

# *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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“If you want to launch big ships, you have to go where the water is deep”

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### *News from the Pit*

By Angus Brewster

**THE CHANGE OF SEASONS**, especially fall to winter, means an influx of men in London. In fact, the only gentleman of note who has not returned is Captain Dai Llwydium-Crystal, spending the winter at sea commanding the Vanguard, best of luck to you! Those coming back have returned to their clubs, their dear ladies and their social lives, lingering as they will. A notable exception was Harold Taylor—his feet barely hit the shore and he was off running, running until he reached a coach station, asked which had the fastest horses and fled back to the countryside!

New arrivals to London include Eric Olthwaite, a young man who nonetheless is rumoured to have a good

knowledge of ships; the savvy Edward Ernest Etheridge whose ability to make friends in high places is second only to his ambitions and got him a lieutenancy on the Thermopylae; Culvallion Du Gilbert, a true believer in family tradition of serving in the Marines; and Geoffrey Windham, always running late but made it onto the crew of the Hornet. Able Seaman James St. John is not quite new, but does have a new rank and appointment as Gunner on the Dreadnought. Julius Octavian Caesar joined the Enterprise as a Midshipman and serves as Neptune's Captain.

Newcomer Gregory Saxon hails from a family of sailors. Rumour has it that he was dismissed from Shrewsbury Academy for a gratifying but unfortunately discovered liaison with the Headmaster's daughter, a man after my own heart! Welcome and good luck to all.

Doris did not need to take food to the hospital this month. During his stay, Lieutenant Royston Darkwing was taken care of by the generosity of Cleophas Faucher who sent meals from the Read Coat club. No accounting for taste, but I'm sure it's better than hospital food. The orderlies say that Darkwing did his best to be stoic through the pain, and managed to compliment Janet on her beauty. By the third week he was able to walk, and even danced a few steps with Janet, who dressed in a gown that she would have worn to a party. Ah romance! Darkwing also spent some time reviewing Naval law

and customs, perhaps wondering how he might succeed in gaining rank in the Navy.

According to my real estate sources, Sir D'Ascoyne finally moved his beautiful new family into a fine house in Camden. Their former neighbors miss them, but do not miss the wails of little George. Sir McBean found a similar new residence in the same area. Muriel is quite excited about it, and has consulted several shops to realize her ideas of show the front parlor should look.

All in London are happy to be home.

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## *French Hit in the Balearics!*

The seas around the Kingdom have been quiet of late; the chill of winter has ensured that most of our friends across the channel have spent the month in dock drowning their tears in the vinegar-like wine that they so love.

The two stalwarts of the Blockade Squadron, His Majesties Ship's Caligula under the command of Captain Tooker and Tickler captained by Sir Digby spent the month at sea without espying one Republican ship at sea. Brave Captain Tooker, fearing his crew would lose their keen fighting ability, decided to sail into the French harbour of Cherbourg and carry out target practice! The audacity of his behaviour ensured no French ship risked breaking cover during December.

Sensibly wishing for sunnier climes, the Welsh captain of the Vanguard, Dai Llwydium-Crystal, having ordered his ship to sea for the winter season, commanded his crew to set sail south for the Mediterranean Sea and Gibraltar. From the Rock they sailed across to the port of Mahon on our former possession of Menorca with orders to join with the small Spanish flotilla protecting the island. The Spanish commander, Jefe de Escuadra Don Estelle, greeted the arrival of the Royal Navy's third rater and its crew with much disdain. He left a formal review of the four Spanish ships to be led by his aide, Alferez de Navío Escudo, who was also to be seconded to the Vanguard as Liaison Officer. Señor Escudo spoke in broken English, but his grasp of the Kings tongue was much better than Captain Llwydium-Crys-



tal's Spanish! He explained that his own rank of Alferez de Navío equated to the British Lieutenant with the Welshman being the same as a Spanish Capitán de Navío. If the slight by Don Estelle was felt by Llwydium-Crystal's, he managed not to show it.

On the eve of our Saviours birth the five vessels were stationed north-west of the island when French men-of-war were sighted on the horizon. The lookout on the Spanish Jefe de Escuadra's ship the Sainte Sybella signalled the enemy numbered two seventy gun vessels and three cargo ships; on hearing this Don Estelle commanded the Spaniards to make ready and the Vanguard to be stood down; the gist of his message seeming to be "The English can have any scraps we miss!" Captain Llwydium-Crystal accepted the orders in good grace although he did seem to develop a slight tick at being referred to as "English."

As his allies sailed off he ordered the helmsman onto a course a few points windward of their route. It was soon noticeable the difference in the quality of ship and crew for even though the Vanguard was sailing tighter on the wind it made much better speed and in a few hours the other vessels were mere specks on the horizon. It was then his own men in the crow's nest warned of enemies from a different quarter. It seemed that they had another Frenchman in their sights, escorting what seemed to be six merchantmen. The enemy warship seemed a match the Vanguard so the order was given to make ready. An hour passed before the ships came close.

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Their foe continued with their usual tactic of attempting to dismast their opponent, but not so Captain Llwydium-Crystal. His gunners poured volley after volley into their target's hull and soon she was taking on water. Knowing that the man-of-war was no longer a risk, and possibly with an eye on the booty they may carry, the marauding Welshman set his sights on the merchantmen who were trying to manoeuvre their sluggish vessels out of harms way. As he closed it became apparent that their cargo was not treasure but men! Soldiers of an invasion force no doubt bound for Menorca!

