



Quarterdeck

The Newsletter of The Friends of HMS Trincomalee

September 2002

Trincomalee - The Last of Nelson's Frigates

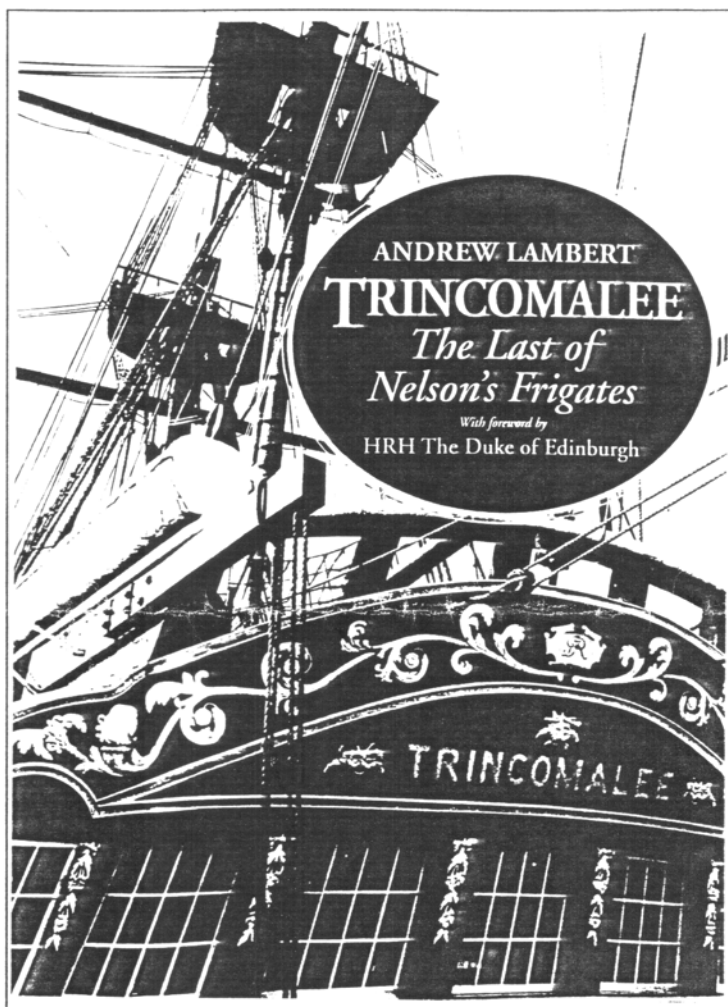
A new book chronicling HMS Trincomalee's place in British naval history was launched by the author, Professor Andrew Lambert, on board HMS Trincomalee in May this year.

Trincomalee - The Last of Nelson's Frigates explains Trincomalee's place in the history and development of the frigate, and traces her life and career from the shipyards of Bombay to her restoration and preservation in Hartlepool.

Containing a wealth of interesting detail and lavishly illustrated with photographs, contemporary illustrations and line drawings, Professor Lambert's highly readable history of the ship is perfectly timed to coincide with the completion of the painstaking restoration of HMS Trincomalee to the condition she would have been in when she entered naval service.

Explaining the vital strategic importance of the Bombay Dockyards to the Royal Navy's success in the Indian Ocean, the narrative takes us through the whole process of construction and fitting out of the ship, her commissions in the North America and West Indies Station under Captain Warren and her later exploits in the Pacific under Captain Houstoun, her time "in ordinary", her early role as a training vessel and her last-minute reprieve from the breakers' yard in 1897. This fascinating tale is carefully placed in the context of the changing role of the Royal Navy during the nineteenth century and the social and political background to the events. The final chapters are devoted to the ship's place in nautical training, first under Geoffrey Cobb and later the Foudroyant Trust, culminating in 1987 with the journey to Hartlepool and ten years of restoration.

This is a book which will appeal not only to those who are familiar with HMS Trincomalee, but to anyone interested in the ships and history of the Royal Navy. Andrew Lambert is Professor of Naval History at King's College, London, and



specialises in the nineteenth century Royal Navy. He is author of a number of books including *The Last Sailing Battlefleet* and *The Foundations of Naval History*.

Trincomalee - The Last of Nelson's Frigates is published by Chatham Publishing, in association with the HMS Trincomalee Trust and is on sale at the ship's visitor center at £ 20. Members can however obtain copies at £18.50 (inclusive of p&p - UK mainland) from The HMS Trincomalee Trust, Jackson Dock, Hartlepool TS24 0SQ. Please quote your Membership number and make cheques payable to HMS Trincomalee Trust

❖ PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR SHIP ❖

The World Ship Trust, an international body dedicated to the preservation and conservation of the world's historic ships, announced at the end of 2001 that it was to confer its prestigious Maritime Heritage Award to the HMS Trincomalee Trust in respect of the restoration of our ship.

