THE DAYBOOK®

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

In This Issue...

The Fleet Arrives in the Western Pacific.....3

The Frigate *Chesapeake*'s First War of 1812 Cruise 6

Features

Museum Voices.....2

Anniversaries

Book Reviews.....10

Capital in Flames: The American Attack on York, 1813 by Robert Malcomson. Reviewed by Mark Tunnicliffe.

Unknown Waters: A First-Hand Account of the Historic Under-Ice Survey of the Siberian Continental Shelf by USS Queenfish *(SSN-651)* by Alfred S. McLaren. Reviewed by Matthew Eng.

The Museum Sage..12

Greetings from Japan, Having Great Time

Cover Illustration: On the cover is a painting by local artist Casey Holtzinger of the Norfolk-built 38-gun frigate USS *Chesapeake*. It is safe to say that this warship has the worst record in the history of the U.S. Navy. Its record was so infamous, that several years later, the commandant of the U.S. Naval Academy asked the Secretary of the Navy to change the name of the school's ship, which happened to be *Chesapeake*. For one four month period during the War of 1812, however, this hard luck warship had one of the most financially successful raids in U.S. Naval history.

HAMPTON ROADS NAVAL MUSEUM
Local History. World Events.

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The HRNM reports to the Naval Historical Center Museums Division. 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 staff and volunteers.

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 gordon.b.calhoun@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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Anniversaries

Museum Voices

by Joe Judge
Deputy Director/Curator

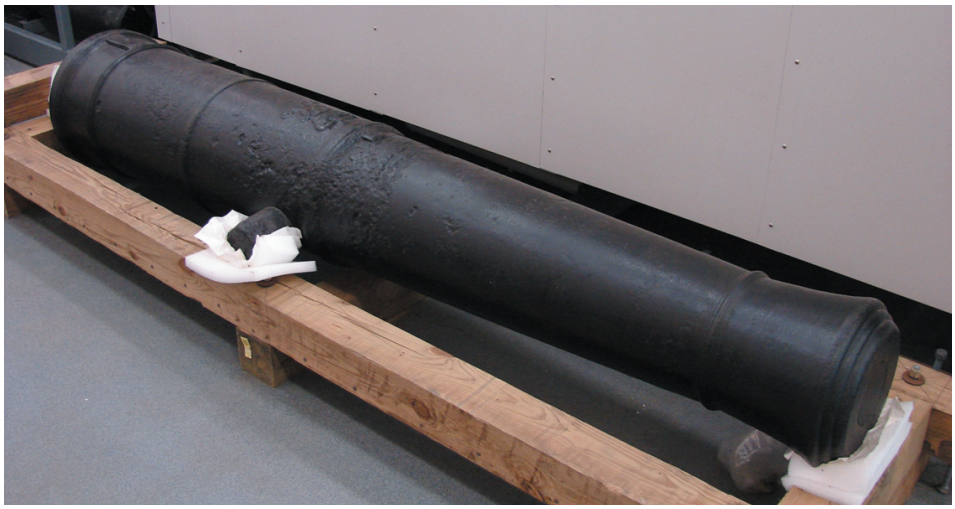
Editor's Note: Starting with this issue, The Director's Column will offer a forum for staff dialogue with our readers. This month's director's column is presented by Joe Judge, Deputy Director.

Historians like anniversaries – and unlike some married people, we actually remember them! Here at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, we have our eye on several upcoming important dates, including the Centennial of Naval Aviation (2010) and the 150th anniversary of the Civil War (2011). And not to be forgotten is the bicentennial of the War of 1812.

While 2012 is a few years away, it is never too early to begin planning for this anniversary. We are an artifact-based institution, and as such, the early 19th century presents some real challenges. For this time period, artifacts, especially meaningful artifacts, are rare. That is why we are thrilled to work with our colleagues at the Naval Historical Center and the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab to bring an 18-pounder "long gun" naval cannon to the museum.

Our cannon was cast in England by Walkers and Company, whose mark "WCo" is on the trunnion. Guns like this 18-pounder long gun formed the main armament for smaller warships and the secondary armament for larger warships. The cannon also bears the date "1798" and two other marks: a crowned "P" and the initials "WG." "WG" refers to the English gun agents Wiggin and Graham, who sold guns. The crowned "P" means that, at some point, the gun was intended for the English merchant service.

How did it get to America? Spencer Tucker (a former HRNM guest speaker) provides an answer in his work *Arming the Fleet*. Tucker writes, "There is considerable evidence of the importation of guns from England by private contractors, beginning as early as November 1798. … English guns purchased for American ships apparently carried the designation "P WG 1798 … ."



The museum's newest acquisition is this 18-pounder cannon. The weapon was a standard weapon of the U.S. Navy along with the heavier 24-pounder weapon. This particular gun was manufactured in England and sold to the U.S. Navy. The Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab recently restored the gun to its present condition. (Photo by Michael V. Taylor)

Even though the gun is labeled as an 18-pounder, it actually weighs over 4,700 pounds. The label refers to the cannon's ordnance weight. (Photo by Michael V. Taylor)

It seems clear that this English gun was imported for American naval use, and indeed it became U.S. Navy property. Unfortunately, the historical trail grows cool and then cold, since there is no record of the cannon until after World War II. Then, the U.S. Naval Weapons Laboratory in Washington, D.C. displayed it outside the building. From there it made its way to the sloop-of-war USS *Constellation*, currently in Baltimore. In 1999 the cannon, by this time suffering from active corrosion, was transferred to the Maryland Archaeological Lab. The staff at that fine institution spent over two years stripping paint, removing corrosion, treating and re-painting the piece.

The Navy's underwater archaeologist Robert Neyland contacted us to see if we were interested in using the cannon for future exhibit. It did not take long for the museum staff to get excited about it! Our reasoning was based on the importance of the long gun to the American Navy, and in particular to the Battle of Craney Island. It was the 18 pounders that the Navy provided that proved invaluable during that important battle. This past September, Michael Taylor and Gordon Calhoun accompanied a contractor to move the cannon to storage in Hampton, where it awaits our exhibit plans.

The cannon will be an important teaching tool for the understanding of the Navy in the Age of Sail. Our next step is to build a suitable carriage to mount the piece, and to determine the best place to exhibit the cannon. At 4,715 pounds some careful planning is required for both these steps.

Museums take a long view of history. We collect for the future and not just the near future. With care and planning our 18-pounder will be available for the tri-centennial of the War of 1812.

The Fleet Reaches the Western Pacific

Editor's Note: This is a continuing series on the 1907-09 voyage of the Great White Fleet as seen through the diary of Petty Officer Elmor Stoffer, a machinist's mate onboard USS Kansas *(BB-21).*

The battleships of the Great White Fleet pulled out of Hawaii in late July 1908 and headed for Auckland, New Zealand, ports in Australia, and the all important stops in China and Japan. The people of Australia and New Zealand gave the Fleet the most enthusiastic welcome of any of the ports, including American ones. The Japanese visit was cordial, formal, and by all accounts a successful visit.

After leaving Hawaii, the Fleet continued to steam west towards the most important part of the journey: Australia and Japan. The Fleet is shown here passing by Pago Pago Bay, American Samoa, which was not on the agenda for a port stop. However, the Fleet did move in close enough for people to see the ships from shore. (HRNM photo)

Uncle Sam's Greatest Show on Earth
The Great White Fleet One Hundred Years Later

Thursday July 23 - Aug 9 [En route to New Zealand]
Everything is going fine. We crossed the Equator Tuesday morning, the 28th, and the Minnesota came in line also and the boats were lowered and the mail brought aboard and also initiated some of the new recruits and we are maneuvering two hours and one half every day having lovely weather but it is hot below. Passed Samoa some of our possessions and had some rough weather a few days before we reached Auckland in the morning about nine o'clock. We could not go ashore because the officers wanted to go first.

Aug 10 Monday. [Auckland]
Only 70 special first class men were allowed ashore today.

Aug 12 Wednesday.
Coaled ship today taking aboard about one thousand tons. Some of the men went ashore in the evening.

Aug 13 Thursday.
Today is field day and every body is cleaning ship. I went ashore at one o'clock

Aug 15 Saturday
We got underway this morning at eight o'clock and steamed east for Sidney we did not get out of sight of land all day. Are having fine weather are going eleven knots an hr.

Aug 18 Tuesday.
Getting rougher all the time looks as though we will have a storm. Had to eat on the deck all day. The ship rolled thirty degrees at times.

