial interests from Shanghai through an armed Chinese rebellion. Utilizing competing Chinese warlords (including a ragtag Communist "army") and even elements of Shanghai's French community, the German plot revolves around a maritime arms smuggling attempt that is foiled at only the last moment (by Col. North, of course). Mason spices up his story with

descriptions of gruesome tortures (devised by nefarious Chinese) and with salacious hints at "coaster" Mme. Ruby Braunfeld's way of life. But what stays with the reader is his prophecy of renewed German militarism. In one particularly telling section, Mason scores it just about - but not quite - right when one of his characters notes that German interests wanted to crush the American, British and French presence in the Far East and that Germany's only ally in the coming days will be Italy. (Mason's one misstep here: his character includes Japan in the list of Germany's future enemies). It is for Mason's prescience vis-à-vis Germany's renewed militarism in the 1930s that his novel is included in this bibliography.

*Note that in the late 1950s Mason rewrote and abridged the novel, changing the plot to reflect then-current Cold War tensions between the United States and Communist China. In the process he also turned Col. North into something of a swinging, James Bond-like super agent. This later effort, entitled *The China Sea Murders* was published in a paperback edition by Pocket Books in 1959.*

Citation added 12-9-07

Williams, David. (1931-)

Atlantic Convoy. London, Eng.: Cassell, 1979. 304 p.

Williams' novel was self-billed at the time of its 1979 publication as a thriller, but in reality is a tepid, overly plot-complicated rehash of the North Atlantic convoy genre. His focus is a Sept. 1942 eastbound convoy traveling to Britain with wartime supplies desperately needed for that island nation's continued survival. Unfortunately the author chooses to tell his story from far too many viewpoints. On the good guys side we hear from actual participants in the convoy (seamen, ship masters, the convoy commodore), their U.S. and British protectors (from both sea and air) and from British Admiralty officials plotting the convoys eastbound movements. Representing Nazi Germany are U-boat captains and crew, Luftwaffe aviators, military planners in France (for u-boats) and Norway (aviation), evil Gestapo agents and even a German spy traveling aboard one of the convoy's Liberty ships as wireless operator. Add lackluster writing into the stew and you've got a work of fiction that only the most diehard convoy fiction enthusiast will embrace.

Citation added 12-2-07

Kelly, Frank K. (1914-)

"Last Ship Home." In: Story: The Magazine of the Short Story vol. 19, no. 92, Nov./Dec. 1941, pp. 93-99.

The Lintons, a honeymooning couple, embark for America from Great Britain aboard an overcrowded neutral ocean liner at the outbreak of World War 2. Also aboard the liner is a woman out of the man's past (she's possibly still his mistress). A day or so out of Galway (the liner's last port of call before heading west across the Atlantic), the liner loses much of the extra illumination that had been lighting up its American-flag painted sides (author Kelly notes that "a neutral ship must be illuminated by night and day, and plainly marked") - naturally at this precise moment a German U-boat appears and challenges the vessel. Women and children are hastily placed in lifeboats as the ship's officers, crew and male passengers wait for the worst. At the last moment the failed lighting system miraculously starts up again and the U-boat is forced to acknowledge the fact that the liner is indeed neutral. Women and children return to the ship and all resume their uneasy voyage to the safety of America.

Citation added 11-26-07

Johnson, Gerald S.

Tropical Furlough. London, Eng.: George G. Harrap & Company, 1964. 264 p.

Johnson's ironically titled sea adventure is set in 1944 in the Indian Ocean, a theater of war rarely encountered in World War 2-related fiction. His narrative follows the voyages of three vessels (two Allied ships and a Japanese submarine on patrol) which fate - or at least the author's imagination - have brought together in the seemingly deserted waters surrounding the atoll of Diego Garcia in the south central Indian Ocean. Primary focus is on the aged Royal Indian Navy supply vessel BANGALORE which, while sailing with a load of cargo from Ceylon

to the RAF station on Diego Garcia, encounters a fierce tropical cyclone and is nearly destroyed. Shifting cargo pushes the ship permanently over onto her side. In the ensuing chaos her engines are destroyed and most of her complement of officers and crew perish. The survivors find themselves aboard a powerless hulk which is at the mercy of the Indian Ocean's little-known Great Oval Current. They drift for months and for a time Johnson's tale takes on the qualities of a seagoing version of *Robinson Crusoe*.

Meanwhile, a Japanese attack submarine secretly departs Singapore, bound for the South Indian Ocean hunting grounds of the Cape of Good Hope to Australia convoy route. Her captain is an arrogant and cruel Imperial Navy officer right out of central casting. He torpedoes an Allied troop transport early on and then, with great malice, sinks a small, unarmed merchant steamer (the fictitious CORAL QUEEN) en route from the British island colony of Mauritius to Diego Garcia. One narrative strand here then follows the course of four lifeboat-bound CORAL QUEEN survivors while another traces the course of the Japanese submarine - a course which leads the submarine to a fatal rendezvous with the drifting BANGALORE. Johnson's climax is dramatically satisfying, though over-reliant on the role of coincidence. A romantic subplot (the BANGALORE's junior officer and a female CORAL QUEEN survivor fall in love once fate casts them into one another's paths) rounds out the novel.

Citation added 11-11-07

Wynd, Oswald (1913-1998)

The Forty Days. London, Eng.: Collins, 1972. 254 p.

Wynd's World War 2 novel is set in the Fall of 1943 aboard a Japanese merchant ship (the fictitious OSHIMA MARU) as it transports 1200 Allied prisoners of war from Singapore to Japan by way of Saigon. The novel sticks closely to Japanese POW transport fact as revealed after the war, with the prisoners crammed into the ship's two cargo holds and only allowed out on deck at rare intervals. Wynd's plot initially revolves around two British prisoners (a Territorial Army major put in charge of "his" cargo hold and a Japanese-speaking Englishman who serves as interpreter between the major and his Japanese captors) and two Japanese (the ship's civilian captain and the Japanese Army major in charge of the prisoners' transport), but soon focuses on the British interpreter and the Japanese Army commander. The author is surprisingly sympathetic towards his Japanese characters and even seems to try and understand why the Japanese major commits, at the novel's climax, a horrific war crime (he beheads an American merchant seaman whom he believed was about to start a prisoner mutiny). This is certainly not the sort of work that could have been written during the war or even in the 1950s. Japanese-speaking Wynd's attitudes are made even more curious by the fact that he had been a prisoner of war in the Far East during the war and had, it appears, even been transported from Singapore to Japan aboard a ship similar to the OSHIMA MARU. Some critics reviewed *The Forty Days* at the time of its publication as a sort of sea-going *Bridge Over the River Kwai*; most present-day readers will question such an assessment.

Citation added 11-7-07

Marshall, Edison (1894-1967)

"Rangoon Adventure." In: *Liberty Magazine*, vol. 16, nos. 25-28, June 24-July 15, 1939, 4-part serial. Illustrations by Charles de Feo.

While this serial may date to just prior to the start of the Second World War it clearly references the then-ongoing Japanese aggression in Asia which would result in Japan's entry into the war two and a half years later. Set in colonial Burma, the plot involves a British attempt to circumvent Japan's blockade of coastal China by sending desperately needed armaments and munitions up the Irrawaddy River into the far interior of Burma and then overland to Chiang Kai-shek and his nationalist army. Japanese espionage (and sabotage) initially doom several of the river boats which are carrying the munitions, but Britain's clever Chief of C.I.D. (the Criminal Investigation Dept.) in Burma, acting in concert with his own (male) private secretary unmask both the Japanese saboteurs and also an American mercenary in their pay. What is particularly interesting in this period piece is the assumption of British moral and political superiority as played out between Marshall's C.I.D. characters and their Japanese Secret Service opponents. There is no suggestion that British military

forces in the region had any real reason to worry about the Japanese Imperial Army. Being a *Liberty* serial, "Rangoon Adventure" also includes in its plot a romance (the C.I.D. Chief's niece is wooed by his secretary) and also a case right out of "The Patty Duke Show" - "identical" cousins (in this case, one good and one bad). The resulting O. Henry-esque "twin cousin" resolution is one that any seasoned serial reader would have guessed at by installment 2, but does rather neatly tie up Marshall's action.

Citation added 11-1-07

Rayner, D. A. (1908-)

The Crippled Tanker. London, Eng.: Collins, 1960. 192 p.

This rousing World War 2 tale is set in February 1943. H.M.S. destroyer HECATE is pulled out of convoy escort duty to tow the crippled (and abandoned) Greek tanker ANTIOCH 500 miles across the North Atlantic from the spot where she had been attacked by a German wolfpack to the safety of a British port. The ANTIOCH, at 14,000 tons, had been the largest ship in her convoy and her petroleum cargo is of vital importance to Britain's wartime economy. Initially angered by their rather inglorious assignment, the warship's officers and crew slowly begin to take pride in their towing assignment as they fend off (and destroy) a German U-boat and then a succession of Luftwaffe warplanes. As the ship's doctor puts it, apropos the HECATE's change of attitude towards the tanker they're towing:

"We're all bloody well balmy ... This thing - the ANTIOCH - has gotten under our skins. She's become part of us. She's a symbol of something or other. Oh, when they certify us, they'll find a word for it that none of us will understand."

With the British Isles almost within sight, an ocean-going salvage tug finally appears upon the scene and orders the HECATE to turn over the ANTIOCH. HECATE refuses. "I am ocean tug" the vessel signals to the warship. "SO AM I" is HECATE's reply, and she proceeds to bring ANTIOCH to port unassisted. Note that the novel was published in the U.S. in 1960 under the alternate title, *The Long Haul*.

Citation added 10-26-07

Catto, Max (1909-1992)

Murphy's War. London, Eng.: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1969. 275 p.

Catto's fast-reading novel is set off the coast of the Belgian Congo and in its Congo River delta during the final days of Nazi Germany, May 1-8, 1945 (May 8th being VE Day, the day in which Germany formally surrendered). The novel opens with a French hospital ship and an armed merchant cruiser (the fictitious DARWIN QUEEN - her back story is that she had served as an ocean liner on the San Francisco - Australian run in pre-War days) en route to Durban, South Africa. The ships are traveling together having lost their convoy (Convoy WAS 72, with "WAS" standing for "West Africa Slow") which had sailed some days previous out of the Gold Coast. The remaining German U-boat from a submarine wolf pack which had harassed the convoy all the way south from Dakar takes on and sinks the merchant cruiser and then, in an act which violated all rules of wartime engagement, torpedoes the hospital ship. The DARWIN QUEEN's sole survivor is a tough Aussie petty officer named Murphy, an over-sexed and violent man, who is rescued and taken to a small missionary medical station in the Congo River delta. He vows revenge on the submarine which had sunk the two Allied vessels. Fate brings the U-boat also to the delta (her captain knows that it's just a matter of days until Germany's surrender and he hopes to lie low until then). Almost singlehandedly Petty Officer Murphy tracks down, harasses and ultimately destroys the U-boat and many of her crew. Catto's descriptive passages concerning Convoy WAS-72 are of interest for their realistic depiction of equatorial convoy and merchant mariner life. Less realistic is Murphy's private war against the German U-boat, with much of his action almost cartoonish in terms of believability. The novel was turned into the Peter Yates directed movie "Murphy's War" in 1971. Actors included Peter O'Toole, Siân Phillips, Philippe Noiret and Horst Janson. For inexplicable reasons the screenplay changed the story's locale from Africa's Congo River delta to coastal Venezuela.

Johnson, Marill

Thirteen Desperate Hours: A Liberty Ship's Crew and Their Navy Armed Guard Fight for Survival While Grounded on a Japanese-Held Island Manhattan, Kan.: Sunflower University Press, 2001. 177 p.

Issued only in paperback, Thirteen Desperate Hours was written by the husband-and-wife team Will and Marilyn Rayment under the pen name "Marill Johnson." The short novel is a thinly fictionalized account of an incident which occurred in January 1945 when Will was a merchant mariner serving aboard the Liberty Ship ALBERT A. JOHNSON in the Pacific. The work's subtitle pretty much tells it all - how the munitions-packed JOHNSON, lost out of a Philippine Islands invasion convoy, gets grounded (on enemy-controlled Negros Island in the Mindanao Strait) and then fights it out with the Japanese while desperately attempting to free herself. What the authors lack in polished writing skill is made up with gutsy seat-of-the-pants, "you are there" storytelling, all based on Will's real life Second World War sea experiences. As "Marill Johnson" explains in the novel's forward: "This story is fiction - founded on a lot of fact."

Citation added 10-11-07

Montgomery, Rutherford George (1896-)

Sea Raiders Ho! Philadelphia, Pa.: David McKay Company, 1945. 224 p.
Illustrated by E. Franklin Wittmack.

Montgomery's World War 2-era novel, aimed at the "older boy" market, focuses on the naval experiences of a pair of young submariners in the South Pacific and China Sea during 1944 and early 1945. Set aboard the fictitious U.S. submarine SEAHORSE, the novel's climax includes a daring raid on the Japanese fleet in Osaka Bay followed by an attack against a Japanese outbound freighter convoy in which the sub destroys two troop transport ships. Though decidedly propagandistic, Montgomery's writing is engaging and he doesn't talk down to his audience. Veteran commercial artist Wittmack (1896-1956), whose work was often featured on the covers and pages of such popular magazines as The Saturday Evening Post during a 40+ year career, contributed a number of excellent black-and-white illustrations which effectively bring Montgomery's story to life.

Citation added 10-1-07

Townend, William (1881-1962)

"The Death Ship." In: Short Stories Magazine, vol. 181, no. 6, Dec. 25, 1942, pp. 39-50.

Nazi cruelty and credulity versus Allied bravery and resourcefulness are Townend's themes in this 1942 short story, themes common to much early war years popular fiction. Townend sets his tale in mid-Indian Ocean with an unnamed German sea raider taking over a British tramp freighter (the fictitious BLUENOSE of Newcastle-upon-Tyne). A boarding party headed up by an arrogant Nazi true believer finds the ship seemingly ravaged by bubonic plague, with sick and dying crew members on deck and in the vessel's cabins and staterooms. The ship's log tells of an especially virulent strain of the plague which infects anyone and everyone coming in contact with it. The "brave" Nazi junior officer ("one of the race destined to rule the world," he believes) grows uneasy, and uneasiness turns to fear when his own captain abandons him and the rest of the boarding party to stay aboard the BLUENOSE rather than risk infecting the Nazi sea raider with the plague. It is only after the sea raider has sailed off that the BLUENOSE's captain and crew turn the tables on their new German guests: in a twist ending, it is revealed that no one is really ill (they'd been play acting - improvised make-up had made them appear grievously ill) and that the log had been "doctored" to make it appear that plague was present. (The genius behind the plague improvisation turns out to be a Polish Army general who had fled east after Poland's fall, the very Victor Laszlo-like resistance leader the German sea raider had actually been searching for at the beginning of Townend's story). The short story concludes with a coup de grace: the now no longer arrogant Nazi prisoners learn that the BLUENOSE has given nearby Allied warships the sea raider's position - the Allies have outsmarted Hitler's "master race"!

Saxton, Alexander (1919-)

Bright Web in the Darkness. New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press, 1958. 308 p.

Saxton's earnest novel looks at the labor movement in San Francisco Bay Area shipyards during World War 2, with a focus on what today would be labeled gender and racial issues. His heroine is an African-American "Rosie the Riveter" (actually her name is Joyce Allen and she's a welder) working at the fictitious East Bay San Martin Shipyards (a stand-in for the famous World War 2 Richmond, Calif. Kaiser Shipyard facilities). Saxton soberly documents the young woman's life at the shipyard where she, like other "Negro" employees, have been shunted into a powerless auxiliary of the welders' union where she's forced to pay union dues but is denied any job rights or even real participation in union activities. Saxton follows this very decent, hard working woman as African-American co-workers and white sympathizers challenge the union on its racial and gender bias (the union comes across as a heavy in Saxton's narrative) by seeking redress from, first, President Roosevelt's independently-established Fair Employment Practices Board, and then later through the federal and state court systems. Joyce's white roommate Sally O'Regan, also a shipyard welder, takes up the cause of equality and, in a subplot, this becomes a sore of contention between Sally and her husband Tom (a naval gunner stationed aboard the fictitious Liberty ship ANDREW ROGERS, primarily in North Atlantic convoy service). Joyce's own boyfriend, an African-American artist named Charlie Gammon, is a merchant seaman who is killed somewhere in the South Pacific when his ship is attacked by Japanese forces.

Citation added 9-21-07

Bowen, R. Sidney (1900-1977)

Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol. Akron, Ohio: Saalfield Publishing Company, 1941. 247 p.

Bowen's Dave Dawson "War Adventures Series" was marketed to the "older boy" audience (mid- to late-teenagers), many of whom would have, in the course of World War 2, moved on from reading the Bowen novels to taking part in actual hostilities after joining (or being drafted into) the military. Each of the series' 15 published titles followed the adventures of Dave Dawson, a young American of 18 or so, who had been trapped in Europe at the outbreak of World War 2. Early on (Dave Dawson at Dunkirk (1941)) Dawson escapes to Britain with Freddy Farmer, a slightly younger Englishman. Both join the Royal Air Force, with Dawson trained as a pilot and "now offering his life and his all in serving England's cause" (Freddy gets to be co-pilot). During the course of the series Dawson and Farmer serve on practically all war fronts, from Singapore to Libya, on the "Russian Front" and into the Pacific.

In an Internet appreciation entitled "Dave Dawson at Sixty" the Rev. Iain Richardson (who'd read the series as a youth) writes:

"This is not Stendahl, nor Tolstoy writing about war. It is wartime propaganda gone literate for boys. It is Tom Swift brought up to date with its fascination for the technical toys of the 1940s; with an added touch of the Hardy Boys in uniform for its cardboard characters and fast-paced, credible action, based on pluck plus luck. It's a formula series, but a good one. The war history is accurate, although it occasionally reveals how much information was kept back for postwar historians to divulge."

(As of Aug. 2007, the full "Dave Dawson at Sixty" article could be found at the [impossibly long URL](#))

Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol was number 4 in the series. In this installment Dave and Freddy are based on the south coast of England and assigned to convoy escort duty (their warplane is a Catalina "flying boat"). Along the way they unmask and eventually subdue a Nazi spy who had been operating in Britain. The novel's climax occurs over the English Channel when the "boys" locate a German "raider and her wolf-pack of U-boats" which had been lying in wait for an approaching Allied merchant convoy.

Macdonell, A. G. (1895-1941)

The Crew of the Anaconda. London, Eng.: Macmillan & Company, 1940. 300 p.

Read Macdonell's espionage thriller for its engrossing contemporary descriptions of London at the very outbreak of the Second World War. Set in late August / early September 1939, the work is very much in the tradition of a classic John Buchan page-turner (perhaps along the lines of The 39 Steps) as it follows the attempts of a mismatched couple (Denis Halloran's a sort of modern day pirate and Florinda Smedley is a British counter-intelligence agent) to track down a spy embedded in Whitehall (site of Britain's Foreign Office). The nautical tie in? Well, the spy is transmitting top secret convoy information of such importance to Germany that it appears the Reich's First World War goal of blockading Britain by sea will become a reality before 1939 comes to a close. And a blockaded Britain will be a defeated Britain - so our couple, working with several secondary characters, must first locate and then capture the spy (who turns out ultimately to be a female "nonentity," a stenographic secretary named Miss Hartropp). MacDonell's writing is brisk and mordantly humorous, with Denis and Florinda written as a British Nick and Nora Charles (sans the booze). And included among the baddies are a number of American hoodlums with names right out of Damon Runyan (such as Dutch Dopey, Spider Morgan and Quickly Quickly Carey) imported over to Britain to do dirty work for the Reich. The novel's climax takes place off the east coast of England, with the hero and his "world's fastest" motor yacht (heavily armed, it can supposedly travel at 60-70 knots) taking on a U-boat sent over to extract Nazi spy Hartropp. Suffice to say, U-boat and spy are ultimately dispatched to their various Valhallas and Britain's convoy system saved for the moment. It should be noted just how prescient author MacDonell was about the importance of the convoy system to Britain's effort during World War 2. And the very real danger that he (and others) foresaw in terms of the U-boat "blockade" menace nearly became a reality in 1942 (the year after he died) before the Allies, slowly at first, beat back the Nazi U-boat wolfpacks.

Citation added 9-3-07

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Cruel Seas : World War 2 Merchant Marine-Related Nautical Fiction from the 1930s to Present

An Annotated Bibliography of Short Stories, Novels & Novellas

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QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? SUGGESTIONS?

If you have questions, comments or suggestions regarding Cruel Seas, please contact Daniel Krummes, either by email (info@library.berkeley.edu or dkrummes@hotmail.com) or regular mail:

Daniel C. Krummes, Director Emeritus
Harmer E. Davis Transportation Library
412 McLaughlin Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

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Adams, Cleve *And Sudden Death*.

Tough-guy World War 2-era murder mystery / espionage yarn set aboard the fictitious liner HONOLULU QUEEN on a voyage from Los Angeles to Honolulu. Adams' hero Rex McBride seems to be a Sam Spade clone, and indeed several characters appear to be related to other Dashiell Hammett characters (McBride's girl friend Kay Ford resembles Nora Charles as played by Myrna Loy; the novel's lady villain, a Mrs. Nordstrom, is rather like the scheming, lying Brigid O'Shaughnessy (as played by Mary Astor) in "The Maltese Falcon" and there's even a corpulent bad guy – though at least he doesn't talk like Sydney Greenstreet!) The espionage angle concerns a spy ring headed by a nasty "Jap" Baron working undercover for his country's diplomatic service (who said the American public was unaware of the Japanese threat to U.S. security prior to Pearl Harbor?). Adams' shipboard scenes are evocative of Matson Line Hawaii service during the inter-war years, and the HONOLULU QUEEN herself was probably based upon either the LURLINE of 1932 or the MALOLO of 1927. Later published as a novel under the title *And Sudden Death*.

And Sudden Death. New York, N.Y.: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1940. 249 p.

This is the book version of Adams' serial "*Homicide Honolulu Bound*."

Adams, Eustace L. *Hell Afloat.*

Abstract based upon the first installment of this multi-part serial. *Argosy's* tagline proclaims: "War-casualty Pete Jordan and beautiful Mickey Lane find that there is terror greater than the fear of death when they are abandoned on a sinking luxury liner out in the South Pacific. A truly memorable novel of war-time castaways." Their "luxury liner" is the fictitious CALISTRALIA, far off normal shipping lanes en route to the United States from Australia. Torpedoed by a Japanese submarine a few days out of Auckland, New Zealand, the liner is abandoned by crew and passengers and left to sink. However, she doesn't sink, happily enough for Jordan and Lane who, for various plot devices, had been unwittingly left aboard the ship. But they're not alone: two loutish oilers are discovered in the ship's engine room. While Jordan — a decorated Army Air Corps officer — wants to try and get the ship running again (he's afraid that the ship — apparently already caught in a strong, southerly-pulling current — will drift to the uninhabited wastes of Antarctica), the oilers have but two things on their minds: drink (amply furnished by the stocks of the CALISTRALIA's 1st Class Bar) and women. Make that "Woman," with nightclub songstress Mickey intended to fill the bill. Installment #1 concludes with stalwart Jordan about to take on the surly oilers.

Addis, Hugh *Dark Voyage*.

This fair-to-middlin' murder mystery is set aboard an unnamed ocean liner during the final portion (Honolulu to San Francisco) of a voyage which had begun at Marseille with a run through the Mediterranean and Suez Canal into the Indian Ocean and then across the Pacific. It was certainly written during World War 2 and, perhaps to capitalize on current events, the author makes a weak stab at wartime references. Indeed, when the ship suddenly stops mid-ocean in order to recover a large steamer trunk that had been tossed overboard in the night (it has a body in it), panicky passengers assume that they've been torpedoed. Later, as news spreads of first one, than another shipboard murder, those same passengers fuel a rumor that "a Nazzy spy had a hand in this." That's about as convincing as it gets, however, since the liner had evidently sailed all the way from Marseille with lights ablaze and no real thought to the World War. It can only be surmised that the action is meant to be taking place sometime during the early days of the war, and certainly well before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. If Addis' attempt at wartime "atmosphere" falls short, so does his plot which, in addition to the two shipboard murders, includes an insurance scam, blackmail and landside murders as well.

Adolphe, Edward "Siesta on the High Seas."

Late World War 2 convoy tale, with a comic tone probably attributable to the fact that an Allied victory was now more of a forgone conclusion than during the dark, early days of the War. The freighter *ESMERALDA*, short a cook and about to embark from San Francisco in a South Pacific-bound convoy, signs up corpulent Juan Angel Francisco Agramonte Bimbo y Machado to fill the vacancy. His culinary creations delight officers and crew alike, though both also suffer greatly from gastric distress every time Juan has his afternoon siesta disturbed. What to do? Juan turns out to have had a South-of-the-border revolutionary past, which stands him in good stead when a Japanese attack airplane wakes him up from his afternoon slumber. An angry Juan mans the *ESMERALDA*'s .50 caliber gun and single-handedly shoots the fighter out of the sky. From then on, the *ESMERALDA*'s captain orders, Juan's siestas are to never be disturbed.

As read today, Adolphe's prose is decidedly condescending, as in his first description of Juan:

“Juan was a funny squirt, with a circumference about equal to his altitude; he bulged, front and back, like a sack of potatoes breaking loose in the middle. His black hair needed cutting and combing. We guessed, from the bronze of his skin and the black of his eyes and the way his pants had trouble hanging on his hips, that he came from somewhere south of the border.”-- p. 12.

Nonetheless, while “Siesta on the High Seas” is certainly a trifle in terms of fiction, it does provide the reader with something all too rarely encountered in steamship era fiction: a minority hero.

Ambler, Eric *Journey into Fear.*

An English engineer, a naval ordnance expert, is pursued by an assassin aboard an Italian freighter — the SESTRI LEVANTE — while sailing from Istanbul to Genoa during the early days of the Second World War. A classic, first-rate thriller, later made into the 1942 Orson Welles movie of the same name.

Andersen, Uell Stanley *The Smoldering Sea.*

Not for the squeamish. A realistic and quite often brutal depiction of merchant marine life during the early days after America's entry into World War 2. Andersen, who himself had served as a merchant seaman and later as an executive officer aboard a U.S. Navy destroyer, sets his novel aboard the ROBIN WEST, a "ninety-day-wonder" Liberty ship. Her commander, Captain Ransel, is an ex-Navy officer who had been court-martialed earlier for ploughing his destroyer aground in heavy fog and could now only gain command of a cargo ship. The ROBIN WEST initially sails west with a cargo of munitions to Hawaii and then on to the South Pacific in convoy. After a brief spell in Brisbane, Australia she joins a massive convoy headed for Guadalcanal, where she meets her end after having been attacked by and then fatally ramming a Japanese submarine. Along the way Ransel displays escalating episodes of madness, almost Queeg-like in intensity, that undermine crew morale. His fellow officers are depicted as angry, foul-mouthed, violent men - all incapable taking command. One interesting subplot depicts the uneasy relations between World War 2 merchant seamen and the Navy personnel commanding and manning the guns aboard merchant vessels. Another subplot revolves around the ROBIN WEST's steward and his (unsuccessful) attempt at pursuing a homosexual "friendship" with a Navy gunnery officer aboard. Also of interest is Andersen's almost lyrical description of the ROBIN WEST sailing north from Brisbane to join the Guadalcanal-bound convoy:

"Gradually a sense of impending events crept over the ship. The men began to feel the surge and flow of the great force they were caught in. And when, in the afternoon of the third day at sea, they saw for the first time the vast array of cargo vessels they were joining, the full magnitude of the entire operation hit them with a shock. The ROBIN WEST took station as the last ship in the port column, and her escorting destroyer swung into position in the anti-submarine screen. Over the ocean the ships spread, steaming directly into the north. It seemed impossible that such a vast force could move so silently, but there wasn't a sound on the sea, no wind, no waves, nothing - just the many silent ships sliding quietly through the water, heading north"-- pp. 270-271.

Arditti, Michael *A Sea Change*.

Arditti's beautifully crafted and emotionally satisfying novel is set aboard Hamburg-America Line's infamous passenger ship ST. LOUIS during that vessel's aborted 1939 "Voyage of the Damned" carrying 900+ German Jewish refugee asylum-seekers from Hamburg across the Atlantic to Havana, Cuba. His work hones close to the actual events which occurred aboard the ST. LOUIS and includes as characters a number of real life actors in the drama, including the ship's heroic master, Captain Gustav Schröder as well as the captain's vile nemesis, 2nd Class Steward and Nazi stooge Otto Schiendick. Refused entry at Havana and other North American ports, the liner eventually was forced to return to Europe, where most of the refugees subsequently perished during the Second World War.

The novel's real center, however, is a 15 year old "assimilated" Jewish boy (Karl Frankel-Hirsch) from Berlin traveling aboard the ST. LOUIS with his family towards what they hope will be the safety of the New World. As the ST. LOUIS turns from a place of asylum into a virtual prison ship wandering the ocean looking for safe haven, young Karl grows up emotionally, intellectually and sexually. The novel's emotional climax occurs when Karl celebrates his belated Bar Mitzvah aboard the ST. LOUIS, a moment of profound sentiment in Arditti's modern day Bildungsroman. Note that *A Sea Change* was published in only a paperback edition.

Ardman, Harvey *The Final Crossing*

A rather silly imagining of the NORMANDIE's last westbound voyage in 1939 as war is breaking out in Europe. Ardman includes a stellar cast of celebrity passengers — Marlene Dietrich, Sonja Henie(!) and Cole Porter among others — and fills the NORMANDIE's holds with France's gold reserves. Then there's the German bomb planted aboard which must be located and defused by an American secret agent. Did I mention German U-boats in hot pursuit of the glory of France's merchant fleet? Note that the novel was evidently issued only in paperback.

Augsburg, Paul Deresco *"Red Sadie and the Rising Sun"*

Canny feline named Red Sadie alerts an ammunition-packed freighter - the fictitious TOBANGO - steaming in Pacific waters for a convoy rendezvous that a Japanese submarine is in the vicinity. The ship's skipper, a frustrated Naval Reserve officer, has a trick or two up his sleeve, and soon (predictably) sinks the sub and captures most of the enemy sailors. Red Sadie, having just had a litter of kittens, is subsequently toasted a heroine when the TOBANGO arrives in Australia. For another feline-in-war story, see F.R. Buckley's "Childhood of Miss Churt" (below).

Ballard, J.G. *Empire of the Sun.*

A World War 2 novel that, though primarily set on land, has strong ties to the sea through one of author Ballard's primary characters, a despicable ship's steward. The powerful coming of age story is set in wartime Japanese-occupied Shanghai, with life seen through the eyes of 11 year old English boy named Jamie whose family is part of that city's ruling (European) elite. In the turmoil of Japan's 1941 takeover of the city he is separated from his family and, after two months living alone in the family's now deserted International Settlement mansion, the youngster falls into the dangerous company of Basie, an American ship's steward hiding out from the Japanese in an abandoned shipyard. The two are ultimately captured and wind up together in a civilian internee camp outside Shanghai. In many ways, *Empire of the Sun* can be read as an updated 20th Century version of the classic sea yarn *Treasure Island*, with Jamie playing the Jim Hawkins role to Basie's creepy (and sometimes sympathetic) Long John Silver. Survival, instead of gold, is the treasure that both seek, with Basie continually – and often casually – betraying Jamie (whom he'd christened "Jim") in order to aggrandize his own wartime profits and schemes. The novel concludes in late 1945 with Jim finally, after four years of internment, reunited with his parents and now aboard the Shaw-Savill liner ARAWA ready to sail to England. The novel was later (1987) turned into a big budget Steven Spielberg movie, with the actor John Malkovich playing the pivotal role of Basie.

Banning, Margaret Culkin "A Day In Port"

Liberty tag line: While there are wars for men, there will always be ways of holding a husband." This women's story dates from the last days before America's entry into World War 2, that period of official neutrality in which the nation's industries were already retooling for the war effort. A middle aged, married couple (Margery and Philip) take a 28-day Caribbean cruise aboard the American liner COLOMBIA (in 1940 and 1941, with Europe and the Far East at war, the Caribbean was a popular destination for American tourists). Philip is an automobile industry executive whose plant is being converted from automobile production to that of war planes and he is taking the cruise to regain his health and energy. Also aboard the ship is the obligatory man-hungry single woman, a cereal heiress named Della (modeled perhaps after infamous Marjorie Meriweather Post?) . During a Trinidad port visit Della makes an obvious play for the husband, and nearly succeeds until mousy Margery plays her trump hand. Does Margery get a fashion make over à la a Bette Davis heroine and thus win back her man? No, she plays with a different card (patriotism) by insisting that they all visit a U.S. air base then being built on Trinidad. Seems hubby's warplanes are already being sent down to the base and he naturally loses all interest in shallow Della (the air base bores her) once he sees the fruit of his hard work back in Detroit. Further, the visit reminds Philip that he wants to be part of America's developing war effort and not just some rich woman's man-toy. The tale concludes back on the COLOMBIA with domestic bliss restored thanks, in no small part, to a dose of good old fashioned American patriotism!

Baxter, Gregory *Death Strikes at Six Bells.*

Two murders occur aboard the fictitious liner MOOLKUNDA off the coast of Port Said during her homeward voyage from India. Baxter's plot starts off realistic, but soon veers into the realm of 1930s fantasy. It all has something to do with the "Third International" - - a shadowy "Bolshevik" movement - - attempting to steal the royal regalia of a Raj princely state. Coded anti-Semitism (Baxter's villain is Paul Baruch, described as "a mongrel product of the Levant") adds to the decided period feel of the book. Baxter's writing style is so "terribly top-drawer, stiff-upper-lip what" that it today reads as parody, though probably didn't appear so outlandish back in 1934 when the book first appeared.

Beresford, J.D. *Beebe, William*

Collier's tag line: "Here is a story few men could imagine and perhaps only one could write – the story of what happens when a ship makes its final voyage into the fantastic world at the bottom of an ocean." Beebe's tale is a well thought out mixture of science + fiction: how a disabled Japanese submarine (the TAI) and its intended victim, an American merchant vessel (the BROOKLYN BELLE) sailing out of convoy in the South Pacific, are both lost at sea after a furious gun battle erupts between the two. The story then continues with a highly interesting look at what physically will happen to both submarine and freighter as they sink to and settle upon the bottom of ocean, and then continues on to tell of their gradual disintegration as the years go by. Beebe's emphasis is on how the remains of both vessels (as well as of their former human occupants) are merged into and become part of the ocean's ecology, with fish and other marine life interacting with the gradually disintegrating vessels.

Beresford, J.D. *Men in the Same Boat*

Co-written with Esme Wynne-Tyson. An intriguing novel unreviewed by compiler. The Times Literary Supplement of Aug. 14, 1943 describes the novel thusly: "The boat of the story is a torpedoed ship's lifeboat which drifts helplessly across the seas while its inmates struggle vainly against thirst, hunger and exposure. The seven characters are distinctly drawn. One of them, the Passenger, is something of a mystery man and the poor Padre is draped in a rather artificial cloak of gentle unction to throw into relief the Passenger's authentic spiritual wisdom. But the sense of what each character stands for is unfolded through what each is. And this is particularly true of the taciturn Seaman and voluble Operator. But in Book II we are in another world, for which we have indeed been prepared by various references in the conversation of the shipwrecked to the theories of 'Karma' and reincarnation. Each of the characters in fact survives in a novel way. It is ingeniously done, but apart from the Jew and the Operator, who provide a good melodramatic sequel on their return to earth, the interest flags, though the idea is suggestive." For a complementary story line see James Hanley's 1941 novel of survival at sea, *The Ocean*.

Bleck, Basil *"Humiliation on the Mary."*

This World War 2 tale is probably closer to "faction" than clear-cut fiction. A missing top secret dispatch pouch causes a reluctant Commander Bisset, real-life captain of the liner-turned-troopship QUEEN MARY and commodore of the Cunard fleet, to stop his ship off Bayonne, N.J. where he'd just taken aboard as passenger British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill. Churchill had been attending the 2nd Quebec Conference for Allied leaders (held in Sept. 1944) and, after having spent a long weekend at Hyde Park with President and Mrs. Roosevelt, embarks aboard the QUEEN MARY for a fast eastbound trans-Atlantic run home.

The story's narrator, a Royal Navy officer serving as liaison based in New York City with the Third U.S. Naval District, had been summoned aboard the QUEEN MARY to bring off a top secret dispatch pouch just before the liner sailed. A mishap causes him to leave the ship sans the pouch (his humiliation, clearly and not the QUEEN MARY's!) and a seemingly fruitless pursuit of the liner by pilot boat as the QUEEN MARY gathers speed would appear to settle the narrator's fate (he fears disgrace for having let the dispatch pouch stay aboard the liner). But at the last moment the great ocean liner stops, the pilot boat catches up with her and the missing pouch retrieved. Later that night, at home, his wife, with "the proper display of feminine curiosity," wonders just what might have been in the pouch. Our Royal Navy man won't venture a guess other than that the pouch had seemed rather light in weight. He supposed it probably didn't contain more than a letter or two. "I expect one was Mr. Churchill's bread-and-butter letter to Mrs. Roosevelt" observes his wife. And, in closing, Bleck's narrator himself observes: "To this day, I find it hard to convince myself that she wasn't right."

Blochman, Lawrence G. *Midnight Sailing.*

Pre-World War 2 Pacific setting. Murder (actually, three murders), espionage and an art theft aboard a second-rate Japanese liner en route from San Francisco to Honolulu. Blochman's plot is more than a little confusing, as is the heroine's rather rapid transfer of her affections during the course of several turbulent days at sea. The jazzy repartee à la Nick and Nora Charles between Blochman's hero (a newspaper report) and the heroine (a young heiress that the reporter is tracking) is one of the novel's highlights. The espionage angle has something to do with stolen plans for U.S. Navy anti-aircraft guns being smuggled to Japan. There's also an interesting denouement when a Korean steward sets the ship afire in an attempt to destroy the vessel's cargo of nitrates which had been destined for the Japanese war machine. Blochman is decidedly anti-Japan in his writing and he seems to go out of his way to summon up just about every 'thirties Japanese stereotype. One amusing shipboard detail: Blochman's ship had no hot water. When a passenger wanted a hot bath, he or she filled a tub in the bathroom with cold seawater, and then inserted a loose steam pipe into the bathtub: the hot steam bubbled through the water and heated it up to bathing temperature. Blochman describes the process with such authority that one accepts the idea that such a strange system very well may have once existed aboard steamships! For another look at the pre World War 2 "espionage-aboard-a-Japanese-ship" genre, see Robert Carson's 1941 *Saturday Evening Post* serial "Aloha Means Good-bye."

Bonosky, Phillip *"Neapolitan Night"*

Bonosky's gritty World War 2 short story about four American merchant seamen out for a night of shore leave in recently Allied liberated Naples is a raw, lurid example of realism in fiction. For three of the seamen this was a return visit to the southern Italian city; accompanying them this evening is Mario, a young Italian-American crewman, on his first overseas voyage. Only part of the city is open to Allied soldiers and merchant seamen, and that section is heavily patrolled by M.P.s who make certain that no one ventures out of this secured zone. Incredible poverty, filthy living conditions and casual prostitution assault the visitors. Though his older, war-seasoned compatriots take it all in stride, Mario is repulsed by the depravity which he encounters. Looking for cheap booze, the Americans are eventually brought to a hovel of a one room apartment where they are offered, in addition to liquor, the sexual services of the family's youngest daughter. While the older men take their turns having sex with her in broad view, Mario resists - even when the seamen strip him naked and toss him onto the soiled mattress where the pre-pubescent girl awaits him. Sitting over in at a corner table, eating pasta, is the girl's young brother, who watches his sister having sex and, along with the rest of his family (including the prostituted girl) and the seamen, find it greatly humorous that Mario refuses a sexual encounter. Horrified by what he has seen, Mario quickly pulls his clothes back on and runs back to the quiet and safety of his ship.

Booth, Charles Gordon *"Mr. Angel Comes Aboard."*

Set in the Fall, 1942. A MARY CELESTE-like mystery involving the American freighter EMMALINE QUINCY, found abandoned at sea in the Caribbean with no sign of the her crew (but with fresh-dried blood stains on her decks). Brought to Havana port by Johnny Angel and his salvage crew, the mystery deepens when a young newspaperwoman is revealed to have been aboard the ship during the QUINCY's aborted trans-Atlantic voyage from the Vichy French-controlled port of Dakar in French West Africa. The young woman eventually reveals that the ship had been attacked in the Caribbean by unknown men from a yacht who were aided by rogue QUINCY crew members. During the ensuing melee, the ship's captain had been murdered – along with most of the rest of his crew – and a secret cargo of \$8 million in gold had been seized. Salvager Johnny Angel's grandfather was the QUINCY's master, and despite the elder Angel's evident murder, the old man is implicated as an accessory to the crime — so of course Johnny has to clear the family name. As in all serials, this one boasts a very tangled plot. And the World War 2 angle? It seems that the gold being transported by the QUINCY had been part of a stash secretly sent to Dakar by the French government just before the 1940 capitulation of France to the Nazis. The Free French underground had, in turn, gotten hold of \$8 million worth of the gold horde and, with the connivance of the U.S. State Dept., was attempting to move it to the relative safety of the New World. The story was subsequently published as a full-fledged novel (see following entry) and then later turned into the 1945 film "Johnny Angel," starring George Raft, Clair Trevor and Hoagy Carmichael.

Booth, Charles Gordon *Mr. Angel Comes Aboard.*

"A deserted ship, a Havana night club, and an unlisted cargo were three signposts on the road to murder"- Book jacket cover blurb, Mr. Angel Comes Aboard.

Borodin, George *Friendly Ocean*.

Borodin's short World War 2 novel is set aboard an ocean liner (the fictitious ATLANTIC PRINCE) making a solo eastbound dash across the North Atlantic during the early Fall of 1940. He focuses almost entirely on the comings and goings of passengers in the liner's deserted 1st Class (only 50 1st Class passengers have booked passage from New York to England, though there are 200+ passengers in 2nd Class – a fact the reader learns only late in the novel) à la *Grand Hotel*. Characters – none too sympathetically portrayed – include an aging Russian countess and her elderly husband, a Romanian diplomat, a newlywed couple, the ship's philandering doctor and his spouse, a floozy from New York City by way of Buenos Aires, a young mother (a "Mrs. Borodin," clearly one of the author's inside jokes) and her baby and an English army colonel returning to Britain after a secret conference in the States. Also onboard is a Nazi saboteur who, though unsuccessful in blowing up the ship at her dock in New York, does succeed in getting the vessel torpedoed by a U-boat in mid-Atlantic. Despite the dramatic possibilities of his story Borodin's prose is curiously unengaging and flat, and it is only when the ATLANTIC PRINCE's survivors take to the lifeboats that the story really picks up.

"Boston Blackie" "Coastal Diary."

Blue Book tag line: "What it feels like to steer a ship through the submarines off our East Coast," billed by *Blue Book* as a "Prize Story from Real Experience." This semi-fictionalized account of an East Coast voyage (Newport News to New York City) aboard an unidentified freighter possesses a veracity and immediacy which makes for compelling reading today, just as it did back in 1942 when first published. The story's seaman narrator captures the stress of sailing in U-boat infested waters, as ship after nearby ship is torpedoed and strikes out S.O.S. on the wireless before sinking. Of the four vessels which departed Newport News at the beginning of his saga, only one makes it to port. "Boston Blackie" is decidedly a pseudonym; the *real* "Boston Blackie" was a fictitious gentleman burglar introduced by the author Jack Boyle to American magazine readers in the early 'teens. Boyle's hero was later featured in a series of films (silent and sound), as well as in a radio series in the 1930s and even as a 1950s television series.

Bosworth, Allan R. *"If I Must Die-."*

Period short story set in a lifeboat in the South Atlantic. Adventure tag line: "Jeremiah Bone was as fair a Shakespearean scholar as any ship captain his age who never went to Cambridge, despite the fact that he'd list four precious volumes of the Bard in as many wrecks at sea. Which explained his determination to save the fifth and final tome if he salvaged nothing else when the Nazi U-boat's torpedo sank the MARY JOLLY." Old Captain Bone's knowledge of Shakespeare's plays leads to an ending that O. Henry himself might have penned, though with a bit of old fashioned Elizabethan vengeance thrown into the mix!

Bosworth, Allan R. *"Short of War"*.

An interesting short story dating to the period just before America's entry into the War. Its *Maclean's* tag line neatly sums up Bosworth's plot conceit: "There was no doubt about what 'all aid short of war' meant to Swede Murphy, U.S. destroyer skipper — not when the fate of his old ship hang in the balance." Swede's "old ship" turns out to be one of the destroyers traded to Britain and Canada for New World naval ports by Roosevelt. The story opens with Murphy and his ship (the destroyer U.S.S. GALLOPING GALLOWAY) on neutrality patrol in international waters near the Canadian Maritimes. A distress signal is received and the American Navy vessel rushes to the aid of a British freighter that had been shelled and left to sink by a German U-boat. Murphy's attempt to rescue the ship's stranded survivors (the callous German had purposefully strafed and destroyed the ship's lifeboats) puts several of his own men aboard the disabled vessel at just the time when the lurking Nazi sub reappears. After tense confrontation with the arrogant U-boat skipper (there's no doubt where author Bosworth's sympathies lie — firmly with the Allied cause), Murphy not only rescues his stranded men and the surviving English crew, but also manages to alert a nearby Canadian destroyer to the U-boat's presence, all the while operating within the legal strictures of American neutrality. What tips the scale is Murphy's realization that the Canadian destroyer is in fact an old U.S. destroyer — and one which he had once commanded.

Bosworth, Allan R. *"Tin-Can Sailor"*.

Collier's tag line: "Belated education of a destroyer man who didn't like planes." The "tin-can sailor" in this case is Admiral Philip Porter Dane, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet, which is engaged in war games several hundred miles off Hawaii. He is eagerly awaiting an upcoming reunion with his daughter who, with many other Navy dependents, is also in the vicinity — en route to Honolulu aboard the liner CITY OF SAN FERNANDO. In a heavy fog, the liner collides with a tanker and the ensuing inferno threatens all aboard her. Dane dispatches two destroyers to come to the aid of the passengers and crew, but then looks on helplessly as fire-charged seas completely surround the liner and seem to make rescue impossible. At the last moment, a host of Navy airplanes arrive on scene, and their pilots use the planes' propellers to fan the flames away from the liner so that destroyers can effect their rescue. O.K., let's face it: Bosworth was *really* stretching it with this plot!

Bosworth, Allan R. "You Always Remember."

Semi-comic tale. Elderly Captain Elam Andrews is called out of retirement by World War 2 to take command of his old ship, the freighter WESTBROOK, and take the vessel, loaded with foodstuffs for Britain, eastbound across the North Atlantic in a slow convoy. Right off the bat his crew think him "a bit unhinged" (he putters around a lot in a locked portion of the cargo hold, supposedly trying to grow tomatoes) and when Andrews refuses to allow the ship's Navy gun crew to practice artillery shooting they wonder whether he's a coward, too. All too soon the old WESTBROOK's engines break down and the ship has to fall out of convoy to effect repairs. Sure enough, right on cue, a German U-boat soon surfaces and orders captain and crew to abandon ship and take to their boats. Before the Nazis sink the vessel, though, they proceed to loot her – paying particular attention to the ship's cargo of canned goods. And, then to the great surprise of the WESTBROOK's crew, a few minutes after the last crate of canned goods has been put aboard the submarine a huge explosion destroys the U-boat. Seems that Captain Andrews hadn't been tending his tomato plants but rather, in secret, had placed a series of time bombs in a crate containing canned grapefruit. You see, he explains later to his crew, he'd had a freighter of his looted and sunk by Germans during World War 1, with the Huns taking "a case of grapefruit the first thing." He'd been thinking up the "grapefruit defense" for over 23 years, he tells, them. And the crafty shipmaster, knowing that the good ship WESTBROOK just might be accosted by another U-boat before reaching the safety of England, assures his crew (now safely back aboard their ship) that he's booby trapped a couple more cases of grapefruit just in case! For another World War 2 short story utilizing the very same plot twist (i.e., timed bombs in cased goods) see Albert Richard Wetjen's "The Pleasure Is All Yours," which had appeared in an earlier (July 19, 1941) issue of Liberty Magazine.

Bowen, R. Sidney, *Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol*.

Bowen's Dave Dawson "War Adventures Series" was marketed to the "older boy" audience (mid- to late-teenagers), many of whom would have, in the course of World War 2, moved on from reading the Bowen novels to taking part in actual hostilities after joining (or being drafted into) the military. Each of the series' 15 published titles followed the adventures of Dave Dawson, a young American of 18 or so, who had been trapped in Europe at the outbreak of World War 2. Early on (*Dave Dawson at Dunkirk* (1941)) Dawson escapes to Britain with Freddy Farmer, a slightly younger Englishman. Both join the Royal Air Force, with Dawson trained as a pilot and "now offering his life and his all in serving England's cause" (Freddy gets to be co-pilot). During the course of the series Dawson and Farmer serve on practically all war fronts, from Singapore to Libya, on the "Russian Front" and into the Pacific.

In an Internet appreciation entitled "Dave Dawson at Sixty" the Rev. Iain Richardson (who'd read the series as a youth) writes:

"This is not Stendahl, nor Tolstoy writing about war. It is wartime propaganda gone literate for boys. It is Tom Swift brought up to date with its fascination for the technical toys of the 1940s; with an added touch of the Hardy Boys in uniform for its cardboard characters and fast-paced, credible action, based on pluck plus luck. It's a formula series, but a good one. The war history is accurate, although it occasionally reveals how much information was kept back for postwar historians to divulge."

(As of Aug. 2007, the full "Dave Dawson at Sixty" article could be found at the impossibly long URL: <http://72.14.253.104/search?q=cache:7pHwZtzYHfsJ:users.tellurian.com/bksleuth/infoB.htm+%22dave+dawson+at+Sixty%22+iain+macdonald&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us>)

Dave Dawson on Convoy Patrol was number 4 in the series. In this installment Dave and Freddy are based on the south coast of England and assigned to convoy escort duty (their warplane is a Catalina "flying boat"). Along the way they unmask and eventually subdue a Nazi spy who had been operating in Britain. The novel's climax occurs over the English Channel when the "boys" locate a German "raider and her wolf-pack of U-boats" which had been lying in wait for an approaching Allied merchant convoy.

Bower, Barbara *"Miss Ranskil Comes Home"*.

Part 1 of this Saturday Evening Post serial details prim Miss Ranskill's unceremonious arrival on a deserted tropical island after having fallen overboard from a luxury liner on a world cruise in 1938. She is rescued by a ship's carpenter, another castaway, and they live together for four years until his death, which occurs right after he had finished construction of a small sailing boat. Miss Ranskill takes the boat to sea and is ultimately rescued by a British navy vessel, sailing in convoy back to England. The succeeding serial installments record the immense changes that England had undergone because of the Second World War, all seen through the eyes of the newly-returned Miss Ranskill. Later published (see next entry) as a novel.

Boyle, Kay "*Frenchman's Ship.*"

Saturday Evening Post tag line: "He was a man without a country, alone, betrayed — until a sixteen year old boarding-school girl brought him something to live for." Boyle, well-respected during a long career for her short stories, set this tale against the backdrop of the early days of America's participation in World War 2. Her protagonist is an unhappy French merchant seaman, stranded in the U.S. by the War, who has taken a temporary job at a New Jersey riding stables that caters to the boarding-school trade. His beloved ship, clearly modeled after the NORMANDIE, "was being held for the duration on the Hudson's New York side" and the Frenchman takes every opportunity to ride to the top of the Hudson's Palisades to catch a glimpse of her. "They [the Germans] haven't been able to get their hands on that much of France" he observes to the one young girl, Vivienne, who takes an interest in his fate. The story climaxes with the "thirty-five alarm fire call" that sees his ship destroyed, much in the manner in which the NORMANDIE herself had been destroyed seven months earlier, with "half of the city's population ... down there looking on." Despite his unsuccessful attempt to break through police lines to try and help save the vessel, the Frenchman, nonetheless, in a very "Casablanca"-like ending, gains resolve and the courage to get back into action by going "north" to join up and fight Germany by whatever means possible.

Boyle, Kay *"The Ships Going to Glory"*

Another Boyle World War 2 short story, this one set in the environs of New York harbor. Her protagonists are a young nurse and the pilot of a New York City fireboat. The story comes to a climax as a docked tanker explodes, with the fireboat pilot losing his life in an attempt to put out its flames. Boyle's very interesting theme is that the importance of war work back home in the United States is not to be underestimated for its worth. Boyle was also evidently still haunted by the NORMANDIE tragedy (see her "Frenchman's Ship" above), as evidenced in brief dialog between the nurse (Lonnie Ivy) and the unnamed fireboat pilot:

"There was one big fire you had here," Lonnie Ivy said in sudden defense. "We read all about it in the papers back home. A big French boat that was here that burned on the river." "Don't say it," said the pilot, and he lifted her hand. "Don't say her name. It was heartbreak to every man on the force when she keeled over"--p. 66.

Bradbury, Ray *"Undersea Guardians"*

A peculiar, eerie convoy story which opens underwater near the wreck of the U.S.S. ATLANTIC, a sunken cargo / troop transport ship destroyed by a German submarine. Bradbury's "guardians" are twenty ghost-like survivors of the vessel, who are neither dead nor alive. They "live" only to protect Allied convoy vessels and to destroy German submarines and surface vessels:

"We're the Guardians," one of these beings, an old woman, tells another. Though over 1000 perished with the ATLANTIC, "twenty of us came out, half dead, because we have someone to guard. You have a lover on the convoy routes. I have four sons in the Navy. The others have similar obligations. [Captain] Condon has sons, too. And Helene — well, here lover was drowned inside the ATLANTIC and never came out half alive like us, so she's vindictive, motivated by a great vengeance. She can't ever really be killed."

We all have a stake in the convoys that cross and recross the ocean. We're not the only ones. Maybe there are thousands of others who cannot and will not rest between here and England, breaking seams in German cargo boats, darkening Nazi periscopes and frightening German crewmen, sinking their gunboats when the chance comes.

But we're all the same. Our love for our husbands and daughters and fathers makes us go on when we should be meat for fish, make us go on being Guardians of the Convoy ..."

Brand, Max *"Survival!"*

A Navy gunner named Avant serving aboard a Victory Ship ("one of these sixty-day wonders") in the South Pacific becomes trapped in his cabin after the freighter is torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. With the door out of his cabin having been jammed by the torpedo explosion, water starts to rapidly fill the small space. Luckily, Brand's hero is something of a small town "mechanic" and, rather than panicking, he uses old fashioned Yankee ingenuity and brute strength to first force the door open and then, a few moments later, figure a way to crank open a jammed watertight compartment door. His calmness and fortitude under stress saves his life as well as the lives of several other mariners trapped in the sinking freighter's hull. Weeks later, recuperating from his ordeal back at Treasure Island Naval Station in San Francisco Bay, Avant

"... dreams of manning a gun on some other day, or night, when a Jap sub comes up to have a look at another Victory Ship, and he hopes to be the one who makes that the last look that sub takes at any kind of ship or weather."

