

‘...ALL WAS HUSHED UP’: THE HIDDEN TRAFALGAR

By Michael Duffy

The Royal Navy was the most enduringly powerful and successful instrument of war of the eighteenth century and its achievement reached a triumphant climax at Trafalgar. Its progress was, however, always marked by controversy. The officer corps was highly competitive and critical of each other's performance – their career and indeed their lives in battle might depend upon it. The century before Trafalgar saw an admiral and three captains shot either for cowardice or for failing to do their utmost to take or destroy the enemy's ships, and many more were dismissed the service.¹ Naval disputes resonated in politics, for naval officers were often politicians and politicians and public were very sensitive to the affairs of the Navy, especially in wartime when the nation's trade, wealth and safety from invasion rested on the way naval officers performed.

This was an age when national attention was riveted by the court martial of famous admirals: Torrington for his defeat at Beachy Head in 1690, Matthews and Lestock for the failure to achieve victory at Toulon in 1744, Knowles for his abuse of his captains for limiting his victory off Havana in 1748, Byng for the loss of Minorca in 1756, Keppel and Palliser for the lack of success at Ushant in 1778.² The feuds and recriminations reached new heights during the War of American Independence, when many Opposition officers refused to serve after the trial of Keppel. Admiral Rodney was hypocritical but truthful when he told the Earl of Sandwich in 1780 that ‘It is with concern that I must tell your Lordship that my brother officers still continue their absurd and illiberal custom of arraigning each other's conduct...’.³ Not only the failure of Graves and Hood at Chesapeake Bay in 1781 (which led to the surrender of the British army at Yorktown) but almost all of Rodney's battles were accompanied by recriminations amongst those concerned – including and especially his victory at the Saints in April 1782, which in its immediate results had a far greater impact than Trafalgar.⁴

A decade later Rodney briefed the new civilian First Lord of the Admiralty that

Sea officers are apt to be censorious. It is their misfortune to know little of the world, and to be bred in seaport towns, where they keep company with few but themselves. This makes them so violent in party, so partial to those who have sailed with them, and so grossly unjust to others.⁵

The feuds of the American War were continued into that against the French Revolution and added to by the growing competitiveness and standards of professionalism of the expanding officer corps. A decade of victories still witnessed

courts martial and controversy after almost every battle. Even Nelson entered into this, condemning the limited achievements of 'a Lord Howe's victory' after the First of June 1794 and Hotham's lethargy in the Mediterranean actions of 1795.⁶ Codrington similarly complained of Bridport's failure to press home success at the Isle de Groix in 1795.⁷ For failing to bring their ships into action, Captain Molloy was dismissed his ship after the First of June and Williamson dismissed the service after Camperdown in 1797.⁸ The victory of Cape St Vincent in 1797 became tarnished by Sir John Jervis's ire at the conduct of Admiral Sir Charles Thompson and by the offence taken by Sir William Parker and his squadron, which had borne the brunt of the battle, at the way Nelson secured most of the credit for the victory to himself.⁹ After the victory at Copenhagen in 1801 the commander in chief, Sir Hyde Parker, was summarily recalled, while after the victory at Ferrol in 1805 the commander, Sir Robert Calder, who had captured two ships from a larger combined fleet, was censured for not renewing the battle on the second day and his career effectively terminated.¹⁰ After Trafalgar there was yet another major court martial to come when Admiral Lord Gambier was tried for neglecting to take effectual steps to destroy the enemy ships stranded after Cochrane's attack at the Basque Roads in 1809 – though acquitted, he never commanded at sea again.¹¹

This was the navy that was becoming sovereign of the seas! Amidst this maelstrom of controversy two victories of Nelson emerged publicly unblemished. The Battle of the Nile in 1798 was so obviously complete, with 11 of the 13 French ships of the line taken or destroyed, while Trafalgar has become the benchmark for naval victory. Nelson's 27 ships of the line attacked the 33 of the combined fleet, capturing 17 and blowing up another. However there was some feeling amongst the victors that the triumph was incomplete. Nelson's devoted friend Thomas Fremantle, captain of the *Neptune*, wrote that 'On this occasion as on all occasions of this sort many have in my opinion behaved improperly; had all gone into action with the determination that Nelson did, it is probable few only could have escaped...'.¹² One of his midshipmen, William Stanhope Badcock, echoed him: 'Had we had more daylight, and all the other ships come into action, there would have been much more done. I do not think above six ships would have got away...'.¹³ Looking back seven years later, Lieutenant William Pringle Green, master's mate in the *Conqueror* at Trafalgar, declared that '...in my opinion if the officers had done their duty in every ship, the action would have been over sooner, and the whole of the enemy taken or destroyed'.¹⁴

Those voicing such views had caught Nelson's aggressive thirst for a battle of annihilation and their hopes had fallen short of fulfilment. Repeatedly in the three weeks between his arrival and the battle Nelson had expressed the hope '...that as an Enemy's Fleet they may be annihilated', that '...it is, as Mr Pitt knows, annihilation that the Country wants, and not merely a splendid victory of twenty three to thirty six, – honourable to the parties concerned, but absolutely useless in the extended scale to bring Bonaparte to his marrow-bones...'.¹⁵ 'We have only one great object in view,' he told Collingwood, 'that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country'.¹⁶ He told the *Victory's* crew, as he toured the decks just before the battle, that he would not be content with the 12 [*sic*] that he had taken at the Nile, and he told Hardy that he 'bargained for twenty' of the 33 ships he was engaging – which would have fulfilled his objective of annihilating them 'as an Enemy's Fleet'.¹⁷

Captures on this scale were unprecedented in contemporary naval warfare, but how were they to be achieved? Late October days were short – we know that it grew dark about 5.15pm on the 21st.¹⁸ The loss of time involved in manoeuvring a single line of battle, perhaps five miles long, 'in variable winds, thick weather, and other circumstances which must occur', was likely to lose him the opportunity of bringing about a decisive battle.¹⁹ Nelson opted therefore for a number of shorter lines (three in his 9 October memorandum, two with the reduced fleet at Trafalgar) which would operate simultaneously and independently but in accordance with overall principles outlined to his admirals and captains in his memorandum. Believing that 'numbers can only annihilate',²⁰ his object was to concentrate an overwhelming force to take the last 12 ships of the enemy rear. In the memorandum this task was assigned to 16 ships (out of 40) under Collingwood, but even with his reduced fleet of 27 at Trafalgar, he still intended Collingwood to be kept up to his full strength of 16, for the *Africa* was to have been among the ships of his lee line (Table 1).²¹ The 9 October memorandum envisaged an even more massive attack (24 against 14) on the enemy centre by Nelson's own division and the third 'advanced squadron' (drawn from the fastest ships in the two 20-strong lines of his order of sailing), though this force also had to be strong enough to contain any riposte by the leading 20 enemy ships. Nevertheless he trusted that the whole line from two or three ahead of their commander in chief to the rear of their fleet would be overpowered before the unengaged ships ahead to the van could return to their assistance. Nelson still sought to achieve this with his single, much reduced division of 11 ships (plus the wayward *Africa*) at Trafalgar, holding the enemy van by feinting to attack it before driving through their centre. The basic principle remained the same, however. Nelson added a note to the 9 October memorandum that if either the British or their enemy were less than the 40 against 46 he then envisaged, 'only a proportionate number of Enemy's Ships are to be cut off; B[ritish] to be $\frac{1}{4}$ superior to the E[nemy] cut off'.²²

To be successful in his 'new...singular...simple'²³ mode of attack, Nelson was depending upon three things: surprise, speed and close engagement. To avoid delays through the need to rearrange the fleet into battle order, he decided that the fleet's standard order of sailing would also be its order of battle. With it, he told Keats at Merton in September, he would 'go at them at once' and he expected that his formation and direction of attack would 'surprise and confound the enemy. They won't know what I am about'.²⁴ He seems to have been hoping that this would hold them in their single line expecting that his divisions would reform into one line of battle when they drew closer, so enabling him to concentrate his ships against the centre and rear part of that line, break it up and 'bring forward a pell-mell battle' which was what he wanted. He still, however, had to get through the concentrated fire of their line of battle and, although it was his low opinion of the gunnery of the combined fleet that made his plan feasible, he still needed to get in quickly to minimize the number of broadsides and damage they could inflict upon his ships in their approach. Hence he instructed that his ships should 'set all sails, even steering sails, in order to get as quickly as possible to the Enemy's line...'. No victory could be decisive without a pell-mell close action in which he had 'no fears of the result', and 'no Captain can do very wrong if he places his Ship alongside that of an enemy'.²⁵ His final instructions, which he asked his frigate commanders to convey to his captains as the *Victory* engaged, were that 'if by the mode of attack prescribed they found it impossible to

get into action immediately, they might adopt whatever they thought best, *provided it led them quickly and closely alongside an enemy*'.²⁶

This was the intention, but in the event it did not work out that smoothly. Nelson had admitted that 'Something must be left to chance; nothing is sure in a sea fight beyond all others. Shot will carry away the masts and yards of friends as well as foes...'.²⁷ Chance was against him in the shape of the weather: ships' logs are full of references to 'light airs' and 'light breezes' which reduced the British attack to a crawl.²⁸ This in itself limited the possibility of surprise, but that was in any case small since Villeneuve had seen Nelson in action at the Nile and correctly predicted the tactics he would employ – no parallel line of battle, attempts to envelop their rear, to break through the line and to act in groups against the ships he cut off. Nelson's feint at the van may have held it longer in its station, but the combined fleet knew what to expect.²⁹

To counter Nelson's expected tactics, Villeneuve ordered a close-formed line of battle and mutual support.³⁰ Nelson's course of action – a head-on attack by successive individual ships against a line of battle – now gave the maximum opportunity for chance to take effect, since his hopes of avoiding incapacitating damage by a rapid assault carrying all sail were jeopardized by the light airs and breezes. Fortunately the gunnery of the combined fleet was as bad as, perhaps worse than, he expected. As one of his opponents later commented, 'The audacity with which admiral Nelson attacked us, and which had so completely succeeded, showed the complete contempt which he had, not without reason, for the effect of our gunnery'.³¹ The French propensity to fire high in order to disable masts, yards, sails and rigging, rather than at the hulls to kill, like the British, meant that much of their shot was wasted. The French failure to abandon slow matches, which fired guns slowly and erratically, rather than follow the British and Spanish in adopting mechanical gunlocks, which fired guns instantaneously, upset their attempt at precision fire in rolling ships, and the effect of this was exacerbated at Trafalgar by the heavy swell that was taking their ships abeam. In consequence the leading British ships got up without major damage.³²

