

James Coull

Dundee Advertiser

2nd October 1880

SUDDEN DEATH OF A NAVAL VETERAN.

Yesterday morning Mr. James Coull, pensioner, Montrose, was found dead in bed. On the previous day he appeared to be in his usual health, and spent part of the afternoon in company with two or three other old "salts". In the evening he complained to his niece of not being very well. Nothing serious, however, was apprehended; but about seven o'clock he was found stiff and cold, having evidently been dead some hours. James's career was a very interesting one. He was born in Ferryden on the 7th January 1786, and was thus in his 95th year. When little more than 8 years of age he went to sea as a cabin boy on board the brig **Christina**, of Montrose, and made several voyages in that vessel, and also in the **Flora**.

In 1801 he was apprenticed to the brig **Concord**, of the same port, and while that vessel was lying at Copenhagen James was seized by the press gang and sent aboard the **Centaur**, 74 guns. In her he was present at the battle of Copenhagen; but, peace having been restored to Europe by the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, he was, on application of his apprentice masters, released, and thereafter completed his apprenticeship on board the **Concord**.

He then shipped as an able seaman in the smack **Swift**, of Montrose, and while lying at the Nore he was once more pressed, and sent on board his old ship the **Centaur**, and was promoted soon after to be assistant quartermaster. He was present at the battle of Trafalgar on the 21st October 1805, and during the next few years he took part in numerous smaller fights.

In 1813 he volunteered from the **Actaeon**, 26 guns, to the frigate **Shannon**, where he was promoted to be quartermaster, and was present at the famous fight between her and the American frigate **Chesapeake** on the 1st June 1813.

From a sketch of James's life which lately appeared we take the following brief description of his part in that memorable battle:-

James spoke with pardonable pride of the events of this day, which was not only the culminating one in his career of glory, but eventful to him as an individual, as it was the last action in which he was destined to fight for king and country. While steering his vessel into action he was wounded in the left arm - a musket ball, supposed to have been fired from one of the Chesapeake's tops, striking him at the wrist, passing along the arm, coming out at the elbow. James, however, kept to his post until the vessels got engaged, and entangled by the anchor of the Shannon getting on board the Chesapeake, affording an opportunity for the guns of the former sweeping the decks of the latter with fearful effect. Captain Broke, seeing the Yankees flinching at their guns, gave orders to his men to board, which were at once obeyed, James forming one of the boarding party. Whilst scrambling on board the Chesapeake one of the "lubbers", as James called him, kept punching at James's head with his cutlass through the netting which surrounded her bulwarks, inflicting a severe scalp wound, which bled so profusely as to almost

James Coull's death certificate

Year 1880
 Parish: Montrose
 Entry No: 264
 Name: James Coull
 Occupation: Greenwich Pensioner
 Died: 1st October 1880
 Where: 1 Academy Square, Montrose
 Age: 96
 Father: James Coull, fisherman
 Mother: Jane Pert
 Informant: Robert Coull, nephew

His birth is noted in the Old Parish register the microfilm copy was very faint

1788
 Joseph Coull and Jean Pert in Ferryden had a child born 5th January and baptised 16th named James

This has been confirmed he appears on the muster ADM37/4472 No.31 as coming aboard on 7th April 1813 and is there for muster on 6th July [transferred from the Serapis (store ship) ADM37/4409 No.721 Appearing 6th Sept. 1812 as vol.]

