

# DATA FILE:

## EARLY HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. AVENGER (FR/FH 1860)

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### Editor's Note:

The successful conclusion of the **Khitomer Conference** in 2293 has marked one of the most monumental events in the history of the United Federation of Planets. An end to almost 75 years of conflict and open hostilities with the Klingon Empire now appears to be an attainable goal. This objective, which would have been considered absurd only a few years ago, has brought with it a number of remarkable insights. To initiate a better understanding between their peoples, the Federation and the Klingon Empire have agreed to publish a multitude of documents and reports that detail the numerous encounters between the two adversaries over the last eight decades. Some of these events, declared Top Secret by Star Fleet Command up until this time, have never been documented and were withheld from the Federation public for reasons of galactic security. Most previously-published reports of Klingon-Federation history are now in fact outdated, filled with holes and misinformation. Needless to say, historians are frantically reworking these chapters, utilizing the newly acquired facts. In particular, a concise accounting of **The Four Years War (2255-2259)**, perhaps the darkest era of Klingon-Federation relations, is now available to the general public. The compilation of the following document would not have been possible without the release of these particular findings.

In 2242 Star Fleet was about to enter what would be later known as "**The Great Awakening**". The Federation was at peace, enjoying the eighty years of détente with the Romulan Star Empire following the conclusion of the **First Romulan War**. The fear of a Federation collapse, brought on by the **Terra-Return League**, had subsided when that organization ceased to be a significant political entity in 2210. The newly discovered Klingon Empire had been relatively silent for a number of years following the almost disastrous first encounter with it in 2218. Thirteen years had passed since the publication of the landmark study, completed for the Federation Council's Office of Public Information, which reported that the next generation of starships would eventually permit a thorough exploration of all sectors within the Federation's sphere of influence. This finding further strengthened Star Fleet's political clout and brought with it renewed and increased funding for the exploration component of its organization. The Constitution-class project was well into its design stage, with delivery of the first new cruisers expected within the next three years. The technological breakthroughs made with the Larson, Loknar, Saladin, and Detroyat-class starships, which had made the Constitution-class cruiser a theoretical possibility, were now trickling down into the Federation's industrial base.

All of these factors were accounted for in November of 2242 when the United Federation of Planets' Bureau of Spacecraft proposed the construction of a new design of starship to meet an ever-increasing demand from Star Fleet Command. Star Fleet was seeking to procure a large number of medium-sized vessels to patrol the Federation's borderspace areas. The Spacecraft Bureau's design criteria required that the ships be simple, easy to maintain, and inexpensive to operate. As the Federation best engineers, both civilian *and* those in Star Fleet, completed their designs, Star Fleet Command decided to use the Detroyat-class heavy destroyer U.S.S. Resolution (DH 1101) as a testbed for the systems to be utilized in this new class of frigate. She was "dry-docked" on 11 March 2243 at the **San Francisco Naval Yards** orbiting Earth over North America and began an extensive overhaul. Originally 72 ships of the newly approved design were authorized to be built. This number was reduced to 28 on 15 November 2245 as cost-overruns became apparent. Initially the Resolution was to be redesignated FR 1850, but as testing problems on board the destroyer continued it became apparent that she would not be ready for recommissioning on time. In fact, reengineering of the Resolution became so problematic that it was soon suggested that the first production ships of the new frigate line would be in service long before the Resolution was even made spaceworthy. Therefore, it was decided in December of 2245 that the Resolution would be redesignated FR 1877 to place it at the end of the procurement line of 28 units.

On 19 March 2246, the hull of Naval Construction Contract 1850 was laid down at **Vickers Shipbuilding Group Ltd.**, based out of New London, in the British Isles on Earth. Work on the frigate continued ahead of schedule and later that year it was announced that NCC-1850, and therefore the entire frigate line, would be named Surya. On 6 November 2247, exactly one month after the ill-fated U.S.S. Resolution was relaunched, the United Federation of Planets produced funds for the construction of several more Surya-class frigates. The lead ship, U.S.S. Surya, was not even launched when the funding for these vessels was approved. However, Star Fleet Command was so enthusiastic about this particular design, despite the problems aboard the Resolution, that it had lobbied for a total of eight such frigates in 2247. To Star Fleet's chagrin, it was granted funds for an additional two Surya-class starships in lieu of three lesser scout-class vessels with which the Federation's Bureau of Spacecraft was not entirely satisfied. A number of Federation ship builders put forth bids for construction of these frigates, among them was the aforementioned Vickers Shipbuilding. The historic British firm was awarded Naval Construction Contract 1860, along with five additional contracts to build Surya-class frigates the following year. Vickers successfully launched the U.S.S. Surya into orbit on 12 January 2248 and commissioned it later that year, on 14 December. Meanwhile, nine other Surya-class frigates were in various stages of construction and procurement at several shipyards. On 12 November 2249, with the U.S.S. Kanaris (NCC-1854) awaiting its launching the following spring, Vickers laid down the hull of NCC-1860 at its Pier #1 where the U.S.S. Surya had lain a few months before. As construction continued in New London, Star Fleet Command's Starship Registry Division decided on a name for NCC-1860. She was to be called Avenger.