However Nelson may not have taken sufficient account of human error on his own side. Firstly one ship, the 64 gun *Africa*, became detached from the fleet in the night and at 10am was still 6–7 miles north-northeast ahead of the two fleets, hastening back but unable to take her place in the order of sailing/order of battle which, as shown below, should have been in Collingwood's column. Eight minutes after Collingwood began the battle towards the enemy rear, the *Africa* began to engage each ship of their van in succession as she moved down their line towards Nelson, joining in his attack on the centre 1 hour 58 minutes after the battle began.³³

Secondly Collingwood and Nelson added to their task by each engaging higher up the line than originally intended. Collingwood chose to break the line between the fifteenth and sixteenth ships from the rear rather than at the twelfth as specified in the 9th October memorandum. He has been excused by claims that did not see three ships behind the rear line, but his journal seems to indicate his actions were deliberate: 'About noon, the *Royal Sovereign* opened a fire on the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th ships from the enemy's rear and stood on with all sail to break the enemy's line'. Rather he was drawn by honour to attack the enemy closest to his own size

and status nearest his target point – the sixteenth ship: 'a Spanish three-deck ship [the *Santa Ana*] with a Vice-Admiral's flag...'. It meant, however, that instead of the 16 against 12 of the memorandum, his remaining 15 would face 16 – assuming that all his division came up in good time.³⁴ Nelson too told his two seconds, the *Temeraire* and *Neptune*, that he intended to break the enemy's line about 14 ships from the van, but, seeking the French commander in chief in the proximity of the four-decked Spanish *Santissima Trinidad* he cut through behind the twelfth, which, perhaps fortuitously, was Villeneuve's *Bucentaure*. Twenty-one ships were cut off, with Nelson apparently intending to make sail up the lee side of the enemy line towards their van.³⁵

With only 24 ships following the *Royal Sovereign* and *Victory*, this was a ratio now below the quarter superiority for annihilation that Nelson specified in the 9 October memorandum. It was therefore even more important that the rest of the fleet got up quickly to support their leaders. This, however, was amongst the greatest failures in British performance in the battle and one that was subsequently covered up.

Nelson had declared that the order of sailing should be the order of attack, and to appreciate which ships fulfilled their intended roles best or worst we need to know the order of sailing. At least five different copies of the order of sailing exist for 9–10 October, at a time when Nelson was projecting a fleet of 40 ships. The differences can be ascribed to the hourly changes of situation as new ships arrived and others were expected to depart. The first was assigned to 9 October by Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas, and has been regarded as probably an initial draft of those signed by Nelson and given out on the 10th. Julian Corbett printed one from the 10th, which he found in the United Services Institution, in *The Campaign of Trafalgar*.³⁶ Corbett used his list to reconstruct the Trafalgar order of battle, removing those not present on the 21st and replacing them with those who had joined since in an order based on a variety of likely or unlikely reasons. This was contested as regards the lee line (Collingwood's) by R. C. Anderson, who produced his reconstruction based on what some officers later said was the intended place of their own ship and on positions logged on previous days.³⁷

However three clearly subsequent copies of the order of sailing of the same 10 October date exist with alterations that help clarify the final order of battle. One sent to Captain Bayntun of the *Leviathan* was printed by Admiral Taylor as an appendix to his 1950 *Mariner's Mirror* article on Trafalgar (Fig. 1). Another sent to Captain Pulteney Malcolm of the *Donegal* differs from former lists by removing the *Prince of Wales*, which Nelson decided to allow Calder to sail home for his court martial, and, like Bayntun's copy, includes the *Belleisle*, which arrived in the course of the 10th. Whereas Bayntun's copy placed the *Africa*, which joined on the 14th, in Nelson's division, Malcolm's has her subsequently pencilled into Collingwood's.³⁸ This last placing of the *Africa* is confirmed by a further copy, apparently a record copy, headed 'Order of Battle', and associated with two letters sent by the *Victory*'s master, Thomas Atkinson, to a friend.³⁹

While this latter is the last surviving order of sailing produced from the *Victory*, there is another surviving list from the *Royal Sovereign*, dated to the 21st itself, in the entry in Admiral Collingwood's journal in which he lists the British ships which took part in the battle, and overlooked by Corbett and Anderson.⁴⁰ Collingwood

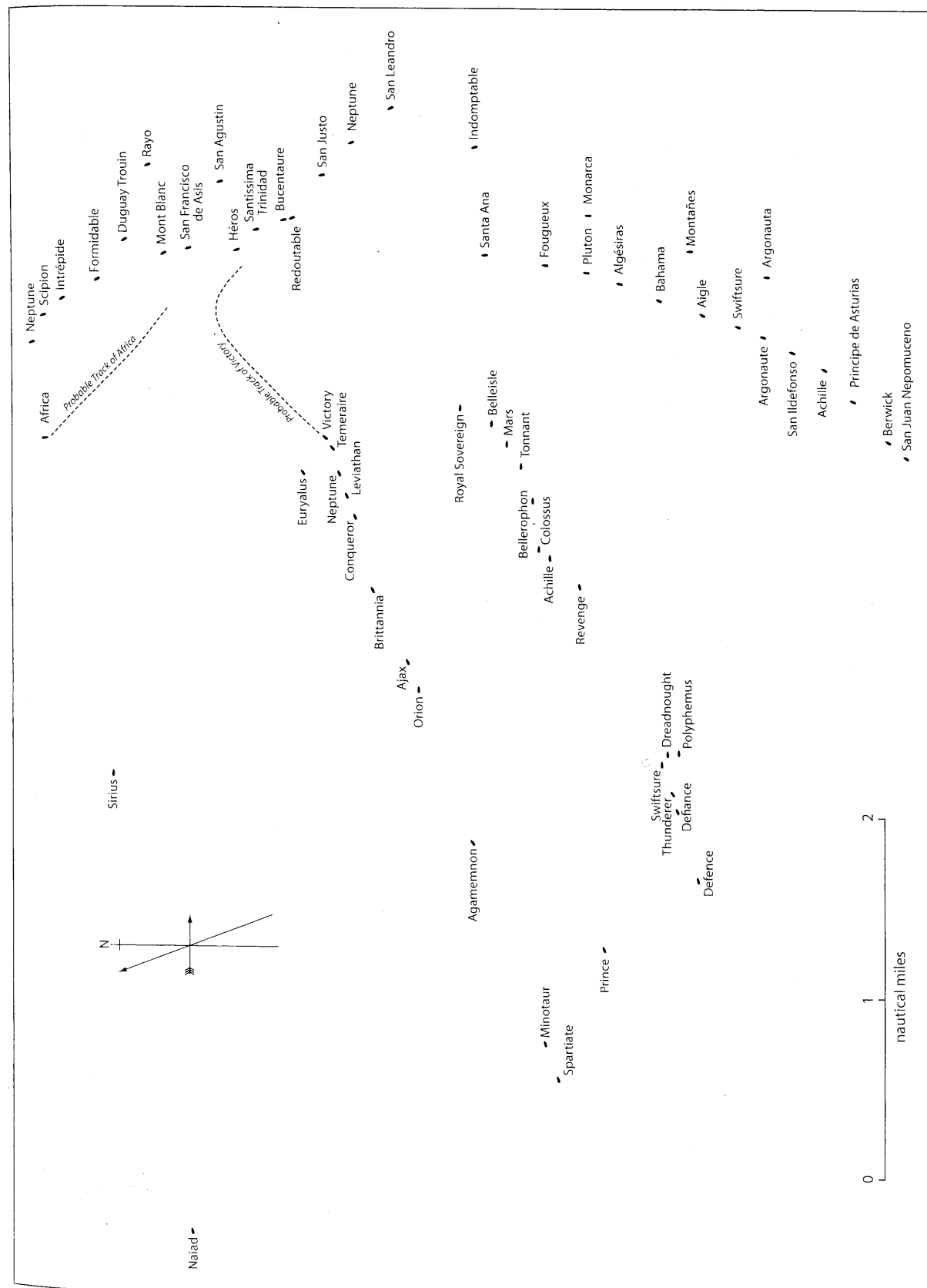


Fig. 1. The Battle of Trafalgar about noon – a disposition closer to reality, derived from logs, contemporary accounts, and the charts of Captain Tizard for the 1913 *Report* and Admiral Taylor for his 1950 *MM* article.

heads his list with the ships of the three admirals – *Victory*, *Royal Sovereign* and *Britannia* – but he then puts the remaining ships in an order so similar to the later copies of 10 October that it seems to be the finally intended order of sailing/order of battle for Trafalgar.⁴¹ The five orders of sailing/battle and Collingwood's list may be compared in Table 1, set in the order in which, judged by internal evidence, they were produced.

