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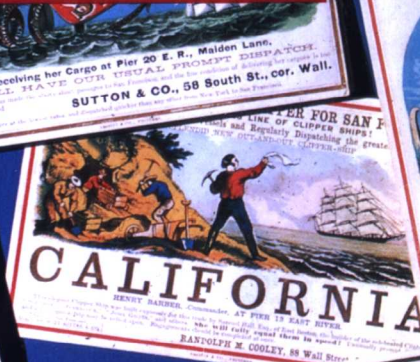
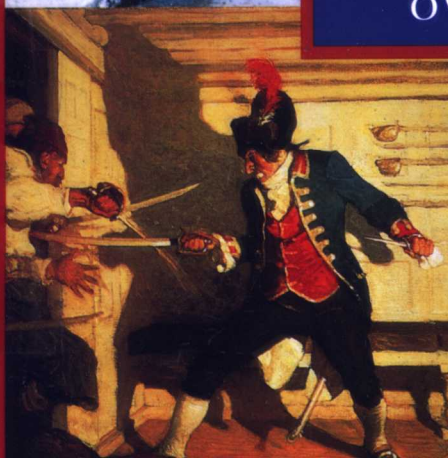


Robert McKenna

The
DICTIONARY
of NAUTICAL
LITERACY



OVER 3,500 ENTRIES



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Preface

The history of man and the sea has kept abreast of the history of civilization. In recent years, however, we as individuals have become less dependent upon the sea, and its presence and importance have ebbed from our daily lives.

Still, the sea is eternal, and we cannot hope to measure ourselves or define who we are without a knowledge and awareness of its influence. Further, it would be unthinkable to look to the future without a lens of maritime history, and for those who have heard the sea's call, it would be useless to follow the traditions if we are unable to appreciate how they were brought about and why their contributions are important.

The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy is the first lexicon to chart our maritime culture. By identifying and defining a baseline of ideas, individuals, and events across the full spectrum of our relationship with the sea, it attempts to fix our position and facilitate our journey. All entries have historical value, hold literary or artistic merit, or are important to comprehending and placing in context the issues of our time.

The terms identified are those that invariably arise in the course of life or business or are encountered in maritime-related texts. Some serve as a foundation on which additional knowledge is based, and others are included to broaden readers' horizons.

The body of knowledge contained herein is based on reading and reviewing thousands of nautical books and periodicals, thousands of hours spent at sea on all types of vessels, hundreds of hours spent in maritime museums and at related historic sites, numerous conversations with experts in various marine fields, and a lifetime of absorbing the sea's role in our popular culture.

Like every compilation, *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* presents problems of inclusion and omission. While it presumes a basic acquaintance with the sea, it transcends the vernacular and technical terms that have up to now characterized most nautical dictionaries. *The Dictionary* contains the equivalent of the first magnitude stars of our maritime galaxy. Countless other potential entries certainly deserve mention and perhaps will find their way into some future volume. Issues concerning the treatment of some terms are bound to arise. A book twice this size could not do justice to the entries, and in many cases the entry is itself the subject of a book or larger body of work.

The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy was inspired by E. D. Hirsch Jr.'s best-seller *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* (1989). Whereas Hirsch set out to establish a baseline of information "every American needs to know" to be "culturally literate," this book identifies and defines the important and useful aspects of the "culture of the sea." *The Dictionary* was conceived as a concise reference text to identify a core of nautical knowledge. As the research process moved ahead, however, it became increasingly clear that the book has added value as a device. It has been written and designed specifically to engage the curiosity of the reader, and it is cross-referenced to maximize information in as many areas of interest as possible. Thus it contains 3,500 "points of entry" into a interesting, engaging, and meaningful world. It begs to be read, scanned, perused, and used as a recall vehicle and a catalyst for learning, as well as consulted as a reference.

I sincerely hope that the knowledge, lessons, and traditions contained in *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* will be read and remembered, will enter into the stream of life, and perhaps will move people to reflection, thought, and action.

Robert R. McKenna
Noank, Connecticut

Acknowledgments

Many people answered my call for assistance with *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy*, but none more so than Gordon R. Ghareeb, who helped overcome many of the initial obstacles of the book's format and whose wit and wisdom eased the entire writing process, and William H. Barnum, who was always on call to field a question, research a topic, or review entries.

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Special thanks are due to my family for their support: Tamara, Julia, and Daria McKenna; Pete and Pam McKenna; Bill and Robin McKenna; Kevin and Marga Huban; and William and Mary McKenna—my parents, who introduced me to a semidiurnal world and gave me the freedom to explore. Thanks go also to Arthur Suwalow, Nina Lapin, Cliff and Marina Morgenegg, Walter and Eleanor Grin, Victor and Dana Grin, and Kevin and Natasha Raymond.

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A final thanks to Ed Knappman of New England Publishing Associates, who got the idea for the book right away, and special thanks to Jonathan Eaton and the entire staff at International Marine.