The Vanguard's crew made hay, sending waves of destruction into the lightly armed landing ships. After sending three of them to the depths and the remainder scurrying away, Llwydium-Crystal changed tack and flew west as fast as the Vanguard could go towards where he thought the Spaniards would be in combat.

The skill of the Royal Navy was evident again for they caught up with the battle at twilight. Even from the

eyes of an amateur it was obvious that the Spanish had fouled up the fight. They had been split and were under heavy fire from not two third-rate vessels but three along with two frigates. Sailing to his ally's aid evened the score somewhat and, although the rest of the combat was inconclusive with no vessels from either side being committed to the depths it was enough to send the Frogs packing and the Spaniards to regroup and return to port for repair.

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On their return to Mahon, Alferez de Navío Escudo told his admiral of the actions of Captain Llwydium-Crystal and his crew. Feting them all as heroes, Don Estelle sent letters to the Admiralty as well as his own King, calling him the saviour of the island.

Rumours abound around the island that the Spanish King is to name Dai Llwydium-Crystal a Don of the Order of Santiago. The British Crown would not be bested and named him a knight of the realm.



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## *First Party, But Not First Blood*

**THE DOLPHIN WAS THE SETTING** for the first party of the winter season. Wisdom Codrington was host to gentlemen of quality from all over London, along with a few Tars of the good ship Hornet. Lieutenant James Blonde was a great asset to the evening, often close by his Captain and ready to raise a glass, he easily moved between the guests to facilitate order and a peaceful evening, mostly!

As Hostess, Harriet Hilfinger saw to the needs of the ladies, keeping watch that the tea, petit fours, and the conversation stayed fresh and light. Lady D'Ascoyne, Caroline Cadger, Muriel Merriweather and Joan Fullins all complimented each other on their new gowns, although miss Fullins nervously arranged her shawl over her fashionable décolletage. From her comfy chair, Lady D'Ascoyne rapped one of the gentlemen on the knees with her fan for his ogling of Miss Fullins! With a few discreet words, Harriett ensured that no lady, nor serving maid, was left alone with him.

Newcomer Gregory Saxon's attention was diverted to the stories of valor from those recently returned from the sea. Sir D'Ascoyne related the tale that resulted in his injuries, Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst mused on who might next earn a title, and Sir Sylvester McMonkey McBean's story was interrupted by Peter Plain when he

was not quite finished. Blonde offered a toast, but there seemed some strain that bubbled through the evening.

At diner, Codrington offered a toast to the D'Ascoynes and their latest family member, with many echoing the sentiment. Much merriment ensued, as the gentleman toasted father, son, and sons in general. Even the Captains of the Devonshire and Enterprise — seated away from each other at the table — seemed to be more amiable. Port and cigars followed, and more tea for the ladies, with the host taking time for a short discussion with the officers of the Hornet. New Midshipman Geoffrey Wyndham took it all in, looking to Lieutenant Blonde for cues.

Just before the musicians struck up a tune for dancing, Sir and Lady D'Ascoyne made their apologies and took their leave as Nancy was growing tired. Others began happily twirling on the dance floor, trying to master one of the new country dances. As the eggnog and mulled wine flowed, Saxon grabbed a serving maid and whirled her about, the dancing stepped up a pace with the odd bump causing courteous apologies from most... but glares were exchanged between Plain and McBean. Patience frayed like a badly spliced mainbrace and heavy weather was seen over the horizon.

Soon the tension was thick enough to be cut with a cutlass as cross words were exchanged, and the pair stormed out to the back garden with a few other gen-

tllemen close behind. James Blonde and Harriet deftly made sure all drinks were refreshed for those who remained inside. After what seemed an eternity, the group came back in, two of them with waistcoats ajar, torn brocade and even a cravat missing! Both Plain and McBean seemed satisfied that honour was served, but went to separate rooms to tidy up and fortify themselves with strong drink.

The dancing and merriment resumed, with promises from all to see each other at future parties this month for Christmas time.



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## *Sudden Swordplay Saddens Solemn Service!*

The London air was crisp and the skies clear as London's society elite made their way to the welcoming doors of Button's. Indeed, so many had arrived that it took some time for the doormen to admit them all, and that's when trouble flared. Frustrated at the press of the crowd, the looming bulk of Lieutenant Burke of the Mercury found himself in close proximity to slender Sir Shaun O'Leary, Lieutenant of the Halcyon. The two at once engaged in a heated exchange and the air was allegedly punctuated with the shrill cries of "...useless toff" and "...cretinous upstart from that little tug boat."

To the dismay of the other guests, the pair would not be content with mere words and stepped out the back door into the club's garden. After a tense time that seemed many minutes too long, they came back inside and found different corners of the club to tidy themselves up.

Lieutenant James Blonde of the Mercury was clearly unused to this sort of affair. Having watched with care that all remained fair, he hurried to both congratulate the victor and fuss over the wounded in turn. As he was without female company it may be that he felt obliged to do something.