The text of the Award reads: *"The Trustees of the World Ship Trust make this Maritime Heritage Award to HMS TRINCOMALEE in recognition of the outstanding restoration and preservation of this historic ship. HMS Trincomalee is an inspiration to all who seek to restore and preserve the maritime heritage of the world"*

The Trust's Vellum and Medallion were presented to Colonel Michael Stewart, Chairman of the HMS Trincomalee Trust, at Buckingham Palace in the presence of our Patron, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh,

on 29th November 2001 by M Jacques Chaveau, World Ship Trust Chairman. At the same time, the Duke presented Captain David Smith RN, President and former Chairman of the HMS Trincomalee Trust with the WST's Award for Individual Achievement, recognising his significant contribution to maritime heritage. Both these well-deserved awards can only help to improve the profile of ship preservation in Great Britain and elsewhere in the world.

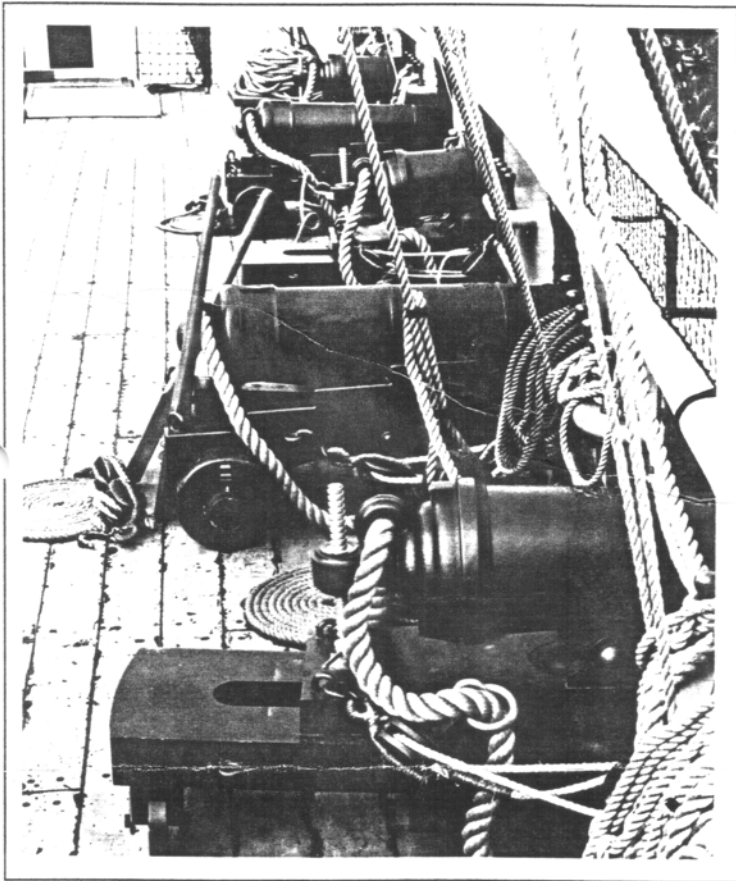
The World Ship Trust's emblem shows HMS Implacable (formerly moored alongside HMS Trincomalee in Portsmouth Harbour and sunk in the Channel in December 1949) and the motto "Never Again"

Further information about the World Ship Trust can be found on the worldwide web at www.worldshiptrust.org.



Colonel Michael Stewart, Chairman of HMS Trincomalee Trust, receives the medallion from M Jacques Chaveau in the presence of the Trust's Patron, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT

MANNING THE GUNS OF HMS TRINCOMALEE



At the time HMS Trincomalee was launched, the principal responsibility for a frigate's guns, magazines, shot and equipment, as well as small arms, side arms, cutlasses, pikes and axes rested with the Gunner. The Gunner was a warrant officer, ranking below the Captain and his Lieutenants, but his was clearly one of the most important posts on the ship. Traditionally he lived in the Gunroom, usually aft on the lower deck, where in addition to his gunnery duties he looked after the midshipmen and volunteers (hence the junior mess is still known as The Gunroom). Below the Gunner and his resourceful and trustworthy Gunner's Mates came the gun crews who manned the cannon. A rule of thumb in Naval Gunnery was that the gun crew should have one man for every 500 pounds of metal in the gun – thus a long 32-pounder (which weighed about 59 hundredweight, or 6608 pounds) fielded a crew of thirteen. The shorter 50 hundredweight 32 pounder should ideally be managed by a crew of eleven.

