

BRINY EN GARDE!

Being in the Main a Game of the Life of a Gentleman Seeking Fame & Fortune in the Royal Navy at the Time of the Napoleonic Wars, and his Several Companions

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“Where a goat can go, a man can go. And where a man can go, he can drag a gun.”

~Major-General William Phillips



News from the Pit

By Angus Brewster

CAPTAIN DAI LLWYDIUM-CRYSTAL, I'm sorry, that's **SIR** Captain Dai Llwydium-Crystal, seems to have sold the benefits of winter service to Master & Commander Wisdom Codrington. The Hornet, including James Blonde and Geoffrey Wyndham, left port on the first of the month in search of fame, fortune and the French. Also headed to sea was Eric Olthwaite. When he accepted an offer to ride a willing lass last month, he did not realize that "Willing Lass" was the name of a cutter out to the blockade. Still, Olthwaite made the best of it by joining the Enterprise as Able Seaman so he could carry that rank on the Caligula. Shame he couldn't convince anyone to make him Purser. Culvallion Du Gilbert, new to the Royal Marines, decided he preferred his chances at sea to the parties of

London. Dick Exe was accepted onto the Achilles and was made Neptune's Captain, Faucher became Gunner on the Thermopylae, and both made the best of their month in London.

One of the more intriguing ploys was Master & Commander Peter Plain's attempt to have the Devonshire sent to sea. A source found a draft of Earl Miller's reply: *Master and Commander Plain, Thank you for your letter but I suggest in future that you write to a duelling master and not an admiral when you mistakenly think that your pen is mightier than your sword. In all probability it is, but sending your opponent to sea costs the navy money while learning to use your sword and perhaps beating him would cost you money. Please think through your actions and their implications. Feel free to volunteer yourself in future and don't ask others to make the sacrifices that you wouldn't yourself. In honour, Miller.*

The expected leaving of and joining other clubs included Baron Douglas, from Buttons to the Almanack, Sir Llwydium-Crystal, from Lloyds to the Dolphin and Andy Boddy from the Pit to Lloyds. You'll miss Doris, Boddy! And while it did not happen until the middle of the month, Boddy also got a new place to live, and had the cash to buy it! The town house in Hackney is cozy, and Leta Blair has been spending his money freely on fancy furniture.

Two new gentlemen were observed entering London at the end of the month. Lindley Barron is the bastard

son of a tradesman with high hopes pitted against laziness. If he discovers the easy way to success, perhaps he will share it with the rest of us. Bertrand Cressac is a French bastard who claims to be on the English side despite his heritage. His father is a lawyer in Charente, for as much good that will do him. Cressac wants to fight the Revolutionary dictators of France who he thinks are worse than the previous ones. Good luck, or should I say Bon Chance?

With that, I shall leave you to the usual news sources to report the triumphs and tragedies of the month.

Heroism in Unexpected Places

DISASTER UPON CALAMITY beset His Majesties Blockade Squadron this month. Based on supposedly sound information, HMS Tickler and Caligula were ordered to take post around the Île de Ré on explicit orders from on high to prevent French men-o-war sailing from Rochefort. It would seem that this information was but a ruse, for no sooner had the two ships arrived at their destination that three French frigates of the Brest Fleet broke out from their home port and were seen off the coast of Plymouth!



Showing what some may think as better judgement than their superiors who had sent them to the their current location, the captains of the two ships quickly decided on a new plan of action; Captain Tooker would take the Caligula north to the Passage de l'Iroise and enforce the blockade of Brest whilst Captain Digby and the Tickler would stay around the Île in case there should be any substance to the rumours that had caused a senior member of the Admiralty to give them their current orders. It is said that none other than the First Sea Lord, Viscount O'Groats, gave the command, but this paper has no evidence of this fact other than his lordship has seemed rather chastened around court this month. It is suffice to say of the Tickler that all its crew had to worry about for the rest of the month was frost-bite and high seas, although the inherent abilities of the newly volunteered Culvallion Du Gilbert of the Royal Marines was quickly recognised by his superior and he was promoted to Subaltern; the same however could not be said for the Caligula!

The crew of that brave ship spent the entire month in skirmish after skirmish as the smaller ships of the Brest Fleet attempted to join their compatriots out on the high seas! The salty tars of the Caligula were never found wanting in their endeavours and not one Frog ship was left in any doubt which nation was the master of the sea. This tale was sadly to have a mournful ending however! The great Captain Tooker was seriously injured when a frozen hawser snapped; its fag end striking him across the breast, breaking several ribs causing one to enter his lung. With regret this paper must

announce that he succumbed to his injuries and died last week.

An incident worth of note happened on the cutter bringing supplies and impressed men to join the Caligula this month! As the ship made its way across the Channel it chanced upon a small French ship. A whiff of British gunpowder was enough to see the curs to drop their colours and a boarding party was sent aboard. The Captain of the cutter had naively assigned none of his own crew to this task, solely those recently taken into employment by the press gangs. These men quickly rounded up the crew of the enemy vessel, but then many of them decided that this could be their chance to escape from service! It is likely that they would have made good their break for freedom had it not been for the bravery of one man, Eric Olthwaite; an Able Seaman more recently of His Majesties Ship Enterprise. Being make of solid English Oak and a true servant of

the King, he stood firm against the mutineers. Killing two of the ringleaders in rapid succession with his pistols cooled the ardour of the rebels, giving the Captain the opportunity to send across more loyal men to bolster Mr Olthwaite. For his bravery it has been recommended that Olthwaite be promoted to Midshipman with immediate effect and the hero was allowed to keep a few trinkets he found aboard the captured ship.

Don' Crystal and the crew of the Vanguard continued to enjoy the company of the Spanish navy based around the Balearic Islands this month. The first week of the month gave the newly knighted captain the chance to greet the Master and Commander of Hornet, Mr Codrington; the mulatto commander having volunteered his ship had sailed it south, mayhap hoping to find warmer climes such as those of the place of his birth!