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Host Peter Plain called for attention to begin the celebration in memory of Baron Marvell. He reflected on the Baron's great generosity and genuine devotion to the well-being of all hands who served under his command, a trait that Plain found inspiring and hoped to emulate throughout his career.

"Truly, what makes a ship great?" he asked. "Discipline, courage under fire, attendance to duty, these are all commendable and essential in a crew. But camaraderie, shared trials and triumphs, the love and companionship of your fellow men, these are what make a ship great... and nowhere was this more evident than in the Royal Oak under Captain Marvell's command."

With a tear in his eye but a steady voice, Plain spoke of the fateful attack on Dakar's port. "The captain gave his orders in his usual easy manner and, as the officers went to their duty, pulled me back. Don't you worry about tomorrow, my boy, serve your guns well and when the time comes I will lead my boats to get you off the shore m'self". In fulfilling that promise, the gallant captain fell to a voltigeur's shot, his breast pierced and his life spent before the boats could even return to his ship."

Another former lieutenant of the Royal Oak, Wisdom Codrington, and his companion Harriet Hilfinger joined them, and were quick to offer condolences to Octavia for her loss. Codrington said: "I was honoured to serve on the Royal Oak crew for many months, culminating in actions at sea this fall. Baron Marvell was a fine leader; a great inspiration; and a wise mentor to all."

Plain was visibly leaning on his beloved Caroline Cadger for strength... either from the scent of her perfume or the vision of her decolletage, pale white skin so beautifully enclosed in black lace... Bystanders recall him gently whispering to her how he had missed her, all those long days at sea...

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The formal part of the evening over, the guests were free to mingle and enjoy the hospitality. Sir Shaun O'Leary reclined on a chase longue with a glass of port. He appeared to be obsequious in his apologies about the unpleasantness earlier, and Octavia did her part to keep the conversation on topic. She told a story of her father's love of erecting model ships in bottles, and how it fueled her brother's interest in the Navy. But their mother threw his favourite, a miniature Royal Oak, against the drawing room wall after a terrible row. "And now with Samuel gone, who knows what she shall do with the

rest of the collection. I had hoped our parents would attend tonight, but it's still so soon."

William Oglby, Captain of the Thermopylae, was somberly dressed in a neat black suit and drank with a great thirst in the company of his amour, Rebecca Dorritt. Approaching his host with words of thanks, he offered a bottle of fine claret as a gift. But Plain was not impressed, saying "hasn't enough claret been spilt already?" before turning to his other guests.

A relative newcomer, Lt Etheridge of the Thermopylae, attended the evening with Miss Elsie Taylor. Seizing his moment in the busy night, he oozed up to Peter Plain and thanked him profusely for the invitation through a mouthful of water biscuit and stilton. He

was then seized by the arm as Peter Heywood bumped into him with a mumbled ..."damn good grub, this Plain chap throws a good do, doesn't he ...." and the two disappeared into the dining room, Elsie in tow.

Lieutenant Blonde took his chance to divert the host, fiercely pumping his hand and repeating what a wonderful honour it was to be hear and be inspired by the stories of such a fine officer. Peter Plain took all these in his stride but looked distracted and kept looking about the room. Our source reports that Caroline turned to Octavia and muttered "you know, I really thought Baron Douglas would be here, after all he was a Lieutenant with your brother as well. What could have kept him away tonight?"

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## *All That is White is Not Pure...*

Outside it was cold, but inside it was bright and warm; a pleasant mood. This was a party for the up-and-coming, aspiring to a better social position. Hosted by Lieutenant Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst at Lloyds in the second week of December, it was an event to celebrate the upcoming Christmas season.

The host requested that his guests dress in white to welcome the winter. Perhaps to prevent blood from staining the finery, members of the Nemesis were not included in the invitation.

As they arrived, guests were plied with roast chestnuts and a hot mulled white wine based on the riesling grape. To fit the theme, clean white table cloths and napkins had been rented and the lighted candlesticks were like the star of Bethlehem above inverted icicles. Even the walls were draped in white bunting, to resemble snow-covered hills.

Among the guests were Able Seaman James St. John, Gunner on the Dreadnought, and Samantha Stevens. His dress for the occasion was a new white waistcoat and old-fashioned ruff. Miss Stevens looked like a winter bride.

Lieutenant Andy Boddy of the Achilles, with his lovely Leta Blair, had really pulled the stops and hired a white coach with four white horses pulling it. Miss Blair was dressed as a snow queen in white with starched lace embedded with crystals to look like snow flakes, and Boddy as a snow king; with white icicle ornaments hanging off his sleeves, cuffs and collar.

Midshipman Julius Octavian Caesar was with Miss Justine Kent, both in white outfits. Miss Kent wore a

white rose corsage, a bit daring, but met with approval of all the men present. Caesar, contrary to rumour is as English as Roast Beef and serving on the Enterprise as Neptune's Captain.

Able Seaman Dick X of Southwark, at least in name, but served most of the time in the Blockade, did his best to drink to the health of the host and was dressed in clothes that had at one time been white. He sang a chorus of "I'm dreaming of a White Yuletide" with others joining in to the best of their abilities.

Geoffrey Wyndham of the Hornet managed to dress in white only by appearing in his shirt sleeves and a borrowed white waistcoat. Midshipman Frederick Jackston Rostenburg of the Fiddler's Green was not really dressed for the occasion, but both had a lovely evening, making sure that every lady danced as much as she liked.

