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Commodore Abraham Whipple of the Continental Navy: Privateer, Patriot, Pioneer (New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology)

Sheldon S. Cohen

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“Abraham Whipple is an overlooked and somewhat tragic naval hero, largely lost in the dusty history of the Continental Navy, but Cohen’s stunning and seminal biography should go a long way in correcting this oversight.”—*Sea History*

“A welcome literary tapestry, a vivid depiction of events woven together with threads of strong scholarship and attention to detail.”— *New England Quarterly*

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“An informative, complete accounting of a man who can be considered one of our nation’s founding fathers.”—*Pirates and Privateers*

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"Finally, after more than two centuries of living in the shadow of other revolutionaries whose reputations have been extolled and exaggerated, this intriguing character is brought to life. Through careful research Cohen has uncovered a wide variety of materials hitherto ignored. The result is neither hagiography nor muckraking, but a carefully crafted biography that gives us new insights into the American Revolution and the early days of the Republic."--William M. Fowler Jr., Northeastern University

"This is the first full-length biography of one of the more successful officers of the Continental Navy. As it is comprehensive and exhausts what it is possible to know about Abraham Whipple from the available sources, it is likely to remain the definitive biography well into the future."--Michael J. Crawford, Naval Historical Center

Abraham Whipple (1733-1819) commanded insurgents who destroyed HMS Gaspee in Narragansett Bay and helped direct the successful invasion of the Bahamas. This little-known, yet intrepid and frequently successful Continental Navy officer contributed significantly to the War for Independence. An esteemed officer of the fleet, he spent his last years in frontier Ohio where he was respected and appealed to younger generations as a "representative of the Revolution."

Sheldon Cohen's biography of Whipple presents a look inside the life of a Continental officer. He illustrates at a personal level the complexities of naval warfare, including Whipple's reliance on personal finances and family connections to outfit his ships and pay his crew. Cohen also reveals the commander’s treatment as a British prisoner of war, and his eventual migration west, shedding light on experiences shared by many Revolutionary War veterans.

A volume in the series New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology, edited by James C. Bradford and Gene Allen Smith

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