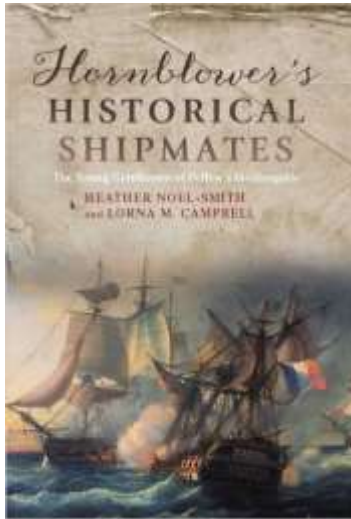


# Hornblower's Historical Shipmates: The Young Gentlemen of Pellew's Indefatigable



By Heather Noel-Smith and Lorna M. Campbell

Reviewed By D. Andrew McChesney

For decades armchair adventurers and avid readers have followed the exploits of Horatio Hornblower, so carefully crafted by C. S. Forester. Many readers of these tales know that in his career, Hornblower was assigned aboard HMS *Indefatigable*. Forester relates his time aboard this large powerful frigate in *Mr. Midshipman Hornblower* and allows him to remember those times in volumes covering Hornblower's later career.

While the Hornblower may have been based on one or more members of the Royal Navy, he was a fictional character. *Indefatigable* was a historical ship and her captain, Sir Edward Pellew a quite well known Royal Navy Officer. The authors, both admitted Hornblower devotees, undertook to learn more about those who really served aboard HMS *Indefatigable*.

When the fictional Hornblower was aboard this large frigate, cut down from a sixty-four gun third rate, he was a midshipman, or an officer in training. The authors focused on his mess mates, his fellow midshipman, while including others, both senior and junior. What emerges is a relatively compact and concise package of biographies, the stories of those who really served aboard. It not only covers their time aboard *Indefatigable*, but looks at their beginnings, their prior service, and their later careers in the Royal Navy.

Prior to reading, this reviewer was advised to read Stephen Taylor's *Commander: The Life and Exploits of Britain's Greatest Frigate Captain*. This recent and authoritative biography of Sir Edward Pellew would set the stage for the stories about the young gentlemen who served with him aboard *Indefatigable*. Whether required or not is debatable. However, the minutely detailed stories of Hornblower's real-life contemporaries proved fascinating. As does Taylor's work, this volume helps the reader gain more insight into the Royal Navy and the men who served during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. It is a must read for those interested in those turbulent times.