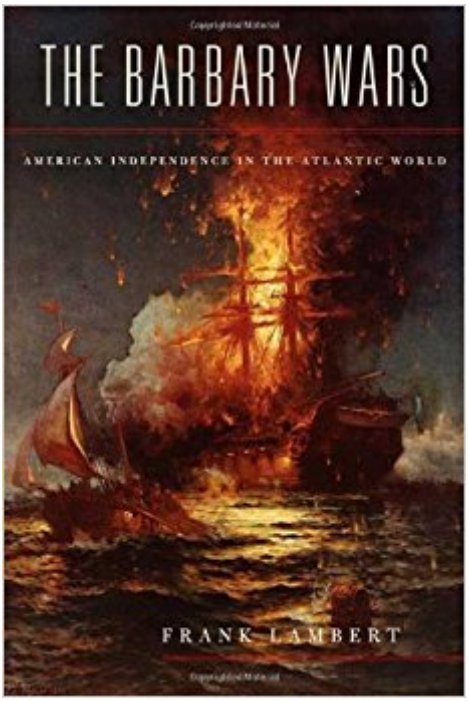
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The Barbary Wars: American Independence In The Atlantic World



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Synopsis

The history of America’s conflict with the piratical states of the Mediterranean runs through the presidencies of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison; the adoption of the Constitution; the Quasi-War with France and the War of 1812; the construction of a full-time professional navy; and, most important, the nation’s haltering steps toward commercial independence. Frank Lambert’s genius is to see in the Barbary Wars the ideal means of capturing the new nation’s shaky emergence in the complex context of the Atlantic world.Depicting a time when Britain ruled the seas and France most of Europe, The Barbary Wars proves America’s earliest conflict with the Arabic world was always a struggle for economic advantage rather than any clash of cultures or religions.

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“For those in search of lessons for today, Lambert’s crisp and readable narrative makes clear that it took a combination of patient diplomacy, military force, and good luck to make the Atlantic and Mediterranean worlds safe for U.S. commerce. One suspects that all three factors are needed again now.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Walter Russell Mead, Foreign AffairsÃ¢â ¬Å“Does an excellent job of placing the Barbary Wars within the context of their time.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Roanoke Times

Frank Lambert teaches history at Purdue University and is the author of The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America, Inventing the "Great Awakening," and Pedlar in Divinity: George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals, 1737Ã¢â ¬â œ1770.

Frank Lambert’s "The Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World" is one of the better books about the Barbary Wars. It does a good job at covering the political and religious views of those living in the United States and the various Barbary Nations. It also touches on these same views of those living in Europe. "The Barbary Wars" is far superior in these areas than either "Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates" or "The Crescent Obscured." The book does not cover military activities and actions in great detail, which actually allows the reader to better follow the political and religious dialogue better. For the best book on the military military activities and actions during the Barbary Wars I recommend "Dawn Like Thunder" by Glenn Tucker.Minor complaints are that the photos and illustrations are not in chronological order and the author occasionally gets descriptions of naval ships confused, e.g., the USS Guerriere was a 44-gun frigate (not a 74-gun ship-of-the-line as the author states) and USS Ontario was a 20-gun sloop-of-war built at Baltimore in 1813 (not a British sloop captured by Decator as the author states). USS Epervier, which was a captured British 18-gun brig-sloop (but not captured by Decator) also accompanied the Guerriere and Ontario to the Mediterranean in 1815. Also, USS Independence, which was a new 74-gun ship-of-the-line, did show up in the Mediterranean after Decatur had obtained peace with Algiers in 1815.

The setting of this book is the United States of America has recently become a sovereign nation. However, unlike the major colonialist powers of Europe (e.g., Britain, France, Spain, etc.), the U.S. lacks a formidable navy and a respected presence in the high seas. At this time, the Mediterranean sea is overrun by ruthless pirates whose activities are endorsed, if not outright ordered by the quasi-independent ruling heads of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, which are collectively known as the Barbary states. As a result, U.S. merchant ships are plundered, U.S. gun ships are commandeered, the U.S. itself is extorted to paying an annual tribute and U.S. citizens are routinely either held for ransom or sold into slavery.If you want an informative, engaging and concise book on the U.S.’ wars with the Barbary pirates, look no further than this. In this book, you will learn about:* All of the major tariff laws which led up to the Declaration of Independence (i.e., Navigation Acts, Revenue (Sugar) Act, Stamp Act, Townshed Duties and the Tea Act).* The two major wars with the Barbary states. The first, which is known as the Tripolitian War (1801-1805) and the second, which is known as the Algerine War (1815).* The Tripolitan capture of the U.S. 36 gun frigate, a top-of-the-line gunship that would have been devastating under pirate control. To counter this deadly advantage, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur lead a daring and successful incursion into the

Tripolitan harbor to burn the the USS Philadelphia, so that it can never be used by the pirates against the U.S. In particularly, you will learn about how Decatur surreptitiously disguised his vessel as a distressed, anchorless merchant ship that needs to be docked on shore.* William Eaton's courageous 500-mile march through Libyan desert to launch a surprise attack on Derne, a coastal fortress which was not prepared for a land attack. This was the decisive victory in the Tripolitan War.* The overt contrast between the treaty of the Tripolitan war and the Algerine War. The first treaty was the result of negotiation (with the soon-to-be-infamous Tobias Lear representing the U.S.). For example, it declared that the Tripolitans reduce the amount of the tribute that they demanded by 90% (Thus, conceding that forcing the U.S. to pay tribute, in principle, was still acceptable.) Even though Jefferson evidently approved of such limited terms, this was an outrage to the U.S. domestically as well as to the war heroes such as Eaton and Decatur.In contrast, the terms of second treaty were dictated by the U.S. In particular, Decatur demanded that the pirates:- disavow all demands of tribute and ransom.- return all American prisoners and property captured through piracy.- allow all ships with a U.S. flag pass unmolested in the Mediterranean.Interestingly enough, the Dey of Algiers wanted to deliberate on the treaty overnight. Decatur famously replied that he would allow "not a minute; if your squadron appears in sight before the treaty is actually signed [...] ours will capture them." The terms that Decatur obtained in the treaties were unimaginable before the war, considering the decades of harassment that the U.S. faced at the hand of the Barbary pirates.This is an amazing book.

This book illustrates, in a clear and professional fashion, a generally untold period of American history. It explains well the events and struggles following the war for independence which greatly contributed to the shaping of the U.S. I highly recommend it for any interested in the United States' formative years.

This was a great book, very informative and factual. I would recommend it to others who enjoy naval history.

An interesting study of a period of history usualyl overlooked. Shows how important free trade has always been to US.

Lambert's book provides just enough detail to understand the historical context and understand the motivation of the pirate communities of North Africa at that time.One can see from this aspect of

early foreign policy how the Articles of Confederation were insufficient for the young republic, for the United States didn't even have the power to tax so as to raise a navy to fight the Barbary threat. The book also explains how the Barbary Wars fit into the changing relationship with Great Britain and France, the impressment of seamen, and the events that led to the War of 1812.Those who are reading or have read any of the Patrick O'Brian "Master and Commander" books, Lambert's book is likewise relevant, for these books are all talking about the same historical time period and geographic location.

Well written. Shows America at its highs and lows showing a complete picture of an obscure conflict. I like it.

This a quick and easy read. I recommend it to any fan of history, especially if one's knowledge of the subject comes from time in elementary school.

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