

THE RANKS AND THEIR DUTIES ON BOARD VICTORY

Lieutenant. Being a 'Sea officer', a term which embraced lieutenants to admirals, Sea officers held a commission from the Admiralty, other officers such as masters and surgeons, held only warrants from the Navy Board. Lieutenants were trained in seamanship, navigation and gunnery, but would be expected to oversee and be familiar with all areas of the ship, including those of the carpenter, gunner and purser. A lieutenant if successful in actions against the enemy, could gain swift promotion.

Master. He was responsible under the Captain, for the sailing of the ship. All matters relating to navigation were his responsibility, in any part of the ocean he could determine longitude by his chronometer and latitude by his sextant, and know his vessel's whereabouts in daylight or darkness. His navigation calculations were recorded in the log-book. The master had the ability to make maps when necessary.

Carpenter. Was responsible for the fabric of the ship, in storm or action he was the man for emergencies. He had a knowledge of shipbuilding and could organise the replacement or repair of damaged timbers. Carpenters would repair the damage done by the enemy, and if need be carry the ship into port under jury rig when her masts had gone. Other duties included checking the caulking of the seams, inspecting the spare yards and top masts, also seeing that the ship's boats were kept in good order.

Boatswain. His duty was to supervise the everyday work up aloft. It has been said he was responsible for the actual motion of the ship, it was up to him to see that the rigging, sails, ropes, pulleys and blocks were all in good working order. Once the master advised the sailing instructions to the officer of the watch, these orders were passed to the boatswain who was responsible for the reefing and furling of sails. His whistle was his badge of authority, which he used to pipe all hands on deck.

Gunner. The gunner was responsible for the armament of the ship. On *Victory* he was responsible for more than a hundred tons weight of solid iron shot, they had to be stored so as to be kept free from rusting. The powder was kept in two felt lined magazines situated below the water-line, safe from enemy shot. For safety the magazines were covered by copper hatches. So important were these magazines that the keys were kept by the Captain. The armoury or gun room was the gunner's headquarters, this is where all the muskets, pistols, pikes, blunderbusses and cutlasses were kept. In action hundreds of crew members would man his guns.

Purser. An officer appointed by warrant to take charge of the provisions of the ship. To obtain his position he had to lodge a considerable sum of money as sureties. Under his immediate care were all the cotton, flannel and linen required for the clothing of the entire ship's company. The purser had charge of all the food, the beef, pork, butter, cheese, flour, sugar, treacle, cocoa and oatmeal. Also the wine, rum, brandy and grog. He was a wholesale tailor, provision and wine merchant, all rolled into one, in such a position a dishonest man could make a lot of money, hence the Admiralty insisted the purser deposit a large sum of money as security against fraud. Invariably pursers were men of some wealth.

Master's Mate. A position usually filled by a midshipman who was still awaiting to pass his examination or to receive his commission. He took responsibility on watches by serving as the Lieutenant's deputy. There could be six master's mates on a first rate ship like *Victory*, the senior one was usually the head of the midshipmans berth.

Surgeon. Having learned his trade before he came on board, he probably passed his exam at Surgeon's Hall in London. The Royal Navy had just over 700 surgeons at the

time of Trafalgar. The surgeon had charge of the sick and hurt on the ship and was expected to perform operations when required, especially amputations. All treatment given to the men was entered in a journal, which was examined at times by his superiors. On his recommendation, sick men could be transferred to shore hospitals or hospital ships. After 1805 surgeons received a substantial increase to their pay.

Midshipman. Usually aged between fifteen and twenty-three. Midshipmen were training to be lieutenants, a first rate ship would have twenty four. Some continually failed their exams, and were still midshipmen at the age of 40 years plus! The young midshipmen during the celebrations on board *Victory*, amused all by their fun and joy.

Master at Arms. He held a warrant for his position, which included teaching the men the use of muskets and small arms. It was his responsibility to see all fires and lights of the ship were out at the correct times, he kept a watch on the behaviour of the crew.

Sergeant of Marines. At Trafalgar there was only two non-commissioned ranks in the marines, corporals and sergeants. In action the sergeant commanded the musket firing of the marines. Unlike the marine corporals and privates who carried muskets, the sergeant carried a halberd or pike as his side arm. When the crew went ashore, a party of marines led by the sergeant would be present, to watch against desertion.

Quatermaster. Duties consisted of stowing the supplies, coiling cables on their platforms, and overlooking the delivery of provisions. Usually good nature men.