Order for allotting pay
 1st October 1812

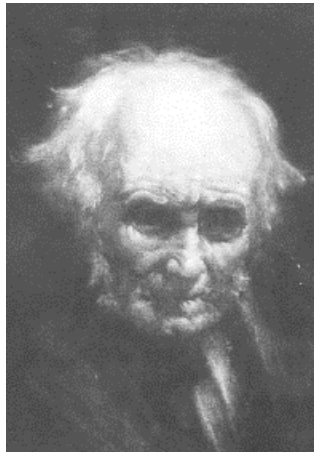
Where and to whom ?
 ADM26/23-24 index
 ADM 27/13 page 184
 Acteon.
 Seeapis 1st Oct. 1812
 £5-9-8 AB Mrs Jane Coull
 paid by Customs Montrose
 *there is a query against
 stop No. 60003
 -this may be nothing but if
 time investigate-
 paid until 11 may 1814

blind our hero; yet in spite of this and his wounded arm he persisted, and ultimately succeeded in forcing a passage. When he obtained a footing on the enemy's deck, James considered his first duty to pay attention to his antagonist, who by this time had sheered off and endeavoured to escape. James, however, caught him skulking round the capstan and gave chase, remarking in an emphatic though not very polite strain, "You -, I'll be your butcher" - a promise which, after an amount of dodging and strategic movements, he faithfully fulfilled to the letter. by the time James had thus "polished off" his antagonist the principal part of the engagement was over - the whole time occupied from the firing of the first gun to the hauling down of the American flag being only fifteen minutes, and from the boarding to the surrender only four minutes elapsed."

The wound on his arm proved a very troublesome one, and in 1814 he was invalided and sent home. In 1816 he made the voyage to London, where he got his arm amputated from above the wrist. He was discharged on a pension of £16 per annum, which was raised to £29 12s 6d fifteen or sixteen years ago. he has thus drawn a pension for the very long period of 66 years, and it may be mentioned as a curious coincidence that yesterday was pension day.

After leaving the navy James served as a cook for many years on board the old Montrose whalers the *Swann* and the *Monarch*, and other vessels. A good number of years back, however, he gave up the sea, and lived in Montrose on his pension - a warm hearted, genial veteran, loved and respected by all that knew him. he was of a very social disposition, and, being of more than average intelligence, could relate the many adventures he had come through very graphically.

His portrait, painted by Mr James Irvine, was exhibited at the Edinburgh Academy Exhibition in 1878, and attracted much attention.



Mr Coull was a widower, but had no family. he was one of the last survivors of the fight between the Shannon and Chesapeake.

His birth is noted in the Old Parish register the microfilm copy was very faint

1788

PENSION
ADM22/254-443
Covers 1814-1846

This was a very disappointing source - had hoped to find reason for pension - but it wasn't even possible to be sure you could identify the correct man. So brief are the entries.

Joseph Coul and Jean Pert in Ferryden had a child born 5th January and baptised 16th named James

The following was taken from James Coul's death certificate

Year 1880

Parish: Montrose

Entry No: 264

Name: James Coull

Occupation: Greenwich Pensioner

Died: 1st October 1880

Where: 1 Academy Square, Montrose

Age: 96

Father: James Coull, fisherman

Mother: Jane Pert

Informant: Robert Coull, nephew

As you will see he was actually in his 93 year when he died.

The pension records now take a more positive turn - I'll try and find the custom's records for Montrose - they seem to be in Dundee!

Whilst this may show the pension being collected by James Coul the issuing of it would have come from Greenwich Hospital- provided that this term wasn't being used colloquially to cover a pension from another source.

If so then his name should appear in ADM22/254-443

"These are the pay books of Out-pensions from Greenwich hospital, paid to warrant officers, rating and marines not resident in the Hospital...

The volumes are arranged alphabetically".

[N.A.M. Rodger Naval Records for Genealogists]

There is something very heartwarming in trying to give James his place in naval history-don't you agree?

Best wishes

Reference:

The naval history of Great Britain: from the declaration of war by France in 1793 to the accession of George IV

William James

London 1902.

[USS Chesapeake engages HMS Shannon 1st June 1813]

Among the captains of British 38-gun frigates who longed, ardently longed, for a meeting with one of the American 44's, was Captain Philip Bowes Vere Broke, of the Shannon. This desire was not founded on any wish for a display of personal valour, but in order to show the world what apparent wonders could be effected, where the ship and the crew were in all respects fitted for battle. It was not since the late American war that Captain Broke had begun to put his frigate in fighting order, and to teach his men the art of attack and defence. From the day on which Captain Broke had joined her, the 14 of September, 1806, the Shannon began to feel the influence of her captain's proficiency as a gunner and zeal for the service.

