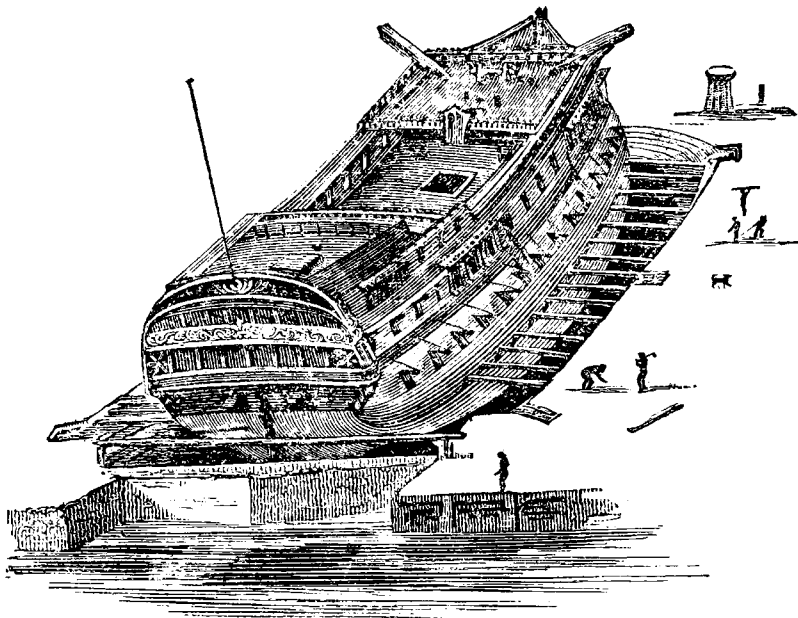


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Portrait of His Majesty's ship *Impetueux*, by Mr. Pucocq, taken by Lord Hugh Seymour on the first of June, 1704, and then called *l'Amerique*. she was afterwards named *Impetueux*, from the ship of that name which was burnt in Portsmouth harbour. She was fitted out expressly under the late Admiral J. W. Payne's directions, who placed the Crest of The Prince in the centre of her beautiful stern. For further particulars, see our first and third Volumes.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF
WILLIAM DOMETT, Esq.

REAR-ADMIRAL OF THE WHITE SQUADRON.

"HOPE, RISING, BIDS US MOURN, BUT NOT DESPAIR.
TRUST, BRITAIN, TO THY NAVAL SONS! FOR THERE
SEE, FROM HIS PHENIX ASHES FUTURE NELSONS SPRING!"

ANON.

THOUGH we cannot but lament, with deep sorrow, and heart-felt anguish, the loss of the departed Nelson; despair, while we have so many "heroes of the dark rolling sea," is a sentiment that can never enter the British bosom. We feel a cheering consciousness of superiority; satisfied that, from the acknowledged excellence of our naval tactics, and the proved valour of our seamen, we must ever retain that superiority; unless, indeed, for some wise purpose, a higher power than that of man should inflict the stroke of defeat.

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The first name which we shall inscribe on our FIFTEENTH COLUMN, is that of Rear-Admiral Domett, *another* friend of the illustrious Nelson! He is, we doubt not, impressed with a due sense of the honour, as it proves him to be deserving of his country's esteem.

This gentleman, who was born in the year 1754, is descended from a respectable family in Devonshire. In 1769, he embarked, as a Midshipman, under the patronage of Captain Hood (now Lord Bridport), on board His Majesty's ship Quebec, commanded by the present Lord Ducie*, and served in that ship upwards of three years in the West Indies. On the return of the Quebec to England, in 1773, when she was paid off, Mr. Domett went on board His Majesty's ship Scorpion, under the command of Lord Keith, in the Mediterranean. He remained in this ship until her return to England, in the spring of the year 1775, when he was removed into the Marlborough, commanded by the present Lord Hood. He served only a few weeks in the Marlborough, and then embarked as Master's Mate of His Majesty's ship Surprise, commanded by the late Admiral Robert Linzee, and employed on the Newfoundland station.

