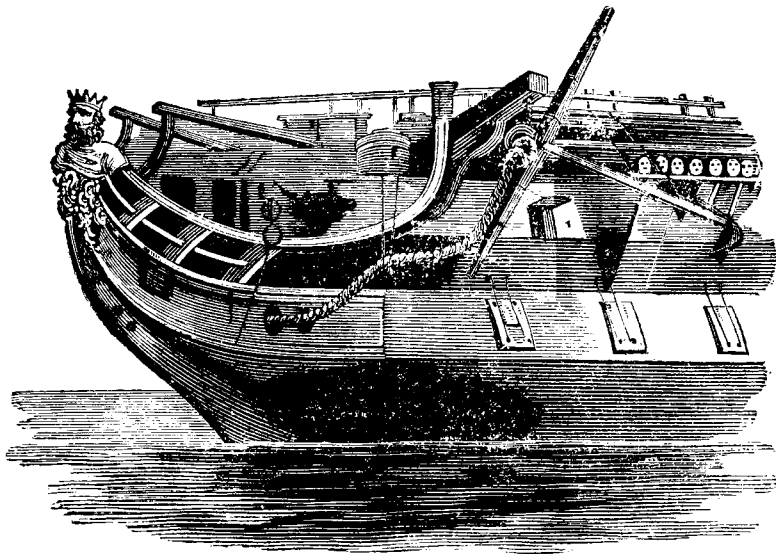


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The above Engraving by Nesbit, is from a Drawing by Pocock, and is an accurate representation of the Bow of the Tonnant, as she appeared after the Battle of Trafalgar.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF
COMMODORE SIR SAMUEL HOOD, K.B., K.S.F.,
 AND M.P. FOR THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER.

“ ——— THE HEART OF A SAILOR CAN FEEL,
 FOR HIS FRIEND'S, FOR HIS COUNTRY'S REPOSE ;
 TO THESE IT PRESENTS THE SMOOTH PELL,—
 AND THE ROUGH OAK BENEATH, TO THEIR FOES.”

OGILVIE.

IT is recorded, on the sepulchral monument of a certain noble family, that “ all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters virtuous.” With the female branches of the Hood family, we have not the honour of being acquainted; but, as far as our knowledge extends, respecting the males, we can with confidence assert them to be *all* “ valiant.”

Already has it been our task to emblazon the virtues and exploits of Sir Samuel Hood's noble relatives, the Lords Hood and Bridport; and to embalm the respected memory of his deceased brother: it now becomes our pleasing duty to exhibit

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the more prominent traits of his own professional life—a life, of which upwards of thirty years have been spent in the service of his beloved country.

This gentleman, whose nautical career we are about to disclose, was born in the month of November, 1762; and consequently is now in his forty-fifth year. Sir Samuel's grandfather was the Rev. Arthur Hood, of Dawlish, Somersetshire, elder brother of the father of the Lords Hood and Bridport: his father was the late Mr. Samuel Hood, an opulent farmer, of Kingsland, in the parish of Netherby, Dorsetshire. Sir Samuel's eldest brother, Arthur, was unfortunately drowned in His Majesty's sloop *Pomona*, which foundered in a hurricane, on the Leeward Island station, in the year 1775;* and his second brother, Alexander, Captain of the *Mars*, was killed in that ship, in an action with *l'Hercule*, on the 21st of April, 1798 †.

From the above genealogical particulars, it appears that Sir Samuel Hood is second cousin to the two illustrious Admirals whom we have mentioned; and not nephew, as has been most generally understood.

Thus related, however, it is by no means surprising, that the subject of this memoir should emulate the proudest deeds of his predecessors and contemporaries—that he should mentally exclaim:—

“ That which Alexander sigh'd for,
That which Cæsar's soul possess'd,
That which heroes, kings have died for,
Glory!—animates my breast!”

About the age of fourteen, Mr. Hood commenced his naval career, as Midshipman, under the protection of the Right Honourable Lord Hood, who then (1776) commanded the *Courageux*. He remained in that ship, and in the *Robust* ‡.

* The *Pomona*, Captain Eastwood, and the *Ferret*, Captain Rodney, were lost we believe at the same time, and all their crews perished.

† *Ide* biographical memoir of the late Captain Alexander Hood, *NAVAL CHRONICLE*, Vol. VI, page 173, *et seq.*

‡ Commanded by Captain Hood, now Lord Bridport.

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until the year 1779. In 1778, while in the latter, he was present at the capture of two French frigates, the *Pallas* and the *Licorne**; and, on the 27th of July, in the same year, in the memorable engagement between Admiral Keppel and le Comte d'Orvilliers†, he had the honour of serving as *Aid-du-camp* to the Captain of the *Robust*.

