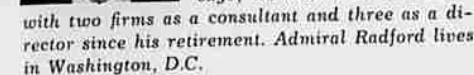


When the ships were little more than 100 yards apart, Truxtun's order cracked across the Constellation's gun deck — "Fire!"

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By ADM. ARTHUR W. RADFORD as told to Alfred Balk



"Hoist all sail!" he commanded. "This may be our opportunity."

Three weeks elapsed before courier ships carried the news to the United States. For days, it overshadowed all other topics in every community.

In Boston, citizens celebrated for an entire day. A special play and song were introduced in Philadelphia. Congress created a special gold medal for hero Truxton.

"Here was courage and dedication when our nation needed it most. May we all be worthy of the freedom the *Constellation* so gallantly helped to preserve and extend."