



For Love of Country: A Novel

William C. Hammond

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Credited with vividly recreating an early chapter in American history with his first novel, *A Matter of Honor*, William C. Hammond continues the seafaring adventures of the prominent Massachusetts family in this second novel. Set in the years following the American Revolution, it offers an exciting look at the young republic at a time when America remained a weak nation with no Navy to protect its prosperous merchant fleet from Barbary pirates or nations intent on crippling its shipping.

The novel opens with the capture of the Cutler merchant brig *Eagle* by Barbary pirates. Young Caleb Cutler and his shipmates are taken as prisoners to Algiers, and his brother Richard, the novel's main protagonist, is sent to North Africa to pay ransoms demanded by the Dey of Algiers. But Richard learns of the Dey's intent to reject the ransom, as well as threats from the British and French, and fights a fierce battle in the Mediterranean with two Arab xebecs. Victorious at sea, Richard travels to Paris to report to John Paul Jones, his former naval commander who now serves as American emissary to the Barbary States. The author's careful historical research and thorough knowledge of sailing and the ways of the sea bring an authenticity to the novel without detracting from the entertaining storyline. The book includes a romantic interest involving a desperate race to save the beautiful Anne Marie Helvétian and her two daughters from the guillotine. Hammond's focus on the American perspective of the Age of Fighting Sail in the years following the American Revolution adds a fresh dimension to historical novels of the period.

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Lawrence Wilson:

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