



The Mauritius Command

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"O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin volumes actually constitute a single 6,443-page novel, one that should have been on those lists of the greatest novels of the 20th-century." —George Will, *Washington Post*

Captain Jack Aubrey is ashore on half pay without a command—until Stephen Maturin arrives with secret orders for Aubrey to take a frigate to the Cape of Good Hope under a commodore's pennant, there to mount an expedition against the French-held islands of Mauritius and La Réunion. But the difficulties of carrying out his orders are compounded by two of his own captains—Lord Clonfert, a pleasure-seeking dilettante, and Captain Corbett, whose severity pushes his crew to the verge of mutiny.

The Mauritius Command Details

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From Reader Review The Mauritius Command for online ebook

Max says

Brilliant and tense. I love the way O'Brian uses the texture of his prose to manipulate tension without feeling like he's manipulating tension.

Brad says

All the main characters, Aubrey and Maturin included, faded into the background of The Mauritius Command, becoming a kind of landscape upon which the drama of Lord Clonfert played out. His was the story that most captured my attention this time through.

Clonfert begins the tale as the captain of HMS Otter. He is a vain man. A handsome man who cuts a dashing figure in his finery. He has developed some bravery (after a shaky beginning to his career), is a "capital seaman" and has the loyalty of his men. He is also an unabashed liar when it comes to his accomplishments (even suggesting he was present at the killing of a unicorn, using a Narwhal tusk as his evidence), but his vanity quickly undermines his spirit when he's thrust into the shadow of his former shipmate, now commanding officer, Commodore Jack Aubrey.

Clonfert is eventually made Post-Captain by the man he sees as his nemesis and is given the frigate HMS Néréide as his command. He eventually loses his ship and half his face in a poorly executed action, and once he realizes that Jack Aubrey will again return him to command, after the Mauritius Campaign has reached its successful conclusion, he takes his own life in his convalescent bed.

It's not a tragic death. It's rather pathetic, actually. O'Brian's expression of Clonfert's fall, however, is touching and strikes at a truth I've witnessed amongst many of those who find themselves in competition with one another. Quite often, the successful person, the "bull" in an analogy of Stephen Maturin's, has no idea that the less successful person, the "frog" in the same analogy, envies him, hates him, or obsesses over him in any way. So the bull steps on the frog without ever noticing, and as Dr. Maturin suggests, "how can the bull be blamed" How, indeed?

I never want to be a frog, but I fear that there is a bit of that beast in me despite my desire. It is something for which I must be wary. I should probably be wary of being the bull too. Wariness may just be the most benevolent policy.

I just took a second listen to The Mauritius Command, and Simon Vance's performance held up very well. I know many adore Patrick Tull, and perhaps I would too if I ever had a chance to hear his work, but I have listened to four of the novels now (having read them all first) with Simon doing the narrating, and I feel like my brain has settled in on his rhythms. He's become the voice of these men for me. He's never been my favourite narrator of fiction (I most recently listened to his Dr. No, James Bond), but I have enjoyed his Egyptology readings. His voice just seems to suit the more historically driven tales. Maybe it is the pomposity he can achieve with his voice. I dunno. I do know I liked it, though. Again.

Ken-ichi says

Yes, yes, more galavanting on the high seas. Jack is commodore in a multi-ship campaign to seize Mauritius from the French. As with all these books so far, Jack has new command challenges, one of his subordinates is mysterious and troubling, and Stephen vacillates between urbane diplomacy, biological nerd out, and bitter invective. Wonderful, wonderful stuff. These books are truly more about the world and the characters than the plot, sort of like a video game. In this book, the "plot" is essentially the military campaign, battle by battle, but O'Brian seems unconcerned with treating it as such, leaving climactic battles between chapters (or in the hands of minor characters), and instead focusing on Jack wondering about his vegetable garden or Stephen wondering about Jack wondering about his vegetable garden. In one scene Stephen is moving between ships, falls into the drink and nearly dies, but it gets only about a longish paragraph and has little to no lasting effect on anyone. Not that I'm complaining, it's just weird.

Benjamin Thomas says

The fourth novel in this series is yet another masterful telling of seafaring adventure. This time, Captain Jack Aubrey opens the story at home, absent of a command and anxious to get back to sea once again. Fortunately his loyal friend and ship's surgeon, Stephen Maturin arrives with orders that send them both off on a secret mission to the French-held islands of La Reunion and Mauritius off the coast of Madagascar. It's a tough mission and while it runs its course, Aubrey gets to wear the rank of Commodore as he directs the actions of multiple ships during the various engagements. All does not go smoothly of course, much of which is due to the travails of two of his own Captains.

