

A CONTINENTAL ARMY SERIES MISCELLANY

The following are some briefer-than-usual and more casual articles and pieces which appeared among some of the postings at our online "Lee's Legion" page, and that some may find of interest and sometimes amusement. A few of these have been slightly revised or re-edited for purposes of this collected miscellany; which it is possible I may expand on and add to as time goes on.

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

*"In this wild wood will I range,  
Listen, listen, dear,  
Nor sigh for towns so fine, to change,  
This forest, forest drear:*

*"Toil and danger I'll despise,  
Never, never weary,  
And ye while love is in thine eyes,  
Ever, ever cheery!*

*"Ah! what to me were cities gay,  
Listen, listen, dear,  
If from me thou wert away,  
Alas! Alas! how drear,  
O, still o'er sea, o'er land I'll rove,  
Never, never weary,  
And follow on where leads my love,  
Ever, ever cheery!"*

~ "Ever, Ever Cheery!" from "The Indian Princess" (1808), and which concerns the story of Pocahontas and John Smith.

It has been an interest of mine, for a long time now, to explore and sift through early American culture from about 1600 to 1850, and in all its various facets, particularly with a mind toward bringing to light works and items that are relatively rare or are known only to a few. Well, it was my good fortune not long ago to discover a joint recording, originally released in 1978, which contains two very early American ballad operas or what we today refer to as musicals, namely, "John Bray: The Indian Princess (1808); Raynor Taylor: The Ethiop (1814)" by the Federal Music Society Opera.

The first of the two musicals, "The Indian Princess" (1808), is based on a text by James Nelson Barker with music by John Bray (1782-1822), and recreates the story of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith. The second, "The Ethiop," is by William Dimond with score by Raynor Taylor (1747-1825), and concerns intrigue and goings on at the court of Haroun Al-Raschid. With a few very notable exceptions, like William Billings, Francis Hopkinson, Andrew Law, most formal composers of burgeoning America were transplanted Europeans, like Bray and Taylor; who sang liberty and the new nation, while bringing the latest theater and church fashions from home; so that in this music we sometimes hear echoing strains of such as Handel, Mozart and Beethoven. Yet most musicals such as were produced in that day were unlike opera in that, as the liner notes<sup>1</sup> explain, "upper-caste characters have speaking roles exclusively. Only the comic characters sing arias. Music in the main plot is assigned to dignified choruses or instrumental interludes." The combined result of these factors and ingredients listening to Bray and Taylor's works now is charming and novel; made all the more so by imagining them being performed in this country in the youthful days of the Republic. Of the two, I like Bray's work better, but for antiquaries and adventurous seekers of the unusual both are definitely worth a listen -- though do follow the liner notes so that you have a more clear idea of what is taking place and being sung. Other related albums, depending on how interested you might be in early American music, are (and not counting fife and drum music recordings which I have not included):

---

<sup>1</sup> Available at the New World records website: [http://www.newworldrecords.org/liner\\_notes.cgi?rm=list&imprint=NWR](http://www.newworldrecords.org/liner_notes.cgi?rm=list&imprint=NWR)

- “Early American Roots” (Maggie’s Music) by Hesperus
- “America Sings, Volume I: The Founding Years” (Vox)
- “The Flowering of Vocal Music in America: 1767-1823” (New World Records)
- “Music of the Federal Era” (New World Records)
- “George Washington: Music for the First President” by David & Ginger Hildebrand
- “The Enlightenment in the New World: American Harpsichord music in the XVIII Century” (Erato) by Olivier Baumont
- “The 18th Century American Overture” (Naxos) Sinfonia Finlandia Jyväskylä with Patrick Gallois
- “Ballads of the American Revolution: 1767-1781” (Folkways) by Wallace House
- “Ballads of the War of 1812: 1791-1836” (Folkways) by Wallace House

Also worth our noting here, on YouTube is a recording<sup>2</sup> by Noel Lester of the Rondo from “The Siege of Tripoli, An Historical Grand Sonata”, Op. 4 (1804) by Benjamin Carr (1768-1831), and for which see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdQyNOQ9ne8>

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~



“Millions for Defense, but not one cent for tribute!”

South Carolina’s Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (1746–1825) in 1773 painted by Philadelphia born Henry Benbridge (1744–1812). It is interesting to observe in this portrait one example of how several of the (what-turned-out to be) Continental army’s uniforms antedated the war (blue coat with red facings were a common colonial uniform in the French and Indian War); with Pickney’s attire shown here being something that later became quite standard for American army officers both north and south. Was the blue with red facings originally the choice of the British, or did the several colonies either by serendipity or else deliberate devise introduce such uniformity to their soldiers’ appearance? If the very latter, then here we perhaps have proof once more that the Revolution could be said to have been initiated years before it was (formally) begun.

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

---

<sup>2</sup> Also to be found on “Piano Portraits from Nineteenth-Century America” (1995) from Centaur Records.



Some of you may, like myself, have the blessing of having grown up somewhere in about the mid 50's to mid 60's period; when history books for children were at their height -- both in terms of quality and quantity. And which of us who knew them in our own "historical" childhood can forget authors such as Burke Davis, Bruce Lancaster, Genevieve Foster, John Bakeless, Joseph B. Mitchell, Bruce Bliven Jr., or Daniel J. Boorstin? Or publications like the "American Heritage Junior Library;" "Horizon-Caravel Books;" "The Childhood of Famous Americans" (by Bobbs-Merrill); the Landmark Books; the "Step-Up Books" (such as *Meet George Washington...*, et al.); or the wonderfully illuminated volumes of Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire -- to name just some? My own interest in the Revolutionary War in the South, as a matter of fact, started with *Guns Over The Carolinas* (1967) by Ralph Edgar Bailey. In respectful tribute and reminder then of such works, authors, and their pictorial artists, posted here are some illustrations by Victor Mays for Bruce Lancaster's *Ticonderoga: the Story of a Fort* (1959).