Reader's Note

No dictionary can lay claim to completeness. The author and editors have made every effort to ensure as wide a coverage as possible within the range imposed by the scope and space limitations of this work.

In constructing *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy*, the author and editors have sought to preserve a degree of authority while making the book approachable and easy to use—the information contained herein can be of no use if it is not read. The reader will immediately notice that it does not follow strict dictionary style and that cross-references, provided to help readers make connections and linkages, are contained within the text of a definition—such cross-references are in boldface type. *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* does, however, run alphabetically through many seemingly disparate terms. This is the real power of such a book.

Ships are alphabetized by name rather than by prefix (prefixes are defined below). Naval engagements are found under the location, such as **Trafalgar, Battle of**.

Faced with the task of defining many terms and concepts, the author realizes the limitations of this work and welcomes at all times suggestions from readers as to possible improvements and enlargement of *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy*. These suggestions may be sent to Editorial Director, International Marine, P.O. Box 220, Camden ME 04843, www.internationalmarine.com, or via www.NauticalLiteracy.com.

Fleet Designations

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| CSS | Confederate States Ship |
| HMAS | Her/His Majesty's Australian Ship |
| HMCS | Her/His Majesty's Canadian Ship |
| HMS | Her/His Majesty's Ship |
| HMNZS | Her/His Majesty's New Zealand Ship |
| MS | Motor Ship |
| MV | Motor Vessel |
| NS | Nuclear Ship |
| RMS | Royal Mail Steamship |
| SS | Steamship |
| USCGC | United States Coast Guard Cutter |
| USNS | United States Naval Ship |
| USRC | United States Revenue Cutter |
| USS | United States Ship |

U.S. Navy and Coast Guard Ship Types

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| AGSS | Auxiliary Oceanography Vessel |
| AGTR | Auxiliary Technical Research Ship |
| AH | Auxiliary Hospital Ship |
| BB | Battleship |
| C | Cruiser |
| CA | Heavy Cruiser |
| CC | Command Cruiser |
| CG | Guided Missile Cruiser |

| | |
|------|---|
| CGN | Nuclear Powered Guided Missile Cruiser |
| CL | Light Cruiser |
| CV | Aircraft Carrier |
| CVA | Attack Aircraft Carrier |
| CVAN | Nuclear Powered Attack Aircraft Carrier |
| CVN | Nuclear Powered Aircraft Carrier |
| DD | Destroyer |
| DDG | Guided Missile Destroyer |
| DE | Destroyer Escort |
| DLG | Destroyer |
| FF | Frigate |
| FFG | Guided Missile Frigate |
| IST | Tank Landing Ship |
| IV | Lightship |
| PR | Patrol Vessel |
| PT | Patrol Boat |
| SS | Submarine |
| SSBN | Nuclear Powered Ballistic Missile Submarine |
| SSN | Nuclear Powered Submarine |
| WLX | Lightship |
| WPG | Gunboat |

A number following the specific ship type is the ship's hull number. It is assigned to a vessel, usually one of a class of vessels, by the U.S. Navy.

A

A-1, old **Lloyd's of London** classification indicating that a ship has met the highest standards of construction. The term is now used colloquially to describe anything that is the very best.

Aaron Manby, the first **steamship** to be built of iron and one of the first iron vessels ever. The 120-foot **paddle wheeler** was launched in Staffordshire, England, in 1821 and made her first voyage in 1822 across the English Channel and up the Seine to Paris. The use of iron plates instead of wood was a watershed event in shipbuilding, although some people opposed this method of construction because iron does not float.

AB, see **able-bodied seaman**.

Abandon Ship!, 1957 seagoing "survival of the fittest" saga that portrays the sinking of a luxury **liner** during World War II. The motion picture, based on a true story, starred Tyrone Power, Stephen Boyd, and Lloyd Nolan.

Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kidd, 1952 spoof of Hollywood's swashbuckler movies,

which shows Bud and Lou finding a treasure map. In addition to Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, the film featured Charles Laughton, who reprised his role from the 1945 film **Captain Kidd**.

ABCD Ships, three **cruisers** and a dispatch boat—*Atlanta*, *Boston*, *Chicago*, and *Dolphin*—launched in March 1883 as the U.S. Navy's first steel ships. Their commissioning ushered in the modern U.S. Navy, giving a notable boost to the nascent U.S. steel industry and what became the military-industrial complex.

Abeking and Rasmussen, boatbuilding company located near Bremen, Germany, best known in the United States for having built ninety-nine **Concordia yawls** between 1949 and 1966. Founded in 1907 by engineer George Abeking and yacht designer Henry Rasmussen, the company's building program included the design and building of naval vessels and special utility craft during World War I.

able-bodied seaman (AB), an experienced member of the deck crew aboard a merchant

ship. The rank is higher than **ordinary seaman** and below that of a petty officer, such as a **boatswain**, or a licensed officer, such as a **mate**. Today they are referred to as "able seamen."

