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978-1-108-01875-3 - The Naval Chronicle, Volume 36

Edited by James Stanier Clarke and John McArthur

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Volume 36

Volume 36 (1816) contains official reports and eyewitness accounts of the Bombardment of Algiers by Lord Exmouth. This was in retaliation for the Dey of Algiers having broken the recently negotiated treaty forbidding the taking of slaves. Technical reports focus on the total solar eclipse of that year and the discovery of sunspot formation. Maps and descriptions of Copenhagen harbour and Algiers are also included.

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The Naval Chronicle

*Containing a General and Biographical
History of the Royal Navy of the United
Kingdom with a Variety of Original Papers on
Nautical Subjects*

VOLUME 36: JULY-DECEMBER 1816

EDITED BY JAMES STANIER CLARKE
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 NAUTICAL SUBJECTS.

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF SEVERAL
LITERARY AND PROFESSIONAL MEN.

VOL. XXXVI.
 (FROM JULY TO DECEMBER.)

— — “ England is a Land which can never be conquered, whilst the Kings thereof keep the Dominion of the Sea.”—(W. RALEGH.)

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TO
SIR GEORGE MONTAGU, G.C.B.

ADMIRAL OF THE RED SQUADRON,

THIS THIRTY-SIXTH VOLUME OF THE

Naval Chronicle

[FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 1816.]

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THE PROPRIETOR,

Joyce Gold

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TO THE THIRTY-SIXTH VOLUME.

FINIS coronat opus: i. e. the conclusion of our XXXVIth Volume is its crown, and thus dignified, it comes forth, the honest representative of our six months' labours for the benefit of the reader (and we hope, in some respects, of the country), who will therein find the flight of time arrested in its sweeping course—the past rendered as it were present—and the future occasionally anticipated by the analogical inference of like effects from similar causes.

From this general or bird's-eye view of the Volume we shall now descend to a more close and particular consideration of its various contents. Our Biography is less varied than usual, but we trust it will be found not less interesting, as the record of, probably, all that will ever be known of our worthy but ill-fated countryman, Captain Wright—we felt it a duty especially incumbent on us, to vindicate his character (now all that remains with us of him) from the aspersions of his enemies, we had almost said his friends—and we have availed ourselves for the purpose, more of facts than argument.

In our NAUTICAL SELECTIONS, page 458, we have given an extract from the recent publication of Dr. Warden, late Surgeon of the Northumberland and medical attendant on Buonaparte, in which will be seen an attempt by the latter to wash his hands of that blood, but so weak, that it would seem there is “the smell of the blood still.” He asks “For what object? Of all men he was the person whom I should have most desired to live. Whence could I have procured so valuable an evidence as he would have proved in the trial of the conspirators in and about Paris? The heads of it he himself had landed on the French coast.” This might have been true enough if he could but have made him *speak*. But his honourable prisoner had given proof sufficient that, as such an evidence, he would be dumb; and, therefore, it may easily be supposed that the *object* was—the gratification of a tyrannical resentment, by rendering him dumb for ever!

In the Memoir of Sir David Milne will be found, briefly recorded, the public services of a gentleman who, by his admirable conduct in the attack at Algier, has merited and obtained a distinguished niche in the Temple of Fame. We regret the documents from which it was drawn up were not more copious of information.

The memoir of Captain Campbell also evinces the justice of his title to an honourable memory in the minds of his countrymen; and we sincerely lament that a longer life was not allowed him to enjoy, in a period of peace, the grateful retrospect of a long course of honourable warfare in the service of his country, and the honours and emoluments by which it had been so duly acknowledged.

The SELECTIONS will be found various and interesting, culled with a view to the gratification of the diverse tastes of our numerous readers, and we hope they will in no instance be found wholly void of interesting information or amusement.