TABLE 1: The order of sailing/order of battle of Nelson's fleet

(ships in round brackets absent from the Battle of Trafalgar)

1 9 Oct. Nicolas ^a	2 10 Oct. Corbett ^b	3 10 Oct. Taylor ^c	4 10 Oct. SHM ^d	5 10 Oct. BL ^e	6 21 Oct. Sturges Jackson ^f
Starboard Division/Weather Line					
<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Temeraire</i>
(<i>Superb</i>)	(<i>Superb</i>)	(<i>Superb</i>)	(<i>Superb</i>)	(<i>Superb</i>)	
<i>Victory</i>	<i>Victory</i>	<i>Victory</i>	<i>Victory</i>	<i>Victory</i>	
<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>
(<i>Tigre</i>)	(<i>Tigre</i>)	(<i>Tigre</i>)	(<i>Tigre</i>)	(<i>Tigre</i>)	
(<i>Canopus</i>)	(<i>Canopus</i>)	(<i>Canopus</i>)	(<i>Canopus</i>)	(<i>Canopus</i>)	
<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Conqueror</i>
<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>
<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Leviathan</i>
(<i>Prince of Wales</i>)	(<i>Prince of Wales</i>)	(<i>Prince of Wales</i>)			
<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Ajax</i>
	<i>Orion</i>	<i>Orion</i>	<i>Orion</i>	<i>Orion</i>	<i>Orion</i>
<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Minotaur</i>
(<i>Queen</i>)	(<i>Queen</i>)	(<i>Queen</i>)	(<i>Queen</i>)		
(<i>Donegal</i>)	(<i>Donegal</i>)	(<i>Donegal</i>)	(<i>Donegal</i>)		
(<i>Spencer</i>)	(<i>Spencer</i>)	(<i>Spencer</i>)	(<i>Spencer</i>)		
		<i>Africa</i>			
<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Spartiate</i>
Larboard Division/Lee Line					
<i>Prince</i>	<i>Prince</i>	<i>Prince</i>	<i>Prince</i>	<i>Prince</i>	<i>Mars</i>
<i>Mars</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Mars</i>	<i>Prince</i>	
<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	
<i>Tonnant</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>
		<i>Belleisle</i>	<i>Belleisle</i>	<i>Belleisle</i>	<i>Belleisle</i>
<i>Bellerophon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>
<i>Colossus</i>	<i>Colossus</i>	<i>Colossus</i>	<i>Colossus</i>	<i>Colossus</i>	<i>Colossus</i>
<i>Achille</i>	<i>Achille</i>	<i>Achille</i>	<i>Achille</i>	<i>Achille</i>	<i>Achille</i>
<i>Polyphemus</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>
<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Revenge</i>
<i>Britannia</i>	<i>Britannia</i>	<i>Britannia</i>	<i>Britannia</i>	<i>Britannia</i>	
<i>Swiftsure</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>
<i>Defence</i>	<i>Defence</i>	<i>Defence</i>	<i>Defence</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Defence</i>
			[<i>Africa</i>] ^g	<i>Defence</i>	<i>Africa</i>
<i>Orion</i>					
	(<i>Kent</i>)	(<i>Kent</i>)	(<i>Kent</i>)	(<i>Kent</i>)	
(<i>Zealous</i>)	(<i>Zealous</i>)	(<i>Zealous</i>)	(<i>Zealous</i>)	(<i>Zealous</i>)	
<i>Thunderer</i>	<i>Thunderer</i>	<i>Thunderer</i>	<i>Thunderer</i>	<i>Thunderer</i>	<i>Thunderer</i>
<i>Defiance</i>	<i>Defiance</i>	<i>Defiance</i>	<i>Defiance</i>	<i>Defiance</i>	<i>Defiance</i>
<i>Dreadnought</i>	<i>Dreadnought</i>		<i>Dreadnought</i>	<i>Dreadnought</i>	<i>Dreadnought</i>

^a Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 94.

^b J. S. Corbett, *The Campaign of Trafalgar* (new ed. London, 1919), 392–3, copy then in possession of the United Services Institution.

^c Taylor, 'Trafalgar', *MM* (1950), appendix 1, 314–5, Captain Bayntun's copy.

^d Vincennes, Service Historique de la Marine, SHM V MS236 Nelson.

^e British Library, Add. Mss 33,963 fo. 104: a photograph of the original is reproduced in N. Tracy, *Nelson's Battles. The Art of Victory in the Age of Sail* (London, 1996), 177.

^f Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 202: Collingwood's Journal, 21 October 1805. NB: This list is undivided and the present author has split it at the obvious place, omitting the *Victory*, *Royal Sovereign* and *Britannia*, since their actual place in the order is not indicated.

^g Added in pencil later.

It remains to place the *Victory*, *Royal Sovereign* and *Britannia* into the final order, though always bearing in mind that Nelson excepted the flagships of the first and second in command, the *Victory* and *Royal Sovereign*, from his 'Order of Sailing is to be the Order of Battle' instructions.⁴² If the former orders were adhered to, then in the absence of the *Superb*, the *Victory* would have been left as second in her line, while the *Royal Sovereign* had been third in hers in all previous lists. The station of Admiral Northesk's *Britannia* is more problematical. On 21 October she was to be found in Nelson's line, though her poor sailing qualities led Nelson to signal her to take such station as was most convenient at the time without regard for the order of sailing. She was in Nelson's line because two of the admirals (Calder and Louis) and two three-deckers (Calder's *Prince of Wales* and *Queen*) were absent from his line. Corbett has proposed that Northesk was simply moved across from leading the second division of the lee line to Calder's place leading the second division of the weather line.⁴³ However **Table 1** shows that at the point when Nelson apparently decided to allow Calder to take his flagship home and so removed the *Prince of Wales* from the order, he did not replace her with the *Britannia*. Moreover the *Britannia* was sixth of the weather line into action at Trafalgar, which even allowing that the *Agamemnon* was not in her station still seems high for a ship of poor sailing qualities if she began in Calder's former position. This might indicate that she had begun further up, in the station formerly assigned to Admiral Louis in the *Canopus*. On these grounds in **Table 2** the *Britannia* has been assigned as replacement to the *Canopus* and a final intended order of sailing/order of battle suggested as for the ships sailing into action at Trafalgar.

If the order in **Table 2** is correct, then the *Africa* should have been in Collingwood's lee line on the 21st, and it would appear that Nelson adapted his initial plan to his reduced force at Trafalgar by keeping Collingwood up to full strength in order to annihilate the enemy rear, while giving maximum impact to his much-reduced van by placing *all* his own three-deckers at the head of his line.

How quickly did these ships get into action?

Nelson's feint towards the van meant that it was Collingwood's line that got into action first. Nelson's original plan had envisaged an approach parallel to the enemy rear until, at a signal, Collingwood's ships would bear up together and cut through their opposite numbers. The haste to 'go at them at once' in the prevailing weather conditions led to an approach at a more vertical angle of around 70° towards an enemy thrown into a concave line by an earlier reversal of course and the lack of

TABLE 2: The final intended order of sailing/order of battle on 21 October

Nelson's weather line	Collingwood's lee line
<i>Temeraire</i>	<i>Mars</i>
<i>Victory</i>	<i>Prince</i>
<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>
<i>Britannia</i>	<i>Tonnant</i>
<i>Conqueror</i>	<i>Belleisle</i>
<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Bellerophon</i>
<i>Leviathan</i>	<i>Colossus</i>
<i>Ajax</i>	<i>Achille</i>
<i>Orion</i>	<i>Polyphemus</i>
<i>Minotaur</i>	<i>Revenge</i>
<i>Spartiate</i>	<i>Swiftsure</i>
	<i>Defence</i>
	<i>Africa</i>
	<i>Thunderer</i>
	<i>Defiance</i>
	<i>Dreadnought</i>

Can this list can be reconciled with the statements of participants as to their station in the battle? It has to be born in mind that some seem to have taken account of ships missing from their places on the 21st and others did not. Robert Moorsom (T. Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 244) declared the *Revenge* sixth from the rear of the lee line, which she was if the *Africa* was counted absent, while Thomas Huskisson (Anderson, 'Lee Line', *MM*, vol. 57 [1971], 157) placed the *Defence* fifth from the rear, which she was if the *Africa* was still included!

Henry Bayntun's statement (Somerset Record Office, MS DD/HI 554) that the *Leviathan*'s station was four ships from the *Victory* but that he was able to place her third, involves even more complex counting. Table 1 shows that, excluding ships not present at Trafalgar, he was fourth from the *Victory*. However on the 21st the *Victory* moved ahead of the *Temeraire*, but the *Agamemnon* was not in station and the *Leviathan* overtook the *Conqueror* so that she was indeed third from the *Victory*. This takes no account of the *Britannia* and Bayntun might thus seem to negate the placing of the *Britannia* in Table 2 which displaces the *Leviathan* from her original fourth, but he possibly discounted her because she had been moved across subsequent to the 10 October order and on the 19th and 21st was also excused from taking station.

Lastly, the late exchange of stations of the *Prince* and *Mars* seems supported by Henry Mason's statement (NMM, MSN/1-7) that the *Prince*'s allotted station was as second to Collingwood – i.e. supporter, next to him, in the same way that Nelson spoke of Keat's *Superb* as his second when Nelson, like Collingwood, was third in his line (Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 123).

wind.⁴⁴ To get his ships into action more quickly all along the enemy rear, Collingwood signalled them about 8.45am to form a larboard line of bearing and make more sail. Thereafter he made a series of signals to those sailing best to get them into action as quickly as possible: to the *Belleisle* (to change places with the slower *Tonnant*), the *Revenge* and *Achille*. Collingwood's leading ships consequently plunged into the enemy rear on a very irregular quarter line from the *Royal Sovereign*'s starboard quarter. 'We went down in no order but every man to take his bird', wrote Lieutenant Clements (*Tonnant*). 'Admiral Collingwood dashed directly down,

supported by such ships as could get up; Lord Nelson did the same, and the rest as fast as they could', wrote Captain Moorsom of the *Revenge*.⁴⁵ Within 20 minutes of Collingwood engaging the *Santa Ana* (sixteenth from the rear) the next seven ships of his division were in action. The other seven, however, took considerably longer: the first of them not until at least 50 minutes after the battle began; the last not until nearly three hours later (Table 3).

TABLE 3: Approximate time ships opened fire (in minutes)

	Time after <i>Victory</i> (c.12.20)	Time after <i>Royal Sovereign</i> (c.12.00)
<i>Africa</i> + 8 (after <i>Royal Sovereign</i>)	<i>Temeraire</i> + 1	<i>Belleisle</i> + 10–13
	<i>Neptune</i> + 10	<i>Mars</i> + 15
	<i>Leviathan</i> + 3	<i>Tonnant</i> + 15–20
	<i>Conqueror</i> + 50 ^a	<i>Bellerophon</i> + 10–15
	<i>Britannia</i> + 10	<i>Colossus</i> + 20
		<i>Achille</i> + 15
		<i>Revenge</i> + 10
	<i>Ajax</i> + c.48	
	<i>Orion</i> + 75 ^b	
	<i>Agamemnon</i> + 38–58	<i>Polyphemus</i> + 50–60 ^d
		<i>Dreadnought</i> + 65
		<i>Swiftsure</i> + ? ^e
		<i>Thunderer</i> + 70
		<i>Defiance</i> + 75
	<i>Spartiate</i> + 128	<i>Defence</i> + 120–130 ^f
	<i>Minotaur</i> + 148 ^c	<i>Prince</i> + 170

^a Although she was overtaken by the *Leviathan* before passing the line, this time is so different from what is known of the *Conqueror*'s actions and those around her as surely to be an error in the log.

^b The *Orion* did not fire until she had a clear and close target. Her log records she passed through the line c.45 minutes after the *Victory* opened fire.