Breyfogle, William Arthur *"The Day's Catch."*

World War 2 tale. An armed German raider, posing as a Danish-flagged freighter, lures a British destroyer to doom off the Atlantic coast of Donegal in neutral Ireland. After taking the destroyer's few survivors as prisoners of war, the vessel turns fire upon Irish fishermen in the vicinity who'd witnessed the incident, slaughtering several of the men. This proves to be a costly mistake: surviving Irish fishermen vow immediate revenge. They take it by luring the Nazi ship to a rocky grounding which turns the vessel and her crew helpless — in other words, by turning the Germans into the Irish fishermen's "day's catch." By tale's end, the Germans face prospect of immediate capture and internment by their English foe. As a piece of World War 2 popular fiction, Breyfogle's story is of interest for his almost-stock propaganda portrayal of Germans as brutal, bloodthirsty and merciless when in a position of power — and cowardly when the tables are turned against them.

Breyfogle, William Arthur "Judas Ship."

A Nazi U-boat disables the BANKS MAID, a Canadian Maritimes sailing vessel, in mid-Atlantic in order to use the ship as a "Judas ship, a stalking horse" to lure unsuspecting merchant vessels to a German torpedo doom. The Germans, depicted as the basest of human beings, leave a prize crew aboard the BANKS to make certain that her crew don't try anything heroic. But men have to eat, and that proves to be the Nazis downfall: the BANKS' cook is an unreformed drunk — and mighty handy with a frying pan! As the *Maclean's* tag line promises (and Breyfogle's story delivers): "Bait, were they? Human decoys for unsuspecting rescuers? — Well, the Nazis hadn't reckoned on big Eli Dessett, ship's cook.' After Eli dispatches the Germans onboard (the first one falls to his frying pan, others are shot to death with Nazi #1's gun), members of the BANKS' crew are able to escape under cover of night's darkness into nearby shipping lanes and shortly thereafter alerted aircraft arrive overhead to destroy the Nazi U-boat.

Brookes, Ewart *Proud Waters*.

Brookes' novel is focused on World War 2 English coastal minesweepers, "the little ships that kept the sea lanes clear." The Times Literary Supplement's review of Jan. 29, 1954 is mixed at best, though (positively) noting: "By far the best passages in the book are those which describe action and fear. Engagements with enemy aircraft and light, fast, coastal forces are vividly realized. The nervous strain of command, the lack of sleep, the constant awareness that a lightning decision of life or death at any moment – all these are well brought out."

Buchheim, Lothar-Gunther *The Boat*

Originally published in Germany in 1973 under the title Das Boot, Buchheim's autobiographical novel looks at the Battle of the Atlantic from a German U-boat perspective. The book is arguably revisionistic, boasting a humane submarine commandant - called alternately the "Old Man" or "Herr Kaleun" (the standard naval abbreviation for his full title, Herr Kapitänleutnant) - who deeply regrets the necessity of sinking civilian vessels, professional, competent officers and a crew of decent, often unwarlike men nicknamed the "children's crusade" because of their extreme youth (most of the crew are in their late teens). Indeed, the only fervent Nazi shipboard - the sub's arrogant First Watch Officer - is pretty much disliked by one and all, and often openly mocked by the Old Man himself. Buchheim aptly captures the tedium of underwater patrol work, the adrenaline-filled moments of stalking and torpedoing Allied convoy vessels. His taut descriptions of the flip side of pursuit, when the U-boat itself has become prey to attacking Allied warships, is admirably done: claustrophobic, shattering, tedious and fearsome.

As the novel moves towards its close, most readers will feel a grudging respect for officers and crew of the U-boat. But that respect turns to horror in a penultimate scene in which a neutral passenger liner, lights blazing, is torpedoed off the coast of Spain because the U-boat's officers cannot decide whether she is Spanish or an enemy vessel. Luckily the torpedo is a dud and subsequent interrogation of the ship's captain by the Old Man reveals that the liner is indeed Spanish and is en route to South America with over 2,000 passengers. The ship is allowed to sail on, unmolested. But in the novel's most chilling scene, Herr Kaleun tells his officers that had their torpedo not been a dud and had it sunk what turned out to be a neutral ship, they would have had to have destroyed all evidence of their misdeed - and that would include machine gunning to death all survivors. "Only dead men tell no tales," observes the novel's narrator (a young naval war correspondent serving aboard the sub, a role in which Buchheim himself had served during the War).

Das Boot became a bestseller in Germany and was published in the United States two years later under the title The Boat. It was turned into a masterly German television miniseries by Wolfgang Petersen in 1981 and subsequently re-cut into a feature film which was released worldwide in 1981 (see Appendix 4, "Cruel Seas Goes to the Movies" for additional film details).

Buckley, F. R. *"Auld Acquaintance."*

This World War 2 era short story features a Saturday Evening Post tag line reading: "A Nazi U-boat patches up two old sea dogs' friendship." The sea dogs in question being the Captain and Chief Engineer of a rust-bucket tanker filled with 10,000 tons of high octane gasoline which has fallen out of a North Atlantic convoy due to engine problems. The tanker, the fictitious POTOMAC, is attacked by and subsequently takes on a surfaced German submarine. The short story itself is somewhat humorous and boasts a Scottish Chief Engineer in the tradition of Guy Gilpatric's Colin Glencannon.

Buckley, F. R. *"Childhood of Miss Churt."*

Another Buckley World War 2 era short story, probably written up during the time of the "Phony War" given its curiously jocular tone and somewhat even-handed portrayal of a British merchant vessel crew and their adversaries in a German U-boat. The Miss Churt in question is a young kitten, darling of the freighter MALVERN's crew, who is inadvertently left behind after the ship has been abandoned after having struck a derelict vessel. The MALVERN's 1st Officer, Mr. Wharton, returns to retrieve the kitten just in time to endure a shelling from a just-surfaced German submarine. When he erroneously believes the Germans to have killed the kitten Mr. Wharton mans the MALVERN's 4.7 gun and shoots off the top of the sub's conning tower.

Buckley, F. R. *"Watch Below."*

An Adventure Magazine "Fact Story," with a tag line which pretty much sums up its contents:

"The third engineer has the next watch – eight to midnight – and you're going to stand it with him. Down in the bowels of the ship in convoy with nothing but a fraction of an inch of steel between you and thirteen tons of scalding water — and depth charges hammering the walls that keep the sea outside."

Buckley takes very much a "you are there" approach to his story and that makes it as fascinating a read today as it would have been during the Second World War at the height of the North Atlantic convoy system (his unnamed vessel — a Liberty ship — is traveling eastbound in convoy). Buckley is one of those rare maritime writers equally adept at bringing to life both the ships' crew and also the inner workings of her engine room. Definitely a must read for anyone interested in what it would have been like to serve as a member of the engine room crew aboard a Liberty ship in convoy.

Burland, Brian *A Fall from Aloft*.

Twelve year old James Berkeley makes a terrifying midwinter journey across the Atlantic during the height of the German U-boat assault in 1942 aboard the fictitious Liberty ship EMPIRE UNITED. The book's strong suit is its unsentimental (indeed, unvarnished) depiction of British merchant seamen of that era along with vivid descriptions of the often hellish conditions in which they worked, particularly while on North Atlantic convoys.

Burke, Jan "*Miscalculation*"

An evocative “murder” mystery set aboard the contemporary Long Beach, Calif.-based museum ship QUEEN MARY, with flashbacks to the ship’s World War 2 career as a troopship. Burke’s descriptions of today’s QUEEN MARY are accurate and dead-on. And her “murder” angle (who *would* have been morally responsible for the deaths of troops aboard the ship who’d succumbed to heat stroke while sailing in the tropics in the overcrowded vessel?) is intriguing. This one’s easily the “best of show” in Block’s anthology.

Burke, Richard *Barbary Freight*

A wildly improbable espionage tale set early in the War. In Burke's story, a series of American freighters have mysteriously disappeared from Allied North Atlantic convoys only to reappear later in the Pacific Ocean as German commerce raiders. "The enemy was using some method subtler and even more successful than the submarine" according to the novel's book jacket blurb (that "method" was a Nazi siren reeking sex appeal and treachery, in equal doses!). Burke's protagonist, ship's officer Bill Mason, is in New York City when the sea raider news breaks and he has just 15 hours before his own vessel is due to sail in convoy. He's convinced that he can solve the mystery of the missing freighters, though he must do so before sailing for North Africa. Aiding him is love interest Ann Dexter, "as pretty and quick-witted a girl as you could want for a heroine." Though the novel starts off with a superb, atmospheric description of the New York waterfront during wartime it soon moves into the realm of pulp fiction, with Burke's stalwart American heroes (and heroine) fighting off nefarious Nazis and Nazi sympathizers.

Callison, Brian *The Bone Collectors: A Novel of Atlantic Convoys*

An outstanding novel by Callison, ranking right up there with his *A Ship Is Dying* for drama, pathos and sympathetically drawn merchant mariner characters. The American edition of the novel's book jacket blurb lays out the basic plotline for this riveting work of fiction:

“Early 1941: the Happy Time for the U-boats; the most savage, punishing time for North Atlantic convoys, in which antiquated merchant ships, mostly unarmed, invariably slow and with few escorts, doggedly sailed in fixed lines, like metal ducks in a fairground shooting gallery, across what the Allies called the ‘Air Gap’, and the U-boat men has christened das Todesloch — the ‘Death Hole’. There were no specialist rescue ships provided in those days; Naval Control could only nominate one ship in each column to attempt to save other seamen forced to abandon. The U-boat men had an apt name for such a steamer. They called her Knochensammler — The Bone Collector. This is the story of one of those Bone Collectors — the British steamship OLYMPIAN — and what happened to her whole the North Atlantic killing was at its peak. It is a novel of ordinary Merchant Navy convoy men, as seen through the eyes of OLYMPIAN's Chief Officer during the early part of one night's massacre — as the U-boat attack groups finally converged on Slow Convoy SC whatever-it-was, in the graveyard of das Todesloch.”

Callison, Brian *A Flock of Ships*

A South Atlantic convoy disappears in 1941, with the mystery surrounding this event only coming to light twenty-five years later. The action centers on the fictitious cargo liner CYCLOPS and is detailed in the log, discovered posthumously, written up by her First Officer. Though the tale itself verges on the truly improbable, Callison nonetheless produced a real page-turner here.

Callison, Brian *The Judas Ship*

Set in 1941 just before America's entry into World War 2. The British freighter MAYA STAR, traveling out of convoy, is attacked by a German sea raider (the fictitious SEEPANTHER) two hundred miles off the coast of Brazil and, though grievously damaged, survives — and indeed escapes her pursuer. With but a handful of her original crew still alive the MAYA Star's captain (and Callison's narrator) manages to get his ship to Brazil only to find — to his great horror — that the Nazi raider's captain has chosen the same estuarial jungle locale to make repairs to his vessel. Callison provides a rousing, *African Queen*-like finale to this fast paced novel.

Callison, Brian *Trapp's War*

Captain Edward Trapp, sole survivor of a British warship destroyed in action during World War 1, “a prickly, but curiously likeable rogue,” is determined to make a decent living off the Second World War. To that end, as master of the rustbucket freighter CHARON (“a contraband-running copy of a Port Said clap barge”), he smuggles goods in and out of the besieged island fortress of Malta — and indeed makes a good living at it until forced by a British Admiral to turn the CHARON into a Q-ship (an armed British merchant cruiser). Trapp’s War follows Trapp and his scum of a crew as they bring 1940s privateering to the waters of the eastern Mediterranean. Callison has crafted a fast-paced, if generally improbable, tale of their bloody exploits against German, Italian and sundry “neutral” shipping engaged in supplying North African troops.

Capouya, Emile *"In the Sparrow Hills."*

Capouya's theme is of the vagaries of human memory. Two shipping experiences in which the narrator had served as an A.B. are recollected during the course of the story. Capouya includes an interesting *Lord Jim* citation as the narrator attempts to track down a supposed short story by Chekhov.

Capouya, Emile *In the Sparrow Hills: Stories*

Five beautifully written, rather elliptical World War 2 short stories. Four of the stories tie into Capouya's real life war experience in the merchant marine:

“In the Sparrow Hills.”

“The Other Rogozhin.”

“A Parenthesis.”

“Staring at the Sun.”

Capouya, Emile *"The Other Rogozhin."*

This leisurely story contains a tale-within-a-tale of a freighter in convoy which is torpedoed in the Irish Sea by a German U-boat. The ship's Third Officer, in command of a lifeboat filled with survivors, is forced to sacrifice the life of one seaman to save the rest of the crew under his command.

Capouya, Emile *"A Parenthesis."*

Capouya examines another human attribute, anger, and illustrates it through descriptions of the World War 2 sea service of his unnamed narrator. That service includes a run down to Mexico aboard a freighter, North Atlantic convoy duty aboard a tanker, South Pacific troopship duties and finally a "command" in which the 18 year old A.B. narrator takes a "convoy" of landing barges from one South Pacific port to another.

Capouya, Emile *"Staring at the Sun."*

This long, rambling story examines that most human of attributes: emotion. Its core is a long story-within-a-story concerning the freighter *NORA MASON* in the days following the South Pacific Battle of Leyte Gulf with the vessel en route to Melbourne and then her voyage back to the hostilities, laden with munitions and troop replacements. An exciting abandonment at sea after the ship has been hit by a Japanese bomber is followed up with the *NORA MASON*'s crew retaking their ship after she inexplicably fails to sink. The tale concludes with Capouya's narrator, the ship's young 1st Mate, being offered a command of his own.

Carouso, George "*Landlubber.*"

World War 2 North Atlantic survival at sea tale which opens in a lifeboat after a merchant vessel has been torpedoed. The landlubber in question proves his mettle once the survivors reach land on the bleak, winter shores of Newfoundland.

Carse, Robert "*The Bosun's Mite.*"

This short story's tag line pretty much sums up Carse's somewhat thin plot: "It was a bitter, implacable feud between Bosun Jake Ketcham and the little sailor, Bill Fox. Ketcham was big and dumb and Fox was undersized and smart – but there was more to it than size and brains." Set in 1944 and 1945 aboard two American freighters, with the first of the ships (the fictitious PLANK) being torpedoed and sunk while in an Atlantic convoy.

Carse, Robert "*The Heart Returns*"

World War 2 short story that could almost be classified as women's romance writing, though with an interesting psychological insight into the popular mood of America during the waning days of the War that transcends the romance genre. Taciturn merchant ship Captain William Jordan pays a condolence call on the young widow of an American Major whom he'd befriended while ferrying the army officer and his troops across the Mediterranean from North Africa to Sicily. (The major had been subsequently killed in heavy fighting during the invasion of Sicily). After meeting the widow, love slowly develops between the two (abetted by the widow's 10-year old son, who takes an instant liking to the sea captain). The mariner initially pulls away only to realize that it is "the simple courage of women ... that kept the world going." Even so, he thinks it unseemly to pursue his love, only to be told in no uncertain terms by the widow herself that she also loves him. It is time, she continues, for those of us who are survivors to get back to life. Though loved ones be lost, the living must get on with their lives to keep "hopes alive."

Carse, Robert *"The Menacing Cargo"*

This formulaic ship-in-a-hurricane tale with a flashback to an event which occurred during the recently concluded Second World War is of chief interest to today's reader for its psychological depiction of what we now know to be Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Carse sets his short story aboard the Caribbean cargo-liner SAN FELIPE during a violent hurricane and focuses the narrative on 1st Mate Harris, a World War 2 veteran of merchant convoys. When the SAN FELIPE's captain takes seriously ill and is confined to his bed, Harris is forced to take charge of the vessel. This is the Mate's first position after a self-enforced period ashore during which time he sold vacuum cleaners door-to-door, of all things, in order to support his wife and young children. Mate Harris is portrayed as being edgy and unsure of himself, particularly since he is serving with the pre-War captain who'd trained him as a junior officer. Midway through the story Carse gives us a flashback to a younger, more confident Harris, now captain of a Liberty ship (the fictitious HOFRICH) in the South Pacific. Despite his young age, Harris is chosen as Commodore for a convoy of Liberty ships sailing from New Guinea to the Schouten Islands. Fog and bad weather kept then-Captain/Commodore Harris on the bridge of his ship for days on end, and, relying solely on navigation information provided him by his green 1st Officer, he had piled the HOFRICH on an uncharted reef. Harris then shot off rockets to warn other convoy ships of the reef's position; unfortunately, a lurking Japanese submarine used the rockets to gain a fix on the convoy and soon destroyed two tankers in it. A hastily convened American "bamboo court" found Harris responsible for the loss of the HOFRICH as well as the tankers, and his license was suspended for 6 months.

Back Stateside, Harris collapsed emotionally and vowed never to return to the sea. Listless, easily agitated, unable to focus are but a few of the Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome symptoms he exhibited. Only his failure as a salesman propelled him back to the sea. Suffice to say, he received no treatment for his psychological ailment and indeed its cure only comes about at the conclusion of Carse's tale when Harris unconsciously confronts his demons, casts them aside and takes over command of the SAN FELIPE. His quick acting decision-making saves the vessel from foundering, and the tale ends with Harris about to be promoted to captain of the SAN FELIPE - improbable psychology, of course, but a damned good way to conclude the story!

Carse, Robert *"Nitro to Murmansk"*

An impressive Murmansk Run convoy yarn in which author Carse focuses on two different types of conflict. The first, naturally taking center stage given the fact that the story appeared in 1943, pits poorly armed — but valiantly defended — Allied merchant vessels against the vastly superior forces (U-boats and warplanes) of Nazi Germany. A more basic conflict, though, occurs between Captain Weddell, skipper of the battered old freighter MOUNT EBRON, and his tough bosun, Joe Lash. Weddell, a veteran of passenger liner service who'd come out of retirement for the war effort, finds Lash to be an outspoken seaman and a man whose actions often border on insubordination. Weddell operates solely "by the book," while Lash acts impulsively. Their relationship pretty much collapses during the final hours of the MOUNT EBRON's voyage to Murmansk when, after the ship's Navy gunners have run out of ammunition, Lash breaks into the ship's cargo hold to obtain enough ammo to fight off Nazi warplanes. That ammunition was intended for Russian troops, and Captain Weddell is incensed that his cargo has been illegally (or so it seems to him) broached. Only later, during an aerial attack on the ship while in port in Murmansk in which shipmaster and bosun work together to save their ship, does Weddell begin to question his own rigidity. It is on the MOUNT EBRON's return North Cape voyage, though, that Weddell learns the true worth of his bosun. The freighter is attacked by a German U-boat and sunk, with her few surviving officers and crew members (Weddell and Lash among them) taking to the lifeboats. When the Nazi sub which had attacked them approaches their lifeboat and demands that the MOUNT EBRON's captain come aboard for interrogation, Lash seizes the opportunity to outwit the Germans and insists on taking Weddell's place. Before going to what will ultimately be his death when the Nazis find out the ruse, Lash, revealing the sort selfless attitude that contemporary Allied war writers so often celebrated, tells his one-time foe:

“You're a better sailor than me. You were the best sailor on the ship. There's plenty of guys who could have gone bosun on her, but only one who could ha' gone master. You're him, and you got to deck the Nazis, get back to bring another ship out again.”

Carse, Robert *The Sea Waifs*

This World War 2 novel was written by Carse under the pseudonym “John Vail” and published only in a paperback edition. Set in the Pacific theater of war in April 1945 aboard the fictitious Liberty ship SYLVANUS J. TYLER which is sailing from San Francisco to the Philippines out of convoy after an engine breakdown and manned – according to author Carse – by a crew of sex-starved merchant mariners and an equally sex-starved band of U.S. Navy gunners. The tale opens with two young women being plucked from a life raft (the C-47 in which they were passengers had ditched in the Pacific two weeks previous) and all hell proceeds to break loose aboard the freighter. As the book’s back cover blurb luridly promises:

“They shattered a ship’s morale, two women cast out of the sea. War and death were the business of the men. Life and love the business of the women. The captain scarred the officer’s face for love of the dark girl. The crew in the hold faced each other with knives for the love of the blonde. And mutiny growled in a hundred throats.”

In reality, this is a very solid World War 2 yarn, though one which has been obviously tarted up with lurid sex (heterosexual sex, nymphomania, broad suggestions of lesbianism and, surprisingly enough for the 1950s, an “out” and very sympathetic gay character) in order to make it more saleable to the drugstore paperback trade. Despite all the sex and mayhem, Carse cannot disguise his very real writing ability, particularly evident in passages describing earlier Murmansk Run experiences suffered by the ship’s skipper, Captain Peter Howe. Neither can Carse disguise his very real appreciation for other nautical writers, such as Joseph Conrad and William McFee, both of whom are cited by characters in the novel. Indeed, the novel concludes with a particularly moving scene when, with the TYLER sinking after having been attacked by “Jap” Zeroes, the ship’s Chief Engineer, Mr. McComb, mortally wounded himself and trapped in the vessel’s hospital with a number of dying men, recounts to them Conrad’s classic “Secret Sharer.” The meaning of the story being told by the dying Chief Engineer to others about to die is understood by all:

“One seafarer helping another, that was what it meant. A beautiful, a perfect story.”

Carson, Robert *"Aloha Means Good-Bye"*

This multi-part Post serial is particularly interesting for its opening (parts 1-3), which is set aboard the fictitious Japanese freighter GENOA MARU bound from Vancouver to Hawaii on what was (in hindsight) the eve of America's entry into the Second World War. Like many stories from this era, this one has a Japanese/Axis espionage angle. The serial served as the basis for the classic 1942 Warner Brothers film "Across the Pacific," directed by John Huston and starring Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor and Sydney Greenstreet. Pre-production for the film started in early December, 1941 and its original script featured a Japanese invasion of the islands. After the very real Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the film's settings — including the GENOA MARU's fictitious sailing — were moved from Vancouver and the West Coast to Hawaii to an Atlantic Coast / Caribbean voyage culminating at the Panama Canal. Ironically, the film never progressed past Panama, and thus didn't make it "across the Pacific."

Castle, Everett Rhodes *"Why Trim a Christmas Tree?"*

Comic, Damon Runyunesque tale of grifters aboard the fictitious liner CITY OF COLON, bound from San Francisco to New York via the Panama Canal. "Mr. Horace Beresford, alias J. Parker Comerford, alias Eddie the Duke" and confederate "Chas B. Nickerson, Altoona, Pa." (aka "Sidney A. Bemis, Arthur H. Toomey and other flights of baptismal fancy") are on the lookout for a rich mark. They think that they have found him in seemingly wealthy Col. Humphrey Flack, comfortably ensconced in a luxury suite on A Deck. As Mr. Beresford puts it: "I like to trim a sucker the way a sucker trims a Christmas tree." Alas, the Colonel is as much a phony as they are, and indeed, by journey's end, has set a plan in motion to take Horace and Sidney to the cleaners! A fun read, and an interesting relic of escapist popular fiction in the months leading up to America's entry into the Second World War.

Catto, Max *Murphy's War*

Catto's fast-reading novel is set off the coast of the Belgian Congo and in its Congo River delta during the final days of Nazi Germany, May 1-8, 1945 (May 8th being VE Day, the day in which Germany formally surrendered). The novel opens with a French hospital ship and an armed merchant cruiser (the fictitious DARWIN QUEEN - her back story is that she had served as an ocean liner on the San Francisco - Australian run in pre-War days) en route to Durban, South Africa. The ships are traveling together having lost their convoy (Convoy WAS 72, with "WAS" standing for "West Africa Slow") which had sailed some days previous out of the Gold Coast. The remaining German U-boat from a submarine wolf pack which had harassed the convoy all the way south from Dakar takes on and sinks the merchant cruiser and then, in an act which violated all rules of wartime engagement, torpedoes the hospital ship. The DARWIN QUEEN's sole survivor is a tough Aussie petty officer named Murphy, an over-sexed and violent man, who is rescued and taken to a small missionary medical station in the Congo River delta. He vows revenge on the submarine which had sunk the two Allied vessels. Fate brings the U-boat also to the delta (her captain knows that it's just a matter of days until Germany's surrender and he hopes to lie low until then). Almost singlehandedly Petty Officer Murphy tracks down, harasses and ultimately destroys the U-boat and many of her crew. Catto's descriptive passages concerning Convoy WAS-72 are of interest for their realistic depiction of equatorial convoy and merchant mariner life. Less realistic is Murphy's private war against the German U-boat, with much of his action almost cartoonish in terms of believability. The novel was turned into the Peter Yates directed movie "Murphy's War" in 1971. Actors included Peter O'Toole, Siân Phillips, Philippe Noiret and Horst Janson. For inexplicable reasons the screenplay changed the story's locale from Africa's Congo River delta to coastal Venezuela.

Chamberlain, George Agnew "Knoll Island"

A World War 2 homefront story about a Delaware Bay waterman family (Enos and Deb Walker) whose three sons go off to sea as merchant mariners to meet America's wartime need for seaman. Think of this one – convoluted plot and all – as a cross between *Mrs. Miniver* and “Ma and Pa Kettle” – with just a touch of *Tobacco Road* tossed in! Though the homespun talkin' gits a might tarsome after a spell, Chamberlain's depiction of the Walkers and their sons does seem heartfelt. The story is of particular interest today for its depiction of an East Coast waterway-focused regional way of life that is now long vanished. Along the way the Walker's lose one son to enemy action when his ship is sunk, while both other sons are wounded when their respective ships are torpedoed in the North Atlantic. The story climaxes when the youngest son, home on leave, foils a Nazi sabotage effort involving a German midget submarine which had planned to land enemy agents ashore on a deserted New Jersey island near the Walker home (the Nazis were smuggling in German nationals bent on sabotaging major East Coast shipyards). The serial was subsequently published as a book under the same title.

Chase, Borden "*Comin' At You.*"

“Trouble at a shipyard – and a race of rivets” – story tag line. Chase’s tale features a contest between two riveters, one a shipyard manager who rose up through the ranks and the other a once-valued workman (temporarily) on the outs with management. Another in a series of interesting Post short stories chronicling the mood in the U.S. as America was gearing up for the Second World War. “The country’s yelling for ships,” says one character, while another claims “The country needs shipping – old ships, new ships, anything that will carry food and arms.”

Chase, Borden *Salute!*

An interesting short story from the late 1930s when the United States was finally coming out of its 1920s isolationism and was beginning the rearmament which would ultimately help win the Second World War. In Chase's tale, the seemingly cold, martinet commander of a U.S. Navy destroyer displays a surprising emotion when he encounters the rustbucket of a freighter (the fictitious LUNDERMAN) upon which he served as gunnery officer in the Spring of 1917 just after America had entered the First World War. Flashbacks reveal the basis for his nostalgia, and also explain his abiding respect for the merchant captain who had commanded – and still commanded in 1939 – the LUNDERMAN. The story ends with a heart-in-throat tribute to the valiant old freighter skipper and to his ship: a signal-flagged salute by the entire destroyer squadron as it races by the LUNDERMAN en route to war maneuvers.

Chatterton, E. Keble *Secret Ship: A Sea Novel*

An interesting – if highly improbable – nautical spy tale from early 1939 (the novel was “First published – April 1939” according to title page verso information) that clearly prefigures the coming Second World War. Chatterton’s hero is an English merchant naval officer turned British intelligence agent battling German espionage activities in the United States, trans-Atlantic aboard the fictitious liner FLORIDA and on the home front in England. Much of the plot concerns a set of top secret naval blueprints which had been stolen by a nefarious German spy, and how Chatterton’s hero, accompanied by a plucky gal-pal, goes after the purloined documents in a sailing adventure aboard a motor yawl that takes them across the English Channel and up through the inland canals and waterways of Holland and over into the German naval base at Wilhelmshaven. There they learn that Germany has secretly constructed a modern “Q-Ship,” a warship (an aircraft carrier) that is disguised as a passenger liner, which the Nazis are preparing to use in an attack on the British Home Fleet. What is perhaps most interesting in *Secret Ship* is Chatterton’s outright depiction of Germany as Britain’s enemy and his assertion that Germany was on the verge of starting a “Second European War.”

The Times Literary Supplement pocket review of May 20, 1939 further notes: “Mr. Chatterton, being author of 40 sea books, sends his hero and heroine after a German spy first on an Atlantic liner, then by motor yawl past Middelburg and Gouda, with much loving detail, across the Zuyder to Groningen, and challenges comparison with *Riddle of the Sands* by letting them take the sea route to Wilhelmshafen. There they find a ‘secret ship’ of dangerous possibilities, defeat the secrecy, and so avert the war.” Unfortunately fiction is not fact; only five months after *Secret Ship* reached print, Germany indeed started the all too real Second World War.

Chidsey, Donald Barr *"Officer of the Day."*

Set aboard a troop transport somewhere in the tropics (the South Pacific?), with an Adventure tag line advising the reader that "Regulations were regulations and if he had to be a soldier, damn it, he'd do it good. Even if every moment on the transport was agony magnified a thousandfold." The transport ship had been a luxury liner before the War and had been hastily converted to military service, though with many vestiges of her former elegance still painfully evident to one current passenger: the "Officer of the Day" detailed with making certain that Army regulations were obeyed to the letter. While the troops deride him for being an over zealous stickler to rules, Chidsey shows us an achingly personal side to the man: he had honeymooned aboard the ship with his now-deceased young wife, and every moment he now spent aboard the ship reminded him of her.

Chidsey, Donald Barr *"Three Times and You're Out."*

Liberty "short, short story," with a tag line which reads: "The kid thought he'd be afraid when the time came — but who can say just when fear gives way to courage. Set aboard a freighter in convoy off the coast of North Carolina, with the "kid" being a young wiper on his first voyage. He is naturally worried about how he may react in danger, and fears that he hasn't the courage to face it if — and when — it comes. When the ship is torpedoed, he coolly remains at his engine room station and helps keep the vessel afloat until all his crew mates are able to abandon ship. Later, adrift in a lifeboat, the kid realizes that he's cut out to be a mariner and decides to sign up for sea duty again as soon as he reaches land.

Clark, Dale "*So Many - All Alike*"

World War 2 tale. An *American Magazine* "storiette" (i.e., a very, very short story). Espionage in the Caribbean: a somewhat comely bar girl working in an unnamed Dominican Republic seaport is revealed to be a German agent who had traded intimacies for shipping information gleaned from unwitting Allied seamen. She's finally uncovered when a practical "joke" played upon her by the wireless officer of a freighter (the fictitious JESSIE CRANE) that had been torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat comes back to haunt her. The story ends on an O. Henry-esque note (and the unwritten reminder to all: loose lips sink ships!).

Clarke, Anna *Last Voyage*.

Start with a little Hitchcock à la “Spellbound,” add a dash of Maxim de Winter (Rebecca) and a whole lot of cardboard (think Nancy Drew) and you’ve got this peculiar World War 2 shipboard murder mystery. Though the murder in question actually occurred in 1929 on a liner bound for London from Cape Town, most of Clarke’s action takes place either aboard a similar vessel en route to Southampton in early Sept. 1939 or in London (at, among other locales, a shipping line office and at a former steward’s East End flat) during the early days of the War.

Clausen, Carl "*Maiden Voyage.*"

A short story from the beginning days of the Second World War which clearly mirrors North American anxieties regarding foreign entanglement. A once-great liner, the fictitious GARGANTUAN (modeled after the real-life OLYMPIC or MAURETANIA?), is en route to scrapping abroad. Though her captain worries about German U-boats, it's much closer to home that problems arise: a group of disaffected crew attempt to hijack the vessel in order to abort her scrapping. What they hope to do is to deliver the ship, clearly a valuable wartime asset, to an unidentified foreign power which, from Clausen's writing, appears to be Germany herself. A ghost from the GARGANTUAN's past (her disgraced first master) foils the plot by turning up as a stowaway and then, in a finale worthy of *Götterdämmerung*, the deranged old man sets fire to the ship rather than allow her to fall in "enemy" hands.

Coffin, Geoffrey *The Forgotten Fleet Mystery.*

Published in the United States under the pseudonym “Geoffrey Coffin”(actually the prolific American author F. Van Wyck Mason), with Helen Brawner serving as co-author. Later (1943) published in Great Britain with F. Van Wyck Mason listed as author. The Times Literary Supplement of June 26, 1943 notes of Mason’s mystery novel: “Four old German liners, moored off the mouth of a river in Maryland, are haunted, and the spooks are distinctly homicidal in tendency. With this as its setting, *The Forgotten Fleet* makes an instant appeal to the amateur criminologist whose interest in detectives is not so strong that he objects to the rough-and-tumble of adventure. Watchmen have died or disappeared on these ‘old dowagers of the Atlantic,’ and new hands are wanted. The prospects scare off able-bodied men even though the skipper’s beautiful daughter, and a still more beautiful woman novelist with purple eyes, have fearlessly taken up their quarters aboard. The stranger in a faded military uniform is not in a position to pick and choose, for rumour says that he has escaped from Devil’s Island. The moment he signs on there are two more murders, and from then on the spooks become more and more active, and more and more tangible.”

The four “mothball” ships in question in are the real-life pre-World War I German liners AMERIKA, GEORGE WASHINGTON, KAISER WILHELM II (under her U.S. government name, MONTICELLO) and KRONPRINZESSIN CECILIE (also under her U.S. government name, MT. VERNON), and, after being taken over by the United States government and seeing service as World War I American troopships, all four were moored in the middle of Maryland’s Patuxent River from the late 1920s until the beginning of World War 2. Though Coffin’s plot is far-fetched, involving as it does crime (murder and a fortune in jewels hidden aboard one of the moribund liners) and espionage (the formula for a chemical breakthrough that can turn water into gasoline is also aboard one of the ships, with American, Italian and “Imperial Nipponese” agents skulking about looking for it), he does very credibly evoke the sad, eerily suspended state of these four former Atlantic greyhounds as they slowly rotted away in Tidewater Maryland.

Coldman, Elliot *"Incident at the Wreck Buoy."*

Improbable (but public morale-boosting) tale set off the coast of North Carolina. The crew of an American ship sunk by a German U-boat early during the War gain revenge when another "Heinie" sub subsequently snags itself on her wreckage. Having been declared a menace to navigation, the ship is soon thereafter blown up by a wrecking crew — and the snagged U-boat goes to the botto with her.

Cohen, Octavius Roy "*Lady in Armor*"

Complicated – and hokey – Southern Gothic detective/mystery story originally published as a magazine serial. Included in this bibliography for one of its key plot devices: the Sept. 1939 sinking of the unarmed British liner ATHENIA in the North Atlantic by a German U-boat. In Cohen's tale, three character – two women and a baby – set sail for the safety of the United States after the outbreak of World War 2. The death of one in the ATHENIA sinking sets the stage for romantic entangles landside by the other surviving woman (the third survivor was the first woman's baby – don't feel confused, this is a serial plot after all!). The tale was subsequently published as a novel (see following entry):

Lady in Armor. New York, N.Y.: D. Appleton Company, 1941. 300 p.

Conrad, Barnaby *Last Boat to Cadiz.*

Totally implausible (but fun reading!) waning days of World War 2 Spanish setting with Nazi bad guys (Martin Bormann among them), having just escaped the inferno of Berlin's last days, attempting to make a rendezvous with a German U-boat waiting for them off the coast of Spain. An American Vice-Consul based in Seville stumbles in on the action in that supposedly neutral city and is forced to accompany the Germans aboard a small ferry (the fictitious CAYETANA) sailing down the Guadalquivir River to Cadiz. Also aboard are a "ship of fools" assortment of other American passengers which make for a pulp fiction voyage that's a fast read. Save this one for that trip to the beach next Summer!

"A Convoy Gunner" *"Ten Were Sunk"*

This graphic and psychologically astute portrait of convoy duty during the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic is replete with telling detail and even 60 years later remains a taut, gripping read. The story is the fictionalized account of a westbound trans-Atlantic convoy (the fictionalization most probably imposed upon "Convoy Gunner" by the exigencies of wartime censorship) which is attacked by Nazi warplanes and submarines. During the course of its journey 10 convoys ships are lost to enemy action, and hundreds of merchant mariners perish. "Convoy Gunner" writes:

"Every morning the same little convoy steadily ploughed its allotted course, getting gradually smaller, always re-forming – washing hanging out between derricks in the sun, breakfast bells tinkling down on the wind at eight bells, bright flags on the halyards."

Compare that somewhat peaceful passage with a truly horrific description of the torpedoing of a tanker which soberly concludes:

"... that Norse funeral of living men held our attention until the glow of it was far astern, and the smoke from it had spread out until it blotted out the stars."

Cook, B. E. *"Emergency Assignment."*

World War 2 convoy tale. An F.B.I. agent is posted aboard a merchant vessel — the fictitious freighter ANDELMANN — in an attempt to learn why the vessel has successfully made it through convoy after convoy when a great many other vessels in the convoys have been sunk. While waterfront spies had been initially suspected by the F.B.I., it turns out that actually “a nest of Axis” spies are aboard the ship and are gleaning vital information from her skipper’s personal diary. The captain’s codebook soon goes missing, and shortly thereafter the ANDELMANN is sunk. Happily for Cook’s plot, all of the suspects end up in the lifeboat in which the F.B.I. agent has taken charge (he had a Master’s license, you see, and had been acting as Third Officer aboard the freighter; yes, I’m sure there were lots of dual track F.B.I./ship’s officer agents in World War 2!). After a harrowing several days at sea in the small lifeboat — surprisingly well described by Cook — the agent collars the “Axis nest,” retrieves the stolen documents and kills the nest’s ring leader — the ship’s cook (an allusion to the author’s surname?).

Cooper, Louise Field *"Left Undone."*

A poignant short story from the waning days of the Second World War which ends on a wry, humorous note. A family from Connecticut (Mr. and Mrs. Findlay, and their three children) sadly prepare for the departure of the two English children evacuees who'd lived with them in the safety of America for over four years of war. In a reflective mood thinking over the past four years, Mrs. Findlay realizes, to her horror, that one thing she has neglected to do is to explain the facts of life to the older of the English girls (16 year old Vivian Chace). The first of the story's two climaxes occurs as the family take their charges to the Cunard piers in New York City for embarkation:

“Next morning at eleven, Mr. and Mrs. Findlay gave Vivian and Rosemary back to their compatriots. A cold, gray drizzle was falling at the entrance to the Cunard pier. The Findlays were not allowed inside, and once Vivian and Rosemary left them to go through that fateful portal, they could not come out. They all stood about in the wet for a while, trying to think of something to say, trying not to cry, looking fixedly at the other passengers and their friends. The members of the British and American armed forces that also stood about on the pavement, mounted guard in the doorway, examined passports, and could be seen moving around inside all looked to Mrs. Findlay's anxious scrutiny more than normally bright-eyed and rapacious. Was that incipient passion or simple kindness shining in their eyes? To her chagrin, Mrs. Findlay had to admit to herself that she couldn't tell the difference.”

All ends well, with an uneventful (or was it?) North Atlantic crossing that is detailed by the two sisters in separate letters back to their American family.

Coxe, George Harmon "Smoke on the Horizon."

Joe Bronson, an American who believes that everybody's got an "angle," has landed himself an "essential job" as wireless operator aboard a Panamanian (i.e., neutral) vessel which will keep him out of the War. The story opens as his ship, the freighter *PENNDARA*, is traveling out of convoy trans-Atlantic from the Caribbean bound for England. In addition to her cargo the ship carries 12 passengers: several missionaries, a technician or two "bound for Suez" and a group of French nationals en route to signing up with General de Gaulle's Free French forces in England. French-born U.S. citizen Henri Martin, now a successful Hollywood film producer, is amongst the latter group. He and Bronson discuss patriotism several times during the voyage, with Bronson never quite believing Martin's willingness to give up a cushy (and lucrative) job in the United States to fight against Hitler. Several days out into the Atlantic the *PENNDARA* is stopped by a German sea raider and the freighter's officers, crew and passengers are ordered to abandon ship. They are additionally ordered to maintain radio silence and Bronson is all too willing to obey if it m. But Martin and the Free French have other ideas. Even though it may cost them their lives, they attempt to send a wireless message to an English naval cruiser that they'd observed in the vicinity recently. Martin loses his life in the attempt, and Bronson, having been impressed with the Frenchman's courage, risks his own life to get the message sent. The *PENNDARA* is immediately sunk and among her survivors (the Germans know that the cruiser will have picked up the wireless message and waste no time leaving the scene) is Bronson, who had just acted altruistically for perhaps the first time in his life. Cox ends his story with a look at this "new" Joe Bronson, adrift in a life raft and waiting rescue in the mid-Atlantic:

"Only then, as he sat on the raft, did he begin to think about what he had done, and now there came upon him a curious tingling sensation that he had never felt before, a strange inner warmth that had nothing to do with the sun or wet garments."

Cozarinsky, Edgardo *"Emigre Hotel."*

Cozarinsky presents a fascinating intellectual mystery which looks at 20th Century European cultural and ethnic diversity, using the fabled Oct. 1940 Lisbon-New York sailing of the Greek liner NEA HELLAS as the lynch-pin upon which he hangs his enthralling tale. That voyage, from neutral Portugal to still-neutral America, was one of the last regularly scheduled Atlantic sailings during World War 2. For that last voyage the NEA HELLAS' staterooms, passageways and public rooms were over-filled with many famous European intellectuals, all of whom making a last minute escape from the horrors of Nazism. To an impressive passenger list of such real-life luminaries as Heinrich Mann, Alma Mahler Werfel and Fritz Werfel, Alfred Döblin, Lion Feuchtwanger and Hertha Pauli ("the last scions, emissaries or survivors of European culture in the unconsciously mocking spotlight of a name like NEA HELLAS"), Cozarinsky adds a wealthy young American socialist and her German (possibly) Jewish husband – grandparents of the story's 1990s narrator. A "Jules and Jim" / "Casablanca" plot line dominates the novella (the narrator's grandparents had left their best (male) friend behind in Lisbon) as Cozarinsky weaves in and out of 1940 and of the late 1990s, illustrating, as *The Times Literary Supplement's* review of Jan. 16, 2004 notes, the "interstices between History and personal history [and] examining the ways that people use, depend on and are trapped by their past."

Crebin, Edward Horace. *"Adrift."*

An ocean liner is sunk (torpedoed?) suddenly in the South Atlantic during a voyage either to or from South Africa and a handful of survivors clamber aboard an overloaded life-raft. Hours pass, and many begin to lose their will for survival - but not a Royal Navy admiral's daughter. She gives comfort to all, especially the children among them, never once believing their fate doomed. Instead, she encourages the survivors to put their hope in rescue by a Royal Navy ship. When one South African castigates the Navy ("Where's the Navy?" he cries out belligerently), she takes charge of the life-raft and threatens to toss the man overboard. Shortly thereafter she senses a ship over the horizon and indeed it turns out to be a Royal Navy destroyer searching for the liner's survivors. They're rescued in due course. In a coda, as all are being pulled aboard the destroyer, the admiral's daughter says - probably in a "There'll always be an England" voice! - to two children she'd been keeping warm within a voluminous Harris tweed coat:

Remember, remember this moment when you grow up. Then you will realize what many people seem to forget: the Navy, above all, stands for - Protection.

Crebbin, Edward Horace. *"In Mid-Channel."*

There is some question as to whether Crebbin's short story is set during the First or Second World War, but since "In Mid-Channel" was published in his 1942 short story collection *Six Bells* the short story is included in this bibliography of World War 2 works. As its title implies, the tale is set in the English Channel and opens:

"She was an old, four-thousand-ton cargo ship, the CLARE, and that night she was bucketing up Channel in ballast, rolling, pitching and yawing in the steep beam sea. They were noted for their rolling - those ships."

While the CLARE's "Old Man" worries about the weather, disaster soon comes from another source. Crebbin notes that "the war wasn't going too well just then" (a clue that he's talking about World War 2?) and sure enough, the ship strikes a floating mine with an ear-splitting boom. The tale's observant narrator (the CLARE's cook, relating the story sometime later to the story's unnamed author) continues with an interesting observation relevant to seamen everywhere, particularly during time of war:

"Have you ever noticed when something happens - some explosion or disaster - that there seems to be a kind of split-second of absolute quiet and stillness packed somewhere in the actual roar - as if for a fraction of time every bally thing: ship, officers, men, even ordinary objects kind of held their breath and waited spell-bound?"

With the CLARE evidently foundering (her bow had been blown off), her skipper soon cries "abandon ship" and in another flash second of time three crewmen are swept overboard to drown when their lifeboat tips while being lowered. The rest of the crew pass the night uncomfortably in stormy seas only to see the CLARE still afloat at daybreak. They retake their ship and with much effort are able to sail her back to the safety of an English port. And after repairs, the CLARE sets back to war service. The story closes with its narrator revealing that the doughty little ship and crew were once again out there, "somewhere in the Channel."

Crebbin, Edward Horace. *"One Night in June."*

Crebbin's World War 2 westbound convoy tale opens in the North Atlantic on a moonlit night aboard an unnamed English tramp freighter with a wonderfully patriotic passage that could have been penned by wartime Winston Churchill himself:

"These English merchant ships, in their proud, gallant, forward surge, were like forests of oak trees moving as one into battle. Some might be cut down in the conflict, but the main body would pass on. Nothing, it seemed, could stop that relentless, inexorable forward surge towards England." The night's calm is broken by an aerial attack (by a Focke-Wulf Condor warplane, well-described by the author) in which Crebbin's freighter receives a direct hit by a huge bomb. Fortunately for the ship, the bomb does not explode though it does become entangled in the ship's deck works. After many tense minutes of difficult labor, the ship's crew, under the leadership of her 2nd Mate, succeed in pushing the giant monster overboard.

Perhaps the most noteworthy (and unexpected) aspect of Crebbin's short story is the presence of a *female* 2nd Engineer serving aboard the freighter. Though resented by some of the crew ("wimmen seems out of place on a ship" says one seaman), the 2nd Engineer ("Miss Ferguson" - naturally a Scots!) performs admirably during the aerial attack on the ship and receives accolades from the vessel's Chief Engineer, 1st Mate and 2nd Mate when that trio meet up later in a waterfront pub to celebrate their ship's safe passage.

Crebin, Edward Horace. *"The 'Porcupine'."*

The *PORCUPINE*, a British "old-fashioned whaler," is transformed into a Q-Ship (she is made to look like a cluttered tramp coaster; under her false "skin," though, she is heavily armed) and successfully takes on a German U-boat which, after becoming disabled, had foolishly attempted to effect repairs in a deserted North Seas inlet. The encounter proves fatal to both vessels. Like several other stories by Crebin, this one appears to have first reached print in 1942 and is thus cataloged as one of the author's World War 2 tales.

Crebin, Edward Horace. "Raider."

As with Crebbin's "In Mid-Channel" (listed earlier), there is some question as to whether this short story is set during the First or Second World War. However, since the tale appeared in his 1942 short story collection *Six Bells*, "Raider" is included in this bibliography of World War 2 works. As its title implies, the work is about a German sea raider. It opens in a café in an unnamed South American seaport with several shady German nationals concluding a deal with a local ship broker to purchase the neutral-registry "intermediate liner" *SANTA MARIA*. Reader and shipbroker alike know instinctively that the ship is destined to become, after rapid conversion, a disguised German warship. Crebbin's Germans are arrogant and over-confident - and pay no attention whatsoever to a seedy little man taking coffee in a nearby table. The man, of course, is a highly successful British intelligence officer and he soon relays information regarding the sea raider to Royal Navy sources. In due time the disguised German warship emerges, callously destroys several neutral ships (ah, German duplicity!) but shortly thereafter is tempted by a Royal Navy Q-Ship into another unprovoked attack - and is promptly blown out of the water by the British warship.

Cunningham, Jock "*Warden of the Zone*"

Gung-ho World War 2 *Adventure* tag line: "For years Ramos had hated his neighbors to the north but now he could smile through the pain of his wounds and all the bitterness was gone from his heart. 'I guess I don't hate Americans after all,' he said. 'Sure I'll fight for them – any time!'" Cunningham's novelette is set in the Panama Canal and features a sabotage effort by a gang of Nazis operating underground and in cahoots with a corrupt American engineer. Enter Ramos and his longtime friend Sardenis, two Panamanians who very nearly give their lives in order to protect the Canal and its shipping. What changes Ramos' mind about the American way of life? – a very real encounter with Nazidom! Along the way Cunningham, who was evidently posted to the Canal during the early days of the War, does a nice job in describing the waterway during wartime, including this evocative squib on a ship transiting the Canal:

"The big tanker, squeezing along the Canal, was like a big, fat woman – blind drunk and staggering, being pulled and prodded through a door to bed by her tough little children, the towcars."

Davis, Eileen *"The Blue Mosque"*

Women's escapist fiction, set in 1928 ("a far, far away season"), which opens and closes aboard an Italian liner — the fictitious COUNT D'AZURE — in the eastern Mediterranean, with intervening sections in the equally fictitious Sultanate of "Bussorah." Davis' only allusion to the actual time period in which she was writing this piece comes early on, with her protagonists (wealthy, handsome Mr. Montgomery and lovely, unattached Miss Eldon) still aboard their luxury liner sailing on Mediterranean seas in which "the small black spots dotting the crests of the too blue waves were seagulls, not periscopes."

Davis, Norbert *"Blow the Man Down"*

A World War 2 romantic trifle decidedly aimed at *Liberty's* female audience. Pretty "Dutch" loves Quentin, an absent-minded mariner who can recite ship vital statistics for days, correctly identify stack colors and house flags, and dredge up from memory vast stores of merchant marine trivia (sounds like a charter member of the Steamship Historical Society of America to me!). Unfortunately, the only thing Quentin can't ever remember is when he's promised to go out on a date with Dutch. She cures him of this defect on a double date with another local belle and a merchant mariner who'd been torpedoed from one side of the Atlantic to the other. By story's end, Dutch and the reluctant mariner Quentin are altar bound.

De Hartog, Jan *The Captain*

One of the great works of nautical fiction. The novel follows the World War 2 career of Dutch ocean-going tugboat Captain Martinus Harinxma. It is set chiefly on the infamous North Atlantic Murmansk run. The book's major theme is the making of a captain and of the almost mystical bond that develops between a captain and his ship. The qualities of leadership and courage are also movingly explored, as is the concept of man's own basic humanity. Beyond this, the novel is a page-turning tale of the North Atlantic convoy system that both saved Great Britain from Nazi aggression and set the stage for Germany's final defeat in 1945. A must-read for anyone interested in the genre.

De Hartog, Jan *Captain Jan: A Story of Ocean Tugboats.*

An abridged translation of de Hartog's 1940 bestseller, *Hollands Glorie*. The original Dutch edition had been published about the time that Nazi Germany occupied Holland and became an immediate symbol of Dutch resistance when the Nazis subsequently banned the novel. Despite the ban, over 350,000 copies of de Hartog's work were published and distributed through underground networks in the Netherlands during the Second World War, and for that reason it is included in this bibliography. De Hartog's novel is actually set in the period 1900-1925 and follows the fortunes of a Dutch mariner who works his way up from deckhand to tugboat captain in the Dutch sea-going tugboat industry. It's easy to see why the Nazis banned de Hartog's book since his hero / protagonist spends nearly all of the novel fighting the forces of an avaricious, dirty-playing family dynasty (the Kwel family, who think nothing of cutting men's wages to starvation level or of sinking its own vessels for insurance money) which had turned the once-independent fraternity of Dutch sea-going tug mariners into a monopoly controlled by the family, and in the process had pretty much enslaved the mariners themselves. By tale's end de Hartog's hero has not only forced the Kwel family patriarch out of public life but also forced the family to reform its business practices by recognizing the Dutch merchant mariners' union.

De Hartog, Jan *The Distant Shore*

A riveting, two-part novel from the viewpoint of a young Dutch captain of sea-going rescue tugboats. Part I takes place during World War 2 and focuses on the rescue of disabled convoy vessels in the North Atlantic. The novel's second part, subtitled "Peace," finds our hero engaged in an illegal Mediterranean underwater salvage operation involving a team of "fanatical divers" (to quote the book's jacket blurb). While both parts are well-written, the World War 2 scenes are truly outstanding.

De Hartog, Jan *Star of Peace: A Novel of the Sea.*

A World War 2 novel which was, according to its title page verso note, “based in part on a play by Jan de Hartog entitled ‘Skipper Next to God..’” Set in 1939 and culminating on the day that Hitler invaded Poland, de Hartog’s novel focuses on the ill-fated journey of the fictitious Dutch tramp freighter-turned political refugee ship STAR OF PEACE, from the time that 250+ German Jews are loaded aboard her in Hamburg to the vessel’s scuttling off the east coast of the United States many months later. In between, de Hartog describes the Jews’ fruitless attempt to land legally in Uruguay (they’d been sold visas which turn out to be forgeries) and how the STAR OF PEACE’s born-again Christian master becomes determined to land his passengers safely somewhere in the New World. De Hartog is at his best in descriptive passages, such as the refugees’ harrowing embarkation at the HAPAG docks in Hamburg and in the STAR OF PEACE’s sinking in the midst of a Newport yacht regatta. His ship master, the young Joris Kuiper, is portrayed in tragic terms as a man who is prepared to lose his wife and children as well as his livelihood (he owns the STAR OF PEACE) in order to abide by the claims of his personal religious faith. In the end, Kuiper defies the Dutch and U.S. governments, the Dutch Reformed Church and even members of his own, hand-picked crew to successfully get his precious human cargo into the United States.

De Hartog, Jan *The Trail of the Serpent*

As the Japanese take over Borneo at the outbreak of World War 2, a small band of Dutch colonists escape aboard a decrepit coastal steamer, the HENNY. The ship, camouflaged as a floating island, makes a perilous voyage through submarine-infested waters to Australia and freedom.

De Vries, Peter *"Nobody's Fool: A Character or Two Overlooked in Miss Katharine Anne Porter's Shipload."*

New Yorker humorist De Vries deftly punctures the hoopla surrounding the 1962 publication of Katherine Anne Porter's *Ship of Fools* (the novel - cited elsewhere in this bibliography - was a celebrated twenty years in the writing, and many literati wondered whether it would ever actually reach print) in this two-pager. De Vries imagines the author (here called "Mrs. Haverstick" being pursued shipboard by an over anxious publisher's representative eager to gain rights to "the Book," only to learn that Mrs. Haverstick hadn't spent all these years writing - no, she'd spent the time slowly reading it!

Deachman, Grant *"The Last Present."*

This sentimental World War 2 tale that seems to comment on the old adage "all's fair in love and war." In Deachman's extremely "short story" the arrival of an English child evacuee (a 4-year old little girl) aboard a children-packed steamship sets in motion a marital reconciliation. The story appears to be set in New York City where the child's expatriate aunt (Kaye Braddock) is on the verge of signing final divorce papers with her estranged husband (Tim Braddock) when a letter from her sister Nora in England arrives announcing the imminent arrival of little niece Joan. Nora's letter, several weeks in transit and marked approved by British wartime censors, is vague as to when the ship will actually arrive, so after Kaye reads the letter and then notices in the newspaper that a ship - which had narrowly escaped being torpedoed - with 800 English children evacuees is arriving that very day, she realizes that she needs her husband now more than ever to cope with this new development. (She also realizes that she still loves him). Swallowing her pride, she calls him on the telephone with the news and he readily agrees to accompany her to the docks to fetch Joan, and also to return home with her. What Kaye doesn't know is that her husband had actually been in contact with his English in-laws and had suggested to Nora that she delay in informing Kaye that Joan was on her way - his underhanded way of getting the reconciliation ball rolling since he knew how much his wife counted on him for emotional support. Indeed, Tim had received a telegram from Nora once little Joan was at sea, thus knowing her approximate arrival date.