After last month's dismissal of the French invasion fleet, it was determined by Don Estelle, the Spanish that the best disposition for the two British ships would be interfering with the French ships supplying the newly reinforced Army of Italy. Since the replenishment of General Schérer's army prior to November's battle at Loano by a lucky brig, it was felt that a more vigorous enforcement of the blockade around Genoa was needed!

As usual the French seemed determined to stay in port rather than face the might of His Majesty but finally in the heavy storms of the third week of January a few of them seemed to finally find out what it really meant to be a man and a small flotilla of cargo vessels accompanied by two warships broke cover from Genoa. Being the junior ship, HMS Hornet followed in line astern behind the 74 gun Vanguard. Seeing their approach, the enemy men-o-war set themselves ready to protect the freighters. Captain Dai Llwydium-Crystal's ship fired first and was soon engaged in a pitched battle with the larger enemy ship.

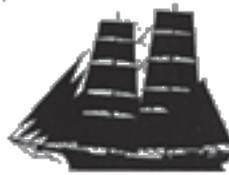
Seeing no way to bring his own guns to bear on that particular combat, Master & Commander Codrington used the better speed and manoeuvrability of the Hornet to sail past and engage the smaller warship; the previous month spent in dry dock having her hull cleared of detritus was clearly time well spent.

Mr Codrington seemed pleased with the aptitude of his crew, for this was the first time he'd had the opportunity to see them carry out their duties under fire. Lieutenant Blonde relished his duties under his new captain;

as officer commanding the gun deck he managed to ensure the timing of the firing of each volley was perfectly on the azimuth of the wave so no shot was lost.

The Hornet's particular battle lasted around an hour with little major damage being inflicted on either combatant before the Frenchman made his escape thanks to a lucky shot that damaged the British ships rudder; the cannonball hit the water to the stern of the ship, bounced and struck the starboard tiller rope, breaking it in two! Unable to manoeuvre, not only could the Hornet not follow, it risked being lost in the storm!

Master and Commander Codrington asked for volunteers to go over the side to try and affix a new line to the rudder, promising a commission for the first man to step forward. Only one person was brave enough to risk the cold sea and the flailing rudder, Midshipman Geoffrey Wyndham. Tied to a rope, he was lowered down into the sea and, after picking up the new tiller rope he swam to the rudder. Three of four times the great piece of oak that forms the Hornet's rudder struck the young man flinging him away, bloodied, but each time he swam back until, at last his task was complete and the ship was safe. By the time he was hauled back on board Mr Wyndham was unconscious with numerous contusions to his head and body and a chest full of salt water. Nothing less than a month's bed rest will see him fit again for duty, but when that time comes he will do so as a Lieutenant.



At the same time as all this, Captain Crystal and the men of the Vanguard were busy destroying the hull of their foe, the Neuf-Thermidor, taking considerable damage and injuries themselves. The salty tars of the British ship would have continued exchanging fire with their foe (named, it would seem, after the date in their new calendar that their brutal leader Maximilien Robespierre was overthrown last year) until one or other belligerent was sunk save that French knaves turned tail and ran for home. Due to the amount of damage his ship had already taken, the Welsh Captain did not risk taking on the guns in the forts that protect the entrance to the port; instead he made himself busy ensuring that the cargo ships found the nearest safe harbour!

As January came to a close, a cutter joined the two British ships in the port of Mahon carrying reports and orders from the Admiralty. Whilst the newly promoted Lieutenant Wyndham was gingerly loaded on board,

ready to be transported back to London to recuperate, a young officer presented himself to Master & Commander Codrington. "Sir, before we left a Miss Hilfinger begged me to deliver this missive to you; she looked most distressed Sir."

Wisdom took the envelope and broke the seal. As he read the contents the colour drained from his face and he slumped onto a nearby barrel. "Dear Lord," he uttered, "what a terrible thing."



NEW YEAR NUPTIALS DRAW CURIOUS CROWD TO LONDON DOCKS

THE EVENT OF THE MONTH was the spectacular celebration of the wedding between the ever-popular Lieutenant Gabriel Bathurst and his beautiful fiancée, Joan Fullins. Dawn broke on a crisp wintery morning in the second week of January. The air was cold, but not a cloud marred the skies as Lieutenant Bathurst waited patiently on the deck of HMS Fiddler's Green with the whole ship's company turned out in their finest uniforms.

The bosun and master's mate had been busy all morning under the watchful eye of Midshipman Rostenburg, and the ship shone with brightly polished brass and fresh-scrubbed wood. Not a halyard or belaying pin out of place, despite the usual traffic of victuallers, tradesmen, port officials and local children who were happy just to see a splendid ship bedecked in all her glory. Indeed it had been no small matter to clear the vessel of uninvited hangers on before Captain, the Viscount O'Mally, was piped aboard in the company of Miss Fullins' mother, to whom he conferred the comforts of his cabin while he stood on deck and watched his men go about the final preparations. This included the mounting of no small quantity of blue and gold bunting, as well as the signal flags spelling out "Good luck on your wedding, we hope you won't need it, Sir!"

Whilst the Fiddler's Green was presenting itself as a model of naval efficiency, the same could not be said for the quayside. The myriad onlookers mingled with off-duty sailors from other ships, salty tars and friendly tarts alike. Indeed the crowd grew to such a size that a small detachment of dragoons was stationed to escort the procession of carriages as the society elite made their way to the ship.

Lieutenant Bathurst did well to hide any pre-marital nerves, but was seen to check his fob-watch several times as the sun slipped past its zenith and the guests began to arrive. The crowd cheered and laughed as two

carriages appeared to race each other down the road, narrowly missing Mr Dibbler's sausage stand! The impromptu race won, Master & Commander Peter Plain stepped down from his carriage and offered his hand to the lovely Caroline Cadger. They were accompanied by Midshipman Caesar and his fair Justine Kent, who took up station a respectful distance behind their superiors before all four went aboard.