The laying of a ship's ordnance, so that it may be correctly fired in a horizontal direction, is justly deemed a most important operation; as upon it depends, in a great measure, the true aim and destructive effect of every future shot she may fire. On board the Shannon, at her first outfit, this was attended to by Captain Broke in person; and his ingenious mode of laying ship's ordnance has since received the highest commendation. By draughts from other ships, and the usual means to which a British man-of-war is obliged to resort, the Shannon got together a crew: and, in the course of a year or two, by the paternal care and excellent regulations of captain Broke, an undersized, not very well disposed, and, in point of age, rather motley, ship's company became as pleasant to command as they would have been dangerous to meet. In August 1811 the Shannon sailed for the coast of North America; and, had this frigate, in the excellent order in which she was kept, met the Constitution in August 1812, we verily believe- But the Shannon and the Constitution did not meet; therefore the thing was not tried.

On the 21st of March 1813, accompanied by the Tenedos, of the same force, and kept in nearly the same order, Captain Hyde Parker, the Shannon sailed from Halifax on a cruise in Boston bay. On the 2nd of April the two frigates reconnoitred the harbour of Boston, and saw the President and Congress, the latter quite, and the former nearly ready for sea. The Constitution was at the same time undergoing a large repair; and her decks were lowered, to render her more snug, and give her a smaller, and more inviting appearance. Captains Broke and Parker having resolved, if in their power, to bring the President and Congress to action, the Shannon and Tenedos took a station to intercept them. In this interval that the Chesapeake escaped into port in the manner related; and on the 1st of May, foggy weather and a sudden favourable shift of wind, enabled the President and Congress to elude the vigilance of the two British frigates and put to sea. Captains Broke and Parker very soon discovered the chance they had missed, and sadly disappointed they were. There now remained in Boston only the Constitution and Chesapeake. The first, as has been stated, was undergoing a serious repair; but the Chesapeake had only to get in her main and mizzen masts, and would be ready for sea in a week or two. Having obtained a furlough to enjoy his share of prize-money, Captain Evans was succeeded in command of the Chesapeake by Captain James Lawrence, the late fortunate, highly applauded, and, we readily admit, truly gallant commander of the Hornet. As the two frigates were not required to attack one, and as the appearance of such a superiority would naturally prevent the Chesapeake from putting to sea, Captain Broke, on the 25th of May, took a supply of water and provisions from the Tenedos, and detached her, with orders to Captain Parker not to join him before the 14th of June; by which time, it was hoped, the business would be over. On the 26th the Shannon recaptured the brig Lucy, and on the 29th the brig William, both of Halifax. Aware of the state of incapacity to which some of the British frigates on the station had reduced themselves, by manning and sending in their prizes, Captain Broke destroyed all he captured. We believe he had sacrificed not fewer than 25 sail of prizes, to keep the Shannon in a state to meet one or the other of the American frigates. Being resolved to have a meeting with the Chesapeake, nothing but the circumstances of the two recaptures belonging to Halifax could induce Captain Broke to weaken the Shannon's crew by sending them in. The master of the Lucy, assisted by five recaptured seamen belonging to some ship on the station, carried in that vessel; and a midshipman and four of the Shannon's men took charge of the William. On the 29th, in the afternoon, the Shannon boarded the Nova Scotia privateer the brig Sir John Sherbrooke, and took from her 22 Irish labourers, whom the brig, three days before, with 30 more (then volunteers on board herself), had recaptured in a prize belonging to the American privateer Governor Plumer; bound, when the latter fell in with her, from Waterford to Burin, Newfoundland.

