

The Daybook

Vol. 9 Issue 3

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Sage is on vacation.
Will be back soon.

Cover Illustration: On the cover is a “wash” drawing by R.G. Skerrett of USS *Cumberland* cruising in company with another frigate. In this issue of *The Daybook*, we present a second in a series of articles about the flagship of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. For her first cruise in 1843, she served as the flagship for the oldest, and arguably most important, overseas deployment in the U.S. Navy.



About The Daybook and the Museum

The Daybook is an authorized publication of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum (HRNM). Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official view of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy, or the U.S. Marine Corps and do not imply endorsement thereof. Book reviews are solely the opinion of the reviewer.

The HRNM is operated and funded by Commander, Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic. The museum is dedicated to the study of 225 years of naval history in the Hampton Roads region. It is also responsible for the historic interpretation of the battleship *Wisconsin*.

Call for information on the museum's and *Wisconsin's* hours of operations. Admission to the museum and *Wisconsin* is free. *The Daybook's* purpose is to educate and inform readers on historical topics and museum related events. It is written by the staff and volunteers of the museum.

Questions or comments can be directed to the Hampton Roads Naval Museum editor. *The Daybook* can be reached at 757-322-2993, by fax at 757-445-1867, e-mail at gbcalthoun@nsn.cmar.navy.mil, or write *The Daybook*, Hampton Roads Naval Museum, One Waterside Drive, Suite 248, Norfolk, VA 23510-1607. The museum can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.hrnm.navy.mil>.

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25 Years of Local Events & World History

The Director's Column
by Becky Poulliot

Mark your calendar and take a moment on August 31 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our fair Hampton Roads Naval Museum. Or better yet, come by and share some birthday cake and war stories with us—and there will be plenty of both. For those of you who are unable to drop in and visit, the following recap will have to do.

March 1, 1978-Assistant Vice Chief of Naval Operations James W. Nance issues the formal birth certificate for the Hampton Roads Naval Museum to become an official U.S. Navy museum with the mission to “encompass the role of the Navy in the Tidewater area from the days of the Revolution to the present day.” The great history of the Navy in Hampton Roads required attention!

October 25, 1978-Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet Admiral Harry D. Train II commends the museum's first honorary director Vice Admiral B. B. Forbes as someone who can make the museum a truly “first class institution.” Later, Admiral Forbes will serve on the Board of Directors of the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation.

August 31, 1979-After more than a year of plans, design and fabrication, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum opens on a Friday, following a formal change of command ceremony for Commander, Naval Base, Norfolk. The museum's home is the historic Pennsylvania House located on Admirals' Row, Norfolk Naval Base. The museum is open daily, with most of its visitors arriving via the Tidewater Regional Transit bus that stops at the museum during its Base tour. Michael Curtin serves as the museum's first curator and Patricia Gleeson as its technician.

1979-1989-The museum offers self-guided tours to approximately 80,000 visitors/year. It boasts a professional permanent gallery,

a series of changing exhibits, and serves as a popular backdrop for military ceremonies. An outstanding collection of naval ship models and artwork form the core of the collections. In 1986, the winds of change bring a formal request from Norfolk's mayor to relocate the museum to a planned maritime center on the downtown Norfolk waterfront. In August 1987, the Commander of Naval Base Norfolk accepts the City's offer to give the museum a new home—after the request goes up the chain to the Secretary of the Navy.

August 11, 1989-Another director arrives (me) and soon a new museum team. This group begins working non-stop on the Nauticus project. Even so, the move is bittersweet because the museum has been so satisfying to its visitors and staff. To quote the *Virginian-Pilot* (10/7/90) regarding the relocation: “Thus the jewel will be hidden no longer. It will be larger, livelier, more complete. Meanwhile the Hampton Roads Naval Museum continues to scintillate at the Pennsylvania House, cramped, perhaps, but undeniably dazzling. Ahoy out there, it beckons. Come aboard.”

June 1, 1994-The Hampton Roads Naval Museum formally opens at its second home Nauticus, The National Maritime Center. The gallery is two and half times larger with an expanded focus on the Navy's role in national history.

1998-2000-In 1998, rumors circulate that the Hampton Roads Naval Museum might gain another artifact, in this case an Iowa-class battleship, USS *Wisconsin*. Once again, the museum reinvents itself, bolsters its paid and volunteer staff and creates an interpretive plan, a new docent training program, publications, and permanent on-site exhibit about the ship. All this occurs while the museum simultaneously mounts exhibits on the centennial of the Spanish-



American War, the centennial of the Submarine Force and the popular “Animals and the U.S. Navy.”

December 7, 2000-April 23, 2001-On December 7, *Wisconsin* arrives at her new home. And on April 16, 2001, she opens to the public. A *Flagship* article reviews our first “Family Fun” weekend: “The numbers have been absolutely phenomenal.” The museum just changed the definition of “other duties as assigned.”

August 31, 2004-Museum staff will celebrate twenty-five years of excellence, reincarnation, and new ventures. Looking ahead there are plans for accreditation by the American Association of Museums, new exhibits—Hollywood and the Navy is one, of course, always collecting neat, old stuff. May the next twenty-five years bring fair winds and following seas to one of the Navy's very best museums!

Becky

Museum to Co-Host Seventh Maritime Heritage Conference

On October 27-30, 2004, leading local and national maritime heritage organizations will co-host the Seventh Maritime Heritage Conference in Norfolk, Virginia. This conference is a recurring national gathering of maritime history scholars, museum and archive professionals, and maritime history enthusiasts who join together to discuss all aspects of the Seven Seas.

This year's conference will be held at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel overlooking the harbor and adjacent to Town Point Park. A rate of \$89 has been obtained with this recently renovated first class hotel. Groups wishing to conduct business

though such meetings can also be fit in during the conference days.

Conference information including a listing of special field trips to local historic

from Thursday, October 28 through Saturday, October 30. On Friday, October 29, attendees will board the harbor cruise ship *Spirit of Norfolk* for lunch and a



Details on the conference can be found at www.nauticus.org or call 757-499-1044

meetings or hold gatherings of their attendees will be accommodated. Sunday, October 31 will be set aside for this purpose,

sights around Hampton Roads can be found on the Nauticus web site at www.nauticus.org. Click on the Conference logo on the home page. The conference brochure will include the meeting agenda, program session descriptions, tour sign-up details, registration form, and hotel reservation instructions. Hard copies are available by request.

The conference will open with a reception on Wednesday, October 27 at Nauticus and the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. Program sessions will continue

narrated cruise of Hampton Roads. The conference banquet speaker on October 30 will be Mr. Nathaniel Philbrick, author of the best sellers *In the Heart of the Sea* and *Sea of Glory, America's Voyage of Discovery: The U.S. Exploring Expedition 1838-1842*.

All inquires about the conference should be directed to conference chair Captain Channing M. Zucker (Ret.) at the Historic Naval Ships Association, 5245 Cleveland Street #207, Virginia Beach, VA 23462-6505, telephone 757 499-1044, fax: 757 499-6378, e-mail: hnsa01@aol.com. 

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757-322-2987
www.hrnm.navy.mil

Volunteer Opportunities

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Nauticus' Wisconsin Exhibits

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Wisconsin Project Partners

Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation
www.hrnhf.org (new address!)