\*\*\*



*The oldest military monument in the United States? THAT would be the Tripoli monument first erected in Washington, D.C. in 1806, at the instigation of Capt. David Porter and others, and dedicated to naval officers who fell in the war with Tripoli. The following description, and attached illustration, comes from Benson J. Lossing's Field Book of the War of 1812 (1868) p. 124n.*

"The picture represents the monument as it appeared when first erected. It is of white marble, and with its present pedestal (not seen in the engraving) is about forty feet in height. It was mutilated when the navy yard at Washington was burned in 1814. It was afterward repaired, and removed to the west front of the Capitol in Washington, where it was placed upon a spacious brown-stone base in an oval reservoir of water. The monument, with this base, was removed to Annapolis, in Maryland, in 1860, and set up there in the grounds of the Naval Academy. In consequence of the Great Rebellion, in 1861, that academy was removed to Newport, Rhode Island. The monument was left. 'It is situated,' wrote Mr. William Yorke

Atlee to the author in January, 1862, ‘on a hill in the northwestern portion of the naval school grounds. It is in a state of good preservation, and adds not a little to the beauty of the grounds.’

“The shaft is surmounted by the American eagle, bearing the shield. On its sides the representations of the bows of vessels are seen projecting, and by its pedestal is an allegorical figure of Fame in the attitude of alighting, with a coronal of leaves in one hand and a pen in the other. The form of the pedestal has been altered. On one side of the base, in relief, is a view of Tripoli and the American squadron; on the other the names of the heroes in whose memory the monument was erected. On three sides of the base are statues representing Mercury (Commerce), History, and America, the latter in the form of an Indian girl with a feather head-dress, half nude, and two children near. On the brown sandstone sub-base on which this monument now stands are the following inscriptions, upon three sides:

“1. ‘Erected to the memory of Captain Richard Somers, Lieutenants James Caldwell, James Decatur, Henry Wadsworth, Joseph Israel, and John Dorsey, who fell in the different attacks made on the city of Tripoli in the year of our Lord 1804, and in the twenty-eighth year of the independence of the United States.’

“2. ‘The love of country inspired them. Fame has crowned their deeds. History records the event. The Children of Columbia admire, and Commerce laments their fall.’

“3. ‘As a small tribute of respect to their memory, and admiration of their valor, so worthy of imitation, their brother officers have erected this monument.’”

\*\*\*



Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton (1757-1854), daughter of Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler and wife of Col. Alexander Hamilton, by Ralph Earl (1751-1801). To the right, a rare daguerreotype of Dolley Madison; taken later in life (Courtesy Maine Historical Society.)

Within just these past few days, I finished reading BOTH *Founding Mothers* and *Ladies of Liberty* by Cokie Roberts, and which are much welcome in helping to increase our awareness and fill gaps in our knowledge of the women who help found this country, circa 1750 to about 1830. Although the two books, particularly the second, could have easily been trimmed down in size a bit to make them more manageable reading, Ms. Roberts otherwise does an altogether wise and laudable job in bringing together and discussing just about every, if not quite all, the great women patriots of both the Revolution and the founding of the Republic -- subjects we, especially us male historical enthusiasts, are apt to brush over too lightly. To examine and or praise these women is not a mere exercise in fashionable feminism or an appeal to belated male impartiality; for frequently these founding mothers contributed to the various national struggles in ways that were truly decisive and momentous, and to be else ignorant of them and what they did leaves us grievously lacking in our knowledge of those times.

Of the ladies covered, Dolley Madison is one we are all familiar with, but whom probably relatively few know in detail what an unusually significant role she played in helping to preserve and bring together a financially strained nation divided by politics and beset by military invasion; with Roberts’ coverage of the burning of Washington on Aug. 24th, 1814 by no means the least engaging portion of her chronicle. Just prior to that conflagration, Mrs. Madison wrote to her sister saying of her husband “‘he desires I should be ready at moment’s warning...I am accordingly ready; I have pressed as many Cabinet

papers into trunks as to fill one carriage; our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to procure wagons for its transportation. I am determined not to go until I see Mr. Madison safe, and he can accompany me, as I hear of much hostility toward him. Disaffection stalks around us. My friends and acquaintances are all gone; even Col. C. with his hundred men, who were stationed as a guard in the enclosure.' The men assigned to protect her had abandoned her. Her servant, 'French John,' inherited from Elizabeth Merry [wife of the former British ambassador to the U.S.], 'offers to spike the cannon at the gate, and to lay a train of powder which would blow up the British, should they enter the [White] house. To the last proposition I positively object, without being able, however, to make him understand why all advantages in war may not be taken.'" [*Ladies of Liberty* pp 269-270.]

~\*\*\*~

"General Clinton, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in America, while New York was in possession of the English, lived at the corner of Broadway and what is now called Battery-Place. At that time the water of the Hudson washed the west end of the yard or garden attached to that house, where there was a summer-house in which Clinton was in the habit of taking a nap in the afternoon. The famous Light-horse Lee, hearing of this habit, formed a plan to cross the Hudson to the foot of the garden at low tide, land, and seize the General while asleep and carry him off prisoner. When all was arranged, Lee informed General Washington of his purpose. Washington consulted Hamilton, who promptly advised the General to forbid it; 'for,' said he, 'should Clinton be made a prisoner it would be our misfortune, since the British Government could not find another commander so incompetent to send in his place.'" ~ *Reminiscences of James Hamilton* (1869), pp. 10-11.

