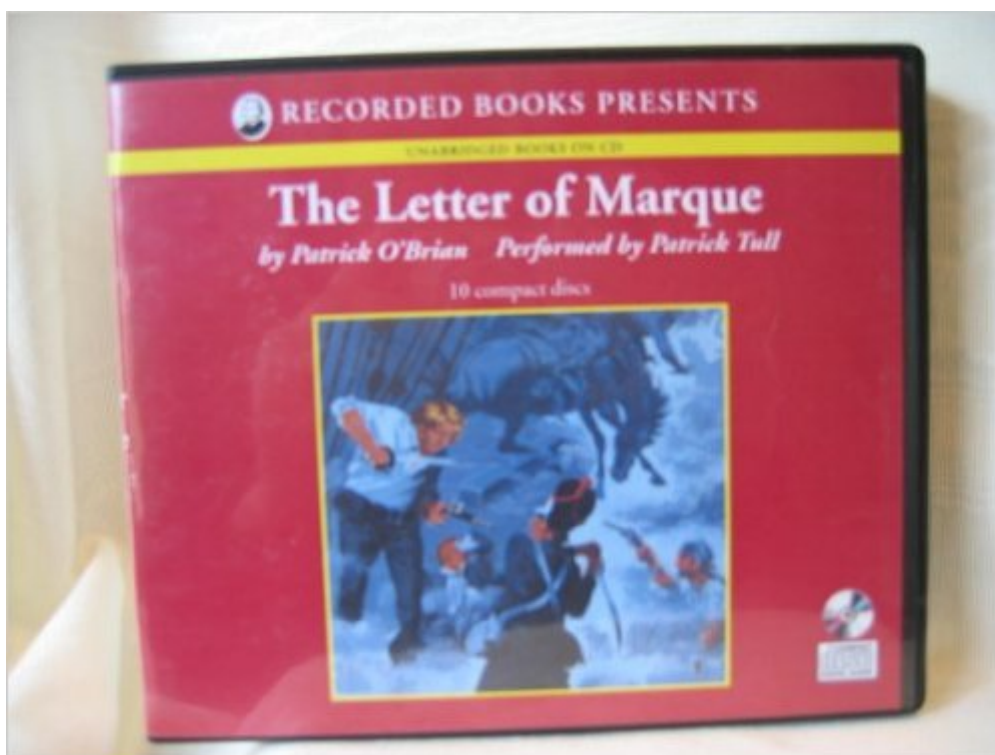


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The Letter Of Marque (Aubrey/Maturin Series, No. 12)



Synopsis

A BODERS AUDIO EXCLUSIVE PRESENTATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH RECORDED BOOKS LLC. "Jack Aubrey is once again aboard his beloved "Surprise", but he has been stripped of his post captaincy for a crime he did not commit. Bought by Aubrey's faithful companion Dr. Stephen Maturin, the "Surprise" becomes a privateer. Sailing into French waters, the two old friends concoct a desperate mission that, if successful, may redeem Aubrey from his state of grace." Set against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, this 12th in the series, offers suspense, believable characters, & action straight from the pages of history.

Book Information

Audio CD

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Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 5.3 x 1.5 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (101 customer reviews)

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[Authors, A-Z > \(O \) > O'Brian, Patrick](#) #3664 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Some critics have referred to the Aubrey/Maturin books as one long novel united not only by their historical setting but also by the central plot element of the Aubrey/Maturin friendship. Having read these fine books over a period of several years, I decided to evaluate their cumulative integrity by reading them consecutively in order of publication over a period of a few weeks. This turned out to be a rewarding enterprise. For readers unfamiliar with these books, they describe the experiences of a Royal Navy officer and his close friend and traveling companion, a naval surgeon. The experiences cover a broad swath of the Napoleonic Wars and virtually the whole globe. Rereading all the books confirmed that O'Brian is a superb writer and that his ability to evoke the past is outstanding. O'Brian has numerous gifts as a writer. He is the master of the long, careful description, and the short, telling episode. His ability to construct ingenious but creditable plots is first-rate, probably because he based much of the action of his books on actual events. For

example, some of the episodes of Jack Aubrey's career are based on the life of the famous frigate captain, Lord Cochrane. O'Brien excels also in his depiction of characters. His ability to develop psychologically credible characters through a combination of dialogue, comments by other characters, and description is tremendous. O'Brien's interest in psychology went well beyond normal character development, some books contain excellent case studies of anxiety, depression, and mania. Reading O'Brien gives vivid view of the early 19th century. The historian Bernard Bailyn, writing of colonial America, stated once that the 18th century world was not only pre-industrial but also pre-humanitarian (paraphrase).

In *THE LETTER OF MARQUE*, Patrick O'Brien manages another exceptional entry into what is arguably the finest long series of novels in English of the twentieth century. As many have noted, these novels are simply unsurpassed for their combination of literary quality, historical veracity, dramatic tension, and narrative excellence. This particular volume also has more action than any in the series in a long while. It is also quite possibly the most upbeat in the series up to this point. My own theory is that O'Brien conceived both the previous novel, *THE REVERSE OF THE MEDAL*, and this one as companions. The former takes the fortunes of our heroes Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin to exceedingly low points; in fact, things never got so bad for Jack Aubrey as they did in that one. In this novel, however, a world of troubles comes to an end. Whereas at the end of *THE REVERSE OF THE MEDAL* Jack was publicly shamed by having been taken off the naval lists and stripped of his rank, by the end of *THE LETTER OF MARQUE* he knows that he will be restored with seniority to the Royal Navy within a few months. Whereas before Jack's financial affairs were in dismal shape, now he is wealthier than he has ever been, thanks to two extraordinary successes commanding the letter of marque (i.e., privateer) *Surprise*, lately of the King's Navy as the H.M.S. *Surprise*. And while his sham trial and conviction wasn't able to tarnish his reputation as completely as his father's political enemies had hoped, he nonetheless had seen better days in the public eye. Now, however, thanks to his great naval victories as a privateer, he had become something of a popular hero.

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