

The Nelson Dispatch

Journal of
The Nelson Society

Volume 14 Part 6 Spring 2022

The Nelson Society

Aims and Objectives

To advance public education in the appreciation of the life and achievements of Admiral Lord Nelson

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Cover: *Nelson and Murray, statue by Vincent Gray at Chichester (photo R Plowman)*

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EDITORIAL

Reading through the contents of another packed edition of the ‘Nelson Dispatch’ it occurred to me that, quite unintentionally, we have twinned several articles. For example, Maxwell Cooper and Benjamin Whiston’s excellent article on Surgeon Chambers, who examined Nelson’s injured eye after Calvi, complements the following piece by Dr Shaw on Nelson’s ‘gout’. Both articles remind us of the very many debilitating health issues Nelson laboured under in the last years of his life. In an age of primitive or no medicine, and no certainty of outcome, health inevitably preoccupied the eighteenth century mind. In the past, based on his sometimes self-pitying letters to Emma, Nelson has been labelled a hypochondriac; and yet considering the mutilating wounds, diseases and mental strain he endured over a long career, he was surely one of the most robust figures in modern history. One shudders to imagine how we might cope facing similar disability today.

The second coincidental pair of articles is Ronnie Kane’s appraisal of Captain Rutherford and Graham Capel’s study of the Patriotic Fund. As Graham explains, following Trafalgar, the fund presented awards to the captains. He queries why some (including Rutherford) received swords and others silver vases. In fact, the fund awarded each Trafalgar captain a sword *or* plate (silver) to the value of £100: the choice of which was the officer’s. Ronnie mentions that Rutherford’s Patriotic Fund sword fetched \$270,000 at auction in 2017, a very high price and one undoubtedly shaped by Rutherford being the only American-born captain at the action. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the descendants of captains who took the—now very sought after—£100 swords are probably financially better off than recipients of the £100 vases, the most recent of which at auction (in 2018) made \$138,000, almost exactly half the price of his friend Rutherford’s sword.

The third pairing links the cover of this edition showing the wonderful new double statue of Nelson and Admiral Murray recently unveiled in Chichester, with statues of Nelson at Portmeirion and another standing guard in a Cornish pub illustrated on page 377. With the world seemingly obsessed with tearing down statues, it is heartening to see statues of Nelson still popping up everywhere!

Martyn Downer, May 2022

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On the subject of protests, and besmirching the reputation of Lord Nelson and his monuments around the world, in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests of the last two years, things have gone quiet for the present.

In the Caribbean, Barbados became a republic in November 2021, with the Queen no longer Head of State. The following is their new flag. I understand that the statue of Nelson which stood in Bridgetown has now been removed and is in a museum. This statue appeared on Barbados stamps for many years, and I am sure that stamp collectors will have seen it and owned it as part of their collections.



In England, certain Local Authorities are now asking residents if they would like the name of their, possibly controversial, street or area changed. This is dangerous as it may lead to change based on ignorance, not facts. As you may know, The Nelson Society has a Facebook Page run by our historian Ray Aldis. In it I recently found the following. What do you think of the sentiment expressed?

‘History is not there for you to like or dislike, it is there for you to learn from. If it offended you, even better. Then you are less likely to repeat it! It is not yours to erase, it belongs to all of us.’

We are now almost half-way through our first full event programme for two years. Our St Vincent lunch at the Union Jack Club in London in February was successful, as was our Copenhagen Dinner and view of the new Nelson and Admiral Murray statues in Chichester. Next, we have two overseas events. The second week of June sees the first of two trips to the island of Menorca in the Mediterranean, which Nelson visited for six days in October 1799 in HMS *Foudroyant* to ask the Commanding General for troops to relieve Malta (which he did not get). There is a second trip planned for September if you would like to join in. At the end of July we are invited to visit Tenerife in the Canary Islands. Their local history group is commemorating the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Santa Cruz, where Nelson lost his right arm in 1797. To them, it was a victory over England’s famous Admiral Nelson which they rightly celebrate with an annual re-enactment. We do not celebrate it in England for obvious reasons, but we are invited to attend this year, and your Chairman hopes that he will not be expected to take part in the re-enactment. I value my right arm!

Graham Capel, May 2022

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

If you have received this 'Nelson Dispatch', this is confirmation that your membership account is now up to date. Thank you to everyone for your continuing support which is very much appreciated. If you know of members who were expecting to receive a copy but have not, please ask them to get in touch with me, so that we can sort out any queries. We hope you will agree that membership is very good value, especially now that we have resumed our programme of events which is already well under way for 2022. We're looking forward to seeing many of you soon.

A warm welcome to new members James Wilson, Jessica Turgoose, David Todd, Nick Pourgourides and Trevor Keen.

Since the last issue the following members have sadly passed away: Dr Robin Agnew, John Goddard, John Davies and David Jagger. Obituaries for Robin Agnew and John Goddard appear later in this issue.

Sue Morris, Membership Secretary

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022

For information please contact committee members/organisers as indicated, and check the website for updates.

225th Anniversary of the Battle of Santa Cruz de Tenerife: 20-27 July 2022.

Visit to Tenerife to take part in the commemoration. Further details below – enquiries to Brian Gibbs.

Battle of the Nile Commemorative Luncheon, Buxton: 30 July 2022. See details below. Booking Form was sent with previous 'Nelson Dispatch'. More information from Jeanette Ryder.

Minterne House: 16 August 2022. See below for further details. Contact David Curson for more information and booking.

Seafarers Service, Portsmouth: September 2022. Date and details to be confirmed in the next issue. Contact Jeanette Ryder.

Menorca: 13-20 September 2022. Details below. Contact Graham Capel.

Portsmouth Hill Trafalgar Day Wreath-laying: 21 October 2022. Details to be confirmed in the next issue. Contact Jeanette Ryder.

41st Annual General Meeting & Trafalgar Weekend, Norfolk: 21-23 Oct 2022. Details below. Booking Form enclosed with this 'Nelson Dispatch'.

Pickle Night & Remembrance weekend, Portsmouth: 12 Nov 2022. Details to follow in next 'Nelson Dispatch'. More information from Jeanette Ryder.

EVENT NOTICES 2022

225th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF SANTA CRUZ DE TENERIFE, VISIT TO TENERIFE: 20-27 JULY 2022

Brian Gibbs

A trip has been organised to Tenerife, at the invitation of the ‘Tertulia de Amigos del 25 de Julio 1797’ (The Group of Friends of 25 July 1797), to join them in their celebrations on the 225th Anniversary of the Battle this year. Please see the Autumn 2021 ‘Nelson Dispatch’ for details, and for more information please contact Brian Gibbs, Tel 01246 203924.

BATTLE OF THE NILE COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON, BUXTON: SATURDAY 30 JULY 2022

Jeanette Ryder

This popular event has had to be postponed for the past two years, so don't miss the opportunity of booking for this year's events, the Nile Luncheon and in addition the informal buffet Evening Supper.

The pre-lunch lecture is entitled ‘Two Teenage Lieutenants on HMS *Vanguard* at the Battle of the Nile’, and this will be followed by the three-course lunch in the beautiful Chatsworth Dining Room.

There will also be an option of an informal buffet evening supper in the hotel at just £14 per person. This will include an entertaining and light hearted event related to the Navy and Nelson and his achievements.

Early bookings for the Palace Hotel or other nearby hotels are recommended as Buxton is a very popular holiday destination. Please make your own reservations if staying at the Palace Hotel and quote ‘The Nelson Society Luncheon 30 July 2022’ to obtain the special discounted rate of Doubles: £100 including breakfast. Singles: £75 including breakfast.

A booking form was enclosed with the last ‘Nelson Dispatch’. Please return by 25 June. For further information and extra booking forms, please contact Jeanette Ryder.

VISIT TO MINTERNE HOUSE & GARDENS, DORSET TUESDAY 16 AUGUST 2022

Home of Admiral Sir Henry Digby GCB, Captain of HMS *Africa* at Trafalgar

David Curson

The Nelson Society has arranged a visit to Minterne House in Dorset, for a fascinating day at the house with its collection of maritime paintings, and its magnificent gardens. Lord Digby will talk to us on the history of the house and his ancestors. The visit starts at 1045 and includes a morning tour of the house, a sandwich lunch with tea/coffee and an opportunity to visit the gardens in the afternoon. Tickets are £25.00 per person and will be limited to 50 persons.



For further information and for a Booking Form, please contact David Curson:
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VISIT TO MENORCA, 13-20 SEPTEMBER 2022

Graham Capel

Nelson visited the island of Menorca for 6 days from 13-18 October 1799 in HMS *Foudroyant*. He went ashore three times, primarily to ask General Erskine, the deputy military commander in the Georgetown (now Es Castell) Barracks, for troops to relieve Malta. He also visited the British Dockyard in Port Mahon.

Chairman Graham Capel has been associated with Menorca for over 50 years and has been helping to restore the remains of the 1711-built British Naval hospital, on the Isla del Rey in the harbour. Minorca (as it was in Nelson's time) was a British possession for over 70 years between 1708 and 1802.

We will be based around Mahon and Es Castell. Most of our activities will start from the spectacular Port Mahon Hotel, but other hotels include Hotel Almirante (Collingwood House), and in Es Castell the Agamemnon, Artiem Rey Carlos and the Hamilton, all within 15 minutes taxi ride of the Port Mahon Hotel.

If you are interested in coming in September, please email Graham Capel for a full itinerary. You will need to book flights, and possibly package flight and hotel deals, or check with your travel agent.

TRAFALGAR WEEKEND AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NORFOLK 21-23 OCTOBER 2022

Graham Capel

Experienced Nelson Society 'Trafalgar Weekenders' know that these weekends really are unmissable, with something for everyone. This year we have an opportunity to see Nelson's Norfolk homeland at first hand and learn much about his early life, enjoying good food and the friendly company of like-minded enthusiasts. If you are a new member or have not previously been to one of our weekends, you will be especially welcome - why not give it a try this year?

In the last issue we published details of this year's event, and with the current issue you will be receiving a Booking Form. Booking is now open, up to 31 August. **Please send your Booking Form and cheque to Graham Capel**, as indicated on the form, as soon as possible, so that we can have a good idea of numbers. (Cheques will be cashed on 31 August and tickets/joining instructions sent to you in September). We will be based at the 4-star Dukes Head Hotel in

King's Lynn. You will need to book and pay for your own accommodation direct with hotel, and we recommend that you book early. Double room rates from £69.00, pay on booking, non-refundable. Flexi rate (cancellable) on enquiry. Booking code for The Nelson Society: GA000292. Tel: 01553 774996 reception@dukesheadhotel.com. If you prefer not to come by car, King's Lynn is well served by trains and there will be coach transport available for all the weekend events outside of King's Lynn.

Trafalgar Day, 21 October falls on a Friday this year, and on this date we shall travel to Burnham Thorpe, Nelson's birthplace, for our AGM, a talk by Graham Capel and a Reception in the Village Hall, followed by our first, informal Trafalgar Dinner at the newly refurbished Lord Nelson pub in the village, with a talk by Ray Aldis.

On Saturday 22 October we shall spend the day in King's Lynn for a programme which includes a guided walk round historic King's Lynn, a 'Nelson Roadshow' and a talk by Norfolkman Charles Lewis. In the evening we shall hold the second, more formal Trafalgar Dinner in the Grand Ballroom of the Dukes Head Hotel, with guest speaker the well-known author, and now a Vice President of The Nelson Society, Dr John Sugden.

On Sunday 23 October we will attend morning service at All Saints Church, Burnham Thorpe (the church where Nelson's father the Reverend Edmund Nelson was Vicar) and I am pleased to confirm that our own Honorary Chaplain, Rev Terry Colling will be conducting the service.

This ends the formal weekend programme, but there will be a number of optional events for Sunday afternoon including lunch at either the Hoste Arms, Burnham Market or the Lord Nelson, Burnham Thorpe, and a visit to Holkham Hall. We do hope that you will join us for this very special weekend and we look forward to receiving your bookings. **If you have any questions please contact Graham Capel on treasurer.nelsonsociety@gmail.com, 07845 341 781 or 01293 871541.**

ANNUAL PICKLE NIGHT DINNER AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICE, PORTSMOUTH 12-13 NOVEMBER 2022

Jeanette Ryder

The 2022 Pickle Night Dinner will be held on 12 November in the Below Decks Room at the Royal Maritime Club Hotel, Portsmouth. Further details and a Booking Form will be issued with the next (Summer) edition of the 'Nelson Dispatch'. The Remembrance Service will take place at Portsmouth Guildhall the following morning, 13 November. It is hoped that members of The Nelson Society will be able to be taken into the Guildhall for coffee/tea before and after the moving and splendid annual Service and March Past, and we will once again be offered VIP positions on the steps of the Guildhall.

Supper at Ye Olde Spotted Dogge will be offered on a first come, first served basis, due to space, on Friday, 11 November and details will follow.

EVENT REPORTS



Photo ORNC

PREVIEW OF THE RE-OPENING OF THE NELSON ROOM AT THE PAINTED HALL, GREENWICH, 17 MARCH 2022

Paul Ganjou

As a patron of the Old Royal Naval College, I was invited to a preview of the re-opening of the Nelson Room on 17 March 2022 along with Nelson Society Chair Graham Capel and Hon Secretary, Sue Morris. This was an eagerly awaited visit, not just because of the long Covid 19 shut-down, but The Nelson Society had also been consulted on the Room's design and layout and had made a financial contribution as a Benefactor. As well as numerous Patrons and VIPs from the Old Royal Naval College (ORNC), several guests well-known to the Society were present, including Professor Andrew Lambert, Anthony Cross of the Warwick Leadlay Gallery and Admiral Lord West of Spithead, the former First Sea Lord.

Originally a small records office at the side of the famous Painted Hall, the 'Nelson Room' is where the body of Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson arrived at Greenwich Hospital, now the Old Royal Naval College, in preparation for his grand lying-in-state after his death at the Battle of Trafalgar. Greenwich became the centre of the national expression of loss and mourning and countless thousands of people came to pay their respects.

That small room has just completed a dramatic transformation and with the help of Design company *Metaphor*, it tells the story of Admiral Lord Nelson and his connection to Greenwich. The room's unique architecture has been



The Nelson Room (Photo ORNC)

carefully conserved and the imposing roof lantern, monumental stonework and Swedish marble flooring has been restored to its former glory. The marble flagstones are of Öland Stone and were actually selected by the architect Sir Christopher Wren himself in his own designs. Large graphic panels depicting different aspects of Nelson's life adorn the walls, complementing the refurbished olive green colour scheme and dark woodwork. The elegant and newly commissioned furnishings include a circle of red leather padded stools under the circular 'corona' lighting and magnificent domed vault ceiling, carved wood settles with red leather, and display cases shaped to match the alcoves between the tall windows. There is also a new audio-visual experience telling the story of our great hero and examining how people react when a much-loved celebrity dies. A 'Pepper's Ghost' display illuminates Nelson's lying-in-state, while a newly commissioned bronze sculpture called 'Breaking the Line', by sculptor Antony Dufort, pays tribute to the many sailors who fought at Trafalgar and later became 'Greenwich Pensioners' at the Royal Hospital for Seamen, which became the Greenwich Hospital.

The centrepiece of the room is a scale model, or maquette, of E H Baily's magnificent statue of Nelson that stands on top of Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square, perhaps the most famous statue in England. Whilst much smaller than its big brother in Trafalgar Square, it is about the same size as Nelson was in life.