USS *Wisconsin* Association
www.usswisconsin.org

Battleship *Wisconsin* Foundation
www.battleshipwisconsin.org



Museum Opens New Cold War Exhibit

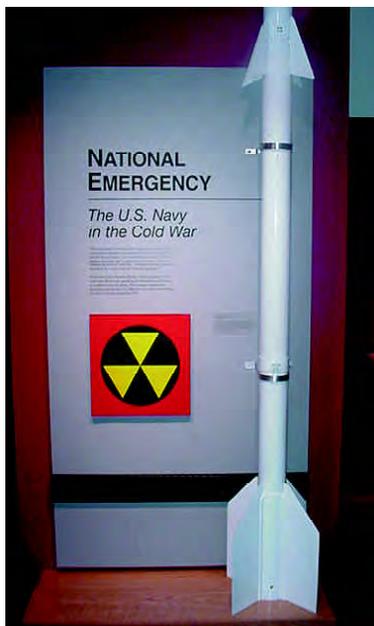
The museum's newest permanent addition opened in May. Entitled "National Emergency," the exhibit covers and honors the locally-based ships, submarines, planes, and sailors that served in various conflicts between 1947-1991.

Using artifacts, historic photos, and historic film, the exhibit interprets the major military events of the Cold War. Starting with the Korean War, continuing with operations off Cuba during the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis, and finishing up with the Vietnam War. A special section covers the often overlooked intelligence surveillance missions conducted by locally-based units.

Some of the artifact highlights include a uniform from USS *Liberty* (ATGR-5), items from the submarine USS *Scorpion* (SSN-589), a flight log book of an A-1 Skyraider pilot who flew in Korea and Vietnam, and wires from the SOSUS surveillance system. Motion picture footage of locally-based units in action including a rare film shot by a sailor on board USS *Norfolk* (DL-1) during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The exhibit replaces the modern navy exhibit and will be up on a permanent basis. 



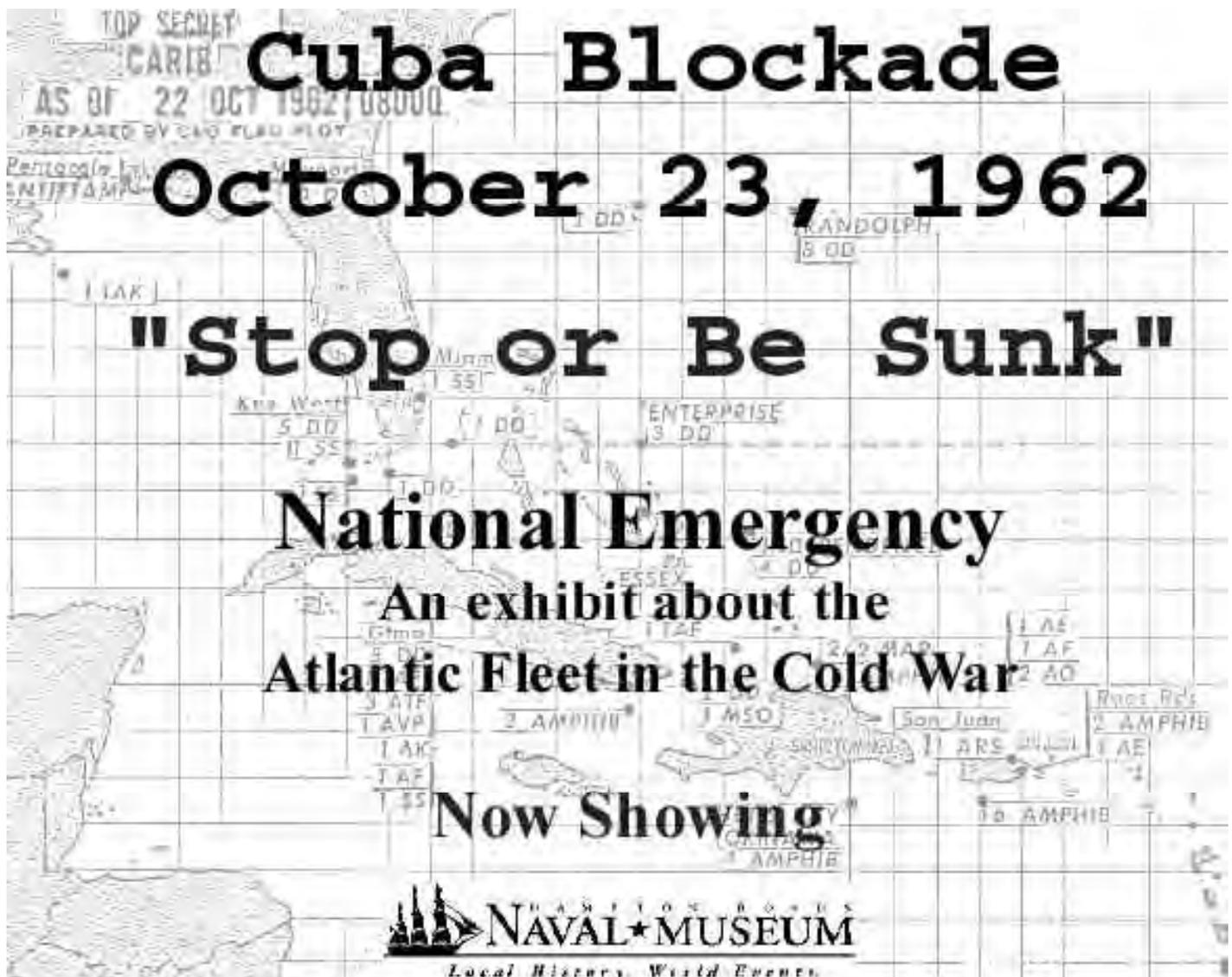
One of the newer interpretation approaches in studying the U.S. Navy's role in the Cold War is its involvement in intelligence collection. The museum's new exhibit honors those who served on locally-based intelligence collection ships such as USS *Liberty* (ATGR-5), submarines such as USS *Scorpion* (SSN-589), and the anti-submarine surveillance system known as SOSUS, which is currently headquartered in Virginia Beach. (Photo by Gordon Calhoun)



An AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missile is one of the larger artifacts. The missile is one of the most successful weapons systems ever developed by the United States and was used extensively during the Cold War. (Photo by Gordon Calhoun)



A major focus of the museum's new Cold War exhibit is locally-based units involvement in the Korean War, Vietnam War, and Cuba. Two films produced by the museum and edited by the Naval Air Reserve Media Center, give visitors a greater understanding and appreciation of Cold War events. (Photo by Gordon Calhoun)



Museum Building Off Site Exhibits

In addition to the new exhibits in the museum gallery and the day-to-day operations of battleship *Wisconsin*, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum is now taking its show on the road and building two new exhibits off site. One exhibit is at the Naval Station Norfolk Tour Office on Hampton Boulevard and the second will be installed at Commander, Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA) headquarters. CNRMA is the regional command that oversees shore installations in a five state area, and also serves as the museum's parent command.

The tour office exhibit introduces visitors to the history and function of the naval station. Over 40,000 visitors came

to the tour office last year and boarded a Hampton Roads Transit bus to hear an active duty sailor talk about the Navy.

The N-21 exhibit will interpret the history of Norfolk and the U.S. Navy. Ship models such as the builder's model of the 1960s-era USS *Norfolk* (DL-1) and the training bark USS *Cumberland* will accompany a photographic display. Building N-21 dates back to 1917 after it was completely rebuilt during the Navy's establishment of Naval Operating Base Hampton Roads. This display is being prepared in anticipation of the 2007 quadracentennial celebration.

Both exhibits are to be completed by the end of summer. 



Flagship of Mediterranean Squadron

USS *Cumberland*'s First Cruise

by Gordon Calhoun

Editor's Note: This is part two of an ongoing series about the flagship and symbol for the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, the frigate/sloop-of-war USS Cumberland. The museum is the only official repository for artifacts from the ship, which was sunk by the ironclad CSS Virginia on March 8, 1862.

