

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Vancouver Region

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In memory of Admiral Horatio Nelson

MEN FROM NELSON'S FLEET REBURIED

An archaeological excavation in Egypt three years ago turned up a British burial ground, which held graves dating to the decisive 1798 Battle of the Nile, in which Admiral Horatio Nelson captured and sank most of Napoleon's fleet. More than 1,500 Frenchmen and 200 British soldiers reportedly died in the sea battle, which ended Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. His army was stranded there and forced to surrender after the 1801 fight.

Under grey, misting skies, in a full British military ceremony, a delegation from the visiting British frigate HMS *Chatham*, marched the five Union Jack-covered coffins bearing all the remains to a burial site near a tall stone marker commemorating the British-French battle. British Ambassador Sir Derek Plumbly told some 40 guests that it was "an appropriate coincidence" that the remains of Nelson's troops were buried the same year that Britain is marking the 200th anniversary of the naval hero's death. Prayers and psalms were read by British officers before the flags were folded and the coffins lowered to the ground.

A descendant of the only body definitely identified was presented with a folded British flag. He said of his ancestor, "I feel very pleased that he's being buried in this country. . . . This is where he died; this is where he belongs."

Tanalee Smith: *Vancouver Sun*, April 19, 2005.



"During the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, of the approximately 100,000 naval personnel who lost their lives, 7% was by enemy action, 13% was by shipwreck, 20% by accident and 60% by disease. In addition to scurvy, typhus, which was spread by lice among men living at close quarters, was a major killer on board." *Jane Austen's World*, Maggie Lane.

Nelson at Copenhagen - Eileen Sutherland.

“Anne had not wanted this visit to Uppercross, to learn that a removal from one set of people to another, though at a distance of only three miles, will often include a total change of conversation, opinion, and idea. . . . She must now submit to feel that another lesson, in the art of knowing our own nothingness beyond our own circle was become necessary for her” (*Pers.* p.42)

Not only do we realize our lack of importance when we move away from home, but also we discover that our opinions of people and events are not necessarily accepted in other places.

We learned in school to admire the feats of the British Navy in the early 19th century, and to honour the great victories of Admiral Lord Nelson. Jane Austen bolstered our pride with her love and commendation of her sailor brothers, and praise for the naval captains in *Persuasion*.

When we were in Copenhagen last Autumn, we heard of these battles from a different point of view. The Tourist Bureau gave us a brochure of the sights and history of the city, including an article titled “*The not so admirable Nelson.*” It all depends whether you were conqueror or victim.

“During the 18th century Denmark’s neutrality proved increasingly irksome to the British, particularly as the Danish merchant fleet was an enthusiastic supplier to the enemies of the British. In April 1801, a British fleet under Admirals Nelson and Parker sailed into the Øresund and commenced bombardment of the Danish navy. The Danes only survived thanks to a change in the direction of the wind, which left some of the English fleet at risk of being driven ashore. Nelson was instructed by his commanders to withdraw, but, though he had been impressed by the Danes’ courage, he merely put his telescope up to his blind eye, and ignored them. Instead, he sent an envoy to threaten King Frederik with the destruction of his entire fleet, including the burning alive of its crews, unless he surrendered This, Frederik did, but not before the clash had cost the Danes a thousand men.

Napoleon was on the move across Europe, and, with his fleet already destroyed by Nelson at Trafalgar, there were strong rumours in 1807 that the French were about to commandeer the Danish navy as a replacement. In fact, Frederik was preparing to defend his country from attack by the French in the south when he was visited by a British envoy who offered him this ultimatum: surrender the Danish fleet to Britain, or the Royal Navy will come and take it for itself. The Danes refused and so the British sailed again on still-neutral Copenhagen and bombarded it for three days. Around 30,000 British soldiers landed north of the city, the university quarter was set alight and more than 300 houses destroyed. Much of the city centre was torched, another 1,000 people were killed, and, in the end, the British sailed off with 170 ships, despite the efforts of plucky Danes to row little gunboats out to becalmed British warships and attack them with muskets. Copenhagen was the first European city to suffer such an attack.

