

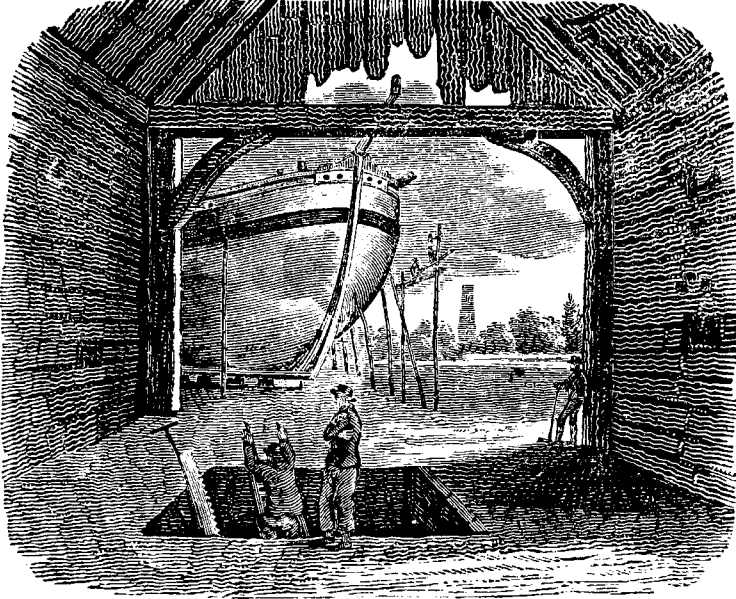
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The above Engraving, from a Drawing by Pocock, represents a View of the Lady Banks, a ship built for the East Country Trade, at Boston, Lincolnshire; taken from a sawpit in the Builder's Yard. Boston Steeple in the distance. From a Drawing by W. Brand, Esq. of Boston.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

THOMAS (HOAR) BERTIE, ESQ.,

REAR-ADMIRAL OF THE WHITE SQUADRON.

“ Men's characters are best illustrated by their actions.”

CHRONOLOGICAL accuracy may fairly be regarded as one of the essentials of history, and of biography. The sound of flowing periods may be more grateful to the ear; but the absence of that charm is amply atoned for, by the information which the mind derives from a precise arrangement of dates, and a lucid detail of facts. The latter advantage we promise to the reader, in his perusal of the following record of Admiral Bertie's professional services.

This gentleman, the sixth child, and fourth son, of George Hoar, Esq. (of Middleton Era, in the county of Durham, but

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latterly of London) and of Frances, his wife, daughter of William Sleigh, Esq. of Stockton-upon-Tees, was born in that town, on the 3d of July, 1758. He first went to a Latin school, at Eaglecliffe, Durham, under an able teacher (the Rev. Mr. Walker, M.A.) in June, 1766.

Mr. Hoar's friends intending him for the navy, availed themselves of a practice which was at that time allowed in the service; and, in March, 1771, he was put upon the books of the William and Mary yacht, then commanded by Captain Norton,* brother of the late Lord Grantley. In January, 1772, he went to a preparatory navigation school, at Stockton; and, in the month of July following, he was placed at Mr. Eaton's academy, in London, with the view of completing his nautical studies. In January, 1773, however, at the earnest recommendation of the late worthy Lord Mulgrave, † he entered on the private foundation of Christ's Hospital, London, where he acquired a full knowledge of the theoretical part of his profession.

At this seminary, which may with justice be mentioned as one of the best in the kingdom, for the study of navigation, Mr. Hoar first became acquainted with his friend, Vice-admiral Stirling; and with the late Lieutenant George Long, who was killed in storming a fort, upon the island of Ceylon, during the American war. ‡

* William Norton.—He was made a lieutenant in the navy, on the 7th of April, 1742; and, on the 15th of November, 1756, he was promoted to the rank of post captain, in the Amazon frigate, in which he proceeded to the West Indies. While on that station, he captured twenty-six privateers. He returned to England about the year 1760; and, after the conclusion of the war, he commanded the Africa, guard-ship, of 64 guns. He was appointed to the William and Mary, at least as early as 1763, and continued in her till his death, which took place on the 19th of April, 1779.

† A portrait and memoir of this officer are given in the VIIIth Volume of the NAVAL CHRONICLE, page 89.