In the month of March, 1777, the Surprise sailed from Plymouth for Quebec, which was then besieged by an American army; and, after a very boisterous passage, and lying in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, entirely surrounded with ice, for more than three weeks, she was the first ship that arrived at Quebec. She immediately proceeded up the river, above that town, to annoy as much as possible the American army in its retreat; the siege having been raised on its being known that reinforcements had arrived in the river.

The Surprise was soon afterwards sent to Newfoundland; and, on her arrival in St. John's harbour, Mr. Domett was, by

* This nobleman, then Captain Francis Reynolds Morton, succeeded to the title of Lord Ducie, on his brother's death in 1785; in consequence of which he resigned his rank in the navy, and his country lost the future services of a good, gallant, and most able officer. His Lordship is Provost Marshal of the island of Barbadoes, a *sinicure* office, which has been held in his family many years.

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the recommendation of Captain Linzee, taken into the *Rompe*, the flag-ship of the late Admiral John Montagu, then Governor and Commander in Chief on that station. He served as acting Lieutenant of that ship, until her return to England in the fall of the year 1777; when, by the desire of his first patron, Lord Bridport, he was made a Lieutenant, and appointed to the *Robust*, then under his Lordship's command*. Mr. Domett was second Lieutenant of the *Robust*, in the battle between the fleet commanded by Admiral Keppel, and that of the French, under the command of Admiral the Count d'Orvilliers, on the 27th of July 1778 †.

In the beginning of the following year, Lord Bridport quitting the command of the *Robust*, Captain (now Admiral) Cosby was appointed to that ship ‡; and Lieutenant Domett had the honour of serving under him till the summer of 1781. He was his first Lieutenant in the battle which took place off the Chesapeake §, in North America, between a squadron of His Majesty's ships commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot, and a French squadron that had been for some time in that country, under the Chevalier de Ternay; in which action the *Robust*, as we have fully stated in our memoir of Admiral Cosby, bore an important part, being very much disabled, and suffering more in killed and wounded than any other ship in the squadron. The complimentary letter, addressed by Admiral Arbuthnot to Captain Cosby ||, is a sufficient proof of the high estimation in which the conduct of the officers and crew of the *Robust* was held by the Commander in Chief on that occasion.

In the autumn of 1781, Lieutenant Domett was removed to His Majesty's ship *Invincible*, commanded by the present Sir Charles Saxton, and was on board that ship in Admiral Graves's action with the French fleet off the Chesapeake, in the month of September ¶. Soon after this he was taken into the *Barfleur*,

* *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 273.

† *Ibid.*; and Vol. VII, page 296, *et seq.*

‡ *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. XIV, page 357.

§ *Ibid.*, page 358, *et seq.* || *Ibid.*, page 360.

¶ *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. V, page 391.

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by his friend Lord Hood, and had the honour of serving under him as signal officer, during the memorable and masterly manœuvres of his Lordship at St. Kitt's, and the several actions which took place on that occasion*. He was also in the glorious battle of the 12th of April, 1782 †; when, on the Count de Grasse, in the Ville de Paris, striking to the Barfleur, and the first Lieutenant being sent to take possession of that ship, Mr. Domett was appointed to succeed him in that situation.

Some days after the battle, Lord Hood was allowed to pursue the flying enemy with such ships of his division as had been the least disabled; and, on the morning of the 19th of April, he got sight of five sail of the fugitives. On perceiving the British squadron, they pushed for the Mona Passage, in hopes, from the shallowness of the water, that they would not be pursued. Determined, however, if possibility would admit, to effect his object, Lord Hood threw out the signal for a general chase. As the enemy approached the Passage, the wind died away, and they lay some time becalmed, which gave our ships greatly the advantage, and enabled Captain Goodall, in the Valiant, at three P.M. to get alongside of the Caton, of 64 guns, which struck at the first broadside. This brave officer, leaving her to be picked up by the ships astern, proceeded on and attacked the Jason, of the same force, with so much impetuosity, that, after a stout resistance for twenty minutes, she also hauled down her colours. Captain Robert Linzee, in the Magnificent, took l'Aimable, of 32 guns; and Captain Alexander Hood, in the Champion, the Ceres, of 16 guns. The only remaining ship of the enemy, l'Astrée, of 32 guns, although closely pursued, effected her escape. Mr. Domett, who had very actively exerted himself on this occasion, was appointed to the command of the Ceres, which proved to be an English sloop, formerly taken from us by a French frigate.—Subsequently to this, our officer remained some time cruising with Lord Hood off St. Domingo, and was then sent home by Lord Rodney, with the account of the capture of the before-mentioned ships in the Mona Passage.