On 19 August 2251 the hull of NCC-1860 was launched into orbit. It was then docked to Vickers' orbital facility, where construction continued on schedule. Meanwhile, Star Fleet Intelligence operatives began to submit ever-increasing reports that *both* the Klingon and the Romulan Star Empires were about to renew their aggressive tendencies. Even more shocking than the new campaigns of conquest that the Federation faced from their adversaries was the possibility that the two Empires, who were thought to be bitter enemies, might now be planning to coordinate their efforts against the Federation. Star Fleet Command informed Vickers and all other shipbuilders that their timetables for construction were to be moved up drastically. The Avenger's command staff and crew were still training at one of Star Fleet Command's facilities in Norfolk, North America when they received calls to report to the Vickers orbital station. Then, on 3 February 2252, in a grand ceremony hosted by the Commander in Chief of Star Fleet Command, the U.S.S. Avenger (FR 1860) was commissioned as the eleventh Surya-class frigate. Command of the new starship was given to a newly-promoted Star Fleet Captain, Robert Wesley. However, he and his virgin crew had no time to familiarize themselves with their newly acquired ship, as they were immediately assigned duty patrolling the **Romulan Neutral Zone**. However, the first deployment of the U.S.S. Avenger, which by necessity doubled as its shakedown cruise, went along without incident. FR 1860, under the command of Captain Wesley, spent more than four years exploring new worlds, mapping stars, and performing various operations for Star Fleet. The invasion from the Romulans, and the Klingons for the time being, never came to pass. It is now common knowledge that the arrival of the Surya-class frigates, and the newer Coventry-class frigates, in the early 2250's was a key factor in prompting the Romulan Star Empire to abandon their plans to attack the Federation alongside the Klingons. However, the blood-thirsty Klingons were not so reluctant.

The Klingons moved back their timetables and expanded their forces to make up for the loss of the Romulan contingent. Then, in late 2253, the bulk of the Klingon Imperial Navy began mobilizing its forces along the entire Klingon frontier with the Federation. For a full year the Klingons assembled task forces and conducted fleet maneuvers in an attempt to confuse Star Fleet and the Federation Council. A number of minor skirmishes with Klingon forces in early 2255 culminated with the destruction of the U.S.S. Gulliver, a Sawyer-class scout, near the planet **Axanar**. In response, Star Fleet ordered the U.S.S. Xenophon, under the command of Captain Garth of Izar, to secure the area. Upon his arrival, Garth found a sizable Klingon force and held it in check, successfully blockading Axanar for two months. When a second Klingon force tried to enter the system in late August of that same year, open conflict broke out. Although highly outnumbered, Garth achieved a major victory at what would later be called the **First Battle of Axanar**. After a final plea for the Klingon forces to retreat from Federation territory was turned down, the United Federation of Planets reluctantly declared war on the Klingon Empire on 29 September 2255. Star Fleet immediately ordered Captain Garth to take the offensive, and on the following day his fleet overwhelmingly defeated the Klingons at the **Second Battle of Axanar**. During this time the Avenger was forced to remain on station near the Romulan Neutral Zone. The Federation Council's fear of a combined Romulan-Klingon attack remained quite high. They had no intention of being outflanked by a second

echelon Romulan force. However, Captain Wesley was eager to join the fight, even though his unseasoned crew was somewhat unsure, fearful of what war might entail.

Following the initial Star Fleet victories led by Captain Garth, the early months of the war were marked by a number of devastating defeats for Federation forces. Star Fleet Command's efforts to stop the Klingon attack were hindered by the Federation Council's micromanagement of the war. Star Fleet Commanders were not given the freedom to undertake tactics and strategies on their own accord. Every movement and engagement had to be approved via subspace radio by the Federation Council. And of those plans that were submitted, many were turned down by the Council in fear of promoting an escalation of the conflict or pulling the Romulans into the war. Finally, in September of 2256, Captain Wesley received a priority-one subspace transmission from Star Fleet Headquarters which contained what he had desired for so long. He was ordered to take the Avenger off patrol and make best speed to Starbase 15. There the Avenger was to undergo standard repairs under an obviously accelerated schedule. Upon completion, the Avenger was to head to the Klingon front where future orders would follow. Captain Wesley quickly motivated his crew and redeployed his starship to the war-zone in record time. There the Avenger rendezvoused with a small task force headed by Garth of Izar, who was now promoted to the field rank of Fleet Captain. For the next three years, Captain Wesley and the crew of the U.S.S. Avenger would fight alongside Garth and play a crucial role in one of the most dire chapters in the history of the United Federation of Planets.

War with the Klingons raged on for more than three years, with casualties on both sides numbering well into the millions. Then, in April of 2258, the **Battle of Thranstor** was fought, ending with Star Fleet forces routing the Klingons. It was the deepest penetration by Klingon forces into Federation space and marked the turning point in the war. In the months that followed this intensely-fought battle, Star Fleet initiated a number of decisive counter-offensives that began to push the Klingons back. By August of 2258 the Klingon Empire was feeling the strain of the prolonged conflict and were close to playing their final card. The Klingon High Council decided to commit their strategic reserve, a huge force comprised of mainly older vessels situated near the Klingon homeworld of **Qo'noS**. They intended to exploit a weak point in the Federation lines near **Rigel XII** and cut off a large salient recently made by Star Fleet forces. Their ultimate objective was to seize *all* of the **Rigel Colonies**, fortify their positions, and sue for peace. Permanent acquisition of these colonies could justify ending the war with the Klingon Empire in a much stronger position than the Federation. However, Star Fleet Intelligence, who had been performing superbly to this date, then came up with their greatest contribution to the war, albeit one that would lead to their eventual downfall.