Another enjoyable read in this lengthy series. When I came to the end of this book I reluctantly closed the final page but then realized I still have 17 more to go. Happy day!

Algernon says

[9/10]

Still the best nautical adventure I've read in years, although this volume is slightly different than the first three books. The change comes from a shift in focus from the developing friendship between Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin, including their romantic entanglements on shore, to a greater portion of the book dedicated to actual naval battles. Until now the plot was basically Jack climbing slowly the ladder of command in the Navy, receiving a new ship, forging a battle-ready crew and engaging in one or two battles with the French or Spanish adversaries. In the Mauritius mission, Jack Aubrey is temporarily advanced to the rank of squadron admiral and sent to take away from the French their bases in the Indian Ocean (the islands of Reunion and Mauritius, used to send raiders to plunder the rich commercial vessels returning from India). So Jack has less time to work on his own crew, and must coordinate the actions of several ships at once, playing to the strengths of each subordinate captain and trying to compensate for their weaknesses. The mission is swinging from early success to almost catastrophic failure due to factors out of Jack Aubrey direct control, offering to the reader more than the usual share of bloody ship to ship broadside carnage. What I found astounding in the lecture is how close the author kept to the historical events of the attack on the islands, as described in a wikipedia article I found. The characterization is excellent, as usual for O'Brian,

and I am also getting more accustomed to the cryptic names of ship parts and maneuvers. I thought Stephen Maturin played a more discreet role than usual here, but still my favorite passages in the novel were a couple of extracts from his private journal where he is analyzing the character of his friend and of fellow captains.

I wish I could include some quotes and more details about the sailing, the observations of nature and the secondary characters, but I accidentally erased both the book and my bookmarks from my reader. I hope I will do a better job with the next book in the series.

Felicity says

I do enter upon my rereadings of Patrick O'Brian books with an open mind. I am willing to give fewer than five stars to each book *before* I read it. However, at some point, sweeping down upon the blaggardly French under a great press of sail, foreboding the ruin of a tragically flawed officer, or smiling at Aubrey's sweet simplicity, it becomes impossible not to give it every star at my command.

Mauritius Command is a particularly cohesive volume, more united in purpose than most, comprising as it does one fictionalized campaign of the Napoleonic Wars. An intimidating military and political undertaking, requiring Maturin's cunning, Aubrey's nautical genius, and something in which Aubrey has never been tested: facility for high command.

Note upon rereading: O'Brian's dry humor has some of its purest moments of expression in this volume.

Nigel says

I'm cruising through Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin series which comprises a mighty collection of enjoyable, well-researched yarns set at sea during the Napoleonic wars early in the nineteenth century. The connecting thread is the naval career of a John-Bull archetype, Captain Jack Aubrey, in the company of his best friend, ship's surgeon and an Admiralty spy, the cerebral, physically Gollum-like Stephen Maturin, obsessed with the study of nature and physiology, and woefully unlucky in love. The pair regularly play music together in the captain's cabin and occasionally share confidences, but more often co-exist separately while pursuing their own dramas, sometimes but not often as rivals. Jack's an extrovert, a plain speaker and an adventurer, never more at home than in hand-to-hand ship-to-ship combat or trimming and breaking in a vessel to its maximum possible speed and battle efficiency. Stephen is more introverted, eccentric and obsessive, a widely-read intellectual and a loner prone to murky moods. This review will serve for all the books. (And a tip: don't be prejudiced by the -- in my opinion -- flawed Peter Weir effort at capturing the series for the big screen in *Master and Commander*: the leads were badly miscast and the O'Brian magic was missing, though there was a certain amount to commend.)

As in all series, a structural pattern emerges. On entering each story we'll find the pair on land yearning for an assignment, and the author skilfully paints their social, financial and practical ineptitudes off-water. Then a ship is given them, accompanied by a mission, with Stephen usually charged with certain duties of Crown espionage. The ship, as it's shaped to Jack's sailing and fighting tastes, usually becomes one of the story's characters, whereby Jack always wants to take an enemy or privateer because therein lies his fortune: spoils and booty. O'Brian has researched every aspect of Regency naval life including its conventions, politics, systems and flaws, and weaves his knowledge deftly into his plots. After some period traveloguing, there'll

be a battle and a victory or a loss, propelling us into the next book.