With the ship's hull complete, the masts in place, and the guns forged and delivered, USS *Cumberland*'s physical construction was finally complete. In the fall of 1843, the Navy tasked her to oversee the Mediterranean station as the flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron. The Squadron itself was to consist of four ships including the frigate *Columbia*, a sister ship to *Cumberland*, the sloop-of-war *Fairfield*, the sloop *Plymouth*, and *Cumberland*.

As workers at the Boston Navy Yard finished up work on USS *Cumberland*, the Navy assigned her a command staff. As *Cumberland* was to be the flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron, Commodore Joseph Smith broke out his flag and raised it aboard the ship. Smith's assignment was to conduct a typical peacetime cruise. This meant that the four-ship squadron had to ensure the protection of American lives and commerce, and assist American diplomats in any way that they could.

In charge of *Cumberland*'s company was Captain Samuel L. Breese. A veteran of the War of 1812 naval battle on Lake Champlain, Breese came from a wealthy family that opened up one of the first department stores in New York City. Breese's father was a merchant in luxury goods and even had his own line of imported European wines.

Assisting Smith and Breese in managing the 450-man ship's company were seven lieutenants, nine passed midshipmen, 14 midshipmen, a chaplain,



After a few more false starts, the frigate USS *Cumberland* set sail for the Mediterranean Sea. The 54-gun warship left Boston on November 20, 1843 and remained on station for a little over two years. She oversaw a squadron that also included her sister ship *Columbia*, the sloop-of-war *Fairfield*, and the sloop *Plymouth*. (Naval Historical Center photo of a wash drawing by R.G. Skerret)

several petty officers, and two Marine Corps officers with a detachment of Marines. Much of what historians know about this first cruise comes from two of *Cumberland*'s lieutenants, who are familiar to anyone who has studied the American Civil War: Andrew Foote and John Dahlgren. Foote served as Breese's 1st lieutenant, which meant he was the executive officer. An outstanding officer who possessed a major talent for ship handling, Foote was determined to implement social reforms among the enlisted ranks and used his time aboard *Cumberland* as his laboratory. His work at the Naval Asylum, where he improved the living conditions, was rewarded with the assignment to *Cumberland*.

As for Dahlgren, the ever-ambitious officer had lobbied hard for a prestigious post and received the position of flag aide to Commodore Smith. In this role, he accompanied and assisted the commodore on official state visits to American consulates and foreign dignitaries. Fluent in French and Swedish, Dahlgren often served as the commodore's translator during these visits.

Dahlgren also was assigned head of the frigate's third division. Most famous for his invention of the bottle-shaped smoothbore cannon that bears his name, he had long been fascinated with the science of naval armament and was constantly pondering the subject. En route to his new assignment in Boston, for example, he found the book *Range of Sea Ordnance*. He

found it to be a hideous and erroneous work on the subject. "A disgrace to the name of science," he commented in a letter to his wife. Earlier in his career, he translated into English a manual on the Paixhans shell gun, first developed in France, and distributed the manual at his own expense to other American officers. The U.S. Navy had since developed its own line of "Paixhans," correctly pronounced "Pax An" though many at the time pronounced them "Pas An" much to Dahlgren's annoyance, and had shipped four of the new guns to *Cumberland*. Dahlgren and his division were placed in charge of their care.

Among the other notable personnel was a 12-year old midshipman whose father was Maine Congressman Jonathan Cilley. Congressman Cilley was shot and killed in an 1838 duel with Kentucky Congressman William Jordan Graves. National outrage over the event led to a Congressional act banning the practice of receiving or requesting offers to duel within the limits of Washington, D.C. In an attempt to ease Mrs. Cilley's grief, the Navy granted the late Congressman's son a midshipman's warrant. *Cumberland* was his first ship.

The last officer to check in was Brevet Major William Dulany, commanding officer of *Cumberland*'s Marine detachment. Dulany was a battle-hardened veteran who had already served in the Corps for 26 years when he arrived in Boston. He enjoyed conspicuous quantities of alcohol, tobacco of "any kind," and spent as much

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Commodore Joseph Smith flew his flag on Cumberland. As squadron commodore, he oversaw the operations of four warships and enforcement of American foreign policy in the Mediterranean. He would later serve on the Ironclad Board. His son served as commanding officer of USS Congress during the Battle of Hampton Roads. (Naval Institute photo)

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time on shore as he could. The Major had just returned from southern Florida where he had fought in the Second Seminole Indian War. He had received a promotion to his current rank for meritorious service. Despite his background and taste for liquor, for example he went out into Boston and purchased several bottles of brandy before the ship departed, Dahlgren found him to be a very likable person. Dulany even yielded to Foote's authority as executive officer with little discussion, despite the fact he held an equivalent rank and was senior to the frigate's 1st lieutenant.

Among the more serious issues when the senior command staff began to arrive was a lack of enlisted sailors. Rather than wait for more volunteers, 100 men were transferred from the ship-of-the-line *Ohio*, which was undergoing a major overhaul at Boston, and placed on board *Cumberland*. Sixty more experienced sailors were to be transferred from other ships to round out the company, but the Secretary of the Navy cancelled the order. In their place, the Secretary gave Breese and Foote sixty landsmen. These were men who had never served on a ship nor had ever been to sea. The command staff was

quite displeased with the Navy bureaucracy after being handed so many raw recruits on such short notice, but believed that they would find a way to manage.

With the crew and wardroom in place and a recent shipment of gunpowder safely in storage, the ship was ready to set sail. However, no sailing orders had arrived and the ship and crew waited for two additional weeks. On the evening of November 9, Commodore John Downes, commandant of the Boston Navy Yard, stepped on board with the orders in hand. Downes no doubt came to see his son off as well, as John Downes, jr. was one of frigate's passed midshipman. The officers retired to the wardroom and champagne was ordered for a send off party. The celebration was



Captain Samuel Breese was Cumberland's first commanding officer. A veteran of the War of 1812 naval battle on Lake Champlain, he came from a family rich in money, luxury items, and naval heritage. Due to illness, he often left much of the ship operations to his junior officers. (Image provided by Mary Van Duseun)

premature, as *Cumberland's* allotment to purchase supplies overseas was sent to the wrong ship. Finally, on the morning of November 20, *Cumberland* set sail for Gibraltar.

The cruise's first few weeks went smoothly. The frigate encountered a British merchant ship bound for Newfoundland and exchanged cordial greetings. A grog ration was dispensed a few days out of Boston with only 85 sailors taking advantage of it. The consumption of alcohol was a subject of national debate and became a very controversial matter during the cruise. Foote believed that all alcohol should be banned from the ship. Tea, coffee, or cocoa were accepted substitutes. Many officers disagreed

and believed that the grog ration was an effective way of maintaining discipline over the enlisted ranks as sailors who stepped out of line had their ration taken away. Foote and others rejected this argument, as they believed liquor caused more problems than it solved.

Several alcohol-related incidents throughout the frigate's cruise would give Foote more reasons to implement his reforms. The first occurred before the ship even left Boston. Shortly before the ship departed, a group of sailors broke into *Cumberland's* storeroom and stole bottles of whiskey. The men subsequently got drunk and assaulted an officer. While the sailors were flogged, Foote believed that if the ship were dry, the attack would never have occurred in the first place.

With the frigate underway for a four-week trek across the North Atlantic, Foote had a captive audience and he began his temperance initiative. Using a skillful combination of education, Christian preaching, and financial incentives, his objective was to get the entire ship's company, officers and enlisted, to completely abstain from drinking both on and off the ship.