Several key speakers gave addresses during the evening under the Statue:

Tony Hales CBE, Chair of the Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College Board of Trustees. Tony welcomed us and spoke about the success of the Nelson Room Renovation project in terms of creating a fuller visitor experience, telling the story of Nelson and his relationship to the Old Royal Naval College site. He explained how the Nelson Room now had a much more sympathetic presentation in relation to the Painted Hall and that the Greenwich Foundation was very proud of the site's association with Nelson.

Claire Kirk, Project Manager of the Nelson Room Renovation Project and Head of Learning, Interpretation and Collections at ORNC. Claire spoke about the Room's interpretation scheme, and its history in relation to Nelson and his lying-in-state in the Painted Hall. She explained the connections between Nelson and

Greenwich, the historical importance of Nelson's death and the unprecedented way that the nation reacted to his death; also about how the interpretation enhanced the Room's architecture and that it now sits very well next door to the recently-restored Painted Hall.

Martin Ashley, Conservation Architect on the Nelson Renovation Project and Surveyor of the Fabric at ORNC. Martin spoke about the improvements that were made to the fabric of the building and said that the stone floor was restored using Öland stone - a type of Swedish marble that came from the same quarry used by Christopher Wren. He told us about the conservation of the roof lantern, stonework and the careful patination (using tea) of the maquette model of the statue that stands on top of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square.

Matthew Mees, Chief Executive of ORNC. Matt thanked those who contributed to the renovation of the Room - staff, funders, supporters and those who have given their advice during the renovation process. He also spoke of the Silver Jubilee of the Greenwich Foundation - 25 years since the Foundation took over from the Royal Navy onsite and that the re-opening of the Nelson Room starts a year of Silver Jubilee celebrations.



(L-R) Tony Hales, Sue Morris, Graham Capel, Claire Knight and Matthew Mees (photo PG)



Andrew Lambert and Sue Morris (photo PG)

This was a wonderfully informative evening, and what a great pleasure it was to be able to again visit one of The Nelson Society's true spiritual homes.



The Painted Hall (photo James Brittain)

A Nelson Society members' visit to the Nelson Room, Painted Hall and the 'Nelson, Navy, Nation' Gallery in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich is planned in the fairly near future – so watch this space.

VISIT TO THE LORD MAYOR'S PARLOUR, GUILDHALL, PORTSMOUTH 23 MARCH 2022

Sue Morris

On 23 March a group of Nelson Society members took tea with the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Frank Jonas, and the Lady Mayoress in the elegant Lord Mayor's Parlour in Portsmouth Guildhall. Frank Jonas is already well known to us, as he was guest speaker at last November's Pickle Night Dinner, and it was an honour for this invitation to be extended to The Nelson Society via Jeanette Ryder, our Portsmouth/South regional secretary. There was plenty of interesting conversation over tea, and Frank regaled us with anecdotes of his experiences as an apprentice in the Portsmouth Dockyard in WW2. While the Mayor's Parlour is actually his official working office, it is rather grand; overlooking Guildhall Square, it is reached via an impressive staircase to the first floor, and contains as well as his working desk a number of interesting display items, models, robes,

regalia, official gifts, plate and documents relating to the history of Portsmouth, which we were able to view. Also attending was Susan Ward, Curator of Art at Portsmouth Museum, who gave a talk on a number of artefacts including some etchings and prints from the Guildhall's collection.



Taking tea (L-R) Terry Ryder, Lord Mayor Frank Jonas, the Lady Mayoress, Susan Ward, Jane Smith, Marina Deestan-Jones



A highlight for us was 'Nelson's snuffbox', a beautiful object in silver, dated London 1792, which we were able to handle and examine at close quarters. The top of the snuffbox is in fact engraved with the coat of arms of William, first Earl Nelson – not Nelson himself.



This was a most enjoyable afternoon and we are grateful to the Lord Mayor for his hospitality and to Jeanette for organising our visit.



(L-R) seated Graham Capel, Lord Mayor Frank Jonas, Lady Mayoress. Standing: Jane Smith, Sue Morris, Terry Ryder, Jeanette Ryder, John Saunders, Pam Saunders, John Wallis, Lyn Wallis, Marina Deestan-Jones, Cheryl Jewitt.

BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN DINNER, CHICHESTER
SUNDAY 3 APRIL 2022

Sue Morris

The Nelson Society and The Murray Club held a joint Dinner to commemorate the Battle of Copenhagen, on Sunday 3 April at the Chichester Park Hotel, Chichester, West Sussex. Organised by the Nelson Society's Brian Gibbs, this event was held on the first anniversary of the unveiling in Chichester of Vincent Gray's life-sized sculpture of Admirals Murray and Nelson, which stands outside the Council House in North Street, only yards from Sir George Murray's former home, now the Harbour Hotel. Some 30 Nelson Society members attended, along with Murray Club members: Chairman Richard Plowman, social historian and Professor Emeritus Philip Robinson, former Mayor of Chichester Anne Scicluna, Rosario Scicluna, Lynne Plowman, local historian Alan Green, John & Susan Coldstream, and sculptor Vincent Gray.

After an excellent dinner, Richard Plowman addressed the guests and gave a gripping account of the role of Admiral Sir George Murray and the *Edgar* at Copenhagen, the famous signal and Nelson's reaction, and also explained how it was that Murray was not at Trafalgar, and the origin of Nelson's famous words 'Murray or none!'



*(L-R) Richard Plowman, Brian Gibbs and Vincent Gray with various models for the statue
(photo GC)*

Sculptor Vincent Gray then gave a fascinating talk on the development of the statue project. He had undertaken a great deal of reading and research, delving into the characters of Nelson and Murray and consulting experts such as Mark Barton on the wearing of swords. Vincent had also made great use of Richard Walker's excellent book 'The Nelson Portraits' in his research. The statue is meant to depict Nelson and Murray in September 1805. Nelson gestures towards Portsmouth (and not towards Copenhagen, as was intended for when the statue was originally to be sited across the road!). Murray does not wear a hat – an artistic decision, but conveniently evening up the height of the shorter Nelson beside the taller Murray!). We learned many interesting facts about the technical side of creating the sculpture, such as the methods of 'scaling up' from a design to a 3D model - somewhat different these days from Michelangelo's use of glass tanks of milk. Vincent said that the local reaction to the statue had been good; initially there had been some unwelcome BLM interest but this seemed to have quickly subsided. There was however still some sporadic vandalism with attempts to remove or damage the swords, which were quite vulnerable, and he had tried to strengthen the resin with steel inserts. This problem should be solved when funds enabled the final bronze version to be installed.

The meal finished appropriately with Murray Mints, and Brian thanked Richard and Vincent for their contribution to what was an excellent evening.

On the following morning of Monday 4 April, a small group of members assembled at the Council Chamber in North Street, where the Murray/Nelson statue stands outside this fine 18th century building. After coffee and a warm welcome by the Mayor of Chichester John Hughes and the members of the Murray Club, we were given a tour of the building and a viewing of various artefacts associated with Murray – himself Mayor of Chichester in 1815.

Finally we gathered at the statue to hear Philip Robinson give a reprise of his stirring speech at the unveiling of the statue in 2021. Philip spoke movingly of the dedication, integrity, competence and humility of Murray which enabled him to manage his captains, and which Nelson recognised so clearly.

The weather being somewhat inclement, Nelson Society members opted not to take the Murray walking trail on this occasion, and Anne Scicluna kindly offered to give us a tour of Chichester Cathedral. Anne is a superb and knowledgeable guide and we learned much about the history and art contained in the cathedral as well as seeing George Murray's memorial.

Our thanks are due to the Murray Club, and our own Brian Gibbs, for a successful weekend and a worthy commemoration of the Battle of Copenhagen and Nelson and Murray's friendship.



Members gather at the Nelson/Murray statue outside the Council House. Back row L-R: Richard Plowman, Keith Holden, Alan Green, Michael Salter, Susan Foster, Brian Gibbs, Philip Robinson, John Maynard. Front row L-R: Hilary Reeves, Anne Scicluna, Joy Sarson, Elizabeth Gibbs (photo SM).

NEWSROUND

Monmouth Museum update

Louis Hodgkin received the following reply to his enquiry about the Nelson Collection at Monmouth (which was moved from the Monmouth Museum to the Shire Hall and scheduled to open in a new gallery there in February), from Rachael Rogers of Monmouthshire County Council on 15 March. It gives important information about the future of the collection. We will update you with further information as it becomes available.

'The Nelson Collection will move to the Shire Hall as part of the redevelopment. However security and environmental conditions will need to be upgraded before we make this move, for all of the museum collection generally but particularly for the Nelson Collection due to its national/international significance. Secure facilities will be needed both when the collection is on

display and in storage. Internal funding has been awarded towards the project and we are working on a larger bid to go alongside this. We are currently waiting to hear the results of a smaller discrete funding bid we have submitted to look at the storage element.

The MonLife website has been/is being updated so it clearly says on the Monmouth Page that we are working towards a move to the Shire Hall. We will update the Shire Hall page with details about the museum offer once we have that. For the moment we will be looking to install temporary displays within the space. For example we had one on the Battle of Britain from end of November to end of Jan. As the project develops we will also use temporary displays as a way of consulting audiences on future displays.

There are new displays in the windows of Monmouth Museum signposting visitors to other museums/heritage attractions within the MonLife group.

Works to the Nelson Collection

We have recently completed a rehousing project of our manuscript collection. The primary aim of this project was to re-house Monmouth Museum's collection of letters relating to Horatio Nelson. They were unsuitably stored in polyester sleeves and needed a condition assessment survey to check for iron gall ink and paper stability. Following consultation with other archive conservation specialists it was decided that a combination of acid free papers and folders would replace the polyester to provide a safer environment for the iron gall ink, seals and papers. Funding was gratefully received from the Welsh Government and Federation of Museums and Galleries of Wales to help support this project. The collection is comprised of approximately 810 items. They generally date from 1770 to the early 1800s. They are written by Horatio Nelson, Edmund Nelson, Frances Nelson, Emma Hamilton, William Hamilton and other associated persons.

We have appointed an expert to carry out conservation work to the books – particularly Nelson's log books. This is due to be completed this month.

We are working with the National Maritime Museum to carry out a significance assessment of our collections. (In the past when applying for funding we have been questioned on the assertion we make that it is nationally/internationally significant, as it's something we say ourselves; having a national institution back that up will be an enormous help). That work will be finished by mid April and will include a report which will be useful going forward. We are beginning a programme of work whereby we look at the Nelson Collections to consider the stories we would like to tell in the new displays. This is will be an ongoing process and we will be consulting a variety of different groups to find out what stories they would like to see.

As part of our Collections Review, our Collections Assistants have been compiling inventories of the Nelson Collection and inputting that information onto our computer database.

We have secured some additional staff time to input further Nelson records on the system. We currently have around 1500 out of 3800 items on the system. When carrying out this work (in March and April) we will be adding extra object description information from various reports, Lady Llangattock sales catalogues, research papers and books and objects.

The Nelson Collection on display was photographed during lockdown and we have commissioned a further day of photography to get the decorative arts collection relating to Nelson photographed.

Having this information and photographs in one place will enable us to add further information to the Collections Online website which only has limited Nelson material on there at the moment.

Please let me know if you have any queries. As you can see we have been carrying out a lot of work on the collection'.

ARTICLES

WILLIAM CHAMBERS: NELSON'S FORGOTTEN SURGEON **Maxwell Cooper and Benjamin Whiston**

At the end of the siege of Toulon (29 August – 19 December 1793), the Royal Navy burnt the French fleet and retreated to Corsica. Here, during the Siege of Calvi (17 June – 10 August 1794), Nelson injured his right eye whilst undertaking shore duties (1,2,3) At the time he was in command of HMS *Agamemnon* and in a letter of 18 August 1794 offered the following account of the injury to his wife Fanny:

“On the 10th of July last a shot having struck our battery the splinters of stones from it struck me most severely in the face and breast. Although the blow was so severe as to occasion a great flow of blood from my head, yet I most fortunately escaped by only having my right eye nearly deprived of its sight. It was cut down, but is as far recovered as to be able to distinguish light from darkness, but as to all the purpose of its use it is gone. However, the blemish is nothing, not to be perceived unless told. The pupil is nearly the size of the blue part, I don't know the name...”(2)

Three doctors examined Nelson's eye and documented his injury in two medical certificates. (3) These are presented below in chronological order and this article considers the author of the second certificate, a surgeon named Chambers:

“These are to Certify, that Horatio Nelson, Esquire, Commander of his Majesty's Ship Agamemnon, did, on the 10th day of July 1794, while Commanding the Seamen before Calvi, receive a wound of the iris of the right eye, which has occasioned an unnatural dilatation of the pupil, and a material

defect of sight. Given under our hands, on board his Majesty's ship Victory, off Calvi, this 9th day of August 1794.

JOHN HARNESS Physician to the Fleet

MICHAEL JEFFERSON Surgeon attending on shore". (2,3)

"These are to Certify that Captain Horatio Nelson of his Majesty's Ship Agamemnon, now serving on Shore at the Siege of Calvi, was on the 10th day of July last, wounded in the face and right eye, much injured by stones or splinters, struck by shot from the Enemy. There were several small lacerations about the face; and his eye so materially injured, that in my opinion, he will never recover the perfect use of it again.

W. CHAMBERS,

Surgeon to the Forces in the Mediterranean.

Calvi, August 12th, 1794" (2,3).

The purpose of the certificates was to document evidence of injury sustained on duty with a view to a disability pension. It is clear that Nelson must have presented the certificates when he was assessed by the Company (later Royal College) of Surgeons of London at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Holborn, in 1797:

"Three weeks after his arrival in London, that is, on October 12th, Nelson appeared before a private Court of Examiners of the Surgeons' Company at their new premises in Lincoln's Inn Fields. One of the functions of this Court was to assess for purposes of pension or superannuation the severity of the wounds or disabilities suffered by members of the Royal Navy and Merchant Service and to approve the amounts spent on surgical treatment. The purpose of Nelson's visit was to gain the opinion of the surgeons about the injury to his eye sustained three years previously at the siege of Calvi, in Corsica..." (4)

Until recently the identity of surgeon 'W Chambers' was unknown. Chambers' service records show that he started his career as a Surgeon's Mate (a rank subsequently renamed Assistant Surgeon) prior to promotion to Staff Surgeon on 7 November 1793. This rapid appointment to 'surgeon to the forces' appears to have been made in the field at Toulon. (5) Between 1797 and 1803 Chambers is recorded as surgeon to the 10th (Prince of Wales's Own) Regiment of (Light) Dragoons.

Our research reveals new information about his biography. (1,5). From 1803 to 1804 he was stationed with the Dragoons at Brighton, Sussex. Here Chambers held the office of 'Surgeon Extraordinary' to the Prince of Wales (later King George IV). (1) In 1803, Chambers directed the establishment of a military hospital in Brighton that appears to be an early example of a general (rather than regimental) hospital. (5) In the same year Chambers founded a vaccine centre entitled the 'Brighton Royal Jennerian Institution for the extermination of the Small Pox'. (1) This provided free vaccination for Brighton's 'indigent poor' at their own homes, at St. James Street (probably Chambers' residence) and later at a medicinal laboratory in Great East Street (see photo). Chambers' Assistant

Surgeon was William Taylor who later served in the Peninsular War and was Deputy Inspector of Hospitals at Waterloo. (6)



Great East Street, Brighton (today known as East Street). Near here in 1803 stood a 'Medicinal laboratory' which was home to Surgeon Chambers' 'Brighton Royal Jennerian Institution for the extermination of the Small Pox'.

In 1803 Chambers was promoted back to the staff, probably to direct one of the army hospitals in the south of England in preparation for casualties from Napoleon's anticipated invasion. (1) Central to defending the realm was the Royal Navy, England's 'wooden walls'. Wider land-based measures around this time included army redeployment, extensive fortification, a military canal and a semaphore telegraph.