Understandably, the Danes now balked at an alliance with the British, siding instead with Napoleon. This was a decision they were to rue in the painful years hence when the British blockaded Denmark and Norway. Much of Norway starved, while Denmark fared little better, enduring great hardship until the death of Napoleon. The Treaty of Kiel (1814) saw Sweden (now allied with Britain) take control of Norway, which had been part of Denmark for 450 years. The loss of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein to Germany in 1864, further diminished a Danish Empire that had once dominated the Baltic.”

From *Time Out*, the Copenhagen Guide.

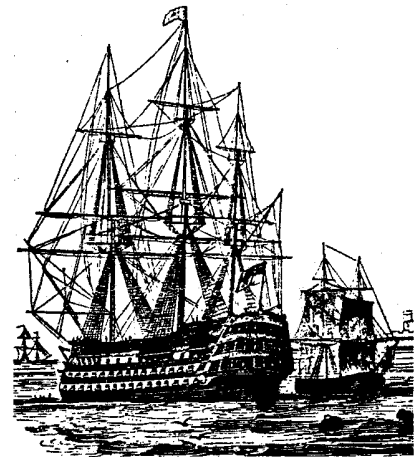
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Nelson's Canadian Experience. Joan Reynolds.

Nelson first took command of his ship, the HMS *Albermarle*, in August 1781, at age 23, following a prolonged period of sickness (and half-pay). The following Spring, he sailed the *Albermarle* from Ireland to Quebec City, accompanying thirty merchant ships as part of convoy duties off New York and the West Indies. Business in Quebec City was booming due to the war, with expansion fuelled by a government policy of cheap credit, which flooded the province with money to meet the growing demands of the increasing numbers of troops and loyalist refugees.

Nelson was less than enthusiastic about this "d---d voyage" to Canada, seeing only a prospect of spending the year chauffeuring convoys while freezing to death. Once reaching Quebec City, Nelson immediately took off again to "cruise in the gulf" in pursuit of more interesting diversions and the hope of capturing enemy ship "prizes." But he neglected to take on any new provisions. When a severe outbreak of scurvy broke out on the *Albermarle*, Nelson was forced to return to Quebec City. Upon arrival, the surviving twenty-two of Nelson's seamen were sent to the hospital outside of the city limits, while Nelson, himself exhausted, spent the next weeks resting at the home of Alexander Davidson, a close friend and local merchant.

During this time Nelson fell in love with Mary Simpson, the young daughter of Colonel Saunders Simpson, the local garrison's provost marshal. So passionate were his feelings for her that he was on the brink of proposing marriage, and decided to ignore his orders to sail the *Albermarle* to New York as escort to a convoy of troopships. "I find it utterly impossible to leave this place without waiting on her whose society has so much added to its charms and laying myself and my fortunes at her feet." He was advised by Davidson not to disobey orders, telling Nelson that "your utter ruin, situated as you are at present, must inevitably follow." Nelson initially opposed this sound advice, but then finally agreed "with no very good grace" to return to his ship.



A line-of-battle ship

Experience had changed Nelson's opinion of Canada, and he later wrote to his father, "Health, that greatest of blessings, is what I never truly enjoyed till I saw Fair Canada. The change it has wrought I am convinced is truly wonderful."

(Five years later Nelson married a widow, Mrs. Frances Nisbet, whom he had met while in the West Indies. He was again without a ship and forced to live on half pay for the next few years in Norfolk with his wife and her son, until re-engaged to take command of the *Agamemnon* in 1793 - the year Nelson met Emma Hamilton for the first time. It was in Naples in 1798 that Nelson began his affair with her. In 1801, Nelson finally left his wife to live with Lady Hamilton, and their new baby daughter, Horatia.)

Footnote: In addition to the famous Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square, there is a less well-known column in Old Montreal. It is the oldest monument in Montreal, if not Quebec. It was put there in 1809 by local merchants, who wanted to be the first in the British Empire to honour Admiral Horatio Nelson, after the battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

[Adapted from various sources, including *Nelson's Purse*, by Martyn Downer]

Aspects of Nelson - Len Haffenden - October Meeting.

Introduction. Len Haffenden, whose excellent talk was the topic of the JA meeting in October, 2005, represents the Vancouver Naval & Heritage Museum Society. This society focuses on military aspects of maritime events, while the Vancouver Maritime Museum emphasizes the civil side. He presented a warm, witty and informative talk which covered many aspects of Nelson's life and career.

