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THE  
"LUCKY LITTLE ENTERPRISE."

AND

HER SUCCESSORS

IN THE

UNITED STATES NAVY.

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1776-1900.

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BY F. STANHOPE HILL,

AUTHOR OF "TWENTY YEARS AT SEA," "HISTORICAL CONTINUITY OF  
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# TO THE CADETS

OF THE

## MASSACHUSETTS NAUTICAL TRAINING SCHOOL.

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THE early predecessor in the navy of the United States of the vessel that is now used as the training ship of the Massachusetts Nautical Training School was the armed schooner *Enterprise*. From her remarkably successful career in the brief naval war with France, 1799-1800; in the brilliant naval operations against the Barbary Powers, 1801-1805; and in the war with England in 1812-1814, she became familiarly known in the service as "the Lucky Little *Enterprise*."

Among the young men who began their naval career in the little *Enterprise* nearly a century ago were Hull, Bainbridge, Decatur, Porter, Lawrence, Macdonough, Somers, Burrows, and others who either lived to write their names high up on the scroll of fame or, like Lawrence, Somers, and Burrows, gave up their lives in the service of their country.

If the cadets of the *Enterprise*, who under careful instruction are now learning the seaman's art, should find in this brief chronicle of heroic deeds an incentive to aim for the same high standard of honor, devotion to duty and sturdy patriotism that characterised the young sailors of whom I write, my labor will be more than repaid.

For the historical data in this paper I have drawn upon the Library and Naval War Records of the Navy Department, Emmons's United States Navy, Cooper's Naval History, Roosevelt's War of 1812, Captain A. S. Barker's Deep Sea Soundings, and various contemporary sources.

F. STANHOPE HILL,  
*Secretary Massachusetts Nautical Training School.*

BOSTON, January 1, 1900.



# THE STORY

OF THE

## “LUCKY LITTLE ENTERPRISE.”

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“I have done the State some service.”

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IT is very doubtful if the naval history of any nation can show a more brilliant record, for a vessel of her size, than was gained during the first fifteen years of the present century by the little twelve-gun schooner *Enterprise*, afterward rigged as a brig, and the predecessor on the navy list of the United States of the present steam sloop-of-war *Enterprise*, now used as the school-ship of the Massachusetts Nautical Training School.

It is also noteworthy that during her long and eventful career, the *Enterprise* never met with a reverse, nor a serious mishap, never failed to capture any antagonist with whom she joined issue in battle, and when forced to escape from absolutely overpowering odds, as in 1813-14, she was always able to distance her pursuers—in one case, only after a chase of seventy hours.

During her very active service in the West Indies, in the war of 1798-99, between the United States and France, as well as later in the Mediterranean, where she took part in our conflict with the Beys of Tunis and Tripoli, the *Enterprise* invariably gave a good account of herself, as might have been expected when we note the men, afterward famous in our naval history, who as lieutenants commanded her.

Among these were sturdy Isaac Hull, ten years later the gallant commander of the *Constitution*, and Stephen Decatur,

whose heroic exploit in the destruction of the *Philadelphia* in the Bay of Tripoli was but the prelude to a long and brilliant career, that culminated in 1815 in the absolute humiliation of the Barbary Powers by the squadron under his command. Other captains of the little *Enterprise* were Charles Stewart, afterward when in command of the *Constitution*, the captor of the *Cyane* and *Levant*; and James Renshaw, who for nineteen months was a captive at Tripoli. David Porter of *Essex* fame, father of the late Admiral of our Navy, served as a junior lieutenant in the *Enterprise* in the operations against Tripoli, and among her officers at that time were midshipmen James Lawrence, "the Bayard of the Sea," who gave up his life on the deck of the ill-fated *Chesapeake*; Joseph Bainbridge and Thomas Macdonough, who gained the glorious victory over the British fleet on Lake Champlain.

It makes one fairly dizzy to recall the names of the young officers attached to that little schooner during the years 1800-1805, who were to become world heroes within a scant decade. The *Enterprise*, then as now, was really a school-ship, and the young officers on board of her were there acquiring the practical training and imbibing the professional spirit that made them self-reliant, patient, fearless and patriotic. And her graduates, as they passed on to a broader field of duty in their country's service, did not fail to profit by their early training.

The first vessel in the United States service bearing the name of *Enterprise* was a sloop, armed with twelve four-pounder guns, and carrying fifty men. Commanded by Captain Dickenson, she was one of a fleet of seventeen vessels on Lake Champlain in 1776, the whole under the command of Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold in the operations against Crown Point. They were officered and manned principally by soldiers and landsmen. This fleet fought a drawn battle with the British fleet off the Island of Valcour, October 11, 1776, which lasted five hours, in which some of the vessels were disabled and sunk. Two days later, in a running fight to the southward, one of the vessels was

captured, after great loss. Soon after, the remainder of the American fleet was run on shore in a small creek, about ten miles from Crown Point, and destroyed by their own officers to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, with the exception of the *Enterprise*, which, with the good fortune that seemed her birth-right, escaped both capture and destruction. But the resistance of the Americans had been so stubborn that it discouraged the British commander, General Sir Guy Carleton, who retired to Montreal for the winter. Arnold received great credit for his heroic conduct on Lake Champlain, and the fight off Valcour, which was the first naval battle in the history of the United States, was called "the naval Bunker Hill."