After June 1804, Chambers disappears from the records. His name is absent from roll calls for the Peninsular War (1808-1814) and Waterloo (1815). We conjecture that Chambers may have died soon after 1804. Arguments for this conclusion are twofold. First, the apparent absence of any census or death record is consistent with a period of national upheaval. It was also early in the century that formal registration of death was in its infancy. Second, there is Chambers' forgotten link with Nelson. Had he lived well beyond victory at Trafalgar, Chambers' association with, or recollections of, Nelson would surely have been preserved (beyond his medical certificate).

We write to ask if anyone can furnish us with further information about Surgeon Chambers' biography? In particular, we wish to enquire whether his original (presumably hand-written) certificate survives?

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Notes

- 1 Cooper MJ, Whiston B. *William Chambers: British army surgeon (Toulon, 1793) and his vaccination institution (1803) in Brighton, England*. Journal of Medical Biography. Published online Feb 2021
- 2 Nelson, H. *The Dispatches and Letters of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, with notes by Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas, G.C.M.G.* London, Henry Colburn. 1845; 1: 493
- 3 Gooddy W. *Admiral Lord Nelson's Neurological Illnesses*. Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine. 1970;63(3):299-306
- 4 Dobson J. *Lord Nelson and the expenses of his cure*. Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. 1957; 21(2):119-122
- 5 Cooper M and Whiston, B. *William Chambers, Surgeon at Toulon (1793) and Corsica (1794)*. The Waterloo Journal. 2021; 43(2): 10-13
- 6 Cooper M, Whiston B, Fernandes C. *William Taylor, Peninsular War surgeon and deputy inspector of hospitals at Waterloo*. Journal of Medical Biography. Published online May 2021.

NELSON'S 'GOUT': A MEDICAL MYSTERY

Dr Michael Shaw

Dr Michael Shaw, reflecting his previous career as a medical writer, looks at a remark in William Beatty's account of Nelson's death, which suggests that Nelson suffered from gout. This seems to have been largely disregarded, even in the quite extensive medical literature on Nelson, and there is no indication in Nelson's correspondence that he ever suffered from the disabling pain of 'classical' gout. Dr Shaw looks at this lack of evidence, and suggests some reasons for Beatty's assertion.

Ever since naval surgeon William Beatty (1773–1842) published his *Authentic Narrative of the Death of Lord Nelson* in 1807, Nelson's medical history has been a source of fascination both for biographers and clinical researchers. A search of the medical research database Pubmed (1) reveals 35 academic articles on Nelson's illnesses and injuries published since 1949, and the field has been comprehensively reviewed by Ann-Mary E Hills in her 2006 book *Nelson: a Medical Casebook*. But one aspect of Nelson's health, briefly alluded to in the *Authentic Narrative*, seems to have been largely ignored, and this seems surprising because there are good reasons to question both Nelson's presumably self-reported diagnosis and Beatty's apparently unquestioning acceptance of it.

In the *Authentic Narrative*, Beatty writes that: '...his Lordship, about the meridian of life, had been subject to frequent fits of the gout: which disease however, as well as his constitutional tendency to it, he totally overcame by abstaining for the space of nearly two years from animal food, and wine and all

other fermented drink...’ This information was presumably reported to Beatty by Nelson himself. But how reliable is this report?

Gout is a form of arthritis, caused by the formation of uric acid crystals within joints, that has been recognised since antiquity. It is characterised by sudden attacks of swelling and redness, accompanied by severe pain. In its most common form, it mainly affects the big toe, although almost any joint can be involved. Gout was a familiar condition in the Georgian era (Fig. 1), when it was considered to be a disease of affluence. It was also clearly recognised by naval surgeons. Gilbert Blaine, in his *Observations on the Diseases of Seamen* (1799), writes that: ‘...a pain in the foot would arise, like an attack of the gout...this would happen in the space of a few hours.’ However, Blaine also considered the condition to be a disease of ‘the indolent and luxurious,’ reporting that ‘With regard to gout, indigestion, hypochondriac complaints, and low spirits, there is something in hard labour of every kind that tends to avert them, and *particularly in that rough mode of it peculiar to a sea life*’ (author’s italics). This in itself might argue against Nelson’s reported diagnosis.

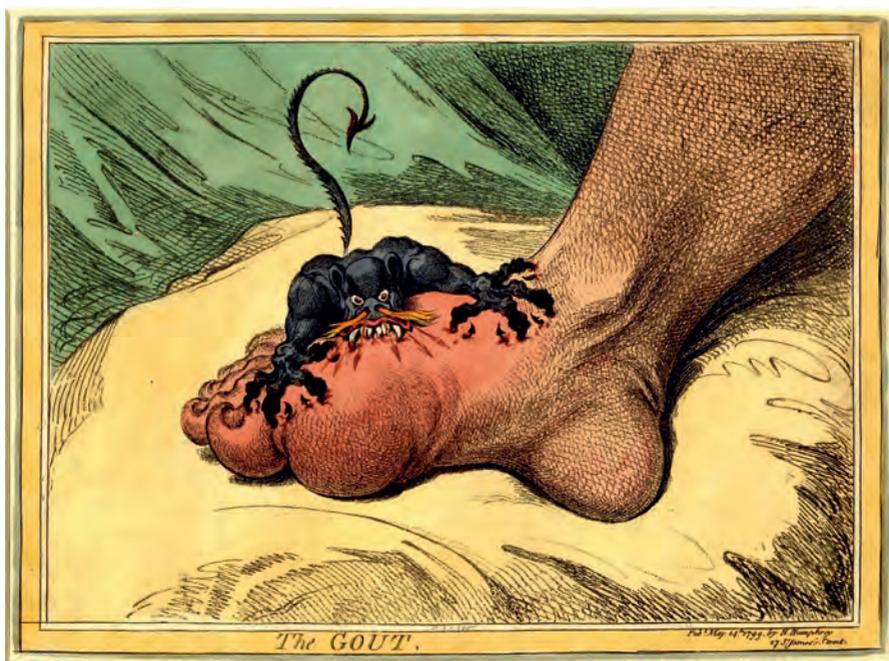


Fig.1. A Georgian view of gout, in which the disease is portrayed as a demon attacking the big toe. Coloured soft-ground etching by James Gillray (1756–1815), 1799. British Museum Collection.

It is notable that in his correspondence Nelson refers to himself as having gout on only three occasions, all relatively early in his career. Writing to Captain William Locker (1731–1800) on 23 January 1780, he writes that ‘I have twice been given over since you left this country with that cursed disorder, the gout’ and, interestingly, he reports that a recurrent chest complaint had been attributed to gout. As described below, however, this diagnosis seems unlikely. A decade later, in a letter to Spiridion Foresti in Corfu, he writes that ‘A friend of mine has heard, and read in a French book, that your Islands have an infallible remedy for the gout, I therefore beg that you will either send the receipt (*sic*) or ingredients.’ At first sight, these comments might seem to suggest a 10-year history of gout, consistent with Beatty’s report. However, at no time does Nelson explicitly mention the characteristic symptoms of gout, notably the often excruciating and disabling pain associated with the condition; in a 1781 letter to Captain Locker, he refers to ‘the most excruciating tortures,’ but without further details. Given the detail with which Nelson describes the consequences of his eye injury, and pain following the loss of his arm at Santa Cruz and the head injury sustained at the Battle of the Nile (1798), this seems a strange omission. Furthermore, prolonged, untreated, gout can lead to the formation of swellings known as tophi in the affected joints (2). Beatty’s *Authentic Narrative* reports no such findings at post mortem, which would not be consistent with a prolonged history of ‘frequent fits’ in an era where medical treatments for gout were limited. Beatty attributes the apparent resolution of Nelson’s gout to an abstemious diet, and this would certainly be beneficial (and, indeed, remains a mainstay of management today): however, it is arguable that such a diet might also lead to improvement in a variety of other medical conditions.

Is it possible that Nelson mistook symptoms of some of his other recurrent illnesses for gout? This seems unlikely because as described above the symptoms of gout have been recognised for centuries, and would certainly have been known to Nelson. Furthermore, his letters include a number of references to other officers being affected by gout.

Could Nelson’s own reported gout, therefore, be a misdiagnosis? Certainly there are grounds to question the original attribution of “my old complaint in my breast” to gout. While it is now recognised that gout can occur in the bones of the chest, this is extremely rare (3), and it seems unlikely that this possibility would have been considered by 18th-Century physicians. It is possible that Nelson’s symptoms may have been due to some other inflammatory condition affecting the chest, which was mislabelled as gout. Similarly, some online commentators have suggested that this ‘gout in the chest’ was actually a manifestation of the malaria which Nelson contracted while serving in the tropics early in his career (4). Pubmed searches (5) reveal no cases of malaria being misdiagnosed as gout, and the symptoms of acute attacks of the two condition differ markedly. Indeed,

Nelson clearly recognised his recurrent malaria attacks, referring to them as his ‘ague days.’

In summary, Nelson’s ‘gout’ represents something of a medical mystery. Neither misreporting on Nelson’s part nor a physician’s misdiagnosis adequately explains the discrepancy between Beatty’s report and the apparent lack of evidence of the symptoms and clinical signs usually associated with the disorder. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that the original attribution of his chest disorder to gout led Nelson to attribute various other unrelated conditions to gout, despite the absence of the classic signs of the condition. At this distance in time, however, the true nature of Nelson’s ‘gout’ seems destined to remain a mystery.

Notes

- 1 Search conducted on 1 December 2021.
- 2 Ragab, G., Elshahaly, M., Bardin, T. *Gout: An old disease in new perspective – A review*. Journal of Advanced Research, vol. 8, pp 495–511, 2017
- 3 See, for example, Xue, W. et al. *Gout in the chest misdiagnosed as ankylosing spondylitis*. Frontiers in Medicine, vol 7, article 582444, 2020.
- 4 <https://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/239899-Nelson-and-the-battle-of-traffic-falgar?page=2>
- 5 Searches conducted on 16 November 2021.

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LLOYD’S OF LONDON - THE PATRIOTIC FUND Graham Capel

Lloyd’s Coffee House was first mentioned in The London Gazette in February 1696. It was run by Edward Lloyd and was located in Tower Street in the City of London. It moved to Lombard Street in 1699. In 1696 Lloyd began to publish a newspaper from the Coffee House, ‘*Lloyd’s News*’ three times each week containing mercantile and war news. Lloyd died in 1712 but his Coffee House continued in the same name. Between 1720 and 1739, Lloyd’s Coffee House became frequented by an increasing number of Insurance Underwriters who were speculating on the arrival or not, of ships and cargoes, and charging for ‘Underwriting’ the safe arrival of either. During this time a new publication, ‘*Lloyd’s List*’ began, and this is still in existence today nearly 300 years later containing worldwide shipping news.



Early coffee house and 'Lloyd's' (Lloyd's Coffee House)

After Lord Howe's victory over the French on the 'Glorious First of June' 1794, a fund was set up amongst the Underwriters in Lloyd's Coffee House, which quickly raised one thousand guineas for the relief of the injured from Lord Howe's action and the support of the bereaved. A committee was set up to manage the distribution of these funds. This was then opened to the public, and within a short time had risen to £21,000. This support for the navy was welcomed by the Admiralty.



In February 1797, Admiral Sir John Jervis gained victory over the Spanish Fleet off Cape St Vincent. Four Spanish ships of the line were captured, two by Captain Horatio Nelson with his 'patent bridge for boarding First Rates'. Lloyd's raised another fund of £2,615 for the relief of the 273 men injured and the relatives of the 73 men killed.

After the Battle of the Nile on 1st August 1798 when Nelson destroyed or captured 11 out of 13 line of battle ships of the French fleet, and became a national hero, another subscription was opened at Lloyd's. This achieved a sum of £38,436. John Julius Angerstein, the Russian-born Chairman of Lloyd's, wrote to Nelson asking for a list of wounded and killed to make donations from the fund. They also voted Nelson a personal collection of plate to the value of £500 from Rundell and Bridge, 'jewellers and goldsmiths to their Majesties'.



Nelson's Nile Service



Nelson's Copenhagen Wine Coolers

After Nelson's victory over the Danes at the Battle of Copenhagen on 2 April 1801, Angerstein again wrote to Nelson asking for the casualty list. This time subscriptions reached £15,500 and Nelson was again awarded £500 in silver plate. This silver service carried the inscription:

'Presented by the Committee appointed to manage the subscription raised for the benefit of the wounded and the relatives of those who were killed in the glorious victory obtained of Copenhagen on 2nd April 1801. To Vice Admiral Lord Nelson KB, Duke of Bronte &&& in testimony of the high sense entertained of his meritorious exertions in the defence of his country which at the peril and danger of his life he so nobly sustained previous to the engagement, and as a token of his brilliant and gallant conduct during the whole of that ever memorable action.

John Julius Angerstein. Chairman Lloyd's Coffee House'.

After the Treaty of Amiens in 1801 had brought peace in Europe for two years, and Napoleon Buonaparte had been made First Consul of France for life, relations deteriorated and Britain declared war on France on 16 May 1803, and blockaded French ports. In June 1803 the Committee of Lloyd's received a petition signed by 33 subscribers, asking for a general meeting to be convened to consider that a Patriotic Fund be established on a permanent basis to provide relief for those wounded and dependents of those killed in the defence of the country. This was agreed, and on 20 July 1803 the first meeting of the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund took place under the Chairmanship of Mr Brooke Watson at Lloyd's Coffee House, now located at the Royal Exchange in London. Watson was a character. He had been orphaned at 14 and lost a leg in a shark attack in Havana. He supplied food to General Wolfe in Canada and became a merchant, joining Lloyd's in 1772. In 1784 he became an MP and became Lord Mayor of London in 1797. In 1798 he was Commissary General to the armed forces of Great Britain, and a director of the Bank of England.

The aims of the Patriotic Fund were set down to provide charitable support and also to reward actions in defence of the country. The intention of the fund was not only to obtain funds from the subscribers at Lloyd's, but it should include donations from 'institutions and the great and the good and to our fellow subjects of every class and denomination'. Initially a subscription of £20,000 was made by subscribers at Lloyd's. At the next meeting this had risen to £74,200. The Bank of England and the East India Company gave £10,000 each, and the City of London £2,500. The three principal Insurance companies, the Sun Fire Office, the Royal Exchange Assurance and London Assurance gave £1,000 each. The committee met weekly in the Merchant Seamen's Office in the Royal Exchange, where Lloyd's Coffee House was now located.



Royal Exchange 1830's – Lloyd's Coffee House on the right

At the third meeting of the committee the fund had reached £100,000. Local fund raising committees were established in major cities. The Dublin fund raised £6,000, Durham £4,400, and the Bishop of Durham a further £1,000. The owner of the Theatre Royal in Haymarket offered the receipts of one particular performance, the Officers and crew of HMS *Pickle* gave a month's pay. The Officers of his Majesty's *Egyptian* brig had collected £11.5.7d, and a farmer in Hunston in Suffolk sent £2 17s. 6d. A donation also came from The Society of Free and Happy Britons, and also from the Everlasting Society of Eccentrics. The funds raised were invested by the committee largely in Government Securities, Consols (3% Consolidated Annuities).

The second Trustee of the fund was Thomas Bonar, the most successful underwriter at Lloyd's. The third Trustee was John J Angerstein. Born in St Petersburg, he had come to England in 1750 aged 15 and was a naturalised Briton. He was introduced to Lloyd's at the age of 25 and became Chairman in 1795.

Sir Francis Baring was deaf from birth and was the founder of the city Bank of Baring Brothers, a Director of the East India Company and also an MP. In 1810 the 'European Magazine' described him as 'the first merchant in Europe'. He replaced Sir Brooke Watson.



