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978-1-108-01876-0 - The Naval Chronicle, Volume 37

Edited by James Stanier Clarke and John McArthur

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Volume 37

Volume 37 (1817) contains much discussion of the peacetime reduction of the navy, naval pensions, and piracy. Several articles focus on historical rather than contemporary events, including an account of the Battle of the Nile (1798) and eyewitness accounts of naval skirmishes in 1793. A biography of Sir John Hawkins and maps and descriptions of Dunkirk and Boulogne 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 37: JANUARY-JUNE 1817

EDITED BY JAMES STANIER CLARKE
AND JOHN MCARTHUR



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 NAUTICAL SUBJECTS.

—
 UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF SEVERAL
LITERARY AND PROFESSIONAL MEN.
 —

VOL. XXXVII.
FROM JANUARY TO JUNE.

— " 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
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
GEORGE VISCOUNT KEITH, G.C.B.

ADMIRAL OF THE RED SQUADRON,

THIS THIRTY-SEVENTH VOLUME OF THE

Naval Chronicle

[FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 1817.]

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THE PROPRIETOR,

Joyce Gold

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PREFACE

TO THE THIRTY-SEVENTH VOLUME.

ARRIVED in Port from our Thirty Seventh Cruise, we have now to present our *Mensals*, in which it will be seen that we have kept a good *Look-out*—have made some valuable *Captures*—and are fairly entitled to *Head-money*. Nor let it be said that we do not bear the King's flag, because we sometimes remonstrate to his Ministers, with the bluntness of a Seaman, who if he tells them they are wrong, it is because he thinks that they are wrong, and not because he wishes to change places with any of them. If experience has made us wise, why should we be niggardly of our knowledge, when we think it is wanted.—The Seaman has now nothing to do but to smoke his pipe, and, in a cloud of odoriferous vapour, puff out the wisdom of past experience, and present, practical suggestion—and the excuse for his occasional boldness should be found in the honesty of his intentions. But laying aside our metaphor, which, like all false-colours, cannot be long held out with consistency, let us now review the contents of our Thirty Seventh Volume, in order to ascertain, at least by the scale of our own judgments, the virtual, intrinsic value of that which we now respectfully offer to an enlightened and discerning Public.

Although in two instances of our BIOGRAPHY we have been under a necessity of turning to the heroes of ages long past for a selection of subjects, it is presumed our judgment will not suffer in the estimation of our Readers, by the choice. Both were men highly distinguished in their day for adventurous deeds, and have left recorded the worth of their actions as the warrant of their fame.

The Memoirs of Captain Barrett, Admiral Frederick, and Captain Layman, as recording services in the benefits of which we have been more immediate partakers, will be considered possibly of superior value, and we are therefore the more solicitous of obtaining such communications, as by them the present generation may feel their esteem and gratitude more sensibly excited.

The Miscellaneous parts of the Volume, we trust, will make good their pretensions of amusement and information; they contain the most prominent of passing events, so far as they come within the scheme and limits of our publication, and must constitute an ample *Melange* of pleasurable interest.

But it is with especial satisfaction that in the augmentation of our CORRESPONDENCE we see the number of our friends increase; and not only in number, but in value also. For in the various subjects on which they treat, we in most instances see an ardent zeal tempered by a connected series of reasoning urging its purpose, and we have reason to believe not ineffectually, where the object intended has been found practicable.

But we again recommend as essential means of success, the use of argument, not of insult—of solicitation rather than demand—of respectful remonstrance, rather than of insolent accusation. If Reform, in whatever department of the State, or Amelioration, in whatever condition of naval men, be the object, and the *only* object, such are the means most likely to obtain the end. Such are in fact now the only means left to distinguish the honest Reformist, from the daring but foolish Revolutionist. Such were the principles of the *Naval Chronicle* at its commencement, such are the principles we wish to maintain; and we are much gratified in seeing the general tenor of our Correspondence, throughout the present Volume, relatively consistent in its character; and in variety of subject, perhaps unequalled by those of any of its preceding Volumes.