The next department of our Publication demands a more especial notice,

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as it is capable of doing much good or much harm. Our professed principle of impartiality binds us to the admission of candid argument and observation on both sides of every question, and if the general tone of our CORRESPONDENCE has too much of the *Croak*, it is the fault of those who should answer the *Croakers*, if their croaking be answerable. That of the present Volume commences with the remarks of *B-r*, in reply to some observations from *H. C.* relative to Falmouth harbour as a naval station, page 27.—At page 32, *Mentor*, on a redress of certain grievances existing in the navy.—*Nestor*, on the payment of King's ships on foreign stations, as a measure highly necessary to be adopted, page 33.—*Atfred*, on the improved regulations of the navy, and suggesting farther improvements, page 26.—*Navalis*, on the neglect of the navy, page 37.—*A Seaman*, on the inefficiency of our superior class frigates, *ibid.*—At page 38 will be found an extract of a letter from an officer at St. Helena, relative to Buonaparte, to which we have subjoined a counter-statement, to shew how difficult it is to know the true state of persons or things at a distance.—At page 42, the monumental inscription of the late Captain Beaver, at the Cape of Good Hope, communicated by Mr. John Bayley.—*Albion*, on the necessity of watching the progress of the American navy, and building ships on a commensurate principle, page 42.—The observations of *A Friend to Naval Merit*, on the situation of old Commanders and Lieutenants, are very just, and the list of those who, he thinks, are officers entitled to an amelioration of condition bears its own recommendation with it, page 125.—At page 127, *A Constant Subscriber* reproves us for the admission of offensive personalities, but we assure him it is never our wish to indulge in any thing of the kind.—Page 129, an interesting extract from the Journal of the Hon. E. I. Ship Chambers, communicated by *J. H.*—The General Directions of the Ipswich Humane Society, for the recovery of Persons apparently Dead from Drowning, Hanging, Intoxication, &c. transmitted by our old friend, *T. H.* will be found at page 133, and especially worthy of notice. Our friend's proposal respecting the insertion of monumental inscriptions, we think eligible under his judgment of selection, to which we are no strangers; and, from our other Correspondents, a judicious selection would be in like manner acceptable.—Page 212 presents a letter from *N. T. T.* stating, indeed, a real grievance, "*Private Punishments!*"—so private as to be often unknown to the Captain himself; this is clearly a crime whenever it occurs, and we have no hesitation in saying, that the inflictors of such *private punishments* are amenable to the laws of their country for all such transgressions.—At page 213, *Trafalgar*, on the comparative advantage of naval Surgeons above naval Lieutenants in the Retired List. *Albion*, on the white slavery and the abolition of naval impressment, page 214; against the latter of which evils our worthy Correspondent evinces a generous and just warmth, considered abstractedly from its necessity. We most cordially wish, with him, that all possible means should be adopted to set aside that odious violation of personal liberty, but when we consider the length of time it has existed, we are induced to fear the difficulty of its total abolition great. So early as the reign of Richard II. we find the practice of arresting mariners and retaining them for the King's service usual and without dispute. By subsequent statute, any waterman using the River Thames, and hiding himself during the execution of any commission of pressing for the King's service, was liable to heavy penalties. By statute 5 Eliz. c. 5, No fisherman shall be taken by the Queen's commission to serve as a mariner; but the commission shall be first brought to two justices of the peace inhabiting near the sea-coast, where the mariners are to be taken, to the intent that the justices may choose out and return such a number of able-bodied men as in the commission are contained to serve her Majesty. And, during the administration of Sir Robert Walpole,

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this evil was considered with an evidently sincere view to its abolition, but found impracticable.