The fund set as its motto ‘Rule Britannia – Britons Strike Home’ set around an image of Britannia slaying the dragon, with an inscription ‘Patriotic Fund 1803’. This phrase came from a play – ‘Bonduca’ (about Boudicca) in 1696.

*‘Britons strike home, revenge your country’s wrongs!
Fight and record yourself in Druid’s songs.’*

Awards from the fund were made, not only to military personnel of both army and navy, but also to the mercantile marine, primarily the East India Company. The first award was made on 24 August 1803 to the officers and crew of HMS *Loire* which captured a French Brig *Veneux* off the Isle de Bas near Brest. At the meeting on 17 January 1804 it was decided to award ‘Swords to the value of £50 for meritorious service’.

The Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805 was the first great battle since the establishment of the Lloyd’s Patriotic Fund. The Patriotic Fund awards were tremendous.

VAN		
HMS <i>Victory</i>	Earl Nelson brother of Lord Viscount Nelson	Vase £500
	Lady Viscountess Nelson widow of Lord Viscount Nelson	Vase £500
	Captain Thomas Masterman Hardy	Vase £100
HMS <i>Neptune</i>	Captain Thomas Francis Fremantle	Vase £100
HMS <i>Conqueror</i>	Captain Israel Pellew	Sword £100
HMS <i>Leviathan</i>	Captain Henry William Bayntun	Sword £100
HMS <i>Ajax</i>	Captain John Pilfold	Sword £100
HMS <i>Agamemnon</i>	Captain Sir Edward Berry	Vase £100
HMS <i>Minotaur</i>	Captain Charles John Moore Mansfield	Sword £100
HMS <i>Spartiate</i>	Captain Sir Francis Laforey	Sword £100
HMS <i>Britannia</i>	Rt Hon Rear Admiral the Earl of Northesk	Vase £300
	Captain Charles Bullen	Sword £100
HMS <i>Africa</i>	Captain Henry Digby	Sword £100

REAR

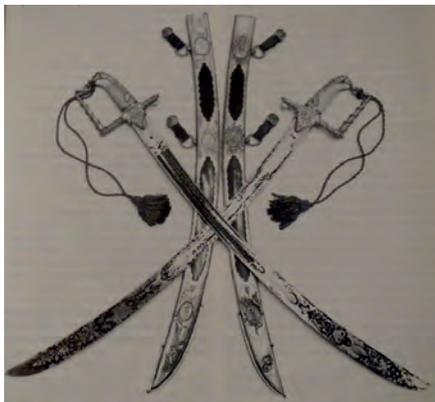
HMS <i>Royal Sovereign</i>	Vice Admiral Lord Collingwood	Vase £500
	Captain Edward Rotherham	Vase £100
HMS <i>Mars</i>	Mrs Duff widow of Captain George Duff	Vase £100
	Captain William Hannah	Vase £100
HMS <i>Belleisle</i>	Captain William Hargood	Vase £100
HMS <i>Tonnant</i>	Captain Charles Tyler	Sword £100
HMS <i>Bellerophon</i>	Mrs Cooke widow of Captain John Cooke	Vase £200
	Captain William Pryce Cumby	Sword £100
HMS <i>Colossus</i>	Captain James Nicoll Morris	Vase £100
HMS <i>Achilles</i>	Captain Richard King	Sword £100
HMS <i>Polyphemus</i>	Captain Robert Redmill	Sword £100
HMS <i>Revenge</i>	Captain Robert Moorsom	Sword £100
HMS <i>Swiftsure</i>	Captain William Gordon Rutherford	Sword £100
HMS <i>Defence</i>	Captain George Johnstone Hope	Sword £100
HMS <i>Thunderer</i>	Captain John Stockham	Sword £100
HMS <i>Defiance</i>	Captain Philip Charles Durham	Sword £100
	Mr Simons father of Lieut Thomas Simons	Vase £100
HMS <i>Prince</i>	Captain Richard Grindall	Sword £100
HMS <i>Dreadnought</i>	Captain John Conn	Sword £100

OTHERS

HMS <i>Euryalus</i>	Captain the Hon Henry Blackwood	Sword £100
HMS <i>Sirius</i>	Captain William Prowse	Sword £100
HMS <i>Phoebe</i>	Captain the Hon Thomas Bladon Capel	Vase £100
HMS <i>Naiad</i>	Captain Thomas Dundas	Sword £100
HMS <i>Pickle</i>	Captain John Richard Lapenotiere	Sword £100
HMS <i>Entreprenante</i>	Lieutenant Robert Benjamin Young	Sword £100

TOTAL AWARDS

Vases £500: 3.
 Vases £300: 1.
 Vases £200: 1.
 Vases £100: 10.
 Swords £100: 23.



Quite how it was determined who was awarded a Vase or a Sword is not established. For example, all of the Frigate and other Captains received £100 swords except Captain Capel of HMS *Phoebe*, who received a vase, which is pictured here and is on display in the Nelson Collection in the entrance Lobby of the present Lloyd's Building in the City of London.

Two Captains did not receive awards, Captain Eliab Harvey of HMS *Temeraire* and Captain Edward Codrington of HMS *Orion*.

Lieutenant Thomas Simons of HMS *Defiance* received a special award of a £100 sword presented to his father. He was nominated for his bravery in boarding the French ship *L'Aigle* and wounding her Captain, and then hauling down her flag. He was killed whilst hoisting the British flag in replacement.

In the subsequent action off Ferrol on 4 November 1804, Rear Admiral Sir Richard Strachan captured the four ships of the combined fleet van which had escaped the Battle of Trafalgar. His Squadron were also presented with awards by the Patriotic Fund.

HMS <i>Caesar</i>	Rear Admiral Sir Richard John Strachan	Vase £300
HMS <i>Courageux</i>	Captain Richard Lee	Sword £100
HMS <i>Hero</i>	Captain the Hon Alan Gardner	Sword £100
HMS <i>Namur</i>	Captain L.W. Halsted	Vase £100
HMS <i>Phoenix</i>	Captain Thomas Baker	Vase £100
HMS <i>Santa Margarita</i>	Captain Wilson Rathborne	Sword £100

The Lloyd's Patriotic Fund made awards following the Falklands conflict in the 1980's and continues to this day.

**THE SCOTTISH DIMENSION:
CAPTAIN WILLIAM GORDON RUTHERFURD**
Ronald G Kane



Portrait by Peter Alexander Hay. A half-length portrait of Captain Rutherford in captain's full-dress uniform, 1793-1812 pattern. He is wearing his Trafalgar medal and holding the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund presentation sword he received as one of the captains there, as well as the thanks of Parliament. This portrait was commissioned for 50 guineas in 1919, by William Rutherford - a descendant of the sitter then living in Torquay - for presentation to the Naval Gallery in the Painted Hall at Greenwich.

William was born on 19 June 1764 in Bowland Plantation, Rocky Point near Wilmington, North Carolina to Loyalist parents John Rutherford and his wife Frances, the youngest of their three children, all of whom were born in North Carolina. The eldest, also called Frances was born 1756 and John born 1762. They were 21st in descent from Robertus dominus de Rodyrforde, the 12th century founder of the Rutherford family in Scotland. At William's christening, His Excellency Governor George Tryon stood as proxy for Lord Adam Gordon, 4th son of Alexander Gordon, 2nd Duke of Gordon. Lord Gordon's regiment had been posted to Jamaica and then to the Colonies during which time he visited the Rutherfuds. (The 'Nelson Dispatch' vol.14 part 1 pp55 refers to Lord Adam Gordon as Governor of Edinburgh Castle).

Tragically William's mother died on 24 March 1767, and soon after, the children were sent to Scotland into the care of their Schaw relatives in Edinburgh. Returning in October 1774 the Rutherford children, along with their Uncle Alexander Schaw and his sister Janet, sailed on the *Jamaica Packet* from the Burntisland Roads bound for North Carolina via the Caribbean. It was a stormy crossing, and at one point when a particularly severe storm dis-masted the ship, but for the quick response of the crew it would surely have capsized. A lot of sea water flowed into the vessel causing everyone to be greatly alarmed. When the storm abated, Alexander found 'little Billy' quite distressed, "'Yes, uncle, I know if I had died at land I would have gone to heaven, but the thing that vexes me is, if I go to the bottom of the sea, God will never be able to get me up, the fishes will eat me and I am done forever". At this thought he cried bitterly, it was annihilation the poor fellow dreaded, for as soon as he was convinced that God could get him up, he became quite calm and resigned.'

The children were re-united with their father, but this was short-lived due to the outbreak of the American War of Independence. The following year they were once again sailing over the ocean to Scotland and into the care of the Schaws of Lauriston, Edinburgh. They also had the protection of Viscount Townshend. It is thought their late mother was related to the Viscountess.

William went on to the University of St. Andrews before commencing his naval career on 2 August 1778. He was signed on as a landsman, then served as captain's servant on HMS *Suffolk* (74) Captain Adam Duncan. On 8 December 1778 Able Seaman Rutherford followed Duncan to HMS *Monarch* (74). Rutherford was a capable sailor and possessed a large amount of patronage. On 25 December 1779 they set off from Spithead, part of a convoy, under Admiral Rodney, consisting of twenty-two sail of the line, one ship of forty-four guns and seven frigates as well as approximately two hundred and fifty merchantmen that comprised the huge Portuguese and West Indian convoys, forty troop transports, store ships and well stocked victuallers for the relief of the Spanish-beleaguered Gibraltar and Minorca. He was present at the capture of a merchant convoy under the escort of seven warships of the Royal Guipuzcoan Company of Caracas, Admiral Juan Augustin de Yaris, off Cape Finisterre on 8 January 1780.

On the morning of 16 January 1780 the British fleet came around the Cape of St. Vincent to be met with the sight of a Spanish fleet, under the command of Admiral Don Juan de Langara comprising of eleven sail of the line and two frigates. The admiral had begun to form a line of battle thinking he was about to confront a merchant convoy and failed to withdraw until it was too late. Meanwhile the admiral in the British fleet was laid low by gout. He entrusted his flag captain, Walter Young, to direct the battle to come.

By 2pm Rodney, from his cot, had decided to relax his formal line, signal a general chase and to engage from leeward to prevent the Spanish ships escaping to Cadiz. By late afternoon the unrelenting wintry weather of rain and squalls over a heaving sea would inhibit the opening of the lower gun ports. A notable event during the chase was the explosion and destruction of the *Santo Domingo* (70). As the foremost British warships, *Bedford*, *Defence*, *Resolution* and *Edgar* which were newly copper bottomed, came up with the Spanish rear they forged ahead to attack their van. While doing so, *Edgar* gave the rearmost, the *Santo Domingo* (70), a broadside in the passing, as did the *Marlborough* and then the *Ajax*, so that when the *Bienfaisant* opened fire on the *Santo Domingo* with her bow guns only, and receiving a broadside in return, Captain McBride and his crew watched in astonishment as the *Santo Domingo* caught fire and blew up at about 4.40pm.

The *Monarch* engaged the *San Augustine* (74) in a fearful exchange of cannon fire causing the Spanish ship to strike her colours, but before she could be taken as a prize she took advantage of the weather conditions and fled the battle as did three other Spanish ships of the line. The battle ended at about 4am. British losses were thirty-two men killed and one hundred and two injured. Of these, the *Monarch* suffered three killed and twenty-six injured. This battle came to be known as the Moonlight battle off Cape St. Vincent.

Rutherford was serving on HMS *Iphigenia* (32) Captain Charles Hope on 5 August 1781 and formed part of the escort of a convoy in the North Sea under Vice Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, when they encountered a Dutch squadron under Vice Admiral Johan Zoutman escorting a convoy out of the Texel. This was during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, contemporaneously related to the American War of Independence. It was to be a bloody encounter. The Dutch convoy was seen at about 4am. Hyde Parker sent on the convoy accompanied by two frigates, one of which was *Iphigenia*, and prepared for battle. At 8am he raised the flag for close action, which ensued, resulting in a huge loss of life and injuries on both sides. By late morning the Dutch convoy retreated to the Texel at which the warships disengaged. This came to be known as the Battle of Dogger Bank.

In November 1793 Rutherford was appointed acting lieutenant on HMS *Boyne* (98), and he received his lieutenant's commission on 9 January 1794. The *Boyne* was the flagship of Vice Admiral Sir John Jervis, with flag captain George Grey, and they were tasked to take a combined force, navy and army, to the Caribbean. The aim was to capture as many of the French-held colonies as

possible in order to disrupt the French economy. This they did by capturing Martinique, Guadeloupe and St. Lucia. On 2 February 1794, Rutherford led a storming party of 100 sailors as part of the British forces' attack on the important post of Monte Mathurine, Martinique. They did so armed only with pistols and pikes. He was mentioned in dispatches for his actions.

On 4 July 1794 he was appointed Commander of HMS *Nautilus* (14). Rutherford went on to command HMS *Adventure* (44) then HMS *Dictator* (64) before being posted Captain of HMS *Brunswick* (74) on 15 November 1796 under Rear Admiral Sir Richard Rodney Bligh. The *Brunswick* was central to many skirmishes with the French and privateers, including the capture of Curaçao in 1800, for which he was again praised.

He was appointed to HMS *Decade* (36) in June 1803, and a year later joined the channel fleet in the blockade of Cherbourg. Rutherford was given command of the new HMS *Swiftsure* (74), joining Admiral Nelson's fleet and the blockade of Cadiz just in time to participate in the famous chase across the Atlantic in pursuit of Admiral Villeneuve's fleet. It had been part of Bonaparte's invasion of England plan to lure the British Mediterranean fleet to the West Indies. Villeneuve was to combine with Admiral Missiessy's fleet there, and strike out for the English Channel, to rendezvous with a third fleet and smash the defending British ships, allowing the invasion force to proceed across the Channel. In Bonaparte's mind it was straightforward; nevertheless Villeneuve was late for the rendezvous, and Missiessy sailed without him. Nelson was without good intelligence and had to rely on guesswork and intuition. His intuition was to proceed south to the West Indies to protect British interests there. If he was wrong however and the French had gone north, that would prove to be catastrophic for Britain, and his career and reputation would be in ruins.

Over some days he had amassed sufficient intelligence to indicate that the French were sailing towards the Caribbean. The chase was on. *Swiftsure* was one of eleven ships in Nelson's fleet in pursuit of eighteen enemy ships of the line. The French journeyed for 34 days. Nelson's fleet covered the same journey in 24 days, and but for bad intelligence there might have been a battle which would have changed the course of history. Villeneuve left the Caribbean three days after Nelson's arrival, having achieved the objective of luring Nelson away from Europe. The British-held islands had been saved from a ravishing when the Royal Navy appeared as it did, and Nelson was their hero. As Nelson continued his pursuit of Villeneuve, the detritus from the French fleet littering the sea confirmed their route back to Europe. Nelson made for Cadiz, but that was not Villeneuve's destination. The chase, however, was over. Bonaparte's warships were dispersed in several harbours all along the French and Spanish Atlantic seaboard, and British warships were blockading them, preventing them from leaving port. Bonaparte was very displeased!

And so to Rutherford's Trafalgar. Rutherford and his command, *Swiftsure*, were on station blockading Cadiz when Nelson returned on 28 September 1805.

One can imagine the little boats ferrying the captains to and from the *Victory*. Nelson wasted no time in appraising his captains of his battle plans. His immediate problem was how to coax the French fleet out of Cadiz. He need not have worried - Bonaparte was going to do that for him. Villeneuve learned he was about to be replaced by Admiral François Etienne de Rosily-Mesros who was on his way to Cadiz. Clearly Bonaparte had lost confidence in Villeneuve, and this was a humiliation.

