# THE KEY TO HONOR

# 荣誉的意义

RONALD WANTTAJA/著 ᘓᑽᑲᘊ 施栋琴/注释 王菊泉/审校

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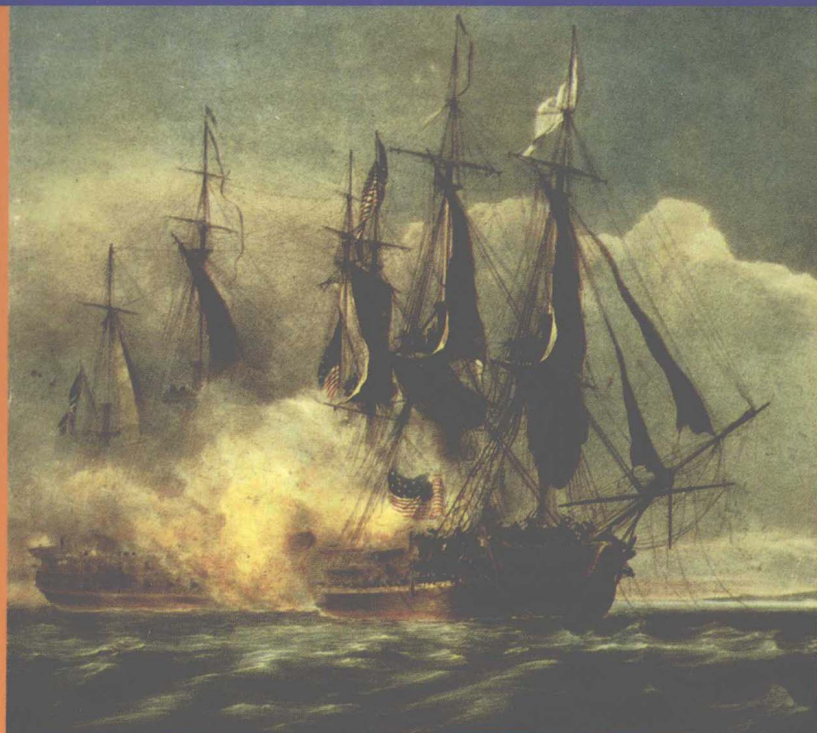
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# Nate Lawton's War of 1812 Series

## The Key to Honor
## The Price of Command

This is a work of fiction. While the names of historical figures are occasionally used, the actions, statements, and attitudes of all characters within this book are the invention of the author. No disrespect to the memories of the actual participants in these events is intended.

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# 故 事 梗 概

　　小说以第二次英美战争(1812.6—1814.12)为背景。

　　1803年,英法两国之间重新爆发战争,交战双方都封锁了对方的贸易。英国为阻止美国跟法国及其他或多或少处在法国势力下的国家之间的贸易往来,派出舰队封锁了美国海岸,同时掠夺美国商船并强迫船上的水手加入英国皇家海军。另一方面,英国在美国西北边疆经常挑唆印第安人同美国作战,遏制了美国向西北部扩大领土的欲望。因此,美国国内要求对英作战的呼声很高。1812年6月18日,美国国会宣布对英作战。战争分别在海上和陆上进行。美国因缺乏充分的准备,在军事力量上处于弱势。

　　小说中提到的美舰"切萨比克号"接受英舰"沙农号"的挑战,最后战败投降为真实的历史事件,但小说中的主要人物及情节均为作者虚构。主人公纳桑尼尔(内特)·劳顿十五岁,是美国海军军官候补生。在他七岁时,父亲被英国海军抓获并强征入伍,以后一直杳无音信。在美国宣布对英作战前夕,劳顿出于替父报仇的动机以及对英国人的强烈憎恨志愿加入美国海军,服役于"宪法号"。在"宪法号"与英舰"战斗号"的交战中,劳顿勇敢地搭救了赫尔舰长,他因此被提升为海军军官候补生,调至"切萨比克号"继续服役。劳顿对于提升非但没有感到踌躇满志,相反感到愧疚万分,因为很多人只看到他救了舰长,却并没有注意到在接下来的战斗中他因恐惧而躲进了锚链舱。他对自己的怯懦一直耿耿于怀,暗下决心要以尽职来赢得真正的荣誉。

