

Under Enemy Colors

By S. Thomas Russell

Born to an English father and a French mother, lieutenant Charles Saunders Hayden's career is damned by his 'mixed' heritage. Assigned to the HMS *Themis*, an aging frigate under the command of a captain reviled by his crew for both his brutality towards his men and his cowardice in battle, Hayden is torn between honor and duty, as the British navy engages the French in a centuries-old struggle for power.

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Under Enemy Colors Summary Details

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editorial:

From Publishers Weekly

Russell's first-rate debut features taut plotting, liberal action and an attractively modest hero: Royal Navy Lt. Charles Hayden. In 1793, Britain is at war with revolutionary France, and Hayden, the son of an English father and a French mother, feels torn in half. Denied a promotion, he reluctantly accepts appointment as first lieutenant to the frigate *Themis*: the commander, Capt. Josiah Hart, has powerful connections in the Admiralty, but is widely disparaged among the fleet as a tyrannical coward. Hayden is dismayed to find the ship in a state of dreadful disarray, the crew on the verge of mutiny and Hart hostile to Hayden's remedial efforts. With the French in sight, tensions aboard come to a boil. Russell writes knowledgeably about late-18th-century naval warfare and lyrically about the sea. In Hayden, he has created a complex, sympathetic hero. (*Sept.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Both C. S. Forester's Horatio Hornblower series and Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin novels reaped critical success and legions of faithful fans. Those authors succeeded by blending careful history, vast knowledge of ships and the sea, fascinating glimpses of the period, and ripping-good adventure into spellbinding fiction. Now Russell is bidding fair to succeed the departed masters (and join those, like Bernard Cornwell, still asea). It's 1793, and England is battling revolutionary France. Honorable, heroic Lieutenant Charles Hayden has only one chance to get back to sea: he must join HMS *Themis* as first lieutenant, under Captain Sir Josiah Hart, despite Hart's reputation for being "shy" about engaging the enemy. Hayden accepts the appointment and quickly learns that Hart is not only a coward but also a tyrant toward his crew, some of whom are intrigued by the "republican" ideas coming out of the U.S. and France. Perhaps not yet quite as polished as Forester or O'Brian, Russell has the makings of an A-lister and is sure to attract fans of fighting sail. Gaughan, Thomas

Review

Before them, Hayden could see the mutineers, armed and stripped to the waist, watching them with a mixture of outrage and dire apprehension. The second French frigate, *La Rochelle*, was quickly ranging up to a position where she might unload her entire broadside into the *Themis*, and the mutineers could not have been

insensible to it. "Surrender your ship. We know you have less than half a crew. Haul down your colours or we will board." Mutineers on the quarterdeck began a fierce argument. One of the men--Jarvis--broke away from the group and came to the rail. "We are English mutineers," he called through cupped hands, though the distance between the ships could be measured in yards. "We have removed our officers and wish to take our ship into Brest harbour. We wish to join you. Do you understand? Join the revolution...." "Lay down your weapons and we will talk."

Fans of Patrick O'Brian's works and other novels in the naval adventure genre will enjoy.

"Library Journal"

Russell's encyclopedic command of nautical lore, joined to his rare ability to spin a ripping yarn, places the reader right in the middle of the action.

Neal Stephenson, "New York Times" bestselling author

Lieutenant Hayden is one of the most compelling and attractive heroes to appear in some time. This nascent

series has ample firepower for a long run.

Military.com

First-rate taut plotting, liberal action.

"Publishers Weekly"

[A] strong naval saga with vivid sea battles, strong characterizations, and a deep sense of time and place.

"Midwest Book Review"

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