Able Manner, the largest search and rescue operation ever undertaken by the U.S. **Coast Guard**. It was in response to a massive increase in the number of Haitians fleeing their country in October 1991.

Able-Peter, the old international signal flag designation for "A-P," which meant "I am aground." Following the Korean War, the code was revised to adapt to dialects and accents better understood by military organizations within NATO and the United Nations. Today's designation would be "Alpha-Papa."

Above Us the Waves, British movie about the midget submarine hunt for the Nazi battleship **Tirpitz** and her ultimate destruction. Although a good sea story, the film is also a reminder that the winners of wars write the history books. The 1956 film starred Theodore Bikel and Lyndon Brook.

ABS, see **American Bureau of Shipping**.

The Abyss, 1989 underwater adventure film starring Ed Harris as the leader of a team of oil-drilling divers who are pressed into service by the U.S. **Navy** to locate an inoperative nuclear submarine. Directed by James Cameron, who later directed **Titanic**, the film was lauded by critics for its good underwater footage and musical score, and it captured an Academy Award for special effects.

Acapulco, originally the **P&O Mongolia** of 1923, the 15,182-gross-ton-passenger steamer was acquired by the Mexican government-owned Natumex Line in 1961 and refitted to run a fortnightly service between Los Angeles and Acapulco. The maiden positioning cruises were canceled because the **liner** failed to pass U.S. **Coast Guard** inspections. After surmounting that embarrassing obstacle, the vessel had a

near-complete mechanical breakdown on her third voyage south from California. She served for six months at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962 as a hotel ship. Mexico's one and only ocean liner, she was **laid up** in 1963 and finally scrapped in 1964.

MS Achille Lauro, motor **liner** delivered in 1947 as the Dutch **Willem Ruys** and sold to the Lauro Line of Naples in 1964. Renamed **Achille Lauro** in 1972, she became a well-known cruise ship. After leaving Alexandria, Egypt, in 1985, the ship was boarded and hijacked by four Arab terrorists. While holding the ship, her crew, and her passengers hostage, the terrorists brutally murdered one American passenger, Leon Klinghoffer, and threw his body overboard. After three days, the terrorists surrendered and the liner was returned to her owners. The ship burned and sank in the Indian Ocean in December 1994 with the loss of two passengers' lives.

acoustic torpedo, torpedo fitted with a sensor that detects the sound of a ship's propellers. The sensor steers the torpedo toward the ship and detonates it when close to the ship's hull. The torpedo was introduced by the German navy in 1943 and was used with limited success during World War II. To counter this weapon, ships tow a device or an array behind them that emits more noise than the ship's machinery.

Action in the North Atlantic, excellent 1943 film—whose value as a recruiting instrument cannot be denied—showcasing the U.S. **merchant marine** in World War II. The film portrays the harrowing story of the fictitious **Liberty ship Sea Witch** as she is separated from her North Atlantic **convoy** and has to sail on to **Murmansk** alone. Based on an original story by **Guy Gilpatric**, it starred Humphrey Bogart, Raymond Massey, and Alan Hale Sr. and was nominated for Academy Awards for best writing and best original story.

Actium, Battle of, naval engagement in the Roman Civil War in which Octavian's fleet of four hundred ships defeated the combined five-hundred-vessel fleet of Mark Antony and Cleopatra in September of 31 B.C. off the coast of Greece. During the fighting, Cleopatra ordered her Egyptian **galleys** to flee, and Antony broke off with a few ships and followed her. The remainder of the fleet surrendered, and Octavian became the undisputed ruler of the Roman Empire as the emperor Augustus.

Acushnet, whaleship that left Fairhaven, Massachusetts, in 1841 with **Herman Melville** serving on board as an **ordinary seaman**. The ship voyaged around **Cape Horn** and into the South Pacific, where Melville jumped ship in the **Marquesas Islands** eighteen months later. The experience provided raw material for his novels *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), and *Moby-Dick* (1851).

Adams, Charles Francis (1866–1954), renowned American yachtsman and the first amateur to defend the **America's Cup**, as **skipper** of *Resolute* in 1920 against Sir **Thomas Lipton's** *Shamrock IV*. In 1934 he skippered the *J-boat Yankee* in her losing contest with *Rainbow* in the America's Cup trial races. A descendant of John Quincy Adams, he served as secretary of the navy from 1929 to 1933 and was a tireless campaigner for increasing the size and scope of the U.S. military.

admeasurement, the confirmed or official dimensions, size, or capacity of a ship.

Admiral, streamlined **Mississippi River** excursion steamer built in 1906 as the *Albatross* (not to be confused with the *Albatros*). The 396-foot craft was completely rebuilt in 1940 to become the all-steel *Admiral*, which was capable of carrying four thousand passengers at a time on day trips. In 1979 the U.S. **Coast Guard** shut the operation down when the vessel's hull proved too weak in places to pass



Achille Lauro. (Courtesy Gordon R. Ghareeb)

safety inspection. The art-deco riverboat was refurbished in 1994 as the President Casino's *Admiral Riverboat* and was permanently docked on the Saint Louis waterfront not far from the Gateway Arch.