In the summer of the year 1798, the continued aggressions of French cruisers upon our mercantile marine had caused the somewhat tardy abrogation by Congress of all existing treaties with France, and American cruisers were ordered to capture any French vessels that might be found near the coast preying upon our commerce. The scope of this order was very shortly extended by authorizing the capture of such vessels wherever found, and Letters-of-Marque and Reprisal were issued to private armed ships.

Early in 1799 our government built and equipped at Baltimore, Md., two schooners of about one hundred and sixty-five tons, the *Enterprise* and the *Experiment*. They each cost \$16,240; their armament was twelve six-pounders, and their complement was about seventy men. These light, fast, handy little vessels, built on the fine modelled lines that had already made the Baltimore clippers famous for speed and seaworthiness, were especially intended to deal with the small fore-and-aft-rigged French privateers which fairly swarmed in the West Indies, readily avoiding capture by our heavy, square-rigged cruisers. The wisdom of this policy was speedily proved by the remarkable success of the new schooners against the enemy.

On April 1, 1800, the *Enterprise*, commanded by Lieutenant

John Shaw, had a smart brush with a brig, showing Spanish colors, near the Mona Passage. The stranger had eighteen guns of heavier calibre than the American, and the action lasted for twenty minutes, the brig continuing to fly the Spanish flag. At last both vessels withdrew, each convinced that a mistake in nationality had been made.

Lieutenant Shaw, finding it necessary after this contest to make some repairs, went into St. Thomas. While there he was challenged to fight a French lugger of twelve guns outside the harbor, but the Frenchman failing to keep the appointment, Shaw sailed for St. Kitts, capturing a small privateer on the way, and a few days later he captured the Letter-of-Marque *Seine*. This was quite a desperate fight, the Frenchman having twenty-four killed and wounded, while the *Enterprise* had several wounded but none killed. Two weeks later the *Enterprise* captured the six-gun privateer *Citoyenne* and sent her into St. Kitts. The French loss in this engagement was fourteen killed and wounded, while the Americans had but eight wounded.

Returning to St. Kitts, the *Enterprise* refitted, and upon going to sea fell in with the same lugger that had challenged her a month before at St. Thomas, and actually captured her without firing a shot, very much to the surprise of Lieutenant Shaw, who had anticipated a severe fight. Shortly after this, while near Guadaloupe, the French privateer brig *L'Agile* was encountered, and, after a brief contest, was carried by boarding, the French losing twelve killed and wounded, while the *Enterprise* had only three wounded.

In July the *Enterprise*, while becalmed, was approached one night by a French privateer brig. Evidently thinking the American was a merchant vessel, the brig had her sweeps out and was coming down upon her expected prey. A breeze sprang up, however, and the *Enterprise*, getting the wind first, trimmed and made all sail and started in chase of her adversary. The Frenchman, finding that he had caught a Tartar, attempted to make off

before the wind under studding sails. But the Yankee schooner had the heels of the privateer, and keeping in her wake, and within musket shot, Lieutenant Shaw made it very unpleasant for the Frenchman by a well-directed fire of small arms. At last the *Enterprise* drew abeam of the brig, and the two vessels then engaged at close quarters. During the fight the Frenchman's foretopmast was carried away, taking with the wreck several men who were aloft endeavoring to secure the spar, and although the brig made no effort to save her drowning men, the *Enterprise* lowered a boat and picked them up. Then, running alongside the French vessel, and pouring in a rapid fire, Shaw soon forced her to surrender. The prize proved to be the *Flambeau*, mounting twelve nine-pounders, with a crew of one hundred and ten, while the *Enterprise* only had twelve six-pounders and eighty-three men. The French loss was forty killed and wounded, while the Americans, with their usual good fortune, only lost ten men.

A month later the *Enterprise* chased for five hours, and finally captured, the French privateer *Pauline* of six guns and forty men, and in September she took the Letter-of-Marque *Guadaloupenne* of seven guns and forty-five men. This made a grand total for six months for the *Enterprise* of eight privateers, with an aggregate of forty-seven guns and three hundred and eighty-four men, captured and four American merchantmen recaptured.

Returning to the United States, the brilliant services of Lieutenant Shaw were at once recognized by placing him in command of the captured French corvette *Le Berceau* of twenty-six guns, while Lieutenant Charles Stewart was ordered to the command of the *Enterprise*.

In May, 1801, the *Enterprise*, then commanded by Lieutenant Andrew Sterett, sailed for the Mediterranean in the American squadron under the command of Captain Richard Dale, who was ordered to make a demonstration in force against the Bashaw of Tripoli and the Bey of Tunis, in view of the probability of a declaration of war by Tripoli, which, as it proved, had actually at



that time been made, although the news of it had not been received at Washington. The immediate cause of this war was the dissatisfaction of the Bashaw of Tripoli and the Bey of Tunis with the amount of tribute they were receiving from the United States, which they considered insufficient as an immunity for refraining from the capture of American vessels.

In common with the principal European states, our young nation had long submitted to this incredible humiliation, and in January, 1798, we actually sent as a present to the Dey of Algiers the frigate *Crescent*, loaded with valuable gifts, including twenty-six barrels of dollars, "as a compensation for delay in not fulfilling our treaty stipulations in time." It is worthy of note that the captain and several of the officers and crew of the *Crescent* had at different times been prisoners at Algiers, while Richard O'Brien, who took passage in the frigate to become Consul-General to all the Barbary States, had been held as a prisoner at Algiers for ten years. The total value of the *Crescent* with the gifts she carried was estimated at \$300,000, and this naturally excited the cupidity of the Bey of Tunis, who complained that he had only received \$40,000 from the United States during the past year.