Alexander Hamilton was cut down in the prime of life; thus leaving it perhaps an intriguing mystery as to how things might have turned out for the country had he lived (Imagine, for instance, if he'd survived to witness the War of 1812.) Yet, in any event, he was singularly blessed in his family who emphatically made it their business to loyally honor and cherish his memory. Two of his sons wrote extensively about him. John Church Hamilton (1792-1882) in 1840 published *The Life of Alexander Hamilton*; while in 1869, James Alexander Hamilton (1788-1878) came out with his *Reminiscences of James Hamilton*. Although the latter book is a memoir about himself and his own times as much as anything else, major portions of it are taken up with sketches and anecdotes about his father; including the latter's various contests and confrontations with Thomas Jefferson. Among other interesting details, we learn that Alexander Hamilton (the son maintains; as did his mother Elizabeth Schuyler) wrote Washington's Farewell Address.<sup>3</sup>

Yet a third book deserving of notice here is grandson Allan McLane Hamilton's (1848-1919) *The Intimate life of Alexander Hamilton*. On pages 116-117, he reproduces what some will find a cute vignette about how decades after the scandalous Reynolds affair (in which, as you may recall, Alexander Hamilton paid money in an effort to conceal a private liaison he'd had with another's wife), his wife stalwartly continued to stand up for him -- even if her seeming antagonist in this, James Monroe, was probably in the right in his facts and in telling the truth -- as follows:

"Mrs. Hamilton could never forget the behavior of Monroe when he, with Muhlenberg and Venables, accused Hamilton of financial irregularities at the time of the Reynolds incident. Many years afterward, when they were both aged people, Monroe visited her and an interview occurred which was witnessed by a nephew, who was then a lad of fifteen. 'I had,' he says, 'been sent to call upon my Aunt Hamilton one afternoon. I found her in her garden and was there with her talking, when her maid servant came from the house with a card. It was the card of James Monroe. She read the name, and stood holding the card, much perturbed. Her voice sank, and she spoke very low, as she always did when she was angry. 'What has that man come to see me for?' escaped from her. 'Why, Aunt Hamilton,' said I, 'don't you know,

---

<sup>3</sup> *Reminiscences of James Hamilton* pp. 24-34. As similarities have been pointed out between Washington's Farewell address of 1783 (also known as "Circular to the States") with the Presidential Farewell of 1796, it may be reasonable to conclude that Hamilton at least had a hand in -- if he did not write entire -- the 1783 address as well. See *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, Vol. One: 1590-1820 (1994), Bercovitch editor, pp. 384-385. Also, curiously and coincidentally enough, passing mention is made in the James Hamilton's memoir to the father of John C. Spencer on p. 11, and, in addition, a description is given of the father of Alexander Slidell Mackenzie on p. 16; both paternal relations to the two principal participants in the Somers Mutiny Affair of 1842.

it's Mr. Monroe, and he's been President, and he is visiting here now in the neighborhood, and has been very much made of, and invited everywhere, and so -- I suppose he has come to call and pay his respects to you.' After a moment's 'I will see him,' she said. 'The maid went back to the house, my aunt followed, walking rapidly, I after her. As she entered the parlor Monroe rose. She stood in the middle of the room facing him. She did not ask him to sit down. He bowed, and addressing her formally, made her rather a set speech -- that it was many years since they had met, that the lapse of time brought its softening influences, that they both were nearing the grave, when past differences could be forgiven and forgotten -- in short, from his point of view, a very nice, conciliatory, well-turned little speech. She answered, still standing, and looking at him, 'Mr. Monroe, if you have come to tell me that you repent, that you are sorry, very sorry, for the misrepresentations and the slanders, and the stories you circulated against my dear husband, if you have come to say this, I understand it. But, otherwise, no lapse of time, no nearness to the grave, makes any difference.' She stopped speaking, Monroe turned, took up his hat and left the room.'"

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

Czar Paul the 1st of Russia was one of the most intriguing what-ifs of history. He led the Second League of Armed Neutrality (of Baltic states) against British interference with neutral trade as part of the latter's war on Bonaparte (The neutral U.S. you will recall later found itself in a similar maritime-trade predicament with Britain.) He was assassinated by a cabal led, among others, by Gen. Bennigsen (originally from Hannover, and of later Napoleonic Wars fame), and which seated Paul's son Alexander I on the throne. (Why Alexander did not later execute Bennigsen for murdering his father is, to me at any rate, a mystery.) The result of Paul's death was the end of the Second League, and a major set-back to Napoleon contra the British; with Alexander, of course, ultimately becoming one of Napoleon's bitterest foes. Had Paul lived therefore, the Napoleonic era, including its effect on the United States (as in the Embargo of 1808 and War of 1812), might well have turned out drastically different than it did.

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

One of the few we think of as a hero of the Napoleonic Wars was Pope Pius VII, and yet Emperor Napoleon, attempting to play the role of Charlemagne, could have counted him among his most formidable political adversaries; as Pius was indomitable in standing up to efforts to bring the Catholic Church in France and Italy under Napoleon's iron control. Did you know, for example, that in 1809 Napoleon was excommunicated? When he learned of it, the Emperor responded "So the pope has aimed an excommunication against me. No more half measures; he is a raving lunatic who must be confined. Have Cardinal Pacca and other adherents of the pope arrested." And indeed for this and other "offenses," he placed the Pope under arrest; at one point forcing him as prisoner to live in France. It was during Pius VII's pontificate also that new Catholic dioceses were inaugurated in the United, including at Richmond, VA. and Cincinnati, OH; with the Roman Catholic Church expanding so rapidly in the U.S. in the early part of the 19th century that Catholics gradually became a major voting block,<sup>4</sup> with this in some instances leading to anti-Catholic sentiments and proponents (which ironically included both the otherwise brilliant Samuel F.B. Morse AND the "Know Nothing Party") of conspiracy theories by some American Protestants, particularly in New England. For more on these topics, see the *Catholic Encyclopedia* online at:

RE: Napoleon

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10687a.htm>

RE: Pius VII

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12132a.htm>

It is interesting to note further that it was Napoleon who (although indirectly following the lead of Frederick the Great) actually first brought about the demise and formal end of the Holy Roman Empire, and less so Germany itself; as many might infer.

