

## **Lewis Hallum - Synopsis**

Lewis Hallum was baptised to John Hallum and his wife Elizabeth in St Michael, Derby, Derbyshire on 15 May 1775. His family appears to have originated from Chapel-en-le-Frith, the town where Will Scarlet, the legendary companion of Robin Hood, is said to have died on 14 December 1283.

### **Concorde**

He joined *Concorde* (36), Thomas Wells, on 22 June 1793 being Prest as an Ordinary seaman (by muster and service record), at the declared age on the muster of 20 years. Wells was apparently a difficult man, for when he assumed command of *Concorde* a number of his predecessor's officers left, and the new Captain brought with him many who were considered rustic and uncouth. *Concorde* cruised from Portsmouth from July 1793 returning in August with a lost maintop mast, having also lost a Midshipman and three seamen in a gale. She came into Plymouth in September and departed in October with a convoy for Gibraltar and Corunna in October arriving back at Plymouth in December.

In March 1794 several British frigate squadrons were ordered to sea. One of these was commanded by Sir John Borlase Warren, and consisted of the *Concorde*, now commanded by Captain Sir John Richard Strachan, as well as the *Arethusa*, Captain Sir Edward Pellew, *Flora*, *Melampus* and *Nymphe*.

### **Action of 23 April 1794 - The Isle of Bas**

At 0400 this day Guernsey was north about eight leagues, Sir John's squadron having just hauled round on the starboard tack with the wind at south gave chase to four strange ships approaching on the opposite tack from the south-east.

Daylight showed these ships to be French and they shortly afterwards formed in line of battle in the following order : *Engageante*, *Résolue*, *Pomone*, and *Babet*. *Concorde* and *Melampus*, followed at some distance by the *Nymphe*, gave chase to the *Résolue* and *Engageante*. *Concorde*, from her quick sailing, soon got near enough to the two French frigates to receive and return their fire. One frigate took so good a position across the bows of *Concorde*, as to disable her in her sails and rigging, and compel her to drop astern. Having partially refitted herself, *Concorde* resumed the pursuit but her main topmast, which had been shot through, was momentarily expected to fall. *Concorde* was soon enabled to bring that frigate to close action. The frigate, found to be the *Engageante* defended herself with great bravery, from noon until 1345 when, the ship being silenced in her fire, and, owing to the state of her sails and rigging being totally unmanageable, her people called out that they surrendered. Only *Resolue* escaped the action the other three vessels being captured.

The British suffered minimal casualties. The French squadron was transporting troops and supplies, making its loss both a tactical and logistical blow. This action was a fine example of effective squadron tactics and the Royal Navy's growing command of the Channel during the conflict. Inexplicably it was not a bar action. It was the earliest Revolutionary War action involving squadron tactics. The half a dozen previous were only ship on ship and was a triumph over the best the French had to offer. They had fought with courage, stamina and skill and three quarters of them were dead or on their way to prison.

*Concorde* was then assigned to Rear-Admiral George Montagu's squadron in May 1794, and took part in the manoeuvres during the Atlantic campaign of May 1794. Strachan left *Concorde* in July 1794 to take command of *Melampus*, and in August Captain Anthony Hunt took over command.

In June Montagu, departed from Plymouth Sound with nine sail of the line and two frigates (one of which was *Concorde*), to attempt to join Lord Howe and intercept the Chesapeake convoy from America. On the 8th, they discovered and chased a French squadron, including 8 ships of the line, under the command of RA Cornice, into the bay of Bertheaume, and then stood back out to sea. *Concorde* then joined Admiral MacBride's frigate squadron and began a refit in September 1794.

## **Defence**

Lewis was posted to Hospital in Plymouth from 2 to 27 January 1795 thereafter joining *Defence* (74) Captain Thomas Wells posting through *Cambridge* the Guard and Receiving ship in Plymouth. *Defence* was part of Earl Howe's Fleet, with Bridport on *Royal George*. After lying at Spithead for a period *Defence* sailed for the Mediterranean with a force under Admiral Mann in May 1795. In June 1795 his force joined the British fleet then off Minorca and in July the fleet was anchored in San Fiorenzo Bay.

## **Battle of Hyeres Islands**

On 8 July aware that the French fleet was close by the fleet gave chase. It was sighted on 13 July at dawn and the French were seen just 5 nautical miles to leeward, scattered widely. Hotham gave orders for a general chase, allowing his fastest ships the opportunity to come up with the French to the best of their ability. At midday the leading British ships came under fire which was returned targeting the slowest French ship, *Alcide* which caught fire and surrendered, but at least 300 are believed to have been killed when the ship's magazines detonated.

More British ships including *Defence* arrived in the afternoon now within long range and trading fire with the rearmost French ships. Hotham then suddenly issued signals to discontinue and return to the flagship and the French fleet returned to Toulon without interference. The British lost 11 killed and 28 wounded, and captured one ship. *Defence* lost 1 killed and 6 wounded. Admiral Hotham's decision to cease fighting was severely criticised and led Nelson to call this "A *miserable Action*." This was the last fleet action in the Mediterranean before the British fleet was forced to withdraw in late 1796 – the next major engagement in the region was the Nile in 1798.