Detzer, Karl *"Assignment to Danger"*

World War 2 short story from the period when America was still a neutral. Detzer's story presents an interesting, if fictionalized, look at New York harbor smuggling and German espionage activities in early 1940 (the QUEEN ELIZABETH is mentioned as being docked, which pretty much dates the story to late February or early March 1940). The yarn opens on a bitterly cold, snowy night and follows one U.S. Customs officer (Sgt. Malone) on "roving patrol" as he encounters a rash of criminal activities – ranging from murder and smuggling to the sighting of a mysterious small craft observed in the vicinity of the highly-guarded NORMANDIE – which seem to be simultaneously occurring from one end of New York's vast port facilities to the other. But all are red herrings, mere diversionary tactics by a gang of smugglers working in cahoots with Nazis. In reality, the hoodlums are in the midst of an attempt to get a load of badly needed munitions out to a German U-boat loitering just outside the 3-mile limit – only to be foiled by the vigilant Sgt. Malone!

Detzer, Karl "*Fog Patrol*"

With a German commerce raider reported offshore, New York Harbor-based Custom's Inspector Hagan foils a Nazi plot to hijack an English freighter set to sail for Bermuda (and a waiting convoy bound for Britain) with a cargo of copper ingots. Hagan foils the plot and rescues a comely waterfront girl in the bargain. Detzer's very real anti-German stance was certainly timely given the story's December 1941 publication date. As with many American stories dating to this time period, the author portrays Germans as sneaky, underhanded and sadistic (it appears that the girl that Inspector Hagan rescues was about to be tortured and raped by the German conspirators) – and none too bright. Detzer's Inspector Hagan, naturally, is portrayed in terms that would do any aspiring Boy Scout proud!

Dickson, Carter *Murder in the Submarine Zone*

Dickson's quirky World War 2-era detective novel opens with an intriguing Dedication evocative of both the era in which it was written and of the novel itself:

“This story is dedicated, as it should be, to fellow-passengers aboard M.V. GEORGIC, in memory of a crossing we made from New York to ‘a British port’ during the early days of the war.

The crossing took place under the same black-out and life-jacket conditions as are described here. But there all semblance to reality ceases. The date was September, 1939; not January, 1940. The ship was not carrying munitions. There were no such regrettable goings-on as occur in these pages. No character in the story – whether passenger, officer, or member of the crew – bears the remotest relation to any living person. In short, everything except the atmosphere is a complete fantasy from beginning to end.”

The book was well reviewed upon publication, as the following *Times Literary Supplement* (Aug. 24, 1940) reveals:

“Should you imagine that Secret Service means a holiday from finger-prints and photography you are mistaken. Such a title as *Murder in the Submarine Zone* holds out a promise of this only to those who are unaware that Chief Pursers study criminal investigation. When there is a murder aboard the EDWARDIC, crossing the Atlantic with a cargo of explosives, she becomes a floating Scotland Yard with enough enlarged finger-prints to be regarded as additional cargo, and Sir Henry Merrivale has something fresh to tell the ordinary reader about them. War is used here simply as a highly dramatic background for a “who-done-it” that would be puzzling even in peace conditions. In a cold-blooded post-mortem frame of mind, the reader may wonder at the lavish amount of criminology expended on a murder or two, but while the hunt is up the excitement is unflagging. From the start it is fairly plain that a U-boat alarm will be sounded: yet when it does happen the suspense thrills. Likewise the expected news “The Navy is here,” comes like a blessing. With so satisfactory a detective as Merrivale and a criminal made on no ordinary mould, the tale passes all the customary crime tests with honours.”

It remains to remark that though this reader found Dickson's characters somewhat of the pasteboard variety, his superb evocation of an eerily deserted liner (clearly based upon the well-known Cunard-White Star motor vessel GEORGIC) racing unescorted across the Atlantic in wartime is especially well done. Note that Dickson's novel was republished in hardcover in 1972 (London, Eng.: Tom Stacy) and has also been published under at least two other titles, *Murder in the Atlantic* and *Nine - and Death Makes Ten*. The latter is a classic Dell paperback from the mid 1940s.

Disney, Dorothy Cameron *"The 17th Letter"*

A convoluted *Post* serial, later published as a novel (see next entry). Disney's plot involves sea-going espionage and skulduggery in New York, Halifax and Reykjavik. The first three installments take place aboard the freighter S.S. SHALIMAR while in convoy from New York to Halifax. Later published (following entry) as a novel by Random House.

Divine, A. D. *They Blocked the Suez Canal.*

Divine's topical mid-1930s thriller is concerned with a British attempt "to help the cause of Abyssinia and to stymie the Italians" in their aggression by sabotaging the Suez Canal. His English and American plotters determine to sink two ships in the narrowest part of the Canal in order to prevent further troops, gasoline and other essential supplies from reaching Italian forces in Abyssinia, thus forcing Mussolini to come to terms with the faltering League of Nations. In spite of "treachery in their midst" (interestingly enough, Divine, friend of the Abyssinians, has no problem making the bad guy a Jew), they succeed in scuttling two ships heavily laden with concrete and scrap iron in the Canal, make their escape in a seaplane and get clear to a Mediterranean island where they lie low until the international repercussions of their escapade have blown over. Divine clearly believed that the League of Nations was the only workable bulwark against the steady rise of 1930s international aggression, noting "the true battlefront was at Geneva, the true cause of all the little nations of the world against aggression, the cause of peace by collective security" was the League. Though the author's characters are pretty much of the cardboard variety, his passages describing Port Said and the Canal in the 1930s are highly evocative and of interest to today's reader.

Dodge, David "*Bullets for the Bridegroom*"

Though set entirely in landlocked Reno, Nev., this wise-cracking detective novel really does have a nautical theme. Seems Dodge's hero, San Francisco accountant James "Whit" Whitney, has stumbled onto a German spy ring which is sending top-secret information about Pacific merchant marine convoys to the Japanese via a secret radio transmitter located in a Nevada ghost town! O.K., so the plot is a bit far-fetched. Read this one for fun, since Dodge's prose remains as witty and fresh today as when it first appeared. Dodge, by the way, remains best known for another caper novel, *To Catch A Thief*, turned into the classic 1955 Cary Grant/Grace Kelly film. Note that "Bullets for the Bridegroom" was later published (see next entry) as a novel.

Dodson, Kenneth *Stranger to the Shore*

A World War 2 yarn, set in 1942. The fictitious American freighter CAPE FALCON makes port in Chile to load a cargo of iron ore. Thirtyish “Chips” Kurt Mueller of San Francisco goes ashore for the day and soon becomes embroiled in the not-so-neutral goings on of local German-Chileans and Italian-Chileans. By novel’s end Chile is moving from its official neutrality towards a more active support of the Allied cause. The climax of the novel occurs when a German sea “raider” makes an unsuccessful attempt to sink the CAPE FALCON.

Donath, Stanley F. *"The Statue in the Fog"*

An Austrian refugee nurse sets sail aboard a Cunard liner for America, along with hundreds of other refugees. As the unnamed liner zig-zags across the Atlantic, she briefly falls in love with a fellow traveler, a supposed Hungarian escaping the Nazis. After their ship is attacked at sea, she realizes that he is a really German agent and, choosing honor and loyalty over love, she turns him in to the naval authorities in charge of the liner.

Dorling, Henry Taprell *Arctic Convoy*

World War 2 convoy operations from a Royal Navy Home Fleet perspective, with an emphasis on Murmansk Run convoys to Russia. North Atlantic and Malta convoys also figure into the novel. The novel's dust jacket blurb notes:

“The story of the Arctic Convoys is one of hardihood and endurance of all who took part in what has been described as one of the worst runs in the war. This book is a story, based on fact, as seen through the eyes of a young officer [Lieut. John Jaspar Satherwaite Rust] who took part in them in a destroyer, of the convoys to North Russia which started in August 1941 and continued until the end of the war in Europe.”

Taffrail's own brief foreword is even more instructive:

“This book is more fact than fiction. Apart from some personal experience, I have referred to many sources, official and otherwise. Though the chief characters and their ships exist only in my imagination, I do not think I have described any action or incident which is either exaggerated or untrue.”

Though Taffrail's prose is often wooden and surprisingly dispassionate, this device (probably unplanned by the author) actually serves to dramatically heighten the novel's effect on the modern-day reader. Of particular interest are his descriptions of the generally unhappy fates met by real, named individual merchant vessels being escorted in convoy by Lieut. Rust's destroyer through a succession of attacking German U-boats, bombers and attack planes. Also of note is Taffrail's bitter feelings towards Britain's erstwhile wartime ally Russia; he depicts the Russians as churlish at best, never truly grateful for the sacrifices made by thousands of Allied merchant seamen and sailors whose dedication kept the Arctic convoys running and ensured that Russia would receive the materials it needed to help fight Nazi Germany.

Douglas, Marjory Stoneman *"Athens to Marseilles."*

Yes, those dates are correct – Ms. Douglas really lived to the ripe old age of 108! This unsettling tale set is aboard a wretched little steamship (“an Amazon River steamer brought over to run troops to Gallipoli”) pressed into a Mediterranean run from Greece to France. The *Saturday Evening Post*’s “[Coming] Next Week” blurb of Aug. 27, 1938 neatly sums up Douglas’ short story: “Have you ever wondered what strange pattern of circumstances changed a housepainter into a Hitler, a journalist into a Mussolini – or a Maurice Marks into Marko, the Dictator. We invite you aboard a battered little steamer to witness, during a storm at sea, the moment that made a talkative little man into a nation’s prophet and leader.” Though Douglas’ descriptions of shipboard life aboard a third rate passenger vessel are well drawn, her extremely sympathetic portrayal of a would-be fascist leader is disquieting to an extreme. This is the type of 1930s story that could have only been written well before Sept. 1, 1939.

Dupuy, R. Ernest *"Major McGee Goes to War"*

North Atlantic convoy story. Army Major Patrick McGee, just a few weeks in the army after a career as an editorial writer for a major American newspaper, finds himself senior officer aboard the 5,000 ton freighter STORVARK. He's en route to London to serve a post in public relations and is a total landlubber. As senior officer on the ship, though, it's his responsibility to take charge of the ship's deck defenses against submarines. McGee rues this assignment since, until quite recently, he didn't know one end of a gun from another. After the STORVARK drops out of convoy due to her slowness, the ship is attacked by a German U-boat. Maj. McGee rises to the occasion. Though his deck gun doesn't sink the sub, it does succeed in scaring it away from the STORVARK. And it's a good thing, as the ship's Captain reveals, in a coda, that the freighter was carrying 900 tons of TNT! In real life, Col. R. Ernest Dupuy was a U.S. Army historian and popular writer on military topics.

Eberhart, Mignon Good *Five Passengers from Lisbon*

This romance novel / murder mystery, evidently aimed at the women's market, is an interesting period piece. Set just after the conclusion of World War 2, the novel features a cast of Americans who had been trapped in Europe during the War and are attempting in late 1945 to get back home by taking the LERIDA, a Portuguese steamer, from Lisbon to South America. West of the Azores the ship sinks in a ferocious storm, with a small group of survivors taking to a lifeboat. They are rescued by the U.S. Army hospital ship MAGNOLIA, en route home with a ship load of wounded troops. One of the LERIDA's survivors has been murdered while still in the ship's lifeboat, and several other survivors meet a violent end once aboard the hospital ship. This mayhem is at odds with the orderly world depicted aboard the hospital ship. Before the novel's denouement Nazi sympathizers and Gestapo stooges are revealed, and all are meted out just punishments for their various crimes. The novel was originally published in Jan. 1946 as the serial "Murder Haunts the Ship" in Collier's Magazine (see following entry):

"Murder Haunts the Ship." In: Collier's Magazine, vol. 117, nos. 1-4, Jan. 5 - Jan 26, 1946. Illustrations by Elmore Brown.

English, Richard *"No Credit to Breezy"*

A young stoker aboard a freighter in the North Atlantic turns World War 2 hero after his ship has been torpedoed. He stays at his post despite danger in order to prove to his girl back home that he's just as brave as his hometown rival, a certain "Breezy," recently enlisted as a naval "fly boy."

Farrel, J. G. *The Singapore Grip*

A masterly novel about the World War 2 fall of Singapore that includes a riveting mini-chapter set on the city's battered waterfront as frenzied Europeans, Asians and Eurasians attempt to board the last passenger ship left in harbor before the Japanese take over the besieged city.

Farrow, John "*Goliath*"

Short story set aboard the fictitious British tanker PLUNGER on a run from Curaçao to the west coast of Africa. *Adventure Magazine* tag line: "Captain McGregor had heard what happens to gasoline tankers that get hit by enemy shells – "A big puff – and no more ship. Jist a lot of fire on the water and smoke going way up !" – and now here he was, master of the PLUNGER, God knows how many gallons of high octane in her hold, no shells for her deck gun, and a Nazi sub surfacing to pick her off like a sitting duck. Things looked a little grim for a minute there till Mr. Tiddlewater of the engineering department went into action." As it turned out, there *was* ammo for the PLUNGER's antiquated gun, ammunition that Mr. Tiddlewater, the ship's Chief Engineer, had procured in a most unusual manner. Farrow's story relates how the Chief had accomplished this, and how his actions ultimately saved the PLUNGER.

Felsen, Gregor *Some Follow the Sea*

Earnest, occasionally stolid account of World War 2 convoy life. Felsen's hero is 17 year old Chris Hollster who joins the merchant marine after he fails the physical when attempting to enlist in the U.S. Navy. The work can be read as a coming of age tale as well as a paean to the merchant marine. Early on Chris' father, horrified that his son would actually become a merchant mariner tells him "The worst sort of riffraff go to sea, while another character observes that merchant mariners are "a very low class of people ... hard, dissolute, radical and untrustworthy." Felsen attempts to show how incorrect such commonly held sentiments were. Indeed, the author is often so vehemently pro-merchant mariner that the reader may wonder whether the National Maritime Union, described in glowing terms, may have had a hand in Felsen's book project.

For the most part the novel presents a fairly authentic and very graphic look at convoy work in the North Atlantic and Murmansk Run, though Felsen's concluding chapter, in which Chris and several other boys destroy a German U-boat on a deserted Russian Far North island, does strain the reader's credulity. Of particular interest is Felsen's depiction of the actual horrors of war, something often omitted in period fiction from the war years. Chris' first ship is torpedoed in the North Atlantic under such horrifying circumstances that he suffers what today would be termed post-traumatic stress disorder after being rescued. Felsen doesn't shy away from graphically presenting Chris' ensuing near-mental breakdown. His subsequent recovery occurs when, on the Murmansk Run, Chris is forced to take over a Navy anti-aircraft artillery piece when its crew are killed by Luftwaffe attackers.

Also of great interest today are a series of period photographs included in the book which portray individual merchant mariners as well as scenes of shipboard convoy life. Finally, it should be noted that *Some Follow the Sea* appears to have been an example of crossover fiction, appealing to both an older teenage as well as adult audience.

Fernald, John "*Destroyer from America*"

“The captain knew they were in for trouble the minute his old destroyer was ordered to convoy the ill-starred SARATOGA” according to The Saturday Evening Post tag line for this short story of World War 2 North Atlantic convoy service. A much longer version (see next entry) of Fernald’s work was published in book format in late June / early July 1942 in both the United States and Great Britain. Fernald was a lieutenant of the Royal Naval Volunteers Reserve at the time that he wrote his story.

Fernald, John *Destroyer from America*

Surprisingly sunny World War 2 North Atlantic convoy novel, based upon the author's own experiences in 1941. The setting is H.M.S. PORCHESTER, a 4-funneled, ex-U.S. destroyer which had been built in San Francisco in 1918 and turned over to the British as part of the Lend-Lease Act. The novel chronicles the vessel's first seven months in North Atlantic convoy duty, as she shuttles (and protects) merchant vessels between Iceland and Great Britain. Her crew is a mixture of ex-retired Royal Navy officers, Royal Navy reservists and recently-trained "ratings." All are depicted as self-effacing, no-nonsense men who understand the importance of their mission. Fernald writes:

"PORCHESTER and her crew settled down to the familiar round. It was odd, thought the Navigator, that doing the same thing day after day was not intolerable in its monotony. Politicians could talk about the Battle of the Atlantic, the Press could shoot its mouth about watch-dogs, sea-dogs, heroes and the like, but to him as when as to everybody else in the ship all that was flapdoodle. It was all part of the vulgar twentieth-century habit of hyperbole. Words no longer meant what they used to mean: with every other man a hero, what words were there for the really brave men, for people like Captain Scott and Oates, or the Commander of the JERVIS BAY, or the Spitfire and Hurricane pilots of September 1940?"--Pp. 46-47.

The novel's climax occurs when one of the PORCHESTER's charges, the aged freighter SARATOGA, is attacked by a German U-boat. PORCHESTER hunts down and "kills" the submarine and returns to the surprising sight of the SARATOGA still afloat, even though her stern had been blown off by the force of the German torpedo. With great common sense and seamanship PORCHESTER's crew rigs a tow-line to the disabled merchant vessel and then successfully tows her (and her load of desperately needed Canadian grain) 150 miles to the safety of Northern Ireland. Fernald himself was at the time serving aboard an ex-U.S. Navy destroyer similar to the PORCHESTER. The book was well-reviewed on both sides of the Atlantic, though the veddy English Times Literary Supplement (July 11, 1944) concluded its review with the waspish note:

"If his book has a fault, it is the yachtman's habit — now seemingly being to some extent adopted by the younger generation of naval officers but anathema to the old school — of writing of a ship by her name only, with no prefix "H.M.S." or definite article — as though one should use "telegraphese" in ordinary conversation."

Note that the British (but not American) edition is illustrated by evocative drawings by John Worsley.

Fettes, Jonathan *"The Admiral Gets an Assist"*

World War 2 North Atlantic convoy tale with a baseball angle (you'll have to read the story to find out what it is). Fettes' ending is a rousing one, with an American freighter – the fictitious NARAGANSETT – ramming and sinking a Nazi surface raider.

Fettes, Jonathan *"Nazis is Mugs"*

How can you miss with a title like "Nazis Is Mugs"? And Adventure Magazine's tag line is no slacker, either:

"The SEMERANG ought to have had an escort, or have been in convoy at least. But in war time you take what you can get. We got Doolittle, who didn't look no more like a quartermaster than a pimple looks like the Rock of Gibraltar, but by the end of the voyage we wouldn't have traded him for six destroyers with a battlewagon thrown in."

Set aboard a British tramp freighter (the SEMERANG) traveling unescorted westbound to the United States from Cardiff, "... nodding down at the wet Atlantic where submarines is thicker than cabbage in a Victory garden." John Doolittle, the ship's scrawny quartermaster tells one and all that "Nazis is mugs," i.e., not too bright in the intellect department. Doolittle, who been torpedoed many times before on the Atlantic run, proceeds to come up with a series of ingenious tricks to hoodwink the gullible Hun. Indeed, by tale's end, the SEMERANG has actually taken on and bested a German U-boat which had foolishly attacked the ship thinking her an easy mark.

Fettes, Jonathan *"Nazis is Mugs"*

A rousing World War 2 short story set in the North Atlantic, off Iceland, aboard the freighter McGILLICUDDY, sailing eastbound out of convoy. The Adventure tag line nicely evokes the tenor of the times:

“Captain Junius of the McGILLICUDDY was in the war up to his neck but had his own ideas what he was fighting for – not for freedom, or to make the world a better place to live in, or for any other catch phrase on a poster – and certainly not for glory. The right to be decent was how he put it, and that was what he gave the Nazi raider’s crew a lesson in when they wanted to play dirty with the traditions of the sea.”

Fettes’ plot mechanics are simple: the McGILLICUDDY answers a distress signal from an unknown ship only to find that the vessel in question was a sinking German sea raider. Following the above-mentioned traditions of the sea, Capt. Junius rescues the enemy seamen (he rejects his crew’s suggestion that he leave the Nazis to die at sea as the Germans had done to the survivors of the many ships they’d sunk), only to have the rescued Germans perfidiously make an attempt to hijack the McGILLICUDDY. But they’d not reckoned with the leaky old ship herself, for she was a notoriously cranky vessel that only the old American ship master could control. And in the end the cowardly Nazis give up their arms and allow themselves to be taken captive by Captain Junius rather than endure icy death in the waters of the North Atlantic.

Fisher, Philip M. *Vanishing Ships*

Implausible pulp fiction about a secret Axis military base / concentration camp located off the coast of Baja California where American merchant mariners, whose ships had been captured by the Axis baddies, provide slave labor. Fisher will have his unsophisticated reader believe that the “Japs” and Nazis had been secretly hijacking American vessels in the Pacific since 1935 and that their success in doing so came from the discovery of a “secret” radio wave which, when wielded, disrupted normal marine wireless transmissions. The sadistic baddies naturally plan an attack on the West Coast (flotillas of Japanese and German U-boats are expected any day!), but are thwarted by the crew of a U.S. destroyer which has fortuitously discovered the secret base.

Flammonde, Felix *"Sailor with Spurs."*

Adventure tag line: "That 'vaquero' from Chihuahua was without doubt the strangest thing on two legs that ever decided to go down to the sea in ships. Sombrero, gunbelt, spurs and all – the only things he'd left ashore were his saddle and horse. It took the bosun a whole voyage to get accustomed to the misfit mariner, but by the time we made port he was damn glad to have Ramón and his 'reata' aboard."

Despite a typical pulp plot featuring personal conflict and danger, what makes this World War 2 story unique is its focus: that of a Mexican crew (specifically the aforementioned Chihuahua cowboy-turned-sailor) serving aboard a Mexican registry ship (the freighter JALISCO) in trade with the United States in the days following Mexico's entry into the War as an Allied nation. Though Flammonde portrays the Mexican mariners as rustics, he also portrays them entirely sympathetically — and definitely portrays them as competent sailors. Thus, this is one of but a handful of examples of World War 2-era nautical fiction depicting "minority" characters rather than standard-issue white men. The story's denouement is also of interest in that it ties its main character (the vaquero Ramón Caballero) into the very real 1942 act of German aggression (the sinking of the unarmed Mexican tanker POTRERO DEL LLANO off the coast of south Florida) which triggered Mexico's entry into the War. It turns out that Ramón's only brother had been a crewman aboard the POTREO DEL LLANO and had not survived the vessel's torpedoing; Ramón has come to sea "to carry on in his place." The vaquero concludes by telling crewmates, "There is no longer any room for personal enmity when our country, and other free countries of the world, need to fight against our common enemy."

Flynn, T. T. *"Gratefully Yours."*

Argosy tag line: "In Puerto Bari it was possible to kill a man with nothing more deadly than kind words." Flynn's tale concerns a World War 2 Nazi espionage ring operating out of a Central American port city which is broken up by an alert American who turns the gang against its chief source of information, a sleazy waterfront bar owner named Carlos Estaban. Estaban had been feeding the Germans information on Allied Caribbean, Panama Canal and Pacific Ocean shipping movements, and the Nazis, in turn, had passed the valuable information on to a waiting Nazi "sea wolf," a warship posing as a merchant vessel. By tale's conclusion, the raider has been destroyed by the U.S. Navy, Estaban himself murdered by his Aryan employers (they thought that he'd double-crossed him) and the Germans taken into custody.

Forbes, Colin *The Palermo Ambush*

"Colin Forbes" was a pseudonym employed by the British thriller author Raymond Harold Sawkins; this novel was published in the U.S. under the title *The Palermo Affair*. Author Forbes takes the documented World War 2 collaboration of Sicilian mafia with the Allies during the July-Aug. 1943 invasion of that island and spins an interesting, if none-too-believable, tale of a guerilla attack upon the last train ferry sailing between Sicily and the mainland. His small guerilla team is comprised of an Italian-speaking British Army officer (he's in command) and an American counterpart, as well as a local mafia bigwig and a non-mafia Italian partisan. Most of the novel's action takes place as the four men make a mad dash across the inhospitable mountains of central Sicily to Messina, homeport of the huge train ferry CARIDDI. There, with the aid of dockworkers controlled by our mafia "hero" (actually, Forbes paints the man in decidedly non-heroic, barbaric terms), the men make their way secretly aboard the ship and, on a return run back from the mainland with a passenger load of several thousand German Panzer troops and a fully-load ammunition train, successfully blow up the vessel. As noted, Allied forces really did work with the Sicilian mafia during World War 2, so there is some solid basis for Forbes' tale. However, in real life the massive train ferry CARIDDI - built in 1931 as one of the largest train ferries in the world - was actually scuttled by German troops on Aug. 16, 1943, the day before hostilities ceased on the island. Indeed, the vessel had brought over 100,000 German troops from Sicily to mainland Italy during their retreat from the Allies, and modern day historians see that successful action as actually being a defeat for the Allies. Though patently false, Forbes' fictive sinking of the CARIDDI has a satisfying taste for those rooting for the Allies versus the Nazi war machine and is certainly an appropriate ending for his thriller.

Forbes, Kathryn "*Hurry-Up Charlie*"

World War 2 short story set in a West Coast shipyard and focusing on the men who make up the graveyard shift of the marine paint department, charged with painting new Liberty and other ships as quickly and efficiently as possible. Forbes focuses on how elderly Charlie Brandon, not particularly skilled at any task, nonetheless helps pull the graveyard team together to work as an efficient team. His refrain is "Hurry-up" (and his nickname, "Hurry-up Charlie") and by tale's end the reader has learned that his three sons had been at Bataan, where one was killed. His surviving sons now being prisoners under the Japanese, old Charlie sees that their return home will be greatly "hurried up" through speedy, efficient U.S. wartime shipbuilding. San Francisco native Forbes is best-known for her novel *Mama's Bank Account*, tuned into the warm-hearted Hollywood classic, "I Remember Mama." Note that "Kathryn Forbes" was the pen name of Kathryn MacLean.

Forester, C.S. *"The Dumb Dutchman"*

“Dutch tug-master proves that treachery is two edged” according to The Saturday Evening Post tag line for this short story. Stolid Captain Jan Schuylenboeck seemingly obeys every order given him by the Nazi occupiers of his homeland to the letter. He is soon drafted into participating in the German scheme to invade England and, along with other tug captains, is sent to the Channel port of Flushing. There he takes part in a series of practice maneuvers during which his tugboat, the LEK II, tows barges laden with German troops and material to sea and back, simulating the impending invasion. He patiently waits for nature to provide him with the means to avenge Germany’s treacherous occupation of Holland. One day, in the middle of an invasion practice session at sea, dense fog settles in over the waters and the clever Schuylenboeck uses the fog as a cover to take his string of barges far offshore into the Channel — and into the arms of a waiting British destroyer. England’s haul, thanks to Captain Jan Schuylenboeck: over 1000 German officers and soldiers, 5 light trucks and 4 armored cars!

Forester, C.S. *The Good Shepherd*

Forester is of course today perhaps best-known for his Napoleonic-era Captain Horatio Hornblower series. In *The Good Shepherd* he proves that he was capable of writing an authentic, exciting World War 2 nautical tale, too. His setting is an eastbound merchant convoy on the North Atlantic shortly after America's entry into the War. Three consecutive days of this grueling trek, watch by watch, are detailed from the perspective of convoy commander George Krause, who is also Captain of the U.S. destroyer KEELING. Enemy submarines challenge the KEELING and the convoy's three other destroyer escorts as the convoy approaches Britain. Keeling's immense responsibilities are depicted in a straight-forward narrative that impresses upon the reader the great resolve, courage and fortitude of all those mariners who took part in the convoys of World War 2.

Forester, C.S. "Intelligence."

British Intelligence learns that particularly vile U-boat skipper Lothar Wolfgang von und zu Lowenstein (his "hobby" is taking photographs of drowning Allied mariners and other innocents who'd been aboard ship's that he's torpedoed; his prize photo is of a drowning woman and child who'd been passengers aboard the ATHENIA, sunk on Sept. 3, 1939) has orders to sink a huge liner-cum-troop transport, the fictitious QUEEN ANNE (the ship is certainly modeled after either the QUEEN MARY or QUEEN ELIZABETH). Back in the 1930s navy officer Capt. George Crowe ("C.B., D.S.O., R.N.") had often encountered the loathsome Nazi at international yachting events. He thinks he knows his man, psychologically speaking, and lays a trap to lure the German and his U-boat away from the troop ship. The lure? A faked up freighter that has been converted to look like the FROTTINGHAM (i.e., real life Swedish America Line vessel GRIPSHOLM), a diplomat exchange ship that is supposed to be sailing from New York to Europe. Aboard the real diplomat exchange ship will be a German enemy of Lowenstein's; Crowe figures that the U-boat commander will take the opportunity to sink the supposed diplomat ship, thus eliminating a personal enemy and making it appear that the U.S. Navy has e sunk the neutral vessel. Right on cue Lowenstein goes after the faux-FROTTINGHAM. In short order his German sub is destroyed by Allied navy forces. The German vessel goes down with all hands but one: the cowardly Lowenstein, who has elected to save himself. Forester closes the tale with war criminal Lowenstein about to be captured.

Forester, C.S. *The Ship*

A riveting look at the wartime life of officers and sailors aboard a British light cruiser (the fictitious H.M.S. ARTEMIS) on Mediterranean duty as the ship provides convoy escort to merchant ships bound for Malta from Alexandria. Its climax occurs when warships of the “Enemy navy” attack the Allied convoy and a fierce naval engagement takes place. The novel was written at the height of hostilities; a May 22, 1943 *The Times Literary Supplement* review notes: “Splendidly vivid in description, Mr. Forester celebrates the letter and the spirit of the engagement with what seems to be absolute fidelity.” Though focused on British naval action, Forester’s *The Ship* is included in this bibliography for its impressive, intense descriptions of 1942 Malta merchant convoy duty.

Foster, Elizabeth *"I'll See You Again"*

Women's wartime "weepie." Gerry Porter, a cool, detached journalist meets British naval officer Toby Fentress while ashore waiting for her England-bound convoy to sail. Gerry and Toby naturally fall in love. Toby's vessel, a destroyer, turns out to be one of the escort vessels guarding Gerry's convoy, and it is attacked and sunk literally in front of Gerry one cold night in mid-Atlantic. Despite all appearances that there have been no survivors, Gerry stalwartly haunts the Admiralty once she arrives in England in an attempt to locate Toby. A survivor, grievously wounded and now in hospital, is finally located, but he, too, claims that all officers and crew went down with the destroyer. In despair, Gerry returns to her rooms — only to find an exhausted Toby waiting there for her. Despite its mawkish overtones, the story does contain several effective paragraphs describing the middle-of-the-night mustering to the lifeboats that Gerry and others on her freighter endured the night that the Germans attacked their convoy.

Foster, Michael *"Ten Thousand Miles from Denver"*

An interesting short story written and published during the waning days of American neutrality before our entry into World War 2. Tramp steamer ANTIETAM, in Southeast Asia (probably French Indo-China), takes on as passengers an out-of-luck traveling carnival company that "had been stranded somewhere upcountry by the war, and was trying to get out of the Orient in a hurry." A subplot involves the vessel's cargo of Boeing airplanes bound for delivery to the Australian military. While enroute to San Francisco the ship narrowly averts Japanese-sponsored sabotage. Though "off camera" for much of the story, Foster nonetheless depicts the Japanese as a treacherous people, giving voice to popular American sentiment as America moved in 1941 toward the outbreak of war in the Pacific.

Fox, Edward S. "Prey"

Atlantic convoy tale set circa 1943. The freighter STARLING, en route from Bermuda to Europe with a cargo of TNT, dynamite and other explosives, has an engine failure and is forced to fall out of convoy. Her German-American skipper (Carl Krueger) is distrusted by many of the crew, especially after they learn that he has had three ships in a row sunk under his command in mid-Atlantic. Sure enough, a German U-boat soon spots the drifting STARLING, shells her and then demands to know whether the ship has a doctor onboard (the submarine's commandant has appendicitis). The STARLING's crew suspect the worst when Captain Kreuger, carrying his black overnight bag, has himself rowed over to the German vessel. A few seconds later, though, the Nazi sub explodes and sinks. Kreuger, it seems, had impersonated a doctor just long enough to get aboard the U-boat and detonate his "doctor's bag" — in reality a bag stuffed with explosives. Fox's subtext, of course, is that German-Americans were just as loyal as other Americans during the War, and just as willing to give their lives for the Allied cause.

Friedlaender, Robert *Titanic: A Novel*

Translated by Erna McArthur. Note that the novel was issued in the United States with the pseudonymous "Robert Prechtl" listed as its author. It was first published in German in 1937 as Titanesturz : Roman eines Zeitalters. Truly a loony work from page one, filled with bizarre characters (John Jacob Astor emerges as some sort of philosopher king) and laughably implausible descriptions of shipboard life possibly inspired by National Socialist youth rallies. His description of early morning outdoor life aboard the TITANIC in April 1912 is typical:

"It is the hour when early risers take their exercise before breakfast. The elder people canter round the promenade deck ... Marches played by the band provide the music. Beach costumes are in evidence, brightly colored pyjamas, sandals, berets ... The third-class decks presents as joyous, if not so bright, a picture. Though a few women have donned beach costumes, these do not seem quite in place. For everybody here walks barefoot and wears as few clothes as possible. Many are lying round in trunks and bathing-suits enjoying their sun-bath amidst lively laughter and shouting ... It is different again on the boat-deck. A group of vigorous boys and girls in black bathing-suits practices rhythmic gymnastics under the leadership of an instructor ... In the middle of the deck, where a place has been roped off for roller-skating, a few couples are disporting themselves without much skill. Only one short-skirted Amazon practices her figures with relentless seriousness and accuracy."!!!

Much of the novel reads as if it had been written after a overlong stay at Bayreuth, with incestuous siblings, overweening "Titans" and mysterious visitors from the netherworld (in this case, a wraith-like Chinese specter who warns John Jacob Astor not to try and obtain a fabulous -- but cursed -- jewel once owned by Alexander the Great which just happens to be up for sale in the TITANIC's jewelry shop!) Friedlaender also puts the entire White Star Line Board of Directors onboard the ship, and they have a board meeting while the ship is attempting to gain the Blue Ribband. Given the tenor of 1937 Nazi Germany, perhaps Friedlaender's strangest characterization is his rather moving depiction of the last moments of the Jewish Straus family as the TITANIC sinks beneath them. To sum up: this book is without a doubt the strangest piece of fiction written about the TITANIC, and indeed one of the most bizarre pieces of steamship fiction ever conceived. And why list it in this bibliography? Well, believe it or not, the novel was a runaway bestseller in 1940 America, going to press at least twelve times — and that must say something (I'm not sure what!) about its place in this list.

Fullerton, Alexander *The Torch Bearers*

Number eight of Fullerton's nine installment "Nick Everard, RN" series; set in late 1942. An Atlantic convoy is used as bait to draw Nazi submarines away from the Straits of Gibraltar in order to protect shipping gathering to take part in "Operation Torch," the real-life 1942 Allied invasion of North Africa.

Fullerton, Alexander *A Wren Called Smith*

World War 2 tale set in early 1945. A Norwegian freighter, sailing solo en route from the recently-liberated Philippine Islands to England and carrying a complement of passengers including British military personnel and German U-boat prisoners of war guarded by American soldiers, is sunk in the South Pacific by a Japanese submarine. Most of the ship's crew and passengers are methodically – and horribly – massacred by the Japanese. Those few survivors who escape the carnage (two British officers, an American guard and Wren Betty Lou Smith for the Allies, and nearly all of the German POWs) embark upon a desert island life while awaiting rescue, with life ashore complicated by the presence of man-hungry Wren Smith. Fullerton's story veers from low comedy to high drama before concluding on a deliciously ironic note. One thing that does not change, though, is the author's focused hatred of Japanese submariners, whom he portrays as sadistic sub-humans. Germans, as a race, are portrayed perhaps up a step from the Japanese, but Fullerton doesn't think much of them, either. From the vehemence of his prose, one doubts whether war veteran Fullerton would ever forgive Japan and Germany for their wartime maritime atrocities.

Furst, Alan *Blood of Victory*

Set in 1940, this evocative World War 2 thriller opens aboard the fictitious Bulgarian ore freighter SVISTOV, “pounding through the Black Sea swells, a long night’s journey from Odessa and bound for Istanbul.” Furst’s weary hero is an emigré Russian author (I.A. Serebin) who is reluctantly drawn into an espionage network attempting to thwart German control of Romania’s oil reserves. Included in Serebin’s Eastern European adventures is a perilous journey down the Danube from Belgrade into Romania aboard a Yugoslav tugboat.

Furst, Alan *Dark Voyage*

Set in the Spring and early Summer of 1941, this is a superb World War 2 espionage novel set aboard a Dutch freighter (the fictitious NOORDENDAM) which, sailing disguised as a neutral Spanish vessel (the SANTA ROSA), undertakes two dangerous — and highly secret — voyages for the British Admiralty, first in the Mediterranean (taking British commandos on a raid against a French installation in Tunisia) and then later to the Baltic (setting up a secret radio listening post on the southern coast of Sweden). Furst's novel is an atmospheric page-turner and if some of his plot twists seem a bit contrived, his evocation of wartime Mediterranean and Baltic ports nevertheless reads true. Particularly telling are his descriptions of Alexandria and Lisbon, of how both ports adapted economically to wartime conditions and how their citizens managed to achieve some semblance of normal daily life despite the war. *Dark Voyage's* climax is a real nail-biter as the NOORDENDAM, in the wrong place at the wrong time, gets embroiled in Hitler's secret attack against Russia. Press-ganged into a Russian emergency convoy evacuating Latvia, the NOORDENDAM and her crew only just barely escape destruction in the upper Baltic before finding refuge in officially neutral Finland.

Garner, Hugh *Storm Below*.

Told in gritty, realistic prose, *Storm Below* is an important look at the wartime North Atlantic convoy system told from the Canadian perspective. Garner's engrossing novel is set aboard the fictitious Canadian Flower Class corvette *RIVERFORD* during six days at the tag end of a March 1943 westbound North Atlantic convoy escort run. While Garner offers telling descriptions of the convoy at sea as it approaches the relative safety of Newfoundland – with a particularly vivid account of a relentless German U-boat attack – his major focus is on the interpersonal relations between the *RIVERFORD*'s complement of officers and crew. The unexpected death of a young recruit who'd fallen and hit his head during stormy weather changes the tenor of life aboard the formerly "happy ship" after the *RIVERFORD*'s captain decides to take the boy's body to St. Johns, Newfoundland rather than bury him at sea. Old sea superstitions about the carrying corpses shipboard are soon rife and morale is shattered during the final days of the corvette's run to St. Johns when many of the crew believe the vessel to be hexed. While Garner offers a compassionate view of officers and crew alike, he spares nothing in his exposure of the very casual anti-Semitism and anti-French Canadian feelings prevalent among many of the *RIVERFORD*'s Anglo-Canadian characters.

Gay, Margaret Cooper *"Three Wise Men on a Raft"*

An O. Henry-esque Christmas tale. Three men and a small Asian boy share a liferaft in the South Pacific after their tanker has been torpedoed by the Japanese. The boy, mute for days, had been part of a group of refugees that the tanker was transporting to supposedly safer shores. Hope dwindles as Allied plane after plane passes overhead and does not see the small life raft. As Christmas approaches, the men decide to make a gift each for the young boy. He is overwhelmed with gratitude, and gives them a personal treasure which he had kept hidden under his shirt: a folded up Chinese dragon kite. Unfurled and flying high in the air, that kite, of course, proves the means necessary to effect their eventual rescue.

Geer, Andrew Clare *The Sea Chase*

The German freighter ERGENSTRASSE escapes from Australia at the outbreak of World War 2, making a run across the Pacific and then into the Atlantic in an attempt to reach Germany while being pursued by the Royal Navy. Based loosely upon the real-life story of the German freighter ERLANGEN which made a similar escape attempt during the early days of the war. Geer's Germans are, for the most part, unsympathetic, and indeed the tale reads as if it had been written during the War and not after it. Later (1955) made into a Warner Brothers CinemaScope feature film starring John Wayne (!) as the vessel's anti-Nazi skipper, Karl Ehrlich. Also onboard for the film ride were John Farrow, James Arness, Tab Hunter and Lana Turner!

Gery, R.V. *"The Captain Lays an Egg."*

Set in the Canadian Maritimes (most probably in (unidentified) Halifax), where Atlantic convoys are being assembled and set off eastwards to England. Aged Captain Bantry, master of the "char" boat MARY ANN (further described by Gery as "a scandal, a ragamuffin civilian blotch and blemish upon the trim, hard face of the war"), knows that his vessel is the laughingstock of the convoys. Now reduced to hauling coal coastwise, Bantry yearns for real wartime action. With the connivance of a sympathetic Royal Navy officer (who turns out to be Bantry's nephew), the old shipmaster gets the MARY ANN rigged out as an Admiralty tug. Alone at sea some time later, the vessel encounters a German U-boat and, utilizing some highly unorthodox depth charge launch gear created by old Captain Gantry himself, sinks same. Score one for seagoing ingenuity! And once word circulates about the MARY ANN's success, Bantry and his boat receive accolades from those same convoy shipmasters who laughed so heartily earlier.

Gilman, LaSelle "*Cargo to Wanping.*"

Set during the Japanese late 1930s invasion of China. Two young Americans (a male tea company agent and a female mission worker) are trapped in a small Chinese harbor between the Chinese and Japanese lines when they stumble upon "a dirty little coaster," the steamship HSIN FANG, still in port. *Collier's* "[Coming] Next Week" blurb of Feb. 18, 1939 neatly sums up what happens next: "The trouble aboard the HSIN FANG was simply this: the ship was loaded with munitions; it had been seized by the Japs; and the Chinese below decks decided to blow the whole thing up." Suffice to say, Gilman's hero and heroine survive the cataclysm (and, this being magazine fiction, fall in love). What's surprising at this late date is Gilman's somewhat neutral depiction of Japanese military forces.

Gilpatric, Guy *Action in the North Atlantic*

Surprisingly flat World War 2 convoy novel by this well-respected maritime author. Gilpatric, of course, is best known for his comedic creation, that standby of *The Saturday Evening Post*, cranky Scots Chief Engineer Colin Glencannon (see succeeding entries). Here, however, there's no comedy (and no Glencannon) and Gilpatric produces a stale, often stilted novel focusing on the eastbound voyage of the fictitious C-2 freighter *MERCHANT MARINER* from Halifax across the North Atlantic to Murmansk. Interestingly enough, the work was turned into a rousing 1943 movie starring Humphrey Bogart, Raymond Massey and Alan Hale, and Gilpatric was nominated for an Academy Award for his screenplay version of the novel. Novel and movie came out at about the same time, and the novel features still photographs from the movie.

Gilpatric, Guy *"The Homestretch"*

The blowsy freighter INCHCLIFFE CASTLE (with her Chief Engineer, the perpetually besotted Colin Glencannon) is returning in a Mediterranean convoy to England after three years of war service. Her master, elderly and comic Captain Ball, worries that, with the war rapidly coming to its conclusion, there will be a shipping slump – and “old shellbacks” like himself (and by inference, Glencannon) will be out of employment, “on the beach” in the argot of mariners. Glencannon naturally concocts a scheme to make the paunchy ship captain look both younger and thinner (all the better to impress shipping company managers) with the aid of a “Dr. Zoglich’s Abdominal Streamliner” (that is, *Glencannon’s* homemade version of the doctor’s girdle).

Gilpatric, Guy *"Monkey Business at Gibraltar"*

Glencannon and company steam into Gibraltar in a Mediterranean convoy, and the larcenous Scotsman no sooner touches land than he's embroiled in a money-making scheme. As the Post's tag line puts it: "There was nothing Mr. Glencannon wouldn't do for the British Empire. He'd even play stepfather to an ape – if there was a bit of money in it." Gilpatric includes in the short story a particularly evocative wartime description of Gibraltar's safe harbor:

"A streaky pall of smoke hung low over the bay. Most of it was coming from the funnels of the anchored convoy that filled the roadstead from the inner moles to well beyond Europa Point, while the rest — it formed the lighter streaks — had drifted across the strait from brush fires burning on the African mountainsides. Rising above it against the dazzling noonday blue, the Rock of Gibraltar loomed like a gigantic lion basking in the sun."

Gilpatric, Guy *Mr. Glencannon Ignores the War*

That celebrated Scot, Mr. Colin Glencannon, takes on the Japanese navy in this short novel which appeared originally as a 5-part series in *The Saturday Evening Post*. A thinly-disguised description of the fall of Singapore gives meat to the story; Chief Engineer Glencannon's amazing drinking skills add the comic touch. Glencannon may not be a politically correct read in the 1990s, but his wild ways are certainly still entertaining. Wonderful period illustrations by George Hughes appeared in the original run of the serial.

Glatzer, Hal *The Last Full Measure.*

Issued only in paperback; Glatzer's conceit for this novel is that it was written by an American mystery writer named Hannah Dobryn shortly after World War 2 as one of Dobryn's "Katy Green" mysteries. In late Nov. 1941, swing musician (and sometime amateur detective) Kathy Green joins an all-girl band featured aboard Matson Line's LURLINE en route to Honolulu. Murder, hidden treasure and supposed Japanese espionage plots dominate the westbound LURLINE voyage to the islands. And while war jitters are noticeable in Hawaii during the LURLINE's Honolulu short layover, it's on the ship's Dec. 5th homeward bound voyage to San Francisco that Glatzer pulls out all the stops. Two days into the trip (on Dec. 7, 1941, naturally) a Fifth Columnist attempts to sabotage the LURLINE by blowing up a bomb in the ship's cargo hold. Disaster is averted, however, thanks to amateur detective Green and the ship, loaded beyond capacity with a complement of military families being evacuated from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland, stays on course for the safety of San Francisco. All along the way author Glatzer had been gleefully tossing out red herrings, nearly all of which seem to implicate Japanese-Americans in a variety of espionage plots, so it does come as a surprise to learn that the real Fifth Columnist is a slightly demented Caucasian who just also happens to be the LURLINE's ship doctor. Though the novel isn't really all that exciting, Glatzer has certainly done his homework on Matson Lines and on the LURLINE as he successfully conjures up sea life aboard a liner in the Hawaiian trade. Also of note: the novel's chapter headings are enlivened by period Matson advertisements and LURLINE postcards.

Grant, Fulton *"Above the Convoy"*

This longish World War 2 story has all the elements of pulp fiction: a dastardly Nazi saboteur posing as an American naval officer, a flawed-but-courageous American naval officer (he drinks too much) redeemed by sisterly love, whizbang technology employed by both American forces (a forerunner to radar is posited) and by the Nazis (Grant imagines an immense pontoon island in mid-Atlantic that serves as an underwater port for German U-boats and – above the waves – as a military airport for Luftwaffe bombers) and even strange medical experimentation (ever hear of “Formula K-11”? Well, our hero gets a shot of it!). All these plot devices converge on Grant’s main interest: the North Atlantic convoy system, and how German wolf packs and Luftwaffe bombers were coming close in early 1941 to putting the convoys out of business. The story comes to a climax in mid-Atlantic when our hero, in an all-plastic(!) U.S. Navy PBY seaplane, utilizes his version of radar to locate a lurking Nazi wolf pack and then alert the convoy that the U-boats are tracking, thus saving the day. What’s of interest to the modern day reader are Grant’s unabashed pro-British sentiments and his portrayal of Germans as standard issue traitors, murderers and louts. The United States may not have been in the War in early 1941, but stories such as “Above the Convoy” dramatized the Battle of the Atlantic t and pointed the way to later American involvement in the conflict.

Grant, James Edward "*Caribbean Patrol*"

Far-fetched serial set in the Caribbean during the early days of America's entry into World War 2, when Nazi U-boats were, seemingly, attacking and destroying Allied tankers at will. Young, rich ne'er do well John Alden Miles Standish, who had been banished from Annapolis and then flunked out of all better the Ivy League universities, enlists in the Navy and makes it through Officer's Training School only to be assigned to what appears to be a rustbucket of an oil tanker, the fictitious JOHN B. LASSITER. Ah, but this being *Liberty Magazine*, appearances are deceiving. In a potboiler right out of a boy's adventure novel, the LASSITER is *really* a secret U.S. Navy vessel, armed to the teeth, which patrols the Caribbean looking for — and destroying German submarine's which think she's an easy target for destruction. Along the way Standish encounters — and falls in love with — a beautiful blonde. There are enough plot turns and improbable coincidences to rate this one as a sort of seagoing "Perils of Pauline." Tale's end finds Standish back with his blonde after single-handedly destroying (with hand grenades!) a "monster" submarine the size of a destroyer that had menaced them.

Grass, Gunter *Crabwalk*

Originally published in Germany in 2002 under the title *Im Krebsgang: Eine Novelle*. Nobel Prize winner Grass' brilliant novel deals with the hitherto nearly forgotten Jan. 1945 sinking of the German cruise liner WILHELM GUSTLOFF by a Soviet submarine in the Baltic Sea which resulted in over 9,000 civilian casualties (the vessel had been packed with German nationals attempting to flee the Red Army). Grass' work has already been declared a masterpiece in Germany, and his English-speaking audience will surely concur. Grass vividly describes the GUSTLOFF, from her 1937 launch as a "Strength through Joy" ("Kraft durch Freude") cruise ship intended for German working class holidays to her tragic end in the freezing waters of the Baltic Sea. Questions about German collective guilt for the Nazi era and victimhood, about familial silence and about the ways in which history has been rewritten are at the heart of Grass' work as he examines Germany's war past as it relates to both present day reunited Germany and the Germany of the 21st Century — all reflected through the horrific prism of the GUSTLOFF disaster.

Griffin, Gwyn *An Operational Necessity*

A searing story, based on a real World War 2 incident in which an allied freighter (the Greek-owned PELEUS) was sunk in the South Atlantic by a German U-boat, with the ship's survivors then being strafed in the water after taking to their lifeboats. Only one crew member ultimately survived, and his evidence ultimately led to a war crimes trial for four of the U-boat's officers and crew shortly after World War 2 ended. Griffin's novel opens with the destruction of the fictitious MARÉCHAL OUDINOT (French-owned in the novel, though having an English captain and crewed by a polyglot mixture of nationalities) in the South Atlantic on Jan. 5, 1945, moves on to the increasingly difficult situation endured by her dwindling handful of survivors adrift at sea after the subsequent U-boat strafing and then details the miraculous survival of the ship's wireless operator off the coast of Brazil. A parallel narrative describes the U-boat and her crew, her mission, the vessel's dramatic capture by British forces on the Indian Ocean shores of British East Africa and then continues to the post-War trial of her two surviving officers. At its height, Griffin's narrative rivals that of De Hartog and Montserrat, the two great post-War interpreters of the Battle of the Atlantic. He brings something new to the scene, too, for his psychological profile of the great toll that war takes on man is finely balanced, brilliantly showing both the Allied and German sides of this heartbreaking tale. A must read for anyone interested in this era. Those interested in the incident upon which Griffin's novel is based can find it documented in *Trial of Heinz Eck, August Hoffman, Walter Weisspfennig, Hans Richard Lenz and Wolfgang Schwender (the Peleus Trial)*, edited by John Cameron (London: W. Hodge Publisher, 1948).

Gutterson, Herbert *"The Needle"*

World War 2 story. American Magazine tag line: "He was an American prisoner of war on a Japanese ship – and out there in the white-capped sea was an American submarine, maneuvering for the kill." Gutterson's hero is naval officer (and submarine man himself) Lt. Commander William Haines – and what a hero he is. With scant thought for the personal consequences of his actions, from his sea-going cell Haines signals the following American sub with a small flashlight he'd managed to hold on to in captivity. His signal gives the sub a target to home in onto, and at story's end, with torpedoes about to strike the "old Jap merchantman", Haines calmly (though "with tears streaming down his face") awaits his fate.

Hahn, Emily "*Repatriate*"

A serious look at the problems faced by repatriated U.S. internees, both during their ocean-going time travelling home and then finally back home in the United States. The story opens onboard the Swedish America Line's GRIPSHOLM, which, under control of the International Red Cross, served as a repatriation ship from 1940 through 1946, ferrying interned diplomats, civilians, wounded and POWs between belligerent Allied and Axis nations. This particular trip finds "Johnny" travelling back to the States with many of the men with whom he had been interned in a Shanghai concentration camp at the outset of the War. In today's jargon, Johnny is suffering from post-traumatic stress, though in this 1944 tale he is described simply as suffering from "nerves." He certainly cannot abide spending yet another minute with his fellow former prisoners, and looks forward to peace (and privacy) once he sets foot back on American soil. Upon arrival in New York, though, he soon comes to understand that he still needs those comrades since no one else whom he encounters has any real understanding of what he has been through.

Haislip, Harvey *"Asking for Disaster"*

“An old head wins a new battle on the convoy lines” according to the *Saturday Evening Post* tag line. The old hand in question, 70 year-old retired Commodore Browning, signs up for duty as Convoy Commander aboard the troop transport ORANTIC sailing out of Halifax in an eastbound convoy. Haislip pulls out all the stops and by tale’s end Commodore Browning’s much younger colleagues all appreciate the man’s qualities and leadership. An interesting subplot has the pivotal May 1941 engagement between the German battleship BISMARCK and British warships HOOD and PRINCE OF WALES taking place in the vicinity of the convoy as it sails eastwards.

Hall, James B. "The Cruise of the Bundle."

Hall's ironic World War 2 tale begins with a look at East Coast society lady do-gooders who have set up a local "Bundles for Britain" program more as a means to advance their social careers than anything else. He then contrasts them with the merchant mariners who, in a chartered rustbucket of a freighter (the fictitious S.S. KARAMAR, dubbed by the local press the "S.S. BUNDLE"), must actually transport the cast-off goods across the hostile North Atlantic. The ship's overage captain, officers "either ... too young or too old" (as a once-famous Hollywood canteen song put it) and bottom-of-the-barrel mariners all must put up with a vessel that's just this side of being a jinx ship. So over the Atlantic the BUNDLE limps, ever so slowly at 7 knots that she must sail out of convoy. Nearing Britain, the ship is spotted by the Luftwaffe, bombed and strafed, and sunk. Only one of her crew survives, and none of the junk assembled by the society dames reaches its destination. Hall angrily concludes his story, by noting "Back in the States, the Ladies heard nothing of the BUNDLE, but the publicity had done wonders."

Hall, Lawrence Sargent *Stowaway: A Novel*

Hall's novel presents a nightmarish, and at times hallucinatory, vision of a ship adrift, figuratively and metaphorically, when its command structure fractures due to the illness of her aged captain and her Chief Mate's inability to cope with added responsibilities. Set on convoy duty during the waning days of the Second World War and through the first months of peace aboard the fictitious freighter LIBERTY BELLE, described by Hall as

“one of the oldest of the Liberty ships, and by war's end one of the thinnest and flakiest. Yet she had been a veteran of some of the toughest going, and for a cheap, hastily built carrier she had been in her own way a somewhat dowdy heroine. Hers was not the career that fired the spirit of a man-o'-war, but in any event, in every event – she did her necessary unromantic job. That is to say, she did what she was constructed for ... She delivered, and she survived her expendability.”

Madness and lawlessness dominate the novel's latter sections as the LIBERTY BELLE breaks down in the Indian Ocean en route from Port Said to Fremantle, Australia during what is to be her final voyage. The ensuing chaos and hopelessness recalls Traven's *The Death Ship* (1934).