On Friday 18 October 1805 Villeneuve issued the order to sail. The combined fleets of French and Spanish ships worked their way out of the protection of Cadiz harbour into the Atlantic. Their plan was to sail down to, and through the straits of Gibraltar, to regroup in the Mediterranean. They numbered thirty-three ships of the line to Nelson's twenty-seven. Nelson worried that the combined fleet would not put to sea, so he kept his ships about fifty sea miles off shore. He had an inshore squadron to communicate back to him when the enemy were about to set sail. As the combined fleet worked its way out of Cadiz and sailed south, Nelson's inshore squadron kept him apprised of their progress. Nelson was apprehensive of alerting Villeneuve as to his presence, which might cause him to return to Cadiz.

In the early morning of Monday 21 October 1805, the opposing fleets met, and in accordance with Nelson's instructions his ships formed two divisions, of which he would lead one in the *Victory* and Admiral Collingwood the other in the *Royal Sovereign*. An immediate problem was the very weak wind. Nelson had placed his heaviest ships at the head of the divisions so that they might punch their way through the enemy's line of battle. It was going to take some time to reach the combined fleet, and until they got in amongst them, they were very exposed to the enemy's fire power. Nelson sent his penultimate signal, "England Expects That Every Man Will Do His Duty" just before midday, followed by his final signal for close action.

The first ranging shots were fired at the *Victory* at about 12 noon. Almost immediately in the opening salvos of the ensuing battle, her ship's wheel was destroyed, obliging her to be steered from the gun room by First Lieutenant John Quilliam and Ship's Master Thomas Atkinson by means of tackle and the tiller. Quilliam, a Manxman, is still spoken of on the Isle of Man as the man who steered the *Victory* into battle at Trafalgar. Nelson's Public Secretary John Scott was one of the first to die when he was struck down on the quarterdeck. Meanwhile Rutherford's command, the *Swiftsure*, was placed towards the rear of Admiral Collingwood's division and was about three miles behind his flagship, *Royal Sovereign*, when she delivered the first British broadside of the battle into the stern of the *Santa Ana*. It would be more than an hour in a poor wind before the *Swiftsure* would come to the battle.

Nelson's plan did not work as smoothly as it might have done. The light wind meant there was no punching through, but rather they were going to have to slog it out, and at the outset of battle the British were outnumbered by the enemy

ships around them. What was telling, however, was the difference between a fleet which had been inactive, blockaded in port, and a fleet which had been at sea, hardened by the elements and whose gunnery skills were honed by much practice. Whilst the combined fleet had been stagnating in port, the health of the sailors suffered, whereas the British captains had taken steps to ensure their men's wellbeing by giving them a good diet and the physical benefit of working a ship at sea. The ships themselves having been at sea for an extended period were in need of refitting, and keeping them seaworthy was a priority.

The *Royal Sovereign* was brought side on to the *Santa Ana* and delivered another broadside to which the stricken ship answered as best she could. Collingwood's ship, in addition to the *Santa Ana*, was now the target of four others nearby blazing away. The rapidity with which the gunners were able to reload and fire, together with their accuracy, meant that in the short term the *Royal Sovereign* gave better than she got. The *Belleisle*, (Captain William Hargood) was next into the fray, taking on the *Fougueux*, followed by the *Mars*, (Captain George Duff) whose first broadside was fired at the *Monarca* just before she broke the line ahead of the *Pluton*, and all three ships soaked up the punishment meted out by the enemy in the opening stages of combat.

Very quickly the battle scene was enveloped in black gunsmoke cutting out daylight and only relieved by the belching red flames of the cannons. Into this hell Admiral Collingwood's lee division sailed. When from the gunsmoke emerged *Defiance*, *Polyphemus* and *Swiftsure* to relieve *Belleisle* which had taken a terrible toll and was the only British ship to be completely dismasted, the *Swiftsure's* crew cheered, and her guns fired double-shotted rounds into the enemy, principally at the *Achille*. Rutherford in the *Swiftsure* carried on the battling with the *Achille*, which was dismasted and caught fire. He gave the order for the ship's boats to be launched to rescue as many of the French sailors, who were abandoning ship, as they could, thereby saving hundreds of lives. When the blaze reached the magazines, the ensuing explosion sealed her fate. Several *Swiftsure* sailors were lost when their boat was swamped. The *Aigle* struck her colours to the *Swiftsure* soon after. Later as the *Belleisle* was being towed away by the frigate *Naiad*, the *Swiftsure's* sailors gave her a rousing cheer.

Rutherford's contribution to the British success at Trafalgar was recognised by the thanks of parliament, a gold medal and being presented with the sword of honour from the Patriotic Fund. (In 2017 the sword fetched at auction \$270,250). When he returned to England from Gibraltar, he was given shore based positions interspersed with periods of unemployment, before taking up the post of Captain at Greenwich Hospital (one of four) in 1814.

William Gordon Rutherford died on 14 January 1818. In August 1795 at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster he had married Liliás, the eldest daughter of the late Sir George Robertson of London. They had no children. Liliás died in 1831 and both are buried in the graveyard of St Margaret's Church.

Footnote: We only know of Rutherford's early life through the letters written by his aunt (to an unknown recipient). The letters from Miss Janet Schaw, from 1774 to 1776, were put into journal form (it is not known by whom) and subsequently archived in the British Museum, where they lay unrecognised until 1904. A book 'Journal of a Lady of Quality; being the narrative of a journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the years 1774 to 1776', was published in 1922 in the USA, financed from a memorial fund 'in conjunction with the North Carolina Society of the Colonial Dames of America'. The author strongly recommends reading this very interesting book, on which the present article is based. Nothing more is known about Janet Schaw.

Frances, the eldest sibling, married soon after returning to Edinburgh. She was widowed just over a year later, going on to marry her Uncle Alexander!

Brother John became a colonel in the army and Surveyor General of Trinidad where he married Marie Defou in 1803, the daughter of a local plantation owner of Huguenot descent and of mixed race. They had one son John Henry Defou Rutherford, who preferred to be known as Henry Defou. Orphaned at 10 years of age, he was raised by William and Liliias who loved him as their own.

Sources:

Electric Scotland.

Journal of a Lady of Quality.

Nelson: the Sword of Albion. John Sugden

MY FAMILY HISTORY IN NELSON COUNTRY

Dan Hood

My parents ran the Lord Nelson Pub in Burnham Thorpe between 1963-1966. A short time, but in that time they added modestly to the pub's history.

They had connections with the sea before running the pub. My Dad's story of the sea started as a young boy living in Norwich with its Nelson connections around him, such as the Nelson Monument and the Guildhall. His father's family came from Scotland, and on Dad's many visits back there, they used to tell him tales of their family ancestor John Paul, who later changed his name to John Paul Jones.

As time went by, the country went to war in 1939. Boys all over the country who grew up with tales of Wellington and Nelson wanted to do their bit for their country and take the King's shilling. In reality, war is more than tales read in boys' annuals. My Dad was just twelve when war broke out. He tried joining the army as a young boy but was soon marched home, so he decided to run away to sea and joined the Merchant Navy as a galley boy.

When the war was over, he successfully joined the army and served some years in the Middle East. After 5-6 years in the army, he gave civvy life a try, which I believe he struggled with, and he rejoined the Merchant Navy some years later.

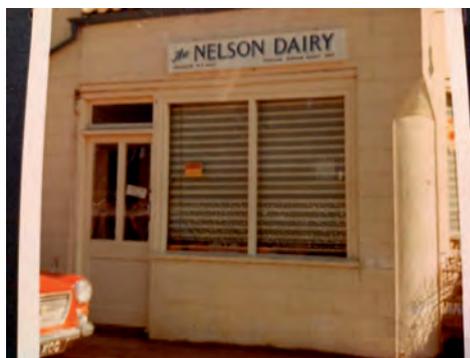
While Dad was trying to find his way in life, his Mum and Dad were finding theirs. After his father was discharged from the army in 1943/44, they brought a village store in Spooner Row near Wymondham, and in 1953 they moved to Burnham Sutton to run the Lord Nelson Pub. While running the pub, they purchased the property next door, which was a butcher's shop. They turned it into a dairy/shop and called it The Nelson Dairy.



(L) My grandparents and great uncle Jack outside The Lord Nelson at Burnham Sutton.

(Below L) The Nelson Dairy at Burnham Sutton

(Below R) My grandfather, known locally as 'Jock' in the dairy/shop



Mum's family lived in Burnham Market. It is believed that they are descended from the Nelson family. Like many other Norfolk people, many of her family were fishermen or worked the land to provide a humble living.

My parents met in the village. Mum recalled that when she first met Dad she was unsure of him - the seaman with tattoos - but under that harsh look was a good man. I guess we shouldn't judge on the way others look. In the year of

1962, Dad tore up his discharge book and on the 29th December, they were married.

Life was good. Mum was working on the land and Dad was working for his father delivering milk. Whilst on one of these deliveries in Burnham Thorpe, Dad bumped into a friend, Tom Francis. Tom was, at that time, the Landlord of the Nelson Pub. He told Dad he was giving up the pub and that it would be ideal for him and his wife. That night, Dad discussed it with Mum, she was a little reluctant, but she was talked round, and in November 1963, they moved in.



My parents sitting in the pub

The Lord Nelson at Burnham Thorpe had new licensees, Alec and Mary Hood. Burnham Thorpe was going through changes at this time. The local shop at the end of the village had closed and the bakery was closing too. With the shop gone, Dad had the idea of turning the old cart shed in the yard into a shop and Post Office. He approached the brewery, they consented, but at his own expense. Work was carried out in February 1964. The GPO made them Postmaster and Mistress. With all this, what about a name for the new village shop? Mum came up with the name TRAFALGAR STORES.

TELEPHONE:
BURNHAM MARKET 254

Copy/

Estimate.

STATION:
BURNHAM MARKET.

CONTRACTOR TO H.M. GOVERNMENT.



From...

F. WILLIAMSON,
Builder,
BURNHAM MARKET, Norfolk.

To 14th February, 1964.

Mr. Hood,
"Lord Nelson" P.H.,
Burnham Thorpe.

All Work Carefully Executed.

Estimate for works in connection with proposed New Shop in existing Outbuilding at "Lord Nelson" P.H., Burnham Thorpe

To carry out works in accordance with the attached Specification dated 14/2/64

FOR THE TOTAL SUM OF :-

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY THREE POUNDS
and TEN SHILLINGS.....(£253. 10. 0.)

Note:-

This Estimate does not include for any repairs which may be necessary to the walls of the existing building.

This Estimate is based on current rates of wages and costs of materials, and any increase in these will be chargeable as extra.

(Signed) "J.F.WILLIAMSON."

Estimate for converting an outhouse into the shop



The pub and store



Mum and Dad outside Trafalgar Stores after completion

The pub had many regulars, one of these being Geoffrey Bodycomb (I am not sure of the spelling). Geoffrey moved to Norfolk as he enjoyed the peace it gave him, having recently become a widower. He also took pleasure in coming in the pub and the kindness shown by my parents.

Dad and Geoffrey were talking about giving the smoke room a new lick of paint and Geoffrey volunteered himself for the job. On one particular quiet Sunday he came into the pub and told my parents to go out for the day. With time off a rarity whilst running a pub, they jumped at the chance!

When they returned, the pub was buzzing with life as a coach had turned up, but it was all under control. Geoffrey told Dad to look in the smoke room. To his surprise, the beginnings of a large mural was being created. Locals came out to see the artist at work. In total, three murals were painted. The first one being of the Battle of the Nile (the blowing up of the French flagship *L'Orient*, where the boy stood on the burning deck). Over the fireplace was painted Nelson's Prayer and the ship's crest from HMS *Nelson*. The third was in the corner, showing the Nelson family tree. Geoffrey had got his inspiration from a Nelson volume that Dad kept in the lounge for all to look through. The ship's crest idea came from the local church.



Battle of the Nile mural by Geoffrey.

The pub looked good, and visitors to the village wanted to take a little bit of Nelson home with them, so Dad approached Frith and Co, a well-known photographic company, to help. A photographer came to the village, and a nice postcard was composed, showing off the murals. I have never seen this in Nelson postcard books.



Francis Frith postcard commissioned by Dad

In 1965, a film crew came to the village to make 'Light on East Anglia', a travel log film. It was a Pathé and British Motor Corporation (BMC) production. Villagers came to get their little piece of fame, but sadly only a short clip was used, which was outside the Trafalgar Stores. In the same year, Vincent Jones came to the pub. He was writing a book called *East Anglian Pubs* (printed by Jarrold and Sons Ltd, Norwich). In this book, he gave a reference to Nelson's farewell dinner at the 'Lord Nelson' before joining the *Agamemnon* in 1793.

Sadly my parents' time in the pub was coming to an end. Did I mention my mum was reluctant about moving into the pub? In the end she loved it, even getting on her hands and knees to scrub the flagstone floor! Dad loved it too, he had a collection of Nelson memorabilia to be proud of, which he left behind. On February 14th 1966, it was time to leave.



A still shot from 'Light on East Anglia' showing the shop sign



Another still shot from 'Light on East Anglia' with my Dad waving

The Nelson story didn't stop. In 1968 my parents ran the Nelson Dairy for a few years, before moving out of the Burnhams for a new life, and in 1973, I came along.

As the Nelson Society trip to Tenerife for the 225th Anniversary commemorations approaches (see page 325 for details), Alastair Robertson has sent us two interesting articles on slightly alternative aspects of Tenerife's naval history.

BETSEY FREMANTLE – AN EYE-WITNESS TO THE ATTACK ON SANTA CRUZ

Alastair Robertson

During the British attack on Santa Cruz in July 1797, among the hundreds of sailors and marines on board the ships commanded by Rear-Admiral Horatio Nelson, there was one young woman, Betsey Fremantle, the newly-wed wife of Thomas Fremantle, captain of the *Seahorse*, one of the British fleet.

Betsey was born Elizabeth Wynne, the daughter of Richard and Camille Wynne on 19 April 1778 at Folkingham, Lincolnshire. Her family had moved to Italy during the 1780s, where they been caught up in the French invasion of 1796, and the small British community had to be evacuated to Corsica by the Royal Navy. Captain Thomas Fremantle was serving at that time with Nelson, with whom he was good friends.



Betsey and Thomas met in dramatic circumstances when the Wynne family was among those rescued in October during the attack on Leghorn (now Livorno).

It must have been love at first sight for the couple, because they were married in Naples on 1st January 1797 at the home of Sir William Hamilton, the British envoy, and his wife Emma, Nelson's lover. Eighteen-year old Betsey then set off to sea with her thirty-year-old husband on what could only have been one of the strangest and most eventful of honeymoons.

Thomas Fremantle was at the centre of British naval action against the Spanish, the last incident of which,

before setting sail for Tenerife, was the blockade of Cadiz in early July. On one particular occasion, Nelson's barge was attacked by a Spanish launch, and although Nelson and Fremantle, with only the coxswain and ten bargemen, were outnumbered, they overpowered and took the launch. Every time an event such as this occurred, Betsey could only wait anxiously below deck and pray that her husband would return safely.

From an early age Betsey kept a diary, which she did throughout what were to prove the perilous days of July 1797. At first the expedition to Tenerife began full of light-hearted confidence. Although Betsey may simply have been putting on a brave face to boost her confidence, on Saturday 15 July she wrote, “The *Theseus*, *Culloden*, *Zealous*, *Emerald*, *Terpsichore* and *Seahorse* sailed this morning on a cruise. We are going to take the island of Tenerife.” Thomas Fremantle was in command of the *Seahorse*.