With him, Len brought a display of books, souvenirs and a rousing taped version of *Hearts of Oak*. The collection attracted a great deal of interest after the talk, and the music stirred the blood during it. After thoroughly enjoying this talk full of interesting facts, wit, puns and an excellent delivery, the only question is: when can we ask him back? - Rae Fraser.

"Today I would like to discuss four aspects of Admiral Lord Nelson: (1) The Royal Navy in the 18th century, (2) Horatio Nelson, the man, (3) The line-of-battle ship HMS *Victory*, and (4) The Battle of Trafalgar. The varied subject matter is so interwoven, that it is a little difficult to unravel them as separate subjects, but I hope you can weave it all back together.

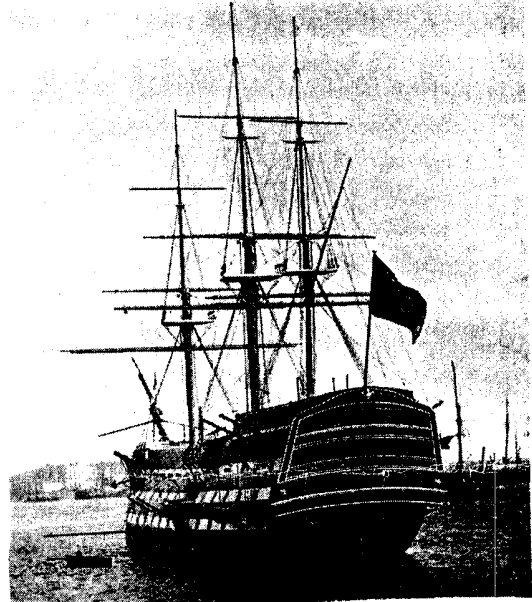
The Battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805, was a significant event with vast consequences. Much has been written about the battle, and the life and death of a most singular man - and 200 years later, it is still being discussed and analysed.

The Royal Navy of 200 years ago is little understood today. Movies give us a warped and twisted view, and generally focus on Captain Bligh and the mutiny on the *Bounty*, which was not typical.

Biographies and journals, such as those of Captain Cook, give a better understanding. The use of flogging and cruelty as discipline was not unusual, although Cook used the lash sparingly, relying mainly on the respect his men had for him. One unusual reason he had men flogged was when they refused to eat the 'pickled cabbage' provided: he proved that this diet could overcome scurvy on long sea voyages - on the voyage of 1768-1771, he did not lose a man to scurvy.

Royal Naval seamanship, signalling, and gunnery were superior to that of the French and Spanish navies. The crew of a British ship tended to remain with it throughout its commission - several years sometimes - thereby allowing the crew to become a cohesive unit, with lots of drills and gunnery practice. On average, a Royal Naval gun crew could fire, reload, and fire again about three times as fast as their enemies could, due to this extensive training and to a more modern firing mechanism. Also, being a naval officer in the Royal Navy was a long-term career choice, a proper profession, providing leadership and discipline to those who served. Too often, French and Spanish officers received short-term appointments during a crisis, or for the duration of hostilities. If there were no immediate action perceived, or if peace had broken out again, the ships were kept in port, where many of the unwilling crew scuttled off.

Horatio Nelson was born on 29th September, 1758, the son of a country parson in the village of Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk, one of eleven children. In those days, getting ahead depended on whom you knew, and how well you knew them. Fortunately, the Nelson family had



Nelson's Flagship, the *Victory*

connections. Nelson's mother had a brother, Maurice Suckling, who was a Post Captain in the Royal Navy; as well, they were related to the influential Walpole family. Captain Suckling was asked if he would take young Horatio on as midshipman. Knowing that Horatio was the most sickly and undersized of all the children, and he wrote back:

What had poor Horace done, that he above all the rest should be sent to rough it out at sea? But let him come; and the first time we go into action, a cannon ball may knock off his head, and provide for him at once.

And so, off to sea he went at the tender age of 12 years 3 months, in his uncle's ship *Raisonnable*, 65 guns, where he became even more weak and sickly, revealing a life-long difficulty with sea-sickness. I cannot provide a full biography now, but here is a summary. His initiative and leadership qualities were soon recognised and led to early promotion. He was a Lieutenant at 19, a Post Captain by the age of 21, and given command of a frigate, HMS *Hinchinbroke*. Coincidentally, at this same time, 1779, Captain Cook was murdered in Hawaii.