In December of 2258 the U.S.S. Aramis intercepted a Klingon scout carrying their fleet commander, Admiral Komex. Star Fleet Command ordered top intelligence operatives to interrogate him. Although initial reports stated that he voluntarily provided Star Fleet Intelligence with information to end the war more quickly, it is now known that these operatives used brutal tactics to force these facts from him. Nevertheless, Star Fleet Intelligence learned in detail of the Klingon plan to commit their strategic reserve and seize the Rigel Colonies several weeks before the planned attack was to take place. Rather than waste this valuable information with the Federation Council, or even Star Fleet Command for that matter, Star Fleet Intelligence bypassed the chain of command and went straight to a source they knew they could depend on. They informed Fleet Captain Garth and urged him to quietly redeploy his forces, their intention being that, when the time came to commit Star Fleet forces, Garth would be the commander most ready. Star Fleet Intelligence *then* submitted their findings to the Federation Council. As expected, the valuable information got wrapped up in a bureaucratic knot. By the time the Council had agreed on a response and informed Star Fleet Command, the Klingon offensive was only days away. Star Fleet Command had no other choice but to rely on the same Captain for whom Star Fleet Intelligence had intended this mission from the start.

Following his historic victories in the First and Second Battles of Axanar, Garth of Izar was given command of the Federation flagship, the U.S.S. Constitution (CH 1700). For the past four years he had been playing a key role in containment of the Klingon advance. However, his outspokenness about the Federation's micromanagement of the war had kept his command relatively limited to this date. Under other circumstances, Garth might have been given command of Star Fleet's entire armada facing the Klingon attack. Instead, he was commander of a small but potent fleet which was used as a shock force to initiate minor offensives. However, he was now poised to have his greatest victory of all, one that would be not made public for over 37 years. The Federation Council was in fact *quite* disappointed when they were informed that Garth was to head the operation to

blunt the Klingon attack. These bureaucrats were in no way interested in making an even bigger hero out of someone whom they did not consider a "team-player". However, when the time came to initiate a defense, he was in fact the only Federation Commander in position to accomplish the task at hand.

At the time, Fleet Captain Garth had four ships under his command, consisting of the U.S.S. Constitution (CH 1700), the U.S.S. Saratoga (CH 1724), the U.S.S. Illustrious (FR 1863) and the U.S.S. Avenger (FR 1860), under the command of Captain Robert Wesley. Star Fleet Command grudgingly untied Garth's hands and gave him unconditional control of **Task Force Constitution**. They even gave him the freedom to initiate any and all decisions, tactics, and strategies, as long as he could ensure victory. Garth utilized every piece of intelligence data given to him, found a weakness in the Klingon plan, and initiated a counterattack in January of 2259. In what is now considered one of the boldest military maneuvers in the history of space warfare, Garth's four ships surprised the Klingon strategic reserve near the Klingon base **Veska**. At this point in history, fortunately for Star Fleet Command, the Klingon Empire had not obtained cloaking device technology. This came years later with the cultural and scientific exchanges with the Romulan Star Empire. Garth's fleet went to extreme efforts to ensure that their ambush was not detected. However, their stealthy approach and deployments were not entirely necessary. After leaving Veska, the Klingon ships cruised under electronic emissions-control, **EMCON**. Without their active sensors operating, the Klingon vessels practically sailed right into Task Force Constitution.

Where Garth had instructed the two heavy cruisers (CH 1700 and CH 1724) to engage the Klingon capital ships, it was responsibility of the U.S.S. Avenger to take out the Klingon command vessel. Normally this ship would be almost indistinguishable from the other vessels; however, the intelligence data Garth received contained the engine signatures of the entire Klingon force. When the Avenger attacked and destroyed the Klingon command vessel from the rear, victory in the battle was nearly assured. As Garth's ships opened fire at will, the Klingon forces' response was frantic and disorganized. Garth's skilled use of subspace echoes and false communiqués caused the bulk of the Klingon force to react in the opposite direction from the attack. The Klingon strategic reserve was routed; its remnants fled and never attempted to regroup. Many Klingon ship captains, humiliated by their defeat, ordered their ships to the front lines and made unsuccessful suicide attacks against Star Fleet forces. Not one Klingon commander returned his ship to Qo'noS; doing so would have almost certainly resulted in their execution. Garth's fleet returned safely to Federation space, suffering minimal casualties. This victory prompted Star Fleet Command to scale up its attacks along the front. Within weeks, the Klingon advance was pushed back to pre-war boundaries. However, Garth's role, and that of the U.S.S. Avenger, in what would soon be dubbed The Four Years' War was far from over.

The cessation of hostilities in early 2259 in no way brought peace for the Federation. Star Fleet immediately began planning for a myriad of new defense contingencies. One proposal even called for a preemptive strike against the Klingon Empire to gain a superior strategic position against them. This would ensure that any future attacks from the Klingon forces could be dealt with under more favorable circumstances than the ones Star Fleet faced during the early stages of the recent conflict. Star Fleet also insisted that this would send a clear message to the Romulan Star Empire, whose forces did not simply "sit out the war" as was more commonly believed. Several unexplained instances in the Four Years' War were now being accounted for by Romulan intervention, although Star Fleet could not produce any concrete evidence. With the specter of future war looming over them, the worlds of the Federation began to splinter in their resolve. The Tellarites and the Andorians vehemently supported Star Fleet's plans. The Terrans proposed a policy of "forward defense", staging the bulk of Star Fleet forces at or near the Klingon frontier to quickly blunt any new Klingon attacks the moment they should occur. However, this would severely hinder Star Fleet's efforts in space exploration, which upset a number of other worlds. The Alpha Centaurians urged restraint, expecting the current atmosphere to diffuse itself within several months. A number of other races offered a wide variety of solutions to the crisis, each ensuring their particular answer was the only way out of the debacle. However, it was one of the Federation's founding members and most crucial partners, the pacifist Vulcans, who demanded a more lasting and permanent peace. They even threatened to withdraw from the Federation should any new offensives take place. This dilemma prompted the Federation President to open up a dialogue with the Chancellor of the Klingon High Council.