The fleet dropped anchor off Santa Cruz, and during the night of 21 July Nelson’s men attempted to take the town by surprise, but failed. After the return of the thwarted landing party, Betsey had little to say about it except that the troops had returned “without doing anything.” The failure of the attack was due to an unexpected delay caused by adverse sea currents, which meant that by the light of dawn the British had been discovered.

On the 22nd Betsey recorded the British landing near Paso Alto, followed by the useless ascent of the Mesa del Ramonal, and the marines’ return “almost dead with fatigue and hunger.” A British officer admitted three days later that he had never in all his life felt such heat as he suffered on the height of Ramonal, to the point where he and some of his companions fainted. On the 23rd she repeated in her diary the information given by a German who had come over to the British. He reassured them that the islanders were “in the greatest alarm, all crying and trembling, and that nothing could be easier than to take the place.”

On the evening of 24 July Nelson held a meeting with his captains on board Fremantle’s *Seahorse*, from where the attack was launched. Betsey presided at the dinner table, she wrote later, “As the taking of the place seemed an easy and almost sure thing, I went to bed after they were gone, apprehending no danger for Fremantle.”

At eleven o’clock that night Nelson, with Captains Fremantle and Bowen, set off in separate launches to the beach at Santa Cruz, but just as he was about to land, Nelson was shot and badly wounded in the right arm. On being taken back to the fleet, the first ship his boat reached was the *Seahorse*, but Nelson refused to go on board for treatment saying, “I had rather suffer death than alarm Mrs. Fremantle, by letting her see me in this state, when I can give her no tidings whatever of her husband.”

Soon after Nelson received his wound, Bowen was killed, and Fremantle too was shot in the arm before he could land. He was quickly taken back to the *Seahorse* where, unlike his commander, his arm was saved, although he never regained its full use. Betsey wrote, “God knows if ever I should have seen him again had he stayed on shore. It was dreadful, poor Captain Bowen (*was*) killed on the spot.”

After the attack was all over, in her diary Betsey summarised the outcome and concluded by writing that all the officers were safe on board with all the prisoners to follow soon, and that “the Spaniards behaved exceedingly well.” That said, however, in order to encourage the British to leave promptly, the Spanish

fired a warning cannonade over their ships. Betsey noted that a shot had holed one of the sails of the *Seahorse*. By the 29th she was writing, "I long to get away from these islands, I am quite tired of the sight of Tenerife." Her wish was soon granted.

In her diary entries for the days between Saturday 15 July and Saturday 29 July, Betsey often noted that she felt ill. On the 15th and 21st she was "sick" and "unwell as usual," on the 23rd she "felt better" than she had for some time and on 24th she was "pretty well." Understandably, for the days after the 25th she was more concerned with the events and her husband's wound than with herself, then, on the 28th, she was "still sick of a morning."

Betsey's first child, named after his father Thomas Francis, was born on 11 March 1798, and by counting back forty weeks from that date we realise that it was not seasickness, or anxious fretting that made her poorly, but the fact that she was about eight weeks pregnant at the time of the attack. For a nineteen-year-old girl who had led a genteel, privileged life on shore, who was not a sailor, just married, on a British warship, surrounded by men, most of them rough sailors, at war, in the heat of the battle, with a wounded husband, she sounds remarkably composed.

There is a brief insight into her later relationship with Nelson. A few years after Tenerife, when Betsey was at home in Swanbourne, Buckinghamshire, and bringing up a rapidly-increasing family, Nelson's affair with Emma Hamilton had become public knowledge. Betsey's attitude positively cooled towards them, her diary entry for 3 March 1801 read, "I had a letter from my husband today ... Lady Nelson is suing for a separate maintenance. I have no patience with her husband, at his age and such a cripple to play the fool with Lady Hamilton."

However, her husband Thomas remained good friends with Nelson, going on to distinguish himself in command of the *Ganges* at Copenhagen in 1801 and the *Neptune* at Trafalgar in 1805. In 1815 he became a Knight of the Grand Cross of the Bath, a baron of the Austrian Empire in 1816, a Knight of the Royal Guelphic order of Hanover in 1818, and Vice-Admiral of the Blue in August 1819. In a short-lived political career, he had been MP for Sandwich from 1806 to 1807 and Saltash from 1807 to 1808. Then, in his prime at the age of 54, Vice-Admiral Thomas Fremantle died of a sudden illness in Naples on 19 December 1819 while Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean fleet. He was buried at Cimiez near Nice, in the Alpes-Maritimes, France.

Betsey did not re-marry, in 1851 at the age of 73 she was living in Putney Heath in Surrey with a nephew, an assortment of six grandchildren from the Fremantle, Fitzgerald and Hervey families, and eight servants. She spent her time between England and the Continent, where she died on 2 November 1857 near Nice, and was buried beside her husband at Cimiez. Her diaries were edited by Anne Fremantle and first published during the 1930s as 'The Wynne Diaries, 1789-1857'. They were then re-published as 'The Wynne Diaries 1789-1820', in the Oxford University Press World's Classics series in 1952.

References:

1. Fuentes Documentales del 25 de Julio, 1797 (Source Documents for 25th July, 1797); Pedro Ontoria Oquillas, Luis Cola Benitez, Daniel Garcia Pulido, 1997 (pp.338-342), for Betsey's diary extracts.
2. Wikipedia entry for Elizabeth Wynne Fremantle, referring to 'The Wynne Diaries', and for Betsey's comment about Nelson and Emma Hamilton (p.310).
3. Oxford University Alumni, 1500-1886 (online), for Thomas Fremantle.
4. ancestry.co.uk (online), for family information.
5. R. Southey, The Life of Nelson, Amalgamated Press 1905 Edition (p.119), for Nelson's refusal to board the *Seahorse*.
6. La Historia del 25 de Julio de 1797 a la luz de las Fuentes Documentales, Luis Cola Benitez & Daniel Garcia Pulido, 1999 (p.123), for portrait of Betsey Fremantle.

JOHN HAWKINS – AN ENGLISH PIRATE IN TENERIFE **Alastair Robertson**

From Tenerife News No.593, 26 January – 8 February 2018

Every English person has heard of Francis Drake, to us he was a hero who circumnavigated the world, 'singd the king of Spain's beard' when he destroyed the Spanish fleet in Cadiz, and annoyed the Spanish to the secret enjoyment of Queen Elizabeth I. Drake was foremost among English mariners that were increasingly becoming an offence to Spain, who for many years had had a monopoly of the trade route to the West Indies and Central America. To the Spanish, of course, Drake was anything but a hero, he was 'El Draco' (The Dragon), the scourge of the Spanish Main (the Atlantic Ocean shipping route between Europe and the Americas), and a thorn in the side of King Philip II, not to mention being one those 'dreadful Protestants'.

Not so well known nowadays is Drake's older cousin by eight years, John Hawkins (born in Plymouth, 1532), from whom to a large extent Drake had learned his trade. As a young man, Hawkins had become familiar with the Canary Islands, sailing on merchant ships to trade for sugar. He is known to have visited Tenerife in 1560, where he already had business associates in the families of Soler, of Abona, and de Ponte, of Garachico and Adeje, who owned sugar plantations in the south of the island. From these visits Hawkins learnt that Negro slaves taken from Guinea were urgently needed by Spanish settlers in the Caribbean. There were fortunes to be made by entering the slave market. Although the Canarian archipelago was part of Catholic Spain, a treaty had opened up the Canaries to the Protestant English and traders of other nationalities, but in any case Queen Elizabeth I allowed her merchants to trade with whoever they pleased. This concession made sense because the Canary Islands did good

business with merchant ships that had to stop over to stock up with fresh food and water for longer journeys. Hawkins' fleets were no exception, and in late 1562 he called in to Tenerife with a cargo of English woollens to trade and to take on supplies before sailing on to Guinea in West Africa to capture slaves or trade for them. Hawkins broke into the ring of traders that had been exclusively under Spanish control. In doing so he was the first Englishman to traffic in African slaves.

Garachico was the main port of Tenerife; it was also one of several estates owned by the de Ponte family. Pedro de Ponte was the first Lord of Adeje, a descendant of Cristobal de Ponte, a Genoese merchant who had participated in the Spanish conquest of Tenerife in 1494 and been rewarded with large tracts of land on which to grow sugar. The labour needed to do this was provided by slaves from Africa. It could have been in Garachico that Hawkins found a kindred spirit in Pedro de Ponte, and despite the aggravating piratical raids on the island, the two men hit it off to become friends and business partners in the slave trade. Hawkins was invited to de Ponte's home at Adeje, so, sailing around Punto Teno and then south east along the coast he arrived at the Caleta de Adeje, the harbour for the town.

It was Pedro de Ponte who built La Casa Fuerte (the Strong House), close to the entrance of the Barranco de Infierno (the Ravine of Hell). As well as being something of a status symbol, a strong, fortified house was necessary because Adeje was vulnerable, being remote from other communities on the island. In the middle years of the sixteenth century, the district was raided repeatedly by pirates from England and France. Pedro de Ponte made several requests to Prince Philip of Spain, soon to be King Philip II, for permission to build a fortified house. Finally, on 2 May 1555, a certificate of authority was signed by Princess Juana and construction began in 1556 for La Casa Fuerte, which was to become the home and the administrative centre for the agricultural estates of the de Pontes.

John Hawkins came to Tenerife again in 1564, but on his third voyage to the West Indies, when he arrived in Santa Cruz in October 1567, there was definite hostility between England and Spain because of the activities of English pirates and privateers. In short, King Philip was fed up with foreigners disrupting the affairs of his colonies. In addition to this was the widening gulf between Catholics and Protestants.

Some of Hawkins' friends in Santa Cruz were friends no more. However, he invited those who were still speaking to him to come on board his ship for a meal and entertainment. Their acceptance might have been a subterfuge, because Hawkins noticed that some Spanish ships shifted their position during the night. With what intent he didn't know, but to be on the safe side he moved his own ships out of gun range. Five days later, as Hawkins left the harbour, he made what might have been intended as a conventional farewell salute by firing a cannon, but instead of using a blank charge, an actual cannonball was fired which damaged one of the houses in the town. This could have been an accident, but

Hawkins' critics believed that he had really intended to shoot at the Church of La Concepcion. This interpretation could be correct because, as a final gesture before leaving the Canary Islands to go to Africa for slaves, his fleet went over to La Gomera and created mayhem by burning images of Catholic saints.

Of Hawkins' three voyages to the West Indies, the first, in 1562, was financially a great success, mainly because its novelty took the Spanish unawares; the second in 1564 was profitable, but less so, because the Spanish were becoming less tolerant towards the objectionable piratical tricks of the English; and the third in 1567, when he was accompanied by his cousin, Francis Drake, was a disaster. But in spite of this, Hawkins went on to become Treasurer of the Navy in 1578; he was instrumental in designing a radically new type of warship that was faster and more manoeuvrable; and he was knighted for his services in the defeat of the Spanish Armada of 1588. However his death was ignominious, as on his last voyage, in 1595 to the Spanish island of Puerto Rico, he died of sickness.



Returning to La Casa Fuerte in Adeje, one of the buildings in the complex is called 'La Cocina', or 'The Kitchen', but, by studying the imposing ruin with its elaborately painted frieze, the coat of arms and the impressive view over the many acres of formerly cultivated land, it is plain to see that in fact this was the lord's residence, or at least the salon where he entertained his guests to impress them by the extent of his estate and his one thousand negro slaves hard at work. I have been inside the ruin and looked up at the first-floor windows, imagining John Hawkins and Pedro de Ponte standing there, probably with a glass of malmsey wine in hand, gazing out towards Gomera, 450 years ago.

NOTES AND QUERIES

A PORTRAIT OF NELSON, PALERMO SCHOOL c 1799

In the last issue (Vol 14 Part 5) we featured this portrait which was offered for sale by Bonhams on 27 Oct 2021. We have since been informed by Michael Naxton that the portrait was not actually sold on that date. We would be interested to know what happened after that!

SALE OF NELSON'S FUNERAL SCORE

Member Hugh Shapter drew our attention to the sale by Bonhams on 23 March of a copy of 'The Burial Service, Chant, Evening Service, Dirge, & Anthems, Appointed to be Perform'd at the Funeral of Lord Viscount Nelson, Duke of Bronti, at St. Pauls Cathedral, on the 9th of January 1806. Composed by Dr. Croft, Heny. Purcell, Esqr. Dr. Greene, Thos. Attwood Esqr. & George Frederick Handel Esqr.' . Described as "engraved throughout comprising title and 40pp. of music, wanting the 4pp. printed 'Ceremonial of the Public Funeral', browning and damp-staining throughout, contemporary wrappers with 'Burial Service' in ink on upper cover, sheets and wrappers detached and chipped at edges, folio, Clementi & Co. [December 1805 or early January 1806]", it is considered to be an extremely scarce score for the funeral of Nelson, one of the last full heraldic state funerals to be held in Britain. Auction records list only a disbound copy which sold in 1973, and one which, rebound and in poor condition internally, sold in 2016 for £4,200. In March this copy apparently sold for £936.

MUSEUM OF LONDON DOCKLANDS, CONCERT OF EMMA'S SONGBOOKS

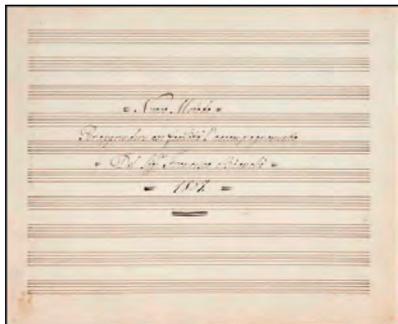
In the last issue (Vol 14 Part 5) we reported on this concert performed on 11 December 2021. Eagle-eyed Nelson Society Historian Ray Aldis has pointed out that 'at the bottom of Page 282 it states "Michael Kelly....., protégé of Sir William Hamilton in Naples and met Emma there in 1801-02."' As you know, the Hamiltons left Italy in the summer of 1800'.

Kelly was in Naples as a young man from 1779 and must have been Sir William's protégé around that time. From 1783 he was based in Austria and from 1787 he was based in London. Emma was in Naples 1786-1800 and as singers tended to travel around Europe it is possible they could still have met in Naples during that time. However as Ray correctly says, they could not have met in Naples after 1800! Thank you, Ray.

MUSIC SCORE FROM EMMA, LADY HAMILTON'S LIBRARY OF MUSIC AT MERTON PLACE

Martyn Downer has drawn our attention to another important piece of Emma's music collection, a copy of Francesco Bianchi's (1752-1810), *Nuovo Metodo Per*

apprendere con facilità L'accompagnamento ('New easy method for learning accompaniment').



Oblong folio (244 x 303 mm; approx. 10 x 12 inches.). [25] leaves. Written in black ink on ten-stave paper. Watermarked: 1806 (?) and 'Evans & Sons'. Contemporary marbled paper covered boards with dark blue morocco-grain paper spine and brown leather tips. With fragmentary label affixed to front board inscribed: *Lord Nelson fa... / at Burnham Thorpe. / & sold at the Burnham / Thorpe sale 40 years ago* [sic].

It's provenance includes Emma, Lady Hamilton (1765-1815), her sale [*Catalogue of the Elegant Household Furniture...Library of Books [etc]..The Property of a Lady of Distinction*, 8 July 1813], part lots 212-217 ('A quantity of music books') This newly-discovered manuscript music book belonged to Emma, Lady Hamilton and was used by her at Merton Place, the house in Surrey she had shared with Admiral Lord Nelson (1758-1805).

