

TRIPOLITAN WAR

Veterans Interred or Memorialized in Congressional Cemetery



"Bombardment of Tripoli" by Carne

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

(Ordered by Range/Site)

R28/14

Lear, Tobias

d. 11 Oct 1816

Dictionary of American Biography

September 19, 1762 - October 11, 1816. Consular Officer. Son of Colonel Tobias Lear and Mary (Stilson) Lear; born at Portsmouth, N.H. His father was a prosperous shipmaster, and later a farmer. Tobias Lear graduated at Harvard in 1783, and traveled and studied in Europe. This led to his engagement as Private Secretary to General George Washington after his retirement to Mount Vernon in 1785, which position he held seven years, endearing himself to Washington and his family and becoming a life-long friend. While at Mount Vernon he published "Observations on the River Potomack, the Country Adjacent, and the City of Washington" (1793), probably the earliest separate monograph on the District of Columbia.

In 1790 he married Mary Long of Portsmouth N.H., who died in 1793. He then went abroad carrying letters of introduction from Washington and Jefferson; returned in 1794 and settled in Alexandria, Va. Was elected President of the Potomac Canal Company in 1795, and that year married Frances (Bassett) Washington, a niece of Martha Washington and the widow of George Augustine, Washington's nephew. After her death, he married Frances Dandridge Henley, another niece of Mrs. Washington. In 1799, when war was imminent, Washington appointed him his military secretary, with rank of Colonel, and Lear remained with him until his death, and received a substantial legacy from him.

In 1801 he was appointed by President Jefferson as Consul at Santo Domingo, a difficult and dangerous post at that time. After General LeClerc, sent by Napoleon, took possession of the island, Lear was forced to return to America. He was then named Consul to Algiers, with power to negotiate a treaty with Tripoli and adjust affairs with any of the Barbary rulers. He was tactful and well suited for this work. He made a treaty with Morocco, kept peace with Algiers, and adjusted affairs with Tunisia.

Since the loss of the "Philadelphia", 300 prisoners had been held at Tripoli. A treaty had been discussed for two years, when suddenly, in June 1805, Lear signed an agreement with the Pasha acceding ransom for those American prisoners. This treaty was upheld by the Government, but became a political issue. Opponents of the administration felt that in view of the fleet being in the Mediterranean and land operations in progress under William Eaton, Navy Agent to the Barbary States, no money should have been provided. It is not known why he made this hasty treaty; perhaps because of seemingly groundless fear of the naval officers for the safety of the prisoners, because of his own "passion for peace", or because he felt certain of securing liberal terms at that time. He remained in Algiers until the beginning of the War of 1812, at which time the Dey, expecting the United States to be defeated by Great Britain, gave him summary orders to leave.

Arriving in Washington under the cloud of the ill-timed treaty with Tripoli, Lear found his diplomatic career at an end. He was made accountant for the War Department, and on October 11, 1816, he committed suicide, leaving no explanation of his deed.

R31/39

O'Brien, Col. Richard Henry

d. 17 Feb 1824

O'Brien. On Saturday night, the 14th instant in the 73d year of his age, Richard O'Brien, Esq. late Consul General of the United States to the Barbary Powers.

The character and history of this very extraordinary man are too generally known to need any statement here. A mind of native vigor, and the most ardent feeling, was in him still further strengthened by a series of adventures the most interesting and diversified. He was, in succession, an active and experienced seaman, a successful adventurer in the privateering exploits of the Revolution, a brave commander in the regular naval service, a captive slave in Algiers, Consul General to Barbary, member of the Pennsylvania Legislature, a worthy farmer, and lastly, an ardent party politician. His earthly scenes are now closed, and he has experienced his last and great change. The merit of his public services has been officially acknowledged by three successive Presidents; and will long be remembered by his country.

His friends are invited to attend his funeral from the house of Mrs. Arguelles, Pennsylvania avenue, corner of 9th street, on Tuesday morning, at 10 o'clock.

R32/26

McWilliams, Dr. Alexander

d. 31 Mar 1850

The National Intelligencer, April 2, 1850

On Sunday morning, at half past eight a.m., Dr. Alexander McWilliams, in the 76th year of his age.