Returning hero Cleophas Faucher brought the glorious Pippa Middleton and both insisted on wearing the Kings Scarlet. They stuck out like a drop of blood in the snow.

Most impressive was the dinner, which consisted of all white foods. The main course was roast pork, "the other white meat," turnips in cream sauce, early spring asparagus that had been pickled, mashed potatoes and stuffed mushroom caps. Perhaps foreshadowing twelfth night, a king's cake was served with sparkling white icing. Peeled pears preserved in a sweet syrup rounded out the dessert course.

They continued to dance until the soles of their shoes were worn paper thin, then all attendees were bundled into their coaches for the trip home. The evening was complete as a light layer of snow began to fall, and the ice glistened in the light from city windows.

## *Party Pitched Perfectly*

**TO PRESENT A NEW MIDSHIPMAN** to the Enterprise mess, Master & Commander Peter Plain played the consummate host yet again when he gathered his ship's company at Button's in week three. Arriving by coach with the delightful Caroline Cadger at his side, he appeared to have recovered his demeanour from the sombre mood of the week before. Plain was seen to bask in the company of his men and their ladies. He was quick to introduce Lieutenant Bathurst and the delectable Joan Fullins to his newest Officer, Midshipman Julius Caesar. Praising Caesar's commitment to training at the naval academy, he also appeared most grateful to Julius' lady, Justine Kent, for trying to assist his efforts to become Master Attendant of London. Sadly, his application was turned down, but it was not enough to spoil the mood. After a discussion of ship's business, this trio of officers, together with their ladies, spent the rest of the night sharing anecdotes and sipping champagne in high spirits.

## *By George, Horatio!*

**CODRINGTON'S CHRISTENING CELEBRATION** delighted D'Ascoynes at the Dolphin. More champagne glasses tinkled in a toast to the newest D'Ascoyne, baby George. The proud parents of the diminutive D'Ascoyne thanked Wisdom Codrington for accepting their invitation to be a godparent and organising the party. Harriet Hilfinger looked positively broody as she fussed over little George and wrapped him in a frame knitted blanket (embroidered with his initials and the year of his birth) during one of her many cuddles with the charming little man. Devonshire's Captain McBean also let his darling Muriel Merriweather entertain the boy with their traditional gift, a finely worked silver rattle. Given the frailty of the child when he was first born, the party are reported to have looked relieved and happy that he was thriving, and his good health was drunk well into the night, although Nancy D'Ascoyne was seen to still be taking it easy as she continues to regain her strength.

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## *Magical Moments At Midnight:*

**BUTTON'S NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY.** The doormen were kept busy as Captain Douglas and Baroness Serena welcomed a distinguished gathering to their end-of-year party. Guests were polite enough to enquire briefly about the state of their house after the unfortunate lightning strike, eyeing the rainy skies warily.

Sir Shaun O'Leary of the Halcyon arrived by coach just as the host was alighting from his carriage, and the two aides fell into easy conversation as Serena and Octavia admired each other's gowns and jewelry. As the aides walked through the door together, a footman was quick to offer the party glasses of wine and sugarplums to start the night in style.

They were soon joined by Master & Commander Peter Plain of the Enterprise, who needed the help of the ever-attentive Caroline Cadger to descend the steps from the foyer, obviously suffering from some debilitation or other. Whatever it was, it didn't prevent him from enjoying the evening.

Entering with a firmer step was Sir Sylvester McBean with his fair Muriel. The Devonshire's captain turned a cold eye on Peter Plain, who responded by saying "...normally, I would demand need words with you in private, but I regret to not feeling up to it... and we shouldn't spoil the Captain's party, should we?"

The knight nodded and moved in the direction of the canapes where Wisdom Codrington played a dusky Father Christmas. "Nutsack?" he offered, with small bags of mixed nuts he brought as gifts.

Dreadnought's midshipman Stanhope and Christine Jenkins kept in the lee of their host, animatedly joining in with the talk of the evening, the news from Italy, fresh from an Admiralty cutter. Apparently the French under general Massena have defeated a combined Austrian-Sardinian force near Loano on the 24th, just a week ago!

Codrington mused on the day being the sixth day of Christmas, and Harriett recited a poem about the days, which lead to other seasonal songs, and quizzing to determine who should have brought swans. Or was it geese in a pear tree?

As midnight approached, the large dining room at Button's was full of guests. Dinner in all its splendour had been cleared away hours before. The big double doors opened, and immaculate staff pushed a six-pound gun carriage into the room, holding what was probably the biggest champagne bottle this side of the Channel — a Goliath of close to fifty pints capacity, fresh out of the icehouse, its sides glistening with moisture.

They stepped back, and Douglas took up his station next to the carriage, holding an open watch in one hand, with a cutlass raised high in the other. Behind him,



several waiters with glasses on trays tried not to draw attention to themselves as they moved into position.

“Five...

Four...

Three...

Two...

One...

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**” Douglas shouted, and on the last word, smartly decapitated the bottle.

The guests replied with three cheers, and the waiters began to fill the glasses on their tray and circulate among the guests, many who were sharing their own New Year’s wishes with their wives and sweethearts. Peter Plain indulged in a very public display of affection when he gave Caroline a lingering kiss. McBean swept his lady off her feet and spun her around the room while Octavia looked on wistfully. Codrington managed to get Harriett’s eyes all aglow.