An event of international importance happened in 1775 when Nelson was a 17-year-old Midshipman: Jane Austen was born (1775-1817), so for thirty years their lives overlapped. She would have heard of Nelson when she was in her twenties, as after 1795 his name was a household word in England. What has Jane Austen got to do with the navy, or Trafalgar? Quite a bit, actually; she would have read about the famous battle, and the funeral, in the newspapers. Two of her brothers, Francis and Charles, were naval officers, and Captain Wentworth, from the novel *Persuasions*, was modelled on her naval brothers.

Nelson's most clever tactical victory in his whole career was the Battle of the Nile, August 1st, 1798. The French fleet, commanded by Admiral François Brueys, had landed an army in Egypt, and was now anchored securely in Aboukir Bay, near the Nile Delta, in a curved line about half a mile off shore, their guns primed for seaward action, and the ships further apart than was normal. As evening was coming on, Adm. Brueys did not expect an attack until the next morning - no prudent commander would seek a night action, especially with shoals and sand bars lurking nearby. He was wrong. The British kept coming. Boldly, the vanguard of the British fleet cut between the anchored French ships and the shoreline, on the French unprotected side. The rest of Nelson's squadron passed down the seaward side, some of them breaking through the gaps between the French ships, raking their sterns with gunfire. Attacked from every quarter, the French lost 13 of their 17 ships, leaving Napoleon's army marooned in Egypt. Napoleon, in some disarray, scuttled back to Paris. The captured ships were refitted and joined the British fleet.

Nelson was prone to disobey orders. Such a practice, if you fail in your undertaking, can lead to a court-martial, or even death. In 1757, a Royal Navy admiral, John Byng, was court-martialled and shot by his *own* Royal Marines on his *own* quarterdeck, for not being aggressive enough in engaging the enemy, causing the loss of Minorca. The news of his execution shocked both British and French officers, and sent a shiver through the European officer corps in general. The philosopher Voltaire summed it up with a witticism: "From time to time the English shoot an Admiral, to encourage the others."

Nelson's disobediences, however, were successful, leading to honours, awards, prize money, and promotion. At the Battle of Cape St. Vincent, 1796, the Spanish fleet had drifted unwittingly apart, into two groups. Nelson, in HMS *Captain*, broke out of line without orders and prevented the two halves from joining up again. His action enabled the British, under Adm. Sir John Jervis, to win a great victory. Nelson captured two large ships. Within days of his disobedience, he was promoted to Rear-Admiral. In 1801, at the Battle of Copenhagen, with the result still inconclusive, Nelson's superior, Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, from a safe distance, signalled him to break off the action and return. Showing some sense of humour, Nelson put his

telescope to his blind eye and said: "I really do not see the signal," and went on to complete a hard-fought victory; hence the expression *to turn a blind eye*.

Nelson confided in his captains, he discussed strategy with them, he had them over for dinner; they trusted him, and he trusted them, referring to them as a *Band of Brothers*. As well, he had an understanding and sympathy for his officers and the men of the lower deck, which was expressed in many small kindnesses and acts not usually associated with officers of flag rank; he was not a stuffy, remote figure; he had what was called *The Nelson Touch*.

A biography of Nelson was commissioned, to be written by the Poet Laureate Robert Southey, 1810. [In October 1813, Jane Austen wrote to her sister Cassandra: *Southey's Life of Nelson*; - *I am tired of Lives of Nelson, being that I never read any. I will read this however, if Frank is mentioned in it* (He was not). E.S.]

Critics of the naval service used to dismiss it as *Nothing but Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash*. Flogging has long been disallowed, last used in 1879. The rum issue was done away with by 1970. A tot of rum and the navy went hand in glove. The rum was often called *Nelson's Blood*. A display at Greenwich Royal Naval College, includes Nelson's final uniform, the tunic blood-stained, and the musket ball hole in the left shoulder. The brisk tune *Heart of Oak* is played by most Commonwealth navies, including ours. It is the last thing the men hear when they leave harbour at Esquimalt or Halifax, and the first when they return, played by a navy band on the dock".

