

generation, produced the greatest physician of the century and a founder of a medical theory. In a later generation the same family produced a sailor, wild in his youth (everyone knows the story of his gambling his fortune at the age of about eighteen) who commanded the Fighting Temeraire at Trafalgar. When he left the sea he settled at Rolls Park and had a grand dinner on every anniversary of Trafalgar at the 'Kings Head,' and in his garden planted the Admiral's Walk which is still there (or was until recently). Turner caught a golden moment of the old wooden man-of-war from Deptford, as she was being towed away for breaking. Perhaps not everybody who looks at this picture realises that she survived Trafalgar and, her day finished, was off to the breakers. There were odd and famous people in plenty living in Chigwell and they are all worth bringing into the light. I think the hour glass of my sermon has run out, perhaps you were quietly sleeping. Why not?

ONE OF NELSON'S CAPTAINS

by George Caunt

Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, the second son of William Harvey of Rolls Park, Chigwell, was born in 1758, and was the grandson of Sir Eliab Harvey, the brother of William Harvey who discovered the circulation of blood. He served as Member of Parliament for Maldon 1780-1784 and for Essex 1802-1812 and from 1820 until his death in 1830. He married Lady Louise Nugent, younger daughter of Earl Nugent.

'We never heard of Mr. Harvey's abilities in the House as a speaker, he being content to give a silent vote . . . Though little heard of in his legislative capacity, he had made some noise in the gay world, having, it is said, not long ago actually lost all his fortune to Captain O'Bourne at cards, who suffered him to regain the whole again, excepting only the trifling sum of ten thousand pounds.' (English Chronicle 1791). This is scarcely fair comment, as during his political life he often took an independent line on navy matters, and was frequently absent from the county on active service in the Navy. He is remembered today as one of Nelson's bravest captains at the battle of Trafalgar.

Harvey entered the Navy as a midshipman and was lieutenant 1779, commander 1782, captain 1783, rear-admiral 1805, vice-admiral 1810 and admiral 1819, K.C.B. 1815 and G.C.B. 1825. In 1793 in the Sta. Margarita frigate he served under Sir John Jervis at Martinique and Guadeloupe. Jervis went on to become Lord St. Vincent, another eccentric and cranky old admiral, who lived at Rochetts, South Weald.

Harvey had a short spell in England owing to bad health and was in command of the Sea Fencibles in Essex. In 1799 he was in command of the Triumph of 74 guns and in 1803 of the Téméraire of 98 guns. After 18 months active service he was with the Fleet off Cadiz under Nelson at the battle of Trafalgar. The British warships were divided into the weather column led by Nelson in the Victory followed by the Téméraire, and the lee column led by Collingwood in the Royal Sovereign followed by the Belleisle. It was known that the four leading ships would come under very heavy fire, and reluctantly Nelson agreed to allow the Téméraire to go ahead, but, as the Téméraire came up to the Victory, Nelson changed his mind and shouted through a megaphone 'I'll thank you, Captain Harvey, to keep in your proper station, which is astern the Victory.' What Harvey said when he heard the order is not recorded, but he kept so close to the Victory that to use his own words, 'the Téméraire almost touched the stern of the Victory,' as the two great ships moved slowly into battle. Both ships were soon under heavy fire, and so close to the enemy that gun muzzles touched. Again to use Harvey's words 'so nearly engaged that I can give you no other account of this part of the most glorious day's work.'

The Victory was locked with the Redoubtable. The marksmen in the French warship's tops almost cleared the decks of the Victory, and French survivors said that the Victory's forecastle and poop were heaped with dead. Nelson was lying in the cockpit and a French boarding party prepared to take the Victory, when Harvey came up in the Téméraire and shattered the Redoubtable with a broadside from the port side. As the three ships were locked together the French Fougeux came up to the Téméraire and Harvey shattered her with a broadside from the starboard side. For a short time the four warships were together like a huge raft of fire and death. Of the Téméraire's share in the battle Collingwood wrote: 'Nothing could be finer. I have no words in which I can sufficiently express my admiration of it. The crew of the Téméraire were feted in London and later Harvey was the guest of honour at a Trafalgar dinner held at the King's Head, Chigwell.

