

The ubiquitous "Windsor" chair and an unusual coffin

Carola Oman, in her biography of Nelson, tells us that when he shifted his flag from the Vanguard to the Foudroyant he took with him "an odd trophy of the Nile". This coffin had been sent to him by Captain Ben Hallowell, and had been made from part of the mainmast of the L'Orient by the carpenter of the Swiftsure. Officers joining the ship's company for the first time "heard with surprise that Lord Nelson was accustomed to dine with a coffin behind his Windsor chair; coming out of his cabin one June morning to discover his officers staring at this blunt reminder that all flesh is grass, he remarked "You may look at it, gentlemen, as long as you please; but depend upon it, none of you shall have it." Carola Oman - Nelson. Reprint Society Edn. p.308.

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