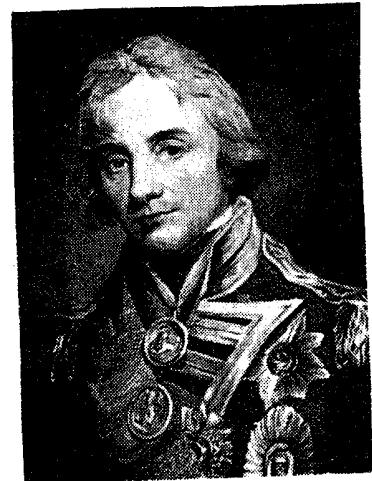
Len's talk carried on with a description of the *Victory*, as well as four other ships of the same name; a detailed "blow-by-blow" story of the Battle of Trafalgar; Nelson's own account of a typical day on a naval blockade, a barely literate one of the battle by a "powder-monkey", the surgeon-general's recollections of a typical day at sea, and the meals served to the officers, and of the very different food arranged for the men below-decks.

Nelson died in action, shot by a sharp-shooter from the high rigging of one of the French ships. He expected to die in battle. Over the years he lost an eye, an arm, and his life - he never hid himself, he led by example.

The news, good and bad, reached England, by fast schooner, and then by post-chaise, in about 16 days. The badly damaged *Victory* was helped into Gibraltar, temporarily repaired, and then sailed for England with Nelson's body on board, arriving nine weeks after the battle. The coffin was taken by small boat up river to Greenwich Naval Hospital, where Nelson lay in state, with enormous crowds pressing in every day to pay their respects, until the lavish funeral in St. Paul's Cathedral on the 9th of January.

At the back of the room, Len had set out a display of memorabilia: a teapot, decorated with battle scenes and portraits of the admirals and captains; music; pictures of the *Victory*, and other souvenirs. Books on display included: *The Nelson Almanac* (David Harris), *Trafalgar, An Eyewitness History* (Tom Pocock), *Nelson & Victory* (Portsmouth Royal Naval Museum), *Life of Nelson* (Robert Southey), *Epic Sea Battles* (William Koenig), *Emma*, the Life of Lady Hamilton, and *Fighting Sail* (Nelson's funeral pictures).

The members present, as full of 'fine naval fervour' as Anne Elliot, expressed their appreciation of the excellent, informative and extremely enjoyable account of one of England's most famous heroes.



Horatio Nelson

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The complete text of this talk is in the Vancouver Jane Austen Library.

Books and Berries - September meeting.

Virgil Oriente chaired this popular meeting - more than 40 members came to discuss books recently read, and share a lavish bowl of berries and cherries for dessert after lunch.

Jackie Johnson reviewed *Mad Mary Lamb*, by Susan Tyler Hitchcock.

In a sudden, uncharacteristic attack, Charles Lamb's older sister Mary, stabbed their mother to death. She was restrained in a "madhouse", but was declared not guilty of murder on the grounds of lunacy (a state of madness that waxes and wanes). Subsequently she had intermittent bouts, not frequent nor of long duration. She could feel when they were coming, and neighbours could watch the mournful sight of Charles escorting his sister to the care home.

Not all was mournful; Mary and Charles had a normal, good, pleasant life together between spells of madness for thirty-five years. This biography gives glimpses of aspects of life at this time - life in a "madhouse", the treatment of the mentally ill (including George III), politics of the day, the growing influence of books and magazines on women. Letters from close friends, the poets Coleridge and Wordsworth, give details of their association. William Godwin, and his second wife, publishers of the *Juvenile Library*, encouraged the Lambs to write for him: *Tales From Shakespeare* was one of their books, and it is still in print. A vivid description of Mary is given: "She smoked, drank, contributed to the conversation, and looked after the household."

Jackie Johnson spoke of another book she had read during the summer, *The Wreck of the Abergavenny*, by Alethea Hayter.

This slim volume deals with the death, at age 33, of William Wordsworth's brother John, who, as captain of a merchant ship, went down with his ship in 1805, off the coast of England at the beginning of a voyage to India and China. The author excuses a rather bellicose statement of John, by reminding us of Admiral Croft hoping that 'we have the good luck to live to another war.' She quotes Jane Austen's description of Captain Harville: 'a mind of usefulness and ingenuity seemed to furnish him with constant employment within. He drew; he varnished; he carpentered; he glued;' and of Captain Benwick: 'he was evidently a young man of considerable taste in reading, though principally in poetry,' as providing a composite of John Wordsworth's personality.