Dr. McWilliams was born in St. Mary's county, Maryland. He entered the Navy in 1801, and, having served during the Tripolitan war, resigned in 1806; since which time he has resided in this city in the practice of his profession. He was the oldest living practitioner of medicine in Washington, as he would have been the oldest surgeon in the Navy, had he remained in that service.

In all the relations of life he was justly respected. He was ever among the most forward in all enterprises for the benefit of the city, or for the diffusion of knowledge. He was one of the founders of the Columbian Institute as well as the National Institute. He spent his life in the unostentatious exercise of the impulses of his generous and noble heart, and in the indulgence of his free and strong tastes for natural science.

The Funeral of the deceased will take place from his late residence, near the Navy Yard, at four o'clock p.m. today. Friends and acquaintances are invited to attend.

R37/94-95

Crane, Commodore William

b. 1784 - d. 20 Mar 1846

The National Intelligencer, March 28, 1846

Commodore Crane

The sudden death of this distinguished officer reminds us that he was one of a class of men now almost passed away—men whose influence upon the destinies of this country will be better known when the stirring events of the times in which they lived shall be viewed as history, and will be better understood if ever the gloom and despair of defeat shall overtake us in the vicissitudes of future wars. Our people will then look back with gratitude to those men who shed so much lustre on our arms at sea, and whose deeds inspired us with a confidence of success, and made us ready to defy the world in the maintenance of a righteous cause.



To them we owe some of the wisest lessons ever learned by our infant nation, and we owe to them some of the most important facts which have come to our knowledge as a people. They taught us that the proper tribute to the barbarian was presented by the broadsides of our fleets; that the ocean was the great highway of the world, free to all nations, and not the domain "where not a sail but with permission spreads." They gave to every man born in these broad lands the unwritten certificate of freedom to go unquestioned, like the winds of heaven, "where he liveth," under the protection of our glorious flag. They made us a name among the nations of the earth, and caused us to be regarded as the champions of the freedom of the seas. They drove the pirate from the ocean, and secured the

peaceful pursuits of commerce. It is one of those men who has passed away forever.

The subject of this notice was born at Elizabethtown, in New Jersey, the 1st of February, 1776, and was the son of General William Crane, who served with distinction as Colonel in the Revolutionary army before Quebec, where he received a wound of which he ultimately died. Commodore Crane entered the Navy on the 23d May, 1799, and first served as Midshipman on board the frigate *United States* in the following June. He served in this grade on board the *Chesapeake*, and as Master in the *General Greene*, and joined the brig *Vixen* in 1803 as Lieutenant, and remained in her in the Mediterranean as part of the fleet under the command of Commodore Preble, and was present at all the attacks on Tripoli.

In consequence of the energy and vigor of his character, Lieut. Crane was appointed to command one of three gunboats captured from the enemy on the 3d of August, 1804, and on the 7th was hotly engaged with the other gun-boats appointed to attack the nine-gun battery on the west of the city, which they demolished. Several men were killed in his vessel, and he and his command narrowly escaped from the explosion of one of the gunboats which blew up close by him.

In the ensuing year he was selected by Captain Smith as first Lieutenant of the brig *Siren*; he served subsequently in the *Constellation*; and was afterwards transferred to the cutter *Hornet*, of some sixty tons burden. Whilst in

command of this little vessel, close in shore at night, she was run upon the rocks, and the next day was attacked by a party of the enemy, whom he managed to keep at bay with the small arms until he got his guns overboard, and his vessel afloat; after which he coolly picked up the cannon, which had been carefully buoyed, and remounted them.

This little craft he navigated to Charleston, and narrowly escaped with his life on the passage having been thrown overboard by the breaking of some of the sloop's gear.

In 1807 the Commodore served as Lieutenant of the *Chesapeake* frigate, and remained in her until the outbreak of the War of 1812, when he was appointed to the command of the brig *Nautilus*, and was unfortunately captured by the British fleet shortly after sailing. On his exchange he was ordered to the lakes, where, in command of the *Madison* and *Pike*, for the remainder of the war, he became the tried, trusted, and able friend and second of his gallant chief, Commodore Chauncey.

In 1815 he was appointed captain of the *Independence* ship-of-the-line, and successively of the *Erie* sloop, and frigates *Constellation* and *United States*. He returned in the latter in 1819, after a protracted cruise of more than four years.

