

Lieutenant Hornblower Study Guide

Lieutenant Hornblower by C. S. Forester

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Lieutenant Hornblower Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter 1.....	6
Chapter 2.....	8
Chapter 3.....	10
Chapter 4.....	11
Chapter 5.....	13
Chapter 6.....	14
Chapter 7.....	15
Chapter 8.....	17
Chapter 9.....	19
Chapter 10.....	20
Chapter 11.....	22
Chapter 12.....	23
Chapter 13.....	25
Chapter 14.....	26
Chapter 15.....	28
Chapter 16.....	30
Chapter 17.....	32
Chapter 18.....	33
Chapter 19.....	35
Chapter 20.....	36
Characters.....	38
Objects/Places.....	44



Themes..... 47

Style..... 49

Quotes..... 52

Topics for Discussion..... 59



Plot Summary

H.M.S. Renown sails from England in 1801 bound for Haiti. Her orders are to destroy privateers in the harbor of Santo Domingo and foment indigent rebellion against the Spanish colonizers. The voyage is interrupted by the captain's developing paranoia and an accident which incapacitates him. The lieutenants, led by Hornblower, take control of the ship and carry out the mission with uneven successes. Upon arrival in Kingston, Renown is received with honors and Hornblower is appointed as acting commander of a sloop-of-war. Temporary peace between England and France thrusts Hornblower and his particular friend Bush ashore on half-pay. Hornblower plays whist and gambles until hostilities resume.

Renown, with 74 guns and commanded by Captain Sawyer, sails from England to Haiti. Her secret orders instruct the captain to attack and sink, burn, capture, or destroy several privateers operating out of the harbor at Santo Domingo and, if possible, to foment indigent rebellion against the Spanish. Lieutenant William Bush joins Renown just hours before she sails; the remaining officers have all served previously. Bush discovers quickly that Captain Sawyer is paranoid beyond reason, encourages the crew to lazy insolence, and constantly suspects the officers of mutiny.

The situation becomes critical and the lieutenants request the ship's surgeon declare Sawyer unfit for command; the doctor declines to do so and the lieutenants then meet in secret to determine whether they should proceed further with relieving the captain. Hornblower, the junior lieutenant, argues that doing so would surely be mutiny. The lieutenants are spared taking action, however, when Sawyer falls down a hatchway and is seriously injured. Suspicions abound that Sawyer was pushed but no evidence is forthcoming. When Sawyer regains his physical health it is obvious that his mind has snapped completely—he sobs hysterically and cringes in fear at the approach of anyone. The ship's surgeon is finally willing to declare him unfit for command and Buckland, the senior lieutenant, takes over command.

Under Hornblower's urging, Buckland reads the ship's orders and determines to carry them out. Renown rather unimaginatively sails directly into the enemy harbor, intending to destroy the privateers by assault. The ship runs aground on a mud flat, though, and is only slowly kedged off under a withering plunging fire composed of heated shot. The indecisive Buckland wavers but under Hornblower's urging launches a stealthy overland surprise attack against the fortress. The attack is difficult but successful. Buckland again wavers as to a proper course of action but Hornblower makes various suggestions which are implemented, resulting in the surrender of the Spanish garrison.

The privateers are taken as prizes and the small fleet sails for Kingston, the holds crammed with prisoners. After several days the prisoners escape and revolt on Renown. They temporarily gain the ship but an alert Hornblower, commanding the largest prize, gathers in the prize crews and counter-attacks in a fierce and successful boarding action. Bush is seriously wounded during the fighting but recovers in time to deliver



testimony at a court of inquiry. All the lieutenants are exonerated and Hornblower is given an acting command to return the largest prize to England.

The Peace of Amiens, however, is established and Hornblower, Bush, and thousands of other officers are thrown ashore in England on half pay. Bush lives with his sisters while Hornblower takes a cheap tenement and supports himself by gambling at whist. The two friends meet a few times during the ensuing year and Hornblower meets Marie Mason, and the two come to an informal understanding. The novel concludes with the happy news—happy at least to Bush and Hornblower—that the war is once again joined and they quickly depart for the admiralty to receive their new orders.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

H.M.S. Renown sails from England in 1801 bound for Haiti. Her orders are to destroy privateers in the harbor of Santo Domingo and foment indigent rebellion against the Spanish colonizers. The voyage is interrupted by the captain's developing paranoia and an accident which incapacitates him. The lieutenants, led by Hornblower, take control of the ship and carry out the mission with uneven successes. Upon arrival in Kingston, Renown is received with honors and Hornblower is appointed as acting commander of a sloop-of-war. Temporary peace between England and France thrusts Hornblower and his particular friend Bush ashore on half-pay. Hornblower plays whist and gambles until hostilities resume.

Lieutenant William Bush reports aboard H.M.S. Renown, scheduled to depart shortly for the West Indies. The assignment is a new assignment though Bush has four years' experience as lieutenant. He reports to the officer of the deck, Lieutenant Hornblower, who has three years' experience as a lieutenant. Hornblower has twinkling brown eyes and is tall and gangling, with hollow cheeks. He is also sloppily dressed. Bush, dressed smartly, has blue eyes. A brief discussion follows and Bush realizes that, based upon date of commission, he will be the 3rd lieutenant aboard while Hornblower will be the 5th and junior lieutenant. Bush thinks about ranking 3rd in the ship and wonders dubiously about his chance of earning note or even promotion during the upcoming cruise. Hornblower barks orders at various crewmen during the brief conversation and then the ship's captain, James Sawyer, comes aboard from the shore. Sawyer asks Bush several strange questions which indicate a high level of unjustified paranoia. After Sawyer departs, Bush looks to Hornblower for some cue about Sawyer's bizarre behavior, but Hornblower merely arches an eyebrow and continues about the ship's business.

HMS Renown is a third-rate British man-of-war, a two-decker with 74 guns. The ship's complement is 740 souls, of which 20 are officers and 80 are marines. About half of the 640 crew are seasoned seamen and the other half are pressed lubbers. Thirty-four of the 74 guns are twenty-four pounder carronades on the lower deck; the ship also carries 9-pounder long guns on the upper deck. The ship is commanded by Captain Sawyer and the named lieutenants are, in order of decreasing seniority, Buckland, Roberts, William Bush, Smith, and Horatio Hornblower. Midshipmen include Abbott, Truscott, and Cope. The ship has at least one volunteer named Wellard. Warrant and other officers include Dr. Clive, the ship's surgeon; Carberry, the master; Lomax, the purser; Booth, the bosun; and Hobbs, acting gunner. The named crew includes Coleman, surgeon's mate; Pierce, surgeon's mate; Purvis, master's mate; Duff; James; Woolton; Saddler; Black; Silk, bosun's mate; Ambrose, foretop captain; Cray; Berry, gunner's mate; and Hart. The marine complement includes Whiting, captain; and Greenwood, corporal.



Chapter 1 Analysis

Chapter 1 sets the tone and texture of the novel—it establishes the bulk of the action will be aboard a British man-of-war circa 1802; that military order and custom will prevail, and that the primary characters will be the lieutenants and other officers of the ship. For readers familiar with the other novels in the series, chapter one is interesting in that it establishes the primary point of view as belonging to Bush in place of the usual Hornblower. Chapter one also firmly establishes the primary early conflict of the novel—the paranoid delusions of Captain Sawyer—that consume the bulk of the first few chapters and also set the uncertain tone carried throughout the remainder of the novel. Hornblower is, in one way, fortunate that Sawyer is unstable because as the plot develops it allows him to take command of sorts by making various logical suggestions and successfully arguing his point of view—this 'leading the leader' forms one of the dominant themes of the novel. Note that the description of Renown offered in the summary is gleaned from entries throughout the novel—no such categorical description exists in chapter one.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Bush has been at sea for about ten years and as *Renown* sails he finds the motion and atmosphere enjoyable. His last posting aboard *Conqueror* had paid off only weeks before and after just a few days with his sisters he has returned to life aboard ship. Bush watches the other officers and determines that 1st Lieutenant Buckland is probably capable, 2nd Lieutenant Roberts is easygoing, and 4th Lieutenant Smith is fairly out of his league. 5th Lieutenant Hornblower appears active and intelligent. The ship has at least one volunteer, Wellard, a non-paid crewman something like a midshipman who is hoping for eventual acceptance into the service. Bush has the watch and sends Wellard below to inform Captain Sawyer of a routine sailing evolution. Soon enough Sawyer is on deck to oversee the activity, a minor affront to Bush's seamanship and judgment. As lines are hauled Wellard shouts at the men to stop—a sail has become tangled in the line and is being torn. Sawyer rebukes Wellard for having 'countermanded' the captain's direct orders, which is very peculiar indeed. Hornblower, overseeing the activity, comes aft and supports Wellard's action, noting that the entangled line must be cleared or serious damage will ensue. Sawyer, strangely, concludes that Hornblower and Wellard are in a treacherous conspiracy to undermine the captain's authority. He sends Wellard and Hornblower below and, in a rage, directs the line cleared and the procedure completed. Sawyer then orders an immediate issue of rum to every man and—curiously—boy aboard. Sawyer then delivers a curious address to the crew, addressing them directly, and insinuating that although they doubtlessly remain loyal, the officers of the ship are suspect.

Sawyer then takes Booth, the bosun, and two bosun's mates below where Wellard is severely beaten for insubordination then sent on deck for an extra watch. Bush sets the stricken Wellard lightly to work synchronizing hourglasses. After a few minutes Sawyer regains the deck and begins brutally to accost Wellard once more. Bush, as officer of the watch, is drawn into the exchange and finds himself being challenged by Sawyer who apparently doubts his loyalty and good faith. Flabbergasted, Bush defends his honor and declares his fidelity. Sawyer once again takes Booth and two bosun's mates below with Wellard, and the boy is again severely beaten. Sawyer then commands Hornblower to stand 'watch and watch' henceforth—that is, Hornblower will spend four hours on active duty, then four hours rest period, repeated around the clock until the captain changes the order.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Chapter two continues to develop the plot and push it toward an initial confrontation between Sawyer and the lieutenants. The chapter also introduces most of the characters which will be involved in the action in any meaningful way. In brief, Sawyer appeals directly to the crew for assistance in opposing his putatively mutinous officers.



He is assisted by Hobbs, an acting gunner. Hobbs, in an acting capacity, is neither fish nor fowl—he is not a warrant officer of the ship but he is also not crew proper. This, coupled with his natural lazy and insolent personality, makes him an optimal collaborator and informer to the captain. Hobbs functions throughout the early part of the novel as a sort of minor villain but has no real personal goals. Hobbs is foiled by Wellard, a volunteer. Wellard joined *Renown* voluntarily and serves without pay. Ostensibly he hopes to eventually be accepted as a midshipman after acquiring the basics of seamanship. Contrary to what might be expected, volunteers were usually viewed with disdain by established crew and officers—somewhat rather like a pressed lubber without the pity. His isolation by Sawyer would be typical except that Wellard is uncharacteristically versed in seamanship and Sawyer's treatment of Wellard goes beyond harsh discipline and is clearly a form of torture. Sawyer's discipline is clearly counter-productive. Hornblower is deprived of much sleep for weeks on end which surely will devastate his mental acuity. Wellard's beating certainly renders him unfit for duty.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

On Sunday the 740 men aboard *Renown* are drawn into ranks for inspection. Sawyer reads the articles of war, placing particular emphasis on charges of mutiny and sedition. After he finished reading, Sawyer takes the unprecedented action of declaring to the crew that the articles of war also apply to the officers of the ship, inferring that some amongst them are perhaps mutinous. Bush is astounded and realizes that it will be nearly impossible to retain order among the hands. Sawyer then orders that no work will be done for the remainder of the day and further orders a double issue of rum. Sawyer goes below and Buckland, Roberts, and Bush enter conversation. Bush says nothing but hears Buckland report that an appeal to Dr. Clive has been rejected—Buckland has asked the ship's surgeon to declare Sawyer unfit for command. They are surprised when Sawyer emerges from a hidden location and loudly declares the lieutenants are engaging in mutinous behavior. The lieutenants flatly deny mutinous intention. Sawyer declares that Wellard will shortly be beaten again, and then orders Bush and Roberts to report to Buckland in full dress for review every hour, on the hour, around the clock, for the foreseeable future, and notes that Hornblower is to remain on watch-and-watch indefinitely.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Sawyer's disciplinary actions are clearly not aimed at making *Renown* more reliable. Three of his four lieutenants are deprived of any semblance of sleep with the attendant loss to mental acuity; a fourth, Hornblower, suffers a similar but less intense punishment. Only Smith escapes the treatment and this apparently because he is retiring and never in Sawyer's sights, rather than because of any positive trait. Wellard's repeated beatings surely make him unfit for duty for a prolonged period of time. Faced with incapacitated officers and an obviously doddering captain, the crew quickly becomes insolent and restive. It is fortunate indeed that *Renown* does not have to face combat under such circumstances. Sawyer's treatment of Wellard certainly establishes a motive for Wellard to hate the captain—hate him enough to contemplate serious harm.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

After several days Buckland, Roberts, Bush, and Hornblower assemble in the dark of the cable tier to discuss Sawyer's apparent mental instability. The meeting is obviously perilous, particularly so considering Sawyer's paranoia. The lieutenants discuss the best way to remove Sawyer from command, noting also that the ship's surgeon has declined to declare the captain unfit for duty. Bush considers the likely result—court martial and hanging—if the lieutenants remove the captain. Hornblower states the obvious—that the captain will be vindicated in any court martial and that the lieutenants will be considered mutinous and will hang. The lieutenants agree but continue to voice their opinion that Sawyer is insane and unfit for command. Suddenly Wellard scrambles forward in the dark and raises the alarm—the captain and marines are coming down to the cable tier. The lieutenants all scramble away into the dark.

