

**AN ESSAY ON THE  
ENCROACHMENTS OF THE  
GERMAN OCEAN ALONG  
THE NORFOLK COAST**

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An Essay on the Encroachments of the German Ocean Along the Norfolk Coast by W. Hewitt

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**W. HEWITT**

**AN ESSAY ON THE  
ENCROACHMENTS OF THE  
GERMAN OCEAN ALONG  
THE NORFOLK COAST**





D. Hodgson, del.

C. Good, Lith. to J. W. Maynard

ECCLES CHURCH, THE PRESENT STATE OF THE BEACH AT HAPFISBURGH, NORFOLK

**AN ESSAY**  
**ON THE**  
**ENCROACHMENTS OF THE GERMAN OCEAN**  
**ALONG THE NORFOLK COAST,**  
**WITH**  
**A DESIGN TO ARREST ITS FURTHER DEPREDACTIONS;**  
**DEDICATED**  
**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE**  
**LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY.**

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**By W. HEWITT, SURGEON.**

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1844.

## DEDICATION.

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*To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners  
of the Admiralty.*

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

A communication with your Lordships in 1843, led me to infer that an Essay upon the interesting subject connected with the present inquiry, would be received with a degree of attention according to its merits, and the importance of the object connected with it. But should you, in your superior wisdom, perceive sufficient evidence has not been advanced to render it deserving the consideration requisite at your hands, future proofs may arise upon the foundation contained in the following pages.— On the contrary, should it meet with your ap-

probation, the high and honourable position you maintain for the benefit of maritime affairs will, I trust, induce you to exercise your influence towards effecting a trial of the plan submitted, for the benefit of the community at large, and for the honour and credit of your noble establishment.

I am,

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your very humble and obliged Servant,

THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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MANY persons may consider it a remarkable circumstance, that an individual, whose profession requires his leisure time to be devoted to the acquirement of knowledge for the comfort of man in his corporeal ailments, should find an opportunity to direct considerable attention to a subject, so very different in character, as the one now submitted to the reader.\* The suggestions, however, of a near, respected, and venerable relative, aroused and stimulated me to make the strictest investigation, and subsequently led to the submitting a plan or de-

\* The Author may probably, on a future occasion, communicate all the circumstances connected with the above, as they will afford an amusing, interesting, and instructive lesson, corroborating the testimony of the Poet,

• "From little causes great effects arise."

sign for future benefit, not only to the mariner, the merchant, the ship-owner, to those whose landed property lies contiguous to the ocean, but what is of still greater consequence, the preservation of human life; and although an abler and a more experienced individual might have given a better statement, or submitted a better design, yet it is hoped sufficient will be found in this first and hasty attempt, to excite the attention of the learned and the wealthy.

An acknowledgment of the truth, a grateful feeling for the assistance derived for the most important particulars on this interesting subject, induces me to introduce the name, with the exertions of my venerable relative to the notice of my readers.

The Rev. John Hewitt, B. A., Perpetual Curate of Walcot, in this county, Vicar of Grantchester, and formerly a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, after several years of often repeated attention to the subject embraced in this Essay, expended in the year A.D. 1802 upwards of one hundred pounds in an attempt to fill up, at his own expence, the worst breach existing between Waxham and Horsey,

and the design to carry it into effect appeared so feasible, that to lessen the expence, the Hon. Harbord Harbord, the first Lord Suffield, lent implements to aid the undertaking. But unfortunately, prior to the task being completed, a strong north-west wind, upon a spring tide, ensued, and a quantity of water passed through the breach partially repaired.

A cottager residing near the place, witnessed the circumstance only just previous to the irruption of the water, and informed my relative had he possessed a shovel, he could have prevented it.

The circumstance attending this catastrophe caused in little minds derision and contempt, from the failure of the experiment. But a humble individual, whose ideas were more enlarged, contended upwards of three hundred pounds worth of good had been effected; and the spot on that part of the coast is recognized to this day as Hewitt's Bank.

While some persons, therefore, considered it a direct failure, my relative deemed it a partial one, and watched with undiminished ardour the effect produced by the stranding of the Hunter