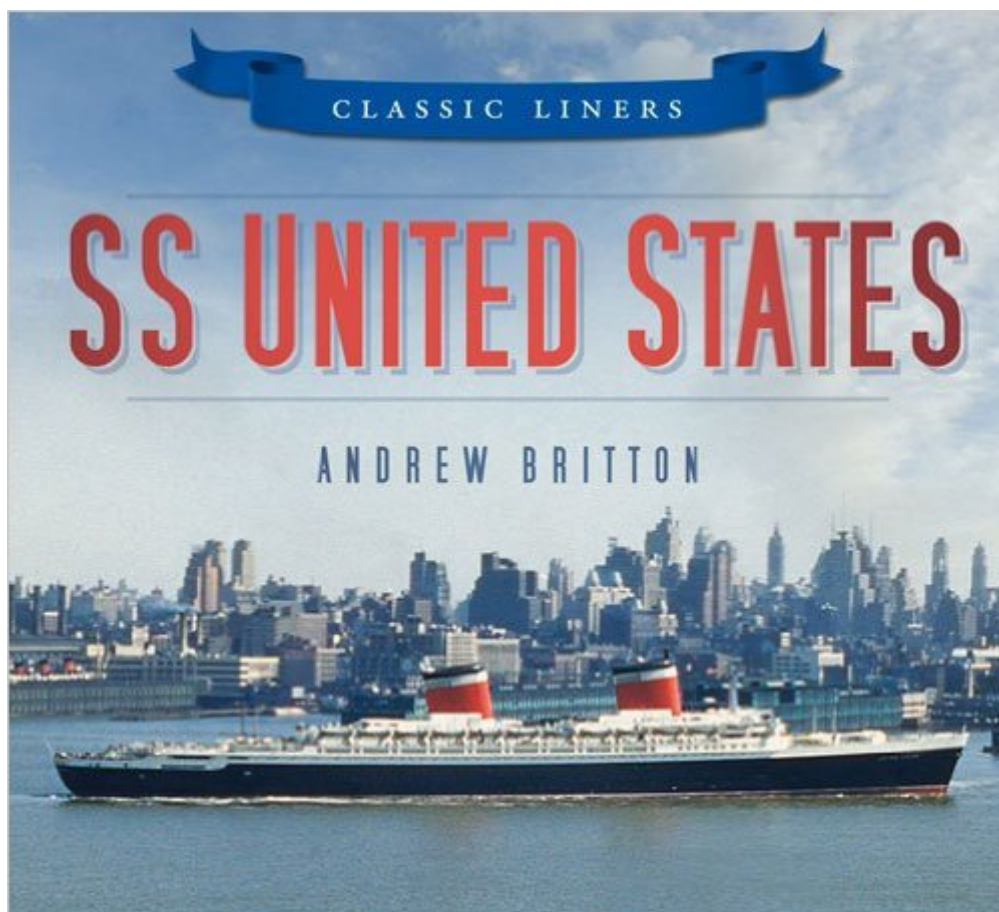


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# SS United States (Classic Liners)



## Synopsis

A colorful illustrated history celebrating 60 years of the SS United States Complete with deck plans, newspaper coverage, and accounts from log books and ship records, this history covers the SS United States' active service from 1952 to 1969, when she dominated the seas of Atlantic. The astonishing operational capacity of this national icon of the United States "with her red, white, and blue funnels; sleek streamlined hull; and silver-coated fittings" was shrouded in secrecy in case she was ever required to be converted to a troop carrier. Andrew Britton presents a revealing insight into the record-breaking liner, her epic maiden voyage, and how she performed in the secret sea trials. Compiled from a wealth of previously unpublished material drawn from the author's own unparalleled collection and others from around the world, this special commemorative book is packed with such ephemera as tickets, timetables, menus, keys, luggage labels, gala invitations, and pennants, as well as historical color photography from both sides of the Atlantic, including the maiden voyage departure from New York.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There has been a spate of small, soft-cover books recently published on the great liners. Most are disappointing. Many of these books will have but a handful of interior images, and most reproduced so tiny that one cannot get any clear idea of the interior. Then, 99% of the images are exterior shots, mostly of the liner's profile. So, the reader gets essentially no information about the interior, and too