　　劳顿去"切萨比克号"报到。詹姆斯·劳伦斯舰长十分赏识劳顿,邀请其当晚共进晚餐。席间,舰长谈到"切萨比克号"的

首要目标是将驻扎在波士顿港口的英舰"沙农号"消灭,这样,美商船才能自由地出入港口;而丹尼尔·威斯考特少尉则认为,"切萨比克号"不是"沙农号"的对手,应避免两舰直接交手,他建议去袭击英国舰队的后方供应线,然而,舰长却十分乐观。劳顿在舰长的晚宴上喝醉了酒,所以第一次值班就迟到,遭到威斯考特少尉的讥讽与严厉批评。同时,威斯考特向劳顿指明他的职责并不仅仅在于执行命令,而更在于维护美国及其海军的荣誉。

劳顿负责上层前甲板上火炮的保养以及他分队中二十五名水兵的操练。"切萨比克号"上的水兵不但纪律松懈,而且在射击操练中错误百出。劳顿命令他手下的水兵每天增加一小时的额外操练,他们很不情愿。劳顿未能妥善处理汤姆·邓肯与另一水兵的打闹,致使邓肯受到了鞭刑的处罚。此后,分队的其他成员对劳顿憎恨有加,邓肯更是耿耿于怀。尽管如此,劳顿还是坚持让他们额外操练。这样经过四五天的训练,他们进步很快,成了舰上动作最迅速、技术最熟练的分队。由于舰上的水兵还从未接触过真实的炮弹,劳顿希望他们能进行实弹射击操练,但是,由于军舰停泊在波士顿码头,他们根本没有机会。一次偶然的机会,劳顿发现码头附近的民兵要塞里有一些从一艘英国沉舰上打捞上来的海战专用火炮,遂向劳伦斯舰长提议利用这些火炮让舰上的水兵进行实弹操练,舰长听后十分赞赏,马上付诸实施。但是,实弹操练的结果表明"切萨比克号"上水兵的作战能力非常欠缺。

劳顿一方面恪尽职守,但同时又时时地受着内疚心理的折磨。他终于将父亲被掳去服役以及他在"宪法号"与"战斗号"交战中的怯懦行为等秘密告诉了偶然结识的瑞蓓卡·布莱克小姐。布莱克小姐非常理解劳顿的这种行为,认为算不得怯懦;她并且帮助劳顿醒悟到,原来他是潜意识里害怕他父亲也在英舰上,为了避免亲手杀死自己的父亲、或者发现他原先杀死的敌人竟是自己的父亲这样的痛苦,他才逃避的。

"切萨比克号"马上就要启航作战了,水兵们因此纷纷上岸

喝酒。这时,劳顿手下的水兵对他已是俯首帖耳,只有邓肯还记恨前仇,借着酒意向劳顿挑衅。这次劳顿吸取了上次的教训,机智巧妙地保护了邓肯,邓肯由此对劳顿的旧恨冰释。正在这时,"沙农号"舰长布罗克差人送来挑战信,要求与"切萨比克号"交战。

"切萨比克号"接受了挑战。战斗中,美舰上的水兵、火炮数目均不及"沙农号",加上水兵未得到充分的训练,因而人员损失惨重,舰上的指挥官也死的死、伤的伤。劳顿指挥他的手下全力拼搏,但在敌人的猛烈进攻面前,显得寡不敌众。最后,劳顿作为上层主甲板上仅存的军官,自动接过全舰的指挥权,命令舰上水兵放下武器投降。"切萨比克号"以及舰上官兵随即成了英军的俘虏。