^c The *Spartiate*'s log records the *Minotaur* as opening fire at the same time as her, but the *Spartiate* had passed the latter in order to engage the van.

^d The latter time in Henry Blackburn's letter, 1 November 1805, *MM*, vol. 65 (1979), 196.

^e The *Swiftsure*'s log failed to record the time she went into action, but the log of the *Polyphemus* locates her close on the latter's starboard quarter.

^f First figure from Midshipman Reid's letter, 28 October 1805, 'Contemporary Letter on Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 9 (1923), 60.

These figures are compiled from the ships' log entries printed in Sir N. H. Nicolas (ed.), *Dispatches and Letters of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson* (London, 1845–6), vol. 7, Sturges Jackson (ed.), *Logs of the Great Sea Fights 1794–1805*, vol. 2 (NRS, vol. 18, 1900), and the *Report of a committee appointed by the Admiralty to examine and consider the evidence relating to the tactics employed by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar* (London, 1913), using time lags of c.10 minutes between the enemy opening fire and the *Royal Sovereign*, and c. five more minutes before the latter broke the line as benchmarks when others are not given. Because of the difficulties of recording or remembering times in action, these can only be very approximate, and they relate to when ships opened fire, which almost all recorded, rather than when they broke the line, which few noted (having other things on their mind at the time!).

A similar situation developed in Nelson's line, though his leading ships were tighter together and constituted an awesome array of concentrated hitting power. Looking ahead from the *Orion*'s quarterdeck, Edward Codrington saw that 'the lee line were in much more open order than ours', whereas '[o]ur line pressed so much upon each other as to go bow and quarter instead of line ahead'.⁴⁶ The next five ships were in action within 10–15 minutes of the *Victory* opening fire, though only four of these followed the *Victory* through the line, the last, the *Britannia*, remaining to windward, ranging the line firing at a distance, and not passing through for another two hours.⁴⁷ Having smashed their way into the enemy line a powerful follow-up was then needed, but the first of Nelson's remaining five did not open fire for nearly 50 minutes after their commander and the last nearly two and a half hours later. Moreover, as will be shown below, many of these lagging ships opened fire long before they reached the positions of close engagement alongside which Nelson desired. In consequence the brunt of the fighting, the losses (Table 4) and the damage inflicted on the combined fleet was carried by eight of Collingwood's ships, five of Nelson's (six if the *Britannia* is included) and the *Africa* moving down the enemy van.

TABLE 4: British casualties at Trafalgar

Weather line				Lee line			
<i>Victory</i>	57k	102w	159	<i>Royal Sovereign</i>	47k	94w	141
<i>Temeraire</i>	47k	76w	123	<i>Belleisle</i>	33k	93w	126
<i>Neptune</i>	10k	34w	44	<i>Mars</i>	29k	68w	98
<i>Leviathan</i>	4k	22w	26	<i>Tonnant</i>	26k	50w	76
<i>Conqueror</i>	3k	9w	12	<i>Bellerophon</i>	27k	123w	150
				<i>Colossus</i>	49k	160w	200
<i>Britannia</i>	10k	42w	52	<i>Achille</i>	13k	59w	72
				<i>Revenge</i>	28k	51w	79
<i>Africa</i>	18k	44w	62				
<i>Ajax</i>	2k	9w	11	<i>Polyphemus</i>	2k	4w	6
<i>Orion</i>	1k	23w	24	<i>Dreadnought</i>	7k	26w	33
<i>Agamemnon</i>	2k	8w	10	<i>Swiftsure</i>	9k	8w	17
<i>Minotaur</i>	3k	22w	25	<i>Thunderer</i>	4k	12w	16
<i>Spartiate</i>	3k	20w	23	<i>Defiance</i>	17k	53w	70
				<i>Defence</i>	7k	29w	36
				<i>Prince</i> ^a	0k	0w	0

^a The diary of volunteer 1st class Henry Mason of the *Prince* records six wounded – presumably too lightly to be returned as disabled (NMM, MSN/1–7, entry for 21 October 1805).

What happened to the remaining 12 and to the *Britannia*? What had they in common? If we look at the 24 captains outside the flagships, and hence responsible for their own decisions, and compare the 12 first engaged with the 12 who lagged behind, it was not a matter of battle experience: four of those never in a battle before were among the former and three in the latter; all five who had not been in a battle for over 20 years were among the former. It was perhaps more a matter of command

experience: of 15 in their first command of a ship of the line, only six were among the first engaged and nine among those behind. The six most junior captains (including two first lieutenants who had been acting captains for just over a week while their captains returned home for Calder's court martial) and nine of the ten most junior were all in the rear.⁴⁸

Due allowance must be made for the light airs and breezes which meant that the better sailers inevitably surged ahead of the poorer, and those in the rear included the worst sailers, the *Prince* (98) and *Dreadnought* (98) who, like the *Britannia*, were permitted by Nelson to take station as convenient, without regard to the established order of sailing. However, besides the *Prince* two others, the *Agamemnon* and *Polyphemus*, whose station should have put them amongst the leading groups engaged, found themselves among those at the rear, as did others who might have been expected to move up from further down the line in the same way as Moorsom's *Revenge* when he correctly interpreted the situation as one in which the ships were to get down as fast as they could. After the battle Collingwood complained privately to the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Barham, that '...although the exertion on the 21st was very great, it was not equal by any means; some of the ships in the rear of my line, although good sailing ships, did not answer my expectations fully'.⁴⁹

Collingwood possibly had three particular ships in mind. The 64 gun *Polyphemus* had been among the five 'fastest-sailing ships' sent ahead at nightfall on the 19th when Nelson thought the combined fleet was making a break for the Straits of Gibraltar.⁵⁰ Yet going into action the *Polyphemus* was behind her station and about to fall back further. When Nelson made his 'England expects...' signal she had the slow *Dreadnought* on her starboard beam who returned her cheers, and about an hour and a quarter later the *Dreadnought* was still up with her, now on her port beam and asking to pass so that she could take on Gravina's three-decker flagship *Principe de Asturias*, third from the enemy rear. The *Polyphemus* veered towards the sternmost ship of the enemy line to let her through. Quite why she was so slow to get into action is unclear, though once she got there she behaved well enough, doubling the enemy line, relieving the dismasted *Belleisle* by taking off her the French *Achille*, bringing down the latter's mizzenmast and maintopmast and shooting away her foreyard. When the *Achille*'s foretop caught fire, she ceased firing and those in the *Polyphemus* saw a union flag being waved from her cathead. Passing on without stopping to take possession, she then went to the aid of the outnumbered *Defence* and finally bore up to prevent the escape and take possession of two surrendered ships drifting towards the escaping enemy survivors. It was a creditable finish from a shaky start. Her captain, Robert Redmill, who had only recently taken this, his first battleship command, was allowed ill-health retirement the following year.⁵¹

The *Defence* too should have been further up the line. Despite her age (built 1763) she had been one of Nelson's 'Advanced Squadron of fast-sailing Ships between me and the Frigates' in the watch on Cadiz, and one of her midshipmen, Thomas Huskisson, later thought her without doubt 'one of the fastest ships in the service on all points of sailing'.⁵² She had been detached between the fleets to watch the enemy motions, and 32 years later Huskisson recalled that rather than wait for heavy sailers to pass in order to take up her station five from the rear, she came into action sooner and engaged 1 hour 15 minutes after the *Royal Sovereign*. This is, however, not born out by the ship's log or by a letter written by another midshipman, Charles Reid,

soon after the battle. Reid put her in action two hours after Collingwood and the master's log put it at 2 hours 10 minutes. Reid declared her to be 'the last station'd ship' – probably because the *Prince* had fallen some 50 minutes behind her, and most historians' accounts place her the second from last of Collingwood's line to enter the battle.⁵³ Why she was so slow into action is a mystery. Her captain, George Hope, had commanded a frigate in Hotham's action off Genoa in 1795, and several more frigates thereafter, taking command of the *Defence* in April 1805. He was one of the 'skilful Officers who would spare no pains to execute what was possible', to whom Collingwood entrusted the sinking of the hulks after the storm, to prevent them falling back into the hands of the enemy, and later he performed well administratively in the Baltic and at the Admiralty.⁵⁴ Once engaged at Trafalgar he performed well also in action, taking on the *Berwick*, another Frenchman and the *San Ildefonso* for 46 minutes until relieved by the British *Achille* (which took off the *Berwick*) and *Polyphemus*, whereupon he chased, caught and after a long fight captured the *San Ildefonso* – all of which makes the *Defence*'s slow approach to the battle the more inexplicable.

The *Defiance* had the ability to advance beyond her station yet seems to have failed to do so. Her captain, Philip Durham, thought her 'the fastest sailing ship of her rate in the British navy', and a number of historians have shown her up to ninth place in their battle plans. However, if the time of opening fire is any measure, she was still in her station behind the *Thunderer*, with only the *Defence* and *Prince* behind her. As will be shown below, there do seem to have been captains more concerned with keeping their station rather than getting up quickly, and perhaps Durham was one. Once engaged, however, he was prepared to get alongside, incurring the biggest casualties of the rear ships in his contests with the *Principe de Asturias* and *L'Aigle*, the latter of which struck to him.⁵⁵

