



Havoc's Sword

Dewey Lambdin

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It's 1798, and Dewey Lambdin's lovable but incorrigible rogue, Captain Alan Lewrie and his crew of the Proteus frigate have their work cut out for them as they sail through the war-torn Caribbean. First, Lewrie has rashly vowed to uphold a friend's honor in a duel to the death. Second, he faces the horridly unwelcome arrival of HM Government's Foreign Office agents. And last, he must engineer the showdown with his arch foe and nemesis, the hideous ogre of the French Revolution's Terror, that clever fiend Guillaume Choundas. Lewrie must also deal with the newly reborn United States Navy, that uneasy, unofficial "ally," and the stunning, life-altering surprise they bring. For good or ill, Lewrie's in the "quag" up to his neck, this time.

Havoc's Sword Details

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From Reader Review Havoc's Sword for online ebook

Justin says

Lots of new story threads... there's plenty of intrigue but I felt the ending was weak. If French commander Choundas is supposed to have such a fierce reputation, why was he suckered into an battle that he could not have won? Why was he so over-confident? And why was he suckered into believing his innocent clerk as a spy? Because as a spy, when the information is too neat, too convincing, and too good to be true, he would have realized something is off. Overall, it was a very good book because the author creates very interesting characters are faithful to the mores and attitudes of that time period.

Steve says

Like

Aspen Junge says

I read the entire series largely back-to-back (my local public library is well-stocked). One of the great things about this series is that we get to watch Alan Lewrie, the main character, grow up from a callow, self-indulgent teenager to a mature, thoughtful, and responsible adult.

Paul Clark says

Excellent as always.

Renee says

Like Pirates of the Caribbean, but with English Navy vs. the French Navy, with the Americans pitching in against the French.

Diane says

Felt like I needed more education about ships and the history of the period before I could begin to follow this book--especially listening to it while driving.

Johnny says

It's unusual, these days, for me to listen to a novel on CD rather than to read one on my commuter train.

However, I prepared to drive on a lengthy trip by visiting my local library and checking out their Books on CD collection. I was delighted to find a fighting sail novel by Dewey Lambdin that I hadn't read, *Havoc's Sword* and even more delighted as I began to listen to the fabulous performance by John Lee. Lee is truly a one-man show with spot-on local accents and enough vocal variety that one never confuses one character with another. I loved it.

The novel is not as full of action as one normally expects in a fighting sail story, but the few examples offer a variety of tactical challenges and situations. They are tense, dramatic, realistic, and satisfying. Mercifully, the reader (listener) is also spared the usual cliché within the genre of the active captain being misunderstood by clueless politicians, ambitious career officers (with inadequate practical experience), and nobles with class prejudice or specific grudges. In fact, such rivalry and venom shows up more among the enemy rather than among the "good guys" in this adventure.

Oh, there is an interesting bit of intrigue between a character with a direct line of authority over an established member of the supporting cast (who appears in several of the Lewrie novels) and this self-same supporting character. However, the interplay is more about Lewrie teaching the supporting character about "interpreting" commands than about the overarching tension of making independent decisions when one's superiors wish one ill.

The tension, fascinating and riveting, is primarily between Lewrie's *bête noir*, Guillaume Chaundas, and our dynamic, heroic Captain Lewrie. Chaundas, of course, has been defeated and maimed by Lewrie in previous adventures and one doesn't have to read/listen very far into the novel before Chaundas is blooded once again. Yet, Chaundas' assumption is that Lewrie couldn't possibly be smart enough to have intercepted him (by surprise) without assistance from some spy within his command. One of the tremendously satisfying aspects of *Havoc's Sword* is the way Chaundas' own paranoia helps unravel some of his most prized plans.

Lambdin's marvelous descriptions of sailing maneuvers and technical terms are always satisfying to me. I always learn a little more about the way certain rigging might have been used or the order in which procedures needed to occur. In this novel, the sailing details are intricately entwined in an ambush scenario. Orders are passed quietly and one can almost hear the creaking of the rigging and the whisper of the hawsers as one ship sneaks up upon an unsuspecting one. The way Lambdin weaves the words and images together reminded me of a film scene where the accompanying soundtrack provides perfect harmony and counterpoint to the action.

In one sense, Lewrie outsmarts himself in this adventure. Realizing that one portion of his mission makes no sense at worst and success is improbable at best, he recreates the mission to include some unlikely allies. And, of course, those allies end up both helping and hindering his personal ambition. And, true to a series of mystery adventures, the denouement sets up not one, but at least two potential problems in the future. It made me smile, as well as anticipate my next sail with Lewrie.

John Boyda says

Lewrie battles old and new foes (on both sides of the flag) in this Caribbean tale. As always a great tale with an all too human protagonist

Don Casto says

Still a great story . . .but this one went too far with the dialog in French again.

David says

Been working my way through this series and have been enjoying it, obviously. This one wasn't a good as some of the others in the series

Mike (the Paladin) says

I will be assuming that you have read the prior books in this series therefore there will be at least minor spoilers for those earlier books.

Here we go again, at sea with Alan Lewrie...in more ways than one. I've mentioned before that I like this series except for any time Alan leaves his ship. Then the novels slow down...abominably. This can be especially true of accounts of Alan's love life. Well, in earlier volumes Alan's amorous adventures have finally turned and bitten him on the....well, they turned and bit him.

You see Alan's wife and HER children have become aware of Alan's mistress and HER child, by Alan. No one came away from this particularly happy. BUT Alan has much less reason to leave his ship now. While there are a few things that slow this one down and there were a few places where my mind wandered..but fewer.

Of course all the fruits of Alan's wild oats haven't come in (view spoiler)

This time we will be involved in some great sea action some of it including the new American Navy...and of course there is the return of Alan's arch Nemesis, again. I like this book and I like this series...mostly. There is some great action and then there's some romance. I'm sure some of you will like that a bit more than me, LOL. Four stars.

Roger Coates says

Not full of exciting Naval actions, but so significant in context of the greater story line, so as not to be missed. Full of interesting, and dangerous characters both New and Old. Lewrie, at his best and worst and most vulnerable.

Jim says

In this, the 11th of Dewey Lambdin's Alan Lewrie series of naval adventures, Lewrie remains captain of the British frigate, HMS Proteus, serving in the Caribbean. The year is 1798.

In this book, Lewrie is once again confronted with his nemesis, Guillaume Choundas, a French naval officer with whom Lewrie has battled twice before - each has a personal grudge against the other. Lewrie also comes into contact with an American naval captain, who is related to an American that Lewrie knew years ago when he was assigned to accompany British agents into Florida to attempt to establish an alliance with the native Americans there against both the Spanish and the Americans. And, finally, Lewrie is re-acquainted with James Peel, an intelligence agent of the British foreign office, who has been assigned to the Caribbean to work with Lewrie against Choundas and in support of British interest on the island of Hispaniola, which is embroiled in a "war of the races."

Once again, a great tale of British naval battles, espionage and a bit of lusty adventures on the part of Post-captain Lewrie.