On the education front, Foote presented a series of lectures to the sailors on the ill effects that alcohol had on the body. In what is a pre-cursor to the familiar anti-drug abuse campaigns of the 1980s and 90s, Foote had brought on board charts of the human stomach. The first chart showed a normal, alcohol-free stomach. The second chart showed what happened to the stomach when alcohol was introduced. Dahlgren reported to his wife that many sailors found the lectures rather amusing. The second approach was an appeal to the sailors' Christian values. Though not trained or ordained as a pastor, Foote was well-read in the Bible and an excellent public speaker. He often filled in for the ship's chaplain when the chaplain was unavailable. The third approach was an appeal to the sailors' purse strings. Congress had already enacted a law that paid temperate sailors the cost of their grog rations as a bonus.

The initiative was at first highly successful. All except one person in *Cumberland's* enlisted company signed a temperance pledge. The wardroom was a different story. Several officers, especially

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Cumberland *continued from page 7*

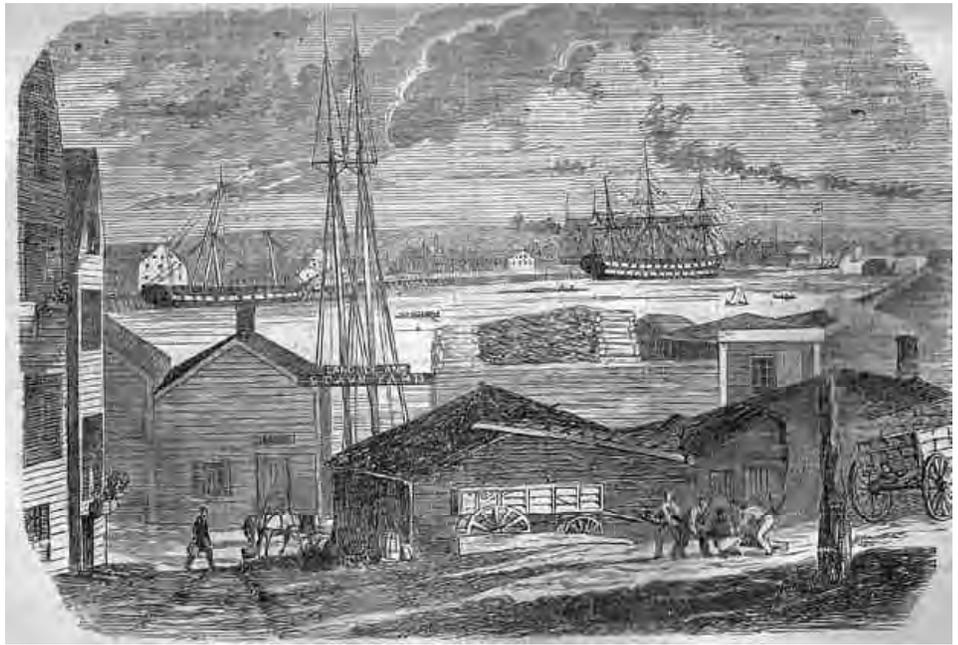
Breese, enjoyed the privilege of consuming spirits at mealtime and became very annoyed at Foote's preaching. Commodore Smith and Dahlgren were among the few officers that initially supported Foote's ambitious plan and both refrained from drinking during meals. Friction between the two sides grew over time.

The ship had safely crossed the Atlantic via the Azores Islands and entered the British colony of Gibraltar on December 20. *Cumberland* anchored next to frigate *Congress*. Once anchoring procedures were complete, liberty was authorized for the afternoon. After being cooped up on a ship at sea for four weeks, officers and sailors alike "made a rush for shore." The wardroom of both frigates held a joint dinner. One of the notable officers at the feast was Lieutenant David Dixon Porter, who was serving as the flag aide to the current squadron commander Commodore Charles Morris.

Dahlgren noted that the colony's streets were filled "with Turks and Moors and Spaniards, rock lizards, and foreigners." He was particularly impressed with the discipline of the colonial garrison. Members of Britain's 79th Regiment (Highlanders) kept the peace on the busy streets and snapped to attention and saluted as the American officers passed. A minor tourist attraction for the officers was a place called "Griffith House." The building was made famous by a popular 1842 memoir entitled *The Bible in Spain*. The book, a best seller in America, and related a riveting tale about a British Protestant's missionary work in Roman Catholic Spain.

After a few days of rest, *Cumberland* pushed on to the Spanish island of Minorca and its principal city Port Mahón. Port Mahón was the home away from home for American warships operating in Mediterranean. The city's navy yard provided ship repair services, supplies, and a safe place to anchor during the winter months when the weather tended to make sailing nearly impossible. Officers often left the ship and rented out houses particularly if their ship was laid up for an extended period. When American sailors were given liberty, which was rare, they packed the city's gambling and drinking establishments. Many incidents between locals and the Americans occurred.

En route to the island, *Cumberland*



Homeport USA-Cumberland was built and initially homeported at the Boston Navy Yard in Charlestown, MA. Lacking dedicated naval stations in the 1800s, America's navy yards served as recruiting stations and supply depots as well as places to conduct ship repairs and new construction. (1851 engraving from Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion)

encountered the sloop *Lexington*. The ship's purser J.C. Spencer came on board with the official change of command instructions and complimentary bottles of wine for Commodore Smith from Commodore Morris. When Dahlgren found out who the purser was, he had a horrifying thought.

One of *Cumberland's* passed midshipmen served on the infamous *Somers'* mutiny court martial board. J.C. Spencer's older brother, Midshipman Phillip Spencer, was one of the three midshipmen hung from the yardarm after being found guilty of plotting a mutiny. The 1842 case remains one of the most controversial legal events in Naval history as the court martial hearing was considered by many to be nothing more than a kangaroo court. Dahlgren noted that the encounter between the two junior officers was "exceedingly strange," but did not note any vows of revenge directed at *Cumberland's* officer from the younger Spencer.

Once *Cumberland* arrived at Port Mahón, an official change of command ceremony was held on board the frigate with the combined crews of both squadrons. The officers of the squadron held a joint formal dinner on board the Norfolk-built and based ship-of-the-line *Delaware*. Dahlgren was in awe at having the privilege of sitting at the same table as Commodore Morris, who was a national hero for his role in the

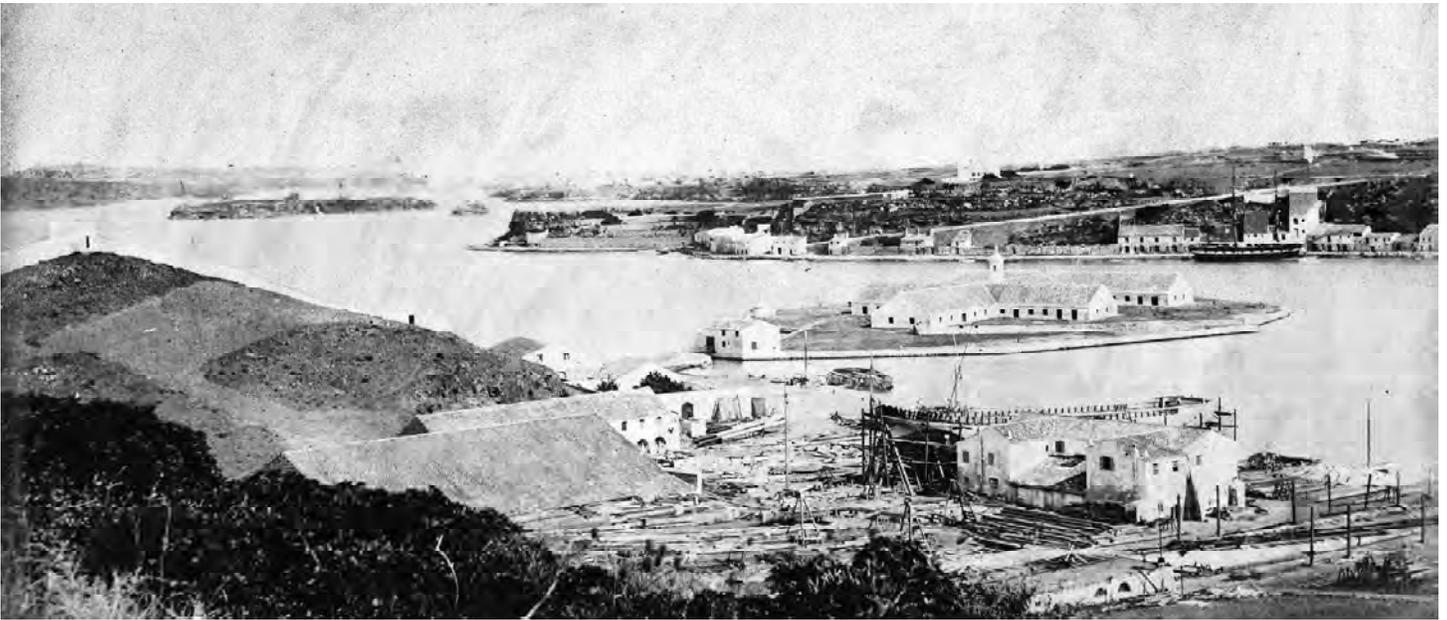
burning of the frigate *Philadelphia* in 1804 and as executive officer of the frigate *Constitution* during War of 1812.