England, with her strong commercial instinct, then, as now, stood between the Turk and the civilized world as his quasi-protector, in the effort to secure for Great Britain the monopoly of the Mediterranean commerce, and Lord Sheffield did not hesitate to declare in Parliament: "That the Barbary States are advantageous to maritime powers (Great Britain) is certain. If they are suppressed, the little states of Italy would have much more of the carrying trade." These words slightly paraphrased might well have been used by Lord Salisbury in Parliament three years ago.

In May, 1800, the United States frigate *George Washington*, Captain William Bainbridge, sailed from our shores carrying the annual payment to the Dey of Algiers. This was the last tribute this nation was ever to pay to a foreign power, civilized or

uncivilized, for soon after the stirring words rang out in the halls of Congress: "Millions for defence. Not one cent for tribute!"

Arriving at Algiers, Captain Bainbridge, very much against his will, was induced at the solicitation of Consul-General O'Brien to carry the Dey's personal present of money and slaves to the Sultan at Constantinople. The Dey did not hesitate to say, when Bainbridge at first declined this service, "Your nation pays me tribute, by which you become my slaves; I have therefore the right and the power to order you as I may think proper." That Bainbridge was a gallant officer he conclusively proved in the coming years, but it is difficult in these days to comprehend how he could have brought himself to the point of complying with this arrogant demand. Within three years it was his fate to become a prisoner, and for nineteen months Bainbridge languished in the dungeons of the Bashaw of Tripoli. He could not well have fared worse had he defied the Dey of Algiers from the deck of his staunch frigate *George Washington*.

Upon the arrival of the American squadron at Gibraltar, the frigate *President* and the *Enterprise* were sent to Algiers, and subsequently the *Enterprise* was ordered to Malta. While cruising off that Island on August 1, 1801, she fell in with the Tripolitan war polacre *Tripoli* of fourteen guns and eighty-five men, and an action was at once begun which lasted three hours. During this desperate fight, the Tripolitan three times surrendered, but when the *Enterprise* sent a boat to take possession the enemy twice reopened fire and rehoisted their colors. Exasperated by this treachery, Lieutenant Sterett determined to sink the polacre, and opened fire, but the Tripolitan commander at last threw his flag into the sea, begging for quarter. Lieutenant David Porter was again sent to secure the prize, which this time he accomplished. The Tripolitan loss was fifty killed and wounded, while, strange as it may seem, the Americans had no loss whatever. Sterett dismantled the polacre, throwing all her guns overboard, and ordered her to make for the nearest port. For this gallant affair-

Lieutenant Sterett was promoted, and Congress voted him a sword, while each member of the crew received a month's extra pay.

The Tripolitan captain did not fare as well, for upon the arrival of the polacre at Tripoli the Bashaw ordered her wounded captain to be mounted on a jackass and paraded through the streets, and afterward to receive five hundred bastinadoes. So terrified were the Tripolitans at this event that the sailors abandoned the cruisers fitting out, and only with the greatest difficulty could men be procured to navigate them.

Under orders from Washington, the *President* and the *Enterprise* returned to the United States in December, to avoid wintering in the Mediterranean. In May, 1802, the *Enterprise* again sailed for those waters, accompanying a squadron commanded by Commodore Victor L. Morris, which included the frigates *Chesapeake*, *Constellation* and *New York*, and the corvettes *Adams* and *John Adams*. The frigates *Philadelphia* and *Essex* had remained on the station.

During this cruise the *Enterprise*, while commanded by the gallant Isaac Hull, then a lieutenant, actually cornered a Tripolitan twenty-two gun cruiser one night, driving her to seek refuge in a narrow bay, and holding her there until daylight, when the frigate *John Adams* coming down to the assistance of the plucky little schooner, the two American vessels stood in shore, opened fire, and soon afterward the cruiser blew up with all on board.

On December 23, 1803, the *Enterprise*, commanded by Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, captured a Tripolitan ketch, the *Mastico*, bound for Constantinople with female slaves for the Sultan's harem. Decatur had already proposed to Preble to run into the harbor of Tripoli at night with the *Enterprise* and destroy the *Philadelphia* that had been taken possession of by the Tripolitans on November 1, after she had grounded near the entrance to the port, but the Commodore would not sanction the plan. He decided, however, to send in the *Mastico* on this venture, and the

officers and crew of the *Enterprise*, having captured the ketch, claimed the honor of taking her in for this perilous expedition. Every man and boy on board volunteered for the occasion, but as the crews of other ships also demanded recognition, six officers from the *Enterprise* and six from the *Constitution* were selected. Sixty-two men were also chosen from the crews of the two vessels, and these, with an Italian pilot, manned the *Mastico*.

The thrilling story of that brilliant and entirely successful enterprise is too familiar to need repetition at length. Entering the harbor of Tripoli on the evening of February 15, 1804, the *Mastico* was permitted to drift close alongside of the *Philadelphia* without exciting suspicion, and then, led by the gallant Decatur, and followed by his brave officers and men, the frigate was boarded, the crew of 400 Tripolitans were driven in panic overboard, and the ship was fired. The daring Americans then escaped from the harbor, followed by the Tripolitan gunboats, and passing through a hail of shot and shell from batteries mounting one hundred and fifteen heavy guns, reached their ships with but one man wounded.