Boatswain's Mate. The sergeant major of the navy. He awoke the crew in the mornings for duty. With a loud voice he signalled the ship's commands. His rope end was the ship's 'starter', encouraging slow men. Floggings were administered by him.

Yeoman of Stores. Boatswains, carpenters and gunners all had large quantities of stores. Each store had a yeoman who took care of the contents. The most important store was that looked after by the yeoman of the powder room, this importance was reflected in his rate of pay, which was the same as the boatswain's mate.

Admiral's Retinue. The Admiral's own company of officers and servants, normally carried and paid for in addition to the normal compliment of the ship.

Supernumerary. A term to denote crew in excess of the ship's normal compliment. It was possible for men to be home for wages in one ship and victuals in another. For obvious reasons he had to be victualled on the ship where he actually found himself. Sometimes the term 'Supernumary' was used for some of the Admiral's Retinue.

Gun Crews. Each 32-pounder gun needed seven men to man it. 18-pounders required six men. With the flag ship having 104 guns of various sizes, it took hundreds of men to fight a fleet action. When the firing was on one side of the ship only, crews would leave the idle side to help fire the guns on the action side. All men would be expected to man the guns, in the case of Joseph Buran, ship's poulterer, he was in the thick of the action on the middle gun deck, having his leg smashed by enemy shot.

Able Seaman. A man who can work well, being acquainted with his duties as a sailor.

Ordinary Seaman. A man who is useful on board, but not an expert or skilled sailor.

Landsmen. Men without any sea experience, often pressed men from shore lives.

Boys. Were rated in three classes. Boys 3rd class, usually under fifteen years of age and were paid £7 per annum. Boys 2nd class, usually under eighteen years of age, these were paid £8 per annum. Boys 1st class would be training to become officers and were paid £9 per annum.

Marines. Acted as sea-going infantry, they also did guard duties on board ship, prime amongst these was the guarding of the Captain's cabin. Marines were also posted to guard the magazine and other store hatches including the spirit store. *Victory* had 145 Marines mustered at the time of the Battle of Trafalgar.

CREW OF VICTORY AT TRAFALGAR. REWARDS AND WAGES

Rank	Prize Money	Government Grant	Monthly Pay
Captain Thomas Masterman Hardy	£973 6s 0d	£2,389 7s 6d	£32 4s 0d
Lieutenant of flagship	£65 11s 0d	£161 0s 0d	£9 2s 0d
Master	£65 11s 0d	£161 0s 0d	£12 12s 0d
Captain of Marines	£65 11s 0d	£161 0s 0d	£9 0s 0d
Carpenter	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£5 16s 0d
Boatswain	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£4 16s 0d
Gunner	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£4 16s 0d
Purser	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£4 16s 0d
Master's Mate	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£3 16s 6d
Surgeon, William Beatty	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£11 11s 0d
Lieutenant of Marines	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	£3 5s 0d
Chaplain to Lord Nelson	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	Admiral's discretion
Secretary to Lord Nelson	£44 4s 0d	£108 12s 0d	Admiral's discretion
Midshipman	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 15s 6d
Clerk	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 15s 6d
Armourer	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 15s 6d
Surgeon's Mate/Assistant Surgeon	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 15s 6d
Master at Arms	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 15s 6d
Carpenter's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 10s 6d
Caulker	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 10s 6d
Ropemaker	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 10s 6d
Sergeant of Marines	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 9d
Quartermaster	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Boatswain's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Sailmaker	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Gunner's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Yeoman of the Powder Room	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Armourer's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Ship's Corporal	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 5s 6d
Caulker's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 6s 6d
Coxswain	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 2s 6d
Yeoman of the Sheets	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 2s 6d
Quartermaster's Mate	£10 14s 0d	£26 6s 0d	£2 0s 6d
Sailmaker's Mate	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 18s 6d
Captain of the Forecastle	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Captain of the Foretop	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Captain of the Main-top	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Captain of the After-guard	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Captain of the Waist	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Trumpeter	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£2 0s 6d
Sailmaker's Crew	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 16s 6d
Quarter Gunner	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 16s 6d
Carpenter's Crew	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 16s 6d
Gunsmith	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 15s 6d
Purser's Steward	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 15s 6d
Cook	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 15s 6d
Able Seaman	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 13s 6d
Ordinary Seaman	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 5s 6d
Corporal of Marines	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 6s 6d
Drummer of Marines	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 8s 5d
Private of Marines	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 3s 9d
Landman	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£1 2s 6d
Boy 1st Class	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£9 per annum
Boy 2nd Class	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£8 per annum
Boy 3rd Class	£1 17s 6d	£4 12s 6d	£7 per annum