* *Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. II, page 14, et seq.*† *Ibid.*, page 21.

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On the 9th of September, in the same year, 1782, Captain Domett was made Post; and, by the particular desire of his steady friend, Lord Bridport, who hoisted his flag, as Rear-Admiral of the White, on board His Majesty's ship *Queen*, of 90 guns, he was appointed to that ship. Lord Bridport assumed the command of the second, or larboard division, in the fleet sent under the command of Lord Howe to relieve Gibraltar. Captain Domett consequently proceeded with the expedition to that port, and was in the battle which took place on the 19th of October*.

On the restoration of peace, in 1783, the *Queen* was paid off; and this was the first time that Captain Domett had been out of actual service, since his first embarking, in 1769, in the *Quebec* frigate. His period of relaxation, however, was not of a protracted nature; for, in the beginning of the year 1785, he was again called into service, by being appointed to the *Champion* frigate, of 24 guns, and employed as the senior officer on the Leith station, where he remained until the Dutch armament in October 1787. He was then superseded, in order to be appointed to the *London*, intended to bear the flag of Lord Bridport; but, an accommodation immediately taking place with Holland, Captain Domett did not take the command of the *London*, but was, in the spring of the following year, appointed to the *Pomona*, in which he went to the coast of Africa, and proceeded thence to the West Indies.

On his return to England, in the beginning of the year 1789, he was removed from the *Pomona* to the *Salisbury*, at the request of the late Admiral Milbanke, who hoisted his flag in that ship, having been appointed Governor and Commander in Chief at Newfoundland. Captain Domett continued in the *Salisbury* till the month of June 1790, when, in consequence of an armament that took place on account of the dispute with Spain respecting Nootka Sound, he was appointed to the command of the *London*, to which he had once before been nominated. This appointment, as well as the former, pro-

* *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, pages 17 and 275.

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ceeded from the influence, and was made at the express desire of Lord Bridport, who had chosen that ship for the reception of his flag. The London proceeded to Torbay, where a fleet was assembled under the command of Lord Howe; but, the misunderstanding with Spain having been accommodated, the fleet was paid off in the month of December, in the same year; and Captain Domett was immediately appointed to the command of the Pegasus frigate, and again employed on the Newfoundland station. In the fall of the year 1791, he proceeded from Newfoundland to Cadiz and Lisbon; and, on his arrival in England, about the latter end of December, in the same year, the Pegasus was paid off.

The services of Captain Domett were in such estimation, that he did not remain long inactive. In the spring of 1792, he was appointed to the Romney, at the request of Admiral Goodall*, who hoisted his flag in that ship, and proceeded to the Mediterranean, as Commander in Chief on that station. Captain Domett continued to serve in the Romney, with his friend Admiral Goodall, till the commencement of the late war in 1793, when he was again applied for by his steady friend and patron Lord Bridport, to be his Captain in the Royal George. To this ship he was appointed in the month of May, and was employed, in the western squadron, under Earl Howe, during the remainder of the year 1793. Captain Domett continued to command the Royal George; and, on the glorious 1st of June, 1794 †, he distinguished himself in a very gallant manner. The Royal George, as we have stated in our memoir of Lord Bridport, commenced the action on the 29th of May, and, during that and the 1st of June, she was exposed to an incessant and fierce cannonade; by which the foremast, with the fore and main-top-mast, were shot away; and twenty men were killed and seventy-two wounded.

Captain Domett, on this occasion, was honoured with a gold chain and medal from His Majesty.'