Before we proceed further, let us show what guns were mounted by the two frigates, whose mutual animosity was on the eve of being quenched by the capture of one of them. On her main deck, the Shannon was armed the same as every other British frigate of her class, and her established guns on the quarter-deck and fore-castle were 16 carronades, 32-pounders, and four long 9-pounders, total 48 guns. But Captain Broke had since had mounted a 12-pounder boat-carronade through a port purposely made on the starboard side of the quarter-deck, and a brass long 6-pounder, used generally as an exercise gun. through a similar port on the larboard side; besides which there were two 12-pounder carronades, mounted as standing stern-chasers through the quarter-deck stern-ports. For these last four guns, one 32-pounder carronade would have been more than an equivalent. However, as a 6-pounder counts as well as a 32-pounder, the Shannon certainly mounted 53 carriage-guns. The ship had also, to be in that respect upon a par with the American frigates, one swivel in the fore, and another in the main top. The armament of the Chesapeake, we have already on more than one occasion described: she had at this time, as afterwards found on board of her, 28 long 18-pounders on the main deck, and 20 carronades, 32-pounders, and one long

CHECK
Possible that he was on the Tenedos also check muster of Acteon prior to 6th July for notice of transfer

shifting 18-pounder, on the quarter-deck and forecastle, total 49 guns; exclusively of a 12-pounder boat-carronade, belonging to which there was a very simple and well-contrived elevating carriage for firing at the tops, but it is doubtful if the gun was used. Five guns, four 32-pounder carronades and one long 18-pounder, had it was understood, been landed at Boston. Some have alleged, that this was done by captain Lawrence, that he might not have a numerical superiority over his antagonists of the British 38-gun class: others say, and we incline to be of that opinion, that the reduction was ordered by the American government, to ease the ship, whose hull had already begun to hog, or to arch in the centre.

On the 1st of June, early in the morning, having received no answer to several verbal messages sent in, and being doubtful if any of them had even been delivered, Captain Broke addressed to the commanding officer of the Chesapeake a letter of challenge, which, for candour, manly spirit, and gentlemanly style stands unparalleled. the letter begins: "As the Chesapeake appears now ready for sea, I request you will do me the favour to meet the Shannon with her, ship to ship, to try the fortune of our respective flags." The Shannon's force is thus described: "The Shannon mounts 24 guns upon her broadside, and one light boat-gun, 18-pounders upon her main deck, and 32-pound carronades on her quarter-deck and forecastle, and is manned with a complement of 300 men and boys (a large proportion of the latter), besides 30 seamen, boys, and passengers, who were taken out of recaptured vessels lately". After fixing the place of meeting, and providing against all interruption, Captain Broke concludes thus: "I entreat you, sir, not to imagine that I am urged by mere personal vanity to the wish of meeting the Chesapeake; or that I depend only upon your personal ambition for your acceding to this invitation. We have both nobler motives. You will feel it as a compliment if I say, that the result of our meeting may be the most grateful; service I can render to my country; and I doubt not that you, equally confident of success, will feel convinced, that it is only by repeated triumphs in even combats that your little navy can now hope to console your country for the loss of that trade it can no longer protect. Favour me with a speedy reply. We are short of provision and water, and cannot stay long here."

This letter Captain Broke intrusted to a Captain Slocum, a discharged prisoner, then about to proceed, in his own boat, to Marblehead, a port a few miles to the north of Boston. Shortly afterwards the Shannon, with colours flying, stood in close to Boston lighthouse, and lay to. The Chesapeake was now seen at anchor in the President roads, with royal yards across and apparently ready for sea. The American frigate presently loosed her fore topsail, and, shortly afterwards, all her topsails, and sheeted them home.

The wind, blowing a light breeze from west by north, was perfectly fair. At about 30 minutes past noon, while the men of the Shannon were at dinner, Captain Broke went himself to the masthead, and there observed the Chesapeake fire a gun, and loose and set topgallant sails. The American frigate was soon under way, and made more sail as she came down, having in her company numerous sailing pleasure-boats, besides a large schooner gun-boat, with, we believe, Commodores Bainbridge and Hull, and several other American naval officers on board.