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

⁴ For a most informative history, examination, and discussion of the rise of the Roman Catholic church in the United States, see among the various and extensive writings of John England (1786-1842), Bishop of Charleston, S.C. from 1820-1842.

George Fisher's (1719?-1778) The Instructor, a do-it-yourself guide to almost everything and originally published in London in 1735, was one of the most successful best sellers of its time and subsequently, and came out in many editions lasting well into the early part of the 19th century. There was even an American version printed in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin in 1748; the title page (to give you some idea of the book's character) reads as follows:

“THE AMERICAN INSTRUCTOR:
OR, YOUNG MAN’S BEST COMPANION.
CONTAINING, SPELLING, READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETICK, IN AN EASIER WAY
THAN ANY YET PUBLISHED; AND HOW TO QUALIFY ANY PERSON FOR BUSINESS,
WITHOUT THE HELP OF A MASTER. INSTRUCTIONS TO WRITE VARIETY OF HANDS, WITH
COPIES BOTH IN PROSE AND VERSE. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS ON BUSINESS OR FRIEND-
SHIP. FORMS OF INDENTURES, BONDS, BILLS OF SALE, RECEIPTS, WILLS, LEASES,
RELEASES, &C. ALSO MERCHANTS ACCOUNTS, AND AS SHORT AND EASY METHOD OF
SHOP AND BOOK-KEEPING; WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL AMERICAN COLONIES.
TOGETHER WITH THE CARPENTER’S PLAIN AND EXACT RULE: SHEWING HOW TO
MEASURE CARPENTERS, JOYNERS, SAWYERS. BRICKLAYERS, PLAISTERERS, PLUMBERS,
MASONS, GLASIERS, AND PAINTERS WORK. HOW TO UNDERTAKE ROCK WORK, AND AT
WHAT PRICE; THE RATES OF EACH COMMODITY, AND THE COMMON WAGES OF
JOURNEYMEN; WITH GUNTER’S LINE; AND COGGESHAL’S DESCRIPTION OF THE SLIDING-
RULE. LIKEWISE THE PRACTICAL GAUGER MADE EASY; THE ART OF DIALLING, AND HOW
TO ERECT AND FIX ANY DIAL; WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR DYING, COLOURING, AND
MAKING COLOURS. TO WHICH IS ADDED, THE POOR PLANTERS PHYSICIAN: WITH
INSTRUCTIONS FOR MARKING ON LINNEN; HOW TO PICKLE AND PRESERVE; TO MAKE
DIVERS SORTS OF WINES; AND MANY EXCELLENT PLAISTERS, AND MEDICINES,
NECESSARY IN ALL FAMILIES. AND ALSO PRUDENT ADVICE TO YOUNG TRADESMEN AND
DEALERS. THE WHOLE BETTER ADAPTED TO THESE AMERICAN COLONIES, THAN ANY
OTHER BOOK OF THE LIKE KIND. BY GEORGE FISHER, ACCOUNTANT.”

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

Having just finished the recently come out Revolutionary War biography of Henry Lee by Michael Cecere, *Wedded to My Sword*, and Charles Royster’s much older, *Light Horse Harry Lee* (1981), one is given to conclude that there is still much remaining that we don’t know or understand about the whys and wherefores of Lee’s life, and personally I’m strongly inclined to suspect and surmise that Lee in his post war life was a haunted (including duped) man -- literally. Perhaps devils were getting their revenge, as seems to me to very possibly have been the case with many Revolutionary War veterans; who either died an early and strange death, or else like Lee were beset with an inordinate amount of troubles. One legend has it that Lee’s wife, Anne Carter, was at one time mistakenly and for a brief time buried alive.<sup>5</sup>

Cecere’s book is in many ways excellent in filling in numerous gaps in Lee’s war record; even so it is far from being as thorough and complete as one might wish. But at least he has advanced much further than anyone else who has undertook the topic, and for this we can be mightily grateful. Royster’s study is fascinating for attempting to analyze more deeply what kind of man Lee was, and yet his conclusions often seem more founded on conjecture than a clear basis in fact. (For one, I don’t think Lee’s memoirs are nearly so damning of Jefferson as claimed; rather, Lee mostly blames Virginia for having lost enthusiasm for the war and, as a result, finding itself unprepared.) And again, I suspect there is more to Lee’s story than either Royster or anyone else is quite yet in a position to know.

---

<sup>5</sup> This reported incident, some literary scholars aver, influenced the writing of Poe’s “The Premature Burial.” Makes one wonder further if perhaps “Fall of the House of Usher” was not, at last in part, based on Henry Lee’s IV’s (i.e., Gen. Henry Lee’s son and step-brother of Robert E., Lee) highly scandalous and publicized affair with his sister-in-law; bearing in mind that the Lee family, long by that time, were seen as on the way out (i.e., were “fallen”) as a major influence in Virginia. (You will possibly recall that Roderick Usher, it is implied, is improperly in love with his sister, and this “sin” and or related sins helps to bring about the house’s, or family’s, demise.) For more, see *The Lees of Virginia: Seven Generations of an American Family* (1990) by Paul C. Nagel; and also of interest, Thomas Jefferson, 4 March 1823, to William Johnson: “the family of enemies, whose buzz you apprehend, are now nothing. you may learn this at Washington; and their military relation has long ago had the full-voiced condemnation of his own state. do not fear therefore these insects. what you write will be far above their grovelling sphere.” Naturally, we must be cautious and avoid jumping to conclusions, yet this said and as we frequently come to learn, truth is sometimes stranger than fiction.