Joining the officers for dinner was famed Italian sculptor Luigi Persico. Persico was traveling on board *Delaware* with his latest masterpiece. Congress had commissioned him to produce several murals and statues to decorate the exterior of the U.S. Capitol. During this voyage, he was bringing over a mural depicting Christopher Columbus meeting Native Americans.

A few days later, general liberty was authorized much to the pleasure of *Cumberland's* company. They were joined by the crew of the sloop-of-war *Fairfield*, which arrived from Hampton Roads a few days later. Smith, Breese, Dulany, and the ship's chaplain all elected to rent houses on shore as *Cumberland* was expected to be in port for several weeks while she waited out winter storms and made repairs.

The overall moral character and behavior of the ship's company during liberty, at least in Foote's optimistic opinion, showed great improvement as many of the sailors continued to honor the temperance pledge. Foote had good reason to believe his initiative was working. However, he may have been a bit too optimistic as bottles of alcohol continued to turn up in surprise inspections of enlisted

Cumberland *continued on page 9*



Homeport in Europe-Port Mahón on the Spanish island of Minorca was the principal naval station for U.S. warships serving in the Mediterranean during the first half of the 1800s. Cumberland made frequent stops here to make repair and replenish supplies during her first cruise. Gambling, horse racing, and drinking opportunities were easily found and they made liberty at the port highly popular. Foote's 1844 temperance program lessened alcohol-related incidents. Nonetheless, Spanish authorities had grown impatient with the actions of American sailors over the years and formally requested that the U.S. Navy find a new home in 1845. (1850 image © National Maritime Museum. Used with permission)

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spaces. Sailors wishing to break their promise could easily smuggle alcohol on board as Spanish merchants parked their wagons filled with wine and gin bottles right on the docks.

Despite Foote's best intentions, many alcohol-related incidents on shore still occurred. On February 5, two sailors from the French steamer *Phare* were found dead from multiple stab wounds. Commodore Smith had sailors from *Fairfield* arrested. Dahlgren translated for Smith as the commodore explained to the French captain that the American sailors would be severely punished. Satisfied with the response, the French skipper went on his way.

Four days later, an American sailor turned up dead on the streets. An inquiry by Breese, Dahlgren, and Commander Samuel Downing, *Fairfield's* commanding officer, looked into the incident and discovered that some sailors from *Cumberland's* company had broken into the house belonging to the American consulate. The investigation also revealed that Major Dulany happened to be near the scene of the crime and was involved in a scuffle with the murdered sailor earlier that evening. Dulany stated that he saw two drunken sailors having an argument and attempted to break it up. The sailors turned to Dulany and shouted many profane words. The Marine officer did not take

kindly to the bad language and promptly knocked out one of the sailors. Witnesses said that is all Dulany did.

The court of inquiry accepted Dulany's testimony and the Marine was cleared of any wrongdoing. Dahlgren suggested that one of the locals took advantage of the sailor's state and robbed and stabbed him. Local authorities rejected this theory and demanded that Dulany be handed over. Smith refused and later booked passage for Dulany on the first ship back to America.

Smith made the same arrangements for the ship's chaplain as illness incapacitated him. Foote happily assumed the role of ship's chaplain on a permanent basis. Foote received assistance from the ship's company as a group of sailors formed a choir for Sunday services. Though they were not the best of singers, they were not the worst either. "They sing tolerably," Dahlgren commented.

The frigate remained in Port Mahón for the rest of February. The squadron's remaining two ships, the frigate *Columbia* and sloop *Plymouth*, arrived from Norfolk later that month. By early March, the ship repairs were complete and the squadron set sail for Toulon, France. A heavy gale hit the squadron en route and lasted for over 48 hours. The experience proved to be more than *Cumberland's* landsmen could handle. "These things speedily [emptied] the interior

of our landsmen and they were lying about the decks like wounded after a battle," Dahlgren commented.

The squadron arrived safely at Toulon, which was the main naval station for the French Mediterranean squadron. *Cumberland* anchored near the bulk of the French battlefleet, which consisted of several ships-of-the-line, frigates, and modern war steamers.

Foote took a leave of absence to meet his wife and children in Paris. Dahlgren dearly missed his family. While in Toulon, he wrote one of many passionate letters to his family, "Papa is coming back after a long while to keep her and play with the boys. They shall ride piggyback down stairs. As for my name sake-what shall I say, having as yet to make his acquaintance? Tell them Papa loves dearly to hear them being good and of doing exactly what Mama tells them to do. I hope the sacrifice I now make for the U.S. will always be remembered for you and the children when I leave this scene. Most faithfully and affectionately. Your husband."

"My name sake" was the couple's fourth child who Dahlgren never met. Mary Dahlgren gave birth to the child while her husband was at sea. Unfortunately, the child died before the lieutenant returned home.

While most of Dahlgren's *Cumberland*
Cumberland continued on page 12

The Pueblo Incident: A Spy Ship and the Failure of American Foreign Policy

by Mitchel B. Lerner

Reviewed by Ira R. Hanna

The prominently displayed leadership motto at the U.S. Naval Academy cites the heroic words of James Lawrence. The dying captain of the frigate USS *Chesapeake* says, “Tell the men to fire faster and not give up the ship; the colors shall wave while I live.” Although on that June day in 1813 after his death, the colors of his ship were struck and captured by the British frigate HMS *Shannon*, the ideal of never giving up your ship has been forever afterwards the standard to which all commanding officers of U.S. naval ships have been held. Had Commander Lloyd “Pete” Bucher, captain of the USS *Pueblo* (AGER-2), died before his ship was surrendered to the North Koreans in January 1968, he would have been hailed as a hero.

Mitchell B. Lerner. *The Pueblo Incident: A Spy Ship and the Failure of American Foreign Policy*. Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2002. 320 pages. ISBN 0-7006-1296-3. \$16.95.