While at the Shannon's masthead, Captain Broke saw that Captain Slocum's boat had not reached the shore in time for the delivery of his letter of challenge to the commander of the Chesapeake. Notwithstanding this, there cannot be a doubt, that Captain Lawrence had obtained the consent of Commodore Bainbridge (whose orders from the government at Washington were to despatch the Chesapeake to sea as soon as she was ready), to sail and attack the Shannon, in compliance with one or more of the verbal challenges which had been sent in. It was natural for the conqueror of the Peacock to wish for an opportunity to capture or drive away a British ship that had repeatedly lay to off the port, and, in view of all the citizens, had used every endeavour to provoke the Chesapeake to come out and engage her.

At 0h. 55m P.M., Cape Ann bearing north-north-east, half-east distant 10 or 12 miles, the Shannon filled, and stood out from the land under easy sail. At 1 P.M. the Chesapeake rounded the lighthouse under all sail; and at 3h. 40m. P.M. hauled up, and fired a gun, as if in defiance; or, perhaps, to induce the Shannon to stop, and allow the gun-vessel; and pleasure-boat spectators an opportunity of witnessing how speedily an American, could "whip" a British frigate. Presently afterwards the Shannon did haul up, and reefed topsails. At 4p.m. both ships, now about seven miles apart, again bore away: the Shannon with her foresail clewed up, and her main topsail braced flat and shivering, that the Chesapeake might overtake her. At 4h.50m. the Chesapeake took in her studding-sails, topgallant-sails, and royals, and got her royal-yards on deck. At 5h.10m. p.m., Boston lighthouse bearing west distant about six leagues, the Shannon's again hauled up, with head to the southward and eastward, and lay to, under topsails, topgallant-sails, jib, and spanker.

At 5h. 25m. the Chesapeake's hauled up her foresail, and, with three ensigns flying, one at the mizenroyalmast-head, one at the peak, and one, the largest of all, in the starboard main rigging, steered straight for the Shannon's starboard quarter. The Chesapeake's had also, flying at fore, a large white flag, inscribed with the words: Sailor's Rights and Free Trade; upon a supposition, perhaps, that this favourite American motto would paralyse the efforts, or damp the energy of the Shannon's men. The Shannon's had a union-jack at the fore, an old rusty blue ensign at the mizen-peak, and, rolled up and stopped, ready to be cast loose if either of these should be shot away, one ensign on the main stay and another in the main rigging. Nor, standing much in need of paint, was her outside appearance at all calculated to inspire a belief of the order and discipline which reigned within.

At 5h. 30. p.m., to be under command, and ready to wear if necessary, in the prevailing light breeze, the Shannon's filled her main topsail and kept a close luff; but, at the end of a few minutes, having gathered way enough, she again shook the wind out of the sail, and kept it shivering, and also brailed up her driver. Thinking it not unlikely that the Chesapeake's would pass under the Shannon's stern, and engage her on the larboard side, Captain Broke divided his men, and directed such as could not fire with effect to be prepared to lie down as the enemy's ship passed. But, either overlooking or waving this advantage, Captain Lawrence, at 5h. 40m., gallantly luffed up, within about 50 yards, upon the Shannon's starboard quarter, and, squaring his main-yard, gave three cheers.

The Shannon's guns were loaded thus: the after most main-deck gun with two round shot and a keg containing 159 musket-balls, the next gun with one round and one double-headed shot, and so alternately along the broadside.

[Sir Howard Douglas, in Naval Gunnery, says he was informed by the first-lieutenant of the Shannon that this was an error, for no kegs of musket-balls and no double-headed shot were used but the main deck guns were loaded alternately with two round shot and one round shot and grape.]

The captain of the 14th gun, William Mindham, had been ordered to fire, the moment his gun would bear into the Chesapeake's second main-deck port from forward. At 5h. 50m. p.m. the Shannon's after most main-deck gun was fired, and the shot was seen to strike close to the port at which it was aimed. In a second or so the 13th gun was fired; then the Chesapeake's bow-gun went off; and then the remaining guns on the broadside of each ship as fast as they could be discharged.

