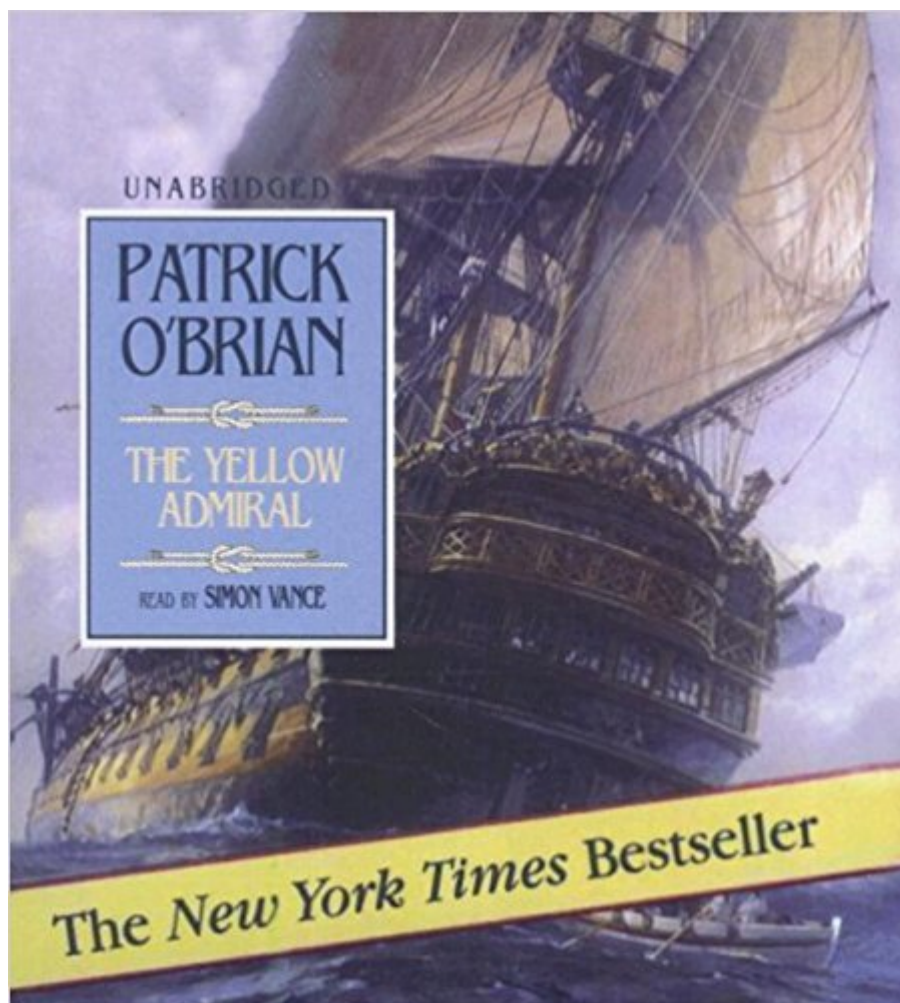


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The Yellow Admiral (Aubrey-Maturin)



Synopsis

A New York Times Best-Seller *Life ashore* may once again be the undoing of Captain Jack Aubrey of the Royal Navy. He is feuding with his neighbor and on even worse terms with his wife, whose mother has ferreted out a damaging trove of old personal letters. His erratic voting as a member of Parliament has dimmed his prospects at the Admiralty; and with the outbreak of peace in 1814, Aubrey fears being "yellowed," that is, nominally promoted to the rank of admiral without a squadron to command. But Stephen Maturin returns from France with the news that the Chileans, to secure their independence, require an English navy. And just as Jack is dusting off his captain's hat, an urgent dispatch orders him to Gibraltar: Napoleon has escaped from Elba.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

At last! Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin are back as Patrick O'Brian provides his indomitably loyal fans with another adventure, this one by land as well as by sea. Lucky Jack Aubrey finds himself not so lucky as his troubles amount ashore, his prospects of admiralty dimmed and Sophie's affection waning. At sea, he fares little better: in the storms off Brest he captures a French privateer ladden with gold and ivory at the expense of missing a signal and deserting his post. And worst of all, in the spring of 1814, peace breaks out... Fortunately, Maturin returns from a mission in Chile with news that may help restore Aubrey to good favor with both his beloved navy and wife. Then, off to Gibraltar: Napoleon has escaped from Elba. *The Yellow Admiral* is a change of pace, a reversion to the themes of the earlier novels in the Aubrey/Maturin series. Much of the story takes place on land,

giving scope to O'Brian's fascination with the landscape, physical and social, of early nineteenth-century England. In vivid glimpses of various rural pursuits, and nuanced observation of politics and domestic arrangements, O'Brian proves himself ever more surely to be the heir of Jane Austen. Not to say there aren't some rousing and bloody sea-battles! --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As befits a popular and enduring fictional hero, Captain Jack Aubrey of the Royal Navy is besieged on all sides in the 18th installment of O'Brian's splendid 19th-century historical adventure series (The Commodore, etc.). Jack is fighting expensive, possibly ruinous, legal battles with slavers, as well as with rich landowners trying to enclose common lands around his family estate. He must also deal with a Navy superior with a financial interest in the enclosure, who is trying to wreck Jack's career. (If a captain becomes an admiral without a command he is "in the cant phrase... yellowed"). Jack, on blockade duty off Brittany, frets that the impending peace will indeed yellow him; and he's also in for some rough marital weather with his wife, Sophie. Meanwhile, the series' other hero, Irish-Catalan physician Stephen Maturin, who's Jack's best friend, connects in "the dark of the moon" with Chilean independence leaders who may hire Jack to head their own young navy. O'Brian is at the top of his elegant form here. He offers a wealth of sly humor (Navy officers' talk is "really not fit for mixed company because of its profoundly nautical character"), some splendid set pieces (a bare-knuckle boxing match, lively sea actions), characters who are palpably real and, as always, lapidary prose. This is splendid storytelling from a true master. Major ad/promo. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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" one a 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 through 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 Parlimentary 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 hold 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 sale 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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