

HANTS FIELD CLUB. 1891.

Plate 1.



A. M. HOARE. DELT

BUCKLER'S HARD. BEAULIEU. VIEW FROM GILBURY.

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BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS.

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On the banks of the Beaulieu river, where the winding stream makes one of its many graceful bends, near Gilbury, a secluded spot on the western shore, dear to all artists, a point runs out "where gnarled twisted old oaks grow down to the water's edge, whose wide-spreading branches give shade to rough little ponies and sleek cattle, stands the old-world village of Buckler's Hard. The village consists of two rows of closely built cottages, two and three stories high, divided by a wide smooth space, covered thickly with short green turf, and fenced at the end from the incursions of animals by a low black paling with a gate in the middle. Each house is a picture in itself, with its deep slanting roof and peaked gables. Upon the shore can be traced the remains of shipbuilding slips and cradles, once busy with life, now only the ghosts of former prosperity. What does it mean? Who could possibly have built large ships in this secluded spot?"¹ But, nevertheless, many a gallant craft was here launched which did England yeoman service in the hour of danger. Towards the middle of the last century that enterprising nobleman, John Duke of Montagu, hoped to make this bend of the river, formed by an argillaceous concretion, and known as *Buckle's Hard* from a local family of that name, an important seaport. The duke owned the sugar producing island of St. Vincent, in the West Indies. The manor of Beaulieu was heavily timbered, and enjoyed more-over all the privileges of the Cinque Ports as a free harbour, (a legacy inherited from the Abbots of Beaulieu), and the iron works at Sowley Pond were within easy reach. Statements were issued proving that ships could sail from the Solent when they would be windbound alike at Bristol and

¹ All the Year Round, July, 1890.

in the Thames. Extensive quay frontages were offered at a yearly rental of 6s. 8d. on 99 years leases; three loads of timber were given gratis for every house erected, and the cheapness of carriage from Buckler's Hard was strongly insisted upon.

Shipbuilding had been going on at Bursledon for half a century previously, Mr. William Wyatt having there built the *Devonshire*, of 100 guns, in 1692, and the *Winchester*, 60, in 1693. This latter ship was lost two years afterwards off Cape Florida.

The firm of Wyatt & Co. appears to have been attracted to Beaulieu by the advantages offered by John Duke of Montagu, and in September, 1743, they commenced operations. The result was that in 1745 they launched the *Surprise*, 24; in the following year the *Scorpion*, 18; and in 1749, the *Woolwich*, 44. The *Surprise* had a crew of 160 men, the *Scorpion* carried 14 swivels in addition to her 14 guns, and had a complement of 110 men. The *Woolwich*, in October, 1748, carried 50 guns and 300 men. It is expressly stated in a business abstract compiled for the firm of Adams & Co., in 1801, that "Henry Adams was overseer to building the above three ships." This is the first mention of this veteran ship-builder who, born in 1713, was only thirty years of age when he undertook the responsible task of superintending the building of the *Surprise*. For sixty-two long years was he destined to build and design ships of war. I have before me a list of "Ships built for Government at Buckler's Hard, from September, 1743, to January, 1791," and a glorious roll it is. A difficulty, however, presents itself, since there was a yard at Deptford, where shipbuilding was carried on by the same firm simultaneously with Beaulieu. It will be correct therefore to say that the whole of the ships enumerated in this paper were built by Mr. Adams, though it is not absolutely certain that all were launched at Buckler's Hard. This is well put by the writer of the list above referred to in a note.¹

¹ N.B.—The account of the ships built at Grove Street Yard was had from the Navy Office, query whether the time of launching is mentioned right, or whether the *Orpheus*, of 32 guns, launched in 1773, the *Centurion*, of 50 guns, and the *Majestic*, of 74, whether one or more of these was not built by Mr. Bernard, at Deptford Green, and whether there was not another frigate built after the *Solebay*, before the lease expired at Grove Street, in January, 1793.

The *Centurion*, 50, was according to the *Naval Chronicle* built at Harwich in 1774, and the same authority states that the *Majestic* was built on the River Thames, in 1785, as was also the *Solebay*, 32. It is evident that Mr. Adams was engaged in shipbuilding elsewhere from a statement in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* of July 11th, 1789, when the *Illustrious*, 74, had been launched on the previous Tuesday: "This makes the twenty-first ship of the line that Mr. Adams has built at Buckler's Hard, besides which he has built as many more at other places." With this caution we proceed with our story. At first the new settlement called Montagu Town grew apace, but at the close of the war, in 1748, the island of St. Vincent was declared neutral by treaty, and all the duke's bright hopes of a great West India trade vanished. But, nevertheless, shipbuilding went on apace from the time when Wyatt and Co. first commenced operations in September, 1743.