At 5h. 53m. p.m., finding that owing to the quantity of way in the Chesapeake's, and the calm she produced in the Shannon's sails, he was ranging too far ahead; and, being desirous to preserve the weather -gage in order to have an opportunity of crippling the Shannon's by dismantling shot, Captain Lawrence hauled up a little. At 5h. 56m., having had her jib-sheet and fore topsail-tie shot away, and her helm, probably from the death of the men stationed at it,

being for the moment unattended to, the Chesapeake's came so sharp to the wind as to completely deaden her way; and the ship lay, in consequence, with her stern quarter exposed to her opponent's broadside. The shot from the Shannon's after most guns now took a diagonal direction along the decks of the Chesapeake's; beating in her stern-ports, and sweeping the men from their quarters.

The shot from the Shannon's foremost guns, at the same time, entering the Chesapeake's ports from the main mast aft, did considerable execution. At 5h. 58m. an open cask of musket cartridges, standing upon the Chesapeake's cabin skylight for the use of marines, caught fire and blew up, but did no injury whatever. Even the spanker-boom, directly in the way of the explosion was barely singed. As the Shannon's had by this time fallen off a little, and the manoeuvres of the Chesapeake's indicated an intention to haul away, Captain Broke ordered the helm to be put a-lee; but scarcely had the Shannon's luffed up in obedience to her helm than the Chesapeake's was observed to have stern way, and to be paying round off. The Shannon's immediately shifted her helm a-starboard, and shivered her mizentopsail, to keep off the wind again, and delay the boarding, probably until her guns had done a little more execution among the crew, supposed to be at least a fourth superior in number. At that moment, however, the Shannon's had her jib-stay shot away; and her head-sails being becalmed, she went off very slowly. The consequence was, that, at 6p.m., the Chesapeake's fell on board the Shannon's, with her quarter pressing on the latter's side, just before her starboard main-chains. The Chesapeake's foresail being at this moment partly loose, owing to the weather clew-garnet having been shot away from the bits, the American forged a little ahead, but was presently stopped, by hooking, with her quarter-port, the fluke of the Shannon's anchor stowed over the chess-tree. Captain Broke now ran forward; and observing the Chesapeake's men deserting the quarter-guns, he ordered the two ships to be lashed together, the great guns to cease firing, the main-deck boarders to be called, and Lieutenant George Thomas L. Watt, the first-lieutenant, to bring up the quarter-deck men, who were all boarders. While zealously

employed outside the bulwark of the Shannon's, making the Chesapeake's fast to her, the veteran boatswain, Mr. Stevens (he had fought in Rodney's action), had his left arm hacked off with repeated sabre cuts and was mortally wounded by musketry. The midshipman commanding the forecastle, Mr. Samwell, was also mortally wounded. Accompanied by the remaining forecastle party, about 20 in number, Captain Broke, at 6h. 2m. p.m., stepped from the Shannon's gangway-rail, just abaft the fore-rigging, on the muzzle of the Chesapeake's after most carronade, and thence, over the bulwark, upon her quarter-deck. here not an officer or man was to be seen. Upon the Chesapeake's gangways, about 25 or 30 Americans made a slight resistance. these were quickly driven towards the forecastle, where a few endeavoured to get down the fore hatchway, but in their eagerness, prevented each other. Several fled over the bows; and while part, as it is believed, plunged into the sea, another part reached the main deck through the bridle-ports. The remainder laid down their arms and submitted. Lieutenant watt, with several quarter-deck men, sergeant Richard Molyneux, corporal George Osborne, and the first division of marines; also Lieutenant Charles Leslie Falkiner, third of the Shannon's, with a division of the main-deck boarders, quickly followed captain Broke and his small party. Lieutenant Watt, just as he had stepped on the Chesapeake's taffrail, was shot through the foot by a musket-ball fired from the mizentop, and dropped on his knee on the quarter-deck; but quickly rising up, he ordered Lieutenant of marines James Johns to point one of the Shannon's 9-pounders at the enemy's top. In the mean time Lieutenant Falkiner and the marines, with the second division of which Lieutenant John Law had now arrived, rushed forward; and, while one party kept down the men who were ascending the main hatchway, another party answered the destructive fire still continued from the main and mizzen tops. The Chesapeake's main top was presently stormed by midshipman William Smith and his top-men, about five in number; who either destroyed or drove on deck all the Americans there stationed. This gallant young man had deliberately passed along the Shannon's fore-yard, which was braced up to the Chesapeake's main-yard, which was nearly square; and thence into her top. All further annoyance from the Chesapeake's mizzen top had also been put a stop to by another of the Shannon's midshipmen, Mr. Cosnahan, who, from the starboard main-yard arm, had fired at the Americans, so fast as his men in the top could load the muskets and hand them to him.

