Mobilising Clothes at Sea: Naval Dress Culture and Economy during the French Wars, 1793-1815

by

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Abstract

During the British involvement in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1793-1815, the Royal Navy contracted for, inspected, and distributed clothing to naval warships in British ports and abroad. This dissertation examines the Admiralty in-letters stored at the British National Archives, Kew, and the Caird Library, at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, to understand how this system worked both practically as a system of production and distribution, but also rhetorically, as an important aspect of the power between administrators, commanders and crew. The Royal Navy concurrently provided clothing on three different models. Officers wore loosely regulated uniforms that they personally paid for and sourced. Sailors wore slop clothes, mass-produced clothing purchased from private contractors in bulk. Finally, the marines were dressed in a combination of the two. They wore slops when they performed seafaring labour and during leisure time but wore more strictly regulated uniforms that were reminiscent of those from the army when policing sailors. Naval commanders both interfered with the uniforms of the marines, whose red coats visually challenged naval authority, and advocated for sailors' slop clothing to solidify their own paternal mastery of their vessels. The navy was a large bureaucratic and technological body beyond its primary military function, and clothing reveals how much time commanders spent on tedious paperwork and supply issues between moments of heightened military action. Further, the proximity of naval ships to British ports diminished the authority of commanders, exposing confrontations between military personnel and civilians. The period of conflict between 1793 and 1815 marks the decline of early modern forms of individual commander care and clothing provision in many respects but the true break was yet to come with the adoption of steam technology.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Meaghan Walker. No part of this thesis has been previously published.

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations and Conventions

All currency unless otherwise stated is pre-decimal British pounds sterling (£):

£1 = 20s. = 240d.

1s. = 12d.

Spelling in quoted primary documents has been left in its original form except when necessary for comprehension and this will be indicated with box brackets.

The following abbreviations have been used for frequently used titles, cited works, archives, archival collections, or sometimes appear in primary source quotations. Full citations are given in the bibliography:

ADM 1	Admiralty In-letters
ADM 12	Admiralty Indexes and Digests
Caird	The Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK.
HM	His Majesty(’s)
HMS	His Majesty’s Ship
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
NMM	The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK.
RMA	Royal Marine Artillery
TNA	The National Archives, Kew, UK.

Introduction

This is a history of the Royal Navy during one of its most violent periods, the wars with France between 1793 and 1815. During those 25 years, Britain was at near constant conflict on an unprecedented scale in terms of military and civilian mobilization, financial risk, technological development, geographical breadth and political ideology.[1] Despite all this political and military activity, however, much of what naval personnel experienced daily was tedium that required little pure military action.[2] Though combat, politics and international intelligence have certainly received a large share of the scholarship during the French Wars, the Royal Navy was an institution predominantly upheld by tedious processes of management and labour. Long periods of routine tasks, such as swabbing the deck, going up in the rigging, and lining up for victuals defined sea-life. Officers wrote letters to the Admiralty beyond recounting battles. They returned particulars about the needs of their ship's company: warrant and petty officers, sailors, and marines. They had to fill in paperwork, manage food and healthcare, and evaluate the quality and amount of clothing supplied to the men under their command. To do this, they performed bedding and slop surveys, took complaints from the purser, sailors, and marines, and wrote to London asking for better clothing for their men. In the everyday demands of captains and admirals at sea lies a hoard of clothes being held up as deficient in some way.

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[1] The French Wars began for Britain when they joined the First Coalition in 1793. The Treaty of Amiens was signed in March 1802, creating a short peace which lasted until May 1803. The Napoleonic Wars continued until Napoleon's surrender April 6, 1814. Afterwards there was another short period of peace before the Hundred Days War, which lasted from March to June 1815. During the 25 years of major European war, Britain also concurrently fought several conflicts or rebellions in the Caribbean, Australia, Cape Colony, Ireland, North and West Africa, India, the Baltic Sea, the Ottoman Empire, Argentina, and the United States. See appendixes 1 and 2.

[2] Special thanks to Stephen Hay and Matthew Ylitomo who discussed the importance of tedium with me at the Symposium "In the Archive: In Honour of the MHA's 50th Anniversary" at the Maritime History Archive, Memorial University, St. John's, NL.

The clothes everyday sailors wore were not modern government-issued and regulated uniforms. Naval sailors were supplied with what were commonly called "slops;" mass-produced suits of male apparel, largely manufactured for maritime or colonial markets. For civilian merchant mariners, these ready-made clothes were easily purchased when coming into port. Sailors chose clothing as one of the first necessary purchases to be made after a long voyage because salt water and labour were notoriously hard on clothing (Figure 0.1). Ready-made slops allowed sailors to immediately purchase a new kit—sometimes before even stepping foot on shore—without having to wait for a tailor or to buy second-hand. Sailors in the navy were supplied with these slops through government contracts that produced a large quantity of theoretically identical products, providing uniformity of a kind to ratings, but not one maintained by assiduous government oversight. This was different from the dress of officers who wore state-regulated uniforms, which they maintained at their own expense. Even with regulations, officers were allowed leeway to add their own personal flounces to their dress until the Admiralty began enforcing more strict uniform regulations in the 1820s.[3]

Mass-produced ready-made clothes designed for a large military market of coerced or involuntary consumers, guaranteeing a constant consumer base, is a significant early source of modern ready-made fast-fashion.[4] Many of the aspects that we take for granted in the modern ready-to-wear garment industry, however, were not yet solved. In the clothes-making process,

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[3] Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions, 1748-1857* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 66–75; Amy Miller, "Clothes Make the Man: Naval Uniform and Masculinity in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 149–50. The difficultly in enforcing regulations for officers was a wider problem in European militaries, see Gunner Lind, "Uniform and Distinction: Symbolic Aspects of Officer Dress in the Eighteenth-Century Danish State," *Textile History* 41, no. sup1 (May 1, 2010): 49, https://doi.org/10.1179/174329510X12646114289545.

[4] See Beverly Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade Before the Factory, 1660-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 9–41; and for a discussion of coerced consumption, see Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c. 1500-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 190–247.

only a few tasks were done by machine. Thread was spun, and, by the end of the Napoleonic Wars, cloth was woven in the growing industrial English midlands, but the bulk of garment construction had to be done by hand. This process involved sub-contractors or the contractors themselves distributing the materials to sweated garment workers who would then copy a distributed "pattern" based on an original facsimile approved by the Navy Board.[5] Thus, the items returned to the contractor from the sweated piece-workers could vary sharply in skill and interpretation. Sizing was especially a problem; without the modern concept of mathematically calculated standardisation, which began development in the late-nineteenth century and was refined in the early-twentieth, garments were sized based on the proportions of actual sailors and marines who were considered a good representation of what bureaucrats and officers imagined sailors and marines to be.

These developments in military apparel occurred over hundreds of years but the focus here is on the twenty-five-year-long conflicts between Britain and France resulting from the French Revolution of 1789. This period was in many ways both the last great conflict of the early modern Royal Navy and at the same time it remains centered in the British imaginary as the most iconic and celebrated period of naval combat in Britain's history. In the same way, the French Wars ended some features of early modernity still clinging to naval bureaucracy and infrastructure but the reforms and changes over decades afterwards actually built the modern Royal Navy. Inventors and innovators like Samuel Bentham and Marc Brunel introduced steam technology and mechanised mass-production during this period but though the first passenger steamship was already at work on the Clyde, the full importance of this technology was yet to be

[5] Patterns, during this period, refer to actual finished garments used as a quality or reproduction sample, not a modern paper pattern, which were a late-nineteenth century development. Many uniforms in museum collections are actually these patterns instead of being actual worn garments which were later donated. See Thomas Roth, "The French Uniform Mystery," in *Uniform*, ed. Klas Kronberg (Stockholm: Armémuseum, 2010), 24–33.

felt.[6] The amalgamation of the Admiralty and Navy Board in 1832 dissolved one of the navy's most significant seventeenth-century bureaucratic developments, though the two departments were already on a collision course by 1805.

This contradiction can also be seen in how the navy contracted for clothing. During the French Wars period, slop clothing distribution in the navy came squarely under the control of the state, ending the long history where military commanders had the power to dress their men.[7] In other ways, however, this period began or hastened trajectories of change, which were completed, not by war, but by the Pax-Britannica steam-powered navy. This technological shift required a restructuring of naval crews—significantly the creation of the engineering department—completing a process that delegated ship authority from the sole purview of the ship's commander to department heads who might not have final say but had to be relied upon for their specialised knowledge. This included the pursery department, where the purser had a closer relationship to the navy's clothing and victualling production and distribution systems than the commander, and who was specially trained to understand its unique bureaucracy. The diluted power of officers and the deck crew gave the state the power to institute new uniforms for sailors, as well as stricter, more inflexible regulations for officers. Peace at sea, even when policed by the Royal Navy, limited the power of officers by requiring fewer ships, slowing rates of promotion, and creating infrequent opportunities for taking prizes.

This thesis aims to study the relationships between warship crews, officers, landward bureaucrats, dockyard workers, and civilians through the problems incurred by the demands for

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[6] In 1813, the Admiralty received a short, printed pamphlet authored by Henry Bell about the *Comet*, his steam-powered transport, which ran the 26-mile distance between Glasgow and Greenock in 4 hours and a half with a three horsepower engine. See Henry Bell, *Observations on the Utility of Applying Steam Engines to Vessels, &c.* (Glasgow: J. Niven, 1813), 15, in ADM 1/4383, February 19, 1813, TNA.

[7] It took longer for this process to occur in the army. See Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 30–54.

and the distribution of clothing, especially those garments for naval sailors and private marines. This is achieved through gender theory with an emphasis on the study of masculinity and through material culture studies. These two approaches are combined to examine naval history and maritime history more broadly in a way that emphasises connections between the land and the sea, the importance of working people, the significance of material goods in everyday life, the layered relationships between naval personnel, and the importance of considering the long periods of tedium spent at sea when warships were not engaged in military action.

Women's History, Gender, and Masculinity

Soon after the development of gender theory in the 1980s, it became apparent that the concept was in danger of becoming simply an alternate title for "women's studies" with added rhetorical and political ideas added to the study of women in society. This was despite Joan Scott's 1986 article explicitly outlining how gender analysis was essential to understand spaces and subjects in which women were not necessarily physically present but gendered rhetoric still informed the actions of men.[8] Scholars did, however, begin to deconstruct masculinity alongside studies of the rhetoric of femininity that predominantly featured women. While some women's and gender historians saw this as a back-door method of diluting important scholarship on women's issues with research on men, already the basis of most histories, it became apparent that understanding the ideas that built changing concepts of masculinity and maintained the male body and male concerns as "universal" was necessary to create a fuller understanding of women's history and gender as a field. Still, historians were hesitant about the usefulness of masculinity studies. John Tosh wrote a passionate appeal for the study of masculinity in 1994,

[8] Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1073.

remarking that "historians of masculinity are in a strong position to demonstrate (not merely assert) that gender is inherent in all aspects of social life, whether women are present or not."[9] He returned with a more negative assessment in 2011 when he asked if masculinity was "an outdated concept." He based this assessment on what he saw as an abandonment of working-class history because its sources "hold little appeal for the prevalent modes of cultural analysis."[10]

Still, the utility of gender and masculinity was apparent, especially in research examining military and maritime history—two areas where women were presented as only marginally important despite their roles as caregivers, entrepreneurs, sex workers, and often secretly as colleagues—was apparent immediately to some, though it was slow to develop. The same year as Tosh's initial article was published, David Morgan produced a chapter in *Theorizing Masculinities* about the value of gender in the study of military history, remarking that "of all the sites where masculinities are constructed, reproduced, and deployed, those associated with war and the military are some of the most direct."[11] His chapter includes the importance of studying the physicality of military life that both builds a masculine body and puts it on display, but Morgan frames this in a limited sense of the development of hegemonic heterosexuality.[12] In an inverse of gender's usual association with women, Morgan wrote that masculinity was an important tool in exploring homosocial environments like the military but thought that when women became involved, the study of masculinity was less useful.[13]

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[9] John Tosh, "What Should Historians Do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain," *History Workshop*, no. 38 (1994): 180.
[10] John Tosh, "The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?," in *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, ed. John H. Arnold and Sean Brady, Genders and Sexualities in History (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011), 24–25, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230307254_2.
[11] David H.J. Morgan, "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinity," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, ed. Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, Research on Men and Masculinities 5 (London: Sage, 1994), 165.
[12] Morgan, 167–68.
[13] Morgan, 170.

Maritime history was another field strongly associated with male-exclusive labour and it also had early adopters of gender theory but was equally slow in more broadly incorporating its use. In 1996, the edited volume *Iron Men, Wooden Women* was published containing articles that tried to situate the maritime world in a gendered framework. It focused largely on women's contributions to maritime labour, however, it also included chapters on masculinity. Tellingly, Margaret Creighton's work on whalers was the only chapter to explore white masculinity and labour, with Laura Tabili and W. Jeffrey Bolster both making important contributions about the gendered pressures Black men faced at sea and in port in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[14] Both Tabili and Bolster make strong arguments for the exploration of maritime labour as an intersectional study, wherein Black labourers were both framed as more racially fit to stoke coal for hot boilers on board steamships while at the same time they were feminised as concurrently more suitable as cooks or stewards than as sailors. White ship owners, captains, and crewmembers harnessed racial and gendered rhetoric in order to limit Black workers to some of the most difficult and undesirable forms of shipboard labour. That a majority of the included historians chose to turn their focus to women's stories when contributing to this volume on gender, some despite their usual focus on men's maritime labour—Marcus Rediker for example wrote about the significance of pirate women—recalls Toby Ditz's 2004 observation that

[14] Margaret S. Creighton, "Davy Jones' Locker Room: Gender and the American Whaleman, 1830-1870," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920*, ed. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling, Gender Relations in the American Expirience (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 118–37; Laura Tabili, "'A Maritime Race': Masculinity and the Racial Division of Labor in British Merchant Ships, 1900-1939," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920*, ed. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling, Gender Relations in the American Expirience (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 169–88; and W. Jeffrey Bolster, "'Every Inch a Man': Gender in the Lives of African American Seamen, 1800-1860," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920*, ed. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling, Gender Relations in the American Expirience (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 138–68.

"masculinity particularly, like whiteness, had been overlooked precisely to the extent that the power and privileged it signified was hegemonic."[15]

Still, historians who feared that masculinity might overwhelm scholarship of women's history were correct in the long term in the instance of maritime scholarship.[16] Though early publications like *Iron Men, Wooden Women* put men and women in conversation through gender theory, few examples of such works exist between the late nineties and early 2010s.[17] Instead, there was increasingly an emphasis on exploring gender only through men and masculinity. This dichotomy is not unique to maritime history, but it is certainly heightened by distinctions between manly labour at sea and feminised "lubber" work on land. Historians like Valerie Burton have analyzed this division as a contemporary ideology that framed working-class sailors as manly and free in contrast to feminised middle-class breadwinners. Burton's work reveals the long-term effect of imagining the sea as masculine and the shore as feminine. Such gendered divisions created a hard border between the two spaces where none exists and naturalised the absence of both women at sea and the scholarship about those women.[18]

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[15] Toby L. Ditz, "The New Men's History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some Remedies from Early American Gender History," *Gender & History* 16, no. 1 (April 2004): 1; and see also Marcus Rediker, "Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger: The Lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, Pirates," in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920*, ed. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling, Gender Relations in the American Expirience (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 1–33.

[16] Ditz argues that the study of masculinity generally "risks perpetuating the oppressive omissions of conventional history." Ditz, "The New Men's History," 7.

[17] Jen Manion's chapter on sailors in her book on transgender history has been a recent and welcome addition. Jen Manion, *Female Husbands: A Trans History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), chap. 3, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108652834.

[18] Valerie Burton, "The Myth of Bachelor Jack: Masculinity, Patriarchy and Seafaring Labour," in *Jack Tar in History: Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour*, ed. Colin Howell and Richard Twomey (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1991), 179–98; Valerie Burton, "'Whoring, Drinking Sailors': Reflections on Masculinity from the Labour History of Nineteenth-Century British Shipping," in *Working Out Gender: Perspectives from Labour History*, ed. Margaret Walsh (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 84–101; Valerie Burton, "Boundaries and Identities in the Nineteenth-Century English Port: Sailortown Narratives and Urban Space," in *Identities in Space: Contested Terrains in the Western City Since 1850*, ed. Simon Gunn and Robert J. Morris (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 137–51.

More recent work, however, is bringing concepts of domesticity and femininity to sea. Elin Jones's doctoral dissertation on space and the naval warship portrays the vessel as a work place whose context is constantly moving on a sliding scale between war machine and domestic home. She explores the supposedly mundane objects that sailors brought with them, like cookery utensils and earthenware mugs, which linked sailors to their homes and families, a welcome rebuttal of Creighton's claim that "the forecastle was an undifferentiated, undecorated, barely domestic public area."[19] Ellen Gill's monograph *Naval Families* suggests a similar transmission of domestic comforts and support through letter-writing by both officers and ratings. Gill explores how men at sea depended on landward communication with their relations for a connection to home. Through letters, family members acted as confidants, as advocates, and even as shoppers.[20] Gill also emphasises that both men and women played important roles in this support network, with parents pursuing relations, acquaintances, officers and bureaucrats for favour. As these works suggest, the ship was a vessel that transported more than just men and materiel—they also carried the memories and ideologies of landward society that were often painstakingly recreated at sea.

Historians of both gender and the maritime world like Isaac Land have suggested reframing maritime history to center on the shore rather than the sea.[21] Land's development of New Coastal Studies is built on the foundations of labour historians like David Alexander, who concluded in his famed 1980 study of seafarers' literacy that "sailors, there is reason to believe, were simply working men who got wet" and reasoned that working people generally experienced

[19] Elin Frances Jones, "Masculinity, Materiality and Space Onboard the Royal Naval Ship, 1756-1815" (Ph.D., London, Queen Mary University of London, 2016), 129–95; and Creighton, "Davy Jones' Locker Room," 128.
[20] Ellen Gill, *Naval Families, War and Duty in Britain, 1740-1820* (Melton: Boydell & Brewer, 2016).
[21] Isaac Land, "Tidal Waves: The New Coastal History," *Journal of Social History* 40, no. 3 (Spring 2007): 731–43.

great hardships, regardless of whether or not they went to sea.[22] Daniel Vickers also questioned the utility of isolating the sea as a distinct and exceptional workspace, connecting this to the stagnation of the field. Maritime historians, he lamented, sit "in a circle facing outwards."[23] He asked for historians to consider the lives of sailors on shore and the lives of their families to fully understand a working group that largely left seafaring by age thirty.[24] In his study of young American men at sea, where Vickers focused on seafaring in Salem, Massachusetts, he defined sailors as "simply faces in the crowd."[25] Alexander and Vickers taught and wrote at Memorial University, drawn there because of the Maritime History Archive [MHA] and the 1970s Atlantic Canada Shipping Project cliometrics study.[26] The work produced from this project has heavily influenced this paper. My application of gendered analysis and material culture studies to maritime history began while working with the MHA collection and as a direct response to both the scholarship that resulted from the project and its missed potential.[27]

Material Cultural Studies

The study of clothing in the early modern and modern periods has been robust, but still lacking in some respects. The clothing of working people, especially in the nineteenth century,

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[22] Alexander cites the autobiography of a South Shields chip woman to highlight this, though he does not explicitly challenge the gendered ideas of sea and shore. See David Alexander, "Literacy Among Canadian and Foreign Seamen, 1863-1899," in *Working Men Who Got Wet: Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the Atlantic Canada Shipping Project, July 24-July 26, 1980*, ed. Rosemary Ommer and Gerald Panting (St. John's: Maritime History Group, Memorial University, 1980), 32; and Francie Nichol, *The Life and Times of Francie Nichol*, ed. Joe Robinson (London: Futura Publications, 1977).
[23] Daniel Vickers, "Beyond Jack Tar," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1993): 419.
[24] Vickers, 421–22.
[25] Daniel Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 2.
[26] The history of the Maritime History Archive, and the Atlantic Canada Shipping Project specifically, is discussed in Valerie Burton, "Sourcing Maritime History Over Four Decades: Crew Agreement Scholarship at Memorial University of Newfoundland," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 2 (2019): 6–13.
[27] The project was plagued by many of the same issues that concurrent cliometrics studies also experienced, but additionally two of its major scholars, David Alexander and Keith Matthews, died while working on the project.

has been examined less frequently and studies on the clothing of working men are fewer still.[28] Studies about military dress, the rising adoption of uniforms, and the disciplining of the military body has become a somewhat popular subject of men's dress, though officers remain favoured because their elaborate dress uniforms are almost exclusively the foundation of military clothing collections in museums. The development of modern European military apparel, over the course of the seventeenth century through to the modern day, closely follows social and cultural trends in the formation of the fiscal-military state, the development of nationalism, the industrialization of warfare, and domestic and international politics and fashion cycles.[29] Uniforms gave officers and the state control over working men's dress, a power that English lawmakers had accidently abandoned in the early-seventeenth century.[30] Additionally, state-regulated uniforms gave men an excuse to dress. Though intensely influenced by civilian tastes and fashion, military men were able to obscure their fashionability and to minutely police the clothing of their peers and subordinates under the auspices of following military regulation and tradition.[31]

The social and cultural uses of the uniform have been of interest to scholars of clothing, nationalism, state power, and the rise of institutions like workhouses, hospitals, schools, and prisons. Foucault noted in *Discipline and Punish* that uniforms were sartorial representations of disciplined, docile bodies, whether they were worn by soldiers or prison inmates.[32] Foucault

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[28] Vivienne Richmond's study of the clothes of the poor is a stand-out work on the subject, with her chapters on working uniforms particularly significant. See Vivienne Richmond, *Clothing the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), chaps. 9 and 10.

[29] See Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*, 9–41; Dale L. Clifford, "Can the Uniform Make the Citizen? Paris, 1789-1791," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, French Revolutionary Culture, 34, no. 3 (2001): 363–82; Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*, 31–48; and Alison Matthews David, "Decorating Men: Fashioning the French Soldier, 1852-1914," *Fashion Theory* 7, no. 1 (2003): 3–38.

[30] Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 117–52.

[31] Quintin Colville, "Jack Tar and the Gentleman Officer: The Role of Uniform in Shaping the Class-and Gender-Related Identities of British Naval Personnel," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, 13 (2003): 105–29.

[32] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alen Sheridan, 2nd ed. (1979: New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 135. Marcel Mauss also looked to the army and especially marching drill when discussing his

defined "docile bodies" as those "that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" but further, the docile body becomes "more obedient as it becomes more useful."[33] The physicality of the uniform provided both a visual means to display the docile body and as tactile means of reforming the posture, often through discomfort, producing a disciplined, battle-ready soldier. Uniform details that may seem counterintuitive to the modern observer, who values practicality in military dress, are given purpose by Foucault's docile bodies. One example is Frederick I of Prussia's tight fitting infantry uniforms that were copied by many European powers after the Prussian army's success in the Seven-Years' War.[34] The design made uniforms cheaper and more uncomfortable, but it also made soldiers more aware of their bodies and more likely to be moulded into a desirable military unit.

Daniel Roche further suggests that uniforms shaped the manners of soldiers in a form of bodily standardization and created a sense of identity for specific units as well as for wider military culture. Roche, however, also pointedly acknowledges that the sartorial uniformity of this period mainly worked only on paper. War put uniforms, as well as soldiers, to the test. Colours faded, fabrics were stained and worn, buttons were lost, and shoes fell apart. "After a few weeks of fighting," Roche ponders, "can we still speak of the regulation uniform?"[35] Uniforms also began appearing in civilian institutions, bolstered by easy and cheap access to such clothing through the military. Both Vivienne Richmond and Rebecca Wynter encountered

1934 theory of techniques of the body. See Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body," *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (1973; 1934): 71–72, 85.

[33] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 136, 138.

[34] John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 50–51.

[35] Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the "Ancien Régime,"* trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 247–48.

references to army and navy clothing in asylums.[36] Though Richmond's example is decidedly negative, both historians reveal the importance of dress in medicalised spaces, where new ideas about healthcare emphasised good appearance as curative.

Recently, historians have been looking to uniforms as material artefacts in wider stories about masculinity, state- and empire-building, and race. Historians Marshall Joseph Becker and Grace Karskens demonstrate how military uniforms could be read differently depending on who wore them.[37] For Becker, the development of the military uniform is mirrored in the rise of the loose-fitting match coats manufactured for trading with First Nations peoples in North America. Becker sees a parallel in the systems that supplied clothes to the military and that sent fabric and coats overseas to the North American frontier.[38] In addition to their similar production, he notes that Indigenous peoples transformed European uniforms using embroidery, beadwork, and accessories to visually link the wearer to their own culture and status, instead of passively absorbing European wear and rejecting the old fur mantles.[39] Karskens also sees the adoption of European coats among Indigenous Australians as being more closely linked with men and women of Australia repurposing European clothes than contemporary colonists from Europe wanted to admit (especially since the coats were largely worn *sans-culottes* as one colonist derisively put it).[40] Many of the coats that men were sketched wearing were contemporary army-

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[36] Richmond, *Clothing the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England*, 267; and Rebecca Wynter, "'Good in All Respects': Appearance and Dress at Staffordshire County Lunatic Asylum, 1818-54," *History of Psychiatry* 22, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 46, https://doi.org/10.1177/0957154X10380014.

[37] See Marshall Joseph Becker, "Match Coats and the Military: Mass-Produced Clothing for Native Americans as Parallel Markets in the Seventeenth Century," *Textile History* 41, no. sup1 (May 1, 2010): 153–81, https://doi.org/10.1179/174329510X12646114289789; and Grace Karskens, "Red Coat, Blue Jacket, Black Skin: Aboriginal Men and Clothing in Early New South Wales," *Aboriginal History* 35 (2011): 1–36.

[38] As Lemire has noted with the relationship between military slops contractors and those who contracted with the Hudson Bay Company. Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*, 35–38.

[39] Becker, "Match Coats and the Military," 154.

[40] Karskens, "Red Coat, Blue Jacket, Black Skin," 1.

issue or convict-issue coats or waistcoats.[41] Karskens suggests that the military uniforms might have been symbols of status among the Indigenous Australians, but also notes that the lack of prestige for convict clothing did not seem to cross over to Indigenous Australian culture. Both she and Becker observe that during particular times that carried extreme cultural significance for both North American and Australian Indigenous peoples, like going to war or for traditional celebrations, European clothes were not worn.[42] Rather than seeing the wearing of coats as an imposition of European culture, Becker and Karskens suggest that clothes, and predominantly military garments, were instead remade and recontextualised by First Nations and Aboriginal peoples.

The repurposing of European uniforms by non-Europeans in the early modern and modern periods shows that using clothing as a visual language of military force, and as personal or collective prestige, did not begin with the European uniform system developed largely in the eighteenth century. European uniforms are instead a continuity and reworking of an old system of military clothes procurement. What was new was the particular way they were linked to the rise of European state power, ideas of nationhood and nationalism, and the exporting of European cultural and political ideas through imperial conquest. Uniforms were not new, but the ideology and visual language attached to them changed and evolved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in a way particular to the time, geography and politics that produced them. To emphasise that modern European uniforms are a break with the past hides a significant history of sartorial regulation in and out of the military before the seventeenth century, and it

[41] Karskens, 22.
[42] Karskens, 26; and Becker, "Match Coats and the Military," 165.

also suggests that uniform military dress was yet another cultural institution that was "invented" in Europe and exported to the rest of the world—a premise that can easily be disproven.[43]

The navy's history of regulated military uniforms is shorter than that of the army by at least a century. In 1748, naval officers were allotted uniforms, which they had agitated at least two decades for. A 1726 editorial in *The Political State of Great Britain* suggested that the navy should "cloath [sailors and officers] from Head to Foot, once in two Years; with a badge of the Flag of England, as a peculiar and honourable Distinction, from all other sailors."[44] N.A.M. Rodger suggests that naval officers wanted uniforms in order to be considered as important and prestigious as their supposed peers in the army; in effect, they wanted to be gentlemen.[45] If they expected red coats, however, they were disappointed. The adoption of blue coats outraged naval officers. Blue was the colour of warrant and administrative officers in the French military, thus making them the equivalent of middling bureaucrats. Eventually, however, the distinction of navy blue became a celebrated feature of the service.

Sailors were not extended official uniforms by the Admiralty until 1857, and until that time they were provided Navy Board-contracted slops that they could purchase from the purser while at sea. Slops were not strictly regulated, however, and it is unclear how distinct sailors were from other working men in port towns. John Styles notes that specific types of clothes, especially blue coats and trousers, were associated with sailor's dress and were often identified

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[43] For example, the adoption of uniforms by the Ottoman Empire is usually framed as a "sartorially static" society mimicking European innovation. But there is evidence that the Ottoman military incorporated the kinds status and hierarchical signifiers in their military dress long before the development of the modern European-style uniform. For the latter, see John P. Dunn, "Clothes to Kill For: Uniform and Politics in Ottoman Armies," *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 2 (2011): 85–107; and, conversely, see Suraiya Faroqhi, "Introduction, or Why and How One Might Want to Study Ottoman Clothes," in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textiles to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Eren Publishing, 2004), 22.

[44] Anon, "The Ways and Means for a Constant Supply of Sailors," *The Political State of Great Britain* 32 (1726): 320.

[45] N.A.M. Rodger, "Honour and Duty at Sea, 1660-1815," *Historical Research* 75, no. 190 (2002): 432–33.

as sailors' clothes in the Old Bailey records for theft (see Figure 0.2).[46] Sam Smiles, in direct conversation with Styles, urges caution when making such claims about the so-called occupational dress of labouring people.

Of the images produced of industrial workers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Smiles notes that the subjects of such images often had no input in how they were depicted and that artists were incentivised to create portraits and scenes that catered to their wealthy clients' limited and preconceived understanding of poverty.[47] Though portrayed as having a distinct costume—blue jacket, white shirt, striped or tan cloth trousers or petticoat breeches, round hat, long hair tied in a queue, colourful neckerchief, buckled shoes and even multiple watch fops—it is unclear if that dress was actually as strictly distinct as it was portrayed, as in Figure 0.2.[48] There is reason instead to suspect that for some sailors the port town milieu rather than their dress confirmed them as sailors, as Figure 0.3 hints. Slops could be a form of occupational dress, as merchant seafarers wore similar clothing, but this also highlights how easily military clothing was adopted and influenced by civilian labourers. After the invention and dissemination of photography, however, crew portraits like Figure 0.4 show sailors wearing dress virtually indistinguishable from other working men, though of course accounts must be made for the dramatic changes in clothing production and maritime labour between 1790 and 1890.

The clothing worn in the navy was closely associated with the clothes of the civilian maritime world—until the 1850s naval ratings did not wear institutional military uniforms and

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[46] Styles, *The Dress of the People*, 45, 49.
[47] Sam Smiles, "Defying Comprehension: Resistance to Uniform Appearance in Depicting the Poor, 1770s to 1830s," *Textile History* 33, no. 1 (2002): 23.
[48] Watch fops were the decorative tabs attached to pocket watches that draped out of the pocket. They were both practical as a grip to remove the watch but were also fashionable elements themselves. The Admiral in Figure 0.2 wears a fop, but sailors were often portrayed in caricature with multiple fops as a commentary on their spending and fashionability.

the naval workforce was largely drawn from the civilian labour force through a combination of incentives and impressment.[49] Maritime dress, whether naval or civilian, has always had a complicated relationship with landward clothing—naval officers skirted regulation to adopt civilian or army accoutrements into their uniforms, and civilian fashion (both men's and women's) drew details and aspects from the clothing of seafarers, trousers being one of the most enduring examples.[50] In addition, the focus of scholars of material culture on globalization and international cultural contact points has also contributed to the increased consideration of seafarers as significant vectors of material and cultural exchange. This turn to considerations of military dress has brought scholars of material culture to consider the clothing and wider material culture of the Royal Navy.[51]

As was true for civilian dress history prior to 1990, the history of military uniforms tends towards the cataloguing of detailed changes in the style of regimentals, and particularly, though not exclusively, emphasises the changes of the dress of the officer class. With a few exceptions, historians of the army and navy have not been very interested in where the uniforms for these institutions came from, how they were circulated within the military, or what happened to them once they were no longer useful or the combatants were demobilised. Historians writing about the clothing manufacture, nationalism, and state centralisation, however, have not let the broader social significance of military uniforms go unnoticed.[52] These varied but pervasive pieces of

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[49] Denver Brunsman, "Men of War: British Sailors and the Impressment Paradox," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14 (2010): 43.

[50] Miller, "Naval Uniform and Masculinity," 148–49; and see also Beverly Lemire, "A Question of Trousers: Seafarers, Masculinity and Empire in the Shaping of British Male Dress, c. 1600-1800," *Cultural and Social History* 13, no. 1 (2016): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.1080/14780038.2016.1133493.

[51] Some recent and forthcoming examples are Jones, "Masculinity, Materiality and Space Onboard"; Sarah Pickman, "The Right Stuff: Objects and the Making of Extreme Environments, 1850-1940" (Ph.D., New Haven, CT, Yale University, Forthcoming); and Maya Wassell Smith, "Sailor Craft: Maritime Making in the Long Nineteenth Century" (Cardiff, Cardiff University, Forthcoming).

[52] Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*; Colin Jones and Rebecca Spang, "Sans-Culottes, *Sans Café, Sans Tabac*: Shifting Realms of Necessity and Luxury in Eighteenth-Century France," in *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer*

dress appeared in domestic and foreign markets as second-hand goods, drove change in the production of ready-made clothes, and were both part of and a visual representation of a centralising bureaucracy and state.[53] The adoption of uniforms, the way they wove into the fabric of society and nation, and their continual changes to adapt to military prerogatives and fashionable sensibilities, underscores the link between clothes, nation, power, and industry.

Slop clothes, however, were even more easily woven into the cultural fabric of society, being both mass-produced for a wide military application, but with a close enough relationship to civilian dress than their military origins were more easily obscured. Uniforms, like livery, were made with visual details that marked them as military apparel—things like contrasting coloured cuffs and lapels, elaborate frogging, stamped metal buttons, and stiff tailoring declared the intended use of the clothes. Further, uniforms did not just mark the wearer as a soldier, but they also shaped the body and movement in ways that slop clothing did not.[54] The wholesale prices and mass-production of slop clothing allowed it to be shipped around the empire as a cheap alternative to locally made clothes or second-hand markets, meaning that civilians were incentivised to wear it. By the time ratings were ordered to wear uniforms in the mid-nineteenth century, male working-class dress was almost entirely produced through the system devised for making naval slop clothes which had been repurposed to produce ready-made clothes for a mass-consumer market.

Culture in Europe, 1650-1850, ed. Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 37–62; Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[53] Manuel Charpy, "The Scope and Structure of the Nineteenth-Century Second-Hand Trade in the Parisian Clothes Market," in *Alternative Exchanges: Second-Hand Circulations from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Lawrence Fontaine (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 127–51; Clifford, "Can the Uniform Make the Citizen? Paris, 1789-1791"; and Michael Zakim, *Ready-Made Democracy: A History of Men's Dress in the American Republic, 1760-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[54] Matthew McCormack, "Dance and Drill: Polite Accomplishments and Military Masculinities in Georgian Britain," *Cultural and Social History* 8, no. 3 (2011): 320–23.

Sources

The Board of Admiralty was the highest authority of the Royal Navy's bureaucracy. They reported to the King and were limited by parameters set up by the Treasury, but for the most part the Admiralty, led by the First Lord, oversaw the navy's expenses and operations, confirming or rejecting the decisions of their subordinate boards, which included the Navy Board.[55] The Admiralty managed the navy through a system of correspondence. This system functioned by sending chains of duplicated and forwarded letters that were received as in-letters by the First Secretary of the Admiralty and presented to the board during meetings.[56] The letters were read, the issues therein were discussed and decisions made about their contents were recorded within the letters as "minutes."[57]

While the format of these letters is not always consistent, they do follow a basic set of rules. Usually, the first or main letter was written by the highest-ranking person who saw the letter or letters. This main letter might act as nothing more than an introduction of the real concern to be outlined in an enclosed letter and was usually written by an admiral, often the commander-in-chief of a fleet or dockyard, a marine commandant, or a ship's commander. The letters begin with a rote recognition of the authority of the Board of Admiralty and the First Secretary, asking the latter to present the letter to the board.[58] Presumably, this application also

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[55] Roger Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy: Resources, Logistics and the State, 1755-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 138.
[56] J.M. Haas, *A Management Odyssey: The Royal Dockyards, 1714-1914* (New York: University of America Press, 1994), 8.
[57] Summaries of these minutes were usually added to the annotations of the letters in the in-letter digests.
[58] The letters begin almost uniformly with a slight reworking of the phrase "Be pleased to lay before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the enclosed letter" as used in one about slop clothing prices written by Admiral Bartholomew S. Rowley, ADM 1/737 f. 349, May 31, 1804, TNA. A variation of this sentence is "I herewith transmit for their Lordship's consideration" as written by Admiral John Holloway, ADM 1/674 f. 234, March 8, 1805, TNA. Though letter-writers addressed "their Lords" with the text body, letters were always posted to the First Secretary and addressed him in the first sentences.

indicates that some letters did not pass beyond this curation process. It is likely that officers and civilians were taught this rote greeting, either through peer-to-peer mentorship or through correspondence instruction books.[59] Most letters included enclosed attachments following the main letter, usually designated as copies. These enclosures could be further letters of advocacy by commanders, forwarding concerns by department heads like pursers or reports by petty officers. Commanders and bureaucrats also returned naval paperwork as enclosures. Surveys and petitions were transmitted this way, and so were contracts. These enclosures, however, could be removed from their place within main letters once received by the Admiralty.[60]

The letters used as the primary source of this dissertation are two different but related document types in collections held by two major British archival institutions. The backbone of these are the Admiralty in-letters, essentially all the correspondence sent to the Admiralty by a variety of people, mostly admirals and ship commanders, but also different government bureaucrats, civilians, and members of the royal family.[61] These letters are divided into the main collection at the National Archives, Kew, where all the Admiralty in-letters are kept. The only exception is the subsidiary collection at the National Maritime Museum's Caird Library, which holds all the Admiralty in-letters sent by the Navy Board specifically.[62] The second documents are the in-letter digests, large bound ledgers organised by subject in which letters were recorded,

[59] A petition for a marine private's discharge was enclosed in a main letter which lead with "I humbly beg you will do me the kind favor to lay the inclosed [sic] memorial before their Lordships," ADM 1/3350 f. 564, August 18, 1814, TNA. The Admiralty believed that the letter was written by a scribe, but it does suggest that there was value in learning the language of addressing the Admiralty. Gill also suggests that letter-writing manuals increased access to this language and assisted soldiers, sailors, dockyard workers, and civilians in their applications to the Admiralty. See Gill, *Naval Families*, 202–3.

[60] For example, an 1810 letter sent by Adm. Alexander Cochrane referred to an additional enclosed letter written by Lieutenant Jeremy of HMS *Bacchus* in which Lt. Jeremy had submitted the slop accounts and vouchers from his ship. These documents were removed from the letter and sent to the Navy Board, as directed by the Admiralty in the minutes. See ADM 1/332 f. 174, December 12, 1810, TNA.

[61] These are ADM 1 Admiralty in-letters, held by the National Archives, Kew.

[62] The collection at the Caird Library is ADM/BP Navy Board out-letters.

annotated, categorised, and accessed by naval clerks so that the letters could be referred to once archived at the Admiralty.[63] These bound volumes are both the database of the in-letter collection and also act as a primary source. The digests are not easy to use as a letter database; they had to be partially transcribed to find the letters in the wider in-letter collection. The annotations recorded in the digest summarise the letters, showing both the amount of correspondence once extant in the collection and their contents. With these records of what was filed two hundred years ago, I was able to determine with some accuracy what letters remain on the subject of slop clothing and marine uniforms with the Admiralty in-letter collection at the National Archives and the Caird Library.

The survival of letters about slops and uniforms is poor. At the National Archives, about half of the letters annotated remain in the collection. Still, letter survival depends on its author. Letters sent by admirals, like Horatio Nelson and John Jervis (Lord St. Vincent), were bound and often transcribed as significant and noteworthy. Most letters, however, are stored in archival boxes. At the Caird, even fewer of the letters sent between the Navy Board and the Admiralty have survived. This, however, is not surprising considering the organization of the Navy Board and its fate. The Navy Board had various evolving sub-boards like the victualling board and the sick and hurt board, which meant that the provisioning of food and the management of healthcare had their own committees with their own bureaucratic focus. Naval slops and marine uniforms,

[63] These ledgers are found at the National Archives as part of the ADM 12 collection. The numerical categorization system developed by the navy to organise the subjects of the digest ledgers contains about 100 cut tabs, many with sub-tabs, and were rebound into between two to five ledgers per year. Those on slop clothing were filed under 94 with four sub-categories, those specifically for clothing and accoutrements for the marines were filed under 63.12, and the few letters about officers' uniforms were categorised under 71 General. The numbers corresponding to the digest tabs were written on the letters themselves in the top-left corner, meaning that the contents of a letter can be ascertained quickly with the assistance of the full subject key. These can be found pasted inside some of the digest ledgers. ADM 12 also contains a second ledger database called indexes, which file letters alphabetically by sender surname and also by vessel. These indexes do not contain annotations, though they do refer to the digest subject number where the letter was also annotated.

however, were part of the duties of the Navy Board proper and it is likely that letters focusing on clothing in this collection were not seen as important to preserve because clothing supply does not fit the typical understanding of the Navy Board's purpose, primarily shipbuilding and dockyard management. In 1832, the Navy Board was dissolved and its duties folded into the Admiralty. Without a civil service invested in preserving their papers, the Navy Board out-letters became vulnerable to purging, and those on clothing were particularly affected.[64] Only about five per cent of the letters about slops or uniforms annotated in the digests remain at the Caird. Still, the annotations themselves give hints as to what these letters contain.

Many projects are shaped by the sources that scholars can access and this study, both fortunately and unfortunately, is no different. Without the annotations recorded in digest ledgers, it would have been impossible to find the breadth of naval letters specifically about clothing that are the backbone of this research. The letters that were received by the Admiralty were largely those of admirals and captains, however, and contain few enclosed notes even from petty officers. The few letters from sailors or marines were either formalised through petitioning language or were received with little enthusiasm.[65] This project, which examines the clothing of working men in the British navy, therefore cannot be entirely about the experience of working men: its conclusions rest solidly on a foundation of sources written by officers, commanders, bureaucrats and aristocrats who thought about sailors and their bodies but only narrowly offer personal insights into this actual experience.

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[64] The Caird Library received these papers from the Admiralty in 1938. See Royal Museums Greenwich, "Board of Admiralty, In-Letters; Description," https://collections.rmg.co.uk/archive/objects/491960.html.

[65] In 1814, during the brief peace, a marine wrote to the Admiralty asking for discharge "from a desire to assist his aged parents [and] to support the younger branches of his family." The minute written on it directs: "the general is to endeavour to ascertain who the writer is that the men should make their applications thru' him" possibly suggesting that the scribe should be stopped from so doing. See ADM 1/3350 f. 564, August 18, 1814, TNA; and ADM 12/167 tab 63.12, August 18, 1814, TNA.

Further, the most frustrating silence was not the sailors, but instead the sweated workers—men and women—who produced slop clothes. Due to the removal or loss of letters, specifically those of the Navy Board that contained contracts, this method of research was not adequate for pursuing contractors or their wider methods of production. The work of the sweated labourers who made slop clothing, however, was truly gargantuan, their output impressively fast and consistent. That this labour was considered so unremarkable as to be nearly historically invisible remains baffling. There is very rarely acknowledgement by the Navy Board and Admiralty that it might be difficult to acquire the goods they hope to contract, despite the logistics of subcontracting clothing production, the difficulties of wartime manufacturing, and the volume of needed articles. Indeed, the Admiralty was remarkably unsympathetic to contractors who could not keep up with wartime needs and their reticence to provide a contract in a timely manner led in at least one instance to a three-year bed shortage.

A final missed opportunity was considering more explicitly the role that weapons act as accoutrements to uniforms and how uniforms therefore become markers of authorised force, though it is discussed in connection to marines. Who was allowed to carry weapons was tied to visual hierarchies of authority, power, and the ability to exert discipline, often corporeal, over other men. Officers wore sabres and kept the keys to the arms box on their persons. Marines carried muskets and their red uniforms marked them as military police who, among other duties, guarded the brig and stood on duty while sailors were flogged or hanged. Sailors had highly selective access to arms, usually only during naval engagements. A captain's ill-conceived storage of the arms chest in a space where sailors had access could the give an edge to

mutineers.[66] Though occasionally orders and requests for weapons can be found in letters with slops and marine uniforms, arms and ordnance had their own sub-section of the Admiralty digest and require their own dedicated study.[67]

Defining Paternal Care

My focus on the letters written by commanders to the Admiralty has led me to develop a specific type of masculine leadership caregiving I term paternal care. This type of care could apply to different public and private contexts, though I have conceived of it here with the ship in mind. Paternal care, however, owes a lot to scholarship of the domestic household, which was typically headed by a patriarch who had authority over the rest of the family and the home, while also acting as a representative of the household in public life. Similarly, commanders acted in such a capacity on board a ship. They had supreme authority over their crewmen, tempered only by visiting port or assignment to a fleet, and were able to mete out discipline, direct and manage the knowledge of on-board bureaucrats, specialists, tradesmen, and skilled labourers, take the lion's share of prize money, and even take crewmen with them to new postings.[68] Like the power of a family patriarch, the authority vested in commanders was understood to be a natural feature of ship life. The large amount of state authority granted to them, however, was not assured—as Rediker notes, early modern seafarers experimented with a variety of ways to run a ship but the

[66] The mutiny of the *Danae* revolved around such a case, where the botched refitting of a formerly French ship rendered space below decks so tight that the captain, twenty-year-old Lord William Allan Proby, put the arms chest on deck. See Dudley Pope, *The Devil Himself: The Mutiny of 1800* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987), 77.
[67] The supply, storage and distribution of naval ordnance is filed under tab 98, subsections 21 to 25.
[68] The division of prize money was revised in 1808 but captains were still allotted the bulk of this payout, getting between 25% to 33% of the value of the captured ship and its cargo, with the rest divided in various allotments to the crew. See J.M. Fewster, "Prize-Money and the British Expedition to the West Indies of 1793-4," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12, no. 1 (1983): 3–4.

power of the state, transmitted through captains, eventually formed the paternal captaincy model that flourished by the nineteenth century.[69]

Paternal care, in a naval context, is the relationship between the commander and his crew that fixes the commander as the site of the ship's primary authority in terms of his ability to advocate with the government, of his right to wield legal force, and as the primary caregiver and manager of the crew's wellbeing. The word "care" specifically is used instead of "duty" or "leadership" because the domestic duties of commanders are often hidden, maligned, or made exceptional when commanders are framed only as masculine leaders. Though they are celebrated for their military prowess and are congratulated for their bureaucratic rigor, commanders also managed tedious non-military housekeeping issues like healthcare, victualling, and the supply of clothing. This was not selfless, however, but a reciprocal duty where commanders provided care and advocacy in return for the good behaviour, deference, and labour of their crew.[70] In turn, the authority of the commander was a negotiation between himself and his subordinates, though his position was always the more powerful in the long term because it was legally reinforced by his peers and the state.[71] Still, it was not total control. Commanders needed to be astute and just

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[69] Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 292–93.

[70] Sailors' "good behaviour" meant that they worked hard and well, did not complain or make rude comments or gestures, dressed appropriately, allowed officers the proper respect, did not desert, were not regularly drunk, and generally followed the rules of the ship and navy.

[71] How the state reacted to mutiny, for example, underscores that even though captains who lost command of their ships were court martialled, they were usually acquitted by their peers. Officers were often more sympathetic to the plight of fellow officers than the suffering of the sailors under their command. When news of the mutiny on HMS *Hermione* reached Adm. Lord St. Vincent, he wrote "I shudder for the fate of Pigot, who is a very promising officer & spirited fellow." Pigot had instituted a policy where the last man out of the rigging was flogged to encourage speedy work. In their haste to descend from the rigging, three sailors fell to their deaths. When a popular midshipman complained, he was decommissioned and flogged. See ADM 1/396 f. 258, December 22, 1797, TNA; Niklas Frykman, "The Mutiny on the *Hermione*: Warfare, Revolution, and Treason in the Royal Navy," *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 175–76; and, for an example where the captain survived the mutiny and was acquitted, see Pope, *The Devil Himself*, 129.

managers of their crew.[72] Their positions of authority were constantly tested by their own actions and the actions of the crew, who collectively needed to work more or less together in order for a warship to function as a military machine, as a mode of transportation, and as a mini-society.

Historians have grappled with how to frame the relationship between the commander and crew in many ways. In merchant shipping, the power that masters wielded is often explained by the term "next after God," meaning that at sea they had total authority, vested dually in them through ship owners and the government. Contemporaries understood, however, that this was a negotiated process, not a strict natural reality. Captain William Barnes observed in his autobiography that "a captain when he's at sea, he's judge, jury and everything else; he has the law in his own hands. If a mutiny starts he can shoot every man of them down to save the ship" but continued that "some captains, they don't know how to treat men when the men are acting all right."[73] Dudley Pope called naval captains the "king of the little island represented by [the ship]."[74] Scholarship of the eighteenth century has contrasting approaches. N.A.M. Rodger sees the relationship between the commander and crew as a negotiation so routine that officers and the government believed mutiny an important and necessary part of sea life.[75] Rediker and Linebaugh, however, framed the relationship as one of increasing capitalist, proto-industrial control over the skills and labour of working people in the Atlantic world, with mutiny and

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[72] Kathrin Orth shows that sailors understood punishment to be necessary but also made it clear that they understood some punishment to be cruel and unusual, and refused to tolerate such treatment. See Kathrin Orth, "Voices from the Lower Deck: Petitions on the Conduct of Naval Officers during the 1797 Mutinies," in *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance*, ed. Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 99–101.

[73] William Morris Barnes, *When Ships Were Ships and Not Tin Pots: The Seafaring Adventures of Captain William Morris Barnes*, ed. Hilda Wortman (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1930), 18, http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/80176.

