



# Bisel Classics

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**DUSSEK**

The Naval Battle  
and Total Defeat  
of the Grand Dutch  
Fleet by  
Admiral Duncan

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# Preface

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Admiral Adam Duncan (1731 - 1804) distinguished himself at the Battle of Camperdown on the 11th October 1797, winning a decisive victory over the Dutch fleet. Delays in readying the attack on Ireland and inclement winds had kept the Dutch forces at harbour long after the window of opportunity had closed but the French Revolutionary politicians in charge ordered the Vice-Admiral in command, Jan de Winter to press on regardless. Upon hearing the Dutch had set to sea, Admiral Duncan, aboard the *Venerable* set to sea from Great Yarmouth at once to intercept the Dutch fleet. The action was timely. The Royal Navy engaged the Dutch forces by the coastal village of Camperduin in the North. Pressed for time, in a weak formation and with few opportunities at his disposal Duncan made the audacious decision to break through the Dutch line. A tactic as bold as it was unproven. This brought the Dutch ships into disarray being split into two groups and on the defensive. The sonata tells of the Dutch losing their masts in the battle but in fact the most horrendous injury was done, to both forces, by the practice of firing into the hulls of the vessels. The casualties on both sides numbered at least 743 dead and 1242 wounded but the British won the battle with the fewest fatalities, taking eleven ships as prize in the process without a single loss of her own. For this great victory, Admiral Duncan was made Viscount Duncan of Camperdown and Baron Duncan, of Lundie in the Shire of Perth.

This victory, which would require another volume to describe in all its remembered glory was a decisive battle not just for Admiral Duncan but for the greater war effort