Within weeks, the Klingon and Federation Councils had agreed via subspace radio on a time and location to begin negotiations. On 12 May, dignitaries and military commanders from the Klingon Empire and the United Federation of Planets convened at none other than the planet Axanar, site of the fiery outbreak of the Four Years' War. A number of Star Fleet and Imperial Klingon vessels were to be present at the site; among them

was the U.S.S. Avenger. Star Fleet placed a commander the Klingons had grown to respect in charge of the Federation force protecting the summit, Fleet Captain Garth of Izar. Several days after negotiations began, one Klingon commander, outraged by Federation demands, beamed out of the peace talks in disgust. Fears of his attempts to sabotage the summit were fulfilled when he began firing on the U.S.S. Republic (CH 1371). Quick reaction by Captain Wesley kept the renegade Klingon cruiser at bay long enough for a Klingon force to beam aboard it to subdue the ship's captain. Many experts still ponder on what would have transpired at the **Axanar Peace Mission** if Robert Wesley had went ahead and actually destroyed the Klingon vessel. His quick thinking and cool judgment won him praise from both sides. After this brief interruption, the negotiations resumed. Four weeks later, following numerous heated debates, an agreement was achieved on 13 June 2259 with the signing of the **Treaty of Axanar**.

In August, the U.S.S. Avenger was ordered back to Earth for an extensive overhaul following three years of prolonged fleet action. After a tremendous welcoming-home ceremony for the Avenger, the ship's crew was granted shore leave to reunite with their families and loved-ones. Although Star Fleet planned to put the Avenger through a number of repairs and upgrades in late 2259, the turnaround time for this mini-refit was scheduled for a mere four months. With tensions still high following the recent war with the Klingons, Star Fleet needed every starship it could muster. Meanwhile, a panel of Vulcan historians began preliminary work on a chronicle of the recent conflict. What they did not know at the time was that they were in the process of unraveling one of the greatest debacles in the history of Star Fleet. When they came upon details concerning Garth's victory in the **Battle of Veska**, the Vulcans began to uncover what had actually transpired. Deployments and requisitions showed far too much foresight and several log entries had been falsified or, even worse, deleted. Most important of all was the fact that when inquired about these discrepancies, certain members of the crews of Task Force Constitution were not talking.

In January of 2260 the U.S.S. Avenger set out on its third year 4-year mission, returning to the newly stabilized Klingon frontier, this time to support the upcoming **Axanar Cultural Mission**. Over the next several months, the Vulcan panel's findings somehow leaked to the Federation press, which had a field day with the rumors. As speculation began to grow, Star Fleet Command tried to silence the public queries by scheduling preliminary hearings regarding the Vulcan findings for November. One of the officers subpoenaed for questioning was the Avenger's second in command, Commander Nathan Britcher. He embarked on a shuttle for Earth and gave initial testimony to a panel of Star Fleet Admirals and Federation officials. Britcher returned to the Avenger shortly thereafter, but he was informed that he might be asked to return for further questioning at a later date. The crew of the Avenger attempted to return to normal duty. However, the specter of the inquiry lingered over everyone. The Federation/Star Fleet panel then suggested that the discrepancies aboard the ships of Task Force Constitution now involved *Star Fleet Intelligence* and dated back to its interrogation of Klingon Admiral Komex aboard the U.S.S. Aramis. In March of 2261 the Avenger's Executive Officer was again ordered back to Earth to give testimony. It became apparent that Commander Britcher's involvement was in fact deeper than initially assumed. The command situation aboard the Avenger was beginning to become intolerable for Captain Wesley. He reluctantly submitted a request for another Executive Officer to fill in for Britcher while he attended the Aramis hearings. Star Fleet Command quickly granted his request, reassigning to the Avenger Commander Melissa Sturdevant. She was a capable officer with an established Star Fleet career behind her, serving as Second Officer aboard the U.S.S. Accord (FT 1842) in the 2250s.

After a lengthy and heated trial in August of 2261, the **Aramis Incident**, as it is now referred to, came to an initial conclusion. The Star Fleet Intelligence officers involved in the interrogation of Admiral Komex were convicted of *wrongful misconduct in the time of war*, and were stripped of their respective ranks and titles. However, these offenses were indeed only half the story. Star Fleet now had to deal with the officers who accepted the illicit information and aided in the cover-up of the incident. The first officer subpoenaed for the second round of hearings was none other than Fleet Captain Garth of Izar. Although Star Fleet had disbanded Task Force Constitution following the conclusion of the Four Years' War, Garth was still in command of CH 1700. When Star Fleet ordered him to transfer command of the Constitution to his Executive Officer and return to Earth for questioning, Garth balked. Subsequent requests for Captain Garth were ignored and Star Fleet realized they had a major situation on their hands. With the Peace Treaty of Axanar only months old, Star Fleet could not afford a renegade captain patrolling the Klingon frontier. They needed someone who could connect with Garth on a personal level, and called upon Captain Wesley and the crew of the U.S.S. Avenger.