[74] Pope, *The Devil Himself*, 76.

[75] N. A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), 238–44; as cited in Jeffrey D. Glasco, "'The Seaman Feels Him-Self a Man,'" *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 66 (2004): 43.

rebellion becoming an increasingly radicalised "struggle against confinement—on ships, in workshops, in prisons, or even in empires—and the simultaneous search for autonomy."[76]

In 2004, Jeffrey D. Glasco attempted to reconcile these two approaches when considering the differences between the fleet-wide Royal Navy mutinies in 1797.[77] Rather than continuations of only class and labour relationships, Glasco stresses that sailors were both invested in securing better work conditions and also in redefining their masculine role in the navy as skilled workers whose labour, martial prowess, and loyalty deserved the careful attention of their commanders, the naval administration, and British society.[78] The mutinies of 1797 proved that sailors had considerable power to disrupt naval operations during a time when the Royal Navy was actively defending Great Britain from foreign invasion. After the 1790s, ship captains, flag officers, and even marine commandants, used this language framing sailors as men deserving state attention and care to advocate on behalf of their crew, but also usurped it to reframe their own power in the naval hierarchy. Commanders, pressured from both above and below, used the threat of crew insubordination to emphasise the important and singular role they played as government representatives and paternal caregivers. Only they had the authority to distribute this care to sailors, and only they had the unique insight to advocate on their behalf.

However, when brought to a homosocial environment like the ship, paternal care becomes elusive. While crews were framed as families, the ostensibly all-male complement of warships and their temporary but primary use as a mobile, floating military fortress made naval

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[76] Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, "The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, and the Atlantic Working Class in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 3, no. 3 (September 1990): 244.
[77] For a general overview of these events, see Ann Veronica Coats, "Spithead Mutiny: Introduction," in *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance*, ed. Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 17–38; and Philip MacDougall, "The Nore Mutiny: Introduction," in *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance*, ed. Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 142–46.
[78] Glasco, "'The Seaman Feels Him-Self a Man,'" 45–46.

vessels into both households and anti-households.[79] Other naval institutions, like hospitals, were framed explicitly as households, with the male hospital governor positioned as the patriarch or master, and the matron as mistress.[80] Hospitals, being on land, were able to reinforce the division of gendered labour and expertise by hiring male physicians, surgeons and orderlies who worked alongside women ward matrons, nurses, servants, and washerwomen. Erin Spinney, for example, found that the Portsmouth hospital governor Richard Creyke titled a section of his institutional accounts a "household book" where he filed various bills, including those for coal, beer, wine.[81] The homosocial nature of the ship, however, complicated this division of labour. At sea, men were responsible for performing forms of self-care and labour normally done by women, such as mending and washing clothing, food preparation and management, cleaning, and nursing. Commanders were required to take an interest in all aspects of their ships, even when this management proved dull or troublesome, and this included managing domestic work. Still, according to naval historians in a curious reversal of the paternal associations of ship command, Captain Thomas Hardy shopping around in 1804 for better clothing prices made him like a "protective, thrifty matron fussing over her children."[82] If the ship was a household, and clothing was an effeminate diversion, then even the brash national hero Nelson was made "mother-like" by advocating for better clothing for his sailors.[83]

Studies of merchant and naval seafarers have indicated that this gendered work formed a shipboard hierarchy among sailors. Bolster's study of Black seafarers in the nineteenth century shows that sailors with the least status on land were increasingly relegated to domestic service

[79] Jones, "Masculinity, Materiality and Space Onboard," 136–37.
[80] Erin Spinney, "Naval and Military Nursing in the British Empire c. 1763-1830" (Ph.D., Saskatoon, University of Saskatchewan, 2018), 161–62.
[81] Spinney, 162.
[82] Laurence Brockliss, John Cardwell, and Michael Moss, *Nelson's Surgeon: William Beatty, Naval Medicine, and the Battle of Trafalgar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 90.
[83] Brockliss, Cardwell, and Moss, 91.

roles like cook or steward, emphasised by the narrowing of Black men's labour mobility, even at sea.[84] This echoes Glasco's emphasis that sailors were not a unified class, but a group of workers within an interclass order that placed hierarchical value on masculine seafaring expertise. In this literal top-down system, the most skilled sailors worked in the highest, most dangerous parts of the rigging as topmen. Each lower spar required less risk and skill, with so-called "landsmen" or "idlers" such as raw recruits, marines, tradesmen, cooks and servants forming the lowest tier.[85] Further, maritime nostalgia, which began to develop for the French Wars period as early as the 1820s[86] and was definitely established by the time Turner painted his nostalgic 1839 portrait of *The Fighting Temeraire* (see Figure 0.5), did not allow the labour of sailors to become entirely invisible, though the men themselves largely lost their individuality. The continuing importance of their labour was made explicit when the Royal Navy began training their young officers on sailing ships. This linked the maritime skills that had once been the purview of working men in the wooden navy to the maritime expertise and mastery of officers in the steam-powered navy.[87] As Frank Scott has pointed out, even contemporaries of this training where sceptical and sometimes even antagonistic to this training method,[88] but it makes more sense when what is being claimed is not necessarily actual skill but powerful recollections of the masculine naval

[84] Bolster, "Every Inch a Man," 163.
[85] Glasco, "'The Seaman Feels Him-Self a Man,'" 46–48. Landsman were men with no sailing skill. If a pressed man was termed a landsman, it meant that he had no maritime training but was in a position to learn, moving to ordinary seaman when he had some skills to able-bodied seaman when he was considered worthy of more responsibility (and higher wages, see Table 1.2). Landsmen or idlers could refer to men who were purposefully barred from going aloft—this includes marines, cooks, servants, and the various trades people on board, like coopers, and their assistants. Sometimes, if the ship was short enough crewmembers, these "idlers" could join the deck crew but this was considered a dire staffing situation.
[86] Miller, "Naval Uniform and Masculinity," 150–51. The rapid glorification of the period is due to both the actual military performance of the Royal Navy but also the subsequent demobilization of the navy following 1815. It would not be difficult for young men entering the peace-time navy of the 1820s and 30s, with few opportunities for command or glory, to be nostalgic for the navy of their fathers.
[87] Frank Scott, "The Evolution of Sail Training from the Nineteenth Century to the 1980s," *The Mariner's Mirror* 106, no. 2 (2020): 203–5, https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.2020.1736400.
[88] F. Scott, 202.

prowess of sailors who fought and sailed in Nelson's navy. Not glorified were workers termed "landsmen" and "idlers," all important for the ship to function, but their landward and often domestic associations did not link them to the working-class skilled manliness that was intrinsically connected to going aloft.

This marks the final important feature of paternal care: officers were able to take credit for many facets of ship labour because it is irrelevant if commanders actually did the work, were the most knowledgeable people on board, or were personably responsible for providing care. What matters instead was that their mastery of the ship was understood to be primarily responsible for the ship's success and the crew's care.[89] In this period the development of specialist departments, such as medicine or pursery, followed the increasing sophistication of these areas. The growth of naval bureaucracy required dedicated civil servants like the purser on board to manage the "vexatious remonstrances"[90] of victualling, wages, and slops. Similarly, physicians and surgeons provided crews with increasingly sophisticated healthcare that captains were not trained to perform.[91] Still, commanders like Captain James Cook and Admiral Nelson took credit for the good management of their ships, even when they themselves did not provide it.[92] This leadership mastery framed commanders as the natural and correct site of expertise on a

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[89] Though from a decidedly earlier period, Brandon Reay's study of Cato's *De agri cultura* suggests precedent for this type of authority and mastery. Reay notes that literature like Cato's instructed the owners of Roman estates how to improve their land personally, despite knowing that these tasks would be delegated to subordinates and slaves. "Slaves and hired hands actually did the mundane, daily work of making an estate productive, but the text addresses itself to the singular reader/owner *as if he would carry out the instruction*, and that is precisely the point … what counts at the end of the day is the shine of the tools—the tangible visible proof of [the estate owner's] skill." Brendon Reay, "Cato's *De Agri Cultura* and the Spectacle of Expertise," in *Roman Republican Villas: Architecture, Context, and Ideology*, ed. Jeffrey A. Becker and Nicola Terrenato, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome 32 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 64, 66. Reay's emphasis. I want to thank Dr. F. Mira Green for bringing this work to my attention.

[90] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA.

[91] Although in merchant shipping specifically masters did continue to act as basic healthcare providers well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because ship owners refused in most cases to staff a dedicated physician.

[92] Jane Bowden-Dan, "Diet, Dirt and Discipline: Medical Developments in Nelson's Navy. Dr John Snipe's Contribution," *Mariner's Mirror* 90, no. 3 (2004): 268, https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.2004.10656904.

naval ship, but the navy did not always reciprocally hold these men to account for the actions and failings of their command.[93]

Ditz cautions that uncritical discussions of mastery can render the work and suffering of subordinate working people invisible.[94] In order to remedy this, I have attempted to view the process of sourcing, regulating, distributing and receiving clothing through the concept of paternal care as both access to government resources and state power that officers held over their crew and also as a reciprocal relationship that could elicit violent reactions from sailors when paternal care failed. Clothing in particular lays this relationship bare as seafarers going naked was an extreme failure of both naval provisioning and the attention that loyal naval sailors deserved for their hard work defending the British Empire. Still, its usual domestic associations with labour done by women have rendered this kind of care either invisible or exceptional, to the amusement of naval historians.[95]

Conclusion

This dissertation is divided into five parts, all of which focus on the clothing of the navy. Chapter one focuses on how the slop supply system worked, or was supposed to work, by discussing the bureaucracy of the Admiralty and Navy Board, what sailors were expected to

[93] This remains an important feature of naval command, even today. Two changes have occurred which fundamentally make modern naval leadership different from the paternal care seen in the French Wars period. First, the power of the captain has slowly eroded over time by both the rise of increasingly specialist departments below them, especially the engineering department, and the increasing ability of the state to oversee the actions of commanders even at great distances. Secondly, the rise of an objective bureaucracy in theory created a milieu wherein commanders were accountable for both the successes and the failures of their ship, though again, the personal power of the commander could temper this accountability. An interesting example of these tensions playing out in a modern context is the Covid-19 outbreak on the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in March and April 2020 which resulted in the permanent removal of the ship's commander by the Secretary of the Navy Thomas Modly and Modly's subsequent resignation.

[94] Ditz, "The New Men's History," 6.

[95] See Brockliss, Cardwell, and Moss, *Nelson's Surgeon*, 90–91.

wear at sea, and the politics of providing and rejecting those slops. This chapter shows how commanders attempted to follow slop clothing regulations and slopsellers attempted to provide the clothes, but the system was so ponderous and was undergoing enough changes that explicit regulations often did not exist. Chapter two continues to consider how the slop system worked, but with a particular focus on when the slop system broke down and commanders used their own personal power through the language of paternal care to supply goods. This includes negotiating with the Admiralty for clothes, acquiring slops outside contracts while in foreign stations, and providing slops to "dubious" crewmembers like supernumeraries.

Chapter three incorporates the Royal Marines into the discussion of naval clothing. Marines' uniforms were the earliest uniforms used in the navy, predating even those for naval officers, and as they mimicked the designs of army foot soldiers, their presence on board naval ships both institutionally and visually presented a challenge to the authority of naval captains. Marines also performed deck work, however, and were allotted slops for this labour and for leisure time. This chapter, therefore, sees marines as naval personnel with a unique operational and sartorial presence on warships and in dockyards. Chapter four considers what changed when naval warships came to port, particularly how civilian laws and private business diluted the authority of commanders. It also discusses the manufacture of machine-produced shoes by Marc Brunel, on the model of his more successful block-production scheme. Finally, the conclusion considers the continuity of the slop-production system, looking ahead to how the development of an iron, steam-power navy patrolling an ostensibly peaceable sea affected the authority of commanders and the skills of sailors, leading by the mid-nineteenth century to the introduction of uniforms for naval ratings.

This dissertation attempts to address a gap in naval and clothing scholarship by considering how clothing moved from dockyards to the purser's slop chest on board warships to the sea chests and ditty bags of sailors. Though officers complained about the process and maligned the actual garments, a large amount of clothing was mass-produced for sale at sea and was transported all over the world. Civilians in Britain had financial incentives to get involved with this production, whether it was in labouring as sweated workers, developing better clothes, inventing new methods of production, or acting as portside saleswomen. Officers used clothing, among other needs, to exert patriarchal power over their sailors and to resist the encroachment of the state's own patriarchal oversight of their command. Naval clothing was both a significant process of production and distribution, and it also reveals important relationship networks within the Royal Navy, visually displaying differences of skill, mastery, and power.

Figures 0.1 – 0.5

Figure 0.1 – Shirt (ensemble), linen and wool, 1600-1699, 53.101/1a, Museum of London, https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/83031.html; and Breeches (ensemble), linen and cotton, 1600-1699, and 53.101/1b, Museum of London, https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/83032.html. Though worn about a century earlier than the period focused on in this paper, these heavily repaired linen shirt and breeches show the incredible stress that sailors put on their clothing at sea—the shirt is still stained with tar.

Figure 0.2 – Alfred Mills, "Sailor and Tea Kettle," National Maritime Museum, PAD0173, 1806. https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/104324.html. This caricature shows the typical depiction of sailors' dress in such images—blue jacket, red neckerchief, buff waistcoat, round hat, buff or striped trousers, and shoes. The sailor with his back to the artist also reveals his extensive queue, tied back with a black or dark blue ribbon, and an unknown headpiece. This caricature further contrasts the dress of the sailors with the uniform of a captain with over three years' seniority.

Figure 0.3 – Julius Caesar Ibbetson, “Sailors Carousing,” National Maritime Museum, Caird Collection, BHC1090, 1802. https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12582.html. This image of sailors in port celebrating, perhaps, the Glorious First of June is far more subdued than usual depictions. Though many round hats and pairs of buff trousers are visible, there are a wide range of shot jacket and neckerchief colours, and different style coats. The blues and browns blend together, making the handful of red jackets stand out.

Figure 0.4 – "Part of the Crew of the Bannockburn, 1891," (Ship's Official Number 93183, 1891, Maritime History Archive). Image reproduced with permission from private collection of Valerie Burton. With the exception of the pilot hats, rubber boots, the gansey sweater (center row, third from right), and the lifesaver, these sailors could be posing in front of a factory. Certainly, their apparel would not look out of place in a port town, even if they were not sailors. Of course, these men were probably encouraged to wear their best clothes for this portraits, but research shows that they had limited options. See Meaghan Walker, "In the Inventories of Deceased British Merchant Seafarers: Exploring Merchant Shipping and Material Culture, 1860–1880," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 2 (2019): 343–44, https://doi.org/10.1177/0843871418824969.

Figure 0.5 – J.M.W. Turner, *The Fighting Temeraire.* Oil on canvas, 1839. NG542. National Gallery of Art, London. https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/joseph-mallord-william-turner-the-fighting-temeraire. HMS *Temeraire*, one of the ships involved in the Battle of Trafalgar, is towed by a steam-powered tugboat from Sheerness to its final destination: a scrap yard in Rotherhilde. The mistily painted un-rigged warship, juxtaposed with the clearly defined tub spewing coal exhaust shows a vital aspect of Britain's past—the success of the wooden Royal Navy in the French Wars—being discarded to make way for the future of steam-power and iron. The setting sun further emphasises the passing of an age, represented by the decommissioned warship.

Chapter One – The Slop Clothes of the Royal Navy: Problems of Supply in a Global Conflict

In the period between 1793 and 1815, the British Royal Navy underwent extreme institutional pressure, fighting a twenty-five year long conflict with a shifting cast of allies and enemies but with one main constant: to defend Britain, its empire, and Europe from the radical revolutionary ideologies and expansionist nationalism of the French governments that came to power as a result of the French Revolution of 1789. During this period, Britain made use of over a century of professionalising the Royal Navy, publishing institution regulations, establishing a cohesively trained and dressed officer corps, and taking full advantage of a military and governmental bureaucracy funded by more efficient taxation and staffed by men who eventually saw service to the British state as a duty first, and a source of wealth second.[1]

The navy's bureaucracy was called the Navy Office, run by the Navy Board, which had been established as naval administration by Henry VII. The Navy Board's functions and methods were developed largely under Samuel Pepys' comptrollership during the Restoration of Charles II and the board remained wedded to these standards in many respects, meaning that as the navy and therefore the yards expanded, the Navy Board continued to work within a seventeenth-century operational framework.[2] By the French Wars, the Navy Board was a powerful though unwieldy mediator between the Admiralty and the various dockyards, naval officers, civilian contractors, and other suppliers of the Royal Navy. It was run out of Somerset House, a large office building between the Strand and the Thames, centrally accessible by land and river, and

[1] John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 69–79.
[2] Roger Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy: Resources, Logistics and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 147-48; and J.M. Haas, *A Management Odyssey: The Royal Dockyards, 1714-1914* (New York: University of America Press, 1994), 10.

reasonably close to Whitehall, unlike its original location at Tower Hill. The Board was the primary source of decision-making surrounding the acquisition of naval raw materials, such as hemp and timber, the negotiator of contracts for the production of finished or semi-finished products like sail sheeting and slop clothing, and was responsible for managing dockyard labour and construction. The Navy Board was supposed to be subordinate to the Admiralty but it was largely a technical rather than political board, meaning that it drew a considerable amount of authority from its members' dockyard expertise. Though the Navy Board was pivotal for naval operations during this period, there were already suggestions about disbanding the board as early as 1803.[3] The Navy Board's jealous protection of its own privileges caused considerable trouble for the Admiralty and the government, and their antiquated methods and convoluted, inefficient hierarchy, along with their Tory politics, were contributing factors to the board's ultimate dissolution in 1832.[4]

While the Navy Board was populated with administrators drawn from the dockyards, the Board of Admiralty was made of appointed politicians. The Admiralty therefore more closely reflected the desires and concerns of the sitting government, and its members heavily relied on the advice and expertise of both the Navy Board and the Admiralty's prominent and often long-serving secretarial staff. Though this might suggest symbiosis of a kind between the Navy Board and the Admiralty, their relationship was less than amicable, especially between 1800 and 1810 during the combined tenures of Samuel Bentham as Inspector General of Naval Works and John Jervis, Lord St. Vincent, as First Lord of the Admiralty. The First Lord was the most prominent

[3] This was, however, the opinion of Admiral St. Vincent. See N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 477.
[4] D. Bonner-Smith, "The Abolition of the Navy Board," *Mariner's Mirror* 31, no. 3 (1954): 154–59; Haas, *A Management Odyssey*, 67–74; and Bernard Pool, *Navy Board Contracts, 1660-1832: Contract Administration Under the Navy Board* (London: Longmans, 1966), 136–40.

member of the board, with his immediate subordinate being the First Sea Lord. The most important person who sat on the board, however, was actually the First Secretary who oversaw the correspondence of the board, policed what the board discussed, and offered his expertise, which was often more considerable than that of the board members.[5] Between 1793 and 1815, the Admiralty had five First Secretaries. These were Philip Stephens (1763-1795), Evan Nepean (1795-1804), William Marsden (1804-1807), William Wellesley Pole (1807-1809) and John Wilson Croker (1809-1827). Their workload was great and their staff small; though they managed some of the most important and sensitive correspondence in the navy, their personnel only rose from forty staff in 1760 to fifty-nine in 1810.[6]

The combination of the dysfunctional relationship between the Navy Board and Admiralty and the Navy Board's antiquated organization had its effect on the clothing supply. What at the surface seems like petty in-fighting between two departments, worsened through the ill-conceived First Admiralty of St. Vincent whose tenure led to the departure of First Secretary Evan Nepean, had extremely wide-ranging effects for the navy. Roger Morriss, N.A.M. Rodger, J.M. Haas, who have all written on the Royal Navy administration in this period, agree that this conflict caused severe issues with contractors and the dockyards, causing labour shortages, slowing ship construction and repair, and generally impeding the war-readiness of the British navy.[7] Though they never closely examined the slop system, their wider conclusions remain supported here: problems in the bureaucracy resulted in delays, increased stress on colonial yards, mismanagement of slops in dockyards and on board ships, a lack of regulations, and a

[5] The Duke of Wellington thought the secretaries of the Admiralty the most important men outside of Ireland and Cabinet. Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy*, 140. The First Secretary was also a political appointment made by the Prime Minister; the Second Secretary was a position appointed by the Admiralty. See Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, 483.
[6] Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy*, 140.
[7] See Morriss, chap. 4; Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, chap. 31; and Haas, *A Management Odyssey*, chap. 3.

breakdown of the auditing system required for pursers to pass their books and be released from their government bond. Sailors, at the end of this provisioning system, had to make do with what they were offered at the end of this process and what they could afford while at sea.

The Slop Clothing Supply System as it was Intended to Work

Sailors in the British Royal Navy wore slop clothing contracted through the Navy Board instead of uniforms until 1857. These ready-made articles of dress were mass-produced by manufacturers who supplied the navy via "standing contracts." These contracts outlined the products the Navy Board expected from the contractor, in this case a "pattern" finished product, like a shirt or a pair of trousers that represented the quality of the order. The dockyards could then ask for supplies as they were needed from a reserve stock maintained by the contractor.[8] This system was very beneficial to the navy and potentially disastrous for contractors. They might only be given the vaguest idea of the quantity of items required and the navy could cancel the contracts whenever something better came along.[9] The patterns were retained by the Navy Board, where they were compared to the finished goods when the bales of clothes arrived in Deptford and were used as a reference by contractors when new tenders were issued.[10] The clothes were mass-produced by a system of industriousness where sweated labourers, mostly women, were hired to produce goods based on the patterns. The contractors were sometimes manufacturers, like Thomas Hutchon who produced knitwear for the navy starting with trials in 1808. At other times they subcontracted the work, spreading the contract among a series of manufacturers. Often slop manufacturers either specialised in the market, sometime providing

[8] Pool, *Navy Board Contracts*, 101.
[9] Pool, 102.
[10] See R. A. Nelson, "Jacket and Trousers Tender," *The London Gazette*, February 3, 1803. https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/15557/page/164.

clothing to both the navy and the army, or they used slop contracts as reliable sources of capital to keep their workers in production when their usual products were not in demand.[11] In order to submit a tender to the Navy Board, contractors were encouraged to apply at Somerset House or Deptford in person with their proposal; firms located in London and southern England were therefore the primary beneficiaries of this system, though some contractors were given allowances. Still, larger firms from farther away, such the West Country, Yorkshire and Scotland kept agents in London to represent their interests. Further, port towns around the British Isles and the wider British world had local slopsellers who provided clothes for sailors in the merchant service, from which naval commanders could approach for goods in a pinch.[12]

Contracting, Supplying, and Delivering Slop Clothes

Finished bales of clothing and cases of shoes were delivered to a central depot at Deptford, weighed, and compared to the pattern before being shipped around the British Isles to dockyard storehouses, especially those closest to major rendezvous like Sheerness, Portsmouth, and Plymouth.[13] From the storehouses in the dockyards, the bales were transferred direct to ships in port or were delivered to vessels at sea via tenders. The loading of the bales on board was witnessed by officers and petty officers, who were responsible for inspecting the bales. On board the *Mutine*, bales loaded at Spithead in April 1808 were inspected by the purser, master, and first

[11]Frederick J. Glover, "Government Contracting, Competition and Growth in the Heavy Woollen Industry," *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): 479.
[12] Captain Robert Fanshawe of HMS *Carysfort*, for example, sent his purser to "make the necessary enquires to the lowest price" jackets, frocks, shirts, shoes, stockings, beds, and blankets could be purchased at Shields. The Admiralty, as was typical if given the opportunity, told him to wait for slops to be delivered to him, but as Fanshawe included prices it is clear that the products were available. See ADM 1/1802 f. 39, February 11, 1803, TNA.
[13] Sheerness, near the Nore, was an important rendezvous where newly raised sailors were transferred from a transport to their actual assigned vessel, though often they would already have received clothing before this point. See Chapter 2. Portsmouth and Plymouth, major yards anyway, were extremely important ports for the ships blockading the channel.

lieutenant, who wrote that they witnessed the bales being delivered on board from the *Sophia*.[14] The slops were then put under the control of the purser, who was given the privilege to sell the items to the crew with a fifteen per cent gratuity termed disparagingly "the purser's pound" on top of a relatively modest salary.[15] Having made bond with the Navy Board on the price of the slops, the purser was responsible for making sure the government broke even on their sale. Though the purser could pocket any profits from the slop chest, he was equally expected to repay its debt. This made the position financially risky; despite being locked away in the purser's store, slops were still stolen and lost, and no lock or degree of good management could protect goods from damage in battle, save them from being captured by the enemy, or lost at sea in a wreck. The purpose of the purser's pound was to incentivise them to carefully itemise everything sold from the stores, but the high risks and rewards inherent in the position also encouraged accounting fraud, resulting in pursers having a particularly poor reputation.

The reception of slops, their storage, issue, allowance limit, and other shipboard issues were regulated by the *Regulations and Instructions relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea* also known at the General Printed Instructions.[16] The original regulations were written and issued in 1731.[17] By the French Revolutionary War, the instructions had undergone several minor revisions, with the final set of General Printed Instructions released before the conflict in 1790.[18] In 1806, a new, heavily revised and reorganised version of the General Printed Instructions was

[14] ADM 1/1806 f. 4, May 17, 1806, TNA.
[15] Karen McBride, Tony Hines, and Russell Craig, "A Rum Deal: The Purser's Measure and Accounting Control of Materials in the Royal Navy, 1665-1832," *Business History* 58, no. 6 (2016): 931.
[16] This is what commanders called the regulations and I will use this title to refer to the *Regulations and Instructions relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea* throughout this paper.
[17] *Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, Established by His Majesty in Council*, 1st ed. (London: *n. p.*, 1731), https://books.google.ca/books?id=sGtUAAAAYAAJ. [accessed March 3, 2018].
[18] *Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, Established by His Majesty in Council*, 13th ed. (London: *n. p.*, 1790), https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008592885. [accessed March 4, 2018].

published.[19] This edition addressed long-standing issues arising from the previous seventy-five years of naval development and conflict, but also acknowledged the recent changes in the wages and living conditions of the ratings that had been at the forefront of concerns during the Spithead and Nore mutinies in 1797. Before the revisions, the gaps in the General Printed Instructions meant that captains frequently wrote their own personal regulation books for their ships, clarifying how they expected the vessel to operate, orders that included considerations about dress, appearance, and cleanliness. Brian Lavery suggests, however, that the new General Printed Instructions were still not comprehensive enough to end the need for these personalised instructions.[20]

Between 1790 and 1806, the regulations for slop management underwent some distinct changes. The chapter on slops was moved from being part of the section focusing on captain's duties to the purser's, and the text was revised to reflect the purser's responsibility for the ship's clothing stores. While this may seem like a pedantic observation, it is clear that during the 1790s the Navy Board was consolidating control over the slop supply system and had succeeded in fully moving slops through a dockyard-based system where pursers were delivered slops that were government property, rather than having captains themselves act as representatives to state-approved slopsellers. Therefore, the revision that placed slops under the responsibility of the purser after 1806 reflected that pursers, not captains, were ultimately responsible for the slop clothing in their care.[21] In addition, the maximum allowances for sailors was changed slightly, allowing sailors an extra portion of their wages to pay for their first suit of clothing, reflecting

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[19] *Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, Established by His Majesty in Council*, 14th ed. (London: W. Winchester & Son, 1806), https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/U0102918112/MOME?u=edmo69826&sid=MOME&xid=a60e1b03. [accessed March 10, 2018].

[20] Brian Lavery, ed., *Shipboard Life and Organization, 1731-1815*, Publications of the Navy Records Society 138 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 6–8.

[21] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1790, 71–72, 74–75; and *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 359–61.

the wage changes of 1797. Men who had to buy new clothes upon joining the ship could use two months of their wages instead of one and the increase in wages meant that this initial allowance was more generous after 1806 (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2). Still, the allowance for the rest of their service remained at 10s. every two months, despite the rising prices of slops between 1793 and 1815.[22]

Besides these changes, much remained the same in the slops chapter of the General Printed Instructions. Captains and pursers were entreated to make early and precise applications for clothing in Britain before travelling to the Channel or to a foreign station, so that they would not need to purchase new clothing abroad or draw from taxed colonial storehouses.[23] The General Printed Instructions acknowledge that purchases might have to be made abroad, however, but caution "that they be as near the kind [of slops] used in the navy as can be procured, and at as moderate rates as possible."[24] Pursers continued to profit from the sale of slops to their captive buyers. As defined in the General Printed Instructions, they were allowed 1s./£ (5%) on the sale of garments and bedding, though some exceptions were added in 1806, and were additionally allowed to add 15% to the sale of foreign-purchased slops. This allowed the pursers the ability to make a tidy profit, often at the expense of the ship's company, who were limited to either the government's or the purser's own personal slop chest while at sea. Sailors often did not have cash with them—no matter, slop clothing and other goods like tobacco were charged against their wages. This is why very specific rules existed in the General Printed

[22] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1790, 72–73; and *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 361.
[23] At the newly established settlement of Hobart, Van Diemen's Land, the Royal Marine Lt. Col. David Collins wrote to London in December 1803 that his already small stores of clothing were further diminished because ships arriving in the far-flung port derelict of clothing also needed to be supplied. See ADM 1/3317 f. 339, December 16, 1805, TNA.
[24] In the General Printed Instructions from 1790, it states "the captain is to see that they be as near the kinds used in the Navy as possible, and that moderate rates be set upon them." See *Regulations and Instructions,* 1790, 74.

Instructions that capped spending at the slop chest (see Table 1.1).[25] They specifically protected sailors and marines from having their wages stripped through the machinations of the purser.[26] Additionally, when their books were audited and passed, the purser could expect a bonus depending on the rating and status of his ship.[27]

The 1806 General Printed Instructions added several additional articles, mostly dealing with new paperwork required by the Navy Board. This included the submission of slop returns by the purser and captain every six months, keeping paperwork on slops sent to other ships in need, new details regarding the submission of slop books, punishments for keeping sloppy records, and keeping track of detachments of soldiers stationed on board in lieu of marines.[28] Only one regulation was removed, half of article 1, which outlined how the slops were to be received on board directly from the slopseller or contractor, again reflecting the captain's loss of control over the slop supply process. While in 1806, the captain, purser, master and boatswain were still responsible for surveying the bales and cases of slops, in 1790 the General Printed Instructions specified a more rigorous process. An inspected bale marked by the Navy Board was used to compare the quality of the rest of the slops. Inadequate slops were not to be issued unless under duress and then at a reduced charge. Any unsuitable slops were to be returned to the contractor at the first opportunity and were not to be thrown overboard.[29] Extant slop contracts show that contractors could be financially penalised for supplying poorly-made slop clothes or other necessaries,[30] but without proof of the poorly-made clothes, the navy could not press their

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[25] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1790, 72–73; *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 361.
[26] Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade,* c. *1500-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 228-29.
[27] McBride, Hines, and Craig, "A Rum Deal," 931.
[28] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 363–64, 367–69.
[29] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1790, 71–72.
[30] See AO 15/45/50, May 27, 1747; AO 15/45/55, August 7, 1747; AO 15/45/103, March 1, 1748, TNA; and ADM/BP/41A, July 15, 1823, Caird, Greenwich.

claim. Still, captains and pursers had incentives to get rid of useless cargo when space on board naval vessels was often at a premium.

The types of slops aboard differed from ship to ship, usually depending on the dockyard storehouse that had supplied the vessel; the same contractors did not always supply all the dockyards. Still, the clothing produced was selected through a process that leaned towards a standardisation of appearance. Applications for new contracts were made by comparing the new items with the original contract's pattern, meaning that it was likely that aspects of the old items remained in the new, even when the navy switched contractors. Indeed, contractors appealed to the Admiralty for the privilege to view the patterns when they were trying to market their slops to the Navy Board, especially when competing against established slop providers.[31] This arrangement was potentially beneficial to the navy, provided that the new contractor improved on the old pattern, but could give some contractors an unfair advantage over their competitors. Under the old regulations, slop contractors were asked to submit patterns to the commander of the vessel receiving their slops, giving commanders more personal control over the quality of the slops. But by at least 1804 commanders no longer received these patterns.[32] Pursers did have the prerogative to source and stock the slop chest with their own inventory of slop clothing, as well as tobacco, to supplement their income.[33] Often, these goods were more expensive than those provided by the government, probably because they were better quality alternatives for those who could afford them, but also because sailors benefited from the government's bulk contracts in their low and often remarkably stable price for slop clothes in this period.

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[31] This occurred when William Jackman was hoping to replace Prater & Son to produce clothing and necessities for the Royal Marines in 1806. Jackson asked to be allowed to view examples of a number of articles from store prior to submitting his tender. See ADM 1/3348/622, January 21, 1806, TNA.
[32] Adm 1/408/123a, August 27, 1804, TNA. See Chapter 2.
[33] Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 228. Lemire discusses tobacco sales within the framework of merchant shipping; in the navy during this period captains would not have sold slops or acted as private salesmen to their crew. Pursers, however, did have this right.

The slop clothing supply system was complicated during the French Wars but was becoming more streamlined and simplified—at least for the turn of the nineteenth century. Instead of hundreds of commanders individually securing clothing with local slopsellers for their ships, the Navy Board contracted for mass-produced clothing and shoes in bulk. This allowed a system of supply to develop, along with somewhat consistent inspection at Deptford, to maintain a navy-wide standard in slop quality and availability. It also stabilised prices, keeping them relatively low for a period with widespread international conflicts, constant logistical difficulties, and widespread economic blockades. Additionally, these mass-produced garments gave sailors the appearance of uniformity, as noted by naval historians (see Figure 1.1), though no official government regulation existed outside of what was determined acceptable between contractors and the Navy Board.

Navy Accounting, Vouchers and Bureaucratic Lethargy

Purchasing slop clothing, or any type of military supplies, was an arduous task that required sending and receiving a great deal of correspondence. New contracts or changes had to be placed before the Admiralty for approval by the Navy Board. The Navy Board, however, was primarily responsible for making the contracts, and made the appointments and regulations necessary for their inspection upon entering storage in Deptford. Slops could be purchased directly at the command of the ship's captain or a fleet's admiral as a last resort, however; usually this was done by sending out the commanders' secretary to make arrangements with local manufacturers or slopsellers for goods.[34]

[34] Admiral Keith purchased shoes in the Mediterranean by delegating the purchase to his secretary, whose subordinate worked with a network of local British officials. See ADM 1/404 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA.

Paying for slops, as with all military supplies, was convoluted and inefficient. Philip Harling remarked of accounting in the army that:

> The enormous wartime growth of the army put great strain on a primitive accounting system in which senior officers were required to handle the accounts of their units, then submit them to regimental agents and paymasters who would in turn submit the accounts to the army Pay Office, which would finally submit them for a final reckoning to the Commissioners for Auditing the Public Accounts.[35]

It was hardly different in the navy. Slops were paid through vouchers that were attached to the accounts kept by pursers. These accounts were submitted to the Navy Board at the end of the ship's voyage with the understanding that they would then be audited and passed so that the purser could be paid and released from his bond. This system was extremely unwieldy; in the case of the much better studied Victualling Board it was revealed that in 1807 over £10 million was waiting to be audited, including about £700,000 in pursers' accounts and about £1 million from home agents and storekeepers.[36] While the corruption of contractors was an easy scapegoat for the inefficiencies and expenses of the military, in reality dockyard bloat and lethargy was as often due to convoluted personnel organization and poor documentation systems that allowed for oversights and graft to pass unnoticed, slowing down bureaucratic efficiency.[37]

The intra-governmental communications system was one place where this organisational lethargy can be demonstrated, and it is especially important for this study due to the importance of Admiralty in-letters as sources. Official correspondence from landward locations like dockyards but also from ships at sea was vital for the Admiralty's ability to make decisions and

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[35] Philip Harling, *The Waning of "Old Corruption": The Politics of Economical Reform in Britain, 1779-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 77. The army's system for clothes supply—where agents bought clothing as representatives for regimental colonels—more closely resembled the navy's original system of captains managing the slops of their ships. This regimental agent process was also used by the Royal Marines in the eighteenth century. See Chapter 3.

[36] Roger Knight, "Politics and Trust in Victualling the Navy, 1793-1815," *The Mariner's Mirror* 94, no. 2 (2008): 141.

[37] Knight, 139; Haas, *A Management Odyssey*, 45–65.

for this reason the post was remarkably efficient for the time.[38] British turnpike roads, mail coaches, and official mail packet ships began to positively affect the mail's reliability by 1784.[39] It was still slow, however, and important military and dockyard decisions had to be siphoned through the Admiralty in London. This took time. Though they could receive information remarkably quickly using a special courier system reserved for naval administration post, the Navy Board and Admiralty could still expect to wait eight hours to receive letters from Portsmouth and a full 24 hours for the same from Plymouth, to say nothing of correspondence abroad.[40] Additionally, the Admiralty and Navy Board were not housed in close proximity—there was at least half a mile distance between Whitehall and Somerset House, meaning that documents could be delayed by two days in their passage from one building to the other.[41] Drawing these problems out further, it often took years for pursers' books to even be delivered to the Navy Board so that they could form part of the assessment queue. These long wait times meant that pursers, captains, and their families might contest charges against them years after the fact. For example, the family of the late Mr. Tait, purser of HMS *Prince*, who issued slops to French and Spanish prisoners of war after the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805, did not write contesting these charges against him until August 1807.[42]

Communication with ships at sea further complicated this network of information. Arguments about clothing sourcing and payment were discussed over months and even years due

[38] Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy*, 139.
[39] Brian Vale, "The Post Office, The Admiralty, and Letters to Sailors in the Napoleonic Wars," *Mariner's Mirror* 105, no. 2 (May 2019): 149.
[40] Morriss gives the following times for the courier system to the Navy Board at Somerset House: Half an hour to Deptford; less than an hour for Woolwich; four hours to reach Chatham; and six for Sheerness. See Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy*, 146. Probably the starkest distance can be seen in letters from Hobart, Van Diemen's Land, one of which was sent September 1, 1807 and was not put before the Admiralty until June 13, 1808. See Adm 1/3318 f. 44, September 1, 1807, TNA.
[41] Morriss, 141. Before 1785 the Navy Board was at Tower Hill, three miles away.
[42] ADM 12/129 f. 94.3, 10 August 1807, TNA.

to the intervals that letters spent in transit between London and ships or stations abroad. The process was not very efficient; the letters that exist in the archives are almost all copies, belying the many hands through which they passed. By the time a commander's letters arrived on the table of the Board of Admiralty, they usually contained at least two attached letters, often more, and might even have objects inserted in them. As a problem moved up the naval hierarchy, the letters were diligently copied and enclosed inside each other at every additional step by a succession of clerks. Once in front of the board, the letter was read and discussed, with the orders on what to do about the problem written on the folded-over bottom-left corner, known as a minute. These notes were written by the First Secretary and are probably the closest indication of the discussion and actions that occurred while deliberating over the letter.[43] This note was the final say on the letter's contents at the time, usually directing some solution or further action on the letter's subject. Occasionally the directions included forwarding the letter further to the Navy Board for their consideration. More rarely, the Admiralty would request clarification from the letter writer. Letters found to be wasting the Admiralty's time met with stern rebukes. Those few complaints in this study from sailors and marines were also not well-received and on one occasion the Admiralty directed marine commandant Lt. General Thomas Strickland to "find the writer of this paper" that a marine had hired to ask for a discharge so he could return home to look after his aged parents.[44]

The letters used primarily for this study, the Admiralty in-letters, pose many problems. They are, as is indicated in their name, only the incoming letters to the board—out-going letters were organised using a different system. The reason this study focuses so heavily on this

[43] Often, the minute simply states the date it was put before the board and "read".
[44] ADM 1/3350 f. 564, August 18, 1814, TNA. This was part of a wider issue with the peace-time discharge of marines between April 1814 and March 1815.

particular collection of letters is outlined in the introduction, but it is important to note that these letters were largely written by upper-level bureaucrats, naval captains and admirals, and were filtered through many levels of the naval hierarchy, including a successive stream of gentlemen secretaries. The First Secretary, a powerful if overworked man, had the final say on what letters were put before the Admiralty, who themselves were important contemporary politicians and were usually admirals and aristocrats in addition. Very few of these letters were written by common sailors and marines, fewer still were written by women—though obviously both these groups were significant to the slop clothing supply system as sweated seamstresses, merchants, and consumers. Further, about 50% of the Admiralty in-letters were purged at some point by either the navy or the Public Records Office. In-letters from the Navy Board fared even worse, with only 5% surviving at the Caird Library in Greenwich, probably an unfortunate result of the Navy Board's dissolution in 1832. Still, using the navy's remarkable letter indexing system, which included brief but vital summaries of the letters, a glimpse of what these missing letters contained can be gleaned.[45] Finally, many letters had their enclosed documents purged—this has particularly affected the survival of clothing contracts between 1790 and 1815, meaning that no original contract was found attached in either Admiralty or Navy Board letters.[46] Still, using these letters, a picture of the complicated system of slop clothing supply and politics emerges.

What Sailors Wore

Seafarers wore, or were represented as wearing, a consistent kit of working apparel, mostly purchased in port from ready-made slopsellers and tailors who usually marketed their

[45] The Admiralty In-letter digests and indexes are held by the National Archives, Kew, under ADM 12.
[46] Almost nothing has been written specifically about clothing contracts, probably for this reason. Because of this, much of how I understand these contracts is drawn from discussions of shipbuilding and general stores contracts, though it is clear they were not necessarily similar. See Pool, *Navy Board Contracts*, 94–103.

wares to sailors, longshoremen and other port workers, or purchased from a ship's slop chest. Sailors are depicted wearing a short jacket, usually blue, with a white or checked shirt, often with buff trousers or petticoat breeches (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3). These images of sailors in petticoat breeches suggest that sailors wore actual breeches beneath them, using the loose layer above perhaps as a protective garment, like a smock for the legs, a detail more clearly seen in Figure 4.5. An extant sailor's suit from the seventeenth century at the Museum of London has a shirt still covered in smears of tar and breeches that were repeatedly mended, suggesting the usefulness of such a garment (see Figure 0.1). They wore leather shoes with plain buckles, and round hats. The perceived uniformity of sailors' clothing in paintings and prints is probably somewhat misleading. Sam Smiles suggests that artists often used visual tropes to define labourers, though his study focuses on early industrial workers.[47] Petticoat breeches in particular appear to be a lasting visual feature of representing sailors, but are suspiciously absent in slop chests during this period.[48] It is difficult to know exactly how men truly dressed during this period, but photographs of crews in the second half of the nineteenth century suggests that sailors' apparel was far less uniform than it was popularly represented and, as is suggested by the adoption of trousers by both sailors and landward working men, was becoming increasingly indistinguishable from general men's working attire (see Figure 0.4).[49]

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[47] Sam Smiles, "Defying Comprehension: Resistance to Uniform Appearance in Depicting the Poor," *Textile History* 33, no. 1 (2002): 22-24.

[48] Petticoat breeches were without a garter or closure at the knee which caused them to appear to be a skirt or petticoat. They were briefly fashionable for young aristocratic men in the late seventeenth century around the time the three-piece suit was also gaining prominence. Between 1800 and 1815, there are no complaints or slop surveys suggesting that breeches of any kind were supplied to sailors, but they could also buy clothing in port and it is likely that petticoat breeches were relatively simple for sailors to sew for themselves. See Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 13, 21; and Lemire, "A Question of Trousers: Seafarers, Masculinity and Empire in the Shaping of British Male Dress, c. 1600-1800," *Cultural and Social History* 13, no. 1 (2016): 2.

[49] Meaghan Walker, "In the Inventories of Deceased British Merchant Seafarers: Exploring Merchant Shipping and Material Culture, 1860–1880," *International Journal of Maritime History* 31, no. 2 (2019): 332–34, https://doi.org/10.1177/0843871418824969.

Frequently sailors' clothing was embellished by their own hand; indeed, if the purser or local economy was unable to supply needed apparel, sailors would make their own.[50] Captain Alexander Cochrane in the West Indies and Admiral Granville George Waldegrave in the Mediterranean both wrote letters asking for canvas for the crew to produce their own clothing.[51] While slop clothing tended toward uniformity because of how it was made and the increased availability of mass-produced slops, it was not bound by a state-regulated uniform code. Therefore, sailors could maintain individuality in their apparel depending on personal preferences of their ship's commander. This contrasted greatly with the wider British armed forces, and in particular with the uniformed officers and marines in their own service (see Figures 1.4 and 3.1).[52]

One place where clothing regulations for naval seamen existed, however, was in the Captain's orders to his vessel. These orders were created by ship commanders to fill a regulatory and bureaucratic gap between the expected duties of the ship's company and the vague contents of the General Printed Instructions that were not yet comprehensive enough to be the sole regulatory system of vessels.[53] They allowed the ship's commander to manage the operation of his vessel under his own personal understanding of protocol and authority. One of the most important aspects of the orders was usually the commander's expectations for ship discipline, but they also discussed other priorities. The orders could outline the clothing sailors were expected to wear at sea—or to regulate against what dress they were not allowed to wear. In 1799, the

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[50] A remarkable example of an embellished uniform is part of the collection at the Winterthur in Delaware, though it is neither British nor of this period. Harold D. Langley, "From the Collection: Warren Opie's Sailor's Uniform at Winterthur," *Winterthur Portfolio* 38, no. 2/3 (2003): 131–41.
[51] ADM 1/329 f. 148, November 2, 1808; and ADM 1/2705 f. 66, October 25, 1809, TNA. See also Lemire, "A Question of Trousers," 4.
[52] An entry about two images of sailors in the Queries section of *The Mariner's Mirror* notes the similarity of their dress, remarking it "almost indicate[s] a kind of uniform." C. N. Robinson, "Queries—32. British Seamen, 1779," *Mariner's Mirror* 9, no. 4 (April 1923): 128.
[53] See Lavery, *Shipboard Life*, 61–81.

Captain's Orders of HMS *Amazon* contained a specific list of clothing to create "uniformity and neatness",[54] requiring a complete outfit of blue jackets (with yellow buttons), Guernsey waistcoats, trousers of blue cloth and white duck, drawers, shirts, black silk handkerchiefs, worsted stockings, shoes, and round hats. Captain Edward Riou further banned flimsy trousers, multicoloured waistcoats, and "other trash" which he believed "are only brought on board to catch the eye of [and cheat] the inexperienced boys."[55]

Aboard HMS *Indefatigable* in 1812, Captain John Broughton's orders required both dress and working clothes, including jackets, trousers, waistcoats, Guernsey frocks, hats, neckcloths, shirts, stockings, shoes, and drawers, and in addition a pair of trousers and a frock for dirty work.[56] Men who did not maintain such a kit risked losing shore leave while in port or could expect other unnamed punishments. This list made men responsible for sourcing a kit of 32 clothing items, a significant amount of slops, while the *Amazon* list required 24 items.[57] The year difference is important; before 1806, sailors could use less of their wages to purchase slops and therefore sailors in the company of the *Amazon* in 1799 would have struggled to assemble the clothing required in 1812 on board the *Indefatigable*.

The difference in quantities between these two examples suggests that as sailors could commit a larger portion of their wages to slops, they were expected to own a larger range of clothing, including reserved clothing for special occasions. These would have represented a significant financial investment for sailors. For commanders, dress slops contributed to the appearance of a ship's cleanliness and order and acted as a sartorial signifier of their personal

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[54] Lavery, 163.
[55] Lavery, 164. Brackets from Lavery.
[56] Lavery, 185.
[57] Thirty-two items may seem somewhat excessive but sixty years later able-bodied seafarers in the British merchant service owned on average about 33 items. See Meaghan Walker, "Dead Men Do Tell Tales: The Inventories of British Merchant Seafarers, 1863-1879" (M.A., St. John's, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2011), 25.

authority over the crew. The crew themselves could find prestige in such attire if it associated them with a particularly heroic captain or a significant ship, though it might also have a negative effect if they deserted or if their commander was notorious. A common anecdote surrounding the eventual adoption of state-regulated uniforms is that in 1843 Captain Wilmott of HMS *Harlequin* wrote orders to clothe his boat crew in the distinctive and colourful dress of the ship's namesake, likely an unpleasant experience for his sailors, and apparently one equally upsetting to the Admiralty.[58]

Some specialist groups of sailors were interested in having uniforms to display their common expertise and their loyalty to the British cause. In 1812 about nine French pilots signed a petition asking the Admiralty to allow them to wear a uniform, remarking on their long and faithful service and that commanders frequently made them wear blue coats to cover "your petitioners plain cloaths [sic]." They asked for a coat like the ones they were already wearing on board HMS *Salvador*, with buttons in the style of a second master, who they felt was their equivalent in rank. Finally, they noted, "when some of them have fallen into the hands of their enemies the dress was found to afford considerable protection, shielding them from too strict an interrogation from their Countrymen."[59] For these Frenchmen in service to the British navy, uniforms potentially served not just to legitimise their knowledge and rank in the eyes of British officers but also to more fully distinguish them as under the protection of the British crown to their enemies. Still, the Admiralty refused to grant them this sartorial honour.

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[58] This is a very popular story and appears in *The Mariner's Mirror* as early as 1913. Though the twelve-gun HMS *Harlequin*, commanded by Captain Arthur Wilmot, did exist, I have yet to find a contemporary news article confirming the harlequin uniform incident, and it appears that the ship spent most of 1853 in Lagos and Sierra Leone. See Charles N. Robinson, "Notes on the Dress of the British Seaman," *The Mariner's Mirror* 3, no. 6 (January 1913): 173, https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1913.10654705.

[59] Adm 1/149 f. 219, May 4, 1812, TNA.