Bush gains the lower deck and sees Hobbs with a lantern, accompanied by assistants, searching around and sealing portals to the cable tier. Bush then passes through the wardroom where he sees the marines quickly readying for action. He asks them about the commotion and finds them ignorant and confused. Moments later Wellard appears and calls for the ship's surgeon; he then reports to Bush that the captain is hurt—the captain has fallen down a hatch. Moments later Hornblower appears and states that the captain is badly hurt; Hornblower collects Wellard and prepares to return to the captain and offer assistance. Joined by the ship's surgeon, they return to the hatchway. As Dr. Clive, and his assistants Coleman and Pierce, begin to assist the captain, Buckland appears and takes charge. He is visibly shaken and still confused about the situation. Hornblower attempts to calm Buckland, and then Corporal Greenwood makes his report. Greenwood had been with the captain and had been ordered to guard a hatch to the lower deck. Moments later the captain apparently fell through the hatchway, headfirst. Greenwood was not an eyewitness, however, and is confused and afraid.

Clive takes the captain into his cabin. Sawyer is unconscious and badly wounded with a serious head injury. Hornblower attempts quietly to calm Buckland, and the lieutenants restore order and then Hornblower, assisted by Wellard, takes down Corporal Greenwood's written statement. Buckland and Bush gain the deck and inform Smith, the other lieutenant, of the situation. Buckland then determines that pending a report from Dr. Clive, no action will be taken—Sawyer remains in command.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Even given these circumstances, the lieutenants realize that any action to remove Sawyer from command will be viewed as outright mutiny by the navy. Such austere terms of service were rather to be expected during the period considered by the novel. Historically, for example, abuse of crew leading to mutiny at *The Nore* in 1797 resulted



eventually in the hanging of ringleaders which would be an event of which Bush, Hornblower, and the others would know. In any event, a non-mutinous group action would certainly have to be led by Buckland and that officer is far too indecisive to ever commit himself to a course of action. Thus, Hornblower's analysis of the situation holds—anyone participating will hang as a ringleader of mutiny—and the lieutenants disband. It is indeed ironic that Sawyer's paranoia of mutiny leads nearly to the very thing he fears. It is also ironic that Sawyer's attempt to capture his lieutenants at putative mutiny leads to his removal from command. Hornblower's active dismissal of the other lieutenants in the cable tier is an early example of one of the novel's dominant themes: Hornblower leads the ship through good sense and insight rather than through authority. The captain's accident begins the dominant unanswered questions in the novel and is used to build a certain tension that runs throughout the narrative. Sawyer falls when his guard, Corporal Greenwood, is not directly observing him but is at some distance. Wellard and Hornblower appear first on the scene of the injury indicating they were both very close by when Sawyer fell. Bush and Buckland both insinuate rather bluntly that they believe Hornblower to have some special knowledge about Sawyer's accident. The supposition, of course, being that either Hornblower or Wellard pushed the captain down the hatchway. All available evidence, including medical analysis, indicates that an accidental fall was at least possible if not probable. Bush is left to wonder and, eventually, to decide that Hornblower must be telling the truth. It is equally possible and perhaps rather more likely that Hornblower did not witness anything but that Wellard did push the captain. Hornblower seems to somewhat indicate this late in the novel when he urges Bush to read a brief announcement in the naval gazette. In any event, the question remains unanswered throughout the novel.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

The next day Sawyer regains consciousness but is insensible, cringing with fear at any approach and wildly sobbing in hysteria. After consideration, Dr. Clive declares Sawyer unfit for command. The lieutenants are all feeling guilty and afraid, but Buckland determines that at any rate he must temporarily assume limited command pending Sawyer's recovery. Following Hornblower's subtle suggestions, Buckland mounts to the deck, calls the hands, and announces Sawyer's putative accident, notes Sawyer's inability to continue in command at the present time, and declare his intention to assume temporary command of the ship.

Later, during a guarded moment, Bush asks Hornblower about Sawyer's accident and Hornblower avows complete ignorance of the particulars. Over the next days Sawyer screams, raves, and sobs, and the general opinion among the warrant officers is that Sawyer is irremediably insane. Buckland imposes gun drill and sail drill on the crew, along with standard discipline, and the ship begins to reform. Bush and Hornblower spend an afternoon discussing navigation, and Hornblower educates his senior officer on the mathematics involved. Later they discuss Buckland's likely actions. Bush feels Buckland should simply leave secret orders alone and sail for the nearest port in Antigua. Hornblower thinks Buckland should read and execute the orders, noting that it is a golden opportunity for Buckland to distinguish himself.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Chapter five marks a major turning point in the novel; Sawyer is incapacitated and the indecisive Buckland is forced into a semblance of action. He resists taking command as much as possible and for as long as possible. This is for two reasons—first, his natural reticence, but secondly because he is clearly afraid that Sawyer will recover, take command, and view Buckland's temporary assumption of power as mutinous behavior. Buckland, already deprived of sleep around the clock for many weeks, is probably not in a fit mental state and is obviously controlled by his fear of Sawyer. Slowly but finally the ship's surgeon concludes that Sawyer is irretrievably insane and Buckland does assume command—albeit haltingly. The open and mocking disdain felt for Sawyer amongst the warrant officers demonstrates how hated the captain was within the wardroom. This section of the novel continues to develop two of the novel's dominant themes. The friendship between Hornblower and Bush develops but encounters an early difficulty when Bush feels that Hornblower is withholding information about Sawyer's accident. The chapter also strongly develops Hornblower's ability to effectively determine the ship's course of action through logical and respectful discussion with Buckland.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

One morning Hornblower reports on deck and requests permission from Roberts to take a seawater shower. Roberts grants the unusual request and Hornblower takes a shower—a peculiar spectacle in the royal navy of the time. Bush watches the other lieutenants and contemplates the subtle interaction of personality and rank in the service. As he thinks, Buckland and Hornblower become deeply engaged in a quiet conversation that lasts for some minutes. Bush and Smith watch Buckland and Hornblower and wonder what they could be discussing so earnestly. Suddenly Buckland goes below.

Later, Buckland calls for Roberts and orders a change of course. Eventually the gossip circulates that Buckland finally has unlocked Sawyer's desk, read the secret orders, and determined to accomplish them. In the evening Buckland confirms the gossip; he will not disclose the ship's orders, but he states their destination to be Santo Domingo, alternatively known among the crew as Scotchman's Bay, Hispaniola, or Hayti. Roberts sagely notes that, as everyone is aware, the native slave population of Haiti is in open rebellion against their Spanish and French masters.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Freed of Sawyer's domineering eye, some of Hornblower's personal eccentricities come to the fore—he takes a seawater shower, for example. Such behavior was peculiar for the time. Later, Hornblower subtly determines the fate of *Renown* by convincing Buckland that opportunity favors the prepared. Buckland considers Hornblower's advice and opens Sawyer's desk and reads the ship's secret instructions. This is a minor turning point in the plot as it indicates Buckland has finally and irrevocably assumed acting command of the ship. When the ship's new destination is announced, Hornblower nearly immediately realizes that the mission is both military and political; among the officers he alone is familiar enough with world politics to guess at the secret orders. In fact, though the orders are never revealed in the novel, Buckland's constant surprise at Hornblower's suggestions indicate that Hornblower has indeed divined the orders' contents with great clarity. Hornblower's desire for adventure and decisive action in service of the king is about to be met, thanks to his ability to lead the leader using a blend of advice, logic, and deferential comments.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Renown reaches Santo Domingo but Buckland vacillates; instead of entering the port, the ship heaves to off the coast and wallows. Hornblower becomes seasick and cantankerous. Bush and Hornblower pace the deck and Hornblower discloses how he would have approached the port—by a stealthy nighttime landing of troops and an overland surprise attack on the Samaná fortress. Buckland feels rather otherwise. After tipping his hand by giving away his presence, Buckland orders a daylight assault on the port by boldly sailing Renown up the narrow channel.

Renown makes the bay and closes with the port—her objective is the destruction of several small privateers sheltering near the town. The harbor's channel is long, shallow, and difficult. The harbor entrance is guarded by two forts—one on the mainland and the other on a prominence on the Samaná peninsula. As Renown closes the distance, the forts open fire. Their large emplaced guns have a great advantage of elevation and their plunging shot soon ranges Renown. Heavy damage and many injuries ensue—also, the fortresses are using heated shot. The cannonballs are nearly white-hot as they strike the ship and great care must be given to every impact lest fire should erupt and consume the wooden sailing vessel. Meanwhile, Renown's gun crews cannot reply against the fortresses which are much higher in elevation. Hornblower waits on the lower gun deck at his duty station, next to Bush on the opposite side of the ship.

Just as Renown closes within range of one fortress the ship slowly heels over at an odd and unusually steady angle—Hornblower and Bush realize she has gone soft aground on a mud bank. After much initial confusion the ship's cutter is launched with a stream anchor and the ship attempts to kedge off the bank. Under heavy fire the evolution is attempted but fails—Renown is stuck in the mud by heavy suction and friction. Hornblower, meanwhile, has taken an enemy fort under fire at extreme range with some effect. On deck the damage continues unabated and Lieutenant Roberts is killed. When Hornblower realizes that the kedge attempt is failing he suggests that the entire lower battery be discharged in unison—the recoil should free the ship of the suction of the mud bank. The suggestion is accepted by Buckland and preparations are made. Hornblower orders the forward cannon on the off-side battery removed to the rear of the ship to redistribute weight. Hornblower also orders the on-side battery cannons double-shotted to increase recoil, and then they fire in unison as the men at the capstan, far above, heave heartily. The ship rocks perceptibly upon the recoil and thereafter moves backward off the mud bank. The cutter hauls aft, regains the stream anchor, and rejoins Renown. Meanwhile the ship has turned about, all the time under plunging fire from the forts, and sails back out of the harbor. Hornblower, Buckland, Bush, and all the rest feel the sharp disappointment of retreat and failure.



Chapter 7 Analysis

The chapter presents much of the naval combat writing for which the entire series is famous. It begins with Hornblower confiding in Bush what Hornblower would do if he were in command. Instead, Buckland rather unimaginatively decides to simply assault the docks by running the gauntlet of the fortresses. Once close to the docks, he intends to use Renown's formidable firepower to destroy the anchored privateers. In theory the plan should work—Renown carries sufficient firepower and so forth. Buckland, however, does not have adequate charts for the harbor and therefore relies a great deal on luck, simply hoping Renown can sail down the harbor and find the channel deep enough to be navigable. He is unfortunately wrong. Renown goes aground very softly, running at high speed onto a slick mud bank which only gradually inclines. By the time Renown heels strangely and slides to a stop she is hard aground in thick mud and held there by suction. Her guns can barely reach one fortress but, due to their elevation, both fortresses can direct a withering plunging fire onto Renown. The fortresses use hot shot which threatens to start fires in addition to doing all the normal damage of shot. Buckland's reaction to the grounding is textbook—he sends the ship's boats abaft the bank to convey the ship's great stream anchor. Once the anchor is placed Renown attempts to kedge off the mud bank. The suction of the mud is too much to be overcome, though, and the ship is stuck fast and continues to draw murderous fire. Buckland does not know what to do. Fortunately, Hornblower has an idea. The combined recoil of seventeen double-shotted 24-pounds is enormous—enough, Hornblower reasons, to rock the entire ship. The rocking ship is thus freed momentarily of the mud's suction and can be kedged off. Hornblower's plan is successfully executed, Renown warps around and makes good her escape.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