Aug 20 Thursday.
We arrived off Sydney Harbor about ten o'clock this morning and maneuvered around until eleven thirty and then started in and anchored about twelve thirty. There were more people out to see the fleet come in than I ever seen before the rocks and hills were black with them. They certainly gave us a great reception.

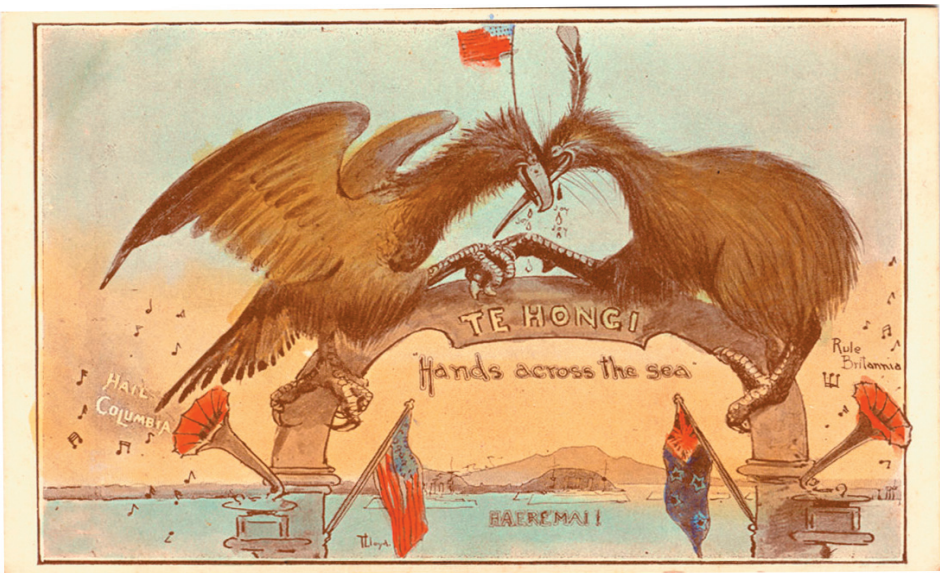
Aug 21 Friday
There was a parade today and after the parade, some of the boys went ashore.

Aug 26 Wednesday
Our last day in Sydney the ship is full of visitors. The people gave us as good a time as we had anywhere else.

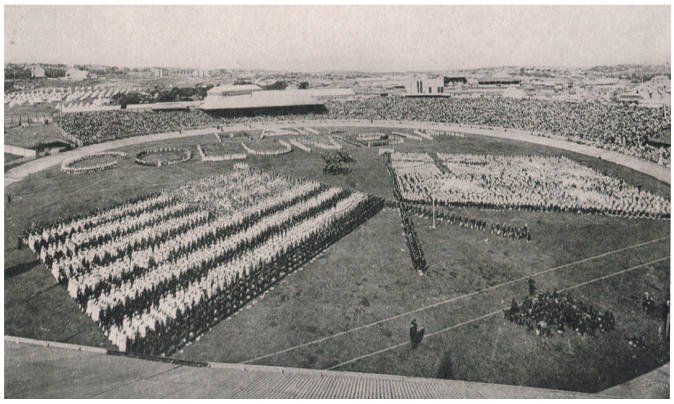
Aug 27 Thursday
We raised anchor at eight o'clock this morning and steamed out of our harbor in single file there were some people on the beach to see us off when we stuck the ocean We started south at twelve knots weather is fine.

Aug 29 Saturday [Melbourne, Australia]
Arrived at Melbourne at 230 this afternoon and dropped anchor about 2 miles from shore. We arrived outside the bay about ten o'clock in the morning and each ship

Greatest Show continued on page 4



In the native language of the Maori (the indigenous people of New Zealand), te hongi *means "rubbing of noses." In this postcard, the national birds of the United States and New Zealand join together in the celebration of the arrival of the American Fleet in Auckland. (Postcard provided by William Stewart/www.greatwhitefleet.info)*



The Fleet docked in three ports in Australia where, according to Stoffer, the people "went crazy" for them. Stoffer recorded that while in Melbourne, he and his fellow sailors could not get back to their ships because people kept mobbing them with their gratitude and thanks. (HRNM photo)

Greatest Show Continued From Page 4

took a pilot aboard and then went into the bay through a narrow entrance where we answered the English gunboats salute and steamed up the bay which is very shallow for we kicked up a lot of mud on the way. People were standing on every point of advantage to see the fleet pass and as soon as the anchor dropped the boats swarmed around us. The people were not allowed aboard because we had to clean up.

Aug 30 Sunday
A number of the boys went ashore today and stayed all night coming back at eight o'clock in the morning. The ship was crowded with visitors also.

Sept 1. Tuesday
Went ashore today town was beautifully decorated had a good time. People went crazy

Sept 2 Wednesday
Coaled ship today taking aboard about five hundred tons. Commenced about five in the morning and finished about seven thirty in the evening had to weigh all the coal.

Sept 3 Thursday
Ship is lousy. All the deck force went ashore to parade and did not clean the ship.

Sept 4 Friday.
Went ashore today had to be back by twelve o'clock Midnight. The people went crazy did not want us to go back to the ship.

Sept 5 Saturday
All the fleet left here this morning for Albany except the Kansas. She waited for the mail and for the decision of the board of inquiry held over the [coal collier] Ajax. [Ajax] ran into a passenger steamer and cut her in half but did not sink her. The Ajax had a large hole stove in her bow. We received two hundred and thirty one bags of mail for the fleet. We also had to pick up all the stragglers left behind by the fleet.

Sept 9 Wednesday
Some of the stragglers attempted to escape on the ash litter which was along side and all were caught but two. They could not be found. Are ready to leave any time.

The Few, the Proud, the Tired-USS Kansas*' (BB-21) Marine contingent relaxes en route to Albany, Australia. Just a week before this picture was taken, these Marines had their hands full as* Kansas *stayed behind to round up sailors attempting to desert from the Fleet. (Photo provided by William Stewart/www.greatwhitefleet.info)*

Sept 10 Thursday
The four to eight [watch] went on this morning to light fires for we are going to leave at eleven o'clock. We started out at eleven making thirteen knots an hour. We have between 100 and 125 stragglers aboard.

Sept 11 Friday
It is a fine day, wind is cool and it looks a little threatening on the horizon. Have ten boilers going now, making thirteen and one half knots.

Sept 12 Saturday
All is going well weather same as yesterday It was reported we were lost and then three hundred miles off our course but it was not true the navigator offered ten dollars reward to find out who started the report.

Sept 15 Tuesday [Albany, Australia]
Arrived at Albany about three o'clock this morning anchoring at our place with the rest of the fleet. Raised anchor again about eleven o'clock and went into the inner harbor where we prepared to coal.

Sept 16 Wednesday
It was raining when we began coaling ship this morning the boys on deck and in the collier getting soaked through. We took aboard about 1500 tons taking until five o'clock in the morning

Sept 18 Friday
All preparations were completed this forenoon and we raised anchor at five o'clock in the afternoon and started for Manila at a eleven knot speed.

Sept 21 Monday
Began maneuvering today. Changed speed to ten and one half knots. Served out bags and hammocks.

Sept 22 Tuesday.
At nine thirty this morning, a band on the jack staff broke and let the boom and clothes lines fall to the deck it created quite an excitement, but no one was hurt. Both lines were loaded with hammocks.

Sept 23 Wednesday.
Having maneuvers every day and had search light drill in the evening and we could not get our hammocks before nine

Greatest Show continues on page 5

Hidden behind this storm surge is USS New Jersey *(BB-16) in the South China Sea en route to Japan along with the rest of the Great White Fleet. The largest typhoon to hit region in forty years caused this surge and slammed the Fleet, making some ships list over thirty degrees. A few sailors were washed overboard. (Photo provided by William Stewart/www.greatwhitefleet.info)*

Greatest Show continued from page 4

o'clock.

Sept 25 Friday [En Route to Manila]
Passed some islands this morning and some coral reefs and a whirl pool.

Oct 1 Thursday
Passed some of our island early this morning and saluted one of the Army posts. [There] were quite number of boats out to meet us.

Oct 2 Friday [Manila, Philippines]
Passed into the bay of Manila about eleven o'clock this morning and anchored about three o'clock in the afternoon. Fired salutes. We cannot go ashore on account of cholera.

Oct 3 Saturday
Had to stand by all the afternoon and evening on account of reported typhoon coming. Coaled ship all day and nearly all night.