When everybody had been served and all verses of Auld Lange Syne sung, Douglas offered a toast: “Friends, shipmates and fellow servants of the Crown! I’m not much of an orator, and in any case Button’s will probably kick me out if I don’t let you drink this fine Champagne, while it still has the correct temperature. Ladies and Gentlemen, here’s to the New Year... and may all your wishes come true!!”

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## *Ring In The New Year*

**THE MANAGEMENT OF LLOYD’S** had obviously done its homework; designating more staff and a larger cloakroom to handle the outerwear for those traveling in the cold rain. Captain D’Ascoyne noted with approval as all guests were escorted into the foyer by footmen with large umbrellas.

Captain Heywood of the Royal Marines and Lieutenant Boddy, accompanied by Miss Blair, represented the Achilles.

“Good to see you, Peter! You’ve met my wife before, haven’t you?” Turning to his wife, D’Ascoyne continued “My dear, may I present the biggest of our red-coated rascals...” and the rest of his words were lost in Lady Nancy’s laughter.

Smiling, Heywood clicked his heels. “Enchanted, Madam!”

Miss Blair appeared to find something amusing. Lady Nancy asked “And where’s the joke?”

As Miss Blair continued to giggle helplessly, Boddy pointed at the ceiling. “They have done it again!”

“The bunting? I think it’s very nice!” Lady Nancy said.

Lieutenant Boddy replied “And it’s in code. Spelled out, the flags say: **ENGAGE ENEMY CLOSELY**”

Captain D’Ascoyne interjected, “In addition to Lieutenant Boddy’s usual duties, he teaches signalling to the sailors. And to Miss Blair too, it seems.”

Leta inquired about the health of little George, and Lady Nancy assured her that he was well and with the wet nurse — and Nancy was finally feeling one hundred percent herself, finally.

All heads turned towards the door to see another couple enter. Captain D’Ascoyne stepped forward. “So glad you could make it, Captain Oglby! And Miss Dorrit, of course! Well, looks like everybody who is going to be here is already here, so we might as well go in and let the revels commence!”

Lloyd’s had given them the Peach Dining Room, just the right size for the party; neither too small so that the guests would feel cramped, nor too large that they would feel lost. Previously the Yellow room, a few coats of paint and new drapes made the space more flattering to the ladies’ complexions.

As dinner progressed, Captain D’Ascoyne caught the eye of a waiter and nodded to have the glasses refilled. “Damned good stuff, this Chateau Claret, indeed! Obviously, ‘93 had been a very good year. What a silly idea to go and bury it in the cellar for another ten years. Drink it now, that’s what we should be doing!”

A quartet proved most versatile, playing slow tunes during dinner and changing to something lively for dancing. The ladies took turns dancing with Captain Heywood, but he found himself alone when the clock struck midnight. Taking a glass of champagne from a waiter’s tray, he said, “Happy New Year everyone! May this year be even better than the last!”

## At the Clubs

**WHEN THEY WERE NOT** at a party, Sir Shaun O’Leary and Octavia Marvell spent time at Button’s. O’Leary glanced around quite a bit, as if he was expecting someone else. Still a bit shy with her beau, Octavia spent time writing letters to her parents. O’Leary mentioned that next week at the Bankside Bear Gardens they would show the baiting of a pony with an ape tied to its back, which got Octavia’s attention long enough for her to cry out against such cruelty.

Baron Douglas had his usual appointment with His Royal Highness at White’s in the third week, this time bringing along Midshipman Marc Orpheus Stanhope. Always prepared with topics of conversation, Douglas discussed last month’s battle of Lambsheim and last week’s news of a meteorite that landed in Wold Newton, Yorkshire. Stanhope praised the wine and found himself a bit star struck by the number of titled persons at the club. His Royal Highness handled the Midshipman’s reaction with introductions all around.

Captain William Hornchurch Oglby held an impromptu meeting of Thermopylae crew at Lloyds. Subaltern Cleophas Faucher was happy to discuss all aspects of the ship, with the stunning Pippa by his side. Week

three found Oglby at Lloyds again, where he thought he would find Sir McBean, but the Devonshire captain was not there.

At the Red Coat, Private Culvallion Du Gilbert enjoyed a few drinks but made sure to stay away from the gambling tables.

The Pit was a hot spot as always. In the first week, Lieutenant Andy Boddy entertained Leta Blair and did well in gambling with two wins out of three bets.

Geoffrey Wyndham endured the ale and Doris’ jokes in week three.

Ringling in the New year were Lieutenants James Blonde and John Bernard Burke. Blonde complained that no one wanted the likes of him at their parties. Burke tried his hand at games of chance, with the results of two losses and one win.