After retreating from the harbor Buckland confers with Bush, now the senior acting lieutenant aboard. They rehash many of the same points which have been previously discussed. Buckland wonders how damaging a full retreat might be to his career; Bush suggests that a victory would almost certainly eventuate in promotion for Buckland. The two dependable but unimaginative officers fret about what to do and, following Bush's suggestion, Buckland finally passes the word for Hornblower, now the third lieutenant. Hornblower cautiously suggests that a surprise overland attack, against the peninsular fortress, with a stealthy approach would almost certainly succeed. Buckland argues against such a risky maneuver but Hornblower, with utmost diplomacy, convinces Buckland that such an attack would succeed. Control of the fort would ensure the destruction of the privateers and would likely force the Spaniards to retire entirely from the harbor. Although only Buckland has read the secret orders, Hornblower appears to have more-or-less guessed at their contents. Buckland squirms uncomfortably as Hornblower guides him by the nose into making plans for the audacious attack. Buckland appoints Bush to lead the overland attack and Bush requests Hornblower to assist. Hornblower then asks Wellard to assist. Buckland then plans to launch the attack after several hours—Hornblower successfully urges that the attack be launched immediately. Buckland finally acquiesces to the entire plan and requests that Bush carry it out—Buckland thereby relinquishes decision-making powers on all subsequent minor points. As Bush and Hornblower prepare to leave the cabin, Buckland asks Hornblower about Sawyer's accident and Hornblower avows complete ignorance of the particulars.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Robert's death leaves Bush as 1st lieutenant, and Hornblower as 3rd lieutenant. After Buckland's signal failure, Hornblower's initial plan is presented to the acting captain. As usual, Buckland finds the entire program nearly incomprehensible. It is not that he is incompetent so much that he is out of his league—as a 1st lieutenant, Buckland was master of his job. Most of the chapter is devoted to Hornblower's subtle and skilled handling of Bush and Buckland. When Hornblower makes a comment regarding the political situation of Haiti, Buckland is startled—evidently because Hornblower's comments echo Buckland's secret orders. Bush, stodgy and ponderous as ever, realizes that Hornblower's plan has the potential for success. He is particularly drawn to solving the components of the plan which give Hornblower problems—how to arrange the men, etc. With Hornblower's logic and exuberance, Bush's confident backing sways Buckland. It is interesting that once he makes the formal decision to proceed, he dismisses Bush and Hornblower with the vague order to "see to it, if you please" (p. 121). Obviously Buckland's capacity for command decisions has been exhausted by the earlier failure. Wellard has obviously demonstrated extreme competency—Hornblower

selects him as his personal aide. The unsentimental Hornblower would not do so if Wellard were not the most-capable person available.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Bush takes his forces—about one hundred seamen and eighty marines—ashore on a deserted beach shielded from view of the peninsular fortress. They are divided into three groups, the main body of seamen commanded by Bush and a smaller forward contingent commanded by Hornblower, and the final body composed of the marine file led by Whiting. To ensure silence, Bush forbids the men to load their muskets—the attack will be carried out with the bayonet. Hornblower scouts ahead and sends Wellard back as messenger; Bush's group travels as a larger body. A marine sprains his ankle, a seaman is discovered to be drunk, but overall the advance happens as planned. The overland trek is difficult in the dark and is described well—in short, it succeeds and the force is drawn up near the fortress at the planned time.

Bush then makes the signal and the force rushes the objective. Combat is hotly joined; grapples are thrown atop the walls and axes are employed to hack open embrasures and doors. Bush is caught up in the pell-mell *mêlée* and hacks at the enemy with his officer's sword; discipline breaks down in the confusion and swarms of British seamen storm throughout the fortress. The enemy is taken entirely by surprise and most surrender in their night clothes. Shortly Bush meets Hornblower—the fortress has been seized. Prisoners are locked into common rooms and dozens of women and children are also locked up. The dead are stacked and the injured British are tended to by the surgeon's mates. Bush regains his composure only slowly—too many sleepless hours have left him exhausted and mentally slow.

Chapter 9 Analysis

The chapter describes how Bush organizes, with Hornblower's assistance, the expedition against the fortress. Much of the chapter's length is consumed by descriptions of the terrain traversed and Bush's state of mind—as such it delivers little to the plot but informs Bush's character somewhat. Hornblower scouts ahead and blazes the trail, sending Wellard back to Bush's group to bring them forward. After a prolonged process, over-described in the text, the forces arrive at the fortress. This portion of the text is the weakest segment of the narrative; the overland journey is described in considerable detail but is fairly uninteresting. It is followed, however, by the assault on the fortress. The shift in tone and action is remarkable. Bush is so tired that much of it passes before him as a blur. The attack is made from several directions simultaneously and British forces enter the fortress by a variety of means. The Spanish are entirely surprised; the night guard is overwhelmed and slaughtered and the remaining forces are captured while still asleep. After the action Bush is faced with many trivial decisions and begins to establish order out of chaos.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Bush and Hornblower mount to a tower in the captured fortress. They watch Renown's approach and exchange recognition signals with the ship. They watch the nearby town of Savaná and see it bustling with activity and confusion. One of the largest privateers begins to warp out, attempting to make an escape before Renown seals the harbor mouth. Hornblower sets about immediately to heat shot so that the British may repay the Spaniards in kind. None of the British sailors has any experience of heating shot but Hornblower reasons out how the task must be accomplished by looking over the array of unfamiliar equipment in the fort's armory. As Bush attends to various tasks, Hornblower lights the forge and instructs the men on how to heat shot. Soon the large privateer sails down the channel, followed at some distance by three smaller craft—all Spanish privateers. When the leading ship comes in range, Bush orders the cannon to discharge and within moments white-hot, plunging shot is directed at the enemy. Although the aim appears true, Bush sees no immediate damage—Hornblower reasons that the heavy, plunging cannonballs must be passing entirely through the ship from deck to hull and to the bottom of the channel. Bush watches somewhat doubtfully until he descries thin smoke raising from the schooner, followed by billowing smoke. The ship alters course and deliberately runs aground as roiling fire engulfs the entire hull. The fire reaches the magazine and the ship detonates with a resounding crash. Hornblower finds the sight rather unappealing but Bush finds the sight of a burning enemy vessel remarkably attractive.

The trailing privateers turn about and return to the docks, taking moderate fire. Hornblower, still working out the principles of heated shot, realizes that some of the cannonballs are too hot—they have expanded and deformed beyond the caliber of the guns. The furnace is put out, the guns swabbed and secured, and the men are sent to breakfast.

Chapter 10 Analysis

The main topic of the chapter concerns hot shot. Aside from the hot shot, in essence the Spanish privateers run for the open sea only to be turned back by shots from the British-held fortress. The British destroy one ship and drive the other three back to the docks. The remainder of the chapter details how Hornblower deduces how to heat shot. He does this by looking over the equipment at the fortress and noting which pieces of equipment are strange to him. He then figures how they must be used and, putting it all together, decides how to heat shot. His conclusions are essentially correct. The British Navy did not use heated shot because the forge required to heat the shot was more of a danger to the ship heating shot than the heated shot was to the enemy. It is therefore not surprising that none of the British know how to heat shot—though some of the marines might have seen the procedure.



The danger visualized by Hornblower was the accidental contact of white-hot shot with charges of powder. He therefore causes the components of the ammunition to be brought to the firing platform in stages. First the powder, then well-wetted double wads to prevent the hot shot from touching the powder, and then finally the hot shot, carried in special handles. Under Hornblower's direction, the hot shot is made and discharged with success. He does not realize, however, that shot heated beyond a certain point will melt and deform. Thus, the shooting stops when the balls will not enter the cannons. This scene demonstrates Hornblower's nervous and insecure personality better than any other in the novel. Bush dismisses it because nobody present knows the first thing about hot shot. Hornblower viciously berates himself for not foreseeing the eventuality.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

Renown gains the harbor entrance but stalls for lack of wind. Bush and Hornblower nap in the fort while they wait for the evening breeze. A boat puts off from the mainland fortress across the bay, bearing flags of truce. Bush summons Hornblower and informs him that as he speaks fluent Spanish he must needs carry on any and all conversation with the enemy. The boat arrives and discharges Colonel Ortega of the Spanish military. Ortega and Hornblower exchange formulaic pleasantries and then discuss the situation. Ortega requests that the women and children be released, requests that the wounded men be released, requests that a list of the dead be compiled and released, and suggests that the uninjured soldiers could be paroled. He also insinuates that some form of Spanish capitulation might be possible if the English will entertain the proposition. Bush is hesitant but under Hornblower's political suggestions he agrees to all of Ortega's suggestions except the capitulation, preferring to leave such a delicate political matter up to Buckland. The parole is worded and sworn to by the captured soldiers and over the next several hours the various classes of prisoners are assembled and released. Meanwhile Hornblower returns to Renown to inform Buckland of the development.

Chapter 11 Analysis

The chapter presents another turning point in the novel. Renown attempts to close with and destroy the privateers but is prevented by a shift in wind. While everyone waits, the Spanish attempt to master their fate at least somewhat—Ortega is dispatched to sue for terms. His proposals are reasonable and Hornblower sees them as so. Bush, on the other hand, suspects his enemy of trickery even when none is present and must be handled by Hornblower. In brief, the parole of the prisoners is more beneficial to the English than it is to the Spanish for reasons of logistics. Ortega then hints that some form of capitulation might be possible. The political situation keeps Ortega from offering such a thing directly—instead, Hornblower must understand the situation and make the initial approaches. Hornblower's fluency in Spanish is apparent as he divines the subtle hint.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Buckland and Hornblower join Bush ashore in the fortress and discuss Ortega's capitulation statement. Hornblower carefully educates his superior officers on the political situation of the area, the Spanish mentality, and the realities of their military situation. Hornblower accurately describes the Spanish situation based on deductive reasoning and careful observation of the locale. After prolonged consideration, Buckland agrees to meet with Ortega and the Spanish officers immediately join the conference. Ortega's offer is unusually aggressive given the circumstances—he demands free passage for all ships, all soldiers, and all civilians to Cuba or Puerto Rico. In exchange, they will hand over the military assets of the harbor. Ortega then makes vague reference to yellow fever—the vomito negro—and insinuates that if his offer is refused the Spanish will fight to the last man while the English die of endemic diseases to which they have no immunity. Ortega then withdraws so the English can consider his offer.

Buckland finds it distasteful and considers once again running Renown up the harbor to destroy the privateers. Bush is very hesitant, noting that the channel is treacherous and that the mainland fort is still in Spanish possession. Seeing no alternative, Buckland despairingly moves toward accepting the capitulation offer. Hornblower then suggests that if a cannon were moved from Renown to a commanding height it could bring fire against the docks and town—such a weapon would entirely change the situation. Bush and Buckland see Hornblower's suggestion as ridiculous at first, but slowly begin to work out the details and implications. Bush becomes enthusiastic about moving a nine-pounder ship's gun atop a prominence. Buckland finally agrees, too, and begins to think about moving the gun in the morning. Hornblower urges immediate action so that upon the next day's meeting the gun would be a reality. Seeing the wisdom of Hornblower's suggestion, Buckland agrees. Buckland returns to Renown, Bush takes command of the cannon-moving force, and Hornblower is left in command of the fortress. Bush finds the mental challenge of moving the cannon an enjoyable diversion, and one that his exceptional seamanship can handle.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Chapter twelve presents another instance in which an indecisive Buckland is happy to have achieved some level of success while an intense Hornblower wants to achieve decisive results. In a well-established pattern, Hornblower leads the leader into making an essentially correct series of decisions. As before, Bush grasps Hornblower's plan before Buckland and the combined encouragement of Bush and Hornblower finally brings Buckland over. The timid Buckland finds Hornblower alone too audacious and adventurous, but when the reliable Bush lends his support, Buckland is confident enough to proceed with Hornblower's plans.



The essential conflict of the chapter deals with the Spanish demand for unmolested passage. In exchange they will not blow up the military emplacement. It is upon the surface acceptable—and yet the British have no need of and can make no use of the military fortresses and guns; they lack the men to take over the area and do not have the political mandate to assume local control. The Spanish are in effect giving up nothing in exchange for everything. Buckland does not immediately see an alternative. Fortunately, his junior lieutenant does. Hornblower's plan is simple—enable the British to destroy the Spanish without heavy losses. Faced with this changed military situation, he is confident the Spanish will surrender without terms. The holes in Hornblower's plans are, as usual, filled in by Bush who rather relishes the complexities of hauling a one-ton hunk of steel up a cliff rather than the intricacies of political negotiation.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Bush and his party take one cannon from Renown and transport it around the peninsula on the cutter. They rig tackle and lines to sturdy trees atop a cliff and successfully hoist the one-ton cannon atop the prominence, followed by the carriage, planking, shot, powder, wads, and tools. The men in Bush's party then lug the heavy materiel to the selected firing point and assemble a deck and mount the cannon. When the operation is finished, Bush orders the cannon sighted in on the largest remaining ship and opens fire. His orders are to deliver ten aimed shots but after the eighth the cannon's vent hole plug blows out. Exasperated, Bush fumes while Berry, the gunner's mate, files a new vent hole plug and installs it—an operation that consumes perhaps an hour. Bush sends a runner to the fortress and demands strict discipline from the men in his party. Just as the gun is again serviceable, a runner approaches from the fortress—it is Wellard and he informs Bush that Hornblower requests a cease fire. The Spaniards have capitulated without terms and the ships far below are now English prizes of war.