Oct 4 Sunday
Moved out away from the breakwater to keep from going ashore should anything happen or the storm get serious. I had to help dump ashes for the first time this morning it took us all forenoon to get them up. The ship is terrible dirty all over because everybody slept until noon did not commence to clean up until evening.

Oct 5 Monday
It took all day to finish cleaning ship. One of my shipmates dropped a 3/4 open end wrench from the top of a boiler on top of my head and left a hole when it dropped off. Nothing serious.

Oct 8 Thursday
The boat race took place this morning between the Kansas and Vermont. The Vermont winning by ten boat lengths. We was feeling mighty blue.

Oct 12 Monday
Soon after leaving the island of Luzon this morning the wind began pretty brisk from the north east and grew steadily into a young typhoon. The ships became separated and went out of line losing sight of the fourth division all together. One man was washed overboard from each of the following ships: Minnesota, Rhode Island and Illinois. The man off the Rhode Island was drowned the other two were rescued. We had to eat off the deck all day.

Oct 13 Tuesday
The storm is still raging this morning water coming over the bridge and we rolled nearly forty degrees at times. Fourth division reported ninety miles astern and Kearsarge broke down.

Oct 17 Saturday
Were to have arrived at Yokohama this morning but was delayed on account of the storm hence [arrived] one day later. The fourth division caught up with us this morning.

Oct 18 Sunday [Yokohama, Japan]
Arrived at Yokohama this morning was escorted into the bay by a Japanese torpedo boat destroyer and dropped anchor at ten o'clock in two columns lay to our left. We fired the National salute coming in and also saluted the different Admirals which came aboard. Liberty party went ashore.

Thursday Oct 22
I went to a garden party today and had a fine time had all we wanted to eat and drink.

Saturday Oct 24
Preparing to get underway in the morning the flagship is giving a big blowout to the officers of both fleets.

Sunday Oct 25
Steaming watch on at four o'clock this morning to light fires and get steam up. Raised anchor at eight o'clock and steamed out in single file. Three Japanese ships leading the way.

Monday Oct 26 - 31
Are having fine weather. Nothing of importance happened during this run except doing quite a lot of maneuvering Arrived in Subic Bay in the morning of the 31st.

Japan made extra sure that the Americans were warmly welcomed and nothing went wrong. They even had American flags set up with the correct number of stars to reflect Oklahoma's November 1907 entry into the Union before the American embassy did. The visit at Yokohama was by all measures a great success. (HRNM photo)

The United States Frigate Chesapeake *is shown here under full sail in a print by local Hampton Roads artist Casey Holtzinger. The 38-gun Norfolk-built vessel is considered by historians to be the most unfortunate and curse ridden ship in U.S. Naval history. But for four months during the War of 1812, the ship and her company found success that most only dream of. (HRNM photo of a print by Casey Holtzinger)*

What Sailors' Dreams Are Made Of

The Frigate *Chesapeake*'s War of 1812 Raid on British Commerce

by Gordon Calhoun

When James Fenimore Cooper wrote the first ever history of the U.S. Navy in the 1840s, he remarked that out of the original six frigates authorized by Congress, three were considered to be "unlucky" ships: *President*, *Congress*, and *Chesapeake*. Of this group, it is safe to say that the Hampton Roads-built *Chesapeake* has the worst reputation. Her short, thirteen year history is riddled with one misfortune after another. Whether it be her refusal to go down the ways on her launch day, the infamous 1807 incident with the British frigate *Leopard*, her sub-par performance during operations against the Barbary pirates, the fact that none of her captains left the Navy on their own terms, or her final defeat in 1813, *Chesapeake*'s career can be considered to be the exact opposite of the Boston-built frigate *Constitution,* the Navy's most famous warship.

But whether the ship was unlucky, unfortunate, cursed, or some other negative word, she did have one bright spot in her career. During the War of 1812, *Chesapeake* conducted two cruises against the British. The second was the most famous when the frigate cruised out of Boston and into President Roads to meet HMS *Shannon*. The first cruise, however, had a somewhat more fortunate end. It was not nearly as successful as the operations conducted by *Constitution*, *United States*, and *Essex*, but it is still worth noting.

When the United States declared war against Great Britain, Commodore John Rodgers believed that the best initial strategy was to deploy American warships into two squadrons and hunt for trans-Atlantic convoys. These convoys sailed from Britain to South America and the West Indies during certain times of the year and were loaded down with millions of dollars worth of goods. Rodgers took command of the first squadron of five ships in New York City and Commodore Stephen Decatur took charge of the second squadron of four ships, of which *Chesapeake* was a member, in Boston. As the frigate was not ready to sail, Decatur's squadron left without her.

Captain Samuel Evans was in charge of getting *Chesapeake* ready. As a naval officer, Evans had a career of quiet competency. He had held six commands, five of them being ships and one commanding the Gosport Navy Yard. His most notable assignment before the War of 1812 was as commanding officer of the brig *Argus* during operations against the Barbary Pirates. Here he guided

***Chesapeake* continued on page 7**

Lost among the giants of the early U.S. Navy, Chesapeake*'s commanding officer, Captain Samuel Evans, was by all accounts a competent leader. (Naval Historical Center image)*

***Chesapeake* continued from page 6**

the ship in support of the famous U.S. Marine-led assault during the 1805 Battle of Derne. During the assault, a piece of shrapnel logged itself underneath his right eye. The injury was not serious enough for him to leave the Navy, but it continued to nag him the rest of his life. In August 1812, the Navy assigned him to take charge of one of the fleet's eight commissioned frigates. He found the ship in less than ideal conditions, but had her ready to sail by December.

Assisting Evans was a group of six commissioned officers including Octavius Page, George Budd, N.D. Nicholson, George Pearce, Charles Thompson, and Augustus C. Ludlow. It was a relatively inexperienced group of men. Budd had only been a lieutenant for seven months, Nicholson had just received his commission, and Ludlow was barely 20 years old. At 42 years of age, Page was an anomaly for a Navy lieutenant, even by modern standards.

On a cold December 17, 1812, Evans called the ship and her company to quarters at 3 a.m. and *Chesapeake* put to sea by 5 a.m. Decatur ordered Evans to cruise the North Atlantic in search of the elusive British trans-Atlantic convoys, specifically near the Cape Verde Islands off the northwest coast of Africa. One newspaper, upon hearing that *Chesapeake* was finally going to war hoped that she would get to avenge her 1807 humiliation at the hands of the Royal Navy. It wrote "The U.S. Frigate Chesapeake, Capt. Samuel Evans, put to sea last Friday morning. *May she emulate the glory of her sisters-disarm the LEOPARDS of Britain or frighten them to their dens!*"

The frigate sailed southeast and then east across the North Atlantic, towards the Azores Islands. On a daily basis, Evans called the ship's company to drill on the main guns and then to drill with the small arms in preparation for possible boarding actions. Otherwise, December was an uneventful month until the very last hours. At one in the afternoon on December 31, watches spotted a sail five miles to *Chesapeake*'s south. Evans ordered a pursuit and caught up with the unknown vessel by the next afternoon.

The ship was an American-flag brig called *Julia*. The vessel was five days out of Lisbon, Portugal and bound for Boston. Evans sent Lieutenant Page and a boarding team to inspect the ship. Under normal circumstances, Evans would have left *Julia* and her captain alone. But the boarding team discovered that *Julia*'s captain was operating under a British license. In Evans' opinion, *Julia* was working for the enemy and thus a lawful prize.

During the early 19th century, British diplomats and naval officers sold licenses to American merchants, giving them a free pass should a British warship intercept them. The British desperately needed American grain to fuel their ground campaign against French armies in Spain and encouraged American merchants to trade with them.

Upon the discovery of the license, Evans ordered the ship seized and placed a prize crew on board. Captain Tristam Lace, *Julia*'s commanding officer pleaded ignorance. He claimed he did not know where the cargo came from or anything about British trading licenses. Evans rejected all of his arguments and ordered the prize crew to make sail for Boston.

The search and discussions took many hours. By the time Evans decided to take *Julia*, he noticed it was too late in the day for the prize ship to proceed and had her stand by until morning. At 8:30 the next morning, watches on board *Chesapeake* spotted two additional sets of sails on the northern horizon. Unable to properly identify the vessels, Evans had *Julia* with Midshipman Samuel Blodget as her prize captain, move away from *Chesapeake* to give the false appearance of two warships. The unknown ships were not deterred and continued to sail on an intercept course. By 9:30 a.m., watches believed, but could not confirm, that one of the ships was a British ship-of-the-line and the second ship was a frigate.