劳顿很快为自己的下令投降而内疚万分。但是,英舰长布罗克却对劳顿盛赞不已,十分钦佩;认为劳顿在当时的情形下别无选择,人道要求他必须投降以避免更多无谓的牺牲。他并向劳顿指出,获得荣誉的关键在于把握恪守职责与体现人道之间的界限。劳顿无法想象他没有尽职还能获得荣誉,但他最终还是接受了布罗克舰长的提议,拿他作为和英方交换俘虏的条件。劳顿离开"沙农号"时,舰上的美英官兵均给了他舰长的礼遇。

# 关于小说思想性问题的说明

　　小说以主人公劳顿努力通过恪尽职守来重新赢回荣誉为故事的主要情节，表达了在战争中如何处理尽职与体现人道之间关系这样一个主题。这个主题是在小说结尾时通过布罗克舰长之口最后明确的，那就是：就战争而言，获得荣誉的关键在于把握尽职与体现人道之间的界限；一个指挥官在努力拼搏而仍然无望获胜的情况下，为了避免手下更多无谓的牺牲，就应该及时投降，如果还继续指挥他们拼死作战的话，这是不人道的。

　　我们认为，尽职与体现人道之间也许是有个界限要把握，但"人道"这个词由英舰长布罗克来讲并不恰当，因为他在小说中是侵略者形象的代表，是他向美军挑衅并造成了美军的人员伤亡，而他却振振有词地对被侵略者大谈人道。这种颠倒黑白、不论是非地大谈人道的作法反映了侵略者的虚伪性，在现实生活中并不鲜见。这是读者首先应该警惕和注意的。

　　小说中作者还有意安排劳顿父子分别效力于敌我双方的军舰上这一特殊情况作为辅线来表达主题。当初在美舰"宪法号"与英舰"战斗号"的交战中，劳顿作为一名水兵救了舰长的命，因而赢得了荣誉，但同时他潜意识里担心父亲也在"战斗号"上，为了避免亲手杀死父亲，他又不为人知地躲进了锚链舱里当了逃兵，以至在以后很长一段时间里他一直为此事感到深深的愧疚。对于劳顿的临阵脱逃，作者或者后来"醒悟"了的劳顿虽然没有明说，但意思却是明显不过的，那就是：这根本不能算是怯懦，而是不自觉地把握了尽职与体现人道之间的界限。这种把亲情凌驾于职责之上的做法或观念同样也是应该受到批判的。

作者在结尾时是这样刻画劳顿的:劳顿将英舰长对他英勇行为的承认和赞赏,以及拿他作为交换俘虏的条件看成一种荣誉,从此,他对英国人的恨意全消,替父报仇的强烈愿望也因此烟消云散,甚至进而认为英国人这个敌人是高尚的、正直的,他不能因为英国政府的决策而憎恨英国皇家海军。至此,主人公劳顿在思想上有了两个巨大转变:一,从对英国人憎恨有加到渐生好感;二,从一心想杀英国人替父报仇、替自己赢回荣誉到决心当一名忠实的军官来效忠美国海军。劳顿的第一个思想转变建立在敌人对他的承认和赞赏的基础之上,因而让读者感到突兀、勉强。至于劳顿最后决心以一名忠实的军官而不是以一个一心想报仇的小男孩来效忠国家,表面上看来他的思想境界提高了,但实际上他最后反而没有了是非观和正义感,因而他的第二个思想转变只能建立在空中楼阁之上,是很空洞的,最终也必定是无法实现的。

# 主要人物一览表


Danial Westcott：丹尼尔·威斯考特，"切萨比克号"少尉

George Bartholemew：乔治·巴塞勒缪，"切萨比克号"中尉

James Lawrence：詹姆斯·劳伦斯，"切萨比克号"舰长

Nathaniel Lawton：那桑尼尔·劳顿，"切萨比克号"军官候补生

P.B.V. Broke：布罗克，英舰"沙农号"舰长

Quentin Forsythe：昆汀·弗希斯，"切萨比克号"军官候补生

Tom Duncan：汤姆·邓肯，"切萨比克号"二等水兵

# *THE KEY TO HONOR*

## *by*
### *Ron Wanttaja*

## CHAPTER ONE

# Boston，1813

"Where's your earring, boy?"

