

"we should soon make the Americans 'strike.'"

The sails and rigging of the *Wasp* was a good deal cut up, several round shot had passed through her hull, and one 24 pound shot through the centre of the foremast, a tolerable proof of its large dimensions. Out of a crew of 173 men and 2 boys the *Wasp* had 11 officers and men killed, and 15 petty officers, seamen and marines wounded—a great part of this loss was caused by the determined efforts of the crew of the *Reindeer* to board. The comparative force of the combatants was as follows:—

<i>Reindeer</i> —Broadside guns,	9
Weight of Broadside,	198 lbs.
Crew, men only,	98
Tonnage,	385
<i>Wasp</i> —Broadside guns,	11
Weight of Broadside,	338 lbs.
Crew, men only,	173
Tonnage,	539

This was decidedly the most gallant and best fought action of the war. Notwithstanding the disparity of force, the weaker was the assailant, nor could the British commander be accused of rashness as both were "sloops of war." According to the rules of the service it was his imperative duty to bring a vessel of *his own class* to action, and well that duty was performed by himself and his gallant crew. The honor of Britain was never entrusted to braver or more gallant hearts, and no fear need be entertained of prestige while the same feelings of honor and duty animate their successors. The *Reindeer* being too much shattered to keep the sea was set on fire and destroyed, while the *Wasp* steered for Lorient to refit, at which port she anchored on the 8th July.

On the 27th August the *Wasp* thoroughly refitted and manned sailed from Lorient to resume her cruise, and on the 1st September at 7 p.m., latitude 30° North, 11° West, going free on the starboard tack with the wind at South-East, she fell in with the British 18-gun brig-sloop *Avon* mounting sixteen 32-pounder carronades and 2 sixes, nearly ahead steering about South-West. At 7h. 34m. p.m. the *Avon* made night signals to the *Wasp* which the latter at 8 p.m. answered with a blue light on the fore-castle. At 8h. 38m. the *Avon* fired a shot from her stern chase gun and still running on to the South-west fired a second shot from her starboard and lee side. At 9h. 20m. being then on the weather quarter of the *Avon* the *Wasp* was hailed by the latter—"What ship is that," and answered by the question—"What brig is that"—the *Avon* replied with her name, but it was not heard on board the *Wasp*—the former again asked "what ship is that," and was told to heave to and she would be informed—the question was repeated and answered to the same effect. An American officer then went forward on the *Wasp*'s fore-castle and ordered the *Avon* to heave to, but the latter declined doing so, and at 9h. 25m. set her larboard fore-top-mast studding sail—immediately afterwards the *Wasp* fired her 12-pdr.

carronade, whereupon the *Avon* commenced the action by a discharge from her port guns. The *Wasp* then kept away and running under the brig's lee, at 9h. 29m. opened her broadside. Almost the first fire from the American ship consisting of dismantling shot cut away with other parts of her rigging the slings of the brig's gaff and on the fall of the latter the boom mainsail covered the quarter-deck gun on the side engaged, the only one that would at this time bear—shortly afterwards the brig's mainmast fell by the board which rendered her completely unmanageable—this disaster, with the upsetting of some of her guns prevented any return to the *Wasp*'s fire, who, on this occasion, fought much more warily than in her action with the *Reindeer*.

At a few minutes before 11 p.m. the *Wasp* hailed the *Avon* to know if she had surrendered, and received an answer in the affirmative, but just as she was about to take possession a sail was discovered close on board, on which the *Wasp* made sail away chased by the stranger which proved to be the British 18-gun brig-sloop *Castillian* of the same force as the *Avon*. At 11h. 40m. p.m. the *Castillian* fired her lee guns into the *Wasp*, cutting away her lower main cross-trees and damaging her rigging, but the latter did not return the fire crowding all sail before the wind. Repeated signals of distress having been made by the *Avon* the *Castillian* tacked and stood towards her, and on closing she was informed that the *Avon* was sinking fast, the *Castillian* immediately hoisted out her boats to save the people, and at 1 a.m. on the 28th, just as the last boat pushed off from the *Avon*, she went down; a capital proof that she was not surrendered before all means of defence had been exhausted. Out of her crew of 104 men and 13 boys she lost 10 killed and 32 wounded. The *Wasp* had two men killed and one wounded—this was the last action of that vessel and her gallant crew, on the 15th of September she was off Maderia and never afterwards was heard from; she is supposed to have foundered at sea before the end of the month.

On 12th July the British Cutter *Landrail* of four 12-pounder carronades, with a crew of 19 men and boys, on her way across the British Channel with despatches, was chased by the American *Syren*, and maintained with her a running fight of one hour and ten minutes duration, and a close action within pistol shot of 50 minutes, in all two hours; having seven men wounded, her sails riddled with shot-holes and her hull much shattered, the *Landrail* surrendered. The *Syren* mounted one long 18-pounder on a traversing carriage, four long 6-pounders and two 18-pounder carronades, with a crew of 75 men, had three men killed and 15 wounded. The *Landrail* was recaptured on her way to the United States and carried into Halifax. The *Ballahow*, a vessel of the same class but rigged as

a schooner, was captured by the American schooner *Perry*—both these vessels measured 76 tons; their captors 180 tons each.

It will be necessary to relate the course of those marauding expeditions on the coasts and rivers of the United States, which reminds the reader of the exploits of the old Sea Kings—acts of war undertaken without design or object and exercising no influence on the direct issues of the war—calculated to bring the British name and prestige into contempt, but not to exhibit the talents of her officers or prescience of her statesmen. If the old tactics of "Carrying the war into Africa" were to be followed, it was certainly advisable that a force sufficiently respectable to hold their conquests should have been despatched for that purpose, because the possession of any of the points threatened would have paralysed all resistance on the part of the United States and compelled a speedy peace; but sufficient men to make a respectable free-booting expedition were all that was sent, and as events proved even not able to retain their conquests for forty-eight hours.

In the summer of 1814 Vice Admiral Sir Alex. Cochrane was appointed to supersede Sir John Warren in command of the British fleet in North American waters. Rear Admiral Cockburn in the *Albion* 74 took command of the Naval forces in the Chesapeake. The American Government had fitted out a strong flotilla at Baltimore under command of Commodore John Barney, it consisted of the *Scorpion* sloop mounting 8 carronades and a heavy long gun on a traversing carriage and sixteen gun boats with one long gun in the bow and another in the stern, the largest of the vessels carrying 32-pounders and 60 men, and the smallest 18-pounders and 40 men. On the 1st June this flotilla was first sighted by the British and was chased by a schooner and boats of the British squadron into the Patuxent, suffering an American schooner to be burnt in their sight. On the 6th this flotilla retreated higher up the Patuxent, and the British being reinforced by a frigate and brig they were driven up St. Leonard's creek where it could be reached by boats only. Various attempts were made from time to time to force them out of their cover, but all to no purpose. The British captured boats, vessels, tobacco stores and at various times defeated parties of American militia, still the flotilla remained at anchor. At length the authorities at Washington finding the proximity of a British force to that capital anything but pleasant, ordered Commodore Barney to destroy the flotilla in the hope that having no longer any such temptation the British would retire from the capital. At the instance of Colonel Wadsworth of the Engineers, who proposed to drive the British frigates from their anchorage and thus liberate the flotilla, this order was suspended. Accordingly by aid of red hot shot and the flotilla, this was effected without loss to the British, but the