The author recounts how John Wordsworth progressed up the ranks in the merchant navy. 'Modern readers may find it difficult to see heroic status in a merchant navy captain who got his job partly by nepotism, was not averse to smuggling, and hoped to make his fortune by opium trading. But that would be hindsight; by the standards of his day, John Wordsworth was a man of integrity, an upright honourable citizen, respected and admired by everyone who knew him.'

Barbara Phillips: *The Dream of Scipio*, by Ian Peters.

This book has been called "a literary Rubik's Cube" - too hard, too intense, too long; but some members of the book club liked it. The author (an art historian) writes art mysteries. This book has three men, three women (one strong, none Christian), three different periods of time; and their reaction to periods of evil. It is woven with Greek philosophies. Menelaus Scipio is a modern Nazi, Julie is Jewish, Sophie is a saint: a chapel figures in the story here and there. There is a thread of philosophy and history throughout: how civilisation survives. It gives a fabulous evocation of the various time periods, not linear, but interwoven stories.

Phyllis Bottomer: *Lucy Nelson.*, by Barry Unsworth.

The main character, writing a biography of Nelson, gives a day-by-day account re-enacting the battles with models on a glass ocean. He is rather confused, but obsessed with Nelson. Is there a dark shadow on his hero - had captives been killed? A woman who works for this character derided Nelson, found lots of 'bad' things about him.

The book refers to naval life of the period - bad food, horrible conditions of the lower gun-deck: dark and hot, the stench of unwashed humanity (six latrines for 500 men). But Phyllis found it 'an absolutely fascinating read, which fits in with the topic of the October meeting.'

Ron Sutherland: *Cradle to Cradle*, by William McDonough.

The author is critical about our usual re-cycling. Old cars are crushed and melted, but the resulting metal is too unpure to be used for other car bodies. Today's recycling is 'Cradle to the Grave.' The title of *this* book could refer to future manufactures - TVs could be designed so that after a few years, they could be bought back and metals still as good as new could be re-used to make more TVs. Ford has already planned 'dis-assembly' plants on sites beside new plants: cars can be taken apart and re-used in new cars on the same site.

Vancouver Archives and VPL already have roof gardens. Garden roofs can store rainwater, keep the building cool, form a useful habitat and an attractive landscape. The savings could be in millions of dollars. Garbage could be burned, then the resulting methane used to cook food. Ultimately there could be no waste at all. The author gave interesting little anecdotes as examples of his comments. The Stone Age did not end because they ran out of stones. It was time to think. Humans can change, cities can change. As a telling example, the pages of his book are made out of an organic plastic: they are totally recyclable, and can be re-made into more pages for another book.

Irene Howard: *Life Mask*, by Emma Donoghue.

This is historical fiction: themes are the politics of Jane Austen's period, the theatre and private theatricals. The main characters are based on leading actors of the time: Sheridan, Fox, etc. It is short, but Irene says "interesting, well-written."

Keiko Parker: *Daughters of Ireland*, by Janet Todd.

The book is based historically, but is written like a novel. The time period is about 1780. A rich family heiress, Caroline, wants to marry, according to custom, the heir of another rich family, etc. One theme is about Mary Wollstonecraft, who becomes a governess to this family, who are influenced by her doctrines. The author, Janet Todd, has written *18th Century Women*, and books on Jane Austen. She will be one of the Vancouver 2007 Conference key-note speakers.

Sandy Lundy: *1759: The Year that Britain Became Master of the World*, by Frank McLynn.

This was as important a year in history as 1066. The British defeated the French in the West Indies, (almost) in India, and in Quebec. A huge armada was set afloat to invade Britain - encouraged by Bonnie Prince Charlie - a confrontation more significant than the Battle of Trafalgar. The book gives a general survey, then a blow-by-blow account of the battles. It has a good bibliography, but no notes.

Lorraine Meltzer mentioned *The Man Who Loved Jane Austen*, Ray Smith, a penetrating story of Montreal.

Nelson's *Victory*.