Name	Title	Att	SL	Gent
Muriel Merryweather			15.0	SMM
Caroline Cadger		W	15.0	PP
Serena (Samuels) Douglas	Baroness	M B I	15.5	RED
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	11.5	RD
Octavia Marvell		B I	11.0	SOL
Rebecca Morrison			11.0	
Joan Fullins		E B	10.0	GAB
Beatrice Chippendale			10.0	
Emily Westmoor		W	10.0	
Allison O’Neil			10.0	
Justine Kent		B	10.0	JOC
Nancy (Hall) D’Ascoyne	Lady	M I	9.0	HDA
Leta Blair		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	

## Cupid’s Arrows

**THERE IS ONLY ONE CURE** for short days and long, cold nights, and that is to find a friendly harbour. Several gentlemen had that very thought in mind, as they visited shops, checked schedules, and otherwise worked on strategies that would impress an admiral. But it was not an admiral that any of them intended to impress.

It was Edward Ernest Etheridge’s first order of business, upon arriving in London, to seek the affections of the lofty Elsie Taylor. The gentleman sent over bolts of fabric and a team of seamstresses. When he called at her door, he said, “We have places to go and I want to be sure you are the most beautiful lady at every party!” Elsie admired his take-charge attitude and invited him in for a private fashion show.

Samantha Stevens was the recipient of a formal invitation, hand-written in careful script. She recognized the name of upwardly-mobile Seaman James St. John and decided to give him a chance. When he arrived, she was dressed and ready to go with him to the theatre, where they enjoyed an opera from the best box seats.

Lieutenant John Bernard Burke observed the object of his affections to determine what her preferences might be. He settled on an emerald necklace studded with jewels, which he presented to Catherine Lane. The emeralds matched her eyes, and the pair were a match for each other as well.

Midshipman Frederick Jackston Rostenburg had a feast of gourmet foods delivered to Barbara Allen, and in addition hired a local poet to write an ode to the lady, comparing her to the wonders of the time of year. He had the work bound in a small book with several other romantic poems, with her name in gold leaf on the cover. When he called, Barbara invited him in, and he spent the week reading the poems to her again and again.

Joan Fullins was already known to be seeing Lieutenant Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst, and the pair had been seen about town at several parties already. At the end

of the month, she was surprised to receive a gift of several bottles of champagne. When a carriage pulled up, she peeked out of her window to see who the interloper might be. It turned out to be her Gabriel, but he was not dressed to take her to a party.

“I thought we might celebrate this final week of the year alone together,” he said. They took a carriage ride and admired the city in the rain. They spent long days in front of a roaring fire, roasting sausages on skewers. They conversed for hours and played whist.

On the 31st, the couple shared a lavish meal and enjoyed the champagne. As church bells in the city rang at midnight, Bathurst dropped to one knee before his love. “I can’t think of any better way to start the new year than to be engaged to you. Will you marry me?”

Joan gasped at the beauty of the ring that he offered her. “Yes, of course I will!” she replied.

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## *The Seedier Side:*

**BEING A TALE** of Deep and Extensive Research of the Boutiques d’Amour of various sorts in London. With so many crews back in port from their tussles with the French, it was clear that the season’s sport would involve a far more dangerous foe, in petticoats and little else! Midshipman Rostenberg led the charge, hailing a cab to the Drunken Monkey. He was soon to be seen dancing a hornpipe whilst holding two jugs in his outstretched hands as he lustily sang “the old French admiral’s only got one....” to much laughter. The Monkey also paid host to Captain Heywood of the Achilles, who quietly slipped in from his carriage and posted himself at one end of the bar where he could enjoy proceedings, although from the way he measured out his coin for each drink he wasn’t feeling flush and most of the younger girls saved their attention for more lucrative pickings.

The following week, Eric Olthwaite launched himself into the streets. Having steered a course to where the coarse are welcome, he sat in Southside’s and seemed unsure what to do next, neither buying a drink nor paying the cheap wares on show much attention. The girls, on the other hand, were very sure and showed him the way to spend his time and money.

Also seen out on the town was the newly arrived Culvallion du Gilbert. Having joined the Indomitable’s marines he strode out of the winter air to celebrate his

appointment, calling for enough rum to drop a lesser man, but not a marine!

Gregory Saxon launched on what would become a prolonged assault on the back passages of affection, taking a carriage to the Broken Drum. His driver must have been confused, for he was seen going first to the back gates (which had been smashed in and were a terrible sight!) before taking his charge to the front door, tastefully screened by neatly trimmed velvet curtains. Once inside, Saxon set to it with mighty cries as one flagon after another was emptied in an attempt to slake his prodigious thirst. Vivien had a livid flush and a tear in the eye as they said farewell at the end of Saxon’s energetic raid.

In week three, Gregory Saxon directed his driver to head for the Turkish Baths where Nikolette put him through his paces to recover from the previous week’s excursions, with powerful Ouzo and Retsina being sunk by the bottle!



Across town, the Hornet's Lieutenant Blonde found himself a carriage to Southside's, where he was soon lavishing his coin and attention on cheap claret to drink old Hattie pretty. Luckily for him, the younger and more adventurous Daisy Dawes invited himself upstairs to help her with some stiff drawers, and much laughter and singing were to be heard all night. A bedraggled and weary Blonde climbed into his carriage a little before six and headed home, humming softly to himself.

As the year came to an end, Madame Fifi's opened its arms to welcome the indestructible Saxon as he continued his rampage through the houses of ill-repute and found himself in the charming company of Suzette and her friends. Brandy and champagne were the order of the day, and the new year was welcomed in high spirits by all.