Unsure of the identity of the approaching vessels, Evans waited. He had the ship's company pull most of the sails down and attempted to maintain the ship's position. A heavy squall came upon the ships, causing both sides to lose sight of the other. Despite the considerably unfavorable odds against him, Evans considered getting *Chesapeake* into position and going on the attack once the weather cleared. The weather moderated around 5 p.m., but there were no vessels to be seen anywhere, keeping Evans from making what would have been a very foolish decision.

Chesapeake continued south and by January 9, watches spotted the island of St. Anthony in the Cape Verde Islands group to the east. Another squall hit the ship and the frigate began to fall apart. The latest wind blast knocked off two of the topmasts. This causality was in addition to damage to the main mast caused by high winds earlier in the cruise. "From the Day of our sailing until [January 9, 1813], the gun deck had not been dry," Evans later commented. Despite the damage, the frigate continued to look for more prizes. Three days later, fate rewarded Evans in a huge way.

Early on the morning of January 12, watches spotted a large ship flying a British flag. The ship attempted to escape, but gave up by mid-morning. *Chesapeake*'s boarding team discovered she was the 380-ton ship *Volunteer* out of Liverpool and bound for

***Chesapeake* continued on page 8**

***Chesapeake* continued from page 7**

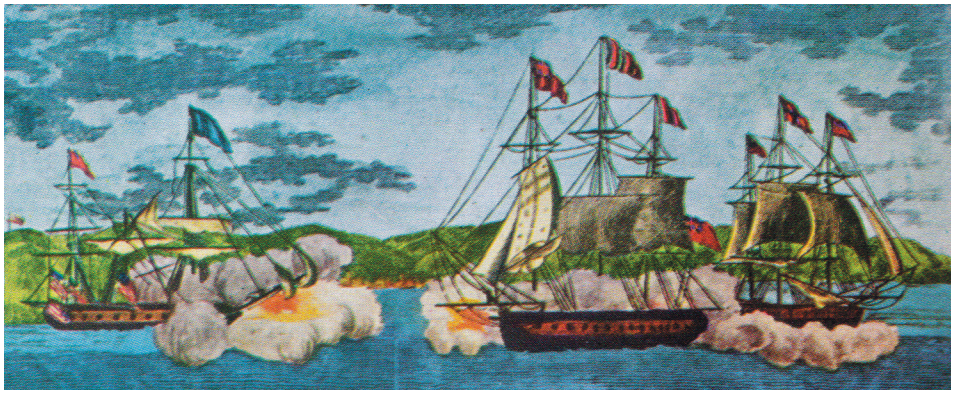
Bahia, Brazil with very valuable cargo. In *Volunteer*'s hold were forty tons of sheet copper and forty tons of pig iron fresh from British mills with an estimated value of a stunning $150,000 (in 1813 dollars). For comparison purposes, when Decatur and the frigate *United States* captured the 38-gun frigate HMS *Macedonian*, the British frigate was valued at $200,000. It was this type of payoff that made men around the world volunteer for the harsh and brutal life of naval service.

Potentially more valuable to Evans was the intelligence offered up by *Volunteer*'s captain. Evans learned that *Volunteer* had been part of a twelve ship convoy, five days out of Liverpool and bound for various ports in Brazil and other points in the Pacific Ocean. The convoy only had one escort, the 18-gun sloop-of-war HMS *Cherub*, which *Chesapeake* could easily handle. *Volunteer* fell behind the convoy and had to risk going alone. Evans kept *Volunteer*'s captain on board and then dispatched his second prize crew and ordered the captured vessel back to the United States.

The intelligence paid immediate dividends. Early the next morning, watches spotted another large merchant ship flying the British flag. *Chesapeake* ran her down within a few hours. This vessel was the brig *Liverpool Hero*. The brig had valuable items such as various manufactured goods and jewels. But the ship herself was found to be badly leaking. Evans ordered his company to "divest" the enemy vessel.

The ship had one other valuable item, but it was not in the cargo hold. Someone noticed that *Liverpool Hero* had a perfectly good main mast that could be used to replace *Chesapeake*'s main mast that had been battered by the North Atlantic weather. The company tore down *Chesapeake*'s mast, hauled over *Liverpool Hero*'s mast, and installed it on the frigate. The high seas repair job took about four hours. While the repairs were underway, another British flag was spotted. However, the new mast had yet to be installed and Evans was forced to let it get away.

Boarding teams transferred *Liverpool Hero*'s company, except for her captain, to *Volunteer*. Evans kept the captain on board *Chesapeake* for further interrogations. The Americans then put *Liverpool Hero* to the torch.



For the first part of the cruise, Chesapeake *pursued a British convoy escorted by the 18-gun sloop-of-war HMS* Cherub *(pictured at far right). Whether it was because of pre-assigned orders or intelligence that an American frigate was nearby, the convoy scattered.* Cherub *proceeded on to the Pacific Ocean where she assisted in defeating the American frigate* Essex *off the coast of South America.*

The two British captains provided valuable information. Their statements to Evans strongly suggested to the American captain that the elusive convoy was nearby. The British captains specifically stated that the British ships were somewhere between the Cape Verde Islands and mainland Africa. Additionally, the captains' information suggested that the 2nd Earl of Moria, Francis Rawdon-Hastings, was possibly in the area en route to south Asia in a ship sailing independently. The British lord was heading to India to assume his new post as the colony's 10th governor-general. In hopes of capturing one of these two valuable prizes, *Chesapeake* cruised to an area south of the Cape Verde Islands. Unfortunately, the hunt found nothing.

At this point, Evans and *Chesapeake* had reached the limits of their cruising orders. Decatur had designated *Chesapeake* to conduct operations between 24 and 30 degrees west longitude, which the Cape Verde Islands marked as the eastern boundary. The orders, however, were flexible as Decatur gave Evans the freedom to expand his cruising ground.

The captain declined the option. Evans reasoned that the element of surprise was lost, that the convoy had scattered, and the enemy ships were proceeding independently to their ports of destination. He thus concluded that the only way to capture any of them was to sail near the coast of South America.

Two other issues caused further frustration. The weather turned completely around for the worse. Up to this point in the cruise, the ship had been battered by high winds. By mid-January, and as the ship approached the equator, the winds died down to almost nothing, forcing the ship to sail at a snail's pace. The second issue was health related. Several sailors had become ill, possibly with the flu. Evans described it as the "three to seven days illness." A few sailors died from the sickness and were buried at sea while the ship was becalmed.

The wind picked up some and the boredom was broken by the first sail sighting in over two weeks. The ship gave chase and quickly caught the British brig *Earl Percy*. The merchant vessel was a long way from home, specifically, Bonavista, Newfoundland and was very close to her final destination in Brazil, by way of the Cape Verde Islands.