Admiral Cruises, U.S.-based cruise operation formed in 1987 by the consolidation of Eastern Cruise Lines, Western Cruise Lines, and Sundance Cruises. It came under the control of **Royal Caribbean Cruise Line** in 1990.

Admiral Graf Spee, widely known as the *Graf Spee*, German **pocket battleship** built in 1936 to conform to the terms of the **Treaty of Versailles** and named for Admiral **Maximilian von Spee** (1861–1914). After terrorizing the Atlantic Ocean in the early days of World War II, the sixteen-thousand-ton ship was **scuttled** to avoid capture by her British adversaries off Montevideo, Uruguay, during the Battle of the **River Plate** on December 17, 1939. Her captain, **Hans Langsdorff**, committed suicide the following day.

Admiral Kuznetsov, the only full-flight-deck aircraft carrier ever to be completed by the Soviets. The conventionally powered sixty-seven-thousand-ton Riga-class ship was laid down in 1982 and finally outfitted for full service in 1995. After making a tour of duty in the Mediterranean, the 885-foot vessel

was tied up at the Russian port of Nikolayov for repair and modifications. The breakup of the Soviet Union complicated the logistics of this repair work because Russia has no ship repair facility capable of handling the task, and the shipyard that built the *Kuznetsov* is in the Ukraine. As of 2001 the ship was still inactive.

Admiral Popov, circular Russian battleship built in 1875. She was constructed to be a platform for her two twelve-inch guns regardless of the sea state. Along with her sister ship *Novgorod*, she performed reasonably well but proved difficult to keep on course at low speeds.

Admiral's Cup, unofficial world championship of offshore yacht racing, established in 1957 by Great Britain's **Royal Ocean Racing Club**. It is sailed every odd-numbered year at Cowes, **Isle of Wight**, England, and the races include the **Fastnet Race**.

Admiralty, the administrative department governing Britain's **Royal Navy**. It was founded by King Henry VIII (1491–1547) and was amalgamated into the Ministry of Defence in 1964. The offices are still located at **Whitehall** in London.

admiralty law (also known as “**maritime law**”), rules and principles—derived from custom, judicial decisions, legislative enactments, and international treaties—that govern the legal relationships arising from the transportation of passengers and cargoes on the high seas and other navigable waters.

Adney, Edwin Tappan (1868–1950), American artist and writer credited with saving the art of birchbark canoe construction. He built more than a hundred one-fifth-scale models of different types of canoes, which are now housed at the **Mariners' Museum** in Newport News, Virginia. With **Howard Irving Chappelle**, he wrote *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America* (1964).

Adrift: Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea, best-selling 1986 account by solo sailor **Steven Callahan** of his two-and-a-half-month survival experience in 1980 aboard a five-foot rubber life raft in the Atlantic after his twenty-foot sailboat sank in a violent storm.

Adventure Galley, thirty-four-gun vessel—a galley-frigate type with both sail and oar power—in which Captain **William Kidd** and a crew of seventy sailed from Plymouth, England, in April 1696 on an expedition to capture pirates. Kidd and an augmented crew turned to pirates themselves in the Indian Ocean and abandoned their ship, **Adventure Galley**, on the coast of Madagascar in favor of a captured ship, *Quedah Merchant*.

Adventures in Paradise, American television show that ran from 1959 to 1962, starring Gardner McKay as Adam Troy, a Korean War veteran who, as captain of the schooner *Tiki III*, drifted from adventure to adventure while carrying passengers and cargo around the Pacific.

The Adventures of Roderick Random, picaresque 1748 novel by **Tobias George Smollett**, which provides a graphic account of British naval life of the time by recounting the sea-going adventures of the fictional Scottish rogue **Roderick Random**.

Aebi, Tania (b. 1969), American teenager who, at age eighteen, became the youngest woman to sail solo around the world. Her twenty-seven-thousand-mile, two-and-a-half-year westward voyage in a Contessa 26 was recounted in her book *Maiden Voyage* (1989).

Aegean Captain, 210,257-gross-ton super-tanker that ran into the tanker *Atlantic Empress* in 1979 while transporting a cargo of crude oil from Venezuela to Singapore. The combined loss of oil from both tankers into the Caribbean was estimated at 48,550 barrels. Both vessels caught fire, and the *Atlantic*

Empress was lost. The *Aegean Captain* was salvaged without casualties and towed to Curaçao for repairs.

Aegir, Norse god of the sea.

Aegospotami, Battle of, naval engagement in 405 B.C. off the Dardanelles in which a Spartan fleet of 180 vessels captured 160 Athenian ships, killing their crews. The battle ended the Peloponnesian War—and Athenian naval supremacy.

Aeolia, a floating island described in **Homer's** *Odyssey*.

An Affair to Remember, hit 20th Century Fox film about a millionaire bachelor and a single heiress who meet and fall in love aboard ship while en route from the Mediterranean to New York. It was filmed aboard the SS *Constitution*, with Deborah Kerr and Cary Grant, during a 1957 westbound crossing.

