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978-1-108-01877-7 - The Naval Chronicle, Volume 38

Edited by James Stanier Clarke and John McArthur

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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 38: JULY-DECEMBER 1817

EDITED BY JAMES STANIER CLARKE  
AND JOHN MCARTHUR



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THE  
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 FOR 1817:  
 CONTAINING A  
*GENERAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY*  
 OF  
 THE ROYAL NAVY  
 OF THE  
**United Kingdom ;**  
 WITH A VARIETY OF ORIGINAL PAPERS ON  
 NAUTICAL SUBJECTS.

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

VOL. XXXVIII.  
 FROM JULY TO DECEMBER.

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

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TO  
**GEORGE PIGOT, Esq.**  
ADMIRAL OF THE RED SQUADRON,  
THIS THIRTY-EIGHTH VOLUME OF THE  
**Naval Chronicle**  
[FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 1817.]  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,  
*BY THE PROPRIETOR,*

*Joyce Gold*

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## PREFACE

TO THE THIRTY-EIGHTH VOLUME.

**T**HE course of our labours under the encouragement of our liberal Patrons and Coadjutors, had extended to nearly the close of the Volume, when the melancholy death of our beloved PRINCESS occurred to render it the most gloomy of the Series. Mournful is the page that records the death of the warrior, but in the necessities of War, the warrior among its chief requisites is always supplied by that Providence under whose permission war exists—the succession of a good and sufficient Sovereign is not equally certain. But to the dispensations of Providence it is our duty to bow in humble resignation, confident in his Wisdom and in his Goodness.

The contents of the Volume in other respects will be found to bear its usual character of pleasing interest. The subjects of our Biography are all modern, and thus calculated to bring the officers of the British Navy more professionally known to each other. We hope the reluctance to communicate such information will give place to a more open disposition.

Of the gentlemen whose services we have had the pleasure to record in the Volume now presented, it will be unnecessary to speak, except in the language of general remark, to say that their conduct has been evidently directed to the preservation of their country's interest and honour, and we hope in a satisfactory degree to the advancement of their own. We have indeed no reason to doubt it, in the instances now before us, unless it be in that of Captain Layman, whose exertions abroad and at home, we think fairly entitled to a more liberal remuneration than he has hitherto obtained. His persevering ingenuity in the discovery of a mode of improving the quality of our ship-timber, and consequently extending the duration of our ships of war, we think has not produced its merited result, a fair *trial*, and hence the failure of *reward*.

In the Miscellaneous part of the Volume, in which may be included the Anecdotes and Selections, we have used our accustomed industry of research, and have been favored with the contribution of several valuable articles culled for us by Correspondents, to whom our obligations are in a most gratifying state of augmentation, as will be amply evident on turning to that division of our Chronicle exclusively devoted to the publication of their original contributions. The variety of subjects treated on, the various views of the same object, and the numerous inferences and remarks thence resulting, constitute such a mass of naval information, as must be highly desirable to naval men, not only for its extent, but quality, varying with the rising topics of the day, and meeting the question of the curious enquirer in many instances as soon as it is formed. Were it necessary to say more in asserting its value, we might with no inconsiderable weight of argument advert to the advantages resulting from a collision of active well-informed minds eliciting those scintillations of science, which might otherwise have lain dormant, like the fire in the flint, unexecuted by an exterior impulse.

We have thought it due to the liberal labours of our friends to make at least a *nominal* mention of them in our Preface; but we found ourselves in the last Volume unable to do them that justice, from the want of room, notwithstanding the smallness of the type in which it is printed—and we find ourselves still less able to effect our wishes in this: we therefore request their excuse for such omissions as may thus unavoidably occur, assuring our respected friends, that their favours are not the less valued, nor are our thanks in any degree less due for their being unnoticed.