Hanley, James *Levine*

Polish seaman Felix Levine is the sole survivor of his ship when the vessel (the fictitious tramp freighter AURORA) is sunk circa 1944 – presumably by a German U-boat – off the coast of Britain and he swims ashore to supposed safety. Rendered paperless by his ordeal and fearing that he will be interned for the duration of the War, the mariner flees inland to a small English town. There he looks for temporary sanctuary; instead Levine meets up with an extremely neurotic female evacuee from Blitz-wracked London with whom he enters into a decidedly unbalanced relationship that culminates in an ill-advised civil marriage. Levine’s only real desire, though, is to get back to the coast, find another ship and return to sea; he is continually thwarted in this goal by the maddeningly clinging woman he has married (a woman twice his age). In a moment of sudden, violent rage, the seaman attempts to break free from their masochistic relationship, and, grabbing his prized sailor’s knife, murders the unfortunate woman by stabbing her to death.

Hanley, James *No Directions*

A taut novella set in a working class London boardinghouse during one night of the Blitz. From the start it is clear that the reader has not entered into the mythical World War 2 realm of, say, a *Mrs. Miniver* or of a John Mills “stiff upper lip” movie of the era. The boardinghouse’s inhabitants are often incoherent, frequently frightened and pretty much put personal concerns above the collective (or national) good. One of Hanley’s chief characters is “sailor,” a merchant mariner named Johns who drunkenly stumbles into the boarding house just after the air raid has begun and who interacts with several of the establishment’s inmates during the course of the long night. Johns is deathly “scared of ice” (he recounts an unsettling Arctic wartime voyage which accounts for this fear), and his introduction to the reader occurs with him sprawled in the street outside the boardinghouse in a pile of glass broken by bomb blasts; he mistakenly thinks the glass to be polar ice. Whether he was drunk at that point or injured by the bomb blast is left to the reader’s deduction, though Johns definitely gets blind drunk over the course of the ensuing night. Author Hanley skillfully describes the boardinghouse inhabitants’ rising hysteria as Nazi bombs come closer and closer to their dwelling, with the novel’s emotional center set in the building’s cellar, where all wait out the night. All survive except for “sailor,” and his enigmatic death in the cellar is not explained. Had he drunk too much liquor, or had he died from injuries suffered aboard his ship or possibly from the evening’s earlier bomb blast? Whatever the cause, Hanley has drawn Johns with compassion and the reader feels a sharp ache at his death. On a broader scale, the novella does much to dispel the often overly-sentimentalized attitudes so often seen in contemporary World War 2 fiction, and is thus most deserving of a modern audience

Hanley, James *The Ocean*

Set on the North Atlantic during the early days of World War 2, Hanley's complex novel is highly impressionistic and told in a stream-of-consciousness rich with symbols. After the sinking of the fictitious liner AURORA by a German torpedo, five men (one sailor and four passengers) occupy a lifeboat for many days while awaiting rescue, with only each other and their own inner longings to keep them company. As the men gradually grow weaker, their struggle to stay alive grows more and more turbulent. The novel comes to a mysterious conclusion when the men appear to be rescued by a fisherman, who may himself be either a hallucination or Christ himself.

Hanley, James *Sailor's Song*

As he lies unconscious on a life raft drifting at sea and tended by several of his shipmates after their ship has been torpedoed, English stoker John Manion noisily dreams of his past seafaring and home life. Manion, “over fifty, nearer sixty, as grey as grey goes, an old-timer” is respected by his mates as “a good sailor-man,” and none believe that he’ll survive his ordeal. But Manion’s a tough old mariner, and survive he does, with the last pages of Hanley’s novel set aboard the ship which has rescued Manion and the other survivors off their unnamed freighter. Alas, Hanley himself pretty much torpedoed what should have been a powerful, contemporary work of World War 2 fiction with a folksy, sailor-y brand of language that reads just as false as it would have sounded had it ever been uttered by a merchant seaman.

Hansson, Per *One in Ten Had to Die*

Translated from the Norwegian; originally published in Oslo in 1970 under the title *Hver Tiende Mann Måtte Dø*. A somber, harrowing look at life aboard a Norwegian freighter during three stressful North Atlantic convoy crossings. Hansson's characters are identified solely by occupation (such as "Skipper" or "Carpenter" or "Boy") which makes for an oddly formal, though thoroughly moving, reading experience. An afterword by Leif Heimstad, a veteran Norwegian seaman who had himself seen wartime convoy service, vouches for the historical and emotional accuracy of Hansson's novella, and concludes with a plea that the work "open the eyes of the Norwegian authorities and so make it possible for all disabled wartime seamen ... receive recognition for what they did and be granted the pensions they should have received many years ago."

Hardy, William M. *The Ship They Called the Fat Lady.*

Hardy's highly sympathetic World War 2 tale focuses on the key role a former cargo-liner turned submarine tender played in the defense of Manila, the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island in the Philippines against invading Japanese forces during the months from Dec. 1941 through April 1942. As the author himself notes in a foreword, the novel is a fictitious treatment of actual events centered around the role played by the U.S. Navy submarine tender *U.S.S. CANOPUS* during those crucial early months of American participation in the war. The real-life *CANOPUS* had originally been built for Grace Line and entered commercial service in 1919 as the *SANTA LEONORA*. She was taken over by the Navy in the early 1920s and converted as a submarine tender. By the time war broke out in Dec. 1941 the vessel was in Manila harbor, and she remained on duty through the difficult months of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. Her crew scuttled the *CANOPUS* in early April 1942 to prevent the ship from coming under Japanese control; the gallant former liner was subsequently awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service medal with one Battle star for the Philippine Island operation, Dec. 1941-April 1942. In his novel, Hardy changed the vessel's name to *U.S.S. RIGEL* and also changed the names of the ship's officers and crew. Many readers will come away from the novel with a very real affection for the ship herself, and a visceral understanding of why her officers and crew so loved their ungainly, old "Fat Lady."

Hardy, William M. *Wolfpack*.

Though there are many “submarine wolfpack versus convoy” World War 2 tales in this bibliography, Hardy’s novel is decidedly a one-of-a-kinder. Instead of the usual stealthy Nazi U-boats against Allied North Atlantic convoys, author Hardy’s very interesting work looks at an American submarine wolfpack in the Pacific theater of war. Set in late June 1944, the novel opens at the U.S. Navy’s submarine base in Darwin, Australia and then follows an American wolfpack as it heads north looking for a Japanese convoy to destroy. Battle is engaged off the Japanese-controlled island of Formosa. The novel has an authentic feel to it; no surprise since author William Hardy was a naval officer aboard the American sub U.S.S. *BILLFISH*, serving on two war patrols in the Pacific Ocean during the Second World War.

Harris, Robert (1957-). *Enigma*

Harris' fast-paced World War 2 thriller about British efforts at breaking Germany's top-secret Enigma military codes is played against the background of a very real Mar. 1943 North Atlantic merchant convoy under attack by German U-boat wolf packs. Most of his action takes place in England's top-secret research base at Bletchley Park as Allied code breakers attempt to unravel the "Shark" Enigma code variant which was used by the German Navy to maintain communications with U-boats at sea. Failure to quickly break the code at this critical juncture in the War would lead to the destruction of the North Atlantic convoy system and indeed place Britain's very survival in question. Harris' novel is a page-turner, no mean feat given the abstract, mathematical nature of cipher breaking. In real life, as in Harris' novel, the "Shark" Enigma code variant was successfully broken, helping the Allies ensure the continued flow of goods and armaments across the North Atlantic from the U.S. and Canada to wartime Great Britain and Russia.

Havighurst, Walter *"First Command"*

Adventure Magazine tag line: "Away from the flaming tanker rowed what remained of the SELKIRK's crew. With a kind of terrible, lonely pride Second Mate Byer took the helm. His first command – a boatload of wounded on a waste of sea." Havighurst seems prescient in this dramatic short story which features a plot sounding very much like the real-life Nov. 1942 saga of the famous tanker SAN DEMETRIO (which occurred nine months after Havighurst's story was published). Havighurst focuses on the leadership abilities demonstrated by 2nd Mate Byer when the young man (only 26 years old) is forced to take command of a lifeboat filled with wounded and seasick sailors after their tanker had been set on fire by a Nazi surface raider. After wallowing in the rough seas of the North Atlantic, Byer and his men come upon the hulk of their ship, still afloat but also still on fire. They retake the ship, fight hard to put out her fires and eventually get the SELKIRK under way again. Days later the SELKIRK is met by a British naval vessel. Her captain asks 2nd Mate-turned-Captain Byer how he'd "done it," and the young man replies (in the rousing traditions of the sea and of World War 2 maritime literature):

"What kept you going, Captain?"

Captain –

Second Mate Byer stared out at the dark sea. He was too tired to think.

"You see, sir – it was my command."

Havighurst, Walter *"Four Lives"*

This immensely affecting piece, a World War 2 North Atlantic convoy short story, opens with a crippled freighter, The EPPING FOREST, reaching Clydemouth. The captain writes up his official report which reads, succinctly and simply:

“Shortly before noon on the 18th we dropped out of convoy with a broken main steampipe. At midnight the engineer had accomplished repairs and we got under way at half-speed. Five hours later, at daybreak, an enemy bomber sighted us, He dropped low low and released two sticks of bombs. One medium bomb scored a direct hit, taking four lives. The casualties were:

- Chief Engineer D. Isherwood – Second Officer W.B. Allard – Radio Operator Clyde Dennis
- Oiler Alec Bowen”

The captain then “dried his pen and paid it away, but his eyes continued to stare at that neat list of names.” In flashbacks Havighurst then focuses on the lives of those four merchant mariners, and how they came to lose their lives while bravely carrying out their duties aboard their ship.

Havighurst, Walter *"Hearts of Oak"*

Another early World War 2 tale by short story master Havighurst. Captain Thomas Woodbody has had three ships sunk under him by the time he takes command of the freighter FASTNET ROCK, outbound on a trans-Atlantic convoy for America. Though nicknamed “the unsinkable Captain Woodbody” by the British press, Woodbody guards a secret known only to himself: he is shell-shocked and now fearful that he has lost his nerve. His haunted memories reoccur during the short time that he is in command of the FASTNET ROCK, with his underlying courageous self surfacing only after his ship has been attacked by the enemy and is sinking after having strayed from its convoy position in a heavy fog. At that point Woodbody learns the true meaning of courage and through his resolve and humor finds redemption for both himself and also for his crew.

Havighurst, Walter "*Kootenai Passage*"

Adventure tag line: "Three weeks ago young Matt Grierson had been proud of the new third mate's ticket in his pocket. Then came the night off Kootenai Point when a towing hawser parted and a million feet of lumber vanished in the tide rip – along with the ticket. It was quite a salvage operation to fish it up again and turn the blurred ink back to blue." Havighurst's rather slight plot revolves around Alaska-Seattle wartime lumber transport and features an attempted (and initially successful) sabotage of shipboard timber cargoes by a disgruntled cook in the employ of Nazi agents.

Havighurst, Walter *"Last Voyage"*

Fictional treatment of the North German Lloyd liner COLUMBUS' Dec. 1939 scuttling off Cape Hatteras when the ship was intercepted by the British in her attempt to break free of internment and return to Germany. Havighurst renames the vessel "NUREMBURG" and changes some details of the famed incident to fit the purposes of his short story, but this piece of fiction nonetheless rings true. What is most interesting about the short story, however, is Havighurst's depiction of the German liner's officers and crew as decent men, greatly pained indeed at the need to destroy a ship that all of them respect and love. America was of course still neutral in 1940, which probably accounts for Havighurst's humane treatment of his German characters. Within a year or so such a sympathetic depiction would be impossible in print.

Havighurst, Walter *"A Lesson in Knots"*

North Atlantic convoy story. "It was a tough initiation for young Captain Satterfield – green hands in the foc'sle, a man short on the bridge, bombers above and subs below" – *Adventure Magazine* tag line. Add to this several days of heavy fog, during which time Satterfield's freighter (the ITASCA) loses her convoy and the untried ship master must try to relocate it. Havighurst's story climaxes with an attack on the vessel by a German bomber, an attack foiled by the gunnery skills of two crew working in closely in tandem: old "Chips" – the ship's carpenter – and "Pitchfork" – a young Iowa farmer on his first voyage. Satterfield learns an important lesson from this: teamwork can combine the tried skills of an experienced mariner with the malleability of the novice to forge a partnership strong enough to even bring down a Nazi bomber.

Havighurst, Walter *"Midnight Sailing"*

Saturday Evening Post tag: "Possibly you will not think this is a story, since it has no hero or heroine. But if you have known the sea and understand a man's love for his ship and his country, you will know this is a love story." And a touching love story it is, that of an unnamed French mariner for his ship, the fabled NORMANDIE. Havighurst's tale follows the NORMANDIE's career, from her record-breaking maiden voyage to her tragic death by fire in New York harbor in 1942.

Havighurst, Walter *No Homeward Course*

File this one under “It seemed like a good idea at the time” — “it” being Havighurst’s incredibly sympathetic tale of a World War 2 Nazi merchant raider! Even sixty years later it’s hard to *not* disagree with the incredulous reaction voiced by British book reviewer Richard Denis Charques voiced in his July 12, 1941 *Times Literary Supplement* review of the novel:

“The first dozen pages are sufficient to send the reader back to the title page to look for the previously unnoticed “translated from the German by so-and-so.” But no, this story of a gallant German raider manned by a gallant German crew is apparently not German, only German or German-American. Why it should have been published here there is no knowing, but a wonderful people we are to give these sentimental Germanic heroes an airing just now!

At the start, it is true, there are points of interest in the description, which seems to be done with a degree of knowledge, of the Nazi raider’s style. The WESTPHALIA, which looked an honest cargo-boat, had been built as a raider, with engines as powerful as a battle-cruiser’s, and in the Atlantic she sported the Dutch flag. She had a battery of six-inch guns hidden in dummy ventilators below, she carried torpedo-tubes and anti-aircraft guns, and her wireless could blanket the air for fifty miles around. Having made all this plain, however, Mr. Havighurst goes on to man the raider with as devoted and chivalrous a crew of German idealists as ever put to sea. The captain is Siegfried-Lohengrin, the chief engineer is a more elderly version of Siegfried-Lohengrin, the ship’s doctor is service to humanity incarnate, and only the first officer, alas! is a Nazi black sheep. And, having made all this plain, too, Mr. Havighurst unfolds the chivalry of the WESTPHALIA towards the prize crews quartered in the ‘tween decks and explores the diversely subtle yearnings of the captain, a British intelligence officer, and an American scientist waging humanity’s war — against disease — for the brave and lustrous daughter of an American copper king. Very proper, no doubt, the American scientist, whose name is Langstreth and who holds the captain’s hand in a grip of eternal comradeship, is the only one of the three to be spared and therefore wins.

Some of the details of the raider’s methods are ingeniously imagined. The rest is vapid and lush and hard to put up with. Mr. Havighurst has odd notions of the geography of this country, and of London in particular.”

For the record, a quick glance through Havighurst’s World War 2 oeuvre reveals as patriotic an American as can be found anywhere in this listing. The merchant marine short stories that he wrote after America’s entry into the War confirm this. Unfortunately *No Homeward Course* -- along with his short story “Last Voyage” (see above) — have somewhat tarnished his reputation). “For another take on the “Gee, the Germans are just guys like us” genre, see Paul Schubert’s 1940 short story, “Lover’s Touch” (listed below).”

Havighurst, Walter *"Suicide Ship"*

Collier's tag line: "Why England will never die." Set aboard the armed merchantman PENTLAND FIRTH during an Eastbound convoy during the early days of World War 2. Young 3rd Officer Philip Sands' enthusiasm for life at sea (depicted as his incessant whistling of "There'll Always Be an England") seems to grate on his elderly — and ailing — superior, Captain Allerdice, who in Havighurst's tale is serving as both captain of his vessel and Convoy Commander. Halfway across the Atlantic the convoy is set upon by a German battleship and Allerdice, in an act of suicidal bravery, has the PENTLAND FIRTH take on the German warship, thus allowing the convoy to scatter and (hopefully) survive. Havighurst's elderly and somewhat cantankerous captain is an eloquent study in "practical, no-nonsense" heroism, while 3rd Officer Sands evokes the more romantic courage often summoned up by youth. The short story's pentultimate scene has both Captain and young officer, one on the shell-wrecked ship's bridge and the other on the PENTLAND FIRTH's burning deck, evoking our popular image of British strength, singing aloud above the din of war, that rousing, much beloved anthem:

"There'll always be an England And England shall be free — If England means as much to you As England means to me."

Havighurst, Walter *"The Tides of Lundy"*

Another Havighurst World War 2 tale, this one set aboard a small converted British herring trawler engaged in minesweeping / submarine duties off the Bristol Channel. Havighurst's chief character is the vessel's commander, Lt. Leonard Macedon, the only Royal Navy man aboard the fictitious St. AGNES. He's inherited an unhappy ship, one in which deck crew and engineers rarely cooperate. A furious battle with a German U-boat changes all this and as a result his civilian crew rapidly – and enthusiastically – learn that teamwork is necessary if they are to wage successful sea battle.

Hawkins, John "*Convoy Captain*"

Well crafted short story co-authored with Ward Hawkins (1912-). *Argosy* tag line: “These ships must reach England, for they carry the bread and steel vital to a fighting people. So they sail through a hundred perils – and none more sinister and illusive than the whisper ‘Treason!’” Set aboard the fictitious “cargo wagon” (i.e. freighter) LOCKLAND during a convoy run from Halifax to England in the days shortly after Italy’s “stab in the back” entry into the War. A young Italian-American fireman (born on the “Frisco waterfront”) aboard the ship is falsely accused of sabotage before proving his very real commitment to the LOCKLAND’s crew and to the Allied war effort when the vessel becomes disabled and is forced to fall out of convoy. The Hawkins’ willingness to explore the issue of national prejudices in wartime is interesting and appears heartfelt. Their choice of a title, though, is somewhat confusing since the story has nothing to do with the captain of a ship in convoy — could it be meant to be taken as a metaphor for the actions of the LOCKLAND’s 2nd Assistant Engineer who single-handedly takes on the national rabble rousers among the ship’s crew and defends the Italian-American?

Hawkins, John *"Devil on His Trail"*

Co-authored with Ward Hawkins (1912-). Seven part Post serial, later published as a book (see next entry). Interesting hybrid of a sea tale, with half being told in “real time” aboard a lifeboat in the South Pacific after the sinking of the freighter ISAAC JONES by the Japanese and the other half in flashbacks set primarily in Portland, Ore., where the story’s anti-hero lived before going to sea as a merchant seaman. On land (and often at sea), the hero, has been misunderstood in a manner that seems to almost prefigure James Dean by a good ten years. The sea elements of the story do, however, ring authentic, particularly with the authors’ description of Black Gang life aboard an aging freighter. The Hawkins write of their low-man-on-the-totem-pole hero:

“Joe found himself remembering how he had once thought everyone who went to sea was a sailor. On deck you were a sailor. Below, you were just a guy who worked in an engine room — the engine room of a factory, save that it pitched and rolled. Engines were all right if you worked with them. But the wipers didn’t. The wipers were the janitors of the place. They cleaned up. They painted. They did all the dirty jobs the storekeeper could dream up”-- p. 78, June 17, 1944 serial installment.

Also, quite impressive is the multi-page description of the ISAAC JONES under attack by Japanese bombers and fighter planes. This realism, alas, clashes with the story’s weak point — the improbable events which see our hero’s “girl” showing up as a newly-commissioned WAC in San Francisco and then boarding the ISAAC JONES for that vessel’s ill-fated last trip across the Pacific. An interesting (from 2001) subplot/theme then develops with Joe being upset that his possible wife-to-be had actually taken it upon herself to enlist in the military without his knowledge or permission. Do Joe and his girl survive their lifeboat ordeal? Do they marry in the end? You’ll have to trudge through all seven installments of this serial yourself to find out! Later (see below) published as a novel.

Heggen, Thomas *Mister Roberts*

Think of the Mr. Roberts saga as a not-too-distant antecedent to Joseph Heller's *Catch 22*; both look at the wearying, soul-destroying non-combat related part of modern warfare. Heggen's work, episodic and cynically comic, is set aboard a Navy cargo ship (the U.S.S. RELUCTANT, known to her crew as "this bucket") during the waning days of World War 2. The ship, Heggen writes,

“ ... operates in the back areas of the Pacific. In its holds it carries food and trucks and dungarees and toothpaste and toilet paper. For the most part it stays on its regular run, from Tedium to Apathy and back; about five days each way. It makes an occasional trip to Monotony, and once it made a run all the way to Ennui, a distance of two thousand miles from Tedium. It performs its dreary and unthanked job, and performs it, if not inspiredly, than at least adequately.”

The Mr. Roberts short stories and subsequently issued novel were enthusiastically received by the American reading public in the days just following World War 2. The works focus on Lt. Douglas Roberts, the RELUCTANT's Cargo Officer, a humane man lionized by the ship's crew for his intelligence, sense of fair play, sympathy and — perhaps most importantly — his unfaltering opposition to the ship's idiotic captain (a former merchant mariner whose promotion to shipmaster by the wartime Navy defies all logic). Mister Roberts was subsequently turned into a highly popular 1948 Broadway play starring Henry Fonda and later into a sanitized 1950s movie featuring James Cagney, Henry Fonda (in a reprise of his stage role) and Jack Lemmon.

Hemingway, Ernest *Islands in the Stream*.

Published posthumously after being edited by Mary Hemingway (the author's widow) and Charles Scribner, Jr., this three-part novel has as its protagonist a painter named Thomas Hudson who, as the story opens (in the late 1930s) is living a solitary life on the island of Bimini, in the Bahamas. Parts 1 and 2 of the novel contain interesting passages concerning steamships of the era (the *ILE DE FRANCE* in Part 1 and an unnamed luxury liner – the *EMPRESS OF BRITAIN?* – on a world cruise, sailing from Mombasa through the Suez Canal to the Mediterranean in Part 2). Part 3 (titled: “*At Sea*”), however, is of the most interest to this bibliography, set as it is in the early stages (1942-1943) of active American participation in the War. At this point in the story Hudson is living in Cuba and, on his own initiative (though with permission from U.S. Naval Intelligence), he organizes a paramilitary group of like-minded Allied nationals to go to sea to hunt for the German U-boats which were then decimating shipping in the Caribbean. Hemingway's tale has Jordan, captaining his own diesel cruiser, in pursuit of a group of survivors off a wrecked U-boat who are attempting to make their way to the relative safety of Havana (from whence pro-Axis Spanish or Argentinian shipping interests will transport the German sailors to safety). The U-boat survivors are depicted as a stereotypically cruel lot, for, as they make their way across the Caribbean they attack, plunder and murder civilians – with the poor Black inhabitants of isolated cays and islets being their victims. Hudson and his crew eventually locate the Germans and, in a ferocious battle, kill them to a man (despite the U.S. Navy's request that at least one survivor be brought back for interrogation). What is of particular interest here is that it is a fictionalized version of Hemingway's own Cuban activities in 1942 and 1943. Then living on the island for tax reasons, Hemingway actually organized a paramilitary Caribbean sea patrol, using his beloved 38-foot diesel cruiser *PILAR* as a “Q-boat” to track down German submarines off Cuba. That's where real life and fiction diverge – for though Hemingway and crew did once spot a U-boat (which ignored the *PILAR*), they never engaged in any action with the enemy whatsoever.

Herm, Heinrich *The Voyage*.

Originally published in Germany in 1925 under the title *Moira*; later published in Great Britain under the title *Frail Safety*. Disaster strikes a world cruise in the wake of a mid-Pacific collision with a derelict vessel. Herm's soap opera of a novel is set aboard the German liner AUSTRALIA and follows the fortunes of a stuffy German sociology professor who, in concert with the ship's stalwart captain, misleads his fellow passengers as to the seriousness of the situation. What's of perhaps most interest to today's reader is the author's pompous, pro-German jingoism which is combined with a supreme condescension to other nationalities represented aboard the wounded vessel (viz, this gem by the AUSTRALIA's shipmaster spoken to our Herr Professor at one of Herm's innumerable climaxes: "It will be necessary for us [i.e., the ship's officers] to use revolvers — there are South Americans aboard ... Don't you understand, we must maintain discipline to the very end. We are a German ship!"). Add to this babble Herm's harping on the "good, clean" death anticipated by the ship's brave mariners and you've got a rather strange Teutonic brew indeed!

Herman, Fred *Dynamite Cargo: Convoy to Russia*

A gripping, contemporary — and somewhat fictionalized — account of the horrific Murmansk Run. Herman's focus is an American Liberty ship — the JASON (“it was not her name but it will identify her”) — as she sails from America to Russia with a cargo of high explosives and other munitions. The author opens his book with a series of well-drawn crew profiles. Though the JASON's eastbound trans-Atlantic voyage is described in detail, Herman's real interest lies with the Murmansk Run convoy that the JASON joins in Scotland. The convoy, described by the author as the largest assembled up to that point in the War, is soon enveloped in a running battle with German bombers, fighter planes and U-boats. One Allied ship after another is consigned to a watery grave by the Nazi foe. Included in the carnage is the JASON herself, though most of her crew survive and are picked up by a British minesweeper (here again Herman is at best with his physical and psychological descriptions of the 200+ survivors of various ships all crammed aboard the minesweeper). Interestingly enough it is the minesweeper which is forced to sink the stricken JASON after she had been torpedoed in order to keep the vessel's cargo out of Nazi hands. Herman closes the book with statistics documenting the high mortality rates suffered by merchant seamen up to that point (1943) in World War 2. “We don't claim to be heroes,” he convincingly writes. “We are the bums. But we deliver cargoes.” Further note: the American edition of *Dynamite Cargo* is illustrated with a series of dramatic black-and-white convoy photographs issued by British official and newsreel sources.

Hickam, Homer *The Keeper's Son*

A cinematic World War 2 novel set on an island in North Carolina's Outer Banks (fictitious Killakeet Island) and in the waters off Cape Hatteras during late 1941 and early 1942 just after America's entry into the conflict. The author is particularly effective in describing the horrific toll German U-boats took on merchant vessels in the Cape Hatteras "Torpedo Alley" region. (Hickam also includes a strong prose description of a Murmansk Run convoy attack from the perspective of German U-boats.). His chief characters include a Coast Guard patrol boat captain (Lt. Josh Thurlow) and the German submarine commander with whom he duels for control of the sea lanes. The novel is marred, though, by a series of thoroughly implausible coincidences. These hijack Hickam's plot, which is truly unfortunate given his strong evocation of and identification with Outer Banks maritime life during the crucial days of late 1941 / early 1942. Flaws aside, though, *The Keeper's Son* is a high adventure yarn of the page-turning variety. Publicity released at the time that the novel was published indicates that this will be the first of a series of World War 2 Coast Guard novels by Hickam featuring Josh Thurlow.

Higginbotham, Robert Emmett. *Wine for My Brothers*

Labor solidarity is the focus of this dramatic - and clearly autobiographical - World War 2 tale. Higginbotham's novel is set aboard a U.S. tanker (the fictitious *S.S. LIQUID WEALTH*) during an early 1942 voyage from Corpus Christi, Texas through the Caribbean and up the Eastern Seaboard. The United States has just gone to war as the novel opens, with German U-boats taking a savage toll against Allied shipping in U.S. Atlantic coastal waters.

Though the *LIQUID WEALTH* is ultimately sunk by a Nazi sub, Higginbotham's real interest lies in describing the complicated shipboard tensions which have arisen between the vessel's drunken martinet of a skipper, Captain G.C. Bohn (think of Bohn - who drinks 2 quarts of whisky a day! - as a civilian counterpart to Herman Wouk's infamous Captain Queeg), and the ship's 41-man unionized crew. Bohn has total contempt for the labor movement. Rather than take the crew on as a whole, though, the shipmaster focuses his hatred of the seamen's union on the *LIQUID WEALTH*'s "deck delegate" (i.e., union representative), an A.B. named Palmer Benson Scott (known as "Blackie" to crewmates). Maligned by Bohn as a "Red," Blackie refuses to back down to the captain's increasingly petty attempts to control every aspect of crew life. And, in an ironic ending to the novel, it is Blackie who remains aboard the *LIQUID WEALTH* after she has been torpedoed (panic-stricken Bohn begins to abandon the ship as soon as the first torpedoes strike) and keeps her on course so that the rest of the crew can safely take to the one remaining lifeboat.

Author Higginbotham is excellent in delineating the *LIQUID WEALTH*'s crew as individuals and in showing how they worked together to so effectively man their tanker. He credits the then-powerful U.S. merchant seamen's union with much of this harmony and points to hostile anti-union figures such as Bohn as being as much an enemy of the working merchant seamen as German U-boats. Also of interest to labor historians are Higginbotham's descriptions of the nuts-and-bolts operations of the labor movement aboard U.S.-flagged vessels during the World War 2 era.

Hill, James L. "Battle Stations"

A U.S. Navy officer (Lieutenant-Commander Cooper) is relieved from the command of his Pearl Harbor-based destroyer after one too many fistfights with civilians and given command of a broken down old cargo ship (the fictitious U.S.S. KINGMAN) which had been hastily converted into a combination hospital ship / military wives evacuation vessel. Sent in convoy back across the Pacific to San Francisco, the KINGMAN breaks down the third day out to sea and is left on her own. All too soon a Japanese submarine spots the ship and comes in for the kill, but her canny Navy skipper has other plans for the sub. By story's end the Nipponese submarine has been sunk, though unfortunately, so too has the KINGMAN (nearly all of her crew and passengers, however, are saved due to Lt.-Commander Cooper's foresight). Hill's short story is fast-paced – and even somewhat believable – though somewhat bogged down by a silly love interest involving our brave Navy officer and an admiral's daughter who just happened to be aboard the KINGMAN while being evacuated back to the continental United States.

Hill, Robert A. *The First Mate of the HENRY GLASS*

World War 2 tale set in the South Pacific, Indian Ocean, Suez Canal, Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic. Newly licensed Chief Mate Robert Hall's first assignment (unwillingly accepted by him) is aboard the just-commissioned Liberty Ship HENRY GLASS, sailing out of San Pedro early on during the War (Hill's narrative appears to take place during late 1942). The GLASS is described as an armed merchant ship, complete with an S.O.B. of a skipper, unhappy crewmen and contingents of Navy gunners and U.S. Marines clearly unhappy to have to associate with merchant mariners. The novel is inelegant, sexually gritty, sometimes cruel and more often than not poorly written (wasn't Vantage a vanity press?), yet Hill's account of the GLASS' wartime voyages nonetheless reads with an immediacy and authenticity often missing in more polished works. Yes, the captain is often mean-spirited; yes, the GLASS' crew are generally crude, sex-driven, drunken louts; yes, the sailors and marines serving alongside the crew are themselves often thoroughly unlikeable. Yet by tale's end the reader comes to care about each and every one of them, and comes to know much about what life aboard a Liberty Ship during the Second World War was all about. Hill's clincher of a finale occurs in mid-Atlantic, where the poorly constructed GLASS breaks apart and sinks during a wild storm en route back to the United States, with 1st Mate Hall seemingly the ship's sole survivor.

Hilton, James *The Story of Doctor Wassell.*

Hilton's story of real-life American World War 2 hero Dr. Corydon Wassell during the 1942 fall of Java to Imperial Japanese forces is told in simple prose which nevertheless carries quite a wallop even sixty plus years after its original publication. The novel, a brief 158 pages, is closer to "faction" than fiction since Dr. Wassell's exploits - the stuff of American war propagandists' dreams (indeed no less an inspirational orator than Franklin Delano Roosevelt himself sang Wassell's praises in an April 1942 radio broadcast when he spoke to the American public about Wassell's actions) - were based upon solid fact.

Sent to the Dutch East Indies island of Java in early 1942 as a U.S. Navy doctor, the fiftyish Wassell was assigned as liaison officer to a group of U.S. Navy personnel who had been wounded in recent action against Japan and were recuperating upcountry. A Japanese invasion of the island (soon following the fall of Singapore) put American naval forces to flight and Wassell, not once but twice, brought his charges to the southern Javanese port of Tjilatjap in an attempt to evacuate them by sea. The Navy had written off a group of them as being too seriously wounded to travel by sea (being afraid that the men couldn't survive a ship sinking), but Wassell refused to give up. He finally talked his way aboard the last civilian ship - the real-life Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij coastal liner JANSSENS- to make port in Tjilatjap and forced her reluctant shipmaster (again, a real person, veteran K.P.G. Captain G.N. Prass) to allow the wounded Navy men aboard the vessel. The final third of Hilton's novel is set aboard the refugee-packed JANSSENS and, while focusing on Wassell and his men, nonetheless also paints a vivid picture of shipboard life aboard the small steamer as Captain Prass attempts to elude attacking Japanese warplanes and lurking submarines. After 10 nail-biting days at sea the ship eventually reached the safety of Australia. By that point the reader realizes that Hilton's brief novel reads like a slim, but packed, version of "profiles in courage," with heroes including Dr. Wassell himself, his Navy wounded, proud Captain Prass, numerous Dutch and British military men and civilians, and the good ship JANSSENS herself. The novel was later made into a 1944 Hollywood movie which was directed by none other than Cecil B. De Mille. And De Mille's actor counterpart for brave Dr. Wassell? None other than Gary Cooper.

Hitchcock, Alfred *"Lifeboat"*

Start with a little Hitchcock à la "Spellbound," add a dash of Maxim de Winter (*Rebecca*) and a whole lot of cardboard (think Nancy Drew) and you've got this peculiar World War 2 shipboard murder mystery. Though the murder in question actually occurred in 1929 on a liner bound for London from Cape Town, most of Clarke's action takes place either aboard a similar vessel en route to Southampton in early Sept. 1939 or in London (at, among other locales, a shipping line office and at a former steward's East End flat) during the early days of the War.

Holder, William "*The Big Trip*"

North Atlantic convoy tale. *Argosy's* tag line pretty much tells it all: "With two lost ships on his record, and a leaky old scow for his last command, Captain Lennon knew the only thing that could save the McBAIN was a miracle – and U-boats don't believe in miracles." Suffice to say that Lennon overcomes a surly, ill-trained crew, many engine breakdowns and bad weather to get his freighter successfully across the Atlantic. And that miracle? – it does come when the McBAIN takes on a surfaced German submarine and bests the U-boat at her own game. Result: one sunk sub and Lennon's "jinx" now beaten.

Holder, William *"Nitro Ship"*

Another North Atlantic convoy story. The tough-as-nails captain an explosives-packed Liberty ship (the fictitious KAVA CITY) has to revise his opinion of his First Mate after the junior officer carries out a courageous rescue at sea when a tanker in their convoy is attacked by German U-boats in the fog-shrouded waters off Newfoundland.

Holder, William "*Strange Woman*"

A *Collier's* one-page "short, short story." An ex-serviceman waits at a New York City pier for his English war bride to disembark from a large liner (possibly either the QUEEN MARY or QUEEN ELIZABETH): "The big ship had been tied up for more than an hour, and the passengers were coming ashore. There was none of the hysteria that had attended his own homecoming months before, George noted. It was much nice this way." While waiting, the man worries whether his brief memories of his wife are too romantic and possibly unrealistic. In an emotionally satisfying denouement, however, he realizes that "the picture in his mind had been a true picture, and only the doubts false."

Holding, Elisabeth Sanxay *"The Unbelievable Baroness"*

A stateless German Baroness fleeing the Nazis and her little pet dog foil an Italian agent's attempt to plant a bomb aboard the Caribbean liner on which both are sailing. The dog's intense dislike for the saboteur results in the bomb's discovery, and the Italian's plot to disrupt inter-island wartime communications and transport thus fails. Allied gratitude results in an offer of asylum for the aged Baroness and her canine companion.

Horsley, Terence *"The Man Who Wasn't Decorated"*

One in the *Collier's* series "A short, short story complete on this page." The setting: France, just after its fall to Germany in 1940. A small ship, anchored just off the coast of an undisclosed French location, swarms with refugees and British military hoping to make it across the Channel to England. German bombers attack the vessel, with many of its passengers trapped below decks as the ship slowly sinks. A quick-thinking British major manages to batter open a closed porthole, allowing nearly all to escape. Ironically, though, he remains trapped and doomed to death by drowning, for he is a large man, far too large himself to escape with his men through the narrow porthole. The story's author is listed as "Lieutenant Commander Terence Horsley, R.N.V.R." Was the story based on a real incident?

Howes, Royce *"Quite a Special Occasion"*

The exceptionally poignant story of what a new-building convoy escort vessel meant to two Canadians. Set in a Quebec shipyard where an elderly couple are given a VIP tour of the yard and one ship in particular. As described by Howes, the ship was probably a corvette, one of a class "being turned out in numbers by several yards. They are especially designed for convoy work ... By their use the Admiralty hopes to relieve more powerful warships, such as destroyers, for missions of defense" (p. 86). The elderly couple's son, it turns out, had served on a similar vessel, a vessel which had courageously taken on a German cruiser in February 1941. It had been sunk, and the elderly couple's son lost, but its action had saved many of the vessels of the convoy.

Howes, Royce "*Steady as She Goes*"

Set aboard the American merchant vessel S.S. WYNCRAFT circa 1940 while en route from Lisbon to Gibraltar, and subsequently into the Mediterranean as far as Naples and then back into the Atlantic en route home to the United States. An interesting look at American neutrality issues, particularly as seen through the eyes of opinionated Captain D.F. ("Dewey Farragut") Jones who refuses to be intimidated by the several German submarines (and their rigid Nazi commanders) that his vessel meets at sea. In the end, having unintentionally rammed and sunk one of the submarines, Jones outwits a German demand that one of his officers accompany them to Bremerhaven for a naval inquiry into the incident. He does this by quoting a non-existent order which he claims to have received regarding American mercantile conduct at sea during the current hostilities. Speaking with his 2nd Officer Morris Sands he subsequently explains:

“Always remember, Mr. Sands, that you can put anything over on a German officer by citing an order. Their heads are built that way.”--p. 68).

Captain Jones undoubtedly echoed a sentiment felt by many of his American sea-going contemporaries, and many a landlubber, too!

Hughes, Terry *Queen's Mate*

Published in the U.S. as *The Day They Stole the Queen Mary G*, this water-logged "thriller" features a totally implausible story line, one-dimensional characters and deadly dull writing. It all revolves around a World War 2 plot by German prisoners of war aboard the QUEEN MARY being sent to America who attempt to hijack the ship and turn her over to Hitler. Oh yes, Winston Churchill just happens to be aboard, too. A 10 on the Yawn Scale!

Hunt, E. Howard *East of Farewell*

Exceptionally strong North Atlantic convoy tale. Published at the height of the War, the novel is noteworthy for its relatively realistic, no-nonsense depiction of life aboard a U.S. destroyer during a routine – if there ever was such a concept on the North Atlantic in 1942! – eastbound convoy. In this regard, the work stands in sharp contrast to much other literature of the era in this regard, for example Guy Gilpatric's *Action in the North Atlantic* or just about any short story appearing in *Collier's*, *Liberty* or *The Saturday Evening Post*. Hunt's characters ring true, as do the situations in which they and their convoy find themselves. And Hunt's take on the tensions between "regular navy" men and those serving for just the duration of the war is particularly telling. This is also one of the few times in which African-Americans are depicted at sea, though all unfortunately as stereo typically lazy and frightened mess stewards given to speech resembling something uttered by Bo Jangles. Also hard to ignore in the 21st Century is Hunt's routine use of the word "nigger," though one should probably look at it as an artifact of its time. These caveats aside, *East of Farewell* is an excellent introduction to World War 2 convoy fiction. *The Times Literary Supplement's* review of Sept. 30, 1944 from war-weary London was a positive one, noting, in part:

“[Hunt's] characters are men as we know. There is no heroism. There is but duty rigorously performed. That means there is no sensationalism, only storms, weariness, and, like an ever-present anxiety overcoming dreariness and languor in tumult, the presence of the helpless convoy.”

Author Hunt himself served as an ensign aboard a destroyer in the North Atlantic during the early days of World War 2. And an added author note: yes, indeed, E. Howard Hunt today is best remembered as one of the Nixon-era Watergate burglars. He was also a prolific author and, as *East of Farewell* proves, a talented one.

Hunt, E. Howard "*East of Farewell*"

According to the *Liberty* blurb, this version of Hunt's novel had been "abridged to a reading of one evening — complete in this issue." Its tag line is a classic, indeed worthy of a movie coming attractions narrator:

"'It's worth a lifetime in the Navy,' the Commodore said, 'to see a ship come through like that.' — Here is the story of the men who 'take them across,' the destroyer crews who brave more than the sea and battle and death — who live through the tenseness of waiting for that one moment when the enemy sub or plane may strike — for the brief, final round which means either they or the enemy sink to destruction — This is the first novel by an American about the war written by an American who has actually fought in it — swift, terse, tense, with an undercurrent of excitement you'll never forget." — p. 31.

Innes, Hammond *Atlantic Fury*.

An exciting, if improbable, sea-going yarn set primarily in Scotland's Outer Hebrides chain of islands, with much action on a thoroughly isolated, now uninhabited island patterned after St. Kilda Island (located 41 miles west of Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides). Though Innes' story takes place in the early 1960s much of its plot is devoted to the solution of a World War 2 mystery about what really happened in 1944 to a group of survivors off a torpedoed Canadian troopship. Though the vessel had been sunk south in the Irish Sea, at least one survivor evidently survived a month long ordeal drifting slowly northward towards the Outer Hebrides aboard a life raft. A case of assumed identity complicates the story. Innes is perhaps at his best writing about the meteorology involved in predicting (and effectively dealing with) a hurricane force storm which assails the islands early on; indeed, his superb powers of description rival those employed by George R. Stewart in the latter's classic novel, *Storm* (1941).

Innes, Hammond "*Maddon's Rock*"

Gripping thriller which opens in Mar. 1945 aboard a rusty tramp freighter (the TRIKKALA) embarking on a treacherous westbound Murmansk Run convoy run. The vessel's disreputable captain – an ex-China Seas skipper of shady background – hatches a plot to steal the TRIKKALA's secret cargo (a fortune in silver bullion being transferred to England by the Soviet Union) and with the connivance of a handful of confederates, makes it appear that the ship has struck a mine and sunk. Most of the TRIKKALA's remaining crew as well as a handful of British Army ratings and a young English woman are consigned to sabotaged lifeboats – and nearly all perish. But not Innes' hero (nor the young woman) who together later discover that the ship had not sunk but rather had been deliberately stranded on a far northern Arctic Sea islet, Maddon's Rock. They make the perilous voyage back across northern seas to Maddon's Rock, locate the TRIKKALA and attempt to make the vessel seaworthy enough to steam to England. Being a thriller, just about the time that their get the TRIKKALA ready for her voyage, the villainous ex-captain arrives at Maddon's Rock – and Innes' plot starts taking on the aspects of a "Perils of Pauline" gone to sea. Apart from being a rip-roaring sea tale, the serial today is of note for its depiction of wartime Murmansk and a late wartime homebound Murmansk Run convoy. In 1948 the serial was published as a novel in England under the title *Maddon's Rock* and in the United States under the title *Gale Warning* (see following entries)::

Gale Warning. New York, N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, 1948. 272 p.

Maddon's Rock. London, Eng.: Collins, 1948. 256 p.

Innes, Hammond *Wreckers Must Breathe*

A nail-biter of a thriller written during the earliest days of the Second World War by master storyteller Innes. Set in August and September 1939, Innes' hero, newspaperman Walter Craig, on a seaside holiday on the coast of Cornwall, discovers a secret German U-boat base carved out of a disused Cornish tin mine with its entrance through an undersea cave. Submarines exiting from the secret base wreak havoc with English shipping as soon as War breaks out (indeed, Innes has one of the base's U-boats accounting for the infamous September 1939 sinking of the liner ATHENIA), and then set their sights on a British warship flotilla expected to soon sail through the English Channel. How meek, supposedly uncourageous drama critic Craig and his confederates — several Cornish miners and a female newspaper colleague of Craig's — outwit the Germans makes for exciting reading. Indeed, *Wreckers Must Breathe* would have been just the sort of shot in the arm that beleaguered English readers would have welcomed during the dark days of 1940 (though perhaps the idea of even a fictitious U-boat base operating out of British coastal waters might have been a trifling unsettling!). Also of great interest to today's reader is Innes' account of the last days of peace in August 1939 as lived by his alter-ego Craig. His riveting descriptions of that time are unnerving and upsetting, even 60 years later. That this section is autobiographical cannot be discounted; Innes sets his early chapters in the Cornish seaside village of Cadgwith and his poignant introduction to *Wreckers Must Breathe* reads simply: "To the village of Cadgwith in Cornwall, where I spent my last holiday before the war and where I hope to spend my first holiday when it is all over."

Innes, Michael *Appleby on Ararat*

This murder mystery initially reads as farce. It opens during the early years of the Second World War aboard an ocean liner traveling in the South Pacific. The “whale” sighted by one of Innes’ characters turns out to be an Axis submarine, with predictable — though quirky — results for the six or seven people gathered in the ship’s sun-deck café just as a torpedo strikes the ship:

“The sun-deck café — except that it had turned upside down — was much as it had been. But the liner of which it had formed so inconsiderable a part was gone, and — wrenched away — it floated grotesquely upon an empty ocean under an empty sky.”

The survivors float away in their unlikely lifeboat for many days before finally reaching an island peopled by society figures attempting to “wait out” the war. Soon murder combines with a *Treasure Island* subplot which twists and turns before the novel’s hero (Inspector Appleby, C.I.D.) solves all, and in the process detects a German presence on the island to boot.

Jackson, Guy "*Scrimshanker Jones.*"

World War 2 short story, set aboard a tanker. "Scrimshanker" is nautical slang for someone who shirks his job responsibilities. The scrimshanker in this case is a lazy and inept supposed Able Bodied seaman named Jones who sustains what today would be called an industrial injury at sea and then nurses the injury along for months to keep his job. Jones ultimately rises above himself during an emergency and rescues the Mate from a gas-filled tank aboard ship, and is then given another chance to prove himself as a mariner.

Jenkins, Geoffrey *A Bridge of Magpies*

Cold War era, improbable claptrap set circa 1970 in the waters off South West Africa. The plot focuses on efforts to locate a World War 2 U-boat that resurfaces mysteriously every few years before sinking once again in the frigid waters of the South Atlantic. The submarine carried a cargo that several competing groups of contemporary “salvagers” are trying to locate – a hocus pocus Nostradamus-like ancient Japanese text that can predict and lead the Japanese (or whoever owns the document) to naval victories. Don’t ask how such a priceless document got aboard the U-boat! Jenkins’ plot includes a major role for the liner CITY OF BARDODA (Ellerman’s Line, built in 1918) which in real-life was a World War 2 casualty, though certainly *not* in the baroque manner of Jenkins’ fevered imagination. This one is really only for the true aficionado of pulp fiction.

Jenkins, Geoffrey *A Twist of Sand*

A mishmash of an adventure novel, set along the Skeleton Coast of Southwest Africa, initially during World War 2 circa 1941/1942 and then later in the mid-1950s. The World War 2 portion of the novel has Jenkins' hero, a Royal Navy submarine commander, pursuing and eventually destroying what turns out to be the prototype for a German nuclear submarine. (The German U-boat had been preying on ships in the South Atlantic and Jenkins makes the Nazi vessel responsible for the real-life 1942 Skeleton Coast grounding of the Blue Star Line refrigerated cargo liner DUNEDIN STAR). Fast forward to the 1950s: Jenkins' English commander, cashiered by the Royal Navy yet restrained by an oath of silence from revealing anything concerning the German nuclear submarine, is now a successful fisherman on the Skeleton Coast. There he's forced (blackmailed really) into taking a German naturalist up the Coast to a forbidden landing hundreds of miles from civilization. Along the way he has an improbable romance with a Swiss female naturalist. By tale's end petroleum reserves have been discovered, and many of Jenkins' cardboard characters have been killed off.

Jessup, Richard *A Novel of the Sea*

Twenty five years (1919-1943) in the life of an American mariner, Savannah native Howard Cadiz, as he moves from being a green boy of fourteen on his first voyage to service as captain of a World War 2 merchant vessel. Jessup's writing is clean and interesting when he writes of a seafaring life in the 20th Century, less so when he tries to psychoanalyze the cold, entire self-absorbed Cadiz. The novel is particularly credible in describing the shipping depression of the 1930s when Cadiz returns to Savannah and spends many years "on the beach" rum running. Jessup's own seafaring background is evident in the wealth of detail found in the sections of the novel taking place during the late 1930s and early War years. One long section, for example, set in 1939 describes a run in with arrogant Nazi seamen off a German liner in New York City reminiscent of Irwin Shaw's "Sailor Off the BREMEN" and William Townend's *And Now England* (see below). The novel's real climax occurs during an Atlantic gale somewhere off Greenland when Cadiz's ship, lost from her convoy, plays an ultimately unsuccessful game of cat-and-mouse with a German U-boat. Here Jessup's taut, often brutal writing conjures up a desolate, terrifying vision of hell: the Second World War.

Gerald S. Johnson *Tropical Furlough*.

Johnson's ironically titled sea adventure is set in 1944 in the Indian Ocean, a theater of war rarely encountered in World War 2-related fiction. His narrative follows the voyages of three vessels (two Allied ships and a Japanese submarine on patrol) which fate - or at least the author's imagination - have brought together in the seemingly deserted waters surrounding the atoll of Diego Garcia in the south central Indian Ocean. Primary focus is on the aged Royal Indian Navy supply vessel BANGALORE which, while sailing with a load of cargo from Ceylon to the RAF station on Diego Garcia, encounters a fierce tropical cyclone and is nearly destroyed. Shifting cargo pushes the ship permanently over onto her side. In the ensuing chaos her engines are destroyed and most of her complement of officers and crew perish. The survivors find themselves aboard a powerless hulk which is at the mercy of the Indian Ocean's little-known Great Oval Current. They drift for months and for a time Johnson's tale takes on the qualities of a seagoing version of Robinson Crusoe.

Meanwhile, a Japanese attack submarine secretly departs Singapore, bound for the South Indian Ocean hunting grounds of the Cape of Good Hope to Australia convoy route. Her captain is an arrogant and cruel Imperial Navy officer right out of central casting. He torpedoes an Allied troop transport early on and then, with great malice, sinks a small, unarmed merchant steamer (the fictitious CORAL QUEEN) en route from the British island colony of Mauritius to Diego Garcia. One narrative strand here then follow the course of four lifeboat-bound CORAL QUEEN survivors while another traces the course of the Japanese submarine - a course which leads the submarine to a fatal rendezvous with the drifting BANGALORE. Johnson's climax is dramatically satisfying, though over-reliant on the role of coincidence. A romantic subplot (the BANGALORE's junior officer and a female CORAL QUEEN survivor fall in love once fate casts them into one another's paths) rounds out the novel.

Johnson, Marill *Thirteen Desperate Hours: A Liberty Ship's Crew and Their Navy Armed Guard Fight for Survival While Grounded on a Japanese-Held Island.*

Issued only in paperback, *Thirteen Desperate Hours* was written by the husband-and-wife team Will and Marilyn Rayment under the pen name "Marill Johnson." The short novel is a thinly fictionalized account an incident which occurred in January 1945 when Will was a merchant mariner serving aboard the Liberty Ship ALBERT A. JOHNSON in the Pacific. The work's subtitle pretty much tells it all - how the munitions-packed JOHNSON, lost out of a Philippine Islands invasion convoy, gets grounded (on enemy-controlled Negros Island in the Mindanao Strait) and then fights it out with the Japanese while desperately attempting to free herself. What the authors lack in polished writing skill is made up with gutsy seat-of-the-pants, "you are there" storytelling, all based on Will's real life Second World War sea experiences. As "Marill Johnson" explains in the novel's foreword: "This story is fiction - founded on a lot of fact."

Jordan, Humphrey *Day Without Evening*

A heart-felt, at times profoundly moving, celebration of the British Mercantile Marine, as seen through the career of one merchant mariner, Bill Glan, a Cornish clergyman's son who takes to the sea shortly after the Boer War. Jordan's novel traces Glan's seafaring and landside life from about 1905 through the middle years of the Second World War, as Glan moves from sail to steam and successively higher in rank aboard a variety of ships. Jordan's broader canvas examines Britain's changing social life during the early 20th Century, with a particular focus on public perceptions regarding the Merchant Marine itself. The last 70 pages of the novel treat Glan's World War 2 experiences, much of spent in the Mediterranean, Suez Canal and Far East, transporting troops, civilians and cargo aboard his most-beloved command, the fictitious liner M.V. ISLAND QUEEN. In one of the novel's highlights, Glan and his crew survive a torpedo attack in the Indian Ocean which blows off the QUEEN's bow. That they safely reach port, Jordan indicates, is due to a combination of grit and professionalism. The "evening" referred to in Jordan's title probably originally was meant to allude to the gradual extinction of Britain's large landowning class, the county-dwelling class of squires and gentlemen that the novel documents so well. It also suggests Glan's last "day without evening," a day in which he dies at sea when the liner he is commanding is attacked by German warplanes off the coast of Cornwall. Reading the novel today, one is struck by how the British merchant marine itself, such an important component in the Britain of 1944, has itself irrevocably suffered its own day without evening. One minor caveat: Jordan's plot does suffer somewhat in believability from an over reliance of coincidence.

Jordan, Humphrey *Decency of Hate*

Jordan's update of Daniel Defoe's classic castaway tale, *Robinson Crusoe*. Jordan sets his stage with a brief tour of England circa 1940 as seen through the eyes of his principal characters, including a ship captain, a purser, a common seaman and a landed gentry couple, each of whom has lost someone or something greatly loved to German aggression. Soon thereafter all are aboard the fictitious cargo liner LAKE TORRENS, which is torpedoed in the Indian Ocean en route from Colombo to South Africa. Those few who make it to the lifeboats are reduced further when the German U-boat which had sunk the LAKE TORRENS surfaces to strafe her survivors. After 11 days at sea, the remaining 26 passengers and crew (out of 143 originally on the ship) reach what they take to be a deserted Indian Ocean island. Subsequent exploration of the small island reveals that it isn't as deserted as the survivors had first believed: it actually serves as a mid-ocean rendezvous for German U-boats and their supply freighters. Using the ingenuity innate to seamen, the survivors cobble together a plan to destroy one of the U-boats when it returns to the island. Here Jordan's plot wobbles a bit: the U-boat in question just happens to be the German submarine which had torpedoed the LAKE TORRENS. The tale is given a happy ending of sorts when the British navy comes upon the scene soon after and rescues the castaways.

Despite his somewhat far-fetched climax, Jordan's writing is generally plausible, and certainly always heart-felt. The novel often eloquently captures the courage and sheer grit displayed by the British people during the War. One passage, a several pages long description of the sensations experienced by a merchant seaman after he had taken to the cold Atlantic after his ship was sunk in convoy, is particularly compelling. Also of note is Jordan's description of a British class system so ingrained into members of society that it is adhered to without comment once the castaways reach their tropic island.

Jordan, Humphrey *This Island Demands*

Possessing a rousing title worthy of Noël Coward at his most patriotic, Jordan's engrossing novel today presents an interesting look back to then-contemporary British attitudes during the earliest days of World War 2. The novel opens in Aug. 1939 aboard the fictitious 4,200 ton meat freighter PARANA in the Liverpool - River Plate service as her new master, Captain Richard Pell takes command. The PARANA's early World War 2 voyages are uneventful, and perhaps a year into the conflict she is routed to Australia. Her return voyage to England from Australia is another story. She carries not only nine rather difficult passengers (a microcosm of Great Britain, it seems, and certainly an unflattering look at the English class system), but also an alcoholic mate. Early on in the Indian Ocean the ship suffers a near fatal encounter with a German surface raider which leaves the PARANA crippled and drifting without power. Remarkably, an ocean current carries the disabled vessel to an islet in the unpopulated Amirante Islands where, during a six-month stay there, the ship's ever resourceful Captain and crew make the seemingly miraculous repairs necessary to sail the ship to Durban, South Africa. A happy ending to the novel, though, is dashed when, just days from England, the ship is torpedoed and over half her passengers and crew die in the ensuing disaster.