The *Philadelphia* burned furiously, until at last the magazines ignited and a terrific explosion rent the ship into fragments and her destruction was complete. Nelson, who was then blockading Toulon, declared this "the most bold and daring act of the age," and Congress manifested its high appreciation of Decatur's bravery by promoting him two grades, to Captain, and voting him a sword.

After this successful raid, the *Mastico* under Decatur was taken into the service and appropriately called the *Intrepid*, but her career under our flag was to be brief. A month later Preble decided to send her into the harbor as a floating mine, for the purpose of destroying the Tripolitan gunboats. In charge of Master-Commandant Richard Somers, the *Intrepid* was filled with powder, explosive shells and combustibles, and with three officers, Somers, midshipmen Henry Wadsworth (an uncle of the poet

Longfellow) and Joseph Israel, with a crew of ten men, she ran in on the night of September 4, 1804, with a fine leading breeze. Unfortunately she grounded on the rocks at the entrance to the harbor, where she was immediately attacked by three Tripolitan gunboats, and in pursuance of his avowed intention not to be taken alive, it is believed that Somers fired the magazine of his vessel, blowing her up in the midst of his enemies.

Although this attempt to destroy the Tripolitan gunboats failed, Captain Preble vigorously continued his bombardment of the fortifications, and on August 3, 1804, sent in the six gunboats with the *Enterprise*, covered by the fire of the *Constitution*, to destroy the Bashaw's gunboats and galleys in the harbor.

The contempt of the Bashaw for "the Franks beyond the ocean," as they called the Americans, was shown at the time of this attack—a contempt, by the way, that was soon to be changed to a very wholesome feeling of respect. Standing upon the terrace of his palace, he watched the American gunboats coming in and remarked to one of his officers: "They will soon make their distance for tacking; they are a sort of Jews, who have no notion of fighting." The terrace was crowded with spectators to behold the chastisement the Bashaw's gunboats would give the Americans if they approached too near. But soon the shells from our flotilla began to fall in the town, and the inhabitants fled to the suburbs, while the Bashaw retreated to his bomb-proof room.

This proved to be one of the most stubborn fights of the war, a hand-to-hand combat that in its various exhibitions of desperate personal courage recalls the feats of the paladins of old.

Stephen Decatur, who led the second of the two divisions, with three gunboats, kept to windward and closed with one of the eastern division of nine Tripolitan gunboats, boarding her with only fifteen men. The captain of this vessel, a large, powerful man, was singled out by Decatur, who charged him with a boarding pike, but the Turk seized the weapon, wrested

it from his assailant's hands, and turned the pike against its owner. Decatur drew his sword, parried the thrust and made a blow at the pike, with a view of cutting off its head, but the sword hit the iron and broke at the hilt, leaving Decatur helpless. As the Turk made another thrust with the pike, the gallant American partially averted it with his arm, but received the point in the flesh of one breast. Pushing the iron from the wound, Decatur sprang within the weapon and grappled his antagonist, the pike falling between them. The Turk's muscular strength, however, overcame the American and he fell across the gunnel of the boat. In this position Decatur managed to draw a small pistol from the pocket of his vest, passed the arm that was free around the body of the Turk, pointed the muzzle in and fired. The ball passed entirely through the body of the Musselman and lodged in Decatur's clothing. At the same instant he felt the grasp of his foe relax and he was liberated.

During this *mêlée* a sergeant of marines interposed between his commander and another Turk who was about to cleave Lieutenant Decatur's skull, receiving the sabre stroke on his own arm, which was nearly severed by the blow.

By this time the other thirteen Americans had overcome the thirty-one Tripolitans, and hauled down the colors of the gunboat.

Decatur left her in charge of Lieutenant McDonough and eight men, and laid another Tripolitan gunboat on board, carrying her, also, after a desperate engagement of a few minutes. These two captured boats had thirty-three men killed and twenty-seven were made prisoners, nineteen of them wounded.

Lieutenant Trippe had an equally exciting experience. He boarded another Tripolitan boat with only Midshipman Jonathan Henley and nine men, his boat falling off before any more could join him. He was thus left to conquer thirty-six men with only eleven. For a time the victory seemed doubtful. Trippe received eleven sabre wounds, some of them dangerous. The blade of his sword bending, he, like Decatur, also closed with his antagonist

and both fell. In the struggle Trippe wrested the Turk's sword from him, and with it stabbed his antagonist to the heart.

After fourteen of the Tripolitans had been killed, the surviving twenty-two surrendered to the eleven Americans, and Trippe brought his captured gunboat off in triumph.

Lieutenant Somers, not able to fetch far enough to windward to coöperate with Decatur, fell upon the leeward division of the enemy, and with his single boat attacked five full-manned Tripolitan boats within pistol shot. After a desperate fight he defeated and drove them in a shattered condition and with the loss of many men to seek refuge under the cover of the rocks.

Lieutenant James Decatur (brother to Stephen) engaged one of the larger Tripolitan gunboats. After losing a greater part of her men she surrendered, but as James Decatur stepped on board of his prize the Turkish captain treacherously shot him through the head, and she escaped while the Americans were recovering the body of their unfortunate commander.

The result of this fight was the capture of three gunboats, and the destruction of three others. The Americans also brought off one hundred and three prisoners, beside leaving many killed and wounded, while our loss was only fourteen killed and wounded.

In this connection a story is told by a contemporaneous writer that may or may not be true. I give it for what it is worth. He says when Decatur returned to the *Enterprise* from this expedition he at once took a boat and boarded the *Constitution* to report to Preble, without waiting to change his clothing, which was torn and begrimed with powder and blood.

