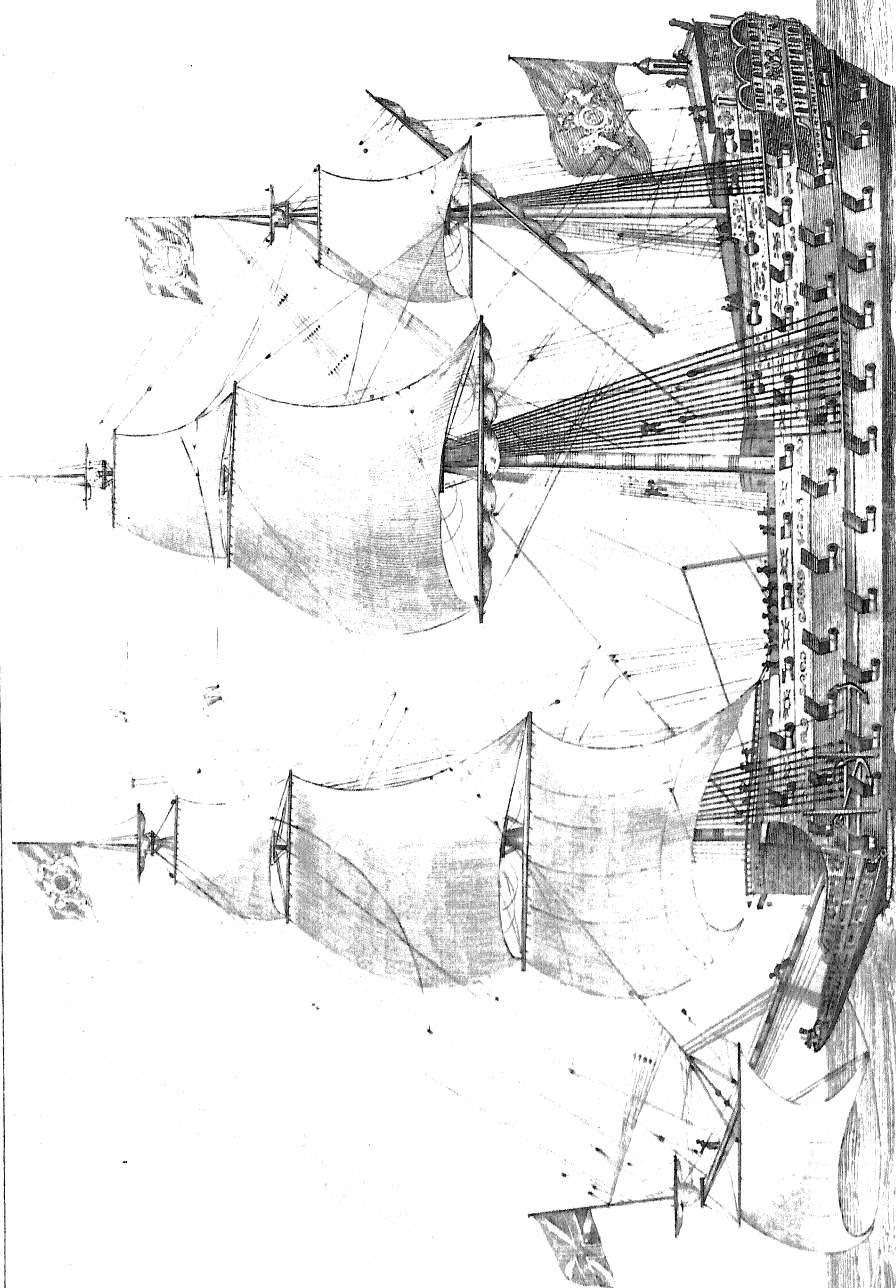


THE ROYAL SOVEREIGN, BUILT IN 1637 (FROM A PAINTING BY VANDERVELDE.)



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A HISTORY

OF

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NAVAL ARCHITECTURE:

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED, AN

INTRODUCTORY DISSERTATION

ON THE APPLICATION OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCE TO THE
ART OF NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

[WITH FIFTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIVE PLATES.]

BY JOHN FINCHAM, Esq.,

MASTER-SHIPWRIGHT OF HER MAJESTY'S DOCKYARD, PORTSMOUTH; AUTHOR OF
"AN OUTLINE OF SHIP-BUILDING;" "A TREATISE ON MASTING SHIPS,"
AND "DIRECTIONS FOR LAYING-OFF SHIPS."*Dedicated, by permission, to His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and published with the sanction of the
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28.2399.

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE ALBERT, K.G.,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

SIR :

IN tendering to Your Royal Highness the humble expression of my deep and grateful sense of Your Royal condescension, in accepting the Dedication of the following History of Naval Architecture, I venture to hope that the character of the subject will procure for its imperfections an indulgent consideration.

I feel it impossible to doubt that both the national importance, as an art, and the high position as a science, of the subject treated in these pages will entitle it, in the estimation of Your Royal Highness, to a prominent place among those elevating studies and pursuits, the extending cultivation of which alike contributes to heighten the lustre of the reign of our gracious and beloved Queen, and to increase the greatness and prosperity of Her people.

That Your Royal Highness, in whom the arts and sciences have ever found a generous patron, and whose warm interest in all that concerns the welfare of Her Majesty's subjects at once commands their gratitude and esteem, may long continue to fulfil and adorn your exalted station among them, is the earnest desire and prayer of

Your Royal Highness' most humble,

Most dutiful and most grateful servant,

JOHN FINCHAM.

HER MAJESTY'S DOCKYARD,
PORTSMOUTH, *March*, 1851.

PREFACE.

THE original intention of the Author, in preparing an account of the history and progress of Naval Architecture, was, that it should form an introduction to the third edition of his “Outline of Ship-building.” It soon, however, became evident that the subject was too extensive for the limits assignable to an introductory essay ; and whilst the materials which were available for such a History were sufficiently ample to call for their production in a separate form, it was felt, that the attempt was fully justified by the intimate connection of the theme with the naval and commercial greatness of the British empire. Narratives of the exploits of our naval armaments are, doubtless, more attractive and exciting to the national feelings than the details of their construction ; yet, while on the one hand, the naval supremacy and commercial prosperity of Great Britain are legitimate objects of satisfaction and of hope, on the other, the history of the progress of the art of naval construction, from the production of the first unskilled design up to its present magnitude and importance, cannot fail to present, to all reflecting minds, a subject alike interesting and instructive.

The condition of Naval Architecture is ascertained in the services of ships and fleets : it has therefore been necessary to notice both the occasions of their employment, and their actual performances, as bearing on the progress which has been made in designing and building them. The relation of ships’ per-