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CAPT. DANIEL TUCKER IN THE  
REVOLUTION

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS BY REV. E. C. CUMMINGS



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## CAPT. DANIEL TUCKER IN THE REVOLUTION.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS BY REV. E. C. CUMMINGS.

MR. JAMES HOPKINS SMITH, a few weeks ago, kindly placed in my hands a manuscript of considerable length, namely, the autobiography of his great-grandfather, Capt. Daniel Tucker. Capt. Tucker was a prominent citizen of Portland in his day, and as a young man shared in the fortunes of Falmouth during the Revolutionary epoch. Thinking that this autobiography would have features of special interest for the Maine Historical Society, I obtained Mr. Smith's permission to present it.

It appeared, however, by reference to Willis' History of Portland, that this sketch had been drawn upon by the historian, especially as respects the very interesting testimony to the character and service of Mr. Theophilus Parsons, afterwards chief justice of Massachusetts, but once a teacher in this thriving town of the District of Maine; also as respects Capt. Tucker's own apprenticeship at the age of eleven to Mr. Paul Little, with whom he was serving when Falmouth was bombarded by Mowatt. There would be little occasion, therefore, to reproduce any matter in the manuscript of a date previous to this event.

Also in Willis' History important genealogical and biographical details are given, presumably from this manuscript, that present particulars of Capt Tucker's life subsequent to the Revolution:— the family of his father, his own family, his successful career as a shipmaster, his extensive commercial operations in the distinguished firm of Weeks & Tucker, his reverses in consequence of the embargo of 1807, and his numerous public offices between that date and his death in 1823.

The peace that followed the Revolution opened to Capt. Tucker, and to other able and experienced men of Portland, a great field of commercial enterprise and seafaring adventure. How such men embarked in the new national movement of trade and commerce, together with the success which many of them achieved, is part of the common glory of our Portland. The story is so well remembered and recorded that I shall not venture to read that later and very interesting part of the manuscript, which takes the cheerful coloring of national peace, common prosperity and Christian hope. Here is a family memoir exceedingly significant,— to be preserved among family memorials, and to become possibly a vivid picture to some student in the far future, when our historic atmosphere shall differ, it may be, much more than at present from its earlier phases.

But from the destruction of Falmouth in 1775, to the peace of 1783, the personal recollections are of the Revolutionary movement. They pertain to that most

memorable episode of transition from colonial dependence to national being. A part, however small, in that momentous change elevates a personal testimony to a share in the dignity of national history ; and what one actor sees with his own eyes can never lose its interest because general events are of familiar tradition, or because many other witnesses saw the same scenes from other points of observation, or shared the same experiences with circumstantial variations.

Besides, it was the fortune of Capt. Tucker to be engaged in the Revolutionary struggle, not only as one of the home guard, but also as a privateersman. The privateer is not likely to get his full due in history. He is an adventurer. He helps in the struggle of his country as a matter of private enterprise, in the expectation of capturing prizes as his reward. He is apt to be celebrated in story, but is not reckoned upon as contributing much to shape the course of events ; and is counted possibly as a sort of licensed survival of the private warfare and systematic robbery of barbarous ages. Among the declarations respecting maritime laws signed by the plenipotentiaries of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia and Turkey, assembled in Congress at Paris, April 16, 1856, is this one : " Privateering is, and remains, abolished." But the United States, for substantial reasons connected with the smallness of her navy, has not given her signature, so far as I can learn, to this declaration. Be that as it may, the progress of international law leaves to the privateer of the past a just claim to take the witness'

stand on his own behalf, that he may either affirm the patriotic motive and general rectitude of his actions, or indicate possibly, on the other hand, the respects in which his conduct may have been warped by stress of circumstances inseparable from his calling. It is this consideration which gives Capt. Tucker's privateering narration a special interest and importance. He is part of a history necessarily obscure, which historical inquirers are apt to neglect, and with regard to which later tradition cannot be expected to compare in graphic distinctness with the testimony of an eyewitness actively concerned in the facts described.

Col. William M. Olin, Secretary of the Commonwealth, in his preface to "Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War," an important record, the first two volumes of which have recently appeared, says: —

It is to be regretted that the records of naval service during the Revolution, in the possession of the commonwealth, should be so meager and incomplete as compared with those of the military service, inasmuch as history records that the service rendered by men of Massachusetts afloat was equally as creditable and meritorious as that rendered by the land forces. By far the greater part of such service was performed by privateers, and these being matter of private enterprise, no official returns of officers and crews were required.