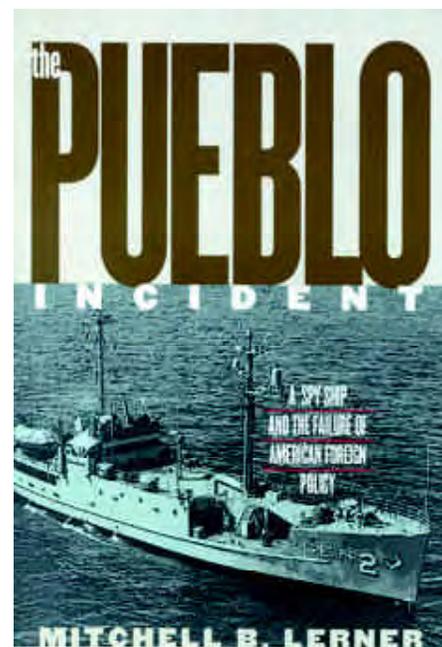
Since that did not occur, he and his crew of eighty three were destined to be the scapegoats for the Navy’s lack of leadership, our intelligence community’s failure to share knowledge of the ship’s real mission among Navy leaders, and the abysmal failure of politicians at the highest level of government to understand the real reason for North Korea’s capture of the *Pueblo*.

“Remember, you are not going out there to start a war,” Rear Admiral Frank Johnson reminded Pete Bucher just prior to *Pueblo*’s maiden voyage. Yet a war, one that might have involved nuclear arms, was what nearly happened when *Pueblo* was attacked and captured by North Korean gunboats. Although diplomacy prevailed in the end, it was not without great cost to the lives of the imprisoned crew and to a nation already mired in an unwinnable war in Vietnam. In *The Pueblo Incident: A Spy Ship and the Failure of American Foreign*

Policy, Mitchell Lerner weaves on a grand scale a dramatic story of international relations, presidential politics, overt intelligence, capture on the high seas, and secret negotiations.

Drawing on thousands of pages of recently declassified document from President Lyndon Johnson’s administration, along with dozens of interviews, Lerner provides the most complete and accurate account of the *Pueblo* incident yet available. He uncovers how a retired army coastal freighter was poorly refurbished as a signals intelligence collector for the top-secret Operation Clickbeetle then how it was sent off with a first-time captain, an inexperienced crew, and no back up, and was captured well before the completion of its first mission. He highlights the personal struggles of *Pueblo*’s crew through capture, imprisonment, indoctrination, torture, and release, and the still smoldering controversy over Commander Bucher’s actions. Bucher emerges in the work for the first time as the truly steadfast hero his men always considered him to be.

More than an account of misadventure, *The Pueblo Incident* is an indictment of America’s Cold War mentality. President Johnson and most his advisors had a predisposition during the Cold War that saw international communist plots at the root of all foreign crises. Lerner argues that had U.S. policymakers regarded the North Koreans as people with a nationalist agenda, rather than serving as a tool for a global Communist conspiracy, they might have avoided the crisis or resolved it more effectively. Specifically, U.S. foreign intelligence agencies and foreign policy makers failed to understand the ramifications of Kim Il Sung’s (North Korea’s leader) pronouncement of his country’s internal policies of *juche* (self-reliance), *chaju* (political independence), and *chawi* (self-defense). Kim used the capture of the *Pueblo* to bolster those ideologies. He used the “confessions” of the officers and crewmen as internal propaganda. The capture of



American secret intelligence equipment and documents was secondary to his purposes. His demand immediately after the capture that the U.S. admit that the *Pueblo* had intruded into North Korea’s territorial waters and engaged in illegal activities; to apologize for those actions; and to assure North Korea that such would not happen again was simple proof of the failure of U.S. military and political leaders to separate the nationalistic aims of North Korea from its commitment to international communism.

Lerner also addressed such unanswered questions as what the *Pueblo*’s mission exactly was, why the ship had no military support, and how damaging the intelligence loss was to national security. With North Korea condemned by President George W. Bush as part of an “axis of evil” that encourages terrorists and terrorism around globe, North Korea’s role in foreign relations is steadily regaining prominence on the international state. *The Pueblo Incident* provides key insights into the domestic imperatives behind North Korea’s diplomatic history. It astutely assesses the place of gunboat diplomacy in the modern world. The author’s thesis is vital for understanding American foreign policy failures in the Cold War and provides a deeper understanding for the current troubled relationship between North Korea and the United States. 

The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship

by A. Jay Cristol

Reviewed by Kathryn Shaffner

Since the day after the Israeli attack on USS *Liberty* on June 8, 1967 an array of theories about its cause, ranging from the “honest mistake” to the borderline outrageous have flourished. A. Jay Cristol, in his book *The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on a U.S. Navy Spy Ship*, endeavors to be the ‘last word’ in the controversy and to dispel the myth that the attack was intentional.

It is Cristol’s contention that a string of miscommunications on the part of both the U.S. Navy and Israel Defense Forces (IDF), combined with the “fog of war” and fervent competition between Israel’s air force and navy brought about the tragic attacks. The assault on the *Liberty* occurred on the fourth day of the Six Day War between Israel and her Arab neighbors

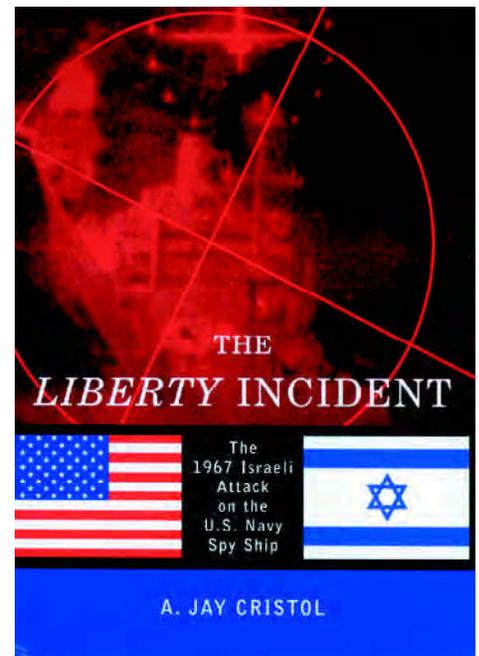
A. Jay Cristol. *The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship*. Dulles, VA: Brassely, Inc., 2003. 295 pages. ISBN 1-57488-536-7. \$27.50.

while *Liberty* was operating dangerously close to the Sinai Peninsula. Five messages were sent to the ship from levels as high as the Joint Chiefs of Staff warning her to stay at least 100 miles from the coast line, but these messages were all lost, according to Cristol, because of the Navy’s poor communications system and multiple human errors. *Liberty* continued to steam to her destination in order to carry out a National Security Agency (NSA) mission, which remains classified to this day. The Israeli forces detected explosions and misidentified them as enemy shelling from the sea. On the horizon, they could see a gray warship and concluded that it was an Egyptian destroyer, not the American ship USS *Liberty*.

As late as 1100, three hours prior to the attacks, Israeli naval headquarters had a marker identifying *Liberty* as a neutral on the command center plotting board. This

wedge was removed because the last information gathered on the American ship was six hours old and, according to Cristol, “it was standard procedure to remove out of date information from the battle control board.” The Israeli Navy went in for a closer look. The crew of one of the three dispatched motor torpedo boats (MTBs) misidentified *Liberty*’s speed at 30 knots and requested an air attack. The Israeli Air Force (IAF), believing the target to have been positively identified, began strafing the ship in the hopes of sinking her before the navy arrived in order to claim yet another IAF victory. The MTBs arriving on the scene were greeted by plumes of smoke and an inability to effectively communicate with the disabled ship so they launched a torpedo attack. One of five torpedoes launched directly hit the spaces manned by NSA personnel leading many to believe that the IDF was intentionally aiming to destroy any intelligence gathered in the eastern Mediterranean. Several minutes after the attack, Israel realized it had made a grave error and immediately issued an apology to the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, to the U.S. Department of State, and even directly to President Johnson.

