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The Nautical Magazine

The Nautical Magazine first appeared in 1832, published monthly at the price of one shilling. It aimed to advance ‘the safety of seamen’, with a focus on the merchant marine, and a readership of professional seafarers. The founding editor, A.B. Becher (1796–1876), served for many years under the distinguished hydrographer Sir Francis Beaufort, and the magazine reflected Beaufort’s interests by reporting on new charts, research on weather and the oceans, astronomy and navigation, and statistics on wrecks and the Lifeboat Institution. The content regularly included serialised accounts of voyages, descriptions of distant countries, notes on new shipping regulations, and discussion of the latest technologies. There were also reports on current affairs such as (during the Victorian period) the searches for Sir John Franklin’s lost Arctic expedition, the Crimean War and the Suez Canal project. Astute editorial decisions ensured that the content mirrored the evolving concerns of readers, enabling ‘the Nautical’ to remain popular for nearly two centuries. It is a fascinating source of data, news and opinions for maritime, economic and social historians, genealogists, and shipping enthusiasts.

The Nautical Magazine for 1872

The *Nautical Magazine* first appeared in 1832, and was published monthly well into the twenty-first century. It covers a wide range of subjects, including navigation, meteorology, technology and safety. An important resource for maritime historians, it also includes reports on military and scientific expeditions and on current affairs. The 1872 volume, the second in the ‘new series’, begins by stating the journal’s updated editorial policy: it will now include a regular digest of recent maritime law cases and other official news. Part 1 (January–June) reports on the meetings of learned societies, and scientific matters including health and steam power. It contains serialised essays on the propulsion of ancient galleys, and on the structures of the British constitution and government. It also discusses aspects of trade, commercial disputes and insurance, and lifesaving and its cost. A new departure is the inclusion of colourful stories, ‘yarns’ and ballads.

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