This is of some significance as accounting for the fact that privateersmen were possibly apt to treat their parole as a mere formality, when having been taken prisoners they were set at liberty on the promise of not serving in the same way again until they should be duly exchanged. As no exchange appar-

ently was provided for applicable to their case, their parole might seem to them to have been canceled before it was given.

With these prefatory remarks, therefore, I introduce an extract from Capt. Tucker's autobiography, covering the period from October 18, 1775, to the news of peace in the spring of 1783 : —

The burning of the town in October of this year is so important an event, attended with such distressing consequences to the inhabitants, and in which I was materially affected, I may here give an account, and without a deviation from my plan and being thought vain of writing a history of the war, or any part of it.

Thomas Coulson, an Englishman, came to Falmouth about the year 1770, master of an old ship named the John, and lay there a long time to repair his ship, and while there he married Dorcas Coffin, a sister of Dr. Coffin, and carried her to England with him. In 1774, Coulson, with his wife, returned to Falmouth, and entered into contract to build a very large ship, which took a long time to complete, and about the time the ship was finished and ready to be launched the difficulties between this and the Mother Country had greatly increased, and the first Congress in '74 had met at Philadelphia, and among many other provisions for the defense of the country, they passed a non-impotation act, which provided that all goods, wares and merchandise that should thereafter arrive from England should forthwith be sent back, without being landed or the bandages being broken.

After this act was in force a small vessel arrived from Bristol, England, having on board the rigging, sails, cables, anchors and everything necessary to equip Coulson's new ship for sea; but the old custom-house being broken up, and all public business being conducted by a committee of public safety, Coulson had to apply to that committee for leave to land his goods in order to rig his ship. The committee, considering the goods were intended to be put on to a ship to go to England, thought it reasonable to grant this liberty; but the law did not allow them the power, and they advised Coulson to go to Watertown, to the Provincial Congress then sitting there, to see if that body would allow his cargo to be landed, which advice Coulson pretended to pursue; but instead of going to Watertown he went to Boston, and laid his case before the British admiral, Graves, and he sent to Falmouth the ship of war *Canseau*, commanded by the infamous Capt. Henry Mowatt, and under this protection the goods were landed and the new ship rigged in defiance of all authority in the town.

While this business was going on, and Mowatt's ship lying in the harbor, in the spring of 1775, Capt. Thompson, of Brunswick, laid a plan to come to Falmouth and take the ship by boarding her, and he with seventy men landed on the back side of Mount Joy's Neck in June: and Capt. Mowatt, his doctor, and Parson Wiswell, the church minister of the town, went to walk around the neck after dinner and fell into Thompson's hands and were made prisoners, and although Mowatt and his doctor ought to have been considered prisoners

of war, Thompson declared his intention of placing these two in the front of his boarding squadron and attempting the enterprise next morning. Against this measure Mowatt warmly remonstrated, and owing to the defenseless state of the town the committee of safety and the leading inhabitants interfered by endeavoring to persuade Thompson to let his prisoners go on board the ship on parole of honor to come on shore at nine o'clock the next morning, and after much conversation it was agreed that Mowatt and his doctor might go on board the ship on parole of honor, and the minister go about his business, on condition that Brigadier Preble, Enoch Freeman, Esq., and Moses Shattuck should become sureties for Mowatt's honor to come on shore the next morning according to agreement, which agreement he forfeited, and he never landed in that place afterwards. When he went to his barge he was accompanied by a large number of the most respectable inhabitants to whom he expressed his thanks in most glowing language for their influence in saving his life, as he expressed it, and he lamented the unhappy civil war that had been begun by the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill. What events this war might lead to he could not foresee, but he thought it might be that orders would be sent from the court of Great Britain to burn or destroy every town on the continent that was assailable; and if that should be the case he thought he had influence enough to save the town of Falmouth, and with a solemn assurance that his influence should be exerted to the utmost he stepped into his barge, bid the gentlemen

“good-night,” and went on board and broke his parole. He returned again in October with five vessels under his command — two ships, two schooners, and one sloop. They arrived and anchored in the lower harbor on the sixteenth, and lay all night without any communication with the town, and the inhabitants were greatly terrified at this hostile fleet, until it was ascertained that Capt. Mowatt commanded the whole.

On the morning of the seventeenth the fleet got under weigh and began to warp up towards the town with kedge anchors. About eight o'clock A. M. my master, Little, came on horseback to the shop door, called me out, told me he was going to Windham to be gone several days and should send people to me with orders to pay for their labor, etc. I then asked him if he knew the fleet was coming up, and that people in general were of the opinion that it was coming with hostile intentions against the town, and he replied to me that Capt. Mowatt had the command, and there was no danger. He then went to Windham and left me, at fifteen years of age, with the care of both shops.