Cristol deserves commendation for his efforts in declassifying an abundance of materials relating to the *Liberty* incident. Over a span of ten years spent researching this topic, he had direct contact with a multitude of sources ranging from Dean Rusk and Captain McGonagle to Israeli pilots and investigators. He worked to declassify eleven official investigations and has posted the conclusions of each on a web site he created as a supplement to the book. *The Liberty Incident* examines the attack itself, the events which led up to the attack, and both the U.S. and Israeli response in extreme detail. Though praiseworthy for its organization, the book is so systematic that it reads more like a court proceeding than an history study. Even the last chapter, entitled “Final Analysis,” could instead be



titled “Closing Arguments.” This should come as no surprise, however, as A. Jay Cristol spent 20 years of his 38-year active duty and reserve Navy career in the Judge Advocate General Corps and later went on to become a federal judge in Miami.

Despite Cristol’s clear argument for his conclusions, one can find difficulty in accepting them at face value. Much of the primary source material included in the appendices leads the reader to far different conclusions. Israeli transcripts of the pilot’s discussions during the air attack, included in Appendix 2, reveal that more than one involved party cast doubt as to the identity of the targeted ship. For example, a mysterious naval liaison officer named Yoshua Barnai appears several times in the transcripts to offer reassurance as to *Liberty*’s identity as an enemy combatant, goes unmentioned in the body of Cristol’s argument.

Israel quickly admitted to the United States that it has grievously erred on June 8, 1967, yet it failed to bring charges against anyone involved in the attack, adding more fuel to the fire of suspicion. At worst, attacks on the *Liberty* were the result of a high-level conspiracy. At best they were the tragic consequence of gross negligence. For those still trying to decide for themselves, Cristol’s book is certainly worth a read, a read, that is, with a cautious eye. 

***Cumberland* continued from page 9**

letters are full of love and affection, some are rather horrifying to modern readers. At times he wrote some very sarcastic and rather mean-spirited notes to his children. On two occasions during the two year cruise, for example, he told his children that he would not come home if the children did not behave for their mother. On another occasion, he sarcastically suggested that he might have to buy one of his sons a Spanish Barb (a breed of horse common to Spain) in order to get his son to take his medicine. This type of father/child relationship was indeed harsh, but it was not unusual for 19th century America.

Foote returned to the ship just as the squadron left Toulon heading for Genoa in the Kingdom of Sardinia. En route, three sailors on board *Cumberland* were found guilty of dereliction of duty and flogged with the cats. The officers were also put on a short leash. Shortly before the trip to Genoa, Passed Midshipman Downes was brought up on charges of “unofficer like conduct” and “disobedience and disrespect of his superior in the expectations of his office.” The young officer had a disagreement with Foote over the watch bill and requested to appeal Foote’s decision to the captain. Foote declined. According to the provost marshal, “Mr. Downes became very excited and said ‘orderly, I demand to see the captain!’” The subsequent court martial found him guilty and forwarded a recommendation of punishment to President John Tyler. The punishment could not have been too severe as the younger Downes remained in the service for another

“Tell them Papa loves dearly to hear them being good and of doing exactly what Mama tells them to do. I hope the sacrifice I now make for the U.S. will always be remembered for you and the children when I leave this scene. Most faithfully and affectionately.

Your husband.”

-Lieutenant John Dahlgren to his wife Mary, six months into

***Cumberland*’s two year Mediterranean cruise**

22 years.

While in Genoa, the officers took time for sight seeing after checking in with the local authorities and the American consulate. Several officers were granted extended shore leave and traveled to Florence, Rome, and rejoined the squadron in Naples. *Cumberland* left Genoa in mid-June and made for Naples. At Naples, the squadron split up to cover more territory. Smith instructed *Columbia* to sail for Tangier in Morocco and ordered *Plymouth* to sail with *Cumberland* to Athens and Constantinople and then proceed independently to the Black Sea. *Fairfield* remained in the western Mediterranean.

The Athens and Constantinople visits were short and uneventful. Dahlgren only commented how warm it was, which was no doubt a welcome change from the snowstorms of Boston and the gale force winds off the coast of Spain and France. *Cumberland* parted ways with *Plymouth* as the frigate headed south to Jaffa and Alexandria, Egypt.

Daily shipboard life between the various port visits was at times quite dull. *Cumberland*’s officers kept their sailors busy while moving from port to port by conducting battle drills. Sailors drilled in both small arms tactics and with the ship’s main battery.

Dahlgren personally believed that American warships, as a general rule, did not conduct enough drills, particularly with the main batteries. He took great pride in his abilities as a weapons instructor. During a small arms drill contest between the frigate’s divisions, he proudly proclaimed that his men “may not have fired the fastest, but definitely fired the sharpest,” as all of his men fired their muskets at once and practiced the manual of arms with perfect discipline and precision.

As for operating the cannons, Dahlgren was dissatisfied with the way his men conducted their drills. However, he did not necessarily believe they were at fault. He believed that the cannon’s firing lock was too complicated to operate. As a result, he

***Cumberland* continued on page 13**



The Sage is on vacation. He will return in the next issue

The Museum Sage



Dahlgren drew this map from Cumberland's log book and mailed it to his wife and three children to show them the highlights of Alexandria, Egypt. Cumberland was anchored in the "Old Port" section of the city. Notice that he points out the 100-foot tall "Pompey's Pillar" (called "Amoud el-Sawari", or Column of the Horsemen by local Arabs), Cleopatra's Needle, and the remnants of the famous Pharos of Alexandria at the entrance to the "New Port." (Library of Congress)

Cumberland continued from page 12

invented and manufactured a simpler design. He also believed the sailors aimed the weapons incorrectly, which prompted him to rewrite the drill for sighting guns.

Maintaining an effective work routine was not limited to the enlisted ranks. Professionalism between the frigate's officers had never been good. The officers had many disagreements with each other over ship operations throughout the cruise, as was evident in Downes' court-martial. By August 1844, many did not speak to each other. Food was among the major disagreements. One of Foote's responsibilities was the role of ship's caterer. Many of *Cumberland's* officers had grown tired of the quality of the food Foote had purchased. His evangelism may have also been an issue as many of the officers refused to attend Sunday service while Foote served as interim chaplain. Breese attempted to solve the problem by transferring one of the disgruntled lieutenants and replacing Foote with

Dahlgren as ship's caterer.

But the command issues ran deeper, as Foote and Dahlgren, in particular, did not think too highly of their commanding officer. Foote thought that Breese lacked competent seamanship and command skills. The fact that Breese spent much of his time in his cabin or on shore due to illness only reinforced the viewpoint.

The ship visited Jaffa before finally anchoring in Alexandria's western harbor in early September. Dahlgren rented a horse drawn carriage and toured the city. He noted that city was a good example of the best of "English style" architecture. He also noted many other improvements produced by the Egyptian pasha Muhammad Ali. When observing the pasha's palace, however that overlooked Alexandria's harbor, Dahlgren was disturbed at the thought of how much blood and money went into building the city.

The ship left Alexandria in late-September and set its course back towards Port Mahón. Stopping off in Malta in early

October, she rendezvoused with *Plymouth*. The relationship among the frigate's officer corps came to a boil. Four of the frigate's lieutenants wanted to go home in one of the other ships and asked to be transferred. Breese declined. Additionally, Dahlgren and a fellow officer almost came to blows when Dahlgren felt slighted after being snubbed from a party. The two officers had a lengthy and heated discussion, but a duel was avoided.

