



Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail

Daniel Vickers, Vince Walsh

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Two centuries of American maritime history, in which the Atlantic Ocean remained the great frontier Westward expansion has been the great narrative of the first two centuries of American history, but as historian Daniel Vickers demonstrates here, the horizon extended in all directions. For those who lived along the Atlantic coast, it was the East—and the Atlantic Ocean—that beckoned. While historical and fictional accounts have tended to stress the exceptional circumstances or psychological compulsions that drove men to sea, this book shows how normal a part of life seafaring was for those living near a coast before the mid–nineteenth century.

Drawing on records of several thousand seamen and their voyages from Salem, Massachusetts, *Young Men and the Sea* offers a social history of seafaring in the colonial and early national period. In what sort of families were sailors raised? When did they go to sea? What were their chances of death? Whom did they marry, and how did their wives operate households in their absence? Answering these and many other questions, this book is destined to become a classic of American social and maritime history.

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