

# Foreword

In 1954 the Solar Queen series was conceived in answer to a request from one of the first Sf-Fantasy genre publishers in the field—Gnome Press. Since I was then reading manuscripts for this firm, I used for the books the pen name Andrew North. The publisher wished to develop space adventure stories which were not akin to the then steady flow of militaristic plots.

Because I had long been interested in the historical importance of the merchant adventurers of our own world in the past I plotted the ventures of the Free Traders—in my mind linking them to our earlier trader explorers and the tramp freighters of present day—having traveled on one such “tramp” myself.

I tried to create a crew of diverse backgrounds and character and plunged them into various perils which might naturally arise from their way of life. Which was done for four books—*Sargasso of Space*, *Plague Ship*, *Voodoo Planet*, and *Postmarked the Stars*,

Ms. Griffin, creator of the justly well-ranked adventure series of Star Commandos, agreed with me that the Solar Queen and her crew might well swing back into orbit—with certain new additions—namely a feminine member for the crew. Thus the Solar Queen lifts again for some more fateful voyages.

—Andre Norton