The ships and vessels were until four o'clock P. M. before they got to their anchorage before the town, and the inhabitants generally were in a state of alarm and many began to move out for safety. Mrs. Little was very much frightened and began to think of moving, and sent me with two old looking-glasses out to a place called Cape Leach. When I had deposited this treasure, worth about five dollars, and was about remounting my horse, a Windham man came by on the

gallop and told me the town was to be burnt in two hours. I then told him where Mr. Little was in Windham and desired him to send him word, and he promised he would, but did not.

I rode into town with all speed and found Mrs. Little with her children at the front door ready to go. She delivered to me a bag with all her husband's money, books and papers, and with her children walked over to Mr. Deering's farm. I then took all the money out of the shop and all the gold and silver ware, and carried the whole and delivered it to her, and went into town with a charge to save all I could. Before Mr. Little got in and with nobody to help me but the females of the family, I got everything ready to load up carts in expectation of Mr. Little's arrival every moment, and I was fortunate enough to get a man and horse to go after him. At two o'clock in the morning this man found Mr. Little in bed and asleep, not knowing anything of the distressed situation of the town.

When Mowatt had gotten his fleet moved and ready to fire, he sent his barge on shore with an officer, under a flag of truce, with a long letter to the committee of safety. The purport of the letter was to inform the committee that he had orders to set the town on fire immediately on his arrival, but he added that, from feelings of humanity, he would take it upon himself to so far deviate from his orders as to allow two hours to remove the human species. Immediately upon this official communication being read, a respectable committee went on board the

Canseau and entered into a conference with Mowatt, and with much difficulty prevailed on him to defer his work of destruction until nine o'clock the next morning, being October 18, 1775. Mowatt having stated to the committee the only condition on which he could spare the town, and that was for the inhabitants to deliver up their arms and swear allegiance to his Majesty, King George the Third. This condition being inadmissible the town was sacrificed to the cause of liberty and patriotism.

During this night the people saved all they could. About four o'clock in the morning Mr. Little got in with two stout teams which we loaded and sent out, and besides what we thus saved, the tide being up, we loaded a gondola at Pote's Wharf with West India goods and sent it round the neck, and then left a large amount of property to destruction. When nine o'clock drew near, the people generally had gone out of town, Col. John Waite came by our house and seeing Mr. Little in the house he spoke like a person in a fright and said, "Little, it is time to go. They will fire in a few minutes." His answer was, "I shall go directly," and turning to me he said, "Daniel, you had better go," and I replied, "I will go when you do." He soon started. He went through Federal Street, and I around Sandford's Corner through Back Street, and when I was abreast of the windmill that stood where Samuel Hussey's house now stands Mowatt hoisted a red flag and fired the first gun, and the shot whistled along between me and the old meeting house. The other vessels in the fleet being all

ready commenced a spiteful fire and continued it with very little cessation until 6 P. M.

The first store that was fired stood where William Gorham's house now stands on Middle Street, near the junction of Federal Street. This house burnt down without communication with any other, but it was but a short time before all the north part of the town was in a blaze. They landed in three boats from all their vessels at the same moment and threw torches into the windows and doors of the houses, and then fled like cowards on board the fleet. Among the public buildings burnt was a court-house, handsome and new, that stood where the North schoolhouse did, and the Episcopal church that stood on the lot adjoining Mrs. Newhall's dwelling-house. All the buildings on King Street, on Fore Street, from Fort Burrows to Exchange Street, and on Middle Street as far as Josiah Cox's house — all this was burnt, and a more melancholy sight, or a more cowardly transaction I did not witness during the war, and before it was over I was in three engagements at sea, of which you will hear more.

Mowatt immediately withdrew his fleet from the town and the next day sailed for Boston, which was then held and blockaded by the English. Many people have blamed the inhabitants of Falmouth for not defending the town against so small a force, but the truth is it was not in their power for there was not was a cannon mounted in town at that time, and there a great scarcity of powder. There was an old decayed fort and blockhouse where Mrs. Weeks' garden

now is. This fortress was built during the reign of Queen Anne, and was in ruins. The people all fled into the country at the beginning of winter which set in uncommonly early. They went out poor and had to live among a people as poor as themselves, and those that have occupied the stage of life since that time can form but a faint idea of what their ancestors suffered in those times that tried men's souls. Among the rest I had to take up my abode in the country and work on a farm in Windham.