The *Surprise* fitted out when war was declared against France, on May 18th, 1750, as did also the *Scorpion*. In 1759 the *Surprise*, under the command of Captain Antrobus, captured the French *Vieux*, 8 guns and 36 men, and in 1761 the *Scorpion*, Captain Hallum, took the French *Boscawen*, 10 guns and 80 men. In the following year the *Scorpion* foundered in the Irish channel; she then mounted 16 guns. The *Woolwich* does not appear in the Navy List of 1756, but was on the coast of Africa commanded by Capt. Daniel Deering in 1760. I have failed to ascertain what became of her.

The *Surprise* was in 1760 in the Mediterranean commanded by Captain Joseph Fraine, and was broken up before 1775.

The *Mermaid*, 24, was launched at Buckler's Hard in 1749, and was lost ten years later under the command of Captain Hackman, near the Bahama Islands, with about 160 men on board.

The *Kennington* was a ship of the same class, with a crew of 160 men. She was comparatively a new ship in 1748, having just replaced an older vessel of the same name which was on the Lisbon Convoy Service in 1741. She saw service during the Seven Years' War, and was on the Mediterranean station at its conclusion, Captain Robert Barber in command. In 1778 she was laid up in ordinary, and was not again commissioned.

The *Lion*, transport, of 151 tons burden, and mounting 4 guns, was launched at Beaulieu, by Henry Adams in 1753. She was classed with ships of 60 guns, and was at Portsmouth on May 18th, 1756. In 1760 she was at Jamaica, commanded by Captain Edward Le Cras, and when peace was signed in 1763 she was on the Home station, Captain J. Stanton. Before 1777 she had been replaced by another ship of the same name.

The *Gibraltar*, 20, took the water in the early part of the year 1756. In the same year, under the command of Captain Cleveland, she captured the *Glanneur*, privateer of 16 guns and 100 men, which was purchased by the Government and renamed the *Gibraltar's Prize*. Captain Walter Griffith was in command in 1760 and 1763 in the Mediterranean. In 1778 she, like the *Kennington*, was laid up in ordinary, but in 1781 she, rigged as a brig, and mounting 14 guns, was whilst commanded by Captain W. Anderson, captured by the Spaniards off Gibraltar.

The year 1757 saw the completion at Buckler's Hard of a sailing lighter of 56 tons, and of a sailing long boat of 30 tons burden, also of the *Coventry*, 28. In the following year she, in company with the *Thames*, 32, another Buckler's Hard ship, took the *Morat*, privateer of 8 guns and 80 men, in the English Channel. Captain Francis Burslem was in command in 1760, and in 1762 under Captain Carpenter she made prizes of four privateers, the *Groignard*, 10 guns and 126 men; the *Guerrier*, 10 guns and 120 men; the *Audacieux*, 10 guns and 104 men; and the Spanish *Dos Amigos*, 8 guns and 50 men. In 1782 she was obliged to surrender in the Bay of Bengal to an overpowering French force, which left Captain Wolsley no alternative.

The *Levant*, 28, launched in 1758 was, under Captain Tucker, at the Leeward Islands in 1760, and was still in the West Indies (Captain John Laforey) when peace was signed in 1763. In 1778 she was in the Mediterranean under the Hon. G. Murray, but was soon afterwards sold out of the service. Sir Thomas Slade designed this ship, which was of 590 tons burden.

The *Thames*, a 32-gun frigate armed with 12-pounders was also launched in 1758. In the same year the French 74 *Le Palmier* captured the *Stork*, 14, Captain Tucker, in the West

Indies, but in 1759 she was herself chased into Brest by the *Thames*, commanded by Captain Colby, who in the same year took the French privateer *Morat*, 8 guns and 80 men, with the assistance of the *Coventry*, and in 1760 the *Bien Aimé*, privateer of 8 guns and 113 men.