much information about the exterior. Deck plans? Dream on. Argh!!!!!! Sadly, annoyingly, and frustratingly, this is just such a book. There are 120 pages, but only three SMALL interior images. Three! There is also a two-page reproduction of a travel brochure, with a few more TINY interior images. Argh!!!!!! In addition, at the beginning of the book, the author inexplicably lists the log records of the United States - thirty-three pages worth! While a very few voyages had something of interest happen, most of the records state that the ship went from X to Y and then back to X. This information should have been at the very end of the book. Also, why in the world did the author think that thirty-three pages of mostly repetitive information was of more interest than full-page images showing the unique interiors of this great vessel? Argh!!!!!!

The SS United States is berthed at a forlorn pier in South Philadelphia awaiting her fate. She is owned by the SS United States Conservancy that has plans for her repurposing, but she is on borrowed time. This book presents her glory years from being designed, built and placed into service in 1952 up through her unceremoniously being taken out of service in 1969--a victim of the jet age and labor strife. Subsequently under various owners she was stripped of just about all of her furnishings and fittings, and is now mostly just a shell of her former self. The book is chock full of photos and factual narratives. The SS United States was a speed demon. No ship her size could then or now go faster (as I understand it). She holds the Blue Ribband for fastest Trans-Atlantic crossing and is our nation's flagship--designed and built in the United States (Newport News) and sailed under the American Flag. Anyone interested in ocean liners of historic significance is going to want to own this book.

This book is primarily a compendium of color photographs of the SS UNITED STATES. Most are of the ship tied up to a pier, or entering and leaving port in New York and Southampton. Also included are a number of shots taken on board while underway. Surprisingly given the age of the photos and the fact some were extracted from movie film, their basic quality is quite good. Color photographs of the SS UNITED STATES are fairly rare, and this book fills a large void. It would have been nice to have some pictures of the ship at sea operating at high speed, but this is not a significant shortcoming. The text is very limited and consists of a brief overview of the ship's history, some abstracted log entries during trials, and a listing of the voyages during the active life of the ship. The photo captions are comprehensive. The author perpetuates the myth that the SS UNITED STATES was capable of steaming at 43 knots, through the use of an out of context engineering log book entry. Her top sustained speed was between 38 and 39 knots subtracting the effects of wind,

waves, and currents, and she had nowhere near the power required to reach anything substantially higher than this. This is a book well worth having if you have a specific interest in the SS UNITED STATES or passenger liners in general.

I was so pleased to get this with its many delicious and nostalgic photos of the only great liner of the US. The dates notated on the captions are a wonderful touch as I always like to know when a photo was taken. This book deserved a bigger format with more pages, fold outs, and enlargements of these photos. The problem with most ocean liner books is that the writers and designers don't think lush. They need to have a look at some of the Taschen books for an example of that kind of visually lush presentation. I certainly appreciate Andrew Britton's efforts. But if only he, and a few others I could name, would allow the right side of his brain to take over and go wild with large photos and fold outs. The mechanics of an ocean liner are incidental and of minor interest to me. The whole point of them often gets lost on the authors, which was they were floating palaces. It was all about design, detail, and eleganza dahling. Lets see more books that really underscore that fact, and minimise the gross tonnage and such. Often with these smaller books, I feel like I'm reading a thick booklet.

Andrew Britton and books on ships go together. This is a great book about a great ship. If you ever saw her whether underway or at her berth she was unforgettable. She is a beauty and an engineering marvel. So kudos to Andrew for putting this book together. If you like this ship or ships in general, get this book you won't be sorry.

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