Having served one whole year at farming and then grown quite tired of it, I went back to my native place with a view to finish my trade, but in this I failed and was obliged to serve as a soldier nearly two years, under old Capt. Lowell, who was a very good officer. We were stationed at Falmouth, and as the enemy did not visit us again during the war, we had no fighting to do, and our duty was to guard the garrison day and night, which was quite easy. This employment did not quite suit me, and in the spring of 1777, I determined to go to sea, and sailed in March, in an old schooner. The next morning we fell in with an English ten-gun schooner and were taken and made prisoners of war, but we fell into the hands of a very humane, well-disposed man who did not suffer any of our clothing to be plundered, and kindly put in for the land and put us all on shore near Mount Desert, and from there we got to Penobscot by water, and from thence home by land, on foot. My next voyage was to Martinique, where we arrived safely, and soon after I was taken with the small pox, in the

natural way but very light indeed, so that I have no marks to show for it. On our homeward-bound passage we were taken by an English privateer and carried to Savannah. By this Captain I lost my adventures, wages and part of my clothing, and was put in irons and lay fifteen days and nights in the hold, without bed, blanket, or great coat, and in a poor state of health, having a slow, intermittent fever.

When we made the land our irons were taken off in the morning and put on again at night, until we arrived and anchored in Savannah River near two English man-of-war. In this situation at sundown the armorer came with his box, looking like a farrier going to shoe horses, and began with one of my fellow prisoners to put on his irons, when I laughed at him and asked him if two men-of-war were not sufficient protection against us five prisoners, at which he appeared mortified and pleaded his orders. I then applied to the commanding officer and asked him if it was his orders to confine us in irons while under the guns of two frigates. He smiled and said he believed there was no need of it, and sent for the armorer and told him not to put the irons on us again. We lay some time in the river, very near the prison ships, and expecting every day to be sent on board where the prisoners were very sickly, and the dead were brought on shore every morning in great numbers, and buried on an Island near where the privateer lay. I, however, had the good fortune to escape the prison ship, and by telling a few plausible stories gained permission to go to Savannah in the boat that went up every

day, and when on shore in that place, I took French leave of the boat's crew and did not return to the privateer again.

I was obliged to conceal myself on board the vessel I had been taken in for fear of the press gangs, and being taken by them and sent on board a man-of-war or prison ship. After being a good while in this situation four or five of us American prisoners entered on board an English brig, bound to New York, where the enemy had possession, and if we had arrived we should have no doubt been sent on board a man-of-war or the old Jersey prison ship, out of which died, during the course of the war, eleven thousand two hundred and fifty-eight prisoners. Fortunately for us on board the English brig we fell in with a Philadelphia privateer which took us and made a prize of the brig and cargo. The captain of this American privateer finding that a number of us were Americans that had been taken, put us on wages and gave us a share of the prize that we were taken in, which was an act of great generosity, that helped us to money enough to bear our own expenses from Philadelphia home, where I arrived in August, 1779, having walked from Philadelphia to Boston, and from there sailed in a packet to Falmouth, now Portland.

All the time while I was on the road, and for three months afterwards, I was in a bad state of health and very feeble, consequently the journey proved to me a very laborious one, and brought me to the brink of the grave. When the weather grew cool in the fall, with the help of some medicine, I recovered and went

to Martinique again, in a brig of Newburyport where three vessels out of four were taken. I had the good luck to make this voyage safely, and made something handsome, and so I laid in an adventure for another voyage and engaged myself to go in a new armed brig called the "Portland," with Capt. Joseph Titcomb. We arrived safely in the West Indies, sold our cargo for a great price, laid in a valuable cargo and sailed for home, but soon after we sailed we fell in with a small English privateer that engaged us, and after a short action we struck our colors and gave up our valuable cargo and vessel to a schooner of inferior force, wholly for want of courage in our captain who was unfit for the command of an armed vessel. Our situation on board this vessel was wretched indeed, for the next day after we were on board we agreed among ourselves to take advantage of the first favorable opportunity and at the risk of our lives to rise upon the crew and take the privateer and overtake the prize brig which was then in company, but one of our own company was foolish enough to whisper this intention to a worthless American sailor who belonged to the privateer schooner and was cruising against his own countrymen; this fellow communicated our design to the officers, and all of us that were prisoners, except our cowardly captain and his officers, were put in irons, and the poor rascals had not a pair of handcuffs apiece for us, but yoked us together two and two.

