

THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE

Log Book of HMS RAMILLIES

Wednesday, 28 May 1794

PM—Squally with rain. At 1.45, No. 29 to attack the rear of the enemy as arriving up and to take station as most convenient for their mutual support. At ½ past 3, wore ship. In chase of the French fleet bearing SSE. At 4, the admiral SE 2 miles. At 4.35, No. 139 to carry a light by night. At 6, saw Admiral Pasley's squadron engaging the enemy. At 6.20, No. 29 to attack the rear of the enemy. Do. with a gun and MARLBOROUGH's signal. At 7.15, No. 41 the fleet to engage the rear of the enemy. At 7.28, No. 30 to denote the enemy's motions during night to the admiral. At 7.32, No. 12 to assist ships engaged; with MARLBOROUGH's signal. At 7.43, No. 34 to form the line of battle ahead or astern as most convenient.

Thursday, 29 May 1794

AM—At 3, the centre of the enemy's fleet SSW about 4 miles. At 3.40, No. 55 to form the line of battle ahead or astern as most convenient. At 6.38, No. 78 to tack in succession. At 7.24, No. 34 the admiral intends to pass through the enemy's fleet and for ships to act as circumstances will admit to engage them either to leeward or windward. At 7.32, No. 28 ships at liberty to fire on passing the enemy. At 8, tacked per signal. The van of our fleet began to engage the rear of the enemy. At 8.14, No. 67 INVINCIBLE to make more sail. At 8.40, No. 67 CÆSAR to make more sail. At 10.3, No. 67 MARLBOROUGH to make more sail. At 10.30, the van of the fleet engaged with the van of the enemy. At 11.30, No. 61 to close to the centre. At 11.35, No. 78 to tack in succession. At 11.44, No. 13 to annul do. At 11.52, No. 73 LEVIATHAN to make more sail.

PM—Cloudy weather. At 12.27, No. 78 to tack in succession. At 1.22, No. 34 the admiral intends to pass through the enemy's line; captains to act as circumstances will admit to engage to windward or to leeward. Heavy firing from the van to the centre. At 2.32, No. 78 to tack ships in 2nd post. At 3. No. 7 general chase. 3.34, No. 80 to come to the wind starboard tack. At 4.10, No. 55 to form the line ahead or astern of the admiral as most convenient. At 4.20, No. 87 ships to windward to form in the admiral's wake. At 4.34, do. with VALIANT's and MONTAGU's signal. At 4.36, the GLORY do. 4.50, do. ROYAL SOVEREIGN and IMPREGNABLE. At 5.38, No. 49 to form the line of battle on the line of bearing. The firing ceased. Received a very considerable damage in our sails and rigging, one of our guns, &c. Began to bend other sails, knot and splice the rigging. Bent a mainsail.

Friday, 30 May 1794

AM—Squally. QUEEN CHARLOTTE w by S ½ S. Bent a fore topmast staysail, foresail, and a jib, the jib being shot away in action. Bent a mizen and main topmast staysail, the others being shot and cut in action. Buried James Edwards and Stephen Rhod, being killed in action. Also buried John Work. Sailmakers also at work mending sails. At 9.43, admiral made tabular signal No. 33 to denote the enemy being in sight. At 9.49, No. 55 to form the line of battle ahead or astern as most convenient. At 10.10, No. 74 the order of sailing in two divisions. At 10.40, No. 84 starboard division to keep in the admiral's wake. At 10.50, No. 11 interrogatory signal to know if you are ready to renew the battle. At 11, No. 83 to come to the wind on the larboard tack with the preparative. At 8, clewed the main topsail up to repair. At 10, set ditto and made sail. The enemy upon the lee bow bearing NNW. At 11.10, No. 83 to come to the wind in succession on the larboard tack. At 11.15, No. 61 to close round the van. At noon, the enemy NW two or three leagues. All hands employed repairing the damages sustained in action.

