

26th May 1853

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

The *Victory* and *Redoubtable*

Several of my brother officers being of opinion that I ought to corroborate the contradiction given by Rear Admiral Pasco to the extraordinary and unfounded account lately published by a French naval officer, wherein, he stated that the *Victory* was boarded by the *Redoubtable* during the Battle of Trafalgar, I most unhesitatingly declare that not a Frenchman ever succeeded in planting his foot on board the *Victory* that day in a hostile manner; and that Rear Admiral Pasco's statement is essentially correct.

As the *Victory* was breaking the enemy's line, Sir Thomas Hardy remarked to the immortal hero who fell on that glorious day, [alluding to the *Redoubtable* and the *Bucentaure*; - "My Lord, we must fall on board either one or the other of them – which do you prefer?" "Just as you please; it is quite immaterial," was the noble admirals reply; when the helm was immediately ordered by Sir Thomas Hardy to be put hard a'port, and we came into collision with the *Redoubtable*; the flag of the French Admiral at the time was not seen on board the *Bucentaure* – it was only discovered shortly before she [*Bucentaure*] struck her colours. As we came into contact with our opponent, the *Redoubtable*, her lower deck ports were lowered for the purpose, as we supposed, of preventing our boarding her through them. The boarders were called at one time on board the *Victory*, but it proved a false alarm and the men immediately returned to their quarters on the main deck.

I remain, Sir, your obedient humble servant.

G A WESTPHAL

Rear Admiral and midshipman on board the *Victory*

21st October 1805

United Service Club - Pall Mall – May 24