Meanwhile, on the other side of town Dick X, Geoffrey Wyndham, and Eric Olthwaite were at Southside's

house of dubious delights intent on making the most of the house specials. The girls were quick to help rid them of their outer garments, then divided and conquered.

Afterward as Dick X left in a carriage, he saw Wyndham and Olthwaite strolling through the smog on the way home. Before he could shout out and offer a ride, Olthwaite looked up and found himself embracing some burly men in stripey shirts and tasteful, if familiar, hats. Perhaps it was the warming mulled wine that befuddled him into confusing these salty tars for sultry tarts, for he was too slow to spot the difference and was pressed to join them for a mug of ale with a nasty surprise — Tickler or Caligula?

Wyndham managed to squeeze himself into a doorway and escaped the notice of the press gang, but instead fell victim to some street urchins. No bodily harm was done; the young pickpockets were only after his money — and they found what they were looking for.

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## *Academy Lessons Heat Up*

**LONDON'S NAVAL ACADEMY** was well attended this month; perhaps those attending were hoping to better themselves, maybe they were wishing for nautical company or maybe they were huddling for warmth against the bitter winter chill.

The first week's classes suited the attendees for it was targeted at those most junior of officers, midshipmen and senior ratings. Among those attempting to improve their knowledge were Marc Orpheus Stanhope and Julius Octavian Caesar, Midshipmen aboard the Dreadnought and Enterprise respectively and Dick X, most recently an Able Seaman aboard the Blockade ship Tickler. Basic Celestial Navigation was the subject and the men spent the time learning the use of the sextant. Dick X required some help reading the almanac from Julius Ceasar, but his ability with the written word is much improved from when he joined the service. Due

to the requirement to practice by the stars, some of the pupils made their feeling plain about missing "valuable drinking time" studying, Dick repaid the assistance given to him earlier in the week by sneaking a bottle of grog into the final evening class!

Midshipman Stanhope was among the attendees in the second week continuing his education in navigation, this time though using the 'Use of Time' method along with the care and maintenance of chronometers.

If there was camaraderie in the air in the first week, the third week saw that disappear faster than a Frenchman in a battle. As the students entered the class, looks of unmitigated enmity passed between Able Seaman James St John of the Dreadnought and Lieutenant Edward Ernest Etheridge of the newly commissioned Thermopylae. With such an undercurrent, it was unfortunate that the subject was 'Boarding Parties and Close Quarters Combat.' Whereas the monkeys-fist so neatly tied by St John, under the tutelage of Dick X, might of accidentally hit Etheridge rendering him senseless for over an hour, the grappling hook thrown in return later that day that caught James in the back, ripping his jacket, was surely not! The next day the instructor set Ernest against Captain Peter Heywood for a mock combat but before the Royal Marine Captain could take his place he had been usurped by James and a most unseemly event occurred.

The month ended with the two rival combatants from the previous week again attending the Academy



alongside Midshipman Ceaser. Injuries were not severe enough to keep their tempers calmed, so they stepped outside for some extracurricular study. They came in with subdued moods, which was fortuitous as the subject for the week was testing gunpowder quality and one can only hypothesise what they would have done to each other with all the explosives that surrounded them if that had not been the case!



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## *Goliath 4, David 0*

**BRUTE STRENGTH BESTS Skillful** Swordplay when the Cutlasses and sabres are drawn! Four incidents of duelling are rumoured to have occurred, as well as one declined due to injuries and a case of a Royal Marine who decided not to disrupt a good party.

The first clash occurred at the start of the month, in the formal gardens behind The Dolphin. Seniority appeared to be the issue, as a slight representative of a junior squadron cut across the sailing line of his larger and more senior rival vessel. The gentlemen excused themselves from their ladies and stepped outside to exercise their cutlasses. The nimble junior officer tested his opponent with probing feints before changing tack and landing a shallow cut to the shoulder, exposing himself to a slash that scored a nasty wound to his left leg. Chastened, both combatants stepped back and paused to consider their next move. As one, they launched forward, the smaller man's slash tracing a thin bloody line above his opponent's knee just as his adversary's cutlass was driven deeply into his own shoulder. This second wound was too much for the slender pugilist, and he offered his cutlass to his heavier opponent. When they met again, both remained civil as one's health was still not up to snuff.

The second incident occurred in the back garden of Button's. The more wiry of this pair threw his cloak over his shoulder and looked back to his lady at the door. "It's no use, my dearest... I will have to teach the vermin a lesson." Cutlasses drawn, the protagonists saluted and went at it for the honour of their ships. A lunge in octave elegantly slipped past the burlier opponent's guard, but he shrugged off the injury and delivered a hard kick in response. The wiry gentleman recovered, and in a display of speed and finesse renewed his attack with a slash in sixte quickly followed by a lunge in quarte and another slash in septime. Weathering the blizzard of blows, the larger opponent drove his arm

forward in a lunge that punched into the other's abdomen, ruining the fine fabric of his waistcoat and forcing him to his knees in pain. He nobly gritted his teeth and, looking his opponent in the eye, merely said "You have the field, today, I yield." His yelp of pain drew his dearest, and she looked furious and anxious in turn as she ran to the side of her beau and helped him to his feet so that he could have his injuries taken care of. The other sauntered inside looking most pleased with himself.