Slop Clothes Prices between 1800 and 1815

Slop prices varied over the course of the French Wars as the lengthy and large conflict caused prices to rise and materials to become more difficult to procure.[60] Scattered information about charges of slops in the Admiralty out-letters can show a small sample of changing prices for items in slop chests, mostly in the ten years between 1802-1812 (see Table 1.3). It should be noted, however, that these prices were often discussed due to exceptional circumstances, such as supplying supernumeraries (extra crewmembers not listed in the ship's company), trials of slops, or because the prices were exorbitant. While the wars influenced slop rates, and clothing purchased outside of British dockyards could inflate prices, the cost of slops purchased within the Navy Board supply system remained relatively stable. Beds, for example, stayed at a consistent 13s. Shirts fluctuated in price only slightly. They first appearing in 1803 as 4s.7d. and remained at 4s.6d. in 1805, 1808, and 1811.[61] Other types of underwear were likewise sold at a consistent rate. Stockings, a staple accessory, remained at a steady 2s.3d. from 1803 to 1812. In 1809, the *Victory* reported that dockyard supplied flannel drawers were 2s.3d. but that knit drawers, on board for trial, cost 3s.9d., showing the disparity between slops made of differing materials and methods – and perhaps of different quality.[62]

Larger, more detailed items had less consistent pricing due to the range of materials and methods in which they could be constructed. Frocks (maritime sweaters or waistcoats) were made of cotton, duck canvas, stuff (wool), and were also knitted (Guernsey). The price of cotton

[60] This section is limited to the fifteen years between 1800 and 1815 because fewer of the Admiralty in-letters were kept prior to 1800, meaning very little beyond the letters bound in collections of correspondences from fleet admirals.
[61] There were a couple of upswings in the price. In 1803, the *Rendezvous* tried to sell shirts for 6s., but Evan Nepean advised that the price was exorbitant. In 1804, the *Zealand* sold stripped shirts to supernumeraries for 5s. and the rest of the charges were also uncommonly high. See ADM 1/2070 f. 4, September 29, 1803, TNA; and ADM 1/737 f. 349, May 31, 1804, TNA.
[62] Captain Philip Dumaresq suggested adopting the drawers, despite their higher price. See ADM 1/4694 f. 262, December 16, 1809, TNA.

and duck frocks first appeared in 1802 as 4s. and rose to 5s. by 1812. Knitted frocks available on the *Victory* in 1809 were sold for 6s.6d. and 7s.9d.; in this case the cheaper frock was on trial, while the more expensive example was sourced through a Navy Board contract. The price of jackets, however, appears to be even more closely linked to their construction and materials. They required more detailed tailoring; even though much of this work would have been sweated they were still the most elaborately constructed clothes items in slop chests.[63] Jackets were made mainly from woven cloth (kersey) but they could also be knitted. The jackets cost between 5s.10d. and 13s.6d. but it appears that the government tried to maintain the price at 7s.2d. This rate appears consistently from 1803 to 1812, though sometimes slop chests contained two versions. The *Neptune* reported two prices for jackets in 1803; those that were not supplied by the Navy Board sold at 11s.6d. and were "certainly superior" and "lined with flannel." These superior quality jackets were sold alongside nondescript jackets sold at the government rate.[64] By 1812, knitted jackets were sold at 7s.2d. while tailored kersey ones were consistently more expensive at 10s.8d., suggesting that as prices rose, the navy still pressured contractors to maintain the same low rate.[65] Contractors, in their turn, found savings by reducing the quality of the jackets. Woven kersey was replaced with knit, also minimizing the need for tailoring and allowing the bulk of the labour to be done by unskilled machine knitters.

This conjecture is supported by letters between the Admiralty board, the Commandant of the marines at Chatham, Lt. General Harrie Innes, and the contractor Olliver Jamessing in November, 1802. Jamessing relates that he had supplied Chatham with shoes at 5s.2d. for twelve years, but the rising price of leather (from 1s. to 1s.11d. per pound) meant that he could no

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[63] Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade Before the Factory, 1660-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 53.
[64] ADM 1/2694 f. 160, December 7, 1803, TNA.
[65] Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*, 37–38.

longer supply Chatham. He also noted that the peace that began in March 1802 did not have the effect he was hoping, remarking: "I have struggled hard for the two last years in hopes that on the blessings peace arriving that leather would have fallen in price but from the best information I can get there is no hope of its becoming lower."[66] Instead, the contractor W. Prater, who was already supplying Portsmouth and Plymouth with shoes, was given the contract and was able to supply Chatham at the original rate. Shoes stayed at around 6s. to 6s.7d. between 1803 and 1812, but this varied depending on where the shoes were sourced. In 1797, Admiral H. Parker had "drawn a bill for £275 for the purchase of 1000 pairs of shoes at Cape Nichola Mole [Haiti] for the use of the squadron,"[67] which calculates out to about 5s.6d. per pair. Twenty thousand shoes were purchased in Sicily in 1801 at the low price of 3s.11d. (though the rate at which they were sold to the ship's company was higher).[68] Conversely, supernumeraries in Dundee were charged between 7s. 9d. and 8s. in 1803 for "good serviceable shoes."[69]

Finally, trousers did rise in price between 1802 and 1812. No breeches, however, were given a price during this period. Trousers appear at 3s.1d. in 1802 and they rose to about 4s.2d. from 1803 to 1808, peaking at 6s.3d. between 1808 and 1812. Differences in the source of the trousers, the circumstances of the sale, and the materials used affected the price. In 1805, HM transport *Gorgon* sold trousers to supernumeraries at a rate below usual at 3s.7d.[70] HMS *Blenheim* in 1805 and HMS *Victory* in 1804 both reported trousers made of good duck were sold at 4s., with both Captain Austin Bissell and Admiral Horatio Nelson noting a rise in the price and

[66] ADM 1/3255, November 24, 1802, TNA.
[67] ADM 12/75, tab 94, April 18, 1797, TNA. Parker was referring to St. Nicholas Mole, Haiti, which the British occupied between 1793 and 1798, and where they briefly established a dockyard.
[68] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA.
[69] ADM 1/2070 f. 4, September 29, 1803, TNA.
[70] ADM 1/675 f. 252, March 11, 1805, TNA.

a drop in the quality of the duck slops.[71] Slop suppliers sold poor quality goods when they could for the extra profits to be had.

The Politics of Quality Slop Clothing

Contracts: Informal and Formal Applications to Produce Slops

Complaints about the inferior quality and the inadequate sizes of slop clothing were some of the most frequent subjects of letters, and they far exceeded letters expressing satisfaction or approval. One instance, however, saw letters extolling the positive virtues of an article of slops was for Hutchon's knitwear frocks and drawers. Thomas Hutchon was a Scottish clothing manufacturer whose business was located at Warnford Court, Throgmorton St, London. Sometime in 1808 Captain Waldegrave of the *Thames* observed some examples of his knitwear slops, probably on another vessel. Waldegrave wrote to the Admiralty that: "they are so superior to those now in use in H.M. Navy & so much approved of that I conceive it proper to state my approbation."[72] He remarked that Hutchon had recently sent a quantity of slops for trial on another ship and asked if he could also receive such a trial.

Over the next year, Hutchon sent his slops to at least ten naval vessels for trial. Waldegrave reported on the clothes in October 1809, saying

> the ship's company are unanimous in their approval of them … their texture [is] thought stronger … they dry after a few washings much quicker. When a stitch is broke, they do not unravel further—they are much longer in the waist & protect the men's loins … as seamen from stooping at their work are liable from the water running off their short jackets, to be wet in that part of the body … these are without [seams].[73]

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[71] ADM 1/175 f. 47, June 4, 1805; and ADM 1/408 f. 113, August 12, 1804, TNA.
[72] ADM 1/2704/49, December 16, 1808, TNA. In October 1808, he wrote to assure the Admiralty that he was sincere in his recommendation, saying that he had only found out about the knitwear by accident and that he was not acquainted with Hutchon. See ADM 1/2705/66, October 25, 1809, TNA.
[73] ADM 1/2705/66, October 25, 1809, TNA.

In November 1809, Hutchon forwarded ten letters with additional positive reactions from captains and crew members.[74] Captain William Bedford of the *Caledonia* wrote: "I gave one of the frocks to each of the gig's crew … [and although] two of the six have deserted … [they have] taken their frocks with them."[75] Captain Andrew King of the *Venerable* forwarded a letter written by his petty officers, to whom he had distributed the samples. They wrote that they "found them preferable to any of the sort that we have ever used, and we are requested by most of the ship's company, that they might be supplied with the same."[76] In all, Hutchon gathered ten letters recommending to the Admiralty that his slops be adopted.[77] However, they were not all positive. In May 1809, Hutchon thanked the Admiralty for forwarding him a letter written by Captain Ross Donnelly of HMS *Invincible*, who complained that the frocks shrank in the wash.[78] Before any positive letters arrived, however, the Navy Board rejected Hutchon's proposal in June 1809.[79] Despite this apparent setback Hutchon continued to send in letters of approbation from commanders about his knitwear late into the year. In December 1809 the Navy Board reconsidered and approved his proposal after receiving the ten recommendations.[80] He continued to supply slops to the navy through to 1823 when a survey of slop providers was sent to parliament.[81]

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[74] Two of these letters are missing but were digested as having been received, sent by Admiral Wells and Captain Curry. This probably refers to Captain Richard Curry of HMS *Roebuck* and Admiral Thomas Wells, Commander-in-Chief at the Nore. See ADM 12/144 tab 94.1, December 12, 1809, TNA.
[75] ADM 1/4694/119, November 17, 1809, TNA.
[76] ADM 1/4694/202, November 15, 1809, TNA. The eleven petty officers were the master, mates, and captains of the rigging crews.
[77] Seven exist in the National Archives, Hutchon alludes to the eighth in a letter, and the final extant letter sent to the Admiralty in December was labelled no. 10.
[78] ADM 1/4693/474, May 24, 1809, TNA.
[79] ADM 12/139 tab 94.1, June 23, 1809, TNA.
[80] ADM 12/144 tab 94.1, December 16, 1809, TNA.
[81] ADM/BP/41a, July 14, 1823, Caird, Greenwich. This document does not state what Hutchon was supplying but does indicate that he still resided at Warnford Court, Throgmorton Street, London. They list nine other slops suppliers, all with London addresses except three, who lived in Northamptonshire.

Hutchon's slop trial letters are among the only positive letters about slops sent to the Admiralty and are rich in their description about what commanders and the ship's company thought were positive qualities of slop clothes. Commanders did sometimes write about how they would like to be supplied with slop clothing or supplies of unsewn fabric, but usually this request accompanied complaints about available slops.[82] Hutchon's trials also show that the Admiralty and Navy Board could be convinced to contract for products—which were in some cases more expensive than the currently supplied items—by by-passing the boards and sending the slops directly to commanders. It appears that Hutchon distributed trial amounts of his knitwear among ship commanders and even station admirals in 1808 and 1809. When his proposal to the Navy Board was rejected in June 1809, he appealed to them for letters of recommendation that he forwarded to the Admiralty in November and December 1809. It could be that many contractors hoped to secure contracts this way and that letters and slop patterns passed directly between commanders and slop manufacturers. But because so few of the Navy Board out-letters survive, it is difficult to know what they received and what they did not.

If such relationships between ship commanders and slop manufacturers did exist, it still worked within the purview of a slop supply system regulated and managed by the Admiralty and Navy Boards—in the end the slops would have to be approved by the overseeing boards and the contract was made between the Navy Board and the contractors. In the eighteenth century, pursers and captains supplied their own ships, but probably through selected slop suppliers with items sold at a navy rate and of an agreed upon naval pattern; after 1806, ships were all supplied by applying to storekeepers in dockyards who managed warehouses of clothing that were inspected at Deptford and then distributed around Britain and the wider empire. Hutchon's

[82] See ADM 1/4693/474, May 24, 1809; and ADM 1/329/148, November 2, 1808, TNA.

lengthy dialogue with at least eight commanders could be seen as a hold-over from the closer relationship between contractors and commanders from the eighteenth century, but may also have been an enterprising and creative method to get the attention of the Admiralty without waiting for the Navy Board to advertise a tender for drawers.

Hutchon's letters show an example of the informal preamble to a contract, but actually very few contracts survive in the Admiralty in-letters or the Navy Board out-letters, and none from the period between 1793 and 1815.[83] In 1822, a contract was made between the Navy Board, represented by Joseph Tucker, Henry Legge, and John Deas Thompson, and the Weavers Robert Price and John Woolrich of Spital Square near Bishopsgate Street, London, for black silk handkerchiefs to be sent to Deptford. The contract survived in its original form at the Caird Library but also as a copy submitted to parliament in July 1823. On both documents some information is missing, significantly the cost of the handkerchiefs. Further, it is a standing contract, meaning that the quantity of slops required was open.[84] Essentially, Price and Woolwich agreed to produce handkerchiefs as the Navy Board required so it gives no fixed number of articles expected. Still, the copy shows that the Navy Board required that the handkerchiefs were: "good, sound, merchantable, well conditioned, conformable in every respect, equal in goodness, and no wise inferior … to the pattern," had to be approved by the Navy Board and the officers of the Deptford yard, and one hundred of the handkerchiefs would equal "at least seven pounds, six ounces and one half of an ounce"[85] in weight.

[83] An early series of three contracts exist from 1747 and 1748 and involved procuring Royal Marine uniforms, see Chapter 2 and Table 2.1 for more details.
[84] This was a common type of Navy Board contract and it was used in shipbuilding as well. See Pool, *Navy Board Contracts*, 101–3.
[85] ADM/BP/41A, July 14, 1823, Caird, Greenwich.

The contract further stipulates that Price and Woolwich were responsible for any faulty products they supplied to Deptford and would assume cost of shipping the articles back to them and the same for their replacement. This was an already established practice, as it appeared in earlier contracts for marine uniforms in 1747. Price and Woolwich agreed to the return of all substandard articles they supplied and to resupply the naval stores with suitable replacements. The threat of charging the contractors for returns or refusing to pay for deficient articles appears to be the extent of the Navy Board's penalties if substandard articles were produced. However, contracts outlined fines if the contractors did not fulfill their agreement. Earlier contracts from the 1740s show that they stipulated much more significant amounts of money—the contractor Roberts was bound to pay £10,000 if he did not produce the agreed upon marine uniforms in all but one of the three contracts (the third contract was an addendum), while Price and Woolwich were only bound to pay £400. This could be due to the open nature of the 1822 contract but also can be accounted for by the disparate final bills of the contracts rather than a change in procedure.[86] Roberts' steep fines amounted to 56% of the final payment owed to him by the Navy Board—the total of which was around £35,770. Since the price of the handkerchiefs and the amount produced was not recorded on the copy of the handkerchief contract, it cannot be known how they compare. But handkerchiefs would have been worth significantly less than a suit of clothes comprising a marine uniform.

The 1822 contract contains procedures to maintain quality standards and to hopefully avoid corruption. Weight was used to indicate quality and was a well-established method used by naval contracts by this period. That it continued to be used in 1822 is interesting; it was a frequent subject of complaints by naval officers and the public. Thomas Cochrane remarked in a

[86] The fine of £400 was added into the contract and was not part of the formatted text.

footnote in his memoirs that it was a well-known rumour that contractors added flour to sail canvas to tip the scales.[87] Additionally, contractor-produced shoes were thought to contain a layer of clay between the soles to achieve the same effect.[88] In both cases, the resultant products were useless or inferior once received by sailors and soldiers. Despite criticisms about the process, the Navy Board continued to use weight as the primary measurement system to determine the agreed upon amount and quality after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Accusations about corruption in the dockyards and naval administration abounded during the French Wars, though J.M. Haas suggests this was a new development from the bulk of the eighteenth century when the public was relatively disinterested in dockyard affairs.[89]

Further additions to the packet of documents submitted to parliament included a list of all the current slop contractors working with the Navy Board and their addresses, which included Price and Woolwich, in addition to Hutchon and nine others. They also included a note stating that Price and Woolwich's 1822 contract was the most recent contract made for slop clothing, and that it was made by public tender in several newspapers, including T*he Gazette*, *The Public Ledger*, *The New Times*, and *Sun*. The advertisement in *The Gazette* appeared twice, on March 30 and April 2, 1822. The advertisements state that on the 4th of April, at one o'clock, the Navy Board would meet with interested contractors ready to provide the Deptford Yard with black silk handkerchiefs.[90] Price and Woolwich signed the contract on that day. Several other notes of interest are included in the packet that show the raising budget for slop clothes and discuss changes in the purser's pound. Over the course of the 1820s, the Navy Board came under

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[87] Thomas Cochrane, *The Autobiography of a Seaman*, vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1860), 48.
[88] Richard Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel: Civil Engineer, Vice-President of the Royal Society, Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, &c.*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1862), 129.
[89] Haas, *A Management Odyssey*, 45.
[90] G. Smith, "Contract for Black Silk Handkerchiefs," Advertised in *The Gazette*, issue 17804, March 30, 1822. https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/17804/page/535; and Smith, "Contract for Black Silk Handkerchiefs," Advertised in *The Gazette*, issue 17805, April 2, 1822. https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/17805/page/559.

increasing scrutiny and it was eventually dismantled, its operations folded into the bureaucracy of the Admiralty.

Pursers, Store Surveys, and Slop Embezzlement

Another document that shows how the supply of clothing worked, but could be disrupted, is in a petition sent to the Admiralty on January 1, 1813, signed by seven pursers: Robert Gamble of HMS *Victory*, Lewis Gordon of *Mars*, William Murray of *Orion*, Peter Hughes of *La Hogue*, Daniel Morison of *Cressy*, William Read Shugar of *Bellona*, and Michael Scott of *Vigo*. The pursers reported that they had all received bales of slops missing small numbers of articles, and they included detailed surveys of missing slops in the *Victory*, *Mars*, and *Cressy*, in addition to HMS *Cumberland*, *Pyramus*, *Zealous*, *Erebus*, and *Cruizer* whose pursers did not sign the petition.[91] The petition shows that the pursers were made aware that there was a shortage of slops in the bales by the purser of *Cumberland*, Stephen Street, whose captain ordered a survey done at his request in December 1811 after receiving bales of slops from Portsmouth. The subsequent surveys were taken in 1812. *Mars,* for example, performed four, presumably each time new slops were taken on board—in April, June, July, and November 1812 (see Table 1.4).

These surveys give a glimpse at the routine deliveries of slops to vessels in southern England (these deliveries were probably mainly made at Portsmouth and perhaps Deptford or Sheerness) as well as the types of slops requested. *Mars*, *Victory*, and *Cressy* all received 3-4 shipments in 1812—a multi-step process, which revealed missing slops. The *Zealous* did two surveys and *Cumberland*, *Pyramus, Erebus*, and *Cruizer* only one. The missing stock spanned almost the full breadth of a sailor's suit of clothes—shirts, stockings, hats, blankets, and shoes, as

[91] ADM 1/5129, January 1, 1813, TNA.

well as jackets, frocks, and trousers. Bales of these later items were the most commonly supplied, with 8 deliveries of jackets, 7 of trousers, and 6 of frocks. The total value of the missing items was £61.10s.8d.[92] The pursers maintained that the slops went missing when the bales were packed, remarking "the Bales and Cases, are mostly short of the contents mark'd on them, consequently, the number short pack'd, must be the encrease [sic] in the store; if this encrease does not appear, that alone will be a sufficient proof."[93]

The pursers of the 1813 petition wanted these shortfalls remedied because the burden of paying for the missing slops fell to them—they had made a bond with the Navy Board making them responsible for the clothing and necessaries on board. Therefore, if incorrectly packed bales came under their care without being discovered, the pursers paid the difference. In 1808 HMS *Mutine* also discovered shortfalls in their slop deliveries, sending a comprehensive list of the bales and cases delivered and the number of items missing, about 7% of the bales (see Table 1.5). In this case, the value of the missing objects was £8.13s.11d., a figure comparable to the sum of missing articles on board *Mars.* The receiving officers and petty officers wrote that:

> bales and cases of slops received from Mr. Alcoff, Storekeeper, Portsmouth Dock Yard on this 2nd day of April 1808 per the *Sophia*. John Diddarus, Master, who counted immediately they came on board in our presence … the said bales and cases did not appear to us to have been previously openned [sic].[94]

First Lieutenant William Edwards and Master Donald McChery signed the account of the arrival of the supplies, marking their approval.

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[92] Using figures from the *Mutine*, whose report about missing slops in 1808 included the invoiced totals of what should have been in the bales and cases (see table 1.5), the total value of these shipments could have been around £500 of slops, with the missing amount representing a 12% total loss. The *Cumberland* was excessively hit by this shortage, potentially missing 31% of the surveyed bales, with three bales short between 40-55% of their contents, likely the reason that Street caught the deficiency. The other ships were missing less slops, between 4-16%. No figures were available for bales of hats, of which only two bales were recorded, each missing 2 hats, on the *Mars* and *Pyramus*.

[93] ADM 1/5129, January 1, 1813, TNA.

[94] ADM 1/1806/4, May 17, 1808, TNA.

No records survive to indicate what the Admiralty did to solve these slop shortfalls, but they considered them significant. In the minutes of the *Mutine* letters, an uncommon string of questions and responses indicate that the Navy Board gave a report addressing the situation, and that the board had to come to some sort of consensus on the matter, but no details were inscribed.[95] The 1813 petition featured a very lengthy minute, directing the Navy Board to look into a way to solve the issue before the slops arrived on board. First Secretary Croker wrote additionally to inquire "whether the suggestion they then relay here hinted at, as to marking the Bales & backups, with the name of the packer would have the effect they propose."[96] Possibly this is a recognition that naming the packers would only shift the blame, leaving the problem ultimately unsolved. If the Navy Board sent a letter to the Admiralty addressing the *Munite* shortages in 1808, it was never recorded in the ADM 12 digest of that year. The Board did respond to the petition of 1813, however. Though the actual letter did not survive, a notation of its contents was recorded in the digest, which states that "they are of the opinion the deficiencies must have occurred during their transportation by craft to the ships at Spithead; and that in cases where it appears that the deficiencies are not attributable to any want of attention on the part of the Purser, they are allowed credit for the same."[97] There is no indication that the packers signing their names to the bales was adopted.

The 1813 petition also called for another change to slop supply, noting that slops were liable to go missing on board because they could not be kept securely in the slop storeroom. The pursers note that this was particularly a problem in the Baltic station, where "establish'd slop

[95] Most letters about pursers contesting payment to the Admiralty for slops have decisive resolutions, stating whether the purser's expenses are to be waived or insisted upon. See ADM 1/1806/4, Minute, May 17, 1808, TNA.
[96] ADM 1/5129, Minute, January 1, 1813, TNA. Marsden's emphasis.
[97] ADM 12/162, tab 93.2, February 2, 1813, TNA.

rooms have been much lessen'd and taken away altogether, to answer private convenience."[98] In November, 1808, the Admiralty received a letter from Vice-Admiral Douglas who complained of that exact problem, noting "in consequence of the *Alexandria* having a considerable portion of Mr. Merry's luggage, that ship could not take any of the slops or beds intended for the Baltic squadron."[99] A very terse reply was written in the minutes, reminding Douglas that "he should have ordered the slops to have been received on board the *Alexandria* over the tawdry Mr. Merry's baggage."[100]

Deficiencies Abroad and Other Trouble

Problems with the supply and shipping of slops, whether because of deficiencies in the slop bales or mismanaged slop shipments, meant that squadrons at sea and foreign dockyards had access to unreliable numbers of garments shipped from Britain. Commanders had to scramble to find slops for sailors if the stores did not exist. In November 1808, Alexander Cochrane, on board the *Belleisle* off the coast of Martinique, wrote about the problems facing the Caribbean storerooms, noting:

> most of the ships, particularly those of the Line, which arrive here from England, bring out an extra number of Cablers; and the storehouses are now so full that we scarcely know where they are to be placed … in other respects [they] are extremely deficient in their outfit … and I have to approve large demands to replace them which constantly keeps the naval depots short of these things.[101]

Foreign dockyards had their own local supply systems and workforces that produced some of the items stored there, including clothing and other naval accoutrements, but these stations still had to be supported by shipments from Britain. During wartime, supply-lines were haphazard and

[98] ADM 1/5129, January 1, 1813, TNA.
[99] ADM 1/1427 f. 1013, November 17, 1808, TNA.
[100] ADM 1/1427 f. 1013, Minute, November 17, 1808, TNA.
[101] ADM 1/329 f. 148, November 2, 1808, TNA.

response times to shortages could be glacial.[102] This was especially a problem in the West Indies, where an emphasis on slave-based cash-cropping diminished other economic activities and plantation managers and owners themselves relied on European-produced slop fabric and clothing imports to clothe their enslaved labourers. This put the navy in competition with local bulk buyers of slop clothing for a limited number of goods within limited island economies.[103] Newly established colonies like the South African Cape Colony and Australian New South Wales had precarious dockyards supporting multiple military and economic groups. Beyond their normal purview of supplying marine detachments and visiting naval vessels, they were also pressured to assist local settlers, clothe local indigenous people and enslaved or convict workers, and to stock merchant ships that required emergency supplies.[104]

Admirals, captains, and marine commanders hoped to encourage the Admiralty to supply their stations with basic supplies to sailors and marines so that they could produce their own clothing. They hoped this might solve shortfall issues quickly, without waiting for completed objects to arrive from Britain. Admiral Alexander Cochrane wrote that captains ordered jackets and trousers to be sewn of duck canvas, and specifically that duck frocks were converted to jackets to solve a characteristically Caribbean problem—the constant shortage of light clothing suitable for the warm West Indian climate. As Cochrane noted "it has been a constant practice here, and most certainly a very necessary one, to clothe the marines of the squadron in white jackets, and what is commonly called musquitto [sic] trousers or pantaloons, instead of the

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[102] Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*, 9–41.
[103] Robert S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 233.
[104] Miki Sugiura, "Garments in Circulation: The Economies of Slave Clothing in the Eighteenth-Century Dutch Cape Colony," in *Dressing Global Bodies: The Political Power of Dress in World History*, ed. Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello (London: Routledge, 2020), 105–6. Lt. Colonel David Collins at Hobart, Van Diemen's Land, noted in 1805 that he was asked to clothe some distressed marines on board the HMS *Buffalo* despite his own marines also being nearly destitute of clothing. See ADM 1/3317 f. 339, December 16, 1805, TNA.

regular uniform, calculated only for cold climate."[105] He hoped that duck canvas would be made available by the navy for this purpose, noting that canvas purchased in the Caribbean was prohibitively expensive for "the seamen, who generally like to make their own clothes."[106]

Overextension also caused clothing shortages, among other problems, often keeping the aggressive fleet out of the reach of supply ships. In 1806, Home Popham took his South African squadron, freshly successful from conquering Cape Town from the Dutch, and sailed across the Atlantic to invade Buenos Aires and Monte Video without the knowledge of his superiors. His assault was ultimately unsuccessful, and his sailors and troops were stuck in the Río de la Plata between Monte Video and Buenos Aires for nearly a year without access to English or even Caribbean clothing stores. As a result Popham wrote to the Admiralty that "I have now ordered some cloth to be brought and sent to the ships, as the cheapest mode of making slops by the taylors [sic] of the squadron."[107] He supported this need by emphasising the good service of the sailors and their suffering in the cold climate of the southern hemisphere. Still, the Admiralty was understandably frustrated by both his presumption to invade South America and his purchases while there. Popham, always happy to send letters to the Admiralty, continued to badger them until the Admiralty accepted the charges in 1807.[108]

Another issue with clothes that exacerbated shortages even if shipments were timely, was sizing. By the French Wars, slop clothing was mass-produced in different sizes, but the standardisation of sizing had not yet been fully realised. The few extant contracts never mention it.[109] In 1804, the Marine Commandant for Town Lt. Gen. John Campbell wrote to the Admiralty

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[105] ADM 1/329/148, November 2, 1808, TNA. White canvas converted into slop clothes and uniforms is the source of the characteristically white dress uniforms of the Caribbean.
[106] ADM 1/329/148, November 2, 1808, TNA.
[107] ADM 1/58 f. 60, July 8, 1806, TNA.
[108] ADM 1/59 f. 46, April 8, 1807, TNA.
[109] This is probably due to different reasons. The extant contract for marine uniforms from 1747 was probably one of the first contracts for military uniforms of any kind which the Navy Board ever made. Therefore, it is difficult to

about some clothing he and other marine officers were inspecting at Somerset House, remarking that they had "some Pairs tried upon a stout well made man, whose height answered to the size marked upon the Breeches,"[110] which suggests that sizing took at least height into account. Still, slops that did not fit sailors were as common as they were troublesome. Large clothing could be sewn to fit correctly, but small sizes were a waste. When Captain Grandville Waldegrave wrote in 1809 about Hutchon's knitwear frocks on trial, he took the opportunity to also bring the Admiralty Board's attention to the surplus of small duck trousers in the Mediterranean station, remarking "the consequence is that they always convert their frocks into trousers at a great disadvantage … the naval yards in the Mediter [sic] are filled with trousers which are never demanded by the ships, being useless."[111] Like Cochrane, his solution was to ask for canvas to be provided so sailors could sew their own slops, which he hoped would save the navy considerable money.

Buying slops abroad was almost always the quickest means to upset the Admiralty Board. It was generally the more expensive option; doubly so if good but unused slops were sitting forgotten in a storeroom somewhere, already paid for. Captain Robert Fanshawe's 1803 letter was received with typical disapproval due to the Admiralty's preference of supplying a vessel from its own stores rather than relying on the local market. He wrote that he was nearly out of slops and that his purser had made inquiries about "the lowest price at which they could be procure'd at this place [South Shields]."[112] He noted that "they are all equally good and the

know the extent of information which the contract is missing on purpose or just from a lack of experience. For the 1823 contract for black silk handkerchiefs, the reason is simply that the handkerchiefs probably did not have size differences. Beamish, however, does recall that Brunel's shoes were made in nine different sizes, though they would have been straight lasted. See Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 132.

[110] ADM 1/3246, March 30, 1804, TNA.

[111] ADM 1/2705/66, October 25, 1809, TNA.

[112] ADM 1/1802/39, February 11, 1803, TNA.

frocks and beds appear to be of a superior quality to those usually supplied."[113] The Admiralty Board directed him to write to the Navy Board about his slop requirements and to "not make any purchase of slop clothing."[114]

Changing stations often involved changing climate and this was another exacerbation of slop supply. This taxed storehouses, especially those in foreign stations who, if the ships were not correctly stocked upon leaving Britain, had to issue new clothes to a fresh crew when ideally those newly arrived ships were supposed to be the least bereft of stores. Admiral Richard Keats wrote from the Newfoundland station in December 1813, remarking that the conflict with America made it necessary to keep the vessels of his station almost constantly at sea in bad weather.[115] He wrote that he hoped ships would be encouraged to take their allotted extra woollen slops, as "it has scarcely happened during my command that any ship has taken with her to Newfoundland this extra Provision of Slop Clothing from which a frequent necessity has arisen of purchasing at a loss and disadvantage to the seamen."[116]

Stations heavily involved in patrolling and blockading duties like the North American, Newfoundland, Mediterranean and Baltic, did not have as frequent access to storehouses. Being at sea for extended periods required tender ships to bring out slops to meet shortfalls, as Admiral James Nicoll requested for the Baltic station in 1813. From the ship *Vigo*, he asked to be supplied with stores for his squadron, including anchors and cables for the small vessels and sloops, but as with Keats, he additionally asked the Admiralty to direct the next ships sailing to the Baltic to bring a supply of warm clothing.[117] Nelson's Mediterranean squadron was awaiting

[113] ADM 1/1802/39, February 11, 1803, TNA.
[114] ADM 1/1802/39, Minute, February 11, 1803, TNA.
[115] The ships of the Newfoundland station were primarily tasked with keeping the American and French fishing fleets out of the Grand Banks and the other important fishing banks around Atlantic Canada.
[116] ADM 1/479/94, December 17, 1813, TNA.
[117] ADM 1/17/20, March 10, 1813, TNA.

the supply tender *Diligent* when it arrived with substandard duck slops in 1804. Nelson's position of receiving the stores from a tender meant that he would have to accept them or wait for another shipment to arrive.[118]

Conclusion

Despite increasing regulations, commanders were not consistently instructed—either through training or the General Printed Instructions—to fully understand the complex Navy Board system that required them to go through various channels to acquire supplies for their ships. This meant that commanders, like Captain Joseph Nourse of the *Severn*, sometimes made misjudged inquiries directly to the Admiralty. In 1813 he wrote to the board requesting an additional supply of mittens and great coats in preparation for his departure to the North American station. His request directly to the Admiralty was not taken well—the board reprimanded him for not bringing his clothing needs to the storekeeper in Portsmouth, remarking "that they can see no reason why the *Severn* should be provided in a different way from other ships."[119] Nourse had been promoted to the rank of captain by 1805, but had never served in a station with a cold climate. It appears he was simply ignorant of the procedure to acquire an additional supply of warm slops.

Commanders like Nourse were expected to be expert navigators, strong-willed and decisive military commanders and labour managers, and bureaucratic savants to properly manage and maintain their vessels. They were trained in navigation and military tactics as midshipmen, and learned how to manage manpower through example, often mentored by older officers.[120] But

[118] ADM 1/408/113, August 12, 1804, TNA.
[119] ADM 1/2236/44, October 21, 1813, TNA.
[120] Ellen Gill, "'Children of the Service': Paternalism, Patronage and Friendship in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no. 2 (2013): 149–65, https://doi.org/10.1080/21533369.2013.851842.

bureaucratic training was not so easy to prepare for. The Royal Navy operated over such an expansive area and experienced such a diverse range of issues that officers seemingly had to learn the bureaucratic management of their ships on a case by case basis. While chores like filling out the ship's log were rote daily tasks that all officers were familiar with, commanders and pursers had to approach issues of supply, missing and stolen articles, and differing climates by their own discretion or, as this chapter has shown, by referring their problems up the chain of command, until they were eventually placed before the Admiralty.

For this reason, logistical issues like slop supply reveal their particular political and wide-ranging influence. Though a small subset of naval problems and concerns, slop clothes (much like victualling) affected all levels of the naval hierarchy from the lowest ship's boys and new raised landsmen, through to ship captains and dockyard storekeepers, to the high office of the Admiralty. They reveal problems of supply, of regulation, of standardisation, but also of politics and power. For all their authority, commanders were under the constant actual and rhetorical threat of mutiny in this period and an adequate clothing supply factored into the happiness of sailors and marines. Commanders therefore attempted to reframe this situation to their own advantage by presenting themselves to the Admiralty as paternal overseers of their crew's health and well-being. They used this rhetoric of paternal management to express their vulnerability in allusions without actually exposing such unmanly fears. At the same time, they appeared to be making a selfless appeal to the Admiralty on behalf of their crew. As Nourse's misguided inquiry shows, some commanders were more adept at this than others. Sailors and marines, of course, were the ultimate losers in this system. The Admiralty and Navy Board juggled contractors and prices to get the cheapest products, with only a cursory interest in clothing their military forces in goods that were properly made, fitted, and designed.

Tables 1.1 – 1.5

Table 1.1 – Seamen's Allowance of Slops, per Regs. 1790 & 1806		
	1790	1806
First 2 Months	One Month's Wages £0.19.0 to £1.4.0	Two Months' Wages B/t £1.3.4 to £3.7.0
Every 2 Months thereafter	10s.	10s.

Table 1.2 – Seamen's Wages, per month, per Regs. 1790 & 1806			
	1790, wages and allowance	1806, per month	1806, two months allowance.
Able-bodied	£1.4.0	£1.13.6	£3.7.0
Ordinary	£0.19.0	£1.5.6	£2.11.0
Landsman		£1.2.6	£2.5.0
Boy, 1st Class		£0.15.0	£1.10.0
Boy, 2nd Class		£0.13.4	£1.6.8
Boy, 3rd Class		£0.11.8	£1.3.4

Table 1.3—Value of Slops between 1802 and 1812			
Item	Lowest £sd	Median £sd	Highest £sd
Bed	13s.	13s.	£1 4s. 3d.*
Blankets	6d.	8s. 7d.	8s. 7d.
Drawers	2s. 3d.	3s.	3s. 9d.
Frock**	4s. 1d.	4s. 10d.	7s. 9d.
Hat	3s.	3s. 9d.	4s.
Jacket	5s. 10d.	10s. 8d.	13s. 6d.
Mitts***	9d.	N/A	N/A
Shirt	4s. 6d.	4s. 6½d.	6s.
Shoes	3s. 11d.	6s. 7d.	£1 5s.*
Stockings	2s. 3d.	2s. 3d.	2s. 3d.
Trousers	3s. 1d.	4s. 3d.	6s. 6d.
Waistcoat***	3s. 6d.	N/A	N/A
* These high prices were exceptional.			
**A frock in a maritime context was a knitted Guernsey or vest worn under the jacket but over the shirt, sometimes without a jacket.			
***These were the only mitts and waistcoats listed with a price. Mittens were not very useful for sailors because the yarn could stick to the rigging in cold weather. Most waistcoats were categorised as frocks.			

Table 1.4—An Account of the Short Contents of Slop Clothing from Surveys made on board the following Ships chiefly within the space of 12 Months from which an Estimate may be taken of similar Deficiencies throughout the navy [abridged to show only the details of the *Mars*]. ADM 1/5129, January 1, 1813, TNA. (Sums in italics calculated by author)

Ships Name	Purser	Articles deficient	Amount		
			£	s.	d.
Mars	Lewis Gordon				
	Survey 17 Apl 1812	3 wht wrst. Kn. jackets, at 7/2	1	1	6
	Survey 24 June 1812	5 blue trousers at 6/3	*1*	*11*	*3*
		2 hats at 2/9	*0*	*7*	*6*
	Survey 31 July 1812	18 pr stock'gs at 2/3	*2*	*0*	*6*
		4 pr woollen trousers at 6/3	*1*	*5*	*0*
	Survey 16 Nov '12	16 prs stockings at 2/3	1	16	0
		Deficiencies amounting to £	8	1	9
Cumberland	Stephen Street	"	22	8	4
Victory	Robert Gamble	"	11	11	7
Cressy	Daniel Morison	"	8	10	2
Pyramus	TC Blake	"	5	2	0
Zealous	George Thorn	"	2	18	6
Erebus	William Walker	"	2	5	10
Cruizer	William Wild	"	0	12	6
		Total deficiencies in petition £	61	10	8

Table 1.5.—Shortfall of Slop Clothing from a Survey on board the *Mutine*, made at Spithead by Lt. William Edwards and Master Donald McChery on the 2nd day of April, 1808. ADM 1/1806 f. 4, May 17, 1808, TNA. (Sums in italics calculated by author).

Item	Bale/Case no.	Invoiced contents	Actual contents	Deficient	Value of Item			Value of deficiencies			Value of invoiced bale			Per cent lost
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Shirts	3741	65	57	8	0	4	6	1	16	0	*14*	*12*	*6*	*12%*
Duck frocks	1523	100	96	4	0	4	10	0	19	4	*24*	*3*	*4*	*4%*
Stockings	6154	75	67	8	0	2	3	0	18	0	*8*	*8*	*9*	*11%*
Blue trousers	2855	40	37	3	0	6	3	0	18	9	*12*	*10*	*0*	*8%*
Duck trousers	8948	50	46	4	0	4	3	0	17	0	*10*	*12*	*6*	*8%*
Blankets	3116	25	23	2	0	8	7	0	17	2	*10*	*14*	*7*	*8%*
Blue jackets	2423	25	23	2	0	10	8	1	1	4	*13*	*6*	*8*	*8%*
Shoes	3077	100	96	4	0	6	7	1	6	4	*32*	*18*	*4*	*4%*
Total								8	13	11	*127*	*6*	*8*	*7%*

Figures 1.1 – 1.4

Figure 1.1 – C. N. Robinson, "Queries—32. British Seamen, 1779," *Mariner's Mirror* 9, no. 4 (April 1923): 128. Robinson wrote several short queries and articles about the dress of naval sailors in the early years of *The Mariner's Mirror*. Here he remarks that the images (which I have been unable to find) were probably from the same book published by William Richardson, and observes that they "almost indicate a kind of uniform."

Figure 1.2 – Thomas Stothard, “A Sailor’s Return in Peace”, oil on canvas, National Maritime Museum, BHC1125, 1798. https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12617.html. This image shows a sailor returning home in a pair of petticoat breeches, with his actual breeches just peeking out from below the loose fabric. He wears additionally a navy blue jacket, red scarf, black round hat, white or beige shirt, white or green stockings, and light brown leather shoes.

Figure 1.3 – John Augustus Atkinson, William Miller, and James Walker, “Sailors”, coloured etching, National Maritime Museum, PAD7762, 1807, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/111914.html. In this image, the standing sailor is wearing a blue jacket and white trousers with shoes. White cloth wraps his queue while on his head is a buff round hat. Both men wear the same blue checked shirts and red spotted handkerchiefs. The sitting sailor holds a pipe in his teeth and wears buff breeches under what may be a pair of buff petticoat breeches or an apron. He also wears white stockings. In the background are two more men dressed in trousers and blue coats like the standing sailor.

Figure 1.4 – Richard Livesay, "Captain Richard Grindall (1750-1820) and his Family," oil on canvas, National Maritime Museum, ZBA5116, c. 1800, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/564479.html. This image shows Captain Grindall in his undress uniform surrounded by his sons, who are also dressed in naval or navy-like apparel, and his wife. Grindal and two of the boys wear breeches, but two sons also wear trousers. Grindall's blue uniform, with gold buttons and epaulets, contrasted sharply with common slops, though even officers' uniforms were not entirely consistent during this time. The son on the far right is dressed in a midshipman's uniform. Grindall's wife Katherine wears a dress of immaculate white muslin with a matching turban, linking her husband's naval exploits with her personal attire sourced through imperial British conquest and maritime trade.

Chapter Two – Paternal Care and Strategic Crises in Slop Supply

Having outlined how clothing was supplied to the navy and what clothing items were sourced, this chapter is a study of the role clothing played on board vessels as more than simply garments. The supply of clothing was part of paternal care, a sometime-contentious force at work within the Royal Navy as reflected in essential material resources including slops. Its function and parameters were negotiated in ways crucial to the health of the sailors, the good management of the fleet, and additionally for the benefit of ship officers. As I will show, this care was a powerful force, but always mediated by other power dynamics. Who could benefit from paternal care was always being negotiated, but officers in particular used claims of mastery and expertise over the needs of their crews and others to explain personal decisions they made far from the oversight of the Admiralty, decisions that later required an explanation.

As chapter one shows, the navy provided only a limited number of regulations that administered how commanders and pursers were able to manage the clothing and necessaries that they had to distribute to the crew. Additionally, these regulations only covered the most routine points in slop management, such as how to apply for slops, how to submit records, what amount of slops sailors were entitled to, and how to manage unusable slops. Regulations respecting men on board who were not regular crewmembers were few especially before 1806. In that year the General Printed Instructions included specific regulations acknowledging the slopping of new raised men and marines, but had fewer rules about slopping supernumeraries.[1] This was an extension of the wider lack of regulation and efficiency prevalent in the British naval bureaucracy. Therefore, the Admiralty consulted previously established precedent in some

[1] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806. [accessed March 10, 2018].

cases and in others were willing to allow concessions or to follow the Navy Board's suggestions. Commanders and pursers therefore wrote carefully worded letters stressing the need for clothing purchases or the distribution of garments to non-crewmembers hoping to arouse the sympathies of the Admiralty.

These requests emphasised the benefits to the people receiving the garments, either as acts of charity or as healthcare, sentiments that were often subtle reminders of the benefits that the navy stood to gain by allowing the expense. These benefits included a healthier workforce as well as a happier one: the threat of mutiny was ever present. Commanders also reminded the Navy Board and Admiralty that the financial burdens of these costs would otherwise rest on the commanders, pursers, crewmembers, or the destitute personally if the state did not accept the charges. Many of these appeals were accepted by the Admiralty as appropriate financial expenditures, though sometimes the Admiralty stretched out the negotiations. In some rare instances, however, the Admiralty refused to acknowledge a debt as the responsibility of the state, especially if the costs were incurred by some form of negligence.

The main problems with slops fell under two categories. First was supplying ships abroad, usually fleets that spent long periods patrolling important foreign stations. The most important of these was the Channel Fleet blockading the French and Iberian coast, but ships also patrolled the North Sea, the West Indies, the Grand Banks, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. Fleets stationed near Britain, like those in the Channel and the North Sea were able to be supplied intermittently by British dockyards with stores of Navy Board-contracted goods. Those in the Mediterranean and the West Indies, however, might rely on local British-run dockyards like the ones at Gibraltar and Kingston, Jamaica, but found that storekeepers were unable to keep

a steady supply of British-produced goods on hand, necessitating the use of foreign slops at rates outside those established by the Navy Board.

The second category was the supply of slops and other products, like beds and bedding, to supernumeraries—men stationed on a vessel who were not on the ship's books, phrased as "borne for victuals only", and therefore did not have wages from which the purser could deduct expenses. These men ranged from British sailors and soldiers who were being transported to other destinations, to prisoners of war or wrecked sailors, but largely consisted of "new raised men" who had recently volunteered or were impressed. Because the *Regulations* did not define procedure for these supernumeraries, there are many letters that inquire about charging these men, often at exorbitant prices. At the center of both issues was, unsurprisingly, money—the Admiralty and Navy Board made careful efforts to supply British-made goods at lower bulk rates and were not pleased when more expensive goods were sourced or when men walked off with substantial amounts of clothing without repaying the expense with their maritime and military labour.

It is clear, however, that despite the optimistic and rigid understanding of the Navy Board and Admiralty of how commanders were supposed to supply their ships, the realities were very different. Unfortunately for commanders, it was largely impossible to provide clothing only by drawing stores from a British-supplied dockyard and deducting the charges from the wages of sailors. This meant that officers had to become adept at negotiations, convincing the Admiralty that charges for clothing were necessary and in the interest of the navy and British state. These strategies were often paternalistic; officers wrote to the Admiralty worried about crew health and happiness. Often, these worries were presented with a sub-text of avoiding potential crew insubordination, though sometimes officers blatantly threatened the Admiralty that ill-clothed

sailors were a mutiny risk. The Admiralty largely had sympathy for officers and accepted this framing, even if they were never pleased when this care came as an additional financial burden to the state. They understood that as representatives of the government at sea, the ability of officers to supply tolerable quality food and clothing at fair rates was part of the sometimes-volatile unwritten work contract between officers and crew—what Jeffrey D. Glasco termed a "patrician-plebeian contract".[2] Highly confrontational letters, or officers whose problems were incurred by their own negligence, however, might not be extended the same institutional lenience.

Negotiating with the Admiralty: Claiming Paternal Care

The systems of clothing provision—not just the actual production and supply, but also the rhetoric—should not be considered an afterthought of British military policy but were instead an important aspect of the paternal contract between officers and crew. Even though writing and thinking about clothing did not occupy the bulk of the Royal Navy's time, clothing existed as a contested topic between naval commanders, sailors, marines, dockyard workers, and administrators in the Admiralty and Navy Board. The right to provide clothing or dress one's self was a carefully guarded privilege of the officer class and indeed the idea of clothing paternalism is a long holdover from Britain's feudal military and a wider tradition of masters providing clothing to servants and apprentices.[3] The French Wars, which put many institutional vestiges of medieval Europe to rest, also brushed away the last fragments of officer-controlled clothing provisioning as it had existed in the British navy in the eighteenth century. By 1798, the Navy

[2] Jeffrey D. Glasco, "'The Seaman Feels Himself a Man'," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 66 (2004): 46.
[3] John Styles, "Involuntary Consumers? Servants and Their Clothes in Eighteenth-Century England," *Textile History* 33, no. 1 (2002): 9–11.

Board assumed full control over contracting and distributing slop clothing for naval vessels through a wider reorganisation of the various boards of the naval administration and, after 1815, a concerted effort was made to standardise the uniforms of officers, a process that was finally realised in 1827.[4] Therefore, the French Wars and the subsequent demobilization and restructuring represent a thirty-year period where the right of officers to clothe their crew and themselves were slowly but ultimately stripped away.

The social order in Britain during the French Wars was defined by a hierarchy that functioned on a paternal model. While this system did not actually work as rigidly as its rhetoric suggests, the illusion was important: it underscored a "natural" order where men were the sites of political and familial control and support. Women's historians have been at the forefront of defining this paternal rhetoric as it significantly affected the lives of British women and families. Though early scholarship understood the spheres of the household and the government or workplace to be distinct and divided, historians began deconstructing this rhetoric to reveal how women either confronted or harnessed paternalism to achieve their own goals or ameliorate the fortunes of their families.[5] Recently, Ellen Gill has shown the political and personal importance of families in the navy and she underscores that paternalism was important both in familial contexts but also in ostensibly male-dominated or exclusive spaces devoid of strict personal relationships.[6] Though fathers wrote to captains asking them to take particular notice of their sons, on board ship young men had to look to older experienced officers and sailors to learn vital

[4] For the development of the post-1815 naval uniform, see Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions*, 1748-1857 (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 65.
[5] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, 3rd ed. (1987: Abingdon: Routledge, 2019); Anna Clark, *Scandal : The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); and Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754-1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[6] Ellen Gill, *Naval Families, War and Duty in Britain, 1740-1820* (Melton: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 7.

maritime skills. Elin Jones' dissertation on masculinity, material culture, and naval spaces has further revealed the importance of gendered considerations of ostensibly all-male spaces. By using traditionally female-coded subjects, like material goods and friendship bonds, and by recontextualizing the ship as a domestic space that was regulated by violence and only happened to go to war, Jones shows how ideologies of paternalism both strengthen and erase the history of men as well as that of women.[7]

It should be no surprise that relationships of power in the Royal Navy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were both extremely important on-board vessels but also extended back to the land. These paternal power relationships played an important role in the distribution and management of slop clothing and uniforms. Paternal relationships have been studied in the context of young officers—especially the younger sons of established aristocratic families—whose careers were assisted through the social networking of parents, especially fathers, and through the mentorship of their commanders.[8] In return it was hoped that these young men would live up to expectations as good officers and dutiful sons. Similar power dynamics, however, existed more broadly between grown men who were separated by social and naval hierarchies, not only by age. These dynamics extended between officers, but also between officers and maritime labourers which included marines and dockyard workers, officers and the administration in London or in local dockyards, and between maritime workers and the administration. These relationships worked through reciprocal extensions of favour and respect, punctuated by administrative reprimands, threats or even displays of violence. Men who had the least social standing—sailors and marines—were more likely to received rebukes from their

[7] Elin Frances Jones, "Masculinity, Materiality and Space Onboard the Royal Naval Ship, 1756-1815" (Ph.D. diss. Queen Mary University of London, 2016), 68-70.
[8] Gill, "'Children of the Service': Paternalism, Patronage and Friendship in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no. 2 (2013), 149-65.

superiors in the form of corporal punishment; officers on the other hand, often received threats or punishments which were social or financial in nature, such as losing pay or being denied career advancement. The administration, which held power over both maritime labourers and officers, sometimes received written or oral criticism of their decisions from officers—though not often without reciprocal consequences—or formal petitions for favour and support by lower-ranking officers, petty officers, sailors, marines and dockyard workers. However, both the administrators and officers could also be retaliated against by workers through either indirect means like theft and desertion, but also through explicit conflict, like mutiny and machine breaking.

