**ADMIRAL NELSON AND TRAFALGAR**

*“Wounds received by Lord Nelson*

*His Eye in Corsica*

*His Belly off Cape St Vincent*

*His Arm at Teneriffe*

*His Head in Egypt*

*Tolerable for one War.”* Lord Horatio Nelson 1803

**YOUNG MAN IN A HURRY – The Rising Star**

* Horatio Nelson (1758-1805) born County Norfolk 9/9/1758 at the rectory of his reverend father
* Age 12 Nelson reported to third rate HMS *Raisonnable* (64 guns) as ordinary seaman, uncle is Captain Maurice Suckling, appointed midshipman and began officer training, learned navigation
* Life is hard in Royal Navy – low pay, discipline harsh (lash), food poor, living quarters crowded, sadistic captains overused lash – Winston Churchill: “*British Naval tradition’s are based on rum, buggery, and the lash”*
* Nelson: *“I will be a Hero and confiding in Providence I will brave every danger”* 1776 age 18 – Nelson wants war, war=advancement and adventure
* Nelson is a short man 5’4” but is made post Captain 1779 age only 21
* In West Indies Nelson begins courting widow Francis “Fanny’ Nisbett (1758-1831) who has son 5 years old (Nelson loves children), 3/1/1787 Nelson marries Francis
* Nelson is without ship 1787-1793 peace with France-enjoys “Coursing” (the sport of hunting game animals such as hares with greyhounds), a great reader especially loves The Bible and Shakespeare (as Admiral calls Captains below him his “band of brothers” Henry V)
* Since Samuel Pepys time officers formed dining clubs such as “Royal Naval Club of 1768” and “Navy Club of 1785”-during time of peace a way of networking

**CAREER ADVANCEMENT AND GLORY**

* War with France again Feb. 1793 Nelson commissioned HMS *Agamemnon* (64 guns) his first ship of the line, launched in 1774 in Mediterranean under Lord Hood – It will be his favorite ship
* Nelson sails to Naples and meets with the British Minister Sir William Hamilton and they become lifelong friends, he also meets his wife lady Emma Hamilton
* British are defeated at Toulon by a young French artillery officer Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)
* On Corsica 7/12/1794 Nelson (He is also Colonel of Marines) is injured in amphibious attack by explosion which sends sand into his right eye, loses sight in it but eye appears normal, very painful
* Battle of Cape St Vincent 2/14/1797 Nelson uses his initiative (reading signals loosely, disobedience) cuts of Spanish retreat boards and takes one ship then boards and takes another (Nelsons Patent Bridge for Boarding Enemy Vessels), wounded in belly
* Nelson is promoted to Rear Admiral by seniority
* Battle of Santa Cruz de Tenerife 7/22/1797, leading Marines in assault Nelson is wounded in right arm and it is amputated (Nelson is fearful this will end his career)

**BATTLE OF THE NILE 8/1/1798**

* Napoleon invades Egypt, French fleet in Alexandria harbor, Nelson decides to attack at sunset
* During the attack Nelson sets the ship *L’Orient* on fire and it explodes, Nelson destroys fleet, Napoleon, and few officers escape back to France, but Nelson sets up blockade and his army is lost, Nelson is a national hero
* Nelson is hit in the head with fragment of iron and believes it is fatal, is temporarily blinded, injury serious concussion
* Nelson sends word to East India Company of the victory, and they reward him with 10000 pounds
* Not everyone sees Nelson as a Hero, James Gillray (Father of political cartoons) does not

**THE HAMILTON AFFAIR AND SCANDAL**

* Nelson goes to Naples to see his friend Minister William Hamilton (1730-1803) and begins affair with his wife Lady Emma Hamilton
* She is born Amy Lyon (1765-1815) and works as a maid, then actress, at 15 1780 she meets Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh (1754-1846) and becomes his mistress, he ignores her for drinking and hunting, she conceives a child by him, then befriends the Honourable [Charles Francis Greville](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Francis_Greville) (1749–1809) who will take her as mistress if she fosters out the girl Emma, he sets her up in a small house and has her change her name to Emma Hart, seeing a way to make money he sends her to his friend painter George Romney for a new muse and model, she soon became London’s hottest celebrity, meanwhile in 1783 the “Honorable” Greville needs money and therefore a rich wife, to be rid of Emma he sends her to Naples for a “vacation” and tells his uncle Sir William she can be his mistress
* William’s beloved wife Catharine had died in 1782 after 24 years of happy marriage
* William did the right thing and married her despite age difference (61/26), she is a hostess and companion to him not sexual
* Nelson is very vain, and Emma plays to his vanity, back in England the affair causes scandal and gossip, Emma is now pregnant with daughter Horatia and will not be received at Court, Fanny tells Nelson it’s her or me, he chooses Emma and they never see each other again

**THE BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN 4/2/1801**

* Baltic states Sweden and Denmark are neutral and important to England-Hemp for rope, flax, tar, wood, copper – Russia’s Tsar Paul I has defected from coalition and is talking peace to France, Prime Minister Pitt decides to intimidate them and not support France
* Sends Fleet under Sir Hyde Parker (1739-1807) to diplomatically or militarily “persuade” them, Nelson is under his command
* Unsure about neutral Denmark, the British attack their fleet in Copenhagen, in shallow water Nelson leading attack in smaller ships, after four hours Parker signals to disengage the battle, Nelson puts his eyeglass to his right eye and says he can’t see the signal (true, it is his blind eye)
* Nelson negotiates cease fire keeping Denmark neutral and is promoted to Vice Admiral
* Ironically, before attack Tsar Paul I is murdered and new Tsar Alexander I wants to stay in war
* Peace breaks out 1801-1803, Sir William dies 4/6/1803, Napoleon goes back to war 1803

**BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR 10/21/1805**

* Combined French/Spanish fleet near Cadiz Spain, Nelson has radical plan to divide his ships into two groups and break the combined fleet line creating melees he hopes will lead to their annihilation
* Nelson changes will, he is asking the King to “maintain” Emma, they don’t, Emma and Horatia will move to France where she dies 1815 age 49-Fanny will receive 2000 pounds/year pension
* Nelson: *“England expects that every man will do his duty*” signal flags to fleet
* Nelson is shot on the quarter deck of the HMS *Victory* at 1:30 pm by a French marine on the top of the *Redoutable* and taken down to the orlop (cockpit) deck where he dies at 4:30
* His body is stored in a cask of brandy with camphor and myrrh lashed to mainmast under guard
* Nelson is buried in crypt under St Pauls Cathedral, *Victory*, fatal ball, and uniform all preserved

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