After the Americans on the forecastle had submitted, Captain Broke ordered one of his men to stand sentry over them, and then sent most of the others aft where the conflict was most going on. He was in the act of giving them orders to answer the fire from the Chesapeake's maintop (this was just before Mr. Smith's gallant and successful exploit), when the sentry called lustily out to him. On turning round, the captain found himself opposed by three Americans; who, seeing they were superior to the British then near them, had armed themselves afresh. Captain Broke parried the middle fellow's pike, and wounded him in the face; but instantly received from the man on the pikemans's right, a blow with the but-end of a musket, which bared his skull, and nearly stunned him. Determined to finish the British commander, the third man cut him down with his broadsword, but at that very instant, was himself cut down by Mindham, the Shannon's seamen, already known to us Captain Broke was not the only sufferer upon this occasion: one of his men was killed, and two or three were badly wounded. Can it be wondered, if all that were concerned in this breach of faith fell victims to the indignation of the Shannon's men? It was as much as Captain Broke could do, to save from their fury a young midshipman, who having slid down a rope from the Chesapeake's foretop, begged his protection. Mr. Smith, who had just at that moment descended from the maintop, assisted Mindham and another of the Shannon's men in helping the captain on his legs. While in the act of tying a handkerchief round his commander's head, Mindham, pointing aft, called out, "There, sir, there goes up the old ensign over the Yankee colours." Captain Broke saw it hoisting (with what feelings can be well imagined), and was instantly led to the Chesapeake's quarter-deck, where he seated himself upon one of the carronade-slides.

The act of changing the Chesapeake's colours had proved fatal to the gallant British officer, and to four or five fine fellows of the Shannon's crew. We left Lieutenant Watt, just as, having raised himself on his legs after his wound, he was hailing the Shannon's to fire at the Chesapeake's mizentop. He then called for an English ensign; and , hauling down the American ensign, bent, owing to the halliards being tangled, the English flag below instead of above it. A few seconds before this, the Chesapeake's quarter gallery had given way, and the two ships were gradually separating. Observing the American stripes going up first, the Shannon's people re-opened their fire; and directing their guns with their accustomed precision at the lower part of the Chesapeake's mizzenmast, killed their own first-lieutenant (a grapeshot took off the upper part of his head) and four or five of their comrades. Before the flags had got half-way to the mizen-peak, they were

William Smith
Lt 14 July 1813
CR 22 July 1826
CA 13 March 1846
Died 1862

Had attempted to find passing. Cert – but may not exist seems if promoted due to action then exam not required – this from staff.

Obit didn't appear in T



lowered down and hoisted properly; and the aggrieved and mortified men of the Chesapeake's ceased their fire.