Capt. Crane was then employed as commandant at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and again at Boston, and, in 1827, hoisted his broad pennant on board the *Java*, for command in the Mediterranean. The Delaware ship-of-the-line afterwards bore his flag, and afforded a better opportunity for the display of his nautical abilities and naval talents, always known in the navy to be of a very high order.

While lying in a Spanish port, the *Delaware* ship-of-the-line, sent out as the flag ship of the squadron, arrived before the harbor, having on board as a passenger one of the family of Napoleon, who had married the daughter of Joseph, the Revolutionary King of Spain. With a prompt delicacy and high bred courtesy, he dispatched orders to the ship to proceed to Italy, and land the Prince, whose presence in a Spanish port in a national vessel would have given umbrage to the Ottoman Porte. So highly was this friendly interposition appreciated by the Ministry that the King of Spain sent him the cross of Charles II, with a letter highly complimentary to the Commodore. But the honor thus intended to be conferred upon him, his duty compelled him to decline.

The command of our squadron in the Mediterranean was conducted ably and satisfactorily to the Government throughout its entire period, and besides affording the usual protection to our commerce, and cementing by friendly intercourse our relations with the Barbary and other Powers, laid the foundation of our present diplomatic intercourse with the Ottoman Porte. Commodore Crane was appointed joint Commissioner with our resident Consul at Smyrna, Mr. Offley, to open and conduct the negotiations preliminary to the desired commercial treaty. To the favorable impressions then made, and the judicious measures then taken, we are indebted for the extension of our commerce in the East.

On the return of the Delaware in 1830, after a short respite, Commodore Crane was ordered to the command of the Navy Yard, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and in 1841 was made Commissioner of the Navy; and, finally, on the re-organization of the Navy Department, he was appointed Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography. Into this important department of the naval service he infused vigor and system, and continued until within a short period of his death to administer its affairs with admitted zeal and ability.

After passing through the several subordinate grades, he was promoted to a Captaincy in November, 1814, and at his death had attained the highest rank in the naval service, Barron, Steward, Jonas, Morris and Warrington alone standing before him in seniority. He was magnanimous, chivalrous, and brave; accomplished in the arts of peace as of war; a gentleman and scholar no less than a seaman, he leaves few equals and no superior in the service which he illustrated and adorned. To a numerous circle of attached personal friends his death will prove a source of lasting grief. He leaves a wife, a lady of Norfolk, Virginia, of rare personal merit, and two brothers, the gallant Col. Crane of the United States Artillery, and Judge Crane of Ohio. The Commodore was the second son, and was sixty-two years of age the 1st of February last.

At the last meeting of the New Jersey History Society, he was proposed as an honorary member, in consideration of his rare personal and professional worth.

In person the Commodore was a man to be remembered. In youth he is said to have been of striking manly beauty, and in matured years he was the beau ideal of the brave "old commodore." He was tall and of large and massive frame, of commanding and imposing presence, and no one could approach him with indifference. Afloat, in his appropriate element, he was stern, uncompromising, and exact in the execution of the duties of his office,

and endowed with a firmness of purpose which seemed to know no change. In private life he was social, gentle, and affectionate, and guileless as a child.

The example of his discipline, which he leaves as a legacy to the Navy, will not be forgotten; his country will not forget his faithful services for nearly half a century; and his mourning friends will never cease to cherish his memory in their hearts. P.

R55/150-152 Patterson, Comm. Daniel Todd

b. 10 Mar 1785 - d. 25 Aug 1839

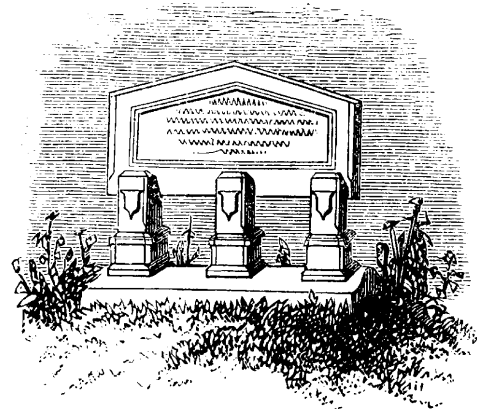
The National Intelligencer, September 23, 1839

The Late Commodore Patterson.