‡ This was on the 11th of January, 1781; at which time Mr. Long was second lieutenant of the Superb, the flag-ship of Sir Edward Hughes, of whom a memoir and portrait will be found, in the IXth Volume of the NAVAL CHRONICLE, page 85. Sir Edward, in his official account of the capture of Ceylon, mentions Lieutenant Long, as “a most worthy and deserving officer, who was killed in advancing bravely to the assault, at the head of his company.”

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The year 1773 may properly be considered as the period of Mr. Hoar's actual commencement of his naval life. About the month of October, he entered on board H. M. S. Seahorse—commanded by the late gallant Captain Farmer, who was afterwards killed in the Quebec*—and sailed for the East Indies. It should be mentioned, however, that the Seahorse was more immediately under the orders of the late Sir Edward Hughes, K.B. who had his broad pendant in the Salisbury, Captain George Robinson Waters.—On her outward bound passage, she stopped at the island of Madeira, and the Cape of Good Hope, and made the island of St. Paul, in the southern hemisphere.

It was in this ship that Mr. Hoar first met, and became the messmate of, his dear and valued friends, Nelson† and Troubridge; with whom he had the enviable fortune of enjoying the strictest intimacy, and an unbroken correspondence, till the respective periods when death deprived the country of their inestimable services—

“ When Britain mourned her noblest heroes lost !”

During the three years and a half that Mr. Hoar remained in the East Indies, he was occasionally at almost all our different sea-port settlements, on the coasts of Coromandel, Bengal, and Malabar; at Bombay, Surat, Muscat, the gulphs of Ormus, Arabia, and Persia; as high up the last, as the town of Bushire, within a short distance of the river Euphrates; and also at Malacca, China, Manilla, Luconia, Borneo, and all the range of islands along that coast.

On the 27th of June, 1777, by the desire of Lord Mulgrave, intimated to Sir Edward Hughes, Mr. Hoar was removed from the Seahorse to the Salisbury (still commanded by Captain G. R. Waters) in Madras Roads. In that ship, he became the messmate

* The remarkable circumstances connected with the death of Captain Farmer, are related at length, in a note to our memoir of Sir Thomas Troubridge, Bart. NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. XXIII. page 2.

† Lord Nelson's memoirs, from *memoranda* furnished by himself, will be found in the IIIrd Volume of the NAVAL CHRONICLE, page 157, *et seq.*; in the XIVth Volume, pages 386 and 497; and, in the XVth Volume, pages 37, 138, and 222. The preface to our XIVth Volume also contains references to a multitude of anecdotes, &c. relating to his Lordship.—A memoir of Sir Thomas Troubridge, as mentioned in the preceding note, is given, with a portrait, in Vol. XXIII. page 1.

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of Vice-admiral George Campbell, and of the late Captain William Clarke, of H. M. S. Victorious.

Mr. Hoar left Madras Roads, to return to England, in the Salisbury, on the 15th of October following; arrived at the Cape of Good Hope on the 4th of January, 1778; sailed thence on the 8th of February; reached the island of St. Helena on the 20th; left St. Helena on the 9th of March; made the island of Ascension on the 18th; sailed thence on the following day; and arrived at Spithead on the 14th of May. His reception was highly gratifying; as his kind friend, Lord Mulgrave, who then commanded the *Courageux*, immediately sent for, and despatched him to town, with letters to Lord Sandwich, recommending him for promotion. He consequently passed for, and was made a lieutenant, on the 21st of the same month. On the following day, he joined the *Monarch*, of 74 guns, Captain (afterwards Sir Joshua) Rowley,* as fifth lieutenant, at Spithead.

Whilst belonging to the *Monarch*, Lieutenant Hoar introduced the life-buoy into the service. An experiment, much to the satisfaction of Captain Rowley, his officers, and people, was first made of its utility, at the anchorage at Spithead; and it soon afterwards became general in Admiral Keppel's fleet.

On the 27th of July, in this year (as already stated in our memoir of Sir Joshua Rowley) the *Monarch* led the van division, in the unsatisfactory encounter with the French squadron, under the Comte d'Orvilliers, off Ushant, and had two men killed, and nine wounded.†

In the month of December following, Commodore Rowley hoisted his broad pendant on board H. M. S. *Suffolk* (commanded by Captain Sir H. C. Christian ‡) taking Lieutenant Hoar, and some other officers, with him, from the *Monarch*. On the 25th he

* A memoir of the services of this officer is given at page 89 of our XXIVth Volume; and a memoir and portrait of his father, Sir Wm. Rowley, K. B. will be found in our XXIId Volume, page 441.

