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THE FINE AND RARE JAPAN 1863-4 RELATED MEDALS, DIARY, PAINTINGS AND DOCUMENT GROUP TO A NAVAL OFFICER WHO LEFT AND ACCOUNT OF IS SERVICE ASHORE DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR. ADDITIONALLY SERVING IN THE BALTIC, HE COMMANDED H.M.S. PERSEUS DURING THE BOMBARDMENT OF KAGOSHIMA IN 1863 FOR WHICH HE WAS MID AND WAS SPECIALLY PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN FOR HIS GALLANTRY IN LEADING AN ASSAULT AND CAPTURING A JAPANESE BATTERY DURING THE BATTLE OF SHIMONOSEKI IN SEPTEMBER 1864, DURING WHICH CAMPAIGN, HE ALSO COMMANDED THE LIGHT SQUADRON



CRIMEA 1854, CLASP SEBASTOPOL 'LIEUT. A.J. KINGSON, H.M.S. ST JEAN D'ACRE', TURKISH CRIMEA, BRITISH ISSUE 'LIEUT. A.J. KINGSON, H.M.S. ST JEAN D'ACRE', BALTIC 1854 'LIEUT. A.J. KINGSON, H.M.S. ST JEAN D'ACRE', MOUNTED FOR WEAR ON SILVER BAR.

Augustus John Kingston was born in Eling, Hampshire on 24 November 1827 and served as Acting Mate of Acorn between 8 January and 8 August 1848. Commissioned Lieutenant on 28 November 1848, he joined Polyphemus on 7 January 1849 and Alarm on 21 August that year, serving aboard until 30 October 1852. Paid off, he joined St Jean D'Acre on 23 May 1853, serving with this ship during the Crimean War and Baltic, before being paid off on 7 November 1856. Of his service in the Crimea, Kingston left a small diary which forms part of this group, this giving entries between 1 March and 28 April 1855 and extending to 36 pages. In it he gives a

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fascinating insight of the views of a naval officer. He describes landing at Sebastopol, the sights he saw, the condition of the army, visiting the battlefields etc and is extremely critical of the way the war was being run and the condition of the army. With St Jean D'Acre he would also see service in the Baltic



Appointed to Indus on 6 December 1856, he was appointed Acting Commander of Imaum on 1 January 1859, rejoining Indus on 12 May that year. Serving briefly on Impregnable in July 1860, he was appointed Commander on 6 August 1860 and spent nearly two years without a ship until given command of 17 gun screw sloop Perseus, on 24 September 1862. Kingston was conspicuous for the part he played during the naval actions against Japan in 1863 and 1864, being one of two Commanders promoted to Captain (no higher promotions or rewards) for their service at the battle of Shimonoseki, Japan, September 1864. Kingston as Commander of Perseus and commander of the Light Squadron, was singled out for leading an assault and capturing a Japanese battery; the subject of which he had commissioned as a painting (sold as part of the group). He had previously been MID for his service at the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863, one of 11 MID's for the action; See the following links for details of the campaign:

## https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shimonoseki campaign

Promoted Captain London Gazette 18 November 1864 "For valuable and gallant service at attack on batteries in Simono Seki Straits, Japan" His service record notes; 21 November 1864 "Specially promoted by board for services in Japan"

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Having been appointed Acting Captain of Pelorus on 13 September 1864 for his service in Japan, he was confirmed Captain on 21 November. Arriving in England on 19 April 1865, Captain Kingston married Clementina Sophia Heathcote in Newchurch, Hampshire in September 1867 but died in Southampton less than a year later whilst on Half Pay, 24 July 1868. He was just 40 years of age.

## **GROUP CONSIST OF:**

- 1) Crimea and Baltic Medals as described above; each contemporary engraved to him as a Lieutenant of HMS St Jean D'Acre. Original ribbons in frail condition, Crimea has come apart. Medals mounted red velvet back which has been removed from an old frame.
- 2) A fine contemporary over painted portrait photograph of Captain Kingston wearing the above medals. This, overpainting of photographs very much a style of the time and is in a 26.5 x 33.5 cm frame, the portrait itself 14 x 18.5cm
- 3) A small diary (36 filled pages), detailing Kingston's time ashore at Sebastopol, beginning of March until end of April 1855. His views on the various commanders and conditions are very critical indeed.
- 4) Kingston's logbook/diary, as a Lieutenant on HMS Alarm in South America and the West Indies, November 1849 September 1850. Approx 170 pages, some sketches and a map. Detailed descriptions of what he saw etc etc