The other coachman hurried to open the door for his passenger, none other than Captain McBean of the Devonshire, who looked sorely unimpressed but managed to rearrange his uniform before assisting Muriel Merriweather. Seeing a pair of sullen urchins, McBean lifted them up onto his broad shoulders for a few moments so they could have a better view of the arrivals.

The other guests arrived in quick succession, and the crowd cheered the sight of Captain D'Ascoyne and his wife Nancy, enjoying a rare social trip without their son George. Another two carriages disgorged a quartet of Thermopylae's crew and their ladies, (Captain Oglby, Lts Darkwing and Etheridge, and Subaltern Foucher). The last guests aboard were the Mercury's Lt Burke and able seaman St. John of the Dreadnought, with their ladies.

As the winter sun smiled on the crowd, finally a gaily decorated carriage made its slow way through the cheering crowds before coming to a halt by the gangplank. Mr Fullins stepped out in a new morning coat, and with pride in his eyes escorted his daughter onto the silent ship. All were entranced as Joan carefully took each step closer to forecastle, ladies gasping in delight at the exquisite workmanship of the dress, the elegant veil, the bouquet of white hothouse roses that only served to accentuate her beauty. The strain's of Jeremiah Clark's trumpet voluntary hung on the air and added to the sense of occasion.

Captain O'Mally presided over the wedding ceremony himself, delivering a brief but entertaining soliloquy on the sanctity of marriage. "The love of a good wife is the compass of a man's soul" he said "...for no matter how many times a naval officer must steer into danger,

their mutual affection will ensure that the husband returns safe home to port and the arms of his eternal love, his wife.” To much cheering, the veil was lifted and the couple kissed before the bride threw her bouquet into the waiting crowd of ladies, where it fell into the hands of the charming Pippa Middleton, who blushed deeply before casting her eye over to her strapping Marine.

At this point the wind began to change, tugging at the bunting and the second signal hurriedly hoisted, which appears to have read “Enemy in sight, prepare to board her,” although your erstwhile columnist may have misread the flags in the stiffening breeze.

Lieutenant Bathurst took this as his cue to declare “to the carriages... Lloyd’s awaits!” and with that the happy couple were festooned with rice and confetti as they made their way to the waiting coaches, flanked by a hastily directed guard of honour, swords held aloft, under the direction of Peter Plain.

At Lloyd’s all had been well-prepared. Guests were relieved of winter coats swiftly, and in their place, steaming cups of mulled wine enriched with spices, orange and a hint of stronger spirit, were pressed into eager hands to ward off the chill. Such was the press of the gathered crowd that some bumping was observed, and indeed two groups of gentlemen quite forgot the happy occasion to step outside and conclude private business that needed more than mere words to settle.

Not long after, an immaculate servant, in the dress of a Hindoo fella, banged a great gong and summoned everyone to sit and dine. Candlelight twinkled on polished glass and silver everywhere. Guests were delighted to find a hearty tomato soup wait-



Happenings at the Almanack

I PRIDE MYSELF on getting the story. Whether my source is a stablehand or a loose-lipped lady, I’ve always had the facts — but I found myself thwarted by the Almanack on the first of January. New member Baron Robert Erasmus Douglas managed to maintain the utmost secrecy inside the club that week.

Fortunately a source caught up with Sir Sylvester McBean and Muriel Merriweather, just outside the club

ing to warm them some more, and this dish was followed by perfectly cooked steak fillets served with a port and pepper jus and accompanied by potatoes, ingeniously cut like thick ship’s planked and scorched in oil to make them crunchy on the outside but wonderfully light on the inside. This was helped down with ample glasses of claret, rumoured to have been taken from a French frigate in last year’s fighting. As if this dish was not enough, dessert was a flotilla of chocolate galleons, whose hulls were breached to reveal a confection of rich sweet cherries suspended in frozen cream.

Dessert was followed by a serving of champagne and a series of witty toasts before the guests were able to get up from the table and mingle more freely. Peter Plain, looking a little in pain with every movement, was seen congratulating midshipman Caesar on some matter and was heard to say “...well done, that’s shown him that there is plenty of fire in the Enterprise, and more than he can weather.”

Across the room, the officers of the Thermopylae made an animated assortment, and much joy was heard from in their ranks, pressed as they were around their Captain who also seemed to have some trouble standing for too long... occasionally the group would cast their eye about the room as if searching for something or someone, bursting into laughter if they espied James St John who looked less than pleased.

The happy couple were an island in a sea of contented faces pressing forward to wish them joy of their marriage until the band struck up a waltz and Lieutenant Bathurst led his wife in a spirited display of nimble footwork before being joined by the other couples for an evening of dancing and merriment.

The party went on well into the night, and many of the grooms and coachmen needed to be woken with steaming cups of soup before taking their charges back across London to their homes. What an incredible evening!

mid-week. The pair were bundled against the cold and waiting for their coach to be brought round. Something was amiss with McBean’s stance, was he injured? My source, Mr. Z, was likewise heavily cloaked and managed to strike up some small talk.

Miss Merriweather said there was some confusion with servants and their invitation must have been lost, but they made their way into the club. They were welcomed with warm drinks and made conversation with the other guests. Several guests were given pouches

with coins. Whilst her Sylvester had gone into the garden with another gentleman, presumably to gaze at some astronomical phenomenon, an object was shown around to the ladies.

“It was a wax figure, a poppet I think, because it had pins and hawthorns stuck into it. It was hideous! Hideous! Caroline...”

“Caroline Cadger? Did she have something to do with this?” Mr. Z tells me he interjected.

“What I was about to say,” said Miss Merriweather, “was Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales, is rumoured to use such a thing against her husband. To bring one to a party hosted by his Aide is, at best, in very poor taste and at worst, well let’s just hope His Royal Highness doesn’t learn about it because I hear he can have a foul temper.”

“And why are the two of you out here, instead of inside?” asked Mr. Z.

Sir McBean was about to answer, but Muriel spoke first, “Out in the garden, Sylvester found this little lamb...”