On October 23rd, 1793, the *Thames*, Captain James Cotes, was on her way to Gibraltar, 30 men short of her complement, when at 9.30 a.m. a sail was sighted, which proved to be the French frigate *Uranie*, carrying 28 18-pounders, 10 8-pounders, and 4 brass 36-lb. carronades. A sharp action ensued. Both ships ceased firing to refit, when four French ships came up, and the *Thames* at length struck to *La Carmagnole*, a French 40-gun frigate, and was carried into Brest. Her name was changed to *La Tamise*; she was armed in a similar manner to the *Uranie*, and during the 20 months that she remained in French hands she proved herself a very active cruiser, sending no fewer than 20 English prizes into Brest. On June 7, 1796, she was retaken off Waterford, after a fierce fight by the *Santa Margarita*, 36 guns, Captain G. Parker. She was much damaged in her hull, sails, and rigging, and was restored to her place in the English navy as a 32-gun (12-lbs.) frigate. In 1798 she was at Portsmouth commanded by Captain Lukin. In the following year we hear of her at Lisbon, and once more at Spithead. The beginning of this century saw her in Falmouth harbour for Channel service. But her latter days were better than her former. On July 21, 1811, she, together with the *Cephalus*, 18-gun brig, captured without loss 11 French gunboats, a felucca, and a martello tower. On November 1, 1811, she landed marines who, aided by 250 men of the 62nd Regiment, defeated the French and captured the defences of Palinuro in Sicily. On the 14th of May following she, together with the *Pilot*, 18-gun brig, forced the fort of Sapri to surrender at discretion. Her gallant Master, Roger Langlands, here gained promotion to the rank of lieutenant. On the 26th February, 1813, she and the 30-gun frigate *Furiouse*, compelled the surrender of the island of Ponza on the coast of Naples. Before 1818 this gallant old ship had taken up her last moorings. The length of her gun deck was 127-ft.; of her keel, 104-ft. 8½-in.; breadth, 34-ft. 6-in.; depth of hold, 11-ft. 9-in.; tonnage, 656.

The *Hayling Hoy*, of 132 tons, and mounting 4 guns, was launched in 1760. Then came a pause, for it was not until 1764, that the *Europe*, of 64 guns, took the water. She was built at Leap, near the mouth of the Beaulieu river, probably for the sake of deeper water. But she seems to have been the only ship built there, and Buckler's Hard still continued to re-echo to the ring of shipwrights' hammers. The length of keel of the *Europe* was 130-ft. 9-in., and we may mention that the keel timbers required for the Bucklers' Hard ships were brought from near Salisbury, there being no timber in the neighbourhood sufficiently large for the purpose. The length of her gun deck was 159-ft., and her tonnage was 1,369. She was a sister ship to the *Exeter*, 64, and was designed by Mr. William Bateley. In 1778, she was flagship at Newfoundland, under Vice-Admiral John Montagu and Captain R. King. Early in 1784, she was laid up in ordinary, but was considered capable of repair. She was employed during the great Napoleonic war as a prison ship at Plymouth. Lieut. J. Gardner commanded her in 1799. In 1801, she was returned as being no longer in commission, and was soon afterwards broken up.

Two *Hannibals* were built here. The first of them was built in 1759, 1772, or 1779 (accounts differ), her tonnage was 1044, and, off the Cape, on October 26th, 1781, she captured the French *Nechar*, 28, but she herself was, on January 18th, 1782, when commanded by Captain Christie, taken off Sumatra, by the French fleet, and her officers and men handed over to Tippoo Sahib, by whom they were treated most cruelly; "many of these unfortunate men perished during their captivity, and numbers of them were not released till after the war."

Another *Hannibal*, 74, the last but one of her class built here, was launched in 1810, and was in ordinary at Plymouth in 1818. An old man named Biddlecombe, aged 86, still resident at Buckler's Hard, remembers seeing her launched. The men of war, when launched, were at once taken round to Portsmouth, and coppered within 48 hours after being docked. This "oldest inhabitant" says that one of the men who came to fetch the 74 gave him "a quart pot full of sugar, and I was as pleased as if he had given me the ship." The father of Mrs. Biddlecombe was a trunnel maker at Buckler's

Hard, and aided to make solid the stout sides of Nelson's *Agamemnon*.

The year 1773 was a busy one at Buckler's Hard, witnessing the launch of no less than three ships. The *Greyhound*, 28, was launched in July. In 1778, she was commanded by a lieutenant, name not given, and in 1781, she was lost upon the South Sand Head, near Deal. Captain W. Fox and the crew were saved.

The *Triton*, 28, was launched in October, 1773. Five years afterwards Captain S. Lutwidge commanded her on the North American station. In November, 1782, she was being repaired at Limehouse, by Messrs. Edward Greaves & Co. She sailed for the West Indies, returned to Portsmouth, and was broken up before the year 1796.

The *Thetis*, 32, was launched in November, 1773. Captain J. Gell commanded her in 1778, but only three years afterwards she was lost at St. Lucia. Captain Robert Linzee and her crew were saved.

