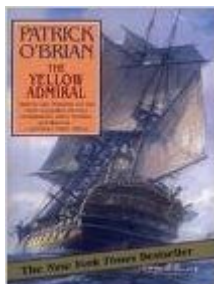


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The Yellow Admiral (The Aubrey/Maturin Series, Book 18)



Synopsis

In this long-awaited sequel to his best-seller *The Commodore*, legendary author Patrick O'Brian continues what the *New York Times* calls "the best historical novel ever written." While surviving life-threatening adventures at sea, Captain Jack Aubrey and Dr. Stephen Maturin find life on land to be even more perilous. Aubrey has dimmed his prospects of an admiralty by his erratic voting in Parliament. He is on even worse terms with his wife, Sophie, when his mother-in-law ferrets out a trove of old personal letters. Fortunately, Maturin brings news that the Chileans need the two seafaring friends to train their navy. Fresh, dynamic and breathtakingly alive, *The Yellow Admiral* continues O'Brian's reign as king of historical fiction. Narrator Patrick Tull's accents enhance O'Brian's elegant language, eccentric characters and authentic 19th-century atmosphere.

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Customer Reviews

In this long-awaited sequel to his best-seller *The Commodore*, legendary author Patrick O'Brian continues what the *New York Times* calls "the best historical novel ever written." While surviving life-threatening adventures at sea, Captain Jack Aubrey and Dr. Stephen Maturin find life on land to be even more perilous. Aubrey has dimmed his prospects of an admiralty by his erratic voting in Parliament. He is on even worse terms with his wife, Sophie, when his mother-in-law ferrets out a trove of old personal letters. Fortunately, Maturin brings news that the Chileans need the two seafaring friends to train their navy. Fresh, dynamic and breathtakingly alive, *The Yellow Admiral* continues O'Brian's reign as king of historical fiction. Narrator Patrick Tull's accents enhance O'Brian's elegant language, eccentric characters and authentic 19th-century atmosphere.

I have read many of the Aubrey/Maturin books by Patrick O'Brian. I must say, this is by far the weakest. NOTHING HAPPENS! The first part of the book has Aubrey and Maturin wandering around, mostly at Aubrey's home. They natter on about the land, politics, a little nature, and Aubrey's responsibilities as the member of parliament for the area. Once they get out to sea, they are on duty patrolling outside Brest, to keep French ships from going in or out. Apparently none do. The admiral hates Aubrey, because he voted against the admiral's nephew in a parliamentary vote about how to use land. The only action in the entire book is Aubrey and his ship going after a "prize," which promptly gives up without a fight. Throughout the book, Aubrey worries about what will happen if war ends, and he is retired, nominally as an admiral, but with no command. This is what is called being a yellow admiral, and it is considered quite a disgrace. It gets quite boring. Really, there is absolutely no action in the entire book. I wish I hadn't wasted my time reading it. There was no pleasure and no entertainment value whatsoever.

"The Yellow Admiral" is 18th in the 20 novel Aubrey-Maturin series, featuring Captain Jack Aubrey and his companion ship surgeon Stephen Maturin, set in the year 1815. "The Yellow Admiral" is one episode in a grand epic, and as such the plot is of secondary importance. Revealing "how it comes out" does not really constitute a spoiler. For reader's new to the series, the titles often describe the ending of the novel, or the next novel in the series. The novel begins with a rather thorough summary of preceding novels in the series, through various second-hand accounts. So, a reader new to the series could start with "The Yellow Admiral" and not be too confused. Caveat, once you've read any book in the series, you're hooked. So, if you are thinking about reading "The Yellow Admiral", do it right. Start with Book 1, "Master and Commander" SUMMARY The action begins at with Jack on temporary leave at his estate at Woolcombe, England, to attend to his Parliamentary duties. Jack is very much opposed to the enclosures of the commons in general and specifically of "Simmon's Lea". As "Lord of the Manor", he is in a position to essentially veto the effort, and does. We learn a great deal about the subject, the effect on "small holders" and the politics. Jack's opposition to the enclosure, other political positions he has held in Parliament, and unpopularity in some parts of the Royal Navy threaten his naval career if peace with France breaks out. Jack is ordered to sea to join a rather uneventful blockade of Brest, France. During which his wife Sophie learns of an affair Jack had with an American woman. When the blockade ends, with the capture of Napoleon, facing the fact that he will almost certainly be "yellowed", i.e., be promoted to admiral but never given a command, Jack opts to temporarily resign his commission in order to accept a private commission

surveying the coasts of Chile, and organizing a Chilean navy. The agreement is accepted by "the powers that be", with the proviso that Jack can be called back into service with the Royal Navy at any time. So, Jack and Stephen set sail on the former "HMS Surprise"-now privately owned by Stephen--for Chile. At Madeira, he receives orders to take command of all Royal Navy ships at Madeira to blockade the Straits of Gibraltar. **CRITIQUE** Although lacking the wonderful action sequences of pitched naval battles, "The Yellow Admiral" is extraordinarily rich and vibrant. In addition to the politics of the time, and vivid details of nautical life, the state of medicine (and surgery) are brilliantly illuminated. Not for the action junky, and maybe not the ideal introduction to the series. But for fans of the series, another superb installment. I have lost track of how many times I have read the entire series start to finish--somewhere between six and ten times, and I look forward to re-reading the series again and again. > Click on ["Stoney"](#) just below the product title to see my other reviews, or leave a comment to ask a question.

I have loved every Aubry/Maturin novel in the series. I supposed one could read just "The Yellow Admiral" alone but that would be a waste as you wouldn't know the depth of the characters and their history together or what the naval terms were. Take my advice and start at the beginning of the series, and you will be greatly entertained. The whole series takes place on frigates and other types of men-of-war during the Napoleonic wars of the early 19th century. The orders from the British High Command take the ship and crew everywhere in the world in order to fight the encroaching French. The two main characters are the captain and his medical officer who become close friends during the years of the novels. They are well written characters: smart, funny without knowing it (thinking of the doctor and his limited knowledge of a ship even after 18 years) and the relationships each has on land. The author has written wonderful, intricate naval adventures that will put the reader on deck with the well-described battles between ships, the life on board a frigate and the characters they encounter in their world travels. Mr. O'Brian should be on everyone's list.

I've never enjoyed another series of books more, including the Dorothy Dunnett's Lymond Chronicles. Patrick O'Brian wrote extremely intelligent, witty, evocatively descriptive sea-dog tales. One little pleasure is his naming of taverns, such as "The World Turned Upside Down".....isn't that the view from the empty bottom of an upraised glass, and at the same time describes Aubrey on land? The Yellow Admiral is the eighteenth in the series; O'Brian's magic is that the readers crave another and another. I've now read them all and have begun again at the beginning.

Great read, if you like well researched, very well written historical novels. Just like all the books in this series.

Patrick O'Brien just never failed to please with this series. His characters even when they are being predictably irritating, are still immensely attractive and full of life. Dr Maturin despite his obvious intelligence, still has not made the connection between filth and infection and continues to operate in a state of hygiene that would cause instant dismissal in a modern clinic, yet his results are better than average? Very complex

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