(From the Louisianian)

Commodore Daniel T. Patterson was in the naval service about forty years, and was a midshipman in the *Philadelphia* frigate when she was lost on the Tripolitan coast in the year 1803. With her officers and crew he endured the evils of captivity in the capital of that barbarous country for about two years. At the conclusion of that war he was ordered to New Orleans with a naval force under Commodore Porter, destined to co-operate with the army for the protection of that capital against the designs of Aaron Burr, who was suspected of being engaged in a plot to dismember the Union.

At the epoch of the invasion of Louisiana by the English in 1814, the naval forces on this station were under the command of Commodore Patterson, and he greatly distinguished himself by his zeal, his courage, and the efficiency with which he aided the commander-in-chief in his plans for the defense of the country. In the memorable night attack on the English camp on the 23d December, 1814, the commodore commanded in person the schooner *Carolina*, which vessel having dropped down the river to the point of attack in the dusk of the evening, the enemy, not aware of her character, hailed her repeatedly without receiving an answer. When she had obtained her proper position, the voice of Patterson was distinctly heard from the shore, shouting to his crew -- "Give them this for the honor of America!" A close and terrible fire of canister shot followed, which scattered the enemy in all directions. They rallied, however, and, without being able to return the schooner's fire, they sheltered themselves as well as they could behind the levee, where they lay till they were again disturbed by the advance of our troops. The schooner then ceased firing.



PATTERSON'S MONUMENT.

Four days afterwards Commodore Patterson was abreast of the lines in the ship *Louisiana*, which had been purchased into the service, and manned with seamen impressed in the streets of New Orleans and when the British army advanced to the attack of our lines, she opened a terrible fire upon the columns, and materially aided in repulsing them.

After this abortive attempt to carry the lines, the seamen with their officers were placed at the batteries on shore. On the 8th of January, when the final attack was made, Commodore Patterson had command of a few heavy guns on the opposite side of the river, which were intended to play upon the enemy's columns whilst marching to the assault, which every one knew they threatened to make on that day. A strong detachment of British troops was transported across the Mississippi in boats and having routed the feeble band of militia under General David B. Morgan, stationed there for the defense of the battery, Commodore Patterson, having used the utmost exertions in vain to arrest the flight of the fugitives, was obliged to spike his guns and retire to this side of the river in order to preserve himself and his men from being made prisoners. The assault on the lines of General Jackson being repulsed in a most signal manner, the British evacuated their new position on the opposite bank the same night, and Commodore Patterson resumed his station the next morning, and continued to annoy the British camp with an incessant fire of his heavy guns till the end of the campaign. In public orders and private correspondence, General Jackson bestowed upon his friend, the commodore, the warmest praise for the zeal, activity, and ability with which he had acted during that trying period. Since the peace, Commodore Patterson has commanded American squadrons in various parts of the globe, and always kept up the efficiency of the ancient discipline and maintained with jealous exactitude the honor of the service. His original education had been of the kind best adapted to the vocation for which he was intended, and in after years he carefully improved his mind by study and observation.

Like all men who pass their lives in the stirring scenes of the naval service, he was full of information and anecdote, which he knew how to detail with tact and propriety. He was of a most amiable character in private life, and has left a widow (sister to Carlisle Pollock, Esq., of New Orleans) and a numerous family of children to deplore his loss.

Comm. P. was a native of Long Island, and at his death was about 58 years of age.

R56/152

Rodgers, Commodore John

b. 1773 - d. 1 Aug 1838

The National Intelligencer, Monday, August 6, 1838

The Late Commodore Rodgers

The remains of this distinguished veteran officer of the Navy were not brought to this city for interment, as had been expected by his friends here, but were committed to the tomb in Christ Church burying-ground, Philadelphia.

The funeral took place on Friday afternoon from the residence of Commodore Biddle. It was attended by many officers, naval, military and civil, and was escorted in procession by a detachment of Marines, and a number of the uniformed companies of the city, ordered out on the occasion by General Prevost. The pall was borne by officers, chiefly of the Navy, among whom were Commodores Stewart and Biddle. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Dr. Tyno. During the movement of the procession, minute guns were fired at the Navy Yard; and after the interment a volley was fired over the grave by the Marines.

