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A Charge of Misconduct
and Neglect of Duty against
the Honourable Admiral
Keppel, on the 27th or 28th July
1778, in divers Instances as
undermentioned.

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1.

That on the Morning of the 27th
of July 1778 having a Fleet of 30
Ships of the Line under his command
and being then in the presence of
a French Fleet of the like number
of Ships of the Line the said
Admiral did not make the
necessary Preparations for Fight,
did not put his Fleet into a
Line of Battle or into any Order
proper either for receiving or
attacking an Enemy of such Force;
But, on the contrary altho his
Fleet was already dispersed and
in Disorder, he, by making the
Signal for several ~~ships~~ Ships of
the Vice Admiral of the Blue's
Division to chase to Windward,
increased the disorder of that part
of his Fleet, and the Ships were
in consequence more scattered
than they had been before; and,
whilst in this disorder, he advanced
to the Enemy and made the Signal
for Battle.

That

That the above Conduct was the
more unaccountable as the Enemy's
Fleet was not then in disorder,
nor beaten, nor flying, but formed
in a regular Line of Battle on that
Tack which approached the
British Fleet (all their motions
plainly indicated a design to give
Battle) and they edged down &
attacked it whilst in disorder.
By this Un-Officer-like Conduct
a general Engagement was not
brought on, but the other Flag-
Officers and Captains were left to
engage without Order or Regularity
from whence great Confusion
ensued, some of his Ships were
prevented getting into action at
all, others were not near enough
to the Enemy, and some from the
Confusion fired into others of the
King's Ships and did them consi-
derable damage, and the Vice
Admiral of the Blue was left alone
to engage, singly & unsupported.
In these Instances the said
Admiral Keppel negligently
performed the duty imposed on
him.

2nd.

That after the Van & Centret
Divisions of the British Fleet passed

The

the Rear of the Enemy, the Admiral did not immediately tack & double upon the Enemy with those two Divisions to continue the Battle, nor did he collect them together at that time and keep so near the Enemy as to be in readiness to renew the Battle as soon as it might be proper; But on the contrary he stood away beyond the Enemy to a great distance before he wore to stand towards them again; leaving the Vice Admiral of the Blue engaged with the Enemy and exposed to be cut off.

3^d.

That after the Vice Admiral of the Blue had passed the last of the Enemy's Ships and immediately wore and laid his own Ships Head towards the Enemy again, being then in their wake and at a little distance only, and expecting the Admiral to advance with all the Ships to renew the Fight, the Admiral did not advance for that purpose, but shortned sail, hauled down the Signal for Battle, nor did he, at that time or any other time whilst

standing

standing towards the Enemy call
the Ships together in order to renew
the Attack as he might have done
particularly the Vice Admiral of
the Red and his Division which
had received the least damage,
had been the longest out of Action,
were ready & fit to renew it,
were then to Windward and
could have bore down & fetched
any part of the French Fleet if the
Signal for Battle had not been
hauled down, or if the said
Admiral Keppel had availed
himself of the Signal appointed
by the 31st Article of the Fighting
Instructions by which he might
have ordered those to lead with
the Starboard Tacks on board by
a Wind, which Signal was
applicable to the occasion for
renewing the Engagement with
advantage after the French Fleet
had been beaten, their Line broken
and in Disorder - In these
Instances he did not do the
utmost in his power to take,
sink, burn, or destroy the French
Fleet that had attacked the
British Fleet.

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4.

That, instead of advancing to renew the Engagement as in the preceding Articles is alledged and as he might & ought to have done, the Admiral wore & made sail directly from the Enemy, and thus, ^{he} led the whole British Fleet away from them, which gave them the Opportunity to rally unmolested, and to form again into a Line of Battle, and to stand after the British Fleet; This was disgraceful to the British Flag for it had the appearance of a Flight and gave the French Admiral a pretence to claim the Victory and to publish to the World that the British Fleet ran away, and that he pursued it with the Fleet of France and offered it Battle.

5th

That, in the morning of the 20 of July, ¹⁷⁷⁸ when it was perceived that only Three of the French Fleet remained near the British in the Situation the whole had been in the Night before and that the rest

were

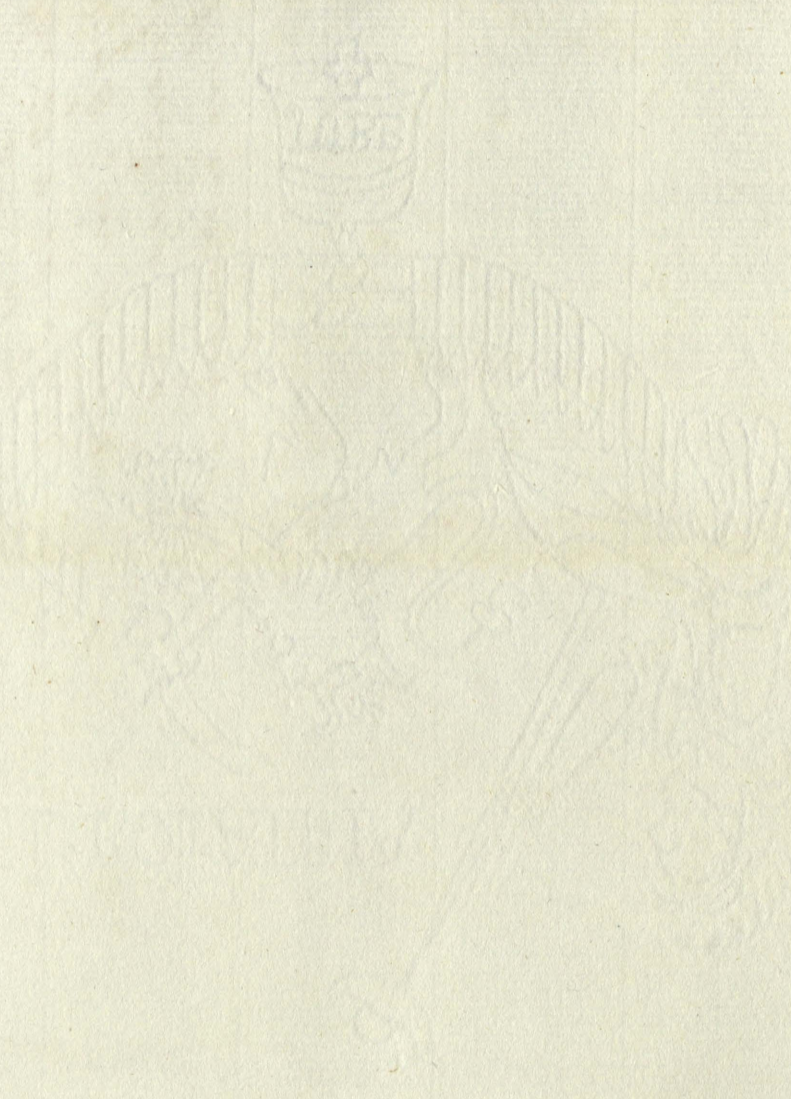
were to Secward at a greater
distance not in a Line of Battle
but in a heap, the Admiral did
not cause the Fleet to pursue the
flying Enemy nor even chase the
3 Ships that fled after the
rest; But, on the contrary, he
led the British Fleet another
way directly from the Enemy.

By these Instances of
Misconduct and Neglect a
Glorious Opportunity was lost
of doing a most Essential Service
to the State, and the Honor of
the British Navy was Tarnished

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