The prose is always more than workmanlike, the suspense supple enough to keep you in. Characterisations are lively and vivid, if rarely passionate, though Jack, refreshingly, exhibits plenty. The tales don't quite rollick, but come close: the author is a sanguine spirit, occasionally cryptic, a habitual dry archness sometimes demanding the reader extricate events from between lines, but never irksomely so. Though English, his pseudonym is Irish, and he enjoys a little irony.

Where the books soar is when the ships sail. No one has written boats at sea better: you feel every droplet and you swoop with every gust that fills the sails. He has no patience for ignorance, you have to keep up with the terminology, but there's a handy diagram of a ship as the frontispiece with every sail labelled. The sailing bits and the battles are exhilarating, founded in meticulous and engaging informative preparation within the narrative, and comprehensive elucidation about every pivotal character caught in the conflicts. The series is worth reading for the author's love of the sea, and his gift for rendering it incarnate with words and paper. Grab one of these books if you see one, they're grownup fun.

Joshua Rigsby says

I love this entire series. I'm sold on it regardless what happens.

I was a little surprised to see Aubrey in the position of Commodore so early (relatively speaking, from my perspective) in his career. I guess, knowing how long the series is in total, I expected him to putter around as a post captain for a while before getting this kind of promotion. But, of course, O'Brian likely didn't know how long the series would be, and it's very likely that I'm ignorant about how these kinds of promotions—even temporary ones—come about.

The ships were a bit of a trick to keep apart, and the landscape was unfamiliar to me. But this only added to the pleasure of the book.

Wonderful action. Brooding philosophy. Complex characters.

What's not to love?

C. A. Powell says

Another fine Aubrey/Maturin story. Every bit as good as the others. This time Aubrey is a temporary Commodore and in charge of a small squadron of ships. He must confront a skilled French enemy operating out of Mauritius. The enemy is attacking and capturing British ships upon cargo routes from India to Britain. The islands of Mauritius are strategically placed to capture a wealth of British plunder. Bonaparte's Navy is making good use of the advantage. The Royal Navy is intent on eliminating this French advantage. What follows is some strategic confrontations. Battles, where advantages are won and, lost and then won again in an ever continuing cat and mouse adventure game upon the high seas. Splendid action scenes throughout and wonderfully atmospheric.

Sherwood Smith says

On this fourth or fifth reread, it occurred to me that my memory of this book has been of a lighter story. It isn't "lite" at all; there is quite a bit of hard action, with complicated maneuvering, and complex characters. Tragedy as well, in an unexpected way. But it doesn't reach the extreme emotional pitch of the third book, *H.M.S. Surprise*, so, coming after that intensity, this one has always seemed a bit of relief.

I almost said comic relief, and indeed there is some of O'Brian's most delightful humor, especially in conversations between Stephen Maturin, so sophisticated and formidably insightful except with respect to shipboard skills, and Jack Aubrey, so big and bluff and unsubtle, except when he is out-thinking and outgunning the enemy.

There are some really funny exchanges between minor characters, like the two fellows stuck at an outpost. We see them for all of a page and a half, but we get a sense of their personalities and relationships before they touch off another heart-pounding ship-to-ship action.

Finally, O'Brian's narrative voice, which improves exponentially with each book, reaches the pinnacle of playfulness in this one, with lines like "Stephen looked at his watch, uttered a low howl, and set off at a shambling run for the harbor, where the *Pearl of the Mascarenes*, the fastest aviso in the island, lay champing at her buoy."

The storyline is based on a real action—the actual Mauritius Campaign of 1809-1811, only with Sir Josias Rowley as commodore instead of Jack Aubrey. Who was Rowley, really? Is he the model for the most interesting character (besides Jack and Stephen) in the book, Lord Clonfert? There is little to be found about Rowley, who never married. Clonfert had a wife—apparently he was not only handsome but fatally attractive to women—but his real passion was to be taken as a dashing and brave captain.

The first time or two I read this book, I wondered if there was actually a bit of Lord Nelson in Clonfert. The tone of some of Nelson's dispatches and letters reminds me of Clonfert—just a tad too full of his titles (he signs himself "Nelson and Bronte" though the dukedom, awarded by Ferdinand of Naples, was dubious at best), too anxious to be admired by other men. Nelson sailed into battle wearing his Turkish diamond chelenk, as does Clonfert, the sort of show-offy "dash" typical of men like Sir Sydney Smith, whose gaudy dress and actions were not always considered to be in the best of taste by their fellow officers.

In any case, O'Brian once again creates a fascinating side character who lingers in memory, set in a book that makes one want to immediately reach for the next in the series.

