

CAMDEN GAZETTE.

Number 11.

THURSDAY, June 13, 1816.

Volume I.

PRINTED BY P. W. JOHNSTON, KING-STREET, CAMDEN, (S. C.) FOR THE PROPRIETORS.

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From the *Analectic Magazine*.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF

CAPT. CHARLES STEWART.

CAPT. CHARLES STEWART, was born in Philadelphia, on the 22d of July, 1778. Both his parents were natives of Ireland. His father came to America at an early age, and followed the business of a mariner in the merchants' service. He commanded several ships from the ports of Philadelphia and New York, and was much esteemed for his probity and professional character. He died about two years after the birth of Charles, the care of whose education devolved upon his surviving parent.

Charles having been instructed at Philadelphia Academy and other schools, and having a strong propensity for the calling of a sailor, commenced that profession on board of a vessel of Britton and Massey's, and performed several voyages in their employment. In due time he was appointed to the command of a vessel, and was often intrusted with the sale and purchase of cargoes.

In the early part of the year 1798, when there was a strong probability of a war with France, he was induced to offer his services to his country. They were accepted, and on the 13th March 1798, he was appointed a lieutenant in the navy of the United States, and placed on board the frigate *United States*, under the command of commodore Barry. In this ship he remained until July 16th 1800, when he was promoted to the command of the *United States* schooner *Experiment*, of twelve guns. Having been ordered to cruise in the West-Indies, he arrived on that station, on the 1st of September 1800; and the same night fell in with the French schooner *Deux Amis* of eight guns, which the *Experiment* engaged and captured without any loss, after an action of ten minutes.

Shortly after while cruising under the lee of the Island of Barbuda, the *Experiment* discovered two vessels, one a brig of war, the other a three-masted schooner, both standing for her under a press of sail, and displaying English colors. The *Experiment* was hove too, and the British signal of the day was made, which not being answered by the strange vessels by the time they were within gun-shot, that signal was hauled down, and the *Experiment* stood away with all sail set. A chase was now commenced by the enemy, and continued for about two hours; when finding they were outsailed by the *Experiment*, they relinquished the pursuit, and bore away under easy sail, firing a gun to windward and hoisting French colors. Lieutenant Stewart now

manœuvred his schooner so as to bring her in the enemy's wake, to windward, when a chase was made on his part, which continued the whole day before the wind, each vessel crowding all her canvass. At 8 o'clock at night, the *Experiment* closed with the three-masted schooner, which was the sternmost of the hostile vessels; and having taken a position on her larboard-quarter, opened a fire upon her from the great guns and small arms, which in about five minutes, compelled her to strike. She was immediately taken possession of, and proved to be the French schooner of war *Diana*, of fourteen guns and sixty-five men, commanded by M. Peraudeau, lieutenant de Vaisseau. The detention occasioned by removing the prisoners, enabled the brig of war to escape. She mounted, as was afterwards learned, eighteen guns, and had a crew of one hundred and twenty men. The *Experiment* proceeded to St. Christopher's with her prize.

Soon afterwards she put to sea, and on the 16th of November fell in with an armed schooner in the night, chased, attacked and captured her. This vessel proved to be the *Louisa Bridger*, of Bermuda, carrying eight nine-pounders, and a stout crew of Bermudians, principally negroes. She was much cut up, and in a sinking condition. The *Experiment* having given every requisite aid to her British opponent, whom she had mistaken for an enemy, dismissed him, and returned to her station to windward of Marigalante, and Guadalupe, for the purpose of intercepting the French privateers and their prizes.

On the 14th of December, she fell in with the privateer *Flambeau*, of sixteen guns and 90 men, with a prize brig, steering for Marigalante. The breeze being light and the enemy to windward, it was late in the afternoon before there was any prospect of closing with him. Notwithstanding all the exertions of the *Experiment*, the *Flambeau* escaped in shore; but her prize was retaken. This vessel proved to be the *Zebra* of and from Baltimore, laden with flour. During the remainder of this cruise, the *Experiment* recaptured several American vessels, sometimes as many as two or three in a day, and thus rescued American property to a considerable amount.

Accounts now arrived of peace having been made with the French republic. The *Experiment* was thereupon sent from Martinique with a convoy to St. Thom's. From thence she proceeded to Curacao, and from thence was ordered to Norfolk, in Virginia, to be put out of commission. On her passage thither, she discovered a vessel in distress near the island of Saona, at the east end of Hispaniola; and had the good fortune to rescue from the jaws of death, about sixty persons who were on board of her. They consisted chiefly of women and children, the families of several respectable inhabitants of Santo Domingo, who were flying from that ill-fated city, then besieged by the revolting negroes. The persons thus saved from destruction, had remained two days without any nourishment, on a small part of the quarter-deck of their vessel, which had struck upon a rock that went through her bottom, and fixed her

to the reef, the greater part of her being under water. They were placed in safety on board of the *Experiment*, with their plate and other property, which the sailors had recovered by diving into the hold of the wreck; notwithstanding the roughness of the sea. During the whole of this humane and arduous service, lieutenant Porter, who commanded the boats sent to their relief, was distinguished for his skill, activity, and courage. The next day they were restored to their friends in Santo Domingo. They, and the inhabitants of that city in general, expressed to the officers and crew of the *Experiment* their most grateful thanks, showed them every possible civility and attention, and furnished them with fruits and all kinds of stock which the island afforded, in such profusion, that much of the supply was obliged to be returned.