“It’s a goat,” said McBean.

“Right a little goat, so young and tiny, still a suckling. It must have wandered in and got caught up in a piece of rope. Someone left some cornmeal there, not that the lamb was old enough to eat it, really...”

“Goat, dear, a kid goat. The cornmeal, it were spread out in an arc or circle of some sort...”

“Goat, of course, and Sylvester brought the little creature inside, it was shivering and would not have lasted much longer. My housekeeper keeps a dairy goat, yes, I suppose it is a goat, and she’s very friendly, the nanny I mean although the housekeeper is kind, too. This little kid’s best chance is if the nanny will foster it.”

Just then a little black head popped out of the front of McBean’s cloak, with a plaintive “Nyaaaaaa.” That explained McBean’s odd posture.

“We can come back, after we get the kid settled.” said McBean. Muriel said she might just prefer to spend some time in church, instead. With that their carriage arrived to collect them and Mr. Z was unable to gather anything else.

Semper Fi — First party

RED JACKETS WANTED TO BE THE FIRST to celebrate the New Year. To that end, Subaltern Cleophas Faucher and the lovely Pippa Middleton hosted a party at the Red Coat in week one. This party was for everyone and anyone, with all costs covered by the host. Only good behavior prevented some of the not-so-suave gentlemen to present bills for reimbursement, as a dress uniform worn is dress never to be used again.

The theme for the party was “Death to the French,” to celebrate the beginning of a new year that will mark the destruction of the vile and cowardly French. No doubt everyone knew better times were coming, as Cleophas Faucher used his position as Gunner to precede each toast with a gun shot from one of the 4 pound guns.

A good time was had by the all, although some time for shop talk was had in the garden by Gunner Faucher and Gunner St. John, together with Captain Oglby.

Must be something regarding powder and such.

The guest of honour was Captain William Hornchurch Oglby of the Thermopylae, who along with the lovely Rebecca Dorrit presented the hosts with a model replica of the Thermopylae. Closer inspection showed it was complete with miniature red coated Marines!

Friends and other guests came from many ships – the winter months being the time friends can really have some quality time together.

Able Seaman James St. John escorted Samantha Stevens. From Fiddler’s Green came Midshipman Frederick Jackston Rostenburg, showing off the wealthy and influential Barbara Allen.

Lieutenant John Bernard Burke of the Mercury, with Catherine Lane at his side, enjoyed the noble company and explained Who’s Who to Able Seaman Eric Olthwaite of the Enterprise.

All had a hell of a time!

Cupid’s Arrows

AS MORE GENTLEMEN have found their Venus, not as many are courting — but their stories became more dramatic. Take Andy Boddy, for example, who has attained the rank of Lieutenant on the Achilles. He

decided to take the next step by asking for the hand of his lady love, Leta Blair. His carriage took them to a restaurant in Oxford street, where he toasted her beauty and charms. It wasn’t until the carriage ride home that he asked the driver to stop on the perfect, still winter evening, with a view of the Navy ships in one direction

and the city in the other. It was there that he presented his Miss Blair with a diamond and agate ring. Her answer was yes, and the pair began to make their plans.

Emily Westmoor caught the eye of Royal Marine Captain Peter Heywood. He knew the wealthy lady would not be impressed with expensive baubles, so he went for an gesture from his heart. Heywood composed a poem, wrote it out on a good piece of vellum, and had it framed for her. Maybe he lacked poetic talent, or maybe his penmanship was faulty, but when Heywood called in week 1 she would not come to the door.

Undaunted, Captain Heywood consulted a few shopkeepers and came up with an idea: maybe instead of trying to demonstrate his abilities, he should encourage the lady to explore her own. The gift he sent in week 2 was a sketchpad and charcoals, delivered by an elderly art tutor. By the time Heywood called, the lady was giddy and dragged him inside! She insisted upon making his portrait and showed off her other sketches. To be honest, her drawing was about as good as his poetry, but the pair discovered a great fondness for each other.

Social Climbing: At What Cost?

WHITES WAS THE SCENE of some controversy; His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales nearly snubbed his Aide who was there in week three. “Laws regarding witchcraft changed a century ago and rightfully so – who cares if you hire a gypsy fortune-teller for a party. But this, whatever it was, at the Almanack, I am not pleased and cannot be associated with such a spectacle!”

Congratulations were offered for the birth of Charlotte Augusta earlier that month. While the prince accepted the good wishes, he did nor have much good to say about Caroline of Brunswick. “She has the worst personality in Germany, admittedly up against some pretty stiff competition.”

His Highness changed his tune, however, when he clapped eyes on the charming Baroness Serena. He was sharing a settee with the Lady Jersey Frances Villiers, and said that there was room for Serena on his other side. She seemed reluctant at first and looked anxiously to her husband. With his mention of a Scottish arms inventor waved aside, Baron Douglas was sent on an errand to fetch some paperwork. Apparently the prince changed his will, leaving Caroline a pittance and his fortune to Maria Fitzherbert!

Name	Title	Att	SL	Gent
Serena (Samuels) Douglas	Baroness	M B I	16.0	RED
Muriel Merryweather			15.0	SMM
Caroline Cadger		W	15.0	PP
Flora de Bries		B W	13.0	
Harriet Hilfinger			13.0	WC
Irene Castle		W	13.0	
Julie Scott			13.0	
Elsie Taylor			12.0	EEE
Janet (Carter) Darkwing	Lady	M B	12.0	RD
Octavia Marvell		B I	11.0	SOL
Rebecca Morrison			11.0	
Joan (Fullins) Bathurst		M B	10.5	GAB
Beatrice Chippendale			10.0	
Emily Westmoor		W	10.0	PH
Allison O'Neil			10.0	
Justine Kent		B	10.0	JOC
Nancy (Hall) D'Ascoyne	Lady	M I	9.0	HDA
Leta Blair		E B	9.0	AB
Pippa Middleton		I	8.0	CF
Anne Bonny		W	8.0	
Rebecca Dorrit			8.0	WHO
Barbara Allen		W I	8.0	FJR
Samantha Stevens		B I	7.0	JSJ
Christine Jenkins		B	7.0	MOS
Liza Peterson		I	7.0	DLC
Gwendolyn Hotspur			5.0	
Mary Lamb			5.0	
Amy Underhill			5.0	
Catherine Lane		I	5.0	JBB
Sara Pati			4.0	
Eileen Roberts		W	4.0	
Agnes Nutter			3.0	

Upon returning from his task, Douglas could not find Serena at the Almanack. He was told that Lady Jersey and His Royal Highness insisted that Serena have a tour of the club, “The view is lovely from the rooftop.” When they returned hours later, Serena had no comments. One can only imagine the conversation — or lack thereof — between the baron and baroness on the ride home.