The following is a link to an overtly political site, but which provides an account and perspective of Lee evidently derived largely from Roytser. While it is informative and well written, I would dispute the author's conclusion in the last sentence that Lee trusted too much in the state, and hence became victim of the Baltimore mob in 1812. Really, it was a piece of foolishness for Lee to have attempted to fight mob violence with private violence, and it was this led to his being beat up -- not excessive reliance on the state (in this case, the city of Baltimore.)

<http://www.thefreemanonline.org/features/lees-legend-of-lessons/>

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

The following passages come from Edward Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. I, ch. 7; first published in that ANNO MIRABILIS ~ 1776. Gibbon was one far from supportive of the revolting colonists,⁶ and here we read his most edifying defense of the monarchical form of government; and which follows with a lead in into the career beginnings of Emperor Maximinus Thrax (c. 173 – 238 A.D.)

“Of the various forms of government which have prevailed in the world, an hereditary monarchy seems to present the fairest scope for ridicule. Is it possible to relate without an indignant smile, that, on the father's decease, the property of a nation, like that of a drove of oxen, descends to his infant son, as yet unknown to mankind and to himself; and that the bravest warriors and the wisest statesmen, relinquishing their natural right to empire, approach the royal cradle with bended knees and protestations of inviolable fidelity? Satire and declamation may paint these obvious topics in the most dazzling colors, but our more serious thoughts will respect a useful prejudice, that establishes a rule of succession, independent of the passions of mankind; and we shall cheerfully acquiesce in any expedient which deprives the multitude of the dangerous, and indeed the ideal, power of giving themselves a master.

“In the cool shade of retirement, we may easily devise imaginary forms of government, in which the sceptre shall be constantly bestowed on the most worthy, by the free and incorrupt suffrage of the whole community. Experience overturns these airy fabrics, and teaches us, that in a large society, the election of a monarch can never devolve to the wisest, or to the most numerous part of the people. The army is the only order of men sufficiently united to concur in the same sentiments, and powerful enough to impose them on the rest of their fellow-citizens; but the temper of soldiers, habituated at once to violence and to slavery, renders them very unfit guardians of a legal, or even a civil constitution. Justice, humanity, or political wisdom, are qualities they are too little acquainted with in themselves, to appreciate them in others. Valor will acquire their esteem, and liberality will purchase their suffrage; but the first of these merits is often lodged in the most savage breasts; the latter can only exert itself at the expense of the public; and both may be turned against the possessor of the throne, by the ambition of a daring rival.

“The superior prerogative of birth, when it has obtained the sanction of time and popular opinion, is the plainest and least invidious of all distinctions among mankind. The acknowledged right extinguishes the hopes of faction, and the conscious security disarms the cruelty of the monarch. To the firm establishment of this idea we owe the peaceful succession and mild administration of European monarchies. To the defect of it we must attribute the frequent civil wars, through which an Asiatic despot is obliged to cut his way to the throne of his fathers. Yet, even in the East, the sphere of contention is usually limited to the princes of the reigning house, and as soon as the more fortunate competitor has removed his brethren by the sword and the bowstring, he no longer entertains any jealousy of his meaner subjects. But the Roman empire, after the authority of the senate had sunk into contempt, was a vast scene of confusion. The royal, and even noble, families of the provinces had long since been led in triumph before the car of the haughty republicans. The ancient families of Rome had successively fallen beneath the tyranny of the Caesars; and whilst those princes were shackled by the forms of a commonwealth, and

⁶ Of note, the fourth volume of his history is inscribed to Lord North; see “Preface to the Fourth Volume of the Original Quarto edition,” 1788.

disappointed by the repeated failure of their posterity, it was impossible that any idea of hereditary succession should have taken root in the minds of their subjects. The right to the throne, which none could claim from birth, every one assumed from merit. The daring hopes of ambition were set loose from the salutary restraints of law and prejudice; and the meanest of mankind might, without folly, entertain a hope of being raised by valor and fortune to a rank in the army, in which a single crime would enable him to wrest the sceptre of the world from his feeble and unpopular master. After the murder of Alexander Severus, and the elevation of Maximin, no emperor could think himself safe upon the throne, and every barbarian peasant of the frontier might aspire to that

“About thirty-two years before that event, the emperor Severus, returning from an eastern expedition, halted in Thrace, to celebrate, with military games, the birthday of his younger son, Geta. The country flocked in crowds to behold their sovereign, and a young barbarian of gigantic stature earnestly solicited, in his rude dialect, that he might be allowed to contend for the prize of wrestling. As the pride of discipline would have been disgraced in the overthrow of a Roman soldier by a Thracian peasant, he was matched with the stoutest followers of the camp, sixteen of whom he successively laid on the ground. His victory was rewarded by some trifling gifts, and a permission to enlist in the troops. The next day, the happy barbarian was distinguished above a crowd of recruits, dancing and exulting after the fashion of his country. As soon as he perceived that he had attracted the emperor’s notice, he instantly ran up to his horse, and followed him on foot, without the least appearance of fatigue, in a long and rapid career. ‘Thracian,’ said Severus with astonishment, ‘art thou disposed to wrestle after thy race?’ ‘Most willingly, sir,’ replied the unwearied youth; and, almost in a breath, overthrew seven of the strongest soldiers in the army. A gold collar was the prize of his matchless vigor and activity, and he was immediately appointed to serve in the horseguards who always attended on the person of the sovereign.” [The Thracian wrestler subsequently became Emperor Maximin.]