Paternal power relations were significant in all maritime work relationships, and indeed in all relationships in early modern Britain. Though they affected more than just the management of slop clothing and uniforms, clothes are a useful physical reflection of how power manifested on the body as well as the complex negotiations required between all levels of the Royal Navy's hierarchies for it to function. Clothing played an important role in this system of relationships, especially on board vessels. Officers, as the representatives of the Admiralty on board, negotiated for quality-made, cheap clothing on behalf of their crew. Up to the French Wars, the ship's commander was nominally responsible for acquiring slops from contractors and slopsellers in ports. In 1798 the Navy Board largely took over the role of managing contracts, purchasing clothing, and distributing bales and cases of slops to dockyards as a part of a broader reorganization of the navy's many boards and committees. This change made in 1798 was not reflected in the General Printed Instructions until 1806, however.[9] Though commanders

[9] In 1798, the Navy Board wrote to the Admiralty asking for instructions for inspecting and receiving marine clothing, and additional how to pay for the clothes, indicating that they had taken on additionally responsibilities for slop clothing that they had not performed before. Unfortunately, the in-letters dealing with these instructions are no longer in the collection at the Caird. See ADM 12/79 tab 63.12, March 1, 1798, TNA, Kew; and the introduction of this thesis, 20-21. When the new *Regulations* were issued in 1806, they reflected this change by categorizing slop regulations in as responsibilities of the purser instead of the captain. See Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea, Established by His Majesty in Council, 13th ed. (London: n. p., 1790), 71-76.

challenged this change in their duties, they did retain command over stores through the ship's purser and continued to play an intermediary role as the spokesperson for the right of sailors to be provided with good clothing at low rates. This care was not charity, however: commanders expected that their paternal attention would be reciprocated by sailors and marines through deference, hard labour, and good behaviour.[10]

The Admiralty was also jealous of their prerogative to allow and refuse clothing expenditures and were extremely attentive when certain regulations were broken; buying slops abroad or tampering with uniforms were particular sticking points. In the latter case, a great deal of time and consideration went into formalizing contracts that produced slops at flat, low rates using almost exclusively British manufacturers—when purchasing abroad, commanders circumvented these price- and quality-controls, sometimes in desperation but also strategically. In the former, though commanders might pretend that they were the foremost authority over their ship's crew of ratings and marines, the Admiralty was very protective of their prerogative to dress working men, with uniforms and slop clothing being an important site of visual state power.

Sailors and marines were not passive receivers of government-regulated dress, however. The simple fact that slop clothing continued to be the primary method of dressing ratings until 1857, despite officers receiving strict uniform regulations in 1827, suggests that it was difficult for the Admiralty to fully pin sailors down. Drawn primarily from a civilian workforce of merchant seafarers, naval sailors often either left the sea or escaped to the merchant marine later

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https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008592885. [accessed March 4, 2018]; and *Regulations and Instructions*, 1806, 359-69.

[10] For a definition of what was expected of sailors' "good behaviour," see page 25, note 70 of this thesis.

in their careers for higher wages and better work conditions.[11] The transient nature of seafaring meant that it was extremely risky to supply ratings with expensive institutionalised uniforms, even if the sailors were charged against their wages for the garments. After 1857, the professionalization associated with steam ships and wider bureaucratic documentation meant that sailors were more likely to become career naval seamen and, if they did desert, they could more easily be held accountable.

Officers used paternal care to make appeals to the Admiralty. It is clear that some commanders used appeals more often than others. Admiral Alexander Cochrane was one of the most frequent applicants to address clothing issues, writing about slop shortages in the West Indies, insufficient slops for new raised men in Plymouth, and for wrecked privateers in the Bahamas. In the case of the wrecked privateers from New Providence, Cochrane appealed to London for a second time and asked to be relieved of the charges against him as his previous appeal had apparently been misplaced.[12] However, it is also likely that many commanders and pursers resolved slop issues between themselves at sea and only applied to the Admiralty when they were unable to pass slop books. The letters allow a glimpse into the issues of slopping clothing outside the General Printed Instructions and show how power, clothing, and bureaucracy created conflict in the navy.

[11] Denver Brunsman, "Men of War: British Sailors and the Impressment Paradox," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14 (2010): 39-41.

[12] ADM 1/1634 f. 343, March 12, 1803, TNA, Kew. The minute on this letter charmingly reads "There was, I remember, some report of the Navy Board on this case?" followed by "I cannot find it sir, nor does it appear to have been referred" probably between Lord St. Vincent, First Lord, and Even Nepean, First Secretary. Home Popham was also an enthusiastic letter-writer and it does not appear that any official censure ever stopped him from putting a strident complaint or firm suggestion in the mail.

Confrontations of Power and Authority while Sourcing Slops Outside Britain

The major British dockyards during the French Wars were all located in southern England around the Thames estuary and the English Channel. Beginning with the closest to London, these were Deptford, Woolwich, Chatham, Sheerness, Portsmouth, and Plymouth. All these yards had been established for at least a century before the Revolutionary conflict began in 1793. There were, however, secondary and supplemental yards around the British Isles and throughout the empire. In total, there were 34 yards that operated during the period between 1793 to 1815, though many of them were short lived due to territorial exchanges or other reasons (see Appendix 3).[13]

The most important yards outside of Britain were those which serviced the four main fronts of British imperial activity: the Mediterranean, North America, the Caribbean, and India. In the Mediterranean, the most developed yard was at Gibraltar. This yard supplied the fleets both blockading France and Spain, and also those patrolling the Mediterranean Sea. In North America, the principal yard was at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and was important for supporting ships patrolling the important North Atlantic fishery as well as supporting the three-year conflict with America starting in 1812. In the Caribbean, the largest dockyard was located at Port Royal, Jamaica. It was supplemented by several yards on surrounding islands, many of which were short-lived due to on-going conflict. In India, the largest and oldest British-controlled yard was at Bombay, though the East India Company also established yards at Madras and Trincomalee, Sri Lanka. These regions had different relationships to the metropole but for the most part the yards sustained themselves through a combination of shipments from Britain with supplemental

[13] Two important dockyards, one in Ireland and one Wales, were moved to new yards. For a comprehensive overview of the major yards, see Roger Morriss, *The Royal Dockyards During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars* (Bath: Leicester University Press, 1983), 39–72.

supplies drawn from the local economy. The yards in India, however, were managed by the East India Company and therefore had a more complicated relationship with the broader system of Royal Dockyards.[14]

Lord Nelson and Slop Clothes in Mediterranean

In theory, the Mediterranean was close enough to Britain to be supplied through naval tenders that shipped men and goods relatively quickly from Portsmouth and the Nore to fleets blockading the Iberian Peninsula or patrolling the inner sea itself. Britain also maintained dockyards in a number of foreign ports in the area, which were supplied with slops and other stores in the interim waiting for when ships eventually visited. In 1804, Admiral Horatio Nelson's squadron stationed in the Mediterranean received a shipment of Navy Board slops, delivered by the tender *Diligent*. Nelson's complaints about the supplies present several important examples of how supplying slops abroad functioned, but also how a commander might use slop problems to contest the power of the state. Nelson, like many admirals abroad, begrudgingly relied on British-sourced stores delivered to his ship on tenders but his letters also hint at the availability of local slop-production. Indeed, Nelson and his captains attempted to access both the British dockyards and local suppliers like those at Malta in order to control the quality and price of the slops their ships were receiving, a strategy of sourcing diversity that could additionally work to strengthen their supply-lines.[15] Additionally, Nelson was able to

[14] Very few letters about slop clothes discuss Indian yards, probably because the station was largely controlled by the East India Company. For a closer look at the relationship between the navy and EIC in victualling the Indian Ocean fleet, see Martin Wilcox, "'This Great Complex Concern': Victualling the Royal Navy on the East Indies Station, 1780-1815," *The Mariner's Mirror* 97, no. 2 (2011): 32–48.

[15] Nelson was particularly adept at this kind of local sourcing. He was able to make a contract for Sicilian lemon juice at 1s/gal as compared to the naval contract at 8s/gal, leading to Sicily eventually becoming the source of lemon juice for the whole navy. See N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 486.

harness the power of his celebrity to inflame the language of paternal care. It is important to note, however, that Nelson's experience with slops should not be construed as normal. Nelson was able to demand concessions from the Admiralty in ways other commanders were not indulged. Still, his wide manipulation of Mediterranean and British stores gives insight both into aspects of slop management, and how commanders attempted to negotiate different ways of accessing critical stores abroad.

Nelson and Captain Thomas Hardy were investigating local slop production in Sicily and Malta, hoping to procure more accessible and cheaper slop clothes from these markets than those that were shipped on tenders from Britain. Malta, strategically located south of Italy at the entrance of the Levant, was also an important naval depot during the wars, though its significance was not immediately apparent to the British government.[16] The British gave up the island in the 1802 Treaty of Amiens, but refused to leave the island until they approved of a neutral replacement, which led to a resumption of the conflict less than a year later. The naval squadrons stationed in the Mediterranean, however, had already begun to use Malta as a significant source of victuals and necessities. In 1801, George Elphinstone, Lord Keith, sent the Admiralty a list of shoe prices from the Maltese yard, including 650 pairs of shoes for HMS *Alexander* and 220 pairs for HMS *Athenian* at rates lower than those charged in Britain.[17] Keith's

[16] Though Malta was located at the mouth of the Ottoman Mediterranean, making it an important naval stronghold and trade depot, Britain was initially willing to allow it to be occupied by a neutral European power and agreed to leave the island under the contentious Clause 10 of the 1802 Treaty of Amiens. However, who would replace the British in Malta quickly became a flashpoint between France and Britain and was significantly one of the factors which led to the dissolution of the short peace. See Desmond Gregory, *Malta, Britain, and the European Powers, 1793-1815* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), 117–40.

[17] ADM 1/405 f. 347, 3 November 1801, TNA Kew. The 4,210 shoes in the Maltese storehouse were worth about 4s.8d., but 3,340 were sold at 5s. to allow for the purser's pound. In 1802, Prater & Son was providing footwear to marines in Britain at 5s.2d. The average price of shoes between 1800 and 1815 was about 5s.4½d. For the prices of marine clothes supplied by Prater & Son in 1802, see ADM 1/3291, 28 November 1802, TNA, Kew, or for a list of shoe prices between 1800 and 1815, see Table 4.1.

letters also suggest that Malta's close proximity to Sicily rendered it a useful supply depot for shoes purchased abroad.

Nelson's search for new clothing sources was vindicated when the *Diligent* transport rendezvoused with Nelson's fleet on August 2nd, 1804. He wrote to the Admiralty that "instead of their being made of good Russian Duck as was formerly supplied … those sent out are made of coarse wrapper stuff and the price increased."[18] Originally, the canvas clothes cost 4s.8d. for frocks and 4s. for the trousers. Those delivered by the *Diligent* were 2d. to 3d. more expensive, making the frocks specifically almost 5s. (see Table 2.1). Unimpressed, Nelson wrote:

> the issuing such coarse stuff to the people, who have been accustomed to good Russian Duck cheaper, will no doubt occasion murmurs and discontent and may [result in] serious consequences. I therefore am most decidedly of the opinion, that the contractor who furnished such stuff ought to be hanged and little less if any thing is due to those who have received them from him. I shall say no more on the subject, as their Lordships will naturally see the propriety of this Evil being remedied as soon as possible.[19]

Nelson alluded to his role as a paternal provider of adequate supplies at a fair price but also reminded the Admiralty of the consequences of breaking that agreement with the crew. Only seven years after the debacles at Spithead and the Nore, as well as the violent loss of the *Hermione*, Nelson's forthright caution about mutiny was a bit heavy-handed. Though other commanders wrote to the Admiralty about their responsibility to act as fair providers to their crews, with the implication that failing to do so might end in crew violence, this was almost always implied rather than explicitly stated.

He continued by passing capital judgement on the contractor who produced the clothing, as well as "those who have received them from him" which could mean either the Navy Board, who accepted the contract, or the storekeepers in England who received the bales of slops and

[18] ADM 1/408 f. 113, 12 August 1804, TNA, Kew.
[19] ADM 1/408 f. 113, 12 August 1804, TNA, Kew.

supposedly inspected them for quality. Discontent with contractors during this period was common,[20] but a commander writing to the Admiralty and threatening violence against the contractor, in addition to associated naval personnel, was not. In June 1805, Rear-Admiral Thomas Troubridge wrote about the same issue when he received inferior "coarse" slops while stationed at Madras.[21] These slops might be from the same contract as those sent to Nelson as the complaint is so similar. Troubridge specifically refers to the replacement of cheap Russian duck with more expensive but poorer quality fabric. However, his language was more careful than Nelson's, writing that "I would rather their Lordships would be pleased to cause an enquiry to be made respecting them" and adding that "I am of opinion [that] there has been some gross imposition on the part of the contractor." Still, Troubridge had been First Sea Lord during St. Vincent's tenure as First Lord and, as St. Vincent's former Board of Admiralty ally, he would have been sensitive to the shortcomings of contractors.[22]

Nelson concluded his letter by adding a postscript about Hardy's research into cotton trousers and frocks from Malta. When Nelson returned some clothing from the *Diligent* as proof of their poor quality, he also included some examples of Hardy's Maltese cotton. Nelson's message was clear: if the Navy Board could not control their own slop supply, he could easily find places to buy them elsewhere. Hardy's opinion was also enclosed in Nelson's letter, in which he acknowledged the *Diligent*'s slops to be of "very inferior quality" and added his approval of the Maltese cotton, remarking that "I beg leave to observe … the Maltese cotton

[20] Both Bernard Pool and J.M. Haas remark that during the period of the French Wars the public was intensely interested in the affairs of the dockyards, in particular the supposedly corrupt relationship between contractors and dockyard officials. See Bernard Pool, *Navy Board Contracts, 1660-1832: Contract Administration Under the Navy Board* (London: Longmans, 1966), 111; and J.M. Haas, *A Management Odyssey: The Royal Dockyards, 1714-1914* (New York: University of America Press, 1994), 44.
[21] ADM 1/175 f. 47, June 4, 1805, TNA, Kew.
[22] Pool, *Navy Board Contracts*, 117.

washes and wears remarkably well."[23] Nelson and Hardy had to make some sort of arrangement to provide slops. Sailors needed clothes and it would take time to receive replacements. Troubridge's solution was to allow the inferior slops to be sold, but at a reduced price, the hope being that the Admiralty would recoup the cost by penalizing the slop contractor and not his crew, his purser, or himself. Nelson's strategy was different—while he may have issued the slops at a reduced price as well, the addition of the slops from Malta reveal that Nelson was prepared to diversify his supply chain through local Mediterranean sources. While at the surface his suggestion of Maltese cotton might seem helpful, the aggressive tone of the letter hints that the foreign slops were additionally Nelson's attempt to wrest control of slops away from the government so that he had foremost authority over the management of his fleet.

This conflict between the Admiralty and ship commanders over who had control of the ship's supplies is further highlighted in the letter Nelson forwarded by Captain Henry William Bayntun, the captain of HMS *Leviathan*. Like Nelson, Bayntun maligned the quality of the *Diligent*'s slops by writing a long, scathing commentary on both the slops themselves and the process that allowed such slops to be delivered to his ship. In his letter, Bayntun explicitly challenged the Navy Board's authority as the site of quality control. He wrote

> I further beg leave to call your Lordship's attention to the very judicious regulation in the General Printed Instruction on the subject of slop clothing … According to this, a pattern marked with the Navy [Board] seal, should be sent to His Majesty's Ships with all slops … and if [the clothes] are found to be inferior they are permitted to make a deduction in the price, acting with fairness between the slop seller and the men.[24]

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[23] MS/3677, 14 August 1804, Wellcome Library, London. Nelson mentions Hardy's letter as enclosed in his August 1804 letter which is bound in ADM 1/408/113, but it is instead in the collection at the Wellcome Library. The provenance of Nelson's correspondence at the Wellcome is elaborated on in Jane Bowden-Dan, "Diet, Dirt and Discipline: Medical Developments in Nelson's Navy. Dr John Snipe's Contribution," *Mariner's Mirror* 90, no. 3 (2004): 260.

[24] ADM 1/408 f. 123a, August 27, 1804, TNA, Kew.

The General Printed Instructions that Bayntun referred to in this 1804 letter were issued in 1790. They did not yet reflect the Navy Board's role as the primary managers of slop clothing, with pursers as their representatives.

The next issue of the General Printed Instructions, which did not arrive until 1806, was its first major overhaul since 1731; the slops section itself almost doubled in length and significantly the entirety of slop management was moved from the control of the captain to that of the purser. Over the course of the French Wars, the Admiralty and Navy Board were in the process of centralizing slop management, and Bayntun had noticed. "Why is it discontinued?" he asked, about sending the slop patterns.

> Is it because we are not to have it in our power to see justice done to the men under our command, and that we may not be a check upon, and bring to light the malpractices of contractors? The General Printed Instructions are referred to frequently enough by the Gentlemen at the Navy Board, whenever it answers their purpose to remind officers of their duty, but I am sorry they have forgot, or do neglect that Particular Instruction to which I have called your Lordships' attention.[25]

A year later, Troubridge wrote that he consulted the General Printed Instructions as well. He decided to distribute his inferior slops at a reduced rate, as per the regulations, but never mentions that he used the contractor's samples to determine their quality. It is probable that Troubridge pragmatically omitted that he lacked a pattern, instead choosing to follow the parts of the regulations that allowed him to distribute the inferior clothes in a way that both kept his crew happy by reducing the cost, and also pleased the Admiralty by following the spirit of the regulations.

The Admiralty response to these letters is not surprising. Nelson's letter was received without comment; Bayntun's was not. Nelson's samples were forwarded to the Navy Board for consideration, with a note to report on the expediency of using Malta a source of cotton. Though

[25] ADM 1/408 f. 123a, August 27, 1804, TNA, Kew.

they also forwarded Bayntun's samples, he was castigated for his confrontational tone. However, through Bayntun, the Admiralty Board was also able to admonish his commander:

> Own and acquaint Lord Nelson that altho' it is the duty of every officer to see that justice is done to the men under his command in the article of slops … [and] to represent the same to his commander in chief … he should at the same time make that [approbation?] in a manner & style consistent with the respect due to those by whom it is to be taken into *consideration*.[26]

The note ended with the threat to Bayntun that similar comments might "extensively injure his service."[27]

Viscount Keith and Supplying Shoes in Sicily

In 1801, Keith was dealing with problems of supply and of challengers to his authority as well. In May 1800, Keith was able to secure 22,200 shoes for the British fleet in the Mediterranean, an indication of the wide availability of shoes on the island of Sicily.[28] The island's location as a division between the outer Mediterranean Sea and the Levant meant that it was an important safe harbour for the British navy and along with Malta was widely recognised by European powers as an important station for monitoring the seafaring activities of the Ottoman Empire. Both Sicily and the Kingdom of Naples signed several treaties with the British government between 1793 and 1812 allowing British use of their ports.[29] By 1806, however, Sicily had undergone a six-year drought and was further separated from Naples due to the French invasion of the Italian peninsula. Desmond Gregory remarks that Sicily was in a difficult

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[26] ADM 1/408/123a, Minute, 27 August 1804, TNA, Kew. The Admiralty Board's emphasis. This directive was written as a minute to Bayntun's letter, not Nelson's, so his behaviour in this instance was never castigated directly.
[27] ADM 1/408/123a, Minute, 27 August 1804, TNA, Kew.
[28] While many historical works on Sicily discuss their fabric-production, it has not been as easy to ascertain how prominent shoemaking was for the island during and before the French Wars. Today, Sicily enjoys a good reputation for their shoe production, but it may be that in this early period the market for shoes was largely local.
[29] Neapolitan harbours were closed to British use after 1806 when the Kingdom was invaded by France, but the Island of Sicily continued to be used. See Desmond Gregory, *Sicily: The Insecure Base: A History of the British Occupation of Sicily, 1806-1815* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988), 15.

position. Though it produced linen and silk, it relied on markets in France and Switzerland to sell its cloth, locations it did not have access to due to the Napoleonic Wars. Gregory further notes that these economic difficulties made Sicily less desirable as a supply depot than nearby Malta, whose economy was robust in comparison.[30]

Still, despite the difficulties experienced by Sicilian traders and manufacturers, Lord Keith was able to source the required shoes, again at a lower rate than what was charged in Britain. It was, however, not considered convenient to keep the shoes in Sicily. In an affidavit he forwarded from James Tough, a consul at Palermo who helped Keith's secretary secure the shoes, he notes that he "procured for him at the most reasonable rates at which [shoes] could be purchased at Palermo and delivered [them] without further charge at Malta."[31] Again, it is worth noting that despite the long-standing British presence in Sicily prior to 1800, it seems that upon gaining control of Malta a significant amount of supplies were either sourced from or redirected to the smaller island, even before it was considered a British protectorate in 1803.[32]

This experience, however, was an important example on how local supplies could be as much a burden to an Admiral as a boon. Here, Keith's informal acquisition of shoes for his squadron allowed a subordinate captain to challenge his authority and so Keith's letters give insight into supply powerplays from the perspective of a fleet admiral being challenged. Captain Benjamin Hallowell of HMS *Swiftsure* both wrote to Keith and went above him to the Navy Board, to suggest that HMS *Northumberland*, commanded by Captain George Martin, was not

[30] Gregory, 38–39. Gregory notes several issues which aggravated Sicily's poor economy. Drought and losing access to important markets were contributors, but Sicily's rising population, a large portion of which was moving out of the country and into the cities, along with a corrupt judicial system, poorly managed grain production, and irregular government, were also factors.
[31] ADM 1/405 f. 347, 3 November 1801, TNA Kew.
[32] Malta was not made into a colony until 1815.

charging the same amount for shoes as the rest of the fleet.[33] The implication was that the cheaper prices allowed on *Northumberland* revealed that those who made the contract for the fleet were taking a large overhead from the more expensively priced shoes. This confrontation required Keith to undergo a six-month investigation of the purchase, which included interviewing *Northumberland*'s purser and securing an affidavit from the consul at Palermo. Significantly, Keith noted that by May 1801 nearly all the shoes had been distributed from the stores in the year since purchasing the articles, suggesting that ships stationed in the Mediterranean were able to consume nearly 19,000 pairs of shoes in twelve months.

In 1801, Keith's fleet was ordered to Egypt but he wrote to the Admiralty that "an absolute want of all kind of slop cloathing [sic] prevailed in the whole ships of war" and he immediately ordered that shoes be purchased in Sicily, "being the only place at which they could be had."[34] Due to not receiving the vouchers for the shoes until the final shipment was received, Keith was unable to set a price until April 21, 1801, when he decided on 4s.4d. This was because all the shoes did not cost the same; Keith wrote that they were between 4s.1d. and 4s.6d. in price, including the expenses of purchase (meaning packing, shipping, and delivery to Malta), with the average being 4s.1¼d.[35] Keith specifically acknowledged the General Printed Instructions, noting that they "do not point out whether or not commission on the purchase and the purser's poundage of the 5 per cent which I have always understood to form a part of the price of slops furnished at home should be included in the price of such purchases made abroad."[36] The difference between

[33] Hallowell, an American loyalist, famously slapped St. Vincent on the back in congratulations at the Battle of Cape St. Vincent and was a close friend of Nelson, perhaps indicating the kind of personality a naval officer had to have to challenge Admirals like Keith on matters like shoe prices.
[34] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA, Kew.
[35] At this average rate, according to the number James Tough mentions in his affidavit of 22,246 pairs of shoes, this transaction cost £4565.1s.3½d.
[36] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA, Kew.

the actual price and Keith's set price was about 2¾d. per pair, with the difference going to the Navy Board, Keith assured the Admiralty, and not to the agent who purchased them.

After three weeks, Captain Hallowell wrote to Keith that he received 416 pairs of shoes from the *Maria* transport, along with Keith's order informing him of their price. He continued,

> I feel it my duty to represent to you that the price charged by the Contractor appears to be exorbitant; as shoes of the same quality, purchased from the same person at Palermo, *and at the same time*, have been issued to the ships Company of the *Northumberland*, for which they stand charged on the Ships Books only 3s.11d. pr pair.[37]

The rate charged by the *Northumberland* was 2¼d. lower than the average rate. Hallowell's letter makes clear that he believed 4s.4d. was too much to charge for the shoes: his letter ends with the hope that Keith will order a 5d. reduction on the ordered rate.

Keith was not interested in allowing Hallowell's crew a reduced price. On May 10th he returned to Hallowell a terse letter noting that he had examined the shoe vouchers, was satisfied that the contractors were honourable, and reiterated his order to charge 4s.4d. The next day Hallowell replied that he had not found sufficient satisfaction in Keith's letter and that he had written to the Navy Board asking them to consult the *Northumberland*'s vouchers. Keith was not interested in shoes but he was equally unhappy to have a captain go over his head to the Navy Board. He wrote a long letter to the Admiralty explaining the issue, emphasising that his actions were "regulated by the best motives for I hope that a consideration for the interest of the public has never been separated from an attention to the other duties with which I am charged; and if I have erred through good intention, I request that their Lordships will respect my motives."[38] He also noted that he was unable to make an enquiry because he was neither in Palermo with the contractor nor was the *Northumberland* still part of the blockade of Alexandria.

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[37] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA, Kew. Hallowell's emphasis.
[38] ADM 1/404 f. 118, May 13, 1801, TNA, Kew.

In November Keith was finally able to update the Admiralty on the shoe situation by presenting the board with a packet of information, including copies of the original letters, a written interview with the *Northumberland*'s purser, a report by the storekeeper at Malta showing his shoe prices, and an affidavit by Tough, the consul who assisted in the contested purchase. This package contains significant insights into how clothing supplies were managed abroad, as well as the difficulties involved in coordinating such purchases even in a single fleet, but also shows that contemporaries recognised that ensuing tensions might also arise from conflicts of power. Going over the original correspondence, Keith wrote that while Hallowell was right in approaching him about the price discrepancy, that he went over Keith's head to the Navy Board made the Admiral feel that Hallowell "was actuated by other motives than a conscientious regard to the Public good."[39] This reconsideration of the original conflict with Hallowell was probably aided by the *Swiftsure*'s capture by the French in June 1801 and Hallowell's subsequent repatriation and court martial.[40] Hallowell had broken convoy without orders from Keith to reinforce another squadron. Caught by a faster French ship between the two British fleets, Hallowell was forced to surrender his vessel after the French ship blew away the *Swiftsure*'s rigging. Reflecting on the shoe issue, Keith wrote triumphantly to the Admiralty that he hoped that captains like Hallowell would not be encouraged by the board "of having a right to conclude or assert … that transactions have been fraudulent, with the integrity of which his commanding officer, after due examination has declared himself to be satisfied."[41] Still, he just as easily could have been admonishing Hallowell for his actions in June.

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[39] ADM 1/405/347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.
[40] Hallowell was honourably acquitted of both leaving his convoy "of very little importance" and the "unavoidable" loss of the *Swiftsure*. See James Stanier Clarke, Stephen Jones, and John Jones, *The Naval Chronicle*, vol. 6 (London: Bumney & Gold, 1801), 511, https://books.google.ca/books/about/The_Naval_Chronicle.html?id=myQoAAAAYAAJ&redir_esc=y.
[41] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.

Keith's additional research is a treasure trove of information about buying clothes abroad. The interview with the *Northumberland*'s purser, Joseph Ault, reveals that the *Northumberland* bought some 700 shoes in Palermo, for 3s.11d. each, from John Thomas, a merchant who had no contract with the Navy Board. Ault suggested that the volatile exchange rate and the lack of any other expenses accounted for the difference in price. He recalled that the rate of exchange was 52 per cent when he bought the shoes, and that if he had purchased them under the current rate (48-49 per cent) the shoes would have cost about 4s.2½d. The shoes were also not burdened with any extra charges; Ault claimed he only paid for packing and did not have to pay a government commission, shipping or freight. Ault was also asked to compare the shoes he had ordered for his own ship with those Keith had issued. He thought the latter were "at least equal if not superior to those supplied to *Northumberland*."[42]

Further, James Tough's affidavit to the Admiralty about his assistance to Lord Keith contains a rare glimpse of the layers of networking required to make purchases outside naval yards. Keith's secretary Nicholas Brown sent a representative to Palermo named James Meek to make the purchase.[43] Meek met with Arthur Paget, the British minister to the Sicilian court who, on finding Meek could not speak Sicilian, introduced him to Tough, a British consul. Tough wrote that he

> did [in] many cases negotiate the Bills [that] Mr. Meek brought for these purposes, or gave him my advice in the negotiation of them. That I also … recommended him to my correspondence and [friends] at other ports on the Island, and … I procured from him at the most reasonable rate at which they could be purchased at Palermo and delivered without further charge at Malta, twenty-two thousand two-hundred and forty-six pair of shoes … thereon amounted to the sum of seven thousand seven hundred and eleven ounces, twenty eight tarins, and eight grains … being on average ten tarins, eight grains per pair … paid to me by the said James Meek without any profit, advantage or emolument whatever directly or indirectly.[44]

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[42] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA.
[43] According to a later letter, by 1801 James Meek was the acting naval officer at Port Mahon, Minorca. See ADM B/203, December 17, 1801, Caird, Greenwich.
[44] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.

The affidavit was signed by several of Tough's superiors and colleagues who assured Keith in their own oath that "Mr. Tough's character in this place entitles his testimony to full credit and belief."[45]

The letter from Malta's storekeeper, William Bundock, confirmed the good rate that Meek and Tough had secured for the shoes. He wrote a list of all the shoes at Malta issued between March and September 1801, showing their actual prices and what sailors were charged with the addition of the purser's pound and other expenses (see Table 2.2). The two general issues of 3,340 pairs of shoes that were sold to sailors at a rate of 5s.5d. produced an average overhead of about 10%. Here, Bundock used the overhead on the cheaper shoes issued between July and September to cover any fees from the more expensive shoes that were sold at a rate which only covered the purser's pound. Keith mentions using the same method, allowing him to issue some shoes that actually cost 4s.6d. at only 4s.4d. Keith also wrote proudly that "I have been credibly informed that no shoes purchased here [Malta], or in Sicily, for the use of the Army during the last winter, have cost [less] than 5s. per Pair."[46]

Keith's troubles make plain why the Admiralty was often so frustrated with purchases outside of those made by the Navy Board. Indeed, though purchasing the shoes quickly solved his shoe-shortage, Keith also clearly regretted the trouble it caused, writing "their Lordships will not fail to observe how vexatious such remonstrances are; how much mischief they may produce, and how much they tend to distract my attention from the many important duties on which it is unremittingly employed."[47] The loss of the *Swiftsure* between May and November also shows that Keith understood that Hallowell's actions gave him the ability to more opaquely admonish

[45] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.
[46] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.
[47] ADM 1/405 f. 347, November 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.

his subordinate, which he seemed more careful about in the earlier letter despite his insistence that the transaction was honorable. Keith's criticism of Hallowell—that his motive for complaint was not "a conscientious regard for public good"—further underscores that commanders understood that the Admiralty was interested in many factors of clothing supply, but principally they were most invested in trying to manage naval finances.

West Indian Slops and the Rhetoric of Liberty

The Caribbean was also an active site of slop management. Like the Mediterranean, it was close enough to Britain to receive regular shipments of goods while also able to produce local goods. Further, the Caribbean was a volatile battleground for much of the century as the wealthy coffee and sugar-producing islands, maintained by a considerable enslaved workforce, were vulnerable to conquest and extremely valuable as negotiating assets. The close relationship between naval sailors and both free and enslaved dockyard workers in the Caribbean underscores a further issue with the government's provisions of slop clothing to the navy. In the letter he wrote about the unfit slops on board HMS *Diligent*, Captain Bayntun of Nelson's Mediterranean fleet reflected on clothing he had witnessed in the West Indies to further malign their quality. He wrote that the cloth's texture and colour was similar to No. 7 sail canvas and remarked that "the article is so inferior that I think them only fit to be sold to the Negro's [sic] in the West Indies (they are exactly like what I have *seen* for *that purpose*, exposed to sale) and by no means fit for British seamen."[48] His comparison of slop clothes with clothing "for that purpose" is significant and revealing. First, the insinuation that free British seamen were to be clothed in slops that Bayntun charged were no better than the those sold in bulk to plantations to clothe their enslaved

[48] ADM 1/408 f. 123a, 27 August 1804, TNA, Kew. Bayntun's emphasis.

workers, was an extremely loaded comparison. Indeed, while the language of liberty and slavery was used at all levels of political power as a rhetorical tool, the specific use of it in the navy could easily remind the Admiralty of the Mutinies of 1797. Sailors used this dichotomy specifically to underline the rights they expected as free British military personnel who were due, among other things, access to well-made clothing and not contractor-manipulated rags overpriced by the burden of the purser's pound. This was also directly tied to a broader British use of such rhetoric over the course of the French Wars, positioning British liberty as the righteous antithesis of French despotism.[49]

Bayntun's comparison was not purely theoretical, however. A closer look at auctions and store inventories published in the British Caribbean shows that slops and clothes intended for enslaved Black plantation workers were often closely associated. Of particular interest are the numerous printed advertisements in Guyanese newspapers.[50] Between 1797 and 1814, the contents of ships arriving from Britain, alongside shop inventories and plantation auctions, were published in English. These advertisements contain a staggering assortment of privately sourced goods deemed marketable in the South American colony, including spices, preserved food, manufactured goods, and equestrian accessories. Important for this study, these ads also included large shipments of clothing and fabric. Frequently, slop clothing and clothing for enslaved Black workers were listed together. In thirty-nine advertisements between 1803 and 1813, half the

[49] Colley, *Britons*, 350–60.

[50] Though located next to modern Venezuela, Guyana is often considered more closely related to the Caribbean than to Iberian South America. Formerly a Dutch holding, the British began occupying Guyana in 1796 but returned the land to the Batavian Republic in 1802, as part of the Treaty of Amiens. However, the resumption of hostilities allowed the British to reinvade the colony and the area was eventually ceded by the Dutch in 1814, becoming a crown colony until 1966. *The Royal Gazette* was established in English and remained in print during the interim Batavian reacquisition as the Dutch-language *Niewe Courant van Essequebo en Demerary*. In September 1803, the British returned and resumed printing the English paper, though the Dutch paper also continued to exist. See John Wilmer and Rodney Van Cooten, "Background," Guyana Colonial Newspapers Online, March 28, 2003, https://www.vc.id.au/edg/background.html [accessed Feb. 2, 2018].

listings that included slops listed them alongside "negro cloathing". Though slops appeared alongside ready-made and general clothing intended for gentlemen, women, and children, clothing for the enslaved were very seldom listed near those for general wear (see Figure 2.1). In 1806, an advertisement detailing the contents of the *Hercules* listed them as "negro cloathing [sic] and slops"[51] while a June 13th, 1807, entry listed the same[52] and another on July 11 as "negro cloathing, slops, gentlemens' ready made cloaths [sic]."[53]

What is remarkable about Bayntun's comparison between slop clothes and ready-made items intended for enslaved Africans is that Bayntun was likely able to make this observation himself in the West Indies, either by witnessing both types of clothes sold together or by seeing sailors and enslaved workers intermingling in ports and dockyards.[54] Slops were probably only of slightly better quality when new and due to the harsh effects of maritime labour on clothes, they probably did not remain very long in a pristine state. Osnaburg was a coarse sheeting made of tow or jute yarns that was a preferred cloth for clothing enslaved workers and appears readily in the Guyanese advertisements.[55] Its rough weave and dull colour would have been less comfortable and appealing, but the Russian and Irish sheeting and duck desired by Nelson and Bayntun for their sailors were not necessarily improvements. Though duck's tight, waterproof weave made it particularly desirable for seafaring, this in turn would not have made it a very

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[51] I. Mackenzie, "At the Store of I. Mackenzie", *The Essequebo & Demerary Royal Gazette*, Oct 11, 1806, https://www.vc.id.au/edg/18070912edrg.html [accessed August 25, 2018].
[52] Cornfoot, Bell & Co., "Imported from London," *The Essequebo & Demerary Royal Gazette*, June 13, 1807, https://www.vc.id.au/edg/18070613edrg.html [accessed Aug 25, 2018].
[53] H. Douglas, "The Subscriber Has for Sale", *The Essequebo & Demerary Royal Gazette*, July 11, 1807, https://www.vc.id.au/edg/18070711edrg.html [accessed Aug 25, 2018].
[54] Naval dockyards in the Caribbean made extensive use of enslaved labourers. Bayntun would have been familiar with this as he served in the West Indies for ten years before being assigned to the Mediterranean.
[55] Sugiura notes that the association of certain fabrics with clothing the enslaved contributed to its cheap reputation. See Miki Sugiura, "Garments in Circulation: The Economies of Slave Clothing in the Eighteenth-century Dutch Cape Colony," in *Dressing Global Bodies: The Political Power of Dress in World History*, ed. Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello (London: Routledge, 2020), 104-5.

comfortable cloth to wear.[56] Enslaved men, women and children were probably one of the largest categories of coerced consumers in the early modern Atlantic and as Robert DuPlessis starkly notes "the redressing of the enslaved was a side effect of their transformation into labor units."[57] The large number of sailors slopped by similar means, with similar clothes, probably unnerved observers in regions extensively invested in human bondage. Bayntun's statement, therefore, was politically motivated to equate the superficial similarities between the clothes of two categories of workers as a similarity of subordination. Sailors, if dressed like slaves, must also be slaves. If true, the paternal contract where sailors expected care from their superiors in return for hard labour was broken.

Clothing and Other Necessaries Issued to Supernumeraries

One of the largest gaps in the regulation of slop clothes was the supplying of supernumeraries, or men aboard ships who were not members of the crew. The distinction of supernumerary could apply to a wide range of men at sea, including sailors and marines in transport, soldiers stationed on ships as marines, prisoners of war, impressed sailors, or men rescued from foundering vessels, itself a broad category that included both allied and enemy combatants as well as civilians. However, the only supernumeraries recognised by the General Printed Instructions were soldiers stationed on ships in lieu of marines, which meant that commanders often had to apply directly to the Admiralty to offset clothing costs that could not be absorbed by the wages of sailors and marines listed in paybooks.[58] Supernumeraries

[56] A significant number of the listings in the Guyanese papers included osnaburgs, and fewer listed general Russian and Irish sheetings and Russian duck.
[57] Robert S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 127.
[58] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 368–69.

complicated ship authority. These men did not produce recordable labour and therefore were outside the paternal contract that established care for sailors in exchange for both shipboard work and military combat.

The brief Peace of Amiens between March 1802 and May 1803 marks a particularly active period in inquiries between commanders and the Admiralty due to the remobilisation of the British fleet. Transporting new raised men—either volunteers or pressed men—created an administrative space where men were neither civilians nor fully documented military personnel and naval and marine officers did not always know how to manage supplies for this category. This, in combination with the administrative strife between First Lord of the Admiralty Lord St. Vincent and the Navy Board, created problems when the navy attempted to quickly remobilise after the renewal of war in May 1803. For most of that year new recruits filtered into the major southern dockyards and rendezvous from around the British Isles, primarily from Ireland and Scotland, with a smaller number of complaints originating with new raised men from Bristol and Liverpool. By the fall, the Admiralty was so exasperated with the reports of overcharged recruits arriving with unfit slops that they began releasing successive circulars about slops and beds issued to these newcomers, attempting to get slop accounts in order and crews ready to return to duty.[59]

When new men were raised, they were placed on tenders or hulks in major ports and supplied with slops against their future wages. These men were often transported to the south of England on different ships, where they were again surveyed by the receiving purser. Once in Portsmouth, Plymouth, or the Nore, new raised men were then transferred to either hulks or their new ships, where they were once more surveyed for any slop deficiencies. During this process,

[59] ADM 12/104 tab 94.1, September 10, 1803; September 22, 1803; and November 30, 1803, TNA, Kew.

pursers had incentive to exploit new raised men.[60] The transient nature of temporary sailors who were not crewmembers, a status officially referred to as "borne for victuals only", gave pursers an opportunity to overburden the accounts of men who, along with their paybooks, would quickly be transferred to another ship where they would become someone else's problem.[61] The system of paternal care which normally incentivised commanders to effectively manage the clothing and debt of their sailors did not properly function because of this supernumerary status. As the slop inquiries made during 1803 and 1804 show, the point when commanders and other officers advocated for new raised men was when their debts conflicted with ship readiness or when the men joined the crew.

Slop charge limits were put in place to keep men from being exploited by pursers, but it was often the sailors who suffered most from these restrictions as the Admiralty was reluctant to allow extra charges, even when military action or demonstrable abuses overburdened their allowance and rendered them destitute. Though officers advocated on the behalf of men who did not have proper clothing, in many cases it took time and tenacity to track down the source of the problem. In these situations, the Admiralty continued to be directed to increasingly lower-ranking officers as the source of problems, where their lack of military and social power made them easier to blame.[62] The Admiralty attempted to create regulations that would both protect sailors and keep the public safe from extra expenses, but these two motivations often conflicted. Pursers, who were better versed in the regulations than sailors, could easily find ways to slip

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[60] Karen McBridge, Tony Hines, and Russell Craig, "A Rum Deal: The Purser's Measure and Accounting Control of Materials in the Royal Navy, 1665-1832," *Business History* 58, no. 6 (2016): 929-31. See also chapter 1 of this thesis, 43-44.

[61] While this loophole was technically closed via an additional regulation before 1790, it was not included as part of the main text of the regulations until 1806. See *Regulations and Instructions*, 1806, 361.

[62] ADM 12/104 tab 94, October 26; and December 7, 1803, TNA, Kew. In the case of the bed issued Brothers, the Admiralty was referred to the regulating officer Captain Robert Warburton at Limerick and then Lieutenant Martins on board the tender HMS *Commerce*.

through charges. For this, they were vilified for cheating sailors, often rightly. Still, pursers were personally burdened with all the financial risk of supplying a naval vessel and they were motivated to find creative ways to augment their profits and to ensure their financial survival.[63] Pursers, therefore, made use of vulnerable new recruits and supernumeraries as an easy chance to pad their gratuity. However, sometimes overcharges were just mistakes owing to the sheer bureaucratic confusion of mobilization.[64]

Almost all the appeals by officers advocating for new raised men were rooted in concerns about ship readiness. New recruits at Dundee were unable to be transported south for embarkation because there were no shoes in store. The Admiralty allowed Captain David Laird to buy them shoes, but cautioned him "to take care that any are observed on the lists against the recruits."[65] Captain George Hope of HMS *Leda* asked to charge the men he had on board "borne for victuals only" because he issued them slops "necessary for their health as well as that of my own ship's company."[66] The charges were allowed against the men, although the Admiralty wrote to remind Captain Hope not to let them take away their beds. The Captain of HMS *Blanche* wrote from Blackstakes, a mooring near Sheerness in the River Medway, that "the Fever now on board, occasioned in [the surgeon's] opinion, from [the new raised men] being too thinly cloathed … the Established quantity allowed them per month not being sufficient."[67] Captain Zachary Mudge, who asked to supply supernumeraries with slops, was warned to guard

[63] McBride, Hines, and Craig, "A Rum Deal," 937–38.
[64] The Captain of HMS *Alonzo* returned an apology to the Admiralty for wrongly charging some new raised men, writing "the mistake solely arose from many men being on board nearly of the same name." Still, he also blamed the receiving ship, saying they took the supernumeraries too quickly. See ADM 1/1802 f. 100, March 19. 1803, TNA.
[65] ADM 1/2070 f. 3, September 15, 1803, TNA, Kew.
[66] ADM 1/1926 f. 247, August 1, 1802, TNA, Kew.
[67] ADM 1/2145 f. 916, January 1, 1803, TNA, Kew.

vigilantly against desertion, as he would be financially responsible for the slops charged against them.[68]

A related issue to the shortage of slop clothing was the equally pernicious trouble with beds and bedding during the Peace of Amiens, a problem that probably stemmed from Admiral St. Vincent's wider crusade against contractors. During the peace, St. Vincent cancelled several important dockyard contracts, and one of them was the contract for ratings' beds.[69] In 1802, the Navy Board was directed to survey beds in order to produce a new contract "procured of British manufacture equally good and cheap."[70] Over the course of the peace, the Navy Board and Admiralty bickered over the beds' details, particularly their stuffing: horse or cow hair, or textile waste called flock. In March 1803, as tensions with France rose, the Navy Board reported that "they do not expect to provide any considerable number of beds made of Hair for some months to come,"[71] adding a week later that "the magazines were therefore much reduced."[72] Despite this, the Admiralty insisted that the Navy Board contract beds exclusively stuffed with horse hair.[73] On March 16, 1803, the Admiralty warned the Navy Board to stop treating for a contract and await new directions, aware that hostile actions by Britain would end the Peace of Amiens the next day. Three days later they sent directions to make the necessary contract, for beds now broadly defined.[74] It was too late, however, to remedy the lack of beds in store and the navy suffered a three-year shortage as a result.

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[68] ADM 1/2145 f. 916, Minute, January 1, 1803, TNA, Kew.
[69] Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, 478.
[70] ADM 12/99 tab 94.1, November 15, and December 16, 1802, TNA.
[71] ADM 12/104 tab 94.1, March 14, 1803, TNA.
[72] ADM 12/104 tab 94.1, March 22, 1803, TNA.
[73] ADM 12/104 tab 94.1, May 7, 1803, TNA.
[74] ADM 12/104 tab 94.1, May 16, 1803; and May 19, 1803, TNA.

The desertion of newly raised and slopped men was also a risk as recruits who had not worked did not yet have wages from which to draw the expense of new clothes. Lieutenant Edward Shrapnell's experience on board the *Cleveland* tender in 1805 shows how tricky this could prove, especially as a lower-ranking officer. On July 6th the Lieutenant sent a petition to the Admiralty protesting a £19.14s.6d. charge made against his pay. While he was asleep, Shrapnell claimed that the sentry stole the keys from the midshipman and released some impressed men from the brig, who promptly deserted with all their newly acquired clothing. In order to gain the sympathy of the Admiralty, Shrapnell used language of honour and paternal duty to his family to contest the stop in his wages, stating "he considers a vindication of his own honour as a duty incumbent on him" and reminding the Admiralty that "the detention of so large a sum must prove serious to himself, an amiable wife & three innocent children."[75] Shrapnell's petition did not move the Admiralty.[76]

Conclusion

During the French Wars from 1793 to 1815, British navy officers used clothing management as a method of extending paternal care to the sailors of their crew. It was also a means to challenge authority, whether the authority was the Admiralty Board in London or a Commander-in-Chief. Commanders were able to use clothing management to challenge their superiors because regulations on how exactly slops were to be bought and distributed were slim, especially before the newly revised and expanded General Printed Instructions of 1806.

[75] ADM 1/3130 f. 82, 6 July 1805, TNA, Kew.
[76] PROB 11/1443 f. 261, TNA, Kew. Shrapnell died of an unstated illness in Bideford, Devon, the following year and through it is not clear if he was already sick when he wrote this petition, it is likely that the sum considerably reduced his half-pay. According to Shrapnell's will, in which he left everything to his wife Sarah, he was already too weak to sign his name, authorizing the document with his mark. See PROB 11/1443 f. 261, May 23, 1806, TNA.

Commanders could take advantage of poor slops and destitute sailors to complain or make an appeal to the Admiralty. No doubt a considerable bulk of slop management, however, took place without communication with London, either because things moved smoothly, or because commanders made their own decisions and only challenged the government when their slop and pay books did not pass audit. Indeed, many of the men who most aggressively challenged the Admiralty were men who were also known as brash military commanders who flouted military and social convention. Officers like Admiral Horatio Nelson, Captain Benjamin Hallowell, and Admiral Alexander Cochrane often questioned the Admiralty on a range of issues, not just clothing, and tested how far they could use their military service and social standing to push back against the confines of naval and even social authority and hierarchy. By contrast, men who were not as powerful, like William Bayntun, received reprimands when they tried the same, and even Hallowell, post court martial, eventually could no long fully rely on his military prowess to make amends for his challenge to Lord Keith's authority. Lower-ranking officers, like Lieutenant Edward Shrapnell, were not as able to effectively challenge the Admiralty to advocate for their own slop problems, perhaps a reason why commanders sent letters challenging the government but lieutenants and pursers sent petitions, whose formalised language of appeal protected them from appearing too aggressive.

The crewmen themselves also used clothing to challenge the paternal authority of their commanders, expecting to receive and to witness their colleagues receive clothes fairly for the work they did. Sailors rescued from wrecks were given slops gratis both as practical charity but also to assure the ship's company of the care they might receive in similar circumstances. Likewise, caring for prisoners of war at home or abroad was a chance to demonstrate the benevolence of the British state and court the loyalty of their own combatants. Deserting with or

reselling state-provided slops was also a means of further undermining authority. Sailors only had power in their labour, however. As new raised men, they were not yet officially on the pay books of their assigned vessels and therefore had no wages against which slop charges could be made. For supernumeraries, the paternal relationship was weaker. Commanders were less likely to advocate on the behalf of sailors who were being transported instead of working. Instead, they appealed to the Admiralty only when disruptions to the slopping process delayed vessels or threatened crew health. In 1803, a combination of remobilisation and administrative issues between the First Lord St. Vincent and the Navy Board meant these issues occurred more frequently.