The Commodore was on the quarter-deck awaiting Decatur, who, saluting, said: "Commodore, I have brought you out three gunboats!" At this Preble seized Decatur by the lapels of his coat and shaking him, responded, "Why didn't you bring them all out, sir!"

At this public indignity, Decatur, who had no sword, as it had been broken in his contest with the Turk, thrust his hand in

his breast for a dagger he had carried through the day, but it also had been lost, and thus, says the chronicler, "a grave scandal was averted."

Preble went down to his cabin, where Decatur was speedily summoned. A long private conference ensued, and the incident was allowed to pass without further investigation.

It is certain that Preble was a man of violent temper, was subject to outbreaks of anger well-nigh uncontrollable, and he was under a very high state of nervous tension at the time, as his plans for the entire destruction of the Tripolitan fleet had only partially succeeded.

The attacks upon the fortifications at Tripoli were continued by Preble, but the resistance of the enemy was very stubborn, and as winter was coming on, the *Enterprise* and several of the smaller vessels of the fleet were sent to Syracuse, while Captain Preble returned to the United States in the *John Adams*, being relieved in command of the Station by Captain Samuel Barron, who came in the frigate *President* in September, 1804.

The results of Captain Preble's operations before Tripoli, up to this time, had been highly satisfactory, and very great damage had been inflicted upon the enemy. The Pope made a public declaration at this time that "the United States, though in their infancy, had in this affair done more to humble the Antichristian barbarians on that coast, than all the European states had done for a long series of years."

In the spring of 1805, the American fleet having meanwhile been greatly increased, active operations were again begun, with such success that by June 3 a treaty of peace was signed by which the Bashaw relinquished all claim to future tribute and exchanged the American prisoners from the *Philadelphia* for the Tunisian prisoners held by our forces, and the long war honorably ended. The American fleet then returned home, and the *Enterprise* was laid up in ordinary. Congress voted a gold medal to Commodore Preble, and swords to the officers of his squadron.



In 1809 the *Enterprise* was again sent out to the Mediterranean under Lieutenant Trippe, returning home in 1811.

In June, 1812, war was declared with Great Britain. An effort was at once made to rehabilitate our Navy, and the *Enterprise* was transformed from a schooner into a brig, armed with fourteen eighteen-pounder canonades, and two long nine-pounders, with a crew of one hundred men. Master-Commandant Thomas Blakely was put in command, with orders to look out for English privateers on the coast of Maine, as twelve years before the *Enterprise* had been sent to the West Indies after French freebooters.

With her usual good luck the little vessel was not long in finding a quarry, and in August, 1813, she captured the privateer *Fly*. Soon after, Lieutenant William Burrows, a very gallant young officer who had served with Preble in the *Constitution* during the Tripolitan war, was ordered to command the *Enterprise*, and on September 1 he sailed from Portsmouth, N. H., in quest of several privateers that had been reported in the vicinity of Monhegan, Maine.

On September 4, 1813, while near Pemequid Point, Maine, Burrows sighted a brig at anchor in a small inlet, which he recognized as a vessel of war. He at once cleared ship for action, and hoisted the stars and stripes at the peak and at each masthead. The British brig leisurely got under way, fired several guns and stood out seaward, with her colors also flying from each masthead.

While the two vessels were standing out, the *Enterprise* leading, Lieutenant Burrows directed that one of the long nines should be brought aft and run out of a stern port in the poop cabin. As it was found that some of the fixtures interfered with getting a proper elevation on the gun, the Captain called the carpenter with his broad-axe to cut away the wood-work. This attracted the attention of the crew, many of whom had been in the *Enterprise* for some time, and they got the idea that Burrows was arranging to run from the Englishman and use the stern

chaser in defence. It was not until the first lieutenant relieved their minds on this point by the promise of a speedy fight with the enemy, that entire harmony was restored.

At 3 P. M., Burrows, having completed his preparations, shortened sail, tacked, and edged away toward the *Boxer*, the two vessels approaching on different tacks. At 3.20 they both kept away, and as they ranged alongside, the *Enterprise* opened with her starboard and the *Boxer* with her port guns. The *Enterprise* drew ahead, keeping up her fire, and as she passed the *Boxer's* bow the helm was put a-starboard and she sheered across the Englishman's fore-foot, delivering the fire of the long nine, which had been run out of the cabin window, twice at half pistol shot distance, with telling effect.

The *Boxer* then kept away and drew up on the quarter of the *Enterprise*, both vessels exchanging broadsides, but the American brig, keeping ahead of her antagonist, again sheered across the *Boxer's* fore-foot, and raked her with the long nine. At this time the Englishman's maintopmast came down, bringing with it the topsail yard, and the *Enterprise* holding her position continued the raking fire.

Very early in the action Lieutenant Burrows had been mortally wounded by a musket ball, but the brave fellow had refused to be taken below, and throughout the action he was stretched on deck with a hammock beneath his head. As he fell he cried to his first lieutenant, "Never strike that flag!"

Lieutenant Edward McCall, who assumed command, had never before been in action, but he proved fully equal to the occasion and fought and manœuvred the vessel with great skill. At 4 P. M. the fire of the enemy ceased and a voice was heard hailing, "We have surrendered."

"Why don't you haul down your colors?" returned McCall through his trumpet.

"We can't, sir; they are nailed to the mast," was the reply.