Deb Oestreicher says

Didn't want to put this one down. Lucky Jack Aubrey gets his first chance to act as commodore, tasked to overcome apparently superior Napoleonic defenders off the coast of Africa. Along the way, Aubrey has to manage a largely inferior group of commanders—one who's capable enough, but plagued by jealousy; another who torments his crew almost to the point of mutiny; and another whose stolidity is welcome, but whose lack of imagination threatens the mission. Meanwhile, Dr. Maturin, in his capacity as ship's surgeon, accomplishes some astonishing medical derring-do; in his capacity as secret agent, helps turn the tide of the

action against the French; in his capacity as observer of human nature finds himself surprised to be mistaken in his judgment of his friend Jack Aubrey; and in his capacity as naturalist, happily identifies scores of unusual birds, beetles, and other species around the island of Mauritius.

As I continue through this series, I am waiting for the installments to get worse--tired, repetitive, or simply dull, but that hasn't happened. I remain utterly and happily addicted to this terrific series.

Roger W. says

In previous books Mr. O'Brian has several times told us that he uses real ships and real battles for his fictional accounts. It's well known that he went to great lengths to make his stories ring with authenticity, reading the original logbooks of the vessels involved and the private papers of survivors.

In this the fourth episode of his Aubrey-Maturin series, he takes this method to the extreme - his whole book, not only one or two battles, is based on a historical campaign, making for some very dramatic reading.

The triumphs and setbacks of a little-known campaign against the French in the Indian Ocean form the basis for the action of this tale. Aubrey receives command of a squadron and has to find ways to overcome the odds. Two flawed captains he has under him make for interesting character studies.

We find O'Brian's wit and humor throughout, from the somewhat less than idyllic scene of Aubrey at home at the beginning, a fish out of water, through the vicissitudes of the campaign together with Maturin, to a typical O'Brian ending. He so often winds up his stories on a kind of anticipatory note, leading us into the next book and leaving us with a longing to see how the story will continue . . .

Boz4pm says

I have been so absorbed in these books that I keep forgetting to take time to review them in turn - aside from discussions and over-excited bouncing with mutual online friends who already know the series, that is.

I love this series so much, for all the reasons I outlined in Master & Commander - the depth and breadth of O'Brian's knowledge and research is outstanding, breathtaking and yet the level of writing mastery he shows in his portrayal of character and plot makes these books utterly brilliant, as well as educational and utterly steeped in the sense of period.

Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin are thoroughly engaging as characters, opposites and yet with a strong bond of friendship. Where Aubrey is utterly hopeless on land, Maturin is equally awkward and a liability at sea - both of which cases lead to angst, plot and, particularly in the case of Stephen's near constantly falling out of or between boats, comedy. Indeed it is a mark of O'Brian's brilliance that in between the battles, the moments of pure tension (particularly in those parts involving Stephen's work as a spy), you get moments - often a mere aside or off-hand comment either by a character or the narrator - that can make you laugh out loud. And the whole is gripping, like nothing I have read for a long while, indeed. So much so I cannot buy the books fast enough, in truth.

Ace says

I thought I would be enjoying these more as I progressed through the series, but alas I am tired of the language and finding that it's no longer fun for me to try to work out what each sentence means.

Darwin8u says

"You cannot blame the bull because the frog burst: the bull has no comprehension of the affair"

- Patrick O'Brian, The Mauritius Command

This is my fourth Aubrey/Maturin novel (obviously) and I have yet to read one that I wasn't completely in love with. There is just too much to love about O'Brian's writing: his knowledge, his wit, his humor, his details, his affection for all his characters, his various digressions. Some of my favorites in this book:

- Dr. Maturin's discussion with Mr. Farquhar and Mr. Prote on the poetics of law
- Dr. Maturin and William McAdam's discussions about medicine and mermaids (Manatees and dugongs)
- Commodore Aubrey and Dr. Maturin's discussions about his temporary assignment as Commodore.
- Food
- Dr. Maturin the Naturalist's pursuit of eggs, drawings of aardvarks, etc.
- Dr. Maturin's thoughts on Aubrey's character, surveyed against Captain Corbett, Lord Clonfert, Captain Pym, etc.
- Dr. Maturin's addiction to Laudanum compared with McAdam's issue with alcohol.
- Commodore Aubrey's explanations of figures of speech in the Navy (e.g. *the devil*)
- the general horror of war, even triumph, shown by Dr. Maturin

Many of the best lines and best observations are made by Dr. Maturin, which is by design. It isn't that Captain/Commodore Aubrey is without wit, intelligence, or even genius, but he is a man of action. The brilliance of the design of these books is with these two you get the action and the observer. It isn't that simple and often O'Brian will reverse the roles or combine the two for perspective, but it still is a useful structure for a long narrative.