Two other ships, the *Swiftsure* and *Thunderer*, as well as the lumbering *Prince*, also seem to have allowed themselves to be overtaken by the slow sailing *Dreadnought*, which entered the battle well ahead of her station according to Collingwood's journal, beginning to engage about 1 hour 5 minutes after Collingwood in a performance that was rather better than that for which he subsequently gave her credit. The *Swiftsure*'s captain, William Rutherford, who was one of the more junior, had only in 1805 taken over this his first battleship command, and seems hitherto to have specialized in amphibious warfare and not been in a sea battle or lesser action before. When finally up, the *Swiftsure* headed the *Polyphemus* in the relief of the *Belleisle*, exchanging shots with a Spanish and a French ship and, according to James, who later interviewed participants, joining with the *Polyphemus* in the fight with the *Achille*, and passing on when the latter surrendered to assist the *Defence* against the *San Ildefonso*. The *Thunderer* was commanded by her first lieutenant, going first to the assistance of the *Revenge*, beleaguered by the *Principe de Asturias* and others, joining with the *Dreadnought* in the attack on the Spanish flagship, then engaging the French *Neptune*, which came to the latter's assistance. When the latter two then made off, the *Thunderer* 'haul'd our wind and stood into the body of the Fleet', where she was ordered by Collingwood to chase four fleeing ships from the van, which she did until abandoning the pursuit at dusk.⁵⁶ The *Prince*, though stationed Collingwood's second, in fact became the last of his line to enter the battle. She was described the year before as sailing 'like a haystack', and daylight on the 21st caught

her already out of station having to repair a split foretopsail, so that she quickly obeyed Nelson's permissive signal by hauling to port to allow the lines to form and then sailed down between the two lines. She did not get up until some 2 hours 50 minutes after Collingwood first engaged. Arriving at the end of the battle, to the apparent astonishment of onlookers in the *Polyphemus*, she then attacked the *Achille*, which had already struck to them, and in three broadsides brought down her remaining – burning – foretopmast, which spread the fire to the rest of the ship so that she shortly blew up.⁵⁷ Her captain, Richard Grindall, at the age of 55 was the oldest in the fleet. He was among the most experienced and another of those 'skilful Officers' entrusted by Collingwood to dispose of endangered prizes in the aftermath of the battle. Collingwood was willing to excuse the *Prince*'s poor sailing performance, along with that of the *Dreadnought*, as due to bad copper sheathing, writing to the Plymouth dockyard commissioner that 'The ships that were foul never could get well up. I am sure the *Prince* and *Dreadnought* were to be pitied – using every effort, the business was finished almost before they could get down'. However, looking back ten years later, Collingwood's flag captain, Edward Rotheram, acidly recorded that Grindall 'behaved notoriously ill in the Trafalgar action'.⁵⁸

Admiral Taylor has also sought to excuse the delay in these ships entering action by proposing that the rear ships of the enemy line altered course four points or more to leeward to avoid the piled-up mêlée of drifting, fighting, ships ahead of them, which 'brought the rear ships of Collingwood's column nearly astern, and the converging action became a chase'. This is not altogether convincing as ships such as the *Principe de Asturias* and those around her stayed to fight, entering, and engaging ships in, the mêlée, and it is not an explanation used by Collingwood. He clearly felt that some of his rear ships should have got up quicker.⁵⁹

Nor was such an excuse available to the weather line, where something has to be said of Lord Northesk and the *Britannia*'s conduct before looking at those behind him in Nelson's rear. Northesk's was an undistinguished career, tarnished in the eyes of his superiors when as captain of the *Monmouth* at the Nore mutiny, he bowed to pressure from the mutineers to go to London and explain their case to the Admiralty. He resigned his command when the mutiny collapsed and so missed the opportunity to redeem himself at Camperdown. He was third in command at Trafalgar less because of his ability than because of his political 'pull' – since 1796 he had been a Scottish representative peer in the House of Lords – and because of the temporary absence of other more senior admirals – Louis guarding the passage of a troop convoy and Duckworth not yet arrived to replace Calder. He had, however, an active flag captain in Charles Bullen, and the *Britannia*, a slow sailer, was only overtaken by the *Conqueror* and *Leviathan* in getting up sixth when the *Victory* broke through between the *Bucentaure* and *Redoutable* (Fig. 2). The claim by Northesk's chaplain and his signals midshipman that she was fourth in action in Nelson's line must be interpreted as the fourth to open fire – one of his own lieutenants lists the five ships ahead of him.⁶⁰ Having arrived near the enemy line, however, the *Britannia* took in her studding sails early and did not pass through it. Bullen's biographer records a family tradition that the two had quarrelled in the approach with the flag captain refusing to obey Northesk's desire to shorten sail.⁶¹ At all events, the *Britannia*'s weight and size was not used to engage closely alongside and overpower any enemy ship. Her signals midshipman recorded that 'our fire was not directed to one particular ship, but as

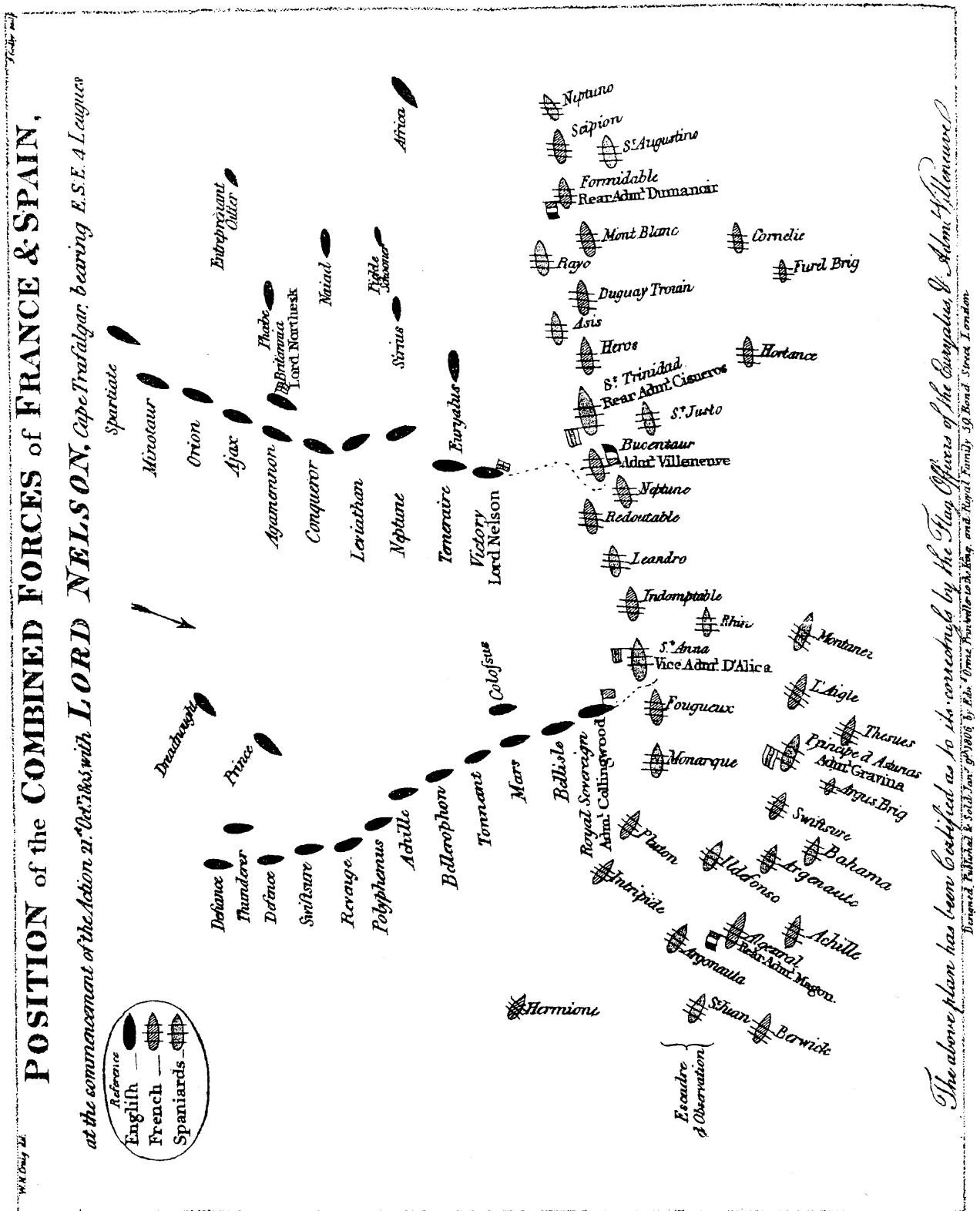
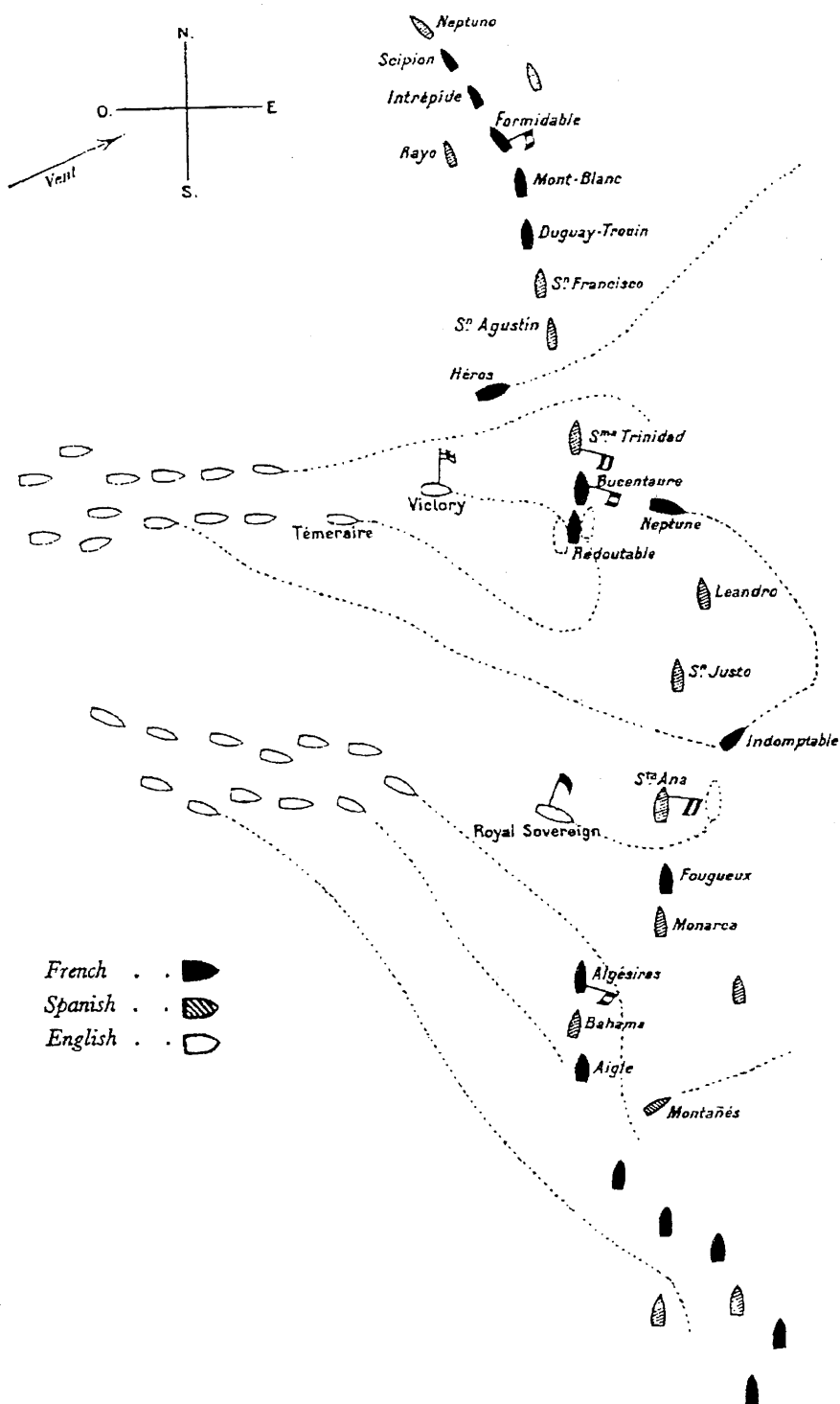


Fig. 2 (above and adjacent). Charts of the battle drawn up by Captains Lucas (*Redoutable*) and Majendie (*Bucentaure*). It suited the French captives to show that they were overwhelmed by densely packed columns of British ships. Majendie's diagram quickly appeared in print in London and influenced British images of the battle.