The supply of clothing to working men in the navy reveals more broadly how the sometimes-contentious paternal contract worked to keep naval ships under sail. Supplying good, cheap clothing to crew members was not the foremost priority of the naval bureaucracy and officers, but it was important because it affected crew satisfaction and readiness. Just as uniforms gave a visual language to the power hierarchies of officers, so slop management highlighted whether the paternal contract between sailors, officers, and the government was functioning properly. Still, people fell outside this dichotomy. As we will see, marines received government supplied uniforms that demarked both their unique role as soldiers and sailors but also their institutional difference, meaning that they were not under the complete authority of naval officers. This distinction was seen by ship commanders as a challenge to their complete authority over their vessels, placing marines in a unique position as both within the naval paternal contract but also outside it. The blue uniforms of the officers, the red uniforms of the marines, and the civilian slops of the ratings were not simply the result of differing approaches to clothing

management, they fundamentally underscored the conflicts of power on naval vessels during the French Wars.

Tables 2.1 – 2.2

Table 2.1 – Prices of Slops received or endorsed by Adm. Nelson, and Cpts. Hardy and Bayntun, August 1804.			
	£	s.	d.
Frocks, wrapper stuff	0	4	10
Frocks, Russian duck	0	4	8
Frocks, Maltese cotton	0	4	2
Trousers, wrapper stuff	0	4	3
Trousers, Maltese cotton	0	4	2
Trousers, Russian duck	0	4	0

Table 2.2 – Prices of shoes issued at Malta dockyard, ADM 1/405 f. 347, Nov. 3, 1801, TNA, Kew.								
Date	Ship	No. Shoes	Actual Price	Issued Price	Total Actual Value	Total Issued Value	Overhead	
							£sd	%
March 16	*Alexander*	650	4s.10d.	4s.10d.	£157.1s.8d.	-	-	-
March 16	*Athenian*	220	4s.6d.	4s.6d.	£49.10s.	-	-	-
May 12 - June 31		940	4s.9d.	5s.	£223.5s.	£235	£11.15s.	5%
July 1 - Sept. 30		2400	4s.6d.	5s.	£540	£600	£60	10%

Figure 2.1

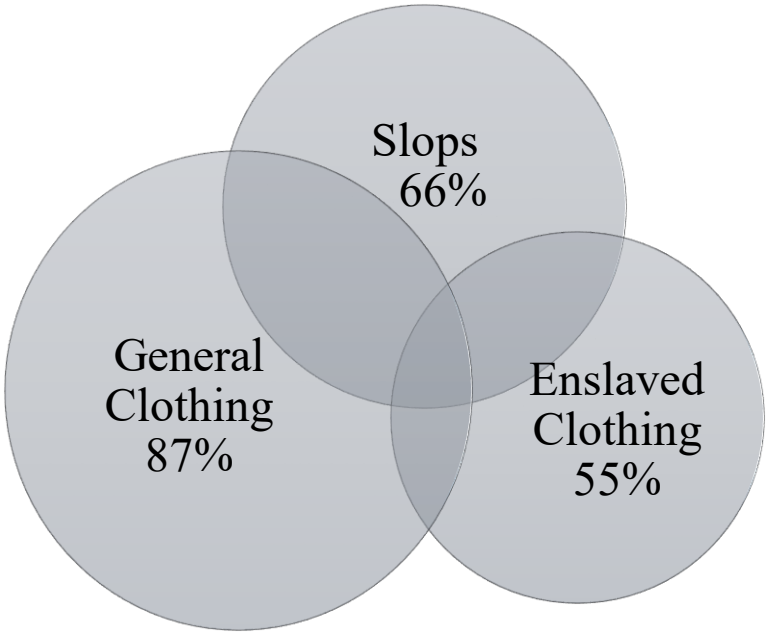

Figure 2.1 – Organization of slops vis general clothing and clothing for enslaved workers in 38 Guyanese newspaper advertisements, 1803-1813.

Chapter Three – Clothing the Royal Marines: Uniforms, Discipline, and Authority

In 1664, the first officially defined English Corps of Marines was instituted at the insistence of Charles II. Over the course of the next two hundred years, marines were used on board naval vessels as infantry assigned to sea service. In the early years this was the most evident; marines were raised and commanded by the army and their organization and appearance was consistent with that service. Because the English—and after the Act of Union in 1707, the British—armed forces could not still perceive of a use for marines beyond a military capacity that would justify their expense, they were only raised during times of war. Then in 1755 they were transferred permanently to the control of the navy, which rearranged the unwieldy regimental organization of the marines to make them easier to assign to ships, but preserved other aspects of their previous army existence, like their uniforms. Despite their legacy, the marines were able to evolve to the point of being a permanent naval corps and this was reflected in their use of both regulation uniforms and unregulated slop clothes.

Historically and historiographically, the Corps of Marines in this period—from 1664 to 1815—were not considered hugely important or consequential.[1] Apart from battles where their service was recognised as being pivotal, such as the 1797 Battle of Cape St. Vincent where marines were lauded for their efforts in the capture of the Spanish ships *San Nicolás* and *San José*, contemporaries did not view them as a very prestigious military outfit, and they were certainly never as numerous as their sailor or soldier counterparts.[2] Modern scholars of the early

[1] This periodization represents the time between their creation to the end of the French Wars.
[2] In 1814 Jane Austen wrote in Mansfield Park "Miss Frances married, in the common phrase, to disoblige her family, and by fixing on a lieutenant of marines, without education, fortune, or connexions, did it very thoroughly." See Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, repr. (1814; Salt Lake City: Gutenburg Press, 2016), chap. 1,

marines are few.[3] Works focusing solely on the marines are almost exclusively dominated by official histories as written by the navy or by ex-marines turned scholars.[4] These authors are also almost exclusively interested in the Marine Special Operatives of their own experience.[5] Prolific naval and maritime historians like N.A.M. Rodger spare very little time for a consideration of marines in the navy or the wider maritime world.[6] The lapse of the western world's understanding and experience of maritime labour and life has reduced the output of naval and maritime scholarship and by extension the Corps of Marines has been overlooked as a small number of dedicated maritime scholars attempt to grapple with the hugely varied global maritime world of our past and, even still, our present.

So then, why discuss marines in conjunction with the dress of the Royal Navy? Between 1793 and 1815, the Corps of Marines (the Royal Marines after 1802) underwent extreme institutional stress—they did not exit this period of conflict as the same corps that existed in the eighteenth century. In the early years of the wars, the marines were important participants in the

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https://www.gutenberg.org/files/141/141-h/141-h.htm; and for marine numbers, see Britt Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines, 1664-1802* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), 266.

[3] Britt Zerbe's recent work is one of the few focusing exclusively on the marines during their formative years. See Britt Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines, 1664-1802* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013); Richard Brooks, *The Royal Marines: 1664 to the Present* (London: Constable, 2002).

[4] The Royal Marines have published four volumes on the history of the marines, attempting to cover a range of time periods and issues: Cyril Field, *Britain's Sea Soldiers: A History of the Royal Marines and Their Predecessors and of Their Services in Action, Ashore, Afloat, and Upon Sundry Other Occasions of Moment*, 2 vols. (Liverpool: Lyceum Press, 1924); H. E. Blumberg, *Britain's Sea Soldiers: A Record of the Royal Marines during the War, 1914-1919*, repr. ed. (1927; Uckfield, UK: Naval & Military Press, 2007); and James D. Ladd, *By Sea, By Land: The Royal Marines, 1919-1997—An Authorised History*, rev. ed. (London: Harper Collins, 1889).

[5] Julian Thompson's book on the marines reduces their 250 year early development into two chapters, one until 1815, and the other until World War I. See Julian Thompson, *The Royal Marines: From Sea Soldiers to a Special Force* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2000). It should be noted that these historiographical trends are consistent with the scholarship of the early history of the American Marine Corps, which was inherited from the British (then called the Continental Marines). The American force was disbanded in 1783 but was reestablished permanently as the US Marine Corps in 1798. For an overview of the US Marine Corps in the nineteenth century, see Heather P. Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874-1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019), chap. 1.

[6] Usually the marines are only mentioned as an aside in publications about larger naval issues or are not mentioned at all. N.A.M. Rodger only dwells on the marines for a single page in his extensive overview of the eighteenth-century British navy. See N.A.M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986), 28-29.

increasing occurrence of single-ship and fleet-wide mutinies in the British Royal Navy. Successful mutinies often relied on the complicit agreement of marines, who threw down their arms or refused to shoot at the ship's company. Once the mutiny was successful, the sailors did not forget the contributions of their marine fellows but added their demands to those of the sailors. In the eighteenth century, marines were primarily used as naval soldiers in landing parties and as reservist sailors—termed "landsmen"—who assisted the crew in unskilled tasks of seafaring and supported the great guns during battle with small arms fire.[7] Marines were understood by the officer corps to be unreliable, but the decade of sailor insubordination in the 1790s meant that increasingly marines acted as naval police whose loyalty to the officer corps was paramount. Marines' policing was also extended to the dockyards, where they acted as guards of naval property, a duty that would have been deemed tyrannical if performed by soldiers. This transformation from reservist sailors to naval police involved a rehabilitation of the reputation of the Corps of Marines, which came slowly but was aided by King George III bestowing upon them "royal" status in 1802. It also required careful management of the bodies and appearance of marines. In order to tie this crucially important imperial force to navy command, captains, admirals, and administrators were all invested in manipulating or maintaining the uniforms and bodies of the Royal Marines. They hoped not only to make them unlike sailors but also to make them as close to soldiers within the navy as could be managed.

Creating and Dressing the Royal Marines

The uniforms of the marines were the most visible holdover from the time they were

[7] For the definition of "landsman" as a rank of shipboard labour, see page 29, note 85 of this thesis. The marines in particular underscore that the derogatory connotations of "landsman" obscure the reality that naval vessels required these workers for the ship to function as a living space, a military fortress, and a mode of transportation.

soldiers. Their red coats were symbols of their potential to act as disciplined, loyal, and respected troops on the side of the naval officer corps. By contrast, sailors wore slops: a type of mass-produced dress contracted by the Navy Board but resembling the civilian clothing of labourers.[8] The navy wished to foster a more disciplined marine service that represented and defended the authority of the officer class instead of training them to become sailors—an idea from the mid-eighteenth century to lessen the need for the press gang. There were several ways that the Admiralty and naval officers worked to instill values of discipline in the marines. Sometimes they physically separating them from sailors, but more subtly they also hoped that emphasizing the distinction between official uniform dress and casual sailor slop clothes would define marine loyalties.[9] This chapter will show how changing attitudes about the Royal Marines can be traced through official reactions to their dress and bodies from the mutinous 1790s to the end of the war.

As warfare evolved over the course of the next two hundred years, the marines would latch onto their distinction as specialised soldiers in a naval institution as a powerful military identity from which they would define their prowess as elite troops with a reputation of hardened combat masculinity.[10] During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, however, this

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[8] Beverly Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade Before the Factory, 1660-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 12.

[9] Slop clothes were mass-produced garments produced by contract, usually for the military, though sometimes for chartered companies such as Hudson Bay. The clothing was handmade and ill-fitting, as advances such as the sewing machine and standardised sizing were not perfected until the mid-nineteenth century. See Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce*, 9–41; for the development of standardized sizing in America, see Mary L. Davis-Meyers, "The Development of American Menswear Pattern Drafting Technology, 1822 to 1860," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 10, no. 3 (1992): 12–20; and for the link between the American Civil War and sewing machines, see Amy Breakwell, "A Nation in Extremity: Sewing Machines and the American Civil War," *Textile History* 41, no. sup1 (May 1, 2010): 98–107, https://doi.org/10.1179/174329510X12646114289662.

[10] Heather Venable's recently published work on the US Marine Corps in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries supports this transition for the American branch of the service. Though it shows how American military rhetoric influenced the trajectory of the US Marine Corps differently than the Royal Marines, it is clear that both services fundamentally struggled with their roles on board ships as military police and expeditionary forces. See Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*, chap. 1.

reputation was not yet so easily defined; their work and life with sailors meant that in the eighteenth century they had gained experience from and respect for sailors and together shared in the hardships of seafaring life. By the nineteenth century, however, the marines were encouraged to identify with the military discipline of the regular army soldier who relied on training and leadership from commissioned and non-commissioned officers.[11] This was also further complicated by the fact that Corps of Marines recruits were heavily drawn from the south of England, but were expected to police the Royal Navy workforce that included sailors from across Britain and Ireland, and also non-British mariners including Europeans and European colonists in addition to Africans and Indians.[12]

Though this project focuses on the period between 1793 and 1815, the navy was expanding throughout the eighteenth century responding to conflicts in Europe, the Americas, the Caribbean, and India. As Britain was defending this established and growing global empire, it was also patrolling important maritime sea lanes, as well as installing new colonies in South Africa and the penal colonies of New South Wales and Tasmania. To achieve these goals, the navy had to both professionalise and expand, which was supported by the fiscal-military state.[13] Cyclically, the navy's foreign conquests also added to Britain's wealth. Through the powerful British fiscal state, the Royal Navy was able to finance projects such as the creation of a naval-

[11] Naval officers used the idea of the disciplined, loyal regimental soldier as a foil for sailors in this period, but soldiers were not seen as particularly disciplined or loyal by other segments of British society and did in fact mutiny with frequency. See Peter Way, "Militarizing the Altantic World: Army Discipline, Coerced Labor, and Britain's Commercial Empire," *Atlantic Studies* 13, no. 3 (2016): 345–69. After the 1857 Indian Rebellion, army mutiny became increasingly associated with the actions of colonial troops.

[12] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 84–90. There was a ban on recruiting Catholics into the marines until 1804. Frykman notes that aboard the *Hermione*, a British ship which in the fall of 1797 suffered a violent mutiny, only 50 per cent of the crew was English, with an additional 20 per cent from the British Empire and Ireland respectively, and the final 10 per cent from countries around the Atlantic world. For details of the manning problems suffered by European navies during the late eighteenth century which led to a dependence on foreign-born sailors, see Niklas Frykman, "Seamen on Late Eighteenth-Century European Warships," *International Review of Social History* 54, no. 1 (April 2009): 68, 72, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859009000030.

[13] John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 34-37.

run food supply system (victualling), the modernization of the dockyards, and the massive contracting apparatus necessary to clothe maritime personnel in uniforms and slops.

A Brief History of the Marines, 1664-1815

The Corps of Marines was established for the use of the English Navy in 1664 by a decree of Charles II but they were not permanent. The corps that existed during the French wars was largely the result of substantial reforms in the mid-eighteenth century as the navy assumed sole control. The haphazard raising and disbanding of the marines, their large, cumbersome army structure, their likelihood to be stationed in naval dockyards across the British Isles, and their haphazard deployment around the world in defense of British interests were problems that the navy set about to resolve as the corps was moved into their jurisdiction.[14] Starting in 1747, the hierarchy of the marines was reorganised to maintain an army-like structure while still being useful for duty on board a multitude of vessels at sea. They were made into a single corps of three divisions instead of many regiments all raised, provisioned, and paid by colonels. The regimental structure was dismantled, making the largest grouping below the division in their organizational structure the company, and even this was largely an organisational pool to staff ships rather than a military organisation.[15] Marine companies, as would have been the case with an army company, were overseen by a single captain, along with several first and second lieutenants, as well as non-commissioned sergeants and corporals. By cutting off the marine military organization at the level of company, however, there was a limited number of high-

[14] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 52; and Thompson, *The Royal Marines*, 9–16.
[15] The size of a marine company depended on the size of the ship, but ranged from about 20 in an 8-gun ship to 170 men on 100-gun ship in wartime. See Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 166.

ranking positions beyond captain.[16] To mobilise marines more efficiently, they were concentrated in the large southern dockyards of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness, and Chatham. These barracks were overseen by Colonels Commandant, and in addition a Commandant in Town was created in 1783 to reside in London and attend the Board of Admiralty, acting as the foremost general in the marine command hierarchy.[17] These high-ranking positions were sometimes filled by marines but were more often staffed by naval officers.

Early modern British marines were used for many purposes, but formally their main contribution to the military was to act as landing parties with more training and discipline than sailors, in addition to adding support fire with small arms during battles at sea. Nevertheless, these roles continued to be concurrently performed by army regiments throughout the eighteenth century because the number of marines was never large enough to man every ship. During the late-seventeenth century, the marines began to be used as unskilled shipboard labour and this role became routine as manning shortages plagued the Royal Navy.[18] Additionally, they protected important parts of the vessel, like the quarterdeck, and the food and gunpowder stores. This role as shipboard guards was expanded to a more active policing role, where marines were used as part of "sailortown"[19] pressgangs, and as police for nascent British colonies and in dockyards. The special qualities of the marines that made them a useful addition to the navy also

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[16] Thompson, *The Royal Marines*, 16. This lack of high-ranking bureaucracy enabled the marines to mobilise quickly, something which later made them a very attractive unit for rapid-action colonial force, but it also meant that the number of high-ranking representatives advocating for the marines were few, which caused long-term problems.
[17] Though confusingly called colonels in this title, these men were generals. The Commandant in Town was often a Lieutenant General, the highest rank to which a marine could advance (and they were therefore also outranked by army generals). Colonels Commandants were Major Generals.
[18] Thompson, *The Royal Marines*, 11.
[19] A "sailortown" is a section of a port-city, usually near dockyards whether military or commercial, where the social and commercial life of the inhabitants and businesses revolve around seafarers and maritime-life. For explorations of the idea of sailortown, see Valerie Burton, "Boundaries and Identities in the Nineteenth-Century English Port: Sailortown Narratives and Urban Space," in *Identities in Space: Contested Terrains in the Western City Since 1850*, ed. Simon Gunn, and Robert J. Morris (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 137-151; and Robert Lee, "The Seafarers' Urban World: A Critical Review," *International Journal of Maritime History* 25, no. 1 (June 2013): 23–64.

made them difficult to integrate into the service. But the need for the navy to have soldiers under their jurisdiction and control was important.

Because marines were considered subordinate soldiers in the navy, service with the marines was not looked upon favourably as a career in the early modern period.[20] With their small number of high-ranking positions, the ambitious marine officer was limited to the rank of captain unless blessed with exceptional luck and social connections. To further complicate matters, the navy often promoted their own officers into important ranks ahead of marine officers as "blue colonels." This position was a paid placement for naval officers waiting for a promised position in the navy.[21] Additionally, marine officers were kept on a prize money allotment one level lower than their naval equivalents, meaning that marine captains were entitled to a share as if they were naval lieutenants. Though the navy expressly denied that this was to be taken as an indication of their subordinate status, it did not stop naval officers from considering it so.[22] Due to these factors, marine and naval officers argued over who had final command over marine detachments when at sea. The idea that anyone had higher authority than a commander of a vessel was anathema to officers of the navy, but this caused resentment among marine officers, who saw themselves as a discrete military force with its own hierarchy. The lack of potential

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[20] Their evolution into the celebrated commandos which modern marines would recognise occurred during the Second World War but marines had been used extensively as a quickly mustered colonial expeditionary force since the second half of the nineteenth century. See Brooks, *The Royal Marines*, 157–88; and Thompson, *The Royal Marines*, 34–52.

[21] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 62–68. Nelson held a blue colonelcy in 1796 but agitated to be released from it, much to the surprise of the First Lord. George John Spencer, *Private Papers of George, Second Earl Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1794-1801*, ed. Julian Stafford Corbett, vol. 2, Publications of the Navy Records Society 48 (Lodnon: Printed for the Navy Records Society, 1924), 21, http://archive.org/details/privatepapersofg02spenuoft. Thompson notes that marine captains sometimes bought commissions in the army if they could afford it, a measure which significantly increased their promotion prospects. Thompson, *The Royal Marines*, 37.

[22] See J.M. Fewster, "Prize-money and the British Expedition to the West Indies of 1793-4," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12, no. 1 (1983): 3. Prize money was awarded after the capture of enemy warships, merchant vessels, and coastal holdings. The unequal allotment system was one of the grievances of the 1797 mutinies and in 1808 the system was reformed.

advancement for marine officers and the interference with their already limited command structure and authority by naval officers fueled bitterness in the ranks of marines but it also made the marines a less worthwhile career option for men who could afford commissions in other parts of the military. Still, no matter how much the resentment of marines poisoned relations between the two corps, this arrangement was better for the navy than relying on detachments of soldiers from the army, over which naval officers and even the Admiralty ultimately had no authority.[23]

Therefore, the officer class of the Royal Marines tended to attract affluent working men, or lower income men of middling rank, as the cost of a marine commission was about half that of the navy. The navy, by contrast, drew their officers from more respectable social groups. Families who put their sons in the navy were often attracted by the chance of a large financial payout in the form of naval prize money, despite the tawdry professionalism that promotions based on merit implied. As naval professionalism became a virtue in the late-eighteenth century, along with the rise of the values of the middling sort, the navy's emphasis on skill and scientific knowledge itself drew promising young men who rejected the ethos of wealth and patronage that infused the army officer corps.[24] The army's promotions were sometimes merit-driven but were more often regulated by social and financial capital, and no service was more restrictive in this regard than the cavalry.[25] In a feed-back loop of reputation, the poor standing of the marines served to attract men from lower social orders than other military forces, and this in turn

[23] Conflicts of jurisdiction plagued the relationship between the army and navy. While both services were jealous of their commands, the "next after God" mentality of ship captains and admirals at sea did not help. For the origin of this disparity, see Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 28–29.

[24] This is not to say that naval promotion was singly merit-based, but only that it had the appearance of it, especially in contrast to the army. Men in the navy still relied on social capital for promotion. See N.A.M. Rodger, "Honour and Duty at Sea, 1660-1815," *Historical Research* 75 no. 190 (2002): 429-30; and Ellen Gill, "'Children of the Service': Paternalism, Patronage and Friendship in the Georgian Navy," *Journal for Maritime History* 15, no. 2 (2013): 149-165.

[25] Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 2.

diminished their social standing in the military.

Marines, Discipline and Uniforms

The history of the integration of the Corps of Marines and the Royal Navy—and the subsequent friction it caused—is important because it informs anxieties about the differences between the two military groups. As the navy modernised, the marines were often left behind. This is an undercurrent of their entire history; the marines had to continually reinvent themselves to stay relevant. In the nineteenth century steam engines and long-range rifled artillery rendered the close-combat function of their corps obsolete. In the eighteenth century the marines were deemed a burden because, while important in pivotal moments of violence, much of life at sea was the tedious maintenance of the vessel and rigging. Army regulars solved the problem of tedium by drilling, training, and exercising. Unfortunately, marines had little space to drill at sea. Therefore, marines were pressed into the service of maritime tedium as auxiliary sailors, conveniently as landsmen barred from gaining maritime skills. Otherwise, marines acted as sentries. During extended periods of tedium at sea where their fighting skills were seldom called upon, deck work and sentry duty became the main function of marines.

Marines necessarily struggled in their role as soldiers because of their placement on vessels and their proximity to sailors. Both were thought to stymie their military discipline. In 1739, MP Samuel Sandys proposed that marines trained from newly raised men would not be "bred to military discipline"[26] unlike marines drawn from the army. The counter argument was that marines did not need this type of discipline aboard a man-of-war. The military discipline that Sandys was referring to is the body discipline that Michel Foucault describes as *docile bodies* or

[26] Mr. Samuel Sandys in House of Commons Papers, Speeches and Debates, 1739, p. 154, quoted in Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 17.

"a political anatomy of detail" created to make the body the most economically useful while also the most politically obedient.[27] Military drill was—and remains—hugely important in shaping the docile bodies of soldiers, making them react to military orders as second-nature in order to normalise the intense brutality of battle. Such training was difficult to maintain on a naval vessel. Instead, it was hoped that marines could be trained from new raised men in a way that made them uniquely soldiers serving in the navy, maintaining the discipline of the army while also preparing them for the specialised roles on board naval vessels.

The observation that marines would not require discipline on board a man-of-war seems puzzling as naval ships were well-known for their rigid command structures and strict regimen of punishments. However, while the discipline of soldiers extended to the intimate control of their bodies through repeated drilling and training, the disciplined subordination that sailors were expected to display to their officers was different. Instead of Foucauldian body-discipline enforced through a strict top-down hierarchy, discipline on board vessels was controlled by the patrician-plebeian contract, as discussed in Chapter 2. Sailors lacked the official authority vested in the officer class by the Admiralty but they were alone empowered with both the knowledge and numbers to sail a vessel.[28] Further, while officers were trained in the mathematics and instruments required for navigation, many of the best-trained sailors and petty officers were as well, which meant that sailors could, and did, sail naval vessels without their commanders.[29] A

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[27] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alen Sheridan, 2nd ed. (1979: New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 138-39.

[28] See Philippa Hellawell, "'The Best and Most Practical Philosophers': Seamen and the Authority of Experience in Early Modern Science," *History of Science*, July 2019, https://doi.org/10.1177/0073275319842425. With the advent of steam, the heritage of sail was hijacked by the officer class, who still today train on board sailing vessels in order to prepare for service in an entirely mechanised Navy. In the eighteenth century, however, officers did not go aloft. For the history of sail training, see Frank Scott, "The Evolution of Sail Training from the Nineteenth Century to the 1980s," *The Mariner's Mirror* 106, no. 2 (2020): 202-205, 208.

[29] Frykman shows that in the *Hermione* mutiny that the leaders were knowledgeable in navigation and were likely resentful of the tyrannical command of Captain Pigot. See Niklas Frykman, "The Mutiny on the *Hermione*: Warfare, Revolution, and Treason in the Royal Navy," *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 1 (Fall, 2010): 169-70; and Marcus

breakdown in the equilibrium between sailors and officers could result in mutinous actions on the part of the crew or in swift reprisals of corporal and capital punishment by officers. In order for the vessel to function within the parameters of the Royal Navy, everyone had to function under a stratified system of power that positioned higher social status and scientific learning against subordinate respect and working men's experience. In short, during the eighteenth century, naval seafarers had power of a kind drawn from their own civilian occupational expertise. This made sailors different from marines whose command structure, uniforms, and army discipline produced Foucaultian docile bodies more closely tied to the state.

These differences in the discipline of marines and sailors plays out in their clothes. While sailors were provided with slops that were contracted and supplied by the navy through the purser and were modelled on plebeian civilian dress, marines wore a regulation uniform. By 1793, this consisted of a red wool jacket with a black stock and white leather sashes along with white breeches, which they could replace with white trousers when not under arms.[30] This uniform contrasts with two groups—sailors and naval officers—and reinforces their association with soldiers of the line (see Figures 1.3, 1.4 and 3.1). Though marines wore slops, it was only when they were not performing marine duties. When acting as guards or sentries, they were expected to wear their uniforms, as the purpose of acting sentinel was as much about the spectacle as it was a practical necessity. The uniform, further, shaped and supported the bodies of military men like the marines, as Daniel Roche notes. He observes in the French uniform "new types of behaviour, inspired by the mechanism of both utility and distinctive symbolisms."[31]

Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 229.

[30] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 126.

[31] Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'Ancien Régime'*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 223.

Matthew McCormack further reflects that "it was impossible to wear the tailored jackets and rigid neckstocks without standing up straight."[32] Therefore, when policing and surveilling the sailors of their vessel, marines were dressed in uniforms that were visually and physically shaping them into soldiers.

In contrast to the uniforms of the marines, however, naval officers wore uniforms that followed loose regulations and were cut at their own expense and direction. This allowed for them to be tailored to the personal preferences of the officers, often allowing for fashionable and comfortable fabrics and modifications. Though the navy did attempt to regulate officers' uniforms, sometimes to the pique of the officers, generally there was considerable pressure for these elite uniforms to conform to fashion standards.[33] Certainly, their clothes were not tailored in a manner that caused the kind of institutional discomfort associated with an item like the neckstock. Indeed, Admiral Horatio Nelson had quilted padding in the shoulders of the coat he died in at Trafalgar.[34] The control that officers had over their uniforms was a privilege of the wealthy, one tolerated in both the army and navy.

Supplying and Distributing Marine Uniforms

[32] Matthew McCormack, "Dance and Drill: Polite Accomplishments and Military Masculinities in Georgian Britain," *Cultural and Social History* 8, no. 3 (2011): 321-22.
[33] In 1748 naval officers were given regulation uniforms but were not pleased by the blue colour. See Rodger, "Honour and Duty at Sea, 1660-1815," 433. Miller uses the epaulette as an example of civilian dress which was adopted by discerning commanders before it was made part of the regulation tunic. Amy Miller, "Clothes Make the Man: Naval Uniform and Masculinity in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Journal for Maritime Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 147-48; and see also Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions, 1748-1857* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 13-14.
[34] This could have been a measure for comfort or for fashion. Royal Naval Uniform: Pattern 1795-1812 (Nelson's Trafalgar Coat), UNI0024, The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/71238.html.

The Hybrid System of Marine Clothing Supply in the Navy

Due to the marines being a specialised force originally drawn from the army, their uniforms were contracted using a hybrid system that both produced regulation uniforms through means inherited from the army and also supplied marines with the slop clothing more commonly associated with sailors. The army uniform procurement system evolved over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the force specialised and the power of officers to clothe and victual their regiments was gradually assumed by the state. Originally, the colonel of a regiment oversaw both commanding military units as well as providing for them, a holdover from an older system of manpower procurement and logistics.[35] The English Civil War and subsequent Protectorate reshaped this system as the government took control of troops and those troops consequently used their collective power to improve their wages and living conditions. These actions eventually resulted in the New Model Army, which was paid and provisioned by the Protectorate, including clothing of a uniform design, arguably considered the first uniform military dress in England.[36] This uniform dress marked the wearers as soldiers in a collective English army, rather than narrowly as part of a regiment.

After Charles II reclaimed the throne, the New Model Army was disbanded but the ideas of organization and preparedness that the army had fostered remained. Colonels again were responsible for clothing their men, but it was increasingly within the administrative purview of the government. Under William and Mary, the army established uniform standards and inspectors, who were given the power to decide whether the quality of the colonel's contracted

[35] Toni Pfanner, "Military Uniforms and the Law of War," *International Review of the Red Cross* 86, no. 853 (March 2004): 97.
[36] Katherine Elliott, "Clothing Soldiers: Development of a System of Production and Supply of Military Clothing in England from 1642-1708," *Arms & Armour* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 37–38; see also Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 72.

clothing fit a state-mandated model.[37] By Queen Anne's reign, the army had decreed that the coats of regular privates were to be made of red cloth, limiting uniform details that colonels used to distinguish their own regiment or to mimic others.[38] The difference between regiments was therefore expressed in subtle details like cuffs, lapels, buttons, coattails, lining colours, and embroidery designs, emblems, and accents, among other accessories, instead of through the distinction of different coat fabrics and colours.

The marine uniform was part of this system in their early history. Originally, the Duke of Albany, who oversaw the Corps of Marines, designed an elaborate yellow uniform for the troops he raised in 1664. After the uniforms became red, the marines' straddled existence as army troops sent to sea appears to have caused their red coats to come under occasional attack. During the 1739 debate in parliament it was proposed that the coats of marines should be changed from expensive red to a cheaper yellow-dyed cloth.[39] In 1747 it was suggested that sergeants' breeches could be made cheaper if they were dyed yellow.[40] An anonymous naval captain suggested changing the uniform of marine officers to the colour blue in 1790.[41] By putting the marine

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[37] Elliott, "Clothing Soldiers," 39–40.

[38] Uniform mimicry was a common method to embody the prestige of more famous regiments or to foil rival colonels who were trying to create unique designs. This became more apparent as regiments attempted to mimic foreign prestigious regiments, like Eastern European Dragoons, Hussars, and Tartars, North African Zouaves, and Scottish Highlanders, and the native dress of colonial peoples were incorporated into military dress standards. These distinct uniforms often fell outside of the regular British uniform regulations but were more expensive to maintain. They also alluded to "martial races," the idea that combat masculinity was racially allotted rather than trained and was particularly applied to colonial or peripheral troops. These factors contributed to the prestige or spectacle of the regiments. See Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*, 45–47; Thomas Adler, *Hinterland Warriors and Military Dress: European Empires and Exotic Uniforms* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 1–10; and Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 9–11.

[39] Red in the eighteenth century was an expensive dye, especially if the fabric was dyed-through, which meant that as the fabric wore out, the cloth remained red, although the Navy Board noted in 1806 that it could source dyed-through red wool cloth from the West Country at the same price as surface-dyed woollen from Yorkshire. See ADM/BP/26, November 10, 1806, CL.

[40] ADM/BP/30B, May 15, 1747, CL.

[41] By an Officer, *A Short Account of the Naval Actions of the Last War; In Order to Prove That the French Nation Never Gave Such Slender Proofs of Maritime Greatness as During That Period; with Observations on Discipline, and Hints for the Improvement of the British Navy*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Murray, 1790), 138, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CW0104895419/ECCO?u=edmo69826&sid=ECCO&xid=05728508.

command into blue coats, it would have significantly reduced their visual independence. Red uniforms were problematic for the navy: they deeply valued their continued use because of associations with army discipline and authority, but uniforms served to emphasise how the marines did not fit within the navy. In 1802, when the marines were granted "royal" status by the George III, blue cloth was added to the coat's facings.[42] In 1804, the Royal Marine Artillery (RMA) was created due to a clash between the army and navy. The RMA's uniforms were blue, thereby visually dividing the corps into "blue marines" meaning the artillery, and the "red marines" referring to the infantry.[43]

The legacy of army control over the marines affected their ability to supply clothing. The early history of the marines reveals how difficult it was to detach and assign small groups of ostensibly army troops on naval vessels. In the 1690s, regiments could only be paid after a muster, but this was an impossible demand for marine regiments who had members literally scattered to the seven winds. Like the navy, everything supplied to army troops was paid for by making deductions to wages, but marines' wages were tied to a system that assumed they were a large regimental land force located together in a regional barracks. When marines' wages stopped, the ability to victual, lodge, and clothe the marines also ceased. The typical system of clothing procurement broke down as officers who had secured financing for clothing and equipment on personal credit were unable to repay their debts. Because of these problems, the marines became the most notorious mutineers in the service; they threatened to pull down the Navy Board Office in 1695 and 1699, would not leave their quarters in 1708 and 1709, mutinied

[42] A more subtle but prestigious change was converting the metal buttons and metal-threaded embroidery from silver to gold. "ADM 49/58 f. 35-36, May 8, 1802, TNA, as reproduced in Britt Zerbe, "'That Most Useful Body of Men': The Operational Doctrine and Identity of the British Marine Corps, 1755-1802" (Ph.D., Exeter, University of Exeter, 2010), 247.

[43] The conflict between the army and navy was about the authority of naval captains over army officers, a familiar frustration for marines. The Royal Marine Infantry will continue to be referred to as marines, while any references to the artillery will be noted. See Brooks, *The Royal Marines*, 133–35.

in Exeter in 1710, and refused to embark for General James Wolfe in 1742.[44] The money allocated for marine wages, victuals, lodging, and clothing was tied up in a system that was designed for barracked foot soldiers, not hybrid soldiers at sea, and therefore the military bureaucracy required to keep marines supplied and battle-ready broke down.

In order to supply clothes, the army relied almost exclusively on a system of procurement that contracted with private enterprise through personal credit, initially from a colonel but later under an army agent, with the oversight of the government.[45] This system was in some ways similar to the system that supplied ships—the colonel and the ship captain played the same role as the paternal supplier of his company's clothes and food, while the army agent and the purser similarly performed the actual grunt work of making this supply available. Eventually, however, the system differed by the Navy Board dropping the captain out of this system entirely. The government took on his role as the buyer and contractor and the commander retained a reduced role as intermediary between sailors and the government. This included marine uniforms, which were brough under Navy Board control in 1747, almost ten years before the navy took full command of the marines. While some army traditions remained in marines' clothing procurement methods, they were largely reduced to symbolic links like red tunics and sharing the same date for the yearly distribution of new uniforms, which was the King's birthday, July 1.[46]

What exactly did these uniforms consist of? According to *Regulations and Instructions Relating to the Royal Marine Forces, When on Shore*, the marines were allotted a red cloth coat, with a white cloth waistcoat and breeches, one shirt with a black stock, one pair of stockings, one pair of shoes, and a hat. These effects were to be "conformable to the sealed patterns, lodged at

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[44] Brooks, 33.
[45] D.J. Smith, "Army Clothing Contractors and the Textile Industries in the 18th Century," *Textile History* 14, no. 2 (1983): 154.
[46] ADM 1/3347 f. 153, TNA, p. 162.

the Navy Board, and at the head quarters of each division."[47] In addition, marines were to be given a second shirt with black stock on their first application for clothing. As seen in Figures 3.1 and 3.2, the uniform of marine privates was similar to the uniform of the same army rank in the First Regiment of Foot. Notable similarities include their black stocks, red coats with white facings, white sashes, black cuffs, bayonets, cartridge boxes, and shoes. The marines' hat, however, was distinct from the army cap. Black stockings or gaiters were worn to give the appearance that marines wore boots without the expense, a thrifty trick also used for soldiers. The gaiters were also worked with blacking to make them resemble leather.[48] The uniforms of different army regiments had unique details which distinguished them and often emphasised important moments in their history. In 1802, when the marines were bestowed royal status, they were also granted the privilege of wearing 'Gibraltar' on their colours, headdresses and accoutrements.[49] Additional changes to the uniforms noted by Evan Nepean in 1802 included blue facings, changes in buttons, and the addition of gold lace.[50]

The marines were issued with many additional necessaries beside their clothing. These were important to maintain a good, clean appearance. This included a variety of brushes and combs for both personal hygiene and for cleaning their coats and shoes. Blacking balls were

[47] ADM 1/3347 f. 153, TNA, p. 161-2. A "Return of Cloathing" in 1804 listed coats, waistcoats, breeches, shirts, rollers, shoes, stockings, hats, caps, sashes, drummer's carriages, epaulets, shore jackets, second waistcoats, hats cock'd, and stoppers as items which the storekeeper could potentially issue men. See ADM 1/3256, February 19, 1804, TNA.

[48] Matthew McCormack, "Boots, Material Culture and Georgian Masculinities," *Social History* 42, no. 4 (2017): 466.

[49] Brooks, *The Royal Marines*, 3, 9. The battle to secure Gibraltar occurred 98 years prior, in 1704. By 1827, Brooks notes, the mythos of the marines' contribution during the capture and defence of Gibraltar had pushed out any mention that other parts of the British armed forces were involved. He suggests the delay in the recognition of the marines' actions at Gibraltar reflects the poor opinion of the corps during the eighteenth century.

[50] ADM 49/58, f. 35-36, May 8, 1802, TNA, reproduced in Zerbe, "'That Most Useful Body of Men,'" 247. Nepean goes on to write that the pattern uniform was being sent to the George III for his approval, whose personal attention was required because of the marines' new royal status.

issued to keep the leather of marine shoes dark.[51] Additionally, the quartermaster of the marines was ordered to supply the men with 1d. of pipeclay per week, and on embarkation was to additionally provide "pipeclay, soap, thread, worsted, needles, &c. not exceeding the value of 8s. … unless they are going on a foreign station, in which case a double proportion is to be issued."[52] The pipeclay was painted on parts of the uniform to keep them white as they aged. This would have included the prominent white belts across the chest that held a bayonet holster on one hip and a cartridge pouch on the other; unfortunately, the pipeclay stiffened and broke into dust when the men moved. The navy also paid careful attention to how the red cloth itself would act over the year in which the uniforms would be required to last. Distinctions were made about how the woolen cloth was dyed, with cloth dyed-through being more expensive but less likely to show wear (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4).[53] Marines were also responsible for polishing their arms. The navy issued Sea Service muskets, which had a shorter barrel than the Brown Bess and the metal was blackened to decrease corrosion. Part of their duty and discipline was to maintain their impressive kit of clothing and accoutrements. More than simply the red coats or the uniform dress, the marines would have distinguished themselves from sailors by their cared-for clothing and arms—their "good appearance."

The Navy Board and Marine Clothing

Marine uniforms were acquired through contracts negotiated by the Navy Board, accompanied by the Royal Marine Commandant in Town. Together with the Admiralty, they regulated changes to dress, maintained the price points of the clothing, and inspected the quality

[51] ADM 1/3291, November 28, 1802, TNA. Maj. Gen. Avarne sent a note to the Admiralty listing all the clothing and necessaries, with prices, sourced from W. Prater & Son.
[52] Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*, 24. See also ADM 1/3347 f. 153, TNA, p. 211.
[53] ADM/BP/26, November 10, 1806, Caird.

of the clothes. Contractors either hired workers or brought on subcontractors with workers to produce various products. These contracts projected the cost and time needed to produce well-made clothing and accoutrements, as well as the penalties for missing deadlines and the consequences for producing inferior goods.[54] To prove their manufacturing capability, contractors produced samples of the finished product to present to the Navy Board, who judged the clothing's quality and sizing in the presence of marine officers.[55] The samples were kept by the Navy Board and used to again judge the finished products.

The government was interested in cheap contracts that produced well-made clothes, keeping marines battle-ready. Therefore, contractors had to be willing to produce products cheaply enough that the navy was interested in their business, but they also had to recoup their cost of production. This was a difficult balance and led to a reputation that contractors shortchanged the government through various schemes. Contractors, however, had incentive to produce acceptable products as government contracts for clothing were both lucrative and provided steady work.[56] In 1802, Oliver Jamisson, who was supplying marines barracked at Chatham with shoes wrote to say he was increasing the price from 5s.2d. to 7s. due to the cost of leather.[57] Jamisson explained that he had taken a loss on the shoes, hoping to maintain his good standing with the navy while waiting for the price of leather to drop at peacetime, but such a drop did not occur. The Admiralty terminated his contract and requested Prater & Son, who were already supplying Portsmouth and Plymouth, to provide the shoes for Chatham at the same

[54] AO 15/45 f. 50, May 27, 1747; and AO 15/45 f. 55, August 7, 1747, TNA.
[55] ADM 1/3246, March 30, 1804, TNA.
[56] Frederick J. Glover, "Government Contracting, Competition and Growth in the Heavy Woollen Industry," *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): 479.
[57] ADM 1/3255, November 24, 1802, TNA. For more details on the cost of shoes, see Table 4.1.

5s.2d. rate.[58]

Admiralty letters discussing enclosed contracts are commonly found in the collection at the National Archives, but the original or copied contracts are rarely enclosed.[59] Two contracts exist from outside the period of the French Wars period. The second set, discussed in Chapter 1, was to procure handkerchiefs for sailors in 1823 and survived because it was presented to the House of Commons in July of that year.[60] The earlier example are mid-eighteenth-century contracts that consist of three orders of marine uniforms from John Roberts of Battersea made in 1747 and 1748 (see table 4.1). These are probably the first contracts the Navy Board ever made for marine uniforms, or uniforms of any kind for the Royal Navy generally.[61] On May 27th, 1747, the navy contracted for 11,100 suits of marine clothing,[62] then in August 1747 an addendum was added for 1500 waistcoats.[63] Finally, in March 1748, Roberts signed a contract to provide 8,600 suits and an additional 1500 waistcoats.[64] The total value of the contract was about £35,700, though there were additional stipulations that changed the value. The Navy Board outlined that if they fulfilled payment thirty days after the order was completed, the navy could make a deduction of £2.10s./£100 (2.5%) from the established rate. Conversely, if Roberts went unpaid after six months, he could collect a £5/£100 (5%) interest on the arrears. This late

[58] ADM 1/3255, November 24, 1802, Minutes, TNA. In turn, Prater & Son lost their contract in February 1807. On March 2nd, Prater appealed the termination, saying it was "deprived of the contract of clothes, without any notice." ADM 12/128, tab 63.12, March 2, 1807, TNA.
[59] It appears that the clothing contracts were removed even though letters exist which allude to enclosed contracts. Additionally, discussions of the contents of the contracts are also rare as very little of the Navy Board correspondence regarding clothing has survived.
[60] ADM/BP/41A, July 14, 1823, CL. For the online copy of these documents, which were submitted to Parliament, see also G. Smith, "Papers Relating to Seamen's Clothing," 1823, https://parlipapers-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1823-008384?accountid=14474.
[61] This supposition is supported by Zerbe, who shows that in 1747 the Admiralty was pressuring the army to give over contracting uniforms to the navy, with the understanding that the Navy Board's contracting system was able to source clothes cheaper than the army. Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 31–33.
[62] AO 15/45 f. 50, May 27, 1747, TNA.
[63] AO 15/45 f. 55, August 7, 1747, TNA.
[64] AO 15/45 f. 103, March 1, 1748, TNA.

payment fee is what made naval contracts so lucrative; especially in wartime it was widely understood that the government was always in arrears. The second contract features an additional clause that added an allowance to Roberts of £7.17s./£100 (8.4%) to account for a government duty on linen. Finally, the contracts layout the timeline of delivery. The first shipment of clothing was expected two weeks after the contracts were signed and every week thereafter. The May 1747 suits, for example, were likely still being delivered long after the June 1st distribution of new uniforms, suggesting that perhaps the contract was meant to replace uniforms two years in advance or to produce a supply to clothe newly raised men. Finally, this contract predates the transfer of the marines to the navy and suggests that the marines were for the most part already institutionally under the authority of the navy, if not in name.

The contracts outline a few specifications about the different component parts required to fulfill a suit of clothes for each rank; presumably the real details were shown in the clothing patterns that no longer exist. The higher ranks all had additional accoutrements, such as the corporal's shoulder knot, which accounted for some of the supplementary expense. Again, the contract does not detail the materials of the suits that also contributed to the higher cost of the sergeants' and drummers' uniforms; they were more elaborate to underscore rank in the former and company prestige in the latter and this was likely apparent in the patterns shown to the Navy Board. These contracts also do not account for shoes, which were probably sourced through a separate contract, like the one for Chatham.[65] The Royal Marine regulations refer to leather products as "buff accoutrements" and it appears than most of these objects—belts, bayonet and sword sheaths—were sourced through specialist providers, though William Prater & Son supplied shoes and clasps in 1802.[66] This difference in the price of ranking uniforms betrays

[65] For a discussion of shoe contracts at Chatham, see page 138 of this thesis.
[66] ADM 1/3347 f. 163, TNA; and Adm 1/3291, November 28, 1802, TNA.

another tension that plagued the navy. They wanted to source cheap goods without compromising prestige. Maj. Gen. Elliot, the Commandant General in Town, reinforced a concern for the usefulness of marine clothing when he wrote "[fashionable breeches] will only create a useless expense, without, in my opinion, adding to the comfort, convenience or good appearance of the soldier."[67] The uniformity of marine dress was controlled through central regulation and this type of control over working men's sartorial display and bodies was a unique privilege of upper-class military commanders and bureaucrats, though as we will see, in practice the Admiralty's ability to maintain such control had limits.

The contracting of slop clothing tended toward uniformity because of how it was made; it was not bound by uniform rules. Therefore marines, in their red wool coats, contrasted distinctly with sailors. Marines, however, were allowed to wear slops and were allotted two check shirts with their yearly uniform. Significantly, they were never to be seen wearing them while performing soldierly duties. They only dressed less formally when they were acting as proxy-sailors, cleaning the ship or assisting with the great guns.[68] The shifts in dress for particular roles underscores the embodiment of these two military groups. Marines were a hybrid service in their dress and use; they were only somewhat sailors but encouraged to be soldiers. Their ability to switch back and forth between two forms of labour, but also visually through two different dress systems, proved troublesome to officers. Unfortunately, due to the manning shortage caused by Britain's near constant military mobilization between 1750 and 1815, marines were a necessary addition to the ship's company.[69] This meant that wearing slops continued to be required for

[67] ADM 1/3246, March 30, 1804, TNA. In a letter sent from the Navy Board to the Admiralty discussing a selection of clothing contracts including Roberts' 1747 contract, the Board wrings its hands over the expense of lace cuffs for the drummers' uniform. See ADM/BP/30B, April 15, 1747, CL.
[68] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 126.
[69] The nineteenth century evolution of the marines underscores this. As steamship technology changed and naval warfare increasingly relied on long-range guns, and as naval sailors professionalised under The 1853 Continuous Service Act, marines became increasingly redundant on board vessels. See Brooks, *The Royal Marines*, 192–93.

marines. Instead officers looked to the marine uniform as a medium they could use to underscore the difference between sailors and marines.

Changing the Marine Appearance at Home and Abroad

Nowhere are the tensions over the appearance and service of the marines more apparent than during the twenty-year conflict over the marine hat. The hat was the only part of the marine uniform that did not closely resemble that of the regular army (see Figures 3.1 & 3.2). Both were black and had high crowns, but the marine hat had a round, curled-up brim while the army cap only had a visor. The difference was negligible but important. In 1807, Captain Thomas Graves of the *Brunswick* altered the hats of his marines by removing or altering most of the brims to appear to be visors. On the relationship between the appearance and behaviour of the marines, he stressed that "I thought it no injury, on the contrary it has so improved the appearance of the men that from great slovens [sic] I have seen them become clean and steady."[70] Linking the caps to the army, Cpt. Graves remarked that "the cap I adopted is the one worn by HM land forces, and the nearer you can bring the marine to consider himself so, I believe it is allowed by every person the more useful he will be and his connection with the seamen less."[71] Cpt. Graves continuously made the connection between the army uniform and the discipline he expected from his marines, declaring the cap would "check insubordination." Further, references to a past "misfortune," probably the mutinies of the 1790s, suggested what was at stake for captains like Graves. The need for marine discipline in the face of crew insurrection was pivotal for naval officers who required tight control over the men on board. The ability to tamper with their dress indicated who had final authority over the marines.

[70] ADM 1/1115, December 12, 1807, TNA.
[71] ADM 1/1115, December 12, 1807, TNA.

