



Turbulent Seas: My Life in the American Merchant Marine

Lance Orton

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Merriam Press Personal Chronicle 1. Second Edition (May 2012). Lance Orton's career in the American Merchant Marine, during which he experienced an interesting, hectic, and often dangerous life on the high seas, and in a variety of ports from the mid-1960s through to the mid-1980s. What to him were fascinatingly difficult human challenges began with his cadet days and from his earliest times on the water, then continued during his first voyage as a third officer, and through his appointment as one of the youngest American captains of a very large vessel—in fact, the largest American ship ever built at that time (late 1970s), "The Golden Endeavor," then classed as a supertanker, but later downgraded to "Baby Super." Lance sailed with colorful, crazy, but sometimes gifted maritime personnel, and fought off a number of life-threatening situations, including pirate attacks, knife fights on board ship, attempted poisonings (of me), etc. I also sailed to Vietnam in the years when a merchant mariner literally took his life in his hands doing so. I had to deal with accidents and near explosions on ships, due to volatile hydrocarbons and other material we carried, but also to human error. In this book you get the inside story. You also get a close view of American organizations both blessed and plagued by a variety of personalities, and especially, by the growing disease of bureaucratization and political maneuvering. And you will encounter a sad, yet comical Soviet Union before Gorbachev, where the secret police, inequities, and paranoia were rife. This is one man's story that will compel the your attention. Contents: * My Baptism at Sea with Captain Crofton; * A Young Cadet's Progress and Revolt; * First Voyage to India; * Strafing in Vietnam and American Rage; * Enter the Divine Element; * Incompetence and Tragedy; * To Russia with Vodka; * Back to American Scalawags; * Returning as Captain Orton to KGB Land; * Ships' Revolvers and Revolts; * Final Diagnosis—Lunacy on Board Ship!

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