Emma met Francesco Bianchi in Naples, which the famed opera composer visited in 1794 for a performance of his *Inez de Castro* written for and sung by Emma's close friend Elizabeth Billington (c.1768-1818). Bianchi had been resident in London since 1793 and in 1800 he married Jane Jackson (1776-1858) a celebrated singer of Handel's music and a popular performer at Court, with whom he had a daughter. Following her return to London in 1801 with her husband Sir William Hamilton and Admiral Nelson, Emma grew close to Jane Bianchi, frequently performing duets with her in London, Merton and elsewhere, including an impromptu recital in Canterbury Cathedral. Bianchi, meanwhile, taught music to Nelson's favourite niece Charlotte and, latterly, to Horatia, the admiral's daughter with Emma. Artist Thomas Baxter (1782-1821) visited Merton and captured Emma seated at a piano with Jane Bianchi, while Nelson's nephew George Matcham recorded how one evening during a family holiday in 1807, 'her Ladyship accompanied by Mme Bianchi, favoured us with some favouriteairs'.

In 1810, Francesco Bianchi committed suicide following the death of his daughter, while Emma Hamilton continued her sad decline to ill health and debtor's prison which forced a sale of her remaining possessions—including this music book—in 1813. She died two years later.

Other music and songbooks belonging to Emma, Lady Hamilton are in the collections of the Museum of London, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.



*Madame Bianchi (left) and Emma, Lady Hamilton at the piano at Merton Place, circa 1805
(Thomas Baxter)*

NELSON AND THE BEE GEES



In the last issue, Dr John Easton Law surveyed Nelson in relationship to music in his article ‘Nelson and Music’. He recently informed us “By chance, I have discovered that the first album by the Bee Gees in 1971 was called ‘Trafalgar’. One of the tracks was ‘Trafalgar’ and another ‘Waterloo’ - though how naval/military they are is at present unclear”. Google reveals that the 1971 vinyl album cover shows a Pocock painting of the battle. The lyrics probably refer to Trafalgar Square.

<p><u>Trafalgar</u> I rolled into the smoke and there I lost my hope I need someone to know me and to show me The square peg fits the hole Why haven't I been told? I need someone to know me and to show me Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Please don't let me down Ten hundred people roam through the place I call me home I need someone to know me and to show me Sitting cross-legged on my own, and yet I'm not alone Don't need no one to show me No one owns me Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Trafalgar, Please don't let me down...</p>	<p><u>Walking back to Waterloo</u> I wish there was another year, another time When people sang and poems rhymed My name could be Napoleon A thousand ships A windy sail, so huge and high It's tall enough to touch the sky It's beautiful but hard to find But I just wasn't born in time I can dream of growing trees and things That live and grass that's green In meadows that have never been But I still place my trust in the queen What is life, when a man is pressured Based on wrong or right? And I don't know what it means There must be more we haven't seen Walking back to Waterloo again Where do I begin? In the brand new street You can get a good seat at the end..</p>
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BUCENTAURE – ‘BUCKET’?

On another tack, John Law is researching on the *Bucentaure*, Villeneuve’s flagship at Trafalgar and is seeking confirmation that the *Bucentaure* was nicknamed ‘Bucket’ in the Navy. Can you help? Have you seen a reference to this? Please contact the Editor and we will forward your reply.

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR – AN 1837 NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT

Alastair Robertson has sent us this stirring article published Saturday 28 October 1837, in the Newcastle Journal and the Derbyshire Courier:

‘Thirty-two years on Saturday last, completed their eventful round since the Battle of Trafalgar was fought and won. Let us invoke the Turshoon and Turyooshoon (*djinns, familiars or spirits associated with magicians - AFR*) of memory to enable us to grasp in the hollow of our hand the shadows of departed deeds. Let us imagine things to exist as they actually did exist, when the sun rose for the last time on the doomed armadas of France and Spain – when their floating castles yet rode unscathed in all their warlike magnificence, and when our gallant friends and no less gallant foes, whose mortal career was then rapidly verging to its destined termination, yet trod the deck with step as elastic and nerves as firm as those did whose lot it may be to read (indulgently we hope) our present lucubrations. The charm is wound up – the past is before us.

It is Monday morning – the British fleet is in two columns under easy sail, with their heads to the northward; the wind is westerly, and but little of it. The dawn is slowly breaking out; we have passed an anxious night, for though the

hammocks are down and the watch below turned in as usual, we know that the enemy is at sea, and in all probability not far from us. At intervals we have heard their signal-guns, and seen the distant gleam of blue lights and rockets – the grey light grows lighter still in the east, and there they are! Like a thick forest on the sharply defined horizon. They are yet some twelve or fourteen miles off, but dead to leeward.

The news spreads in a moment, and before the short shrill chirp of the boatswain's "call" is heard, the men are already lashing up their hammocks. The officers are all on deck – every glass directed – every eye straining on the enemy. Our two lines bear up in succession – the lee line first, and thus Collingwood obtains in the race a precedence which he never loses – every inch of canvass, studding sails, aloft and aloft are set to woo the feeble breeze.

The sails of the hostile fleet wear a dark and sombre hue, for the young daylight is on the other side of them: their heads are to the southward, and they seem as compact and serred as a jungle. There are two or three ships distinguishable on this side of them standing the same way, and apparently very close to them. They are our own look-out squadron; they have been all night at quarters dodging the enemy, and at times almost mingling in their line. Daylight finds them two or three gunshots from the weather-beam.

The enemy are wearing – their heads are now to the northward, and they are on the larboard tack – columns approach, and out look-out ships take their respective stations. We draw nearer still; there is the red-sided Santissima Trinidad, with her four tier of guns; there is the Bucentaure, with Villeneuve - the devoted Villeneuve – who survives, but not unwounded, the carnage of the day, to meet a fate, perhaps, forever involved in mystery. There is the Redoubtable, from whose top has not yet issued the fatal missile commissioned to terminate the earthly existence of the hero of more than a hundred conflicts. It is high noon – the sun beams brightly on the painted sides of friends and foes – those sides will be darkened ere he sets.

On the right, in the British van, is the Royal Sovereign, slightly rolling to the swell, and gliding as mutely, and, in outward seeming, as peacefully along as if her course were for a friendly harbour. But signals are going up on board the Victory! Word by word the telegraphic message is noted down – "England expects every man will do his duty." The last word is completed, and the purport communicated to the crews. Hark to the thundering cheer that responds to it. The enemy hear it too. But see the flash – and the smoke rolling forth from the port! The iron herald comes hissing and whizzing along, its voice increasing in the loudness and intensity as it rushes past the ear, while the bravest holds his breath for a time. Never mind, we shall be more familiarised to the music before we have done.

Up goes the white ensign of St. George; and up as smartly go in defiance the beautiful tricolour and the gorgeous banner of Castile and Leon. Their broadsides open – the deadly shower falls thicker and closer! Still silently and

steadily advances the British three decker – she pierces the line! “Stand by!” – both broadsides – away they go! – the one into the stern of the Santa Anna, the other into the bows of the Fougueux. The contending ships are mantled in their own smoke, but still the flag of Collingwood is distinguishable, triumphantly floating above the dense cloud, while the flashes of the cannon glimmer redly through it. At the head of the larboard column see the Victory – eight broadsides, that is to say more than 250 pieces of heavy ordnance are open on her; twenty of her best men are dead on her decks, and twice that number wounded. The crew are commanded to lie down, but few obey the order – she had not yet returned a gun.

At length – at length – the moment of vengeance arrives – her larboard broadside crashes into the stern of the Bucentaure, and her starboard is housed into the Redoubtable. The enemy close round the ship of the British admiral, but the Temeraire is at hand to support her. The strife is becoming even yet more deadly – “Hardy, they have done for me at last – my back bone is shot through!” He – need we say *who*? – He is immediately borne below.

The battle is at its height – the British rear have closed – the seamen are toiling at their heavy guns, for the work of death is laborious, and the victory must be earned with the sweat of the brow, as well as the blood of the heart; their features are grim and black with powder, and their huge pig-tails hanging over their naked shoulders, for many of them have thrown off their upper clothing, and have bound their black silk neckerchiefs round their loins – perspiration is streaming from every pore, and the atmosphere is so impregnated with sulphur it is scarcely respirable. The marines are either working at the cannon, or, as the sharp rattle of musketry indicates, firing from the poops and gangways.

It is five o’clock – the strife is drawing to a close – a few straggling shots in the north-east conclude it – the shattered remnant of the Spanish force are making off in that direction for Cadiz. Dumonoir, with his four line-of-battleships, are close hauled to the windward, on the starboard tack – seventeen battered hulks to windward have the British flag flying above the French or Spanish, and huge volumes of flame and smoke are issuing from the midships of the French Achille – she is burning – as the fire reaches her guns they go off one by one – the British boats are astern of her picking up her crew - a female form appears clinging to the rudder chains – the melted lead from the taffrail falls upon her in burning drops – she throws herself into the sea, and she is saved! See, the fire has reached her magazine! – one mighty mass of vivid flame shoots up – in an instant it becomes black smoke, but it still rises, interspersed with glittering fragments – the burning mainmast is pre-eminently distinguishable – it has mounted like a rocket to an immense height, and there it appears for several seconds to remain stationary – the mass of smoke slowly rises from the surface of the ocean, and no trace of the ship is visible.

Three hundred human beings have perished in that explosion – the fragments of wreck continue to fall with a sullen splash for some seconds, and then all is still – the battle is over but the tempest is yet to come’.
(Reprinted in the *United Service Gazette*).

TWO STATUES OF NELSON

The first, in this photo recently taken by Brian Gibbs, is a statue at Portmeirion in North Wales. Life size and brightly coloured, it stands in the gardens of this Italianate dream town created by the distinguished architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, appropriately gazing out over the tidal waters of the Glaslyn estuary. A photo by Charles Addis appeared in the Oct 2000 issue, and in the April 2001 issue Louis Hodgkin says it was presented to Clough Williams-Ellis by Sir Michael Duff of Y Faenol on his 70th birthday in 1953. The statue was Grade II listed in 1971, and is said to be of Coade stone, manufactured in Lambeth and although no record of it exists, Nelson was their most popular subject when the factory was in operation between 1780-1820.

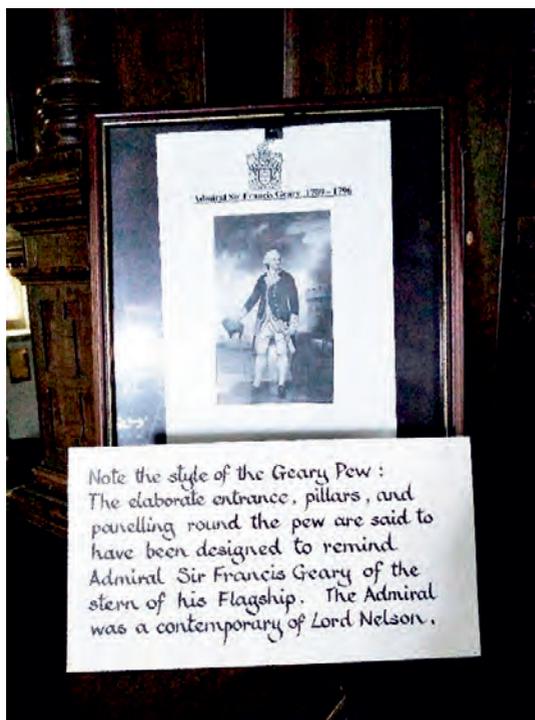
The second photo was sent in recently by Alan Cross who spotted Nelson working as a cloakroom attendant in a pub in a village near Bodmin, Cornwall. The pub staff apparently didn’t know why he was there but informed Alan he has been there for at least 8 years and has been the kidnap target of local young farmers.



ADMIRAL SIR FRANCIS GEARY 1709-1796

Sue Morris

On a recent visit to the beautiful village of West Peckham, near Mereworth in Kent, (recently featured on ITV as the 'Larkins' village), I visited the Church of St Dunstan where a small display about local worthy, Sir Francis Geary, a contemporary of Nelson's, caught my attention. Apparently the Geary Pew, with its elaborate entrance, pillars and panelling was designed to remind him of the stern of his flagship. Delving a little further into the history of the pew it does seem a little fanciful that the pew was made by Sir Francis to resemble a ship – records show that the 'Geary' pew was actually created in the mid 17th century – however it is a fact that the West Peckham manor house of Oxon Hoath (built by Sir John Culpeper in 14th century) passed to the Geary family of Polesden Lacey,



Surrey in the 18th century.

Sir Francis Geary, 1st Baronet (1709 –1796) was an officer of the Royal Navy and had an illustrious career. He served during the War of the Austrian Succession, the Seven Years' War, and in the American War of Independence. He rose eventually to the rank of Admiral.

Geary was promoted to Vice-Admiral of the Blue on 21 October 1762. He remained at Spithead, with a brief period as Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, until the peace in 1763 ended the war. He then struck his flag and entered another period of retirement ashore until he became in November 1769,

Commander-in-Chief,

Portsmouth. Increasing tensions with Spain led to his return to service and his promotion to Vice-Admiral of the Red on 17 October 1770. He retired again after the relieving of tensions led to a reduction in the navy. Though not on active service, he continued to rise through the ranks based on his seniority. He became Admiral of the Blue on 31 March 1775, and Admiral of the White on 29 January 1778. The death of Admiral Sir Charles Hardy in May 1780 led to Geary being recalled to service, despite being in poor health. He hoisted his flag aboard the

100-gun first rate HMS *Victory*, with Richard Kempenfelt as his flag captain and took command of the Channel Fleet. Geary put to sea, patrolling off Brest in the hope of preventing the joining of the French and Spanish fleets. Sails were sighted on 9 July, and Geary gave chase believing them to be one of the enemy fleets. It was found that they were instead an enemy merchant convoy. Geary engaged and captured twelve of the merchants, the rest escaping under cover of fog.

Geary returned to port in August, but was taken ill and returned to Polesden Lacey. Feeling himself unfit to retain command, he requested and received permission to resign. He was created a baronet on 17 August 1782, and died at the age of 86 on 7 February 1796.

Geary was renowned as being of a most even temper, charming, gallant, unassuming and kind, but too placid for high command, being regarded as more suitable for a subordinate role. Boscawen called him ‘my stupid friend’, and Kempenfelt in describing him as ‘brave and generous’, maintained in 1780 that he was ‘lacking in memory, judgement and decisiveness’.



No doubt the brilliant Kempenfelt was somewhat aggrieved that Geary, albeit generously, had made it clear that he could not understand his subordinate's newfangled signalling system. Nevertheless he was certainly popular, and a prominent member of his profession. His seamanship skills were undoubted.

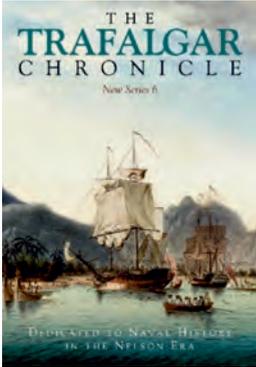
As a young man, Geary was a keen campanologist or bell ringer, being a member of the record - breaking Society of College Youths. In his later years he grew salad vegetables at sea to assist in the fight against scurvy.

The Geary Pew, St Dunstan's Church, West Peckham, Kent

REVIEWS

THE TRAFALGAR CHRONICLE. Dedicated to Naval History in the Nelson Era. New Series 6. Edited by Judith E. Pearson, Sean Heuvel and John Rodgaard. 232pp, 8 col. pls, 92 b/w illus. Seaforth Publishing (Pen & Sword Ltd), Barnsley, in association with the 1805 Club, 2021. Paperback, £20.