It was never intended that the guns on both sides of the ship should be fully manned at once. One crew would

normally be responsible for two guns: thus Number Two starboard gun's crew would move across to serve Number One portside gun, or in case both needed to be manned at once, half the crew would move across. Each member of the gun's crew would have a number, indicating his duty – Number One was always the captain of the gun, and the last man was always the powderman, whose duty was to keep the cartridge box supplied. Others manned the side tackle, handspikes (for training the gun), loading, sponging and so on. It was vital that each man was familiar with the duty of every other "number", not only to ensure that the crew worked as a team, but in case of casualties during action the missing man's duties could be undertaken by other crewmembers.

William Hutchinson, in his *Treatise on Practical Seamanship* (1777) advised assigning the best and most experienced seamen to the guns' crews, leaving the younger men to go aloft and using the ship's boys as powder carriers.

The efficiency and accuracy of gunnery in the Royal Navy varied greatly from ship to ship. Captain Sir Philip Broke, commander of the frigate HMS Shannon (and famous for his victory against the American frigate Chesapeake in 1813) commented that whilst American seamen were constantly practicing firing at targets, British seamen "scarcely did so once in a year". In spite of instructions from the Admiralty severely restricting the quantity of powder and shot available for target practice, Broke exercised his gun's crews every day and arranged target firing twice a week, no doubt accounting for his success in battle.

The Admiralty learned many lessons from the Navy's experiences during the Napoleonic Wars and gunnery was much improved through the efforts of officer like Broke, who initiated the establishment of HMS Excellent as a gunnery training ship.

HMS Trincomalee was designed to carry 18-pounder guns as her main armament, and it is these that the visitor will see on the gun deck today. In practice, such guns were virtually obsolete by the time of her first commission in 1847, and her gundeck by this time sported twelve 32 pounders (each weighing 50 hundredweight, or two and a half tons) and six 8-inch shell guns (heavier than the 32 pounders, at 65 hundredweight or three and a quarter tons each).

NEW YEAR HONOUR FOR CAPTAIN SMITH

Hard on the heels of his appearance at Buckingham Palace to receive the World Ship Trust's Award for Individual Achievement, our President Captain David Smith RN was awarded a well-deserved OBE in the New Year Honours List for his services to HMS Trincomalee.

It is also very pleasing to record that Brian Dinsdale, Chief Executive of Hartlepool Borough Council and a stalwart supporter of the HMS Trincomalee Trust was similarly honoured for his contribution to regeneration in Hartlepool.

Teak Ships Down Under

Chris Bowers, of Saltburn, spotted an article in Sea Breezes about another teak hulled ship which has survived from the 19th century. The EDWIN FOX, an East Indiaman built in Calcutta of Burmese Teak in 1853 is awaiting preservation in Picton, New Zealand.

Apart from her normal trade, she acted as a troopship during the Crimean War and for a time served as a prison hulk. She ended up in Marlborough Sound in 1897 – the same year that HMS Trincomalee was to have been broken up – and after serving as a floating storage hulk she was eventually beached close to her original moorings. A group of local enthusiasts rescued her from the mud in 1967 and towed her to Shakespeare Bay, where she was later re-floated and moored. She is now installed in a newly constructed dry dock, which is to have a roof built over it to protect the hull from the weather. EDWIN FOX will not be restored, but her hull will be preserved as a museum exhibit.



Quarterdeck is printed and published by:
The Friends of HMS Trincomalee
PO Box 1817
HARTLEPOOL TS24 7YE

You are cordially invited to a

Trafalgar Day Dinner

To be held on

Saturday 19th October 2002

The Mess Deck of HMS Trincomalee

Dress: Formal (Black Tie) or Uniform (Medals may be worn)



In association with the Conway, Worcester and Pangbourne Association (North East), HMS Trincomalee Trust is to hold a commemorative Dinner on board HMS Trincomalee on Saturday 19th October 2002.

This will take place in the Mess Deck and promises to be very well attended. A toast will be proposed by Commodore J E V Madgewick OBE RN, of the North of England Naval Regional Office, and diners will enjoy a three course dinner with coffee, cheese and biscuits (including, of course, a glass of port). A vegetarian option is available.

Tickets for this event are available on a "first come, first served" basis at £35.00 per head from:

**G S Brown Esq
"Mizzentop"**

The Ridge

Saltburn by Sea

North Yorkshire TS12 1JQ

Tel: 01287 623213 Fax: 01287 625842

e-mail: gsbmizzentop@aol.com