Cumberland returned to Port Mahón in late October. The other three ships of the squadron arrived over the next few days. While in port, a note arrived from *Columbia* challenging *Cumberland's* crew to a boat race. *Cumberland* agreed and launched its barge with the agreed upon fourteen rowers and two sitters. *Cumberland's* reputation for being the first dry ship did not sit well with the rest of the squadron. Every sailor from the other three ships jeered and mocked *Cumberland's*

***Cumberland* continued on page 14**



Andrew Foote, shown here as a flag officer, served as *Cumberland*'s executive officer during the ship's first cruise to the Mediterranean. His responsibilities included day-to-day management of the ship's company, ship's caterer (until the wardroom complained), and ship's chaplain, where he proudly preached the Gospels. (Naval Historical Center photo)

Cumberland continued from page 13

team during the race. Undeterred, *Cumberland*'s rowers won the two and half mile race by a comfortable 150 yards.

Foote and Dahlgren could not have been happier. Both of them firmly believed that their sailors were in better mental and physical condition because of their pledge not to drink. "The *Cumberland* has always taken the lead and there is a very wholesome determination among the crew to keep it," Dahlgren commented.

Determined to keep the ship "wholesome," Foote purged the ship's company of unwanted and troublesome sailors. Forty sailors, including the one sailor who refused to sign the temperance pledge earlier in the cruise, were transferred off *Cumberland* and sent home in *Columbia*. Dahlgren referred to the transferred sailors as "refuse."

The squadron sailed for Gibraltar where *Columbia* and *Fairfield* made preparation to sail for their homeport in Hampton Roads. While at Gibraltar, one sailor from *Cumberland* attempted to desert and asked British authorities for asylum. A British judge refused the sailor's request and sent him back. One last incident did not reach Smith until it was already

resolved. While reading a local newspaper, Smith discovered that two of *Fairfield*'s midshipmen had challenged British army officers to a duel. The duel, fortunately, never materialized.

The two remaining ships conducted a second tour of the Mediterranean ports. *Cumberland* concentrated on patrolling the western and middle sections of the sea. *Cumberland* visited Palermo, Malta, Trieste, Tripoli, and a second port call to Toulon, France. Dahlgren was both nostalgic and concerned when expressing his view of Tripoli. He was nostalgic, as Tripoli was the site of many of the great naval battles of the early American navy. He was concerned because, "The people are slaves and the slaves of savages too—mere brutes who hold power but to wring the hard earned [money] from the starving people," he commented. The ship anchored next in Malta, where Dahlgren found a prospering city with fine English inspired architecture. He believed, with a major racial bias, that it was a place to be admired unlike dirty Tripoli.

While in Toulon, news came from home that war with Mexico was on the horizon due to President James Polk's saber rattling over Texas, California, and New Mexico. On September 23, 1845, the Navy recalled *Cumberland* and *Plymouth* from their stations and ordered them home. *Cumberland* was ordered back to Boston, while *Plymouth* sailed directly to Texas to join Commodore David Conner's squadron. On October 1, *Cumberland* ended her first tour in the Mediterranean and reached her homeport of Boston on November 8.

While the ship enjoyed a very peaceful and, at least on the foreign affairs side of events, uneventful cruise, *Cumberland*'s first cruise to the Mediterranean had two legacies. The first was lessons learned on ordnance. Dahlgren took the experience from *Cumberland*'s shell guns to his shore assignments and transferred the knowledge to his own line of smoothbore cannons.

The second was the temperance pledge. After the cruise, Foote continued to push for a complete ban on alcohol. He even secured the signature of Captain Breese on a petition Foote sent to Congress asking the Representatives to ban grog. While it gained some support, the ban was voted down. However, the movement did not die. The Navy applied *Cumberland*'s experiment to the whole fleet in 1862 and



Foote's best friend on board *Cumberland* was the ever ambitious Lieutenant John Dahlgren. The famed naval ordnance expert served as Commodore Smith's flag aide during the ship's first Mediterranean cruise. During his time aboard the frigate, he continued his research into improving the Navy's cannons. (Naval Historical Center photo)

remains in effect, with few exceptions, to this day.

Foote's reforms in short term, however, came too late to head off a diplomatic embarrassment. The 1844 incidents at Port Mahón caused by *Cumberland*'s sailors and others in her squadron had infuriated Spanish authorities. Already tired of the chaos at Port Mahón caused by American sailors over the past several years, the incidents on this particular cruise pushed the Spanish to formally request that the U.S. Navy find another Mediterranean naval station. The Navy decided it was equally tired of dealing with the Spanish and Port Mahón's many vices. By 1846, the Navy withdrew from Port Mahón and moved its base to Spezzia on the island of Sardinia.

The entire senior command staff continued to serve in the Navy well on into the American Civil War. Foote and Dahlgren's careers both benefited from serving under Commodore Smith. Dulany saw more combat in the Mexican War, where he received his second commendation. This one was given to him for his role in the storming of Chapultepec Castle outside Mexico City. He eventually reached the rank of colonel and was placed in charge of the Marines at the Norfolk Navy Yard during the Civil War.

As for the frigate herself, she rested for the next four months in preparation for her next cruise. 



Operations Manual for USS *Cumberland*

Among the Andrew Foote papers at the Library of Congress is his “Watch, Quarter, and Station Bills” manual. Similar to the modern bills used on today’s warships, it included a complete roster of the ship’s officers and company, a breakdown of each division and her personnel, the procedures on how to load and fire the ship’s cannons, and where specific sailors were supposed to be during a specific ship procedure such as battle stations, raising the main sails, and docking the ship.

It also included a list of general orders and procedures drawn up by Captain Breese on how he wanted the ship to operate. The first order simply stated that the general “printed” law, that is the naval law mandated by Congress, would be strictly followed. To this first order, Breese added several others. Today’s sailors would instantly recognize many of them. Some of them included:

2. Officers are required to oversee the strictest silence among those under the command and to cause all orders to be executed with clarity and without confusion.

3. Officers and petty officers are required

to make themselves acquainted with the ship’s company so that they may always address them by their name.

4. No person is to be flogged with the Cats, but by the orders of the Captain. For offenses committed by the night watches, the offender may be confined by the Lieutenant in charge of the deck and the offense shall be noted on the masters at arms report the following morning and all punishments recorded on the log book with the nature of the offense.

5. All officers attached to the ship must be provided with the regulation full and dressed uniforms. Cock hat cap and sword and they are not to leave the ship on duty without their side arms.

6. The executive officer having the general superintendence of the ship, its policy, and the carrying of these regulations, his orders will be obeyed as if emitting directly from myself.

7. The signal officer will have his signal book by day and night.

8. The Lieutenant of the watch is forbidden to hold conversations or to allow the other

officers on watch to do so.

9. The Lieutenant of the divisions will be accountable for the perfect state of the batteries, the cleanliness of their men and the order of their clothing.

10. The [sailing] masters will have the ship log written up every day [with] the name of the lieutenants of the watch written out in full.

25. Muster at 9 am for quarters, state of battery inspected.

27. Drunkenness and profanity, outraging discipline and propriety as they do, will be visited with the severest censure and punishment.

Standing orders

1st, 2nd, or 3rd lieutenant always to be on board with two other lieutenants and one master.

On Sunday, breakfast at 8, muster at 10, divine service at 10 30, articles of war will be read on the first Sunday. 

USS Liberty: The Day After



USS Davis (DD-937) assists the Little Creek-based USS Liberty (ATGR-5) the day after the intelligence ship was attacked by the Israeli Defense Force. See more on Liberty and other Cold War events at the museum's new Cold War exhibit. (U.S. Navy photo provided by ussliberty.org)

In Our Next Issue...

- *Cumberland Goes to War*
- *Book Reviews: 19th Century Torpedoes and Their Inventors and The Messman Chronicles*