"Warships made of oak and powered by sails, like Nelson's flagship the *Victory*, had remarkably long lives. *Victory* had been in service for forty years before the battle of Trafalgar, and she is still afloat in Portsmouth harbour. By modern standards she was small, measuring 186 feet in length, weighing a bit more than 2,000 tons, and carrying 100 guns, all muzzle loaders, with a range of about 1,200 yards at most. The best tactic for such a vessel, so equipped, was to haul alongside the enemy and try to sink her with repeated broadsides. At Trafalgar the British fought 27 ships of the line against 33 of the enemy; but British gunnery and seamanship were incomparably superior, hence the historic result." *The Land and Literature of England*. Robert M. Adams. (p. 370).

Invasion Fears.

"For a long time French armies, under the deft direction of Napoleon, moved from end to end of Europe as they pleased, while the British Navy held control of the seas and blockaded French ports. Twice, in 1797 and 1804, Napoleon seemed on the point of striking a mortal blow by invading across the channel. He assembled troops and transports, while on the other side the British built blockhouses and mobilized to repel the invader. But the blow never came, and Napoleon turned elsewhere. On the other hand, after the revolutionary French armies were created in 1792, neither Britain nor any of her allies ever came close to hitting at the heart of French land power." *The Land and Literature of England*. Robert M. Adams (p.346)

Napoleon's Victories.

"In 1805 to 1808, Napoleon was able to win smashing victories over England's allies in eastern Europe . . . But word of these stunning successes, in which Napoleon finally perfected that coordination of massed artillery preparation with furious infantry assaults on which his fame rested, reached England only as from a distance. Most of the novels of Jane Austen were written, and are supposed to take place, during the last years of the Napoleonic wars; it has often been remarked that she hardly notices them. Garrison soldiers of proper rank and naval officers of good family are among the matrimonial prospects contemplated by her young ladies; they provide gallant company at county balls. Actual warfare is kept the other side of a rather remote horizon; and the prospect that war would ever end must have seemed altogether visionary."

The Land and Literature of England. Robert M. Adams (p.349)

Southey's *Life of Nelson*.

The poet wrote of Nelson, "England has had many heroes. But never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow countrymen. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless . . . that with perfect and entire devotion he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength. And therefore they loved him as truly and fervently as he loved England."

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Bells Toll to mark Trafalgar.

Portsmouth, England.

The Queen led a commemoration Friday, October 21, 2005, of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar aboard the warship that led Britain's Royal Navy to victory against the French and Spanish fleets. Bells tolled aboard British vessels around the world and wreaths were laid at the site of the decisive battle.

The victory by an outnumbered British fleet on October 21, 1805, lifted the threat of invasion by the armies of Napoleon - who ruled both France and Spain - and helped ensure Britain would be the world's dominant naval power for more than a century. It also cemented Nelson's reputation as the country's greatest naval hero.

In Portsmouth, Nelson's battle-day signal to his fleet - "England expects that every man will do his duty" - was hoisted aboard Nelson's flagship, HMS *Victory*. Later, officers laid wreaths on the deck where Nelson was injured, and the spot where he died hours later.

As the sun set over Portsmouth harbour, the Queen lit a beacon beside HMS *Victory*, the first in a chain of 1,000 due to blaze across the country. Later, the Queen dined in the Great Cabin of the 200-year old vessel, raising the traditional toast to Nelson, "the immortal memory."

Emily Behlmann, *Vancouver Sun*, October 22, 2005.

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"Nelson is one of England's first heroes in the modern sense of the word. Because his rise to fame coincided with the Romantic obsession with the self, with the rapid growth of newspapers, with improvements in travel, people knew more about him more quickly than would have been possible before. Between his victories at Cape St. Vincent in 1797 and Trafalgar in 1805 he became synonymous with Britain's battle against a threatening Europe: its glamorous champion, its focal point."

Review by Andrew Motion, April 17, 2003, of
Nelson: Love and Fame, by Edgar Vincent.

Persuasions - No.25, 2003.

There is an article on page 33 you might wish to re-read:
Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers: Francis and Charles in Life and Art: Brian Southam.



The woollen vest, with bullet hole, that Nelson is believed to have worn when he was shot at Trafalgar.

This Newsletter, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, is issued four times a year: February, May, August, and November. All submissions on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome. Mail to the Editor: Eileen Sutherland, 4169 Lions Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 3S2. Canada. Subscription price to non-members is \$10 per year. JASNA Vancouver Website: <www.jasnavancouver.ca>