In the course of the following year, Mr. Hood was removed into the *Lively* sloop; and, in 1780, he was in that vessel at the capture of la *Duchessé de Chartres*, a French privateer, which surrendered after a short action, in the British Channel.

At the latter end of the year 1780, Lord Hood having hoisted a Rear-Admiral's flag on board of the *Barfleur*‡, he was accompanied to the West Indies, in that ship, by his young protégé; who served under him, as acting Lieutenant, and Lieutenant, from the month of October, 1780, until the 31st of January, 1782.—During his services in the *Barfleur*, Lieutenant Hood exerted himself, as far as his rank and orders would permit, in the battle with de Grasse, off Martinique, on the 29th of April, 1781; in the engagement off the Chesapeake, on the 5th of September following§; and in the actions between the two fleets, at St. Kitt's, on the 25th and 26th of January, 1782.

Were it not that we have already given a copious and correct detail of these respective services, in our memoir of Lord Hood, we could here dwell with much pleasure upon their extent and importance; and would endeavour to offer some tribute to the gallantry and skill of those brave Commanders, who performed so much for the honour of the British flag. As it is, we must content ourselves with referring the reader to the lives of Lord Rodney, Lord Hood, and Lord Graves, whose actions form such conspicuous figures in the pages of our Chronicle ||. It

* June 17 and 18. Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 273; and Vol. VII, page 293.

† Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 274.

‡ Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. II, page 7.

§ The British fleet was then commanded by the late Lord Graves.

|| Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 353; Vol. II, page 1; and Vol. V, page 377.

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would be unjust, however, to dismiss the subject, without observing, that the officer, to whom this memoir immediately relates, derived ample experience and profit from the situation in which he was placed. Acting so immediately under the eye of such distinguished Commanders as those whom we have mentioned, he could not but acquire a portion of their skill, and imbibe a sentiment of emulation, which opened to him a prospect of the brightest and the happiest results. We cannot consider Sir Samuel Hood as otherwise than extremely fortunate in having been thus stationed. Favoured by nature with an excellent constitution, a brave and martial spirit, fortune seems to have indulged him with an opportunity of turning those advantages to the best account.

On the 31st of January, 1782, five days after the second action at St. Kitts, Mr. Hood was promoted to the rank of Commander, and appointed to the *Renard* sloop, by the present Lord Viscount Hood. This appointment took place, it is worthy of remark, when he had scarcely passed his twentieth year; a presumptive proof that, joined to his family interest in the Navy, he had given sufficient indications of future eminence.

Captain Hood's command of the *Renard* appears to have been rather nominal than real. At the period of his appointment, that vessel was lying as a convalescent ship at Antigua; and, revolting from the state of inactivity to which such a service would have condemned him, he remained as a volunteer on board of the *Barfleur*.

“ The warrior's wish arose within his soul,
As Fancy pictur'd scenes of radiant hue;
He saw, at distance, Fame's immortal goal,
And future glories press'd upon his view !”

Captain Hood was in the *Barfleur* at the well-remembered actions of the 9th and 12th of April, 1782, in which his noble relation so conspicuously and eminently distinguished himself*; and, on the 19th of the same month; he was also at the capture

* *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I, page 389; and Vol. II, page 20.

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of the French squadron in the *Mona Passage*, consisting of the *Jason*, the *Caton*, the *Aimable*, and the *Ceres**.

This was the last engagement in which Captain Hood was concerned during the war.—When the preliminaries of peace were signed, he took the opportunity of going over to France, where he remained until the year 1785.

On his return to England, he was appointed to command the *Weazle* sloop of war, in which he proceeded to Halifax. He was there employed in surveying the coasts and harbours on that station; where, for the vigilance and activity of his services, he was rewarded, by the Commander in Chief at Halifax, with a Post Captain's commission †, and appointed to the command of the *Thisbe* frigate. Captain Hood remained at Halifax until the latter end of 1789, when the *Thisbe* was ordered to England and paid off.

In the month of May, 1790, he was appointed to the command of the *Juno* frigate, in which he proceeded to Jamaica. Whilst on this station, nothing particular occurred until the beginning of February, in the following year, when Captain Hood, in a manner the most honourable to his character as an officer and as a man, had the satisfaction of saving the lives of three men from a wreck, at sea. His ship was then lying in *St. Ann's Harbour*; and, in the height of a gale of wind, which increased to an absolute hurricane, a wreck was descried from the mast head, with three people upon it, over whom the waves broke with such unremitting violence, that it appeared scarcely possible to rescue them from their dreadful situation. The *Juno's* cutter and launch had been previously dispatched to the assistance of a vessel in the offing; so that Captain Hood had nothing but his own barge, with which to attempt the preservation of his unfortunate fellow creatures. From the extreme apparent danger, the crew evinced the greatest reluctance to descend into the barge, until Captain Hood undauntedly leaped in, exclaiming—*I never gave an order to a sailor in my*

* *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. II, page 22.