* Captain of the Valiant, at the capture of the French ships in the Mona Passage, on the 19th of April, 1782. *Vide* page 4, preceding.

† *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, pages 20 and 277.

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Continuing to command the Royal George, on board of which ship Lord Bridport's flag remained, Captain Domett sailed from St. Helens, on the 12th of June 1795, with the Channel fleet, consisting of the following force:—

<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>	<i>Commanders.</i>
Royal George.....	110	{ Lord Bridport, Admiral of the White, Commander in Chief. Captain William Domett.
Queen Charlotte	110	{ Sir Roger Curtis, Bart., Rear-Admi- ral of the Red. Captain Sir A. S. Douglas.
London	98	{ John Colpoys, Esq., Vice-Admiral of the Blue. Captain E. Griffiths.
Queen	98	{ Sir Alan Gardner, Bart., Vice-Ad- miral of the White. Captain W. Bedford.
Prince of Wales	98	{ Henry Harvey, Esq., Rear-Admiral of the Red. Captain J. Bazely.
Prince George	98	—— W. Edge.
Barfleur	98	—— J. Richard Dacres.
Prince	98	—— C. P. Hamilton.
Sans Pareil	80	{ Lord Hugh Seymour, Rear-Admiral of the Blue. Captain W. Browell.
Orion.....	74	—— Sir James Saumarez.
Valiant.....	74	—— Christopher Parker.
Russell	74	—— Thomas Larcom.
Irresistible.....	74	—— Richard Grindall.
Colossus	74	—— J. Monckton.
Thalia	36	—— Lord H. Poullett.
Revolutionnaire	44	—— F. Cole.
La Nymphé	36	—— George Murray.
Aquilon	32	—— Robert Barlow.
Astrea	32	—— J. Lane.
Babet	22	—— Ed. Codrington,
Megæra, fire-ship.....	14	—— H. Blackwood.
Incendiary, do.....	14	—— J. Draper.
Charon, hospital ship		—— W. Lock.

On the morning of the 22d of the month, at dawn of day,

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the *Nymphé* and *Astrea* being the look-out frigates a-head, the enemy's fleet, which was afterwards found to consist of the following ships, was descried:—

<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>
Le <i>Peuple</i>	120	Le <i>Foërmidable</i>	74
Le <i>Nestor</i>	80	Le <i>Jean Bart</i>	74
Le <i>Redoubtable</i>	80	Les <i>Droits de l'Homme</i>	74
Le <i>Mutius</i>	80	L' <i>Alexandre</i>	74
Le <i>Tigre</i>	80	Le <i>Veristenné</i>	74
Le <i>Fougueux</i>	80	La <i>Brave, razée</i>	56
Le <i>Zélé</i>	74	La <i>Scavola, do.</i>	56

FRIGATES.

La <i>Virginie</i>	44	La <i>Regenerée</i>	44
La <i>Fidelle</i>	44	La <i>Nante</i>	44
L' <i>Insurgente</i>	44	La <i>Fraternité</i>	44
La <i>Fortitude</i>	44	La <i>Dryade</i>	36
La <i>Proserpine</i>	36	Le <i>Renard</i>	36
La <i>Cocarde</i>	36		

CORVETTES.

La <i>Constance</i>	22	La <i>Senseure</i>	22
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BRIGS.

La <i>Talente</i>	18	Le <i>Papillon</i>	18
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CUTTERS.

La <i>Pearlterre</i>		La <i>Montagne</i>	
Le <i>Dragon</i>			

It was evident to Lord Bridport, that it was not the intention of the enemy to meet him in battle; but determined, if possible, to bring them to action, he immediately made the signal for four of the best sailing ships to chase, and afterwards for the whole fleet*. The chase continued unremittingly throughout the day, none of the pursuers being able to get sufficiently near to permit them to commence an action with any probability of success: early on the morning of the 23d six of the British ships had neared the enemy so considerably, as to be able to bring them to an engagement about six o'clock. The battle continued nearly three hours, and then ceased, in consequence of the greater part of the French squadron having worked almost

* *Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 279, et seq.*

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close in with the port of l'Orient. Three of their ships fell into the hands of the English, as a substantial reward for their brave and determined perseverance.