Elsewhere at the clubs, Lloyds was quite popular. Lieutenant Royston enjoyed Janet’s company there in week 1, the two of them as much in love as ever.

In week 3, Lieutenant Andy Boddy and Midshipman Frederick Jackston Rostenburg were both at Lloyds with their ladies. Barbara Allen enjoyed the wine and musicians. Leta was impressed by Boddy’s luck at

gambling, winning each of the four wagers he placed!

Boddy was back in week 4, again at the table. It seemed his luck was holding with two wins, then changed with a loss and a cut. His attention turned to Leta, and he beamed as she showed off the ring. Newlyweds Lieu-

tenant and Joan Bathurst were happy to admire, and the ladies chatted away about wedding fashions.

Lieutenant John Bernard Burke was at the Pit in the fourth week, and tried his luck at gambling there. Lady Luck was not with him as he lost both times.

Devonshire Duo Delighted at the Dolphin!

CAPTAIN MCBEAN held his ship's company party at the Dolphin club accompanied by the delectable Muriel Merryweather. Despite a dismal downpour, the drenched Devonshire crew did their duty and duly detailed themselves off to drink at their captain's dinner. First Lieutenant Spratt attentively took up station at his captain's side, laughing at all the right moments and doing his best to distract his commander from the sorry sight of the empty seat where Lt Hoggett should have been. Indeed, this appeared to be the second month in which the errant lieutenant has erred – how much longer can he try McBean's patience?

Dinner was duly delivered, and the captain was heard instructing Spratt to "...get out there and get this crew roster filled... no midshipmen to stand duty, no able seamen to manage the crew... if this goes on much longer I'll see to it that you spend the rest of your days in the Navy on a customs brig off the Hebrides!" Perhaps the best entertainment seen that evening was later in the night when, with a glass of fine port in one hand, the captain regaled his crew with the story of his latest disagreement with another gentleman of the sea.

Meanwhile, across town at Lloyd's, Captain D'Ascoyne welcomed his ship's company to his monthly dinner. The Achilles' crew were in fine form despite the desperate weather, all the happier for seeing the captain's wife looking well and out in society once more. Newly commissioned Midshipman Exe excitedly worked his way around the room, torn between the earthy company of the hands and his new station as an Officer. But he did his best to look smart in his issued uniform (just think how much better when he gets his own), even if he did prefer a flagon of ale to the Spanish red that was being served to the other Officers.

Lieutenant Boddy's absence was coolly remarked upon, but RM Captain Heywood and the effervescent Miss Westmoor did good service in his place, assisting the captain in managing the evening and keeping the tars in check. He even led the initiation of the new

Neptune's Captain into the ship's company, an event that involved each of the Neptune's equerries (all six!) presenting Dick Exe with three covered jugs of ale. The game being a simple one of choice and consequence: choose a flagon, drink it down, and then ready yourself to do again. Midshipman Exe did well, choosing five ales and one tankard of sea water!

Lloyd's was the scene of more captain's revelry at the end of the month, when William Oglby hosted his growing crew to another evening of fine fare and welcome wine. The captain, resplendent in immaculate dress uniform with the ravishing Rebecca Dorrit at his side, welcomed his company into Lloyd's with steaming mugs of mulled cider to fight off the night's chill. Lt Darkwing was constantly at his captain's side, roaring with laughter at all the jokes and paying scant attention to anyone else.

Lieutenant Etheridge and Seaman Lucius Yeo were both notable by their absence, however the evening was buoyed by the attendance of Subaltern Faucher of the Royal Marines and the perfectly proportioned Pippa Middleton. To celebrate Faucher's appointment as gunner, a mock gun run was improvised utilising the club's plate silver, a marble statue of Venus, and an obstacle course comprised of numerous chairs and tables in the public room!

Afterwards, Faucher and the Captain were seen in deep conversation, both rubbing tender limbs and making excited motions with their arms as they discussed some finer points of swordsmanship. The Thermopylae is definitely a ship of fighting men, and mightily pleased they appeared to be! The fighting talk clearly gave both men a prodigious thirst which they attended to again and again, and the ladies had to support their beaus as they made their way back to the waiting coaches in the early hours of the morning.



Voyage Into the New Year with the Enterprise Crew

The third week of the New Year brought in a party with the elegance expected of its host. Peter Plain invited many levels of society to an extravaganza at Buttons. The dazzling and charming Miss Caroline Cadger was on his arm for the entire time and at times it looked as if it was her strength that was holding up the captain who proudly wore his well-earned battle scars. They struck as a handsome couple as they welcomed members of the loyal crew of the Enterprise and other popular gentlemen and ladies.

Lieutenant Royston Darkwing thrilled the ladies as he recited sonnets, it seems, much to the delight of his lovely wife, Janet. Time spent in the hospital was filled with reading and memorizing his favourites. Many commented on how well Royston has recovered from the wounds he received in the past year.

There were expressions of slight boredom on the beautiful faces of Rebecca Dorrit and Elsie Taylor when

William Hornchurch Oglby and Edward Ernest Etheridge launched into talks of military matters and life on the sea, each story braver than the last. But the night was won as music began and the captain and his lieutenant were “forced” to stop reminiscing and danced the night away with their ladies.

Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst of the Fiddler’s Green spent most of the evening beaming at his captivating wife, Joan. That was until the dice came out and Mr. Bathurst drifted off to the tables. A great bit of fun was poked at him during the evening as it seems his wife is a tad bit better at rolling the bones than her chagrined husband.

Like the loyal crew members they are, Midshipman and Neptune’s Captain Julius Octavian Caesar and Able Seaman Eric Olthwaite were always near their Captain, as towards the end of the evening he seemed to be wearing out. Plain refused to allow his wounds to drag him away from his party, his loyal crew, and fellow Naval comrades, and they all celebrated into the wee hours of the morning.

Burns Honoured at Almanack

THE FOURTH WEEK’S PARTY of note was the captain’s dinner for the Dreadnought, where Baron Douglas invited guests to honor poet Robert Burns. The Almanack was transformed into a Scottish manor house with roaring fires, stag antlers, and blankets of colorful wool plaid. Guests were plied with scotch whiskey upon their arrival, and particularly after Sir McBean and Peter Plain took what has become their regular tour of the garden.

Dinner included haggis from the Baron’s usual supplier, as well as neeps and tatties, and a plethora of game meats, much to the relief of Peter Plain. Cranachan was served for dessert, and trays of shortbread and clottie dumplings were available throughout the room afterwards. Conversation flowed from tales of battles to the latest gossip. Octavia Marvell seemed annoyed that Sir Shaun O’Leary still had not managed to learn her name and insisted on calling her “Olivia.”

The first to recite a poem was Midshipman Stanhope who chose “Address to the Toothache.”

My curse upon your venom’d stang,
That shoots my tortur’d gums along,
An’ thro’ my luggies mony a twang,
Wi’ gnawing vengeance,

Tearing my nerves wi’ bitter pang,
Like racking engines!

Christine Jenkins was thrilled that he had memorized all six stanzas and lead the applause afterward. Baron Douglas stood and announced the next recitation, “A lovely lady very dear to me will now entertain you with “Ode to a Mouse.”

To the surprise of many, two ladies got up and approached the front of the room. Baroness Serena stood before them with her usual poise and grace, and Caroline Cadger, perhaps not to be outdone, pulled up a chair and stood on it!

“Wee, sleekit, cow’rin, tim’rous beastie, O, what a panic’s in thy breastie!” began Serena in a soft voice with an excellent Scottish brogue, no doubt coached by her husband.

“Small, crafty, cowering, timorous little beast, O, what a panic is in your little breast!” said Caroline, the Anglicized version of the poem, considerably louder. Both ladies continued for the rest of the stanza and into the next, neither ceding the floor to the other.



About that time a footman appeared and whispered something to Baron Douglas. Serena immediately understood what had happened by his expression, her face went ashen and she fainted. Little George D'Ascoyne had lost his battle for life, which was why his parents were not at the party.

Sir McBean, who was godfather to the child, found that the staff had his and Muriel's cloaks ready and their carriage brought around, so they could go and attend to their friends.

Once Caroline realised what happened, she started screaming and saying over and over again that it was

not her fault and she did not do it. Staff escorted her from the room as others gathered around Serena until she came to, which she did with Baron Douglas wafting a glass of Scotch under her nose.

The evening quieted considerably, with the attentive staff making sure everyone had plenty of drinks. Word came back that George was buried the next day and the D'Ascoynes would not be accepting callers just yet.

Caroline Cadger was not seen again that week, and rumour had it that she had been taken to Bethlehem Royal Hospital. Further rumours are that she was transported in His Royal Highness' own carriage, but who knows what is reliable in the dark of night?

Low Water, High Spirits

THE CLASSROOMS OF GREENWICH saw good use this first month of the new year. Perhaps this was due to the informative, thought provoking lectures being given by its lecturers or mayhap it was due to the warm grog being served after each class!

The students of the first week were entertained by Alexander Dalrymple, the newly appointed Hydrographer to the Admiralty. Poor Dick Exe, the newly promoted Midshipman of HMS Achilles looking proud as he could in his issued uniform, nearly choked on his rum when he heard Mr Dalrymple's title. His distress was not eased when his fellow Midshipman, Julius Octavian Caesar of the Enterprise, whispered in his ear that the man's job was to "Establish the topographical and tidal nature of the seas and oceans." Further assistance was then given by Lieutenant Edward Ernest Etheridge of the Thermopylae.

"Dick, dear chap, take tides for example. His job is to measure the depth of the sea at its zenith," with that he picked up Midshipman Exe's rum glass and scribed a line where the fluid inside came to, "and at its nadir." He then proceeded to take a large gulp of the contents and then marked the new level. "At sea, that is the result of tidal movement!"

Dick looked even more dazed after that dissertation and spent most of the rest of the day repeatedly topping

up his rum mumbling "Zenith," and then drinking it to the toast "Nadir!"

The second week of lectures saw the return of a more circumspect Dick Exe. The poor fellow hid his ration of grog when Marc Orpheus Stanhope, Midshipman of the Dreadnought and fellow Neptune's Captain, offered to assist him working through completing a project on 'ranging.' "I b'aint getting caught up in drinking games in class again."

The same Midshipman Stanhope was still at the Academy during the penultimate week of January, where he could be heard regaling his colleague from the Dreadnought, Able Seaman St John, of Mr Exe's new aversion to 'drinking games.' This seemed to help them while away their weeks education in use of a ship's log.

By the end of the month, Able Seaman St John was joined at Greenwich by two more students; fortunately neither of these caused him to replicate the unseemly events he had been involved in the previous month! The returning Midshipman Caesar and Captain Peter Heywood of the Royal Marines seemed to both show a natural talent when it comes to sketching coastal features. Neither are likely to be invited to show their works at the Royal Academy of Arts but they were certainly good enough for Alexander Dalrymple and his plan to chart the coastline of the world.