In September 1795 a French force under Rear-Admiral Richery broke out of Toulon and in October a squadron including *Defence* departed from San-Fiorenzo in pursuit. The squadron under RA Robert Mann chased Richery to off Cadiz and blockaded it. He remained there nearly a year until recalled by Jervis to the Mediterranean. In July 1796 Mann sailed away from the blockade of Cadiz to reinforce the bulk of the Mediterranean Fleet off Corsica. In October Mann arrived at rendezvous with Jervis but had failed to re-provision his ships. He was sent back to Gibraltar and told to return immediately. Mann and his seven ships of the line narrowly escaped a Spanish force and got into Rosia Bay, near the mole of Gibraltar.

## **Rear-Admiral Man 'deserts' the Mediterranean Fleet**

Mann then held a conference with his captains, and decided not to return to the Mediterranean, but instead to sail north with a convoy, and then cruise off Cape Finisterre for a time. With his ships in poor condition after a long period at sea, Mann then returned to England to refit. Mann had no authority to make this decision, and it infuriated Jervis, who accused him of jeopardising the British strategy and forcing a temporarily withdrawal from the Mediterranean.

## **Spithead Mutiny**

Having returned home, Lewis was promoted to Able seaman on 1 April 1797 and almost immediately after *Defence* was present at the Spithead Mutiny from 16 April 1797, the ship remaining disaffected for some time afterwards. Captain Thomas Wells of *Defence* was one of the Captains turned ashore by the mutineers. and in May *Defence* found themselves threatened with violence if they did not join the mutiny. A threat was received that *Defence* would be fired upon if its ship's company did not join. Observing the seamen of *Glory* loading and running out two of their large lower deck guns, the company of *Defence* joined the mutiny by giving three cheers and fixing yard ropes.

After the Spithead mutiny had apparently been resolved *Defence* was then sent out to Gibraltar to join the fleet commanded by Admiral the Earl St. Vincent. While off Cadiz though in September 1797 St Vincent concerned at attempts to delay a Court Martial execution ordered "*all the launches in the fleet, fitted with carronades, to have them mounted .. and at any resistance to the execution .. you fire into that part of Defence where the persons resisting are and continue to fire until they submit.*" *Defence* clearly still had unresolved issues.

In March 1798 Captain William Brown took command from Wells followed by Captain John Peyton, one of Nelson's Band of Brothers, in May. Immediately after *Defence* sailed away from the Cadiz area with a squadron to join Nelson in the Mediterranean in searching for the French fleet transporting Bonaparte to Egypt. By June the fleet, under the command of Captain Thomas Troubridge, joined Nelson off Toulon with orders that he was to pursue and intercept the Toulon convoy.

### **The Chace**

In June the fleet arrived off Cape Corse, Corsica 2 leagues and lay to off Elba. Nelson thought the French may rendezvous in Telamon Bay. Later that month they were in the Bay of Naples. Sir William Hamilton advised they knew the French were attacking Malta. They then proceeded to Stromboli and then entered the Straits of Messina. The Squadron passed between Scylla and Charybdis, the first large fleet to do this since Byng in 1718. They heard the French were off Goza so headed towards Malta but found they had already departed.

At the end of the month they were in sight of Alexandria, and *Mutine* was sent for intelligence, The Consul was absent, and no French. "*We expected to find them at Naples, afterwards at Malta .. away we hasted for Egypt .. poor disappointed us .. come all this way for nothing.*" Nelson left Alexandria heading north to Anatolia, 25 hours after he had left Napoleon arrived, he had missed him on the passage down.

In late July Nelson was in Syracuse Harbour replenishing and concluded that the French must indeed have gone to Egypt and on 1 August the fleet was back there off Aboukir Bay.

### **The Battle of the Nile**

Standing into the Bay at 1730, Nelson formed line of battle, and at 1800 the action began by the British attacking the French van and centre while they anchored by the stern. *Defence's* log records Nelson's signal to prepare for battle at 1600, when the enemy ships were some nine or ten miles distant, and his next signal at 1820 to engage the van. *Defence* duly took-on the 74-gun *Peuple Souverain*, already under attack on her other beam by *Orion*. Firing continued for three hours until 2200 when *Peuple Souverain* cut her cable and drifted away completely mast-less. Just five minutes later, *Defence* manoeuvred to attack the 80-gun *Franklin* which was already engaged with the *Swiftsure*. Firing continued until 2320 when *Franklin* hailed *Defence* to say that she had struck.

The action continued through the night, and at 0600 four French ships escaped under Rear-Admiral Villeneuve. The British lost 218 killed and 678 wounded, which included one Captain killed and Admiral Nelson and other officers wounded. The French lost in killed, wounded, burned, drowned, and missing, about 3500, which included among the killed Vice-Admiral Brueys and four Captains. Of the French ships 9 were captured, 3 were burned, and 4 escaped. *Defence* lost 4 killed and 11 wounded.