At the time of its late 1941 publication *This Island Demands* received only faint praise from *The Times Literary Supplement* (Dec. 13, 1941), which noted, in part:

“Mr. Humphrey Jordan knows what he is doing. His characterization, serviceable in its way, is not specially profound and indeed is inclined to be sketchy. The narrative construction, too, is somewhat ragged: there is a lack of discrimination in the piling up of circumstantial detail. But the feeling is direct and unforced, the dramatic values are sound, and the war-time routine of merchantmen and their crews is pictured vividly enough.”

Also of interest are a series of evocative, pen-and-ink drawings by the illustrator Bip Pares which enliven chapter headings.

Jordan, Humphrey *Landfall then Departure*

“The firm of Simon Hoy, British coaster tramp owners, is one of the earliest and best considered in the eldest of British sea services. It not only holds to and cherishes the many individual and independent ways of its kind but has a tradition of its own. Late in the nineteenth century the then reigning Simon Hoy turns his business into a limited company, a private and family affair, but still a company. It is change. Yet he hopes that it will not, nor ever will be, the road to break with the Hoy tradition”—book jacket blurb. For once a book jacket blurb is actually rather accurate, for in *Landfall then Departure* Jordan has crafted a highly-readable novel describing just how the financial and political changes of the 20th Century affected the Hoy Line, and how those changes move it from being a paternalistic company in which its owner knows each of his employees – and their individual families – into the beginnings of a combine which joins together other coasters (small steam vessels engaged in the British Island trade as well as trade across the Channel to continental ports), shipbuilders and chandleries better attuned to mid-20th Century concepts of commercial “progress.”

The final third of the novel presents a rousing look at Simon Hoy operations (in financial and management as well as in human terms) during the Second World War, including impressive descriptions of the fictitious firm’s participation in the evacuation at Dunkirk and other French ports, in coastal convoy service, in strategic maritime planning and, in quite interesting detail, during the D-Day 1944 invasion of German-occupied France. *Landfall then Departure* is both a moving elegy to a now-vanished way of British seafaring life as well as a rousing look at British coaster fleet service during the Second World War.

Frank K. Kelly "Last Ship Home."

The Lintons, a honeymooning couple, embark for America from Great Britain aboard an overcrowded neutral ocean liner at the outbreak of World War 2. Also aboard the liner is a woman out of the man's past (she's possibly still his mistress). A day or so out of Galway (the liner's last port of call before heading west across the Atlantic), the liner loses much of the extra illumination that had been lighting up its American-flag painted sides (author Kelly notes that "a neutral ship must be illuminated by night and day, and plainly marked") - naturally at this precise moment a German U-boat appears and challenges the vessel. Women and children are hastily placed in lifeboats as the ship's officers, crew and male passengers wait for the worst. At the last moment the failed lighting system miraculously starts up again and the U-boat is forced to acknowledge the fact that the liner is indeed neutral. Women and children return to the ship and all resume their uneasy voyage to the safety of America.

Kent, Ryland. *After This*

Set in the late 1930s and published in Nov. 1939, *After This* opens in mid-Indian Ocean aboard the liner *S.S. KALIPURTHA* en route from Europe with a "Grand Hotel" complement of passengers bound for Calcutta and "Hongkong." Unbeknownst to passengers and crew, two of the ship's American passengers - small time crooks named Danny and Manny - have smuggled a huge shipment of munitions aboard the vessel that are destined for Imperial Japanese forces fighting on Mainland China. On a hot, sultry August Sunday afternoon, with the ship at the impossible latitude of 90 degrees 30 minutes, a terrific explosion rocks the boats (the munitions have exploded) "and in less than thirty seconds the *KALIPURTHA* and all aboard were lost from mortal view." And thus begins one of the strangest works of fiction in this listing for with the sinking of the *KALIPURTHA* as prologue, author Kent proceeds to follow a select group of the vessel's now-deceased passengers as they move about, singly or in pairs, through a strangely humanized afterlife and attempt to attain what can only be described as a sort of celestial transcendental existence. As strange as the novel may appear today, it was but one of several alternative reality works of the inter-War and World War 2 eras which humanized otherworldly and after-death experiences. The 1924 play "Outward Bound" (made into an early talking picture in 1930) comes immediately to mind, as does James Hilton's popular 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*. But even more closely related to *After This* were a series of afterlife fantasy films, often directly tied to World War 2, including "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" (1941), "A Guy Named Joe" (1943), "Heaven Can Wait" (1943), "Between Two Worlds" (1944) and "Stairway to Heaven" (1946).

Kiefer, Durand *"The Fog of March Fifteenth"*

World War 2 “novelette,” set in the days shortly before U.S. entry into the War. Action takes place aboard the “BRIGGS, old four-stack flushdecker of the U.S.N. – now H.M.S. TREMAINE of the Channel Patrol” as the ship plays cat-and-mouse with the Nazi subs and torpedo boats in the fog-shrouded English Channel. The story’s interesting premise: the German invasion of England had actually been underway until a clever ruse by the TREMAINE’s captain convinced the Nazis that a huge British naval armada was barreling up the Channel to annihilate the invaders. As with many stories of this era, Germans are depicted as pompous, gullible and downright stupid. Note that this issue of *Adventure* features a wonderful period, full-color cover illustrating a wireless operator (with “U.S. Navy” tattooed on his arm) furiously working his radio set in the middle of battle.

King, C. Daly *Obelists at Sea*.

Murder and mayhem on an eastbound trans-Atlantic crossing aboard the fictitious liner MEGANAUT. A run-of-the-mill mystery, though enlivened by King's choice of detectives: four "modern" psychologists en route to a London conference. Each takes a generally futile turn at solving the shipboard crimes. King's deep felt antagonism towards psychology shines throughout his often mean-spirited text. Along the way the author indulges in loathsome 1930s anti-Semitism as well as general misogyny towards women. King does, however, quite nicely summon up the general feeling of disoriented isolation that liner travel induced in passengers during what is now regarded as the Golden Age of the trans-Atlantic steamship voyage:

"There is a peculiar isolation about a sea trip that clings even to the short, swift ferries across the North Atlantic. The land with its familiar sights, sounds, activities, slips away. These things can still be talked of but no longer experienced; within twenty-four hours they become scarcely more real than one's childhood, as new faces, new voices, totally different activities replace those left behind. There is an interim, a definite hiatus. For a time the traveller is suspended, as if on a foreign planet; never again, perhaps, will he see his fellow passengers, and the bars of convention (such as are left to us) are dropped by common consent" – pp. 4-5.

Kubeck, James *The Calendar Epic: A Novel of the Merchant Marine*

Set during World War 2 on the West Coast and in the South Pacific and New Guinea. A rather tepid account of the C-2 freighter CALENDAR EPIC's first -- and last -- voyage. Kubeck presents a cross section of her large crew, but his writing never really brings them to life. Of interest is his depiction of the still-simmering labor animosities of the 1930s, temporarily ignored -- but not forgotten -- among wartime merchant mariners. In one amusing homage to well-respected, early 20th century nautical author Felix Riesenber (whose own entries follow), Kubeck has the CALENDAR EPIC's Chief Mate cite Riesenber's non-fiction maritime writing to a bed-bound young seaman with time on his hands due to an injury. "How about your reading Riesenber and Bowditch?" [Chief Mate] Ramsdell said. "They might do you some good." [p. 198]. Alas, I'm not convinced that a contemporary First Mate would recommend a similar dose of all-too-earnest Mr. Kubeck.

Kyne, Peter B. *"Ranzo Goes to War"*

Thirty plus years into his celebrated writing career, Kyne demonstrates that he still has the knack for creating a rip-roarin' yarn. His hero is 86 year old Asa Holcomb, aka "Ranzo," a colorful, irascible near-brother to Kyne's perennial favorites, Cappy Ricks and Pop Bates. Old Asa owns a fleet of steamships operating as the Red Arrow Line and, as 1941 winds down, he makes it clear to 1st Mate Daniel McNamara of the Red Arrow steamer VANGUARD how much he hates the Germans. With the ROBIN MOOR sinking clearly in mind and referred to at least twice in the text, Ranzo hatches a plot to "take on" a German submarine despite the fact the the United States was technically still a neutral nation at the outset of the story. Ranzo captains the VANGUARD trans-Atlantic to South Africa and, just as he hoped, his vessel was intercepted off the coast of Africa by a German U-boat bent on making certain that the VANGUARD's cargo not reach its British destination. Sly Ranzo has other ideas and, with the help of 1st Officer McNamara and a quart of nitroglycerin, disables the submarine and then notifies a nearby British warship of where to find the sub. Back aboard the VANGUARD, as Ranzo and McNamara ponder what the State Department's response will be to their privateering, Sparks bursts in with the news of Pearl Harbor. Yes, it's Dec. 7, 1941 and their piracy has actually been one of the first American salvos of World War 2!

Kyne, Peter B. "A Troubled Sea"

Another Kyne World War 2 tale, this time set aboard a British reefer, the LANCASHIRE MAID, en route to South America and back to England across the Atlantic. His hero, self-possessed Captain Jasper Hannay, outwits a German plot to sink his vessel on the homebound journey. Indeed, like other Kyne characters, Hannay has planned in advance how to foil the blasted Hun (Kyne's World War 2 work reads as if the First World War were still being fought!). By story's end, Capt. Hannay has sunk a German U-boat and also given a captured enemy aircraft pilot a lesson in British forthrightness and courtesy. Like many Kyne stories this one also has an older, wiser man (Capt. Hannay) serving as mentor to a younger, more impetuous man (the captured German aviator).

Langdon, John *"The Girls of Tongatabu"*

South Pacific wartime conditions have isolated the British-controlled island of "Tongatabu" in this comic short story so the appearance of an American freighter seems to be good news for both the ship's women-hungry crew and the bumboat operators and "easy women" of the island. Aboard the unnamed vessel old timer Swede ("the four-to-eight oiler") regales newbie crewman "Samish the scullion" with tall tales of licentious island living ("the gals drag you into the bushes here," he tells the incredulous youngster). Alas, British officials decree no shore leave. And though the crew contrives to smuggle some women aboard via the ubiquitous, constantly circling bumboats, their efforts come to naught. And gullible Samish? Well he seems to have at least learned a thing or two about tale telling from Swede: we last see Samish writing a letter to his younger brother, extolling the free love atmosphere he claims to have encountered with the women of Tongatabu!

Lanux, Eyrie de. *"You Can't Know Anything About It."*

Lanux's brief, two-part short story is set in New York City during the early days of World War 2 and focuses on young Mary Caruthers, a female volunteer at a rest-and-relaxation club for merchant mariners. Her primary duties include pouring out generous cups of tea for the weary men, filling in as an occasional fourth at bridge and, perhaps most important, chatting with the mariners. We encounter Mary on her first day at the club, and her attempts at making polite chit chat are somewhat forced, particularly in light of the grim wartime stories of survival at sea after the torpedoing of their ships that many of the men share among themselves and with her. Mary meets a young mariner at the club that day, has a brief relationship with him, and, in the second part of the story - set a couple of weeks later - is in a waterfront bar with him just before his departure back to sea. Though the mariner (Eddie) has enjoyed his time with Mary, he matter-of-factly lets her see that the sea is his first priority, though he at least promises to try and stay in touch with her. Lanux's story is not an upbeat one and doesn't conclude on either an optimistic or patriotic note. This makes it far more interesting to the modern reader than the typical (and often sentimental) short stories of the era which were then flooding mainstream mass circulation magazines such as *Collier's*, *Liberty* or *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Laskier, Frank *"Alfred and the Staff of Life."*

Laskier's comic World War 2 tale of a ship's cook who couldn't even boil water has an unexpected post-War denouement. Told mostly in flashback aboard the freighter TARELA during a voyage from the East Coast to the Persian Gulf, Laskier's cook is young, inexperienced first-timer Alfred Gilhooley. Never having cooked before, Gilhooley proceeds to botch just about everything he tries to prepare for the TARELA's famished crew. Only bread finally comes out O.K., and that's because a savvy A.B. teaches Gilhooley the trick of simply using seawater for the bread recipe's required water ingredient. Gilhooley gets his seawater from one of the TARELA's seawater intake pumps, which is fine when the ship is far out to sea but disastrous when he uses the oily, smelly, dirty (and dog-carcass infected) waters of the Persian Gulf! A fast forward to present day 1947. Laskier's narrator, a seaman returning to his Boston docked ship, stops in at an inviting diner and, to his surprise, finds Alfred Gillhooley at its counter. "Everything's on the house," cries Alfred, happy to see an old sea mate. Remembering Alfred's "unskill" as a chef, our narrator reluctantly tastes a little of this, then a lot of that. The food is wonderful! What happened? A culinary miracle? Well, no, Alfred reluctantly admits - he didn't cook a morsel of the diner's fare: his wife did. Seems he married after the War and along with wifey acquired the diner. Since said wife has had her own first hand experience with his horrific cooking, Alfred was quickly relegated to taking orders at the counter - while his wife does all the diner's (delicious) cooking!

Laskier, Frank *"The Carpenter Goes Home"*

Set during World War 2 aboard the freighter TRIBESMAN, on a voyage from England to Calcutta and back. The story of an elderly ship's carpenter who set aside retirement plans to make one last trip at sea. Laskier shows the reader that bravery need not be limited to actual confrontation with one enemies. A quiet and uplifting short story.

Laskier, Frank *Log Book*

Published early in World War 2, this short novel is an autobiographical treatment of Laskier's life as a merchant mariner. Much attention is paid to World War 2, with riveting descriptions of convoy service. Though simply written, it is a powerful work, particularly in its last section when Laskier's hero is confronted by a series of ghosts, sailors all, who exhort him to tell their stories of life at sea in wartime. There is much bitterness here, against not only the Nazis and Axis nations but also against British shipowners and indeed the British public and their attitudes toward merchant mariners. A quick and "must" read for anyone interested in the merchant marine during the Second World War. Highly recommended.

Liepmann, Heinz *Murder - Made in Germany: A True Story of Present-Day Germany*

Originally published in Amsterdam in 1933 (where the author was living in exile) under the title *Das Vaterland: Ein Tatsachen Roman aus dem heutigen Deutschland*; first published in English in 1934. This is one of a series of 1930s works of fiction listed in this bibliography; though these works predate World War 2, they clearly point towards the coming conflagration.

This unsettling, indeed horrifying, German maritime novel dates to the early days of Nazi rule. *Murder - Made in Germany* follows the officers and crew of the German steam trawler KULM when they return to their home port of Hamburg after a three month long voyage. The KULM had left Hamburg the day after Christmas, 1932 and returned on Mar. 28, 1933. The vessel carried no wireless, so news of the Nazi complete takeover of power in Germany did not reach them until the ship were nearly docked. Liepmann's plot line is rudimentary: he simply follows the men, individually, as they attempt to come to grips with the brutal Nazi rule during their shore leave. Nearly all run afoul of the new totalitarian regime; some suffer nothing "worse" than a beating at the hands of local brown shirts, while others are jailed in town and/or sent to the brutal Wittmoor concentration camp located on an island in the Elbe River. The novel concludes with one character's escape from Germany hidden in the hold of an American cargo ship. As for the rest of Liepmann's tragic characters, one can only assume that nearly all subsequently perished in Nazi Germany. *The Times Literary Supplement* of Feb. 22, 1934 noted: "The book is not a detached piece of fiction, but neither is it a special pleading hastily disguised as fiction. Herr Liepmann has a story – a revolting and horrifying story – to tell, and he tells it with terse power and without comment."

Lively, Penelope "*The Mozambique Channel*."

An imaginative and infinitely sad World War 2 tale from a collection of eight short stories linked together as a novel. (The author uses incidents in her own life to imagine what might have happened if at certain times she or others had made different decisions, or if chance had moved in another direction). It's June 1942 and as Rommel's German armies advance across North Africa and come within 70 miles of Alexandria, English noncombatant dependents (chiefly women and children) prepare to flee Egypt, some to Palestine and others to South Africa. Lively's chief character in this short story is a young English governess who, along with her employer and the young girl in her charge, take passage with other expatriates aboard a converted liner bound for the safety of Cape Town. As the relatively uneventful two week voyage draws to a conclusion, the ship is torpedoed at night by a Japanese submarine in the Mozambique Channel (which separates the island of Mozambique from the African continent) and sinks, with great loss of life. As *The Times Literary Supplement* review of Aug. 5, 2005 notes, "The novelist ... captures, through the eyes of a prim, limited but warm-hearted young woman, the hierarchy of expatriate and English life, with a teasing evocation of attitudes towards children, courting and marriage among different classes." Lively's depiction of shipboard life is particularly fine, as are her descriptions of ports visited (Aden and Mombasa) during the course of the ill-fated voyage.

Lueddecke, Werner Jorg *Morituri*

A German living in India during the Second World War is blackmailed by the English to impersonate an SS officer and sail aboard a German freighter on a voyage out of wartime Tokyo bound for Germany with a cargo of much-needed raw rubber for the Nazi war effort. His mission is to disable the scuttling charges set in various locations in the ship so that vessel's captain cannot sink the ship if they are stopped by Allied warships. Also aboard are a mutinous German crew bound for Nazi work camps as well as a young Jewish German woman refugee who obviously does not wish to reach the Fatherland, either. Turned into an all-star 1965 film (originally titled simply "Morituri," but later re-titled "The Saboteur, Code Name Morituri") starring Marlon Brando, Yul Brynner, Trevor Howard and Wally Cox. Brando plays the part of the saboteur and is unintentionally hilarious in the role speaking as he does (actually mumbling is more like it, think of him in this role as a German Don Corleone!) with such a phony German accent – none of the other principals playing Germans have fake German accents– that it's at times impossible to know what he's saying! *Morituri* was evidently published only in this U.S. paperback edition and it is possible that the book was a novelization of the movie.

Lynch, Rolland *"Seasoned in Sail"*

World War 2 tale. Honolulu saloon owner Lorimer Hildreth still had his master's papers when the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor and, despite his age (he's 67), wanted "to do his bit." Trouble was, the last time he'd been to sea it had been in the waning days of the age of sail. Still, he argued, "the sea's the sea," whether under sail or in steam. The Maritime Commission evidently bought his reasoning and eventually send him out as 1st Mate aboard the tramp freighter BERING. Derided by captain and crew alike as an outdated "shellback," the old mariner comes into his own after the BERING, sailing in convoy to Jubal, is struck by a torpedo and her captain killed. Without missing a beat Hildreth takes command of the ship and, when it becomes apparent the vessel's engines have been destroyed by the torpedo's explosive impact, leads his men in jury rigging sails to power the ship which utilize the tramp's cargo booms as masts and canvas hatch covers as improvised sails. The story ends optimistically with the BERING back en route to Jubal under sail.

Lynch, William *"Arctic Passage"*

A brief short story, told documentary style, of Captain Jack Moody and his freighter RUSHFORTH while in a 30 ship Murmansk Run convoy. The story opens with the convoy traveling at 12 knots off Hammerfest, Norway. Engine problems soon cripple the RUSHFORTH and she is forced to fall out of convoy into ice-choked, frigid Arctic waters. A German submarine wolf pack is in the vicinity and through a combination of sheer luck and bravery, Moody and his freighter manage to ram and sink one of the U-boats. At story's end the plucky steamer has rejoined her convoy and is now closer to the safety of Russian waters.

Macdonell, A.G. *The Crew of the Anaconda.*

Read Macdonell's espionage thriller for its engrossing contemporary descriptions of London at the very outbreak of the Second World War. Set in late August / early September 1939, the work is very much in the tradition of a classic John Buchan page-turner (perhaps along the lines of *The 39 Steps*) as it follows the attempts of a mismatched couple (Denis Halloran's a sort of modern day pirate and Florinda Smedley is a British counter-intelligence agent) to track down a spy embedded in Whitehall (site of Britain's Foreign Office). The nautical tie in? Well, the spy is transmitting top secret convoy information of such importance to Germany that it appears the Reich's First World War goal of blockading Britain by sea will become a reality before 1939 comes to a close. And a blockaded Britain will be a defeated Britain - so our couple, working with several secondary characters, must first locate and then capture the spy (who turns out ultimately to be a female "nonentity," a stenographic secretary named Miss Hartropp). MacDonell's writing is brisk and mordantly humorous, with Denis and Florinda written as a British Nick and Nora Charles (sans the booze). And included among the baddies are a number of American hoodlums with names right out of Damon Runyan (such as Dutch Dopey, Spider Morgan and Quickly Quickly Carey) imported over to Britain to do dirty work for the Reich. The novel's climax takes place off the east coast of England, with the hero and his "world's fastest" motor yacht (heavily armed, it can supposedly travel at 60-70 knots) taking on a U-boat sent over to extract Nazi spy Hartropp. Suffice to say, U-boat and spy are ultimately dispatched to their various Valhallas and Britain's convoy system saved for the moment. It should be noted just how prescient author MacDonell was about the importance of the convoy system to Britain's effort during World War 2. And the very real danger that he (and others) foresaw in terms of the U-boat "blockade" menace nearly became a reality in 1942 (the year after he died) before the Allies, slowly at first, beat back the Nazi U-boat wolfpacks.

Mackenzie, Compton *Whiskey Galore!*

Mackenzie's uproarious World War 2 "home front" tale (well, the Outer Hebrides were part of *Britain's* home front!) opens in Feb. 1943 and focuses upon the intensely suffering residents of two small Outer Hebrides islands (the fictitious Great Todday and Little Todday, modeled, it seems, upon the very real islands of North and South Uist) – suffering because, in the wake of strict wartime rationing, there's nary a drop of whisky to be found on either island. Fate lends a kindly hand, though, when a heavy fog falls upon the sea approaches to the islands and a freighter (the fictitious S.S. CABINET MINISTER) bound for America strikes an outcropping of rocks and has to be abandoned by her officers and crew. The seafaring islanders have harvested flotsam from the Atlantic for generations, but this time they've struck the equivalent of Scottish gold: 50,000 cases of expensive, bonded whisky being shipped to the States as part of Britain's Lend-Lease payments. The islanders – mainly older men and boys since most of the area's young men are serving their country in the Merchant Marine – lose no time in "harvesting" the CABINET MINISTER's bounty and then lead officious government administrators on a merry chase as they sequester the liquid booty all over the islands.

Mackenzie's fictitious S.S. CABINET MINISTER incident was inspired by the very real wartime stranding of the freighter S.S. POLITICIAN off Eriskay Island in the Hebrides. Like Mackenzie's CABINET MINISTER, the POLITICIAN's cargo included over 264,000 bottles of Scotch whisky – many of which found their way into homes on the islands of Barra, South Uist and North Uist. *Whisky Galore* was turned into a hilarious Ealing Studio's motion picture in 1949 starring Joan Greenwood, Basil Radford (as a Col. Blimp-ish Sassenach) and a young Gordon Jackson. Compton Mackenzie himself had a small part in the film as the captain of the grounded S.S. CABINET MINISTER.

The novel was later published in the United States under the alternate title *Tight Little Island*:

Tight Little Island. Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1950. 339 p

MacLean, Alistair *H.M.S. Ulysses*

One of the most celebrated sea novels dealing with the World War 2 horrors endured by mariners (naval and merchant marine) on the Murmansk Run. MacLean's novel has as its focus the British naval cruiser H.M.S. ULYSSES as she makes her heroic last run to Russia guarding a combined flotilla of 36 merchant and naval ships. The convoy is an unlucky one from the outset ("the convoy the Royal Navy would always want to forget" MacLean writes early in the narrative), with the German military hitting the convoy with U-boat wolf packs, bombers and fighter aircraft, a warship and even the threat of the battleship TIRPITZ. Ship after ship after ship in the convoy is sunk, with the ongoing "massacre" sometimes described by MacLean in horrific detail, sometimes simply noted in an offhand manner. The ULYSSES herself dies valiantly in battle, with only a handful of crew surviving. And the convoy itself is whittled down to 5 or 6 vessels alone which make it successfully to Russia. MacLean is at his best his depiction of the "routine" shipboard lives of the officers and crew of the ULYSSES, all viewed in exceptionally humane detail. By the novel's conclusion the reader cares about all these men. Also of note are MacLean's fearful descriptions of the brutal physicality of Arctic convoy duty, often revealed in agonizing detail. If the novel has a fault it would be that MacLean's ULYSSES suffers so many horrible incidents and coincidences that the tale, at times does seem a bit soap opera-ish. But this is a small complaint for such an important, passionate work. Put simply, *R.M.S. Ulysses* is a definite "must read" for anyone interested in the now legendary Murmansk Run.

MacLean, Alistair *San Andreas*

A fast paced thriller set aboard the fictional World War 2 hospital ship SAN ANDREAS while on a run from Murmansk to Aberdeen. The vessel, an American-built Liberty Ship, and her crew are involved in intrigue and sabotage as the SAN ANDREAS is pursued by German U-boats and the Luftwaffe. MacLean's tale is a rousing one, with well-drawn characters. In a very interesting Prologue, MacLean launches a blistering attack on both British shipowners and Whitehall during the inter-War years, condemning both institutions for callous treatment of British merchant seaman.

MacLean, Alistair *South by Java Head*

An exciting (if overblown) World War 2 yarn, opening in Singapore during the last hours before the city's fall to the Japanese in February 1942, and then following the sea escape of a handful of British and Dutch nationals aboard the fictitious coaster KERRY DANCER (and later aboard the fictitious tanker VIROMA) south through the Java Sea. MacLean's tale starts off realistically, but soon veers into the "Perils of Pauline" school of fiction. The Japanese military are all portrayed as evil sadists. Interestingly enough, a German ("Nazi") spy also surfaces and he becomes so disgusted at Japanese treatment of their captives that he helps the prisoners escape to a (conveniently) waiting American warship.

Mallalieu, J.P.W. *Very Ordinary Seaman*

A “below the decks” look at the life of sailors aboard a British destroyer (the fictitious MARSDEN) on North Atlantic duty. Written at the height of hostilities in a matter-of-fact, “unvarnished style of description” (according to *The Times Literary Supplement* of April 22, 1944) by a real life British seaman, the novel is included in this bibliography for its graphic Murmansk Run convoy climax.

Mangione, Jerre Gerlando *The Ship and the Flame*

Set in 1939 after the beginning of World War 2 as the neutral Portugese liner SETUBAL, filled with European refugees, sails through the Caribbean looking for a country which will honor the refugees' transit visas. The novel's plot is patterned after the real-life Hamburg-Amerika line ST. LOUIS episode, which occurred earlier in 1939 (and in an interesting plot twist, several of Mangione's characters make reference to the ST. LOUIS debacle). Though most of the passengers eventually find at least temporary refuge in Norfolk, Va., where the ship puts into port after encountering a hurricane, the story nevertheless is a grim, depressing one. For another fictive take on the voyage of the ST. LOUIS, see James Yaffe's VOYAGE OF THE FRANZ JOSEPH, listed below.

Marmur, Jacland *"Action Off Para"*

A World War 2 tale from the period of U.S. neutrality just prior to America's entry into the War. Experienced 1st Mate Johnny Elder and his buddy Nils (a Norwegian) take positions aboard the American-registered, diesel-powered barque RIPANA for what is supposed to be a routine trading trip out of New York City to Chile. The vessel's skipper, Captain Bludnow, has a reputation for shady dealings, so Elder isn't all that surprised to learn that the ship is illegally loaded with arms and munitions which Bludnow, when confronted, claims to be consigned to the Chilean government. But something more sinister than arms smuggling is afoot: Bludnow secretly opens a seacock in mid-Atlantic and soon thereafter orders his crew to abandon their seemingly foundering ship. Elder and Nils, however, don't buy the captain's "the ship is sinking" tale and manage to get back to the RIPANA after all the other crew have taken to the lifeboats. There they discover Bludnow's treachery, made all the more mysterious by the fact that the jimmied seacock had been closed just before the ship was abandoned. Something more than barratry is afoot. The mystery is soon solved when a German cargo vessel appears – manned by German Navy personnel and ready to take over the seemingly deserted barque – appears on the scene: Bludnow had deliberately abandoned the RIPANA, leaving her at a pre-arranged spot in mid-ocean for the Germans, who, it develops, intend to turn the neutral American vessel into a German sea raider. Yankee ingenuity and resourcefulness (along with a healthy dose of the suspension of reality so often encountered in pulp fiction) defeat Nazi plans, with Elder and Nils successfully eluding the Germans. At tale's conclusion, they prepare to single-handedly (double-handedly?) take the RIPANA to the safety of a South American port where both men intend to enlist in the navies of their respective countries (U.S. and Norway). America may not yet be officially at war, author Marmur is saying, but patriotic American seamen like Johnny Elder certainly know that war is coming and are prepared to fight – as they will be by year's end, 1941.

Marmur, Jacland *Andromeda*

Set in early 1942, with the “slow, weary” tramp steamer ANDROMEDA the last civilian vessel to flee Singapore before the city’s rapidly approaching takeover by advancing Japanese troops: “A steel-shod horde was marching down on Singapore, casting its old familiar omens of flame and smoke before it in the sky. The signs of it were all around ANDROMEDA” (p. 2). Marmur’s plot has the ship headed across the Pacific for the safety of America, with her lights out and in radio silence, in an ultimately futile attempt to outrun the Japanese. Aboard are an experienced American crew as well as two unlooked for “consular” passengers, fellow-Americans trapped by events in Singapore. An espionage-related subplot involves one of the passengers (character Alexander Berkhart Bane, an Addison De Witt stand-in if ever there was!), with a romance between passenger Nancy Paget and the ship’s Chief Officer tossed in as a second subplot.

Marmur writes well, and his merchant mariner characters are particularly well-drawn. The real hero of the tale is Mr. Wainright, the ANDROMEDA’s Chief Engineer. In a sly tribute to then well-known nautical writer William McFee, Marmur has *his* Chief Engineer engrossed in a McFee novel throughout the ANDROMEDA’s adventures *and* also being a writer himself, albeit in secret, à la McFee. Not all the book’s characters, though, are as enamored with McFee as Wainright, for his good friend, Chief Mate John Flemming joshes him at one point after picking up the book Wainright’s reading with a “That one! He writes like an engineer.” To which Wainright replies, “ He is an engineer.” It is clear that Marmur’s sympathies are decidedly with marine engineers (another great quote: “Engineers are an hardy race, with obstinate notions of their own”--p. 160), though he writes admiringly of deck officers and crew, too.

Marmur, Jacland *"Captain Ruthless."*

This interesting World War 2-related short story about the power (and burden) of command actually opens sometime in the early 1950s aboard the tramp freighter S.S. CARDINIAN, of the fictitious San Francisco-based Cardin Line. The ship is in a port in northwest Luzon, Philippine Islands, where her master has just died. Command is temporarily assumed by 1st Mate David Gorman who learns, much to his consternation, that the ship's owner, Joseph Cardin (a man who himself has an extra master's license and is thus a trained mariner - something that will be of key importance as Marmur's story develops), will be taking passage back to California aboard the vessel. Cardin hates his employee Gorman and has told him in no uncertain terms that he would never get command of a Cardin Line ship because of a horrible incident that had occurred back in 1944. Told in flashback, the incident finds Gorman, then a Navy Commander and master of the warship U.S.S. JOHN GRANT. Though ordinarily a "lucky ship," the GRANT, while escorting several damaged ships in stormy South Pacific waters, is hit by a bomb jettisoned out of a single Japanese warplane. The bomb blows up a gunnery station (killing three men) and its concussive force also propels another seaman into the violent waters. Gorman knows full well that the seaman was alive when he hit the waters, but because of the same regulation that convoy ships never stop to rescue comrades adrift, he sadly orders that the GRANT continue on course. The man not rescued was Joseph Cardin's only son; Cardin's hatred for Gorman comes about when he learns the circumstances of his son's death. (Cardin is angered further when his daughter marries Gorman). Fast forward to the CARDINIAN's 1950s Pacific passage. Several days out from the Philippines the ship encounters a terrific typhoon and, during the course of attempting to keep the ship from sinking, the young son of the ship's bos'n is blown (alive) overboard. Gorman demands that his boss make the decision on whether to turn about (and risk capsizing the ship) to make a rescue attempt or leave the man to drown. Cardin reluctantly orders the ship to sail on. The bos'n himself, a man who had long sailed with Gorman, makes it apparent that he understands the cruel law of the sea that the good of the majority must always prevail over that of the individual. His own stoic acceptance of his son's death brings about a reconciliation between the shipowner and his shipmaster.

Marmur, Jacland "*Command Performance*"

A Dutch clown wreaks vengeance on Nazis aboard a coastal vessel in the River Maas. *Liberty's* tag line says it all: "A sad-faced clown uses the last trick in his bag to foil the Nazis." Marmur comes up with a very macabre ending for his story.

Marmur, Jacland *"Decision on the Beach"*

Marmur's tale of one man's ultimate redemption is set in the late 1950s with a crucial flashback to World War 2 in the Pacific. His protagonist is Peter Ringat, Chief Officer of the San Francisco-based freighter BALLARDINE. Marmur opens his story by introducing a drunken Ringat making a scene in a San Francisco waterfront dive, a condition not atypical of the officer when in port (Marmur makes it clear from the outset that Ringat never takes a drink while at sea). A flashback to the Second World War finds peacetime merchant mariner Ringat serving as a U.S. Navy junior officer aboard a destroyer sent to pick up an Allied "coast watcher" off a beach located on a Japanese-controlled island leading to the Philippines. Ringat is detailed to take a whaleboat in, which he does successfully. However once on the beach and after the coast watcher has been found, patrolling hidden Japanese soldiers attack the Navy detail. One member of his crew is pinned down in the dense beach undergrowth and Ringat is forced to make the decision to abandon the man to the Japanese in order to save a coast watcher who has information of strategic importance for the looming invasion of Leyte. The abandoned man is killed, and Ringat is so haunted by this over the years that he turns to drink. Marmur's story reaches a climax with the BALLARDINE now back at sea in mid-Pacific. In the midst of a terrific storm the freighter comes upon a sinking sailing schooner and Ringat makes a heroic effort to rescue all of the ship's crew. It transpires that one of Ringat's own men has the same surname (Jensen) as the man Ringat had abandoned in the Philippines and indeed had had a father who'd died in the Pacific. When the younger Jensen is swept overboard during the rescue effort, Ringat gives up his own life to save the man. Whether Jensen was indeed the son of the man abandoned by Ringat is left unclear, but that being said, the thrust of Marmur's narrative is clear: Ringat has paid, with his own life, his self-imposed debt. Marmur's story closes simply and powerfully: "What mortal is there who holds righteousness or virtue deep enough to pronounced judgement on the greater value of one life unlived above another?"

Marmur, Jacland *"Dutch Treat"*

Rousing, morale-boosting short story from the early days of America's participation in the Second World War. In tandem with a Royal Dutch naval vessel, a U.S. destroyer (the fictitious U.S.S. JOHN PROME), escorting a Dutch merchant vessel (the NUEDENBOORG) filled with civilian evacuees fleeing from Batavia (modern day Jakarta) in the Dutch East Indies to Australia, takes on a superior Japanese naval force in the Sunda Strait. All three Allied vessels gives the Japanese what-to, and, while the Dutch warship is sunk in action, the Allies, through sheer audacity, succeed in sinking several Japanese vessels. The Dutch freighter and her merchant crew are portrayed as particularly brave, and they survive the encounter. At tale's end the small convoy is headed south for Perth.

Marmor, Jacland *"The Girl Who Waited"*

World War 2 tale. The young waitress of a San Francisco Mexican restaurant frequented by merchant mariners and sailors refuses to believe that her beau (the restaurant's former chef) had died at sea during the invasion of Iwo Jima and waits, fruitlessly, for his return. Taking a page from a 1940s Hollywood movie, the missing man eventually turns up after the War has ended, but is suffering from amnesia. The restaurant's big-hearted Hispanic-American owner, Dizzy Ramez, figures out how to snap the man back to reality, and in doing so sabotages his own romantic designs on the waitress. The rather trite story is chiefly of interest today for its rather sympathetic – and non-stereotypical – portrayal of a Hispanic-American. For another 1940s portrayal of a Hispanic-American see Edward Adolphe's "Siesta on the High Sea" (listed above).

Marmur, Jacland *"Hero's Son"*

One in the Collier's "short story complete on this page" series. World War 2 story set in San Francisco. Tommy Lackard, 2nd Mate aboard the freighter PARCIFAL, doubts his own courage under fire and fears that he cannot measure up to the example of his deceased father, who had been an acclaimed World War 1 merchant marine hero. In flashback we see that, under fierce Japanese aircraft attack, Tommy had continued to stand by his station aboard the PARCIFAL, even though he was deathly afraid. During the course of this short, short story, the young 2nd Mate comes to understand that fear is a natural part of courage, and that true courage depends upon men (and women) working together as a team to "face what they must."

Marmur, Jacland *"The Middle Watch"*

World War 2 coming-of-age sea yarn. American cargo-liner PARTHENON recently outbound from Lisbon en route home to New York spots a torpedoed British tramp freighter sinking in heavy seas. "Young Tommy Barton," a rather sullen American seaman ("a tough fo'c'stle boomer," according to his Captain) goes off in a small whaleboat to attempt the rescue of the British crew. While doing so, according to Marmur, he "grew up at last". Returning successfully to his own vessel, he vows to get ahead in his chosen profession, and indeed now plans to sit for a ship officer's license as soon as the PATHENON reaches port.

Marmur, Jacland *"The Ransom of Peter Drake"*

Set in the North Pacific during the first winter after the end of World War 2. Former wireless operator Peter Drake, reduced to working his way back to the United States as a deckhand aboard the fictitious cargo steamer TRINTIPAL, redeems an earlier lack of valor by remaining aboard the vessel to send out wireless distress signals after the ship has hit a floating mine. That redemption costs him his life, as the story's narrator ("Sparks") relates.

Marmur, Jacland *"Salute to Youth"*

A bit too much coincidence mars this otherwise interesting short story dating to the period after the start of World War 2 but before America's entrance into the conflict as a combatant. Set in the South Pacific, on and in the waters surrounding the Japanese-controlled island of Saipan, Marmur's tale involves stolid Captain Ira Bentley, American skipper of the tramp freighter ALTURAS, who goes against his perceived image (his crew call him "Old Ironface" for his stolid, unquestioning obedience to rules) to assist a young botanist escape the wrath of the Japanese military. Marmur's writing, mirroring American public opinion circa 1940, makes it plain that he distrusts the Japanese and foresees eventual conflict with them.

Marmur, Jacland *The Sea and the Shore*

Marmur's take on the inter-war years in America as seen through the evolving life of mariner Charlie Bradburn and his wife Galeta, a first generation Polish-American. The book's opening section is set in 1919, with Charlie a 2nd Mate aboard the freighter TONNANT, moves on to 1928 (with Charlie now a Chief Mate and separated from Galeta) and concludes in 1937 with Charlie serving as captain of the Pacific freighter ALDEBARAN. Though the novel's penultimate scene in Shanghai during an attack by the Japanese has a deus ex machina feel to it, Marmur's sea writing, focused and always interesting, carries the book forward to a satisfying conclusion. His "shore" writing, too, is of interest, particularly in his loving portrayal of Polish-American family life. Also of note today is Marmur's early — and quite positive — portrayal of the women's movement in America during the 1920s and 1930s, and how it affected the Bradburn family.

Marmur, Jacland *"Sweet Tooth."*

Marmur's "short, short" World War 2 story is set in the final days of the conflict and centers on a Gestapo officer (Eric von Maltke) attempting to flee the rapidly shrinking Nazi Reich via boat to neutral Portugal. As the story opens, von Maltke has just been captured off the coast of Belgium and is being interrogated by an American Army officer. Also present is a young Belgian woman, a Resistance member, who had been held as hostage at sea by the German. It develops that before fleeing von Maltke had stolen a famous cache of jewels (the "Flemberg diamonds") and the smug German refuses to reveal their whereabouts assuming that he can use them as a bargaining chip to help bribe his way to the freedom of Portugal. The American officer refuses to take this bait and the wind is further taken out of von Maltke's sails when his former hostage reveals that she had actually absconded with his booty while at sea (he thought they were safely hidden shipboard) and tossed the jewels overboard. The Gestapo officer crumbles when he realizes that he'll now have to face justice. To provide final irony to the story, the young Belgian reveals that she had tied a line attached to the diamonds to a harbor buoy before tossing them overboard and that the jewels can now be easily retrieved and returned to their rightful owners.

Edison Marshall "Rangoon Adventure."

While this serial may date to just prior to the start of the Second World War it clearly references the then-ongoing Japanese aggression in Asia which would result in Japan's entry into the war two and a half years later. Set in colonial Burma, the plot involves a British attempt to circumvent Japan's blockade of coastal China by sending desperately needed armaments and munitions up the Irrawaddy River into the far interior of Burma and then overland to Chiang Kai-shek and his nationalist army. Japanese espionage (and sabotage) initially doom several of the river boats which are carrying the munitions, but Britain's clever Chief of C.I.D. (the Criminal Investigation Dept.) in Burma, acting in concert with his own (male) private secretary unmask both the Japanese saboteurs and also an American mercenary in their pay. What is particularly interesting in this period piece is the assumption of British moral and political superiority as played out between Marshall's C.I.D. characters and their Japanese Secret Service opponents. There is no suggestion that British military forces in the region had any real reason to worry about the Japanese Imperial Army. Being a Liberty serial, "Rangoon Adventure" also includes in its plot a romance (the C.I.D. Chief's niece is wooed by his secretary) and also a case right out of "The Patty Duke Show" - "identical" cousins (in this case, one good and one bad). The resulting O. Henry-esque "twin cousin" resolution is one that any seasoned serial reader would have guessed at by installment 2, but does rather neatly tie up Marshall's action.

Mason, F. van Wyck *The Shanghai Bund Murders.*

War-torn China, circa 1933, is the setting for Mason's political thriller, much of which is set aboard the "squat little river steamer" KIANGSU during a voyage from Nanking to Shanghai. Traveling first class are an international cross section of passengers including a supposed English tea trader (he's really a German spy/agent), a pair of annoying American female tourists, an Austrian-born "coaster" (i.e., a lady of quite ill repute), a suspicious Chinese gentleman, an American mercenary and, not one, but two intelligence officers (one British and the other Mason's continuing character, American spy Capt. Hugh North). Before you know it the British officer has been murdered and his American counterpart is engaged in finding out just what happened. Mason's plotline, particularly once the KIANGSU reaches Shanghai, is a complicated one but his basic storyline traces the efforts by a German conspiracy which is attempting to foment the expulsion of British and American commercial interests from Shanghai through an armed Chinese rebellion. Utilizing competing Chinese warlords (including a ragtag Communist "army") and even elements of Shanghai's French community, the German plot revolves around a maritime arms smuggling attempt that is foiled at only the last moment (by Col. North, of course). Mason spices up his story with descriptions of gruesome tortures (devised by nefarious Chinese) and with salacious hints at "coaster" Mme. Ruby Braunfeld's way of life. But what stays with the reader is his prophecy of renewed German militarism. In one particularly telling section, Mason scores it just about - but not quite - right when one of his characters notes that German interests wanted to crush the American, British and French presence in the Far East and that Germany's only ally in the coming days will be Italy. (Mason's one misstep here: his character includes Japan in the list of Germany's enemies). It is for Mason's prescience vis-à-vis Germany's renewed militarism in the 1930s that his novel is included in this bibliography.

Note that in the late 1950s Mason rewrote and abridged the novel, changing the plot to reflect then-current Cold War tensions between the United States and Communist China. In the process he also turned Col. North into something of a swinging, James Bond-like super agent. This later effort, entitled *The China Sea Murders* was published in a paperback edition by Pocket Books in 1959.

Masselman, George *"Sea-Dog's Revenge"*

An English merchant marine captain, reduced to commanding a “rusty little tanker which careened across the Caribbean like a kerosene peddler through New England” because of alleged incompetence and cowardice in World War 1 (he had lost his first command to a German submarine’s torpedo), leaps into action to prove his true patriotism when a German agent attempts to recruit his services in the early days of the Second World War. He fools the Germans into thinking that he can be bought and arranges for a mid-ocean rendezvous to fuel an enemy U-boat. Once the Nazi vessel surfaces, he extends oil lines to the sub — and then exacts his revenge through an ingenious plot hatched up in secret from the remainder of his tanker crew. Like all Liberty fiction, this one tells the reader exactly how long it will take to read through it — in this case, 29 minutes and 20 seconds!

Matteson, Stefanie *Murder Under the Palms*

Set in Palm Beach in the late 1990s, this Charlotte Graham whodunit revolves around the legendary liner NORMANDIE, with a flashback to the vessel's maiden voyage. The novel's cast of characters include (fictional) former NORMANDIE staff, passengers and aging World War 2 ex-servicemen who had worked on the ship just prior to the fatal 1942 fire which destroyed the ship. The most interesting character, however, is a wealthy NORMANDIE memorabilia collector who just doesn't where to stop -- even if it leads to murder. Author Matteson has done her homework well, with ample (and accurate) descriptions of NORMANDIE china, silver, furniture and Art Deco light fixtures -- all lusted over by her obsessive collector lead character. Great fiction (even detective writing), it's not. Still, it's a fun look at both the NORMANDIE and at ship memorabilia collecting gone awry!

Maule, Hamilton *Rub-a-Dub-Dub: A Novel*

Though touted on its dust jacket as “an outrageously comic novel,” Maule’s maiden voyage as a sea writer is labored at best. Set aboard the fictitious Liberty ship ANDREW CRICHTON – supposedly a Waterman Steamship Company vessel – during a ninety day round-trip voyage from New Orleans to New York and across the North Atlantic in convoy to Liverpool. Of the CRICHTON Maule notes: “Like all Liberties she was named after a merchant seaman who had been killed in action. Later Nick [Maule’s alter ego / hero] found out that Andrew Crichton , for whom this Liberty was named, had sold his papers to his brother-in-law and spent the war on a chicken farm in South Texas.” Maule’s heroes are a group of ordinary merchant seamen, and in a sense, his broader theme is the comradeship between them. Of chief interest today are his descriptions of shore leave in wartime New Orleans, New York and Liverpool – with emphasis on the various “B-girls” the group encounters. Maule’s convoy descriptions are also of interest, particularly the CRICHTON’s westbound trip when her convoy was pursued all the way across the Atlantic by a Nazi wolf pack of 15-30 U-boats.

McCunn, Ruthanne Lum *Sole Survivor*

Exceptionally powerful World War 2 survival at sea tale. According to the author, *Sole Survivor* is a “fictional re-creation” of the extraordinary experiences of Chinese steward Poon Lim’s 133 days adrift aboard a small life raft after his ship, the Ben Line freighter BENLOMOND, was sunk by a German U-boat 750 miles off the coast of South America in late November 1942. Poon Lim’s story is an amazing one, and one that McCunn captures quite well. “The essence of being a seaman,” Lim’s brother tells him in a flashback, “ is to live life in the present to make both the past and the future disappear.” The Chinese steward uses this philosophy to stay alive and survive his ordeal. His frail craft eventually – in real life and in this novel – drifts all the way to the mouth of the Amazon River, where he is rescued by Brazilian fishermen. To this day, Poon Lim’s is the longest recorded survival at sea after a shipwreck. McCunn’s novel is also of interest for her vivid descriptions of the difficult lives endured by Chinese merchant mariners serving aboard Western ships and of the routine racism they endured at the hands of their employers and fellow non-Asian shipmates.

McCutchan, Philip *Cameron's Troop Lift.*

This action-packed tale is set circa 1942/1943 with McCutchan continuing character Donald Cameron, now in command of the British destroyer *H.M.S. CAITHNESS*, being deployed from Trincomalee, Ceylon to the Indian Ocean's Bay of Bengal on a reconnaissance mission to gauge Japanese naval strength in the region. After enduring a wild Indian Ocean typhoon (vividly described by McCutchan), the *CAITHNESS* rescues a Japanese merchant seaman from a half-swamped lifeboat and learns that a Japanese convoy is heading north to Japanese-occupied Burma from Malaya. Despite his prisoner's refusal to disclose military secrets, Cameron discovers that one of the merchant ships in the convoy is actually transporting British Prisoners of War to Burma, where the men will be used as slave labor in building military roads and rail infrastructure. Acting solo, Cameron and his *CAITHNESS* track down the convoy, engage in battle, sink several enemy naval vessels and ultimately rescue over 1100 former British troops from the holds of the Japanese merchant ship *YOKOSUKA MARU*. They then fight their way back to Trincomalee, sinking three pursuing Japanese destroyers in the process. McCutchan's tale seems to have been inspired in part by the real life rescue of British POWs who were being held on the German vessel *ALTMARK* off the coast of Norway by *H.M.S. COSSACK* early in the War.

McCutchan, Philip *The Convoy Commodore*

McCutchan's "Convoy" series all focus on Mason Kemp, a 50ish former ocean liner captain serving as Convoy Commodore during World War 2. During the Second World War, a Convoy Commodore was senior naval officer aboard the lead civilian ship of each convoy, responsible for overall coordination of convoy movements. Defense of the convoy rested with the actual naval escorts -- corvettes, destroyers and battleships -- which accompanied the convoy across the oceans.

This first in the Kemp series finds the Commodore aboard the converted ocean liner ARDARA, coincidentally a ship which he had once commanded in the Mediterranean-to-Australia service. (The ARDARA seems to have been modeled after a P&O pre-War liner). The novel follows Kemp's convoy trans-Atlantic westbound to Halifax and then back east to Scotland. Enemy action occurs on both segments of the round trip voyage, with the ARDARA being torpedoed -- but not lost -- on her eastbound trip while filled with Canadian troops bound for England. A subplot of sorts highlights Winston Churchill's 1942 trip aboard the battleship PRINCE OF WALES to meet up with Franklin Delano Roosevelt off Newfoundland.

McCutchan, Philip *Convoy East*

Commodore John Mason Kemp guides his convoy through the Mediterranean to Malta — with the convoy's subsequent voyage leading to Alexandria, then on through the Suez Canal to Ceylon. A complement of Navy Wrens aboard his own vessel add extra tension to the endeavor. As with all novels in this series, the action comes fast and furious. A curious oddity: late in the novel McCutchan adds a supposed Orient Line passenger liner turned troopship, the ORDUNA, to the lineup of convoy casualties. In real life, the ORDUNA (properly, the ORDUÑA), was a Pacific Steam Navigation liner which really did see World War 2 troopship service. McCutchan picks of the Alexandria to Trincomalee thread of the story in his 1990 novel, *Convoy of Fear*.

McCutchan, Philip *Convoy Homeward*

This installment in the Commodore John Mason Kemp series details a convoy sailing west from Colombo to East and South Africa, and then out into the Atlantic before finally making homeport in Scotland. This time Kemp is aboard the ex-liner AURELIAN STAR, which is now serving as a troop transport. Much of the homeward convoy drama centers around a contingent of German POWs aboard the AURELIAN STAR, as well as with a mixed group of civilians also aboard the vessel. U-boat attacks also make their customary appearance .

McCutchan, Philip *Convoy North*

McCutchan sets this Commodore Kemp novel on the Murmansk Run, with Kemp directing his convoy's action from the bridge of the freighter S.S. HARDRAW CASTLE. Set in Dec. 1941, it becomes Kemp's unpleasant duty to pick up a captured German intelligence agent off the coast of Norway and then transport the agent to Russia -- an unpleasant task for Kemp because the Commodore had known the man socially before the war and Kemp also knows the fate awaiting his former acquaintance once the man has been turned over to the Soviet secret police.

McCutchan, Philip *Convoy of Fear*

A continuation of McCutchan's 1989 *Convoy East*, *Convoy of Fear* finds Commodore Kemp's convoy sailing on from Malta to Alexandria, thence through the Suez Canal and finally to Trincomalee in Ceylon. A complement of Navy Wrens aboard his own vessel (a converted liner serving as a troopship) continues to add anxieties to the already high wartime tension. Cholera hits the convoy in the Suez Canal, and here McCutchan is most impressive in his writing. Unfortunately, McCutchan also seems to be competing with Clive Cussler to see how many action-packed episodes he can squeeze into the plot. In addition to the aforementioned cholera outbreak, he includes multiple enemy attacks on the convoy by Italian submarines, a lone wolf Japanese submarine and a German pocket battleship, collisions at sea, threat of a German surface raider and a typhoon which comes out of nowhere to sink convoy vessels. Whew!

McCutchan, Philip *Convoy South*

This installment in the series is set circa 1942/1943 and finds Kemp in charge of a fast convoy – chiefly former passenger liners crammed with Australian troops – sailing from Sydney, Australia to Hampton Roads, Va. by way of South Africa. Along the way the convoy encounters a German surface raider as well as the usual quotient of rough weather. In a highly improbable plot twist, Kemp's flagship (the fictitious tanker COVERDALE) is taken over in mid-Atlantic by the crew of a Nazi U-boat bent on locating a top secret dispatch that Kemp is carrying to America. McCutchan portrays his Germans in stock World War 2 fashion (i.e., they are sadistic, brutal and unintelligent), so it should come as no surprise to find that Kemp and his men of his ship prevail and his ship (and convoy) safely make port in America.

McCutchan, Philip *Lieutenant Cameron, R.N.V.R.*

This fast paced, quick read is set in the South Atlantic in 1941 and has more than its share of improbable coincidences as British naval reserve officer Lieut. Donald Cameron - a former merchant marine captain - takes on the German regular navy as well as Nazi armed merchant raiders. The tale is somewhat marred by author McCutchan's stock German villains, including a dastardly Gestapo officer.

Merson, Ben *"The Anchor from Murmansk"*

The captain of a tramp freighter, returning to America after a run to Murmansk, disables and captures a German U-boat in mid-Atlantic with the aid of an oversized anchor with which the Russians had outfitted his ship after his ship lost her original anchor.

Merrick, Elliott *Passing By*.

An engrossing merchant marine novel set late in the War and focusing on life at sea aboard (first) a T2 oil tanker and (later) a Liberty Ship already decrepit and seemingly about to fall apart at her welded seams. Merrick's protagonist is a young American A.B. named Duncan (no surname) who had early in the War chosen to go to sea rather than enlist in the Army. We first meet Duncan in 1944 as he's about to sign up aboard the tanker CORNHILL, and then follow the vessel's uneventful trek across the North Atlantic in a 30-ship convoy. Merrick's descriptions of convoy service are both poetic and precise enough to suggest that the author himself had seen North Atlantic mercantile duty. His descriptions of seafaring union activities are also of interest, as is his portrayal of the CORNHILL's obviously gay ship's cook. A particularly interesting passage describes the reading habits of the CORNHILL's mariners down to the books that were read (and not read: sorry, Virginia Woolf!). Subsequent chapters follow Duncan and the CORNHILL into Caribbean Sea tanker duty.

The novel's concluding sections find Merrick's A.B. serving aboard the Liberty Ship SAUK CITY, primarily in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Arabia. Very late in the War the SAUK CITY is dispatched to South America and, in mid-ocean, torpedoed. Duncan and a handful of his crewmates survive the vessel's sinking and then spend 40 days at sea slowly making their way 2100 miles west to Brazil in a small lifeboat. Merrick's description of this ordeal is well drawn, and the novel concludes with the emaciated Duncan and his mates rescued by a British vessel within sight of the Brazilian coast.