The *Ambuscade*, 32, was launched at Deptford, by Mr. Adams, in September, 1773. The *Levant*, 28, came into the Buckler's Hard Docks for repair in April, 1771, as did also the *Le Brune*, 32, after her capture and addition to our Navy, in 1771.

The *Centurion*, 50, and the *Hector*, 74, were both launched by Mr. Adams in May, 1774, the former at Harwich and the other at Deptford; and in October of the same year the *Vigilant*, 64, left the stocks at Buckler's Hard. Her tonnage was 1,347. She did good service under Captain Kingsmill, on the 27th July, 1788, in Admiral Keppel's action, and also under Sir Digby Dent, in Admiral Byron's action off Grenada, on July 6th, 1779. She ended her career as a prison ship at Portsmouth, for French seamen captured by our cruisers. She was "out of commission" in the year 1801, and never again saw service.

The *Experiment*, 50, was launched in August, 1774. Four years later Sir James Wallace was her captain, and took her to the North American station. On her passage from New York to Savannah with stores, in September, 1779, she was dismasted in a heavy gale of wind, and a few days afterwards

“had the misfortune to fall in with the French fleet, and after a most gallant defence, in sight of the whole (British) fleet, was obliged to surrender to the superior force of the enemy.”

The *Hound*, 18, was launched in March, 1776. She sailed for the East Indies on October 13th, 1782, under Vice-Admiral Sir H. Parke, and in September, 1783, was sold out of the service. She was then sloop-rigged, and mounted 14 guns.

The *Pelican*, 24, was launched in April, 1777; sailed for the West Indies, and in 1781, whilst under the command of Captain (afterwards Admiral) C. Collingwood, was wrecked during a hurricane at Jamaica, only a portion of her crew escaping with their lives.

The *Pacific*, 20, was repaired at Buckler's Hard in 1777, and re-launched in December of that year.

The same year and month saw the launch of the *Romulus*, 44, which was in 1781, when commanded by Captain George Gayton, captured off the Chesapeake River by the *Eveillée* and two French frigates of Ternay's fleet.

The *Hydra*, 24, launched in April, 1778, was sold out of the service in April, 1783. Hers was but a brief career.

The *Pandora*, 24, was launched in May, 1779, and was three years later in North America, under Captain John Inglis. The next year we find her under repair at Chatham, but before 1793 she had disappeared from the Navy List. Her fate is uncertain.

The *Garland*, 28-gun frigate, of some 700 tons burden, was launched in January, 1779, her gun deck being 120 feet in length. She was at first named the *Sybil*, but her name was altered about 1797 because three years previously a very beautiful French frigate of 44 guns, named *La Sybille*, had been captured, and added to the English navy under the name of *Sybil*. I have seen a still existing list of the crew of the *Garland* when called to quarters, and most interesting it is to call over once more the muster roll of heroes who fought the guns of this dashing frigate. The West Indian negroes used to sing:—

You go on board the flagship,
 Dey ask you for to dine;
 Dey give you lots of salt horse,
 But not a drop of wine.

You go on board de *Garland*,
 Dey ask you for to dine;
 Dey give you plenty roast beef,
 And lots of rosy wine.

Oh de happy, happy *Garland*, &c.

The *Garland* at last went ashore on the coast of Madagascar, and her ship's company endured great hardships before they reached a friendly port.

The *Brilliant*, 28, the first of her name, was launched in May, 1779. She is noted for having run foul of, and swept away, the last of the masts of the *Royal George* (sunk in 1782), which remained above water at Spithead, after which a buoy, removed some years ago, was placed over the wreck. In November, 1796, she came under the command of that gallant sailor and friend of Nelson, Capt. Henry Blackwood, who in this small ship, by dint of bold manœuvres and spirited fighting, made a daring escape from two French frigates in the Bay of Santa Cruz. The *Brilliant* captured several French privateers, one of which was the smart lugger *Pointe du Four*, of Roscoff, of 3 guns and 30 men, whose captain had a few months previously made a specially daring escape when a prisoner of war from a hulk in Portsmouth Harbour. In the year 1810 the *Brilliant* fell into the hands of the ship breakers.

The *Zephyr*, pierced for 24 guns but only mounting 14, was launched in May, 1779, and was at once fitted out as a Channel cruiser. She was rigged as a sloop, was commanded by a lieutenant, and was under repair early in the year 1784, at Sheerness. She disappeared from the Navy List before 1793.