The African Queen, 1935 novel by **Cecil Scott "C. S." Forester** that takes place in German Central Africa during World War I. Rose Sayer, the sister of a slain English missionary, is rescued by Charlie Allnut, the captain of a **tramp** steamer. They both escape aboard the leaky launch *African Queen* and later sink the German gunboat *Königen Luise* on Lake Tanganyika. The 1951 film adapted from the novel was directed by John Huston and starred Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart, who won his second Academy Award for his role as the boozing, smoking, cussing captain.

afterguard, a group of crew members, frequently including the owner, who determine the course of action aboard a racing yacht. The term comes from the tradition that the **skipper** and officers aboard ship are stationed around the helm, at the after end of the vessel.

Against All Flags, classic 1952 motion picture, a no-holds-barred epic about an undercover espionage foray into a den of early-eighteenth-

century Madagascar pirates. The quintessential swashbuckler was portrayed by Errol Flynn, and the film also starred Maureen O'Hara and Anthony Quinn.

HMS Agamemnon, Royal Navy ship launched in 1781 and commanded by **Horatio Nelson** from 1793 to 1796. She saw action in the 1801 victory at the Battle of **Copenhagen** and survived the Battle of **Trafalgar** in 1805. Named for the leader of the Greeks against Troy, who is immortalized both in **Homer's** *Iliad* and in Aeschylus's tragedy *Agamemnon*, she ran aground in the **River Plate** and was abandoned in 1809.

Agassiz, Alexander (1835–1910), Swiss-born marine zoologist, oceanographer, and mining engineer who used his wealth to make important contributions to marine science. He co-published *Seaside Studies in Natural History* (1865) and also wrote *Marine Animals of Massachusetts Bay* (1871) and *Revision of the Echini* (1872–74). The son of Louis Agassiz, a world authority on living and fossil fish, Alexander was curator of the Harvard Museum from 1874 to 1885 and maintained a private laboratory at his summer residence in Newport, Rhode Island. He underwrote a number of scientific voyages in the Pacific that focused on coral reef studies.

Captain Ahab, fictional one-legged captain of the whaling ship *Pequod* in the novel *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (1851), by **Herman Melville**. Ahab is obsessed with avenging himself upon the great white whale Moby Dick, who had bitten off his leg.

aids to navigation (ATON), general term for buoys, beacons, lighthouses, daymarks, and other markers installed to assist navigators and warn of dangers or obstructions.

Aivazovsky, Ivan Konstantinovich (1817–1900), Armenian painter embraced by Russian royalty and the Naval Ministry. He was commissioned

to paint numerous canvases devoted to Russian ports, battles at sea, and the heroic past of the Russian fleet. Aivazovsky went on to become one of the most celebrated marine artists in Europe. He exhibited in the United States as well and traveled there in 1892.

Akagi, 855-foot Japanese aircraft carrier (whose name means "Red Castle") constructed in 1927 from the hull of an uncompleted battle cruiser to comply with the terms of the **Washington Naval Treaty**. She led the task force that attacked **Pearl Harbor** on December 7, 1941. The 36,500-ton ship was set on fire at the Battle of **Midway** from USS *Enterprise*-based aircraft assaults and was **scuttled** to prevent capture by American forces. *Akagi* and her sister ship *Hiryu* were the only carriers ever fitted with port-side islands.

CSS Alabama, most famous of the **Confederate raiders**, which preyed on Union merchant ships and whalers during the Civil War. Built secretly in England in 1862 along with sister ships CSS *Florida* and CSS *Shenandoah*, and commanded by **Raphael Semmes**, *Alabama* sank, burned, or captured sixty-four ships in the next two years. On June 19, 1864, the Union warship USS *Kearsarge* sank *Alabama* outside of the harbor of Cherbourg, France. Following the war, Britain had to pay the United States more than \$15 million for damages inflicted on northern shipping by *Alabama* and other Confederate raiders. These reimbursements became known as the *Alabama* Claims.

USS Alabama (BB-60), thirty-five-thousand-ton U.S. Navy battleship of the *South Dakota* class built in 1942. After serving in action in the Atlantic Ocean in World War II, she was sent to the Pacific theater of operations. The 680-foot-long warrior earned nine battle stars and led the U.S. fleet into Tokyo Bay in 1945 to receive the surrender of the Imperial Japanese forces. Decommissioned in 1947, the battle-