† *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. XXIV. page 94. For the particulars of the action, see also the memoir of Admiral Lord Keppel, Vol. VII. page 296, *et seq.*

‡ A memoir and portrait of Sir H. C. Christian are given in the XXIst Volume of the NAVAL CHRONICLE, page 177.

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ailed from Spithead, with seven sail of the line, and three frigates, to reinforce Admiral Byron, in the West Indies. This squadron arrived at Barbadoes on the 20th of March, 1779; and, a few days afterwards, it joined Admiral Byron, at St. Lucia.

Lieutenant Hoar continued in the Suffolk; and, on the 6th of the succeeding July, he was in Admiral Byron's action with the Comte d'Estaing, off Grenada.* On this occasion, Rear-admiral Rowley, who had been promoted to his flag on the 19th of March preceding, commanded the rear division; and, notwithstanding the great disparity of force between the hostile fleets (the English having only 19 sail of the line, whilst the French had 27) the conflict terminated in a drawn battle. The Suffolk, however, was very warmly engaged; receiving much damage, and having seven men killed, and 25 wounded.

By this time, Lieutenant Hoar appears to have established his character, for bravery and skill. On the 18th and 19th of December, he was engaged in two boat actions, close to the shore of Martinique; having been ordered to destroy two ships, that were on the rocks, under the protection of the enemy's militia. This service he had the satisfaction of accomplishing, with the loss of only one man.

In March, 1780, he removed, with Admiral Rowley's flag, from the Suffolk, into the Conqueror, at St. Lucia; and was, consequently, in Rodney's successive actions with de Guichen, on the 17th of April, and 15th and 19th of May.† In the first of these engagements, as will be seen by referring to our memoir of Admiral Rowley,‡ the Conqueror sustained a heavier loss (13 killed and 36 wounded) than any in the fleet, the Sandwich, Cornwall, and Trident, excepted. In the affair of the 19th of May, Admiral Rowley's captain (Watson) a very brave man, lost his arm; and, in ten days afterwards, he died of the wound. His nephew, the late lamented Captain R. B. Burgess, and Lieutenant Hoar, attended his funeral, at St. Lucia, as chief mourners.

* For particulars of this engagement, *vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. IV. page 186; Vol. VII. page 10; Vol. VIII. page 189; Vol. XX. page 341; Vol. XXI. page 178; and Vol. XXIV. page 95.

† *Vide* NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. I. page 276, *et seq.*

‡ Vol. XXIV. page 96.

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In June, Mr. Hoar went with Admiral Rowley's flag, as third lieutenant, into the *Terrible*; and, in July, he removed from the *Terrible*, into the *Princess Royal*, of 90 guns, at the island of St. Christopher. Having been at all the Leeward Islands, in the latter ship, he proceeded to Jamaica, where he had the pleasure of meeting his old friend and messmate, Nelson, who had just returned from St. Juan in the *Janus*. Nelson at that time appeared to be so extremely ill, from his exertions in the fatal expedition on which he had been employed, that the hope of his long surviving was very faint.* Fortunately for himself and for his country, his youthful constitution successfully resisted the ravages of disease.

From July, 1780, till the 10th of August, 1782, Lieutenant Hoar accompanied Admiral Rowley, as his *aide-de-camp*, or own lieutenant.—On his arrival at Jamaica, the admiral shifted his flag from the *Princess Royal*, into the *Ulysses*, of 44 guns, commanded by Captain (afterwards Admiral) Thomas; next, it was hoisted on board the *Nestor*, of 28 guns, Captain Silverius Moriarty; subsequently, it was shifted into the *Ramilies*, also commanded by Captain Moriarty; and, lastly, it was hoisted on board the *London*, of 98 guns, Captain Kempthorne.

