

THE NELSON COLLECTION FACTSHEET 2



The Nelson Collection is a display of prized artefacts, letters and valuable silverware from an important period in history. It vividly recalls the exciting times following the Revolution, and a series of brilliant naval victories, ending with Trafalgar.

Lord Nelson & Lloyd's

The Nelson Collection at Lloyd's vividly recalls the long war with France following the French Revolution, and the brilliant series of naval victories ending with Trafalgar. It is also a reminder that this was a relatively dramatic era for Lloyd's. From a disorganised coffee house, the Society had emerged as a powerful fraternity of underwriters who were playing a leading part in supporting the nation's war efforts.

Lloyd's links with Horatio Nelson date from the first of his great victories, the Battle of the Nile, 1798. A fund of over £38,000 was raised at Lloyd's to relieve the suffering of the wounded and bereaved. The fund's management committee under the great John Julius Angerstein, also voted Nelson £500 '...to be laid out in plate in such a manner as you will be pleased to direct, as a small token of their gratitude...'

Nelson's 'Nile Dinner Service' was later augmented with a similar gift from the Lloyd's fund raised after the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801. These silver dinner services formed the nucleus of the Nelson Collection.

Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson KB

The son of a Norfolk rector, Horatio Nelson was born at Burnham Thorpe on 29th September 1758. When he was 12 years old he joined the Royal Navy and three years later was on an expedition to the Arctic. In 1777, he passed his lieutenant's examination and proceeded to the West Indies. It was here that he met Frances Nisbet, the widow of a doctor, who he married on March 11, 1787.

He returned to England in 1787 and five years later gained command of the *Agamemnon* and was ordered to the Mediterranean. It was during the siege of Calvi in Corsica in July 1794, that Nelson lost the sight of his right eye.

However, in 1797 he achieved great success in the Battle of Cape St. Vincent. This earned him a Knighthood of the Order of the Bath and promotion to Rear-Admiral. The Collar of the Order of the Bath is part of the Lloyd's Nelson Collection, but this is currently on loan to the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.

In the July of 1797, he took part in siege of Santa Cruz de Tenerife. It was here that a musket ball shattered Nelson's right arm. The damage to his arm was so bad that amputation was necessary. In spite of his injury he achieved great distinction a year later at the Battle of the Nile. For this victory he was given the title Baron Nelson of the Nile and of Burnham Thorpe. His next success was the hard-won

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Battle of Copenhagen in 1801 and after this action he was created a Viscount.

Horatio Nelson's last great battle came in 1805, off Cape Trafalgar, when his ships defeated the combined fleets of France and Spain. But on 21st October, in the heat of the battle he was mortally wounded.

Nelson at Trafalgar

Trafalgar, Nelson's last and greatest victory, was one of the most decisive sea battles in history. For over two years the British Navy had watched and chased the Franco-Spanish fleet to the West Indies and back. Finally, this combined fleet of 33 ships under its Commander Admiral Villeneuve came out of Cadiz to do battle.

On October 19, the dramatic signal was relayed to Horatio Nelson, aboard HMS Victory - 'The enemy ships are coming out of port'. 'I will give them such a shaking as they have never yet experienced', Nelson had written prophetically to his friend Henry Blackwood, captain of HMS Euryalus; 'at least I will lay down my life in the attempt'.

By the late afternoon of October 21, Nelson lay dead and more than half the enemy ships had been taken or destroyed. The remainder scattered, some to be captured later. Napoleon never again threatened England with invasion.

The day's events were recorded as they happened by the master of HMS Euryalus. His log book, in the Lloyd's Nelson Collection, is open at the page recording Nelson's famous message to the fleet - 'England expects that every man will do his duty'.

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The 'Glorious First of June'

After each of the major naval battles of the 1790's a charitable subscription was started in the City of London. These were usually organised and managed by a committee of merchants at Lloyd's Coffee House. The first of these funds was raised in 1794 after Lord Howe's victory over the French. This day, the 'Glorious First of June' was the first major setback for Jacobin France since it had declared war on Britain.

Immediately the news was received, a general meeting at Lloyd's recommended raising a subscription for the relief of the wounded. *The Times* notes that 'to the honour of the subscribers of Lloyd's Coffee House, they, with the liberality which will ever distinguish that respectable body of men, in less than one hour subscribed a thousand guineas.'

The greatly respected John Julius Angerstein chaired the management committee and the fund that raised £21,281. Over £1,300 came from a charity performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, put on by the playwright, Sheridan. The victor, Lord Howe, donated his entire prize money from the battle.

Five pieces of presentation silver from this fund are part of the Nelson Collection. These include the two tureens awarded posthumously to John Harvey and John Hutt, respectively commanding HMS Brunswick and HMS Queen.