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5) A superb original watercolour painting by Charles Wirgram of the assault of the crew of HMS Perseus on a Japanese battery at Shimonoseki, September 1864. Kingston MID and promoted Captain for this. This in a 62 x 44cm frame, the watercolour itself 45 x 28cm

Wigram a well known reported and artist who worked for the Illustrated London News resided in Japan at the time. Presumably Kingston commissioned the painting whilst in Japan

6) A two page report (in clip frame to protect) by the Gunner of HMS Perseus, dated 22 September 1864, concerning the effectiveness of the new Armstrong guns in action at the battle of Shimonoseki. This report or a copy of it was sent to the Admiralty and published in full here:

https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Accounts and Papers of the House of Comm/ICtcA AAAQAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=armstrong+and+whitworth+committee+kingston+perseus&pg=PA229&printsec=frontcover

- 7) A Commission for Kingston as Mate of HMS Acorn, dated 8 January 1848
- 8) A period adventure/Boys own book entitled 'The Three Commanders' by W H G Kingston who was a cousin of Captain Kingston's. It seems the author had drawn on his cousins experiences for this book and at least some of the details in Captain Kingston's Crimea diary were copied word for word into 'The Three Commanders'
- 9) Also with the group are a number of letters to and from the National Maritime Museum concerning this group which they had seen in 1994. Looks like the museum was hoping to have it donated but was clearly kept by the family until I picked it up at auction in December.



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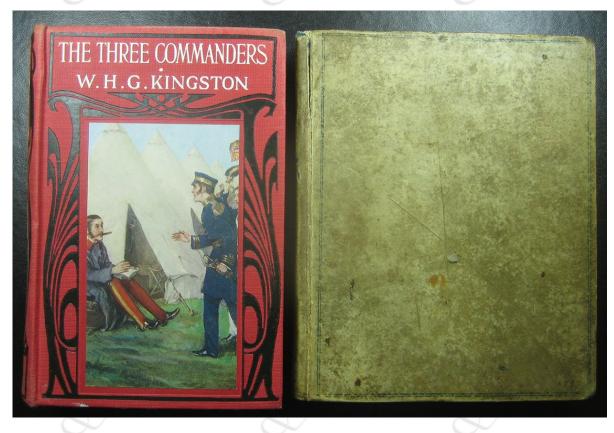
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By SAMUEL HOOD INCLEFIELD, Eng., Companion of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, Rear-Admiral of the Military and Vessels employed, and to be employed, in the East Indies and Seas adjacent.

TO Majesty Majesty and Majesty ships and Vessels employed, and to be employed, in the East Indies and Seas adjacent.

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## SOME EXTRACTS FROM PERIOD BOOKS RELATING TO KINGSTON AT SHIMONOSEKI

Per Mare, Per Terram: Reminiscences of Thirty-Two Years' Military, Naval, and Constabulary Service By W. H. Poyntz

".. The town of Simonoseki was very picturesquely situated at the entrance of the inland sea, which is about 300 miles in length, and most fortunate was it for us, that after the operations the "Conqueror" retraced her steps, in order to land our battalion again at Yokohama, right through its glorious scenery and expanse of water, from one end to the other. For the attack the allied fleet rendezvoused and anchored in the Straits, on the side nearest to Simonoseki. The surrounding hills were very high, and clothed with verdure almost down to the water's edge. Along the shore were several redoubts, with heavy guns mounted, and later on masked batteries hidden among the thick foliage of the trees half way up the hillsides disclosed theirselves on opening fire.

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The bombardment commenced on the 5th September, 1864, with the fire of the combined fleet, which was formed into two lines, the larger ships lying outside those of lighter draught, which were closer in shore, and nearer the enemy's works. H.M.S. "Conqueror," our floating barrack pro tem., was anchored some distance beyond all the other vessels, and well out of range of the Japanese fire. I have never seen a more soul-stirring sight than when H.M.'s corvette "Perseus," commanded by Captain Kingston, a well-liked and gallant officer, passed close under our stern, cleared for action. The guns' crews fallen in at their proper stations on the upper deck, sponges, rammers, and trigger-lines in hand, heads, necks, and feet bare, clothed only in flannel shirts and trousers, looked a workmanlike lot, as they were, fit for anything. This ship and a Dutch corvette led the inshore squadron. Most people imagined the Japanese would not show fight; but almost simultaneously with the first shot from the flagship their batteries returned the fire. It was a beautiful sight to see the flashes and puffs of smoke darting forth from the wooded sides of the hills, and very well indeed for a time were their guns served; many of the allied vessels were hulled, and several men were killed and wounded; but Armstrong's and Krupp's, of heavy naval calibre, belching a hail of shot, shell, and rockets, were too effective, so by degrees the enemy's fire slackened, and eventually ceased. Our gallant old ship was not going to be left out in the cold, so the Armstrong pivot gun, manned by Lieutenant Lye and gunners of the Royal Marine Artillery, fired over the heads of all at long range, and made some excellent shell practice. It was easy to see through the glasses that the works were much knocked about, so the order was given for the landing next morning, 6th of September, to destroy the batteries, spike the guns, and occupy the town of Simonoseki."