Saturday, 31 May 1794

PM—Moderate and thick foggy weather. At 1.50, No. 73 to make sail after lying by. At 2, saw the enemy's fleet in the NW. Answered signal No. 18 with the preparative to alter the course together and steer N by W. At 3.55, No. 49 to form on the larboard line of bearing. At 3.58, No. 61 to close to the van. At 4.10, No. 18 to alter the course and steer NNW. At 4.50, No. 19 to alter the course one point to port. At 5.24, No. 40 to engage the van of the enemy. At 5.30, No. 39 to prepare to engage the centre of the enemy. At 5.37, No. 19 to alter the course one point to port. At 5.45, No. 41 the rear to engage the rear of the enemy. At 6.55, No. 47 the PHAËTON to pass within hail of the admiral. At 7.4, No. 139 to carry a light by night. At 7.17, No. 83 the fleet to haul upon a wind on the larboard tack. At 7.46, No. 68 the rear to make more sail. At 8 o'clock, hauled our wind. The SOUTHAMPTON hailed and informed that the admiral intended to keep under the same sail he then had set, if the weather permitted, all night; therefore desired to keep out as many reefs as possible and to preserve a close order to windward of the admiral's wake. At 8, QUEEN CHARLOTTE NNW, and the centre of the French NW by N 3 or 4 miles. Out 2nd reef main topsail. At 12, QUEEN CHARLOTTE WSW.

Sunday, 1 June 1794

AM—At 4, QUEEN CHARLOTTE made the signal for the fleet to close. At 4.30, No. 61. At 5.30, No. 188 with the preparative to alter the course together and steer NW. At 6.40, No. 18 to alter the course and steer North. At 5.35,

bore down towards the French fleet. At 7.15, No. 61 for the squadron under the command of the 1st and 2nd posts to close to the centre. At 7.35, beat to quarters. Answered No. 84 to prepare to haul the wind on the larboard tack together. At 7.43, No. 11 line of battle on the larboard line of bearing. At 8.15, brought to. At 8.53, the admiral made signal he intends to pass through the enemy's line to leeward, and for ships to act as circumstances will admit to engage them either to windward or leeward. Also No. 61 to preserve close order, and No. 73 to make sail after lying by. At 8.50, for each ship to engage her opponent. At 9.23, No. 6 for the GIBRALTAR, CULLODEN, GLORY, ALFRED, and BRUNSWICK to make more sail. At 9.30, No. 36 each ship to engage her opponent. At 9.45, the enemy began to fire. At 9.56, the admiral made the signal to engage closer; our van and centre began firing. At 10, the action general from van to rear. At 10.45 to 10.56, observed the ORION's main topmast and main yard shot away, and one of the enemy's ships opposed to our centre with her main and mizen masts gone. The QUEEN's opponent bore away, bore up also with the QUEEN after our opponent. Perceived several of the enemy's ships bearing up out of their line seemingly in great disorder; and shortly after discovered their whole fleet bearing up and flying in all directions. At 11.38, No. 55 to form the line of battle ahead or astern as most convenient.

PM—Cloudy weather. A very heavy firing in the rear and centre of both lines. Some of the enemy's ships bearing up and many dismasted. One of our ships bore away after the enemy with her main and mizen masts gone, being opposed to a three-deck ship that had her main and mizen masts gone; [the former] proved afterwards to be the *DEFENCE*, and got totally dismasted. At a quarter past noon, No. 103 to close round the admiral. At 1.33, No. 80 to come to the wind on the starboard tack in succession. Several of the enemy's ships kept up a straggling fire. At 2.58, No. 73 to make sail after lying by. Ditto No. 55 to form the line of battle ahead or astern as most convenient. The enemy bore away and steered east, taking four or five of their dismasted and crippled ships in tow. At 3.16, No. 64, GIBRALTAR and CULLODEN to stay by captured ships, 8 or 9 being totally dismasted. At 4.15, signal for all cruisers in the east. Took possession of one of the enemy's line-of-battle ships, the *ACHILLES*. Damage sustained in action this day; having our foresail, fore and main topsails cut to pieces, mainsail, main topmast staysail, main staysail, cut much; our jib and a piece of the boom shot away, our lower rigging much cut, all the fore topmast rigging except one pair of shrouds, preventer forestay. Our fore yard, main yard, main topmast, topgallant yards and topgallant masts, mizen yard, bower cable and best bower anchor, several gun carriages much damaged. At 9, No. 101 to close round the admiral.

Monday, 2 June 1794

AM—Shook 70 butts (empty) beer and water to make room for the prisoners. Lay to all night splicing and knotting the rigging, unbending the sails and bending others. Employed taking prisoners out of the captured ships. At 9, No. 101 to close round the admiral. Bending new sails.

T. Sturges Jackson, *Logs of the Great Sea Fights, 1794–1805*. (London:1899), 1:92–97.