

I leave you to think about what the feelings were before we went into battle, when I heard men on their way to the surgeon with all his bowels hanging out, hurraing along the decks as he encouraged his gun-mates.

Midshipman George Elliot

The hammocks were rolled up and lashed [tied] to the sides of the ship to provide some protection from flying splinters. Netting was rigged up on the upper deck to stop boarders [attackers] and to stop parts of the ship falling on the men below during the battle.

Midshipman Dillon

For the first time my sleep was disturbed by the sound of the drum beating to quarters [prepare for battle]. My eyes were scarcely open, when I heard the hurried cry of 'Turn out - Turn out!' Bear a hand there, move up, men!

Midshipmen James Scott

Cleared the ship for action and threw overboard ten cows.

Logbook of HMS Zealous

I was sent below with orders. The men were stripped to the waist, a handkerchief was tied tightly bound round their heads and over the ears to deaden the noise of the cannon, many men being deaf for days after the action. Some were sharpening cutlasses, others polishing the guns, while three or four in their excitement were dancing the hornpipe.

Lieutenant Samuel Ellis

Activity

A French ship has been sighted. Give orders to make ready for battle