In the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* of April 10th, 1781, we read "was launched at Buckler's Hard the *Agammemnon*, a fine 64-gun ship, built by Mr. Adams, of that place." Her gun deck was 160 feet in length, her keel measuring 132 feet, with a burden of 1384 tons. We hear of her everywhere. In February, 1783, a certain well-known Horatio, Lord Nelson, was appointed as her captain, and in the following

October she kept up a gallant running fight with four French frigates and a brig corvette. She helped to capture the *Ca Ira*, 80, and the *Censeur*, 74, off Genoa, in 1795. In the same year she was (with other ships), chased by the Toulon fleet of 17 sail of the line, helped to make prize of *L'Alcide*, 74, and captured a number of privateers. She was in every affair of importance in the Mediterranean, and whilst in command of her Nelson lost his right eye at the siege of Calvi. If you care to see what a grand old ship our New Forest oaks produced and the ways of the men who sailed her, read "Ben Brace," by Captain Chamier. It was one of her crew who at the Battle of St. Vincent tucked under his arm the swords of the Spanish officers upon the quarter-deck of the *San Josef*, as coolly as if they had been faggot sticks. The *Agammemnon* played a noble part at Copenhagen, and her full share in Sir Robert Calder's action off Cape Finisterre. The battle thunder of Trafalgar raged around her, and in the following year she was with Sir John Duckworth off St. Domingo, when five sail of the line struck, amidst ringing English cheers. Nelson's *Agammemnon* was finally wrecked in Maldonado Bay in the River Plate in May, 1809. Well done *Agammemnon*.

The *Orpheus*, 32, was launched by Mr. Adams, at Deptford, in June, 1780, as were also the *Africa*, 64, in April, 1781, and the *Andromache*, 32, in November of the same year. The *Carnatic*, 74, launched in January, 1783; the *Majestic*, 74, launched in February, 1785; the *Solebay* in March, 1785; and the *Orion*, 74, launched in June, 1789. The name of Mr. Adams' partner at Grove Street Yard, Deptford Green, was Mr. Barnard. The lease of this yard finally expired in January, 1793, after which Buckler's Hard was the only place at which Mr. Adams built ships.

The *Gladiator*, 44, was launched in 1782, and sent round forthwith to Liverpool to be fitted for home service. She was long employed as a convalescent ship at Portsmouth, and certainly never went to sea before 1810, if at all. She, however, bore a well-known name, for on board this ship was held many a court-martial, in which was at stake both the lives and honour of admirals, captains, lieutenants, gunners, and seamen:

The *Hevaine*, 32, glided into the waters of the Beaulieu River in April, 1783. She was built on speculation, and was purchased in her frame by the Government. She was of 779 tons burden; was ready for sea in the following August; and two years later was in the East Indies, whence she returned in 1798, to be laid up in ordinary at Portsmouth.

In November, 1783, was launched the *Indefatigable*, of 64 guns, only to be reduced ten years later to a frigate. She mounted 26 24-pounders on her maindeck, 18 12-pounders on her quarterdeck and forecastle, and 4 42-pounder carronades. She retained the masts and yards of a 64-gun ship. On April 22nd, 1793, after a run of 168 knots in 15 hours from the Lizard, she captured the French frigate *La Virginie*, of 40 guns, which was added to our fleet. The *Indefatigable* took several French privateers; in 1797 she recaptured the *Hyana*, late British frigate, and also took the *Vaillante*, 20, which proved, under the name of the *Danae*, a welcome addition to the fleet. On July 13th, 1797, the *Indefatigable* was nearly lost on the Penmarks, (on which her consort, the *Amazon*, was wrecked), whilst engaging the disabled French 74, *Droits de L'Homme*, which latter ship went ashore in Audierne Bay, and became a total wreck. The crews of the English frigates fought up to their knees in water on the maindeck, the *Indefatigable* having at the same time her masts badly wounded, and four feet of water in her hold. It is no wonder that the *Naval Chronicle* for 1799 says that "under her present able commander, Sir Edward Pellew, Bart., she has proved worthy of her name, and has rendered very essential services to this country."

The *Sheerness*, 44, was to have been off the stocks in August, 1784, but her launch did not, after various delays, take place till July, 1787. She was commissioned for the West Indies, and before 1809 her place in the Navy List had been taken by a vessel purchased in 1797. She was sold out of the service in 1810.