6, Euryalus. — 7. Batteries japonaises. — A. 3 steamers japonais incendiés. — B. Jonque japonaise incendiée C. Palais. — D. Factorreries. EXPÉDITION DU JAPON. - Bombardement de Kagosima par la flotte anglaise. (b'après un croquis de M. Barbier.)

Young Japan: Yokohama and Yedo. A Narrative of the Settlement and ..., Volume 1 By John Reddie Black

"At this time Captain KINGSTON of the Perseus with his second Lieutenant Mr. PITT, Sub. Lieut. FROUDE, Mr. COCHRANE, gunner, and twenty men, quickly joined by a boats' crew from the Medusa under Mr. DE HART, landed, and, driving the gunners from one of the forts, succeeded in spiking all its guns, 14 in number, threw the powder and shot over the parapet, and laid a train to the magazine (which, however, missed), under a severe fire of musketry from the paddy-fields and bush in the neighbourhood. It was well that this dashing feat was accomplished; for the next morning at 10 o'clock the Perseus got aground under this very fort, and her position would have been perilous indeed, had the guns been available and the men to serve them intact. As it was she lay aground all day, and was only relieved from her awkward plight at 11 o'clock on the following morning."

De Medusa in de wateren van Japan, in 1863 en 1864 By François Casembroot

"...At 2 P. M. the light squadron (under command of Capt. Kingston, Perseus) consisting of Perseus, Medusa, Tancrède, Coquette, Argus, and Bouncer weighed and took up position opposite the Chofu-point battery. The in-shore, or heavy, squadron, viz Tartar, Dupleix, Metalen Kruis, Barossa, Djambi, Leopard, weighed anchor, and anchored in position in front of the Matamura batteries, near Tanura village. The heavy squadron was led by that gallant officer, Captain Hayes, and in so skilful a manner as to call forth general expressions of admiration from the most experienced officers in the fleet.

At 4 P. M. the Admiral hoisted the signal to engage the enemy," and opened fire on the Matamura batteries: the fire was almost simultaneously returned from the batteries; the whole Allied fleet took up the note with one well timed volley, and ere the second hand of the dial had once traversed the circle, the engagement became general. At 4.30 an explosion in a battery was observed to be produced by a shell fired from an Armstrong pivot-gun. At 4.43 the light squadron was ordered to close on the batteries: at 5.27 the Chofu-point batteries were silenced by the light squadron; at 7 the heavy squadron, which had been keeping up a constant and telling fire upon the front of the Mata-mura barracks ceased, those batteries being silenced. The little Coquette was seen flirting with No. 6 battery. The shells both of the Euryalus and the Semiraas also the U. S. steamer Ta-Kiang with her 36 lb. Parrot-gun, working wonderfully well, and with great effect at long range all the while. During this part of the engagement, the Metalen Kruis, not being yet prepared to present her broadside, received a shot at her bows, which traversed the ship to her stern, killing two men and severely wounding two others. It was during the latter part of this day a very gallant exploit was performed by Captain Kingston, his 2nd Lieutenant Mr. Pitt, Sublieutenant Froude, Mr. Cochrane, gunner, and twenty men, seamen and marines of the Perseus, and Mr. de Hart and boat's crew of H. N. M.'s Medusa. Captain Kingston, seeing some time before dark to spare for good service, about 6.25 z. m. determined upon the attempt to render harmless the guns upon the Mata-mura batteries. As the first and second cutters were being lowered, and the above-named officers and the men taking their places,, on this errand bent" Captain de Casembroot promptly sent his boat to assist, commanded by the gallant first Lieutenant of the Medusa, Mr. de Hart; they landed, spiked all the guns (14) in the fort, threw the powder and shot over the parapet, set a train to the magazine (which however missed) and then returned to their ships. The whole of this most important service having been performed under a sharp fire of musketry from the paddy-fields below and the neighbouring bush. One account we have of this little episode is certainly about as concise a compendium of it as was ever written by,,the Duke" of the most gallant action performed in his army. It reads thus:

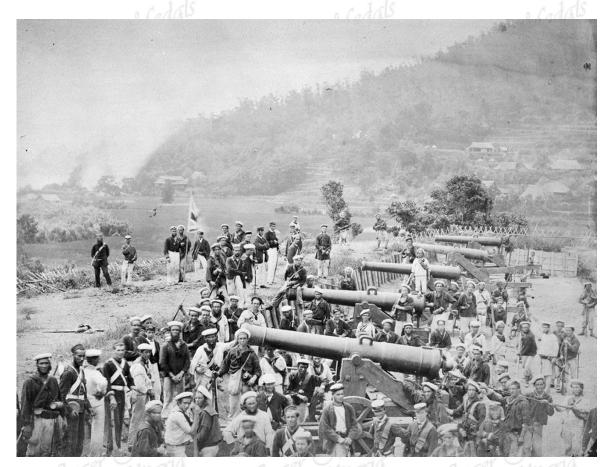
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6.25 The Perseus' 1st and 2nd cutters landed to spike guns."

6.45 The Perseus' cutters returned."



## https://www.pdavis.nl/Japan.htm

They returned! but between the 6.25 and the 6.45 what had these gallant men accomplished? That which probably saved the lives and limbs of scores - may be of hundreds; nay which no doubt did save their own noble ship itself; for, only a very few hours after this, the Perseus grounded right under these very forts, and from 10 A. M. on the following day (Tuesday) until 11 A. M. on Wednesday, there she lay, heeling over to starboard, sometimes 8° sometimes 105°, her hull exposed in a manner which must have been most tantalizing to the crews of the 14 heavy guns, the venom of whose fangs had so fortunately and so nobly been drawn just before. A great number of Nagato's men, well armed were in a position near the batteries, but their surprise appears to have been so intense at the very coolness of this proceeding, that their fire, though they kept blazing away from behind the bushes and hills in the rear, had but very little effect upon the landing-party. We hear that on passing along the line to their respective ships, both the gallant commanders, Kingston and de Casembroot, were received with vollies after vollies of cheers from all the ships they passed, echoed, and re-echoed by the others who had witnessed the exploit from a greater distance."

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Supreally hecafable of much exertion. Their Major are their Mus, hepheros, Watines (energthing but their daughters ) who More nothing of have deen hothing of military matters, thinking Their duty Contests in escoting paper on horseback & making Hempelues as comportable as they can & it by chance any thing is left to their Individual exertions, involved, from exhorace in the ulticost confusiones. The different Sources belowing to the Army are equally bad, The luxinees are few & dependent for their work Jeing done wholey on the Jim, the Whellery drilled to Exellence ou Inthout common) are quite at a loss without thew hunerous & huweldly apparatus, In moving Juns . A doyla Jeanen Leing Questoned & transperting heavy long le

doss the Voldie over de them with great trouble on his hast he may get a small kortion doled out, officials prevent the lest I government whose ale protecting arm is supposed to Supervise or appoint those to do So, is limployed lutily liv factions, family & parliamentary fends at home. The hublic decession on disquisted, ministerial a blace handars fathering, the stores lotting I the Soldier neglected. While the curted System of patronen Auchase lasts, the wil will artis I brane hearts & lines with he Sacrificed, In the gloufications of the fainelized few, who alone Ceah, It housers & lewards. Anday 4th Rode mer the Field of Internam it is theto streno with payments of the fight. The dead lane all here wellest to a Suries in I large glones in the balley

Then are a large number of dead ported lying in the gorge of the hills It former they are similarly disposed of the better a they will need a pestilence. The balley of homean is a beautiful Hot between two hills a termenating he a deep & harrow labine on the right are the quarries from which Sebustopol has been enstructed & the bed of the gorge Spens buddenly on the Valley of the Veherwaya, on the spotile Lite are some answer great Rines on a high cliff ones los king the live at the upper part of the going was the most deadly Anggle of the Hordy duy of Seckerine The Pression driven down the hite by the Butish life him the there 5000 dead Rode Donned our Carech of Visited Acaily ale the dolderes whom we brougher out from lugland.

2 Mille