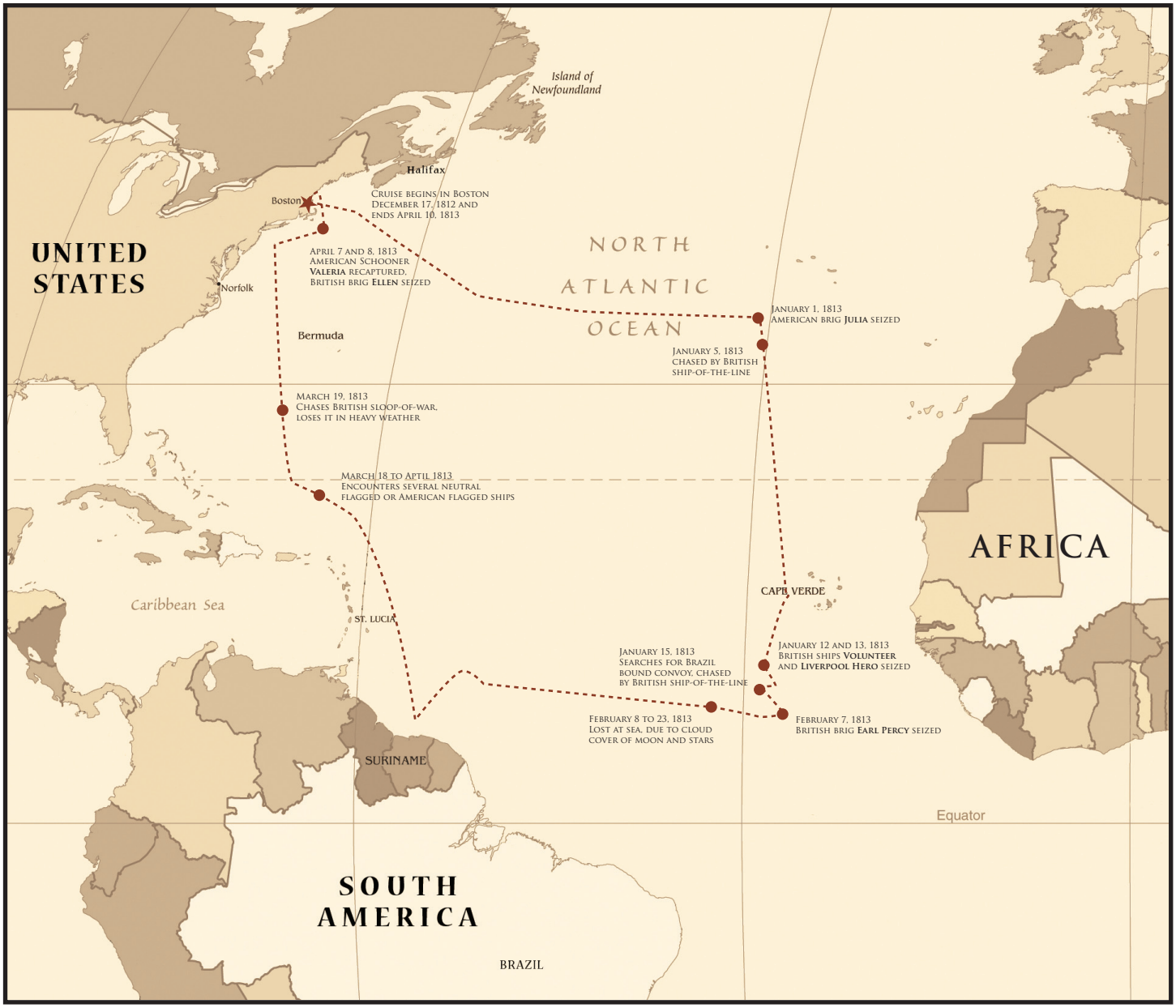
She was carrying several tons of salt and Evans deemed her valuable enough to seize. He placed Midshipmen John Carter and William Mott along with nine other sailors on board the prize vessel and ordered them to New York City for condemnation. Evans got another gift in the form of additional manpower. Twenty-two of *Earl Percy*'s sailors decided to switch sides and joined *Chesapeake*'s company. Evans also decided he no longer needed his two British guests anymore. He released and transferred them aboard *Earl Percy*.

After taking care of the prize, Evans decided to head west towards South America. The winds turned fierce. By February 10, the winds turned into a major thunderstorm and battered the ship for 24 hours. Once the storm passed, the weather cleared up to very favorable sailing conditions. Evans decided to renew daily gunnery drills for the next week as the ship approached hostile waters.

Strategically speaking, Evans wanted to be able to stay more to the east and south, closer to the coast of Brazil. Yet two powerful forces of nature prevented him

***Chesapeake* continued on page 9**

Map of the Frigate *Chesapeake*'s First War of 1812 Cruise



***Chesapeake* continued from page 8**

from doing so. The first was, once again, the weather. Officers attempting to get a fix on the ship's location were frustrated by overcast skies that covered up the Moon and stars. For two weeks, *Chesapeake* was lost at sea. When she captured *Earl Percy*, her location was 24.30 W and 2.32 N. Evans wanted to be somewhere in the 26 to 27 W longitude range and closer to the equator. By the time the skies cleared up, Evans and his company found themselves over 350 nautical miles to the west of where they needed to be. The second was the ocean itself. The frigate was now caught in a strong ocean current (possibly what we now call the North Equatorial Current) that pushed the vessel to the west.

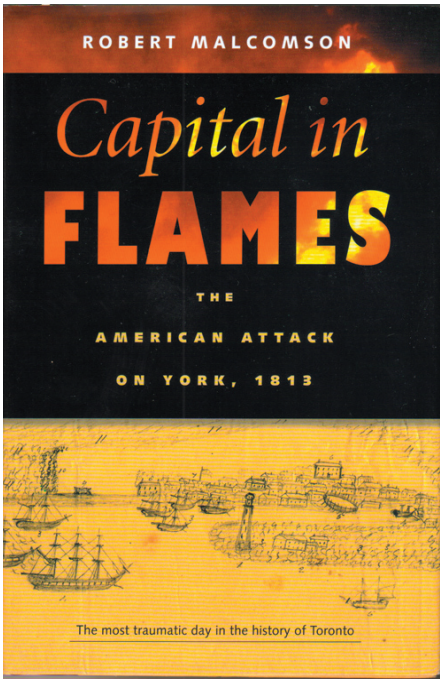
Evans settled for the coast of the Dutch plantation colony of Surinam in the northern section of South America and sailed within 45 miles of the coast. *Chesapeake* found nothing for the rest of February and proceeded north towards the West Indies in the beginning of March.

It was around this time that *Volunteer* arrived in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and gave the American public its first news about *Chesapeake*'s operations. American newspapers were more than happy to print anything about the Navy during the War of 1812, as it was often good news. In March 1813, editors devoted the majority of their "maritime intelligence" or "naval news" columns to the victories of the frigate *Constitution*. They left some room, however, for *Chesapeake* and were just as happy with the results. "A God Send!" wrote one editor. "Glorious News!" wrote another.

Chesapeake **continued on page 14**

Book Reviews

Capital in Flames: The American Attack on York, 1813
By Robert Malcomson
Reviewed by Mark Tunnicliffe



Wars are generally not good for cities – that goes without saying. Since the dawn of civilization, war has visited conflagration, pillage, starvation, disease, and more recently, aerial bombardment upon centers of human habitation. Canadian cities have generally been spared the worst of war but they have not been immune and they have sometimes added their own twist to the fates of cities at war – that of self detonation.

Robert Malcomson. *Capital in Flames: The American Attack on York, 1813*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2008. ISBN 1-89694-153-2. $42.95.

The Halifax explosion of 1917 is the most famous (and deadly) of such events but it was not the first. The town of York, now modern Toronto, had experienced a similar indignity just over one hundred years earlier during its brief occupation by American forces in 1813. Respected War of 1812 historian Robert Malcomson has made the planning, execution and consequences of one of the first successful combined arms operations conducted by U.S. forces, the landing at York on April 27, the subject of a meticulously researched and engagingly narrated study.

Malcomson's story, like so many tales of warfare, is one of contrasts on many levels. On the temporal level the successful invasion of York represented a change in fortune for American land forces; a reversal which occurred for much the same reasons that had resulted in earlier defeats at Detroit and Queenston Heights. This time, a coherent strategy, energetic preparation, coordinated action and resolute execution of the assault resulted in the victory that U.S. policy badly needed at this stage of the war.

On the other side, with the operational genius and energy of Major General Isaac Brock lost at Queenston Heights the year before, the British fell into a deadly morass of confused planning, an uncertain centre of gravity, dilatory preparation, and unenthusiastic leadership which guaranteed failure for the defence. In this light, Malcomson's work becomes almost a text book study on how to prepare for and execute an amphibious landing and, at the same time, how not to defend against it.

Other contrasts are revealed in that portion of the narrative in which Malcomson develops character – the character of the town of York at the turn of the 19th Century, the character of war in North America and, of course the character of the people involved. Drawing from their own letters and writings, casualty returns and roster sheets, the author tracks the lives, thoughts and fates of participants from the ranks to the leaders.

The latter form the focus of the story and Malcomson portrays them as the complex multi-dimensional beings that people generally are. Commodore Isaac Chauncey, the commander of the U.S. fleet of fourteen small ships, emerges as a competent and energetic planner capable of making just enough allowance for the failings of his subordinates while Brigadier General Zebulon Pike is portrayed as a zealous, strict, but respected death or glory leader (he achieved both, dying of wounds suffered during the explosion of the York grand magazine during the final assault on the town).

Malcomson even sympathetically treated Major General "Granny" Dearborn, who was accused of being dilatory and lethargic, as someone who was aware of his own limitations but knew how best to employ competent subordinates to overcome them. The main focus of Malcomson's character study however, is on the losing general, Sir Roger Shaffe. Shaffe, ironically the man who had retrieved the situation at Queenston Heights the year before, comes across as a man who did not care. He did not care about preparing to defend York, about managing his troops and reserves in the field, or even defending his legacy afterward.

