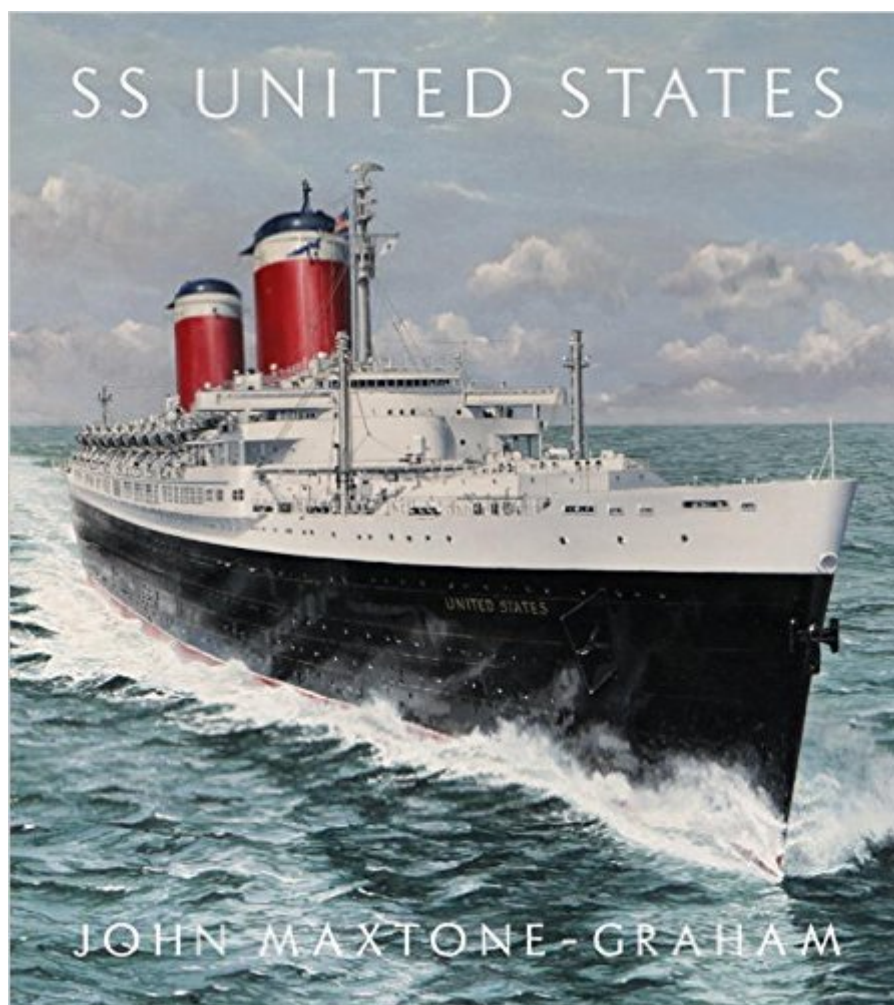


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# SS United States: Red, White, & Blue Riband, Forever



## Synopsis

Maxtone-Graham has yet again produced a profusely illustrated tribute, this one to America's most famous and historic liner. Arguably the world's most articulate and authoritative maritime historian, John Maxtone-Graham documents SS United States, her design, construction, and seventeen years of impeccable service. He introduces us to dozens of U.S. passengers, famous and infamous, as well as captains and crew. The last great American ocean liner, SS United States could be converted to a 14,000-man troop carrier and was capable of attaining a speed of over 40 knots (although in her luxury Atlantic crossings the ship was much slower). Sadly, jet travel put an end to ocean crossings, and the all-aluminum ship rests in Philadelphia while groups of fans continue to try to repurpose it. 200 color illustrations

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The SS United States has been a part of my life for almost 60 years. When it was built in the 1950s I was just a child but my aunt and uncle (who instilled in me the love of travel) took a sailing on her and brought back home movies and postcards. Fast forward 50 years to 1996 when ship "then out of commission" was transferred to the Delaware River waterfront in Philadelphia where it still sits today. As I live maybe 20 blocks from the Pier I see it often. Whether shopping at Lowe's or Ikea, I look across the parking lot and there it sits "it's rusting away and there are plans to save it" but it is an amazing site "and a pleasure to at least see it from a distance. I know there is not much inside but I've always wanted to see what it was like. When I learned in May that this

book was coming from Norton â “ and saw a few advance pages â “ I knew this book would be wonderful. And it is! Unlike the two other reviewers before me here, I was not familiar with many other books on ships by the author. It was just the SS United States that interested me. The large and heavy (four pounds!) book has 240 oversized pages. The book is not 100% about the ship though. It begins by having the author cover Post-WWI sailing and we see the various Cunard ships. Then there is a chapter on the Gibbs Brothers who not only designed the SS United States but the SS Leviathan, which also gets a chapter of itâ™s own. Then comes the SS America (which is covered beginning on page 57 and, finally, on Page 81 we learn about building the SS United States From there on itâ™s all about the ship and itâ™s passengers. There are wonderful full page photos and taken from both archives and private collections (It seems that anyone who sailed on the ship saved some memento).

I disagree with the prior reviewers of this book. If I had been able to do a pre-purchase review, I would not have purchased it. I have been enthralled by ships since I first set foot on the Queen Mary in 1951 at age 4 during a family bon voyage party. I have studied the history extensively... and my library on ships contains well over 400 titles. The promo paragraph about Mr. Maxtone-Graham and his book uses the word "Arguably" with following superlatives; further, the excellent print on the dust jacket emphasizes potential for quality to come when the cover was opened. I was sincerely disappointed. First, the promo, concerning the book's, content, places the "color illustrations" in the over 200 range. After scanning the book several times I could not reach that total. Further, I found no color exterior "photographs" taken during the ship's active period (the 1950s thru the 1960s). During that period, admittedly, the world of photography was in transition from predominantly black and white to color (best in seen in Kodachrome). Why is this important ? I saw the ship several times close up during that period -- at the pier and in the harbor. The most lasting memories during that period were the vivid colors, the massive red, white, and blue funnels, and the consistent pristine condition of the ship. Black and white does not do justice to the ship. A new book (using color words in its title) listed at a \$75 price should have had a wealth of color pictures in order to support that (and future historical ) value in my opinion. In total I found only a few interior shots and promo material from that period in color. So, you say, the color exterior photos probably don't exist.

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