Captain Garth was playing a dangerous game of feeding his crew misinformation and attempting to quietly rally them behind his cause. Although the crew of the Constitution had come to perceive Garth as something more

than a man, his efforts met with only limited success. Aware of his predicament, Garth fled to a more remote area of the Federation, away from the Klingon and Romulan frontiers. Garth knew he would have his hands full avoiding Star Fleet forces and no desire to fight outnumbered against *three* superior foes. Garth took the Constitution to the **Antos** system, hoping to find refuge on one of its habitable planets. When CH 1700 reached its destiny, Garth attempted to reach the surface of **Antos IV** in one of the ship's shuttlecraft. While making its way down to the planet, Garth's shuttle lost power and crash-landed. The Constitution's crew quickly sent down a second shuttle to find their Captain, but found no body, just the wreck of the shuttlecraft. This immediately sparked dissent among the Constitution's crew. Several crewmembers who had not yet fallen victim to Garth's lies secretly contacted Star Fleet Command and informed them of the Constitution's location. Star Fleet relayed this data to Captain Wesley who immediately set course for the Antos system. Meanwhile, on the planet Antos IV, Garth had in fact been rescued by its inhabitants, a race of tremendously advanced beings. The Antosians knew Garth was injured, yet had no way of knowing how to repair him. They did, however, possess an incredible power known as **cellular metamorphosis**. They taught Garth this mental ability in the hopes that he could repair himself. Back on the Constitution, the crew was close to open fighting over what to do with their *stolen* starship. This was all put aside when Captain Garth signaled them from the surface of Antos IV.

Garth beamed aboard the Constitution and spent the next several days in seclusion. His presence seemed to quiet the infighting among his crew; they sat silently awaiting his next order. Garth's delay proved to be a bit too long, for the U.S.S. Avenger soon arrived at the Antos system. Robert Wesley contacted the Constitution and pleaded with Garth to stand down. Garth ignored his old friend, shunning him and other Star Fleet captains. He referred to them as "*mere puppets of complacent Federation bureaucrats*". Garth began to rant and rave, claiming the Federation "*sold-out*" his great victories to the Klingons at the bargaining table during the Axanar Peace Mission. He boasted of his ability to defeat any foe and exaggerated the Klingon Empire's weakness. Garth promised his crew glory and power if they were to follow him in his conquest of the universe. It was clear Garth was approaching mental breakdown. When the Constitution attempted to flee, the Avenger maneuvered into its path. Captain Wesley even fired a warning shot off its bow. Garth responded without hesitation, ordering Wesley to withdraw and threatening to destroy Antos IV if he did not. Wesley held his ground and instead of attempting to reach Garth he spoke directly to the crew of the Constitution. Wesley's speech was both moving and inspiring. The Constitution's Executive Officer sadly informed his captain that he was relieved of command. He placed Garth in the brig; the crisis was over.

In January of 2262, the Aramis Trials resumed. Fleet Captain Garth was convicted of a number of offenses. Among them were: *failure to disobey an unlawful order; failure to report such orders; falsifying Star Fleet records; lying to Star Fleet Command; disregarding the chain of command; failure to relinquish command of the U.S.S. Constitution; and theft of the U.S.S. Constitution*. Commander Nathan Britcher was reprimanded for his failure to disobey illegal orders given to him by Captain Garth. Upon completion of the trials, Britcher was ordered to report back to the Avenger. However, he decided it was in the best interest of his ship that he not return. Although his part in the Aramis incident had not been substantial, Britcher had become somewhat of a noted figure. He felt his connection to the scandal was something the Avenger did not need. Captain Robert Wesley and the remainder of the Avenger crew were fully exonerated and returned to normal duty. Star Fleet Command sentenced Garth of Izar to life imprisonment. However, Star Fleet and the Federation had mercy on their fallen military hero, who was obviously mentally ill, and sent Garth to an orbital mental hospital for psychiatric treatment. Garth would later be transferred to the Federation's criminal rehabilitation facility on **Elba II**. There he would escape imprisonment and mastermind a brief hostage crisis involving Captain James T. Kirk of the U.S.S. Enterprise (CH 1701) and his Chief Science Officer. However, his gallant but tragic career as a Star Fleet Officer was now sadly over.

This was not the case, though, for Captain Robert Wesley. Star Fleet Command was greatly impressed by his military exploits during the Four Years' War and his notable performance during the Axanar Peace Mission, as well as his resolution of the recent incident involving Garth. In April of 2262, they offered him a position at Star Fleet Command's Tactical Operations Headquarters in San Francisco. Wesley was quite relieved to be given the opportunity to step out of the Captain's chair, and readily accepted the transfer. Although proficient in the art of tactical and strategic planning, the experiences of the Four Years War had taken much out of Wesley, and he was enthusiastic to return home to Earth. Later, in 2265, Star Fleet Command promoted Robert Wesley to the rank of Commodore and transferred him to Star Fleet Academy, where he became a cadet instructor, a role he had in fact been seeking for some time. Ultimately, Wesley would again be given command of a starship,

the Constitution-class heavy cruiser U.S.S. Lexington (CH 1703). In command of the Lexington Commodore Robert Wesley would make his most notable achievement, again utilizing infallible composure and averting complete disaster during the **M-5** incident of 2267.

