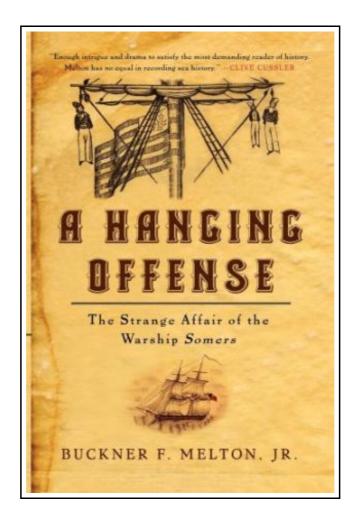
A Hanging Offense: The Strange Affair of the Warship Somers



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Reviews

The very best book i actually study. It is actually writter in easy terms and never hard to understand. Your daily life period will probably be enhance when you total looking over this publication. (Edna Rolfson)

A HANGING OFFENSE: THE STRANGE AFFAIR OF THE WARSHIP SOMERS



Free Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 320 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.9in. x 1.1in.Mutiny on the Bounty is one of historys greatest naval stories -- yet few know the similar tale from Americas own fledgling navy in the dying days of the Age of Sail, a tale of mutiny and death at sea on an American warship. In 1842, the brig-of-war Somers set out on a training cruise for apprentice seamen, commanded by rising star Alexander Mackenzie. Somers was crammed with teenagers. Among them was Acting Midshipman Philip Spencer, a disturbed youth and a son of the U. S. Secretary of War. Buying other crew members loyalty with pilfered tobacco and alcohol, Spencer dreamed up a scheme to kill the officers and turn Somers into a pirate ship. In the isolated world of a warship, a single man can threaten the crews discipline and the captains authority. But one of Spencers followers warned Mackenzie, who arrested the midshipman and chained him and other ringleaders to the quarterdeck. Fearing efforts to rescue the prisoners, officers had to stay awake in round-theclock watches. Steering desperately for land, sleep-deprived and armed to the teeth, battling efforts to liberate Spencer, Somerss captain and officers finally faced a fateful choice: somehow keep control of the vessel until reaching port -- still hundreds of miles away -- or hang the midshipman and his two leading henchmen before the boys could take over the ship. The results shook the nation. A naval investigation of the affair turned into a court-martial and a state trial and led to the founding of the Naval Academy to provide better officers for the still-young republic. Mackenzies controversial decision may have inspired Herman Melvilles great work Billy Budd. The story of Somers raises timeless questions still disturbing in twenty-first-century America: the...

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