Merrick, Elliott *"The Second Engineer."*

Merrick's low-keyed World War 2 short story opens:

"We were bound north along the coast of Newfoundland in the battered Labrador mail steamship ... Her portholes were blacked out and her sides were daubed with red lead and patches of war gray."

Aboard the vessel were over two hundred and eighty Newfoundland fishermen and their wives (the vessel was certified for ninety passengers), bound for the cod fisheries of Labrador.

The story's unnamed narrator strikes up a friendship with the ship's 2nd Engineer, who shows the passenger around the ship's engine room and engages in a series of rather fruitless attempts to explain the fundamentals of steam propulsion to the non-mechanically inclined narrator . During the course of the voyage the narrator notices that the Engineer has a pronounced limp and asks him about it. It turns out that the 2nd had been torpedoed in the Irish Sea the previous Fall and was one of four survivors aboard a wet life raft (the limp was a result of exposure: he had lost circulation in his toes). The 2nd's story of his actions after his ship had been torpedoed are understated to an extreme and very grim - particularly when he relates that fierce winds blew the life raft away from other survivors, and how he and the other three men on the raft were forced to listen to the agonized calls of shipmates freezing to death in the surrounding icy ocean waters.

Even more disquieting is his revelation that the German U-boat which had sunk his sink actually hovered in the vicinity of the life raft for a day, hoping to torpedo any vessel which ventured to rescue the survivors. Indeed, at times the sub was so close that the men on the raft could clearly see the faces of German sailors standing watch on the U-boat's conning tower - and vice versa. "Did you say anything, or they?" asks the narrator. The 2nd Engineer's sad and horrifying reply: "What was there to say?"

Miller, Blaine "*Convoy Weather*"

Co-authored with Dupont Miller. A World War 2 convoy tale, though with a unique angle. The Millers tell the story of a U.S. Navy aviation meteorological reconnaissance team ("aerologists") whose continuing flights take them regularly over Greenland to monitor weather that will affect North Atlantic convoys. They discover Germans working a similar mission, based on Greenland itself. The German presence threatens convoy security, so the Americans must track down and destroy their enemy on the icebound island.

Miller, Blaine "*Danger Zone*"

Co-written with Dupont Miller. *American* tag line: A story of the U.S. Neutrality Patrol." There's a Panama Canal / Caribbean setting for this short story about a U.S. Navy officer charged with monitoring "belligerent" shipping. Though its romance angle is rather trite (the Navy officer encounters his ex-wife (a champion aviatrix) and saves her from the guns of a British warship that mistakenly believes her plane to be a Nazi fighter), the story does point to the fact that merchant shipping in the Americas was being closely monitored by the U.S. military by the Summer of 1940. An interesting "author's note" printed as a sidebar to the story – and written in the breathless style of a Hollywood press release! – says of the Millers:

"Blaine Miller, who collaborated with his wife in writing this story, is a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy. He has recently completed a tour of duty in command of a squadron of giant patrol planes that have been winging their way back and forth over the Caribbean keeping an eye on belligerent ships. It was monotonous, hard work, fraught with danger. Yet, amid his daily adventures, Lt. Comdr. Miller found time to conceive the idea for this absorbing yarn, which he and his wife rushed into production on his return to his Panama base."

Miller, Blaine *"A Lady at Heart"*

Co-written with Dupont Miller. Haunting World War 2 story set in the Caribbean circa 1941. A young U.S. Navy officer “on the Neutrality Patrol” and attempting to get his first command (a decrepit , barely seaworthy seaplane tender, the U.S.S. FLAMINGO) safely to Colon in the Panama Canal reluctantly comes to the aid of the disabled S.S. ARIADNE, “an ancient Greek tramp carrying a tragic cargo. Loaded with refugees from Central Europe, she had cleared the war zone safely, but when she arrived at the country in which her cargo had expected haven, that country, fearing Trojan-horse tactics, refused to accept them. Vainly, the ARIADNE had entered one steaming, blistering Central American port after another, only to be turned away, still bearing her disheartened passengers.” When a German U-boat commanded by a swinish Nazi shows an unwanted interest in the refugee ship, the American vessel takes the ARIADNE in tow to the Canal Zone. The Millers’ story ends with both ships safely entering the submarine nets of Colon, though with the fate of the ARIADNE’s passengers (mainly Jews) clearly – and uncomfortably – undecided. “A Lady at Heart” represents the earliest known depiction in fiction of refugee ship sailing from port to port in the Western Hemisphere, fruitlessly looking for safe haven.

Monsarrat, Nicholas *The Cruel Sea*

A masterpiece of World War 2 sea fiction. Monsarrat's gripping, moving chronicle of convoy life as seen through the eyes of the men who manned the British navy ships detailed to escort merchant vessels across the North Atlantic, on the Murmansk Run and into the Mediterranean. Monsarrat's human characters are sympathetically drawn, with individual losses greatly affecting. And his ships -- particularly the brave corvette COMPASS ROSE -- spring to life in such a masterly manner that they, too, become fully drawn characters in their own right.

A beautifully written review of the novel which appeared in the Sept. 1951 issue of *Atlantic Monthly* magazine noted at the time:

“The author is accurate and honest in his self-analysis. The women in this book do not count save as symbols of love, loyalty or gratification left ashore. What he is writing about is the binding force of watchful men, manning the bridge on filthy nights, how to pick up survivors, how to stalk and counterattack the U-boats, how to bury the dead and ‘how to die without wasting anyone’s time.’ ... The story is a long stretch of powerful episodes, some of them almost more gruesome than one can bear, as when the skeletons are sighted lashed to the drifting raft. But the inner filling and dominant quality of this sturdy novel is compassion. You see the men in strength and in weakness, in laughter and in reverie, and facing death; and it is in the manliness in them that makes you proud and stirs your pity as you read.”

Monsarrat's novel was later (1953) turned into a documentary-style film, with a screenplay by Eric Ambler. Note that a “condensation of one section of *The Cruel Sea*” also appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* at the time of the novel's publication in the United States:

"**The Cruel Sea.**" In: *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 188, no. 2, Aug. 1951, pp. 21-35.

Montgomery, Rutherford George *Sea Raiders Ho!*

Montgomery's World War 2-era novel, aimed at the "older boy" market, focuses on the naval experiences of a pair of young submariners in the South Pacific and China Sea during 1944 and early 1945. Set aboard the fictitious U.S. submarine SEAHORSE, the novel's climax includes a daring raid on the Japanese fleet in Osaka Bay followed by an attack against a Japanese outbound freighter convoy in which the sub destroys two troop transport ships. Though decidedly propagandistic, Montgomery's writing is engaging and he doesn't talk down to his audience. Veteran commercial artist Wittmack (1896-1956), whose work was often featured on the covers and pages of such popular magazines as The Saturday Evening Post during a 40+ year career, contributed a number of excellent black-and-white illustrations which effectively bring Montgomery's story to life.

Morrill, George P. *Dark Sea Running*

An outstanding World War 2 novel which reads initially like a seagoing version of “Our Town” before descending, in its latter chapters, into a nautical version of the lower levels of Dante’s “Inferno.” The work is set aboard the fictitious T2 tanker AUBURN RIDGE, initially focusing on her trans-Atlantic convoy work when she was engaged in “the great oil armadas to England.” This is followed by Mediterranean convoy duty and, as the War winds down, service in the Pacific. Morrill tells his story in an engrossing documentary style through a series of short, first-person narratives from the perspectives of nearly all of the tanker’s 75+ contingent of merchant seamen and Navy gunners. His focus throughout, though, remains on the AUBURN RIDGE’s decent, humane Captain Clyde Falk, whose innate goodness of heart makes the vessel a “happy ship” despite her fearful wartime activities. Falk’s break with his own true character—brought on by the grisly news that his only son had been executed in a particularly gruesome manner by Japanese troops—changes the ship and her company. The AUBURN RIDGE and her men, under Captain Falk, soon find themselves in a terrible moral crisis which results in a terrible act of vengeance wrought upon a recently-surrendered Japanese submarine and her crew. The novel’s powerful climax is unsettling, yet psychologically understandable. Morrill’s examination of the power— for good or ill— of command makes his novel as thought-provoking today as in 1959 when it was first published.

Morrill, George P. *"One for O'Brien"*

This short story originally appeared in a 1951 issue of *Argosy Magazine*. Captain Cranston, skipper of a ship doing location shooting in the South Pacific circa 1950 for a Hollywood World War 2 film ("Hell Below Bougainville"), recalls action he saw in the very same waters during the War. He particularly remembers the heroism exhibited by a young crewman (Harvey O'Brien) who'd served aboard his clandestine Guadalcanal-based "spotter" ship. Though the young man's story is a heroic one and has all the makings of a Hollywood movie, Cranston (wisely) decides to not sully his crewmate's memory by sharing it with the Tinseltown producer who now employs him.

Morris, Phyllis “Honeymoon Incorporated.”

This World War 2-era Liberty Magazine “short, short” story (i.e., less than one page in length) that contains an ending right out of O. Henry. Young couple Anne and Tad are, according to author Morris, just two ordinary, innocent Americans, “people whose name would never be in the newspaper.” The duo are befriended by a teller (Mr. Jansen) at the local bank where they come in, week after week, year after year, to make small deposits into a joint savings account. They confide to Jansen that they are engaged and that they’re saving for their honeymoon. Jansen takes a liking to them, is present at their modest, late November 1941 wedding ceremony and, alone among their friends, knows that the two have booked passage aboard a fruit boat, the *MOANA*, for a honeymoon cruise to Hawaii. Ironically, Anne and Tad are caught up in the Japan’s sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and their names, sadly, do appear in the press. The story concludes:

“Monday, December 8, their names appeared on the front page of every paper, in small print, under black headlines: ‘The fruit boat *MOANA* was sunk Sunday December 7, docking at Pearl Harbor – No survivors.’”

What Morris is saying is both poignant and deceptively simple: the days of American innocence are over – war has overtaken the country, and many more lives will be shed before future couples like Anne and Tad will be free to plan for a peaceful, uneventful future together.

A final note: readers who want their historical fiction accurate will have a bone to pick with author Morris. Since Pearl Harbor is a U.S. Navy base, with facilities only for military vessels, a civilian “fruit boat” such as her *MOANA* would in reality have docked at nearby Honolulu and not at Pearl Harbor. A quick read through historical sources reveals that the Japanese attacked no civilian ships at Honolulu on December 7th.

Morton, Frederic *The Witching Ship*

Set aboard the fictitious Dutch “cruise liner” SYNGDAM during a May 1940 trans-Atlantic crossing. The ship is filled with refugees and American citizens fleeing Europe, and the atmosphere turns tense when Hitler invades the Netherlands while the ship is in mid-Atlantic. At his best, Morton captures the social “feel” of an extended ship trip, with its coalescing and dissolving social fabric:

“The commonweals into which all these friendships had blossomed — you would never have guessed they were only two days old. By the second evening of the trip thy attained compactness, finality, weathered endurance. Together they formed the SYNGDAM’s social routine which, no sooner invented, seemed to have been laid down for all time.”--p. 51.

The SYNGDAM herself appears to have been modelled after a Holland-America Line vessel, quite possibly the NIEUW AMSTERDAM of 1938.

Mowery, William Byron "Keep of the Light"

A Caribbean / Central American lighthouse keeper rescues and hides a woman who had been aboard a northern European liner packed with Jewish refugees attempting to find asylum in the New World. The keeper himself soon falls victim to persecution when henchmen of his own country's dictator attempt to beat out of him the whereabouts of the hidden Jew. He soon becomes the touchstone for a local revolution and, ultimately, the humble lighthouse keeper is proclaimed the republic's new president. All too late, though, for the young woman, who had returned to her ship of exiles – and probable death in Europe.

Mowery's anger at anti-Jewish prejudice is palpable, and there is no doubt that the infamous ST. LOUIS affair of May 1939 inspired his tale. Indeed, he opens with a stirring denunciation of the New World's refusal to admit religious and political refugees to its shores that ties his "novelette" to the ST. LOUIS tragedy:

“‘There is a ship,’ wrote the late Heywood Broun in the New York World-Telegram. ‘It is called the ST. LOUIS. If suddenly the vessel flashed an S.O.S. to indicate that the crew and the 900 passengers were in danger, every other steamer within call would go hurrying to the rescue . That is the rule of the sea.

‘But there is a ship. It carries 900 passengers – men, women and small children. And they are in peril ... which threatens not only their lives but their very souls and spiritual freedom. It would be better for them by far if the ST. LOUIS had ripped its plates in a collision with some other craft, or if an impersonal iceberg had slashed the hull below the water-line.

‘Then there would be not the slightest hesitation in a moment of all the allied fleets to save these members of the human race in deep and immediate distress.

‘But this is not an iceberg, or a plate which has been ripped away. It is not an accident of nature but an inhuman equation which has put them in deadly peril.

‘And so the whole world stuffs its ears and pays no attention to any wireless.

‘There is a ship. And almost two thousand years have elapsed since the message of universal brotherhood was brought to earth.

‘What have we done with that message? What price civilization?’”

Newman, Thomas *"The Happiest Man"*

Ship's carpenter Joe Evans is the "happiest man alive" upon reaching New Orleans after having spent twenty-eight days on a life-raft in the South Atlantic following his merchant ship's sinking. He's looking forward to a nice month-long furlough — that is, until he realizes that, despite its dangers, he'd rather be at sea. So he signs up for another trip out, on a ship leaving that evening. And becomes the "happiest man" yet again .

Nordhoff, Charles *Men Without Country*

Co-written with longtime Nordhoff collaborator Charles Norman Hall (1887-1951), this World War 2 novella's title is a direct reference to a famous 19th Century tale of patriotism, as explained in the blurb that ran in the June 1942 issue of *The Atlantic*:

“In December 1865, the *Atlantic* published “The Man Without a Country” by Edward Everett Hale. We now follow that classic with one born of our own time, a short novel complete in this issue.”

Nordhoff and Hall's story concerns itself with the actions of six “French évadés” (convicts) incarcerated in the prison colony of French Guinea who, in 1940, “when they learned that France, the country which has cast them off, was again fighting for her existence, they escaped, through jungle and over stormy seas, with one thought in their minds – to serve her.” Much of the tale is set aboard the ship which picks them up from their unseaworthy canoe in mid-Caribbean, the freighter VILLE DE NANCY (“... one of those venerable tramps which wallow across the backwaters of the world year after year. She was a coal burner ... and her ancient reciprocating engine broke down every fortnight or so. The seamen were French; the stokers were New Caledonian blacks. She wore the customary coat of rust-streaked black paint”).

Much of the ensuing conflict aboard the VILLE DE NANCY is between the patriotic “Free France”-leaning convicts-turned-seamen and a pair of Pétainist army officers who see no problem with collaborating with Nazi Germany. The army officers attempt a mutiny at sea in order to make certain that the VILLE DE NANCY proceed to Marseille with her cargo of valuable manganese ore (where the Germans would snatch it up) rather than divert the vessel to Britain. The mutiny is thwarted by the tough convicts, and the ship makes it to England (though not before being attacked by Nazi warplanes in the English Channel). There the Pétainists are interned and the convicts allowed to join Free French forces.

As for the novella's updating of Hale's 1865 title, one of the évadés, early on in the tale explains to the story's narrator (a French Army officer also aboard the VILLE DE NANCY, one who favors de Gaulle and the Free French movement): “Convicts are men without country – no rights, no citizenship, nothing. Well, all Frenchmen are in the same boat now.”

In 1944 the story was filmed as a Warner Brother's movie as “Passage to Marseille,” which reunited “Casablanca” alumni Humphrey Bogart, Claude Rains, Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lore. As part of a movie tie-in, the book was re-released at that time under the title *Passage to Marseille*.

O'Brien, Brian "*Jungle Jailor*"

Joe Peters, the sole survivor of an American freighter (the fictitious S.S. TOLEDO) which had been torpedoed by a German U-boat in the Mozambique Channel off the east coast of Africa finds himself, after many days adrift in a bullet-riddled lifeboat (the sub had strafed the lifeboat, killing all but Peters), cast ashore in Portugese East Africa. He is soon taken captive by the mad German operator of a secret Nazi telegraph relay station which is located in a nearly impenetrable jungle about 100 miles south of the Portugese colonial city of Beira. It soon becomes apparent to Peters that the sadistic German (one "Flaggleutenant Hennig") was partly responsible for the loss of the TOLEDO (spies in Beira had gleaned information on the ship's planned movements and then relayed that information to Hennig, who passed it on to a nearby German submarine). Once Peters learns that the Nazis are planning on attacking an approaching northbound Allied convoy in the Mozambique Channel it becomes imperative for him to figure out a way to overpower his captor and save the convoy. It should come as no surprise to readers that the wily American indeed does defeat the cowardly Nazi (Hennig is last seen trapped in the swamp, frightened to death – and indeed, the German appears to have committed suicide by tale's end); Peters then escapes from the jungle after having destroyed the wireless station and thus ensuring the convoy's safe passage.

Readers interested in a more artful look at the World War 2 dangers of shipping in the Mozambique Channel should check out Penelope Lively's engrossing short story "The Mozambique Channel," published in 2005. And those looking for a portrait of a similarly off-kilter jungle inhabitant who has taken and used for his own strange purposes a Western prisoner might wish to read the final chapters of Evelyn Waugh's acerbic 1934 novel, *A Handful of Dust*.

O'Brien, Brian *"Lagos Roads."*

Two recurring World War 2 themes often found in tandem (the duplicity of Nazis versus the innate ingenuity of the Allies) come together with a third (that even “superannuated” old men could contribute to the war effort) in this satisfying yarn from the midpoint of the War. Set in the Atlantic off British Nigeria and also in the waters of colony’s Niger River delta, O’Brien’s story focuses on two old Welshmen who, with their Kru “boys,” run a battered, single-stacked freighter (the IBADAN) in the West African coasting trade. Dating to the late 19th Century, the old IBADAN had long been the pride of her master, Captain Hughes, though by 1939 she had been pretty much reduced to “1,500 tons of scrap and concrete held together by paint and rust.” But wartime exigencies made her valuable again, if only as a means to transport low-quality coal upriver to Port Harcourt. Returning to Lagos after one such run, the IBADAN is shelled by a German U-boat and then forced to serve as a decoy in order to let the Nazi sub get close in to an approaching Allied convoy consisting of many troopships loaded with American GIs. But old Hughes and his Chief (Mr. Morgan) had a trick or two up their sleeves as they first subtly lead the U-boat into relatively shallow waters and then run over the submarine with the IBADAN, breaking the back of the U-boat and also that of his beloved IBADAN in the process. By tale’s end Hughes and Morgan have been enthusiastically welcomed back in to the fraternity of shipping men and have even been offered a new, armed freighter. As the local Marine Services superintendent puts it, “My God, if you two fire-eaters can sink a sub with a leaky old bucket like the IBADAN, you’ll sink the whole Nazi Navy with a gun.”

O'Connor, Patrick *Across the Western: A Novel*

Well-written merchant convoy tale set aboard the decrepit tramp steamer S.S. FAIRWARP, a 4,000 ton vessel with engines given to breakdowns in mid-Atlantic. The narrator is a young Mess-Room Steward slyly named by author Patrick O'Connor as "Pat" O'Connor. The book reads as authentic, with O'Connor-the-author and O'Connor-the-Steward capturing the flavor of wartime convoy duty. Included in the novel are flashbacks to O'Connor's earlier wartime sea service aboard a variety of other vessels. A curious book-within-the-book entitled "*The Call of the Sea*" imagined by "Pat" O'Connor (though supposedly authored by a "Jack" O'Connor!) occupies many pages midpoint in the narrative. The FAIRWARP meets her end on her return voyage to England while taking on a German pocket battleship. While "Pat" O'Connor survives the ordeal, he suffers from shock and amnesia and, after recuperation back in Canada, is repatriated back to England – aboard the United States Lines' liner-converted-to-troopship GEORGE WASHINGTON – as a Distressed British Seaman.

O'Reilly, Tom *Purser's Progress: The Adventures of a Seagoing Office Boy*

O'Reilly's delightfully humorous *Purser's Progress* may be a bit closer to "faction" than true fiction, based as it is upon O'Reilly's very real experiences as Purser aboard a Liberty ship that he has dubbed the "S.S. MULLIGAN STEW." Set in 1942, the novel follows the ship on a round-trip voyage from the East Coast of the United States to the Suez Canal by the most roundabout of routes: south through the Caribbean to the Panama Canal and then west out into the Pacific, south along the western coast of South America, round Cape Horn and then across the South Atlantic to South Africa, from whence the MULLIGAN STEW headed north up the Indian Ocean to Aden and into the Suez Canal. The ship's return trip pretty much retraced that route, though once safely back in South America the MULLIGAN STEW headed north up the Atlantic back home.

Our titular Purser had never been further out to sea than the Staten Island ferry, so he gets naturally himself into one comical scrape after another. His growing affection and respect for the professional seamen manning the MULLIGAN STEW is soon evident, with his descriptions of Liberty shipboard being both informative and humorous. Additionally, artist Hershfield's wickedly funny pen-and-ink drawings posted as chapter headings add greatly to the book's period feel.

And O'Reilly really does get down to the very psychology of merchant seamen and life at sea with particular reference to the Second World War, observing at one point:

"An American seaman will fight [the enemy], but he'll wear no man's collar [i.e., join the Navy]. He loves to shock people by saying that he's at sea to duck the draft. This attitude confuses landlubbers, who don't realize that seamen secretly feel that people who join the Marine Corps are dodging the draft, too - it's just a matter of choice. Seamen are loyal, courageous, boisterous, undisciplined, proud, defiant, and breath-taking. No man could do the magnificent things they have done for mere money. But don't let them kid you. They are as patriotic as George M. Cohan, but they are individuals who insist on facing the enemy with their own personal pitchfork. They not only know their business, but each one feels the ship couldn't move two feet without him. That's what is called morale."

Note that the novel was originally published serially in *PM*, a New York City daily newspaper for which author O'Reilly had been a sports writer before the War.

Owen, John *Across the Western: A Novel*

An interesting novel dating to the early days of World War 2 that combines “thriller” action with musings about business ethics. The work is set in fictitious “Weftport,” a port definitely modeled after Liverpool. Owen’s hero is Gwyn Ravelston, managing owner of a British shipping line, a man who loves ships for their aesthetic beauty, and a man who appreciates the sacrifices that the officers and crew aboard his vessels must make in wartime. Throughout much of the novel Ravelston is engaged in a very convincing battle of wills with the Ravelston Line’s general manager, the latter a longtime company employee embittered over the fact that he had been passed over when it had come time to name a new firm head (Ravelston had gotten the nod due to family connections). Owen’s depiction of office politics is convincing, and the reader has no doubt that idealistic Ravelston will not prove victor in the ensuing strife.

The thriller angle to the story involves a German espionage ring operating in Weftport, with its chief actually a member of the Ravelston Line’s board of directors. The last half of the novel takes place in 1939 and early 1940, and, as Weftport ships are increasingly torpedoed by German U-boats, the book’s narrator (a solicitor friend of Ravelston’s) begins to suspect espionage. How the narrator discovers and breaks the spy ring brings the novel to an exciting close. Sadly, Ravelston, sailing aboard one of his ships in order to impress upon his shipping personnel that he is willing to share their wartime dangers, is no longer on the scene as he himself becomes one of the last victims of the espionage ring when his ship is torpedoed and sunk.

Parsons, Francis *"The Outcast"*

Parsons certainly scored a bulls-eye in the prophesy — if not propaganda — department in this 1913 short story which was later reprinted at the height of World War 2. An American “outcast,” adrift in the North Pacific in a small boat, makes landfall on a deserted island somewhere in the Aleutians. There he discovers the “high-pitched voices of the Orient,” otherwise known as a Japanese secret military base. As he conveniently speaks Japanese he is able to quickly learn that the Japanese are using the base to plan a four-pronged attack on the United States, with takeovers of the Panama Canal, the Philippines, Hawaii and the Puget Sound all in the offing (and no — there is no geographic logic here: why would the Japanese use an Aleutian island as the base for an attack on the Philippines, Hawaii or the Panama Canal?). Suffice to say, after battling (and besting) several loathsomely-depicted Japanese, the outcast escapes via motorboat and, after several days at sea, is found delirious (he had been grievously wounded fighting one of his foes) by a coastal steamer (the fictitious ANNIE WILSON) bound “south for Sitka” heading in toward the coast of southeast Alaska. American authorities are notified in time (it conveniently just happens that the outcast’s old college roommate is the Assistant Secretary of the Navy), military disaster is averted and our outcast returns to the United States restored to full citizenship. It should be noted that the story is a perfect “fit” for World War 2 propaganda purposes: the Japanese are depicted as a cretinous, dishonorable, nefarious, stab-in-the-back sort of people, though one easily defeated by upright, honorable Americans.

Pattinson, James *Last on Convoy*

A gritty and extremely grim North Atlantic convoy novel focusing on the aging merchant ship S.S. REGAL GESTURE and on the men who attempt to get her safely “Across the Pond” to England. The ship foolishly sails out of Halifax in a “fast” (10-knot) convoy despite her captain’s knowledge that the REGAL GESTURE’s engines are decrepit and that she probably won’t be able to maintain a grueling ocean passage at high speed. Indeed, from the start, the REGAL GESTURE is relegated to last position in the 45-ship convoy, and all too soon, the ship is forced to drop out of convoy and make her way alone across the hostile ocean. Along the way the REGAL GESTURE encounters (and possibly sinks) a surfaced U-boat, battles storms and a German Focke-Wulf bomber and has her cargo of wool catch fire. Almost within sight of land she founders after having drifted for days ablaze. Dramatic as these events are, Pattinson’s real strength lies in his characterization of the ship’s crew, particularly how they act and interact among themselves, under stress. Of particular note are his descriptions of the daily lives of the Royal Navy gunners serving aboard the REGAL GESTURE.

Pattinson, James *On Desperate Seas*

North Atlantic / Murmansk Run tale set aboard the British tanker ROSA DARTLE which is carrying a cargo of industrial alcohol from Philadelphia to Archangel. Also aboard the ship are six American seamen whose mysterious presence unsettle a crew already on edge. After air and U-boat attacks sink the vessel, her surviving crew and passengers continue to fight for survival in an open boat and then later ashore in pitiless Arctic conditions.

Pattinson, James *Soldier, Sail North*

Murmansk Run convoy tale. “Mr. Pattinson’s book is an honest, authentic account of the life of some gunners on a Russia-bound merchant ship, sailing in winter convoy. There is a certain amount of flash-back sentimentality, dealing with faithless wives, East End childhoods and so on; also a good deal of action. Mr. Pattinson, unfortunately, lacks the equipment to make anything fresh or exciting out of it” – *The Times Literary Supplement*, July 9, 1954. *The Times*’ reviewer must have been in a rather grumpy mood the day he encountered the novel, since this reviewer found the book both fresh and exciting. Pattinson’s highly readable prose clearly describes the horrors of a Murmansk Run convoy, while his descriptions of the Soviet port of Murmansk in wartime are particularly evocative. His individual portraits of the various Maritime Royal Artillery men who manned the guns aboard the fictitious S.S. GOLDEN RAY on her ill-fated trek to Murmansk and back are uniformly moving, as is the GOLDEN RAY’s own ironic ending (she hits a drifting mine just in sight of Scotland and sinks with many of her crew and gunners)

Paul, Louis *"The Cruise of the Lola Montez"*

Early World War 2 tale from the days when the United States was still a neutral in the conflict. An American photographer stranded in Mexico, goes to Tampico ("Tampico's all right if you sleep and eat on a tourist steamship and have your passage booked out of the place. But for an American on the beach with a limited knowledge of Spanish it's not so good. This seaport stinks of fish and oil. The people have a method of curing meat in which the native fly – big translucent babies – play a part. It's not like Baltimore") to look for a ship to crew on. He soon encounters "a very interesting Spic" crimp who gets him a job as a seaman aboard the ship LOLA MONTEZ, warning him to "show no surprise" at anything he might see aboard the vessel. The LOLA had apparently once been a millionaire's yacht, though now appeared to be – in our hero's words – "the dirtiest hulk of a boat that I ever clapped my eyes on." The ship is captained by a mysterious, "shriveled-up Negress dwarf," who turns out to be well-educated, with a burning desire to learn all about America from narrator. Whew! What a stewpot of a plot so far! At any rate, in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico the LOLA MONTEZ's destination becomes apparent when a German U-boat rises out of the waters to rendezvous with her. The smaller vessel empties her cargo holds to provision the submarine and also runs a line over to the sub to pump oil and fuel. A few days later our American hero is tossed unceremoniously overboard about a mile off the Mississippi Delta, from whence he successfully makes for New Orleans.

Pease, Howard *The Black Tanker: The Adventures of a Landlubber on the Ill-Fated Last Voyage of the Oil Tank Steamer "Zambora."*

The most political of Pease's novels in the "young adult" Tod Moran series, *The Black Tanker* can be seen as the author's wake-up call to America regarding the nation's need to take an active stand against Japanese and German worldwide aggression. Published in early 1941, just months before Pearl Harbor, the book is set aboard the oil tanker ZAMBORA and features Pease regulars Tod Moran (now a Third Officer), Captain Jarvis, Topy the Cockney and 'Swede' Jorgenson. Also onboard is Rance Warren, Stanford University student, working as a wiper (and later oiler) in the ship's engine room. The tanker is engaged to deliver aviation fuel to a Japanese air base located just outside Hong Kong, and Pease examines the dilemma faced by the ZAMBORA's crew: though certainly "lawful" to sell and deliver the fuel to the Japanese, was it, given the continuing Japanese wholesale destruction of China, morally right? Pease forcibly argues (through the voice of Captain Jarvis) that America must soon either take sides in the worldwide conflagration or face aggressor nations such as Japan and Germany alone. In an ironic aside, a minor Pease character (a San Francisco stevedore) tells Rance that 90% of Japan's scrap metal needs are being met by the U.S., and indeed are being shipped from West Coast ports -- and that these scrap materials are being turned into Japanese armaments.

Pease, Howard "*Black-out.*"

The alternate title to this interesting World War 2 novella is "*The Adventure in the Black-Out.*" The story is set in early Summer 1942 (we know this because mention is made of the Battle of Midway Island as well as the Japanese landings on the island of Attu in Aleutians, both events having taken place in June 1942) and San Francisco – and indeed the entire West Coast – is jittery wondering whether Japanese air raids are imminent. 3rd Mate Moran of the freighter ARABY is in port and just had just hopped aboard a cable car en route to dinner with a friend (none other than Howard Pease himself!) when the city is suddenly blacked-out and air raid sirens begin wailing. Though ultimately a false alarm, Tod is forced to disembark from his cable car and walk his way home. He soon finds himself involved in an "adventure" involving an unscrupulous boardinghouse landlady out to fleece a possible orphan (Julie is the girl, and her father had been captured by the Japanese on Wake Island and not heard from since) out of an inheritance.

Pease's slim plot aside, what today's reader will most appreciate are the author's "you-are-there" descriptions of what black-outs and air raid warnings were like those early days of the War. Also of interest are Pease's rather brave (for 1942) attack, oblique though it may be, at the government's removal of California's Japanese-American citizens to the Mazanar relocation camp. He also has a thing or two to say about tinpot patriots objecting to Italian-Americans serving as air-raid wardens (one of the story's characters is a Tony Gallo, an Italian-American shipyard worker by day and air-raid warden most nights on Larkin Street). By the time the all clear siren has sounded, Tod Moran has solved the boardinghouse mystery, though both Pease and his fictitious hero know that a final "all clear" is years into the future:

"Tod peered through the shadows toward the window. But he didn't hear the sounds of traffic even though the city was beginning to move like a gigantic animal roused from sleep. Neither did he see the glow from the lights coming on below. For the black-out, he knew, wasn't really over. Not for Julie, not for Tony and his family, not for anyone at all. No, it wouldn't be over until this war had been won and ended."

And with the realization that land-bound Americans, too, were making immense sacrifices for the war effort, 3rd Mate Moran went back to his own business of war – as a merchant mariner.

Pease, Howard *Heart of Danger: A Tale of Adventure on Land and Sea with Tod Moran, Third Mate of the Tramp Steamer "Araby."*

"Tod Moran and Rudy Behrens, a talented young violinist-composer, undertake a perilous journey through occupied France during World War II. They meet and work with the wonderful French Underground -- through Jacques, who teaches them to act boldly in 'the heart of danger,' and through many other Frenchmen who help them keep their appointment with the mysterious 'X-31' in Paris" -- Jacket blurb. Note that though most of this very somber novel is set on land in wartime France and Germany, the novel's opening chapters do find Tod and the crew of the ARABY in an Allied convoy en route from Great Britain to the Mediterranean.

Pentecost, Hugh *"Death at the Whistling Buoy"*

American Magazine tag line: "Protected by the fog, which lay like a thick, gray shroud over the refugee ship, a killer was at work. Before the GOTHENBURG, with her load of panic-stricken passengers docked in New York two people were to die." Pentecost's plot line is more than a bit tangled. Among the GOTHENBURG's passengers were American civilians who had been interned in Nazi "concentration camps," several of whom plotted revenge against a French Fascist collaborator who's also aboard and who had been interned with them all in Europe. The author presents an interesting moral quandary: should the murderer be exposed and punished? After all, the murdered man was both a Fascist and an enemy alien.

Pierce, Frank Richardson "*Cargo for Vladistock.*"

World War 2 short story with *Argosy* tag lines reading "A story of our Fighting Merchant Marine" and "Salt-water badmen make good Merchant Marine heroes." Pierce's hero is old Captain Abner Sprague, a retired "shellback" (a mariner with sailing ship experience) who comes out of Snug Harbor retirement to help the Navy in a merchant mariner recruitment campaign. The Navy intends to portray old Sprague as a stellar example of patriotism for his willingness to assist in the war effort by assuming – at his advanced age – command of a freighter. Sprague believes the Navy's freighter command offer to be legitimate (it isn't; the Navy had planned to "retire" him again as soon as its patriotic PR hoopla dies down). When Sprague discovers he's been made a chump he immediately goes on the defensive. Before long he is actually given a real command, the tired old West Coast freighter DUCKABUSH. There's one (major) catch the ship is crewed by troublemakers and misfits no one else wanted. How the seemingly feeble Capt. Sprague tames his crew (these being the "modern times" of 1943, union rules won't allow him to use a belaying pin on recalcitrant crew!) and then successfully brings his ship, out of its North Pacific convoy after a mechanical breakdown, safely to port in Vladivostok forms the crux of Richardson's rather nifty war yarn. Along the way, the old DUCKABUSH takes on both a Japanese submarine and destroyer, sinking both.

Pierce, Frank Richardson "*Slicker*"

One in Collier's weekly series tagged "A short short story complete on this page." As with much nautical fiction from the World War 2 era, Richardson's tale contrasts American ingenuity with German sadism and cupidity. Young gun pointer's rating aboard an armed American freighter is blown into the sea when his ship is torpedoed. He survives, clinging alone to flotsam and eventually encounters, also alone, though in a life raft, the German U-boat commander responsible for his ship's sinking (the U-boat had been sunk by a last-minute, fortuitous gun barrage from the freighter). The German is armed. He is also physically cold, and demands the rating's warm blue pea coat and clothing. The quick thinking American proposes a deal: his clothes for the yellow slicker the German is wearing (which, the rating believes, had been stolen from the freighter's 1st Mate by the German after their vessels' sinking). The German agrees, though without a last minute, unsuccessful effort to shoot the young American. Soon after, the American is rescued, and it turns out that his rescue had been aided by the fact that the yellow slicker was visible to the Army Air Corps pilots flying overhead. As for the clothes that he had traded to the German: "A man in blue clothes on a gray raft or boat that's floating on a blue sea, is hard to spot from the air."

Pierce, Frank Richardson *"A Ton of Gold."*

A million dollars worth of gold being shipped to Seattle from Dawson at the height of the 1898 Alaska Gold Rush mysteriously disappears when the ship carrying it (the NORTHLANDER) is sabotaged and subsequently beached on shoals in the Inland Passage. Forty years go by without even a trace of the gold reappearing, and for much of that time, suspicion had placed the ship's purser (he's disappeared during the grounding) as the chief culprit. It's only in 1938 when the stalwart old ship is being scrapped for metal to send to Japan ("when war breaks out in China and Japan needs iron and steel") does Pierce's narrator (and evidently continuing character) "No-Shirt" McGee solve the mystery (no, the purser wasn't guilty; indeed, he was a murder victim) and recover the gold for its rightful owners. Besides being a good read as a mystery tale, Pierce's story is of interest for his description of Northwest passenger ship life during the Gold Rush, and of the contrasts between steerage (full of those "that the North had defeated") and 1st Class, carrying "the boys and girls [many of whom were decidedly of a shady character] who was in the money," where champagne flowed like water.

Podolin, Si *"Blitz on the ANTHONY J"*

The freighter ANTHONY J., heavily laden with military equipment, encounters a fierce storm at sea which causes a 30-ton Army tank to break loose from its moorings 'tween decks. As the ship rolls in the storm, the tank batters its way back and forth from portside to starboardside, threatening to break through the ship's hull and cause her sinking. Two crew members volunteer for dangerous duty below in an attempt to secure the careening tank: the ship's bos'n and "Chips," the ship's carpenter. At the risk of great bodily harm, the task is finally accomplished, but not before Chips is seriously mauled. This somewhat routine "storm-at-sea" story's chief claim to interest lies in the fact that Chips is African-American — one of the very few appearances of non-Caucasians in World War 2-era popular American sea fiction. And not only is Chips drawn as an intelligent, sympathetic character but he is also, non-condescendingly, the story's hero, a rare bird indeed in terms of the popular fiction of that time.

Polonsky, Abraham *"The Enemy Sea"*

Action-packed World War 2 serial set aboard a tanker bound for New York from Galveston. American Magazine tag line: "The astonishing story of a girl who was much too beautiful and gay to be sailing on a grim oil tanker, most hunted prey of Nazi submarines. But nothing in the world could stop redheaded Carrie from plunging straight into the grimmest adventure of her outrageous career – not even the two men who loved and hated and were maddened by her." (Whew!) Polonsky dwells on common World War 2 American fears: fifth columnists, traitors and saboteurs – and he dishes up quite a stew. The tanker in question (the fictitious ARROW) is commanded by a man who seems to be an Axis sympathizer (later it's revealed that his family is being held hostage in Germany), who makes a mid-Caribbean rendezvous with Nazi U-boats. After transferring all the vessel's oil to the subs, the ARROW is scuttled – and with most of her crew, our redhead and one of her admirers locked in a storeroom. (The other admirer turns out to be a dastardly American turncoat in Hitler's pay). Happily for "outrageous" Carrie, the tanker had been scuttled on a sand bank, so most escape death by drowning. Polonsky's serial climaxes at the Coast Guard inquest into the ARROW's sinking in a scene-stealer rivaling that of a "Perry Mason" rerun! The serial was later published as a novel (see next entry):

The Enemy Sea. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Company, 1944. 288 p.

Pope, Dudley *Convoy*

World War 2 Battle of the Atlantic saga, with its pivotal action taking place during a convoy run from Liverpool to Freetown in West Africa. Pope's hero, Lt. Ned Yorke of the Royal Navy, is temporarily vetted to a merchant marine cargo liner in an attempt to find out how a series of convoys had been attacked from within their ranks by a lone wolf submarine. While much of the action – and plot line – borders on the improbable, Pope nevertheless does manage to conjure up a somewhat convincing picture of the tensions rife between Royal Navy officers and their counterparts in the Merchant Navy (as the merchant marine is dubbed in Great Britain). A few days out on convoy duty Yorke has an epiphany of sorts when he realizes that “officers and master in the Merchant Navy had much the same kind of band, or brotherhood, that knitted the Royal Navy: as boys, many of them had started off together at one of the nautical training colleges, like Pangbourne, Conway or Worcester; they had over the years met in distant ports, knocking back strange drinks in smokey bars; came together again for the few months spurt at nautical school to swot before sitting for a higher competency. Obviously there were friendships going back twenty or thirty years which people like Hobson [Captain of the merchant ship on which Yorke was traveling] had seen cut short when a ship was torpedoed and sunk, drowning men he had known since his ‘teens.” Thus emotionally charged up, Yorke goes on nearly single-handed to defeat the Nazi lone wolf threatening his convoy, and with a thrilling (and implausible) climax.

Porter, Katherine Anne *Ship of Fools*.

A masterpiece of 20th Century literature, thirty years in the writing, set aboard the fictitious North German Lloyd liner VERA during a voyage from Vera Cruz, Mexico to Bremerhaven, Germany in 1931. The plot focuses on the VERA's First Class passengers and their relations among themselves, with the ship's officer's and crew. This brilliant, chilling novel conveys both the stifling shipboard life aboard such a vessel as well as forebodings of the Hitler years to come. An interestingly coda: in real life Porter took a similar voyage in 1931 from Vera Cruz to Germany aboard the North German Lloyd steamer WERRA.

Posey, Chester L. "Overboard"

One in *Collier's* "A short, short story complete on this page" series. The setting: a South Pacific convoy containing hundreds of vessels. A soldier somehow falls overboard during the night, and fears that his sudden plummet has gone unnoticed. The story takes two tracks; one, describing the GI's physical and emotional experiences in the warm waters of the Pacific; the other, with the convoy itself. The soldier's fall had, it turns out, been immediately reported, and as one the convoy works together to devise a rescue plan and carry it out. The GI's eventual rescue is rather movingly described:

"The tears were streaming down his face and their salt taste was sweet in his salt-caked mouth. Arms lifted him, and he was suddenly warm, so warm with realization and friendship and love that he could hardly stand it."

"Quarterdeck" *"Destroyer Man"*

Maclean's tag line: "The [Royal] Navy sighed when Horace Smith came aboard — but that was before Horace Smith showed the Navy how a pen-pusher fights at sea." Paymaster-Lieut. Smith, son of a famous British World War 1 era destroyer man, shows he's got the "right stuff" when his own destroyer goes prowling for what appear to be German subs preying on Allied freighters in the North Atlantic. Instead of U-boats, though, Smith and company find — and ultimately destroy — an ex-Norwegian tramp turned German raider which, using wounded freighters as stalking horses, had been sinking merchant and naval vessels alike.

Raddall, Thomas H. *"Action at Sea"*

Young Canadian Orton Portingale, aged 30, son and grandson of sea captains and with a master's ticket of his own, finds his civilian career interrupted by the Second World when he takes command of the corvette H.M.S. WINDLESTRAW. He and his crew engage in nearly non-stop North Atlantic convoy duty. Though well-trained, they seem to have no luck in actually sinking a German U-boat or downing an enemy aircraft. This all changes one day, in mid-Atlantic, during a German aircraft attack on their convoy when the WINDLESTRAW blows a Folker-Wulff bomber out of the air in a most unusual manner: with depth charges which had been catapulted from the corvette's stern in attempt at sinking a lurking submarine!

Raine, Norman Reilly *"Mr. Gallup Gathers No Moths"*

Mr. Gallup's colorful – and malapropian – manner of speaking (“them there rolling stones wot gathers no moths”) and somewhat irascible behavior put him in good company with another Saturday Evening Post regular, Guy Gilpatric's Colin Glencannon. While on a New York City overlay, Gallup discovers a German plot to disable and sink a British tanker at sea, and kill her crew. He slips aboard the vessel under an assumed name and ultimately foils the plot, winding up with a recommendation for the George Cross in commendation for his heroism.

Raine's theme is that of the underhanded and cowardly manner in which Germany was attempting to win the War, which he compares to the selfless manner in which the British merchant marine carried out its hazardous duties. His rousing description of a convoy as seen from sea is a classic:

“At the change of the watch he [Mr. Gallup] climbed the spidery ladders and gartings to the deck. It was dusk, the rain had cleared, ahead and silhouetted against the blood-red sky astern, were the ships of the convoy, the smoke of their many funnels trailing astern like the sooty banners of a marching army.

Mr. Gallup counted them. Thirty-five. Thirty-five, and crammed to the hatches with explosives, guns, plans, oil, gasoline, fuel and all the multitudinous sinews of war. Moving as a close, defensive unit in a tight, definite formation, frequently changed, while around their flanks roved the grim protecting war dogs.”

Raine, Norman Reilly *"Mr. Gallup Backs a Cockroach"*

A North Atlantic convoy short story. Raine's hero in this tale is again the somewhat comedic Mr. Bellial Gallup, "by rights a master mariner, but until quite recently third mate of the deep-water tramp ship JAIPUR PRINCE." The "quite recently" was a torpedoing of the vessel just off the coast of Iceland, which left Mr. Gallup in the waters of the chilly North Atlantic (the JAIPUR PRINCE was eventually salvaged after she failed to sink). He is taken to "Rekjlak" [Reykjavik] to recuperate, where Gallup comes up with an ingenious solution for trapping and destroying a German U-boat that had been sinking Allied ships at the entrance to Reykjavik harbor.

Raine, Norman Reilly *"Tugboat Annie Wins Her Medal"*

Classic Tugboat Annie, set in late 1945 right after the conclusion of World War 2. Annie and her NARCISSUS are off the coast of Southern California, towing a barge load of oil north to Puget Sound. The old girl is as racy as ever and still a bit miffed that she'd not been accepted by the Navy as a WAVE — or any other women's auxiliary — during the War. (Annie had done her part, nonetheless, and had taken the NARCISSUS through the Battle of the Atlantic to England and had even taken part in the Murmansk run, where she and her crew had towed many a torpedoed vessel!) Annie's peaceful voyage north is interrupted by a rogue Japanese submarine which has refused to accept Japan's conclusive defeat, and, after the sub has torpedoed a nearby troopship returning veterans to the U.S., Annie vows revenge. Annie tricks the Japanese into thinking that they can get hold of her oil cargo. Navy dive bombers, clued into Annie's intent, soon take out the submarine and Annie is duly awarded the Navy Cross for her actions.

Raphael, Freferic *"The Siren's Song"*

A rumination on guilt and responsibility (both personal and, more broadly, national) which looks at the life of a Greek shipping tycoon (possibly modeled after Aristotle Onassis) who had allowed a ramshackle freighter carrying Jews fleeing the Nazis to sink in the Black Sea. Raphael's protagonist is Iakobos, 1st Mate of the BRODA, which, as the story opens, has arrived in Istanbul in early 1942 from the Danube delta with hundreds of "Jews; pilgrims who can neither move forward or back." Denied visas to Palestine by British authorities and not allowed to land in Turkey, the ship sets sail back into the Black Sea. Both her captain (Rubik, "an Albanian Epirot") and mate know that the ship is thoroughly unseaworthy (her seaworthiness certificate and other documents had been purchased), and in due course "when the ship is torpedoed, or hits wreckage, it splits soggily like a paper bag full of water," sinks like a stone with only the captain and Iakobos escaping death. The sinking is at the heart of Raphael's story, which then goes on to trace Iakobos' rise to prominence (he marries a rich shipowner's daughter) from 1946 onwards. Despite late life philanthropy (he secretly funds the rebuilding of Thesaaloniki's synagogue after the War), Iakobos can never forget his part in the BRODA incident. Raphael's tale has an ironic ending, with Iakobos himself drowning in 1986 (he is pushed off the deck of his luxury yacht into the Ionic Sea by old Capt. Rubik, a man consumed with envy for Iakobos' riches; double irony – Rubik himself then slips on deck, falls overboard and drowns having never felt guilt for his part in the BRODA's sinking).

Rayner, D. A. *The Crippled Tanker*

This rousing World War 2 tale is set in February 1943. H.M.S. destroyer HECATE is pulled out of convoy escort duty to tow the crippled (and abandoned) Greek tanker ANTIOCH 500 miles across the North Atlantic from the spot where she had been attacked by a German wolfpack to the safety of a British port. The ANTIOCH, at 14,000 tons, had been the largest ship in her convoy and her petroleum cargo is of vital importance to Britain's wartime economy. Initially angered by their rather inglorious assignment, the warship's officers and crew slowly begin to take pride in their towing assignment as they fend off (and destroy) a German U-boat and then a succession of Luftwaffe warplanes. As the ship's doctor puts it, apropos the HECATE's change of attitude towards the tanker they're towing:

"We're all bloody well balmy ... This thing - the ANTIOCH - has gotten under our skins. She's become part of us. She's a symbol of something or other. Oh, when they certify us, they'll find a word for it that none of us will understand."

With the British Isles almost within sight, an ocean-going salvage tug finally appears upon the scene and orders the HECATE to turn over the ANTIOCH. HECATE refuses. "I am ocean tug" the vessel signals to the warship. "SO AM I" is HECATE's reply, and she proceeds to bring ANTIOCH to port unassisted.

Note that the novel was published in the U.S. in 1960 under the alternate title, The Long Haul.

Redel, Victoria (1959-). *The Border of Truth.*

Redel's eloquent, highly moving novel about family secrets has at its center the story - little remembered today - of the chartered Portugese liner *QUANZA* which, with a human cargo of 317 Jewish refugees fleeing war-torn Europe, was during August and September 1940 briefly at the center of American consciousness. Among the *QUANZA*'s passengers is 16 year old Itzak Lejdel of Brussels, traveling alone from Belgium and hoping for asylum in an America populated (at least in his over-active imagination) by glamorous movie stars and public-minded politicians sympathetic to the plight of Jews like himself. Redel's novel alternates in time between the events of 1940 and 2003, when Itzak's daughter first learns of her father's presence aboard the *QUANZA*. The 1940 sections are epistolatory in nature and feature letters that young Itzak has written to none other than Eleanor Roosevelt, all typed out on his portable typewriter in an idiosyncratic English which is alternately funny and heartbreaking. Redel's descriptions of life aboard the refugee ship, her passengers and indeed the role that Eleanor Roosevelt played in resolving the *QUANZA* "crisis" (86 refugees - including fictitious Itzak - were initially refused entry into the United States when the ship touched port in Newport News, Va. after having been turned away from Vera Cruz, Mexico; Mrs. Roosevelt's behind-the-scenes intervention helped get the refugees gain entry to the U.S.) are well drawn and with a sense of nail-biting immediacy that makes the events of 1940 read as if they were taking place today. Redel includes as characters several very-real players in the *QUANZA* crisis, including the ship's captain (Captain Harberts), a once well-known 1930s French movie star couple (Marcel Dalio and Madeleine Le Beau - obviously Jewish - who only two years later would play featured roles in a very famous Hollywood take on World War 2 refugees, "Casablanca"), American Secretary of State Cordell Hull (who does not come across at all sympathetically) and of course Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Reeman, Douglas *Rendezvous -- South Atlantic*

Reeman's dedication page sets the tone for this World War 2 novel of the sea lanes: "To the armed merchant cruisers RAWALPINDI, JERVIS BAY, LAURENTIC, DUNVEGAN CASTLE and to all those other proud ships which sailed in peace but went to war when they were most needed." *Rendezvous — South Atlantic* follows the fortunes of an ocean liner-turned-armed merchant ship (the fictitious S.S. BENBECULA) during the early years of the Second World War (roughly from 1940 through 1942) in a variety of settings: on solo patrol duty in the North Atlantic and on convoy work in the North and South Atlantic and later in the Indian Ocean. Pluses: the BENBECULA and her crew are well drawn, and by tale's end the reader has a real affection for the valiant, and enemy action battered, ship. Minuses: a cardboard love affair between the ship's commander and a young Royal Navy Wren that stretches the reader's credulity with an over-reliance on coincidental meetings.

Reeman, Douglas *A Ship Must Die*

Set in 1944, this Indian Ocean tale looks at the Allied pursuit of what British and Australian sources believe to be a German sea raider which had been attacking and sinking merchant ships both in and out of convoy. Author Reeman tips the reader off long before his fictitious Allied naval brass figure out that the sea raider is not one but two raiders (the SALAMANDER and WÖLFCHEN) acting in concert. And, while one of the vessels (the SALAMANDER, under Kapitän zur See Kurt Rietz) honorably plucks survivors of the ships that she has sunk out of the sea for internment, the other ship (the aptly named WÖLFCHEN) plays “bad cop,” massacring all eyewitnesses to her actions. A great many ships – merchant and naval – “die” before Reeman brings the reader to a thrilling climax in which a British / soon-to-be Australian light cruiser named ANDROMEDA tracks down and sinks both raiders.

Reeman, Douglas *The Pride and the Anguish*.

This maritime novel about the 1942 fall of Singapore is concerned chiefly with military activities of the Royal Navy officers and crew of a small British gunboat, the H.M.S. *PORCUPINE*, which had been dispatched from the rivers of China to Singapore in 1941 after the Japanese overran the Chinese mainland. Reeman's tale is a gripping story – and an angry one, at that. He highlights the British military and civilian bungling in Malaya and Singapore which played such a decisive role in the area's devastating fall to Japanese troops during the period November 1941 through Feb. 1942. His descriptions of Singapore's final hours are particularly well rendered. The novel's final chapters make for an exciting read when the *PORCUPINE* and a sister ship, loaded with civilians and naval personnel, escape as the last vessels out of Singapore before the city comes under total Japanese control and then head for the safety of Java, 500 miles by sea distant. From there it's a nail-biter of an ending as the two small ships, built for river service, endure rough ocean seas and a Japanese navy all-out search for the British escapees.

Ricci, Lewis Anselm da Costa "*Ocean Convoy*"

Published under the pseudonym "Bartimeus." Veteran British seaman Joe Bignell, having survived a mid-Atlantic torpedoing and three days in an open boat during a gale, returns home & decides that he's "finished with the sea and ships." However, he runs into Captain Blackburn, under whom he served before, and all-too-soon the captain, now commanding the freighter OCEAN RAMPART, recruits Bignell who reluctantly returns to sea. Bignell's worst fears are soon realized when his new ship is torpedoed in the dead of night a week or so later while in a North Atlantic convoy. The vessel's survivors take to the lifeboats, with Captain Blackburn keeping the survivors' spirits lifted through a combination of his "indominable spirit" and by playing his "precious" cornet! After a long, cold night at sea, the survivors are picked up by an American destroyer. As a coda we find Seaman Bignell returning home for a brief stay, but already signed on with Blackburn for another wartime voyage. In real life, Ricci was a Royal Navy Paymaster Captain, and, according to *The Saturday Evening Post*, served as an official "Naval Eye Witness" during World War 2. *The Post* goes on to state, "Ocean Convoy, we suspect, is a rare combination of fact and fiction."

Ripley, Lyndon "*Victory of Dragon Reef*"

Pulp fiction authors were really stretching for a novel war-related plot line by 1944 as evidenced in this looney South Seas lagoon short story. Let's see, Ripley's got: a sick humpback whale, a crew of whalers off a steam whale ship, one nasty Japanese submarine (packed with evil Nipponese) and a pack of killer whales. Happily for "earth firsters," the humpback whale survives all, which unfortunately is not the case for the Japanese submariners whom the peaceful humpback and his voraciously hungry killer cousins take on, giving a new meaning to the concept of "sushi." For plot details you'll have to consult the *Adventure Magazine* original (happily out of print now for nearly 60 years!)