The Seedier Side

THE STREETS OF COVENT GARDEN were quiet this month. Many reasons for the desertion of London's seedier establishments could be proposed;

a new found moral fibre within the gentlemen that would normally attend such establishments perhaps or potentially a crackdown by London's watchmen! More likely however is that the usual clientele that attend the brothels had simply run out of money!

Dick Exe, Midshipman of the Achilles, was one who chanced his luck in the City's seedy underbelly during the final week of this month. Finding himself outside a house named the 'Lady Julian,' after the ship that took around two-hundred and fifty depraved women to the colony of New South Wales some six years ago, he ventured inside; after all there is nothing a sailor likes

more than finding himself aboard a ship (or even an establishment named after a ship). Insofar as one can tell from the look on Mr Exe's face as he left the Lady Jane, the berth he found was more than passable.

Having taken the King's Shilling after a previous foray into such areas, the fellow in question took to the protection of a carriage for his journey home

Flashing Blades Test Each Other's Mettle in Seven Sessions of Swordplay!

THE JANUARY AIR may be cold enough to chill the bones of ordinary men, but the hot-blooded heroes of His Majesty's Navy didn't let that deter them from repeatedly steering a course for danger around London's clubs this month.

The flurry of fury was first seen in the walled garden of the usually quiet Almanack, when one of the Fleet's heavier hitters, who now has quite a reputation for swift settlement of matters of honour, dropped his gaze onto a slighter gentleman from the wrong side of the Fleet. Some words passed between the two men and then they left the common room in stiff silence. Our man in the know informs us that, despite the cold, the slender combatant threw off his cloak and rolled down his collar to reveal a mass of bandages still in place from a former disagreement. His burlier opponent is rumoured to have said that there was no honour in besting a man already wounded, but if his opponent insisted on pressing his demand for satisfaction then he would fight left-handed and even up the symmetry of scars. A light snowfall drifted across the space between the adversaries, and for a while little happened as each tested the other's sense of distance and balance on the slippery flagstones. With three quick steps the smaller protagonist closed the gap but his wild slash was easily blocked. This move was followed with an elegant flick of the wrist to cut at his opponent's face, but the bigger man merely jumped back out of the way before delivering an awkward slash to the outstretched arm. With a clatter of steel, the cutlass fell from the wounded man's arm, who bowed and surrendered in quiet dignity. One can only wonder what the host, Captain Douglas, may have thought of it all: perhaps the glass was too well-drained?

Meanwhile across town, the Red Coat's courtyard rang with the sound of two successive demonstrations

of strength and skill as another bravo of the blade engaged all-comers from a rival ship. Matching harsh liquor with harsh language, he soon found himself confronting two would-be opponents. Although one of the gentlemen, in marine scarlet, was keen to rebuke this over-confident oaf, he stepped aside and gave way to seniority in the line.

The sabres drawn, a moment of pause was followed by both fighters leaping forward in the attack. The celebrated sabreur's lunge found his smaller opponent's shoulder at the same time the counter-slash scored a scarlet signature across his left flank. The slighter man recovered more quickly, delivering a cut in seconde but this did nothing to slow his enemy's slash to his left arm. The battle raged, with another cut from the quicker man answered with a second probing lunge at the already wounded shoulder. With this third wound, the slighter man offered his sword and his surrender was curtly accepted.

Despite his injuries, the bravo then gestured to the waiting marine to advance and be dealt with in the same manner. Again the big man opened with his extensive reach to pierce the crimson coat with a deep lunge, which was quickly answered with a slash to the outstretched arm before closing and delivering a hefty kick in the groin just as the victor of the first match drew back his arm in a half-hearted slash. With a heavy groan, the big man collapsed to the ground, fair purple in the face, such was the force of the timely punt from his second opponent. Barely able to breathe, let alone stand, he reluctantly surrendered and tasted the bitter dregs of defeat at last.



The second week of January was a grand affair to celebrate the marriage of Lieutenant Bathurst and his lovely fiancée, Joan Fullins. However not everyone was feeling the love, as yet again two erstwhile opponents found themselves confronting each other over the canapes at Lloyds.

The winner of their previous encounters looked at his nemesis and said quietly... "Sir, you look in no fit state to make daggers at me... but if you are game, I am happy to provide you with another brief lesson in swordsmanship." With a simple nod, the target of his tirade muttered "I'll see you outside." But as he moved to the courtyard your observant reporter noted another young gentleman, one of the newer members of London's society, rush to his side and accompany him.

The antagonists squared up and drew their cutlasses once more, neither looking truly pleased to be missing the festivities. Again, careful footwork probed the ground and each other's reactions before the lighter man attempted a slash at his opponent's face that was derisively blocked before the remise of the attack was foiled as the experienced swordsman stepped lithely out of the way then riposted with a well-timed slash that drove the wind from his opponent's sails. Acknowledging that he was beaten once again, his surrender was politely received.

At this point, the third gentleman stepped forward. "You may have bested a wounded man, but why not try your luck with a fresh opponent who's more your size?" The veteran eyed his younger opponent, and with a world-weary shrug of his shoulders came En Garde! The attack came on quickly, but the more experienced swordsman met the first slash with a lazy block in quarte, only to suffer the surprise of a rapid second slash that tore a great chunk from his coat's right shoulder. Recovering his poise, he returned the compliment with a slash that scored a scarlet line across the waist of his new opponent, but this move left his guard open and a third slash tore a trail from his left shoulder to the last button on his own waistcoat. This was all too much and the veteran surrendered, clearly shocked at receiving two stinging blows in this encounter.

As this trio made their way inside to tidy themselves up and rejoin the party, another pair of belligerents blustered out into the cold night air. These sabreurs also looked like they had an old score to settle, and the larger man was overheard to say "You really haven't learnt

anything then..." as they made their way into the starlit courtyard. The pair moved as one, the bigger combatant using his reach to drive home a shrewd lunge and receiving a slash to his forearm in return. The opponents recovered in time with each other, but the smaller man took up the attack with a well-aimed cut to his adversary's leading knee. Falling forward, the accomplished swordsman turned his fall into a savage slash to his enemy's calf and then recovered his balance enough to block the next attack and riposte in sixte. However his nimble opponent pressed the attack and with a final cut to his right side, the bigger man was forced to concede defeat and surrender with little grace.