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

*Monty Python<sup>7</sup> is not NEARLY so new as some PERHAPS may think; for ready proof of which, here is an humorous excerpt from (Scotsman) Tobias Smollett’s Roderick Random (1748) chapter 27.*

“...About this time, Captain Oakum, having received sailing orders, came on board, and brought along with him a surgeon of his own country, who soon made us sensible of the loss we suffered in the departure of Doctor Atkins; for he was grossly ignorant, and intolerably assuming, false, vindictive, and unforgiving; a merciless tyrant to his inferiors, an abject sycophant to those above him. In the morning after the captain came on board, our first mate, according to custom, went to wait on him with a sick list, which, when this grim commander had perused, he cried with a stern countenance, ‘Blood and cons! sixty-one sick people on board of my ship! Harkee, you sir, I’ll have no sick in my ship, by G--d.’ The Welshman [Morgan] replied, ‘he should be very glad to find no sick people on board: but, while it was otherwise, he did no more than his duty in presenting him with a list.’ ‘You and your list may be d--n’d,’ said the captain, throwing it at him; ‘I say, there shall be no sick in this ship while I have the command of her.’” Mr. Morgan, being nettled with this treatment, told him his indignation ought to be directed to Cot Almighty, who visited his people with distempers, and not to him, who contributed all in his power towards their cure. The bashaw, not being used to such behaviour in any of his officers, was enraged to fury at this satirical insinuation, and, stamping with his foot, called him insolent scoundrel, threatening to have him pinioned to the deck, if he should presume to utter another syllable. But the blood of Caractacus being thoroughly heated, disdained to be restricted by such a command, and began to manifest itself in, ‘Captain Oakum, I am a shentleman of birth and parentage (look you), and peradventure I am moreover.’ Here his harangue was broken off by the captain’s steward, who, being Morgan’s countryman, hurried him out of the cabin before he had time to exasperate his master to a greater degree...

“...[Morgan] had no sooner finished this narration [of his dispute with Captain Oakum] than he received a message from the surgeon, to bring the sick-list to the quarter-deck, for the captain had ordered all the patients thither to be reviewed.

---

<sup>7</sup> See as well *The Faerie Queene*, Book 4, Canto 3 (and with its antecedent in Ariosto.)

“This inhuman order shocked us extremely, as we knew it would be impossible to carry some of them on the deck, without imminent danger of their lives: but, as we likewise knew it would be to no purpose for us to remonstrate against it, we repaired to the quarter-deck in a body, to see this extraordinary muster; Morgan observing by the way, that the captain was going to send to the other world a great many evidences to testify against himself. When we appeared upon deck, the captain bade the doctor, who stood bowing at his right hand, look at these lazy lubberly sons of bitches, who were good for nothing on board but to eat the king’s provision, and encourage idleness in the skulkers...

“It would be tedious and disagreeable to describe the fate of every miserable object that suffered by the inhumanity and ignorance of the captain and surgeon, who so wantonly sacrificed the lives of their fellow-creatures. Many were brought up in the height of fevers, and rendered delirious by the injuries they received in the way. Some gave up the ghost in the presence of their inspectors; and others, who were ordered to their duties, languished a few days at work among their fellows, and then departed without any ceremony. On the whole, the number of the sick was reduced to less than a dozen; and the authors of this reduction were applauding themselves for the services they had done to their king and country, when the boatswain’s mate informed his honour, that there was a man below lashed to his hammock, by direction of the doctor’s mate, and that he begged hard to be released; affirming, he had been so maltreated only for a grudge Mr. Morgan bore him, and that he was as much in his senses as any man aboard. The captain hearing this, darted a severe look at the Welshman, and ordered the man to be brought up immediately; upon which, Morgan protested with great fervency, that the person in question was as mad as a March hare; and begged for the love of Cot, they would at least keep his arms pinioned during his examination, to prevent him from doing mischief. This request the commander granted for his own sake, and the patient was produced, who insisted upon his being in his right wits with such calmness and strength of argument, that everybody present was inclined to believe him, except Morgan, who affirmed there was no trusting to appearances; for he himself had been so much imposed upon by his behaviour two days before, that he had actually unbound him with his own hands, and had well nigh been murdered for his pains: this was confirmed by the evidence of one of the waiters, who declared he had pulled this patient from the doctor’s mate, whom he had gotten down, and almost strangled. To this the man answered, that the witness was a creature of Morgan’s, and suborned to give his testimony against him by the malice of the mate, whom the defendant had affronted, by discovering to the people on board, that Mr. Morgan’s wife kept a gin-shop in Ragfair. This anecdote produced a laugh at the expense of the Welshman, who, shaking his head with some emotion, said, ‘Ay, ay, ’tis no matter. Cot knows, it is an arrant falsehood.’ Captain Oakum, without any farther hesitation, ordered the fellow to be unfettered; at the same time, threatening to make Morgan exchange situations with him for his spite; but the Briton no sooner heard the decision in favour of the madman, than he got up to the mizzen-shrouds, crying to Thompson and me to get out of his reach, for we should see him play the devil with a vengeance. We did not think fit to disregard his caution, and accordingly got up on the poop, whence we beheld the maniac (as soon as he was released) fly at the captain like a fury, crying, ‘I’ll let you know, you scoundrel, that I am commander of this vessel,’ and pummel him without mercy. The surgeon, who went to the assistance of his patron, shared the same fate; and it was with the utmost difficulty that he was mastered at last, after having done great execution among those who opposed him.”

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

Earlier on one of the posts, I used the heading “Life Aboard a Man o’ War” [see the Smollett piece above], and which slightly modified (i.e., “The World in a Man of War”) is the subtitle to Herman Melville’s 1850 semi-autobiographical narrative White Jacket. Here is a fitting, and timely, extract from the same; with events taking place on the U.S. Frigate United States and on which Melville had actually served.

The great guns of an armed ship have blocks of wood, called tompions, painted black, inserted in their muzzles, to keep out the spray of the sea. These tompions slip in and out very handily, like covers to butter firkins.

By advice of a friend, Lemsford, alarmed for the fate of his box of poetry, had latterly made use of a particular gun on the main- deck, in the tube of which he thrust his manuscripts, by simply crawling

partly out of the porthole, removing the tompion, inserting his papers, tightly rolled, and making all snug again.