The Naval Academy is rumoured to have been the venue for two encounters this month. In the third week of December, a lecture appeared to impel two students to immediately set about some practical application of the theoretical nuances. Meeting in the walled practice area behind the gymnasium, the gentleman drew their sabres, saluted and applied themselves to their extra-curricular learning. Although similar in size, the larger man appeared more comfortable with his blade, adopting a guard in septime rather than the traditional garde in sixte his opponent adopted. Suddenly, with a balestra lunge, the confident combatant closed the gap and swept his sword up in a low lunge that was easily deflected by a semi-circular parry in octave which was swiftly followed by a riposte into his attacker's chest, but with little effect. Unfortunately for the slighter man, this attack left his burlier aggressor free to sweep his blade up into his opposed exposed abdomen before following up with a cut to the weaker man's left shoulder. These two blows in quick succession were enough to compel the slender fighter to offer his sword and his surrender was accepted.

The following week, the same two pugilists were in attendance, and with his wounds of the week before somewhat healed, the feisty slighter gentleman sought to level the score between them. Adjourning to the practice field once more, the affair was a miserable one in the annals of naval swordsmanship. No sooner had the blades swept down from the salute, when the larger man, clearly suffering less, stepped forward and



Abbr	Name	Title	NMR?	Wealth	SL	SP	Club	Housing	NA	Rank	Ship/Sqd	Appoint
RED	Baron Robert Erasmus Douglas	Baron		Comfy	15+	50	Button's	FH Kensington	5	Captain	Dreadnought	Aide to Crown Prince
SOL	Sir Shaun O'Leary	Knight		OK	13	29	Button's	TH Hackney	5	Lieutenant	Halcyon	Aide to Admiral
PP	Peter Plain			OK	13	17	Button's	FH Camden	6	M&C	Enterprise	
SMM	Sir Sylvester McMonkey McBean	Knight		Comfy	12+	39	Dolphin	FH Camden	6	Captain	Devonshire	
WC	Wisdom Codrington			OK	11+	38	Dolphin	FH Camden	3	M&C	Hornet	
HDA	Sir Horatio D'Ascoyne	Knight		OK	10	23	Lloyds	FH Camden	7	Captain	Achilles	
DLC	Dai Llwydium-Crystal	Knight		Comfy	10+	Asea	Lloyds	TH Hackney	6	Captain	Vanguard	
GAB	Gabriel Ambrose Bathurst			Comfy	8+	42	Lloyds	TH Hackney	9	Lieutenant	Fiddler's Green	Ship's Adjutant
MOS	Marc Orpheus Stanhope			OK	8+	27	Lloyds	Apt Southwk	3	Midshipman	Dreadnought	Neptune's Captain
RD	Royston Darkwing			OK	8	20	Lloyds	TH Hackney	5	Lieutenant	Thermopylae	
WHO	William Hornchurch Oglby			OK	7+	32	Lloyds	TH Southwk	5	Br Captain	Thermopylae	
CF	Cleophas Faucher			OK	7+	22	Red Coat	TH Hackney	5	Subaltern	RM Thermopylae	
EEE	Edward Ernest Etheridge			OK	7+	22	Lloyds	TH Hackney	2	Br Lieutenant	Thermopylae	
GS	Gregory Saxon			Comfy	7	7	-	Gar Southwk	2	-	-	
PH	Peter Heywood			Comfy	6+	30	Red Coat	TH Southwk	3	Captain	RM Achilles	
AB	Andy Boddy			Comfy	6+	25	Pit	Gar Southwk	4	Lieutenant	Achilles	
JSJ	James St. John			OK	6+	25	Pit	Gar Southwk	2	Able Seaman	Dreadnought	Gunner
FJR	Frederick Jackston Rostenburg			Comfy	6	18	Lloyds	Gar Southwk	5	Midshipman	Fiddler's Green	
JOC	Julius Octavian Caesar			Poor	5+	28	Pit	Apt Southwk	4	Midshipman	Enterprise	Neptune's Captain
CDG	Culvallion Du Gilbert			Poor	5	8	Red Coat	Gar Southwk	4	Private	RM Indomitable	
JBB	John Bernard Burke			Comfy	4+	31	Pit	Apt Southwk	6	Lieutenant	Mercury	
GW	Geoffrey Wyndham			Poor	4+	16	Pit	Gar Southwk	4	Midshipman	Hornet	
JB	James Blonde			Comfy	4+	24	-	Gar Southwk	3	Lieutenant	Hornet	
DX	Dick X			OK	4+	12	-	Gar Southwk	1	Able Seaman	Blockade	
LY	Lucius Yeo		NMR 2	Comfy	4	8	Pit	Gar Southwk	7	Sailor	Thermopylae	
TH	Tobias Hoggett		NMR 1	OK	3	6	Pit	Gar Southwk	7	Br Lieutenant	Devonshire	
EO	Eric Olthwaite			Poor	2	2	-	Gar Southwk	5	-	-	

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, Kevin, Red, 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.

I changed the due dates a bit so there is more time between announcements and orders. 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!

There are a couple of additions to the rules: under "Loans" there is more info regarding player-to-player loans, and some info at the end. "Notes" regarding role playing.

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

**Deadlines for January, 1796**  
**Announcements: Friday, August 23rd**  
**Orders: Friday, August 30th**