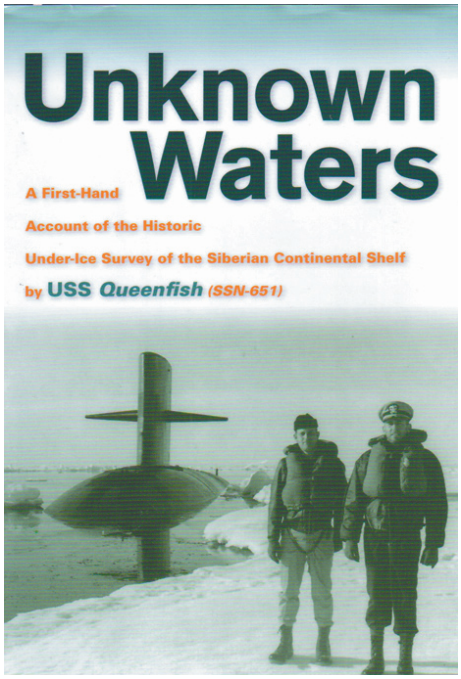
The book is meticulously researched and footnoted to a degree that gave even the author pause. Almost one third of the volume is dedicated to endnotes and extensive appendices covering weapons, monuments, orders of battle and a comprehensive listing of all soldiers and seamen present at the battle. Supplementing this are numerous illustrations, photographs, period art, and maps well sited throughout the book that very effectively bring the text to life and make following the narrative easy for the reader. Aside from being a readable history, Malcomson's work is an exhaustive reference for anyone interested in this aspect of the War of 1812 or of the early history of the City of Toronto.

York itself was not much damaged by the detonation of its main magazine - most of its indignities were the result of subsequent pillaging and fire but the town certainly did not escape the war unscathed. Wars are indeed unhealthy for cities – it is also unhealthy for its citizens to forget just what the consequences can be. For Toronto, Malcomson has provided the reminder.

Unknown Waters: A First-Hand Account of the Historic Under-Ice Survey of the Siberian Continental Shelf by USS Queenfish *(SSN-651)*

By Alfred S. McLaren

Reviewed by Matthew Eng



In 1970, the Cold War reached fever pitch. American forces in Vietnam faced a quagmire with no political or military resolution in sight. Social change in the 1960s sprouting from the war spilled over into the following decade. Behind these scenes of suspicion, the United States Navy engaged in its own Machiavellian blend of scientific and military surveillance.

Alfred S. McLaren. *Unknown Waters.* Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2008. ISBN 0-81731-602-7. $29.95.

Under cover of ice, Captain Alfred S. McLaren and USS *Queenfish* (SSN-651) traveled in secrecy to survey the uncharted vestige of the Soviet Union's "own private backyard," the Siberian Continental Shelf.

Unknown Waters details how the 4,640 ton *Queenfish* became the first nuclear attack submarine to successfully survey the Siberian Continental Shelf. Under tremendous emotional strain and bureaucratic stress from Washington, McLaren and his crew logged over 3,100 nautical miles in harsh under-ice conditions, specifically targeting the waters of the Laptev, East Siberian, and Chukchi seas.

McLaren had a good idea of the dangers facing the *Queenfish* when his crew departed for its two month mission in late August 1970. McLaren began his military career with undersea operations and was a disciple of Captain William R. Anderson, the commander of USS *Nautilus* (SSN-571) during her historic 1958 Arctic voyage. McLaren went to great lengths to follow the exact route of his predecessor. Indeed, a good portion of the book praises Captain Anderson as a mentor and pioneer of the "True Arctic submarine." Yet the accomplishments of the *Queenfish* twelve years later stand tribute to the emerging technological advances of the day.

After a brief discussion on the construction and organization of the *Queenfish*, McLaren spends a majority of the book explaining day to day operations under his command. Everything, from the measurement of ice thickness to the stocking of supplies, is mentioned. This may dismay some, as he consistently fills each chapter with jargon-rich detail only specialists in the field may enjoy or comprehend. McLaren thankfully includes over seventy illustrations, maps, and hydrographic charts to help readers place a visual marker on his well written account.

The main concern of *Unknown Waters* is the validity of the title itself. *Unknown Waters* implies that the subject waters are unknown, yet the author discusses the history of exploration and discovery into the shelf seas on several chapter-length occasions. The author does not help his case, using words like "largely undiscovered" and "for the most part uncharted" to describe previous endeavors into the region. These waters are by definition not unknown, but uncharted. *Uncharted Waters* might better suit the content and focus of this work.

Detail into the civilian crew and its association with the actual scientific surveys is another facet scantly mentioned. More emphasis is placed on the tracing of the trek of the *Nautilus* than the raw data uncovered from bathymetry and fathometer readings. In fact, McLaren does not give his description of *Queenfish*'s under-ice survey until the fourteenth chapter, over halfway through the book.

There is reason, however, to praise his eye for detail. The most intriguing aspect of *Unknown Waters* came when the *Queenfish* spotted a convoy of Russian ships during the survey. "I was able to see and identify all six ships as Soviet," McLaren recalled. McLaren's orders were to conduct the survey under intense secrecy, even when crossing into disputed Soviet sea boundaries.

One would assume that the survey would bring some solid information about the Arctic polar expanses to the surface. Remarkably, McLaren noted in his epilogue that it took an astounding thirty-four years before the *Queenfish* data was recorded and analyzed for navigation charts. If the expedition was so important to the military to send 117 sailors through pain of isolation, abandonment, and possible death, why did a full account of the events remain unrecorded for so many years? What were the military implications of the survey, if any? These types of questions remain.

Perhaps McLaren's next contribution will fill in these gaps. It is the hope of historians that more information on America's Cold War secretive missions will be brought to the forefront. Global warming, the opening of navigable shipping lanes, and the possibility of oil in the Arctic are still debates left open today.

Like the polar ice caps themselves, what information from this triumphant expedition will melt away, breathing new life and study for academics and laymen alike? As McLaren concludes in his final paragraph, "that is another story."

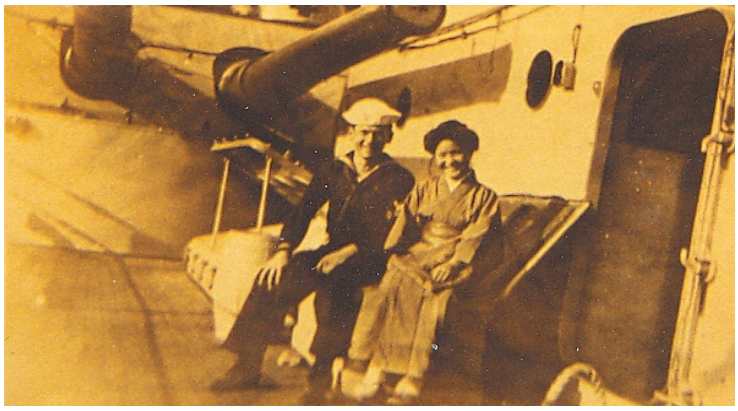
Greetings From the Fleet, Having a Great Time

In the museum's collection is a album of photos of the Great White Fleet that were taken by a sailor stationed on board USS *Louisiana* (BB-19).

Louisiana sailors look over items brought on board by a Japanese merchant.

Gateway to a recreation area set up by local Chinese officials in Xiamen.

The Museum Sage



The photographer only wrote to the left of the photo, "No comment necessary on this one."

The sailor witnessed an execution in the street while in Xiamen.

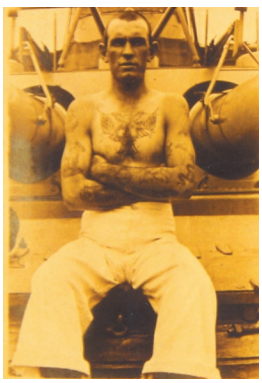
Some sailors were allowed to leave Yokohama and visit Tokyo. Even in Tokyo, American flags, with the correct number of stars, lined the streets.

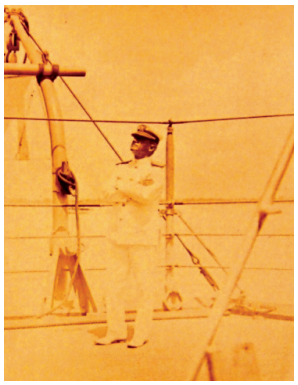
After they were done with gunnery practice in Magdalena Bay, the sailors of the Fleet went fishing. Situated along the coast of Baja California, Mexico, the Bay is one of the world's greatest fishing grounds.

A first class gunner's mate has *Louisiana*'s armory stocked full of .38 short revolvers, Krag rifles, and cutlasses.

Louisiana's company conducts the filthy, but critically necessary job of coaling the ship while in Hawaii.

When the Fleet crossed the Equator, no one was safe from *Neptunus Rex*'s wrath. Not even war hero Rear Admiral Richard Wainwright was safe.





