

***Admiral Lord Keith and the Naval War Against Napoleon.* By Kevin D. McCranie.
(Gainesville: University Press of Florida, pp. 256. Cloth, \$59.95)**

The period between the American and French revolutions onward is an area rife with enthusiasm from historians and lay readers alike. Revolutions raged on both sides of the Atlantic, but the British ruled the waves during this period known as the Age of Fighting Sail. The British Naval establishment ruled the seas, but the vast engagements in America and burdensome, comprehensive fighting against Napoleon on land required effective and tactical joint military operations between the Army and Navy.

A leader capable of engineering the necessary joint-operations was Admiral Lord Keith Elphinstone. In *Admiral Lord Keith and the Naval War Against Napoleon*, historian Kevin D. McCranie compiles over 100,000 public and private records about Admiral Lord Keith, making it the most comprehensive biography of the Admiral to date. Commanding four naval fleets over the course of his lifetime (Eastern Seas, Mediterranean, North Sea, and the Channel) McCranie is able to weave the primary sources of one Admiral through the entire British Naval establishment.

As a young captain during the American Revolution, Elphinstone often served as the envoy between the Army and Navy. Captain Elphinstone provided the planning, politically savvy dialogue and expert execution in many offensive and defensive engagements along the American coastline (17). Early on in his career, he cemented relationships with the royal family; his first being Prince William, the third son of George the Third, who served under Elphinstone's command aboard the *Warwick* (27). Elphinstone held a seat in Parliament, though for the majority of his tenure he remained on active duty (26). As an outspoken critic of the war with France, Elphinstone risked much speaking against the king, even though many of his political allies shared his sentiments. Still, Elphinstone maintained those vital connections throughout his life and reached great heights within the British Navy because of it. In his old age, Elphinstone adjusted to the comfortable life of the gentry.

Admiral Lord Keith and the Naval War Against Napoleon is well written, making a dauntingly historical niche market subject palpable for both historians and lay readers. It comfortably weaves the over 100,000 records of Elphinstone's life throughout the book creating a comprehensive depiction of the British Navy during the Age of Fighting Sail. McCranie's choice of Elphinstone was a wise choice of a focal point from which to understand the inner workings of the British Navy. Informative and a delightful read, *Admiral Lord Keith* will satisfy anyone looking for a British focus on the revolutionary period and shortly after.

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