A boat was lowered, and McCall, boarding the *Boxer*, found that her commander, Captain Samuel Blyth, had been killed at the first broadside from the *Enterprise*, and that in all the English had twenty-eight killed and fourteen wounded, while the *Enterprise* had but one killed and thirteen wounded, three of whom, however, died the next day.

Captain Blyth, who was a very gallant officer, equally noted for his gentleness and humanity, had been one of the pallbearers a few weeks before in Halifax at the funeral of Captain Lawrence of the *Chesapeake*. Stimulated by the good fortune of Captain Broke of the *Shannon*, Blyth had sailed in the *Boxer* in search of the *Enterprise*, expressing his determination to "lead another Yankee into Halifax harbor."

When Lieutenant McCall returned to the *Enterprise*, he at once brought Blyth's sword to Burrows, who was still stretched out on deck where he had fallen. As the young commander grasped the sword in both his hands and pressed it to his breast he murmured, "I am satisfied." Soon after his body was laid out in his own cabin, covered with the flag for which he had given up his life, "a smile on his lips," as one of his officers wrote to his wife.

An extract from a letter from Commodore Hull to Commodore Bainbridge, dated September 10, 1813, is of special interest as giving the testimony of an intelligent personal witness. Hull says: "I yesterday visited the two brigs, and was astonished to see the difference of injury received in the action. The *Enterprise* has but one eighteen-pound shot in her hull, one in her mainmast, and one in her foremast; her sails are much cut by grape shot, but no injury was done by them.

"The *Boxer* has eighteen or twenty eighteen-pound shot in her hull, most of them at the water's edge; several stands of grape shot in her side, and such a quantity of smaller grape that I didn't undertake to count them. Her masts, sails and spars are literally cut to pieces; several of her guns are dismounted

and unfit for service. To give an idea, I inform you that I counted in her mainmast alone three eighteen-pound shot holes.

"I find it impossible to get at the number killed, as no papers are found by which we can ascertain it. I, however, counted upwards of ninety hammocks that were in her nettings, besides several beds without hammocks. I have no doubt that she carried one hundred men on board."

The exact number on board the *Enterprise* was one hundred and two.

On September 7, after the arrival of the *Enterprise* at Portland with her prize, the bodies of the two commanders were brought on shore in ten-oared barges, rowed at minute strokes by masters of ships, and accompanied by a procession of almost all the barges and boats in the harbor. Minute guns were fired from the vessels, the same military ceremony was performed over each body, and the procession moved through the streets, preceded by the selectmen and municipal officers, and guarded by the officers and crew of the *Enterprise* and *Boxer*. Burrows and Blyth were buried side by side in the Portland cemetery, where their tombs may still be seen.

Lieutenant James Renshaw was now ordered to command the *Enterprise*, and during the winter of 1813-14 she made an extended cruise to the southward in company with the *Rattlesnake*. While off the Florida coast, the *Enterprise* captured the privateer brig *Mars*, armed with fourteen long nines and carrying seventy-five men. April 25 she was sighted by an English frigate that chased her for seventy hours, frequently getting within gunshot. On April 27 it fell calm, whereupon Lieutenant Renshaw got out his boats and towed the schooner until, a breeze springing up, he was enabled to escape from his pursuer. During this chase, Lieutenant Renshaw threw overboard all but two of his guns, reserving these to repel possible boat attacks.

On returning to the United States at the end of this cruise, the *Enterprise* was sent to Charleston, S. C., to act as a coast

guard vessel, in which service she was employed until the close of the war.

During the years 1816-19 the *Enterprise*, under command of Lieutenant Laurence Kearney, was again attached to the Mediterranean squadron, and in 1821 she was sent to the West Indies to aid in breaking up the pirates who were infesting the Caribbean Sea. Among these Lafitte, who had distinguished himself at the battle of New Orleans and received a pardon in consideration of his gallant services against the British, had fitted out a large brigantine, the *Pride*, armed with sixteen guns and carrying one hundred and sixteen men, and returned to his old career in those waters.

Lieutenant Kearney found Lafitte with the *Enterprise*, and agreeably to the desire of our government arranged with him to shift his cruising ground from the West Indies to the southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, the idea seeming to be to relieve our commerce at the expense of our neighbors.

In October, 1821, the *Enterprise* encountered the noted pirate Gibbs with his fleet of piratical vessels while they were in the act of robbing the American ship *Lucies*, brig *Anstides*, and the English brig *Larch*. Lieutenant Kearney burned two of the pirate vessels, drove Gibbs' schooner on shore and finally burned her, and brought several of the pirate schooners to Charleston, S. C., where they were condemned.

In 1823, after her long and fortunate career, the *Enterprise* was wrecked on the Little Curacoa, but all hands were saved.

To sum up the service of this little vessel, we find that the *Enterprise* took more French privateers than any vessel in the West Indies, while her action with the *Flambeau* was one of the warmest of the kind on record. In the Tripolitan war she captured the *Tripoli*, a cruiser of equal size, in a very desperate engagement. She captured the *Mastico*, and with that vessel, the Commander of the *Enterprise* with several of his officers and men, aided by a detail from the *Constitution*, destroyed the *Philadelphia*.

She took the English brig *Boxer* after a sharp engagement. She escaped from several English frigates by her superior speed, and of the five small vessels in the Mediterranean squadron, the *Enterprise*, *Vixen*, *Siren*, *Nautilus*, and *Argus*, the *Enterprise* alone escaped capture by the enemy. Finally she rounded out her career by honorable and successful work against the pirates in the West Indies.