In Graves's letter he claimed that he had been making changes to the marine uniform as early as 1787.[72] His concern was shared by others. Proposals for marine caps begin as early as 1800. In 1802, when the marines were granted "royal" status, First Lord St. Vincent wrote a long letter to the Admiralty about changes to the marine uniform.[73] He noted that "the only material alteration from the present mode of dress to that I have now to recommend would be substituting the present regulation cap of the army in lieu of the common shaped round hat at present worn by the marines."[74] He supported the decision by offering that the cap would be more comfortable and also cheaper and repeatedly emphasised that the cap would improve the appearance of the marines. In 1802 the marine barracks in Portsmouth was being supplied with a forage cap on the initiative of the quartermaster at 2s., the only article of dress that was not provided by Prater & Son.[75] In 1800, 1802, 1804, 1809, and 1812 proposals were submitted to the Admiralty about replacing the marine hat with the army cap. William Bicknell, a contractor from Old Bond St., London, persistently submitted three proposals in 1802 and 1804, along with letters of praise from the RM Commandants of Chatham, Plymouth, and Portsmouth.[76] In 1804 he listed the cap's extensive merits, including that it was weatherproof, without seams, manufactured of good felt, would not retain damp, and would last two years. He also noted that "His Majesty has been pleased to order them for the whole of the infantry of the army."[77]

The Admiralty, however, was not interested in making the change. Admiral George Montagu, Commander-in-Chief of Portsmouth, had to step in to censure Captain Graves for his

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[72] ADM 1/1115, December 12, 1807, TNA.
[73] It should be noted that St. Vincent was also an important proponent of the marines' acquisition of royal status.
[74] ADM 1/3255, April 19, 1802, TNA.
[75] ADM 1/3291, November 28, 1802, TNA. The list of clothing and necessaries which the quartermaster provided did not include an equivalent hat.
[76] ADM 1/3347 f. 446, December 16, 1802, TNA; and ADM 1/3348 f. 71, May 24, 1804, TNA. In 1804, Bicknell claimed he had a patent for his cap, but this has not been confirmed.
[77] ADM 1/3348 f. 71, May 24, 1804, TNA.

modified marine caps, having already been chastised by Lt. General Eliot, to no effect.[78] On January 1st, 1803, the Admiralty rejected two proposals of Bicknell's cap by the Marine Commandants, and they also rejected his second application in 1804, remarking "their Lords do not consider this cap as well calculated for the use of HM's Marine forces".[79] The disconnect between the Admiralty and naval captains betrays two conflicting concerns. The captains were interested in pushing the marines as close to becoming soldiers as they could without losing control over them. The Admiralty, meanwhile, was invested in guarding its privileges, including their ability to form clothing regulations and this included distinguishing marines from army soldiers. Further, the period of 1802 to 1805 was marked by attempts to reform the navy and dockyards and this caused conflict between the reformers, like St. Vincent and Samuel Bentham, and more conservative naval officials, like the Comptroller of the Navy Board, Andrew Hamond.[80] This meant that any decision made by the Admiralty could not come into effect without the Navy Board signing a contract to produce a physical object. Therefore, it is hard to know if the rejection of Bicknell's cap in 1802 and 1804 was made because the Admiralty did not want the cap or if it was a means to avoid working with the Navy Board. It was not until 1821 that the problem was finally settled; the cap was issued in lieu of the hat on the 23rd of April. The Admiralty gave the consideration of thrift as the deciding factor, but the Marine Commandants and Bicknell had outlined as early as 1804 that the cap was cheaper than the hat because it lasted two years instead of one. A reason for the delay could be that the initial investment was too high or that fallout from St. Vincent's tenure as First Lord poisoned the

[78] ADM 1/1115 f. 2101, December 12, 1807. Elliot must have called them "mutilations" in his letter to Graves because he is very defensive about that in particular.
[79] ADM 1/3347 f. 446, minute, December 16, 1802, TNA.
[80] Roger Morriss, "St. Vincent and Reform, 1801-04," *The Mariner's Mirror* 69, no. 3 (1983): 270.

Admiralty or Navy Board on the idea.[81]

The central naval administration clearly wanted to have control over the design of the uniform but keeping up a standard was difficult the farther abroad marines were stationed. The ships in India circumvented late shipments and inappropriately warm clothing by simply granting marine commanders an extra allowance to purchase clothing for their troops from local suppliers. India was a complicated station in terms of the supply of necessaries like clothing and food. Like the Mediterranean, it had a powerful local economy that was perfectly able to produce marine uniforms and slops for the navy personnel stationed there. Uniquely, however, the dockyards in Madras, Bombay, and Trincomalee were controlled formally by the East India Company and not by the Admiralty. The East India Company was obligated, in return for military support and convoys for their ships, to provide food and clothing to the navy.[82] In Madras, Vice-Admiral Samuel Hood reported in 1813 that allowances were extended to officers who returned vouchers to storekeeper.[83] The rates varied depending on the rank of the marine at £4.5s. per sergeant, £3.11s.6d. per corporal, and £3.10s.6d. per private. According to Hood, this system was not ideal. "I found it subject to great abuse, and since I am confirmed in my opinion by the marine officer of HMS *Volage* being charged with having made use of the money for his own personal use," he wrote, asking for a new system of supplying the men to be devised.[84] Though he had previously made appeals about it, the Admiralty uncharacteristically responded by simply raising the allotments of money.

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[81] St. Vincent was succeeded by Lord Melville in 1804, but not before St. Vincent had put an investigation in motion accusing Melville of appropriating public funds. St. Vincent, whose title comes from the battle of the same name, owed a great deal to the actions of the marines at that engagement and took it upon himself to be their benefactors. He was, for example, instrumental in granting the corps their royal status. A petty but effective revenge of his successors at the Admiralty or the Navy Board would therefore be to resist changing the hat to the cap that St. Vincent wanted, but this is my own conjecture.
[82] Wilcox, "'This Great Complex Concern,'" 34–35.
[83] ADM 1/186 f. 12a, August 20, 1813, TNA.
[84] ADM 1/186 f. 12a, August 20, 1813, TNA.

Marines at the very edge of empire, however, faced a complete breakdown of the clothing supply system. Unlike the Mediterranean or India, the new colonies at New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land had trouble sourcing clothing to meet the dress and appearance standards of the Royal Marines. Lt. Col. David Collins, the governor of New South Wales from 1788 to 1803, was already familiar with the trouble of having clothing supplied to the marines in this distant station.[85] Transferred to the governorship of the new settlement in Hobart, Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), Collins sent letters in 1807 to the Admiralty warning of looming clothing shortages. It took so long for new clothes to arrive in Hobart that Collins suggested that they should send replacement shipments a year and a half in advance. Further, Collins wrote that his colony was also supplying ships destitute of marine clothing. To provide at least a basic comfort, Collins bought locally produced shoes of kangaroo leather at £1.5s. a pair, compared with William Prater's 1802 shoes at 5s.2d. The kangaroo shoes did not last a week. Collins begged the Admiralty to "direct a quantity of strong leather and materials for making it into shoes."[86] Otherwise, he warned, "we shall not be enabled to preserve that military appearance which is so essential to the soldier, particularly in such settlements as these."[87] The desperate appearance of the marine uniform reflected the difficultly in maintaining the far-away colonies in the antipodes, but uniformed soldiers were responsible for outwardly projecting the good appearance and strength of the British Empire.

[85] ADM 1/3347 f. 487, March 26, 1803, TNA. Prater & Sons charged a bill to the navy for shipping clothing, including personal effects, to Collins in New South Wales.
[86] ADM 1/3318 f. 44, September 1, 1807, TNA. For other shoe prices, see Figure 4.1.
[87] ADM 1/3318 f. 63, September 2, 1807, TNA. It appears from the minute that the letter, sent in September 1807, was not presented to the Board of Admiralty until June 1808.

Clothing, Authority, and the Mutinies of 1797

Good appearance was important even near the metropole, however. The British navy used the marine uniform to project its power over sailors and to control marines, especially during and after the mutinies of the 1790s. In particular, the 1797 mutinies were an important turning point in the history of the Royal Marines. These mutinies were exemplified by two major outbreaks at Spithead and the Nore.[88] The former was the site of the first series of mutinies, known cumulatively as the mutiny at Spithead. It lasted from April 16th to May 15th. The second mutiny occurred at the Nore from May 12th to June 15th and was bolstered by the arrival of the North Sea fleet, which had mutinied off Yarmouth on May 27th.[89] Naval ships anchored in the Nore were often of several different fleets; until the North Sea fleet arrived, there was not a great deal of pre-established cohesion in the crews stationed there because they normally did not serve together and many of the crew were new raised men. The mutiny at the Nore was further complicated by being located at the entrance of the Thames; the rebelling ships stopped the flow of merchant shipping but also left a pivotal approach to London undefended. These mutinies were part of a broader trend of insubordination in the 1790s. Throughout naval fleets in Europe and its colonies, crews routinely felt that for various reasons they no longer were happy with the conditions of their service. Niklas Frykman shows that in the French, British and Dutch navies "between one-third and one-half of the 450 ships and 200,000 men deployed across the 3 fleets

[88] Spithead is a sandbar in the Solent River south of Portsmouth Harbour. The Nore is a sandbar in the Thames estuary, near the dockyards at Sheerness and the River Medway. Both were important "roadsteads" or safe anchorages for ships. They were additionally important defensive sites, protecting the approaches to Portsmouth in the case of the later, and London, the former.

[89] For a comprehensive examination of the 1797 mutinies, see Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall, eds., *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011). Helen Watt created a clear timeline of the various mutinies that took place in the Royal Navy in the United Kingdom between April 15 and June 15, 1797, which she counted as ten distinct events. See Helen Watt, *Letters of Seamen in the Wars with France, 1793-1815* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 372.

had experienced of participated in at least one mutiny, many of them in several."[90]

At Spithead and the Nore, the sailors and marines sent petitions to the Admiralty asking for better wages, the removal of tyrannical officers, and a cessation of arbitrary punishment. The Mutiny at the Nore included additional demands that were considered revolutionary in sentiment; this mutiny was both more violent, closer to London, and threatened the nation's commercial artery in a way that the Spithead mutiny did not. These two near-concurrent large-scale mutinies had different results: Spithead was considered successful and resulted in changes in conditions for the men, including new wages. The mutiny at the Nore went less well, but still punishment was relatively lenient. The Royal Navy was at war with France and it could not afford to condemn all the men who mutinied at the Nore.

As news of these mutinies spread, fleets stationed abroad experienced disruptions to varying degrees. In the West Indies, the crews of HMS *Hermione* and HMS *Marie Antoinette* murdered the officers in retaliation for cruelty.[91] In South Africa, ships watering in Cape Town mutinied on October 7, 1797, fueled by many of the same dissatisfactions as at Spithead.[92] There was a further mutiny at the Plymouth Marine Barracks in 1797 due to the slow implementation of the new wage agreement settled at Spithead. This mutiny was quelled in part by marine NCOs, who rejected the "diabolical French Jacobitism" they felt was at its heart.[93] As news of the success at Spithead travelled, the Royal Navy attempted to stop the spread of mutinous sentiment around the empire and throughout the various theatres where the British were at war with the French.

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[90] Niklas Frykman, "Connections between Mutinies in European Navies," *International Review of Social History* 58, no. S21 (2013): 87–107, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859013000230.
[91] For a detailed analysis of the mutiny on the *Hermione*, see Frykman, "Mutiny on the *Hermione*," 149–87.
[92] Nicole Ulrich, "International Radicalism, Local Solidarities: The 1797 British Naval Mutinies in Southern African Waters," *International Review of Social History*, Special Issue, 58 (2013): 71–75.
[93] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 153–60.

During the mutinies, the ships where marines were complicit in overthrowing the officers were more often those ships that fell under the control of the sailors. Once the sailors had taken control of the ship, the officers were locked away and were guarded by marines, who retained their positions as sentinels despite sailors and officers virtually switching positions of power.[94] Still, sailors and marines were mingling as fellow crew members, leading to anxiety about access to arms. "I just planted sentinels … and was very careful about the arms," Marine Corporal Bryan Finn testified in his defence at the courts martial aboard the *Neptune*, continuing that, "Soldiers and sailors being planted together, I was always very careful especially when planted about the Magazines."[95] Finn was sentenced to 300 lashes for his role managing marines during the mutiny. As Zerbe has noted, marines as sentinels were not simply guards but were also visual reminders of corporal punishment. Fully uniformed, with musket and bayonet ready, a guard of marines were present during all floggings, hangings and sundry punishments. Therefore, marines were disproportionately over-disciplined when they committed insubordination or crime because their unlawful actions undermined the symbolism of their position.[96]

The spreading mutinous sentiment eventually reached the Mediterranean Fleet, led by Admirals St. Vincent, John Orde, and Horatio Nelson. Since the role of the fleet was blockading the ports of Spain and patrolling the region for French and Spanish vessels, it is unlikely that a successful mutiny would have gone unnoticed by Britain's enemies. Despite this, ships returning from the dockyards in Britain brought with them news from the Spithead and Nore mutinies that irritated already simmering resentments. Though none were successful, six vessels mutinied in

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[94] Proceedings of a Court Martial Held on Board the *Neptune*. August 24, 1797, ADM 1/5864/32/80, TNA.
[95] Proceedings of a Court Martial Held on Board the *Neptune*. August 24, 1797, ADM 1/5864/32/85, TNA.
[96] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 128. Zerbe notes that marines guarding the gunpowder were held to a higher disciplinary standard. For a detailed analysis of the discipline of sailors and marines on a single naval vessel, see also Nick Slope, "Discipline, Desertion and Death: HMS *Trent* 1796-1803," in *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance*, ed. Ann Veronica Coats and Philip MacDougall (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 226–42.

St. Vincent's fleet on two occasions. On May 7th, 1798, HMS *Marlborough, Centaur*, and *Lion* attempted a mutiny near Bearhaven, Ireland, on their way to join the fleet off Cadiz. A second attempt was made by HMS *Princess Royal, Prince*, and *Hector* on the evening of June 25th. The continuing spread of mutinous sentiments led St. Vincent to go to great lengths to discipline the sailors under his authority and to disparage officers who did not appear to have their ships under control.

Marines were involved in both attempted mutinies. On the 29th May, 1798, St. Vincent wrote to the Admiralty, specifically recognising the significant role the marines played to quell the mutiny on the *Marlborough*.[97] The next day, after a quick court martial, seamen from the *Marlborough* were hanged "to stop the contagion of so large an importation of sedition."[98] Further, St. Vincent removed three crewmembers and replaced them with marines "to prevent as much as possible any further disturbance in that ship, she being (it is with pain I observe) in very feeble and improper hands."[99] The attempted mutiny on the *Princess Royal* was the result of the crewmembers attempting to free a prisoner, a marine named Guthrie,[100] which was supported by the *Prince* and *Hector*. This event was significant because Orde was the Admiral on board *Princess Royal* and his associations with the failed mutiny seems to have damaged his standing with St. Vincent.[101]

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[97] ADM 1/397 f. 94, May 29, 1798, TNA.
[98] ADM 1/397 f. 98, May 30, 1798, TNA.
[99] ADM 1/397 f. 94, May 29, 1798; and ADM 1/397 f. 98, May 30, 1798, TNA. St. Vincent wrote that First Lieutenant John Jones was instrumental in ending the mutiny, commenting that Captain Ellison had tried to compromise with the mutineers. On June 22, St. Vincent further elaborated that Ellison was "fitter … for Greenwich Hospital, than to be placed in the *Marlborough* after the mutiny; his nerves are shook to imbecility." See ADM 1/397 f. 123, June 22, 1798, TNA.
[100] Guthrie, according to St. Vincent, was "confined for an insult offered to a Lieutenant in the execution of his duty." See ADM 1/397 f. 124, June 26, 1798, TNA.
[101] The relationships between Orde and St. Vincent continued to deteriorate and eventually Orde asked the Admiralty to Court Martial St. Vincent. His request was denied.

Some of the mutineers had sympathies with the Irish Rebellion of 1798. Two of the three men executed from the *Princess Royal* confessed loyalty to the United Irish cause, but they also talked a great deal about broader concerns, including the issue of Guthrie's imprisonment, and the unfair and harsh beating of crewmen by the officers. The sailors warned about the loyalty of the Irishmen on board but also remarked that "the marines are the worst men in the ship."[102] Marines were demonstrably active in the mutiny proceedings; not only was Guthrie's imprisonment a key cause of the mutiny, but James Cook, a sailor, remarked that some marines had promised "they would never fire on a sailor and it was understood that they were friendly to the cause."[103] Further, several marines interviewed spoke about the mutineers attempting to recruit them.[104]

Despite these warnings, or perhaps because of them, Orde wrote to St. Vincent asserting the innocence of the marines in the plot and that they had acted appropriately. Orde's assertions did not put St. Vincent at ease. Between the two mutinies, St. Vincent had already published a standing memorandum which outlined new regulations for the marines in his fleet (see Appendix 4). He declared that the marines were to be barracked or lodged on shore when ships were anchored in port. There, the marine officers were to drill and parade their troops. Further, while barracked on shore, the marines were no longer to be used for any shipboard duties normally undertaken by sailors but were only to assist in weighing anchor and getting under sail.[105]

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[102] ADM 1/397 f. 139, July 6, 1798, TNA. Connell stated that the Irishmen on board had all taken an oath, which was transcribed in the enclosed confessions. A. D. Hake, the Chaplain of *Princess Royal* took the confessions, with Orde as witness.
[103] ADM 1/397 f. 139, July 6, 1798, TNA.
[104] ADM 1/397 f. 141, July 6, 1798; and ADM 1/397 f. 145, July 9, 1798, TNA.
[105] Brian Lavery, *Shipboard Life and Organization, 1731-1815*, Publications of the Navy Records Society 138 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 219.

Another strategy to separate marines and sailors was to simply shuffle the crews—men from problem ships were removed and distributed among various other vessels, including marines.[106]

The same day he received Orde's letter, St. Vincent appointed Lieutenant Colonel Frederick William Flight to the position of Inspector General of the Marines (see Appendix 4). He commanded Flight to inspect the marines on the various vessels and to observe that St. Vincent's June memorandum was being followed. He was also to inspect the clothing of the marines and the stores. St. Vincent wrote about the decision that

> The united Irishmen serving in His Majesty's Fleet, having with their wonted acuteness, ascertained the drift of the orders I have lately given, touching the improper manner of employing the Marines, when the ships are at anchor and endeavoured to counteract them, by persuading the marines that there ought to be no distinction made.[107]

Further, Flight had already been inspecting how St. Vincent's orders were being applied and this position of judgement over the naval officers of the Mediterranean fleet was not received well, even if only on matters of the marines. St. Vincent had evidence that the officers were resentful; a newly arrived officer to the Mediterranean fleet had refused to allow Flight to do his job. Further, a light punishment sentenced by court martial to two sailors who insulted an on-duty marine made St. Vincent remark bitterly that "a majority of the members, who compose [the court martial], is determined to counteract the measures I am taking, to make soldiers of the marines."[108] More than simply requiring an inspector, St. Vincent needed a man officially appointed by the Admiralty to police his orders to separate marines and sailors. Still, by the 26th

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[106] ADM 1/397 f. 153, July 20, 1798; ADM 1/397 f. 155, July 26, 1798; and ADM 1/397 f. 157, July 28, 1798, TNA.
[107] ADM 1/397 f. 140, July 6, 1798, TNA. Flight had already done some inspection work in the *Defence, Minotaur*, and *Gibraltar* at the request of St. Vincent in 1797. See ADM 1/396 f. 172, September 5, 1797, TNA. Fleet was in the Mediterranean fleet to recruit foreigners (Germans) and British regulars to the marines.
[108] ADM 1/398 f. 164, August 11, 1798, TNA.

of August, St. Vincent had not received notice from the Admiralty that his appointment was confirmed.[109]

Flight and St. Vincent understood the importance of marine clothing and appearance in this fight. St. Vincent was particularly interested in how uniforms that were not suitable for the weather could hamper the loyalty and morale of marines. He noted "that unless cloathing [sic] is sent out immediately, for near the whole of the marines of the fleet under my command, the health of the men cannot be preserved."[110] Flight began submitting returns of the state of the marines in various vessels and noted whether they made a good appearance and the condition of their clothing. On the 18th of August, St. Vincent wrote that the clothing was in a worse state than he expected, especially in the ships that had newly joined the fleet, and he asked urgently for supplies. In the meantime, Flight and Lt. Col. Berkeley of the *Ville de Paris*, were "to consider the best means of preserving the health and appearance of the men until the new clothing arrives."[111] Though St. Vincent had many faults, he was a strong supporter of the marines. He seemed to understand their importance on board naval ships and worked to highlight their authority and significance through the maintenance of their "good appearance" in drilling, their uniform clothing, and their well-kept accoutrements.

Conclusion

The action or non-action of marines during the 1797-1798 period, where the Royal Navy had to contend with the Spithead and Nore mutinies and their fallout, changed the relationship

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[109] ADM 1/398 f. 175, August 26, 1798, TNA. The minutes on his letter of the 6th July show that the decision was made on October 20th to apply to King George to appoint Flight the Marine Inspector General and also to create additional Marine Inspectors in all foreign fleets with more than 20 vessels. See ADM 1/397 f. 140, minute, July 6, 1798, TNA.
[110] ADM 1/397 f. 153, July 20, 1798, TNA.
[111] ADM 1/398 f. 170, August 18, 1798, TNA.

that the Royal Navy had with marines. These events caused officers and the Admiralty to realise that marines were more useful as soldiers who policed unruly sailors; they could be remade into important allies of the officer class rather than ostracizing them as less-prestigious maritime soldiers, exploited as additional shipboard labour. Zerbe has observed that marines sided with the sailors in the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore and that the navy responded to this betrayal with a mass discharge of marine NCOs.[112] The message of this retaliation appears to have reached the marines involved in the failed mutinies at the Portsmouth barracks and at the Mediterranean fleet, where marine reception to mutinous sentiment was lukewarm. St. Vincent understood that having Corps of Marines loyal to the quarterdeck was vital. Unlike the West Indian and South African fleets, St. Vincent's fleet did not experience any major insubordinate actions. After the shock of 1797 mutinies, the officer corps had a vested interest in maintaining the marines as a loyal buffer between themselves and sailors, and this was reflected in the politics of the uniform.

The Royal Navy needed the marines. They needed soldiers on board their vessels, abroad in colonies, and in the dockyards. However, drawing these troops from the army was as anathema to the navy as having a standing army in Britain was to the British people.[113] The navy, therefore, manipulated marine dress and emphasised their soldierly duties so that they could have marines dressed as soldiers but under the full and complete authority of the Admiralty. Without proper care, however, marines could easily become more like sailors, undisciplined and untrustworthy. Therefore, the clothing was used to both mark the distinction between them visually and also to reinforce that distinction internally in marines as well.

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[112] Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines*, 141–44.

[113] Indeed, St. Vincent wanted to replace the army with the marines, at least in the British Isles. Such a proposition is consistent with his high esteem for the corps but it probably no coincidence that such a change would also consolidate unprecedented local authority in the First Lord of the Admiralty as well. See N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 476.

Table 3.1

Table 3.1 – Details of Marine Regiment Contracts, May & August 1747 & March 1748, b/w John Roberts and Navy Board (AO 15/45 fs. 50, 55, 103)																				
Dates				Marine Suits, according to Rank											Cost			Total		
Date Signed	Date Delivered	Shipment Complete	Rank	Total	Coat	Breeches	Shirt	Neckcloth	Roller***	Shoes	Stockings	Cap	Knot	Belt	Waistcoat**	£	s	d	£	s	d
27 May, 1747	11 June, 1747	Oct 1747	Sgt.	400	1	1	1	1		1	1	1				3	15	0	1500	0	0
			Cpl.	400	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	13	8	673	6	8
			Drm.	*300	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1		2	5	0	675	0	0
			Pte.	10,000	1	1	1		1	1	1	1				1	13	0	16,500	0	0
			Total	11,100															19,348	6	8
7 August	21 August	Jan. 1748	Pte.	1500											1	0	8	0	600	0	0
31 March, 1748	14 April, 1748	Aug. 1748	Sgt.	400	1	1	1	1		1	1	1				3	15	0	1500	0	0
			Cpl.	400	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	13	8	673	6	8
			Drm.	300	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1		2	5	0	675	0	0
			Pte.	7500	1	1	1		1	1	1	1				1	13	0	12,375	0	0
			Pte.	1500											1	0	8	0	600	0	0
			Total	10,100															15,823	6	8
			Full Total	33,800															35,771	13	4
* Drummers' suits were copied as "the hundred suits" in the May 1747 contract but appear as "three hundred suits" in 1748. It is assumed that both orders are for 300 suits.																				
** There is some suggestion that the past year's red coats were altered to produce waistcoats, but the regulations called for white waistcoats.																				
*** The roller was perhaps a neckstock, as it seems to replace the neckcloth of the sergeant.																				

Figures 3.1 – 3.4

Figure 3.1 – Joseph Constantine Stadler, "A Private of the Royal Marines, 1812," aquatint, National Army Museum, NAM.1950-11-33-41, 1812-1815, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1950-11-33-41. This marine is wearing white breeches with black stockings or gaiters to create the appearance of wearing boots, though he wears only shoes. Many details of this uniform are drawn from the infantry uniform seen in Figure 3.2, but the most distinct deviation is the marine hat, which is shown here to have a full brim.

Figure 3.1 – Joseph Constantine Stadler, "Privates in the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards on Service, 1812," aquatint, National Army Museum, NAM.1950-11-33-28, 1812-1815, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1950-11-33-28. This image is from the same published collection of uniform illustrations as Figure 3.1. The foot solders wear grey trousers here, however, and have shorter gaiters, though they also wear shoes. This image gives two views of the army cap, which had a peaked brim. The marines adopted the army cap in 1822. The background of these two images also suggest the environments in which these troops served. Here, a neat encampment of canvas tents is shown situated in what is possibly Portugal or Spain. In Figure 3.1, the marine poses on a dock with ships in combat in the distance.

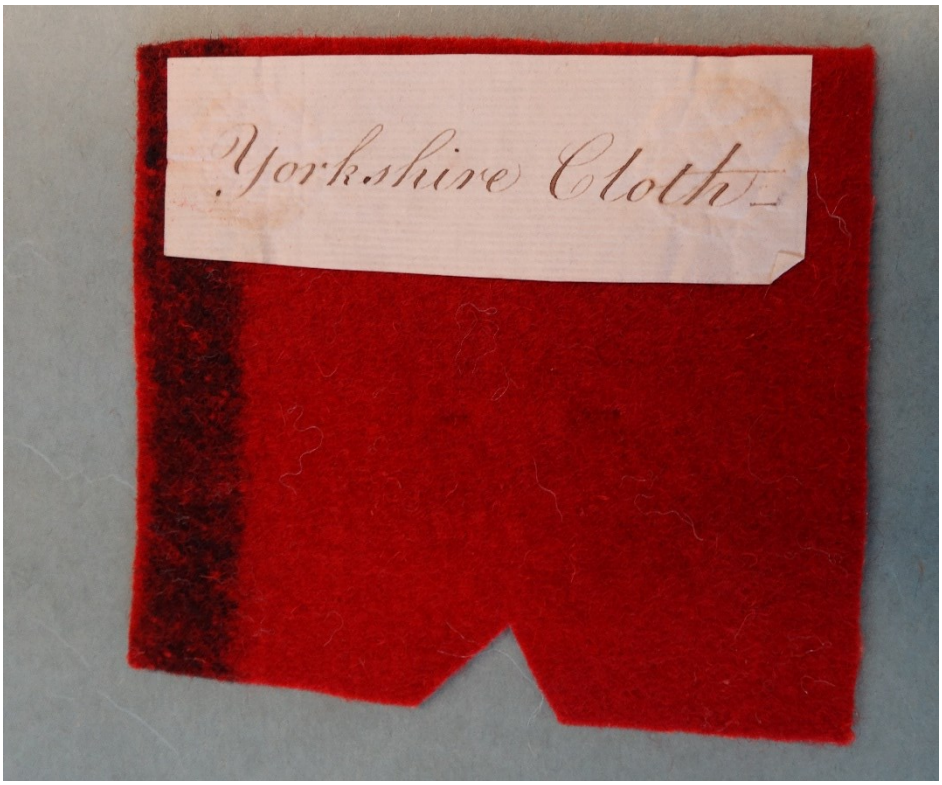

Figure 3.3 – Red Yorkshire cloth swatch, sent to the Admiralty from the Navy Board, ADM/BP/26, November 10, 1806, Caird. The contractor Mr. Box applied to make marine coats using this fabric, which he already used in the coats of the Veteran Battalion, but the Navy Board did not think the cloth of suitable quality. They advised the Admiralty that if they wanted a new contract, they should offer a public tender rather than contracting with Mr. Box.

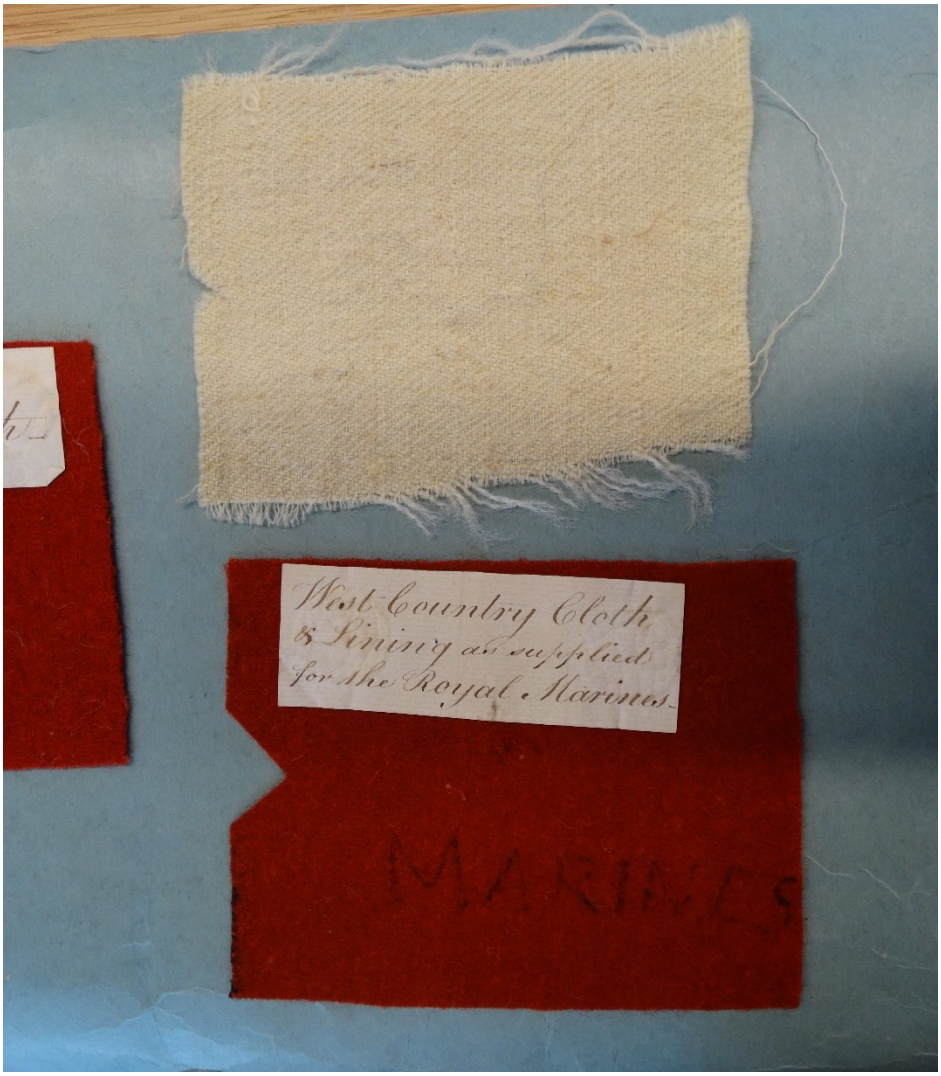

Figure 3.4 – White twill lining and red West County woolen cloth swatches, sent to the Admiralty from the Navy Board, ADM/BP/26, November 10, 1806, Caird. These swatches are from the actual cloth used to make the red coats of Royal Marine privates and NCOs in 1806. The Navy Board preferred the West Country woolen because it was dyed-through.

Chapter Four – Naval Clothing and Port Life: Slops, Slopsellers, and Dockyards, 1800-1815

The naval clothing system functioned through the dockyards and ports, especially those in southern England that supported the ships blockading France in the Channel, the North Sea, and the North Atlantic. The ports themselves constantly received warships full of sailors with nowhere but the ship's slop chest to spend their money. Unsurprisingly, civilian merchants were interested in gaining access to this market of consumers on board ships. This brought them into conflict with commanders who normally were able to exert full control over sailors. In port, this relationship changed. Sailors could challenge the authority of their commanders by deserting. Merchants brought colourful and frivolous clothing on board, along with liquor, which the sailors were admonished not to buy, but did so anyway. Commanders found their power curtailed in port, a liminal space between the landward rule of law and the captain's almost unlimited authority at sea. Ports and dockyards were an important zone of contact for clothing, where military and civilian dress intermingled.

The dockyards in these ports were also able to support significant modernisation projects, like Marc Brunel's Portsmouth block mill. While the block mill did not produce any clothing, it is clear that Brunel brought many ideas about the role of machines and labour into his shoe-machinery project between 1810 and 1815. Indeed, the seeds of the shoe factory's failure are also apparent in Brunel's financial trouble with the navy during the block mill project. His optimistic belief in the importance and value of innovation was not universally shared and the government's reticence to commit to Brunel's ideas or reward him for his work eventually put him in the poor house.

This chapter will look at two areas where clothing and dockyards intersected. First, it will explore private slopsellers in port towns, how they sold clothes and other goods to sailors when in port, and the tensions between slopsellers, ship commanders, government bureaucracy and, of course, other slopsellers. Second, this chapter will examine how clothing was part of the attempt to regulate, survey, and rationalise dockyard labour, ending in the creation of Brunel's short-lived but important shoe factory at Battersea. The difference between the life at sea in naval vessels and the processes on land where clothing was produced, distributed, and mechanized, out of the control of both captains and the wider authority of the navy, show the tensions and intricacies of the slop clothing system in this period.

Slop Clothing Consumption and Business in Port

Clothing in Port and the Limits of Naval Authority

Sailors and marines were often involuntary consumers.[1] At sea, there was no effective cash economy; they were limited to the slop chest that contained government-produced slops in addition to supplementary clothes items and tobacco supplied by the purser. Even when returning to port, however, sailors were often still restricted to their ships. The lack of shore leave for naval sailors was one of the grievances listed during the Spithead mutiny; commanders kept their men on board in order to limit desertion but by the same stroke they caused resentment among their crews by limiting their freedom and denying their access to the comforts of the shore. For port

[1] Beverly Lemire shows how captains manipulated involuntary or coerced consumers to maximise profits at sea, in this case of tobacco. Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c. 1500-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 227–29; see also John Styles, "Involuntary Consumers? Servants and Their Clothes in Eighteenth-Century England," *Textile History* 33, no. 1 (2002): 9–21.

towns, naval ships represented a large concentration of eager consumers.[2] In-coming sailors, especially those on naval and deep-sea merchant ships, spent long periods at sea isolated in single-sex environments with only the clothing and tobacco from the slop chest on offer and with surveillance from officers and marines restraining their clothing, food, and liquor consumption. Sea water and heavy labour required that garments had to be quickly replaced upon arrival in port, but sailors were additionally motivated to buy new clothes to display their new and likely short-lived wealth. Slopsellers took their wares out in bumboats[3] to meet the newly arriving ships, knowing that the first merchant would get early access to a crew of sailors eager to buy and flush with cash. Naval ships did not pay and discharge crews like merchant vessels,[4] but slopsellers hoped to arrange access with the ship's officers to visit the crew on pay-day.

Slopsellers and other landward merchants hoped to profit from this binge culture, just as officers hoped to restrict it. Richard Wilk defines binging as a significant feature of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century global extraction economy.[5] He notes that it is found in work forces that are largely or totally male, where the labour takes place in isolation, the labourers are unable to escape from the workplace, and consumption is predominantly rationed.[6] "When workers return from their isolation, they immediately spend all or most of their wages, often in a

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[2] Richard Wilk, "The Binge in the Food Economy of Nineteenth-Century Belize," in *Changing Tastes: Food Culture and the Processes of Industrialization*, ed. Patricia Lysaght and Christine Burckhardt-Seebass (Basel: University College Dublin, 2004), 117.

[3] Bumboats were a small boat used to carry provisions to ships lying at anchor in port, usually items for sale. By the nineteenth century, they had acquired a bad reputation associated with smuggled goods, crimps (labour agents), and prostitutes.

[4] It is important to highlight the difference between merchant shipping and naval service on this point. Merchant shipping was treated as casual labour—though voyages could last up to two years if foreign-going, most sailors working coastal or even Atlantic routes could expect to be discharged after a few weeks or months. By contrast, naval officers could not afford to release their crews—the use of the press to secure a workforce, the danger of battle and the poor pay meant that it was difficult to replenish crews once they were discharged.

[5] Wilk, "The Binge in the Food Economy of Nineteenth-Century Belize," 118.

[6] Wilk expressly highlighted the gendered nature of binge culture. Both he and Valerie Burton show that part of binging is to display masculine independence, often as a working-class counterpoint to more respectable male breadwinners whose wages were additionally supporting dependents like women and children. Wilk, 116–19; Burton, "The Myth of Bachelor Jack," 189–90; Burton, "Reflections on Masculinity," 96.

context of social revelry and release," notes Wilk, who continues that sailors were probably some of the earliest binge consumers.[7] The cartoon "Portsmouth Point" shows how binging by sailors was seen by contemporary observers (see Figures 4.1). The scene prominently displays many aspects of binge culture, including public drunkenness and sexual activity. Of particular interest is the clothes shop on the left. From an upper window the shop advertises slop clothing: a man's blue jacket, white shirt and buff trousers. Below a sailor and his companion browse the wares. The woman is touching a pink garment, probably indicating what she wants the sailor to purchase it for her.[8] The establishment also advertises "money lent" and is owned by "Moses Levy," a name implying the Jewishness of the owner. In the distance, two men in red coats, perhaps marines, observe the men coming ashore. This image shows many aspects of the liminal zone of the port. It prominently depicts conspicuous consumption of clothes, alcohol, and women by binging men, but also suggests the depravations that the sailors will experience at sea, especially in the contrast of the wide, open street with the small ships in the distance.

Naval commanders were not as happy as their men to see these bumboats arrive. Binging threatened the health of the sailors and encouraged desertion. Slopsellers often sold liquor and brought on board clothing that offended officers' ideas of suitable dress for seamen. After 1806, the government regulated that such merchants were not allowed to visit naval ships to sell

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[7] Wilk, "The Binge in the Food Economy of Nineteenth-Century Belize," 116–17.

[8] Probably one of the best accounts of binging, though from a later period, is William Barnes's discussion of shore leave in his 1930 autobiography. Barnes discusses drinking and fighting, as witnessed during his career between 1870 and 1920, but also how sailors and shore women entered into mutually beneficial financial, sexual and emotional relationships. These were not just transactions for sex but were "marriages" which allowed sailors to have short-term hetero-normative relationships which replaced or were concurrent to legal marriages which were difficult to maintain because of their work. The sailors bought their "girls" clothing and even gave them their half-pay notes, allowing them to draw on the sailor's wages while he was at sea. Barnes is very clear that sailors were not naive and understood that the women saw other sailors, and even used the half-pay of other men to support destitute sailors before they found work. William Morris Barnes, *When Ships Were Ships and Not Tin Pots: The Seafaring Adventures of Captain William Morris Barnes*, ed. Hilda Renbold Wortman (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1930), 146-53.

alcohol, and the men were further restricted from selling their state-supplied slop clothing and bedding, as it interfered with ship cleanliness and order.[9] Commanders, like household masters controlling the sartorial choices of their servants, attempted to limit the types of articles sailors might be offered, usually under the auspices of paternal concern for their wages and health. Captain Edward Riou's orders for HMS *Amazon* stated in 1799 that:

> it is recommended to [the crew] to lay out their money with slop men of the best character, who sell articles of the best quality and to deal only with *a few* {two or three} tradesmen of that description, but by no means to give their custom to one.[10]

Riou also observed that clothing made of "flimsy" fabric and inappropriate colours were only offered by slopsellers to cheat the men of their wages, though he did not outright ban them.[11] Captain John Fyffe, commander of HMS *Indefatigable*, allowed bumboats to come alongside his ship, though only during mealtimes and always under surveillance by the ship's master at arms or the marine officers.[12] Captains had to tolerate these visits, however. Binging soothed the ship company's confinement on board, and as Wilk notes, it was also "a direct benefit to employers as the men's debt binds them in service."[13] Further, the slopsellers might themselves retaliate. They believed that they had a right and duty to access the potential consumers on board, and did not fully recognise naval commanders as legal authorities over their landward affairs.

Such was the case in 1811 when Admiral Sir Roger Curtis, then commander-in-chief at Portsmouth, and Captain John Tower of HMS *Curacao*[14] wrote to the Admiralty about a poster that was displayed throughout Portsmouth and the surrounding region. The poster (see Figure

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[9] *Regulations and Instructions,* 1806, 138.
[10] RUSI/NM/235/ER/3/11, Capt. Edward Riou, Orders for the Discipline of HMS *Amazon*, The National Maritime Museum, Caird Library, Greenwich [CL], cited in Brian Lavery, ed., *Shipboard Life and Organisation, 1731-1815*, vol. 138, Publications of the Navy Records Society (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 163. Riou's emphasis.
[11] RUSI/NM/235/ER/3/11, cited in Lavery, 164.
[12] WQB/39, Capt. John Fyffe, Orders and Watch Bill, *Indefatigable*, 1812, CL, cited in Lavery, *Shipboard Life and Organisation*, 195.
[13] Wilk, "The Binge in the Food Economy of Nineteenth-Century Belize," 118.
[14] The ship's name appeared irregularly spelled as "Curacoa", "Curacao", and "Curaçoa."

4.2) refers to a posting bill written by Tower's clerk Thomas Price, distributed in Portsmouth, Gosport, and Portsea (see Figure 4.3).[15] The two bills were collected and sent to the Admiralty for their consideration in November. The one put up by slopsellers was ripped from a wall in the Portsmouth area; when removed from its archival box the poster is still stiff with the layers of paste and other posters that pulled away with it when it was removed.[16]

Tower's poster shows how captains attempted to extend their shipboard authority over even landward merchants under the pretext of paternal care for sailors. Tower was explicitly looking for slop clothing to be provided to his crew, who were about to receive their wages. The notice instructs that:

> the Slopmen will be admitted into the Ship to shew Samples of various Articles of Clothing, which the Petty Officers will decide on in respect to Quality and Price—Approved Samples will be preserved by the First Lieutenant, and any Slopman detected in selling Articles inferior in Quality to those previously exhibited, the Captain cannot use his Endeavours to procure Payment for an Article which is not equal to the Quality agreed on.

The statement further noted that: "Fancy-coloured Cloaths of all Descriptions, and Spirits, are prohibited."[17] This system where the slopsellers approached the ship with samples to be approved by the officers is very similar to the large-scale government system of clothes contracting. It is likely that this is what purchasing clothing for vessels was originally like before the Navy Board took over the process.

Additionally, Tower wanted his officers to act as intermediaries between the sailors and vendors. His idea was that sailors would give the money to the officers, who would record the value and then give the money to the traders. This would determine if they had used a one- or

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[15] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA. See text transcription of these notices in Appendixes 5 and 6.
[16] At least three posters can be discerned on the back, but very little information remains intact. One appears to be a real estate advertisement, perhaps for a rental building. Another may be a tender for a contract, but the small amount of transfer does not reveal enough details to reconstruct its content.
[17] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA.

five-pound note before the cash disappeared into the purses of the slopsellers. The notice explains that a common trick of dishonest merchants (or, the notice allows, also of dishonest sailors) was to "forget" the value of the note. By registering the notes before sale, Tower hoped to mediate these types of confrontations. Whether or not Tower intended it, the proposal insinuated that slopsellers were cheating the sailors, which the merchants found particularly offensive.

Captain Tower's notice was printed and distributed on October 25th and about half a month later a second notice appeared on November 6th, produced by the slopsellers and printed by Williams, a printer in Portsea. The notice counters Tower by mocking him, his ship and his regulations. It begins:

> WANTED, For J[ohn] T[ower]s, of his Majesty's Ship *SO AND SO*, Cheap Lodgings; or, Lodgings Gratis; *A Pair of New Epaulets*, and A Washerwoman; Who will be paid on Delivery of the Clothes; two Years Credit *not being at present* required.

It continues that: "in consequence of the illiberal Remarks made in a posting Bill … it has been determined … not to suffer any Goods to be sent from their Shops to the said Ship."[18] Much of this Darnton-esque joke is opaque to the modern reader.[19] The emphasis on the pair of epaulets might be an insinuation that Tower's command and authority were new or, since the poster was advertising for the marks of rank, that his position was purchased. A captain was only allowed to wear a pair of epaulets after three years seniority.[20] Towers had about six years of prior command experience, becoming the captain of *Curacao* in 1809 and before that commanding the 32-gun HMS *Iris* for three years. Nor was he a young man; promoted to post-captain in 1802, he was at

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[18] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA. Original emphasis.
[19] Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, Rev. Ed. (1984; New York: Basic Books, 2009), 76–77.
[20] This changed in 1812, where captains were allowed two epaulets regardless of seniority and the distinction was instead made through designs embroidered on them. Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions, 1748-1857* (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 53-54.

least in his thirties by 1811. The cheap lodging is perhaps a reference to Tower's statement that "at other Times, only those who have previously contracted with the People, who will be allowed to remain on Board Twenty-four Hours;"[21] but the connection is tenuous. The remark about payment on delivery might suggest the frustration of slopsellers with the navy's sluggish payment system, where they could expect to wait two years or more for repayment.

One joke, however, is clear: the pun on the ship's name *Curacao* as *So and So* is publicly defining the limits of Captain Tower's power.[22] At sea, the ship commander might have more power over his crew than the King had over his subjects, but he could not demand obedience and the right of invasive surveillance over civilian merchants in Portsmouth. By changing his ship's name to the *So and So*, the slopsellers of Portsmouth asked: "who do you think you are?" This is further illustrated in the slopsellers' poster by the claim that Tower was not only overstepping his authority in trying to manage the merchants who visited his ship, but they also suggest that Tower's regulations were really a front for taking bribes from the merchants who were accepted to trade on board his ship.

Tower's response was to rip the slopsellers' poster from the wall and send it to the Admiralty. He complained that the posters were "not only calculated to create dissatisfaction amongst my crew, but spur on dissention in other ships when the captain interests himself for the benefit of his ships company."[23] He also revealed that the slopsellers had joined together, not only in refusing to sell goods on the *Curacao*, but they also pledged to refund any merchant with any credit extended to the ship's crew if they would withdraw their services. Tower's plea to the Admiralty for a solution exposes the limits of a commander's authority, especially in port, and

[21] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA.
[22] The second "c" in Curacao was soft, therefore the pronunciation of the ship's name was CUR-a-SOW.
[23] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA.

his inability to solve issues outside his control without assistance from higher powers. Unlike Nelson and Keith's experiences with clothing, however, Towers neither had the clout to influence the Admiralty nor the wherewithal to devise an unofficial workaround. During the meeting of the Board of Admiralty on November 9th, the minute for the letter simply reads "[acquaint] him that their Lordships do not see how they can interfere in this matter."[24] Though no information about what followed is contained in the letter, it is probable that without Admiralty intervention, Tower was forced to bend to the will of the slopsellers or risk the displeasure of his ship's company. Further, it is unlikely that there was anything the Admiralty could have done in any case.

Marines also articulated the limited authority of naval ship commanders through their clothes. As shown in the previous chapter, marine headgear was a focal point of naval officers as an object that could be manipulated to make marines less like sailors. Their regulation brimmed hat was frequently modified to produce a cap with only a brim on the front, to more closely resemble the caps worn by the British infantry (see figs. 3.1 and 3.2). Headgear generally also remained significantly tied to displays of authority. In May 1815, Captain Henry Duncan of HMS *Glasgow* wrote to Admiral Sir John Duckworth, the commander-in-chief of Plymouth, about a distressing incident he had experienced near the Plymouth dockyard gates. He was passed by a marine "without [his] taking off, touching, or moving his hat."[25]

Duncan chafed at not being acknowledged through what Penelope J. Corfield calls "hat honour", the use of the hat as an extension of the head to indicate submission by social inferiors to those of higher rank or for categories of people determined to be deserving respect (e.g.

[24] ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, Minute, November 8, 1811, TNA.
[25] ADM 1/837 f. 620, June 6, 1815, TNA.

women).[26] During the eighteenth century, hat honour was beginning to decline as a prevalent form of social distinction. Corfield shows that the practice was initially neglected by non-conformists who challenged the authority of Anglian clergy, but it was further diluted by the urbanisation of Britain, which made it difficult to determine social rank at a glance. By 1815, British men no longer removed their hats in acknowledgement, but instead inclined their heads or touched their hats.[27] The military salute is a codification of this practice so it is no surprise that Captain Duncan was upset and offended when he was not acknowledged by Lieutenant Martin in Plymouth.

Martin's excuse for not saluting Duncan, however, came from their situation on shore. The marine officer was not assigned to any ship and therefore, as he told Duncan, "it was only his duty to do so [salute] on passing general officers, and the captain of his own ship, or words to that effect."[28] It is clear that Duncan did not believe that there was a division between the Royal Marines and the navy but that Martin did see the two forces as separate with their own distinct officer hierarchies. At sea, Martin acknowledged, he would salute the captain of his vessel, who was considered the higher-ranked officer; but on land without an assigned ship, he did not need to offer that respect to Duncan. Unclear on how to proceed, Duckworth wrote to Major General Thomas Strickland of the Royal Marines asking him to clarify the regulations. "I beg leave to inform you," Strickland wrote back to Duckworth, "that I never heard or knew of any general rule for officers of the Royal Marines, whilst serving on shore, saluting Captains of the Royal Navy on passing them in the street."[29] Unsatisfied, Duckworth forwarded the letters to the

[26] Penelope J. Corfield, "Dress for Deference and Dissent: Hats and the Decline of Hat Honour," *Costume* 23, no. 1 (1989): 64.
[27] Corfield, 71–72.
[28] ADM 1/837 f. 620, June 6, 1815, TNA.
[29] ADM 1/837 f. 620, June 6, 1815, TNA.