The Avenger was a young ship with an already proud history behind it. She had an anxious crew which had been seasoned, but not hardened, by three years of relentless war. Following Captain Wesley's transfer, Star Fleet promoted the Avenger's Executive Officer, Commander Melissa Sturdevant, to Captain and gave her command of FR 1860. However, the 2260s were an odd time in the Federation's public attitudes, especially when it came to women's roles. These feelings were even more present within the conservative ranks of Star Fleet. Spurred by the losses felt during the Four Years' War, males began taking on an increasingly uneven percentage of hazardous duties. Likewise, promotions and accommodations for males began to supersede those for many *superior* female officers. This was not a bigoted campaign undertaken by an elite group of male chauvinists within Star Fleet Command. As odd as it may seem, this was a legitimate feeling held by the majority of the Federation's populace. Not only were protests from prominent female officers absent, but many women in Star Fleet even endorsed the undeclared policies. This trend reached its furthest, and perhaps most absurd, extent with the introduction of separate male and female uniforms for Star Fleet personnel in 2266. Also during these years, the position of Yeoman aboard starships saw a great resurgence, and was more than often filled by attractive female officers. Needless to say, during this period Captain Sturdevant, and in turn the crew of the U.S.S. Avenger, were not given an abundance of vital assignments.

Sturdevant led the Avenger through the completion of the ship's third four-year mission. After a quick refit in late 2263, the Avenger was once again sent out on duty. However, this time the Avenger played a much more menial role, patrolling the inter-Federation Space Lanes of Communication (**SLOCs**). Contact with new worlds was rare, star-mapping was almost non-existent, and hazardous duty was rarely encountered. In one notable incident in 2264, however, during an attempted coup d'etat on the **Yogyakarta Baru** colony, Star Fleet Command ordered the evacuation of the colony administrators and their families. One of the vessels aiding in the evacuation was the U.S.S. Avenger, commanded by Captain Melissa Sturdevant. Her performance during this operation was exceptional, and she was awarded the Silver Palm with Cluster by Star Fleet Command for her outstanding efforts. Among those rescued were the Sastrowardoyo and Adiwoso families. Two of the three Sastrowardoyo children later became noted officers in Star Fleet: Hartriono (5 years old at the time of the rescue), who later served aboard such noted vessels as the U.S.S. Enterprise (CH 1701-A) and U.S.S. Challenger (CH 1676), then became commander of the Flight Test Team assigned to **Space Station Shadowstar (SFR 721)**; and Rahadyan (then 11 years old), who served first as Chief Helm Officer, then Chief Scientist (Physical Sciences), on U.S.S. Avenger in the early 2290's. Carolyn Adiwoso (also 5 years old during the Yogyakarta Baru incident, and a cousin of the Sastrowardoyo brothers) also served briefly aboard the Avenger in 2294, and currently serves as Diplomatic Liaison Officer aboard the U.S.S. Accord (FT 1842).

After a standard refit in late 2267, the U.S.S. Avenger set out on its fifth four-year mission in January of the following year. Although this would turn out to be the last under the command of Captain Melissa Sturdevant, she had already made her mark in Star Fleet history. Her noted accomplishment at the Yogyakarta Baru colony had won her fame back on Earth. Her refusal to wear the standard female Star Fleet uniform, although initially shunned, now rallied women all over Star Fleet to speak out against its silent policies. As a result, as quickly as they had come to be, Star Fleet's chauvinistic tendencies, and those in the Federation as a whole, were all but gone by 2269. Public demand forced Star Fleet to grant Sturdevant a role more fitting such a decorated and noted Captain. In early 2270, the U.S.S. Avenger was redeployed to the Romulan Neutral Zone, this time in the areas near the Federation outpost **Cestus III**. Star Fleet had increased its presence there several years earlier after its first contact with the Gorn Alliance. In late 2271, when the Avenger was ordered back to Earth for standard repairs, Sturdevant was promoted to Fleet Captain. Star Fleet decided that the responsibilities that came with Sturdevant's new rank necessitated a change in her command. In a brief ceremony held aboard the Avenger just before reaching Earth, Fleet Captain Melissa Sturdevant transferred command of FR 1860 to the ship's Executive Officer, Commander Raymond Jellicho. Sturdevant was fond of Jellicho, admiring his matter-of-fact style of command. However, she was unsure how he would perform as a starship captain. Nevertheless, she had many new duties to perform and left the care of the Avenger in Jellicho's hands. Jellicho returned the Avenger to the Vickers orbital facility, where its entire crew was granted extensive shore leave. There was one exception: the Avenger's Andorian Chief Engineer, Lt. Commander P'Tak Thalazar. Jellicho and Thalazar remained on

duty and onboard the Avenger for the next seven months, supervising the installation of a myriad of high-technology diagnostic equipment.

By August of 2272, FR 1860 was ready for its next deployment. This mission proved to be one unlike any other the Avenger had undertaken before. Star Fleet engineers had made a number of revolutionary breakthroughs in starship design theory over the past twenty years. These hypotheses, derived during the "Great Awakening" of the 2250s and 2260s, were now ready to be transformed into workable technology and deployed onto a physical starship. The birth-child of this so-called "**new technology**" was slated to be the famous U.S.S. Enterprise (CH 1701). Its Chief Engineer, Commander Montgomery Scott, was the author of most of the design breakthroughs and in fact headed what was now being called the **Constitution-Class Refit Project**. However, Star Fleet Command was already looking ahead. If the Enterprise's conversion turned out to be a success, Star Fleet intended to further apply their new technology and retrofit a number of other vessels of various designs rather than construct an entire new fleet from scratch. Star Fleet Command chose the U.S.S. Avenger to be the testbed for a frigate-sized new technology conversion project. Knowing the Avenger needed a new Commanding Officer, Star Fleet had promoted both Jellicho and Thalazar in July of 2272. With its new hard-nosed Captain and anxious Executive Officer, the Avenger left Earth scheduled for an extended four-year test mission. However, problems aboard the Avenger sprang up from the very *start* of this deployment. Not only was testing proving to be more involved than initially envisioned, Jellicho's command style did not seem to agree with the crew. As time passed, the chain of command completely broke down and officers began to deal with Thalazar as if he were captain. This did, however, soon reverse the success rate of the Avenger's testing and actually put the ship ahead of schedule. Ultimately, testing aboard the Avenger would finish in late 2275. The experiments were considered a success, but details concerning the next stage of the process were not yet determined. When Jellicho informed Star Fleet Command of his problems with Thalazar and the rest of his crew, they were not as sympathetic as he had assumed they would be. Star Fleet merely offered him reassignment following the Avenger's return to Earth in November, which he promptly accepted.