The *Illustrious*, 74, was ready for launching in 1789. In July of that year the King and Queen, who were staying at the Duke of Gloucester's house at Lyndhurst, on their way from royal Windsor to Weymouth, their favourite watering place, paid a State visit to Beaulieu, where they were royally

entertained by the Duke of Montagu. The *Illustrious* was then on the stocks at Buckler's Hard, and, strange to say, fired a salute of 21 guns, in honour of their Majesties' visit, whilst still upon dry land, a circumstance probably without a parallel in our naval annals. On July 11th, 1789, we read: "On Tuesday last, H.M.S. the *Illustrious*, of 74 guns, was launched from Mr. Adams' yard at Buckler's Hard. The launch was exceedingly fine, and she is esteemed by gentlemen in the seafaring line to be as handsome a ship of her class as any in H.M.'s Navy. A great concourse of very genteel people assembled on the occasion." Drawings of her still in existence confirm this statement. Ten years later, when under the command of Captain T. L. Frederick, she went ashore during a heavy gale of wind on the rocks near Avenza, in the Mediterranean, and, in spite of Lord Nelson's expressed hopes that she would be got off, became a total wreck. Her captain set her on fire, to save her from the French.

On May 17th, 1790, we read under the head of Portsmouth news in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*: "Arrived the *Beaulieu*, frigate, 36 guns, lately launched at Beaulieu, and is since come into the harbour." She was built on speculation, and was bought on the stocks for £12,250. A great future was before her. Not to enlarge upon her numerous captures of French privateers, she was present at the capture of the Dutch fleet at Camperdown on October 11th, 1797, by the gallant Admiral Duncan, on which occasion she did duty in repeating signals. On July 22nd, 1801, she, in company with four other frigates, played an heroic part in the ever-memorable cutting out of *La Chevrette*, a French corvette of 20 guns and 350 men, from Camaret Bay, her quartermaster, James Wallis, a true hero, steering the prize until out of range of the batteries. The shipbreakers closed round the *Beaulieu* in 1809.

In December, 1789, a sailing mooring lighter of 119 tons burden, was launched at Buckler's Hard. The price paid for her was £952, at the rate of £7 17s. 6d. per ton, £220 being paid in advance, when the contract was signed.

In the previous month a "chain boat" had been launched, which was built at the rate of £7 15s. per ton. Her burden

was 30 tons, and her whole cost £232. A long boat or launch was also built about the same time.

The Salisbury and Winchester Journal has the following:—
“Southampton, April 20th, 1793. The *Santa Margarita*, 36 guns, will be launched from Mr. Adams' yard, at Buckler's Hard, on Friday next, at ten o'clock in the morning.” She was originally a Spanish prize, captured in 1779, by the squadron commanded by Commodore Johnstone, off the coast of Portugal. She was a very beautiful frigate, and, under the command of Captain J. B. Martin, she recaptured the *Thames* frigate, another Buckler's Hard ship, off Waterford, on June 7th, 1796. She also captured the Spanish *San Francisco*, 14, off the Irish coast, in the following year. In 1793, she came into Mr. Adams' hands for large repair, at a cost of £18,500, being at the rate of £17 19s. 3d. on each of her 1,030 tons burden. She was in fact rebuilt by him.

The *Penelope*, 36, was launched in 1783, at Liverpool, and not at Buckler's Hard.

The *Cerberus*, 32, was launched on Sept. 14th, 1794. She was of 796 tons burden, and was built at the rate of £12 10s. per ton, her total cost being £9,954 1s., of which £1,750 was paid down in advance. The beginning of this century found her refitting at Plymouth, Captain J. McNamara in command.

A mooring lighter of 90 tons burden was launched in June, 1795. She cost £945, at the rate of £10 10s. per ton.

The *Bittern*, 16, was launched on April 7th, 1796, and soon after sailed for the West Indies. Before 1807 she had captured several French and Spanish privateers, and in 1818 she formed one of the long line of ships laid up in ordinary in the Hamoaze, at Plymouth. She was rigged as a sloop, and cost £13 a ton to build; her total cost being £5,332 14s., of which £1,080 was paid in advance.

The *Boadicea*, of 38 guns, and 1,038 tons burden, was launched on April 12th, 1797. She captured many French and Spanish privateers. On September 22nd, 1810, she retook the *Africaine*, French frigate, formerly British, and in December, 1810, she had a share in the reduction of the Isle of France. In 1818, she was lying in ordinary in Hamoaze,

then rated as a 46-gun frigate. She was eighteen months on the stocks, and cost £16,885 to build, at the rate of £15 10s. per ton.

The *Snake*, 16, brigantine, of 380 tons burden, was also launched in 1797; she cost £11 17s. 6d. per ton. She was at Spithead in the year 1800.