Chapter 13 Analysis

The chapter is fairly slow in action and is somewhat tedious at points. The description of hoisting the cannon is interesting but the inordinate detail given to the simple hauling of heavy objects is fairly uninteresting. As the cannon has a naval carriage, a firing platform must be constructed to allow recoil. This is all accomplished by Bush who remembers to plan for every contingency except the one which actually occurs—a vent hole blowing out. Bush is doubly fortunate, however—the gunner has a spare bushing, and the eight shots fired are sufficient to accomplish the mission. The eight shots severely damage the remaining privateers. Realizing that their only escape vessels can be destroyed at leisure, the Spanish forces surrender without terms. Hornblower's plan has been executed perfectly and Buckland's victory is complete. This marks the end of the first major narrative segment of the novel—to this point, Hornblower has been personally involved in all of the major decisions and most of the significant action in the novel, and all such decisions have been correct and all such actions have been, in the aggregate, successful. The only failure, per se, was entirely Buckland's. This heavily foreshadows the events of the next chapter.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

The Spanish ships are taken by English prize crews and the Spanish soldiers and citizens are divided amongst *Renown* and the three Spanish vessels where they are made captives in the various holds. The largest Spanish ship, *La Gaditana*, a ship-rigged vessel, is commanded by Hornblower. The two Spanish fortresses are destroyed by massive explosions in their respective magazines. *Renown* weighs anchor and claws out to sea, followed by her prize fleet. Bush organizes a system of guarding the prisoners and bringing small groups of them to the deck to take fresh air and sun. Groups of women and children are segregated from groups of men and a complex series of shifts begins to allow marines to sentry portals and escort prisoners to and fro. Other shifts of seamen are arranged to provision the prisoners. Several days of monotonous sea voyage ensue as Bush's system settles down into routine. Buckland is in high spirits anticipating his successful entry into Kingston.

One night Bush retires; Carberry has the watch. After a few hours Bush is awakened by the sound of running. It is out of place and he senses that all is not well. He gains his feet amidst sounds of screaming and, opening his cabin door, hears the discharge of a musket. Grabbing his sword he takes to the companionway and sees that the ship is in open warfare—Spanish prisoners run everywhere, fighting against English seamen. Bush attempts to move aft to Buckland's cabin but immediately realizes the stern end of the ship is in Spanish control. He fights his way to the deck and gathers the men around him. They make several desperate attempts to seize the quarterdeck but all are unsuccessful. Bush receives numerous wounds and bleeds heavily. He staggers to a cannon, slumps against it, and finally collapses to the deck. The Spanish have taken the ship, though at high cost, and begin to drive her into the wind. Bush, unable to rise, watches the entire proceeding with despair. He then sees *Gaditana* closing alongside *Renown* and within moments Hornblower leaps onto *Renown* at the head of nearly one hundred British men. The organized attack sweeps the deck before them and within moments Hornblower has captured the quarterdeck. The determined boarding attack then clears the maindeck, consolidates the surviving crew, and then storms the entire ship. Bush is discovered among the wounded and, passing out, he is carried below.

Chapter 14 Analysis

The Spanish prisoners are divvied up between the four ships of the squadron. As the largest ship by far, *Renown* has the lion's share of the captives. The women and children are placed in one holding area and the soldiers in another. Bush works out a system to feed, water, and relieve the various prisoners. As *Renown* is working without a full crew—many have been killed and many more form the prize crews and guards of the three prize ships—the arrangements are complicated. After things settle down, the female prisoners exercise their virtues upon the British seamen and are shortly allowed



out of the cage. They in turn help the escape of some Spanish soldiers and soon Renown is embroiled in open revolt. The Spanish attack appears well coordinated. The British defense is piecemeal. No experienced officer is on deck and after taking heavy casualties the British crew is defeated. Bush is severely wounded in heroic efforts and collapses on the deck. He witnesses Hornblower's boarding action and subsequent re-taking of the ship. Hornblower later explains that prior to boarding he gathered all of the sailors and marines from the other prizes to bolster the attack. To prevent the other prizes from escaping, he disabled those ships' rigging. Hornblower's attack is successful in reclaiming Renown and he does not lose a prize. This major conflict in the novel marks the final military exploits of the British forces in the novel; the remainder of the narrative presents a prolonged falling action which is interrupted only somewhat by Hornblower's stint at gambling in Portsmouth. The chapter is well-written and the action is presented in crisp prose. Such presentation of dramatic naval combat actions has propelled the novel—and the entire series—into prolonged popularity.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Bush remains confined to his berth until *Renown* makes Kingston. At the port, Hornblower sends lemonade and other conveniences to Bush's cabin. Bush reflects upon what he has learned since regaining consciousness. Sawyer is dead—one of the Spaniards murdered the insane captain while he was still lashed to a board. Buckland remains alive and unharmed, though he was captured in his bed, asleep. Hornblower assembled all of the prize crews before boarding *Renown* and his storming was entirely successful. Losses among the British were high—losses among the Spaniards were very high. The most likely explanation of how the Spaniards came to be free involves speculation and judgment: Bush rather thinks British seamen must have let Spanish women out in exchange for sexual favors, the freed women then conspiring to free the men. After consideration, Bush realizes that all of this will reflect very poorly on Buckland, very well on Hornblower, and might lead to rounds of courts martial.

Hornblower and Buckland join Bush in his cabin moments before Buckland departs to make his formal report. Buckland once again asks Hornblower about Sawyer's accident and Hornblower, as before, avows complete ignorance of the particulars. Buckland presses the issue and Hornblower unemotionally declares complete ignorance of the particulars. Buckland then bemoans his own fate but Hornblower assures him that with the successful destruction of the Spanish emplacement and the three prizes, Buckland will not fare too badly. Buckland departs and Hornblower returns to his duties.

Bush is shortly joined by Sankey, the surgeon of the naval hospital in Kingston, and Clive. They review his condition—nine serious wounds followed by exsanguination—and perform a physical examination, then Clive signs Bush over to Sankey's care. On deck, Hornblower bids Bush an abortive but emotional farewell. Bush watches, meanwhile, as a new captain—Cogshill—comes aboard *Renown* to take command. Then Sankey causes Bush to be hoisted over the side, lowered into a launch, and rowed ashore. Sankey accompanies Bush to the naval hospital. As Bush is carried on a stretcher Sankey keeps up an interminable chatter about the buzz surrounding Sawyer's death, Buckland's successes and failures, and Hornblower's counter-attack. Sankey more-or-less echoes Hornblower's sentiments but does so in an expansive and prolix way which leaves Bush irritated. Sankey predicts that there will be no courts martial, that Bush's actions will be viewed as sufficiently heroic, that Buckland's capture in bed will strip him of any chance of promotion, and that Hornblower's exploits will earn him commendations. Sankey further comments that Cogshill was a particular favorite of the local administrator, Admiral Lambert, and thus was fortunate to be in port when *Renown*, a ship of the line, came in without a captain.

In the hospital Bush is reviewed and his complete recovery seems likely. Later he is visited by an official from the review board and a date for his testimony is set with Sankey's permission. Still later Hornblower visits Bush, bringing gifts, and makes small



talk. Hornblower's visit is particularly cheering to Bush. Hornblower informs Bush that Gaditana, the largest of the privateers, will be bought into the service as a sloop-of-war and renamed Retribution. Hornblower comments that he, too, will be giving testimony at the review board.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Chapter fifteen uses several interesting narrative constructions to present a great amount of detail in a very compressed amount of space. Bush, the primary actor in the novel, is incapacitated and therefore does not see most of the action described in the chapter. Instead, a variety of methods are used to allow Bush to experience the action vicariously. From time to time, Hornblower visits Bush and delivers information via dialogue. Other times Hornblower sends a messenger to Bush to keep him informed. This of course strengthens their friendship as Hornblower is under no real obligation to do the favors he does. Bush hears the noises of the ships and the shouted commands and uses his naval experience to imagine the ship's evolutions. Later, Bush happens to be transported at the critical moment when Renown receives her new captain. Bush is accompanied by Sankey, the garrulous shore surgeon, who keeps up a continuous running dialogue that informs Bush—and the reader—of much of the political background which informs the next two chapters. In all, the chapter is a masterful presentation of interesting fictional methods of construction and it varies widely but successfully in tone from the other segments of the text: stylistically it is the most distinct section of the novel. Buckland once again presses Hornblower for information regarding Sawyer's fall. This information would obviously be to Buckland's advantage—were he able to point a finger at Wellard or Hornblower, his own failings would be so much the less by comparison. Hornblower wisely—truthfully or not—declares again his complete ignorance. By this point in the narrative, Bush is certain of Hornblower's character and does not himself pursue the matter again.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Bush attends the court of inquiry; his medical condition allows him to deliver his testimony while sitting. The captains of the board review Bush's written testimony and make small comment upon it; they observe that their investigation does Bush great credit. As Sawyer was deemed insane and is now dead, the board exhibits little interest in pursuing the matter of his removal—better to let him pass out of memory with good feelings intact. Bush is dismissed and watches as Hornblower is called. The captains state that most of the initiative for most of the successes appears to have been Hornblower's; Hornblower demurs and gives all credit to Buckland. The court briefly confers and then states their findings: there will be no further inquiry and no courts martial; they call for charges to be brought against the Spaniard responsible for Sawyer's murder. Bush realizes this means Buckland will remain an undistinguished lieutenant for life; Hornblower will likely enjoy success; and Bush will be promoted to a better post.

Days after Bush has recuperated, he joins Renown for a dinner. He, Buckland, Hornblower, and Cogshill enter the cabin and drink heavily and partake of Cogshill's evident rich provender. Surprisingly, Hornblower is summoned away from dinner to attend to the Admiral Lambert. In his absence, all drink and talk and Bush becomes very intoxicated. Hornblower eventually returns and, after rounds of drinking, announces that he has been appointed acting commander of Retribution, with orders to sail to England. A drunken Bush cheers lustily while Buckland weeps and damns Hornblower's luck. Cogshill has the good etiquette to ignore both men, congratulate Hornblower, and keep the dinner on proper track. At the end of the night, Hornblower assists a falling-down drunk Bush to his berth.

Chapter 16 Analysis

The chapter concludes the central tension of the novel. A board of inquiry is held to determine the official response to Sawyer's death. As Hornblower has predicted since the first chapters in the novel, the successes of Renown and the prizes she brings silence nearly all criticism about Sawyer's removal and death. The court's officers see little reason to make public unsavory details about Sawyer's decline—better to simply remember his as a captain giving his life in service of the king. Buckland is deemed correct in his actions but also seen as a competent 1st lieutenant—but not material for commander. Bush will continue as a lieutenant and probably draw a plum next assignment. Hornblower is recognized as the motivating spirit behind Renown's successes. As junior lieutenant he is beyond suspicion in the matter of Sawyer's removal. Hence he enjoys the unqualified successes and is not responsible for any failures. His capacity for command is also recognized and he is appointed acting commander of a sloop-of-war. This brings Bush's chapter one reasoning full circle—



when initially boarding Renown he had contemplated that a resourceful and lucky lieutenant could potentially be advanced. Bush has a magnanimous character and finds Hornblower's promotion to be entirely laudable; Buckland is rather more stingy and self-centered and realizes that he will retire as a lieutenant. Happily for all, the court of inquiry declines to suggest a court martial and thus the matter of the voyage of Renown is a closed book.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

Bush spends weeks recovering and reading *Renown* for sea. He occasionally sees Hornblower preparing *Retribution* for departure. Bush contemplates his experiences and realizes he has recently learned a great deal about human nature and personalities; he attempts to codify his experiences for later use. He bids Hornblower goodbye, noting that unless peace is established, the admiralty will confirm the appointment to commander; *Retribution* sails. Days later *Renown* leaves the harbor with a convoy. After a few days a sail is raised on the horizon and then closed. The squadron heaves to with the convoy scattering abroad when a boat crosses from the new ship. After a strangely long meeting, the admiral emerges and announces the dreadful news—peace has been declared. While the sailors shout and cheer, Bush considers his own likely fate of near unemployment ashore, receiving only half pay. The mental image he conjures up is of a cold winter's day in Portsmouth.

Chapter 17 Analysis

The chapter forms a narrative bridge between the dominant first section of the novel and the brief concluding section of the novel. Upon first reading, the concluding segment seems somewhat out of place—but as the novel is historically accurate, it presents Bush and Hornblower in the circumstances which would have been too familiar to all naval officers at that point in time. The chapter does mark the full development of the character of Bush, however. Slow and often thick, Bush is nevertheless relentless in processing his experiences and now reviews the entire past year's adventures. Never one to overly dwell on complexity or subtlety, Bush overlays his experience on his previously constructed reality and enlarges his worldview a little. For example, he takes his conception of types of officers and rather than discarding it as limiting or formulaic, he expands it and adds a few new 'types' of officers. In the future, he will have more pigeonholes to sort his peers into but his process of discrimination is not effectively altered. The strongest aspect of the chapter is undoubtedly Bush's interior monologue. The chapter concludes the military action of the novel with the news—happy to most, unhappy to some—that England and France have established peace. Bush is out of a job.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

On a cold winter's day in Portsmouth, Bush walks toward the admiralty to receive his half pay. He happily meets Hornblower, quite by chance. After greetings and simple pleasantries, Hornblower announces that the admiralty did not, in fact, confirm his appointment—he remains a lieutenant. Various problems with his half-pay have reduced him to a state of poverty. They retire to a local gambling hall familiar to Hornblower, and stand by the fire. Bush realizes that Hornblower is nearly penniless. Hornblower, however, is paid to play whist and occasionally makes solid winnings at cards. He is employed by the gambling hall to be available as a fourth partner. His perfect skill at the game ensures that he is in demand. Bush spends time sitting by the fire and watching Hornblower play whist. Upon Hornblower's suggestion, Bush reads a recent edition of the Naval Chronicle which contains an article about Renown's recent exploits and includes Bush's own letter. A later news item notes that Wellard has drowned in an accident. Bush and Hornblower arrange to meet at a later date, and Bush departs after several hours of relaxation.