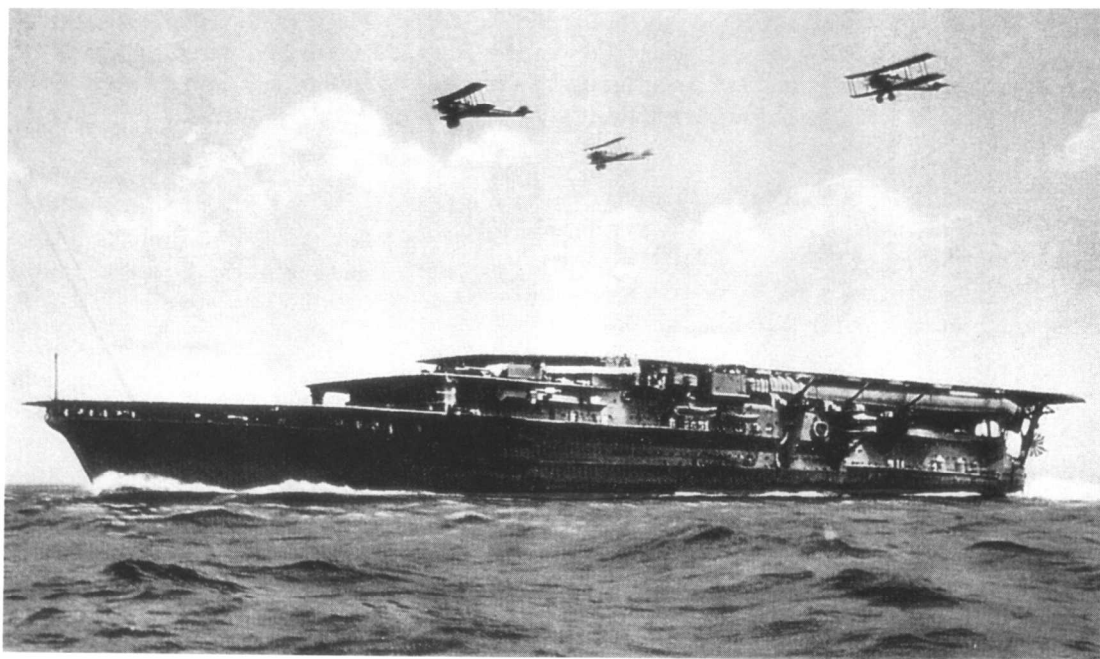
ship was eventually towed to Mobile Bay in Alabama, where she continues to serve as the centerpiece of Battleship Memorial Park.

Alaska Marine Highway, state-owned and -operated line of ships that carry passengers, vehicles, and freight between Alaskan ports and to the ports of Seattle, Washington, and British Columbia.

Alaska Steamship Company, cargo and passenger operation formed in 1895 to maintain service between ports along the Pacific Coast and Alaskan ports. The 1899 Yukon gold rush insured the company's success. With scheduled service as far as Deering, Saint Michael, and Kotzebue, the American-owned company played a major role in bringing settlers to the frozen frontier. Passenger operations ceased in 1954, and the company sold all of its assets in 1970.

USS Albacore (AGSS-569), experimental U.S. Navy submarine completed in 1953. Carrying no weapons, the 205-foot vessel was used to test such new equipment as **sonar** and hydrophones as well as to provide data regarding submerged speed, maneuverability, and depth. The 1,692-ton *Albacore* was decommissioned in 1972 and thirteen years later was opened for tours as a display ship at the Portsmouth Maritime Museum Park in New Hampshire.

Albatros, North Sea pilot **schooner** built in Holland in 1921, a sister ship to the Tabor Academy's *Tabor Boy* and **Irving Johnson's** *Yankee*. She was purchased by American author Ernest Gann in 1954 and was the subject of his book *Song of the Sirens*. Sold again in 1958, she became an American sail training vessel under Panamanian registry. Hit by a **white squall** in May 1961 while en route from Mexico to the Bahamas, the eighty-three-foot schooner sank in the Caribbean Sea with the loss of six lives. This tragic loss was the subject of the 1995 film *White Squall*.



Japanese carrier *Akagi*. (Courtesy The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia)

albatross, a large web-footed, soaring seabird inhabiting the Pacific and **Southern Oceans**, with a wingspan sometimes exceeding twelve feet. Sailing lore has it that each bird bears the soul of a sailor lost at sea.

albatross around one's neck, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge tells the tale of a seaman who kills an **albatross**, bringing bad luck to his shipmates. He is forced to wear the bird around his neck as punishment. The phrase has come to mean a burden or something that causes deep anxiety.

Albion, Robert G. (1896–1983), American academic long considered the dean of American naval historians. He was a Harvard professor of Oceanic History and Affairs and served as U.S. historian of naval administration from 1943 to 1950, supervising a project that produced some two hundred volumes. He was the author or contributor to many additional volumes on maritime history.

Alcoa Steamship Company, subsidiary in charge of ocean transportation for the Aluminum Company of America, which was formed in 1940 by the consolidation of the already allied Aluminum Line, American Caribbean Line, and Ocean Dominion Steamship Company. The fleet's main function was to carry raw bauxite from world mines to aluminum plants in the United States. Following World War II, three new **combi-liners** were converted from attack transports for the company. The *Alcoa Cavalier*, *Alcoa Clipper*, and *Alcoa Corsair* were all on line between South America and New York by 1947. The line ceased to carry passengers after 1960, continuing solely as a cargo operation.