Position of the two Fleets at the opening of the Battle of Trafalgar



SKETCH-MAP ANNEXED TO THE REPORT OF CAPTAIN LUCAS
OF THE *REDOUTABLE*

soon as one had struck to us we immediately made to others and at one time had 5 ships blazing away upon us, but we soon tired them out'. There is no record of any ship striking to the *Britannia* – the *Bucentaure* struck to the *Conqueror*, with whom she was closely engaged, rather than to the *Britannia* firing into her from a distance. One of the latter's lieutenants, John Barclay, explained the fact that she 'Continued edging on slowly' as due to the very little wind and that the 'main topsail in particular was shot almost entirely from the yard'. Two hours and ten minutes after she went into action she finally passed through the line and tacked to larboard. There she played out a protective role, being variously described as having 'kept up a heavy fire on both sides on every French or Spanish ensign flying near us', and by the naval biographer Marshall that she 'singly engaged and kept at bay three of the enemy's van ships that were attempting to double on the *Victory* at that time much disabled and warmly engaged with two of the enemy'. This again ignores the rather more positive contribution and captures made by others in confronting the van attack. There is little to positively contradict Rotheram's subsequent judgement that Northesk too 'behaved notoriously ill in the Trafalgar action'.⁶²

If Table 2 is accepted as the intended order of sailing, the ship that should have followed the *Conqueror* into action was Edward Berry's *Agamemnon*, and she too played an equivocal part in the battle. From his knowledge of his former ship, Nelson had added her to his 'Advanced Squadron of fast-sailing ships between me and the frigates' when she arrived shortly before the battle. The *Agamemnon*, however, was not well handled by his former flag captain. On the day before the battle it took repeated signals made 'with many guns' by the commander of the frigates, Blackwood, to prevent the *Agamemnon* from sailing into the enemy fleet. Blackwood then sent her to signal to Nelson the size and situation of the enemy fleet, but on the way she lost her maintopmast in a squall and stopped to replace it, and this put her far out of position to take her station in the line on the morning of the 21st. Even then she was slow to get up: whereas the log of the *Conqueror*, near Nelson ahead, records that between 5am and 6am she 'Bore up and made all sail in chace', it was only at 8am that the *Agamemnon*'s master recorded that she 'Made all Sail to get in our Station', and she arrived up three behind her appointed station astern of the *Conqueror*.⁶³ Berry was not renowned for his seamanship, but rather as a doughty fighter who was reputed to have been in more battles than any other officer. However while he excelled under the direction of others, he seems to have floundered when in command himself. He made a bloodily expensive mess of the capture of the *Guillaume Tell* when in command of the superior ship *Foudroyant* in 1800. In the approach at Trafalgar, the *Orion*'s captain, Codrington, described the *Agamemnon* as 'far astern of us, ...blazing away and wasting her ammunition'. When Berry finally got up, the naval biographer Marshall opaquely recorded that 'it does not appear that any opportunity was afforded him of particularly distinguishing himself on that occasion'. This contrasts with Codrington and with Bayntun of the *Leviathan* who made opportunities for themselves by selecting and capturing targets when the enemy van came down towards the end of the battle.⁶⁴

Berry, like the others in the rear, was in receipt of Nelson's final instructions that if they could not get into action immediately by the prescribed mode of attack 'they might adopt whatever they thought best, provided it led them quickly and closely alongside an enemy'. This was carried down the line by a lieutenant of the frigate

Euryalus, finally reaching the last ship *Spartiate* 1 hour 46 minutes after Nelson engaged.⁶⁵ However only Codrington in the *Orion* seems to have responded to it, striking out to starboard from Nelson's approach and breaking the enemy line between the *Santa Ana*, which had struck, and the largely dismasted *Royal Sovereign*. Thence he continued to the assistance of the *Colossus* in Collingwood's division where he delivered the *coup de grâce* to her battered opponent, the French *Swiftsure*, with a devastating close broadside which brought down her masts, leaving her to strike to the former. He then moved up towards the van, relieving the *Leviathan* and *Africa* from the damaging attack of the fresh French *Intrépide*, which he then engaged closely and captured after a stubborn resistance.⁶⁶ The *Ajax*, ahead of the *Orion* in the line, was in the hands of her first lieutenant, who had only been acting captain for a week and who, Codrington charitably recorded, did not see things as quickly as her far more experienced absent captain would have done. Both acting captains in the fleet played fairly safe and conventionally in their first battle in command.⁶⁷

Harder to explain is the far slower approach of the last two ships in Nelson's line, the *Minotaur* and *Spartiate*, which dropped considerably behind the rest. So far behind were they that they never reached the enemy line. Instead the enemy reached them when five of the van came down the windward side of the battle to see who they might rescue and found the *Minotaur* and *Spartiate* in their path. Why they were so far behind is unclear, but it seems that attention to station-keeping played its part. As they began to go down towards the enemy, the ships of both lines that had fallen out of place attempted to get back into their sailing order/order of battle. Codrington in the fast-sailing *Orion* recorded that he 'made and shortened sail occasionally to keep our station'. This station-keeping inevitably produced a tail-back effect as slower sailers held back others in the line behind them, but Codrington later told his wife that 'a ship being late in action was no discredit to her if she was not behind her station', and while he took an independent course once he had received Nelson's message, others still looked to keep to that principle.⁶⁸ This seems particularly true of the *Spartiate* which, when stationed astern of the *Minotaur* the previous year, was described as sailing 'like a witch', always best at night and putting the latter in constant danger of being 'pooped' by her. The *Minotaur*'s log shows that throughout the morning she crawled down at a consistent one knot, whereas those ahead of her were logging 1½–3 knots. Yet only as the enemy van ships came down did the *Spartiate*'s captain hail to be allowed to pass ahead of her in order to get into a better position to prevent them linking with their centre.⁶⁹ Both captains were in their first battle and their first ship of the line command. The *Spartiate*'s captain, Laforey, had been a successful frigate commander, but the impression remains of an officer more concerned with keeping his station in the line than with Nelson's injunction to get into battle quickly. The two ships behaved well once threatened, standing together to engage the first four French ships as they came by in a manner which helped influence the van commander, Dumanoir, to abandon any designs to intervene and to make off, and then combining against the final Spanish *Neptuno*, which stopped to fight, and which they took after another stubborn resistance.⁷⁰

The consequence of all this was that a clear gap developed between the leading half of each line which engaged quickly and closely (the *Britannia* excepted) and the remainder who straggled up more slowly from the rear. Collingwood's first eight ships were all in close action scattered down the enemy rear within 20 minutes of the

Royal Sovereign opening fire, most of the rest of his ships then came into action between 50 and 75 minutes later and the last two 150 and 170 minutes later respectively. However, coming into action for them meant opening fire rather than getting up to engage closely alongside (see below). Similarly with Nelson, whose first six ships were in action within 10–15 minutes, three more entering 40–50 minutes after the *Victory* opened fire, and two more between 128 and 150 minutes later. Lastly, the *Africa*, while opening fire about 15 minutes before the *Victory* and playing some part in distracting and holding the van as she ran down it, did not get into a position to provide direct support to Nelson's attack for about 95 minutes after the *Victory* opened fire, when the 'poor little 64' joined the attack on the 130 gun *Santissima Trinidad* by taking up a raking position on her larboard bow.

Not only did the delay in these ships getting up jeopardize the outnumbered ships ahead of them, but growing impatient to contribute, they began to fire early at long distance. I have explored and explained more fully elsewhere the considerable variations in British gunnery performance at Trafalgar, and this long-distance fire was a major handicap.⁷¹ The ensuing smoke hindered their ability to select a target to attack when they got up. After the *Britannia* opened fire, wrote John Barclay, 'It became impossible to trace farther except at intervals, when the smoke cleared away a little'.⁷² Codrington reserved his fire in coming down, looking for a target that he would get alongside and then open fire, but he found that he was alone in this and that 'the shot from friends and foes were flying about us like hailstones'. Ten minutes before he felt himself near enough to fire at a ship he was approaching, Codrington had to ask a ship on his quarter 'not to fire into us in her eagerness to fire at the distant enemy'.⁷³ Similarly the *Polyphemus* had to ask the *Swiftsure* to cease firing when she began to take hits from the latter firing across her bow.⁷⁴ Nelson had told his captains to get quickly and closely alongside an enemy, but a number who failed to do either of these obstructed the efforts of others. Attempting to close with a French two-decker, Codrington found himself cut out by the *Ajax* and could only fire at a distance. He then '...made for Admiral Gravina in the *Prince of the Asturias*, but the *Dreadnought* again cut me out there, and yet, like the *Ajax* did not close and make a finish of it'. A second attempt to get alongside the Spanish flagship was similarly prevented 'by the *Britannia* ranging her line, and continued in action'.⁷⁵

The battle began about noon, giving only just over 5¼ hours of fighting time to achieve decisive victory before dusk put an end to the chances of successful pursuit. In that time the sheer hard fighting of the leading half of each of the British lines that were quickest into action created the conditions for victory. Their sustained heavy hitting when surrounded by superior numbers is a justly lauded high point of the British performance in the battle. This was not only because of the immense destruction they inflicted and the ships that struck to them, but also through enabling a number of easier and less costly victories over shattered enemy ships for those eventually coming into action behind them. However there were never enough British ships up in time to prevent a number of enemy ships escaping from those targeted for annihilation by Nelson – those cut off from just in front of the centre back to their rear. Eight of these escaped, as did seven more from those forward to the van – of whom more could have got away had not three others⁷⁶ sought to save honour by making hopeless late rescue charges back into British fleet where they were inevitably outnumbered and overwhelmed: 18 captured or destroyed (Nelson had bargained

for 20) might so easily have been only 15! On the other hand more might have been taken (and less casualties inflicted on the leading British ships) if the rear British ships had got up quicker and engaged the enemy more closely.