In this situation we were several days and nights, painful indeed, for if one moved in the night he woke his fellow, and the one was obliged to accompany the

other on every occasion. We were destitute of bed and bedding, and almost naked, for they robbed us of our clothes, except what we had on. When we were first taken I cut open my bed sack, emptied its contents, and stuffed it full of my bedding and clothes, and had some hope of being left on board the prize instead of going on board the privateer, but when I found the privateer's men plundering our men of all their baggage I divided mine and tied up a bundle, hoping to save a shirt and a pair of stockings, and as I lay under the bowsprit I was seen by one of those piratical Turks who ordered me to the boat. I plead permission from the prize master's mate, but the fellow said "No" (with an oath), "Mr. Ramsey, the prize master says he 'will have none of you,'" and when I went towards the gangway the Irish rascal seized the bed sack from under my arm. I then had hopes of saving my bundle, but he saw that though it was night. I said, "Will you take them, too?" "Yes, I'll take the tote." Then I wanted to fight again, but we were overpowered and obliged to submit.

We were at length relieved from this miserable condition by falling in with a small Dutch schooner bound to St. Eustacia, and to get clear of such a number of prisoners the captain of the privateer compelled the Dutchman to take us all on board. This little vessel was so deeply loaded that none of us could go below. In two or three days we arrived at St. Eustacia, and when my clothes were dry they were stiff with salt. In this island we found a friend by the

name of Hovey, who had lived in Falmouth, and who was acquainted with our fathers and friends, and he sheltered us and found us provisions until we could get employment, for which Daniel Freeman and myself made every exertion and tried to get business on several American vessels, but did not get suited under two or three weeks when there arrived the ship "Columbia," Jonathan Greely, commander, a vessel of twenty guns and fifty men. On board this ship Freeman and myself entered and sailed for Port au Prince where we arrived without meeting an enemy; but on the passage we fell in with and took up a small boat having in her eight Englishmen, the crew of a vessel bound from New York to Jamaica. These men, though enemies, were treated with hospitality and set at liberty on our arrival at the port above mentioned. Here our ship lay five or six weeks to discharge her cargo and take in a valuable cargo of sugar, cocoa and coffee, with which we sailed in company with a Boston ship for Spain. Both ships being manned and armed about alike, and with about fifty-five men each, and we had under our protection a convoy of several manned merchant vessels bound to this country.

When we had got out of the bite of Dogan and were steering for the crooked island passage, we were stopped in our course by a British fifty-gun ship, which chased us into the harbor of Cape St. Nicholas Mole and blockaded us there a week. While lying there I became acquainted with an old man by the name of Snow whom I found to be a complete mathematician, one that had been bred to the sea in every

station and gradation from the caboose to the cabin, and had also been an instructor on shore. Knowing my own deficiency in point of learning I engaged this old shipmate to teach me geometry, trigonometry and navigation on our passage, which he engaged to do for a small compensation, and our captain being a Casco Bay man, was particularly kind to Daniel Freeman and myself and lent me any books and instruments out of the cabin that I wanted. With these advantages, which I attentively improved, I learned the above-named arts while my shipmates in my watch were asleep, an indulgence I did not allow myself in the daytime while on our passage to Cadiz, where we arrived in March, 1781, and on the fourteenth day of this month I was twenty-one years old, and then I was so much of a navigator, as I have no doubt I could have navigated the ship home.

We laid about six weeks in Cadiz and took a very valuable cargo of wines, silks, and other dry goods and sailed for Boston in May, and proceeded on our voyage, occasionally cruising or looking out for English merchant vessels to make prizes of, but found none, and after having been out fifty days, and having run over all the banks from Newfoundland to Georges, we knew we were near Cape Cod and expected to make the land in the morning of the third of July, 1781, but at the dawn of that day our man at the masthead descried two vessels in chase of us, one a ship, the other a brig, and both being armed, our Captain Greely, though as brave a man as ever had command of the quarterdeck, considering the great

value of our ship and cargo, which in Boston, where we could have arrived that evening, would have been worth sixty thousand dollars, very prudently stood from them in the hopes of getting in safely after a ten month's voyage. But our ship, after having been a long time out, and her bottom being very foul, did not sail as fast as her pursuers and they came up with us very fast; having made the land near Plymouth in the fore part of the day we made every exertion and entertained hopes of getting into Boston harbor until sometime after an action began at four o'clock, P. M., which from that time till eight o'clock, P. M., was kept up from the ships in chase and from our ship, and for a part of this time we were within range of musket shot, and the number of musket shots that were fired at us were like showers of hailstones flying about our heads, and the cannon at the same time making havoc of our masts and yards. During part of the time of this chase I steered the ship, and the mizzen being brailled up and hanging in folds, it was perforated with musket balls that did not pass more than a foot or two over my head, and the sail was literally cut to pieces. When we were very near in, not more than two miles from the entrance of Boston Sound, the captain went forward to look out for the passage, for we could get no pilot, and when returning to the quarter deck he cheered the men at the guns and gave encouragement that we should get in. But at this moment he received a mortal wound by a musket ball in the forehead between his eyes. He made out to reel to the quarter deck and said to the first lieutenant that he