Alden, John (1885–1962), American yacht designer who was one of the first to gain fame through ocean racing. He incorporated a working knowledge of fishing **schooners** in yacht design, and in the 1920s his schooner-

rigged ocean racers were thought to be among the few safe and reliable yachts for distance passages. His series of **Malabars** were the most famous ocean-racing yachts of the 1920s.

Alert, the ship that along with the brig **Pilgrim** carried **Richard Henry Dana Jr.** on his adventure at sea from 1834 to 1836. Dana boarded the larger **Alert** in San Diego for a return trip back to Boston. Dana's voyage is immortalized in his book **Two Years Before the Mast** (1840). The **Alert** had been built for the **China trade** and was a whaleship when she was sunk by the **CSS Alabama** in 1862.

Aleutians, a volcanic island chain in the North Pacific stretching twelve hundred miles southwest from Alaska. The Japanese occupied two of the islands, Attu and Kiska, in 1942–43. Attu was retaken in May 1943 in the only ground fighting on North American soil in World War II.

Alexanderson, Leroy (b. 1910), final commodore of the **United States Lines** and last master of the liner **SS United States**. He also held the rank of rear admiral in the U.S. Navy Reserve.

Alexandr Pushkin, Soviet passenger liner, completed at the height of the Cold War in 1965, that inaugurated transatlantic service between Leningrad and Montréal the following year. The ill-designed and poorly decorated 19,861-gross-ton vessel was the second of five identical ships constructed by the Soviet Union to show the hammer and sickle in ports around the world. She was removed from liner operation in 1975, relegated solely to cruising, and then sold in 1991 to become the cruise ship **Marco Polo**.

Alliance, Continental Navy frigate that accompanied **John Paul Jones** and **Bonhomme Richard** in their attack on British shipping during the American Revolution. Captain **John Barry** took command of **Alliance** in

1780, and in 1781 she captured two British sloops. Following the war, she made several Atlantic crossings, including transporting the Marquis de Lafayette back to France. In 1783 she fought the last naval battle of the American Revolution. With the **Treaty of Paris**, **Alliance** was the only vessel still in commission in the Continental Navy. She was sold in 1785, and it would be ten years before the United States had another naval vessel.

Aloha Tower, distinctive structure overlooking the cruise ship and ocean liner docking facility in Honolulu Harbor that includes piers 9, 10, and 11. When built in 1925, this nine-story pink clock tower was the tallest structure in the territory of Hawaii.

Alter, Hobart "Hobie" (b. 1933), American surfer and outrigger canoe enthusiast who pioneered the development of fiberglass surfboards and a lightweight catamaran. In 1968 he designed and introduced the **Hobie Cat**, a popular sailing catamaran.

Altmark, German tanker that was used as a supply ship and floating prison for captured seamen during World War II. In February 1940 British Prime Minister **Winston Churchill** ordered the vessel boarded despite its location in neutral Norwegian waters. Discovered in **Altmark's** holds while it was anchored in a fjord near Bergen were 299 British merchant seamen captured by the **Admiral Graf Spee**.

Alvin, the U.S. Navy's first manned Deep Submergence Research Vessel (DSRV), commissioned in 1964. In 1966 **Alvin** located the hydrogen bomb that was lost in the Mediterranean when two U.S. planes collided over Spain. In 1986, with underwater explorer **Robert Duane Ballard** aboard, **Alvin** descended to the wreck of **RMS Titanic**. The name for the sub was a contraction of "Allyn Vine," the name of a **Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution** oceanographer and a reference to the popular cartoon chipmunk.

ambergris, a waxlike concretion that may be extracted from the intestine of a dead whale but may also be found floating on the sea or cast up on shore. Extremely valuable, it is used as a fixative for high-quality perfumes.

amberjack, large, fast-swimming game fish found in warm and tropical oceans that is prized for its fierce fighting ability when hooked.

Ambrose (LV-87), replacement **lightship** built in 1907 to send her beacon across the entrance to lower New York Bay between Coney Island and Sandy Hook. She served as a floating lighthouse until she was retired in 1963. *Ambrose* was later presented to New York's **South Street Seaport Museum** for refitting into an exhibit ship.

America, ninety-foot **schooner** built for **John Cox Stevens** and a syndicate of **New York Yacht Club** members both to accompany U.S. exhibits at the first World's Fair in London, England, in 1851 and to race the yachts of Britain's **Royal Yacht Squadron**. *America* defeated fifteen British vessels in a race around the **Isle of Wight** on August 22, 1851, to win the **Hundred Guinea Cup**, later renamed the **America's Cup** in her honor. Sold to a British yachtsman, *America* later returned to the United States, where she served as a Confederate **blockade runner** in the Civil War and a training vessel at the U.S. **Naval Academy**, before again racing for the America's Cup in 1870. **Scuttled** and saved once more, she raced again in the 1920s. She was donated to the Naval Academy, and lasted until the 1940s, when a shed collapsed on her.