Why they were slower in getting up and why they did not engage closely will never be fully explained because there was no enquiry, no courts martial after the battle. Questions were soon asked afterwards, as the survivors in the leading ships compared casualty lists and considered who and what they had seen. The verdict of the lower deck was swift: 'only fourteen of us to come into action', wrote seaman John Brown of the *Victory*. 'There is some of our ships to be kept out of land for seven years for not coming into action[,] there was the most of our heavy ships skulk't away and the poor little 64 [*Africa*] come into action. There is the *Prince* 98 had nobody killed and wounded.'⁷⁷

Nevertheless things did not degenerate into the vicious feuding and back-biting so frequently seen in the past. Partly, this would seem to have been because of a reluctance to do anything that would besmirch the memory of Nelson's heroic death amidst his last and greatest victory, but more clearly it seems to have been the result of the determined efforts of the new commander in chief, Collingwood. An eyewitness recorded that when the frigate commander Blackwood hinted to Collingwood after the battle that 'there had been a want of exertion on the part of some particular ship', the latter started up and said, 'Sir, this has been a glorious victory for England and for Europe – don't let there be a reflection against [even] a cabin boy'.⁷⁸ Collingwood wrote to his and Nelson's old patron, Sir Peter Parker, that

Our ships were fought with a degree of gallantry that would have warmed your heart, – everybody exerted themselves, and a glorious day they made of it. People who cannot comprehend how complicated an affair a battle is at sea, and judge of an officer's conduct by the number of sufferers in his ship, often do him wrong; though there will appear great difference in the loss of men, all did admirably well, and the conclusion was grand beyond description.⁷⁹

Why was Collingwood so determined to cover up for his more errant subordinates? Principally because of bitter memories of having been implicitly maligned himself on such an occasion 11 years before. At the Glorious First of June 1794 Collingwood had been flag captain of the *Barfleur*, taking full command when his admiral was wounded. When after the battle the commander in chief, Earl Howe, was asked to write a public letter naming those who had distinguished themselves in the action, Collingwood's name was not included. Only those who were named were then given commemorative medals. He complained that the fleet was thrown into 'the utmost consternation and astonishment' by Howe's letter and, as for himself, he was

...sick with mortification that there should be the shadow of a suspicion that every possible exertion had not been made by the *Barfleur*, in the mind of any man, and felt it an injustice that such an insinuation shou'd go into the world. ...I could not help thinking, the manner in which we were excluded, bore hard upon injustice: there was an implication of defect, of which I was not conscious, for from the beginning of the Action until the end of it, we were hotly engaged.⁸⁰

Collingwood nursed his grievance until after he had distinguished himself at the Battle of Cape St Vincent in 1797, whereupon he declined to accept the victory medal

until he also received one for the First of June, telling his commander in chief, Sir John Jervis, that 'I feel that I was then improperly passed over: and to receive such a distinction now, would be to acknowledge the propriety of that injustice'.⁸¹ He received both, and he praised the way he thought Jervis had avoided the possibility of recriminations in his victory dispatch:

What is particularly happy to this great event is that there is no drawback, no slander – though all were not equally engaged, all did what was in their power to reduce them, and I understand the Admiral has wisely avoided all partial praise of those whose ill luck prevented their getting into conspicuous situations.⁸²

In his own dispatch after Trafalgar he therefore tried to do the same. Apart from praising Blackwood for his vigilance and reporting of the enemy movements when commanding the frigates, he named no-one except those who were dead and he singled out only one incident (the *Temeraire* sandwiched between the captured *Fougueux* and *Neptuno*) as an example strongly marking 'the invincible spirit of British seamen, when engaging the enemies of their country'.⁸³

He told the secretary to the Admiralty, William Marsden, that

After such a Victory it may appear unnecessary to enter into encomiums on the particular parts taken by the several commanders; the conclusion says more on the subject than I have the language to express; the spirit which animated all was the same; when all exert themselves zealously in their country's service, all deserve that their high merits should stand recorded; and never was high merit more conspicuous than in the battle I have described.⁸⁴

And he issued a general order to Northesk and all his captains thanking them, their officers, seamen and marines for 'their highly meritorious conduct' in the battle and the storm that followed and asking for this to be communicated to their crews.⁸⁵

Nevertheless Collingwood was fully aware of what had happened and hostile to captains claiming too great credit as much as to others incurring too much criticism. When the captain of the *Defiance* boasted of his taking *L'Aigle*, Collingwood grew 'quite indignant at his presumption; because he himself saw her closely and singly engaged with the poor *Bellerophon* very long before Captain [Durham] could have been in action'.⁸⁶

His captains took the hint as to their behaviour and toned down their judgements. Criticisms were made by Collingwood's officers, but privately and cautiously after the commander in chief's attitude became known. Blackwood told his wife that he watched the battle '...As a spectator, who saw the faults, or rather mistakes, on both sides...', and Codrington declared that '...it was all well done *errors excepted* and I hope we shall have no abuse about want of good conduct'.⁸⁷ This is not to say that grievances were not harboured and never re-emerged. Five years after Collingwood's death, in 1815, his Trafalgar flag captain, Rotheram, responded to the news that Northesk and Grindall were to be promoted GCBs by drafting a letter to a newspaper editor, under the pseudonym 'Philo Verus', protesting that the rewards ought to have been given to those 'having been really present at the battle of Trafalgar'.⁸⁸ Nevertheless Collingwood's actions ensured that the battle was allowed to stand unstained as the classic, heroic British naval victory. As a participant, William Pringle Green, later wrote, 'So great was the joy of all the people of England and the remaining Admiral, that all was hushed up'.⁸⁹

References

- 1 See for examples N. A. M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean. A naval history of Britain 1649–1815* (London, 2004), 165, 267, 275, 324.
- 2 *Ibid*, 146, 266–7, 338–9; P. A. Luff, 'Matthews v Lestock: Parliament, politics and the navy in mid-eighteenth-century England', *Parliamentary History*, vol. 10 (1991), 45–62; B. Tunstall, *Admiral Byng and the Loss of Minorca* (London, 1928); D. Pope, *At 12 Mr Byng was shot* (London, 1962); J. H. Broomfield, 'The Keppel-Palisser Affair, 1778–1779', *MM*, vol. 47 (1961), 195–207; N. Rogers, 'The Trial of Admiral Keppel' in N. Rogers, *Crowds, Culture and Politics in Georgian Britain* (Oxford, 1998), 122–51.
- 3 G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen (eds), *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich*, vol. 3 (Navy Records Society, vol. 75, 1936), 201, to Sandwich, 16 February 1780.
- 4 D. Spinney, *Rodney* (London, 1969), ch. 18–21; K. Breen, 'Divided command: the West Indies and North America, 1780–1781', in J. Black and P. Woodfine (eds), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester, 1988), 191–206.
- 5 G. B. Mundy, *The Life and Correspondence of the Late Admiral Lord Rodney* (London, 1830), vol. 2, 358.
- 6 Sir N. H. Nicolas (ed.), *Dispatches and Letters of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson* (London, 1845–6), vol. 1, 499; G. B. P. Naish (ed.), *Nelson's Letters to his Wife and other documents, 1785–1831* (Navy Records Society, vol. 100, 1958), 200, 202–4, 215–16.
- 7 J. Bourchier (ed.), *Memoir of the Life of Admiral Sir Edward Codrington* (London, 1873), vol. 1, 36. Codrington was present in command of the frigate *La Babet*.
- 8 C. Lloyd, *St Vincent and Camperdown* (London, 1963), 160–2.
- 9 C. White, 1797. *Nelson's Year of Destiny* (London, 1998), 53, 73–8; Lloyd, *St Vincent and Camperdown*, 86–92.
- 10 N. Tracy, 'Sir Robert Calder's Action', *MM*, vol. 77 (1991), 259–69.
- 11 See B. Vale, *The Audacious Admiral Cochrane. The true life of a naval legend* (London, 2004), Ch. 5. Basque Roads also ended the career of a Trafalgar captain, now admiral, Eliab Harvey, whose violent abuse against Gambier when the attack was entrusted to Cochrane led to his court martial and dismissal from the service. Reinstated in his rank and seniority in 1810, he was never employed again.
- 12 A. Perry (ed.), *The Admirals Fremantle* (London, 1971), 76.
- 13 *English Historical Review*, vol. 5 (1890), 769, letter to father, 28 October 1805.
- 14 National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (hereafter NMM), JOD/48, W. P. Green's account of Trafalgar 19.
- 15 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, 75–6, 80, to Barham 5 October, to George Rose 6 October 1805.
- 16 *Ibid*, 95, to Collingwood, 9 October 1805.
- 17 *Ibid*, 251; H. G. Thursfield, *Five Naval Journals 1789–1815* (Navy Records Society, vol. 91, 1951), 364.
- 18 E. Fraser, 'The journal of Commander Thomas Colby, R.N. 1797–1818', *MM*, vol. 13 (1927), 264.
- 19 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 89.
- 20 *Ibid*, 80.
- 21 *Ibid*, 89. The memorandum was copied and issued to captains over 9–10 October. For a recent extensive re-examination see M. Czigisnik, 'Admiral Nelson's tactics at the Battle of Trafalgar', *History*, vol. 89 (2004), 549–59. Her discussion draws upon the much neglected *Report of a committee appointed by the Admiralty to examine and consider the evidence relating to the tactics employed by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar* (London, 1913), to which the present author has now added the evidence of the orders of sailing.
- 22 *Ibid*, 90, n. 2.
- 23 *Ibid*, 60, to Lady Hamilton 1 October 1805.
- 24 *Ibid*, 89, 241 n. 9.
- 25 *Ibid*, 91.
- 26 *Ibid*, 150 (author's italics).
- 27 *Ibid*, 90.
- 28 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 149–320 *passim*.
- 29 E. Desbrière (transl.) and C. Eastwick

(ed.), *The Naval Campaign of 1805. Trafalgar* (Oxford, 1933), vol. 2, 131, Villeneuve's Final Instructions.