An unexpected fire of musketry, opened by the Americans who had fled to the hold, killed a fine young marine, William Young. On this, Lieutenant Falkiner, who was sitting on the booms, very properly directed three or four muskets, that were ready, to be fired down. Captain Broke, from his seat upon the carronade-slide, told Lieutenant Falkiner to summon the Americans in the hold to surrender, if they desired quarter. The lieutenant did so. The

Americans replied, "We surrender"; and all hostilities ceased. The Shannon's was now about 100 yards astern of the Chesapeake's, or rather upon her larboard quarter. To enable the Shannon's to close, Captain Broke ordered the Chesapeake's mainyard to be braced flat aback, and her foresail to be hauled close up. Almost immediately after-wards Captain Broke's senses failed him from loss of blood; and the Shannon's jolly-boat just then arriving with a fresh supply of men, he was conveyed on board his own ship.

Between the discharge of the first gun, and the period of Captain Broke's boarding, 11 minutes only elapsed; and in four minutes more the Chesapeake's was completely his.

Now for the damage and loss of men sustained by the respective combatants.

Five shot passed through the Shannon; one only below the main deck. Of several round shot that struck her, the greater part lodged in the side, ranged in a line just above the copper. A bar-shot entered a little below the water-mark, leaving a foot or 18 inches of one end sticking out. Until her shot-holes were stopped, the Shannon made a good deal of water upon the larboard tack; but, upon the other, not more than usual. Her fore and main masts were slightly injured by shot; and her bowsprit (previously sprung) and mizzenmast were badly wounded. No other spar was damaged. Her shrouds on the starboard side were cut almost to pieces; but from her perfect state aloft, the Shannon's, at a moderate distance, appeared to have suffered very little in action. Out of a crew, including eight recaptured seamen and 22 Irish labourers two days out only in the ship, of 306 men and 24 boys, the Shannon's lost, besides her first-lieutenant, her purser (George Aldham), captain's clerk (John Dunn), 13 seamen, four marines, three supernumeraries, and one boy killed, her captain (severely), boatswain (William Stevens, mortally), one midshipman (John Samwell, mortally) and 56 seamen, marines, and supernumeraries wounded: total, 24 killed and 59 wounded.

The Chesapeake's was severely battered in her hull, on the larboard quarter particularly. A shot passed through one of her transoms, equal in stoutness to a 64-gun ship's; and several shot entered the stern windows. She had two main-deck guns and one carronade entirely disabled. One 32-pounder carronade was also dismounted, and several carriages and slides broken. her three lower masts, the main and mizzen masts especially, were badly wounded. The bowsprit received no injury; nor was a spar of any kind shot away. her lower rigging and stays were a good deal cut; but neither masts nor rigging were so damaged that they could not be repaired, if necessary, without the ships going into port.

Out of a crew of at least 381 men and five boys or lads, the Chesapeake's, as acknowledged by her surviving commanding officer, lost her fourth-lieutenant (Edward I. Ballard), master (William A. White), one lieutenant of marines (James Broom), three midshipmen, and 41 petty officers, seamen, and marines killed, her gallant commander and first-lieutenant (both mortally), her second and third lieutenants (George Budd and William L. Cox), acting chaplain (Samuel Livermore), five midshipmen, her boatswain (mortally), and 95 petty officers, seamen, and marines wounded: total, 47 killed and 99 wounded, 14 of the latter mortally. This is according to the American official account; but, it must be added, that the total that reported themselves, including several slightly wounded, to the Shannon's surgeon, three days after the action were 115; and the Chesapeake's surgeon wrote from Halifax, that he estimated the whole number of killed and wounded at from 160 to 170.

Of the Chesapeake's guns we have already given a full account; it only remains to point out, that the ship had three spare ports of a side on the forecastle, through which to fight her shifting long 18-pounder and 12-pounder boat-carronade. The former is admitted to have been used in that way; but, as there is some doubt whether the carronade was used, we shall reject it from the broadside forever. This leaves 25 guns, precisely the number mounted by the Shannon's on her broadside. The accuracy of Captain Broke's statement of his ship's force is, indeed, worthy of remark: he even slightly overrated it, because he represented all his guns of a side on the upper deck, except the boat-gun, as 32-pounder carronades, when two of the number were long nines.



James Coull