

critical than the other. Both are of vital importance, failure in one would mean failure in the other. And the invisible enemy at any moment of the night or day may suddenly throw the whole weight of its sea-power into one attack or the other. Only in one way can we realize the world's debt to the British Navy—Imagine that it had failed us. If that had been, there is not one nation or race or country which would not now be lying helpless at the foot of Prussian brutality."

THE SECRET OF THE SHIPS

("The association between the two services, the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine, has been so close during the war, whatever that association might have been before, that it seems to me almost incredible that it can ever be broken asunder."—Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss.)

On their ventures in the service of a Tudor King or Queen

All the ships were just as like as they could be,
For the merchantman gave battle; while the Royal ship
was seen

As a not too simple trader oversea;
Being heirs to ancient customs, when their upper sails
came down

As a token of respect in passing by,
They would add the salutation in a language of their own,
"God speed you, we be sisters, thou and I."

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