Rohmer, Sax *"Fu Manchu and the Panama Canal."*

Rohmer's rather strange take on the early years before official American entry into World War 2 finds the always- nefarious Dr. Fu Manchu engaged in a Panama Canal espionage plot against the U.S. Navy. The lengthy (12-part) serial commences in London with Manchu stealing a map of potential Allied submarine bases in the Caribbean approaches to the Canal and then moves on to the Caribbean itself. As in all Rohmer Fu Machu efforts there are a variety of confusing (and silly) subplots, including, this time around, a lovely woman enslaved by Manchu, voodoo worship (presided over by Manchu's daughter) and zombies galore. A trio of stalwart Englishmen tackle the evil doctor and these include "the great sleuth" Nayland Smith, bumbling Sir Lionel Barton (from whom the afore mentioned map was stolen) and "star reporter" (yes, Rohmer really wrote in such cliché-laden prose) Bart Kerrigan. By tale's end it has been revealed that Manchu has a fleet of submarines himself and had been planning on taking advantage of the War to attack America no matter "whatever happened to Europe and the rest of the world." He dismisses the Axis by noting "the methods pursued by the Nazis are a clumsy imitation of my own." Happily, our English threesome defeat the madman by destroying the secret submarined base which Manchu had constructed in the heart of an extinct volcano, and in the process save the lovely woman enslaved by the doctor. The serial was later published in book format under the title *The Island of Fu Manchu* (see following entry).

The Island of Fu Manchu. New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1941. 299 p.

Ross, David Allan "*Ghost Ship*"

This South Seas pulp novella is set during the period Dec. 7, through mid-January 1942. American skipper Bill Sudbury lands his auxiliary trading brig (the FLIGHT) at Maniti Island ("the nastiest, most isolated and undesirable sinkhole" in the Society Group) on Dec. 7, 1941 and promptly finds himself interned by Maniti's pro-Vichy resident administrator. But there's more than internment afoot: the isolated atoll has become a hotbed of Japanese and Nazi intrigue with enemy agents already in residence there. Indeed, shortly after the FLIGHT's internment, a large, 20,000 ton cargo-liner filled with Germans arrives and is openly welcomed by the French resident. In a plot that trades on Axis duplicity versus American cunning and inventiveness, it turns out that the Nazi vessel is a sea raider, and one that has been fitted out to resemble a neutral Swedish vessel (the STAR OF NORWAY) which is currently somewhere in the South Pacific carrying British and American diplomats from Japan to Australia after their German and Japanese counterparts had been carried to Japan. The STAR OF NORWAY is scheduled to hook up shortly with an Allied convoy which includes several large troopships filled with American soldiers (this part of the story seems even more far-fetched than what has gone before it: surely a neutral "diplomat ship" would *not* travel in an armed belligerent's convoy). The Huns' fiendish (remember, this was written at the height of hostilities) plot: use the sea raider to track down the real STAR OF NORWAY before she makes her convoy rendezvous, sink the ship (an act against all the rules of diplomacy) and then have the "faux" STAR OF NORWAY infiltrate the convoy and, once in position, use torpedoes and concealed armament to destroy as many of the troopships in the convoy as possible. Whew! Needless to say, Captain Sudbury foils the plot and by tale's end is preparing to enlist in the U.S. Navy. This being pulp fiction, there's also a pretty, blonde damsel in distress (she's a Canadian former showgirl (don't ask!) being held hostage on Maniti by the pro-Vichy resident). And besides being duplicitous, the Nazis and Japanese are all depicted as brutal and blood-thirsty. Pro-Vichy French come in for pretty much the same criticism. And you thought the South Seas were peaceful and idyllic!

Sale, Richard "*Cape Spectre*"

World War 2 serial dating to the waning days of U.S. neutrality. Set in the Florida Keys, where a German agent has been using the wireless from an abandoned lighthouse to guide a Nazi sea raider to British shipping in the Caribbean. Sale's hero is a U.S. Lighthouse Service official who ultimately routs the Nazis. This being a pulp serial, a beautiful young girl is involved in the proceedings, too.

Sale, Richard *"Flight of the Wankus Bird"*

Imaginative — if wildly improbable — World War 2 convoy story. Young U.S. Navy ace aviator accepts a temporary assignment to fly a “wankus bird” (a Sikorsky helicopter) stationed onboard the BURMA STAR, a British tramp freighter sailing in convoy from Gibraltar to Plymouth, England. The helicopter is supposedly being tried out as a U-boat chaser to aid in the protection of ocean convoys. En route to Britain our hero learns that a buddy has crashed at sea somewhere nearby after a dogfight with a German fighter plane. In heavy weather he takes off in his helicopter and effects a dramatic rescue. It’s highly doubtful that anything like this occurred during World War 2, but the ending does at least have a satisfying Hollywood feel to it!

Sale, Richard "*Last Trip*"

A ship's electrician saves the lives of his crew by firing off a desperate SOS after their ship had been torpedoed and the ship's wireless officer killed. Though viewed by many as a hero, the man, 50-year old Matt Raleigh, knows that his heroism was prompted more by his desire to get home safely to his family than out of feelings for fellow crew. Yet, though a "safe" stateside job awaits him, Raleigh decides to re-up in the merchant marine after taking part in a radio interview in which he hears a mariner from another torpedoed ship reply to the question "How do you feel about the war?" The mariner's unvarnished reply echoes the sentiments of many Allied participants in the Second World War:

"Well, sir, we just got to win it. I been to countries that have met Hitler, and what I seen told me that we got to win it, and the merchant marine will do its part."

Sale, Richard *"Nothing to Report"*

World War 2 short story set in the stormy waters of the Atlantic. A Hollywood actor now doing his part in the War effort as a U.S. Naval officer aboard an East Coast-based surveillance dirigible on U-boat patrol duty turns real-life hero when he almost singlehandedly rescues the sole survivor of a torpedoed American freighter.

Sale, Richard *"Short Voyage Home"*

An unusual World War 2 survival at sea story. Two fighter pilots in an aerial dogfight – one an Englishman named Ross and the other a German – are shot down over the English Channel. Through a bit of fortuitous “luck” the RAF pilot spots an abandoned dory drifting in the Channel beneath him as he parachutes into the sea. Ross successfully makes it to the damaged small boat, which lacks a full complement of oars and had been strafed at some point in the recent past. When he sees his foe ditching in the water nearby, chivalrous Ross rescues the man from certain drowning. A battle of wits – and maritime “salvage” rights! – ensues when the German attempts to force Ross to take the boat eastward to Occupied France. Ross wins the fray, and the two men slowly head back to England. It is interesting to note that Sale portrayal of the two enemies very much corresponds to American public opinion in 1941 regarding the English and German national characters. The downed Englishman is seen as a man of bravery and intellectual resources. The author’s portrait of the German, on the other hand is entirely negative: the Nazi is arrogant, sneaky, thoroughly lacking in morals and a true barbarian.

Sale, Richard "*Torpedo.*"

Sale anthropomorphizes a World War 1 era torpedo and uses it (actually, a "she" according to Sale) to strike a blow against Nazi tyranny in this short story published just one short month before American entry into the Second World War. His back story has it that the torpedo had been manufactured in the United States for a U.S. Navy destroyer in 1918. Sent to the South Pacific aboard the destroyer during the waning days of the war, the torpedo ends up beached - and unexploded - after a German sea raider destroys the American warship. A French colonial (he'd coincidentally - and conveniently - been a torpedo man when in the French Navy) living on a small atoll in French Polynesia finds the torpedo in the early 1920s, turns it (or "her") into a lawn ornament (!) and then rearms the weapon after the 1940 Fall of France. Shortly thereafter a German sea raider stops off at his atoll to take on provisions and drop off a load of survivors from the many Allied and neutral ships they'd sunk. With most of the ship's German crew ashore, the patriotic Frenchman secretly rigs the torpedo onto an old skiff and, à la *The African Queen*, pilots his "Old girl" onto the anchored warship. For another of the author's 1940s "torpedoes-go-to-war" tales, see his "Warhead," which appeared in the July 19, 1941 issue of *Argosy Weekly*.

Sale, Richard "*Warhead*"

Bill Brookfield, an English RAF officer invalidated out of the service after being wounded in aerial action over the North Sea, seeks recuperation at the family estate on an island in the Bahamas. Initially all he wants to do is go fishing in the Atlantic aboard the family steam yacht, but war soon intrudes when he learns of a German U-boat in the vicinity which is preying upon British merchant vessels. One day soon after, while picnicing on a deserted atoll, Bill and his wife Marion stumble upon an unexploded German torpedo ("Gott strafe England" is scrawled in a Teutonic hand on its side), and Bill hatches a plot to find the prowling U-boat and sink it with its own lethal armament. That is precisely what he does when, later in the day, he encounters the submarine attacking a British armed merchant vessel (the fictitious steamer RAJAH). Though this short story was published six months before America's entry into World War 2, there can be no doubt as to author Sale's sympathies - he's pro-Britain all the way!

Sanders, Leonard *Act of War: A Novel of Love and Treason*

Sanders' fevered imaginings of a perfidious German plot to destroy the NORMANDIE in New York City during the early days of the Second World War.

Saxton, Alexander *Bright Web in the Darkness.*

Saxton's earnest novel looks at the labor movement in San Francisco Bay Area shipyards during World War 2, with a focus on what today would be labeled gender and racial issues. His heroine is an African-American "Rosie the Riveter" (actually her name is Joyce Allen and she's a welder) working at the fictitious East Bay San Martin Shipyards (a stand-in for the famous World War 2 Richmond, Calif. Kaiser Shipyard facilities). Saxton soberly documents the young woman's life at the shipyard where she, like other "Negro" employees, have been shunted into a powerless auxiliary of the welders' union where she's forced to pay union dues but is denied any job rights or even real participation in union activities. Saxton follows this very decent, hard working woman as African-American co-workers and white sympathizers challenge the union on its racial and gender bias (the union comes across as a heavy in Saxton's narrative) by seeking redress from, first, President Roosevelt's independently-established Fair Employment Practices Board, and then later through the federal and state court systems. Joyce's white roommate Sally O'Regan, also a shipyard welder, takes up the cause of equality and, in a subplot, this becomes a sore of contention between Sally and her husband Tom (a naval gunner stationed aboard the fictitious Liberty ship ANDREW ROGERS, primarily in North Atlantic convoy service). Joyce's own boyfriend, an African-American artist named Charlie Gammon, is a merchant seaman who is killed somewhere in the South Pacific when his ship is attacked by Japanese forces.

Schisgall, Oscar *"I'll Never Go Back"*

A *Liberty* “short, short story” filled to the gills with hokum and propaganda. Young Navy nurse, survivor of the fall of the Philippines, returns home to Maine to find the man she loves, a merchant mariner, also back home after surviving the torpedoing of his tanker — the fictitious CITY OF TULSA — off the coast of Virginia. He is suffering from “nerves” and hasn’t recovered from his ordeal, but nonetheless wants to marry her. He also never wants to go to sea again, instead wanting to stay ashore to look for work. Miss Nurse, fearing him now a coward, says, in her best Patriotic Voice “no.” Actually she says: “Go back to sea. Get a grip on yourself.” Suffice to say, he gets a grip, re-enlists in the merchant marine and our Nurse agrees to marry him — and then re-ups herself with the Navy. Seems she’s been suffering from a bad case of the nerves, too, but his example has given her the courage to go back to her service in the Navy.

Schisgall, Oscar "*Wings of Wrath*"

Lurid World War 2 stew by the "Author of *I Married a Nazi*"! Parts 1 and 2 of this serial are set aboard the fictitious British steamer CARTHAGE, torpedoed en route from Scandinavia to England. After a rescue at sea, the usual plot lines of popular magazine serials arise: assumed and mistaken identities, romance and — this being World War 2 — espionage, all served up with a generous helping of coincidence.

Schubert, Paul "*Lover's Touch*"

A one-page "*American* short, short story." The former captain of a famous German ocean liner (the fictitious ATLANTIK), now a U-boat commandant, must make a painful, split second decision when he sees the vessel within the range his periscope. The problem? The ATLANTIK has been in an English port at the outbreak of war and had been taken over by the British government. "Now she was sailing under the 'red duster,' the British merchant ensign [and was] and enemy to Germany." After agonizing, the naval officer sends two torpedoes streaming toward his former command, and is relieved when they miss their target – only to realize a second later that the ATLANTIK has altered course and is running on a course to ram his submarine.

Schubert's story is interesting for its sympathetic portrayal of the German naval officer. Though the Battle of the Atlantic was raging by the time that the story reached print, the author looks humanely at his chief character. Within a few short months American public sentiment was such that no author could (or would) portray Axis soldiers and sailors in such a favorable light. See also two contemporary works by William Havighurst ("*Last Voyage*" (1940) and *No Homeward Course* (1941)) which portray German Second World War maritime officers as people rather than cardboard enemies.

Schulberg, Budd "Passport to Nowhere"

This dark tale of an accomplished Polish Jew's futile attempt to emigrate to pre-War Palestine is set in the late 1930s. Schulberg's protagonist is Nathan Solomon, an artist (a painter) who quits his native land in the late 1920s after a pogrom had killed his lover (a young Christian woman). Over the next few years he moves on to and is forced out of Berlin and then Paris in the wake of Europe's rising fascism. Failing to obtain French citizenship, Solomon decides to move to Palestine and accordingly books a 3rd Class ticket on the Italian steamer VENUS DE MILO sailing out of Marseilles. Aboard the ship he's befriended aboard by a Jewish American couple on a holiday cruise to the Holy Land and also by a wealthy 1st Class woman ("an adventurer") who admires his painting style. The author draws a riveting portrait of shipboard life, with particularly fine descriptions of 1st and 3rd Class social conventions. When the ship arrives in Palestine Solomon is denied entry because he does not have enough cash with him to prove that he's not be a burden to the mandated territory. 1st Class passengers eventually take up a collection to aid the Jew, but the DE MILO's captain refuses to allow him the money because, as an Italian shipmate sailing an Italian vessel, such "would not please the Fascists" (i.e., Italy's rulers). The Italian captain forcibly keeps him aboard the DE MILO while the ship is docked in Palestine, carries him back to Cyprus and then hustles him ashore there. Without money, Solomon is nonetheless at least temporarily safe. Schulberg angrily closes his story noting that "darkness was the only refuge now" for a Jew like Solomon.

Scott, Douglas *The Albatross Run.*

A searing - and utterly convincing - depiction of a British merchant sea captain's descent into near-madness while taking his ship (the fictitious freighter KILDARE GLEN) on an unescorted voyage from India's Bombay Roads across the southern Indian Ocean (the so-called "Albatross Run") to South Africa. Set in late 1943 / early 1944, Scott's protagonist is Captain William Taggart, an internationally acclaimed hero who had earlier in the war taken on and bested a surfaced U-boat which had attacked his ship. By this point in the war, however, Taggart has begun showing signs of an ever-escalating emotional breakdown, a meltdown precipitated by the death of his only son in the North African campaign. By turns iron-willed (some would say a bully) and sympathetic, Taggart is all but destroyed by the isolation of sea command. As he fails emotionally, discipline aboard the KILDARE GLEN plummets and by the novel's midpoint he resembles nothing if not a merchant mariner version of Herman Wouk's infamous Captain Queeg of *Caine Mutiny* notoriety. Overtones of *Billy Budd*, too, are present as Taggart first takes an intense dislike to his young, 16 year old cabin boy, then begins to actually persecute the hapless youth. When the cabin boy dies after having taken ill with what eventually proves to be poliomyelitis, Taggart's crew turn thoroughly against him and, in supreme irony, deliberately keep the KILDARE GLEN from maximizing her speed towards port when Taggart himself is taken ill with appendicitis.

Scott, Douglas *The Burning of the Ships*

Political intrigue, espionage and sabotage in Vichy-controlled West Africa (chiefly Senegal) and North Africa (Algiers) during 1942 and 1943. Scott's hero is English ship captain John Laidlaw Rennie who is held briefly as a prisoner of the Vichy French in Senegal after the ship in which he had been traveling was torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic. Back in England sometime later Rennie runs a foul of real-life turncoat spy Kim Philby after an encounter with Charles De Gaulle. Rennie's unhappy Senegal interlude serves as prelude for much later unpleasantness (some of it caused at least indirectly by Philby) when the English captain is forced to take his injured freighter (the fictitious Canadian ship FORT DARLING) to Algiers for repairs. There Rennie runs into a murky world of pro-Vichy versus pro-Resistance French violence, none too well controlled by the Allies who had only recently taken control of North Africa. The novel's double climax has a Nazi saboteur nearly blowing up the entire waterfront of Algiers (à la Halifax, 1918), followed shortly thereafter by a failed Vichy-led putsch which aimed at deposing General De Gaulle.

Scott, Douglas *Chains*

World War 2 story focusing on the captain of a merchant vessel, whose ship is torpedoed by a U-boat and ends up in a Prisoner of War camp. He escapes the camp, only later to be accused of being a collaborator.

Scott, Douglas *Die for the Queen*

Another Scott World War 2 maritime tale: this time it's bluff and counter-bluff as the British Admiralty sends the liner QUEEN ELIZABETH – the world's then-largest liner – on her secret 1940 maiden voyage from Great Britain to the United States in what turned out to be a successful attempt to elude the German U-boats which were waiting for her. The novel is very much in the Herman Wouk / *Winds of War* tradition, with its (romantic) action stretched across pre-War and then World War 2 Ireland, Scotland and Germany. Scott credits the idea for his story to an unpublished short story entitled "A Trick To Us" written by Ben Goldsworthy, a real-life World War 2 British naval officer who had been assigned to duty in the Clyde approaches at the time of the QUEEN ELIZABETH's very real March 1940 mad dash across the Atlantic to the safety of New York City.

Scott, James Maurice *Sea-Wyf and Biscuit*

The *SAN FELIX*, an overloaded, refugee-packed freighter is sunk - whether by torpedo from a submarine or by hitting a drifting mine is unclear - in the Indian Ocean after escaping the Feb. 1942 fall of Singapore to the Japanese. Four survivors (a mysterious woman, two English passengers and the ship's mulatto purser) find their way out of the water and onto a wooden liferaft which becomes their home for many weeks before drifting to a deserted island. After many misadventures the woman and the two English men are rescued. The survivors part with a vow to go their separate ways and not meet in the future. Years later a series of enigmatic messages are posted in the announcements section of the London Daily Telegraph and the three survivors are forced to gather together one last time. At that meeting it is revealed that the mysterious young woman (with whom one of the men had fallen in love) was a nun, something which she had concealed from them all the time that they were adrift at sea.

Scott's novel is an engaging one, full of adventure, drama and a sweet romance of sorts. Early on in the novel his descriptions of the approaching fall of Singapore are superb, as are later descriptions of the ill-fated *SAN FELIX* filled to the bursting point with the volatile mix of over 1,000 fear-maddened refugees, inefficient (and venial officers) and an unhappy, mutinous lascar crew. The four survivors' weeks adrift on the liferaft are vividly described as Scott probes the aspects of group - and individual - psychology which keep the men and woman alive. Of particular note is his examination of the deep-felt, casual racism that motivates one of the English men, a racism that leads inevitably to the death of the mulatto purser.

Finally, it should be noted that the novel's conceit is that it is based on a true story, and that the novel was prompted by a very real series of newspaper announcements which had appeared in the London Daily Telegraph between March and May 1951. Whether true or not, this lends a sense of mystery to Scott's dramatic and engaging story.

In 1957 the novel was made into the affecting, bittersweet film "Sea Wife" starring Richard Burton and a very young (and very beautiful) Joan Collins.

Scott, Justin *Normandie Triangle*

Plodding espionage pop thriller set in New York at the height of World War 2 initially involving the fictitious sabotage of the NORMANDIE and then turning to a plot to sink the QUEEN MARY at sea with 12,000 allied troops aboard. A fitting near-companion to Sanders' *Act of War* (see above).

Sercombe, Ronald G. *"Bessie Arbruster Goes a Scuttlin'"*

Bessie rides --well, boats — to the rescue when a merchant ship, the fictitious CITY OF GLASGOW, overloaded with a cargo of TNT catches fire offshore and threatens to explode in a fire ball that would make the Halifax Disaster look like a picnic. With the Coast Guard too far away to help, Bessie rounds up an armada of small boats, gets the CITY OF GLASGOW towed far offshore into deep water and then watches as the ship explodes and sinks.

Sercombe, Ronald G. *"Bessie Arbruster Snags a Whoppersnapper"*

Liberty tag line: "Bessie proves there's more than fish to be caught in the sea when she hooks a Coast guard ensign and turns an angling contest into a wholesale rescue." Translation: Bessie and her powerboat rescue a U.S. submarine which is in mortal danger after having sunk offshore. (O.K., this one rather stretches the concept of "merchant shipping" focused World War 2 nautical fiction, but old Bessie's such a pistol that she deserves another listing!)

Shaw, Irwin *"Faith at Sea"*

Shaw takes a formula that was tired even back in 1943 — appendicitis at sea — and reinvigorates it in this rather sweet World War 2 short story about wartime friendship and camaraderie. Set aboard the fictitious tramp freighter S.S. ROSCOE, which has lost its convoy in the stormy North Atlantic still many days away from the safety of English waters. Shaw's protagonists include the vessel's Navy gunnery crew, their commanding officer (a young lieutenant) and the ROSCOE's rather unfeeling civilian captain. The gunnery crew itself is composed of youngsters, several no older than 16 or 17, and when one of their number comes down with appendicitis it is up to the Navy officer to do an emergency operation at sea. The "faith" referred to in the story's title refers to the trust that the young gunnery crew places in their "older" lieutenant (who's all of 35), and that faith is ultimately justified when his operation proves a success. Viewed from a contemporary perspective, this short story reminds us that many of America's fighting men and merchant mariners were in reality teenagers barely out of adolescence.

Shaw, Irwin *"Sailor off the Bremen"*

A Nazi steward serving aboard the liner BREMEN comes ashore in New York to seduce a young passenger and instead suffers a horrible beating in revenge for treatment that he (and others) had meted out to Communist crew members on the ship. A very political, decidedly anti-Nazi piece.

Sherlock, John *The Amindra Gamble*

North Atlantic World War 2 drama as England attempts to smuggle out her gold reserves to the safety of Canada aboard a passenger liner. Those wily Nazis naturally discovery this — and are quickly in hot pursuit!

Small, Sidney Herschel "*The Castaways*"

Interesting as a period piece, though certainly not as believable fiction. *Post* tag line: "Captain Wallis hated the Japs as much as they hated him — which explains why he deliberately let them capture him and take him aboard one of their infamous prison ships." Wallis, late of the Japanese-sunk freighter GALATEA, becomes part of a U.S. Navy team attempting to capture the MIYAKO MARU, a prison ship en route from Formosa to Manchuria. Wallis' son just happens to be a prisoner aboard, but that's one coincidence that the reader will just have to swallow. The story's 1945 "message" involves Wallis' view of his fellow team members, all of whom are Japanese-Americans. Wallis initially hates and distrusts them as nothing more than "Japs," but of course comes to respect them as patriotic fellow Americans once they've successfully taken over MIYAKO MARU and rescued its ill-treated Allied prisoners (including his son). The "Japs," of course are depicted as fiendishly cruel, uncivilized subhumans.

Small, Sidney Herschel "*Lady at Sea*"

Romantic piffle set against the backdrop of the 1930s Japanese war against China. Act 1. A wise-talking journalist (this being the 1930s, think Clark Gable) arranges to meet his fiancée (Loretta Young would do quite nicely here) aboard an American liner – the fictitious SAMOA – in Yokohama where the vessel is calling during an around-the-world cruise. There's of course trouble afoot: the young woman has fallen for the ship's 2nd Officer, a dashing blond Viking of a man (Randolph Scott? Gene Raymond?). Act 2. The threesome (and a whole ship load of passengers and crew) set sail in the China Seas. A shipwreck (the SAMOA sinks) off the fog-shrouded coast of Formosa is soon followed by a lifeboat encounter with pirates; both events enable our plucky journalist to show his stuff (he's both brave *and* witty). Act 3. Our heroine comes to her senses and realizes that it's a journalist's wife she wants to be! Fadeout.

Smith, Patrick D. *The Seas that Mourn: A Novel*

An autobiographical novel about fictitious World War 2 seaman Jimmy Kindall's life at sea after abandoning his Mississippi college for the merchant marine. Though Smith's writing is rather wooden, his descriptions of alter-ego Kindall's hurried training at a U.S. Maritime Service Training Station in Florida is of interest, as are his depictions of North Atlantic and Murmansk Run convoys aboard the old freighter JUNIPER SPRINGS. Even sixty years after the JUNIPER SPRING's sinking by a German U-boat, Smith remains bitter (deservedly so!) about treatment given merchant seamen during the war by civilians and armed services personnel who often didn't believe that merchant mariners were "really" part of the Allied war effort. Indeed, the authors' anger, documented by the many World War 2-era slights and insults endured by civilian seamen, makes *The Seas That Mourn* a uniquely passionate novel.

Smythe, Tom *Atlantic Tramp*

Dedicated simply “To the Merchant Navy,” Smythe’s *Atlantic Tramp* should be on the must read list of anyone interested in contemporary wartime British attitudes towards their merchant services during the early years of the Second World War. At times almost mawkishly sentimental, sometimes reeking of official propaganda (“British chivalry on the high seas is sharply contrasted to the cruel and cowardly methods of the enemy” — dust jacket blurb), yet at other times profoundly moving, Smythe’s novel looks at one British freighter, the fictitious RAMBLER, during the period August 1940 through May 1941 as the ship endures a succession of North Atlantic voyages, sometimes in convoy, other times sailing solo but with her crew always keenly aware of the importance of their mission to keep Britain’s sea lanes open. Smythe’s opening paragraph describes the tired old RAMBLER and sets the stage for his tale:

“Her scarred and battered hull, and the slatternly air she carried with her, told their own tale. Typhoons in the China seas, monsoons in the Indian Ocean, blizzards in the North Atlantic, hurricanes in the Southern Pacific — she bore the marks of them all; but, having borne and ridden through them triumphantly, you could almost hear her say on her safe return: ‘Here we are a again, not so trim, but as jaunty as on the day we first went into commission.’”

While the RAMBLER sees plenty of action on the North Atlantic, it’s Smythe’s quieter moments of crew shipboard and portside life that stay with the reader. Of particular interest is one chapter detailing a nighttime air raid on the ship’s homeport (Liverpool?). For the record, the RAMBLER is attacked on various voyages by Nazi bombers and endures many submarine alerts. The novel climaxes with the crew of the RAMBLER taking on and besting a German U-boat somewhere close to Britain on a homebound voyage. As for the Nazi foe, Smythe, in the voice of one mariner aboard the RAMBLER, couldn’t be more clear: “Germans — they’re not men, they’re swine.” Another remarks, “German seamen should stink in the nostrils of everybody decent when this lot is over.” Clearly a commonly held sentiment during the war years.

Sorenson, Harold Francis *"Delivery at Sea"*

Short Stories tag line: "It was Sparks who first thought there was something wrong about the THORLESON." Set aboard the ploddingly slow freighter PINDAR, at sea in the tropics (Indian Ocean?), sailing out of convoy. The PINDAR encounters what appears to be a Swedish tramp vessel, the THORLESON. Wireless operator "Sparks" thinks that something about her looks fishy, and soon figures out that the ship is actually an Axis prison ship, carrying Allied prisoners of war back to Europe. Taking the initiative, the PINDAR's Navy artillery crew attacks the THORLESON (herself heavily armed, it turns out), and, after a brief firefight, succeeds in overwhelming the enemy ship and freeing her prisoners. Sorenson's story is enlivened early on with an interesting description of the PINDAR's crew making ready to abandon ship when, mistakenly thinking the THORLESON to be an enemy raider, they prepare their own lifeboats for launching:

"On his way back to the radio room, Sparks saw crew members rushing in and out of their quarters in the stern. The men brought out their blankets, and armloads of their possessions. They threw the blankets on the deck, flung their armloads on the blankets, and proceeded to fold and roll the blankets into bundles. They knew they probably had run into an enemy ship, and they knew it was almost certainly a vessel that could outfight the PINDAR. It meant a maximum of ten minutes to take to the boats, or perhaps no time at all, after coming into range.

Standing in the radio room doorway, Sparks looked into the faces of the men as they came up the vertical iron ladder to the boat deck. Most of them grinned. Under the directions of the second and third officers, who carried their mahogany boxed sextants, the boats were uncovered, bundles flung in, and men turned the cranks that swung the boats out."

Sperry, Armstrong *Hull-Down for Action*

Sperry's late entry into the sneaky Japanese / arrogant Nazi World War 2 adventure novel genre is set in the South Pacific in 1941. Two recently hired crew of the trading schooner ISLAND QUEEN – a Japanese-American steward who'd formerly worked for Matson Line and a German 1st Mate posing as the sole Danish survivor of a torpedoed vessel – incite a mutiny and force the vessel's American captain and three others (two Americans and a Samoan) onto a makeshift raft in mid-ocean. Before forcing the four onto the raft our nasty Japanese steward informs the quartet that he'll be turning the ISLAND QUEEN into a Q-Ship which will lure Australia-bound convoys to waiting Japanese submarines. As a final aside, he tells them that this day itself will go down in history (it's Dec. 7, 1941 – the two Axis baddies obviously know in advance that Pearl Harbor is about to be attacked). After a week or so bobbing about aboard their raft, the four Allies make it to a tropical island, Guadalcanal, no less. And there, after braving cannibals and the malevolent jungle itself, they meet up with a New Zealand intelligence officer who tells them that there is a secret Japanese submarine base somewhere on the island. The plot couldn't get much thicker – but it does! While trekking to what they hope will be a secluded harbor (where an Allied schooner is at anchor), the trio (the fourth ISLAND QUEEN American had been wounded and was staying put on the island) come upon not the sailing vessel they're looking for but rather the ISLAND QUEEN herself, now rigged up with munitions and ready to set sail to take on an incoming American convoy. Before you can say “arrogant Nazis aren't as smart as they think they think themselves to be,” the threesome retake the ship (the Nazi is soon their prisoner). Naturally, at this instant a Japanese sub approaches (turns out the Americans have stumbled upon that secret submarine base) and, after the Americans lob some hand grenades and bombs into the vessel's conning tower, the submarine is sunk (taking with her to his death the nefarious Japanese-American steward). Sperry's tale concludes with the retaken ISLAND QUEEN en route to Australia, where the two Americans and the Samoan plan on signing up with the U.S. Marine Corps.

Steele, Wilbur Daniel "*The Dark Hour*"

World War 1 tale set aboard an unnamed ship in the North Atlantic war "zone," heading westward to America, "in the dark void between two continents." Steele's two characters – a doctor and a patient of his whom the doctor believes to be dying – engage in a dark, somber dialog on the meaning of war, specifically the Great War of which they have personally played a small part. The doctor is clearly despondent, while his grievously wounded patient takes a more positive view and sees "democracy" as the salvation that will arise out of the ashes of World War 1. Of "The Dark Hour," Edward J. O'Brien in his *The Best Short Stories of 1918 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story* noted "In its message to the American people it yields in significance only to the best of President Wilson's state papers." At story's end, the patient is still alive as his ship continues her westward journey.

There is a time-added poignancy to the Sept. 1940 *Atlantic Monthly* republishing of the story. This was the period immediately following the fall of France, the British evacuation at Dunkirk and the beginning of the London Blitz. America was of course still neutral, and Steele's message of calm optimism in the face of European hostilities was probably meant to reassure a jittery nation. In hindsight that optimism was both unrealistic and misguided. Indeed, by the Autumn of 1940 the very same seas upon which Steele's doctor and patient had sailed back in 1918 were being transformed anew into the ferocious World War 2 Battle of the Atlantic.

Steni, L. *Soldier Adrift*

Atmospheric, moody sea novel at times reminiscent of B. Traven's *The Death Ship* (1934). A medical officer aboard a troopship in convoy returning to England from the Far East immediately after the conclusion of the Second World War must contend with a mysterious epidemic which seemingly threatens to claim the lives of many men. Is it a new, yet undiscovered tropical disease or a virulent new strain of the plague? The unnamed troopship was a luxury liner in pre-War days, and Steni successfully captures the claustrophobic, nightmarish atmosphere of shipboard life on a vessel doing convoy duty, noting "Now was the last time that ships would ever move in convoy, and this one would be dispersed before they reached home." The novel contains many flashbacks to the War years, including incidents revolving around convoy work and violent sinkings of merchant vessels at sea.

Sterling, Stewart *"Fire Eater"*

Lt. Eddie Relch of the New York City Fire Dept.'s Marine Division is none too pleased when 28-year veteran Gus Dagnan is transferred to his unit. He believes that Dagnan is too old to work on the line and indeed thinks a desk job a better fit for the older man. But a major blaze at an Army depot and dock on the Hudson River proves how wrong he was after Relch and a number of stevedores become trapped in the cargo hold of a ship which had been loading war materials dockside when the fire had begun. All too soon the freighter (the fictitious FURBETT) is ablaze herself, and with a particularly dangerous cargo (menthol-benzol, a chemical designed to be used by PT-boats and cruisers in throwing out smokescreens) that threatens to add to the conflagration. But Gus Dagnan comes to the rescue of the trapped men. Wearing an asbestos suit and carrying an oxy-acetylene torch with him, the older man manages to cut his way into the hold where they are trapped and then, as the FURBETT slowly turns turtle and sinks into the Hudson, cuts an escape hatch in the vessel's hull, thus freeing all the men. Later Dagnan admits that he'd been frightened all along, but, as he tells his now grateful battalion leader, patriotism plus paternal pride had guided him in his act of bravery:

“... all that stuff on the pier – I was afraid that it might go up all in smoke. I got a boy over there on the other side, in the Marines ... I'd sure hate to feel that any of the stuff he might be needing was burned up here if we could stop it.”

Stern, George *"Masters' Conference"*

World War 2 focused short story, set during a British coastal convoy. An astute Welsh ship captain uncovers sabotage by a renegade Scandinavian skipper who on earlier convoys had rather ingeniously signaled German bombers as to the exact convoy position of tankers carrying fuel oil vital to Britain's defense effort. The Scandinavian captain receives a (fatal) dose of his own medicine at the hands of his erstwhile employers while the rest of the convoy reaches port safely.

Stern, George "*Petticoat Influence*"

Comic World War 2 English Channel tale. *Maclean's* tag line: "If you're the skipper of a minesweeping trawler and your wife wants a bit of fresh fish, you start fishin'. Result: a blinkin' medal." Translation: Stern's hero nets a mine instead of a fish, destroys same mine and is awarded the George Cross for his efforts.

Storm, Hans Otto *Made in U.S.A.*

Storm's sardonic tale involves an old cargo-boat (the fictitious INDIA) which, after hurriedly being tarted up by her avaricious owners and converted into an ocean liner, goes aground on an uncharted South Seas mud-bank during an around-the-world cruise. After three days and nights stranded, morale breaks down and disenchanted members the crew – joined by many bored passengers – stage a rather ridiculous mutiny-cum-revolution which accomplishes nothing and indeed very nearly sinks the vessel. At the last minute a violent storm lifts the INDIA off her mid-ocean perch and her cruise resumes. There are really no real heroes in Storm's tale, though in a bow to the general concerns of the 1930s he does issue scathing remarks about the INDIA's owners (a New York bank). On the topic of the shipping industry in general his one semi-hero (the ship's navigator) observed that "the shipping business [is] a sump of shoddiness, dishonesty and racketeering ... the traditions of the sea [do] not hold water" and that "every doorknob on a modern ship was formed to advertise the most screaming inequalities." The INDIA's passengers fare no better under Storm's cynical eye, nor do the vessel's officers and crew. Indeed, he has created a veritable ship of fools, pattering around in tedium and silliness while the rest of the world is erupting into violence (various characters allude to the ongoing Japanese hostilities in China as well as to the recently concluded Spanish Civil War). Later (1941) published in Great Britain under the Title *Three Days Reckoning*.

Strabel, Thelma *"The Flaming Tree"*

World War 2 tale. A rather Gothic women's romance story set in Key West and Cuba. A stranded merchant seaman whose ship had just been torpedoed in the Caribbean lands in Key West on Christmas Eve and is befriended by a wealthy young woman in town whose family has a more than a few "secrets." Before long the seaman is working in the family's shipyard, helping construct and man a fleet of auxiliary schooners to be used trade between mainland Florida and Cuba. When romance between the two seems to be heating up, the girl's over-controlling grandmother (this being the South, Grandma's known as "Miss Caroline") tries to break the two apart. Soon thereafter the young seaman's schooner is torpedoed in the Caribbean – but, this being a women's story, love triumphs when he turns out on the beach at Key West again. At story's end he has returned to the sea (it appears that he's sailing now in North Atlantic convoys), with his now-fiancée planning their upcoming Key West wedding. Though Strabel's story is pretty sappy overall, it does at least paint an interesting picture of wartime Havana (where several of the characters enjoy a mid-story vacation).

Strachey, John "*Ship in Convoy.*"

A straight forward, documentary-like short story about a Mediterranean convoy, told from the perspective of a British Army public relations officer traveling aboard an older transatlantic liner drafted into troopship service. The story opens in England and follows the ship, the fictitious *ILLYRIA*, as she travels in armed convoy through the Atlantic to Gibraltar and then across the Mediterranean to an unnamed port that appears to be Britain's island fortress of Malta. Strachey is particularly good at showing out how one's rank in the Army determined one's "quality of life" aboard the troopship. His hero, Squadron Leader Ford, shares a cabin in the liner's former 1st Class accommodations, while the masses of "other ranks" are packed below. Ford notes that his quarters "were not very different from first-class accommodations in a particularly crowded ship in peacetime." Though all aboard the ship certainly share in the dangers of a wartime convoy, including aerial bombardment, Squadron Leader Ford does suffer pangs of conscience regarding the treatment that he, and other officers, receive when, after the ship had nearly been sunk, he goes down for his regular breakfast and observes:

"Everything in the first-class dining room was aggressively normal. The stewards served the porridge, coffee (so-called), bacon and eggs, rolls, butter and marmalade which the printed card announced." War might be raging, but the high service standards of fabled British shipping lines such as The Cunard (as British merchant mariners called Cunard), P&O and others would be preserved, as Squadron Leader Ford learns, at all costs!

Sturdy, John Rhodes *The Grey Funnel Line*

Maclean's tag line: "Civilians on a Navy ship! Like a blinkin' passenger line, swore the Chief Gunner's Mate — but that was before young Georgie went overboard." Late in the War, after a major repair job at Norfolk, Va., the Royal Navy cruiser MIDLAND, with a temporary captain and crew, heads back to England with two special passengers: two young English boys being repatriated back to their families after having been evacuated to America in 1940. Surprisingly, the two children serve as a catalyst towards knitting the green, apathetic crew together as an effective military unit. An encounter with a German submarine pack, followed by one of the lads going overboard accidentally (he's ultimately rescued) completes the process. And who comes to value the children's shipboard presence the most? Why the Chief Gunner's Mate, of course! Despite the children-at-sea angle, though, Rhodes' story is neither sugar-coated nor sappy, and actually presents today's reader with an interesting look at late World War 2 public attitudes toward the war effort.

Sturdy, John Rhodes *"The Story of Maitland's Reply"*

Rousing tale set aboard the fictitious British tanker HALIFAX in the North Atlantic during an eastbound convoy. The ship has been fitted with a rocket launched Halifax fighter, with R.A.F. Flight Officer Maitland in charge of the plane. It is understood that should circumstances force him to take to the air to defend the convoy against German bombers, there will be no chance of his making land once the battle is finished and he will have to ditch in the cold Atlantic. The HALIFAX's officers all find Maitland a rather cool individual and think that he "felt himself superior" to them. A last minute encounter just before Maitland takes off to fight the Germans changes the mind of one officer as he comes to realize that Maitland is just like them: longing for home and tired of war, but ready to fight until final victory.

Sturdy, John Rhodes *"Without Convoy."*

This World War 2 short story set aboard an unnamed "free" Norwegian freighter. One of the vessel's junior officers is Rolf, who chafes at merchant marine wartime life, wishing instead to become a combat pilot in order to strike what he feels would be a real blow against the Nazi war machine. But his repeated attempts at signing up in either the U.S. Army Air Force or the R.A.F. have been rebuffed and instead he must stay with his ship. Much of Sturdy's tale is set in the North Atlantic where Rolf's ship, in convoy, suffers a well-described mid-ocean collision with another merchant vessel and is disabled when her steering-gear is damaged in the incident. Repairs are made, but by the time the ship is underway again she's far out of convoy and is forced to undertake the rest of her voyage alone. All's relatively well until, within a day's sail from England, the ship is attacked by the Luftwaffe. Seizing the ship's small machine gun, Rolf singlehandedly shoots one of the Nazi planes out of the skies (though not before the plane has strafed the freighter and mortally wounded her captain), and the R.A.F. soon appears on the scene to chase off the other enemy planes. Though wounded himself, Rolf realizes that he's just been given the chance he'd hoped for: to personally take on — and vanquish — a German warplane.

Sullivan, Frank. "Nobody But Nobody Undersells Uncle Sam."

Sullivan's tongue-in-cheek reverie on post-Christmas "bargain sales" (this was written in the 1950s after all, so it's definitely "post-Christmas" and not "post-holiday" sales) turns surreal when the author spots a news item from Jan. 11, 1953 - probably from *The New York Times* - which announced that the U.S. Maritime Administration had just put the liner *PRESIDENT COOLIDGE* up for sale as surplus government property. One slight problem, though: the *COOLIDGE* had been a World War 2 casualty and in 1953 was resting underwater in the lagoon of Espiritu Santo Harbor in the New Herbrides where she'd been sunk by the Japanese eleven years earlier. Also up for sale were a variety of other sunken government-owned and/or -controlled merchant ships from the War era. Sullivan's riff on what he'd do with the sunken ships, "bargains" all, along with other strange governmental surplus property, makes for inspired, if silly, reading ; something along the lines of an Eisenhower Administration version of a Monty Python monologue!

Taylor, Samuel W. (1907-1997) "The Expert"

World War 2 *American Magazine* "storiette." Two Murmansk Run ship sinking survivors find themselves aboard a small life raft off the coast of Norway with no food. While one uselessly pontificates on this thing and that, the other's quick thinking provocation of a circling German bomber results in a food bonanza which keeps the duo well-fed until a passing convoy rescues them. His brilliant idea? Well, upon spotting the bomber he makes a series of "gestures of insulting nature, in the sign language current in every port." The result: bombs are dropped on the life raft, and all fall into the sea (the raft is too small a target for the German to hit). And up from the sea come masses of bomb-stunned and dead fish – Norwegian sushi, as it were.

Taylor, Theodore. (1907-1997) *To Kill the Leopard*

Above par Battle of the North Atlantic novel which focuses on Sullivan Jordan, an American tanker First Mate (and subsequently captain of a Q-Ship masquerading as a tanker) who has two of his ships torpedoed from under him by the same German U-boat commander. After seeing so many of his comrades die, Sullivan vows revenge on the responsible U-boat. Improbably, Sullivan is given command of an American Q-Ship (a warship masquerading as merchantman) which finally destroys his nemesis. A back plot involves French Resistance espionage and sabotage at the U-boat base in Lorient, France. Taylor's depiction of the German U-boat commander is very retro, reading almost as if it had been written at the height of hostilities: the Nazi is depicted as arrogant, vile, despicable, even sadistic. Indeed, the commander is described by one of his own men as being "an obsessed lunatic" — and another calls him a "human shark."

Thomason, John W. *"The Sergeant and the Ship"*

An interesting short story published but a few short months before the United States entered World War 2. Master Gunnery Sergeant John Houston, attached to the U.S. office of naval shipping in Tapaca, Chile, serves as an undercover agent (ostensibly as “an agent for an American exporting company, interested in minerals”). His task is to keep any eye on German and Italian shipping, in particular the German freighter KURTSCHEID which may be ferrying supplies to a German raider operating in the South Pacific. Houston soon discovers that this is indeed the case, and does his part to hamper the German war effort soon after deciding for himself that “to all practical purposes the United States was [already] in the war.” That thought reflected the growing public opinion of Americans in mid-1941 as well as one held by the editors of *The Saturday Evening Post* itself.

Thompson, Ray *The Watery Hell*

Creative Books appears to be a vanity press. Thompson's novel is a heartfelt look at freighter life during the War, focusing on the lives of three members of an East Coast maritime family working as bos'n (Jim Davis, the family patriarch), Captain (Jim's younger son Frank) and Engineer (Jim's older son Billy) aboard a variety of vessels including a T2 tanker and two Liberty ships. Despite amateurish writing and an over reliance on lengthy, expository passages, Thompson's voice is an authentic one and should be of great interest to contemporary readers. His plot line reads rather like a riff on Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War*, but from a merchant marine – rather than Navy – perspective. And he definitely has an ax to grind (albeit a justified one): the shameful treatment that U.S. merchant mariners received from their government both during and after the War. Thompson's prose is perhaps best in his physical descriptions of ships and in also in passages describing convoy duty (on the Murmansk Run, in the North Atlantic and in the Mediterranean). He writes extensively, too, on crew interpersonal relations, with interesting insight into life at sea aboard a cargo boat during the War.

Thorne, Anthony *I'm a Stranger Here Myself*

I'm a Stranger Here Myself is a novel about life on the lower deck in an armed merchant cruiser [i.e., “a former passenger liner still bearing marks of a somewhat rococo luxury”], and a very good novel it is, glowing with truth and character and humour. It is described as both a novel and a piece of autobiography (“ninety per cent. of it is fact”), and the narrator, an ordinary seaman in for a commission, is a travelled and literary young man always referred to as ‘Thorney.’ Since he, too, draws straight from life, it may well be asked why he succeeds as a novelist where so many others fail. The answer seems to be that, while rejecting any admixture of fancy, he has brought imagination to bear upon the experience he records in a way that justifies the use of the expedients of fiction. His, in brief, is a quality of observation, a feeling for character and a sense of human issues in peace and war that war-time reporting seldom encompasses. It is the novelist in Mr. Thorne, that is, who composes a faithful description of lower-deck types and manners to-day.” – *The Times Literary Supplement*, Dec. 25, 1943. The novel is included in this bibliography for its treatment of life aboard an Armed Merchant Cruiser and in particular for its descriptions of the ship’s escort duty for a slow, 6-knot Atlantic convoy. The novel is, as *The Times*’ reviewer suggested, poignant, big-hearted and very, very English! Also of note: Thorne’s even-handed, non-condemning depiction of a reciprocal gay relationship between two of Thorney’s messmates.

Toksvig, Signe *Life Boat: A Novel*

A somewhat melodramatic plot (two cousins seemingly in love with each other's husbands) mars this otherwise interesting novel, much of which is set aboard the fictitious motor ship ALTAIR as the vessel travels from New York to Germany via Denmark just after the start of the Second World War. Toksvig includes a rather Grand Hotel-ish cast of characters, including swinish Germans whose rants on the "great Germanic-Nordic race" initially perplex the ALTAIR's politically naive American passengers. The novel's most successful sequence involves the dramatic rescue of crewmen off a sinking Norwegian trawler during a violent North Atlantic hurricane.

Though the ALTAIR safely reaches port she is sunk a few months later by a German U-boat which prompts one character, safely back at home in the United States, to exclaim:

"It's the dirtiest outrage I ever heard of! A neutral ship sailing in ballast between neutral ports! Sure I know they've done it before, and that they'll do it again, the !"

The novel winds down with America not yet a participant in the Second World War, though Toksvig's American characters now clearly realize the dangers that German militarism poses to the United States. The author concludes her novel with another key character stating that the German people under the Nazis are "apostles of ruthless annihilation." That being voiced, he resigns his position as an American merchant marine officer to offer his services to the Canadian navy for the duration.

Torode, William G. *"Too Old for Service"*

Torode maintains that no one was too old for service during the early dark days of World War 2. His two chief characters, Captain “Peg-Leg” Lacey of the freighter REXBOROUGH and the ship’s wireless operator (and narrative voice for the short story) are 66 and 65 respectively. After their ship has been torpedoed in the South Atlantic, the two men are taken prisoner aboard the U-boat that had attacked them. By eavesdropping they learn that the sub’s intended next target is a crippled British aircraft carrier — and soon hatch a (successful) plot to warn off the carrier and doom the U-boat. Both men survive their ordeal. Watch for an ending worthy of O. Henry.

Townend, William *And Now England*

Published in the United States in 1939 under the title *The Rescue of Captain Leggatt*. A very interesting English novel set during the period October through December 1938 and apparently published just prior to the start of the Second World War. Townend focuses on the 47 year old captain of the British freighter COTSWOLD and looks at the world through his exceedingly pessimistic eyes. Germany's rearmament, Britain's appeasement policy, Japan's rapacious commercial policies in the Far East and the German takeover of Czechoslovakia all play out in the background as Captain Leggatt embarks on a North Atlantic voyage from London to New York and back. Leggatt has a pathological hatred of Germans (explained by the fact that his first wife had died aboard a torpedoed ferry on the Irish Sea in 1918), as well as anger at the British government and key industrialists for allowing the British merchant marine to decline so precipitously after World War I. The novel's high point is an exciting mid-ocean rescue by the COTSWOLD of crew off the sinking German freighter JOHANNA NEUMANN during a blizzard in raging seas, an incident which appears to have been inspired by the famous 1924 rescue at sea of the crew of the sinking freighter ANTIGOGNE by the American vessel PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT. The novel's one failing – and it's a major one – is a soap opera quality which reveals itself in a mind numbing series of coincidences that bring key characters together for a series of denouements. Nonetheless, Townend does quite successfully conjure that bleak period between Munich and Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939.

Townend, William *"The Death Ship"*

Nazi cruelty and credulity versus Allied bravery and resourcefulness are Townend's themes in this 1942 short story, themes common to much early war years popular fiction. Townend sets his tale in mid-Indian Ocean with an unnamed German sea raider taking over a British tramp freighter (the fictitious BLUENOSE of Newcastle-upon-Tyne). A boarding party headed up by an arrogant Nazi true believer finds the ship seemingly ravaged by bubonic plague, with sick and dying crew members on deck and in the vessel's cabins and staterooms. The ship's log tells of an especially virulent strain of the plague which infects anyone and everyone coming in contact with it. The "brave" Nazi junior officer ("one of the race destined to rule the world," he believes) grows uneasy, and uneasiness turns to fear when his own captain abandons him and the rest of the boarding party to stay aboard the BLUENOSE rather than risk infecting the Nazi sea raider with the plague. It is only after the sea raider has sailed off that the BLUENOSE's captain and crew turn the tables on their new German guests: in a twist ending, it is revealed that no one is really ill (they'd been play acting - improvised make-up had made them appear grievously ill) and that the log had been "doctored" to make it appear that plague was present. (The genius behind the plague improvisation turns out to be a Polish Army general who had fled east after Poland's fall, the very Victor Laszlo-like resistance leader the German sea raider had actually been searching for at the beginning of Townend's story). The short story concludes with a coup de grace: the now no longer arrogant Nazi prisoners learn that the BLUENOSE has given nearby Allied warships the sea raider's position - the Allies have outsmarted Hitler's "master race"!

Townend, William *Fifth Column Family*.

Set in England (chiefly London) during the period just before the start of the war (Summer 1939) through the June 1940 fall of Norway to the Nazis and its immediate aftermath. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "fifth column" as "a group of secret sympathizers or supporters of an enemy that engage in espionage or sabotage within defense lines or national borders." The dictionary notes that the term is a relatively recent one (for an age old activity), and dates to the 1936 Spanish Civil War. Townsend's aggregate protagonist is the Darris family, solidly middle class and more unwitting fifth columnists than anything else. Members include a widowed mother (father Darris had been a Royal Navy officer killed in action during the First World War) and her four young adult children (two still at university), three of whom profess pacifism. The fourth Darris, Duncan, is a patriotic ship's officer in the merchant navy who sees the dangers of Naziism and is willing to fight for his country's survival if necessary. Townend introduces a true fifth columnist in family friend Admitted, a pro-Bolshevik Communist who gathers and passes on vital British shipping movement information to Nazi agents (readers should recall that this work was written at about the time of the German-Soviet rapprochement). In what turns out to be the crucial event of the novel, Admitted, on the lam from British counter-intelligence, runs into Duncan in a small English port from whence Duncan's ship is about to sail. The fifth columnist thinks nothing of turning over information on Duncan's ship to Nazi handlers, and the convoy-less vessel is sunk in the North Sea with nearly all hands, including Admitted's supposed friend Duncan. Duncan's horrible death, described later in the tale by the ship's sole survivor, causes grief to family and friends alike, and prompts his older brother to give up his pacifistic views and join the Royal Navy. Overall, Townsend's prose is passionate and angry, particularly when dealing with the Darris family's narcissistic younger children (who seem to personify a "me generation" that Townend finds particularly repugnant). *Fifth Column Family* additionally provides a very interesting look back at contemporary British attitudes on a variety of topics ranging from pacifism to the role of the British merchant marine, all framed within the time period of the 1939-1940 "phony war."

Townend, William *"Happy Ever After."*

Chief Engineer Truscott of the tramp freighter KOLBA, in port in Naples, comes to the aid of a disreputable young Englishman fleeing the Black Shirts only to later learn that he had been conned by the rascal. Though the tale itself is slight, Townend does a credible job conjuring the atmosphere of an Italian port at the height of Mussolini's Fascist power.

Townend, William *Red Ensign-White Ensign*

Townend's novel looks back to the years immediately before World War 2 in this work dating to 1942. His protagonist, marine engineer David Kilver, is a naive man working for a pro-German shipping line. Under the spell of love, he fails to recognize either the broad threat of fascism or the more immediate threats of German spies whom he encounters in Alexandria. All this changes once war begins: David's ship is sunk by the GRAF SPEE and he briefly becomes a prisoner in the German naval vessel ALTMARK. When rescued, he quickly changes to the White Ensign (i.e., joins the Royal Navy). The May 9, 1942 *Times Literary Supplement's* somewhat damning review of *Red Ensign-White Ensign* was written by no less a personage than British maritime novelist H.M. Tomlinson. In it he notes "The book is pungent with expletives, and suggests that the cinema screen has infected the writing of fiction with improbable coincidence through toying with time and space." Alas, the cinema never seemed to take an interest in Townend, and none of his large body of work appears to have been turned into film.

Townend, William "*Rendezvous*"

Set during the early days of World War 2. *Collier's* tag line: "The passenger on Captain Brame's ship knew the sea but didn't know the captain." German naval officer, pretending to be a Czech fleeing the Nazis, talks his way aboard the freighter TARNBROOK which is bound, from Brazil, for England. Though he pretends to know nothing of the sea, his real identity is established in mid-Atlantic when he attempts to hijack the ship in order to rendezvous with a German U-boat that has been awaiting him. Quick action by the TARNBROOK's master aborts that plan, and British destroyers in the vicinity soon dispatch the lurking sub. As nearly always the case in World War 2 popular sea fiction, the German is depicted as double-dealing, duplicitous, arrogant and dishonest. The British, on the other hand, in the character of stalwart Captain Brame are seen as retaining their sense of common decency and humanity, even in time of war. Indeed, the good captain decides to not transfer the German officer to one of the British destroyers, knowing, as he does that the British are about to sink the submarine containing the German's colleagues and friends.