On 2 December 2275, barely two years after the successful recommissioning of the U.S.S. Enterprise (CH 1701), the Avenger was placed in drydock at the San Francisco Naval Yards orbiting Earth. With most of the complications of new technology conversion worked out by the shakedown cruises of the Enterprise and seven of her sister ships, refitting of the smaller Surya-class vessels was completed in record time. The Avenger was relaunched on 16 February 2277 and after nine months of finishing work, on 3 November of the same year, the U.S.S. Avenger was recommissioned and redesignated **FH 1860**. Command of the newly refitted starship was given to none other than its Chief Engineer, P'Tak Thalazar. His undaunted work and long hours during the Avenger's refit had earned the respect of Star Fleet Command. Thalazar was promoted to the rank of Captain during FH 1860's recommissioning ceremony. During the Avenger's refit, he and the Avenger's crew had been training on simulators at Star Fleet Command's **New Technology Training Facility** in Norfolk, North America which had been built for the new Enterprise crew in 2271. There they familiarized themselves with the revolutionary new technology they would encounter aboard the Avenger upon completion of its upgrade.

Halfway through the Avenger's refit, Star Fleet had decided to make it the lead vessel in a new class of starships. The displacement and power output of the ships had almost prompted Star Fleet to redesignate the Avenger a cruiser. However, to keep the ship's historic lineage intact, NCC-1860 was recommissioned as a *heavy* frigate. During the design phase of the Avenger refit, two layouts for the warp engine nacelles were studied and proposed. Star Fleet engineers Lundar Wright and Horatio Corder had used a revolutionary warp drive theory which necessitated a sleek layout of curved support pylons for the engine nacelles. The rest of the redesign team proposed a more conventional angled approach. When the time came for actual realignment of the Avenger's nacelles, Star Fleet engineers were no closer to a decision than they had been at the *start* of the design phase. The Wright-Corder design was ultimately approved by the design branch of Star Fleet as a means of evaluating the operational effects of a more fluid design on warp field formation and balance. However, the extra funds needed to implement this new design throughout the entire Avenger line were not available. This prompted Star Fleet to utilize it only on a limited scale. It was therefore decided to install the Wright-Corder design onto the three Surya-class frigates scheduled to be converted by the San Francisco Naval Yards, the U.S.S. Avenger (FR 1860), the U.S.S. Endurance (FR 1862), and the U.S.S. Sarpeidon (FR 1874). The lines on these ships were noticeably different from those of their sister ships. During their shakedown cruises, these ships routinely reported slower rates of dilithium decay than the other vessels. However, maintenance aboard these ships proved to



be far more cumbersome than expected, and safety standards were substantially compromised with the unconventional nacelle layout. Star Fleet engineers ultimately decided that the current technology could not support what was in fact a sound theory to make the Wright-Corder design an operational success. These theories were shelved for the time being, but would prove quite valuable in later starship design.

As Star Fleet engineers readied the Avenger to set forth on its shakedown cruise, another twenty-one Surya-class frigates were in various stages of similar conversion, including the former Detroyat-class heavy destroyer U.S.S. Resolution. Among them was the U.S.S. Reliant (FH 1864), which would eventually be lost in March of 2286 in the Mutara Sector after being commandeered by terrorists. Soon after, the U.S.S. Courageous (FH 1861) was assigned to TacFleet and fitted with the enhanced "B"-series CGCP/SCDS system. Beginning in 2284, the U.S.S. Endurance (FH 1862), and seven other Avenger-class heavy frigates underwent extensive refits. Many of their defensive systems were removed in lieu of additional scientific research equipment. These eight ships were downgraded in class and made up the Endurance-class line of exploratory frigates. The U.S.S. Ardana (FH 1868) and the U.S.S. Resolution (FH 1877) are scheduled to be assigned to the SFRF in 2297 and 2298, respectively. Other than the one incident involving the Reliant, the Avenger and her sister ships performed admirably in their role of patrolling inner Federation territory. The remaining twelve Avenger-class heavy frigates remain on active duty in Star Fleet to this date.

In December of 2277 the U.S.S. Avenger was slated to begin an extended two-year shakedown cruise for a number of reasons. The first was to test and weed out any design flaws in the new technology refit. The second was to fully test the Wright-Corder warp engine nacelle layout. Third, the Avenger was to aid in supplying Federation colonies located within **The Triangle**. Captain Thalazar and his crew were assigned duty now quite familiar to the U.S.S. Avenger, patrolling areas near the Romulan Neutral Zone. One role the Avenger undertook during those years was not made public. That was escorting Star Fleet Intelligence vessels out of Romulan space, returning from the covert missions of **Project Grey Ghost**. The Avenger returned from this cruise without incident. The ship's crew had high marks for nearly all of the Avenger's new systems. Oddly enough, the one exception was the adequate rating for the Wright-Corder design's matter-antimatter intermix shaft configuration. In January of 2280, after a brief overhaul and shore leave for the crew, the U.S.S. Avenger set out on its seventh four-year mission and its first as an Avenger-class heavy frigate.