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At page 30, is an interesting communication from our obliging friend *Thessaly*, "Minutes of a Running Action fought in the Adriatic."—At page 114, our worthy friend *Mentor* lays us under an obligation, which we gratefully acknowledge, in the sincere interest he evinces for the promotion of our Work, by his handsome commendation of it, and zealous call for that support which the "Communication of Biographical Documents" would undoubtedly afford us.—Page 122, an "Addendum to the Life of Captain Robert Campbell, R.N." adds to our numerous obligations to *Thessaly*.—125, an *Anonymous Correspondent* has obliged us with a "List of the Flag Officers of H. M.'s Fleet, 1747."—At page 193, *Thessaly's* Remarks "on the action between the *Endymion* and *President*," are candid, impartial, and probably just, although they differ from those of *Borer*, who has made the various naval actions of the late American war, a subject of especial consideration, and in his calculations of opposed strength seems to reckon on assured data; we think with *Thessaly*, that the merits of a brave enemy should have due acknowledgment.—*Mentor's* "Character of the late Sir C. Parker," induces us to wish for a more ample account of him, and is an excellent example of Naval command.—At page 196, will be found some cogent observations, by *Tiphys*, "On the Eligibility of Falmouth as a Packet Station."—Page 199 and 201, the condition of "Old Commanders" is fairly considered, by *A Friend to Naval Merit*.—At page 203, an *Anonymous Correspondent* has added to his former favour, "A List of the Captains of H. M.'s Fleet in the year 1747."—At page 206, are some very judicious remarks "On Marine Surveying."—207, *Albion*, on the failure of our "Five Frigates."—*Nestor*, on the "Payment of Ships on Foreign Stations, *ibid.*"—At page 211, letter of *Archimedes*, to Sir Joseph Banks, requesting his influence towards promoting a farther survey of New Holland, &c.—At page 212, is a "Memorial presented by the French Ambassador to the Spanish Minister at Madrid, relative to the victory of the 14th February, 1797; with the Spanish Minister's answer."—At page 285, is a letter from *Nestor*, on the expediency of a "Fixed System of Command;" a subject entitled to the serious consideration of those by whom command is delegated. To subject so numerous a body of British subjects, as in a period of war the subaltern officers and seamen of our Navy constitute, to the sole will and caprice of the commander, is to give to such commander a power which we withhold from the Sovereign himself. The necessary duties to be performed on board a ship of war are sufficiently determined to admit of fixed punishments for any omission of performance by those to whom they are assigned; but when tasks are imposed, and compliances exacted, merely to gratify the whim or caprice of a crabbed tyrant, or a haughty, self-willed humourist, and reluctance under such circumstances is punished by the power of a petty despotism assumed without warrant, and seemingly connived at merely from the want of a due advertency to the injustice of such a system of command, by those who have the power to control it; we do consider that the liberties of that class of our countrymen who are sufferers under it, are unnecessarily infringed, and British spirit most unwarrantably humbled.

Nestor has accompanied his own observations on the subject, by an Address from a Captain to his Crew; under such a captain, it was not likely that the ship's company would be unjustly treated; but as the characters of men vary, and not unfrequently in the very same person, it is evidently necessary that his government of others should be directed and restrained by some fixed and clearly defined rules.—At page 286, is a Letter "To the President, Vice-President, and Committee of the Marine Society," from Mr. *Ugubart*, remonstrating on the conduct of that respectable body, as incongruous with the principles of the Institution—and at page 289 is a letter from the same gentleman, "To the Right Hon. Viscount Melville, vindicating the general character of our Seamen, and

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objecting to the general treatment of them. The zeal of this gentleman for the interests of the British Navy does him great honour, and many of his suggestions are worthy of adoption; but he is apt to extend his inferences into too many collateral ramifications, and thereby weaken his course of radical argument. We, however, consider Mr. Urquhart as a very valuable Correspondent, and hope to see the Naval Chronicle long honored by his support, and the Navy benefited by his laudable exertions.—At page 300, is another Letter from Mr. *Urquhart*, “To the Right Honorable Viscount Melville,” on the inattention of Government to suggestions of improvement, or the invention of plans for the public benefit.—Page 301, some judicious observations “On Naval Courts Martial,” by *Britannicus*.—Page 302, *Mentor*, in support of Nestor’s call for a Fixed System of Command.—374, *Orion*, advising the employment of our large merchantmen in the “Private East India Trade.”—375, *Thessaly*, “On the Distresses of our Seamen.” A very excellent Letter, in which he not only commiserates their condition, but suggests a mode of affording them at least a partial relief, with advantage to the country.—377, a valuable Letter from *Britannicus*, “On the depressed state of the Shipping Interest.” His hints seem both practicable and profitable.—378, *Orion*, on the probable advantages of a “South American Trade.”—379, *Occidens*, offering “Hints respecting the Necessity of a Fixed System of Internal [or Naval] Discipline.” The arguments and suggestions contained in the several letters on this subject, will, we trust, obtain their due notice from those whose *fiat* alone can give them full efficacy.”—*Alfred*, at page 382, has a Letter addressed to “Lord Cochrane,” written in the spirit of friendly reproof, accompanied by such advice, as we think his Lordship might adopt, with every prospect of ultimate benefit to himself and his country.—At page 384, a Letter from *P. C. T.* in reply to Thessaly’s observations on the action between the Endymion and President. The truth must surely appear at last from so many different views of the Action.—385, some observations from *Occasional*, “On Admiral Frederick’s Memoir,” for which we respectfully thank him. We believe the particulars of the Admiral’s birth and family are correctly stated at the conclusion of the Memoir.—At page 387, are some just remarks, relative to the “Pensions to Naval Officers’ Widows.”—389, a very humane Letter from *J. C.* suggesting a mode of “Provision for Seamen.”—Page 465, *J. C.* “On the insufficient state of our Navy,” evinces a very proper anxiety for the preservation of our best bulwark—the Queen of the Ocean can only maintain her title by her superior strength.—At page 468, is a “Comparative Statement of the European Navies, by *Juvenal*, and we see in it a gratifying superiority—may we always maintain it as the sheet anchor of England.—At page 470, *Triton* has given us two laudable “Instances of a Mild System of Command;” we hope the time is not distant when the opposite System shall no longer be allowed.—Page 471, *Mentor*, “On Retirement.”—Page 472, *Alfred*, on the advantages resulting from “The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty visiting Naval Arsenals.”—At page 472, *Gracchus* has obliged us by his recommendation of a more general patronage of the Naval Chronicle: our worthy friend has made a very accurate statement of the trifling expense at which the advantages of our Publication might be rendered available to the whole British Navy, and being so exclusively devoted to its interests, we hope his kindness will not be ineffectual—our sense of gratitude it has already duly excited.—Page 473, *Britannicus* has suggested the expediency of “Constructing Royal Dock Yards in Scotland and Ireland.”—At page 475, is a very excellent Address, from *Nestor*, “TO THE CAPTAINS OF THE BRITISH NAVY,” ‘On the Duties of Command.’ An Address in perfect consonance with the zeal which Nestor so invariably displays for the best interests of the Navy. A degree of discretionary power is perhaps indispensably necessary in the command of a ship’s company;