After such an adventurous and singularly fortunate career, it is not strange that she earned the name in the Navy of the "Lucky Little *Enterprise*."

The third *Enterprise* in our naval service was a schooner of one hundred and ninety-four tons, mounting ten guns. She was purchased in New York, in 1831, for \$27,935 and was sold in Boston in 1845. During her career she cruised on the Brazil station under command of Lieutenant S. W. Downing, 1832-33. She was in the East Indies, 1834-37, under Lieutenants A. S. Campbell and George Hollins. Cruised in the Pacific, 1838-39, under Lieutenants William M. Glendy and H. Ingersoll; on the Brazil station, 1839-42, under Lieutenants F. Ellery, Percival Drayton and Commander Louis M. Goldsborough, and in 1843-44 she was commanded by Lieutenants J. P. Wilson and J. M. Watson.

These were the piping times of peace, and the third *Enterprise* had no opportunity of making a war record. But it will be noted by the names recorded above that, like her immediate predecessor, this little vessel had also among her various commanders some officers who were later highly distinguished in our naval annals.

The present steam sloop-of-war *Enterprise*, the fourth of her name in our service, was built, 1873-76, at Kittery, Me., by John W. Griffith and the United States government. She is bark-rigged; length, 185 feet; beam, 35 feet; mean draft, 14 feet 3 inches; displacement, 1,375 tons. Her armament when she was first commissioned was: one 150-pounder rifle pivot; one 60-

pounder rifle on top-gallant forecastle; four 9-inch Dahlgren smooth-bore guns; one 3-inch B. L. rifle; one Gatling gun; and two howitzers for boats and saluting purposes.

She carried 195 officers, seamen and marines, and proved herself one of the fastest and most efficient vessels on the North Atlantic Station, having a speed under steam of about twelve knots an hour.

In 1879-80 the *Enterprise*, under the command of Commander Thomas O. Selfridge, U. S. N., surveyed the Amazon River a distance of several hundred miles from its mouth. Upon the completion of this work the ship was sent across the Atlantic to reinforce the European squadron. Upon her return from that cruise she was refitted and sent out again to the European squadron, 1880-82, under the command of Commander Bowman H. McCalla, U. S. N.

On January 2d, 1883, the *Enterprise* sailed from Norfolk, Va., under command of Commander A. S. Barker, U. S. N., to join the Asiatic squadron. The route selected by the Navy Department for the ship was via the Cape de Verde Islands and Cape of Good Hope. From the Cape, Commander Barker was instructed to cruise along the coast of South Africa, thence to Madagascar, the Comoro Islands and Zanzibar. From Zanzibar the *Enterprise* was directed to cross the Indian Ocean by the way of the Straits of Sunda and proceed to China, touching *en route* at Borneo.

The Navy Department directed, for the purpose of adding to the existing knowledge of the ocean's bed, that deep-sea soundings should be taken on this cruise at intervals of one hundred miles. For that purpose the Sigsbee Improved and Sir William Thompson's deep-sea sounding apparatuses were put on board, provided with Belknap's specimen cups and other modern apparatus.

During this cruise around the world the *Enterprise* made several important discoveries and added materially to our previous

hydrographic knowledge of the contour of the bottoms of the North and South Atlantic Oceans. Among these discoveries were two submarine peaks in the South Atlantic Ocean, and an extensive sand-bank several hundred miles from the coast of South America. Commander Barker also found the deepest depression that had been discovered up to that time, but one, in the North Atlantic, when, in sounding to the northward of the Virgin Islands and Porto Rico, a specimen was brought up from the bottom from a depth of 4529 fathoms, or  $5\frac{1}{8}$  miles. The *Blake*, under Commander Brownson, had previously obtained 4561 fathoms within 40 miles of this spot.

During this cruise of thirty-eight months the *Enterprise* also visited all the Chinese treaty ports, and was present at the bombardment by the French of Foo Choo arsenal, Pagoda Anchorage, witnessing the destruction of the Chinese fleet and the passing of the forts in the Min River by the French squadron under Vice-Admiral Courbet. This engagement was exceedingly dramatic in its incidents, it being the first time that the modern quick-firing guns had been used in battle. The effect of these guns when fired from the tops of the French fleet was terrific, making perfect charnel houses of the unprotected decks of the Chinese ships.

In 1891 the *Enterprise* was sent to the Naval Academy at Annapolis for the use of that institution, and in 1892 she was assigned by the United States government to the use of the Massachusetts Nautical Training School, where she is now used as a school-ship for the purpose of instructing about one hundred young men (residents of this Commonwealth) in the theory and practice of seamanship and steam and electrical engineering. The Navy Department detail for this school four naval officers. These are, at this time, Commanding Officer and Superintendent, Commander Frederick M. Wise; Executive Officer, Lieutenant Robert E. Coontz; Navigating Officer, Lieutenant L. C. Bertollette; Watch Officer, Lieutenant G. G. Mitchell. These officers



are also instructors, as well as the civilians who are engaged as engineer, surgeon, English instructor, etc.

The *Enterprise* remains at Boston during the winter months, which are devoted to the instruction of the cadets in the theory of navigation and steam and electrical engineering and in other branches of study. During the summer months the ship is sent to sea, to afford an opportunity for practical work for the cadets in the various branches of their profession.