The *Abundance*, storeship, mounting 24 guns, was launched on September 30th, 1799. She was of 673 tons burden, and cost £14 10s. per ton. The *Spencer*, 74, left the stocks on May 10th, 1800. She had been two years and a half in building, was of 1,901 tons burden, and cost £38,021 1s. 3d. (of which £4,170 was paid in advance) at the rate of £20 per ton. She had a narrow escape from destruction in 1813, and was acting as one of the guardships at Plymouth, in the year 1818.

L'Aigle, 36, was launched on September 23rd, 1801. She captured several French and Spanish privateers, and was present when the *Ville de Varsovie*, 84, *Tonnerre*, 74, *Aquilon*, 74, and *Calcutta*, 56 guns, were destroyed in Basque Roads on April 14th, 1809, by Lord Gambier's fleet.

The *Euryalus*, 36, was built at Buckler's Hard, and launched on June 6th, 1803. Need we say more of her than that she, with the *Agammemnon* and the *Swiftsure*, were the three Buckler's Hard ships which fought at Trafalgar, and that to the *Euryalus* was assigned the honourable task of watching the allied fleets of France and Spain in Cadiz harbour, that she signalled their coming out to Nelson's fleet in the offing, and that after the battle she right gallantly took the *Royal Sovereign* in tow. She was fifteen months on the stocks; was of 943 tons burden, and cost £15,568 16s., at the rate of £16 10s. per ton, an advance being paid of £2,410.

The *Swiftsure*, 74, was launched in 1804, when a large number of spectators assembled to witness the launch, the day being very fine. Next year the battle thunder of Trafalgar rolled and crashed around her, and on November 26th, 1813, her boats captured off Corsica, the French privateer schooner *Charlemagne*, of 8 guns and 93 men. She took thirty months to build; her tonnage was 1,702; and her cost was £35,787 17s. 9d., at the rate of £21 10s. per ton, the advance paid being £4,170.

The *Starling*, *Snipe*, and *Vixen*, gunvessels, mounting 16 guns, or, according to another account, 14 carronades, were launched in 1802. They were of 184 tons burden, and were built at a cost of £18 per ton; £800 being paid in advance. On January 31st, 1801, there were 4,163 tons of shipping in progress of building at Buckler's Hard, at the contracted price of £75,637 13s. 4d., on which advances of £11,130 had been already paid. In 1806 the *Columbine*, 18, and another 14-gun brig of the same name were laid down. The *Hussar*, 38, had already been two years upon the stocks, and the *Sabrina*, 16, half that period. The *Victorious*, 74, had also been laid down in 1804; and in June, 1806, Mr. Adams was building a 74-gun ship, not as yet named, in addition to the above-mentioned ships, so that business was going on apace. The new ship was soon afterwards named the *Hannibal*. The *Sabrina*, 16, was launched in 1806, rigged as a sloop, and the *Hussar*, 38, in the early part of 1807. The *Victorious*, 74, was launched in 1808, and the *Hannibal* in 1810. The *Sabrina*, the *Hussar*, and the *Victorious* were all engaged in the ill-fated Walcheren expedition in 1809, as was also the *Euryalus*, 36. The *Vengeur*, 74, the first of her name in the British Navy, was launched in 1810. She was probably the last 74 built at Buckler's Hard. In 1812, the *Victorious*, 74, and the 18-gun brig *Weasel* captured the French 80-gun ship *Rivoli* in the Atlantic. For this action Captain Talbot was knighted, and received a gold medal from the Admiralty. The *Victorious* was on the North American station in 1813, as was also the *Vengeur*, 74. No ships of war appear to have been building on the Beaulieu River in 1813. After the peace in 1815 more than three hundred ships were either broken up or sold out of the service. Amongst them was the *Victorious*, 74, which was broken up in 1814, after only six years' service. The Admiralty now decided not to build any more ships in private yards, and I believe that the *Repulse* Revenue cutter, built about 1818, was the last Government vessel built at Buckler's Hard. On March 8th, 1818, there were an immense number of ships laid up in ordinary in Hamoaze, at Plymouth. Amongst them were our old friends the *Bittern*, 16, the *Columbine*, 18, and the *Hannibal*, 74, whose work was done for ever; whilst the *Spencer*, 74, was doing her last duty

as one of the guardships, and the *Sabrina*, 16, was being offered for sale.