On 9 November, 1805, Captain Eliab Harvey was promoted to rear-admiral. In 1807 he was complimented by Lord St. Vincent for his 'ability, zeal and perseverance,' but his 'intemperate manner' ended his active career in 1809, when he was court-martialled for 'using threatening language' to his commanding officer, Lord Gambier, and speaking disrespectfully of him to several officers. The officers concerned were closely questioned at the court-martial, and Lord Cochrane admitted that Harvey had said 'he was no canting methodist, no hypocrite, nor no psalm singer; but it was evidently unpremeditated, and arose from the warmth of his feelings at the moment.' Harvey was dismissed the service. Public opinion strongly supported Harvey, and

there were widespread misgivings concerning the fairness of the court-martial. The full facts of the case have not been revealed, but he was fully reinstated in 1810 'in consideration of his long and meritorious service.' Harvey was advanced to vice-admiral, received a K.C.B. in 1815, was admiral in 1819 and G.C.B. 1825.

Harvey's political career began in 1780 when he was returned unopposed for Maldon at a by-election and at the general election in the same year. He did not stand at the 1784 election. Harvey probably came to Maldon on the Strutt family interest, as his fellow member was John Strutt, in return for paying two-thirds of the election expenses. He supported Lord North's administration and was considered a Pittite in 1784.

Under the compromise arrangement by which the Essex county representation was shared between Tories and Whigs, he was returned unopposed as a Tory and John Bullock was the Whig in 1802. Most of his speeches were on maritime matters, and there is an echo of his feelings when he was court-martialled in a speech he made on the reappointment of the Duke of York to the office of commander in chief on 6 June, 1811: 'Was it no punishment to a man of a feeling mind to be removed out of the sphere to which he was accustomed to move and in which he presumed to think his services had been and might still continue to be useful.' Harvey remained one of the Essex members until he retired in 1812, and took a leading part in the general election of that year supporting John Archer Houblon.

He represented Essex again as a Tory from 1820 to his death in 1830, his parliamentary colleague being Charles Callis Western (Whig). In 1823 he presented a petition from Essex to the House of Commons praying for the repeal of the duty on malt, and said that the petition spoke for itself. At a meeting at Chelmsford in 1826 for the abolition of colonial slavery he agreed to present a petition to the House of Commons against colonial slavery. Harvey was bitterly opposed to Catholic emancipation and lost all interest in parliamentary work after the act was passed.

Harvey often took a leading part in local affairs and was frequently on the vestry at Chigwell. For a short time he was churchwarden, but was replaced as he was with the Navy on active service. He was elected verderer of Epping Forest in 1785, and in 1818 served on a central committee dealing with encroachments on Epping and Hainault Forests. He was appointed chairman of a parish committee in 1799 to draw up 'a just and equal assessment of the Poor Rate for Chigwell.' During a sudden agricultural depression in 1816 Harvey set an example by reducing his rents by ten shillings an acre.

He was an eccentric man of violent and uncertain temper. His wife wrote to her daughter, Lady Ashton, in 1818: 'We are all in a bad way at Chigwell. Never was anything equal to him, the whole

village and neighbourhood are talking of him.' Later she wrote: 'I am concerned he is insane . . . two nights ago he attacked me and gave Maria a frightful blow on the head; he has also shown his madness at five or six different times by pulling off every one of the young vine shoots, pulling up all the French beans, and breaking off a dozen fine hyacinths and treading in the roots under his feet . . . Mr. Layton rode by the other day and bowed to him, he was standing among his labourers, upon which he turned his posteriors to him and gave himself two great smacks on them in Mr. Layton's face . . .'

When Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey died in 1830 he left six daughters. He had two sons, but the elder was killed on active service in the Army at the siege of Burgos in 1812, and the younger died in 1823. His elder son was Captain Edward Harvey of the Coldstream Guards, and the Admiral received news of his son's death within a month of standing down in the 1812 election.

An obituary in the Kent and Essex Mercury, 23 February, 1830, said that he 'as a magistrate was remarkable for a firmness approximating too closely to a rigid dispensation of justice, but in his private friendship he was sincere and constant, and what redounds still more to his praise, he was a kind, liberal and indulgent landlord.'

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