Chapter 18 Analysis

This short chapter's initial sentence is a humorous play on chapter 17's concluding image—Bush had imagined a cold winter day as resulting from the conclusion of war; the current chapter opens on a cold winter's day—Bush's unhappy vision has come entirely to pass. The chapter acts primarily as a plot transition device; Hornblower and Bush meet by accident and decide to continue their friendship ashore. The scene of the concluding chapters of the novel is established as a gambling hall in Portsmouth. The gambling hall caters to a wide range of clients, including some influential political figures. Whist is a popular game in the establishment—the card game requires four players to play in two partnerships. It is a common enough occurrence for three people to desire to play whist that the owner of the gambling hall hires Hornblower to idle about so that he will be on hand to function as the fourth. The game of whist is played such that a partnership of skill has a great advantage over a partnership without skill. During the period considered by the novel, whist is the game of choice of serious card players and entire books of whist etiquette are in wide circulation. Thus, Hornblower's skill at the game must be complemented by social grace and a broad knowledge of how the game is played if he is to succeed. His small remuneration from the gambling hall is supplemented by his gambling winnings such that he is able to usually make ends meet.

Bush joins Hornblower at the gambling hall but of course does not join him at the whist tables—such a mathematical and social game is beyond Bush's ability and enjoyment. Instead, Hornblower points out a recent edition of a naval news gazette and mentions that Bush will find not one, but two items of significant interest inside. The first is a



description of the Renown's action off Santo Domingo and includes Bush's after-action letter addressed to the Kingston authorities. Bush is of course flattered to see his actions portrayed in print. The next article concerns Wellard and is a brief notice of a nautical accident; Wellard has drowned. This can be interpreted in several ways—perhaps Hornblower points it out to Bush simply because he was a common acquaintance, perhaps to signal to Bush that any possible source of information about Sawyer's accident is now unavailable. After reading the gazette, Bush takes his leave of Hornblower.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Weeks later, Bush calls at Hornblower's housing. He is greeted by Mrs. Mason, a dour and penurious woman, who directs him to Hornblower's room after an initial appraisal. Hornblower admits that his funds are entirely exhausted and that his financial situation is perilous. Even so, he remains optimistic that his luck will change. While he entertains Bush, a young girl named Maria enters the room, brings a second cot, tidies up, and insists upon taking Hornblower's coat downstairs to brush it. Hornblower obviously finds her appealing and she has a fairly obvious crush on Hornblower. Bush finds their intimacy confusing and somewhat distasteful. They discuss Napoleon Bonaparte's recent claim to be emperor and feel that war must shortly be rejoined. Bush and Hornblower then proceed to dinner where they overhear constant buzz about the probability of war. Hornblower confides in Bush that his luck is at an all time low and then discovers some money in his coat pocket—Maria has secreted it there while brushing the coat. Bush is unconcerned but Hornblower is deeply affected; Hornblower orders a sumptuous meal for the two of them.

Chapter 19 Analysis

The chapter establishes the second minor conflict of the novel; more a conflict of characterization than anything else. Bush lives with his sisters and travels into town to pick up his payment. While in town he stays with Hornblower to save a little money. Hornblower continues to play whist at the gambling hall as he has done for about a year. The talk of all the town concerns Napoleon Bonaparte's recent activities and the political fallout surrounding them—most people feel threatened and many desire war. Bush and Hornblower, with a vested interest in naval service, clearly hope for war. The chapter also introduces Maria—not a significant character in this novel, per se, but she becomes Hornblower's wife in subsequent novels in the series. The seeds of their romance and relationship develop during the approximate year when Hornblower lodges at Maria's mother's tenement building. The other development during the chapter concerns Hornblower's failing fortunes. He is nearly penniless and cannot seem to win at cards—in fact, another player comments on Hornblower's extended run of unbelievably bad luck. This foreshadows events to come. Obviously for one such as Hornblower, bad luck is simply prelude to fortune.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

Bush and Hornblower then proceed to the gambling hall. Bush watches as Hornblower is joined by Admiral Lord Parry, Admiral Lambert, and an important colonel at the whist table. The play continues and continues and Bush sees that Hornblower's luck has changed to exceptionally good, and, joined to his perfect skill, quickly fills his pocket with cash. The general makes various odd remarks through the night and Bush is amazed to discover that the play continues and continues—Admiral Lord Parry plays all night long. Several times the conversation allows Hornblower to sing his own praises but, to Bush's dismay, Hornblower glosses over his own accomplishments and credits his superior officers with all the accomplishments. The talk also focuses on the political tension of the moment but for the most part Admiral Lord Parry remains devoted to the whist games as the hours pass. Bush watches all night until, in the early hours, the game finishes.

Hornblower has a pocket stuffed with money and bids his esteemed partners goodbye amidst rather curious remarks. On the walk home, Bush is excited about Hornblower's winnings but Hornblower seems entirely focused on Maria's act of goodwill the previous day. Bush sees little significance in it. As they walk, a press-gang passes with many pressed hands. The sight seems fairly odd given that no war is occurring. Moments later more military action becomes evident and Bush and Hornblower begin to wonder what could be happening. They return to Hornblower's abode amidst speculation that, perhaps after all, war has been declared anew. Hornblower, flush with money, settles a large past-due rent debt with Mrs. Mason and makes tender eyes at Maria. A few minutes later he orders a large breakfast and when Susie, the maid-of-all-work, delivers the food to his room, Hornblower tips her the precise amount of money Maria had given him the day before. Bush views the act as strange, Hornblower merely comments that for some people in some situations money has a value all out of proportion to its actual worth.

A messenger then knocks on the door and delivers to Hornblower a sealed envelope and a newspaper. The letter is from Admiral Lord Parry; it announces that war has been renewed, that Hornblower's appointment to commander has been confirmed, and that Hornblower will shortly be posted as commander of a sloop-of-war. Admiral Lord Parry goes on to apologize for not having disclosed the information during the previous night's whist game, but felt that in the interests of security and propriety it was his duty to communicate the facts officially. Hornblower unfolds the paper to read the headlines—England is at war with France. An overjoyed Bush packs quickly and is ready to leave. Hornblower also packs up but is detained by a sobbing and moody Maria who fears she will never see him again. While Bush paces in disgust, Hornblower comforts and reassures Maria and they reach an agreement to correspond. Bush and Hornblower then hurry off to the admiralty, each in quest of the next adventure.



Chapter 20 Analysis

The novel finishes with Hornblower having developed from a seasick junior lieutenant to a confirmed commander embarking on his first command of a sloop-of-war. Bush, meanwhile, has developed within his rank of lieutenant and as a person—he has learned much from Hornblower and has come to recognize in him an intelligent, active, and insightful commander. Hornblower has additionally met and wooed—unconventionally of course—a young woman. Both characters receive the news of war with enthusiasm. Not only does war mean certain employment, it means excitement, adventure, and a chance for personal glory.

The chapter begins with a prolonged session at the card tables where Hornblower's luck changes entirely. After perhaps twelve hours of continuous play, his pockets are full of cash. He has played with two admirals, one a lord, and a colonel. The three officers obviously share a secret which the colonel is anxious to share. Coupled with the foreshadowing of war talk, the nature of the secret is not surprising to the reader. The admiral's letter to Hornblower is complimentary to his skill and the accompanying newspaper formally announces the war is on again. All that remains is a tearful goodbye between Hornblower and Maria. Her weeping has some influence on Hornblower but, characteristically and humorously, Bush finds it not only irritating but abjectly horrid. While he paces, Hornblower soothes Maria and finally they depart for the admiralty and, obviously, many more grand adventures on the high seas.



Characters

William Bush

William Bush is the protagonist and dominant character in the novel, present in every scene. Although much of the novel focuses on Hornblower's exploits, the narrative point of view is tightly focused on Bush. Bush is described as being in his late twenties, a tallish man of great courage and dominant physical strength, satisfactory intelligence but no great insight. He is well-liked, open, generous, and gracious, but suffers from a lack of spontaneity of thought. He is in his element when surrounded by rough seamen and sailors but finds women nearly unintelligible. He is thoroughly honest and entirely dependable. He is also formidable with a sword, a good pistol shot, and an excellent commander of gunnery. Little is known of Bush's life ashore—he has several sisters and he supports them financially.

Bush joins H.M.S. Renown in the opening scenes of the novel. He is the last lieutenant to report aboard and, comparing his seniority to that of the other four lieutenants, discovers he is the third in rank. When Sawyer is incapacitated and Buckland assumes command of the ship, Bush becomes the acting second lieutenant. When Roberts is killed in combat, Bush becomes the acting first lieutenant. Finally, when Hornblower leaves Renown to command the prize Gaditana, Bush becomes the only commissioned lieutenant aboard Renown and is supported by various warrant officers acting as lieutenants. The fact that Bush retains discipline and order throughout all of the various changes, speaks remarkably well of Bush's capacity as a reliable if uninspired leader of men.

During the Spanish uprising on Renown, Bush—off duty—gains the deck with his sword and actively attempts to rally the men and recapture the ship, making several unsuccessful attempts and killing several enemy combatants. He receives nine major wounds, though none of them are mortal or maiming, and eventually falls exhausted to the deck where he nearly bleeds to death. His grievous and incapacitating wounding serves him well enough politically; the board of review concludes that his actions were warranted and appropriate and excuse him because of his injuries. Bush rather feels more responsible. Ashore, Bush proves a courteous and devoted friend and meets Hornblower on a few occasions where he offers friendship, advice (not always heeded), and congratulations.

Horatio Hornblower

Lieutenant Horatio Hornblower is in the British Navy during the Napoleonic wars and is the 5th and junior lieutenant aboard H.M.S. Renown, a 74-gun third rate, on detached service. His age is twenty-five during the beginning of the novel; he is probably twenty-six by the close of the novel (this matches with a birthday of July 4, 1776, given in another novel of the series). He is very educated and joined the naval service as a



midshipman fairly late at the age of seventeen, being promoted to lieutenant after about four years of service. He thus has a term of naval service of eight years. Hornblower is an exceptional navigator and capable seaman, though he is nervous and occasionally experiences internalized self-doubt. For example, he views his failure to foresee a maximum acceptable temperature for heated shot as a despicable and signal failure; certainly such vehement feeling is out of place. Hornblower's powerful drive to unqualified success masks his internal turmoil in reserve and steely self-control, and even his closest friends never fully know him.

Hornblower is entirely tone deaf and finds music irritating and incomprehensible. He is prone to seasickness, dislikes many of the normal usages of naval life such as flogging, and passes much of his time in isolation. He enjoys seawater showers, is usually poor, and almost always appears disheveled and unkempt. Hornblower's early career as a midshipman is alluded to during several scenes in the novel. For example, he speaks fluent Spanish due to a prior imprisonment. Hornblower has served two years aboard *Renown* prior to the opening of the novel; enough time to learn Sawyer's eccentricities but not enough time to gain his paranoid captain's confidence. Hornblower expects much from his fellow officers and the crew and when occasion demands it, he is a relentless taskmaster. His leadership qualities are grounded in the reality of always expecting more from himself than he does from his subordinates. He is described physically as of apparently average height and weight though perhaps a little tall and a little light. His brown hair is fine, and his fingers are long and apparently delicate.

Buckland

Buckland is the senior lieutenant aboard *Renown* when she sails from England. As a 1st lieutenant he is entirely capable, an experienced and older seaman within his element. He is a 'career' lieutenant, the likelihood of promotion to commander is low. The men respect him but he does not inspire any great loyalty or superior confidence. His seamanship is solid though unexceptional and his gunnery is perhaps a bit rusty. For a 1st lieutenant, however, his is a well-suited individual.

Buckland faces numerous crises throughout the novel and meets them all with steadfast indecision. First, he gathers the other officers to discuss Sawyer's obvious paranoid delusions but then refuses to take decisive action or even make a definitive statement, instead lamely stating that the ship's surgeon will not relieve the captain as medically unfit. When Sawyer is injured and truly incapacitated, Buckland hesitates to assume command for fear that Sawyer might recover. Buckland only gradually assumes command and apparently intends to do little more than sail the ship to the nearest port. Hornblower convinces Buckland to review the ship's orders and prosecute them. Buckland botches an initial attack by running the ship aground and then fails to kedge her off, sustaining heavy losses throughout the attempt. It is up to Hornblower to finally solve the problem. Buckland then intends to return to the nearest port. Hornblower again convinces Buckland to attempt an audacious surprise attack which is successful. Buckland then fails to seize the situation and it is up to Hornblower to adaptively seize the moment and prosecute the advantage to a full victory. Buckland then momentarily



looks forward to receiving all the credit for Hornblower's plans but, alas, is asleep in his bed when the Spanish prisoners revolt aboard ship—Buckland is captured in his pajamas, along with his ship. Fortunately, Hornblower is not aboard and within an hour or so, Buckland's reliable subordinate has recaptured the ship and placed Buckland once again in command.

