

Great Britain was an unprovoked attack upon their commerce; that the right of search which she claimed and practised was an encroachment upon their national independence. The whole trouble grew out of the mighty feud between France and England; and France was quite as much at fault for any injustice suffered by the young Republic as England; but it was towards England chiefly, if not solely, that a bitter feeling of resentment existed in the United States. England had no desire to break with America; and although the British Government refused to repeal the obnoxious Orders in Council or relinquish the right of search, they determined by every reasonable means to avoid a quarrel with the offspring of England across the ocean. That prudent policy, however, was frustrated by the proceedings of the Admiral in command of the British North American squadron, who, in the exercise of the alleged right of search, authorized an attack on the U. S. frigate "Chesapeake," for the purpose of seizing on board of that vessel some deserters from the British navy. As this act of aggression may be considered the indirect, if not the direct cause of the war of 1812, it will be necessary for me to give a sketch of the event before going any further.

While some British men-of-war were at anchor in Chesapeake Bay, in the spring of 1807, several seamen deserted and entered the service of the United States on board the frigate "Chesapeake," and afterwards openly paraded the streets of Norfolk, Virginia, in sight of their officers, under the American flag, protected by the Magistrates of the town and the recruiting officer, who refused to give them up, although they were demanded by the British Consul as well as the Captains of the ships from which the men had deserted. Admiral Berkley, in command of the British squadron, thereupon directed the Captains of the ships under his command, in case of meeting with the American frigate "Chesapeake" at sea, and without the