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The initiatory article of this Volume's Correspondence, is from our constant and worthy friend *Albion*, on the subject of Impressment, a subject not only first in place, but among the first also in importance; for of all human blessings health is the first, and next to health is personal *liberty* and a free conscience—as to a clear conscience, let every man look to that himself, our business is only to advocate the inviolability of our persons. It is true, and it is just, that, in a state of Society, a portion of our natural rights is surrendered, when the general interests of the Commonwealth require it. But the demand made by the usual mode of impressment for the naval service, is of a nature so serious and to such an extent, that it certainly does call for the most anxious and earnest revision, in order to its abolition if possible, or at least to the utmost possible extent of mitigation. The mode humanely suggested by *Albion* is worthy of consideration, because there is certainly nothing impracticable in it. What might be the consequence of liberating our seamen from their bond of service at the end of five or seven years, possibly in the very heat of the war, and with the enemy off our shores aware of such discharge, it is not difficult to guess, and therefore we think the scheme in that particular calls for a revision by him, unless it be supposed that there will *always* be a race of seamen ready to supply all deficiencies thus occasioned. We heartily coincide with the opinion of *Albion*, that the service should be rendered eligible to our seamen by every possible means of comfort and encouragement, and certainly in the first place by a *fixed system of command*, so far as that is practicable—as little as possible should be left to the humour and caprice of an individual commander. This letter will be found at page 25, and is undoubtedly calculated as far as it goes to diminish the evils of impressment, if, as we have before observed, there be any *essential* difference between *compelling* a man to serve at a certain time with or without any previous obligation. At page 28, are some very judicious observations by *Neptunus*, “On building our men of war of teak or mahogany.”—At page 30, is a letter addressed by *Britannicus* to Lord Viscount Melville, “On the management of the navy,” consisting of suggestions on various points of naval management, respectfully offered, and we trust will become the serious objects of the Board of Naval Administration, if *Britannicus* has not been anticipated by their own wisdom; for the points urged are of that obvious necessity to a sound constitution of the British navy, that we can scarcely think the observations of *Britannicus* can reach them in the shape of *information*. Page 38, letter from *J. C.* as a reply to *Albion*, in defence of the merchant yard builders, which we think he has managed very ably, evincing the possession of much information on the subject, and which he has very cogently displayed. At page 42, are “Observations on the Naval Asylum,” by *Clericus*. Page 44, letter to Lord Viscount Melville, from *A British Ship-Owner*, “On the protection of the British trade and shipping.” Page 118, *Orion*, “On our North American timber trade.” Page 121, *Arion*, “On the inviolability of the British Funds,” a subject rather extraneous to the design of our publication, but as naval men, as well as other men, have undoubtedly an interest in the due performance of the obligations they have credited, to those thus concerned *Arion* offers some very forcible observations against the arguments of the landed interest. Page 125, *Triton* recommends, on very reasonable grounds, the employment of some of our ships and men “In marine surveying and nautical discovery.” At page 127, *Alfred*, “On improvements in the navy,” urges them with an earnestness bordering on reproof; but earnestness in a good cause should not be too strictly scrutinized. At page 128, “Reply to *Clericus*,” by *A Friend to Truth and Justice*. At page 130, is a letter from Mr. *Thomas Urquhart*, to Lord Viscount Melville, on various points of naval service. This gentleman is a most indefatigable advocate for the interests of the navy, and by consequence those of the country at large;

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we wish him the success he merits, and that he may finally effect that naval reform which he so earnestly labours to obtain. Page 132, *Orion*, "On the qualifications of lieutenants and masters of the royal navy," applauds, with good reasons for his approbation, the recent regulations for a stricter mode of ascertaining them. At page 134, *Pactolus*, "On the peace establishment." 135, communication by J. L. S. of "An Admiralty Circular," to ascertain periods of service, &c. a means of promotion, we hope, to many a deserving officer. *Tiphys*, at page 194, renews his very valid arguments in favour of "Falmouth as a packet station." At page 201, is a very sensible and humane letter from *Arion*, on the present mode of affording parochial relief, with suggestions for a better regulation of it, and especially with regard to superseding its necessity by other means of providing for poverty arising from a want of employment or redundancy of population. At page 210, is the commencement of a series of letters by *Juvenal*, containing an "Historical account of the rise of the British navy to the command of the ocean," a subject so perfectly coincident with the plan of our publication, and of such amusing interest to our naval readers especially, that we hope from the favour of our intelligent Correspondent an uninterrupted continuance of them: so far as we are in possession of the series we have availed ourselves, and we have no doubt to the gratification of all who have perused them: the second letter will be found at page 234. At page 214 is a letter from *Mr. Urquhart* to Sir William Scott, "On our civil and marine laws." At page 216, *Nestor* renews his arguments, the truth of which is self-evident, to show the necessity of "A Fixed System of Command;" and in addition to which, as also to those of *Mentor*, *Candidus*, *Triton*, *Veritas*, and other of our strenuous Correspondents, we would put this simple question to those whose business it is to answer it effectually—What command otherwise than *systematic*, can or ought to be entitled to the obedience of a Briton?—Britons never will, and never ought to be *Slaves*. The man who serves a master on shore in a civil capacity, serves him under certain stipulations, and if the demands of service go beyond them, it is optional in him to obey them. In the instance of military service, in which is included that branch of it restricted to the navy, and which it is our business more immediately to consider, the commander is invested with the power of inflicting immediate punishment for disobedience, as a necessary consequence of his situation; but in no instance can it be just, that the exercise of it should depend upon the bare *sic volo* of a single individual, by which so numerous a body of men as is the complement of a ship's company, may be subjected to the mere variations of temper in the commander, and their just comforts (to say nothing of corporal *punishments*) be abridged in proportion as the man is less worthy of *command*. A state of existence revolting to the mind of every man worthy the name of a *British Seaman*, and to which the necessity of *compulsion* must inevitably increase in proportion as his character, by superior acquirements, becomes more worthy of respect; it is not enough to say, that from such a character there can be no doubt of a regular discharge of his duty; the passionate, the proud, or the capricious commander orders and acts from his mere passion, pride, and caprice—*Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas*, is the language of his mind, a language which none but the base and unworthy can obey, without a deep and as we not unfrequently find *during* resentment of its injustice. Far, very far, are we from supposing it to be the wish of the Board of Naval Administration, that obedience should be so exacted—and we trust that a due consideration of the justice and necessity of fixing the duties of the naval service beyond which obedience shall not be *demand*ed, will take its turn (and an early one) in sequence of the late Naval Regulations, which, as far as they go, are so honourable to the Board by which they have been established. At page 216 are some remarks "On the undue preference of the Army to the