† Dated May 24, 1788.

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life, which I was not ready to undertake and execute myself!

The barge then pushed off; and, through the most determined perseverance, Captain Hood had the happiness of succeeding in his gallant and meritorious effort. This was an action worthy even of Lord Nelson himself!

The following extract of a letter, dated Feb. 3, 1791, from a gentleman at St. Ann's, to the Printer of the *Kingston Daily Advertiser*, contains the only authentic narrative of this transaction, which has ever appeared; and is now, we believe, for the first time published in this country:—

Yesterday morning a ship in the offing under sail standing in, and having a signal of distress, Captain Hood, of the *Juno*, now lying here, sent a sailing boat (the launch) out to her, and which returned with an account that it was the *Fame*, Captain Moyze, of Bristol, which had been blown out of Spring Garden, where she parted four cables, and had not an anchor or cable on board. It was surprising with what expedition Captain Hood supplied her wants; for notwithstanding the extreme badness of the weather, it blowing very hard, and the sea being very high, he sent out an anchor and cable by two sailing boats, (the launch and cutter,) which could not, after delivering the anchor, regain this port, and we entertained some fears for their safety. We have however been just now informed, that they got safe into Runaway Bay, about nine miles to leeward.

This morning our feelings were arrested by a most distressing scene—a signal of distress—a white shirt fastened to a piece of the shallop's mast, about six feet high, was seen about a mile at sea. With the glass we could plainly discover some people on the wreck of a small vessel, water logged, and scarcely tenable; the sea breaking over her with great violence, we could give her no assistance, having no craft here that durst venture out. The *Juno's* two sailing boats, (the cutter and launch,) as I have already told you, being wind bound at Runaway, and Captain Hood having no other boat but his barge, which no one on shore imagined could have lived in so turbulent an ocean as the wreck was in. Captain Hood however, as an encodgement to his bargemen, leaped himself into her, to undertake an affair of humanity, at the great risk of his own life. The spectators you may suppose were numerous; our distress was increased, instead of being allayed, by the bold attempt, for we expected every

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moment to see the barge and her crew perish, the sea running mountains high, and with incredible violence; but it pleased the Almighty to favour the attempt, and to protect the brave and humane Captain Hood and his men: in less than half an hour the barge reached the wreck, which had now driven almost on the roaring reef; one of her crew had been drowned before Captain Hood came up with her; the remaining three were saved, but they were so exhausted, that they were not able of themselves to get into the barge; and in two minutes more, but for the assistance of Captain Hood, must have perished on the reef.

It required great management to keep the barge from filling, having been obliged to go so near the reef, to rescue the poor wretches from death, that she was amongst the breakers.

The wreck it seems was a Turtler, belonging to Montego Bay, and had upset about two miles from where the people were taken out of her.

You may form some idea of the violence of the sea from the wreck's being overset and righted again several times.

So highly was the Government of Jamaica impressed with a sense of the humane and adventurous conduct of Captain Hood, upon this occasion, that it immediately passed the following Resolution:—

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

Tuesday, 22d day of February, 1791.

Resolved, *nem. con.*, that the Receiver-General do forthwith remit to the agent of this island, the sum of one hundred guineas, for the purchase of a sword, to be presented to Captain Samuel Hood, of His Majesty's ship Juno, as a testimony of the high sense which this House entertains of his merit, in saving (at the manifest peril of his own life, in a violent gale of wind, off the port of St. Ann, on the 3d inst.) the lives of three men, discovered on a wreck at sea, and who must inevitably have perished, but for his gallant and humane exertion.

Ordered that the Clerk of this House do transmit to Captain Samuel Hood, a copy of the foregoing resolution.

By the House,
GEORGE WRENCH,
Clerk to the Assembly.

Captain Hood returned to England, in the Juno, in the course of 1791; having, however, previously received the

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following letter, containing the unanimous thanks of the Humane Society of Jamaica, for his philanthropic exertions:—

SIR,

THE Humane Society of Jamaica, ever ready to acknowledge those acts of benevolence, which do honour to their institution, have at their last general meeting unanimously voted that the thanks of the Society should be transmitted to you, for your humane and courageous exertions at St. Ann's Bay, in saving the lives of your fellow creatures at the imminent risk of your own. This, Sir, I do in behalf of the Society, taking this opportunity of wishing you a prosperous and safe voyage, to enjoy in the arms of your relatives, that happiness which must ever attend a benevolent and brave Man.

I have the honour to be,

With esteem and respect, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

JOHN HARRIS, Sec.

Samuel Hood, Esq.

July 8, 1791.