The Nautical Training School is managed by a State Board of three Commissioners who are, at present, Rear-Admiral George E. Belknap, U. S. N. (retired), *Chairman*, Robert B. Dixon, M. D., and Hon. John Read. These Commissioners formulate all rules, regulations and courses of study for the school and administer the annual appropriation made by the Legislature of the Commonwealth for its maintenance. During the six years it has been in operation the school has been exceedingly successful and nearly one hundred of its graduates have already obtained responsible positions in the mercantile marine, while about seventy of the cadets were engaged during the late Spanish war in the United States service and made an excellent record in their various lines of duty.

There is a steadily increasing demand for the carefully trained graduates of this institution as junior engineers and officers in the mercantile marine, and as a natural result the number of applicants for admission to the school is fully up to its capacity. And so, in this year 1900, the modern *Enterprise* is perhaps doing, in a quiet manner, as worthy service to the State as was accomplished in a very different way long years ago by her warlike predecessor, "the Lucky Little *Enterprise*."

OPINIONS OF SOME WELL-KNOWN NAVAL  
OFFICERS AND OTHER GENTLEMEN,  
WITH EXTRACTS FROM  
PRESS NOTICES.

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Following are brief extracts from a large number of letters received:—

The late Governor Roger Wolcott said:

"I have been spending a part of the afternoon in reading 'The Story of the Lucky Little Enterprise.' What a splendid record of American courage and valor! I beg that you will accept my cordial thanks for this admirably told story of the sea. I shall value it highly."

Admiral George Dewey, U. S. N., says:

"Please accept my thanks for the little book, which I have read with much pleasure, recalling as it does one of the most gallant sea fights in the annals of our history. May the present 'Enterprise' be as lucky as her predecessor."

The Hon. John D. Long, Secretary of the Navy, says:

"I value your little book and appreciate your sending it. The 'Enterprise' was one of the ships of the early American Navy which particularly distinguished itself; its battle with the 'Boxer' is especially memorable. I remember looking at the graves in Portland, Me., where Captain Burrows and Captain Blythe lie."

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge says:

"I am very glad to have your monograph on the 'Enterprise.' One of the finest events in the war of 1812 was her fight with the 'Boxer.'"

Professor E. K. Rawson, Superintendent Naval War Records, says:

"It would be very desirable if the same sort of work as 'The Story of the Lucky Little Enterprise and Her Successors in the United States Navy, 1776-1900,' could be done for some of the other historic ships in the service."

The Rt. Rev. Leighton Coleman, D. D., LL. D., Bishop of Delaware, says :

" You did well to commemorate that most lucky vessel, the 'Enterprise,' and the story, as you tell it, is most interesting, and aids in doing justice to the valor and skill of our countrymen in a very eventful period of our history."

Rear Admiral S. B. Luce, U. S. N., says :

" You have done a good piece of work, and I trust the book will be used as a text-book on board the ship whose services and those of her forefathers—or foremothers (for a ship is of the feminine gender)—it commemorates. I hope the time will come when a little more attention will be paid to teaching our naval apprentices something of the history of the Navy. May your little book be the beginning."

Rear Admiral George E. Belknap, U. S. N., says :

" You have made an exceedingly interesting story of 'The Lucky Little Enterprise.' There is not a dull line in the book. Rich in incident, gathered from many sources, happily grouped and woven together in graceful and graphic narrative, the reader's interest is at once attracted and continued with unabated enjoyment to the end of the story. Like the old 'Constitution,' the 'Enterprise' was always a lucky ship and the story of her career possesses similar interest."

Rear Admiral James A. Greer, U. S. N., says :

" If we could have a detailed account of many of our vessels, with personal and other incidents included, it would be most interesting. I have read 'The Story of the Lucky Little Enterprise' with great pleasure."

Rear Admiral Albert S. Barker, U. S. N. (formerly in command of the "Enterprise"), says :

" I always felt when I was in command of the 'Enterprise' that she was a lucky ship and frequently spoke of it to the officers. I am very glad you have put so much information in such an attractive shape."

Commander Franklin Hanford, U. S. N., says :

" I have read your most interesting little book giving the history of the 'Enterprise,' and write to thank you for it. There are several other vessels in the Navy whose history I wish might also be written up as you have done for the 'Enterprise.'"

Commander J. Giles Eaton, U. S. N. (formerly in command of the "Enterprise"), says :

" I have read with great pleasure your 'Lucky Little Enterprise,' and only regret that it is not longer. It is excellently done and very welcome to all who have had to do with the staunch old seaboat."

The New York Nation says:

"Mr. Hill closes his very interesting memoir with the just reflection that the modern 'Enterprise' is doing as worthy service to the state as did the vanquisher of the 'Boxer.'"

The New York Nautical Gazette says:

"The history of this famous ship is presented in a manner altogether commendable and we wish that more of our naval craft could have as enthusiastic a chronicler. As an individual history of a notable vessel this would be hard to excel."

The Boston Journal says:

"What the 'Constitution' was among frigates and the 'Hornet' among the sloops-of-war of the young navy of the Republic, the little 'Enterprise,' sometime schooner, sometime brig, was among the smaller craft. Captain F. Stanhope Hill tells her eventful history very entertainingly, and it is probable that she was the most successful warship of her tonnage ever built."

The Boston Times says:

"We must present our compliments to Mr. Hill for his very interesting and patriotic account of the exploits of the 'Lucky Little Enterprise,' now used as a training ship by the Massachusetts Nautical Training School."

Hon. Frank A. Hill, Secretary of Massachusetts Board of Education, says:

"A capital story of splendid courage, written by one who knows whereof he writes and how to tell what he knows."

