Roberts

Roberts is initially the 2nd lieutenant aboard *Renown* when she sails from England. He is unexceptional in most regards though well-liked by his fellow officers and the men. Roberts is kindly and capable enough. He dislikes Sawyer but participates in the semi-mutinous discussion only half-heartedly, arguing that the only proper course of action would be to proceed immediately to the nearest port. After Buckland assumes command, Roberts functions successfully as the ship's 1st lieutenant and is well received in this capacity by the crew. His service, however, is fairly short. He is killed—cut in half by a cannonball—in the initial unsuccessful attack on Santo Domingo. Robert's death leaves Bush as the acting 1st lieutenant. Roberts is a fairly minor character in the novel.

Wellard

Wellard is a volunteer aboard *Renown* when she sails from England. This means he is ranked somewhat as a midshipman, though he carries no official status as an officer. Caught in the limbo between the crew and the officers, Wellard's volunteer service would probably lead to eventual acceptance as a midshipman were it not for Sawyer's particular dislike for the boy. Wellard, probably about fifteen, is described as slight of build and fairly timid, with a high-pitched voice and a somewhat worse than average constitution. Early in the novel, he earns the particular ire of Sawyer by putatively countermanding one of the captain's orders; Wellard intervenes in a maneuver to avoid damage to the ship's sails. Although his intervention is correct, the paranoid Sawyer interprets it as inciting the crew to mutiny. Sawyer orders Wellard's orders obeyed, then has the boy dragged below and severely beaten. Wellard is then sent on deck but within a few minutes is once again dragged below and beaten. Over the next several weeks Wellard is routinely singled out for corporal punishment.

By the time the lieutenants meet to discuss removing the captain, Wellard is nearly suicidal with despair. He warns the lieutenants that their meeting has been discovered and then, curiously, pairs with Hornblower to effect an escape from the cable tier. Wellard and presumably Hornblower are very near Sawyer when he falls down the hatchway and sustains serious injury. After the accident, Wellard is seriously shaken which leads some, including Bush, privately to speculate that perhaps Wellard pushed Sawyer. After Sawyer's injury Wellard attaches himself closely to Hornblower and provides acceptable if not distinctive service throughout the remainder of the voyage. Wellard eventually returns to England and during the period of peace is drowned in an accident—a fact which Hornblower is careful to point out to Bush.



Whiting

Whiting is the captain of the marines aboard *Renown* when she sails from England. He retains his position throughout the entire voyage. Whiting is apparently viewed by Sawyer as entirely trustworthy because although an officer, he is never included in any of the paranoid demands made upon the other officers by the captain. Whiting is in all respects the quintessential marine captain, obeying orders to the letter and demanding strict discipline and correct parade and dress from his men. Throughout the novel he provides prompt if uninspiring service and fulfills all his obligations. Whiting is killed during the Spanish revolt aboard *Renown*; the particulars of his death are not disclosed but are not difficult to deduce. Whiting is a minor character in the novel.

James Sawyer

Captain James Sawyer is the post captain of *Renown* when she sails from England. He is described as a large man with shaggy eyebrows, shaggy hair, and a very large nose which he frequently points about as if it were a cannon of sorts. From the first scene in the novel in which Sawyer appears it is clearly evident that he is not right in the head—Sawyer is paranoid, somewhat delusional, and definitely convinced that despite the true hearts of the men, the officers are determined to mutiny. On several occasions he accosts discussion groups as small as two lieutenants and accuses them of plotting mutiny. His actions range from deliberate hazing to outright sadism. For example, he orders Hornblower to stand watch-and-watch, then orders Bush and Roberts to appear before Buckland in full dress every hour, on the hour, around the clock for months. Later he takes a particular dislike to Wellard and causes the boy volunteer to be seriously and routinely beaten. Meanwhile, Sawyer indulges the crew, ordering Sundays be work free and issuing extra grog and double rations of grog. He further berates the officers in front of the men and then praises the men for their lazy behavior. Indeed, Sawyer's behavior quickly leads to an unhappy and ill-disciplined ship.

Sawyer's hazing is so relentless that four of the lieutenants meet secretly in the cable tier to consider removing him from command. The 1st lieutenant reveals that the ship's surgeon has declined to declare the captain medically unfit. As the meeting concludes that any removal would be mutinous, Sawyer rouses the ship and tumbles out the marines, intending on catching the lieutenants in a compromising situation. Unfortunately for Sawyer the lieutenants are alerted by Wellard and escape. During the commotion, Sawyer apparently trips and falls headlong down the hatch, sustaining serious facial and head wounds. A nearby marine corporal does not witness the accident thereby leading to unspoken suspicion that perhaps the captain was pushed—Wellard and Hornblower being Bush and Buckland's chief suspects. Nothing comes of the investigation, however, except the official decision that it was an accident.

Sawyer survives the fall but his paranoia becomes a full-blown mental disability. He weeps constantly and howls in fear any time he is approached by anyone. After recuperating from his physical wounds, his mental disturbance only increases and after



a few weeks the ship's surgeon declares the captain mentally unfit to command. Sawyer spends the remainder of the voyage strapped to a board and locked away. He is still tied down when the Spanish prisoners revolt aboard *Renown* and he is murdered by one of them.

James Edward Cogshill

Captain James Edward Cogshill is a commander of a sloop-of-war which happens to be in port when *Renown* sails into Kingston without a post captain. Cogshill is a favorite of Admiral Lambert, the local ranking officer, and is forthwith appointed to command *Renown*. He is apparently financially well off because he brings aboard a mountain of food and a lake of spirits and entertains his lieutenants in lavish style. Cogshill participates in the board of inquiry and is anxious to put *Renown's* past to bed and get on with outfitting her for another cruise. Cogshill is well received by the officers and apparently well-liked by the men. He is a minor character in the novel.

Hobbs

Hobbs is the acting gunner in *Renown* at the time she sails from England. He is described as a paunchy man with a thick, grey pigtail. He is lazy, fairly sulky, and nearly insubordinate in his first appearance on the first page of the novel. The reason for his acting capacity is not fully developed in the novel but the fact that Hobbs is in a fluid situation, neither crew nor warrant officer, makes him Sawyer's creature entirely. Hobbs allies himself with the captain and rather openly spies upon the other ship's officers. He is an efficient toady and informer and quickly gains the distrust and dislike, though not open hostility, of the wardroom. Aside from being lazy and a penchant to inform on his fellows, Hobbs appears to be fairly competent and prosecutes his duties with slow success. After Sawyer's accident, Hobbs' influence in the ship declines remarkably, as would be expected. Functioning mostly as an unlikable toady in the narrative, Hobbs is a relatively minor character.

Colonel Ortega

Colonel Ortega is the Spanish officer who conducts all of the military parlay between the Spanish forces at Santo Domingo, commanded by Villaneuve, and Buckland and his lieutenants. Ortega claims to speak no English though Hornblower rather doubts this is true. A minor character, Ortega comports himself with dignity and confidence and attempts to arrange favorable terms by bluster and bluff. Hornblower sees through Ortega, however, and by the end of the diplomacy Ortega surrenders without terms.

Maria Mason

Maria Mason is the daughter of the landlady who owns the tenement where Hornblower lives during the Peace of Amiens. Maria's mother is dour and penurious but Maria is



expansive of spirit, optimistic, and generous. Maria is employed as a school teacher but also she acts infrequently as maid within the tenement, assisted by Susie, the maid-of-all-work. She is described as rather plain and perhaps a bit homely, though willowy and thin. Maria is overly prone to weeping and emotionally clinging. Obviously devoted to Hornblower, she dotes upon his needs and even secretly gives him some money at his lowest point of luck. Bush finds Maria entirely irritating but Hornblower is devoted to her and finds her reliable and somewhat attractive. At the end of the novel as Hornblower prepares to deploy, Maria breaks down in great sobs and fears they will never meet again. Marie is a fairly minor character in the novel but is notable—this is the first appearance of the woman who will become, in time, Hornblower's wife.



Objects/Places

HMS Renown

HMS Renown is a third-rate British man-of-war, a two-decker with 74 guns. The ship's complement is 740 souls, of which 20 are officers and 80 are marines. About half of the 640 crew are seasoned seamen and the other half are pressed lubbers. Thirty-four of the 74 guns are twenty-four pounder carronades on the lower deck; these guns are usually crewed by ten men apiece but can be operated by five men in extremis. The ship also carries 9-pounder long guns on the upper deck. When the novel opens the ship is commanded by Captain Sawyer; at the close of the novel the ship is commanded by Captain Cogshell. The named lieutenants are, in order of decreasing seniority, Buckland; Roberts, killed in action during the attack on Santo Domingo; William Bush; Smith; and Horatio Hornblower. Midshipmen include Abbott, Truscott, and Cope. The ship has at least one volunteer named Wellard. Warrant and other officers include Dr. Clive, the ship's surgeon; Carberry, the master, who is seriously wounded during the Spanish revolt; Lomax, the purser; Booth, the bosun; and Hobbs, acting gunner. The named crew includes Coleman, surgeon's mate; Pierce, surgeon's mate; Purvis, master's mate; Duff; James, possibly a warrant officer or midshipman, or possibly advanced to rank from the crew after the attack on Santo Domingo; Woolton; Saddler; Black; Silk, bosun's mate; Ambrose, foretop captain; Cray; Berry, gunner's mate; and Hart, possibly a warrant officer. The marine complement includes Whiting, captain, who dies during Spanish revolt on Renown; and Greenwood, corporal.

Santo Domingo and the Samaná fortress

The Renown is ordered to proceed to Santo Domingo, known by various names among the crew, and there to destroy Spanish privateers and, possibly, disrupt the Spanish control of the area. Santo Domingo is a named locale on the island of Haiti and includes a harbor, a small town, docks, and two fortresses, including the Samaná fortress. The two forts guard the mouth of the harbor and prevent Renown from easily sailing into the area and destroying the privateers. After an abortive naval assault, Renown lands troops secretly at night and the conducts a surprise attack on the Samaná fortress which is successful.

Grog

The British Navy customarily issued a certain amount of rum each day to every sailor over twenty years of age. The rum was mixed with a formulaic amount of water and thus served out as 'grog'. British seamen considered their grog ration to be sacrosanct. During the novel, Sawyer on several occasions issues extra grog rations or double grog rations which, of course, strongly appeals to the crew. However, a drunken or tipsy crew is obviously less disciplined and capable. Sawyer uses the phrase "splice the main



brace" (p. 15) to indicate an extra grog ration. Splicing the main brace was one of the most difficult jobs to perform on a man-of-war and, traditionally, the sailors who performed the job received an extra and immediate ration of grog—hence the term gradually became a euphemism for receiving the ration rather than performing the job. Sawyer's direction that every man and boy should receive grog was highly unusually—boys usually were forbidden to drink.

Heated Shot

Land-based fortresses would commonly heat cannonballs to white-hot temperatures before firing them at enemy ships. The heated cannonballs, or heated shot, would start fires quickly which made them especially destructive and dangerous to wooden-hulled vessels. Ships never used heated shot because the difficulty and danger of running a large heating forge aboard ship was great. When *Renown* attacks the Samaná fortress, it receives discharges of heated shot. After the capture of Samaná fortress, the British seamen take great delight in being able to use heated shot against an enemy ship.

Futtock-Shrouds and the Lubber's Hole

The top of each lower mast is surrounded by a platform known as the top—hence the terms maintop and foretop. The top is reached by climbing the ratlines on the standing rigging which runs from the outside hull upward on an incline to a point just below the platform of the top. The top is most-easily attained by climbing the rigging and then passing through a hole in the platform of the top known as the "lubber's hole". The top itself is stabilized by standing rigging which runs from the edges of the platform downward to the mast, forming lines which have a negative angle; that is, an overhang. These overhanging lines are called the futtock-shrouds. Seamen climb the rigging, then move onto the futtock-shrouds and climb up, hanging backwards at a steep angle, and thus gain the top by clambering over the edge of the platform. Less capable men are expected to gain the top by use of the aptly-named lubber's hole.

Splinters

Naval combat between large wooden ships was violent and dangerous, even though it rarely resulted in complete victory for either side. Ships rarely sank outright, though they were sometimes captured. The chief weapon of naval engagement was the cannon—several types, weights, and configurations are noted in the novel. In general, cannons threw heavy iron balls—cannonballs—at the enemy. The cannonballs would strike the enemy ship's outer hull and cause enormous flocks of splinters to spall away from the ship's inner hull. These splinters, traveling at great velocity, were the chief cause of injury and death among the ship's crew. The word 'splinter' seems innocuous enough; however they were lethal and often very large.



The Weather Gauge

To have or possess 'the weather gauge' describes the favorable positioning of a sailing vessel relative to another with respect to the wind; in brief, it is any position upwind of the other vessel. Being upwind, or having the weather gauge, allows a vessel to maneuver at will toward any downwind point and thus gain the tactical advantage over other ships. Further, the ship having the weather gauge typically controls the timing and even the occurrence of military engagement. In general, correct tactics dictate that seeking the weather gauge is always an appropriate endeavor.

Carronades

A carronade was a short smoothbore cannon used by the British Navy until about 1860. They were designed as short-range cannons. Light-weight and devoid of many of the features of long guns, carronades were devastating at short ranges but notoriously inaccurate beyond pistol-shot ranges. Renown is fitted with thirty-four carronades. A carronade weighed approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ as much as a long gun throwing an equal weight of metal.

