

Enquiry question: Why is Nelson considered a national hero?

# Nelson's Battle of Trafalgar

**"England expects that every man will do his duty."**

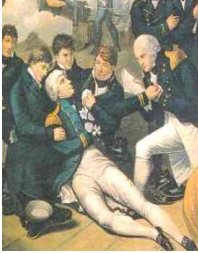


The Battle of Trafalgar was a major sea battle between Britain and the combined French and Spanish navies during the Napoleonic Wars. In October 1805 the French and Spanish fleet of 33 ships was safely in the port of Cadiz in Spain.



Its leader, Admiral Pierre de Villeneuve, was ordered to leave Cadiz and sail to Italy. He hoped to do this without being seen by the British fleet of 27 ships, commanded by Admiral Nelson. The British saw the enemy ships, though, and caught up with them near Cape Trafalgar, between Cadiz and Gibraltar, on October 21. Nelson was determined that Villeneuve would not get away. Just before midday, Nelson sent a signal from his flagship, HMS *Victory*, to the other ships in his fleet: "England expects that every man will do his duty."

Nelson began by attacking the French and Spanish ships at the end of the long, single line sailing north. He then led an attack into the center of the enemy line of ships. For a time there was chaos. Villeneuve tried to drive the British ships away, but he failed. In the midst of the fighting, a French sailor fired directly at Nelson, who was standing on the deck of his ship. Nelson was hit in the shoulder and chest. He was carried below decks and died just as it became clear that the British had won the battle.



In the South Denes industrial area of Great Yarmouth is the Grade I listed monument erected by the people of Norfolk to Nelson's memory. Completed in 1819 and standing at 144 feet, 24 years before the column in Trafalgar Square, it is well worth a look. On Sundays during the summer it is open for ascents to the top and once you have climbed the 217 steps there are stunning views over the town and surrounding countryside. Nelson famously said **'I am myself a Norfolk man and glory in being so!'**

Key vocab	meaning
admiral	the most senior commander of a fleet or navy.
British	relating to Great Britain or the United Kingdom,
captain	the person in command of a ship
expedition	a journey undertaken by a group of people with a particular purpose.
conquest	control of a place or people by military force
monument	a statue, building, or other structure erected to commemorate a notable person or event
Norfolk	A county in East England
The navy	A branch of the armed services



<b>1758</b> Born in Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk	<b>1771</b> Ages 12 joins the navy	<b>1773</b> Joins and expedition to the arctic where he famously killed a polar bear	<b>1778</b> Jons HMS Badger as commander	<b>1781</b> Becomes captain of HMS Albemarle	<b>1787</b> Marries Francis Nisbet	<b>1793</b> Britain went to war against France. Nelson was given command of the ship <i>Agamemnon</i> .	<b>1794</b> Takes part in the siege of Bastia and sand blew in face and caused him to become partially blind	<b>1797</b> The Battle of Cape St Vincent. and Nelson leads an attack on Santa Cruz, Tenerife where he was shot and needed his arm amputated	<b>1798</b> The Battle of the Nile	<b>1805</b> Nelson died by a fatal gunshot in the battle of Trafalgar.
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