This novel came out in 1977 and I'm still convinced that there was some deeply secret relationship between Patrick O'Brian and Gene Roddenberry. It might be the universe delivering a weird twin, but there is something similar in the way these stories seem to fit the mood and temperature of Star Trek. I even get a Captain Kirk vibe from Jack Aubrey and a Leonard "Bones" McCoy vibe from Stephen Maturin (with a bit of Spock thrown in as well). Since the first M&C book came out in 1969 and Star Trek first came out in 1966, it is a hard sell to say that one really influenced the other, but both were being created over the same time. Anyway, I love thinking there is some secret back and forth between these two pioneers of 20th-Century maritime fiction.

Wealhtheow says

At the end of the H.M.S. 'Surprise', Captain Jack Aubrey finally had the chance to marry his beloved and settle down into a little country cottage. The *Mauritius Command* begins with his bff Doctor Stephen Maturin visiting him and offering Jack an opportunity to go back to sea. Jack leaps at the chance, both to return to the profession he loves and to get away from his hectoring mother-in-law and limpish twin infants. And even better than he'd expected--when Jack makes it to La Reunion, he finds that he will be commanding the naval action. If he succeeds at the nearly impossible task of snatching Mauritius from the French, he might very well become an Admiral--but if he fails, his career will be over.

Jack is outgunned and outmanned, and several of the captains under his command are almost worse than useless. But through his own determined hard work and strategy, and Stephen's sly propaganda on land, success appears almost within reach...

I missed Sophie and Diana, and there was less interaction between Stephen and Jack than previously. But I was so glad to read about Stephen's depressed, almost viciously insightful thoughts on the people around him (and his deeply mistaken ideas of what was going on with the navy) and Jack's own terrible jokes and tireless, fearless action. What surprised me the most were Jack's own tact and tactical skills--all too often I fall back into the assumption that Stephen is the smart one, but truly the difference between them is the arenas in which they are gifted. I love these books for being full of nail-biting adventure and suspense--and also brimming with psychological insight. In fact, I love these books so much that I'm starting the next book as soon as I finish this review!

Jason Koivu says

My love for these books seems boundless, almost paternal...so I feel harsh giving any of them anything but a 5 star rating and a kiss on the papery cheek. I'm trying to be objective, to take off my rose-colored glasses and view the work through someone else's eyes, someone who's not a hardcore fanboy, but goodness gracious, it's difficult.

Giving it the old college try, let me begin with the negative then...

The Mauritius Command does not hold the passion of the first three books in Patrick O'Brian 20 volume seafaring series set during the Napoleonic Wars. Love and its numerous forms, many of which appear in O'Brian's writing, is not a theme as strongly attended to as it was in the previous books. Sure, trace whiffs of it linger about in the form of our hero Captain Jack Aubrey's longing for his wife so many thousands of miles away, but love is not a motivating factor as much here. Fear of failure, not living up to the "manly" expectations of the day, and the burden of command, these are driving forces that move the characters through this well-crafted tale.

Certainly Jack and his ship's surgeon/intelligence agent friend Stephen Maturin are still solidly ensconced as our main characters, remaining as the heart and soul through out the series, however minor characters and their needs take hold of the narrative with just as firm a grip. Jack's need to succeed in his first chance to lead a squadron of ships is severely tested by his ability to handle personalities. These are not just chess pieces to be moved about and sacrificed with utter disregard. These are people, some quite prickly, and the somewhat ham-fisted Captain Aubrey must get the most out of them with a kind of delicacy that does not come

naturally.

This is fiction, but fiction based to such an extreme degree upon actual occurrences that one could almost call it a non-fiction. For me, that's fantastic, because I'm "truth is stranger than fiction" kind of person. However, following the facts too closely can have an ill effect upon historical fiction, especially if it takes the wind of the sails of a ripping good yarn. Be warned, there's a touch of that within *The Mauritius Command*.

Regardless, this is another brilliant piece in O'Brian's masterful puzzle. As ever, his writing is superb, his characterization flawless, the flashes of action and adventure are fun and exciting. Setting descriptions of places the author has never seen are breathtaking. When I read these books I feel as if I've stepped into these exotic locations with Jack and Stephen, who have become so real to me as to be thought of as old friends.

