



Patrick O'Brian's Navy: The Illustrated Companion to Jack Aubrey's World

By Richard O'Neill

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From the moment that *Master and Commander*, the first of Patrick O'Brian's sequence of 20 novels about the 19th century British Royal Navy officer Jack Aubrey and his surgeon colleague Stephen Maturin, was published in 1970, critics hailed his work as a masterpiece of historical recreation. Called "the best historical novels ever written" by the *New York Times*, the books have sold millions of copies. This first full-color illustrated companion to the Aubrey-Maturin series, timed to coincide with the release of the blockbuster Twentieth-Century Fox film adaptation starring Russell Crowe, explains the fascinating physical details of Jack Aubrey's fictional world. An in-depth historical reference, it brings to life the political, cultural, and physical setting of O'Brian's novels. Annotated drawings, paintings, and diagrams reveal the complex parts of a ship and its rigging, weaponry, crew quarters and duties, below-deck conditions, and fighting tactics, while maps illustrate the location featured in each novel.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Both visually impressive and highly informative, this large-format introduction to Napoleonic naval warfare focuses on Patrick O'Brian's splendid Jack Aubrey saga, which it presents as a major work of English literature. In fact, parts of this book (including the material on Lord Cochrane, the original model for Jack Aubrey's character) will be more useful to O'Brian's fans than to the lay reader. However, the book also depicts, in words and pictures, the political background of the Napoleonic Wars, the development of the major navies, the sailors' life at sea (where weather and disease killed far more men than battles did) and the design and construction of the wooden sailing warship. The volume also details the training of officers, fleet actions, frigate actions (prominent in the career of both Cochrane and his avatar) and the role of piracy, slave trading and mutiny in the maritime history of the era. Although not uniformly well reproduced, the illustrations are outstanding, including many period items, and the book as a whole makes a fine treat O'Brian's many fans.

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About the Author

Richard O'Neill is a writer and editor who has specialized in military history for the past 40 years. He is the author of *Suicide Squads*, a history of the weapons and missions of the Special Attack units of World War II. He has contributed to many books on weaponry and military history, including *The Complete Encyclopedia of 20th Century Warships*, *The Vietnam War* and, most recently, *An Illustrated History of the Royal Navy*. He was a major contributor to *Lands And Peoples*, a multi-volume educational work, and wrote *Presidents of the United States* for the Facts America series. He is also the author of *The Middle Ages* and *World War II* for the "Historical Facts" illustrated series.

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