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but, to use the words of the late Lord Mansfield, as quoted by Sir M. W. Ridley, in the recent discussion which took place in the House of Commons, on the petition of the Academical Society, "that discretion should be a sound discretion, guided by law; it should be a rule not determined by individual humour, arbitrary, vague, and fanciful, but legal and regular."—And at page 481, is some very natural and true remarks, by J. C. "On the Renewal of Barbaric Piracy," which concludes the Correspondence of the present Volume.

Although we have but barely named our friends, and numbered our obligations to them, and even that with many instances of omission, it has occupied so much of our limited space, that we have scarcely room, under the indelible impression of our respected friend the Hydrographer's kindness, to repeat our acknowledgment of it; this, however, we do, with sincere respect for his long and steady attachment to the interests of the Naval Chronicle, and wish him many years of uninterrupted health, not wholly disinterested in our views of probable advantage resulting from it to ourselves.

To Dr. BURNEY, the conductor of that excellent Establishment, the Naval Academy, Gosport, for his interesting Meteorological Register, we return likewise our most sincere and respectful thanks. The very accurate and scientific manner in which it is kept, with the regular transmission of it to us, renders it a most valuable acquisition; the minuteness of the observations; the illustration of various phenomena of the weather, &c. and the very high and deserved reputation of Dr. BURNEY in Astronomical and Nautical Science, give to his Register a character of which we confess ourselves proud; nor is our sense of honour conferred by Dr. BURNEY solely the result of his communication of the Register—we confess that our pride is in no small degree excited by a literary communication with the Editor of the last edition of FALCONER'S *Marine Dictionary*, a work which, from the very great augmentation of matter, with the science and the judgment displayed in the original and selected articles which constitute it, might more properly be termed BURNEY'S MARINE DICTIONARY ON FALCONER'S MODEL. With respect to the Journal, we know of none that is kept in this country so extensive, and that will ultimately prove so stimulative to young Meteorologists, and beneficial to the much neglected science of Meteorology. There is only one thing wanted and that is an Hygrometer.

That department of our Publication which is appropriated to a Review of Naval Literature, is in the present Volume peculiarly interesting, both in the utility of its subjects and style of handling them. To our Poetical Correspondents our thanks are eminently due, for many specimens of elegant versification, and fertile fancy; and among them stand conspicuously those of Mrs. M'MULLAN, M. M. and C. the inspirations of whose respective Muse, whenever they assume a Naval character, we shall feel much gratified by the transmission of. The specimens of early genius, by R. C. DALLAS, are in themselves so extraordinary and unique, that they admit no other comment than, *admiration!*

The Letters of James Duke of York, as Lord High Admiral of England, form also a prominent and interesting feature of the Volume; and with the Supplement of Gazette Letters, will afford valuable materials to the *British Naval Historian*. No expense has been spared in the Embellishments of the Volume, and we trust they will be found no less interesting in their subjects, than excellent in their graphic and chalcographic execution.

Finally to our SUBSCRIBERS, without whose liberal patronage the ingenuity and labour displayed in the construction of our Chronicle could not be encouraged and supported, we return our thanks, for their past and present kindness, and hope to merit their future favour by the progress of our endeavours to deserve it.

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