Kedge

To kedge is to warp a ship by hauling on the cable of an anchor which has been hauled away from the ship and dropped. Kedgeing is used, for example, by Renown to attempt to haul off the mud bank in the harbor near Santo Domingo.

Court of Inquiry

A court of inquiry is a tribunal established to investigate shipwrecks, casualties effecting ships, or charges of mutiny. When Renown arrives at Kingston without her captain and with a long list of casualties, it is only natural that a court of inquiry would be held. The court decides whether or not to establish a court martial. The court of inquiry in the novel is more interested in preserving Sawyer's good name and the navy's reputation than in examining all of the particulars of Sawyer's death.

Peace of Amiens

The brief period of peace resulting from the Treaty of Amiens was referred to as the peace of Amiens. It lasted from March, 1802 through May, 1803. The peace interrupts the naval careers of Hornblower, Bush, and others. The novel can be definitively grounded in historical terms by noting that Chapter 17 occurs about April, 1802, and that Chapter 20 occurs May, 1803—indicating the early chapters of the novel occur in early 1802. Thus, Hornblower's whist-playing days span about one year.

Themes

Adventure on the High Seas

The novel's principle setting is the high seas during a time of war; Napoleon Bonaparte's military adventures threaten the British Empire and only a strong naval response keeps the French aggression at bay and ensures the survival of the empire. As a junior lieutenant of the Royal Navy, Hornblower's sworn and obvious duty is to assist his captain to engage the enemy at every opportunity. He carries out this duty with H.M.S. Renown.

The novel relates a sea voyage in the years circa 1801-1802; although the voyage is fictional it contains many historical elements and the maritime combat described is derived from several historical accounts. The ships mentioned represent fictionalized ships of historically appropriate type, though the crews are entirely fictional. Although there have been several historical ships named H.M.S. Renown, the ship in the novel is not intended to represent any of her eponymous near contemporaries. All aspects of the novel are related to sea adventure; most of the action takes place at sea and even the action which takes place on land generally relates to the sea.

The strength and popular appeal of the novel is undoubtedly due to the nature of high seas adventure and the conversational way in which it is presented. Although full of accurate descriptions of lengthy nautical and amphibious maneuvers and frequent technical descriptions of nautical equipment, the text is presented in an accessible and friendly manner which allows the reader to descend to deck-level, at it were, and enjoy the excitement of days long gone.

The Nature of Friendship

The two protagonists of the novel, Horatio Hornblower and William Bush, share the spotlight nearly equally. The two men develop a friendship over the course of the novel. Their mutual confidence survives conflict, suspicion, and even competition, and emerges the stronger for it. Both men's skills complement the other's without overlapping to such an extent that conflict becomes apparent.

The constantly developing nature of their friendship not only drives the tone and texture of the novel, but is also largely responsible for the novel's plot development. For example, the usually reticent Bush is convinced of Hornblower's essentially correct insight which allows him to overcome his natural resistance and support the junior lieutenant's audacious plans to capture the Spanish fortress. Bush takes professional risks to support Hornblower, and Hornblower takes extreme care to support Bush without offending him. This exchange of graces and friendship runs as a dominant thread throughout the novel—indeed throughout many of the novels of the series—and forms one of the most enjoyable themes present. Such a close male-male friendship,



entirely devoid of any homoeroticism, is indeed rare in modern fiction. Their friendship is perhaps enabled only by the nature of the environment used as the principle setting; that of a man-of-war on prolonged sea duty.

Leading the Leaders

Hornblower joins *Renown* and sails with her on an journey of two years which is not described in the novel. During this time, however, he learns that Captain Sawyer is paranoid, unstable, and cruel. Rather than seeking to obviate Sawyer's influence, Hornblower has learned to deal with it. When Bush joins *Renown*, Hornblower becomes the fifth and junior lieutenant on board. Such a low position of rank nearly assures to a normal man an anonymous period of service and obedience to decisions made by others. Hornblower is not a normal man.

Early in the novel, four of the lieutenants meet in secret to discuss Sawyer's increasingly erratic and paranoid behavior. Hornblower emerges, rather humorously, as the voice of caution and urges the other lieutenants to forbear any mutinous intentions. When the meeting is discovered, Hornblower orchestrates the escape. When Sawyer falls—or perhaps is pushed—down a hatch, Hornblower manages the situation, calms the other lieutenants, orchestrates the medical response, and propels Buckland into assuming a position of command. Hornblower later convinces Buckland to read and execute Sawyer's secret orders. After Buckland makes a botched and aborted assault, Hornblower proposes an alternate plan and gently ushers it to a successful execution. As the political and military situation on shore becomes more complicated, Hornblower intervenes to salvage the foundering Buckland's advantage. Finally, on the voyage to Kingston Hornblower regroups the prize crews and storms *Renown*, re-taking the ship and saving her from capture. Throughout the entire novel, Hornblower engages in subtly leading but does so by convincing his superior officers that his own proposed course of action is the only feasible, or at least the most appropriate, one. The theme is fully developed as Bush watches Hornblower manage superiors and drive decisions while appearing to be simply a devoted subordinate officer; Bush's open admiration, free of envy, of Hornblower makes the theme's development doubly enjoyable.



Style

Point of View

The novel is told from the third-person, limited, point of view. The narrator is reliable, entirely effaced, and unnamed. Bush, the main character, is one of two central protagonists and a central figure in all of the scenes in the novel. The narrator divulges frequent internal thoughts of the protagonist, but not of other characters. The majority of the story is told through action and dialogue; revealed thoughts are frequent but generally are used for characterization rather than plot development. The novel, unlike the other novels in the series, is told from the viewpoint of Bush whereas the other ten novels are related from the viewpoint of Hornblower. This construction element allows Hornblower to be presented in an extremely positive and strong light—gone is the internal turmoil of other novels in the series, replaced entirely with Hornblower's decisive insights and successful outcomes.

The third-person point of view allows Bush and Hornblower to be presented in a highly sympathetic manner. For example, the narrative structure portrays Hornblower's isolated mannerisms as deliberate rather than haughty. The narrative also allows portrayal of Hornblower's life situations as difficult but not pathetic. In this way, the choice of narrative view is appropriate and successful. Indeed, the structure of the novel and the method of plot development nearly require the use of a third-person point of view. Finally, the frequent appearance of minor characters is allowed through the point of view selected; this is carried throughout all of the novels of the series and makes them accessible and successful.

Setting

The novel features two principle settings. The first and most important setting is well developed and is aboard ship of H.M.S. Renown, an English third-rate, two-deck, ship-of-the-line with 74 guns. The ship sails well, fights well, and is responsive—indeed, were the terms of service aboard not so disagreeable and confused, it is likely that Renown would be beloved of her crew. The ship is of typical construction of the time, with a cable tier, a lower gun deck, an upper gun deck, quarterdeck, stern captain's cabin, and so forth. She has, of course, three ship-rigged masts and is capable of sailing in fairly light airs. Her compliment is 740 souls, 20 of which are officers and 80 of which are marines. About half of the 640 seamen aboard her are considered seasoned men, the rest are pressed lubbers, which is an acceptable ratio. The ship is captained at first by Sawyer who is paranoid and tyrannical. After his accident and mental breakdown, the ship is captained by Buckland, and this period of command spans the bulk of the action described in the novel. When the ship makes its destination of Kingston, Buckland is relieve of acting command and Cogshill is posted captain. Although Cogshill's command is not treated in depth in the novel, he is apparently an able and likable officer. Alongside Renown, the early portions of the novel also feature



various harbors, fortresses, and landscapes around Santo Domingo, a port on the island of Haiti. These are not described in significant detail and are developed only as transient settings for plot development.

The second setting is somewhat developed and is a small area of Portsmouth, England, near the waterfront and the admiralty, which includes Hornblower's tenement and a gambling hall operated by M. le Marquis de Sainte-Croix where Hornblower plays whist and is nominally employed. This secondary setting is presented during the final few chapters of the novel and is significant primarily as the backdrop for plot development. Hornblower lives in a very downscale apartment and is quite obviously struggling to make ends meet. He gambles, sometimes winning, sometimes losing, at the card tables. The real significance of the gambling hall is that it allows Hornblower to sit at cards with his social, economic, and political superiors and thus he becomes acquainted with many significant figures in the admiralty. The gambling hall is not otherwise well developed as a setting.

Language and Meaning

The novel's language is generally simply and accessible. Standard punctuation is used to indicate dialogue and interior thoughts and descriptive text are easily distinguished. Most of the places, some of the objects, and even some of the events referenced in the narrative are identifiable as real geographical locations or historic events. It is notable that the novel was originally written and published in England and uses standard English spelling which may be somewhat unfamiliar to American readers.

The novel becomes linguistically complex in two primary respects. First, when dealing with nautical events, a somewhat complicated specialized language is used which includes references to various parts of sailing craft and sailing techniques which are probably not particularly familiar to modern readers. The technical language is accurate and interesting and a reference to a general sailing encyclopedia will assist in a careful reading and complete understanding of the text. Second, the novel makes frequent reference to various events which occur prior to the novel's opening, proper—this is a standard construction technique and in no way detracts from the novel's readability.

Structure

The 313-page novel is divided into twenty named and enumerated chapters of roughly equal length, though some chapters are noticeably shorter than others. The narrative is presented in strictly chronological order with each chapter's events occurring after the events in the previous chapter and before the events in the subsequent chapter. Of course references to previous events occur with some frequency and characters from time to time think about future events. Such deviations from the principle timeline are minor and are clearly identifiable as such. Thus, the novel's principle timeline is accessible and easily followed.



The novel is part of a series of novels; specifically it is chronologically the second novel in a series which extends to eleven volumes—however, the novel was the seventh-written of the series. Many of the principle characters presented in the novel, therefore, are recurring characters with backgrounds and histories developed in a prior novel which results in minor alterations of some biographical data previously offered. For example, in the first-written novel of the series Bush and Hornblower appear to hardly know each other. The novel is unique within the series, however, for being told primarily from Bush's viewpoint rather than from that of Hornblower.

The structure is further complicated by adherence to historical events. In broad terms, events in the novel are fictional or fictionalized events which could have occurred, or did occur, in the period of time used as the novel's setting; namely, the war between England and France during the years 1800-1802, concluding with the Peace of Amiens. Thus, the novel's language, technology, politics, and geography are all based upon historically accurate representations.



Quotes

"Lieutenant William Bush came on board H.M.S. Renown as she lay at the anchor in the Hamoaze and reported himself to the officer of the watch, who was a tall and rather gangling individual with hollow cheeks and a melancholy cast of countenance, whose uniform looked as if it had been put on in the dark and not readjusted since. 'Glad to have you aboard, sir,' said the officer of the watch. 'My name's Hornblower. The captain's ashore. First lieutenant went for'rard with the bos'un ten minutes ago.' 'Thank you,' said Bush." (p. 3)

"'Vast hauling there! Vast hauling!'

There was a piercing urgency about the order, and obediently the men ceased to pull. Then the captain bellowed from the poop.

'Who's that countermanding my orders?'

'It's me sir—Wellard.'

The young volunteer faced aft and screamed into the wind to make himself heard. From his station aft Bush saw the captain advance to the poop rail; Bush could see he was shaking with rage, the big nose pointing forward as though seeking a victim.

'You'll be sorry, Mr. Wellard. Oh yes, you'll be sorry.'

Hornblower now made his appearance at Wellard's side. He was green with seasickness, as he had been ever since the Renown left Plymouth Sound.

'There's a reef point caught in the reef tackle block, sir—weather side,' he hailed, and Bush, shifting his position, could see that this was so; if the men had continued to haul on the tackle, damage to the sail might easily have followed.

'What d'you mean by coming between me and a man who disobeys me?' shouted the captain. 'It's useless to try to screen him.'

'This is my station, sir,' replied Hornblower. 'Mr. Wellard was doing his duty.'

'Conspiracy!' replied the captain. 'You two are in collusion!'

In the face of such an impossible statement Hornblower could only stand still, his white faced turned towards the captain." (pp. 13-14)

"The captain had been standing by watching this orderly progress of the ship's routine. Now he raised his voice.

'Mr. Buckland!'

'Sir!'

The captain mounted a couple of steps of the quarterdeck ladder so that he might be clearly seen, and raised his voice to that as many as possible could hear his words.

'Rope yarn Sunday today.'

'Aye aye, sir.'

'And double rum for these good men.'

'Aye aye, sir.'" (pp. 31-32)

"'Pass the word for the doctor,' came the cry. 'Pass the word, there.'



And here came Wellard, white-faced, hurrying.

'Pass the word for the doctor. Call Dr. Clive.'

'Who's hurt, Wellard?' asked Bush.

'The c-captain, sir.'

Wellard looked distraught and shaken, but now Hornblower made his appearance behind him. Hornblower was pale, too, and breathing hard, but seemed to have command of himself. The glance which he threw round him in the dim light of the lanterns passed over Bush without apparent recognition.

'Get Dr. Clive!' he snapped at one midshipman peering out from the midshipmen's birth, and then to another: 'You, there. Run for the first lieutenant. Ask him to come below here. Run!'