We merely mention these things to shew that impressment, as an evil of so long standing, seems to imply that it is from absolute necessity, and a necessity very difficult to remove. The plan of binding apprentices of merchant ships to a service of seven years, in a time of war, would certainly go far toward lessening the evil; but, then, might it not be considered a kind of impressment by anticipation?—*Veritas*, on the disparity of pay between the Army and Navy, 216.—*Alfred*, on a proposed History of British Men of War, from the year 1700, *ib.*—*Navis'or*, query respecting the *Mediterranean pass!* p. 218.—*Veritas*, on Corporeal Punishments, *ib.*—*Mentor*, on the same subject, 219.—*Navalis*, on the expediency of abolishing all superfluous Iron Work on board Ships of War, and on the deficiency of Medical Aid in the Navy, p. 220.—*Joannes* Critique on the Inscription for Captain Wright's Monument, p. 281.—Another, proffered by an Anonymous Correspondent, *ib.*—*Viator*, on the great inconvenience of sending Baggage to London for inspection at the Custom-House, p. 222.—*An Officer of the Leander*, in defence of the *Pasteboard Fifties*, p. 295.—*Neptunus*, on the building of Ships, p. 297.—*Gracchus*, recommending the communication of Biographical Documents to the NAVAL CHRONICLE, p. 298.—*Nestor*, on the necessity of a fixed System of Naval Command, p. 299, a very excellent letter, written in the spirit of wisdom and candour, and entitled to official notice.—*Orion*, on the Mediterranean Trade, p. 301.—*Victor*, on the Victory of Lord Exmouth, p. 303.—*Albion*, on the same subject, p. 305.—*An Enemy to Slavery*, on the state of Algier after the Battle, p. 307.—*G. T. T.*, on the Conduct of the Algerines in the Attack of Lord Exmouth, p. 308.—*T. C. P.*, on the Construction of our Frigates, p. 377.—*Alfred*, on various subjects of Improvement in Naval Regulations, p. 384.—*Gracchus*' second Letter, recommending Communications of Naval Biography, p. 385.—*Y.*, on the propriety of bestowing Medals on the Officers and men who fought at Algier, p. 387.—*Ment'or*, on Naval Punishments, p. 387.—*Oceanus*, in reply to an Officer of the Leander, p. 389.—*Albion*, on the Practice of bringing Sugars from distant Estates by ships' long-boats in the West Indies, 390, highly creditable to *Albion's* humanity.—*A Friend to Naval Merit*, on an Extension of the Retired List, *ib.*—*Nestor*, on the Duty of Naval Members of Parliament, p. 394.—*Sol*, on the Incorrectness of the Nautical Almanack, p. 394.—*Scriblerus*, advising the Publication of our Memoir of Captain Wright as a Pamphlet, p. 395.—*S.*, Remarks on the Sun's Eclipse, Nov. 19th, 396.—*Thessaly*, assigning the credit of first Breaking the Line in Naval Action to the Earl of Sandwich, on the 3d of June, 1665, p. 462; we avail ourselves of this opportunity to return our thanks to *Thessaly*, for several valuable communications accompanying this letter.—*Quaestor*, on the introduction of Corporeal Punishments in our Commercial Marine, *ib.*—*Thessaly*, extract of a letter from Sir Charles Douglas to Admiral Greg, giving an account of the actions on the 9th and 12th of April, 1782, p. 464.—*Candidus*, asserting the late Lord Nelson no *Martinet*, p. 468.—*Nestor*, on Naval Punishments, and the Employment of our Seamen, p. 469.—*Albion*, on the necessity of watching, with a jealous eye, the growing Navy of the United States, p. 470, a truly patriotic letter.—*Triton*, on the improved regulation in the issues of Naval Pay, p. 472.—*Occasional*, correcting error in our Memoir of Sir David Milne, and transmitting a correct list of officers, promoted on occasion of the victory at Algier, p. 473; we return him our thanks for his favour.—*Neptunus*, urging a continuation of Beatson's Memoirs, p. 475.—*Orion*, on the present distressed condition of our Seamen, p. 476; we most cordially coincide with *Orion* in his observations and suggestions.

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Having gone through our multifarious Correspondence in the way of respectful notice, we request our worthy friends to accept our grateful acknowledgment of their favours, and our hope that their exertions will be continued, and ultimately tend to the general benefit of their country.

We have now to advert to the Hydrography of the present Volume; in doing which, we cannot but feel the weight of obligation to our indefatigable friend the Hydrographer, who seems resolved that words shall sooner fail, than cause, to thank him. But while thus we acknowledge his liberal and obliging industry in aid of our endeavours to render the NAVAL CHRONICLE worthy of the reputation it has acquired, we are most ardently desirous that his labours might be lightened by the communications of our ingenious Correspondents, on hydrographical subjects. The importance of such communications must be unquestionable. The opinions of the Lords of the Admiralty, on this branch of nautic information, will appear from the following circular, which we here reprint, from page 321 of this volume:—

(Circular.)

SIR,

Admiralty-Office, 20th May, 1810.

A PRACTICE having obtained among captains and commanding officers of his Majesty's ships and vessels, of applying to this department, as a matter of course, for certificates to be granted upon statements furnished by themselves, of observations towards the furtherance of hydrographical knowledge that they have made, though the opportunity of making such remarks may not have occurred; I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that they have directed that, after the 1st of July next, no certificate of remarks shall be granted, until the Hydrographer of the Admiralty shall have reported whether there was an occasion for making remarks or not, or (should any be furnished) upon the value of the remarks which may have been made; and I have further to acquaint you of their Lordships' direction that you transmit half-yearly, to this office, a remark-book, which shall contain, at least, the latitudes and longitudes of all places (out of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland) in which the ship you command may have been; and, whenever time and circumstances will permit, particulars of bearings, soundings, tides, currents, and all other circumstances of nautical utility, are to be carefully entered therein: and I am also to apprise you, that no certificate of remarks will be issued from this department, unless the observations in the several remark-books shall appear to their Lordships to be such as, with reasonable diligence and accuracy, might be made. And my Lords trust that you, with the other officers in his Majesty's naval service, will see the advantage of collecting a body of hydrographical information, and that you will exert yourself to the utmost of your power in contributing to an object so necessary to the general advancement of science, and so highly advantageous to the best interests of a great maritime people.

I am, &c.

To the respective Captains, Commanders, and Commanding Officers of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels.

Finally, we return our grateful acknowledgments to our numerous PATRONS for their liberal support, and hope, by our unremitting endeavours to render the NAVAL CHRONICLE worthy of their acceptance, to obtain the continuance of it.