

The Death of Parker

289

arr. MCB 1995

variant of "Constant Billy"

(♩=72)

Air

Ye gods a-bove pro- tect a wi - dow, And with pi - ty look on me.

Counter

Flute

Vcl.

6

Help, O help me out of trou - ble, Out of sad ca - la - mi - ty, For by the death of

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my brave Par - ker, For - tune prov'd to me un-kind, And though hung for

In 1797 there were mutinies in the Channel fleet at Spithead, and at the Nore, a sandbank in the Thames estuary where the North Sea Squadron was moored. This latter fleet was under Duncan, whose career therefore hung in the balance for several weeks. Admiral Jervis, just back from the battle of St. Vincent (14 Feb, for which he was created 1st Earl St. Vincent), helped the First Sea Lord, Howe, resolve the mutiny at Spithead, where the men were granted many of their demands. (Jervis continued to reform abuses as Howe's successor.) As the Spithead mutiny came to a successful end, the one at the Nore went on unnecessarily to disaster. From 20 May to 13 June 1797, Richard Parker, who had once been a midshipman, led the mutiny, styling himself "President of the Floating Republic". On 30 June he was hanged from his own yard-arm. Twenty-eight other seamen were hanged, and others were flogged around the fleet.

Captain Robert Mosse married Ann Grace Kinchin of Stoke Charity on 16 March 1780 at Deane, Hampshire. In February 1793 as captain of Sandwich he patrolled the sandbanks of the Thames at Nore. In 1797 he therefore became deeply embroiled in the Nore Mutiny and was part of the prosecution and execution of its ringleader Richard Parker, both of which took place on board Mosse's ship. He was killed at the Battle of Copenhagen, 1801, when captain of HMS Monarch under Nelson. The grave of his wife (d.1843) and children is at Wickham.

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Sym

mu - ti - ny, Worse than He were left be-hind.

*Parker was my lawful husband, bosom friend, whom I lov'd dear,
 But in the time he had to suffer, alas, I could not him be near.
 Again I ask'd, again I begg'd them, three times o'er and o'er in vain,
 They still that one request denied me, and order'd me on shore again.*

The yellow flag I saw there flying, as signal for my love to die,
 A gun they fired as was required, to hang him on the yard-arm high.
 The bo's'un did his best endeavour, and I on shore was sent straightway,
 Where I stood watching, like a mermaid, to take my husband's corpse away.

3 ladies, Vln, Vcl

At dead of night, when all was silent and many thousands fast asleep,
 I, with two female friends attended, into the burial ground did creep.

All in

Our trembling hands did serve as shovels with which the earth to move away,
 And so the body of my husband we carried off without delay.

Fl, Vcl tacet

A mourning coach for him was waiting, we drove to London with all speed,
 Where decently I had him buried, and a sermon o'er him said.
 And now his sorrows are all over, and he's free from guilt and pain,
 I hope in heav'n his soul is shining, where he and I shall meet again.

O Richard Parker, thou bright angel, once thou wert the Navy's pride,
 Since we did not die together, now apart we must abide.
 I must wait a while with patience, I hope on earth not long to stay,
 When we shall meet once more in glory, and all our sins be wash'd away.