Tough guys of the fleet-At left is one of *Louisiana*'s very tattooed sailors and at right is Rear Admiral Robley "Fighting Bob" Evans, first commanding officer of the Fleet.

***Chesapeake* continued from page 9**

One editor, however, went too far with his accolades before he checked his facts. The *Baltimore Patriot* published a story that *Chesapeake* not only captured several merchant ships, but defeated a British frigate, and captured the entire convoy. "GLORIOUS!" it wrote in all caps followed by the added headline, again in all caps, "BRITISH FRIGATE SUNK AND SEVERAL OF THE CONVOY CAPTURED." The article stated that *Chesapeake* not only fought the British frigate, but fought the frigate while fending off attacks from the merchant ships, retired from the battlefield twice, came back each time, and won the battle. The editor did add the disclaimer "if true" in small letters, just in case. Of course, the rumor was not true as *Chesapeake* never found the convoy.

As the ship sailed to the eastern side of the West Indies and Puerto Rico, she encountered a slew of merchant ships. Unfortunately, none of them could be considered lawful prizes as they were neutral or friendly ships.

The first was a Spanish schooner out Puerto Rico bound for Cadiz. The second was the American ship *Charleston & Liverpool Packet* bound for New York from Cadiz (which, unlike *Julia*, apparently did not have a British license). The third was the New York bound, British-flagged schooner *Thetis*. Her only cargo was American prisoners that just been released from British jails in the West Indies. Evans offered the prisoners the chance to enlist, and received seven new recruits. The fourth was the Portuguese-flagged brig *St. Antonio De Invego* bound for Wilmington, North Carolina. The fifth was the American-flagged ship *Virgin* that had her papers in orders. Evans chased a sixth ship for twenty-four hours, only to discover it was another Spanish-flagged schooner.

On March 19, watches spotted what they thought was a British sloop-of-war. The Americans gave chase, but lost sight of it due to darkness and foul weather. The rest of March was uneventful as the frigate headed for home. The frigate proceeded north towards Cape Cod and followed the Cape's curved contour where she came upon her fifth capture.

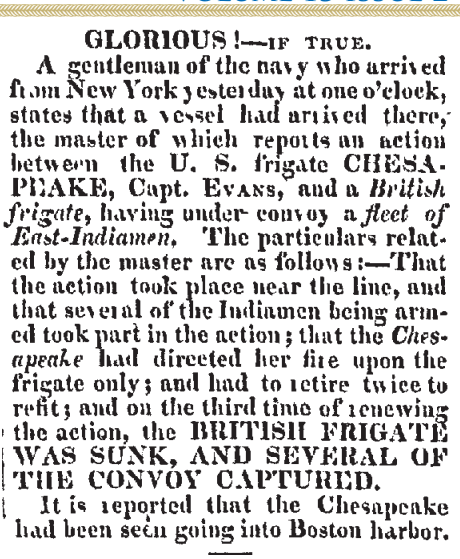
The British, like the Americans, authorized privateers against enemy shipping. One of the more successful British privateers was the brig *Sir John Sherbrooke*. Based out of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the brig captured eighteen American ships. One of her captures was the schooner *Valerius* and her cargo of timber, which *Sherbrooke*'s crew seized in a raid on Tarpaulin Cove in the southwest corner of Cape Cod. Eight of *Sherbrooke*'s sailors formed a prize crew and planned to take her back to Halifax for prize money. Unfortunately for them, they ran into *Chesapeake*.

The British prize crew made no attempt to escape upon seeing *Chesapeake*. The crew possibly mistook *Chesapeake* as a British frigate as there were many Royal Navy ships in the area. Just two days before being captured, a British squadron consisting of the ship-of-the-line HMS *Ramiles*, the frigate HMS *Nymph*, and a sloop-of-war intercepted *Valerius*. Additionally, Evans frequently had his ship fly the British flag, a common tactic among commerce raiders, to lure enemy merchant ships closer.

Evans took control of the schooner away from the British. However, he did not return the schooner to her former owners. In Evans' opinion, *Valerius* was a British prize and thus no longer an American ship.

"The U.S. Frigate Chesapeake, Capt. Samuel Evans, put to sea last Friday morning. May she emulate the glory of her sisters-disarm the LEOPARDS of Britain or frighten them to their dens!"

-An 1812 newspaper editor's hope that *Chesapeake* would avenge her 1807 humiliation caused by HMS *Leopard*



GLORIOUS!—IF TRUE.

A gentleman of the navy who arrived from New York yesterday at one o'clock, states that a vessel had arrived there, the master of which reports an action between the U. S. frigate CHESAPEAKE, Capt. EVANS, and a *British frigate*, having under convoy a *fleet of East-Indiamen*. The particulars related by the master are as follows:—That the action took place near the line, and that several of the Indiamen being armed took part in the action; that the *Chesapeake* had directed her fire upon the frigate only; and had to retire twice to refit; and on the third time of renewing the action, the BRITISH FRIGATE WAS SUNK, AND SEVERAL OF THE CONVOY CAPTURED.

It is reported that the Chesapeake had been seen going into Boston harbor.

American newspapers embraced the U.S. Navy's success against the British during the War of 1812 with reckless abandonment. They even printed stories that were merely rumors like this one of Chesapeake*'s cruise in the Atlantic. (March 31, 1813,* Baltimore Patriot*)*

By the first week of April, the frigate was almost home. She encountered two more ships. The frigate spotted and captured the British-flagged schooner *Ellen*. Few details are known about this capture, except that she was carrying unspecified "fancy goods," as one source labeled it, in the cargo hold. The second ship was the American merchant vessel *Jane* out of Portland, Maine en route to the French island of Saint Barthélemy. Evans let her go without incident.

As the ship sailed the Narrows, the entrance to Boston Harbor, a "heavy flaw," or a short-lived gust of wind, hit the ship snapping the main mast in four places and sending it over the side. Five sailors were working on top of the mast when the gust hit them and blew them overboard. Evans reported that three were killed and two were seriously injured.

Chesapeake arrived home in Boston on April 10, 1813. She passed near the frigate *Congress*, which prompted hearty cheers from *Congress*' company. The ship had been at sea for 115 days. Evans immediately penned a report to Decatur and the new Secretary of the Navy, William Jones, on the state of the vessel. He reported that the ship's company had suffered a few casualties, seven from illness and three from the accident, but as a whole, the ship's company was in very good condition and spirits.

The same could not be said of the ship herself. Evans reported to them about the makeshift main mast breaking into pieces and

***Chesapeake* continued on page 15**

When the owner of the American-flagged brig Julia *sued the Navy for seizing his ship, Richard Rush, the 8th Attorney General of the United States, came to the Navy's defense. (U.S. Department of Justice image)*

***Chesapeake* continued from page 14**

that the mizzen mast needed to be replaced as well. Evans also asked to be relieved of command. The eye injury he suffered during the Battle of Derne was getting worse and asked for a shore assignment.

Secretary Jones responded by praising Evans for the ship's safe return, given the number of British warships patrolling in American waters. But, unlike the previous Secretary, Jones was a no nonsense administrator and could be rather cold in his tone. "Your cruise has been less than brilliant than your zealous efforts merited. [However,] it has not been ineffectual," the Secretary wrote to Evans. He then scolded the captain for excessive spending on the wardroom. In the end, the Secretary agreed to the transfer request and assigned Evans to be the commandant of the New York Navy Yard to oversee the construction of new ships. In his place, Jones ordered Captain James Lawrence to take over and to get *Chesapeake* ready for sea as soon as possible.

Though the frigate was getting ready for what would be her final cruise, there was still the issue of her prizes and prize money. One of the principal reasons cited for *Chesapeake*'s defeat by HMS *Shannon* was the fact many of *Chesapeake*'s sailors refused to sail with Lawrence until they were paid their due prize money from the first cruise. Lawrence ended up paying them out of his pocket. If he had not, the sailors could have been waiting a long time as it took months, if not years, to finalize prize money awards.

Volunteer and *Liverpool Hero* were the two big captures of the cruise and among the easiest to process. Prize courts marked both of them as lawful prizes as they both were obviously British ships *Liverpool Hero*'s cargo of salt and various manufactured goods sold for $22,675. The ship *Volunteer* sold for only $10,000, but the real payoff was her cargo. Her cargo of 80 tons of pig iron and copper fetched $185,000, making her one of the most profitable captures by a U.S. Naval warship in history (though one source placed her value at an astronomical $700,000).