In late 2284, as the U.S.S. Avenger returned from its four-year mission, Captain Thalazar's commission as a Star Fleet Officer was nearing its end. Rumors amongst the Avenger's crew slowly spread that their beloved Captain intended to retire. Although not known at the time, this rumor was in fact correct. While en route to Earth, Captain Thalazar contacted Star Fleet Command and submitted his resignation. Star Fleet was in no way interested in losing Thalazar and shuffled a number of positions to get him a reassignment that would persuade him to remain in Star Fleet. They offered Thalazar a staff position in the top-secret **Project Excelsior**. With engineering being Thalazar's first love, he promptly accepted the transfer. Captain Thalazar assembled his command staff and sadly informed them that this would be his last mission as Captain of the U.S.S. Avenger. Many of the Avenger's crew decided it was in fact their time to leave as well. With the Avenger's new technology refit now seven years past, they felt their presence as a testing crew was no longer necessary. However, most just could not envision life aboard the Avenger without P'Tak Thalazar in the Captain's chair. Upon arrival at Earth, Star Fleet Command informed Captain Thalazar that funds had been approved and appropriated for the conversion of FH 1860 to the class standard. When it was announced that their ship was to undergo another extensive refit, the remaining members of the Avenger crew put in applications for transfer.

This left Star Fleet with a serious problem. One of their most noted and most capable starships would soon be left without a crew. Meanwhile, the famed U.S.S. Constitution (CH 1700), which had seen so much action with the Avenger in the 2250's under the command of Fleet Captain Garth, was once again assuming the role as the Federation's flagship. However, the command situation aboard this great starship was in the process of completely breaking down. Its commanding officer, Jason Elliot Genser, was having severe conflicts with his crew. Despite Genser's recent promotion to Rear Admiral, these problems increased until the Constitution's entire senior staff and a number of the crew requested reassignment. Star Fleet approved the transfer and would later subject Genser to a psychological review. Genser was ultimately found unfit for command and was transferred to Star Fleet Headquarters as an administrative advisor. The Constitution's command staff, led by Commodore Alex Rosenzweig, remained in limbo for several weeks as Star Fleet finalized plans to transfer them, as a whole, to the U.S.S. Avenger. On 21 June 2285, Commodore Rosenzweig officially assumed command of FH

1860. Rosenzweig brought along with him the capable Commander Matthew Cohen, who would double as his Chief Medical Officer *and* Executive Officer. The remainder of the Avenger's new command staff also proved to be filled with numerous talents, such as: Chief Science Officer Commander Jonathan Lane, Chief of Operations Commander Ken Newman, Chief Engineer Lt. Commander Nicolas Cook, Chief of Communications Captain Bob Vosseller, and Chief of Security Captain Karl Roussell.

Beginning in January of 2285, the Avenger again underwent refit for a period of five months. During this upgrade the ship's warp engine nacelle support pylons and "roll-bar" were finally replaced. Other minor alterations were made to the Avenger's external configuration, bringing the ship to match the class standard. New mission requirements necessitated a number of internal changes, limiting the Avenger's fighter complement and upgrading its scientific and exploratory capabilities. Also, with its second new-technology refit, Star Fleet engineers extended the Avenger's standard mission duration. Future exploratory missions of the Avenger-class heavy frigates were now to last five years instead of four. In the months to follow, when FH 1862 and FH 1874 underwent similar refits, the Wright-Corder design would be gone for good. This brought the entire line of 22 Avenger-class heavy frigates to share one common configuration.

In June of 2285, the U.S.S. Avenger began its eighth assigned mission. It was during this mission that the Avenger reached what many consider its *finest* hour. In January of 2288, while patrolling an area of the Klingon Neutral Zone following an incident two months earlier at **UFC-675-III**, Rear Admiral Rosenzweig received a communiqué from Star Fleet Command. He was informed that he had just been appointed to command of the Star Fleet **7th Fleet**, thereby making the U.S.S. Avenger the 7th Fleet flagship. Details of the Avenger's history following this date can be found in a personal report edited and compiled by Alex Rosenzweig himself.

#### **Author's Note:**

Many of the dates and events listed in this text were taken directly from a number of valuable sources, which I'd like to acknowledge. First is Alex Rosenzweig's **TIMELINE OF STAR TREK HISTORY**, which I used as a basis for my text. The dates and events listed in it needed no amending, since he used *this* document as a background for his **TIMELINE OF AVENGER HISTORY**, a text I also used extensively and one we consider to be factual aboard the *fictional Avenger*. Second are the two STAR TREK Role Playing Game modules **The Four Years War** and **Return To Axanar**, published by FASA. Since the timeline in these supplements is based upon the old **Spaceflight Chronology**, most of the dates listed in these texts can be utilized by setting them forward approximately 61 years. My third source for information was **SHIPS OF THE STAR FLEET Volume One/Revised**. Dates listed in this text can be used only after they are modified by linking major events with those in the aforementioned timelines compiled by Alex Rosenzweig. Subsequent dates can then be easily extrapolated. Finally I utilized the Michael and Denise Okuda guides **THE STAR TREK ENCYCLOPEDIA** and **STAR TREK CHRONOLOGY**, published by Pocket Books. Events listed in these text also need to be modified in a similar fashion to match the dates of the Avenger Timeline.

The character of Melissa Sturdevant was created by Rahadyan Sastrowardoyo for the Shadowstar Timeline, as well as for the (at this writing) forthcoming story "New Year's Day".