What made *Defence's* role in the battle particularly noteworthy was the fact that most of her crew had been laid low by fever and scurvy. Peyton himself was unwell, writing to Nelson four weeks before the battle that the effect of the weather on his weakening constitution, "*will make it very unjustifiable in retaining a situation I shall not be equal to.*" Nevertheless he somehow managed to take part in the battle.

On 14 August 1798 the *Orion*, *Bellerophon*, *Minotaur*, *Defence*, *Audacious*, *Theseus*, and *Majestic*, accompanied by the prizes *Franklin*, *Tonnant*, *Aquilon*, *Conquérant*, *Peuple-Souverain* and *Spartiate* left Aboukir Bay. In September they arrived at Gibraltar with the prizes. In November Captain Thomas Stephenson took command from an ill Peyton and *Defence* joined the squadron off Cadiz. In February 1799 Lord Henry Paulet took command from Stephenson. In May Lord Keith took a fleet including *Defence* into the Mediterranean but by July *Defence* was back in England and on 3 August 1799 Lewis posted off.

## **Juste**

On 4 August 1799 Lewis posted to *Juste* (80), Captain Henry Trollope, as Master at Arms. That month he started an allotment to his mother Elizabeth at Clerkenwell. After a refit *Juste* departed Portsmouth to join the Channel Fleet in July 1800. Captain Herbert Sawyer took command from Trollope in January 1801.

## **Sir Robert Calder's Cruise to the West Indies**

In February 1801 a squadron under Sir Robert Calder, including *Juste*, parted company with the Channel Fleet with a view to tracking down Ganteaume's squadron, which had slipped the blockade. Unfortunately he decided to search for the French in the West Indies, being unaware that the enemy had actually made for the Mediterranean where they cruised from January to July. Calder learned of his wasted journey upon reaching Jamaica in April 1801. The expedition took the force, amongst many other locations, to Madeira, Teneriffe, Barbadoes, Dominique, St Martins, Porto Rico, and Jamaica. *Juste* arrived back at Cawsand Bay in June 1801. At some point Richard Dacres took command from Sawyer and now in turn Sir Edmund Eagle took command from him.

In November 1801 *Juste* was in Beerhaven, Bantry Bay and in April 1802 departed Spithead for Plymouth to be paid off. In turning up the harbour in the Narrows, the wind failed her, and she tailed ashore on the Asia Rock, having missed stays, but by the exertions of her Officers and crew, and the tide flowing freely, she swung off without damage, and got safe to her mooring in Hamoaze. On 10 April Lewis posted off and out of the Service.

## **Post Service**

It is likely that Lewis married between late 1802 to the end of 1805 although there appears to be no record. From subsequent birth records his wife was Elizabeth. His first son Lewis Anthony Hallam was born 16 Jun 1805 and then his only daughter, Elizabeth Hallam, 6 October 1806. A second son, James Hallom (sic) was born 19 May 1808 and a third son John Hallom (sic) on 14 February 1811. The family seemed based in the Islington St James Clerkenwell location, for at least a time at Chapel Place.

## **Greenwich**

On 16 April 1835 Lewis was admitted into Greenwich, "*not having a pension*", a Mariner, age 62 years, service 8 years and nine months, discharged April 1802. He then had 4 children ages 30, 28, 25 and 23 years and was now widowed. He was given the number 4694. The 1841 census notes him as Lewis Hallum age 65 years Pensioner.

On 2 April 1845 the Nelson Testimonial medal was presented to Greenwich Pensioners who had served under Nelson. Lewis received the medal as one of 6 pensioners who were on *Defence* at the Nile: "*Nile Defence Lewis Hallum 72.*" A total of 35 Greenwich pensioners who were at the Nile were eligible for the Testimonial medal.

On 28 July 1850 Lewis died at Greenwich aged 75 years. He was buried 30 July at Greenwich Old Cemetery and was one of the 3,000 that were moved to the new East Greenwich cemetery in 1857.

**The Medal:** "*Lewis Hallow*", unique name, earliest provenance Spink 1987, claimed the NGS 1793-1840, and was issued with one bar, Nile, claim GP (No.4694). Lewis' surname by baptism and through his service was clearly "*Hallum*". It however suffered a number of mis-transcriptions in the process of the issuance of his NGS starting with ADM 171-1.

ADM 171-1 name "*Hallow, Lewis*"

ADM 171-8 name "*Hallon, Lewis*"

List of Greenwich issued NGS "*Hallow, Lewis, 1835, 4694, 1, A.B., Defence, Nile 1798, as Hallon.*"  
Message Roll G.H. ROLL CONFIRMS ("*HALLUM*")

Nile bar, Roll - Total 331, Ship 27 Recorded - Total 145, Ship 10