The Editors' Foreword records that this volume is 'unique in two respects. First [it] contains fourteen contributions by authors from six countries' and secondly, that the individual authors overcame the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in submitting their contributions despite lacking access to archives, etc. Not least the planning session in 2019 had, unbeknownst, the prescience in choosing the 2021 theme to be 'Georgian Naval Encounters with indigenous populations and enslaved people', thus pre-empting the political and social unrest of 2020. This issue of *The Trafalgar Chronicle* could not have been more apposite in its reflection of those topics three centuries before.



The contributions, rather like Caesar's Gaul, are divided into three parts: the main topic, mentioned; Biographical Portraits, and Articles of General Interest – followed by Contributors' Biographies and Notes completing the volume. The quality of all the contributions is so high that it is invidious, as well as extremely difficult with text length restrictions, for the reviewer to single out individual papers. All have strong merits to commend them but perhaps of particular interest in relation and comparison with Nelson is the article by Liam Gaul on 'Commodore John Barry: Father of the US Navy'. Not least to catch the eye is an unusual aspect, apparently not touched on previously, an article on 'The Officers Who Missed the Battle of Trafalgar' by Andrew Venn. Amongst them is Captain William Hoste, and the reviewer has always wondered whether Nelson sent Hoste, his protégé, off on a diplomatic mission deliberately to miss the impending carnage of Trafalgar. Then there is Ben Hallowell who had fashioned a coffin for Nelson from the mainmast of *l'Orient* at The Nile, and Captain Thomas Foley who had led in *Goliath* at The Nile and was with Nelson on *Elephant* at Copenhagen. All nine officers described here were prominent in their own right, and the author, in conclusion, teasingly raises the question 'What if ... ?'

Each and every one of the 14 contributions holds a worthy place in this issue and will inform and delight in equal measure; it is another triumph for the three American editors and cannot be recommended highly enough.

Peter A. Clayton

MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS

Kester Bathgate's 'Perilous Beginnings' is now out on Amazon. Kester tells us: 'It's mainly a story about smuggling, but also involves revolutionary France and the 'hero' comes from Poole (where I used to live). Not Nelsonian I'm afraid, but he does get a mention! It turned out at a whopping 520 pages (!) so it's something of a long read'. September 1797, during the 'Year of Peril' and set against the background of the French Revolutionary War, Thomas Devenish takes command of His Majesty's Revenue Cutter '*Diligence*'. However she is an unhappy vessel and besides having to gain the trust of her demoralised crew he discovers that, as a former smuggler, he is under scrutiny. Whilst investigating the murder of one of his men, he also finds he is pitted against a scheming adversary. In addition, his family past returns to haunt him and the ongoing conflict with France brings a threat of its own. In the midst of it all he finds companionship and perhaps love.... 520pp £11.99 published Feb 2022.

Edwin Wilson continues his family research from Australia and has now published a summary of his work on his ancestor Oliver Bainbridge and the family's connections to the Nelson family, the subject of his fascinating 2017 book 'Lord Nelson, Uncle Oliver and I', which we reviewed in Vol 12 Part 12. The summary is available on Edwin's website edwinwilson.com.au

Jenny Newbold's latest novel 'The Private Misadventures of Nell Nobody' is about to be published. Just to tantalise you... 'It is 1793, and France and Britain are at war. Traumatized and grieving the loss of her infant son, Eleanor Buccleuch leaves behind her previous life, dons waistcoat and breeches, and becomes Ned Buckley. Ned enlists in the British army and vanishes amongst the soldiers of the 69th Regiment of Foot. Sent to the Mediterranean, Ned is pulled out of his squad and assigned to work with a zealous Royal Navy captain named Horatio Nelson, who is goading the army to besiege the Corsican town of Bastia. Ned becomes a participant in momentous events of victory and defeat, forming an unlikely friendship with the man who will one day become Britain's greatest naval hero. But even as he witnesses Nelson's trajectory towards immortality, Ned's past is stalking him, threatening him with a downward slide into discovery, ignominy, and the prospect of his own destruction....' Watch this space!

Anna M Holmes' book 'Wayward Voyage' (The Book Guild, 2021, 480pp, £9.99) was published last year and is a novel inspired by one of the famous female pirates of all time, Ann Bonny. Growing up in the frontier colony of early 18th century Carolina, Anne runs away to sea and finds herself in the Bahamas, which has become a nest for pirates plaguing the West Indies. Anne becomes involved with the charismatic pirate John 'Calico Jack' Rackham and

fellow pirate Mary Read, and the novel creates a vivid and gritty picture of colonial life in the Americas and at sea. (For additional background on female pirates, members may wish to consult 'Women and English Piracy 1540-1720 – Partners & Victims of Crime' by John C Appleby. Boydell Press, 2015 pb £19.99 - reviewed by Peter Clayton in the 'Nelson Dispatch' Vol 12 Part 4).

OBITUARIES



DR ROBIN AGNEW 1926 - 2022

Robin Agnew was born in Dublin in 1926. Growing up in Ireland, he graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA in 1948 and MB in 1950 with honours in Medicine. During his time at Trinity he joined the Dublin University Sailing Club and this gave him an honorary membership of the Royal Irish Yacht club at Dun Laoghaire. This was the start of his lifelong passion for all things nautical. Specialising in chest medicine he eventually joined the RN in 1956 until 1960 when he retired with the rank of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander.

After a period at HMS *Ganges* near Ipswich and a brief experience as a GP in Yorkshire, he settled in Nelson's county with his family in Norwich, where he continued to train in thoracic medicine. While in Norwich he was elected president of The Irish Society of East Anglia. He was appointed consultant Chest physician at Liverpool in 1970, a city which had close ties to his beloved Ireland, and where he took a particular interest in TB. In 1990 he retired from the NHS and was appointed emeritus consultant chest physician.

He finally retired in 1999 at the age of 72, and was able to pursue his interest in medical and naval history, publishing in 2002 his work on Sir John Forbes (1787-1861), the distinguished Scottish physician and naval surgeon. This led him to research further on the Victorian publisher, George Smith, who published the first Bronte novels. John Forbes was also asked for advice by Charlotte Bronte when Anne Bronte developed TB, Emily having recently died from it. Forbes is most remembered for being the first to translate and recognise Laennec's work on the stethoscope, an essential tool of any doctor, and particularly for a respiratory physician such as Robin Agnew. His book 'Lightfoot Winds' was published in 2009, a sequel to his previous work on Sir John Forbes. 'Lightfoot Winds' focuses on events taking place during Forbes' service as a ship's surgeon in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars between 1807 and 1815. The book was reviewed in the 'Nelson Dispatch' in 2019.

Robin was a keen member of The Nelson Society since 2015, and he contributed several articles for the 'Nelson Dispatch', including in 2015 on Sir George Magrath and in 2017/2018 on Leonard Gillespie. His article on Nelson's Christening Mug, appeared in the latest (Winter 2022) edition. He will be much missed.



JOHN GODDARD 1955 – 2022

We are sorry to report the recent death of John Goddard, who had been a member of the Nelson Society for over 20 years and was known to us as an expert medal collector. A City solicitor by profession, John developed an early interest in medal collecting having been introduced to it by his father. He went on to become a prominent member of the Orders and Medals Research Society, acquiring over time an important collection including a number of Naval General Service Medals. Specialising in the NGS medals he published 'A Brief History of NGS Medal Collecting' in five parts in the OMRS Journal. He eventually also became interested in collecting

Nelson Letters, and he acquired several including the short, but emotive, letter on the death of his father and his well-recorded note to the Rector of St. George's in Hanover Square after finally recovering from the pain of his amputation. Many items from John's collection were sold in an important sale of 2015 and this was reported in detail in the 'Nelson Dispatch', by Peter Clayton in Vol 12 Part 5.

John's developing interest in Nelson himself, rather than just the naval medals of his period, prompted him in 2001 to join The Nelson Society and he continued to contribute articles in relevant journals. John was also known as an author of books on Agatha Christie. He will be very much missed by his family, fellow members of the Nelson Society and within the medal fraternity.

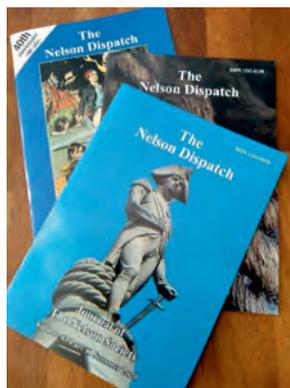
POSTSCRIPT - ANTHONY (TONY) NOËL ROPER 1923 – 2021

In the last issue we published an obituary for member Tony Roper who died aged 97 on 11 November 2021. Lily Style has kindly visited the archive in South Brent where she lives and where Tony had his home. She has donated a copy of the 'Nelson Dispatch' with the obituary of her fellow villager. She says 'As well as being a Nelson enthusiast, he was a major contributor to the village archive. He donated several documents to them, as well as sitting for voice recordings of his memories of the village. The Archive is very pleased to have this obituary in their collection. He is deeply missed by all, but will be remembered for many years'.

NELSON SOCIETY MERCHANDISE AND MEMORABILIA

Gifts and merchandise

We have a great selection of special Nelson Society merchandise for sale including ties, scarves, umbrellas, lapel-pins, bow-ties and cuff-links. We also have limited numbers of The Nelson Society's own specialist publications including many out of print titles unavailable elsewhere. All these make wonderful gifts for the Nelson enthusiast. If you would like to buy, do take a look at our website Online Shop. Please contact David Curson (Sales Manager) for all information and further details of prices and availability. And don't forget we have back numbers of 'The Nelson Dispatch' going back up to 40 years and Binders if you wish to complete your collection.



Memorabilia and books

From time to time the Society is fortunate to be given members' Nelson books, pictures, prints, ceramics and other memorabilia, to be sold for the benefit of the Society. These are usually offered on the Sales Table at Nelson Society events. If you would like to be sent a list of items periodically please let Sue Morris know.

Thank you for supporting The Nelson Society! Your purchases and donations help us to achieve more of our aims and objectives.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE NELSON SOCIETY

Membership is open to anyone who is interested in Nelson, his life and times. Members are sent free quarterly issues of the 'Nelson Dispatch', and are able to participate with their guests in our varied programme of events, luncheons, lectures and visits to relevant places of interest. Contact the Membership Secretary, whose details appear on the inside front cover of this issue, for details of how to apply, and current subscription rates.

CONTRIBUTIONS & ADVERTISING

Contributors

Any contributions, whether fully researched articles, short features, queries or letters, will be welcomed. Please send material initially to the Executive Editor, Sue Morris. Ideally, material should be sent in **by email, as a plain Word document** which we will lay out. Any references should be included as end-notes. (Please additionally send as a pdf, if your article includes figures or tables so we can check it is accurately displayed). Illustrations and photographs are very welcome and should be sent separately as jpeg files **numbered and identified with detailed captions**. Articles should ideally conform to our house style and 'Notes for Contributors' are available on request. Please contact the Executive Editor for advice on any of the above.

Deadlines

Edition	Researched articles and full page adverts	Letters, notes, event notices and reports, small ads
Winter (publication 28 Feb)	30 December	15 January
Spring (publication 31 May)	31 March	15 April
Summer (publication 31 Aug)	30 June	15 July
Autumn (publication 30 Nov)	30 September	15 October

Advertisers

Black & White Advertising:

Price	For 1 insertion	For 4 identical consecutive insertions (each)
Full page A5	£145	£100
Half page A5	£85	£63
Quarter page A5	£48	£36
Eighth page A5	£28	£23

Colour Advertising:

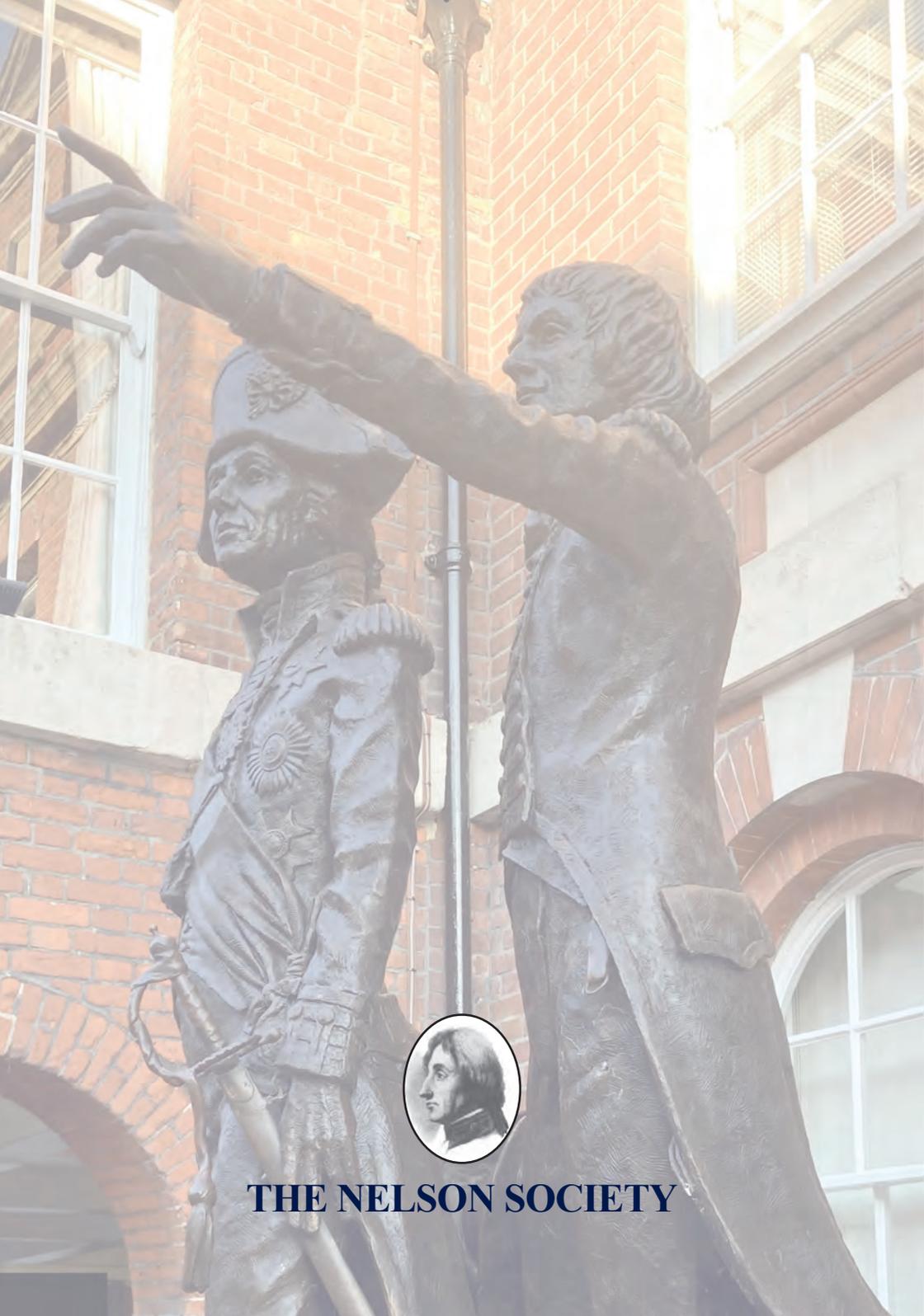
Price	For 1 insertion	For 4 identical consecutive insertions (each)
Full page A5	£175	£130
Double facing pages A5	£300	£900
Half page A5	£100	£75
Quarter page A5	£60	£45
Eighth page A5	£35	£30

Please contact the Executive Editor (Sue Morris) for further information.

Any additional pre-printing work by our printer will be notified to you before the advertisement can be placed together with a quotation for the price.

Advertising copy is best provided in electronic form either as a PDF or Word document depending on the content and reproduction quality required by the advertiser.

The Editor's decision regarding suitability of any material is final



THE NELSON SOCIETY