Nate Lawton paused, confused. "Huh?"

"Your earring. *Ain'cha gonna get one, afore you go aboard?*"[1] The speaker sat atop one of the dozens of bales stacked along Boston's Long Wharf. The brown beard ringing his jaw *was flecked with gray.*[2]Gray, too, were his eyes, nestled deeply in wrinkled skin. Blue smoke trailed from his thin ivory pipe. Beyond the tattered sleeves of his shirt, *tattoos chased each other across hairy arms.*[3]

Merchant ship's masts towered overhead, casting short shadows in the May sun. Nate's heavy blue broadcloth uniform wrapped his body like a steaming blanket. He lifted his cocked hat and wiped sweat from his forehead. He absently smoothed his close-cropped black hair before restoring his hat to its position.

"Why do I need an earring?" he asked.

The man pointed the pipe stem at Nate. "*T' pay for* [4]a Christian burial, when your body washes ashore." The sailor slid down from the bale. "You be looking for *Chesapeake*, I *wager* [5]. Brand new midshipman." He leered at Nate. "Brand new officer. What are you, thirteen?"

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〔1〕 = Aren't you going to get one, before you go aboard? 说话者汤姆·格里姆未受过多少教育,说的是非标准英语。下文还有不少类似情况,只要不影响理解,一般不再注明。aboard: 用作副词或介词,意为"上船"或"在船上"。

〔2〕 已有花白的斑点;to fleck: [常用被动]使有斑点。

〔3〕 汗毛浓密的胳膊上闪现着文身;to chase: (使)闪现。

〔4〕 = To pay for ... 用来支付……的开销。

〔5〕 = bet。

Nate reddened. "Fifteen," he snapped. People were always thinking he was younger. Treating him like a kid, too. He wasn't small. Far from it, he was taller than other boys his age. *Just something about his face.* [1]

The man looked him up and down *with a knowing wink.* [2] "Aye, I suppose you are. But you're obviously new to the sea. You don't know your way around a harbor. I could take you to the ship, for five cents. I'm *an old man-of-war's man.* [3] I'll make sure you know what to do when you get there. *With old Tom Grimm and his boat,* [4] you'll be on a fine start towards fame and glory."

*The old rage burst free before Nate could think.* [5] "I'm not after fame and glory. I want to kill the British."

Grimm tilted his head back and laughed. "Sure you do, lad," he finally said, with his eyes still crinkled shut with mirth. "*Other than the fact that we're at war,* [6] what do you have against England? You'd ..."

The old sailor stopped. He'd finally looked at the face of the boy before him. Instead of the flushed face of an embarrassed boy, he found tight-set lips below narrowed dark-brown eyes. *Eyes that whispered of pain but screamed with hate.* [7]

Tom Grimm swallowed. "Beggin' your pardon, sir. *I didn't mean nothin' by it.*" [8]

Nate lifted his chin. "I don't need your boat," he said curtly. "The *Chesapeake* is a square-rigged frigate. Thirty-eight guns, three masts. Black hull, white stripe around the gunports." *He scanned far-*

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〔1〕 仅仅因为他的脸(才使他看上去小于实际年龄)。
〔2〕 会意地眨了一下眼。
〔3〕 军舰上的老水手;man-of-war: 军舰。
〔4〕 有我老格里姆用小船送你去;这里汤姆·格里姆用第三人称称呼自己。
〔5〕 内特未及思索,原有的怒气一下子迸发了出来。
〔6〕 除了我们在跟英国交战这个事实之外;other than: 除了……之外。
〔7〕 那双眼睛里流露出的是痛苦,但更多的是强烈的仇恨。
〔8〕 = I didn't mean anything by it.