My review of book three, *HMS Surprise*
<http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

My review of book five, *Desolation Island*
<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

Michael says

A delight as usual to dive into this 4th in the wonderfully addictive series about the British navy during the Napoleonic Wars. I gave myself the treat of coming back to this, which stands out as one of the best in the set of 16 that I read most of the distant past. Half or more of the pleasure comes from partaking in the special friendship between boyish and brave Captain Jack Aubrey and the more intellectual surgeon and spy, Stephen Maturin. The other reward lies in O'Brian's portrayal of the special community that exists among the sailors aboard these floating extensions of the British empire. Of course, the quest of taking virtuous naval action against the forces of Bonaparte's tyranny is part of the hedonic equation, a chance to experience a more adult version of the heroic adventure tales of Hornblower that sustained my youth.

Here Aubrey has the mission to take a small squadron to face the marauding French frigates which are devastating the trade of England with India around Cape Horn. The series of engagements covered in this tale involve a wonderful chess match of shifting odds which recapitulate the actual history of how the islands of Mauritius and Reunion off the east African coast were wrested from the French in 1805. Unlike the cat and mouse play between individual ships and commanders in previous books in the series, this one puts Jack in the position of leader of a campaign. As a commodore, his challenge is to harness and inspire his captains, each with a different set of strengths and weaknesses. He also has to coordinate with British army forces and local militia and judiciously risk Stephen to on intelligence gathering trips ashore.

Much of the narrative comes from Stephen's reflections, which provides a fascinating perspective on the manners and morals of the time, critical views on British imperialism, and much comparing and contrasting of Aubrey with other officers. As usual, he is frustrated in his hunger to satisfy his naturalist avocation in

exploring the flora and fauna of this remote geography. Still, we get to share his ecstasies over experiencing his first aardvark and manatee. His ruminations on human nature and medicine provide a satisfying backdrop to the story. And, as usual, the interludes of music and of humorous banter with Jack are icing on the cake. For example, at one point Stephen asks Jack whether he can learn anything useful from distant observation of the French ships:

“Of course,” said Jack a little impatiently. “What a fellow you are, Stephen. Any sailor can tell a great deal from the way another sailor sets his jib, or goes about, or flashes out his stuns’ls, just as you can tell a great deal about a doctor from the way he whipped off a leg.”

“Always this whipping off of a leg. It is my belief that for you people the whole noble art of medicine is summed up in the whipping off of a leg. ...”

Brad says

I'm bumping my rating of this up to five stars from four after my reread.

Damn this is a fine addition to the Aubrey-Maturin series. There is genuine comfort in reading this book, and I think some of that comfort stems from Patrick O'Brian's comfort with his characters. O'Brian knows his men intimately by this fourth book, and he is able to let them live on their own, confident, it seems to me, that they will take him where they need to go.

In this case, they take him to the Mauritius campaign of 1809-1811. Jack Aubrey stands in for real life Commodore Josias Rowley, captaining HMS Boadicea, while Stephen is busy fomenting unrest on the islands. Apparently The Mauritius Command follows the true campaign faithfully, which makes for a fascinating experience for those who love historical novels, but the real interest for me is -- as always -- the characters. Whether reading (or rereading) about the family of men, Jack's "brothers" and friends and followers, I've grown to love as they live and work, or reading about the pathetically narcissistic Lord Clonfert and the fatally brutal Captain Corbett (who may have met his maker from "(un)friendly fire" during a pitched battle with the French), it is a reading experience I am able to fully immerse myself in. O'Brian's is a world I don't ever want to set aside.

I believe in O'Brian's fictional men, which makes me believe that O'Brian's take on the real men that surround them is equally plausible, and I want to be part of that group, eating plum duff and "hauling to" and boarding the enemy vessel and waiting for news from home. The closest I will ever come is O'Brian's books, but at least I have them.

Andy says

Less sailing details then the first few outings & for that Im grateful as each voyage & battle is a lot smoother.

Dr Maturin & Commodore Aubrey as always steal the show.

As the title tells us.... We're off to the Mauritius Isles and hunting down a French Fleet which has already captured a few Indiamen en route back to Britain with bountiful cargo. There are plenty of sea battles &

quite a few reversible's as the Royal Navy doesn't always triumph..... Also land battles as the lobsters (redcoats) storm the islands garrison & forts along with a bit of politicking from the good Doctor amongst the local populous.

A welcome continuation of a very good series which is not at all dated.