was badly wounded and must go below to the doctor, and at the same time gave him a charge to defend the ship as long as he could, which was not long, for the enemy's ship came alongside and put forty men on our deck all armed with some deadly weapon, and made bloody work among us, and we stuck to the ship to within a mile and a half of where the Boston lighthouse now stands, and stood off towards Cape Cod, bound to New York. Capt. Greely died of his wound. Many more were wounded, but no others died. One was shot in his breast and the ball went around by his ribs and stopped against his backbone, and Dr. Osgood, our surgeon, opened the place and took it out with his thumb and finger. This man got well and Mr. Robert Boyd, our ship's steward, saw him four years afterward in good health.

We were all made prisoners of war on board His Britannic Majesty's ship, General Monk, under the command of Capt. Rogers, a young officer who was a brave and generous man. He did not allow us to be plundered of our baggage, and otherwise treated us as well as prisoners of war could expect. Our number was so near that of the ship's crew that it was necessary for him to keep us under deck, with hatches barred down and sentries over us night and day. Our situation was uncomfortable to be sure, and some of our ship's company, not used to being prisoners, were much discouraged and would stay below when they might have gone on deck in their turn, but I preferred the deck in the open air to being below in the smoke and dirt, and kept on deck as much of the time

as I could. At one time while I was leaning on the gunwale, looking anxiously at the land and the many vessels in sight, the captain came out of his cabin with his spyglass under his arm and taking his stand by my side took a view of the shore of Cape Cod, and turning towards me he observed that it was unfortunate for me and for the rest of my fellow-prisoners that those vessels were so far to the windward that he could not fetch them, for if he could he would take some of them and send us all home. Though he was a young man about my own age, I thought it kind of him and thanked him and told him that as we were then prisoners of war in his possession it was the greatest favor we could ask or he bestow upon us.

There were then two ships and one brig in company, all bound to New York, and our most alarming apprehensions were of being imprisoned on board of the old Jersey prison ship ; but from this deadly place we were rescued by the fleet falling in with two Nantucket sloops that were out cruising after whales. They came up with and took them both, and one they made a cartel of, and one of their lieutenants came to the grating and called to us below, telling us to be ready in a moment to go on board one of the vessels for they were going to send us home. Nothing could be to us more gratifying, and we all went on deck and signed a parole wherein we promised not to take up arms against his Britannic Majesty again until we were regularly exchanged for as many English prisoners in possession of the Americans, about which

I gave myself no trouble for we were soon landed in Boston, and I once more returned home and began to look about for the best armed ship that I could find. I entered on board the ship "Fox," Joshua Stone, commander, and our other officers were Joseph Titcomb, David Stonet, Nathaniel Hatch, and John Mussey steward, the ship being manned with forty-five men. We sailed for Cape Francois where we arrived safely, but not without difficulty and danger, for when we were near making the Island of Hispaniola we saw a large ship and immediately gave chase for her, and she for us, and we stood on in this way until we made her out to be a frigate, and then we had to depend for our safety upon the fast sailing of our ship, and we soon left her and stood on our course for the old Cape, and the next morning we were close in with the land on our larboard beam, and at sunrise we saw the same frigate about five leagues off on the starboard beam, she having suspected where we were bound and followed us, and gave us a hard day's chase from sunrise until just before sunset when she gave up the pursuit; we having lightened our ship could outsail the frigate which we knew to be an enemy.

Our ship was a commissioned letter of marque, mounting fourteen guns, six iron and the rest wooden guns in imitation of iron ones, commonly called **Quakers**. Having escaped the enemy, the next day we arrived and anchored in the harbor of Cape Francois among a numerous fleet of French and American ships and vessels that were then waiting for convoy. Our cargo was sold, landed, and another taken in with

great despatch, to be ready to sail with the fleet and convoy. The fleet was so large it took two days to get out of the narrow passage of the harbor, and when we were all out that intended to join the convoy, the harbor looked like a forest of trees on account of the masts of a great number of ships and vessels that were left behind. The fleet consisted of more than three hundred sails convoyed by a French sixty-four-gun ship, and several frigates and corvettes. Our ship sailed so fast that we could keep up with the convoy under our three topsails without any other sails. Tired of this slow movement, as soon as we were clear of the Caucas Passage we made sail in the night, and ran away from the fleet, and arrived in Portland in twenty days passage, having been very near cast away on a reef at the entrance of old Plymouth Harbor, on a most dangerous place, where the sea broke over us, and there was not two feet of water under our keel, and if we had struck we should probably all have been drowned. Not long before that time a Boston privateer got on that reef, went to pieces and lost fifty men, old Mr. William Stevens of Portland being among the few that were saved. It was late in November, 1781, when we arrived, and this was the second safe voyage that I had made so far in the war, and having a little property I thought myself rich enough to get married, and in the beginning of the year 1782, I was married at Back Cove by the Rev. Mr. Brown, to Dorcas Barton, she being then eighteen years and three months old, and I was twenty-two the middle of the next March.

