

**THE LAST FOUR
DAYS
OF THE "EURYDICE"**

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The last four days of the "Eurydice" by E. H. Verney

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E. H. VERNEY

**THE LAST FOUR
DAYS
OF THE "EURYDICE"**



H.M.S. "EURYDICE."

THE
LAST FOUR DAYS
OF THE
“EURYDICE.”

By CAPTAIN E. H. VERNEY, R.N.



The Profits of this Publication will be devoted to the *Eurydice* Fund.

1878.

PORTSMOUTH
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P R E F A C E .

The few known details of the appalling catastrophe which has overtaken a British Frigate leave many blanks in the mind of the general reader; to those who know the daily life and routine of a Man-of-war the picture is more vivid.

The probable events of that sad Sunday, March 24, 1878, and of the three preceding days are here briefly sketched.

EDMUND H. VERNEY,

Captain, R.N.

RHIANVA, BANGOR,

March, 1878.

"How gloriously her gallant course she goes
Her white wings flying—never from her foes—
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.
Who would not brave the battle-fire, the wreck,
To move, the monarch, of her peopled deck."—

Byron's Corsair.



THE STORY OF THE "EURYDICE."

THE "EURYDICE" was an old 26-gun frigate of 921 tons; what used derisively to be termed a "jackass-frigate:" she was the smallest class of frigate in the Navy, and not much larger than the largest class of brigs, but she had the advantage of carrying a heavier armament, with better accommodation for the officers and crew. She carried, therefore, two tiers of guns, one on the upper deck, and one on the main deck, while the lower deck was reserved for the quarters of the crew. A frigate's main deck

is a water-tight deck, communicating with the lower deck only by hatchways in the middle of the ship. It is very usual to carry the main deck ports open at sea in moderate weather, because if she does ship one or two seas, no harm is done beyond wetting the deck; the water cannot get below, as there are high coamings round the hatchways, and it only runs off harmlessly through the lee scuppers. Indeed, frigates are built on purpose to fight their main deck guns, and carry their main deck ports open at sea in all reasonably fine weather.

She was a peculiarly handy ship for navigating in narrow waters—more bouyant than a brig, and safer, from her higher freeboard; her main deck ports were about five feet above the water line; her draught of water at this time was 16 feet 6 inches, rather more than it had had been formerly; her twenty-six old-fashioned guns had been removed, and she carried four 64-pr. guns of a modern pattern.

When it was decided by the Admiralty to exercise in Training-ships the ordinary seamen attached to the Reserves in the home ports, the *Eurydice* was fitted out for that purpose, and commissioned by Captain Hare, February 7th, 1877.

The officers for this ship were specially selected. Captain Marcus Augustus Stanley Hare was born in 1836, and entered the navy in 1849. Previous to his promotion to Lieutenant in 1857, he served in the *Valorous*, Captain Claude H. M. Buckle, C.B., in the Mediterranean. As Lieutenant he served in the *Calcutta*, 84, on the China station, until transferred in 1859 to the *Chesapeake*, 51, on the same station, in which ship he remained for two years. He then served in the *Chanticleer*, 17, attached to the Channel Squadron until the end of 1862, when he was removed to the *Trafalgar*, 70, in the Mediterranean; after remaining in her for two years he was appointed to the *St. George*, 72, Coastguard