

# One Common Enemy: The Laconia Incident: a survivor's memoir

Jim McLoughlin

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I'll see the world,' Jim McLoughlin told his parents as he set off to join the Royal Navy in 1939. 'It'll be fun.' Months later, this Liverpool lad was sailing to war aboard the massive battleship HMS 'Valiant'. He saw some of the world, but it wasn't fun. In 'One Common Enemy', he recounts how the chaos and carnage of war at sea in the Norwegian and Mediterranean campaigns led him to a fateful rendezvous with a much-loved ship from his boyhood, the passenger liner 'Laconia'. Nostalgia turned to disaster when 'Laconia' was torpedoed by a German U-boat in the South Atlantic. Despite a remarkable rescue attempt by a courageous, compassionate foe, Jim was condemned to a drifting lifeboat and a harrowing voyage of death and madness. 'One Common Enemy' is a story of a desperate personal battle for survival, but also a moving narrative of innocence lost and a lifelong battle with confronting memories.



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