



The American Line: 1871-1902 William Henry Flayhart III

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This book presents the largely unknown early history (1870-1900) of the American Steamship Company--an extremely colorful and eventful time replete with disasters and triumphs.

The story of the development of the American Merchant Marine remains one of the most glorious chapters in the early history of the United States. Up until the Civil War the American sailing ships carried the Stars and Stripes around the world with honor to the nation and profit to their owners. The war and the concurrent change from sail to steam brought disaster to American shipping. By 1870 there were no American passenger liners on the North Atlantic, a sad blow to national pride. The American Steamship Line, born in 1873 as a necessary response to the failings of the American Merchant Marine during the Civil War, quickly became the only American transatlantic line competing with Europe. Begun in part as an investment by the Pennsylvania Railroad, it operated out of Philadelphia and eventually reinstated America's position as a competitive and prestigious force in transatlantic crossings.

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