Admiralty. They were terse, writing "their Lordships are not aware that there is any rule or custom that required the Lieutenant in this case to take off his hat to Capt. Duncan."[30] As with the conflict with the slopsellers in Portsmouth, naval officers were somewhat shocked to find out the limits of their authority—and the authority of the Admiralty—on land. Due to their amphibious role, however, the marines regained some measure of their institutional autonomy when stationed ashore, especially in naval dockyards like Plymouth where they had barracks.

The Hawker's Department and Regulating Slop Sales in Port

Despite the Admiralty's reticence to intervene in landward clothing disputes, the government did attempt to regulate the private sale of slop clothing on board naval ships. The basis for this action was the 1697 Act for Licensing Hawkers and Pedlars, which was managed through the Board of Commissioners for Hawkers and Pedlars in the eighteenth century. The Act was one of the many that Parliament hoped would increase revenue to pay for the Williamite War of Ireland between 1688 and 1691. It required traveling merchants to pay a tax in order to receive a licence and was specifically imposed on itinerant traders. In 1780, revisions were made on the act that allowed licenced pedlars to settle in one town so long as they displayed their paperwork.[31] In 1810 the Board was made a subsidiary part of the Commission of Hackney Coaches. In September 1812, Lieutenant John Smale of the Royal Marines,[32] seemingly on his own initiative, applied to the Treasury to regulate Hawkers' Licences in Plymouth, specifically to regulate the bumboats visiting royal navy ships on pay day.[33] Around this time, a port order

[30] ADM 1/837 f. 620, June 6, 1815, TNA.
[31] Alison Toplis, *The Clothing Trade in Provincial England, 1800–1850* (2011; London: Routledge, 2016), 67.
[32] Smale is referred to interchangeably as "Smale" and "Small" and "Smols" even by himself. I will use the name Smale.
[33] ADM 1/5129, February 26, 1813, TNA.

was made that no hawkers or pedlars were to visit naval vessels in Plymouth without a licence.[34] It is unclear if Smale's letter precipitated or followed the port order, but established landward shopkeepers were suddenly considered hawkers because they travelled back and forth to vessels in port in order to sell their wares or fit sailors and officers for suits of clothes. This required sedentary port storekeepers to have hawker's licences, a system that did not usually apply to such establishments. On November 11, 1812, agents were also appointed in Portsmouth and Chatham, and the Hackney Coach Commission requested that the Admiralty extend the order to those two port towns and Sheerness in addition.

John Smale was an ex-marine Lieutenant who lived in Plymouth. In 1813 he antagonised at least one naval commander by trying to enforce the hawker licences. He additionally attempted to get an audience with any government body that might condescend to hear him outline his opinions on how revenue might be raised through this method. On December 31, 1812, Smale wrote to James Quaife, chief clerk of the Hackney Coach Commission, asking to visit London to appeal directly to the board. In January 1813 he received their response. Trying to both encourage Smale's enthusiasm but also curb his ambitions, the Hackney Coach Commissioners wrote that they did not want him to come to London, nor would they pay him an allowance to support such a visit, but "they are well pleased by my assiduity and advice me to send my representations … to the Lords of the Treasury, and the Lords of the Admiralty."[35]

Smale wanted a boat, or an allowance to maintain a boat, that would enable him to inspect naval ships in order to catch illegal traders in the act. Smale noted that it was difficult to find evidence of the illegal sales of these "traders on the water" as he called them. He claimed

[34] The order was made by Admiral Sir Robert Calder in Plymouth, but no date is given for when this order was given. By the phrasing in his letter, it appears that Smale's appointment on September 28 predated the Admiralty's instructions to Calder to announce the order. See ADM 1/3340, January 13, 1813, TNA.
[35] ADM 1/3340, January 13, 1813, TNA.

they numbered "hundreds of traders, composed of Jews, gin carriers &c residing here that live almost so retired as if in Garretts" adding later that "several of those women got into the ships."[36] Smale initially went to Admiral Calder, asking for a boat so he could inspect HMS *Hotspur* where it was rumoured there were illegal traders. Unfortunately for Smale, the secretary refused to comply with the request. He wrote the Hackney Commission asking to make an in-person appeal to be granted funds to maintain a boat and to aggressively pursue the slopsellers and gin carriers from whom he felt "an emmence [sic] revenue will be collected, the government property greatly secured, desertion prevented and a great satisfaction given to all the captains of His Majesty's Navy."[37] Smale's actions, however, did not "give satisfaction" to the captains stationed in Plymouth with crews awaiting pay day. Unable to inspect the ships themselves, Smale attempted to enforce the Hawkers and Pedlars Act by intercepting captains on shore, serving them with papers. When that did not work, he wrote to London informing the Admiralty that an unlicensed trader was allowed on board HMS *Surveillant*. This letter was removed from its place and never returned, but the paper office slip records that the minute ordered Admiral Lord Keith to make inquiries.[38]

Keith followed this up, forwarding a letter from the captain of *Surveillant*, George R. Collier, who was not impressed by being harassed by Smale on his spring visit to Plymouth. Smale accused Collier of having knowingly allowed illegal trading on board his ship, additionally asserted that liquor was being smuggled on board with the knowledge of his officers, and further chastised the captain for not paying attention to the general port orders in respect to hawkers. Collier was not pleased at being accused of assisting illegal activities, nor

[36] ADM 1/3340, January 13, 1813, TNA.
[37] ADM 1/3340, January 13, 1813, TNA.
[38] ADM 1/3340, March 12, 1813, TNA. Some letters, like this one, were removed contemporaneously and a slip put in their place which recorded basic information including the contents of the letter and a record of the minute.

was he very impressed by Smale's conduct in approaching him. He described the altercation as "an attack" with Smale being "independent & impertinent".[39] He observed that Smale stood to benefit financially from apprehending the illegal traders. Indeed, though it is not clear how much Smale was receiving, surveyors of the licences had a yearly salary of £100 and an allowance of 2d./£ of the funds collected enforcing them.[40] Collier saw no reason why he should assist Smale in getting this money, despite Smale's appeals that "the revenue would be injured by my conduct."[41] Not knowing that Smale had no boat to inspect ships, Collier also told him that he had permission to visit the *Surveillant* to see if any illegal activity was taking place—without Smale's letter, however, we cannot know how he took this unintended slight.

Collier continued to write a character reference for one of the traders under suspicion, a clothier named Mr. Bail, who he remarked was a respectable shopkeeper in Plymouth Dock. His defence gives a short description of Bail's visits to the *Surveillant*:

> He has frequently been on board the Ship to measure the Petty Officers & some of the seamen for suits of clothes & that, having made them, he takes them on board or send them agreeable to order—in the same way that any other Taylor does to a more respectable customer. Nor am I aware that in permitting a Sailor the enjoyment of such a right I have any way injured the revenue of my country.[42]

The strange application of the Hawkers & Pedlars Act to merchants with shops who only travelled to reach ship-bound sailors was apparently confusing to captains. The application of the license to Mr. Bail is also further complicated by the fact that he was not bringing goods directly to the ship for sale, but was taking measurements and tailoring the garments in his shop, returning them to the vessel at a later date. Alison Toplis shows that merchants who sold products by subscription or by order were able to successfully challenge the need for a hawker's

[39] ADM 1/153 f. 342, June 13, 1813, TNA.
[40] Toplis, *The Clothing Trade in Provincial England, 1800–1850*, 70.
[41] ADM 1/153 f. 342, June 13, 1813, TNA.
[42] ADM 1/153 f. 342, June 13, 1813, TNA.

licence, though likely on a case by case basis.[43] Collier, however, was not so much interested in protecting Bail or protesting the application of the Act as directing Smale and the government to investigate the shopkeeper rather than himself. Whether or not the Admiralty did anything to resolve this issue is unknown—the curt remark "read" is all they wrote when considering the letter on June 17th, 1813.

Smale's aggressive actions and keen attitude had allowed him to return £68 to the local district Agent for Hawkers, Mr. Bent, and the Hackney Coach Commission in London were equally pleased with his efforts—or at least with the increased revenue.[44] In a letter to the Admiralty, the Hackney Coach Commission boasted that "the Hawkers Revenue has been considerably increased at Plymouth."[45] The letter, sent in February of 1813, reads almost like a reminder to the Admiralty of Smale's appointment and the Commission's actions on hawkers licences, as thought to pre-empt Smale's own letters. If this was the goal, they underestimated Smale's enthusiasm—he wrote his letters to the Admiralty and Treasury the day his proposal to travel to London was rejected by the Hackney Coach Commission in January.

Smale's role in the licensing system is strange. It is clear that he was not considered an official surveyor, but instead reported to the surveyor of the district, Mr. Bent. The application of this tax to traders who visited ships in port was also probably dubious. Sellers who could prove that they made sales by order and traders selling their own manufactures were not considered hawkers and challenged the need for licences.[46] Indeed, the system was so impractical, and surveyors so sparse with only between thirteen and twenty in England between 1810 and 1820,

[43] Toplis, *The Clothing Trade in Provincial England, 1800–1850*, 67–68.
[44] At the rate of 2d./£, Mr. Bent would have been due an allowance of 11s.4d. from this sum, though it is not clear what portion would go to Smale.
[45] ADM 1/3340, January 13, 1813, TNA.
[46] Toplis, *The Clothing Trade in Provincial England, 1800–1850*, 67–68.

that it was suggested that it should be abandoned, at least in London, as it was impossible to administer. Despite Smale's lofty ideas of assisting the navy by protecting sailors and giving relief to commanders, the goal of hawker's licences was not regulation but revenue, and the Treasury refused to abandon the system.[47]

The hawkers' licences were never discussed as such again but in 1813 several letters and petitions were sent to the Admiralty from Portsmouth and Plymouth asking for permission to visit naval vessels or outlining their own ideas for how to regulate merchants who visited naval vessels, indicating both that the Act continued to be applied at least until 1814 and that it was not very well advertised. It is clear from many of these appeals that the writers did not understand how the Act applied to themselves or that that there was any licencing at all. It cannot be a coincidence, however, that these letters all arrived at the Admiralty in 1813 after Smale's appeal established some attempt at licencing.

In March, shortly after the debacle between Smale and Collier, L.G. Lyons from Gosport wrote the Admiralty. He asked for a bill to be raised in parliament to enforce a licencing scheme to be created to draw revenue from the slopsellers who visited naval vessels in port. This perhaps indicates that the requirement for hawkers' licences was never extended to Portsmouth, though the Hackney Coach Commission claimed in January that they established an agent there to enforce them. Lyons thought that £5 should be charged for such a licence, hoping that the proceeds might go towards raising the pay of captains and lieutenants in the navy.[48] He believed that Lieutenants, who were often delegated the task of controlling which merchants were allowed to board their vessels, were influenced by their small pay to admit only a few slopsellers, suggesting that the officers took bribes to limit shipboard competition. Lyons additionally

[47] Toplis, 70–71.
[48] ADM 1/4839 f. 131, March 25, 1813, TNA.

thought the measure might limit the ability of "Jews and others" who "exact a certain percentage from those who go on board to sell the goods."[49] He also suggested that a penalty and reward system might be used to limit the amount of spirits sold on board. Lyons thought that liquor was not just detrimental to the discipline of the men but that sailors often spent all their wages on spirits, leaving nothing to be spent on clothing.

Joseph Chandlin, a slopseller in London, wrote in August 1813 with a petition to bar "Jews and persons of no character"[50] access to naval vessels. He cited concern for sailors and officers as his motive, writing that the traders he complained of offered

> articles of no utility or service to the seamen but vexatious and expensive and deceiving the commander for their own Advantage which frequently creates misunderstanding between the captain and crew so necessary to be avoided in the service of his Majesty.[51]

In his letter, Lyons also suggested that regulating slopsellers might benefit the relationship between sailors and officers by removing untrustworthy merchants who cheated sailors and made them resentful.[52] Chandlin framed this as "the jealous temper of the seamen."[53] He reported that the slopsellers persuaded captains to introduce ship uniforms, making the seller the sole purveyor to the ship. Without competition, Chandlin charged, the sailors were forced to buy clothing at exorbitant rates and captains were unable to detect the fraud, being too busy. To solve this, Chandlin suggested that the Admiralty should "order that every ship shall on muster day have the same uniform as all blue jacketts [sic] waistcoats and trousers with the blue white or gilt buttons or such as your Lordships may be pleased to approve."[54] This would not only allow all slopsellers equal access to merchant ships, Chandlin proposed, but provide a consistent uniform

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[49] ADM 1/4839 f. 131, March 25, 1813, TNA.
[50] ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.
[51] ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.
[52] ADM 1/4839 f.131, March 25, 1813, TNA.
[53] ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.
[54] ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.

across the service, reducing the amount of clothing a sailor had to buy when he was transferred from ship to ship. Chandlin, however, was also looking to promote his own access to naval ships and included a list of bankers and merchants as references to his respectability as a man and a trader.[55] What Chandlin describes is basically the uniform eventually adopted in 1857, though with some additional military details (see Figure 5.2). What he does not consider, however, is that such regulations would give the same slop contractors who already dominated slop production even more established institutional dominance, cutting local merchants out of equation almost completely.

Chandlin, Lyons, and Smale all hoped to dissuade a certain kind of disreputable merchant from visiting naval ships, but they specifically targeted Jewish traders. By the 1800s, Jews were already closely associated with selling clothing, especially used clothing. As Beverly Lemire remarks, Jews were so thoroughly linked to the old-clothes trade that the association influenced how Jews were discriminated against and racialised in the nineteenth century.[56] Here, the Jewishness of the slopsellers is implied to intrinsically reflect the quality of the clothing but this influence was cyclical. The motives of Jewish merchants were also assumed to be as flimsy as the clothing they sold. Smale, Lyons, and Chandlin all define Jewish slopsellers as disreputable and dishonest. They wrote to the Admiralty that Jewish merchants were willing to sell spirits and frivolous dress to sailors thereby threatening the health and livelihood of a group of men considered pivotal for the nation's defence. This risk to sailors plumbed a prominent stereotype of Jews and other so-called "alien" groups: that they had no loyalty to the British state and happily weakened British military men for their own benefit. These associations belied that the

[55] The names include two banks, including the Glyn, Hallifax & Mills Bank which financed the Hudson's Bay Company, along with five merchants, and a solicitor. See ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.
[56] Beverly Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade Before the Factory, 1660-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 76-77.

navy's most important slop contractor during the French Wars was the Jewish firm Prator & Son. Further, it scapegoated Jewish businesses and merchants as un-British for seeking to profit from military contracts even as British gentiles did the same.[57]

These assertions further paternalistically painted sailors as childlike. They were unable to properly manage their money, resist luxuries like alcohol or flash clothing, or to detect scams.[58] When their betters stepped in to protect them, they became "jealous."[59] This was how seafaring binge culture was framed by officers and middling observers. As the nineteenth century progressed, binge culture became a means of rejecting the middle-class ideals of regular work, breadwinning, and sexual restraint.[60] Moralists created charitable institutions in order to curb sailors' propensity to binge and they pressured the government to regulate portside merchants, businesses, and sex workers who facilitated binge culture.[61] These actions scapegoated sailors and their support economy as lazy, corrupt, and degenerate. What was never considered was that it was in the best interests of ship owners to keep seafaring labour casual and tied to a boom/bust

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[57] Indeed, the woollen mills of Witney colluded to manipulate contract prices in the 1830s and 1840s by pre-emptively deciding who would get each army and navy contract for blankets and cloth at what price. The companies would then overbid on contracts so that the already fixed winner would receive the contract at a higher rate than if they earnestly competed. See Frederick J. Glover, "Government Contracting, Competition and Growth in the Heavy Woollen Industry," *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): 490.

[58] This paternalistic attitude towards sailors as incompetent wage-earners, mindless consumers of dress, alcohol and sexual favours, and as the dupes of dishonest merchants, prostitutes and innkeepers was a common one in the nineteenth century. See Valerie Burton, "The Myth of Bachelor Jack: Masculinity, Patriarchy and Seafaring Labour," in *Jack Tar in History: Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour*, ed. Colin Howell and Richard Twomey (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1991), 179–198.

[59] ADM 1/4438 f. 555, August 5, 1813, TNA.

[60] Burton, "'Whoring, Drinking Sailors': Reflections on Masculinity from the Labour History of Nineteenth-Century British Shipping," in *Working Out Gender: Perspectives from Labour History*, ed. Margaret Walsh (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 89-90.

[61] Burton, "Reflections on Masculinity," 93. The Contagious Diseases Prevention Acts, which regulated women's bodies to protect male soldiers and seafarers, is a prominent example of government regulation of the maritime support system, while the establishment of Sailors' Homes in ports like London and New York, run usually by Protestant churches, is an example of charitable pushes to diminish binging. See also Pamela Cox, "Compulsion, Voluntarism, and Venereal Disease: Governing Sexual Health in England after the Contagious Diseases Acts," *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 2007): 91–115, https://doi.org/10.1086/508400; Johnathan Thayer, "Merchant Seamen, Sailortowns, and the Philanthropic Encounter in New York, 1843–1945," in *The New Coastal History: Cultural and Environmental Perspectives from Scotland and Beyond*, ed. David Worthington (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 67–85, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64090-7_4.

cycle. The technological transition from sail to steam played an important role in these dynamics, including the creation of the career naval rating; but it is clear that the roots of these attitudes were already well-established by 1800, as seen in these petitions and letters to the Admiralty.

The final petition asking for licenced access to sell on naval vessels was from a Plymouth widow, Ann Waldron, who lived on St. Aubyn Street near the Royal dockyard. Waldron, like Chandlin, also wanted access to naval vessels so she could sell her "necessary articles" on board and was specifically looking for a letter from the Admiralty which recommended her to the officers. As a woman, she additionally wrote about her personal circumstances to justify why she wanted to be able to sell products on board naval vessels. She explained that her husband, Edward Waldron, died at sea in 1805 on the *Duke of Marlborough* merchant packet, defending the ship against the enemy. She had five children and wrote:

> your petitioner has struggled hard, by serving necessaries on board His Majesty's Ships, to support such a large family, they having no other dependence but your Petitioner, who finds at times a great difficulty in providing them necessary food.[62]

As she advocated for herself, Waldron continued to emphasise the large size and dependant state of her family, calling them at one point "orphans."

As with the Jewish vendors who tried to access naval vessels as merchants, women hawkers were also targeted as disreputable salespeople. Smale's comment, grumbling that "those women" had been allowed to get on board ships in Plymouth, reveals that he considered women who wanted to visit ships to be women of a certain type. This type is revealed in contemporary satirical print cartoons like "The Last Jig" and "British Vessels" (see Figures 4.4 and 4.5). The former shows sailors and women having a party below decks with one of the sailors sitting astride a canon. The image depicts the many types of binging associated with sailors: the group

[62] ADM 1/5080 f. 762, November 17, 1813, TNA.

is drinking, smoking, eating and dancing. All are well-dressed. The women wear white cotton dresses with feathered bonnets while the men all have unblemished jackets, white linen shirts and buff trousers and breeches. In the background, three couples are shown in various stages of sexual activity, from simply cuddling, to kissing, to intercourse. The latter image depicts an arrangement of different prostitutes labeled with titles drawn from different naval ratings and merchant ship types.[63] On the far right, one of the women is labelled "a bumboat" and is depicted as a hawker, pushing a wheelbarrow laden with unknown wares and crying out "round & sound!" The contemporary reader of this cartoon would understand that the merchant woman was advertising her own body with this call.

These cartoons show what contemporaries thought women did on board warships. Female companionship was one of the many things sailors were thought to unscrupulously binge upon during their brief time in port and women merchants were as likely to be providing their bodies to sailors while on board as they were to be selling alcohol and clothes. With this in mind, Waldron was hoping that a line from the Admiralty might give her some measure of respectability as she approached officers with "the timidity of a friendless woman"[64] for access to the ship's company, an act that by implication would not have been considered respectable. To this end, Waldron included a list of local Plymouth men who could testify in support of her respectability. Chandlin also provided references to support his claims as a fair and creditable merchant but Waldron's addition of a minister's name in her list is evidence that she had to prove her respectability not only as a trader but also as a woman.[65]

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[63] "British Vessels," PC 3, No. 94504614, 1802, British Print Collection, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/94504614/.
[64] ADM 1/5080 f. 762, November 17, 1813, TNA.
[65] ADM 1/5080 f. 762, November 17, 1813, TNA. References were eventually required to get a hawkers' license in 1832. See Toplis, *The Clothing Trade in Provincial England, 1800–1850*, 71.

The Admiralty and Hackney Coach Commission's efforts to regulate trade to in-port naval vessels does not appear to have gone much further than imposing a yearly licencing fee, which people like Smale, Chandlin and Lyons thought would benefit the navy at least by barring certain kinds of slopsellers from ships. The regulation, however, would only limit those who could not afford to produce cash upfront to cover the cost of the licence, but who, unlike Smale, could apparently afford to hire or maintain a boat to reach naval vessels. Still, it is unknown how long Smale and others in the major Royal Dockyards continued to regulate these licences. While perhaps successful in producing revenue for the government, the hawkers' licences did not appear to help captains or protect sailors in the ways the Admiralty hoped, nor to provide special access to merchants like Chandlin. The licences probably only acted as a deterrent to the poorest of slopsellers while only serving to complicated regulations for merchants like Collier's Mr. Bail, who probably paid rent and taxes on his shop while also being harassed for a licence he otherwise would not require. Further, the licences in many ways additionally restricted the discretion of commanders to make their own decisions about who was allowed to board their ships, no doubt an action resented by officers.

Commanders had unparalleled authority at sea, but this power was curtailed the moment they sailed into port. Sailors were more easily able to desert, marines on shore were able to assert their independence, and civilians acted outside the usual regulations that governed the navy. Officers like Tower, who tried to regulate slopsellers as if they were part of his crew were resisted definitively and publicly. Captains, like Duncan, who were able to give orders and ask for deference from the marines stationed on board his ship, found that when on shore the marines had more institutional authority and could afford to defy captains. On the other hand, civilians attempted to circumvent officers by going to the Admiralty for permission to go on board and

sell their wares. Hoping to bolster their own access, these men disparaged Jewish and women vendors as purveyors of unsuitable goods that robbed sailors and injured their health. This interfered with the right of commanders to make their own decisions on who should or should not board their vessel. The government only half-heartedly tried to regulate merchants' access to vessels, not oversee the quality of goods, protect sailors, or assist captains, but to bring in more revenue.

Clothing, Corruption and Mechanisation in the Royal Dockyards

Like the wider port, the Royal Dockyards themselves were places of considerable importance. These liminal spaces between the sea and the wider port allowed naval officers, civilian labourers, government bureaucrats, and marine privates to mingle, but were additionally under the administration and control of the military. This is another space where marines took on a new importance: in dockyards they not only had more independence with direct less naval oversight[66] but they also acted as military police who guarded the Royal dockyards from outside intruders and also surveilled the civilian workers within. The French Wars were a particularly disruptive period for the dockyards. During the 1790s, the Admiralty supported the first concerted push to mechanise the yards. Between 1800 and 1805, the dockyards underwent a drastic upheaval as the First Lord of the Admiralty attempted to thwart corruption by cancelling supply contracts, rearranging staff hierarchies, introducing new pay systems, and by making the aged and infirm of the workforce redundant. Between 1801 and 1808, Marc Brunel also

[66] The navy did not entirely retreat from positions of power over the marines on shore as officers awaiting a post or a promotion were placed in the corps as "Blue colonels." Such a placement was widely understood to be a placeholder for advancing naval officers and they were not expected to perform as actual marines. They did have the right to do so, however, and some did, much to the annoyance of the established marine officers. Britt Zerbe, *The Birth of the Royal Marines, 1664-1802* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), 62-68.

revolutionised product manufacture by designing and putting into practice the first fully mechanised production line for ship's blocks.[67] These proceedings were to have important ramifications for military clothing.

In 1796 Samuel Bentham, the brother of philosopher Jeremy Bentham, was appointed Inspector General of the Royal Dockyards. Bentham was a trained shipwright who was apprenticed at the dockyards between 1770 and 1777. He left Britain, frustrated by the limited innovation allowed and his own lack of advancement, and travelled in northern Europe, eventually ending up in Russia. There he worked for Catherine II and Prince Potemkin improving river boats and developing other industrial projects. He helped arm the Russian navy in the Black Sea and then visited Siberia where he tried to open a trade route between Archangel and the White Sea. Bentham was visited by his brother while he was living in Belarus and during this time Samuel developed the idea of the panopticon. He thought such a building might allow the small number of skilled overseers he had at his disposal supervise his workforce of serfs and soldiers, an idea that would influence Bentham's reforms of the Royal dockyards.[68]

In the 1790s, Bentham returned to Britain. Though he expected to go back to Russia, his return was delayed due to the death of his patron Potemkin and the hardening of the Russian state against the new ideas travelling east from revolutionary France. When he was appointed Inspector General of Naval Works, Bentham was put in an ideal position to modernise the dockyards. In the short term, however, Bentham was not entirely successful with this project. His actions received pushback from all directions. The dockyard labourers were hostile to the

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[67] N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 476. Rodger emphasises how good the investment was by noting that parts of Brunel's block machines remained in operation in Portsmouth until 1983.

[68] Roger Morriss, *Science, Utility and Maritime Power: Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779-91*, Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies Series (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 1988), 177; William J. Ashworth, "'System of Terror': Samuel Bentham, Accountability and Dockyard Reform during the Napoleonic Wars," *Social History* 23, no. 1 (January 1998): 64–65.

adoption of Bentham's steam-powered machines that were introduced to cut timber and pump water. The carefully guarded traditional rights of dockyard workers were also under severe threat from Benthamite innovations. Bentham attempted to introduce a standard wage in lieu of labourers taking home wood scraps, called "chips".[69] Further, Bentham believed that the organisation of labour could be improved.[70] With the support of Admiral St. Vincent, Bentham attempted to streamline the dockyard hierarchy. He removed apprentices from directly working with labourers by introducing a shipbuilding school, thereby professionalising the position and making it difficult for shipwrights to transfer their skills directly to their sons or other male relations or beneficiaries. This labour reorganisation also targeted the middling bureaucrats who occupied redundant stages in the dockyard hierarchy, their positions making work more complicated and allowing them to take bribes. Though Bentham was appointed to innovate the dockyards, his work was seen as meddling which slighted the Navy Board because he directly reported to the Admiralty. During St. Vincent's tenure the relationship between the Navy Board and the Admiralty was particularly fraught and Bentham's work made the relationship worse.

John Jarvis, Lord St. Vincent, was the hero of the 1797 Battle of Cape St. Vincent, one of the most important British victories before the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Like many of his contemporaries in the naval and in public service, St. Vincent had strong opinions on what he believed was rampant corruption in the dockyards and in 1801 he was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty.[71] His term was disastrous—N.A.M. Rodgers frames his tenure as "violent and bigoted," emphasizing that St. Vincent believed "all government expenditure was inherently

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[69] Peter Linebaugh, *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 371–401; Ashworth, "'System of Terror,'" 72–73.
[70] Ashworth, "'System of Terror,'" 65-71.
[71] Roger Morriss, *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy: Resources, Logistics and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 142; and Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean*, 477.

corrupting."[72] What would have been a difficult tenure anyway was made all the worse because St. Vincent attempted to reform the dockyards during the short-lived Peace of Amiens. When Britain returned to war in 1803, the navy and yards were in disarray. Not only were they unprepared to resume the conflict with France, but the animosity between the Admiralty and the Navy Board actively undermined the navy's remobilisation.[73] In 1804, St. Vincent was replaced by Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville, who St. Vincent also accused of corruption, an act which eventually forced Melville out of office in 1805.[74]

Together, Bentham and St. Vincent reimagined the labour of the dockyards, transforming how they would function in the nineteenth century.[75] Though in many ways they were ineffectual, and their meddling in the affairs of the dockyards made the Navy Board more nervous and hesitant about modernisation, two basic ideas outlasted Bentham and St. Vincent.[76] The first was the idea of dockyard surveillance and worker management, while the second was the mechanisation of various dockyard tasks, at first in pumping water and cutting timber, but also with the establishment of Marc Brunel's blockmaking machinery. Both projects severely curtailed the traditional rights of dockyard workers and began the process of creating a rational and objective dockyard bureaucracy. The Navy Board itself, an independent but conservative board of skilled dockyard managers rather than politicians, did not survive this process—in 1832

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[72] Rodger, 476.
[73] Roger Morriss, "St. Vincent and Reform, 1801-04," *The Mariner's Mirror* 69, no. 3 (1983): 284; for an example, see chapter 2 of this thesis, 112-113.
[74] His son, Robert Dundas, the 2nd Duke of Melville, eventually became First Lord of the Admiralty, serving from 1812 to 1827.
[75] Bernard Pool, *Navy Board Contracts, 1660-1832: Contract Administration Under the Navy Board* (London: Longmans, 1966), 117.
[76] For all Bentham's work, Haas frames the changes he made as "pretty meager". J.M. Haas, *A Management Odyssey: The Royal Dockyards, 1714-1914* (New York: University of America Press, 1994), 64.

an act of Parliament disbanded the board and brought the dockyard administration under the auspices of the Admiralty.[77]

From Blocks to Shoes: Marc Brunel's Project to Stop Corruption with Machinery

One of Bentham's most enduring successes was inviting Marc Isambard Brunel to design a fully mechanised system for constructing ship blocks at Portsmouth. Brunel's block-making machinery reduced the labour involved in producing this critical equipment and also standardised block sizes. Blocks were used on ships to reduce weight on lines as part of lifting mechanisms for stowing cargo, to manage the recoil of the ship's canons, and importantly, in rigging, allowing sailors to trim sails under wind-pressure. A 74-gun warship during this period required at least 922 blocks for rigging and 450 more for the guns.[78] The blocks were made of an elm shell that contained at least one sheave made of lignum vitae, a dense wood imported from the Caribbean and South America. The wheel was fitted with a bell-metal coak secured by copper rivets then put inside one or more mortised holes in the block and fixed with a lignum vitae pin (see Figure 4.6).[79] Brunel's system made blocks entirely by machine, the first completely mechanised mass-production system, only requiring workers to do basic assembly, a small amount of detailed handwork, and to manage the machines.

The system reduced the needed workforce, but significantly it also produced standardised blocks that were manufactured directly by the navy. Brunel's machines took over production from the original contractors Samuel Taylor at Southampton and Bartholomew Dunsterville at

[77] The Navy Board was inherently conservative. In 1752 it claimed to be against any innovation when the Admiralty tried to introduce task work. Haas, 16; and D. Bonner-Smith, "The Abolition of the Navy Board," *The Mariner's Mirror* 31, no. 3 (1954), 154-159.
[78] Jonathan Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills: Bentham, Brunel and the Start of the Royal Navy's Industrial Revolution* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005), 49.
[79] Coad, 76–78.

Plymouth who produced blocks by a combination of handwork and animal-power.[80] Importantly, Brunel's mechanisation and standardisation of block production at Portsmouth was directly tied to the corruption crisis in the dockyards at the time. Brunel believed that machines were incorruptible, and that mechanised production would stamp out the type of infamous frauds committed by contractors—for example, by adding flour to sailcloth to increase its weight.[81] Bentham's ideas about labour, developed in Russia, were put on full display by the block mill: the work was fast and precise by virtue of the machines and not the labourers.[82] These ideas were passed on to Brunel's later development of a mechanised system for mass-producing shoes and boots. Brunel, however, was never able to fully capitalise on his mass-produced footwear due to a combination of financial trouble and lack of support from the military, including the navy, early signs of which are evident in the block mill scheme.

Brunel provided this system to the navy over the course of several years while receiving a meagre allowance on the promise of being awarded all the navy's savings from the block machinery for one year once the project was complete and operational.[83] Brunel, however, never inquired exactly how these savings would be tabulated.[84] As the process of installing the block machines drew on, there were signs that the government might not pay out quite the amount that Brunel imagined. In 1808, the government began taxing his stipend and in addition asked Brunel for the back taxes on the same, amounting to £123.[85] Though Brunel appealed to the Admiralty,

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[80] Coad, 49–50; Pool, *Navy Board Contracts*, 120. Though Brunel accused the original contractors of never innovating, Samuel Taylor was one of the inventors of the circular saw, which he used to cut blocks via horse power.
[81] Thomas Cochrane, *The Autobiography of a Seaman* (London: Richard Bentley, 1860), 1:48.
[82] Ashworth, "'System of Terror,'" 71.
[83] ADM 1/4380 f. 686, June 14, 1808, TNA; and ADM/BP/30B, August 14, 1810, Caird. This allowance was in effect from 16 September 1802 to 25 May 1808 at a rate of 1 guinea (21s.) per day. Brunel was due around £2000.
[84] On the payment method, an Admiralty clerk reflected that "From this period [1803] it appears to have been considered as settled that Mr. Brunel was to be given one year's savings, & the only difficulty seems to have been how that saving was to be calculated." See ADM/BP f. 30B, August 14, 1810, Caird.
[85] ADM 1/4380 f. 684, March 24, 1808, TNA.

he was not able to move them to interfere on his behalf.[86] In June, Bentham informed Brunel that the Navy Board refused to accept the vouchers for his block machinery expenses.[87] A few days later Brunel wrote with surprise that his allowance had been stopped. The officers of the dockyard had reported to Bentham that the block mill was capable of fully supplying the navy and Bentham recommended Brunel's removal from the project.[88] Brunel reflected that "I feel a considerable degree of anxiety at being left without any communication of the manner I am to be remunerated for my invention and services."[89] His fears were well-founded.

In 1810, the Navy Board finally had one of Bentham's clerks, a Mr. Roger, draw up the profits owed to Brunel for one year of block manufacture. Roger concluded that Brunel should be awarded between £6,600 and £12,700, though Brunel himself had made calculations that showed he was owed £21,100. Though Bentham was no longer working as the Inspector General of Naval Works, he was contacted to make the final calculation and he concluded the amount due to be £16,600. The different sums are due to two factors. First, Bentham wrote that the other calculations were based on estimations of the costs; second, Roger's sums were established using financial quotations from the contractors Dunsterville and Taylor, who suffered the loss of their naval contracts due to Brunel's machinery and perhaps were not completely truthful in their reports.[90] Certainly, if the sum based on Dunsterville's prices totaling £6,600 was accepted,

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[86] ADM 1/4380 f. 684, March 24, 1808, Minute, TNA.
[87] ADM 1/4380 f. 685, June 8, 1808, TNA.
[88] Brunel and Simon Goodrich, the engineer in charge of the mill's development in lieu of Bentham, who was in Russia, were not on good terms at the end of Brunel's tenure at Portsmouth. Part of Goodrich's responsibility was to have the block machinery brought into production as quickly as possible under the least expense, but Brunel continued to tinker with the machines and to test his own personal projects at the mill. Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills,* 69.
[89] ADM 1/4380 f. 686, June 14, 1808, TNA.
[90] ADM/BP f. 30B, August 14, 1810, Caird. The probability that at least one contractor was trying to undermine the Admiralty's opinion of the block mills is supported by a letter by Brunel in 1808 when one of the contractors sent a report claiming that Brunel's blocks were more expensive and that his machinery could never produce the amount needed to supply the navy. See ADM 1/6380 f. 687, July 7, 1808, TNA.

Brunel would have been in debt to the navy, having withdrawn £7000 in advance of his payment between 1808 and 1810.[91] The Admiralty did accept Bentham's calculations, and Brunel was awarded around £10,000 for the invention of the block machinery. Despite Brunel's difficulty with the navy, however, Beamish's biography shows that he was optimistic about the universal importance of mechanisation and that he continued to believe that the government's interest in his projects was in good faith.

"Shoes of a New Construction": Mass-production and Brunel's Battersea Shoe Factory

At the end of Brunel's development of the block mill at Portsmouth, he moved from his home in Portsea to a new residence in Chelsea, near where he hoped to establish his own private block mill in Battersea. The site, upriver from Battersea Bridge where what is today a council housing estate, was an ideal place for Brunel's mill. "We are not likely to be better accommodated," Brunel wrote to his associates of the location. "476 feet along the River and contiguous to two Turnpike Roads … [and] the Bridge will always be a clean walk to Chelsea market."[92] When Brunel's enthusiasm for building a second block mill cooled, the property became the site of many of his post-block projects, initially a steam-driven sawmill for cutting veneers and thin boards.[93] Additionally located at this site was Brunel's fully mechanised system of shoe production.

Richard Beamish, Brunel's colleague on his final Thames tunnel project and his biographer, recalled that his friend was moved to develop the shoe-making machinery after witnessing the disembarkation at Portsmouth of the soldiers from Sir John Moore's ill-fated

[91] ADM/BP f. 30B, August 14, 1810, Caird.
[92] LBK/54 f. 4, October 27, 1806, Caird.
[93] Colin Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil: New Light on Marc Isambard Brunel's Activities in Battersea," *Construction History* 25 (2010): 57.

Retreat to Corunna. The soldiers spoke about marching across northern Spain "with lacerated feet enveloped in filthy rags bound round with knotted strings."[94] Beamish continued that this event inspired Brunel to commit to producing standardised, mass-produced shoes. As with the blocks, he believed that mechanised mass-production was resistant to the "knavery" of contractors who Beamish charged had introduced clay between the soles of the shoes instead of thick leather in order to meet the weight requirement of their contract. This fraudulently-made footwear did not last a day's march, Beamish asserted, heating up the feet in the hot sun and dissolving into mud when wet.

Another part of Brunel's idealistic shoe-making scheme was using disabled soldiers as his primary workforce. He wrote in 1819 that: "as soon as the machinery I had invented was in a state to work, I applied to the Invalid Department for disabled men whom I proposed to be exclusively employed in it."[95] He hoped that the mechanised factory would give employment to men who were unable to do more traditional labour. However, Brunel's use of disabled workers also underscores the de-skilling of his factory work. In 1817, Richard Phillips visited the Battersea factories as part of a walk between London and Kew that he transformed into an interesting domestication of usually exotic travel narratives.[96] He wrote of Brunel's system that:

> as each man performs but one step in the process, which implies no knowledge of what is done by those who go before or follow him, so the persons employed are not shoemakers, but wounded soldiers, who are able to learn their respective duties in a few hours.[97]

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[94] Richard Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel: Civil Engineer, Vice-President of the Royal Society, Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, &c.*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1862), 129.
[95] Quoted in Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 134.
[96] This was his stated purpose. In the introduction he observed that "like French Encyclopaedists, we forget our own Paris; or, like editors of newspapers, we seek for novelties in every quarter of the world, losing sight of the superior interests of our immediate vicinity." Richard Phillips, *A Morning's Walk from London to Kew*, Project Guttenberg Reprint (London: J. Adlard, 1817), 1, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/31253/31253-h/31253-h.htm.
[97] Phillips, 48.

Phillips was appreciative of the ingenuity and elegance of Brunel's shoe factory, comparing it to the manufacture of pins, but he was also cautious. He believed that factories and monopolies would not extend the benefits of the wealth derived from mechanisation to the masses and foresaw a time when machines would destroy the industriousness of workers, forcing them to leave industrial regions to subsist.

Brunel's shoe factory was the first fully mechanised mass-production system to produce an item of clothing. In the style of the block mill, it was comprised of 16 specialised machines that cut, pierced, stretched, welted, and clamped leather, and produced cooper pins.[98] The process was all the more remarkable as it was developed at least twenty years before the development of viable industrial sewing machines.[99] Brunel's machines cut and stretched a leather upper over a cast iron last, then cut and nailed it to the soles using copper pins, requiring 1100 pins per pair of no. 9 shoes.[100] The process could produce nine different sizes of men's straight lathed shoes in five different styles.[101] With 24 workers, in 1812 the factory was producing between 100 to 400 pairs per day.[102] According to Beamish, they were between 9s.6d. for common shoes and 20s. for

[98] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 61.
[99] Chainstitch machines existed at this time, but they could only sew a straight line and were not powerful enough to stitch leather. Singer and others developed reliable lockstitch sewing machines around in the 1840s and 50s, with their impact being felt in clothing production quickly. Beamish mentions the establishment of a new shoe-making factory in America using sewing machines in his book published in 1862. See Andrew Godley, "Singer in Britain: The Diffusion of Sewing Machine Technology and Its Impact on the Clothing Industry in the United Kingdom, 1860–1905," *Textile History* 27, no. 1 (1996): 60–61; Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 139.
[100] The metal of the pins was not initially settled. Brunel tested shoes with iron and brass pins on the Royal Marines in 1813. ADM 12/162, tab 94.1, October 12, 1813, TNA.
[101] Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 131–32.
[102] Beamish claimed it could produce 400 pairs, but Giorgio Riello, based on the observations of Richard Phillips in 1817, wrote that the number was actually closer to 100. Though Phillips was not an expert, his observations are probably based on what he was told when he visited the factory while it was still in operation, as opposed to Beamish's recollections. See Beamish, 133; Giorgio Riello, *A Foot in the Past: Consumers, Producers and Footwear in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 235; and Phillips, *A Morning's Walk from London to Kew*, 48.

a pair of Wellington boots, but a notation from the marine pay-office in 1815 listed prices of between 6s. and 6s.4d. for the shoes (see Table 4.1).[103]

Though Brunel had worked closely with Bentham at the navy for the block project, the shoe factory is more closely associated with the army. It appears, however, that Brunel attempted to involve the navy in the development of the shoes as well. In 1813, the site was operational and Brunel contacted the Admiralty on August 31 with a request to put the shoes to trial with the Royal marines, shoes he delivered in October.[104] The footwear was distributed to marine recruiting parties and did not perform as hoped.[105] Though Beamish extols their quality in his biography of Brunel, the marine division commanders at Portsmouth and Plymouth presumably wrote negative reports on the shoes. These letters no longer exist but the reports caused Brunel to write a letter soon after "contributing the failure of his Shoes to the inexperience of the Invalid Soldiers whom he has employed in making them" and he requested another trial.[106]

As long as Brunel continued to pay for them, the Admiralty had no objections to receiving additional shoes for trial. In February 1814, Brunel wrote to the Admiralty about fire prevention at the block mill but mentioned in a passing remark that "it is however a satisfaction to add that we have no shoes left on hand."[107] In April, however, the Royal Marine paymaster F. H. Doyle reported that he planned to have a committee of officers value "the shoes of a New Construction" in store so they could be issued to the men "at such reduced prices as shall be

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[103] The pay-office figures match those given by Phillips in 1817, but it is never stated why the sergeant's shoes were cheaper. ADM 96/27 f. 345, Apr. 14, 1815, TNA; Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 132; Phillips, *A Morning's Walk from London to Kew*, 48.
[104] ADM 12/162, tab 94.1, August 31, and October 12, 1813, TNA.
[105] ADM 96/27 f. 345, Apr. 14, 1815, TNA. Captain Parke wrote to F.H. Doyle of the Royal Marine pay office that three pairs of Brunel's shoes were issued to Major Fladden's recruiting party, which were not charged to their accounts.
[106] ADM 12/162, tab 94.1, December 6; December 9; and December 9, 1813, TNA.
[107] Adm 1/4383 f. 165, February 10, 1814, TNA.

deemed equitable."[108] If Brunel had sold all his shoes to the military in 1814, it seems they still were not considered equal to those that were hand-cobbled. Additionally, Doyle asked if he was to charge Brunel for the shoes they had returned to him. Though the Admiralty declined, this does reveal that between February and April Brunel had some quantity of shoes returned to his factory for issues of quality. If Brunel sold out of shoes in 1814, however, he was not so fortunate in 1815. At the conclusion of the war, Brunel was left with 80,000 shoes he could not convince the military to purchase.[109]

Due to the end of the war and financial duress, Brunel was never able to fully capitalise on the potential of his factory. As Giorgio Riello remarks in his history of footwear, Brunel was only interested in producing shoes for a bulk buyer, in this case the British military.[110] This was in opposition to the usual approach by contractors, who pursued military contracts as a way of maintaining stability in fluctuating markets.[111] The government was an unreliable payee, and though this allowed contractors to receive additional income in interest, they had to be able to survive until the day they received their arrears. Brunel felt the effects of this between 1808 and 1810 while he waited for his reward for his block-making machines. The hesitancy of the government to pay him fairly for his block system did not appear to cause Brunel any hesitation in going forward with this new project, though he only had verbal assurances of support and no formal contract. Brunel continued to produce shoes with the belief that his work would be recognised as an important service to British soldiers and marines, and as an important check to corrupt contractors and slovenly cobblers.

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[108] ADM 12/173, tab 63.12, April 18, 1815, TNA.
[109] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 61.
[110] Riello, *A Foot in the Past*, 235.
[111] Glover, "Government Contracting," 479.

Brunel's shoes did not establish a public desire for factory-made shoes. If the army and navy had been supplying soldiers and marines with them for a longer period, as involuntary consumers, the shoes might have been more widely known and entered second-hand civilian markets. If so, perhaps they would have slowly developed a demand in a way similar to ready-made slop clothes. This assumes, however, that Brunel's shoes were good products. For all Beamish's assertions that "the superiority of the shoes, as regarded durability, finish, and cheapness, was unexampled,"[112] the correspondence with the Admiralty suggests that the shoes were never properly perfected. In an 1819 letter to Nicolas Vansittart, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Brunel admitted that they were impossible to mend in the field and that therefore their value was in their initial durability.[113] While such an observation about shoes would not surprise today's shoe consumers, it is clear that the inability to repair the shoes was considered a significant fault. As they cost about the same as cobbled shoes received from contractors, Brunel's shoes were not a very good deal (see Table 4.1). Richard Phillips put the price of shoes in 1817 as 8s.6d. but the numbers reported by captains and pursers only reflect this price when supplying supernumeraries. Strangely, Beamish wrote that the shoes were even more expensive. In any case, no secondary market developed, and Brunel tried to recoup his losses by selling the equipment to various governments, initially by appealing to the British Treasury, and then to the French and Prussians, with no takers.[114]

Brunel's sawmill at Battersea burned to the ground in 1814. While the fire did not appear to affect the shoe factory, it cemented Brunel's poor financial situation. Colin Thom observes that between October 1813 and the fire, Brunel lost over £9,000, almost all the proceeds from

[112] Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 133.
[113] Quoted in Beamish, 134.
[114] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 61; Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 138–39.

developing the block mill at Portsmouth. For the next five years, Brunel begged the government for financial compensation for his shoe-making project. When his bank, Syke & Co., failed in 1821 Brunel was incarcerated for debt in King's Bench prison with his wife Sophie. Brunel threatened to take his new project, a tunnel-boring shield, to Russia, where he proposed to dig a tunnel under the Neva River, but his friends and supporters were able to persuade the government to grant him £5000 in recognition of his services to Britain. Brunel sold most of his interest in the Battersea property after he left prison and it is likely that his successors destroyed or threw away his shoe-making machinery.[115]

Exactly how the factory functioned, what the shoes looked like, and how well they performed is difficult to ascertain because very few documents remain about the machinery. Beamish's biography, written forty years after the factory closed and ten years after Brunel's death, is thought to refer to Brunel's own notes; but these are now considered lost.[116] Unlike the block-making equipment, which is on display as part of the development of British industry at several prominent British museums, the shoe-making machinery was not saved.[117] Brunel and the marine division commanders at Portsmouth and Plymouth wrote several letters to the Admiralty on the subject of the shoes, however these letters are also gone—the only evidence they ever existed is their citations in the Admiralty's in-letter digests from 1813 to 1815, which are unfortunately vague. Finally, no shoes or boots manufactured by Brunel and identified as such have survived, despite their production numbers and their auspicious owners. The Duke of Wellington was said to own a pair of Brunel-made boots and, as the government bought out

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[115] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 64. The sawmill which Brunel rebuilt on the site remained until the 1970s, when it was demolished to build a housing development. The shoe factory was probably pulled down or converted into another building during the nineteenth century.
[116] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 55.
[117] The full machines can be found at the Science Museum, Kensington and at the Historic Dockyards, Portsmouth. The original model machines which Brunel used to pitch the system to Bentham and the government are held by the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Brunel's overstock at half-price in 1815, it is likely that many soldiers at the Battle of Waterloo were kitted with them as well.[118] Still, Beamish believed the Brunel's system was vindicated in the end. Concluding his chapter on the shoe factory, he observed that a shoe mill in the United States was producing shoes using sewing machines—a technology Brunel did not have access to—but he continued that the mill used the same method of joining the soles with the upper. "By means of this machinery," he quoted from an unknown source, "twenty-five men produce six hundred pairs of shoes per day."[119]

Conclusion

As the previous chapters have shown, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars played increasing havoc with the early modern logistics system that had passably supplied the almost constantly active eighteenth-century British war machine. This system entered the nineteenth century largely still an early modern enterprise, but technological innovators like Marc Brunel, accountability crusaders like Admiral Lord St. Vincent, and the administrators who linked them, like Samuel Bentham, were pushing to improve and modernise Britain's dockyards. This task was not an easy, cheap, quick, or generally positive experience for anyone and its success would not become apparent until later in the century.

The period from 1793 to 1815 was as much an important time for the dockyards as it was for the navy. Samuel Bentham's push to industrialise the yards, especially the addition of Brunel's blocks mill, allowed the dockyards to control the production of important ship parts. In addition, the Navy Board began to fully control the supply of slop clothing in 1797 and the Victualling Board also consolidated food production for vessels in order to have full control over

[118] Thom, "Fine Veneers, Army Boots and Tinfoil," 61.
[119] Beamish, *Marc Isambard Brunel*, 139.

the quality of the meat and its supply. In 1811, the Hackney Coach Commission began to regulate slop selling by private dealers to naval ships. Also, the tenure of Admiral St. Vincent as First Lord came as the perils of corruption increasingly became fixed in the public mind. The French Wars, as they went on and on, consumed such large amounts of public money that the sums were incomprehensible. His brief control of the Admiralty caused difficulties with the Navy Board and the dockyards and highlighted problems with the naval administration that would eventually result in the dissolution of the Navy Board.

Brunel and Bentham's prolific use of steam machinery also portended another naval development in the nineteenth century. In 1813 the Admiralty received a booklet about Henry Bell's recent steam-power ferry trials at Glasgow. Brunel himself was interested in this prospect, writing letters in 1816 extolling that "imperfect as they appear to be, [steam-power vessels] are nevertheless capable of making their way through a very rough Sea, against Strong Tides and against gales of wind."[120] The advent of steam would have new and profound effects on the role of sailors in the navy, which in turn affected the role, design, regulation, manufacture and provisioning of their naval clothing and their wider material and spatial connection to naval warships.