The courts also had no issues with the fifth and sixth captures, the schooners *Valeria* and *Ellen*. *Ellen* and her cargo of "fancy goods" netted $17,500 at auction. It is not known how much *Valeria* sold for but her cargo of wood would not have been worth too much. Her estimated sale for the ship and cargo would be about $500.

Earl Percy, the fourth ship seized, never made it back to port. The brig, her prize crew, and prisoners headed north for New York City and hugged the southern coastline of Long Island in an attempt to evade British warships blockading the City. Unfortunately, the ship was hit by a severe rain squall that drove the prize ship aground, caused the ship's main mast to break off, and threatened to break the hull in two.

Fortunately for *Earl Percy*'s prize crew and captive company, help was nearby. A New York-bound American flagged merchant ship spotted the brig's distress signal. The vessel was coming from Great Britain and had been chartered by the U.S. Government to bring American prisoners home from a British prisoner exchange. Her company successfully rescued all *Earl Percy*'s crew and prisoners. *Percy*'s cargo of salt was washed away, which was no great financial loss.

For the prisoners of war, they were happy just to be alive. Three of them even went to the trouble placing an ad in a New York City newspaper to express their thanks (see the ad on page 16).

The final ship to be processed was the brig *Julia* and her disposition was problematic. From a financial view, *Julia* had almost no value. Her cargo, like *Earl Percy*'s, was salt. A letter to Congress from a clerk at the Court of Claims stated that *Julia*'s cargo was only worth about $500 and the ship apparently was in such bad shape that she was worthless.

Commodore Stephen Decatur served as Evans' superior officer and headed up the squadron of ships (of which Chesapeake *was a member) based out of Boston at the beginning of the war. As a result, Decatur, according to the law and the courts, received a share of* Chesapeake*'s prize money. (Naval Historical image of a painting by V. Zveg)*

Nonetheless, Robert Ewell, *Julia*'s owner, was not happy about his ship being taken away from him. Upon hearing about *Julia* being captured by *Chesapeake*, he sued the Navy in Boston general district court for illegally seizing his ship and demanded monetary damages. Unfortunately for Ewell, the judge ruled against him. He appealed to the circuit court and got the same result. Determined that he was wronged, Ewell appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court setting up the case *The Brig Julia v. United States*.

Ewell's attorney argued that *Julia* was trading with Portugal, a neutral nation, and not with Great Britain. He warned that a judgment against his client would severely hinder the lucrative grain trade the United States had with Spain and Portugal.

The 8th Attorney General of the United States Richard Rush argued on behalf of Evans and the Navy. Rush argued, that to him, it was obvious that Ewell was trading with the enemy. He stated that the goods sold in Lisbon were solely meant to feed the British Army in Spain. Furthermore, *Chesapeake*'s boarding team found three different letters from senior British naval officers and diplomats endorsing *Julia*'s right to trade with them. Rush all but charged Ewell with treason when he argued that "the transaction is the most obnoxious

***Chesapeake* continued on page 16**

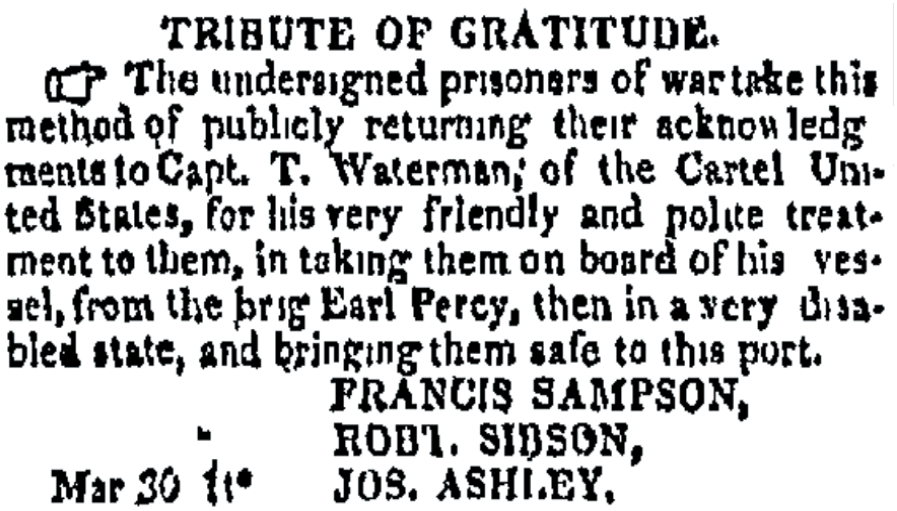
***Chesapeake* continued from page 15**

of its class."

The justices of the Supreme Court agreed with the attorney general. They ruled that once an American merchant purchased a British license and traded with British goods no matter where they were purchased, he was operating in an illegal trade during a time of war. Thus, they ruled, that his ship and goods were subject to seizure by agents of the U.S. Government. Additionally, the justices, many of whom were veterans of the American Revolution, were particularly disturbed and angered by the fact that Ewell bought the license from a British diplomat on American soil after the United States had declared a state of war with the British.

A second case concerning *Chesapeake*'s prize money came a little later. This case concerned how much prize money Decatur, who was Evans' superior officer and squadron commodore, deserved, if any at all. The U.S. Navy followed a similar tradition set down by the Royal Navy that a squadron flag officer was entitled to a portion of the prize money earned by ships under his command.

However, some within the Navy argued Decatur deserved nothing as all he did was give Evans broad instructions about where *Chesapeake* should operate. Complicating the issue further was the fact that Decatur was not actively conducting combat operations as his ship, the frigate *United States*, was stuck in New London due to the British blockade. Thus according to some, Decatur abandoned his duties as the squadron flag officer. Decatur sued the Naval agent in charge of distributing prize money and won. In a case called *Decatur v. Chew*, the courts believed that the law on prize money was clear: a flag officer, no matter how little he participated, was always entitled to his 5%, even if he gave the most broad directions to his ships.



TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE.

☞ The undersigned prisoners of war take this method of publicly returning their acknowledgments to Capt. T. Waterman, of the Cartel United States, for his very friendly and polite treatment to them, in taking them on board of his vessel, from the brig Earl Percy, then in a very disabled state, and bringing them safe to this port.

FRANCIS SAMPSON,
ROBT. SIDSON,
JOS. ASHLEY.

Mar 30 1t*

What would you do if your ship was seized only two to three days away from completing its journey, sent a thousand miles in the opposite direction, and then you were almost killed when your vessel was wrecked? If you are like these gentlemen from the British brig Early Percy*, captured by* Chesapeake *on February 5, 1813, you thank your captors for a safe arrival by placing a classified ad in a newspaper. (March 31, 1813,* National Advocate *(New York City))*

Chesapeake total damages against British shipping was $235,675. By law, half of that went to the U.S. Treasury to fund the disabled sailors' pension fund and half went to the company. For Evans, he received 10% of the prize as captain of the ship. Thus, the 115 days at sea aboard the "unlucky" *Chesapeake* should have netted him $11,783.35. To put that in perspective, as a captain he earned a little over $1,000 a year in wages. This amount placed him eighth overall on the most money earned during the War of 1812. The other seven men include Decatur, Thomas Macdonough, John Rodgers, Charles Stewart, Isaac Chauncey, Lewis Warrington, and William Bainbridge.

Each of *Chesapeake*'s junior commissioned officers were slated to get 10% of the total purse divided among the seven officers or $1,683. The midshipmen and limited duty officers (such as the surgeons) received 10% of the purse divided among nine of them or about $1,329. The petty officers got 17.5% divided among thirty-nine or about $529. The able seamen received 12.5% divided among thirty or about $409 each. The rest of the company received 35% of the total purse divided among 309 or about $133 each. As for the commodore, Decatur received over $5,800.

Unfortunately for many of Evans' junior officers and company, they did not live to see any of their money as many of them were killed in the action with *Shannon*. Among the officers killed were Lieutenants Page, Ludlow, and White. Lieutenant Budd was severely injured but lived. Additionally, there were delays in getting the money distributed. According to one report to Congress, money from the sale of two of the captures was still sitting in the vaults of Boston's State Bank as late as December 1815.

Regardless, from a financial stand point, the cruise was very successful. The cruise was one bright spot for *Chesapeake* in a career that we have all done our best to forget.

In Our Next Issue...

-Richmond's Contribution to the Steel Navy

-The Fleet Heads to the Indian Ocean and Egypt

-Book Reviews: *Agents of Innovation: The General Board and the Design of the Fleet That Defeated the Japanese Navy* and *Intrepid: The Epic Story of America's Most Legendary Warship*