At the last-mentioned date, (August 10, 1782) Mr. Hoar was made a commander into the *Duc d'Estisac* sloop, of 16 guns; an appointment which took place at Port Royal, in consequence of the death of Captain Peter Rivett.—On the 9th of September, he sailed in this sloop, for North America, with a convoy of nine transports, under the orders of Captain Stoney, of the *Fox*. The object of this expedition was, to evacuate Charlestown, in South Carolina.—Captain Hoar entered Charlestown harbour on the 2d of October; left it on the 6th of the same month; and arrived at Jamaica on the 20th of November.—Soon afterwards, he sailed express, with despatches from Admiral Rowley to Admiral Pigott, at the Leeward Islands. He accordingly arrived at St. Lucia, on the 9th of January, 1783; returned thence with despatches from Admiral Pigott to Admiral Rowley, on the 25th; and reached Jamaica on the 2d of February following.

On the 12th of May, 1783, Captain Hoar sailed for England,

* *Vide NAVAL CHRONICLE*, Vol. III. page 165.

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in the Duc d'Estisac: he arrived in the Downs on the 16th of July; and, on the 7th of August following, his ship was paid off, at Deptford.

Unfortunately, by one of those unforeseen instances of neglect, which too frequently occur in the service, Captain Hoar was prevented from obtaining post rank, before the conclusion of the war.

A few years subsequently to this, a circumstance of importance occurred, in the private life of this officer, whom, hitherto, we have known only by the name of Hoar.—On the 20th of May, 1788, he married Catherine Dorothy Bertie, daughter of Peregrine Bertie, of Low-Layton, Essex, Esq. (of the late Duke of Ancaster's family) whose name he assumed, and has since borne *alone*, agreeably to his will.

Not being desirous of employment, during the peace, Captain Bertie, after his marriage, went to reside at Burn Hall, in the county of Durham. He remained there till the Spanish armament of 1790; when, through the kind and friendly interest of Lord Mulgrave, he was made a post captain, by Lord Chatham, on the 22d of November, in that year, and appointed to the *Leda*.

The dispute with Spain, however, was amicably arranged, and Captain Bertie was not again called upon, till September, 1795, when he was appointed, by Earl Spencer, to the *Hindostan*, at Spithead, and put under the orders of Commodore George Bowen. He sailed from thence, for Ireland, on the 2d of November, and arrived at Cork on the 8th; whence, after remaining three months wind-bound, the following squadron proceeded, with a convoy, for the West Indies:—

<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>	<i>Commanders.</i>
Canada	74	Commodore George Bowen.
Dictator	64	Captain F. Totty.
Hindostan	54	——— T. Bertie.
Abergavenny	54	——— E. T. Smith.
Malabar	54	——— T. Parr.
Laurel	23	——— R. Rolles.
Babet	26	——— W. G. Lobb.
Tourterelle	26	——— F. Fellowes.
Beaver	16	——— J. S. Warner.

The transports which sailed under the protection of this

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squadron, as part of the unfortunate expedition to the West Indies,* had 9000 troops on board, under the orders of Major-general White. These troops were destined for an attack on St. Domingo; but, from the unhealthfulness of the climate, and the direful effects of the yellow fever, they nearly all died, without having been employed on any active service whatsoever.

Captain Bertie was himself seized with the yellow fever, whilst commanding at Port au Prince, and he was obliged to apply to Sir William Parker, to be surveyed. This accordingly took place at Cape Nicholas Mole. The order was kindly forwarded by Sir J. T. Duckworth;† when Captain Bertie left the West Indies, in an American ship, in the month of October, 1796.

On the 29th of March, 1797, after he had recovered from the attack of the yellow fever, he was appointed, by Lord Spencer, to the command of the Braakel, of 64 guns, at Plymouth; where, soon afterwards, the memorable mutiny in the fleet broke out.‡ To the credit of the Braakel's crew, however, they were as little concerned in it as possible; refusing, on many occasions, to send delegates, or to take any active part whatsoever.

On the 13th of August, Captain Bertie left Plymouth, in the Braakel, for the Nore; where, on the 24th of the same month, he was appointed, by Lord Spencer, to the Ruby, of 64 guns, then just returned from the Cape. Early in the October following, having been found in too defective a state to be docked, the Ruby was paid off, at Chatham; and, immediately on the death of Captain Burges, of the Ardent,§ who was killed in Lord Duncan's

* Some particulars of the disasters attendant on this expedition, will be found in our memoir of Sir H. C. Christian, NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. XXI. page 181.