America, former **Hamburg-America Line** passenger **liner** *Amerika*, which was built in 1905 and seized in 1917 by the United States for naval transport service. After World War I, she was overhauled and operated by the **United States Lines** and her name given the Yankee spelling. She was again converted for war service in 1941

as USS *Edmund B. Alexander*. **Laid up** in 1949, she was finally scrapped in 1958.

SS America, 26,454,-gross-ton U.S. passenger **liner** completed in 1940 to replace the recently retired SS *Leviathan* as the flagship of the **United States Lines**. Christened in 1939 by Eleanor Roosevelt, she entered World War II service in 1941 as the troopship USS *West Point*. She took up station on the North Atlantic run in 1946 and was sold in 1964 to **Chandris Line**, after which she became the *Australis*, serving on emigrant duty to Australia. Sold again to operate short budget cruises from New York in 1978, she quickly reverted to Chandris ownership after a disastrous initial cruise to Nova Scotia as *America*. She was renamed the *Italys* by Chandris but was **laid up** the following year in Piraeus. In 1994, while being towed to Thailand as the *American Star*, she grounded off the Canary Islands and subsequently became a total loss.

America³, American yacht that defeated the Italian yacht *Il Moro di Venezia* in 1992 to retain the **America's Cup** for the United States. Cup newcomer Bill Koch, head of the *America³* syndicate, defeated **Dennis Conner** for the privilege of defending the Cup.

American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), U.S.-based private **classification society** for merchant ships and other marine systems. Founded in 1862, the primary purpose of ABS is to determine the structural and mechanical fitness of ships and other marine structures and to establish design, construction, and operating standards for the same.

American Canoe Association, society founded in 1880 to promote and organize the activities of canoeists in the United States and Canada.

The American Coast Pilot, volume containing navigational information, first published in 1796 by James Furlong at Newburyport,

Massachusetts. Edward March Blount acquired the rights to the volume, but in 1866 the newly formed U.S. Hydrographic Office took over from the Blount family. Through the 1990s, the **National Ocean Service** published nine annual *Coast Pilots* to supplement nautical charts of U.S. waters.

American Export Lines (AEL), American steamship company established in 1919 to carry cargo from New York to the Mediterranean. In 1931 the company entered the passenger business with the addition of the Excalibur-class **Four Aces** combi-liners. AEL later designed and operated the incomparable SS *Independence* and SS *Constitution* in the postwar world. In 1962 the Isbrandtsen Company of New York bought a controlling interest in the firm, and its name became the American Export Isbrandtsen Lines. The company stopped carrying passengers in 1968 and filed for bankruptcy in 1977.

American Hawaii Cruises, operating agency of the American Global Line that began inter-Hawaiian service with SS *Independence* in 1980. Two years later her sister ship, SS *Constitution*, also began sailings through the islands. From 1985 to 1987, this agency also operated the former *Argentina*—as SS *Liberté*—on cruises through French Polynesia.

American Legion, organization of former American soldiers and sailors who served in World War I, which later expanded to include veterans of all U.S. wars and conflicts. It was founded in Paris in 1919 at a meeting of representatives of all divisions of the American Expeditionary Force in France. Posts were later set up in each state and in some foreign cities.

American Line, U.S. transatlantic steamship line established in 1871, which became a subsidiary of the **Red Star Line** in 1884. In 1893 the line transferred the British-built liners *City of New York* and *City of Paris* to U.S. registry. The U.S. Congress permitted this

transfer on the condition that the line build two comparable ships in the United States, which it did—the *St. Louis* and the *St. Paul*.

American Maritime Officers (AMO), national union representing licensed officers in all sectors of the U.S.-flag merchant fleet. It was chartered in 1949 as the Brotherhood of Marine Engineers, an affiliate of the **Seafarers International Union**.

American Merchant Marine Library Association (AMMLA), organization founded in 1921 to provide portable libraries to U.S. merchant vessels. In addition to supplying mariners with entertainment, having books on board was intended to prevent seamen from reading the socialist propaganda distributed in many foreign ports. AMMLA became part of the **United Seamen's Service** in 1973.

The American Neptune, quarterly scholarly journal of maritime history and the arts published since 1950 by the **Peabody Essex Museum** in Salem, Massachusetts.

The American Practical Navigator, U.S. government publication that describes the modern principles of marine navigation and includes tables, data, and instructions required by navigators to perform computations associated with dead reckoning, piloting, and celestial navigation. Published on a five-year schedule by the **National Imagery and Mapping Agency** (formerly the **Defense Mapping Agency**), it contains sections addressing the practice of navigation, navigational safety, oceanography, weather, and electronic navigation. The publication is popularly known as **Bowditch**, because it was originally published by **Nathaniel Bowditch** in 1802.

American President Lines (APL), transpacific shipping company started by Captain Robert Dollar in 1900 as the **Dollar Line**. The company also acquired a controlling interest in the American Mail Line in 1923 and then assumed