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Navy," signed by *A Clerk of the Weather Office*, a signature subscribed to a former letter on a more relative subject. We hope farther favours from this gentleman, who of whatever office he may chuse to subscribe himself, we think an *able Clerk*, and perhaps a *learned one*. At page 286 is a letter to Earl Spencer, from that worthy and indefatigable Naval Reformer, Mr. *T. Urquhart*, relative to the present management of the affairs of the Trinity Corporation. At page 292 is an instance of naval tyranny related by *Triton*, which would alone warrant a re-consideration of the penal authority delegated to commanders, with a view to that important *desideratum*, a *Fixed System of Command*. At page 295 is a very excellent letter from *Nestor*, addressed to Lord Melville, "On the State of the British Navy;" the wisdom of his remarks are truly Nestorian: it is indeed rarely that *Nestor* writes below the character which his signature implies. At page 298, *Vigilans* appears as the strenuous advocate of British liberty; and we cordially agree with him in his opinion of the means by which it should be acquired with respect to the points there insisted upon. The letter of *Civitas Eblana*, at page 299, may be thought rather extraneous in its subject, but we could not do otherwise than comply with the request of a gentleman to whom the Naval Chronicle is indebted for many valuable articles more consonant with its plan. At page 301, is another letter from our valuable Correspondent, *J. C.*: this gentleman will be recollected as the quondam antagonist of our worthy friend Albion, and much gratified we are to see them in that state of opposition which has for its motive the mere ascertainment of truth, an opposition which, wherever it has place on subjects of public interest, tends to render the information and good sense of both parties effective of the public good. At page 304, the launch of the *Orwell East Indiaman*, on the river of that name at Ipswich, is related with much interest by our respected friend *T. H.* At page 469, our much respected friend *Thessaly*, will see that we are not negligent of his favours, and we hope he has not forgotten us.

Our limits will not admit of a farther review of our Correspondence, than to notice the letter of *J. E.* "To the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in respect to claims of candidates for the rank of purser;" it contains some strong appeals to the humane consideration of their Lordships, and we hope their Lordships' humanity will induce them to lend a favorable ear to them.

The Hydrography of the present Volume does not occupy its usual space, but to the extent it goes will be found replete with local and scientific information. To our highly respected friend James Horsburgh, Esq. to a gentleman who signs himself *An Old Stager*, to Captain Weathrell, and to *Sapientiae Verae atque Scientiæ Amator*, our obligations are gratefully acknowledged, who, in the regretted absence of our esteemed friend the Hydrographer, have contributed its most valuable articles.

The acknowledgment of our obligations to the Rev. Dr. Burney, for his regular transmission to us of the *Meteorological Journal*, is no less respectfully than duly made, as to one of our most valuable contributors. We are, indeed, proud to acknowledge the accession to our strength of several gentlemen of the most respectable talents and information on nautical subjects.

In conclusion, with the most grateful respect, we return thanks to the liberal PATRONS of the NAVAL CHRONICLE for their continued support, and we hope to merit by our endeavours to maintain the respectability of its character for nautical information in its many and various branches, the approbation and countenance they have so long bestowed.

The EMBELLISHMENTS of the Volume are all Topographical, and will be found accurate in delineation, and skilfully engraved.