Needless to say, the restrooms and servants were busy binding injuries and hiding rent clothing with deft needlework so that all could try to enjoy the rest of the night without further embarrassment to their host or themselves.

At the end of the month, Burns Night became brawling night at the Almanack. As Captain Douglas hosted his second party of the month, two of his guests bumped into each other as they were handing their winter cloaks to the doormen. Turning to face each other, the slighter man let out an audible groan when he saw the last person in London that he wished to meet. "We need to talk outside, now" he whispered through gritted teeth, and the men left for the now-familiar walled garden.

"As I am wounded, I would not normally seek battle, but even as I am it is not enough to refuse it when honour demands" he continued as they stepped onto the frozen ground. His opponent calmly looked him in the eye and said "people really should learn when they are beaten... it seems you require a further demonstration of my superiority. Is it me, or do these bricks look redder than usual... I must speak to the staff here, they don't appear to have cleaned up since your last lesson."

Cutlasses drawn, they stared at each other across the still night air. Somewhere, a lone dog barked at the



Abbr	Name	Title	NMR?	Wealth	SL	SP	Club	Housing	NA	Rank	Ship/Sqd	Appoint
RED	Baron Robert Erasmus Douglas	Baron		OK	16+	50	Almanack	FH Kensington	5	Captain	Dreadnought	Aide to Crown Prince
SMM	Sir Sylvester McMonkey McBean	Knight		Comfy	13+	45	Dolphin	FH Camden	6	Captain	Devonshire	
SOL	Sir Shaun O'Leary	Knight		OK	13	30	Button's	TH Hackney	5	Lieutenant	Halcyon	Aide to Admiral
PP	Peter Plain			OK	13	17	Button's	FH Camden	6	M&C	Enterprise	
WC	Wisdom Codrington			OK	11	Asea	Dolphin	FH Camden	3	M&C	Hornet	
HDA	Sir Horatio D'Ascoyne	Knight		OK	10	26	Lloyds	FH Camden	7	Captain	Achilles	
DLC	Dai Llwydium-Crystal	Knight		Comfy	10	Asea	Dolphin	TH Hackney	6	Captain	Vanguard	
GAB	Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst			Comfy	9+	54	Lloyds	TH Hackney	9	Lieutenant	Fiddler's Green	Ship's Adjutant
RD	Royston Darkwing			OK	9+	32	Lloyds	TH Hackney	5	Lieutenant	Thermopylae	
MOS	Marc Orpheus Stanhope			OK	9+	31	Lloyds	Apt Southwk	4	Midshipman	Dreadnought	Neptune's Captain
WHO	William Hornchurch Oglby			OK	8+	42	Lloyds	TH Southwk	5	Captain	Thermopylae	
CF	Cleophas Faucher			OK	8+	35	Red Coat	TH Hackney	5	Subaltern	RM Thermopylae	Gunner
EEE	Edward Ernest Etheridge			OK	8+	26	Lloyds	TH Hackney	2	Lieutenant	Thermopylae	
PH	Peter Heywood			Comfy	7+	23	Red Coat	TH Southwk	3	Captain	RM Achilles	
AB	Andy Boddy			Comfy	7+	23	Lloyds	TH Hackney	4	Lieutenant	Achilles	
FJR	Frederick Jackston Rostenburg			Comfy	7+	22	Lloyds	Gar Southwk	5	Midshipman	Fiddler's Green	
JOC	Julius Octavian Caesar			Poor	6+	31	Pit	Apt Southwk	4	Midshipman	Enterprise	Neptune's Captain
JSJ	James St. John			OK	6	17	Pit	Gar Southwk	3	Able Seaman	Dreadnought	Gunner
GS	Gregory Saxon		NMR 1	Comfy	6-	-2	-	Gar Southwk	2	-	-	
JBB	John Bernard Burke			Comfy	5+	29	Pit	Apt Southwk	6	Lieutenant	Mercury	
DE	Dick Exe			Poor	5+	16	-	Gar Southwk	1	Br Midshipman	Achilles	Neptune's Captain
CDG	Culvallion Du Gilbert			Poor	5	Asea	Red Coat	Gar Southwk	4	Private	RM Indomitable	
GW	Geoffrey Wyndham		NMR 1	Poor	4	Asea	Pit	Gar Southwk	4	Br Lieutenant	Hornet	
JB	James Blonde			Comfy	4	Asea	-	Gar Southwk	3	Lieutenant	Hornet	
EO	Eric Olthwaite			Comfy	2	Asea	-	Gar Southwk	5	Able Seaman	Enterprise	
TH	Tobias Hoggett		NMR 2	OK	3	4	Pit	Gar Southwk	7	Br Lieutenant	Devonshire	
BC	Bertrand Cressac		New	Poor	3	NEW	-	Gar Southwk	3	-	-	
LB	Lindley Barron		New	OK	2	NEW	-	Gar Southwk	3	-	-	

Wealth Level: poor= 0-250 GC, ok up to 1,000, comfy up to 5,000, wealthy up to 10,000, rich up to 25,000 and filthy is 25,000+

SP = social points earned, NMR = No Move (orders) Received, RIP = Dead!



Thanks to Sean for calculations, and thanks to Tony, Sean, Roger, and Peter for writing, and as always to Terry for the website!

Please look over your character sheet and let me know ASAP any errors. Send to aquazoo(at)patriot(dot)net.

Please get announcements in on time, and please double check the announcements when you put together your orders. Announcements need to be posted on the Forum thread for that month. If you can't access the forum, I can post it for you but you have to get it to me ahead of time!

If you have a question about anything, please inquire at the aquazoo e-mail. Thank you!

Deadlines for February, 1796
Announcements: Friday, October 18th
Orders: Friday, October 25th

