

troops across the Atlantic. With peace, *Queen Mary* returned as a bejeweled matron who pampered its passengers even as they were wooed away by new, speedy, Pegasus-fleets that forced the ship into a sheltered semi-retirement.

RMS *Queen Mary* is an easy but great introduction to the golden age of Transatlantic liners.

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Paul G. Gill. (Paul G. Gill, Jr., ed.) *Armageddon in the Arctic Ocean. Up the Hawse Pipe from Galley Boy to Third Mate on a Legendary Liberty Ship in the Biggest Convoy Battle of World War II.* Ashland, OR: Hellgate Press, www.hellgatepress.com, 2022. ix+389 pp., illustrations, maps, tables. US \$21.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-954163-38-6.

This memoir of mariner Paul G. Gill centres on his life during the Great Depression, chronicling his experiences aboard cargo ships and passenger liners before becoming a US Merchant Marine officer during the Second World War, and concluding with a brief summation of his post-war life. Recurring themes in the episodic account are the adolescent's attempt to earn a living while pursuing his calling for a nautical career. Gill's engaging story culminates with the firsthand account of his experience as an officer aboard the *SS Nathanael Greene*, an American-built Liberty ship, operated for the War Shipping Administration, and part of Convoy PQ 18, a fleet of forty Allied merchant ships under military escort, delivering supplies to the allied port of Archangel in the Soviet Union.

Paul and his twin brother, Phil, were the fifth and sixth children born to Sarah Welsh Gill and Captain William Francis Gill of South Boston. The Gills had a long history as fishermen off the west coast of Ireland, emigrating to America in 1864. Much of the narrative involves Paul's adolescence and his difficult life leading up to the convoy battle.

Paul recalls gathering driftwood on the beach with brother Phil, in the winter of 1931 – fuel to be burned in their mother's kitchen stove. After the driftwood was gone, the ten-year-old boys scavenged coke from the local electric company's coal-fired generating plant. As a teenager, he left home, signing up to work for the CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps, one of President Roosevelt's New Deal programs established in 1933. After 15 months living and working in a camp in Vermont's Green Mountains, he returned to Boston and signed up for the Merchant Marines; he was not yet eighteen. Gill's first position was as galley-man (cook's assistant) aboard an oil tanker. In 1937, he signed on as Ordinary Seaman aboard the *SS Manhattan* – the biggest and

fastest luxury liner built in the United States at the time of her launching in 1931 – intending to accrue enough sea time to be eligible to take the examination for Able Seaman. Gill describes his transatlantic passages to European ports, particularly Hamburg, where he enjoyed the beer halls, learned to speak German, and met Heidi, his girlfriend. In 1937, he made seven North Atlantic crossings aboard *Manhattan*.

The economic drought of the Great Depression along with organized labour unrest greatly undermined employment opportunities during these years. A particularly engaging episode involves Paul and his older brother, Steve, riding the rails across the continent, in hopes of signing aboard West-Coast-based merchant ships. In Denver, the brothers parted ways, Steve returning to Boston and Paul pressing on. Their experiences in North America's interior, jumping boxcars, camping in "hobo jungles" and looking for temporary jobs as they worked their way westward is a vivid moving picture of social history.

Eventually, Gill acquired the sea time, passed the exam, and received his Able Seaman license in May 1939. He worked aboard the US Army transport *Republic* and the passenger ship SS *Uruguay* to Rio de Janeiro, where some romantic encounters follow.

Having spent more than four years as a merchant seaman, Paul had risen from galley boy to Able Seaman, aboard nine different vessels visiting seaports all over the world. When the US Maritime Service at Fort Trumbull, Connecticut, opened its Officer Candidate School to any American merchant mariner who had accrued more than fourteen months of sea duty, Gill applied and was accepted. On a weekend visit home to Boston, his twin brother introduced him to Maura Evans, the young woman he fell in love with and later married.

On 1 April 1942, 21-year-old Paul Gill signed on as Third Mate aboard the S.S. *Nathanael Greene*, preparing to depart on its maiden voyage to northern Russia to deliver munitions to the Soviet ally. The action for which the memoir is titled is described in terse entries from the author's perspective. This ship's crew received the Gallant Ship Citation for outstanding action to save life or property at sea. (The Gallant Ship Citation is an award given by the United States Merchant Marine to US and foreign flagged merchant vessels.)

After the battle, Gill received his Second Mate license and taught at Fort Trumbull Officer Training School. After a few months, he resigned and accepted a commission as an ensign in the United States Navy Reserve where his experience qualified him for duty as a Stevedore Officer in a Construction Battalion. He was assigned to the 37th Naval Construction Battalion in Pearl Harbor – his wife Maura joined him in Hawaii. After the war, the couple returned to Massachusetts to work and start a family. Using his benefits from America's GI Bill, Gill resumed his education, eventually earning an MBA

from Harvard Business School. One continuing thread of Gill's narrative is how he survived the economic hardships of the Great Depression to build a successful maritime career.

The book includes an introduction and an epilogue written by the author's son, Paul G. Gill, Jr., who also edited the manuscript. The epilogue follows up on what happened to his father and uncles, and the ships described in the memoir. There are no references or citations, but numerous images and personal photographs enhance the work. Editor Gill, Jr. is a medical doctor and writer, author of *The Onboard Medical Guide: First Aid and Emergency Medicine Afloat*.

An interesting personal memoir, Paul G. Gills' story is a notable addition to twentieth-century social and maritime history.

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Jamie L.H. Goodall. *Pirates & Privateers from Long Island Sound to Delaware Bay*. Charleston, SC: History Press, www.arcadiapublishing.com, 2022. 128 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$21.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-46714-827-6.

The Golden Age of Piracy, which lasted from the 1650s to the 1730s, has long lived in the imaginations of innumerable children and adults worldwide, spawning numerous books, plays, films, and television series. Famed for their rejection of mainstream society's social mores and hierarchies, as much as for their frequent violence and supposed riches, the prominence of pirates, is often up for debate. Looking at the Mid-Atlantic colonies, Goodall argues that these supposed scourges of all good people were, in reality, often welcomed by various governments in the region due to the economic and martial support they could offer. In particular, when it came to New York, she contends that a not insignificant portion of the region's economy was heavily dependent on piracy. Crews seeking to turn their captured ships and stolen goods to profit were welcomed in the newly English colony, with government officials happily condemning such illicit gains as the product of legitimate privateering. This willingness stemmed primarily from the precarious position of the colony itself. Having only recently been acquired from the Dutch, New York was well positioned but poorly provisioned for success, needing most of all ways to stimulate their economy. Stolen goods brought in by pirates allowed merchants to supply demand from both domestic and overseas markets and grow their shipping fleets at a fraction of the typical costs. The local economy was further stimulated by the ongoing pirate need to repair and outfit their ships for further