The Nautical Magazine

The Nautical Magazine first appeared in 1832, published monthly at the price of one shilling. It aimed to advance ‘the safety of seamen’, with a focus on the merchant marine, and a readership of professional seafarers. The founding editor, A.B. Becher (1796–1876), served for many years under the distinguished hydrographer Sir Francis Beaufort, and the magazine reflected Beaufort’s interests by reporting on new charts, research on weather and the oceans, astronomy and navigation, and statistics on wrecks and the Lifeboat Institution. The content regularly included serialised accounts of voyages, descriptions of distant countries, notes on new shipping regulations, and discussion of the latest technologies. There were also reports on current affairs such as (during the Victorian period) the searches for Sir John Franklin’s lost Arctic expedition, the Crimean War and the Suez Canal project. Astute editorial decisions ensured that the content mirrored the evolving concerns of readers, enabling ‘the Nautical’ to remain popular for nearly two centuries. It is a fascinating source of data, news and opinions for maritime, economic and social historians, genealogists, and shipping enthusiasts.

The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle for 1846

The Nautical Magazine first appeared in 1832, and was published monthly well into the twenty-first century. It covers a wide range of subjects, including navigation, meteorology, technology and safety. An important resource for maritime historians, it also includes reports on military and scientific expeditions and on current affairs. The 1846 volume includes reports on tribal warfare in New Zealand and a review of John Lort Stokes’ book Discoveries in Australia (also reissued in the Cambridge Library Collection), describing the Beagle voyage. Mexico and the Baltic also feature prominently, and the second report of the Tidal Harbours Commission, of which Sir Francis Beaufort was a member, is given full coverage. The wreck reports are particularly poignant, including a captain unable to save his young daughter, while fascinating short notes record the transport of camels to start a breeding program in Bolivia, November meteorites and a shower of frogs over the Humber.
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The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle for 1846

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