This winter being uncommonly hard and cold our ship lay by until the spring, and I having nothing else to do, employed part of the time in teaching navigation. In the month of March our ship was again loaded and ready to sail for Havana, having the same number of men and guns as on the last voyage, and our officers were, Joshua Stone, commander, David Street, Arthur McLellan and Daniel Tucker. This is the first time that I was an officer. John Mussey was with us as steward and acted as doctor, having the care of the medicine chest. We arrived safely at Havana after a short passage, and lay there two months, being embargoed part of the time. When the embargo was raised we sailed in company with forty American ships and vessels, some bound to Europe and some with us to America. Many of these ships were armed, and the strongest of these was the Congress, of Philadelphia, of twenty-four nine-pounders bound to Spain. When we got past the trade winds that part of the fleet bound for Europe left us, and ours being the strongest ship, led the rest under our convoy, and although we had to run under easy sail to let the dull sailers keep up, we arrived and anchored in Portland Harbor in twenty days passage. We had on board fifteen or sixteen men sick with the small pox, and we had to run the ship up to where Vaughan's bridge now is to land the sick and cleanse the ship.

The next vessel I engaged in was the fast sailing brig "Union," fourteen guns, six iron and the rest Quakers, having in all twenty-one men, including

officers, viz. : Capt. Gage ; first officer, Henry Waite ; second, Daniel Tucker, and Jonah Dyer, prize master. We sailed in the month of July or August, and arrived at St. Pierre, in Martinique, after a good passage for the time of year. Having a letter of marque commission, we chased and boarded every vessel we saw, but found none but Americans or neutrals. The objects of our pursuit were English, not one of whom did we meet until after we completed our business at Martinique by landing our cargo at St. Pierre, and taking in return a cargo of cocoa with which we sailed, and after being at sea long enough to get as far to the northward as the islands of Bermuda, and being about two degrees of longitude eastward of them, early one morning we saw two vessels to the northward of us and immediately gave chase to them, and soon could determine that one was a schooner and the other a sloop, the schooner aiming for us, and the sloop in the opposite direction. We continued on this course until we came nigh enough to ascertain with our glasses that the schooner was a formidable armed vessel, full of men too strong for us, and we having on board a valuable cargo, thought best to take care of that and our vessel, and also ourselves ; we tacked ship and endeavored to get away and avoid a contest if we could, but the wind failing, and the schooner being stronger manned than we were, she gained on us notwithstanding all our efforts in trimming the sails, to make the most of the light air of wind there was and with our sweeps. At about sunset, finding no possibility of avoiding a contest with

our antagonist, Capt. Gage called his officers about him, and like a prudent man as well as a brave one, he asked us what was best to be done with the situation we were then in. And it was the opinion of all that as we could not avoid him it was best to have it out with him, and accordingly we tacked and stood for him boldly until we got within half the range of cannon shot, and then every man being at his station, we, at the word of command from the quarter deck, and in unison with the boatswain's call from the fore-castle, hauled up our courses, down staysails, and in royal and top gallant sails, and at the same moment fired at him six six-pounders, which were well directed, and all this being done in a prompt and war-like manner, our foeman fired upon us one broadside and put about and stood from us, and this conduct animated all on board of our brig, and gave us hopes we should be able to defend ourselves, and, after exchanging a great many shots at each other, he wore round and passed by us with his head to the southward, when ours was to the northward, and we passed so near that a conversation was carried on by questions and answers, and "What brig is that?" "What schooner is that?" were repeated over and over until I, standing by the side of Capt. Gage, suggested to him to answer "The brig Haulker," and in answer to the next question, "What brig is that?" Gage deliberately answered, "The privateer brig 'Haulker' from Philadelphia, on a cruise." In reply our antagonist said, "I don't believe it." Then our captain replied "Come nearer alongside and I will convince

you." His answer was "Ay, ay, I'll be alongside of you directly," and we expected him, but he stood away from us with a light air of wind there was, and all hands on board our brig were looking out for him until no eye on board could discern him, and then we set all sail and out sweeps, and endeavored to get from him as fast as we could, knowing that if he came up with us again we should be overpowered and taken. The next morning he was at so great a distance that we could just see his hull, and then he renewed the chase and kept us hard at work at our sweeps all day, it being nearly calm. It was a hot day and we were on an allowance of one quart of water a day, and this was a distressing day indeed, but a little before sundown a fine breeze sprung up, and we hauled in our sweeps, filled our sails, and left him without saying "good-by," for when we had a good breeze of wind we feared nothing that sailed, neither frigate nor seventy-fours.