† A memoir and portrait of this officer are given in the XVIIIth Volume of the NAVAL CHRONICLE, page 1.

‡ For some interesting particulars relating to this mutiny, vide NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. IV. page 98, *et seq.*

§ Captain Richard Rundle Burges.—This gentleman was the only officer of note, who was killed in the engagement off Camperdown. He led his ship into action in the most gallant manner, and fell most nobly supporting his brave admiral, one of whose seconds he was.—A description of the monument which was erected by government, to the memory of Captain Burges, in St. Paul's Cathedral, will be found in our VIIth Volume, page 427.

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memorable action, off Camperdown, on the 11th of October,* Captain Bertie was appointed to the command of that ship, at the Nore. In the succeeding month he took her up to be docked at Chatham.

It may here be proper to mention an improvement, which Captain Bertie effected on the 42-pounder carronades, belonging to the Ardent's main-deck; particularly as the improvement was generally adopted, for some years afterwards, in all his Majesty's ships having that description of ordnance on board.—Observing, when he was first appointed to the Ardent, that the inclined plane of the carriage was in a contrary direction to what, he conceived, it ought to be—being *within-board* instead of *without*—Captain Bertie communicated his ideas on the subject to the Board of Ordnance; and, in a correspondence which ensued, he had the satisfaction of convincing that Board of the utility of his proposed alteration. Orders were consequently given, for fitting up the carronades at Chatham, according to Captain Bertie's directions. The alteration consisted simply in depressing the stole of the carriage two inches. This not only imparted to it the good property of being worked, and run out, with a smaller number of men—(the 42-pounders being afterwards fought, and exercised, with only four men each, without any exertion or difficulty)—but it also checked the recoil, and necessarily added to the force of the shot. The simplicity of this improvement seems strongly to entitle it to attention.

On the 4th of December, Captain Bertie was ordered to attend a court martial, on board the Circe frigate, at Sheerness, Admiral Lutwidge, president. This Court was assembled for the purpose of trying Captain John Williamson, late of H. M. S. Agincourt, upon charges exhibited against him by Captain Thomas Hopper, of the marines, for his conduct in the then recent action of the 11th of October. The court sat till the 1st of January, 1798, when its opinion was delivered in the following terms:—

“ The court having heard the evidence on the part of the prosecution,

* For the particulars of this engagement, the reader is referred to our memoir of the late Admiral Lord Duncan, NAVAL CHRONICLE, Vol. IV. page 106, *et seq.*

and the defence, together with all the evidence the prisoner chose to bring forward ; and after having weighed the whole, maturely and deliberately, are of opinion, that the charges of cowardice and disaffection have not been proved against the said Captain Williamson. That the other charges have been proved in part, therefore the court pronounces the following sentence :—

“ That the said Captain John Williamson be put at the bottom of the list of post captains, and be rendered incapable of ever serving on board any of his Majesty’s ships.”

We have been thus particular in noticing this trial, for the purpose of introducing to our readers two original letters which it occasioned, from Sir Horatio Nelson to Captain Bertie. The first of these, written while the court was sitting, is as follows :—

“ MY DEAR BERTIE, “ 141, *Bond-street*, *December 11th*, 1797.

“ You have reason to abuse me, for not long ago answering your affectionate letter ; but truly, till last Monday, I have suffered so much,* that I hope for your forgiveness. I am now perfectly recovered, and on the eve of being employed. You are on a most unpleasant service ; but the country demands a strict scrutiny, and we rest confident that you will do ample justice, be that what it may. Remember me kindly to your worthy President, and such of those with you that I know, and believe me ever

“ Your affectionate friend,



The succeeding epistle, written immediately after the close of the trial, deserves an attentive perusal from every officer and man in the navy :—

“ MY DEAR BERTIE, “ *Bath*, *January 4th*, 1798.

“ I thank you very much for your early notice of the event of Captain W.’s long trial.† The court has been a most patient, and certainly a most lenient one. As to myself, upon the general question, that if a man does

* This alludes to the wound which Admiral Nelson received at Teneriffe, when he lost his right arm.—ED.

† Captain Bertie communicated the sentence of the court to his friend, Admiral Nelson, the day before it was passed. The members of the court had been two days in forming their determination upon it.