*ther up the wharf.* [1] A cluster of tall white masts stood out from the stumpy brown ones of the merchant ships. "Those masts are hers, I bet. She's tied to the wharf. I don't know why I should hire your boat when I can just walk."

Grimm gulped air. "I — I'm sorry, sir. I didn't know you was an old hand. Most of the young gen'lemen who *come by* [2] need some help, an' ..." He took an awkward step backward.

An odd scrape on the wooden wharf made Nate glance down. A cracked and peeling black shoe covered the old sailor's left foot, but only a wooden peg showed underneath the fraying cuff of his right trouser leg. *Anger fled Nate's face. Faint red spots surfaced high on his cheeks.* [3] He cleared his throat. "It's all right. Don't worry about it."

The man's face relaxed. He lifted the knuckles of his right hand to his forehead in salute. "Thank'ee, sir."

Nate *grunted an acknowledgment* [4] and turned away. He started walking towards the tall white masts.

But his eyes and his mind were far away. "What did he have against England?" the old sailor had asked. His hatred of the British had begun seven years earlier. Elias Lawton, his father, had been second mate aboard a merchant brig *bound for* [5] Cuba.

On the way, the brig had been boarded by a Royal Navy frigate. A British lieutenant declared that Elias Lawton and four other Americans were Englishmen and forcibly *impressed* [6] them into the Royal Navy. Since then, there had been no word. The American government had filed a strong protest, but the *seaman-hungry* [7] Royal Navy had swallowed Nate's father.

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〔1〕 他顺着码头朝更远的方向望去。

〔2〕 路过,经过。

〔3〕 怒气从内特脸上消失了,双颊泛出浅红色的斑点;to surface:显露,呈现。

〔4〕 哼了一声表示回答。

〔5〕 (船等)开往……的。

〔6〕 强迫……服役,强征……入伍。

〔7〕 水兵短缺的。

Elias Lawton hadn't been the first American seaman pressed by the British, nor would he be the last. *England was locked in a desperate struggle with Napoleon*. [1] The Royal Navy was England's only bulwark against invasion, and *a seagoing fort needed men the way a land-variety fort needed sandbags*. [2]

Nate was eight when they took his father. Elias Lawton could be dead. He could just as well be alive. But in seven years, there'd been no word.

The British would pay.

Nate became aware of a tap-tap-tap following behind him. *He glanced over his shoulder*. [3]

The old sailor had followed him. The tapping was the iron thimble on the end of his wooden leg. Grimm smiled and nodded. "Mind you, sir, bein' an experienced officer and all, you'd probably know *the lay o' the land*. [4] I'll just walk with you a *spell*, [5] an' *you can pay me as you find it worth it*." [6]

Nate rolled his eyes and kept moving.

Grimm gestured to the merchant ships tied to the wharf on either side. "Not much trade out of here, since the British set the blockade. Before the war started, you could hardly take a breath, with all the loadin' and unloadin'."

The war. A year earlier, America *had* finally *had enough of* [7] British bullying. When Congress declared war, Nate immediately joined the Navy as a ship's boy, the lowest rank in the service. Two months at sea, a quick flurry of action ... and now, eight months later, he was joining the *Chesapeake* as a midshipman.

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〔1〕 英国正与拿破仑进行着一场殊死的战争。to be locked in = to become rigidly fixed in。

〔2〕 海上的堡垒需要水兵就像陆上的堡垒需要沙包一样。

〔3〕 他回过头一看。

〔4〕 地形。

〔5〕 一阵子或一小段距离。

〔6〕 你认为值得就付我点小费；worth it: 〈口〉值得的，划得来。

〔7〕 受够了……再也无法忍受……

Midshipman. Him, an officer. He shook his head at the wonder of it, and fumbled uncertainly with the hilt of the dirk hanging at his side. The Baltimore tailor had insisted Nate would need the long knife; had pressed him to purchase the rather crude-looking blade with its coarse wood hilt. *"Part of the uniform ,"* [1] the man had said.