Having got clear of this difficulty we arrived safely at Cadiz, meeting with many singular occurrences too numerous for me to recount. It was afterwards ascertained by Capt. Enoch Preble, Nathaniel Morse and Jonah Dyer that the schooner we had the rencounter with was the "Lady Hammond" of Bermuda, of twelve guns and seventy men; that our first broadside being a ranging shot cut the captain's neck half off and killed him instantly, besides wounding several men, and this accounts for their not coming alongside of us with more bravery. Here ended all my fighting, having been three times engaged in the course of the

Revolutionary war, besides the shots old Mowatt fired at me when he burnt the town, and I was in it almost all day, for I soon returned after I went out. We made quick despatch at Cadiz, landed and sold our cargo of cocoa, and took a cargo of salt, enough to ballast, and filled up with wine, raisins, lemons and other fruit and dry goods. A rich cargo indeed we had, which paid more than five hundred per cent. profit in Boston. The morning we sailed for home we passed in sight of the combined French and Spanish fleet that had just left the siege of Gibraltar. We felt safe because we knew that Lord Howe with the English fleet had gone off the coast, and we therefore bore down upon the center of the grand fleet which was a most stupendous sight, there being between fifty and sixty line-of-battle ships, and frigates and transports in great numbers. When we got within a league of the weather ships we hauled up westward on our course, and the Admiral, making a signal, a frigate and a corvette gave us chase and fired to bring us to, but confident of our superior sailing, and being apprehensive of ill usage, although we knew them to be friendly ships, we kept on our course and outsailed them both, and arrived at Portland after a passage of twenty-six days. Two ships that sailed from Cadiz about a week before us arrived about a week after, and the captains thought they had made good passages.

It being about Thanksgiving time the "Union" sailed immediately for Boston to get our fruit to market, but I was advised not to go on account of my ill

health, having a most frightful cough and spitting blood in great quantities, which I did all the passage ; but I stood at my watch all the time and in the morning the deck would be covered with the spots of blood I had thrown off during the night. I then hired apartments in town and went to housekeeping, pretty independent, not owing a cent to anybody, and having an adventure on board the "Union" that was worth fifteen hundred dollars, which was soon turned into cash. Being in such a precarious state of health I gave up the thought of going to sea again that winter, and six or eight young men engaged me to instruct them in geometry, trigonometry and navigation, and we took a chamber in Mrs. Wildridge's house, and paying close attention to this business, soon got through with it. These young men all became mates and masters of vessels, and now there is only one living, Capt. Enoch Preble, all the rest having long since paid the debt of nature.

The winter of this year, 1782-83, was the first that I passed at home after the commencement of my seafaring life, and we being almost the only young family in town, we had a social time, my days being spent in school, and having company almost every evening, and it was perhaps as agreeable a winter as any of my whole life. In the spring of the year 1783, we had the news of peace, *i. e.*, the preliminary articles being signed and a suspension of hostilities taking place. When this news reached Boston I was there with Father Barton in his old schooner "Dolphin," and as Father Smith says in his journal,

“Boston was all in a toss.” The handbills were hawking about and I got some of them and told Mr. Barton we had better hurry off and carry the news to Casco Bay. We sailed that day and arrived and ran aground on the flats just after daylight the next morning, and having six loaded guns to fight “shaving mills,” that is, armed boats, these guns were handed up to me on deck one by one and I fired them off in quick succession, which roused the people from their beds, and they came running down to the wharf to know what the firing was for, to which we answered that they were not warlike guns but fired on account of peace. The word “peace” was expressed and echoed over and over again with feelings that were unutterable, and by this time the old skipper had paddled me in the float to the wharf. It being low water the people got part of the way down the wharf and took me by the collar and lifted me on to the wharf where I delivered one of the printed handbills to Parson Hall, and he mounted a hogshead and read it to the people. They received the news with joy, and, so old Parson Smith says, “they spent the day in a frolic,” drinking and firing guns among the houses.



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