

Naval Furniture

Those of us who listened with great interest to Treve Rosoman's recent talk on military furniture or read the article he contributed to the Group's first publication, might like to reflect on the problems of clearing the captain's cabin in the stern of a fighting ship of his furniture, in order that the guns mounted there could be run out when going into action.

Treve quoted examples of the practice of putting the captain's furniture into the long boat and towing it astern. There must have been many occasions, however, when there was not time to do this, as the following quotation from a contemporary diary suggests. It describes a meeting between a British squadron and the USS Constitution. Being short of provisions one of the British ships came up close alongside to ask if some bread could be spared. "We found him at quarters, cleared for action", but on being assured that the visit was a friendly one, "Captain Percival was polite, drinking brandy and water and smoking cigars, and spitting all about his cabin, which was in great confusion, with his furniture piled in a heap to clear away the stern guns."

Lionel Reynolds