On the reduction of the navy to the peace establishment, lieutenant Stewart was retained in service, and sailed as first lieutenant of the frigate *Constellation*, with captain Murray, to the Mediterranean. During this cruise, nothing occurred to afford the officers of that ship an opportunity of distinguishing themselves; her operations having been confined to the blockade of Tripoli, in conjunction with some Swedish frigates.

Soon after lieutenant Stewart's return to the United States, he was appointed to the command of the brig *Siren*, and superintended her equipment for the Mediterranean service. So much activity was employed in fitting her out that she was completely copped in ten hours, and sailed on her cruise the seventh day after she was launched. She joined the squadron under commodore Preble; and after having been employed in convoying some merchant vessels, and conveying the usual consular presents to Algiers, she proceeded to Syracuse, in Sicily, the port appointed for the general rendezvous of the squadron. Here they heard of the capture of the frigate *Philadelphia* by the Tripolitans. The practicability of recovering or destroying that ship had been maintained by lieut. Decatur, who proposed to the com. a plan for that purpose, and volunteered his services to execute it. The commodore disapproved of the enterprise at first, on account of the extraordinary perils with which it would be attended. Lieutenant Stewart united his exertions with those of lieutenant Decatur, and the commodore at length gave his consent. Decatur selected for the expedition the ketch *Intrepid*, and manned her with a chosen crew of seventy volunteers. She sailed from Syracuse on the 3d of February, 1804, accompanied by the *Siren*, and in fifteen days arrived at the harbour of Tripoli about sunset, after encountering much tempestuous weather.

It had been arranged, that the boats of the *Siren* were to assist in the attack; but unfortunately, on arriving off the harbour, that vessel, by a sudden change of wind, was thrown some miles without the *Intrepid*. The wind, however, was fair for the latter; and her gallant commander, apprehensive that if he waited for the *Siren's* boats, the attack could not be made that night, and that the delay might prove fa-

tal to the enterprise, determined to attempt it with the *Intrepid* alone. His glorious achievement on that occasion, and the honorable promotion with which he was rewarded for it, have been already related in our memoir of his life. The two vessels returned to Sicily; they entered the port of Syracuse, displaying the signal of victory, and were loudly cheered as they past by all the squadron, and by multitudes of Sicilians who crowded the shores.

During the same year, and prior to the bombardment of Tripoli, the *Siren*, assisted by the *Vixen*, *Enterprise*, and *Nautilus* schooners, were employed to blockade its port. Two vessels, the one a Greek ship, and the other a Maltese brig of twelve guns, were taken by the *Siren*, for attempting to violate the blockade. To induce the Tripolitans to expend their ammunition as much as possible, the blockading vessels would frequently range under their batteries to draw their fire, and at night fire into the town and retreat, leaving lights afloat in tubs for them to fire at.

The enemy had erected a battery of four guns, about three miles to the westward of Tripoli, and another of eight guns on a sand-bluff near the former, for the purpose of protecting his coasting trade. Lieutenant Stewart determined to destroy these works; and they were accordingly attacked and demolished by the *Siren*, *Vixen*, *Nautilus*, *Argus* and *Enterprise*, without any loss whatever on our part.

On the arrival of commodore Preble with his flotilla off Tripoli, an attack on that place was resolved on. The squadron now consisted of the frigate *Constitution*, brigs *Siren* and *Argus*, the schooners *Vixen*, *Nautilus*, and *Enterprise*, with two bombards and six gun-boats. The enemy's line of gun-boats, twenty in number, was moored about fifty yards from their batteries. It was covered on the left flank by a battery of twelve guns built on the rocks projecting into the sea; on the right, by a corvette brig of eighteen, a schooner of fourteen, and two galleys of 8 guns each; and in the rear, by the *Rashaw's* castle, the batteries of the arsenal, the batteries of the town wall, and a triple tier of guns on the point of the mole. On the morning of the 3d of August, 1804, the signal was made for bombarding the town and the enemy's vessels. The gun-boats advanced to the attack of the enemy's line, led on by captain Decatur, and covered by the frigate, the brigs and schooners. We forbear to repeat the particulars of this second victory obtained over the Tripolitans, chiefly by the exertions of that gallant officer; they will be found recorded in the biographical notice to which we have already referred. It was on the occasion of this splendid victory that the pope is said to have exclaimed, "the Americans have done more for Christendom in one battle, than all Europe in a century."

Lieutenant Stewart had been promoted to the rank of master and commander, and now received his commission, dated the 17th of May, 1804.

The squadron was prepared for another attack on the town, and the batteries to the westward, as the enemy's flotilla could not be again drawn