

thrown out upon the waters. Then more kentledge followed, and, tapping the magazines, he threw over all but a dozen or so of round shot. Then over went the capstan, which was no easy job, and they began on the guns; one after another they plashed overboard. All this time the *Cornwallis*, the great seventy-four, kept up a continual firing, to which no reply was made. In fact, for four hours the English gunners displayed the worst marksmanship on record, for their shot continually went ahead of and all around the *Hornet* without once striking her, although several passed between her masts.

At eleven the breeze began to freshen, and the seventy-four commenced to creep up slowly, and then gain all at once in a manner which caused Biddle to believe that the Englishman had made alterations in his trim. By noon the wind had shifted slightly, and was squally, with fresh breezes from the westward. It was Sunday, the 30th, but there was no service held. Gloom was everywhere throughout the American vessel: staring them in the face were apparently inevitable capture and the frightful confinement in an English prison. Many of the crew had already been impressed and had served in the English navy, escaping from time to time, and the idea of being held as deserters—deserters to a country that was not theirs—gave cause for much unhappiness. At 1 P.M. the *Cornwallis* was so close that her commander began to fire by divisions, and once let go his entire broadside loaded with round and