Breakfast over, he and I were reclining in the main-top--where, by permission of my noble master, Jack Chase, I had invited him-- when, of a sudden, we heard a cannonading. It was our own ship.

“Ah!” said a top-man, “returning the shore salute they gave us yesterday.”

“O Lord!” cried Lemsford, “my Songs of the Sirens!” and he ran down the rigging to the batteries; but just as he touched the gun-deck, gun No. 20--his literary strong-box--went off with a terrific report.

“Well, my after-guard Virgil,” said Jack Chase to him, as he slowly returned up the rigging, “did you get it? You need not answer; I see you were too late. But never mind, my boy: no printer could do the business for you better. That’s the way to publish, White-Jacket,” turning to me--“fire it right into ’em; every canto a twenty-four-pound shot; hull the blockheads, whether they will or no. And mind you, Lemsford, when your shot does the most execution, your hear the least from the foe. A killed man cannot even lisp.”

“Glorious Jack!” cried Lemsford, running up and snatching him by the hand, “say that again, Jack! look me in the eyes. By all the Homers, Jack, you have made my soul mount like a balloon! Jack, I’m a poor devil of a poet. Not two months before I shipped aboard here, I published a volume of poems, very aggressive on the world, Jack. Heaven knows what it cost me. I published it, Jack, and the cursed publisher sued me for damages; my friends looked sheepish; one or two who liked it were non-committal; and as for the addle-pated mob and rabble, they thought they had found out a fool. Blast them, Jack, what they call the public is a monster, like the idol we saw in Owhyhee [Hawaii], with the head of a jackass, the body of a baboon, and the tail of a scorpion!”

“I don’t like that,” said Jack; “when I’m ashore, I myself am part of the public.”

“Your pardon, Jack; you are not, you are then a part of the people, just as you are aboard the frigate here. The public is one thing, Jack, and the people another.”⁸

“You are right,” said Jack; “right as this leg. Virgil, you are a trump; you are a jewel, my boy. The public and the people! Ay, ay, my lads, let us hate the one and cleave to the other.” [ch. 45]

~~~~\*\*\*~~~~

*August 14th will mark the 199th anniversary of the battle between the brig-sloops U.S. Argus and H.B.M. [His Britannic Majesty’s] Pelican and which ended in a British victory -- though only after Lieutenant, acting Commander, William Henry Allen, operating in the channel and joint coasts of Britain and Ireland, scored the highest U.S. Navy record in the War of 1812 for seizing British merchant ships; his originally assigned mission. About a week ago, I just finished reading Ira Dye’s, a former WWII U.S. submarine officer, 1994 The Fatal Cruise of the Argus: Two Captains in the War of 1812 (U.S. Naval Institute Press.); an original and innovative historical study; insofar as the author presents a dual full-length biography of both sides’ commanders, Allen and Captain John Fordyce Maples, before leading up the main battle and its aftermath. On the down side, Dye oft writes in a rather flat, naive, even juvenile, prose style, and while many of the points he makes are usually good ones, he sometimes descends to undue over-simplifications; as, for example, he tries to present the savage and bullying, and by his own admission ultimately pointless if well fought, attack on un-warlike Copenhagen in 1801 as a noble and heroic enterprise.*

*But despite these qualms, his research is excellent and there is much and ample of interest one learns about the U.S. and British navies of the time reading his book. Not least moving is his account of Allen’s death and burial by the British in Plymouth, England; and which is quoted here below. It is worth*

---

<sup>8</sup> [Edit. This distinction between people and public had been previously made mention of by Wordsworth in the 1815 preface to his poems.]

*noting that a number of slain naval captains in the War of 1812 ended up being interred on the shore opposite their homes: as well as Allen at Plymouth; James Lawrence was taken to Halifax, Nova Scotia by H.M.B. Shannon (and after the war removed to Trinity Churchyard in New York City); Captain Samuel Blyth, R.N. and Lieut. William Burrows, U.S.N., -- of the Boxer vs. the Enterprise battle at which both were killed -- laid to rest in Portland, Maine; and Capt. George Downie, R.N., at Riverside Cemetery in Plattsburgh, N.Y. It stands as a tribute to the character, gallantry, and simple good sense, of both sides that they made the effort to give honorable obsequies to their fallen foes; furnishing us now, in retrospect, something further to respect and hold dear about our mutual pasts.*

“What shall we say of this young man [William Henry Allen], now that his life is finished and can be summed up? He was a naval officer of great promise -- courageous, skilled, eager to learn his profession and advance in it. He was generous to his adversaries in war. He was loyal to those who led him and to those below him entrusted to his leadership. In turn, he inspired loyalty, and both salt-matured sailors and young officers followed him from ship to ship to serve with him. He was a gentleman in that early-nineteenth-century pattern that called for uncompromising integrity and for kindness and sympathy to the weak and the vulnerable. He had that excessive sense of personal honor often found in officers of that day, and it was this that brought him his death...

“William Henry Allen’s funeral was arranged by John Hawker, the American ex-vice consul, and the officers of the [U.S. sloop] Argus. Rear-Admiral Thomas Byam Martin, commanding at Plymouth, ordered that the ceremonies be done with military honors and be attended by British officers of rank, and that a lieutenant-colonel’s guard of Royal Marines take part. Hawker and the Argus’s officers bought a fine ‘wainscot coffin’ for Allen and had the breastplate of it inscribed with his name, rank, age, and a brief eulogy.

“The funeral procession assembled at the Mill Prison Hospital at 11 A.M. on Saturday, 21 August. The coffin was brought down and covered with a black velvet pall, over which was spread the American ensign of the Argus, those Stars and Stripes under which the battle had been fought. On top of the flag were laid Henry Allen’s hat and sword. As the coffin was placed in the hearse the maritime guard saluted, and the procession began to move into Millbay Road. The guard of honor was first, led by the lieutenant-colonel of Royal Marines, followed by two companies of marines with their captains, subalterns, and field adjutant, the officers wearing black hatbands and scarves. Behind them came the marine band, playing the ‘Dead March’ from Handel’s ‘Saul,’ and the vicar, curate, and clerk of St. Andrew’s Church.

“Then came ‘THE HEARSE, with the corpse of the deceased captain,’ attended by eight seamen from the Argus with black crape arm bands tied with white crape ribbons. With the hearse were eight captains of the Royal Navy, acting as pallbearer, with black hatbands and scarves. Following the hearse came Henry Allen’s servants, his steward, Appene [a Chinaman], and his coxswain, in mourning; then the officers of the Argus, two by two, wearing black crape sashes and hatbands; John Hawker and his clerks; Captain Pellowe, R.N., the commissioner for prisoners of war at Plymouth; and Dr. Magrath. Behind them were all the captains of the Royal Navy that were in port, marine, and army officers, and the servants of the officers of the Argus, all walking two by two. Last came ‘a very numerous and respectable retinue of inhabitants.’ Henry Allen would have been pleased to know that such a great event was organized to honor him.

“The procession moved east, up Millbay Road and into George Street, then right into Bedford Street and on to St. Andrew’s Church. There the marine guard halted and formed in a single file, with arms reversed, and the procession passed through them into the church, where the coffin was set down in the center aisle. The vicar read the first part of ‘The Order for the Burial of the Dead,’ then the coffin was taken out into the south yard of the church for burial, and the reading of the ‘Order’ completed at the grave. Midshipman Delphey had been put to rest there just the night before, although with less ceremony, and the vault was still open. Henry Allen was let down into the vault to a place on Richard Delphey’s left, the vault was sealed, and the grave filled. There they still sleep.

“No detail survives about how their headstone was designed and the epitaph written, but this scenario fits the available facts...what appears at the top of the stone is the representation of an American

naval officer's uniform button of the pattern that had been in use some years before, and was still worn: a circle of thirteen stars, and inside the circle an eagle, its wings half open, its head turned to the right, standing on its right foot with the left talons holding up an oval shield with a fowl anchor shown on it.

“The inscription below the eagles says,

“SACRED  
to the MEMORY of  
WILLIAM HENRY ALLEN, Esq.  
Aged 27 Years  
Late Commander of the  
United States BRIG ARGUS  
who died August 18th 1813  
In Consequence of a Wound  
Received in Action  
with H.B.M. BRIG PELICAN  
August 14th 1813

ALSO in Remembrance of  
RICHARD DELPHEY, Midshipman  
Age 18 Years  
U.S. NAVY, Killed in the same action  
Whose remains are Deposited  
on the Left.