Hornblower's glance took in Whiting and travelled forward to where the marines were snatching their muskets from the racks.

'Why are your men turning out, Captain Whiting?'

'Captain's orders.'

'Then you can form them up. But I do not believe there is any emergency.'

Only then did Hornblower's glance comprehend Bush.

'Oh, Mr. Bush. Will you take charge, sir, now that you're here? I've sent for the first lieutenant. The captain's hurt—badly hurt, I'm afraid sir.'

'But what's happened?' asked Bush.

'The captain's fallen down the hatchway, sir,' said Hornblower." (pp. 43-44)

"'Mr. Roberts sent me down to ask for orders, sir,' he said.

Roberts had the watch, and must be fretting with worry about what was going on below decks. Buckland stood in indecision.

'Both watches are on the deck, sir,' said Hornblower, deferentially.

Buckland looked an inquiry at him.

'You could tell this news to the hands, sir,' went on Hornblower.

He was making as suggestion, unasked, to his superior officer, and so courting a snub. But his manner indicated the deepest respect, and nothing besides, but eagerness to save his superior all possible trouble.

'Thank you,' said Buckland." (pp. 60-61)

"'Pardon, sir,' said Roberts, greatly daring, addressing him as he loomed in the darkness. 'Can you tell us our mission, sir?'

'Not our mission. That is still secret, Mr. Roberts.'

'Very good, sir.'

'But I'll tell you where we're bound. Mr. Carberry knows already.'

'Where, sir?'

'Santo Domingo. Scotchman's Bay.'

There was a pause while this information was being digested. 'Santo Domingo,' said someone, meditatively.

'Hispaniola,' said Carberry, explanatorily.

'Hayti,' said Hornblower.

'Santo Domingo - Hayti - Hispaniola,' said Carberry. 'Three names for the same island.'



'Hayti!' exclaimed Roberts, some chord in his memory suddenly touched. 'That's where the blacks are in rebellion.'

'Yes,' agreed Buckland." (pp. 83-84)

"There was a frightful crash close beside Bush and something screamed past him to crash into the deck beam near his head. Something flying through an open gunport had struck a gun on its reinforced breech. Two men had fallen close beside it, one lying still and the other twisting and turning in agony. Bush was about to give an order regarding them when his attention was drawn to something more important. There was a deep gash in the deck beam by his head and from the depths of the gash smoke was curling. It was a red-hot shot that had struck the breech of the gun and had apparently flown into fragments. A large part—the largest part—had sunk deep into the beam and already the wood was smouldering.

'Fire buckets here!' roared Bush.

Ten pounds of red-hot glowing metal lodge in the dry timbers of the ship could start a blaze in a few seconds. At the same time there was a rush of feet overhead, the sound of gear being moved about, and then the clank-clank of the pumps. So on the maindeck they were fighting fires too. Hornblower's guns were thundering on the port side, the gun-tracks roaring over the planking. Hell was unchained, and the smoke of hell was eddying about him." (p. 96)

"There was a hint of recognition in the marine's mad eyes, and he turned aside, his bayonet at the charge, and rushed on. There were other marines in the background; they must have made their way in through the embrasures. They were all yelling, all drunk with fighting. And here was another rush of seamen, swarming down from the ramparts they had scaled. On the far side there were wooden buildings; his men were swarming round them and shots and screams were echoing from them. Those must be the barracks and storehouses, and the garrison must have fled there for shelter from the fury of the stormers.

Whiting appeared, his scarlet tunic filthy, his sword dangling from his wrist. His eyes were bleary and cloudy.

'Call 'em off,' said Bush, grasping at his own sanity with a desperate effort.

It took Whiting a moment to recognize him and to understand the order.

'Yes, sir,' he said." (p. 137)

"At the furnace the bellows were still being worked and the heat was tremendous—but it was far hotter when Saddler drew out the grating that carried the heated shot. Even in the sunshine they could see the glow of the spheres; as the heat rose from them the atmosphere above them wavered so that everything below was vague and distorted. It could be a scene in Hell. Saddler spat on the nearest cannon ball and the saliva leaped with an instant hiss from the smooth surface of the sphere, falling from it without contact to dance and leap on the grating under it until with a final hiss it vanished entirely. A second attempt by Saddler brought the same result.



'Hot enough, sir?' asked Saddler
'Yes,' said Hornblower." (pp. 152-153)

"Hornblower paused before answering, and that in itself was a warning to Bush that something complicated was in the air.

'It's much more important than just a matter of prisoners, sir.'

'Well?'

'It might be possible to arrange for a capitulation, sir.'

'What do you mean by that?'

'A surrender, sir. An evacuation of all this end of the island by the Dons.'

'My God!'

That was a startling suggestion. Bush's mind plodded along the paths it opened up. It would be an event of international importance; it might be a tremendous victory. Not just a paragraph in the Gazette, but a whole page. Perhaps rewards, distinction—even possibly promotion. And with that Bush's mind suddenly drew back in panic, as if the path it had been following ended in a precipice. The more important the event, the more closely it would be scrutinised, the more violent would be the criticism of those who disapproved." (p. 173)

"Now, all of you together when I give the word. Lift!

The gun rose a foot from the ground as every man exerted himself.

'March! Belay that, sergeant.'

The sergeant had begun to call the step, but on this irregular ground with every man supporting eighty pounds of weight it was better that they should not try to keep step.

'Halt! Lower!'

The gun had moved twenty yards towards the position Bush had selected for it.

'Carry on, sergeant. Keep 'em moving. Not too fast.

Marines were only dumb animals, not even machines, and were liable to tire. It was better to be conservative with their strength. But while they laboured at carrying the gun the necessary half-mile up to the crest the seamen could work at hauling up the rest of the stores from the launches." (p. 193)

"The boat's well clear now,' said Bush. 'I wonder—ah!'

The fort on the crest had burst into a great fountain of smoke, within which could be made out flying fragments of masonry. A moment later came the crash of the explosion.

Two tons of gunpowder, ignited by the slow match left burning by the demolition party, did the work. Ramparts and bastions, tower and platform, all were dashed into ruins.

Already at the foot of the steep slope to the water lay what was left of the guns, trunnions blasted off, muzzles split, and touchholes spiked; the insurgents when they came to take over the place would have no means to reestablish the defences of the bay—the other battery on the point across the water had already been blown up.

'It looks as if the damage is complete enough, sir,' said Bush.

'Yes,' said Buckland, his eye to his telescope observing the ruins as they began to show through the smoke and dust. 'We'll get under weigh as soon as the boat's hoisted in, if



you please.'

'Aye aye, sir,' said Bush." (pp. 204-205)

"The ship fell oddly quiet again when the salute was over—he was nearly sure it had been fifteen guns; Lambert presumably had been promoted to vice-admiral. They must be gliding northward up Port Royal bay; Bush tried to remember how Salt Pond Hill looked, and the mountains in the background—what were they called? Liguanea, or something like that—he could never tackle these Dago names. They called it the Long Mountain behind Rock Fort.

'Tops'l sheets!' came Hornblower's voice from above. 'Tops'l clew lines.'

The ship must be gliding slowly to her anchorage.

'Helm-a-lee!'

Turning into the wind would take her way off her.

'Silence, there in the waist!'

Bush could imagine how the hands would be excited and chattering at coming into harbour—the old hands would be telling the new ones about the grog shops and the unholy entertainments that Kingston, just up the channel, provided for seamen.

'Let go!'" (p. 217)

"Now we come to the next matter. The attempt of the prisoners to capture the Renown. You were by this time acting as first lieutenant of the ship, Mr. Bush?'

'Yes, sir.'

Step by step Bush was taken through the events of that night. He was responsible under Buckland for the arrangements made for guarding and feeding the prisoners. There were fifty women, wives of the prisoners, under guard in the midshipmen's berth. Yes, it was difficult to supervise them as closely as the men. Yes, he had gone his rounds after pipe-down, yes, he had heard a disturbance. And so on.

'And you were found lying among the dead, unconscious from your wounds?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Thank you, Mr. Bush.'

A fresh-faced young captain at the end of the table asked a question.

'And all this time Captain Sawyer was confined to his cabin, until he was murdered?'

The president interposed.

"Captain Hibbert, Mr. Buckland has already enlightened us regarding Captain Sawyer's indisposition.'

There was annoyance in the glance that the president of the court turned upon Captain Hibbert, and light suddenly dawned upon Bush. Sawyer had a wife, children, friends, who would not desire that any attention should be called to the fact that he had died insane. The president of the court was probably acting under explicit orders to hush that part of the business up. He would welcome questions about it no more than Bush himself would, now that Sawyer was dead in his country's cause." (pp. 236-237)

"Gig after gig left the flagship's side, and now they could see the Renown's gig with her captain in the sternsheets. Buckland went to meet him as he came up the side. Cogshell



touched his hat; he was looking a little dazed.

'It's peace,' he said.

The wind brought them the sound of cheering from the flagship—the announcement must have been made to the ship's company on board, and it was the sound of that cheering that gave any reality at all to the news the captain brought.

'Peace, sir?' asked Buckland.

'Yes, peace. Preliminaries are signed. The ambassadors meet in France next month to settle the terms, but it's peace. All hostilities are at an end—they are to cease in every part of the world on the arrival of this news.'

'Peace!' said Bush." (p. 252)

"H.M.S. Renown, off Santo Domingo. January 9th, 1802

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you...

Bush relived those days of a year ago as he re-read his own words; those words which he had composed with so much labour even though he had referred, during the writing of them, to other reports written by other men so as to get the phrasing right.

...I cannot end this report without a reference to the gallant conduct and most helpful suggestions of Lieutenant Horatio Hornblower, who was my second in command on this occasion, and to whom in great part the success of the expedition is due." (p. 267)

"A young woman—no, a woman not quite young—came up the stairs from the depths of the house at the call.

'Yes, Mother?'

Maria listened to Mrs. Mason's instructions for making up a truckle bed in Mr. Hornblower's room.

'Yes, Mother,' she said.

'Not teaching today, Maria?' asked Hornblower pleasantly.

'No, sir.' The smile that lit her plain face showed her keen pleasure at being addressed.

'Oak-Apple Day? No, not yet. It's not the King's Birthday. Then why this holiday?'

'Mumps, sir,' said Maria. 'They all have mumps, except Johnnie Bristow.'

'That agrees with everything I've heard about Johnnie Bristow,' said Hornblower." (pp. 272-273)

"That was all Bush needed to read. Boney's fleet of flat-bottomed boats, and his army of invasion mustered along the Channel coast, were being met by the appropriate and necessary countermove. Last night's press gang measures, planned and carried out with a secrecy for which Bush could feel nothing except wholehearted approval (he had led too many press gangs not to know how completely seamen made themselves scarce at the first hint of a press), would provide the crews for the ships necessary to secure England's safety. There were ships in plenty, laid up in every harbour in England; and officers—Bush knew very well how many officers were available. With the fleet manned and at sea England could laugh at the treacherous attack Boney had planned.

'They've done the right thing for once, by God!' said Bush, slapping the newspaper." (p. 309)

Topics for Discussion

Hornblower plays whist like a master. The game is, of course, composed of luck but is designed such that a skilled partnership can typically defeat a less-skilled partnership. Discuss how the game of whist mirrors the paradigm of naval warfare—that is, Hornblower plays whist ashore but arranges tactical warfare while at sea.

Captain Sawyer is described as having shaggy eyebrows, shaggy hair, an unkempt appearance, and a huge nose which he points about as if it were a cannon. Discuss how his physical characterization helps present him as a crazy man who is dangerous.

Would you rather serve under Captain Sawyer or Lieutenant Buckland? Would your choice differ if you were an officer or a member of the crew?

Which lieutenant is the epitome of what a Royal Navy lieutenant should embody? Hornblower, Bush, or Buckland?

After reading the novel, does the life of a common seaman seem appealing to you? In your opinion, which class of sailors has the best situation—seamen, midshipmen, officers, or the captain?

During the fight between Renown and the shore batteries at Santo Domingo, some men, such as Roberts, are killed outright. Others are hideously wounded and subsequently die. Still others are maimed and survive; others are grievously wounded but recover completely; presumably some are lightly wounded; and some, such as Hornblower, are not wounded. Which of these men are the most fortunate? Which are the least fortunate?

Why do you think Hornblower and Bush develop such a close friendship? Do you think that either lieutenant develops a similar friendship with Buckland or Smith?

Contrast the way that Hornblower views women—such as Maria and Mrs. Mason—with the way that Bush views women—such as his sisters. Which character (if either) is probably the most enlightened in terms of gender equality?

Based on the presentation of Hornblower as a lieutenant, do you think he would make a successful commander? A successful captain? A successful admiral? Do you think Bush would be equally successful in command? Why or why not?

Bush and Buckland apparently think that Hornblower has some secret knowledge about the circumstances surrounding Captain Sawyer's calamitous fall through a hatchway (review chapter 4). Hornblower denies having any such information. The implication is that Hornblower either pushed Sawyer or at the least watched Wellard push Sawyer. Do

you think it likely that Hornblower would perform such an action or, having witnessed such an action, would keep it secret?