Having thus followed the mortal remains of this brave officer to the bourn appointed for all the living, the occasion seems fit to recite the leading incidents of his active public life, which is attempted in the following hasty sketch:

Commodore John Rodgers entered the Navy as a lieutenant in the year 1799. He was 1st lieutenant of the *Constellation* in the action with the *Insurgente* which resulted in her capture. His zeal in performing his duty on the occasion, and complying strictly with the orders of his commander, (Commodore Truxton) was, in Commodore T.'s language, "not to be surpassed." After the action the command of the *Insurgente* was conferred upon him.

With Midshipman D. Porter (the present commodore) and 11 men, he took possession of the prize, and commenced removing her crew to the *Constellation*; but, before this could be done the ships were separated in a heavy gale of wind, and 173 prisoners were left on board to be guarded by Lieutenant Rodgers and his handful of men, whose situation was rendered peculiarly perilous by the circumstance of there being no handcuffs or shackles on board to secure the prisoners, who manifested a disposition to retake the prize. The energy of Lieut. Rodgers, assisted by the gallant Midshipman Porter, conducted the prize safely into St. Kitts.

Returning to the United States, Lieut. Rodgers was commissioned a Captain in the Navy, in consideration of highly meritorious conduct and known qualifications. He was appointed to command the Sloop of War *Maryland*, in which vessel he cruised in the West Indies for many months, rendering important services. In 1801, he sailed in the *Maryland* for France, with Mr. Dawson, sent as a diplomatic messenger to that Court.

In 1802, he was appointed to the command of the *John Adams* – attached to the Mediterranean squadron – destroyed the *Meshouda* of 22 guns, "the largest cruiser belonging to Tripoli," and performed other valuable services.

In 1804, he was appointed to the *Frigate Congress*, and proceeded to the Mediterranean as part of a squadron of vessels, under the command of Commodore Samuel Barron, sent thither against Tripoli.

From Comm. Barron's extreme ill health, he resigned the command of the squadron in May, 1805, to Comm. Rodgers, whose decisive conduct soon disposed the Bashaw of Tripoli to make peace with us, and in less than two months after the command devolved upon him a treaty of peace was concluded with that Power, on terms dictated by him and Colonel Lear.

In 1812, the command of a squadron was given to him. He dashed into the European seas, made a number of captures, most of which he from necessity destroyed, returning triumphant after an absence of more than three months. At the time he sailed, a number of the enemy's vessels were on our coast, greatly exceeding the Commodore's squadron in force. These he successfully evaded, and, by drawing them off in pursuit of him, enabled a great number of our merchant vessels, with valuable cargoes, to return in safety to our ports. One of the effects of this cruise was to save millions to our merchants and to our Government.

When the British army marched upon Baltimore, Commodore Rodgers acted a distinguished part in the defense of that city. Many believe that Baltimore would have been surrendered but for the seasonable aid of the force under his command.

After the war, he was appointed Commissioner of the Navy, and presided over that Board for several years. He was mainly instrumental in making regulations which have conduced to the economy of the naval service. He was offered the appointment of Secretary of the Navy, but declined it. Having acted as President of the Board of Navy Commissioners about ten years ago, the President invited him to take command of the Mediterranean squadron, mentioning considerations, inducing him to do so, highly honorable to the Commodore. He accepted, and his flag was hoisted on board the *North Carolina* ship of the line of which D.T. Patterson, Esq. Was appointed Captain.

He cruised in the Mediterranean seas nearly three years. He had much intercourse with the commanders of other naval Powers, and was held by them in high estimation. The ship was particularly distinguished for her fine condition at all times, and the high state of discipline maintained on board. The Commodore, his accomplished Captain, and this noble specimen of American naval architecture, were objects of universal admiration. Returning to the United States, he was again appointed President of the Board of Navy Commissioners, and continued to discharge with great fidelity and zeal the arduous duties of that station, till his constitution was literally worn out, and his mind exhausted, in the service. He then retired—made a trip to England in the hope of recovering his health, and was there received with those kind affections which were gratefully remembered till his last moments.

Of his personal character, it may be added, that, though of quick temper, he was noble and generous in his disposition. He was a Patriot in reality. Though stern in his appearance, he was particularly distinguished for his humanity. The story of his noble and successful exertions to save two young ladies from the massacre at Francois—his sublime efforts to rescue a poor old negro woman floating upon a cake of ice down the Susquehannah, which were also crowned with success, must be told as characteristic incidents of his life, when these brief outlines of his character shall be filled up by faithful History.