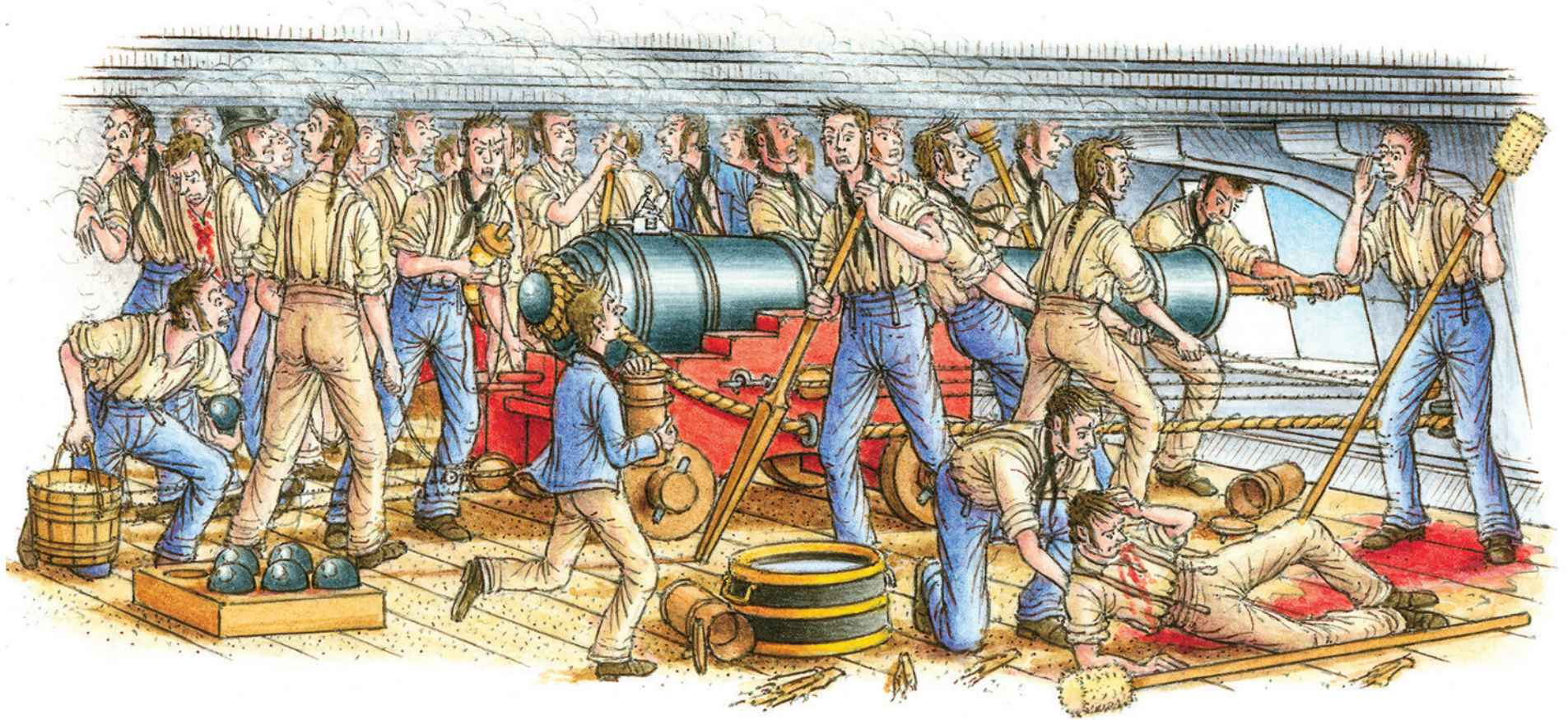


Gun Deck in Battle



Roaring and belching fire, *Constitution's* guns were like huge and dangerous dragons when the enemy drew near. Seamen fed their smoking mouths with gunpowder and iron. Thick ropes controlled them, yet with every shot they jerked and lurched, threatening to break loose. Constant training taught each member of the gun crew his job in handling these hot, heavy beasts. Yet nothing could really quite prepare him for the smoke, the noise, the blood and the deadly flying splinters of the gun deck in battle.