"'Course, *not that* [2] the Navy hasn't been busy," Grimm continued, *unabashed by* [3] Nate's lack of response. *"Chesapeake* hasn't had much luck, though. But Cap'n Decatur *took* [4] HMS *Macedonian* , and Old Ironsides sank *Guerriere* and *Java* ."

Nate *set his mouth in a thin smile* . [5] "I know. I was aboard when the *Constitution* took *Guerriere* ." *Guilt knotted his stomach* . [6]

Grimm grabbed Nate's arm, stopping him. " *You're not just throwin' the lead*?" [7] His eyes lit up. "Why, we're practically shipmates! I sailed in her, back in '04 when we knackered the Tripoli pirates!"

Nate tried to pull away from the man's iron grip.

*A stricken look crossed Grimm's face* . [8] He dropped Nate's arm as if it were on fire. "Sorry, mortal sorry, sir. *Dunno what came over me* ." [9] His fingertips brushed and smoothed the wrinkles on the midshipman's blue sleeve.

"Fine, fine," muttered Nate. He stepped forward, trying to keep from grinning at the man's appalled reaction.

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〔1〕 (佩剑是)军服的一部分。

〔2〕 并不是说,并非。

〔3〕 没有因为……而感到害臊,没有因为……而难为情。

〔4〕 俘获。

〔5〕 内特咧嘴淡淡地笑了一笑。

〔6〕 负罪感紧揪着他的心。to knot: 使紧缩。

〔7〕 你可不只是在瞎吹吧? to throw the lead: 抛水砣以测水深;此处转喻为"捏造事实,瞎吹"。

〔8〕 格里姆脸上掠过一丝受惊的表情。

〔9〕 (我自己也)不知道我这是怎么了。dunno = don't know; to come over: 抓住;发生。

The tap-tap of Grimm's wooden leg followed. "I didn't know you was a fightin' sailor, sir. I'm mortal sorry for bein' a bother. But ol' Tom Grimm'll do anything for a shipmate. Just give me a hail anytime, sir."

As they walked, the white masts of their destination rose higher. *Exertion flushed Grimm's face*.[1]  "Just around these bales, sir."

They stepped *though*[2] a gap into a cleared area. There she lay. The United States Ship *Chesapeake*. The blackpainted hull towered above the wharf. A long white stripe gave her side a dashing look, if one ignored the black gunport lids.

Nate tilted his head to study the masts and rigging. The three masts stood like a military forest. Her mainmast soared a hundred feet high; *the foremast and mizzenmast slightly smaller echoes fore and aft. The yards were crossed; the spars spaced at intervals on each mast. The sturdy, tarred, standing rigging and the hempen running rigging formed a delicate but disciplined web overhead*.[3]

It was all so familiar, yet different. Homesickness stirred. In his short time aboard *Constitution* he'd come to deeply love the stout frigate. He'd be a stranger here. Friendless. Why had he accepted promotion? He'd be happier with his shipmates aboard Old Ironsides. What did he know about being an officer?

*And the odds against them*![4] When Nate originally joined the Navy, he hadn't realized the power of the enemy. Against Great Britain's three hundred great battleships, the United States Navy mustered its entire fleet — all seventeen ships. More than a hundred British ships were larger than Old Ironsides, and she was the biggest the U.S.

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〔1〕 格里姆(费力)走得脸颊都涨红了。exertion：尽力,努力,费力；to flush：使(脸等)涨红。

〔2〕 此处 though 当为 through 之误。

〔3〕 前桅和后桅分别位于舰首和舰尾,外形与主桅相同,只是稍小而已。(桅杆与)横桅纵横交错,每根桅杆上的横桅每隔一段距离上下排列着。结实的、浇过柏油的桅杆固定支索和张帆麻绳在上方形成一个精致而又井井有条的网络。to echo：重复。

〔4〕 而且情形对他们不利! odds：[常用作复数]机会,可能性。