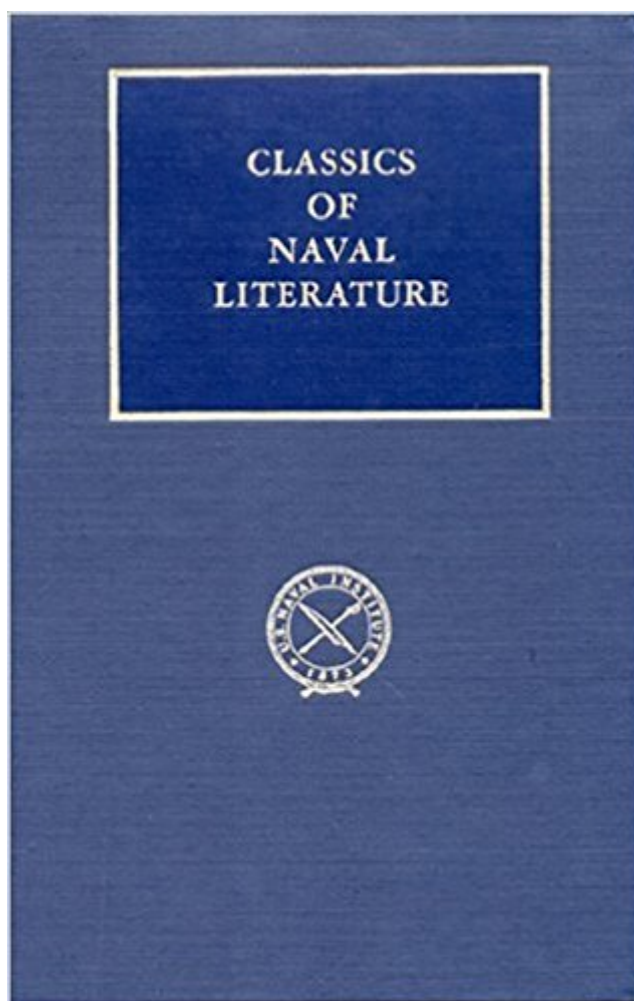


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# Wreck Of The Memphis (Classics Of Naval Literature)



## Synopsis

This is a vivid, minute-by-minute account of one of the worst shipwrecks in naval history. Edward Beach's father commanded the Memphis, one of the largest battle cruisers built by the U.S. Navy up to that time—bigger and faster than a battleship. The Memphis (originally Tennessee) was demolished by monstrous tsunami waves in Santo Domingo Harbor in August 1916, killing forty-three sailors, and Beach Jr. literally grew up with the tragedy and its effects, which are as profound today as they were eighty years ago. Based on his father's reminiscences and private papers, official documents, and interviews with survivors, Beach's reexamination of the disaster and his father's court-martial ranks among the finest analyses of the responsibilities and demands placed on the commanding officer of a U.S. Navy ship. A record-setting submarine skipper himself and the acclaimed author of *Run Silent, Run Deep*, Beach brought personal knowledge to a story that has become a classic in the years since its original publication in 1966. His prose was never more incisive and vigorous. In an introductory essay written for this new edition, Beach discusses the design of the Memphis, her role in the fleet that fought in World War I, and object lessons that have influenced U.S. naval history since the disaster.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Edward L. Beach graduated from the US Navy's submarine school in December 1941, two weeks after Pearl Harbor. He commanded submarines in the Pacific throughout the rest of the war. His first

novel, *Run Silent Run Deep*, became an immediate bestseller, and was later made into a Hollywood blockbuster.

My dad was interested in this book that he saw advertised in a Naval Institute magazine to which he subscribes. He has read several works by this author and enjoys his style. I found a near-perfect but used copy at for a great price. (This copy is marked as belonging to the collection aboard the *Bonhome Richard*.) My dad is thrilled with the book!

There are so many reasons why Beach was so as the author of this fantastic book; his personal family ties to the subject, his unerring knowledge of how ships work, his detailed research into the crew and local population. Meant to be read more than once.

Edward L. Beach, renown American submariner, and author of "*Run Silent, Run Deep*," brings his considerable talents to bear on the story of the USS *Memphis*, (commanded, not coincidentally, by his father), which was wrecked by a sudden tidal wave while at anchor in a tropical Caribbean port. The tension builds to a climax as the wave approaches and the crew tries desperately to get up steam to leave harbor. The *Memphis*' near-escape is chronicled minute-by-minute, taking the reader onboard the doomed ship until nature's fury is unleashed against man's inadequate technology. The tragedy, the heroism, the aftermath, and Beach's efforts to clear his father's name, all make for an episode in history that reads like the best page-turning fiction. A must-read for true naval yarn aficionados!

*Wreck of the Memphis* is the story of a Navy cruiser, *Memphis*, formerly named *Tennessee*. It is the story of an afternoon in the Dominican Republic, where in less than an hour, the ship went from being fully prepared for war, to a beach wreck at the base of a cliff. It is the story of a ship and it's captain who happens to have been the author's father. The event which lead to the loss of the *Memphis* was US intervention in the Dominican Republic. It is period in US Naval history that is little known and less written about. Captain Beach's book fills in some of the details of this time. The aftermath of the loss of the *Memphis* is as equally interesting as the events leading up to the loss of the ship. Now comes the question 'Why did it happen' to be answered. The man held responsible is the captain of the ship and in this case the author's father is the man being asked the question. The verdict and future career of senior Captain Beach make for interesting reading. This is a fine book and an excellent read. I first read this book when it was first published and I have read it periodically

ever since. It is a great addition to any nautical library.

I have been a long time reader of naval and maritime history and only heard of this incident last year (2000). It covers a period in naval history that doesn't get much notice from the general public (1916 when the US Marines landed in the Dominican Republic to restore order). The author is a well known and respected chronicler of naval history, deservedly so. The incident is about a tidal wave, a phenomenon not yet understood by science (or the Navy), that besets an armored cruiser (captained by the author's father) while it was anchored in Santo Domingo. The main problem was how to get up to full steam so they would be able to head out to sea and safety in time. The story gets very exciting when it talks about the problems in the coal fired boiler rooms as the waves washed water down the stacks. This would make a great episode for the TV show JAG because a captain is ultimately responsible for damage to his ship and this one had to face a court martial to establish what happened. I won't reveal the fate of the ship, the crew, or Capt. Beach because that's a big part of the story, but it's a very exciting tale that needs to be remembered. It reads like an adventure novel where it takes a chapter or two to set the stage and then the excitement builds to fever pitch as the situation unexpectedly deteriorates. I only gave it 4 stars instead of a 5 because the author had to repeat sections of the incident from the perspective of different locations and people. But it was so exciting at that point that the repetition was OK because you didn't want to put the book down. The heroism of the crew fighting an uncontrollable force of nature earned them 3 Medals of Honor. A great read.

This book is a well told tale of what happened to the U.S.S. Memphis in 1916. His father being the captain of the ship, the author had a good insight to what he went through on the ship as it was driven ashore under freak circumstances as well as the crew. Although, I think the author belabored some of the details, this book is a very good read. A long forgotten incident, I read this book back in the late 1960's and happened to find it again on . Glad I did .....

This is a really great book for anyone interested in Naval history. It was well packed and arrived on time.

My father was A Warrent Machinist in charge of the engine room. He is mentioned in the book. He had his lungs cooked and spent a year growing new lining on them. Died 1928 from pneumonia, and was told if he ever got it, he would. He was removed from the Memphis by breaches

bouy. The ship is still visible in Santo Domingo harbor.

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