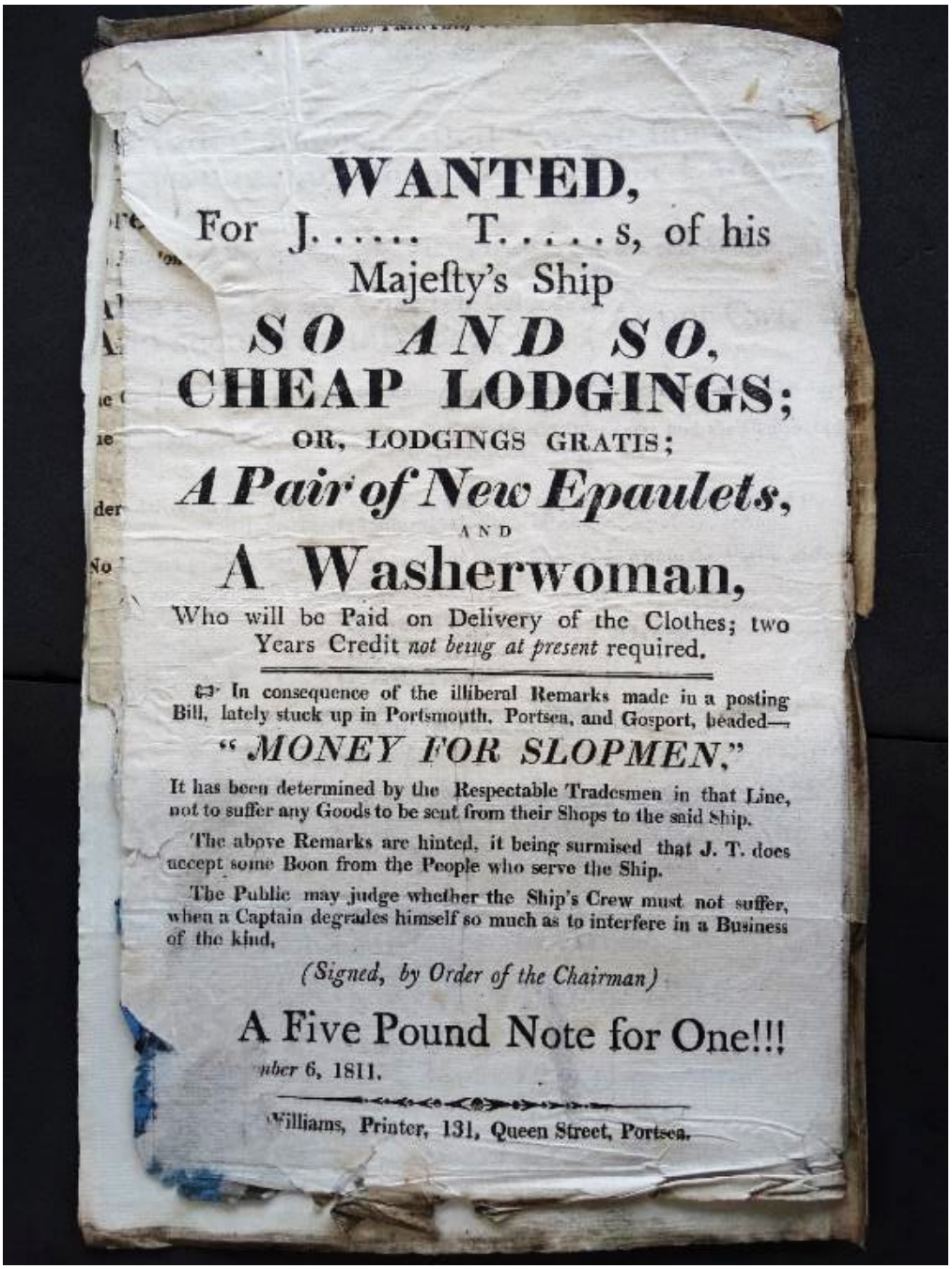
[120] ADM 1/4384 f. 875, August 29, 1816, TNA.

Table 4.1

Table 4.1 – Prices of Shoes and Boots						
Date	Ship	Place/Supplier	Citation	£	*s.*	*d.*
1801	*Swiftsure*	Sicily	Adm 1/404/118	0	3	11
	Fudroyant	Do.	Do.	0	4	4
	Athenian	Maltese Yard	Adm 1/405/347	0	4	6
	Alexandria	Do.	Do.	0	4	10
	NA	Do.	Do.	0	4	9
	NA	Do.	Do.	0	4	6
1802	NA	Prater & Sons, RM Portsmouth	ADM 1/3291/18021128	0	5	2
1803	*Carysfort**	Shields	Adm 1/1802/32	0	6	0
	NA*	Dundee (Rendezvous)	Adm 1/2070/4	0	7	9
	NA*	Do.	Do.	0	8	0
1804	*Zealand**	Nore Station	Adm 1/737/349	0	6	0
	Do.*	Do.	Do.	0	6	6
1805	*Gorgon* etc.*	Transports	Adm 1/674/252	0	10	3
1807	NA	RM, Hobart	Adm 1/3318/18070901	1	5	0
1808	*Mutine*	Portsmouth	Adm 1/1806/4	0	6	7
1812	*Cressy*	Petition	Adm 1/5129/18130101	0	6	7
1815	*NA*	*Brunel, for Pte.*	*Adm 96/27/345*	*0*	*6*	*6*
	NA	*Do., for Sgt.*	*Do.*	*0*	*6*	*0*
1817	*NA*	*Brunel*	*Phillips,* A Morning's Walk*, 48.*	*0*	*6*	*6*
	NA	Contractor, "unequal/cobbled"	Do.	0	8	6
1862	*NA*	*Brunel, common shoes*	*Beamish,* M. I. Brunel*, 132.*	*0*	*9*	*6*
	NA	*Brunel, Water boots*	*Do.*	*0*	*10*	*6*
	NA	*Brunel, Half boots*	*Do.*	*0*	*12*	*0*
	NA	*Brunel, Superior shoes*	*Do.*	*0*	*16*	*0*
	NA	*Brunel, Wellington boots*	*Do.*	*0*	*20*	*0*
*Supplying Supernumeraries						

Figures 4.1 – 4.6

Figure 4.1 – Thomas Rowlandson, "Portsmouth Point,", PAF3841, National Maritime Museum, 1811, [accessed December 23, 2019] https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/127976.html. Sailors and officers arrive in Portsmouth or prepare to leave. To the left is a clothes shop with men's and women's clothing on display; on the right is a "ship tavern." Casks, probably full of salt meat, are being rolled out to the assembled ships. Sailors carry their possessions in bags over their shoulders as they walk down to the foreshore under the supervision of marines. The colourful, lively scene is contrasted by the pale distant ships, to which the sailors will eventually return.



WANTED,
For J..... T.....s, of his
Majesty's Ship
SO AND SO,
CHEAP LODGINGS;
OR, LODGINGS GRATIS;
A Pair of New Epaulets,
AND
A Washerwoman,
Who will be Paid on Delivery of the Clothes; two Years Credit *not being at present* required.

☞ In consequence of the illiberal Remarks made in a posting Bill, lately stuck up in Portsmouth, Portsea, and Gosport, headed—

"*MONEY FOR SLOPMEN*,"

It has been determined by the Respectable Tradesmen in that Line, not to suffer any Goods to be sent from their Shops to the said Ship.

The above Remarks are hinted, it being surmised that J. T. does accept some Boon from the People who serve the Ship.

The Public may judge whether the Ship's Crew must not suffer, when a Captain degrades himself so much as to interfere in a Business of the kind.

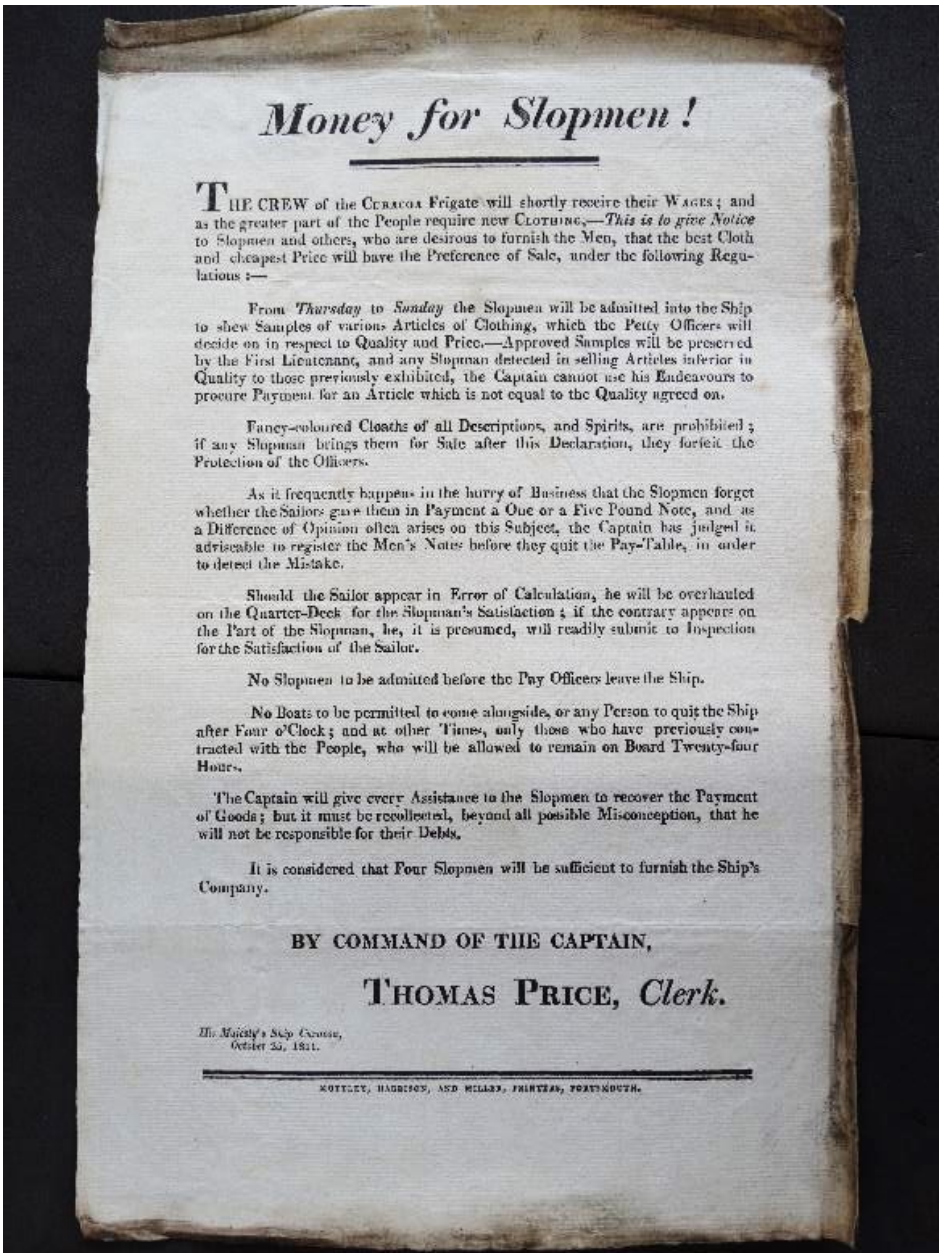
(Signed, by Order of the Chairman)

A Five Pound Note for One!!!

nber 6, 1811.

Williams, Printer, 131, Queen Street, Portsea.

Figure 4.2 – "Wanted, For J[ohn] T[ower]s, of his Majesty's Ship *So and So* [*Curacao*]" in ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA. The reverse of this poster still has the remains of the poster bills it was pasted over in Portsmouth in November 1811. The HMS *So and So* puns on the sound of the actual ship name, drawn from the island Curaçoa off the coast of modern Venezuela. Curaçoa was a Dutch colony that Britain occupied briefly during this period, similarly to their occupation of Dutch Guyana. For transcription, see Appendix 5.



Money for Slopmen!

THE CREW of the CURACOA Frigate will shortly receive their WAGES; and as the greater part of the People require new CLOTHING,—*This is to give Notice* to Slopmen and others, who are desirous to furnish the Men, that the best Cloth and cheapest Price will have the Preference of Sale, under the following Regulations:—

From *Thursday* to *Sunday* the Slopmen will be admitted into the Ship to shew Samples of various Articles of Clothing, which the Petty Officers will decide on in respect to Quality and Price.—Approved Samples will be preserved by the First Lieutenant, and any Slopman detected in selling Articles inferior in Quality to those previously exhibited, the Captain cannot use his Endeavours to procure Payment for an Article which is not equal to the Quality agreed on.

Fancy-coloured Cloaths of all Descriptions, and Spirits, are prohibited; if any Slopman brings them for Sale after this Declaration, they forfeit the Protection of the Officers.

As it frequently happens in the hurry of Business that the Slopmen forget whether the Sailors gave them in Payment a One or a Five Pound Note, and as a Difference of Opinion often arises on this Subject, the Captain has judged it advisable to register the Men's Notes before they quit the Pay-Table, in order to detect the Mistake.

Should the Sailor appear in Error of Calculation, he will be overhauled on the Quarter-Deck for the Slopman's Satisfaction; if the contrary appears on the Part of the Slopman, he, it is presumed, will readily submit to Inspection for the Satisfaction of the Sailor.

No Slopmen to be admitted before the Pay Officers leave the Ship.

No Boats to be permitted to come alongside, or any Person to quit the Ship after Four o'Clock; and at other Times, only those who have previously contracted with the People, who will be allowed to remain on Board Twenty-four Hours.

The Captain will give every Assistance to the Slopmen to recover the Payment of Goods; but it must be recollected, beyond all possible Misconception, that he will not be responsible for their Debts.

It is considered that Four Slopmen will be sufficient to furnish the Ship's Company.

BY COMMAND OF THE CAPTAIN,

THOMAS PRICE, *Clerk.*

His Majesty's Ship Curacoa,
October 25, 1811.

MOTTLEY, HARRISON, AND MILLER, PRINTERS, PORTSMOUTH.

Figure 4.3 – "Money for Slopmen!" in ADM 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA. For transcription, see Appendix 6.

Figure 4.4: T. Williamson, "British Vessels," Library of Congress, Washington D.C. PC 3, 1802. [accessed November 27, 2019] https://www.loc.gov/item/94504614/. The caption reads "For the use of Country Gentlemen." On the far right the woman labelled "a bumboat" cries "round & sound" to advertise her wares, in this case her own body.

Figure 4.5 – Thomas Rowlandson, "The Last Jig or Adieu to Old England," National Maritime Museum, PAG8630, 1818, [accessed December 23, 2019] https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/138578.html. This caricature shows a party below decks with dancing, music, tobacco, alcohol, well-appointed clothing, and sex.

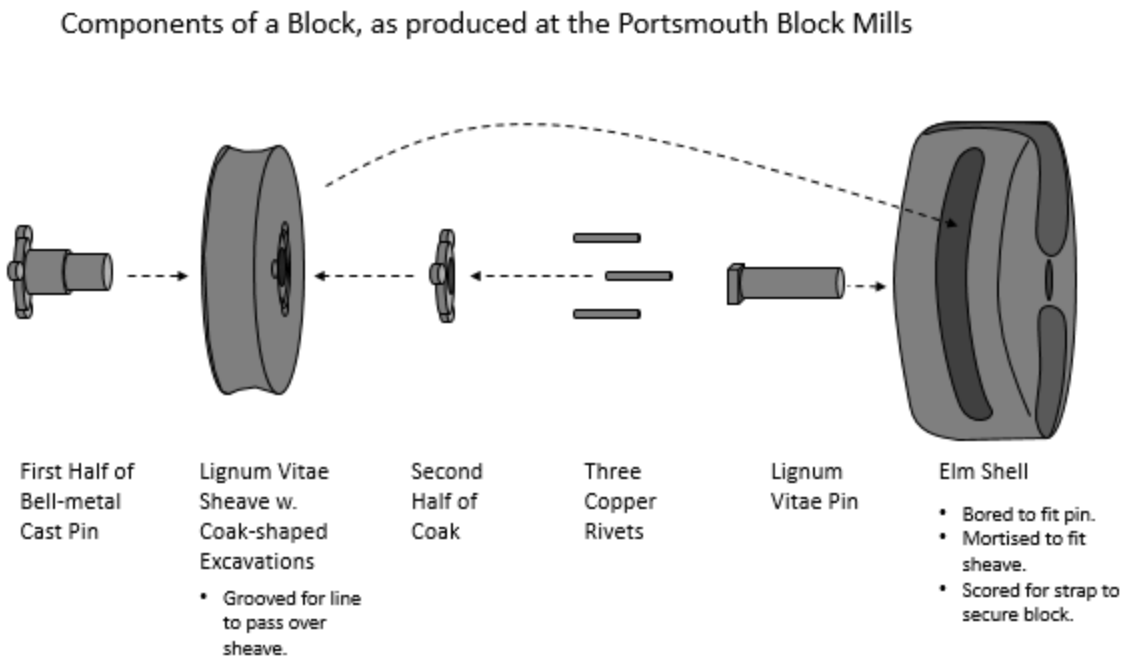


Figure 4.6 – Components of a Block, based on images in Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills*, 76 and 79; and Cooper, "The Portsmouth System of Manufacture", 184.

Conclusion – Nineteenth Century Royal Navy Uniforms and Slops

On the 3rd of April, 1812, a letter arrived addressed to Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty. The writer, an anonymous "old purser in the Navy" from Chatham, wrote to complain about the changes made in "every officer's uniform except the pursers' and the masters'," adding that even "the surgeons have the distinction of an embroidered button hole on the collar." The purser continued, musing on possible changes that could be made to the uniforms of the pursers and masters, suggesting embroidered triplicate anchors on the collar for pursers, to reflect the seals of the victualling and navy boards. His notice of the lack of changes in the uniform reflects another complaint, his distress at the flagging respect for the rank of pursers on board Royal Navy vessels, suggesting that even "surgeon's mates who have only been in the service a few days" can command them, even "considering the *charge* and *responsibility* of pursers."[1]

This letter from An Old Purser highlights the link between clothing and rank, underscoring that the dress of the men of the Navy had broader implications than simply as fabric over bodies. This could be reflected, as above, in issues of seniority with pursers both representing their importance and resenting the increasing significance of the medical department. Sumptuary distinctions were subtle visual reminders of where officers fit in a highly stratified military system where rank was carefully observed and the privilege of command jealously guarded, even as such distinctions in civilian dress had been slowly diminishing since at least the seventeenth century.[2] Officers were able to distinguish themselves from each other

[1] ADM 1/4368 f. 128, April 3, 1812, TNA. Purser's emphasis.
[2] Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 117-52; and Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack, "Introduction," in *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c.1200–*

using minute sartorial cues, but also were able to make judgements about their authority and wider significance in the naval system.

Illustrative of this is that four days after the Admiralty received the anonymous letter from a purser, they received a similar anonymous letter from a surgeon who was also upset by the new regulations for his rank's uniform. Despite the purser marking the "embroidered button hole"[3] as a significant change, the unnamed surgeon lamented that: "no notice has been taken of the medical & surgical department" and warned that "Gentlemen educated to so useful and important a profession feel concern to entering a service when they think they are looked down upon."[4] Without knowing it, both men had complained to the Admiralty about the distinctions of each other using almost the same language, bemoaning their lack of prestige and insinuating that changes in dress symbolised the unreasonable promotion of the other's authority. Instead, both men were part of departments whose prestige was rising during this period. Commanders themselves, limited in power in the years following peace in 1815, would begin to resent the authority allowed by pursers' bureaucratic prowess and medical professionals' healthcare skills.

This study confirms the significance of naval dress beyond simply itemising uniform details. The Admiralty in-letters show that clothing was one of the many tedious processes that occupied the time of commanders between brief periods of military action and it was a responsibility taken seriously. Clothing underscored the relationships between the various parts of the crew—officers, sailors, and marines—and highlighted the fact that warships were not solitary, self-sustaining military units. They were interconnected to fleets certainly, but more widely to landward networks of bureaucracy and dockyard management, private sector

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1800, ed. Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 32, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108567541.

[3] ADM 1/4368 f. 128, April 3, 1812, TNA.

[4] ADM 1/4368 f. 129, April 7, 1812, TNA.

capitalists, humble merchants, slopsellers, dockyard labourer, and male and female workers who concurrently allowed the navy to function through labour and taxes. As the eighteenth century turned into the nineteenth, working people were being increasingly watched and regulated as their workplaces were being reformed. For dockyard workers during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, this was happening all around them. Changes to wages, destruction of common privileges, and attacks on their traditional skills through mechanization were all occurring as Britain was shouldering an almost impossibly large financial burden through continued military conflict. For sailors, these changes were not just on the horizon, they were current and pressing. Their actions at the mutinies in 1797 at Spithead and the Nore declared a willingness to work together to ameliorate wages and ship conditions, a unity that had to be mitigated by the Admiralty and officers to maintain quarterdeck power. By the mid-nineteenth century, the innovation of steamships in the navy and the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849 severed the crucial link between naval and civilian seafarers and therefore diminished the skilled maritime labour and knowledge of the naval seaman. Without control over the mobility of their vessels, sailors lost their most valuable and powerful asset, and one that allowed sailors authority when the ship's hierarchy was turned upside-down during a mutiny.

Slops remained the predominant dress for ratings until 1857, meaning that for all the increasing institutional control the Navy Board—and after 1832, the Admiralty alone—had over the clothing of ratings, they still continued to dodge the necessity of wearing fully regulated military dress. The years between 1815 and 1857, however, are a grey period in terms of the transition between slop clothing and the naval rating's regulation suit. As shown in a portrait of Thomas Peter Cooke, an actor famous for his sailor roles, some aspects of sailors' dress from this interim period, such as white flared trousers and short blue jackets, seem lifted directly from the

French Wars (see Figure 1.5). Others, like the distinctive blue jean square collar and black neckerchief were later additions. The standardisation of black neckerchiefs was developed over time, first through captains' orders, perhaps to discourage sailors from wearing more vividly coloured and patterned neckwear. Then the preference for black became all but regulated by 1822 through a contract that produced explicitly black silk kerchiefs for the whole navy.[5] Likely the white shirt with blue jean cuffs and collar was also introduced in this way.

The future Edward VII's sailor suit from 1846 shows these aspects (Figure 5.2) but as a high-class reproduction of working-men's clothing—few actual sailor suits had mother-of-pearl buttons or the kind of decorative but subtle stitchwork on display in the outfit. Historians interested in the provenance of sailor suits or nautical details in the apparel of British children usually begin the discussion with the gift of this suit to Edward. It was made by the tailor who also clothed the sailors on board the Royal Yacht, explicitly in imitation of their dress, and was given to the young prince as the royal family sailed to Ireland.[6] This wider adoption of the suit, popularised after a painting of Edward in the suit was made public, is typically seen as an expression of British pride in the empire generally and the Royal Navy's role in that empire specifically. The argument goes that middle- or working-class parents who dressed their sons in sailor suits were indicating publicly that the navy was a respectable future occupation. Clare Rose disputes this, noting that sailor suits can be linked to a host of other meanings, such as the new novelty of seaside vacations, the sea as site of adventure and commerce rather than as

[5] See chapter one, p. 50, 58-61.
[6] Clare Rose, "The Meanings of the Late Victorian Sailor Suit," *Journal for Maritime Research* 11, no. 1 (2009): 30, https://doi.org/10.1080/21533369.2009.9668367.

strictly one of naval exploits, and the sailor as a popular everyman as represented in the theater and in books.[7] However, Rose does not inquire further into the origins of the suit itself.

Amy Miller does give some space to the question of what occurred between 1815 and 1857 for the clothing of ratings.[8] Miller suggests that the collar specifically was just an exaggeration of the unstarched collar, which she shows frequently appeared in depictions of sailors, even in the eighteenth century.[9] This origin could be correct but there are equally images both before and after 1820 that either do not show prominent collars or any collars at all (see Figure 5.3 and also Figures 1.2, 1.3, and 4.5). Figure 0.2 shows that collar styles varied, even between officers. The sailor depicted wears his turned up and tied with a red kerchief, reflecting the more refined starched collar and black cravat worn by his captain. Miller notes that the detail of blue jean and three lines of tape eventually adopted in 1857 come from the uniform designed for the Royal Yacht. Again, however, neither Miller nor Rose consider why the Royal Yacht had adopted that specific design.[10] The origins of the square collar seem to circle back and forth between the yacht uniform and slop clothes, neither providing satisfaction. The suit adopted in 1857, depicted from behind in a portrait of Captain William Peel at the relief of Lucknow in 1858, is very similar to Edward's childhood suit, with the only difference being that the trousers are blue (see Figure 5.4).

Whatever the reason for the square jean collar, the final push to fully require a regulation uniform for sailors that was distinctive from clothing worn by civilian maritime workers needed the full modernisation of the Royal Navy fleet into a steam navy. The change in technology

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[7] Rose, 25; and Isaac Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750-1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 131–38.
[8] Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions*, 1748-1857 (Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 2007), 84-90.
[9] Miller, *Dressed to Kill*, 88, 90.
[10] Miller, 88, 90.

required gradual but eventual reconfiguration of ship labour, a dramatic change that challenged both the authority of commanders and sailors. Steamships required an engineering department that brought to sea a new professional class of trained engineers and new labourers like stokers, trimmers, and donkeymen who were responsible for tending boilers hungry for coal. The engineering department, by the late nineteenth century, largely replaced sailors as the source of ship mobility. Without the power of their previously required sailing skills, ratings became essentially shipboard labourers who did day-to-day deck-based tasks that on a sailing ship was considered the unskilled work of "landsmen". This unskilled labour did not need experience in sailing vessels, nor was the merchant marine clamouring to recruit these workers back into their workforce. Thus, the rating became a specifically naval career rather than a brief period in the broader work history of a seafarer and working man.[11]

As naval ratings lost labour prestige on board steamships their newly regulated dress reflected their changed status, but sailing labour continued to maintain its reputation as a risky and manly skill. In the nineteenth century and still today, young officers are trained in the sailing skills that had once been the powerful cachet of their subordinates, with the understanding that such sailing knowledge not only gives them a well-rounded maritime education, but also links officers to the authority and heritage of a lost and largely imaginary "Age of Sail."[12] The link between the wooden navy and Britain's nineteenth-century imperial dominance was explicitly

[11] Denver Brunsman has suggested that sailors used naval service (often tolerating impressment) as an early training period in their seafaring career. The Navy paid less than the merchant service but they constantly demanded workers. It was therefore a reasonable strategy to serve in the navy, learn vital skills, and earn promotions to leadership positions before entering the merchant service where those skills could command a high wage. See Denver Brunsman, "Men of War: British Sailors and the Impressment Paradox," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14 (2010): 39-41.

[12] Frank Scott, "The Evolution of Sail Training from the Nineteenth Century to the 1980s," *The Mariner's Mirror* 106, no. 2 (2020): 208. Scott does not explicitly make this link, but he does note that training officers in sail continues to be a form of "soft power" which garners prestige for the nations whose navies maintain working sailing ships for the purpose.

understood by contemporaries. At least two paintings in the 1880s imagined Greenwich pensioners retelling their experiences to new generations of British sailors, represented alternately as a child dressed in a sailor suit like Edward's and actual naval sailors visiting the National Gallery (see Figures 5.5 and 5.6). That most veterans of the pre-1815 navy were probably dead by 1880 mattered not at all; as Isaac Land remarks, "Nelson and his loyal crews were frozen in time, forever swearing allegiance to George III."[13]

Both images juxtapose these young people, dressed in uniform, with the dress of the pensioners, whose own uniforms recall the wooden fleet as readily as their memories. They wear outdated felt hats with gold embroidery and buttons, details brought over from the dress of their past officers. Their embroidery and tricorn hats did double duty reflecting the authority of Greenwich Hospital boatswains who were given additional status and responsibility in managing their fellow hospital inmates.[14] The pensioners are depicted in these images often as solitary men, alone able to contextualise the battles of the past, though Andrew Morton's 1845 painting "The United Service" is a group portrait of actual Greenwich and Chelsea pensioners together viewing the paintings on display at Greenwich (see Figure 5.7). The painting shows a group of women and children also in attendance, but it is unclear whether these visitors are related to the veterans. Instead Morton's addition of these women, one of whom appears to be a war widow, alludes to what the sailors' past actions defended and the future of Britain able to flourish.

Land notes that the presence of these men at Greenwich, where tourists came to view paintings and visit Christopher Wren's neo-classical hospital complex, complicated nostalgia for the glories of the wooden navy. At once they represented the men whose actions had stymied

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[13] Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750-1850*, 132.
[14] "The United Service: Description," *National Maritime Museum Catalogue*, BHC1159, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12651.html.

Napoleon at sea, but they also were physical evidence of the passage of time away from that period.[15] Their increasing fragility and basic living conditions, it was thought, did not reflect well on the state that owed them so much. In order to benefit from their pension at Greenwich, veterans had to leave their families to live in the hospital, which saddened visitors and frustrated the inmates. The state's denial of a traditional household in favour of a state-provided home for pensioners, however, fits with the paternal care and homosocial environment that sailors had lived with at sea. Sailors at Greenwich had to be visible to fully display the beneficence of the state, who allowed them to live in Wren's palatial hospital and provided them uniform clothing and healthcare. Their believed separation from domestic life at sea was recreated in retirement, where only the singular men themselves could be beneficiaries of a pension which did not extend that support to sailors' families. They had to be separated from the familial home so that the state could take credit as their sole caregiver.

The juxtaposition of the dress of pensioners with the new uniforms of ratings underscores that the French Wars period, between 1793 and 1815, was both an important period of change as well as of continuity. As officers' uniforms evolved in 1827 and 1843, following civilian fashions, both their full dress uniforms and clothing of the veterans at Greenwich continued to display design details of pockets and cuffs that were drawn from the uniforms worn by naval heroes like Nelson and St. Vincent. The uniforms captains wore at sea were simpler, however (see Peel in Figure 5.4), and followed changes in Victorian fashion more closely in terms of the cut and style, such as the reduced use of embroidery. Though the slop clothing of sailors was distinguished with uniform details like the blue jean cuffs and collars, marked with three white stripes of tape as was worn on board the Royal Yacht, much of the clothing they wore as

[15] Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750-1850*, 152–53.

uniforms were simply regulated slop clothes. Concurrently, the slop system grew and expanded to serve the consuming habits of working-men as ready-made clothes, at first providing clothing for naval and merchant sailors and other port workers, then expanding to sell clothing for working and middle-class men both at home and abroad. The invention of the sewing machine allowed clothing contractors to expand production while exploiting the labour of sweated seamstresses. By the conclusion of the nineteenth century, civilian sailors and working men generally wore the same or very similar clothing, all supplied through the same production system except for extremely specialised apparel like oil clothes, as can be seen in the 1881 portrait of the *Bannockburn*'s crew (see Figure 0.4). Visually, legally, even technologically, the nineteenth century was a period where the merchant and naval fleets and the people who laboured on them became distinct and separate.

The clothing of the Royal Navy was produced through different methods. Some of it was regulated to mark with distinction those who had authority over others. Officers in blue and marines in red had the ability to command and to surveille sailors, who dressed in mass-produced slop clothing similar to civilian seafaring apparel. Commanders had to set aside time to make sure that these clothes were delivered, stored, and sold so that the government received a return on their investment of care, both through the good behaviour of sailors and through their wages that repaid the initial purchase. Commanders reinforced their importance as mediators in this process, using fears of mutiny and championing sailors' loyalty to argue that they exclusively knew what sailors required. When ships returned to port, however, commanders' authority was diluted as landward officials—whether it was commanders-in-chief of the station, local civilian leaders and merchants, or naval bureaucrats—were able to interfere with ship life. The clothing of the navy, though seemingly simple and considered a tedious bureaucratic process by many of

the captains and admirals who had to manage it, reflects the unique and significant changes that overtook the Royal Navy between 1793 and 1815 and suggested the changes to the service still on the horizon.

Figures 5.1 – 5.7

Figure 5.1 – "Portrait of Thomas Potter Cooke (1786-1864)," oil on canvas, National Maritime Museum, BHC2631, c. 1853, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/14105.html. Cooke was a stage actor who specialised in depicting seafarers. He entered the Royal Navy in 1797 at age 13, serving on HMS *Raven* under St. Vincent and left in 1802, becoming an actor in 1804. The metal on his breast, though the ribbon is the wrong colour, is a Naval General Service Medal with a St. Vincent clasp, which Cooke applied for and received in 1849. This portrait, perhaps based on a photograph, depicts sailor's dress before it was regulated in 1857 showing many of the aspects that would appear in the regulations, such as the distinctive jean collar with white tape, wide-leg trousers, dark "navy" blue jacket, black neckerchief, and round hat. The scene shows Cooke in his most famous role, as William in *Black-eyed Susan*, which is set in Deal, Kent.

Figure 5.2 – Thomas Walton, “Royal Naval Uniform: Pattern 1846 (Child),” linen, twill, mother of pearl and silk, National Maritime Museum, UNI0293, c. 1846, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/71507.html. This child’s sailor suit was worn by the Prince of Wales and is based on the design worn by sailors on the Royal Yacht. Images of Edward in this costume contributed to the popularity of sailor suits for children. The suit bears many similarities to actual informal pre-regulation sailor dress, but its construction is more detailed than the mass-produced apparel available to most sailors. Though it is difficult to see in this image, the lining of the front flap was secured to the trousers with a decorative scalloped pattern of stitching, suggesting its superior construction and royal provenance.

Figure 5.3 – L. Mason, St. Eschauzier, C.H. Martin (artists), Lefevre & co. (printers), Andrews & co. (publishers), "Costume of the Royal Navy & Marines. Captain, Flag Officer & Commander (Undress)," lithograph, coloured, National Maritime Museum, PAF4262, c. 1827, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/128397.html. This image was part of a wider collection of plates showing the new uniform regulations for officers issued in 1827. Significantly, this plate also shows sailors in the background. They wear short blue jackets, white shirts and trousers, black neckerchiefs, and round hats both in felt and straw. None of them appear to have the distinctive jean collar depicted as part of ratings' dress in the 1840s and 50s, though they all have short unstarched white collars pulled out over their kerchiefs and jackets.

Figure 5.4 – John Lucas, "Captain William Peel (1824-1858)," National Maritime Museum, Greenwich Hospital Collection, BHC2943, 1859-1860, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/14416.html. This painting posthumously depicts Royal Navy Captain and Victoria Cross recipient William Peel at the relief of Lucknow where Peel commanded a group of 450 sailors, marines, and soldiers. One sailor can be seen behind him loading a cannon. He wears a white shirt with the jean collar and cuffs which the artist carefully detailed with three stripes of white tape. His trousers are blue and his head is bare (though he was probably wearing the same hat as his colleagues). More sailors in white shirts with their distinctive collars can be seen in the distance dragging another cannon on a carriage. The visual placement of red soldiers (53rd Foot) to Peel's left and blue sailors to his right, emphasises the dual importance of the army and navy in maintaining Britain's imperial dominance.

Figure 5.5 – "Twas in Trafalgar's Bay," chromolithograph, board, National Maritime Museum, PAI8288, c.1880s, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/158885.html. This painting shows a Greenwich pensioner explaining the Battle of Trafalgar to a young boy. The pensioner wears a uniform that has details from pre-1850 officers' uniforms: the gold embroidery on the pocket flaps and on the cuffs, and the placement of gold buttons, are all details retained in subsequent full dress uniforms in the 1827 and 1843 regulations. On the chair nearby lies an outdated bicorn hat with cockade. The child wears a sailor suit and carries a round straw hat. The image juxtaposes the past and future of Britain's navy, suggesting that knowing past glories will help ensure continuing naval supremacy and prowess.

Figure 5.6 – Edward Taylor, “Twas a Famous Victory,” oil on canvas, Birmingham City Art Gallery, 1883. This is the painting that inspired “Twas at Trafalgar Bay” however the link between past glories and present naval service is made more explicit because the child is replaced by two actual sailors, depicted in uniform. The scene shows the pensioner explaining the events of Trafalgar in front of Turner’s “The Battle of Trafalgar” in the National Gallery. Again, the pensioner’s uniform is shown as having details associated with officers’ uniforms, especially the cuffs, pockets, and buttons. The tricorn hat with cockade further associates the veteran with Nelson’s navy. The two sailors wear navy blue trousers and white shirts accented with blue jean cuffs and lapels with white tape. Though difficult to see, their black caps report their assigned ship in gold letters. To be a living veteran of the Battle of Trafalgar in 1883, the pictured pensioner would have to be 88 years old if he served at Trafalgar at age 10.

Figure 5.7 – Andrew Morton, "The United Service," oil on canvas, National Maritime Museum, BHC1159, 1845, https://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/12651.html. Morton's painting imagines a visit between the army pensioners from Chelsea Hospital at the gallery at the Greenwich Hospital, hosted by the naval pensioners 40 years after the Battle of Trafalgar. The image depicts real pensioners (from left to right: George Copestick, William Crook, William Mathews, J.I. Shaw, Edward Perry, Henry Jacobs, Peter Moser, Daniel Ogilvie, Thomas Holland, John Lovell, John Deman, and Joseph Burgin). This portrait also juxtaposes the uniforms of the two institutions, showing that both continue to include details from the eighteenth century, such as breeches and hats, but that the two services continue to proudly distinguish themselves by red and blue coats. The black shawls of the women imply that they are war widows.

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ADM 12 The British National Archives, Kew, Admiralty Indexes and Digests, 1660-1976.

ADM/BP Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, Navy Board Out-letters to the Admiralty, 1780-1832.

MS Wellcome Library, London, Volume 11: Orders, Stores etc. including material on the purchase of lemons to guard against scurvy, 1780-1805.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Brief Timeline of Britain's Conflicts with France in Europe

1793 – 1802	**War of the French Revolution**	
	February 1, 1793	France declared war on Britain
	March 25, 1802	France and Britain signed the Treaty of Amiens
		The first peace between France and Britain, lasting 14 months.
1803 – 1805	**War of the Third Coalition**	
	May 18, 1803	Britain declared war on France
	October 21, 1805	The British destroyed the French and Spanish Fleets at Trafalgar
	December 26, 1805	France and Austria signed the Treaty of Pressburg.
1806 – 1807	**War of the Fourth Coalition**	
		Britain continued to blockade the French coast.
1807 – 1814	**Peninsular War**	
	November 30, 1807	France occupied Britain's ally, Portugal.
	August 1808	Britain landed first troops in Portugal.
	November 1808	First attempt by Britain to push into Spain.
	July 1809	Second attempt by Britain to push into Spain.
	November 1813	British army invaded France.
1809	**War of the Fifth Coalition; Walcheren Campaign**	
	July 30, 1809	The British invaded Walcheren, Netherlands.
	December 9, 1809	The British withdrew from the Netherlands.
1813 – 1814	**War of the Sixth Coalition**	
		Britain joined the Sixth Coalition.
	May 30, 1814	France signed the Treaty of Paris.
		The second peace between France and Britain, lasting 10 months.
1815	**Hundred Days, or War of the Seventh Coalition**	
	March 20, 1815	Napoleon re-entered Paris after escaping exile in Elba.
	June 18, 1815	The Battle of Waterloo stopped Napoleon's advance.
	July 8, 1815	Louis XVIII was restored to the French throne.
	October 15, 1815	Napoleon arrived in St. Helena, with an escort of marines.
	November 20, 1815	The Treaty of Paris was signed.

Appendix 2: Timeline of Britain's Concurrent Conflicts between 1793 and 1815

Conflicts involving France are italicised.

1793 **Ibn Ufaisan's Invasion**
Saudi invasion of Kuwait countered and reversed by the East India Company.

1793-1798 ***British Intervention in the Haitian Revolution***
The British invaded and restored slavery in parts of Haiti. In December 1795 the British sent "the great push", about 30,000 troops and 200 ships; most died of yellow fever.

1795 – 1796 **Second Maroon War**
Jamaican Maroons defeated and were deported to Nova Scotia.

1795 – 1816 **Hawkesbury and Nepean Wars**
British victory pushed Aborigines out of the Hawkesbury and Neapean River valleys of New South Wales.

1795 ***First Invasion of Cape Colony***
Initially successful, Britain returned the colony to the Batavian Republic in 1803.

1796 – 1818 **Kandyan Wars**
Fought in Sri Lanka, the British victory led to the annexation of the Kingdom of Kandy.

1798 ***Irish Rebellion of 1798***
The British re-established dominance in Ireland; victory established the 1801 Act of Union.

1798 – 1799 ***Fourth Anglo-Mysore War***
The East India Company annexed Mysore.

1801 – 1807 **Temne War**
Fought in Sierra Leone; British victory led to the acquisition of territory from the Kingdom of Koya.

1801 – 1804 **Tunisian-Sicilian War**
Victory allowed the reduction in North African piracy.

1802 – 1805 ***Second Anglo-Maratha War***
Fought in India; East India Company victory led to the acquisition of a substantial portion of Marathas territory.

1803 **Emmet's Insurrection**
Rebellion fought in Dublin, Ireland.

1805 – 1806 ***Second Invasion of Cape Colony***
Britain reoccupied the colony at the Battle of Blaauwberg in 1806.

1806 – 1807 **British Invasion of the Rio de la Plata**
The failed invasion of Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

1806 – 1807 **Ashanti-Fante War**
Fought in the West African Gold Coast; Britain allied with the Fante, who were defeated.

1807 – 1809 ***Anglo-Turkish War***
Britain invaded Turkey and Egypt; both attempts were failures.

1807 – 1814 ***The Gunboat War***
A conflict that began with the destruction of the Danish navy, it mainly involved Danish gunboats harassing British shipping.

1807 – 1812 ***Anglo-Russian War***
This conflict involved British forays into the Baltic and Barents Seas, extending the embargo against Denmark-Norway to Russia.

1809 ***Persian Gulf Campaign of 1809***
British victory reduced French influence in Oman and minimalised attacks on British shipping in the Persian Gulf.

1810 – 1817 ***Merina Conquest of Madagascar***
British-supported Merina Kingdom conquered much of the island.

1810 – 1820 ***Punjab War***
The East India Company was defeated by the Sikh Empire.

1811 – 1812 **Fourth Xhosa War**
The British pushed the Xhosa out of the Zuuveld, a buffer between Cape Colony and Xhosa territory.

1811 **Ga-Fante War**
Fought in West Africa (present-day Ghana). The Fante destroyed British and Dutch forts.

1812 – 1815 **War of 1812**
A conflict between the new American Republic, Britain and the Tecumseh Confederacy. Britain and America ended the war in a stalemate, but the Confederacy was dispersed.

Appendix 3: British Dockyards in Operation between 1793 and 1815

Principal Yards

England
Deptford, 1486 – 1869
Portsmouth, 1495 – Present
Woolwich, 1512 – 1869
Chatham, 1547 – 1984
Sheerness, 1665 – 1960
Plymouth, 1689 – Present

Secondary Yards

Britain
Deal, England, 1672 – 1864
Leith, Scotland, 1781 – 1825
Kinsale, Ireland, 1690 – 1811
Hawlbowline Island, Ireland, 1811 – 1923

Abroad
Gibraltar, 1721 – 1984
Port Royal, Jamaica, 1655 - 1905
English Harbour, Antigua, 1730 - 1882
Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1759 - 1905
Bombay, India, 1811 – 1947

Supplemental Yards

Britain
Falmouth, England, 1795-6, 1805-14
Yarmouth, England, 1803 – 1820
Milford Haven, Wales, 1800 – 1813
Pater (Pembroke Dock), Wales, 1813 – 1947

Mediterranean
Corsica, 1794 – 1796
Port Mahon, Minorca, 1798 – 1802
Malta, 1800 – 1959
Alexandria, Egypt, 1801 - 1805

West Indies & South America
Martinique, 1793 – 1802
Ireland Island, Bermuda, 1795 – 1995
Mole St. Nicholas, Haiti, 1797-8
Barbados, 1805 – 1816
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1812 – 1815

Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, & Oceania
Cape of Good Hope, 1795 – 1957
Madras, India, 1796 - 1813
Trincomalee, Ceylon, 1813 – 1957
Penang, Malaysia, 1798 – 1816
Mauritius, 1811 – 1813
Sydney, New South Wales, 1812 – 1816

Appendix 4: St. Vincent's Notices and Appointments Concerning Marines, 1798

St. Vincent's Standing Memorandum, June 22nd, 1798

Standing Memorandum

When at anchor in this position, the whole party of marines in the respective ships of the fleet is to be kept constantly at drill or parade under direction of the commanding officer of marines and not to be diverted therefrom by any of the ordinary duties of the ship. Sighting the anchors or getting under sail are the only exceptions which occur to the commander in chief.

From Brian Lavery, ed. *Shipboard Life and Organization, 1731-1815* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998), 219.

St. Vincent's Appointment of Lt.-Col. Flight, July 6th, 1798

Having found it necessary to appoint Lt.-Col. Flight inspector of the marines serving in His Majesty's fleet under my command, he is to be received as such and be permitted to have the marines of the respective ships under arms, to inspect their necessaries, visit the store room, and every other department attached to the marines; and he has my orders to report any departure from the regulations of the service and the instructions I have thought fit to give.

From Lavery, *Shipboard Life*, 219.

St. Vincent to Lt.-Col. Flight, on his appointment, July 6th, 1798

By the Earl of St. Vincent, Knight of the Bath
Admiral of the Blue and Commander
in Chief of His Majesty's Ships & Vessels
employed and to be employed in the
Mediterranean &c &c &c.

The awful and calamitous events which have to the disgrace of all good government taken place in His Majesty's Fleet during the last fourteen months and the active and baneful poison which has been introduced by United Irishmen and other dangerous characters who have crept into it, having lately shewn itself in one of His Majesty's Fleet under my command, and it being essential to the preservation of good order and discipline that the marine forces serving on board the different ships which compose it, should be impressed with just ideas of the duty they owe to their King and country and the instructions and regulations I have established not having produced all the desired effects, I have determined to appoint an inspector of [the] marines, embarked under my command and having perfect knowledge of your fitness and competency to fill the employment.

I do appoint you Inspector General of the several detachments of Marines, embarked on board His Majesty's Ships under my command, hereby authorizing and directing you, to repair on -- the said ships, as often as you shall see occasion, to see the marines under arms, to inspect their

necessaries, visit the store rooms, and every other department attached to the corps; and requiring to report to me from time to time any departure, from the regulations of the service, and the instructions I hereby thought fit to give.

Given on board the *Ville de Paris* off Cadiz the 6th July 1798~

St. Vincent

to Lieut. Colonel Flight
hereby appointed Inspector General
of the Marines, in the Mediterranean
and Coast of Portugal &c &c &c

By command of the Admiral
Geo. Purvis [Secretary]

From ADM 1/397 f. 140, TNA.

Appendix 5: Transcription of "Money for Slopmen!" Notice

Money for Slopmen !

THE CREW of the CURACOA Frigate will shortly receive their Wages; and as the greater part of the People require new Clothing,—*This is to give Notice* to Slopmen and others, who are desirous to furnish the Men, that the best Cloth and cheapest Price will have the Preference of Sale, under the following Regulations:—

From *Thursday* to *Sunday* the Slopmen will be admitted into the Ship to shew Samples of various Articles of Clothing, which the Petty Officers will decide on in respect to Quality and Price.—Approved Samples will be preserved by the Frist Lieutenant, and any Slopman detected in selling Articles inferior in Quality to those previously exhibited, the Captain cannot use his Endeavours to procure Payment for an Article which is not equal to the Quality agreed on.

Fancy-coloured Cloaths of all Descriptions, and Spirits, are prohibited; if any Slopman brings them for Sale after this Declaration, they forfeit the Protection of the Officers.

As it frequently happens in the hurry of Business that the Slopmen forget whether the Sailors gave them in Payment a One or a Five Pound Note, and as a Difference of Opinion often arises on this Subject, the Captain has judged it advisable to register the Men's Notes before the quit the Pay-Table, in order to detect the Mistake.

Should the Sailor appear in Error of Calculation, he will be overhailed on the Quarter-Deck for the Slopman's Satisfaction; if the contrary appears on the Part of the Slopman, he, it is presumed, will readily submit to Inspection for the Satisfaction of the Sailor.

No Slopmen to be admitted before the Pay Officers leave the Ship.

No Boats to be permitted to come alongside, or any person to quit the Ship after Four o'Clock; and at other Times, only those who have previously contracted with the People, who will be allowed to remain on Board Twenty-four Hours.

The Captain will give every Assistance to the Slopmen to recover Payment of Goods; but it must be recollected, beyond all possible Misconception, that he will not be responsible for their Debts.

It is considered that Four Slopmen will be sufficient to furnish the Ship's Company.

BY COMMAND OF THE CAPTAIN,
THOMAS PRICE, *Clerk.*

His Majesty's Ship, Curacoa,
October 25, 1811

Mottley, Harrison, and Miller, Printers, Portsmouth

Posted by Captain John Tower, Adm 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA.

Appendix 6: Transcription of "Wanted" Notice

WANTED
For J[ohn] T[ower]s, of his
Majefty's Ship
***S O A N D S O*,**
CHEAP LODGINGS;
OR, LODGINGS GRATIS;
***A Pair of New Epaulets*,**
AND
A Washerwoman,
Who will be Paid on Delivery of the Clothes; two
Years Credit *not being at present* required.
>In consequence of the illiberal Remarks made in a posting Bill, lately stuck up in Portsmouth, Portsea, and Gosport, headed—
"MONEY FOR SLOPMEN,"

It has been determined by the Respectable Tradesmen in that Line, not to suffer any Goods to be sent from their Shops to the said Ship.

The above Remarks are hinted, it being surmised that J. T. does accept some Boon from the People who serve the Ship.

The Public may judge whether the Ship's Crew must not suffer, when a Captain degrades himself so much as to interfere in a Business of the kind,

(Signed, by Order of the Chairman)

A Five Pound Note for One!!!

November 6, 1811
Williams, Printer, 131, Queen Street, Portsea

Posted by Portsmouth & area slopsellers, Adm 1/1185 f. 4044, November 8, 1811, TNA.