Townend, William *Sabina's Brother*

One of Townend's most accomplished and compelling works, this novel presents a well-nuanced portrait of a merchant ship's crew during wartime trans-Atlantic convoy service. Set in 1941 just prior to America's entry into the war, the book focuses on the fictitious freighter ORANGE RIVER:

“The ORANGE RIVER was a wartime ship, built by a firm on Tyneside and resembling, down to the last bolt and rivet and strake, other ships built on the Clyde and Mersey and Tees and in Philadelphia and Baltimore and San Francisco and Vancouver. Her speed was poor, her construction was sound, and her accommodation excellent, even the deck-hands and firemen having mess-rooms of their own and bathrooms. Their quarters were light and airy and comfortable and they were, in this ship and her sister ships, regarded by the designers as men who deserved something better to live in than the dark and dirty slums of fo'c'sles that had been so long considered good enough for sailors by British shipowners.” (pp. 72-73)

Much of the novel takes place during the ORANGE RIVER's ill-fated last voyage (after losing her convoy a torpedo sends her to the bottom of the North Atlantic with great loss of life), and turns to her surviving crew members as they endure a harrowing 34 days at sea in an open boat. Of particular interest is a young American pacifist (the brother alluded to in Townend's title), whose Christian beliefs — worn on his shirt sleeve, so to speak — help bring a handful of the ship's crew safely back to England. In all, a riveting, harrowing and authoritative tale of survival at sea, made all the more compelling by the contemporary wartime flavor of Townend's prose.

Townend, William *The Ship's Company*

Another excellent read from one of Britain's preeminent maritime authors. In his *Ship's Company* Townend documents a series of postwar voyages undertaken by the English tramp freighter M/V IKOMA, an "unhappy" ship if ever there was one. The vessel's master is arrogant, brutal (indeed, sadistic) Captain Hawksweed, a man of many hatreds, not all reserved for his officers and crew. Indeed, the novel's many narrative strands, which come together during the final section of the book with the IKOMA homeward bound across a stormy North Atlantic, focus on Hawksweed's abominable treatment of his much younger wife, his anti-Semitic hatred for the ship's 2nd Steward, his contempt for 1st Mate Millsden (a decorated World War 2 hero), his inability to sympathize with the ship's elderly, clearly dying, Storekeeper ... the list is virtually endless. What is most amazing here, however, is Townend's ability to paint the shipmaster as a brute, pure and simple, while at the same time rendering him in pathetic, very human terms. And though Hawksweed is the author's primary focus, the IKOMA's entire ship's company is so well presented as to make this an ensemble novel of the first rate.

Though the work is set circa 1947/1948, it is so thoroughly suffused with both images and deeds from World War 2 as to make it a war-related novel. In particular, Townend uses a series of war back stories to fill in the narrative histories of the IKOMA's officers and crew. Such as of how the 1st Officer, having been torpedoed, navigated a lifeboat full of survivors hundreds of miles across the open sea to eventual rescue. Or how a gruff A.B. arrived home from a Murmansk Run convoy to find that his wife had just been killed with a hundred other working class women when a V2 hit the Woolworth's where they'd been shopping. Or how another crew member had been trapped and nearly drowned when the Navy ship in which was serving as a matlow sank after action with the enemy. These are but a few of the tales Townend relates, and with each telling, the reasons for the IKOMA's unhappy state of affairs become more clear.

Also of great interest is the author's portrayal of postwar Britain's financial and cultural austerity, and of how the nation's international reputation had taken a decided downturn - particularly as the Jewish/Palestinian conflict heated upon after 1946. Indeed, it is ironic that Captain Hawksweed's eventual downfall is tied to the Palestinian conflict for in one of the plots turning points a member of the IKOMA's crew convinces the vessel's very gullible (and Jewish) 2nd Steward Abie Loman that the captain had, in cold blood, shot and killed Jews in Palestine when the ship was recently in port at Haifa. The novel reaches a chilling conclusion with Captain Hawksweed's mid-Atlantic suicide (he jumps overboard), and even promise of salvage money for all (the IKOMA tows a disabled American freighter to the safety of Britain) fails to turn the surviving ship's company into a happy one.

Townend, William *Sink and Be Damned*

This impassioned novel dating to the early days of World War 2 finds author Townend at the height of his narrative powers. Characters are delineated initially in broad brush strokes, and emerge gradually as fully realized creations as Townend moves his story forward. The novel opens in Galveston, Texas in late August 1939 with the British tramp freighter GRANGEMOUTH, skippered by Captain Inchmere, preparing to sail to Hamburg, Germany with a load of cargo. War erupts with the vessel mid-ocean, and the GRANGEMOUTH is diverted to England. Also aboard the tramp is an arrogant Nazi stowaway who does his best to sabotage the ship. Two encounters with German U-boats as well as a fire deliberately set by the fanatical stowaway very nearly do in the GRANGEMOUTH, but the foresight and heroism of her crew keep the ship sailing. Along the way, though, it becomes apparent that the German Navy has no intention of allowing the ship to reach the safety of Britain; obviously, something of vital worth to German interests (foreign currency? top secret American warship or aviation plans?) has been smuggled aboard the GRANGEMOUTH. The novel reaches a thrilling climax off Avonmouth in southern England when the ship is brutally shelled by a U-boat bent on totally destroying the gallant ship. The proverbial cavalry (in the form of a Royal Navy destroyer) arrives just in the nick of time to save the freighter and to destroy the enemy submarine.

In a cast of uniformly excellent characters it's difficult to single out one or two, but mention certainly must be made of the GRANGEMOUTH's Chief Engineer, a survivor of enemy action during World War 1, a man who is deathly afraid of dying in his engine room but yet never shows his inner fear, rather putting on a stoic demeanor which inspires his men even as torpedoes and artillery fire hit the ship. Also notable is the Jewish A.B., originally from Germany and whose older brother is incarcerated in the Dachau concentration camp, who refuses to give in to self-doubt and whose actions while the GRANGEMOUTH is being strafed clearly helps guarantee her survival.

Townend clearly identifies with even the most marginalized of the GRANGEMOUTH's crew, championing the very importance of their skilled (and unskilled) work in a manner which, under different circumstances, might be read as agitprop, but here reads more as an impassioned, angry paean to the common man:

“These men, for instance,” he writes, “these firemen and trimmers, like coal miners and fishermen, lived lives of danger and hardship, and in return received — what? — less money each week than some bitch of a film actress might spend on a pair of silk stockings! a living wage, perhaps, but little more than a living wage, and a poor living at that! The mean streets of Cardiff and Newport and Liverpool and Newcastle were witness.” — p. 204.

Finally, in its best “stiff upper lip” prose, *The Times Literary Supplement* of Aug. 1, 1940 noted that *Sink and Be Damned* was “a story which does everything to confirm that Mr. W. Townend's reputation as a writer about the sea” and that the novel read as a “remarkably vivid and appropriate tribute to the courage of the Mercantile Marine” — surely an understatement for this excellent work of fiction!

Townend, William *The Three Brothers*.

A work of fiction from quite late in Townend's writing career, *The Three Brothers* looks at the effects of World War 2 on the lives of three brothers and on the girl that all three had loved. The novel's turning point comes with a powerful description of the sinking of a troop transport (a former freighter named *KILMORACK*) while traveling in an Atlantic convoy from England to Gibraltar. The novel's heroine (Jennie Landrail) is aboard the freighter, en route with other Women's Auxiliary Air Force (W.A.A.F.) personnel to a Mediterranean posting. Townend's description of the *KILMORACK*'s final moments as well as Jennie's survival at sea in a small rubber life-raft is riveting. By focusing on his first-rate war-at-sea descriptions today's reader may be able to ignore the anti-Catholic plot devices that often threaten to derail the novel.

Travers, Robert J. *20th Meridian*

Tense, violent story of a large, westbound North Atlantic convoy, focusing on the fictitious freighter S.S. BRANTEN which is carrying a cargo of Scotch whisky to the United States. That cargo precipitates a series of events aboard the ship which result in death for three crew members as well as the psychological collapse of the BRANTEN's alcoholic 1st Mate. In a gripping section, the BRANTEN's convoy is attacked by a German U-boat wolfpack halfway across the North Atlantic (at the title's 20th Meridian), and shortly thereafter the freighter's engines give way. Abandoned by the convoy and wallowing without power in a gigantic storm, the BRANTEN and her crew struggle to make the repairs necessary to continue their voyage — all the while ready to abandon ship should she be sighted (and torpedoed) by the roaming Nazi submarines. Though the ship ultimately gets underway again and rejoins her convoy, the price paid in lives has been a heavy — and probably unnecessary — one. Travers' writing is taut, and his shipboard detail so clearly rendered that it is evident that he himself had much experience as a merchant mariner during the Second World War.

Trew, Antony *Kleber's Convoy*

Gritty, exceptionally graphic account of a World War 2 Murmansk Run convoy seen from the dual perspectives of the British naval commander (and crew) of a convoy escort vessel — the fictitious destroyer VENGEFUL — and the commander of the lead U-boat of a “Rundeltaktik” (wolf pack) that assaults the convoy off Russia’s Kola Peninsula. Set in late 1944, when Germany’s defeat was no longer in question. Trew is at his best in describing British Admiralty convoy procedures, communication systems and tactics, and in conveying a very real (and horrific) sense of Murmansk Run convoy action. He is less successful with the series of forced coincidences that serve as his plot’s foundation (the opposing British and German commanders were once fast friends in pre-War day; they unknowingly meet in fierce Arctic combat that ultimately proves fatal to both naval men and nearly all of their respective crews). Still, Trew’s work compares favorably with such classics as *H.M.S. ULYSSES* and definitely deserves a read by anyone interested in the infamous Murmansk Run.

Tute, Warren *Leviathan*

Tute's "LEVIATHAN" seems a stand-in for the QUEEN MARY, but with one major twist (read on). The novel follows the fortunes of the fictitious British superliner LEVIATHAN from her entry into service in 1938 to the early days following America's entry into the war. The twist? Tute has brutal Nazi submariners sink his fictitious ocean liner in mid-Atlantic while the ship is transporting 15,000 troops to England (and of course dastardly murdering survivors who have taken to the lifeboats). What should be an exciting read is, unfortunately merely an adequate one. Tute's descriptions of pre-War shipboard life are passable; those aboard the LEVIATHAN as troop transport less so. It is interesting that Mr. Tute's service in the Royal Navy from 1932 through 1946 did not inspire more passionate prose.

Vidal, Gore *Williwaw*

A sea story set in the Aleutian Islands during the latter days of World War 2, *Williwaw* was Vidal's first published novel. Much of the story is set aboard a small U.S. Army steamship carrying passengers and freight from one isolated Aleutian island port to another. While en route to an island serving as Army headquarters the ship, manned by a combination of former civilian merchant mariners and draftees, encounters a fierce "williwaw," which one character likens to "a kind of a hurricane with a lot of snow." The storm, with winds of up to 100 miles per hour, nearly sinks the ship. The vessel is ultimately saved by the superior seamanship of her captain, a pre-War 2nd Mate in the Merchant Marine. Vidal convincingly traces the crews interactions before, during and after the chaos of the storm, and includes vivid descriptions a bitter rivalry between one of the mates and the vessel's unpopular Chief Engineer. This rivalry, begun in a dispute over the affections of a girl in one of the ports they frequently visit, leads, in the novel's climax, to the Chief's death after he falls overboard into the Bering Sea. The mate's failure to report the incident is chilling, as is his captain's impersonal acceptance of the Chief Engineer's fate. The novel was later (1953) issued as a mass market paperback under the title *Dangerous Voyage*.

Villars, Elizabeth *The Normandie Affair*

A romantic novel — women’s romance, really — set aboard the NORMANDIE during a Sept. 1936 eastbound crossing, book-ended at beginning and end with a description of the NORMANDIE’s death by fire in Feb. 1942. In a particularly evocative passage Villar has her narrator, upon hearing of the fire aboard the NORMANDIE, reminisce about his love for the great ship, and his heartbreak at her demise:

“[I began] thinking of the NORMANDIE again. It was not unusual before the war, even before the last war, for passengers to develop a special fondness for a particular ship. I’d had a friend with whom I’d graduated from Harvard who would cross only on the AQUITANIA in the same cabin with the same steward. His attachment to the ship went back to his childhood, and he and his wife had crossed on their wedding trip in the same cabin in which each of his children subsequently sailed to Europe. I’d also had an aunt who had a greater affection for the MAURETANIA than for any living being. She’d died two months after they’d scuttled the ship in ‘35. Perhaps I took after Aunt Lavinia, though no one in the family would ever admit as much. They excused her individuality as eccentricity, they condemned mine as immorality, but that night as I hurried back to my apartment I understood the way she must have felt when she learned of the ship’s demise. I knew that one of the last things of beauty and excellence in my world was being consumed by this insane war.”

Overall, the book’s tone is prissy and snobbish. And it contains enough ocean liner name dropping to rival that of the brahminish John Maxtone-Graham, king of the pampered-rich-at-sea genre (the non-fiction branch of the genre, that is). However, it should also be admitted that Villar *does* know the NORMANDIE from stem to stern, and describes in great detail the liner and how she functioned at sea. Indeed, Villar’s plot is so often derailed by these descriptions that novel probably should be better read more as a Cook’s tour of the NORMANDIE and the three classes of passengers she carried rather than a serious effort at fiction.

Vivante, Arturo (1923-). "The Foghorn."

This very interesting (and brief) short story about what today we'd call Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is set aboard a freighter traveling North Atlantic from Canada to England just after the conclusion of the Second World War, probably in late 1945 or early 1946. Included among the ship's small complement of passengers are a mother and her young daughter who'd been interned by the Japanese in Singapore during the War. Like the story's unnamed narrator, mother and daughter are returning home to England. A day or so out, just off Labrador, the freighter encounters thick fog and, as a standard maritime safety measure, begins blowing its foghorn at increasingly shorter and shorter intervals. This agitates the little girl (she's no more than four years old or so) immeasurably and she is soon screaming at each blast of the horn. Narrator and the girl's mother figure out that the horn sounds very much like the air raid sirens of late-War Singapore. The very sympathetic narrator writes of the child:

It seemed cruel - it seemed cruel that now that peace had come, there shouldn't be peace for her. For her the war had not ended. It was still going on. Echoes of it, out of time, out of place, like a swarm of wasps, still pursued her.

But a solution occurs to the narrator: getting down on the deck on all fours, he gives the little girl a horsey ride, galloping only when the horn sounds, as if in a horse race. Bit by bit he helps the child conquer her fears through application of another late 20th Century psychological technique: positive reinforcement. By tale's end the girl has conquered her fears as the freighter moves out into the North Atlantic and home.

Vivante, Arturo (1923-). "The Jump."

Vivante's narrator is a middle aged artist, an Italian (now an American citizen) who ponders a step not taken in this short story which is set in the early 1970s. Looking back over his life, the narrator relates how his anti-Fascist family had fled Italy in the late 1930s and sought refuge in England. Italy's entry into the Second World War had turned them (illogically) into enemy aliens, and the-then 16 year old narrator was placed in an internment camp; in July 1940 he was shipped across the Atlantic to another internment camp in Canada. Ironically, his fellow internees included very-real Italian Fascists, as well as captured German prisoners of war and Germans civilians caught in Britain when war had broken out. Once in the protected waters of the St. Lawrence River, the Italian boy briefly considers jumping overboard and swimming to shore (he'd been a champion swimmer at his English boarding school prior to internment) but in the end decides to stay aboard the ship and the known (read: safe) routine of internment. Years later the discontented artist thinks back on that trans-Atlantic journey and wishes "that long, long ago he had taken a step he hadn't taken - a jump, really." Vivante's story is particularly evocative of in his descriptions of life aboard a civilian liner requisitioned for wartime internee / prisoners of war transportation service.

Wales, Ken *Sea of Glory: A Novel Based on the True WW II Story of the Four Chaplains and the U.S.A.T. Dorchester*

Very, very earnest – and very, very dull – retelling of the tragic World War 2 sinking of the former coastal liner DORCHESTER in the North Atlantic while serving as a troopship. Co-author Poling is a relative of one of the four courageous chaplains aboard the vessel, all of whom perished in the icy Atlantic waters after giving their life jackets to soldiers onboard the ship.

Ward, Millard "*Last Lap*"

Saturday Evening Post tag line: "No one knew why the young "mess punk," who loved the sea, hadn't joined the Navy until the night the old ferryboat scratched at Davy Jones' locker." This being the height of the Second World War it turns out that Ward's "mess punk" actually suffers from a physical disability and that, rather than fear, had kept the patriotic young man from joining the Navy. He naturally proves his bravery during the story's climax when his "ancient, double-ended" Chesapeake Bay "relief" ferry hits stormy weather and nearly founders. He's offered a permanent deck position on the ferry once safe haven has been reached, and declines the offer (it's here that the young man reveals that he is color blind, and thus is ineligible to work as an A.B.). He further reveals that he's shipping out the next week on a tanker – the most dangerous of wartime sea duty – and will serve aboard the ship in the vessel's stewards department (again, because of his color blindness). Ward's not-too-subtle subtext is a simple one: no matter one's age, sex, ability (or disability), everyone can – and should – help out in the Allied war effort.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Action Offshore"*

Collier's tag line: "A stowaway has a good memory for faces – especially Nazis." Set aboard the American freighter MARY McNALLY on a North Atlantic voyage. Second Mate Tom Ruddock discovers a stowaway and learns that his Captain and several others aboard the ship are actually Nazis intent upon delivering the vessel and its petroleum oil to a German submarine in mid-ocean. Similar in plot to Raine's "Mr. Gallup Gathers No Moths" which was published a year earlier. Was this Germans-secretly-taking-over-an-American-ship tale a World War 2 equivalent of an "urban myth" ?

Watkins, Richard Howells *"A Birth in Bermuda"*

Another of Watkins' "the Germans are taking over" World War 2 plot (see also his "Action Offshore"). An American merchant marine officer sets sail as a passenger aboard a ramshackle Greek freighter from New York City, bound for Bermuda where his next berth is waiting. A "bunch of Nazis" soon take over the vessel and then plan to scuttle her at the entrance to the Bermuda channel so that Allied ships will not be able to get into either the naval dockyard or Hamilton harbor. Our quick-thinking American, of course, outsmarts the duplicitous Germans and foils their nefarious plot.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Blessed Event"*

Garrulous Mr. Jimpson, 2nd Mate aboard the American (i.e., neutral) freighter MARJORIE TOLLIVER, is deputized by his captain to take over and claim for salvage an abandoned British steamer encountered 400 miles east of Cape Hatteras. Jimpson does so, and along with his small crew, gets the vessel underway, only to be stopped some time later by the German submarine that had originally attacked the vessel. Mr. Jimpson is forced to meet with the German U-boat's commander and when he attempts to convince the German that the vessel is now neutral and controlled by American merchant mariners, the German becomes suspicious. The German commandant ultimately lets the 2nd Mate return to his ship because he incorrectly thinks Jimpson actually a U.S. naval officer in mufti. As the suspicious German remarks: "We have been warned that your country might like a convenient excuse to enter the war, as you did the last war. The destruction of a ship with a U.S. naval crew aboard would help, hein?"

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Court Ship"*

Comic Second World War short story about a young mariner's coming of age. Set aboard the fictitious American freighter MARGARET BLACKENHAM during two successive eastbound convoys across the North Atlantic as well as at an "unknown British port" where the young man precipitously falls in love with beautiful shop girl "Rosemary 'Arris." Miss Harris is no innocent — indeed she's a "Mrs." who's been around the matrimonial block a half dozen times or so in a bigamous con scheme to receive allotments from each of her various husbands! Our hero, happily, escapes her ensnarement (and indeed Rosemary is arrested for bigamy near the conclusion of Watkins' tale). A related subplot, also comic, turns on the heated rivalry — in convoy and at port between the crews of the "MARGIE" and another freighter, the WHITE CRANE. For two other Watkins short stories set aboard the MARGIE BLACKENHAM see the author's "Morale in the Margie" (1942) and "The Spy-Gazers" (1944).

Watkins, Richard Howells *"A Gift to the Nation"*

Asthmatic, retired Captain Bertram Billingsly inherits a fortune just as World War 2 breaks out and decides to spend it by purchasing a merchant ship to present to England as "a gift to the nation." He ends up in the Caribbean where he purchases the rustbucket Greek freighter ST. NICHOLAS and, with a crew mainly drawn from the Empire, overloads her and attempts to sail back across the Atlantic to London. Nearly home, the ST. NICHOLAS stumbles into the middle of an eastbound Atlantic convoy and heroically positions herself between a German U-boat and a large freighter filled with important war cargo for Britain. She is sunk before British destroyers can intervene and put the submarine out of commission. Though Captain Billingsly himself is lost, he nonetheless has been successful in his quest: the 'saved' large freighter turns out to be his "gift to the nation." As in many stories from this era, Watkins' theme is the need for individual needs being freely traded away for the common good. In this case, Captain Billingsly's self-sacrifice will ultimately benefit his nation's progress during the War.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Girl Adrift"*

World War 2 North Atlantic convoy short story. What reader could pass it up with the following tag line(s): “What danger gripped the ship when the girl was tossed overboard? She had to guess, and her ideas led a Canadian crew to daring action and an officer to romance.” If I had to guess, I’d hazard the notion that Richard Howells Watkins had been hitting the bottle while writing this one. His plot has a Nazi sub hijacking a merchant ship in convoy, loading torpedoes on the ship and then utilizing the unlucky ship to attack – and sink – other vessels in the convoy with same torpedoes. And of course no one figures this one out until our “girl overboard” gets pulled onto a Canadian corvette!

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Half a Jackass"*

An inexperienced 1st Mate learns that it's "steady old seamen who save the bacon for young officers." Set aboard the fictitious freighter ESTELLE HALLOCK during a voyage in convoy from California to the South Pacific. The new Mate (Mr. Kingsley) takes an immediate dislike to the friendship between two old seamen, Dan Mulqueen and John Strom, who had come out of retirement to serve shipboard during the War. An aerial attack on the ESTELLE by a Japanese fighter plane proves to Kingsley just how valuable the two old sailors' friendship and combined maritime experience really is.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Lagoon of Lost Command"*

World War 2 short story set in the South Pacific. Two survivors of an American freighter (the fictitious NORTHERN SHORE) which had been sunk by a Nazi sea raider are washed ashore on a deserted atoll, one of several such small islands surrounding a lagoon. But it's not deserted for long – the Nazi raider soon arrives on the scene (it had been seriously damaged in the firefight which had erupted when it attacked the armed NORTHERN SHORE). The two Americans spend much of the tale dodging Nazis and trying to work up a plan to permanently disable the raider. By tale's end they have of course accomplished this and, after an Allied reconnaissance plane has spotted them (and the raider), their rescue is in the offing. As is typical of pulp stories of the era, the enemy is depicted as cold-blooded, cruel and curiously inept.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Mates"*

Yankee ingenuity prevails over Nazi sneakiness in this Caribbean tale about a “dizzy kid” (American 4th Officer Ted Buckley of the freighter ELSIE J. BROOKS) and how he takes on — and bests — a Nazi “rattlesnake raider” that had been preying upon Allied shipping off the northern coast of Venezuela. The junior officer had been seeing submarines everywhere, so Buckley’s shipmates rather naturally ignored him when he announced to one and all that the blacked out ship the BROOKS had “kissed” in a glancing nighttime collision was a German sea raider. Soon enough he was proved right, and the crew of the virtually defenseless BROOKS, after having been shelled by the raider and ordered to abandon ship by an arrogant Nazi ship master, were on the verge of taking to the boats when Buckley had a brilliant idea involving the ship’s line-throwing gun. Against all odds, his unorthodox weapon beat off the German vessel’s boarding party, giving the BROOKS time to both escape destruction and pinpoint the Nazi raider’s location for the U.S. Navy.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Morale in the Margie"*

Comic feuding between a ship's captain and his Chief Engineer (the latter described as a "Brooklyn Scotsman") on a freighter in the North Atlantic convoy lines during the early days of World War 2. *The Post's* tie-in reads: "Any man in the crew could have cautioned the U-boat commander against muscling in on the private war between the Old Man and the Chief Engineer." Set aboard the fictitious freighter MARGARET BLACKENHAM during a westbound convoy. Engine problems cause the "MARGIE" to fall out of convoy, and as the Old Man fusses and fumes (and fights with his Chief), the ship encounters not one but two German U-boats. Quick thinking by the feuding ship officers saves the MARGIE and results in the destruction (by ramming) of one of the enemy submarines. Once safely back in port, the MARGIE heads for the drydock and her captain gets a new command – and his nemesis the Chief goes with him. So does the entire crew for, as one remarks, "Sure the men know they're in a terrible world war. But the scrap between the Chief and the Old Man – they don't want to miss a real honey like that." For two other Watkins' short stories set aboard the MARGARET BLACKENHAM see "Court Ship" (1944) and "The Spy-Gazers" (1944).

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Sea Room for a Sailor"*

A World War 2 North Atlantic convoy story. Young Nova Scotian Neil Cameron, commanding the THURSO, a Canadian corvette, off the coast of Iceland, has to keep a watch out for both Germans and also a freighter in his convoy, the ELSPETH MacDONALD, captained by his own father, John Cameron. The elder Cameron chafes at being placed in a "slow" convoy when his own vessel can make a fast 17+ knots, and impetuously strikes out alone. Neil Cameron takes the THURSO after the errant ELSPETH MacDONALD and sights a German U-boat at the same time that he locates his father's freighter. In the ensuing battle, the corvette succeeds in sinking the submarine, but only after she herself has suffered a mortal injury. The corvette's crew is rescued by Capt. Cameron's freighter, and the old man is disheartened by what his folly has wrought. His son's rejoinder is that a "corvette for a submarine" has been a good exchange.

"Ay, true," said John Cameron keenly. "But it's still your ship that's sunk, son, and I know how sad a business losing a ship — "

"No!" said Neil. He flung a hand downward. "There's my ship – the best, irreplaceable part of it, down there in your forecastle, getting hot drinks and warm words. I lost no more than a bit of wood and steel stuff that they're turning out by the mile." His voice sounded steady enough to his ears. "The real ship is the boys down there, what's left of 'em, ranks and ratings alike, the real ship, Dad. And so you'll see after we make port." — p. 80.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"A Shift in Cargo"*

The freighter ALICE CLISSOLD, with a deckload of “jeeps, peep and trucks” is caught in a fierce storm en route from Brooklyn to Puerto Rico and appears to be sinking after much of the cargo in her holds shifts. A last ditch effort by her crew to re-stow the cargo seems her only hope. At that precise moment one of her crew, knowing back in Brooklyn that the cargo was being improperly and hastily stowed by two “Hatch Foremen” (i.e., stevedores) more interested in making high dockside wages than ensuring the safety of the ships they worked on, reveals that he had imprisoned the two men aboard the ship. They are forced to put their own lives in the balance and re-stow the cargo correctly. Though Watkins’ plot is implausible at best, he does make an interesting point in showing that not all of the merchant navy’s World War 2 enemies were on the high seas.

Watkins, Richard Howells "*Snoop Ship*"

Saturday Evening Post tag line: "The hilarious tale of a convoy skipper who used a brand-new method to trap a spy." Étienne, a roly-poly Frenchman serving as cook aboard the American freighter BLUE HERON in an eastbound North Atlantic convoy, is unjustly suspected by officers and crew alike as being a spy / saboteur after a series of suspicious incidents seem to implicate him. Étienne refuses to stand by idly and instead investigates the matter himself (à la a seagoing Hercule Poirot!). As the BLUE HERON approaches the safety of English shores, the Frenchman unmasks the real spy a German who has been posing as the ship's 4th Engineer.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"The Spy-Gazers"*

Semi-comic World War 2 North Atlantic convoy tale. The Captain and Chief Engineer of the fictitious freighter MARGARET BLACKENHAM go “detecting” for a German stowaway / saboteur / spy aboard their vessel on an eastbound crossing from Halifax to Liverpool. Though neither are exactly brilliant in the detective business (the MARGIE’s 3rd Mate notes of them: “As detectives and spy busters those two were a couple of unlaidd eggs”!!), by story’s end the Nazi has been captured and a mid-Atlantic disaster — the sinking of a troopship crammed with thousands of army troops — averted. Watkins wrote two other comic stories set aboard the MARGIE BLACKENHAM, both are listed above: “Court Ship” (1944) and “Morale in the Margie” (1942).

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Stars in his Head"*

Though America was still officially neutral in 1940 you wouldn't know it from this Watkins short story. Able bodied seaman Sam Browne, an astronomy-mad amateur star-gazer aboard the freighter BETA PERSEUS, detects and foils a plot by his vessel's pro-Nazi 2nd Mate ("a Bund man — a junior partner in the firm o' Hitler & Himmel — though his ticket says he's an American citizen") to wreck the vessel (and thus deny Britain much-needed war supplies). An interesting subplot involves the Captain of the BETA PERSEUS' strong belief that "education in the foc'sle means trouble all over the ship."

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Sub Conscious"*

What happens when German treachery comes up against a quick-thinking merchant mariner. Watkins' tale is set in the Atlantic, 400 miles off the coast of Portugal, where the American freighter ERNESTINE HOBART sights a German U-boat disabled and sinking after an encounter with a British convoy. Despite resistance from the American crew who loath German submariners, the HOBART's Captain orders his 2nd Mate, Rob Paley, to rescue the German survivors. The Germans react to their rescue by smuggling small arms onto the neutral American ship and eventually taking it over in an attempt to force a rendezvous with another German U-boat in the vicinity. These are stock World War 2 Germans: arrogant, treacherous and vicious. They meet their match in 2nd Mate Paley, who convinces their commander that he has spotted their hoped-for submarine on the near horizon. In reality, they rendezvous with a British warship and are taken off to captivity. Watkins is probably right on the mark in terms of American public opinion and national self-image in the months before our entry into the Second World War with this exchange between two seaman who are unhappy about the Captain's decision to rescue the Germans:

“Sure, that gang of underwater thugs haven't got around to torpedoing American ships yet. But we're on their list. Know about the Lend-Lease Act, don't you? Would they rescue us?”

“No, but maybe that's what the war's about ... We're different from them.”

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Turtle Soup"*

Set aboard the American freighter IRENE MAXWELL in the Caribbean during the early days of World War 2. Young Second Mate Lee Dobie outfoxes a heartless shipping company manager, as well as a suspicious First Mate, and makes certain that his mentor, old Captain Burbage is suitably rewarded for his many years of faithful service. Dobie doesn't make out too poorly himself, as he is promoted to Captain of the IRENE MAXWELL by tale's end.

Watkins, Richard Howells *"Where We Aren't"*

A Nazi commerce raider, falsely flying the flag of Sweden and with "SVENSKA" emblazoned on her sides, foolishly tangles with a Yank vessel in the Strait of Magellan off the southern tip of South America. A battle royal erupts, with the ever resourceful American sailors carrying the day.

Weidman, Jerome *"Dummy Run"*

This short story is set in a seamen's dockside waiting room in an unnamed Canadian Maritimes port during World War 2. With a fierce ice storm raging, crew in port on liberty are stranded ashore. Communication by the waiting room's staff with a Polish crew, seemingly stymied by a lack of understanding between Polish and English speakers, takes place despite the inadequacies of having no language in common.

Weidman, Jerome *The Hand of the Hunter*

At first glance author Jerome Weidman's choice of a protagonist for this World War 2 North Atlantic convoy novel seems an unusual one: a somewhat dull - though prosperous - 42 year old New York City accountant named Vincent Sloate, one of several passengers aboard a decrepit freighter (the fictitious *SIRITH*) which has been stuck in ice-bound Halifax harbor for 11 days waiting for an eastbound convoy. The novel is set in the early days of America's participation in the War and finds Sloate being sent by sea on an official mission to London (his mission isn't important enough to warrant air passage, which clearly irks the businessman). Though a take-charge kind of businessman at home, Sloate becomes disoriented, listless and out of his element at sea, and is easily buffeted from one shipboard acquaintance (and shipboard drama) to another.

As the ship's day's in harbor lengthen Sloate becomes intrigued with a female fellow passenger who proves to be fatally ill, gets involved with a rather gruesome pair of Liverpool stewards, learns to man one of the *SIRITH's* anti-submarine guns (the ship is undermanned, so male passengers are dragooned into artillery service), becomes part of a scheme to "lose" a DBS ("Distressed British Seaman") assigned passage on the *SIRITH* and eventually (but futilely) attempts to quit the freighter rather than risk the dangerous North Atlantic passage. In the end, Sloate chooses to remain onboard having discovered that, for the first time ever, he was really experiencing a life he'd never lived, one of emotions and human needs.

Weidman's descriptions of the ramshackle freighter *SIRITH* are particularly well drawn, as are passages detailing wartime winter life in snowy maritime Halifax. Though the novel starts off a slow read, it picks up as Sloate's picaresque adventures unfurl during the *SIRITH's* penultimate 24 hours in port.

Weidman, Jerome *The Lights Around the Shore*

Peter Landor, aged 16, sets sail for Europe with his aunt aboard an unnamed liner on July 6, 1939. Peter soon realizes that his aunt is on a mysterious errand. Much period atmosphere aboard the ship on its trans-Atlantic sailing as the last days of peace unfold.

Wetjen, Albert Richard *"A Deal's a Deal"*

Saturday Evening Post tag line (!): "The yellow dwarfs of Nippon should have known better than to pick on Captain Porpoise Bailey before he had finished drinking his breakfast." Set in the waters around Papua New Guinea during the early days of World War 2. Schooner Captain Bailey and crew are captured by Japanese subterfuge and imprisoned below decks with arch-rival Captain Jed Tomkins and his crew aboard Tomkins' ramshackle freighter KOOMALOO. Bailey soon hatches a plot to recapture the vessel from its Japanese captors (Wetjen's description of same is blunt, coming as this story does at the height of Japanese hostilities). In short order, Porpoise regains control of the KOOMALOO and then forces Tomkins to agree to salvage Porpoise's own schooner as well as pay 3 months worth of wages to Porpoise's crew.

Wetjen, Albert Richard *"The Extra Hand"*

Set during World War 2. Infirm Captain Barkley is called out of retirement to take the aged freighter MONTREAL — not sailing in convoy — across the Atlantic to France. The Post tag line neatly summarizes the plot: “They thought Captain Barkley was too old to command a freighter laden with TNT. But when the fire broke out, they discovered that youth has no corner on glory.” Mr. Barrow, the vessel’s young First Mate observes and learns from his captain’s experience. He also learns that the “Extra Hand” signed onboard the freighter by the shipping company’s port captain is none other than Death.

Wetjen, Albert Richard *The Pleasure Is All Yours*

The fictitious Portugese-registry passenger ship ALCAZAR is in reality the German sea raider KRANDORFF, heavily armed and capable of a sustained speed of 24 knots. Wetjen's story opens with the ALCAZAR/KRANDORFF capturing the British freighter FAIRFAX and forcing her crew to take to the ship's stripped lifeboats (the sea raider's inhumane boarding party had tossed all oars, navigation equipment, sails, etc. overboard). Before sinking the FAIRFAX, though, the Nazis loot the FAIRFAX of her cargo and stores. And then, while her former crew watches helplessly, the FAIRFAX is shelled and sunk. That done, the raider steams off, leaving the FAIRFAX survivors alone to what the Germans plan will be eventual death on the high seas. But Wetjen has a surprise ending up his sleeve: no sooner than the KRANDORFF sets sail that the raider explodes into thousands of pieces and sinks rapidly into the sea with no survivors. Witnessing the firestorm, the FAIRFAX's captain tartly observes: "I'd never have believed that time bombs in cased goods would have done the trick so neatly." It is soon revealed that the FAIRFAX was really a decoy vessel, and one whose cargo was booby trapped especially for the German raider that Allied naval authorities had been tracking. Utilizing a wireless hidden in one of the lifeboats, the FAIRFAX survivors communicate their position to waiting naval vessels, and the story concludes with rescue in the offing. For another World War 2 short story utilizing this very same plot twist (i.e., timed bombs in cased goods) see Allan R. Bosworth's "You Always Remember," which had appeared in the Mar. 21, 1942 issue of *Liberty Magazine*.

White, James *The Watch Below*

White's science fiction novel is possibly the most peculiar addition to this bibliography. He sets his story aboard the World War 2 tanker GULF TRADER, with narrative opening in Feb. 1942 as the ship is sailing in an eastbound North Atlantic convoy. Aboard the vessel are her crew as well as 50 or so survivors — including several women WRENS — from convoy vessels that had been sunk earlier in the voyage by Nazi subs. Disaster overtakes the GULF TRADER eventually, and she is sunk by enemy torpedoes just a short sail from the safety of English coastal waters. While most of her passengers and crew make it off the ship, a handful of survivors are trapped in the vessel's lower deck spaces in an air bubble (think *Poseidon Adventure*, though the GULF TRADER doesn't turn turtle like the old POSIEIDON did). Here White's story veers from reality into science fiction, for he has his survivors settle in (unwillingly, of course) to life underwater in the drifting tanker hulk (it eventually gets stuck underwater on shoals off the coast of Spain). In Swiss Family Robinson style the survivors marry (remember those WRENS?), learn how to supplement their oxygen supply (by growing beans) and maintain their electrical power. Luckily the GULF TRADER is packed with canned goods, so food is initially no problem. Just about the only thing these intrepid folk can't do is escape their watery domicile. Decades pass with generation after generation of the descendants of the original survivors continuing to live (and die) in the cold, dank wreck. Meanwhile, an exodus of spaceships from a dying water planet are heading towards earth (remember, the key description here is "science fiction"), hoping to colonize the planet's oceans. How the GULF TRADER's inhabitants reconcile alien and human culture provides White with an interesting finale. *The Watch Below*, by the way, isn't the only piece of World War 2 shipping related science fiction to appear in this bibliography: check out Ray Bradbury's eerie 1944 short story, "Undersea Guardians."

Williams, David. *Atlantic Convoy.*

Williams' novel was self-billed at the time of its 1979 publication as a thriller, but in reality is a tepid, overly plot-complicated rehash of the North Atlantic convoy genre. His focus is a Sept. 1942 eastbound convoy traveling to Britain with wartime supplies desperately needed for that island nation's continued survival. Unfortunately the author chooses to tell his story from far too many viewpoints. On the good guys side we hear from actual participants in the convoy (seamen, ship masters, the convoy commodore), their U.S. and British protectors (from both sea and air) and from British Admiralty officials plotting the convoys eastbound movements. Representing Nazi Germany are U-boat captains and crew, Luftwaffe aviators, military planners in France (for u-boats) and Norway (aviation), evil Gestapo agents and even a German spy traveling aboard one of the convoy's Liberty ships as wireless operator. Add lackluster writing into the stew and you've got a work of fiction that only the most diehard convoy fiction enthusiast will embrace.

Williamson, Scott Graham *A Convoy through the Dream*

Downbeat post-War reflection on World War 2 in general and merchant mariner life in particular. The novel is set in 1944 aboard the fictitious Liberty ship S.S. WILLIAM BENSON and follows 3rd Wireless Officer Eric Clark – a moody and introspective ex-academic who had done a government stint in Washington, D.C. before deciding that he wanted to really experience the War – as he makes his first sea voyage across the Atlantic in convoy and through the Mediterranean. Williamson’s physical portrait of the WILLIAM BENSON is of particular interest, and indeed early shipboard passages read like a Cook’s tour of a typical Liberty ship. His portrait of actual shipboard life, however, is searing, and decidedly not the sort of prose that would have been published during the War. In one long passage Clark sourly muses about the “comradery of blind hatred” that defined the daily lives of his fellow ship’s officers:

“During these twenty-two days aboard the S.S. WILLIAM BENSON his awareness of the men with whom he lived had changed considerably. But what seemed to him more important than his changing view of each man as an individual was his changed perception of the organism of the group.

What had at first appeared to him as a closely knit body of men, inevitably unified by the factors of confinement, interdependence, and extreme danger, now appeared to be a thing wormholed by petty hatreds and spiritually unified only in-so-far as two or more individuals could share prejudices. He could not at this moment think of a single instance of friendship between any of the officers that was based on mutual approval of something. Yet there were innumerable friendships of mutual dislike ...

In this little society of fourteen men there were cliques and countercliques, fissures and cross-fissures. All the merchant marine officers were against the Armed Guard Commander because he was a navy man. ‘The Navy’s bad enough,’ they said, ‘but these gun crews are the *wastebasket* of the Navy. This is where they throw their misfits.’ Also they said that he prowled the decks most of the night and that even when he went to bed he would never turn his light out. They implied that this was because he was a coward. Whenever he came suddenly into the saloon, the men stopped talking, gulped down their coffee, and left him alone. This drove the lieutenant into closer association with his own gun-crew boys. He even played cards with them in their mess room. This just went to prove further, the merchant officers said, the slipshod, inefficiency of the navy gun crews.

Nearly everyone was against the steward. They said that he was saving perishable foods such as fresh fruit, and that later he would just have to throw the stuff overboard; that the meals were monotonous; that he used fancy French and Italian names for ordinary chow; that he ate in his own cabin because he wanted to eat steak every day and only put it on the menu twice a week; that he was dirty; and that he was nothing but a goddam guinea.” – pp. 95-96.

Wilson, Sloan *Ice Brothers: A Novel*

Sprawling (some might say bloated) World War 2 sea tale set aboard a U.S. Coast Guard Boston beam trawler (the fictitious ARLUK) on the Greenland Patrol. While Sloan's opening chapters seem nothing more than an overblown –if that's possible! – Herman Wouk pastiche (think *The Caine Mutiny* meets *The Winds of War* in Arctic waters), once the novel really gets underway Sloan holds his readers' attention. Of particular merchant marine interest are descriptions of an encounter with the troop and civilian workers transport ship DORCHESTER a year before her tragic sinking. Also of note is the gruesome discovery of a machine-gun riddled lifeboat filled with dead mariners, victims of a German attack on a merchant marine convoy. Much of the novel is devoted to the ARLUK's ultimately successful effort to locate and destroy a series of east coast Greenland weather stations manned by Germans as well as the supply ships which service the clandestine weather stations.

Wilson, Sloan *Pacific Interlude*

A grim World War 2 novel set in the South Pacific in 1944 and 1945 aboard a small gas tanker running shuttle and convoy duties for the U.S. Army. The novel is the third in a series (see Wilson's earlier *A Voyage to Somewhere* (1946) and *Ice Brothers* (1979), each clearly autobiographical in nature, by an author who himself had commanded a similar gas tanker in the South Pacific during the war. Wilson's descriptions of tanker life are seen through the eyes of protagonist Syl Grant, the tanker's twenty five year old Coast Guard captain. Grant's difficulty with command is a major theme of the novel, and though he feels a great sense of responsibility for his unruly and often undisciplined officers and crew, he clearly never particularly likes most of them. Yet he does his duty by them and, by the novel's conclusion, comes to respect his crew. An interesting subplot involves the unsuccessful integration of a young African-American able bodied seaman into the tanker's crew. Harassment — verbal, physical and psychological — eventually drive the hapless young man into going absent without leave from the ship, an act that the tanker's compassionate captain is unable to prevent.

Wilson, Sloan *Voyage to Somewhere*

Late (1944/45) World War 2 tale set aboard a small (180') , recently commissioned U.S. Navy supply vessel (the SV-126); included in this bibliography for its interesting descriptions of South Pacific convoy life. The novel is set primarily in New Guinea and the recently reconquered Philippine Islands, where the SV-126 is engaged in running non-essential supplies (such as a shipment of candy bars!) to isolated military outposts linked up only by sea. In early 1945 the vessel joins a series of convoys running north out the Philippines to island beachheads on the way to Japan. These South Pacific convoy descriptions are of particular note, as is an interesting subplot which involves the somewhat unsuccessful introduction of a "Negro" seaman into the hitherto all-White crew of the SV-126.

Wilson's novel amply documents the torpor and tedium of sea life in the waning days of World War 2 , as well as the waste and bureaucratic inefficiency which often bogged down the United States' war effort. For another "early" post-War look back at military-related sea life, see Gore Vidal's *Williwaw*, also published in 1946.

And an interesting "sea fiction" sidebar: Wilson also makes reference to the Armed Services Editions of paperbacks created specially for U.S. fighting forces and merchant seamen during the War (see p. 91 of the novel). He relates how, after having exhausted such leisure time activities as the construction of "objets d'art" made from spent shell casing and the fabrication of fancy macrame belts, the SV-126's crew develop a mania for reading – which is satisfied by the ship's collection of Armed Services paperbacks. Like all fads, though, the reading boom is short-lived and the crew moves back to handicrafts and games of poker!

Wire, Harold Channing *"Big Day"*

Semi-comic Canadian shipyard / shipbuilding story about a novice welder who saves the day by spot welding a careening ship section that had threatened the stability of an about-to-be-launched vessel.

Wolfe, Reese *"Coffin Ship"*

This World War 2 story boasts a Maclean's tag line worthy of the most lurid pulp fiction: "A killer ship battles the Coral Sea; aboard her, a drama of death and new life." Wolfe's "drama" revolves around Captain Hardiman of the old freighter SULU STAR, and it opens in Australia as the aged vessel prepares to sail in convoy across the Pacific. All's not well with the SULU STAR, and indeed the ship's corrupt Greek owner has arranged with Captain Hardiman to sink the ship while en route to San Francisco in order to collect insurance monies. (Wolfe is positively venomous about the Greek shipowner and about "murky little one-ship companies growing fat on the war"). Right on schedule, the ship suffers an engine room breakdown in the Coral Sea, loses her convoy. Captain Hardiman sees this as the perfect opportunity to dispose of his ship and is just about to open the SULU STAR's seacocks when two Polish stowaways are discovered aboard, a man and his very pregnant wife. The latter gives birth to a child shortly thereafter, and then, having heard the Polish husband's tale of flight from Nazi-occupied Poland, the shipmaster has a change of heart. He reverses his decision to scuttle the vessel, gets the SULU STAR repaired and then successfully takes his ship east to San Francisco, knowing full well that he'll lose his license once back in the United States for his part in the insurance scam.

Wolfe, Reese "*Sew-Sew Woman*"

Ironic tale of how a money-grubbing American ship master is bested at his own game by a lowly “sew-sew” woman (a bumboat girl who sews for mariners). The tale is set in December 1941 in Hawaii and Batavia (modern-day Jakarta on the island of Java) and opens in Honolulu just as Captain Blanton, the skinflint master of the tramp freighter BANDA MAIDEN, has taken part in the ransacking of waterfront Japanese beer joints in the wake of the Dec. 7th attack on Pearl Harbor. His haul includes a goodly sum of crudely counterfeited American greenbacks that Japanese espionage agents had planted in the various saloons. Blanton knows that they’re phony but nonetheless tries to pass them off as authentic a couple of weeks later when the BANDA MAIDEN reaches safety in the port in Batavia. (“The Japs seemed a long, long way from Java in those early weeks,” notes the story’s narrator, Chief Engineer Hallett). Dutch officials give Blanton the benefit of the doubt regarding his knowledge of the currency’s authenticity but when he interferes with the budding romance between his half-caste 2nd Engineer and a local half-caste “sew-sew” girl, the woman frames him good, and only by paying her off with real Yankee dollars is he able to clear the BANDA MAIDEN out of Batavia. Though Captain Blanton doesn’t know it at the time the freighter sails sans his 2nd Engineer, who’s done a reverse “pierhead jump” to join his fiancée dockside. Together, the maiden and the Engineer plan to use the dollars extracted from Blanton to flee south ahead of the advancing Japanese to the safety of Australia.

Wolfe, Reese "Slow Bell"

Adventure's gung-ho World War 2 tag line neatly sums up this gem of a yarn: "It wasn't Captain Hardiman's fault that the SEA THRUSH got caught at Bergen in the Spring of '40, just as the Nazis decided to stab Norway in the back. All he wanted to do was unload his ship and get out of there – but if he could gum the works for the Germans in the getting , that was all right, too. He had his own ideas about how 'neutrals' ought to behave." Wolfe's tale is told epistolary style in a series of telegrams, letters, and notes penned/sent by a cast of characters including the SEA THRUSH's stubborn Yankee captain, the U.S. consul in Bergen, U.S. State Dept. officials back in Washington, D.C., Norwegian military officers, various Nazis and even a quisling Norwegian ship's agent in Bergen who tries (unsuccessfully, thanks to the afore described stubborn Yankee ship master) to gain control of the THRUSH's valuable cargo for the Nazi war machine. As noted in a profile of author Wolfe which accompanied the *Adventure* short story, "Reese Wolfe's 'Slow Bell' is no figment of a fictioneer's imagination." The profile goes on to describe how Wolfe was approached in real life by the president of the McCormick Steamship Company who gave him access to company files documenting the true experiences of the freighter CHARLES R. McCORMICK and her captain in Bergen during the 1940 invasion of Norway by Nazi Germany. The McCORMICK was one of three U.S.-flagged ships trapped in Norway during the Spring of 1940, all subsequently escaping by virtue of American neutrality, though in real life the McCORMICK's cargo was commandeered by Nazi forces (unlike that of her fictitious counterpart, the SEA THRUSH).

Wood, James *The Sealer*

World War 2 novel about the pursuit of a German sea-raider, the fictitious steamship SEEADLER (Wood's inspiration must have been prompted by the real-life World War 1 German raider SEEADLER, noted as being the only sailing ship to be used as an armed merchant ship raider during that conflict). Wood's narrator is Scotsman James Fraser, a trawler fisherman turned merchant seaman, who, after surviving the sinking of his freighter out of a North Atlantic convoy, is recruited by the Royal Navy for a bit of "espionage." In due course he finds himself in the wilds of South America's Tierra del Fuego and the Straits of Magellan, the German raider's probable home base. Though in the end Fraser is unsuccessful in tracking down the SEEADLER, Wood's yarn is nonetheless an interesting one. He is particularly successful in conveying the weird, violent natural beauty of the storm tossed waters around South America's southern tip. Note that this appears to be the first appearance of Wood's continuing character James Fraser.

Woodman, Richard (1944-). *Dead Man Talking.*

Woodman's imaginative take on the infamous (and ill-fated) World War 2 Murmansk Run merchant ship convoy PQ-17 makes for a novel that's hard to put down once you start reading it. His conceit is to provide the "real" reason why Royal Navy escorts abandoned the convoy to German U-boats and Luftwaffe bombers high in the Arctic en route to Russia (25 out of 36 merchant ships in the convoy were lost to enemy action because of this abandonment, the heaviest losses ever incurred on the Murmansk Run). In his novel, Woodman focuses on a merchant officer-turned-Royal Navy officer (Lieutenant Commander John Clark) who's sent out by the British Admiralty on a secret mission in late Spring / Summer 1942 to track down and sink a giant prototype cruiser U-boat (code named "Orca") about to set up base along the route of the Allies' convoy route north of Norway. Clark's own command is a whaler which has been heavily armed with both deck-mounted artillery and also hidden torpedo tubes. In this neat piece of fiction, PQ-17 stumbles into Clark's stalking of the U-boat - and with disastrous results. Woodman's Arctic descriptions are particularly well done and these, along with a talent for delineating major characters, make up for the author's over-reliance on coincidence in his narrative.

Worts, George F. *"Five Who Vanished"*

A convoluted serial set during the early days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The story opens in San Francisco and closes in Hawaii, with six of the serial's ten parts are set aboard a fictitious ocean liner – the TASMANIA – sailing in convoy to Honolulu. This serial contains everything from a comely female cat burglar (!) to the elderly, murderous doyenne of a prominent Hawaiian planter family. With dialog like “These people are a ruthless and dangerous lot,” it's a wonder that Monogram Pictures didn't picked up an option on Worts' tale! Later (see following entry) published as a novel.

Oswald Wynd *The Forty Days*.

Wynd's World War 2 novel is set in the Fall of 1943 aboard a Japanese merchant ship (the fictitious OSHIMA MARU) as it transports 1200 Allied prisoners of war from Singapore to Japan by way of Saigon. The novel sticks closely to Japanese POW transport fact as revealed after the war, with the prisoners crammed into the ship's two cargo holds and only allowed out on deck at rare intervals. Wynd's plot initially revolves around two British prisoners (a Territorial Army major put in charge of "his" cargo hold and a Japanese-speaking Englishman who serves as interpreter between the major and his Japanese captors) and two Japanese (the ship's civilian captain and the Japanese Army major in charge of the prisoners' transport), but soon focuses on the British interpreter and the Japanese Army commander. The author is surprisingly sympathetic towards his Japanese characters and even seems to try and understand why the Japanese major commits, at the novel's climax, a horrific war crime (he beheads an American merchant seaman whom he believed was about to start a prisoner mutiny). This is certainly not the sort of work that could have been written during the war or even in the 1950s. Japanese-speaking Wynd's attitudes are made even more curious by the fact that he had been a prisoner of war in the Far East during the war and had, it appears, even been transported from Singapore to Japan aboard a ship similar to the OSHIMA MARU. Some critics reviewed The Forty Days at the time of its publication as a sort of sea-going Bridge Over the River Kwai; most present-day readers will question such an assessment.

Yaffe, James *The Voyage of the Franz Joseph*

Earnest — if stiff — fictional treatment of the infamous 1939 voyage of the Hamburg-Amerika Line steamship ST. LOUIS which sailed from Europe with over 1,000 Jewish German refugees aboard hoping to find safe haven in the New World. Despite earlier official promises, the ship's passengers were refused entry to Cuba. A similar refusal from the United States government forced the vessel back to Europe, where the refugees were, finally and begrudgedly, parceled off to various countries. Sadly, most died in the World War which engulfed Europe later that year. Yaffe changes the ship's name to the FRANZ JOSEPH, but otherwise fairly faithfully follows the true story of this shameful episode of anti-Semitism.

Yonge, Roy "*Against the Clock*"

World War 2 *Maclean's* effort with a tag line promising: "Torpedoed, alone with the grey sea, there was still an enemy that he could lick!" "He" being young Canadian tanker seaman Fred Hatch, whose inordinate pride in a newly-acquired, pre-War German self-winding wristwatch leads him to the upper deck of his tanker one dark Caribbean night (he'd wanted to temporarily escape from a fellow crew member's non-stop, "humorous" banter about his supposedly waterproof timepiece). Hatch's moment of peace is abruptly terminated when a U-boat torpedo explodes the tanker sky high, blowing the young man into the sea as his ship's only survivor. Drifting alone in the ship's flotsam, Hatch ponders death and then begins to hate his watch when he envisions it ticking on and on, long after he himself has perished in the sea. A mounting hatred of the German instrument helps fuel his will to survive the ordeal, and indeed, when rescue finally comes some days later, he discovers that the wristwatch had actually been losing time ever since its initial immersion in the warm waters of the Caribbean. Score one for the human spirit / human survival against the purported machine-like mechanical efficiency of Hitler's "Thousand Year" Reich!

Zugsmith, Leane *"Shanghai to Manila"*

A disheartening, profoundly sad story of Frenchmen serving aboard a Vichy French passenger ship (the fictitious LUTETIA) in the Far East in late 1941. The ship, once a popular vessel in the Marseilles-Yokohama trade, is now nearly deserted by passengers as she sails from Shanghai to Manila and then on to Saigon. And, it turns out, she is also steadily losing her crew for, at each Manila call, more and more desert to join the Free French of General de Gaulle (there's a recruiting office in town). The French are presented as thoroughly demoralized by their loss to Germany and humiliated by Vichy's recent (July 1941) turning over of Indochina to the Japanese. The crux of Zugsmith's short story involves the ship's purser and bar steward, both of whom are toying with the idea of joining the French, and at story's end, both do desert the LUTETIA for de Gaulle's forces. In an unintended irony, the author includes an American character, a used-car salesman traveling from Shanghai to Manila, who feels the pervasive fear aboard the Vichy-controlled ship and can't wait to disembark in Manila. "I'm not easily scared," he says, "and I'll tell you what. Manila isn't the first place I want to be. Only I'm damned glad to get off in Manila tomorrow." The irony of course is that this story was published less than a month before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor – and less than six weeks before the fall of Manila itself to Japanese troops.