~~~~~

HERE SLEEP THE BRAVE”

[pp. 287-289]

~~~~~\*\*\*~~~~~

*Although the Marines storming the shores of Tripoli, whether in song or in the film “Old Ironsides” (1926), never quite happened, some members of the Corps, under Lieut. Presley O’Bannon, were involved with a band of Mediterranean mercenaries in the somewhat exotic expedition, headed by intrepid U.S. envoy William Eaton, intended to unseat the Bashaw of Tripoli by placing the Bashaw’s brother on the throne. This enterprise reached its highpoint at the battles of Derna (about 549 miles east of Tripoli; in Libya), in April and May 1805, and it was there that the U.S. flag was first raised on foreign shores.*

*A few years afterward, American physician and poet John Shaw (1778-1809) wrote some lines commemorating the event and honoring its participants, and which, though little known, deserve to be more memorable.*

SONG.

Written for and sung at an entertainment given at Annapolis to Lieut. George Mann and Dr. Harwood, of the U. S. Navy.

BY JOHN SHAW, M. D.

Now the war-blast is blown, and the thunders are still,  
And the blue gleam of steel lies asleep in the sheath,  
And to peace and to mirth the full bumpers we fill,  
While the ear shrinks no more at the echo of death.

Yet still, not ungrateful, the deeds of the brave  
Our heart's strongest impulse shall eagerly tell,  
And on those who have sunk in a watery grave  
With a sorrowing tear still shall memory dwell.

The sons of our fathers have proved to the world  
That the blood in their veins beats for freedom as high,  
And wherever the red-striped flag is unfurl'd,  
Like them they can conquer, like them they can die.

Though shackles a while may the eagle entwine,  
And forbid him the strong-sinewed wing to display,  
Yet break but the bands that his ardour confine,  
And he mingles his flight with the blaze of the day.

Behold, where, in Afric's far regions, a band,  
Though few, yet determined, all peril defy,  
Their prospect by day but the hot, gleaming sand—  
Their bed the hard desert—their shelter the sky.

Yet still they urge forward—'tis glory that calls,  
Whose sovereign impulse leads onward the brave,  
And the cluster'd stars rise o'er Derna's proud walls,  
And the wan crescent fades, and descends in the wave.

Then fill up the bumper—a tribute of fame,  
Though 'tis small, yet 'tis all we now have to give:  
Yet, while memory holds seat in our bosoms, the names  
Of Eaton, and Mann,<sup>9</sup> and O'Bannen shall live.

[Found in *Songs, Odes and Other Poems on National Subjects* (1842) by Wm. McCarty.]

---

Wm. Thomas Sherman  
<http://www.gunjones.com> and [http://www.scribd.com/wsherman\\_1](http://www.scribd.com/wsherman_1)  
For a full list of titles in the Continental Army series, see:  
<http://www.gunjones.com/Cont-Army-series.html>

And for Lee's Legion on Face Book:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LeesLegion/>

---

<sup>9</sup> Midshipman George Mann.