Some time after his arrival in England, Captain Hood was presented with the sword, which had been voted to him by the Government of Jamaica, accompanied by the following elegant and classical letter:—

SIR,

London, February 17, 1792.

IN obedience to the commands of the Assembly of Jamaica, I have the honour to present you with a Sword, the value of which is greatly increased by their unanimous resolution of the 22d Feb. 1791, of which the following is a copy.

Resolved, *nem. con.*, that the Receiver-General do forthwith remit to the agent of this island the sum of one hundred guineas, for the purchase of a sword, to be presented to Captain Samuel Hood, of His Majesty's ship *Juno*, as a testimony of the high sense the House has of his merit, in saving (at the manifest peril of his own life, in a violent gale of wind, off the port of St. Ann, on the 3d instant) the lives of three men, discovered on a wreck at sea, and who must inevitably have perished, but for his gallant and humane exertion.

In obedience to the commands of the Committee of Correspondence, I have ordered an Inscription to be engraved, which I hope will meet with their approbation, which is as follows:—

SAMUELI HOOD OB TRES CIVES
 SUO EXEMPLO, ET SUO PERICULO SERVATOS
 D. D. D. SPQ. JAMAICENSIS.
 MDCCXCI.

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To which I have added another very short inscription, upon the upper ornament of the scabbard, in order to perpetuate the memory of your speech to your sailors, when you sprang on board your boat to save the men on the wreck, which I am informed were these:—"I never gave an order to a sailor in my life, which I was not ready to undertake and execute myself."

The Inscription stands thus:—

OMNE NAUTARUM PERICULUM
MEO SUBIRE PARATUS.

Horace.—Epod. 1. Lib. 1.

Amongst the ornaments upon the hilt, you will find, in pursuance of my directions, an elegant enamel of the Corona Civica, the chaplet of oaken leaves, which the Roman Senate, in the time of its greatest prosperity, presented to any person that had signalized himself by saving the life of a citizen.—I take upon myself to say, that no Roman ever deserved that honour better than yourself; few so well; as you saved not one life only, but three; and what is more, at the imminent hazard of your own. The applause of the whole world will follow you to the end of time, and the same applause will follow that liberal Assembly, which has distinguished its own humanity by rewarding yours. Permit me, Sir, to add one wish of my own, and I have done. May victory in future finish the character, which humanity has begun; and may they both join hands in promoting you to the highest honour of your profession.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient, and obliged humble Servant,

STEPHEN FULLER.

*Captain Samuel Hood, of His
Majesty's Ship Juno.*

In the autumn of 1791, after his return to England, and in that of the succeeding year, Captain Hood had the honour of attending upon their Majesties at Weymouth. This duty must have afforded him a pleasing relaxation from the toils of severer service. But a scene more animating, more congenial to the enterprising spirit of this officer, was on the eve of presenting itself.

At the breaking out of the late war, in 1793, Captain Hood

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was ordered up the Mediterranean, in his old ship, the *Juno*, and was there very actively employed*.

It will be recollected, that, in the month of December, 1793, Lord Hood had been under the necessity of evacuating Toulon; after which he proceeded, with his fleet, to Hieres Bay, there to await the arrival of a fleet of transports and victuallers from Gibraltar. Previously to the evacuation of Toulon, Captain Hood had been dispatched to Malta; and, on his return from that port, with supernumeraries for the fleet, being wholly unacquainted with the events which had occurred during his absence, he stood into Toulon harbour. His escape from the enemy, under the consideration that it was night when he entered the road, may be regarded as one of those fortunate circumstances, which history has but rarely an opportunity of recording. For his good fortune in this instance, however, Captain Hood was certainly much indebted to his own promptitude of decision, and activity of exertion. The justness of this position will be evident, from Captain Hood's narrative of the affair, as transmitted to Vice-Admiral Lord Hood, in the subjoined envelope:—

MY LORD,

Juno, Bay of Hieres, January 13, 1794.

I BEG leave to enclose your Lordship a narrative of the fortunate escape of His Majesty's ship *Juno*, under my command, from the port of Toulon, after having run ashore in the inner harbour on the night of the 11th instant.

The firm, steady, and quiet manner in which my orders were carried into execution, by Lieutenants Mason and Webly, in their respective stations; the attention of Mr. Kidd, the Master of the *steerage*, &c. with the very good conduct of every officer and man, were the sole means of the ship's preservation from the enemy, and for which I must request permission to give them my strongest recommendation. I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Your Lordship's very obliged humble Servant,



To the Right Hon. Lord Hood, Vice-Admiral
of the Red, and Commander in Chief, &c.

* For a detailed account of the proceedings at Toulon, see the biographical memoir of Lord Hood, *NAVAL CHRONICLE*, Vol. II, page 1, *et seq.*, and the series of Toulon Papers, in the same Volume.