30 *Idem*.

31 A. Gicquel des Touches, 'Souvenirs d'un marin de la République', pt 2, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. 28 (1905), 424.

32 *Idem*; Desbrière/Eastwick, *Naval Campaign of 1805*, vol. 2, 145, 194.

33 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 297, Journal of Captain Henry Digby, 21 October 1805.

34 *Ibid*, 202, Collingwood's Journal, 21 October 1805; G. L. Newnham Collingwood, *A Selection from the Public and Private Correspondence of Vice Admiral Lord Collingwood* (London, 1829), 125. Did Collingwood cover up for himself when he wrote in his victory despatch that he broke through 'about the twelfth from the rear' (Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 213)?

35 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 225, Eliab Harvey, *Temeraire*, to his wife, 23 October 1805; Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 186, n. 7, *Neptune's Log* – 'about the 13th or 14th ship', 153, *Victory's Log* says she fell onboard the tenth and eleventh ships, but historians have readjusted this. See Fig. 6 in the most authoritative account, A. H. Taylor, 'The Battle of Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 36 (1950), 281–321.

36 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 94; J. S. Corbett, *The Campaign of Trafalgar* (new ed. London, 1919), 392–3.

37 *Ibid*, 393–5; R. C. Anderson, 'The Lee Line at Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 57 (1971), 157–61.

38 This order of sailing is held by the Service Historique de la Marine at Vincennes (SHM V MS236 Nelson). Curiously it also excludes the *Dreadnought* entirely. The *Africa* has been pencilled in later as fourteenth in Collingwood's line after the *Defence*. I am grateful to Nicholas Rodger for bringing this document to my attention.

39 British Library, Add. Mss 33,963, fo. 104: a photograph of the original is reproduced in N. Tracy, *Nelson's Battles. The Art of Victory in the Age of Sail* (London, 1996), 177.

40 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 202, journal entry 21 October 1805.

41 Excluding the flagships, the only differ-

ences in Collingwood's list from that in Table 1 are that the stations of the *Prince* and *Mars* are reversed and that Collingwood places the *Africa* astern of the *Defence* – which is also the place at which the *Africa* has been pencilled in, after 10 October, in Malcolm's list (Vincennes, SHM V MS236 Nelson).

42 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 89.

43 Corbett, *Campaign of Trafalgar*, 393–4.

44 See the outline sketch in Captain Moorsom's letter to his father, 1 November 1805, in NMM, AGC/M/5 (omitted in the printed version in Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 242–4).

45 *Ibid*, 243; E. Fraser, *The Sailors whom Nelson led* (London, 1913), 318.

46 Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 64.

47 The order given in Table 3 is to be preferred to the inaccurate 'The Order in which the Ships of the British Squadron attacked the Combined Fleets on the 21st of October, 1805' which Collingwood attached in haste to his victory dispatch immediately after the battle (Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 215), and which seems based on the list in his journal (Table 1:5) as amended by what he then knew of certain ships (e.g. *Belleisle* passing *Tonnant*) and placing the *Britannia* and *Africa* at the end of Nelson's line and the *Prince* and *Dreadnought* at the end of his own – the ships which had been put out of the line or had never joined it.

48 For their dates of posting see D. Syrett and R. L. DiNardo (eds), *The Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy 1660–1815* (Navy Records Society Occasional Publications 1, 1994). For their careers see the entries in R. H. Mackenzie, *The Trafalgar Roll* (London, 1913), the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and John Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography* (London, 1823–5).

49 Sir J. K. Laughton (ed.), *Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham*, vol. 3 (Navy Records Society, vol. 39, 1911), 327, to Barham, 26 October 1805.

50 William Pryce Cumby, 'The Battle of Trafalgar (an unpublished narrative)', *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 46 (1899), 720.

51 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 155–6, n. 7; Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 292–3; N. A. M. Rodger, 'An

eye-witness account of Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 65 (1979), 196. Between 4am and 9am the *Polphemus* logged herself as making only one knot when everyone else whose log survives in the lee line except the *Thunderer* were averaging more – at 7am the *Tonnant* logged 2, *Revenge* 1⁵/₈, *Dreadnought* 1¹/₂, *Swiftsure* 2¹/₂, *Defiance* 2, *Thunderer* 1, *Defence* 1¹/₂ and even *Prince* 2 knots.

52 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 73, 111; T. Huskisson, *Eyewitness to Trafalgar* (Royston, Herts, 1985), 66.

53 'Contemporary Letter on Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 9 (1923), 60; Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 261–2.

54 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 217, to Marsden, 24 October 1805; Mackenzie, *Trafalgar Roll*, 180–1.

55 Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, vol. 2, 453; D. B. Smith, 'The *Defiance* at Trafalgar', *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 20 (1922–3), 116–21; Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 203–4, n. 6; Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 253–4.

56 Fraser, 'Journal of Commander Thomas Colby'.

57 F. Hoffman, *A Sailor of King George* (new ed. London, 1999), 109; Charles Ekins, *Naval Battles from 1744 to the Peace in 1814* (London, 1824), 280, quoting one of the *Prince*'s lieutenants; Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 156 n, 189 n; *Report of...tactics...at...Trafalgar*, vol. 47 (the lateness of her entrance to the battle gives ground to suspect that the *Prince* was overlogging her speed at 2 knots for all except an hour [at one knot] between 5am and midday); NMM, MSN/1–7, Diary of Henry Mason of the *Prince* (which thought *Achille* was making sail to get away).

58 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 217; H. Owen (ed.), 'Letters from Vice Admiral Lord Collingwood' in M. Duffy (ed.), *The Naval Miscellany*, vol. 6 (Navy Records Society, vol. 146, 2003), 186; NMM, LBK/38, Commonplace book of Captain Edward Rotheram.

59 Taylor, 'Trafalgar', *MM*, vol. 36 (1950), 305; also 44 above.

60 Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, vol. 1 pt 1, 206; Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth (henceforth RNM), MSS 225, Papers of John Wells, letter to parents, 30 October 1805; Sturges

Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 214.

61 A. M. Broadley, *The Three Dorset Captains at Trafalgar* (London, 1906), 253 n.

62 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 214; RNM, MSS 225, Wells 30 October; Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, vol. 1 pt 1, 206–7 (taking his cue from *Naval Chronicle* vol. XV [1806], 444–7); NMM, LBK/38, Commonplace book of Captain Edward Rotheram.

63 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 147–8; *Report of...tactics...at...Trafalgar*, 7, 14. The *Conqueror* herself had been overtaken by the *Leviathan*. There are shades in the *Agamemnon*'s dismasting of the incident when Berry and Nelson in the *Vanguard* were caught by a storm off Corsica in May 1798 and dismasted while the two ships in company were undamaged (B. Lavery, *Nelson and the Nile* [London, 1998], 66–73).

64 For the *Guillaume Tell* episode see William James, *The Naval History of Great Britain* (London, 1837), vol. 3, 16–19 and G. S. Parsons, *Nelsonian Reminiscences* (London, 1998 edn), 15–24; for Trafalgar, Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 64 and Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, vol. 1 pt 2, 779. Three and a half months later Berry in the *Agamemnon* again lagged behind and scarcely came into action in Duckworth's victory at San Domingo (James, *Naval History*, vol. 4, 191–6).

65 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 168 n.

66 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 279–80; Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 60–8.

67 *Ibid*, 71.

68 *Report of...tactics...at...Trafalgar*, 39, *Codrington's Journal*; Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 63–4. Not until 10am does Codrington report setting his steering sails, whereas the *Victory* and *Neptune* set theirs about 6.30am.

69 Hoffman, *Sailor of King George*, 109; Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 168 n. Quite why the *Moniteur* was so slow is a puzzle since her log records her setting her steering sails between 8am and 9am – after the *Victory* and *Neptune* at 6.30am but before the *Orion* at 10am. *Report of...tactics...at...Trafalgar*, 30.

70 *Ibid*, 168–9 n. 1, 198 n. 9.

71 See 'The Gunnery at Trafalgar: training, tactics or temperament?', to be published in *Jour-*

nal for Maritime Research (2005), as an extended version of the author's 'La artillería en Trafalgar: adiestramiento, táctica y moral de combate', in A. Guimerá, A. Ramos and G. Butrón (eds), *Trafalgar y el mundo atlántico* (Madrid, 2004), 127–44.

72 Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 214.

73 Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 64, 67.

74 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 156 n.

75 Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 65; Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights*, vol. 2, 279.

76 *San Agustín, Intrépide, Neptuno*.

77 Thursfield (ed.), *Five Naval Journals*, 365.

78 A. Murray, *Memoir of the Naval Life and Services of Admiral Sir Philip C.H.C. Durham*, GCB (London, 1846), 64.

79 J. Allen, *Memoir of the Life and Services of Sir William Hargood* (Greenwich, 1841), 150.

80 E. Hughes (ed.), *The Private Correspondence of Admiral Lord Collingwood* (Navy Records Society, vol. 98, 1957), 48–9, 51.

81 Newnham Collingwood, *Public and Private Correspondence of Collingwood*, 46.

82 Hughes (ed.), *Private Corresp. of Collingwood*, 81.

83 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 212–14. The *Temeraire* had earlier been in a group of four including the *Victory* and

Redoubtable on one side and the *Fougueux* on the other, but Collingwood saw her when the two former had detached and the already surrendered *Neptuno* had drifted down and fallen on board her.

84 *Ibid*, 213.

85 *Ibid*, 215–16.

86 Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 99. Many officers took exception to the boastings of Eliab Harvey of the *Temeraire*, particularly after Collingwood had, unwittingly as to the consequences, so much praised his conduct in his victory dispatch. *Ibid*, 72, 99.

87 Nicolas, *Dispatches and Letters*, vol. 7, 225 (the cover-up continued when Blackwood's criticism was left out of his letter when published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. XXXIV [July 1833], 11); Bouchier, *Codrington*, vol. 1, 67.

88 NMM, LBK/38, Commonplace book of Captain Edward Rotheram.

89 NMM, JOD/48, Account of the Battle of Trafalgar, 19.

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