On the following day Lord Bridport dispatched Captain Domett, with his official account of the action, to the Admiralty, where he arrived on the morning of the 27th.

Lord Bridport's dispatches were so highly honourable to the bearer (who received the usual reward on their presentation), and so generously evinced the estimation in which his Lordship held Captain Domett's professional character, that, exclusively of the interest which the detail of the action must naturally excite in the reader, we feel ourselves called upon to introduce them. They are as follow :—

SIR,

Royal George, at Sea, June 24, 1795.

It is with sincere satisfaction I acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that His Majesty's squadron under my command attacked the enemy's fleet, consisting of twelve ships of the line, attended with eleven frigates, and some smaller cruisers, on the 23d instant, close in with port l'Orient. The ships which struck are, the Alexander, le Formidable, and le Tigre, which were with difficulty retained. If the enemy had not been protected and sheltered by the land, I have every reason to believe that a much greater number, if not all the line of battle ships, would have been taken or destroyed.

In detailing the particulars of this service, I am to state, that on the dawn of day, on the 22d instant, the Nymph and Astrea, being the look-out frigates a-head, made the signal for the enemy's fleet. I soon perceived that there was no intention to meet me in battle; consequently I made the signal for four of the best sailing ships, the Sans Pareil, Orion, Russel, and Colossus, and soon afterward for the whole fleet, to chase, which continued all that day, and during the night, with very little wind.

Early in the morning of the 23d instant, the headmost-ships, the Irresistible, Orion, Queen Charlotte, Russel, Colossus, and Sans Pareil, were pretty well up with the enemy, and a little before six o'clock the action began, and continued till near nine o'clock. When the ships struck, the British squadron was near to some batteries, and in the face of a strong naval port, which will manifest to the public the zeal, intrepidity, and skill of the Admirals, Captains, and all other officers, seamen, and soldiers employed

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upon this service; and they are fully entitled to my warmest acknowledgments.

I beg also to be allowed to mark my approbation, in a particular manner, of Captain Domett's conduct, serving under my flag, for his manly spirit, and for the assistance I received from his active and attentive mind. I feel likewise great satisfaction in doing justice to the meritorious conduct of all the officers of every class, as well as to the bravery of the seamen and soldiers in the Royal George, upon this event, and upon former occasions.

I judged it necessary, upon the information I had received of the force of the enemy, to put the Robust, Thunderer, and Standard, into the line of battle; but from their distance from my squadron, and under the circumstance of little wind, they could not join me till after the action was over.

I shall proceed upon my station as soon as I have ordered a distribution of the prisoners, and made other necessary arrangements for the squadron. It is my intention to keep at sea, in order to fulfil every part of my instructions.

I have judged it necessary to send Captain Domett with my dispatches, who will give their Lordships such farther particulars as shall have occurred to him on the victory we have gained.

You will herewith receive a list of the killed and wounded, with the ships they belonged to, and the commanders' names.

I am, &c.

BRIDPORT.

Evan Nepean, Esq.

N. B. I am happy to find, by the report made to me, that Captain Grindall's wounds are not dangerous.

Note. Captain Domett reports, that the remainder of the enemy's fleet made their escape into l'Orient.

List of the Killed and Wounded on board His Majesty's squadron under my Command, in action with the Enemy off Port l'Orient, June 23, 1795.

Irresistible, Captain Grindall—3 seamen killed; 9 seamen and 3 soldiers wounded.—Captain Grindall, and Mr. Troughton, the Master, wounded.

Orion, Sir James Saumarez—5 seamen and 1 soldier killed; 17 seamen and 1 soldier wounded.

Queen Charlotte, Sir A. S. Douglas—4 seamen killed; 25 seamen and 5 soldiers wounded.—Mr. David Coutts, Master's Mate, and Mr. Hornsby Charles, Midshipman, wounded.

Russel, Captain Larcom—2 seamen and 1 soldier killed; 9 seamen wounded. Captain Bacon, of the 118th regiment, wounded.