

Naval Court Martial



From the Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser August 23, 1850:

NAVAL COURT MARTIAL

A court martial assembled on board H.M.S. Impregnable at Devonport on Thursday, for the trial of First Lieutenant Jermyn Charles Symonds of the Royal Marines, on service in H.M.S. Trincomalee.

The following was the charge:- In that the said First Lieutenant Jermyn Charles Symonds, of her Majesty's Royal Marines, while borne on the books of H.M.S. Trincomalee, in commission, did not on the 4th of April, 1850, return to the said ship, then being in the harbour of St. Jago de Cuba, until after eleven o'clock p.m. of that day.

Second charge – For that the said First Lieutenant Jermyn C. Symonds, while so borne as aforesaid, and when he returned to the ship after eleven o'clock p.m. of the said day as aforesaid, did force his way on board of the said ship when ordered by the officer of the watch and the sentry on the gangway of the said ship to keep off.

Several of the officers belonging to the Trincomalee having given evidence on support of both clauses of the charge, - the prisoner, in defence, stated that he had no intention to disobey orders, and had, unfortunately, acted under a mistake, believing that the order to keep off from the ship had been given in jest by one of the youngsters. He also stated that he had been four months a prisoner, five weeks of which he had been kept in close confinement. Three witnesses were called for the defence, to prove that Mr Symonds had the impression, which he stated in his speech, and had been confined as he represented.

After consultation, the court decided that the prisoner be reduced in rank two years, and be severely reprimanded.

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