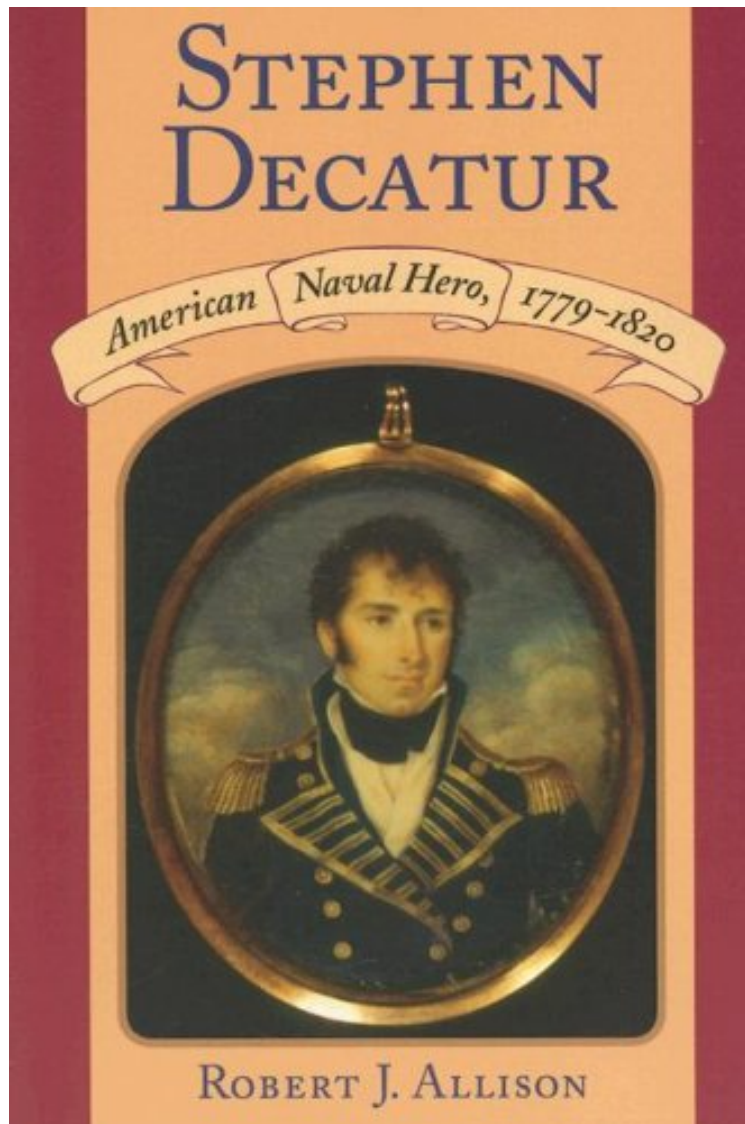


(Library ebook) Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779-1820

Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779-1820

Robert J. Allison

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Robert J. Allison : Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779-1820 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779-1820:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Difficult to stop reading once the naval battles startBy J. E. SMITHActual naval history that reads like an exciting novel. The author has managed to make reading about the beginnings of the US Navy and its initial battles an exciting endeavor. I didn't choose this book as it was required reading, but am delightfully surprised at how difficult it is to put the book down. Not the history we get in textbooks, but a very concise and colorful story about the federalist-republican battle over the need for a US Navy and how

impressive the organization was with its rag-tag fleet of early vessels. Any naval history or even general history buff should love this book!

Born to a prominent Philadelphia family in 1779, Stephen Decatur at age twenty-five became the youngest man ever to serve as a captain in the U.S. Navy. His intrepid heroism, leadership, and devotion to duty made him a perfect symbol of the aspirations of the growing nation. Leading men to victory in Tripoli, the War of 1812, and the Algerian war of 1815, and coining the phrase "Our country, right or wrong," Decatur created an enduring legend of bravery, celebrated in poetry, song, paintings, and the naming of dozens of towns from Georgia to Alabama to Illinois. After the War of 1812, Decatur moved to Washington to help direct naval policy. His close friendships with James Madison, John Quincy Adams, and other political leaders soon made him a rising star in national politics. He and his wife Susan made their elegant home on Lafayette Square near the White House a center of Washington society. The capital and the entire nation were shocked in 1820 when Decatur died at the age of forty-one in a duel with a rival navy captain. In this carefully researched and well-written biography, historian Robert Allison tells the story of Decatur's eventful life at a time when the young republic was developing its own identity when the American people were deciding what kind of nation they would become. Although he died prematurely, Decatur played a significant role in the shaping of that national identity.

"This biography fills a significant gap in the published lives of early and immigrant American naval figures. Decatur was arguably the most admired and capable naval officer of his day. . . . Professor Allison's scholarly research and use of contemporary correspondence, newspapers, and other printed material are impressive." George Emery, Vice Admiral, United States Navy (Ret.) "Without question Stephen Decatur was a formidable and important figure in the United States Navy. . . . Professor Allison's work offers the best modern study of Decatur. . . . It is likely to appeal not only to a naval history audience but also to those interested in social history and those more broadly concerned with the early republic." William Fowler, Director, Massachusetts Historical Society, and author of *Jack Tars and Commodores: The American Navy, 1783-1815* "One of the central figures to emerge from the early national period, Stephen Decatur became a larger-than-life naval hero in his own time. His exploits in combat overshadowed his other contributions to the development of the U.S. Navy, but Allison (history, Suffolk Univ.; *The Crescent Observed: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*) offers a well-researched, well-balanced account of Decatur's role in shaping a U.S. national identity. Allison places Decatur in a calmer perspective by drawing upon such contemporaries as John Quincy Adams, James Madison, and Washington Irving, making this more than a naval biography; it is a good social history of the period. This is the best modern study of Decatur." *Library Journal* "Allison's is a useful and frequently fresh look at the life and career of an early American naval hero." *The Daybook* "Allison's investigation of Decatur and his era has much to offer the serious student of the early republic as well as students of naval history. Even readers not interested in scholarly investigation will find that Allison has produced an entrancing story of a bygone age. I strongly recommend Robert Allison's *Stephen Decatur*." *The Journal of American History* "Stephen Decatur may have been ignored by two generations of historians, but that oversight has been impressively corrected." *The Historian* "Decatur's story remains a tale of heroic naval adventure and the story of an admirable fighting leader." *International Historical From the Back Cover* "One of the central figures to emerge from the early national period, Stephen Decatur became a larger-than-life naval hero in his own time. . . . Allison offers a well-researched, well-balanced account of Decatur's role in shaping a U.S. national identity. Allison places Decatur in a calmer perspective by drawing upon such contemporaries as John Quincy Adams, James Madison, and Washington Irving, making this more than a naval biography; it is a good social history of the period. This is the best modern study of Decatur." *Library Journal* "Allison's excellent research and strong narrative bring both Decatur and the early republic to life. It is fascinating to see how the republican values prevalent in the upper echelons of Decatur's society among them love of country, the quest for personal fame, and the readiness to sacrifice all in the defense of both personal and national honor shaped the slight young man into a figure of heroic proportions." *Journal of American History* "This biography fills a significant gap. . . . Allison's scholarly research and use of contemporary correspondence, newspapers, and other printed material are impressive." George Emery, Vice Admiral, United States Navy (Ret.) "Professor Allison's book is likely to appeal not only to a naval history audience but also to those interested in social history and those more broadly concerned with the early republic." William Fowler, author of *"Jack Tars and Commodores: The American Navy, 1783-1815"* About the Author Robert J. Allison is professor of history at Suffolk University and author of *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815*.