

Superstitions of Sailors (Dover Maritime)

Angelo S. Rappoport



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Handed down from generation to generation, these intriguing maritime legends from around the globe describe a magical world beneath and above the waves. They range from the origins of the sea, as recounted in the *Mahabharata* and other ancient epics, to colorful instances in English literature that reflect the age-old superstitions observed by mariners and the seafaring community.

Some of these stories attempt to interpret and explain observable phenomena such as waterspouts, phosphorescence, and St. Elmo's light. Others draw upon mystical, supernatural associations with the sea, from sightings of phantom galleys and apparitions to the mischievous deeds of mermaids, kelpies, and watersprites. Still others originate among the tall tales spun by ocean travelers, a tradition at least as old as *The Odyssey* and its legends of ship-destroying monsters and islands inhabited by giants, sea nymphs, and witches. Nine evocative illustrations complement these enchanting tales.

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