Amongst the numerous merchant vessels built here were the *Columbus*, West Indiaman, of 338 tons burden, launched in September, 1795. She cost £2,873, at the rate of £8 10s. per ton. The *Princess Mary*, East Indiaman, launched in 1796, of 465 tons burden, cost £13 10s. per ton, or £7,606 in all. The *Heart of Oak*, for coasting trade, the *Endeavour* and *Active*, timber ships, both built in 1800, the latter being of 111 tons burden, the *Neptune* (she was only a small vessel), and the *Hard Privateer* were launched into the Beaulieu River.

The *Mary Ann* and *Henry*, brigs, were built here at a later period. The *Nelson*, a fine ship, was built here, and took out to Australia a number of donkeys, the embarkation of which caused great merriment at Buckler's Hard. The *Australia*, a large three-masted vessel, which traded with the country after which she was named, was the last large ship built and fitted out here, and some of her crew are still living, hale and hearty in the neighbourhood.

The *Bee* and the *Lady Hannah Ellis*, 400 tons, West Indiaman, launched in 1812, must not be forgotten.

Mr. Henry Adams was the original shipbuilder. He attained the good old age of 92 years, and died in 1805, as appears by a tablet in Beaulieu Church. He is still remembered as a kindly old gentleman by the veteran Mr. Rogers, of Brighton, who was, before he left his native village of Beaulieu in the year 1818, an eye witness of various launches. A 74-gun ship was usually at least thirty months upon the stocks. A ship of 1,300 tons burden required the felling of more than 2,000 average oaks to supply 2,000 loads of timber, and 100 tons of wrought iron and 30 tons of copper were also needed. When a ship launch was imminent, every vehicle and saddle horse within 20 miles was in motion. In default of chaises, many persons came in tumbrils and in waggons. Scaffolds and booths were erected for the spectators, who often numbered 10,000, and who frequently waited patiently for many long hours. So beautifully was everything managed that when the *Superb*, 74, was launched at Pitcher's Yard, Northfleet, in 1795, more than 200 persons stood under her when the dog shores were knocked away.



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BUCKLER'S HARD, BEAULIEU.—HOUSE OF ADAMS, THE SHIPBUILDER.

But all these things are over. Mr. Henry Adams was succeeded by his son Robert, who afterwards went into the Navy as a purser, and died holding that rank in 1811 at Portsmouth, being described in *The Naval Chronicle* of that date as "having been formerly many years an eminent ship-builder at Buckler's Hard." He was followed by Edward and Balthazar (locally called Balty) Adams, two brothers, who, finding trade prosperous, undertook to build four men-of-war at one and the same time. The strain upon their resources proved too great, and failure to deliver the ships in due time was the cause of a fine, and of ill-advised litigation against the Government, with disastrous consequences. The last piece of work done at Buckler's Hard was the cutting asunder and lengthening a collier, which came from Lymington. The home of the Adamases still stands at Buckler's Hard, and the curious visitor may still tread the floor of the room where in old days high festival was held before, during, and after a launch. When the *Illustrious* was launched in 1789, we read—"A great concourse of very genteel people assembled on the occasion, about 150 of whom stayed to dinner, and the day was spent with great conviviality." Hushed are the strains of the band which played "God save the King," and "Off she goes," as hats off and amidst ringing cheers "Nelson's *Agammemnon*" took the water. The site of the tanks and swimming baths, which were filled with sea-water by a little creek, and wherein stalwart carpenters and smiths washed off the stains and grime of labour, is now used as the potato patch of a cottage by the shore, which is sheltered by a belt of fine stone pines. Gone is Joseph Purse, the very strong man, who used to haul down the timber which, stacked in mighty piles, lay in the village street, the said street being made unusually wide for its reception. He is still remembered for his great but quiet power over his horses, "there was never no hollering." Many cottages, now no longer needed, have been pulled down, and closed is the inn kept by Mr. Hemmons, where the shipwrights and caulkers were paid, as is also the New Inn, kept by Mr. Wort, who was succeeded by his son Joseph, with its traditions of a "Smugglers' Hole." James Bown no longer fires the kiln, and only hollows in a meadow and by the waterside

tell where the "top-sawyers" laboured. The site of the mould loft in the lower yard is still pointed out. The blacksmith's shop is closed, the shipwrights and caulkers rest in peaceful Beaulieu churchyard, side by side with the last Hampshire ironfounders from Sowley Pond, and the ribs of the grand old ships lie rotting on many a shore, for "the old order changeth, giving place to the new," though "we are not better than our fathers."

The illustrations to this paper are from drawings by the skilled pencil of the Rev. H. Hoare, Vicar of Fawley.
