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**Serving in Nelson's Navy  
A Social History of Three Amazon Class  
Frigates Utilising Database Technology  
(1795-1811)**

**NICK SLOPE  
August 2005**



**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of Thames Valley University,  
London for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy.**

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Glenmore.mdb

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## **Acknowledgements**

Attempting a PhD thesis as a part-time student whose main occupation is that of a Near Eastern archaeologist and where the primary evidence that the thesis is based on resides in Kew, London causes considerable difficulties. That this labour has been accomplished required that assistance and understanding, both personal and professional, were more than usually necessary from family, friends and colleagues. Therefore my debt of gratitude is that much greater than is usual in such undertakings.

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Nick Slope



## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to apply computer technology, specifically data management systems (commonly referred to as computer databases), to the study of the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815). The muster and, to a lesser extent, pay and log books of three British Royal Navy frigates of the period *HMS Trent*, *Amazon* and *Glenmore* have been transcribed onto a series of Microsoft Access Databases. The databases have then been interrogated in order to produce statistical information that has been applied to specific questions relating to the social history of the Royal Navy of the period.

The emphasis of the thesis is the men of the lower deck although one chapter looks specifically at commissioned officer development. The major questions addressed revolve around the duties of the ships and men (Chapter 2) recruitment of men to the three ships (four commissions) (Chapter 3), the use of child labour (Chapter 4), the recruitment and development of volunteers new to the sea (Chapter 5) and the development and career prospects of midshipmen (Chapter 6)

The thesis provides a unique view of the men and boys who served on board Royal Navy vessels of the period that is not reliant on controversial memoirs but concentrates on exploiting primary sources recorded on a day-to-day basis. The findings demonstrate that the use of computer databases is a powerful weapon in the naval military historian's armoury and have made a significant contribution towards answering some important social questions regarding the lower deck of Nelson's Navy.

## Chapter 1.

### “What an undertaking!”<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

##### Introduction

The Introductory chapter to this PhD thesis contains a number of sub-headed sections. The first section **Overview** broadly examines the background to military social history since WWII and the trend towards the integration of social and military history that, by and large, naval history has failed to follow. It also looks at the dominant literature of the social history of the Royal Navy and identifies the landmark works that have been published (detailed literature reviews are given at topic levels in the following chapters). The next section **The nature of the evidence** evaluates the primary and secondary evidence available to the historian and discusses, in particular the use of memoirs as well as looking in detail at muster, pay and log books. The section **Aims, objectives and methodology** considers the background to the development of the thesis via a pilot study and the questions that the pilot study raised that this thesis hopes to address. Also looked at is the typicality of the sample under consideration and the methodology applied to the research. This is followed by the section **The database** that defines what a database is, how the databases constructed relate to the evidence, the problems encountered during their construction, an outline of the sample used and how to read the database. The next section **Topics selected** outlines the various topics concerning the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) that this thesis attempts to address and why those topics were selected. The **Conclusion** summarises the major points of the introductory chapter.

## Overview

Historians have tended to look at the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) in terms of strategy and tactics as well as biographies of well-known admirals such as Nelson. However, given the size and importance to British history of this period, little research has been carried out concerning the men, and very occasionally the women, who occupied the lower deck. The social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars has had little attention paid to it. Rodger<sup>2</sup> writes that:

*The Navy has in recent years been an unfashionable subject among professional historians in Britain, with the natural result that its historiography in many respects is old-fashioned and the received views of it do not well agree with modern understanding of the currents of British history as a whole. This is particularly true of the social history of the Navy, which in spite of some pioneering efforts, remains largely unwritten in any detail for any period, and especially for the eighteenth century.*

Ground breaking work in other areas of military history has shifted the balance of military historical study towards the social aspects of the experience of warfare and the interaction between civilian and military life and society. Perhaps the most influential work has been Marshall's *Men against Fire*<sup>3</sup> published in 1947 that tried to analyse and interpret soldier's reactions to battle and argued that the battlefield experience was essentially a social one. Marshall's work was picked up and championed by Keegan whose seminal work *The Face of Battle*<sup>4</sup> looked at the historical commonality of the experience of warfare in a social setting. This theme

was developed in Keegan's *Six Armies in Normandy*<sup>5</sup> where the experience of warfare was viewed from six different national perspectives. From these beginnings the so-called 'Sandhurst School' (Keegan was then a lecturer at Sandhurst) of social perspectives of the military experience was developed. These themes were taken forward by other historians, particularly relating to the Second World War, and have produced works ranging from the social, moral, economic and military macro level such as Overy's *Why The Allies Won*<sup>6</sup> to the micro level of Ellis' *The Sharp End*<sup>7</sup> a detailed look at the individual soldier's experience in the Second World War. This approach has reached into other periods such as Carlton's *Going to the Wars*<sup>8</sup> based primarily on letters sent home by soldiers during the English Civil War (1638-1651) that integrates the social and military aspects of the soldier's lives and experiences and Hanson's *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece*.<sup>9</sup> However, with a few notable exceptions, to paraphrase Griffith,<sup>10</sup> the study of the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars has remained in the 'historical doldrums'.

There has always been much interest generated in the Royal Navy of the age of sail and in particular that of the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. A glance at the shelves of any popular bookshop will demonstrate that that interest is still alive today and even Hollywood is not immune to the lure of dashing sea officers and nautical derring-do. Until recently serious research, like historical fiction, concentrated almost exclusively on the lives and careers of the officer class of the Royal Navy as well as the Navy's 'glorious exploits'. The publishing in 1905 of Masfield's *Sea Life in Nelson's Time* broke that mould.<sup>11</sup> Masfield while acknowledging the Navy's achievements claimed that there had been a price to pay

for those achievements 'Our naval glory was built up by the blood and agony of thousands of barbarously maltreated men'.<sup>12</sup> Masfield heavily criticised the officer class 'some captains were, perhaps, the most cruel and tyrannical fiends ever permitted on the earth. There were never very many of this kind, but there were enough to make a number of our ships mere floating hells'.<sup>13</sup> Masfield's view on the Royal Navy can probably be best summed up by the following quotation from his book:

*It cannot be too strongly insisted on that sea life, in the late eighteenth century, in our navy, was brutalising, cruel, and horrible; a kind of life now happily gone for ever, a kind of life which no man today would think good enough for a criminal. There was barbarous discipline, bad pay, bad food, bad hours of work, bad company, bad prospects.*<sup>14</sup>

This was a brave and innovative approach to the social history of the Navy and as Lloyd states in his introduction to the 1971 edition of Masfield's work 'in the days of Jackie Fisher, this was not the angle from which naval history was usually approached'. Lloyd also points out that Masfield's prime sources for his work were the reminiscences of Jack Nastyface and Samuel Leach 'both of whom hated the navy'.<sup>15</sup> Masfield's intention was to make people aware of the price that had been paid by the common seaman during Nelson's time for the glories of the present. Masfield for the first time looked at the conditions of service of the lower deck and came to the conclusion that the sailors lived in a sort of 'floating concentration camp'.<sup>16</sup> Masfield's work set the scene for the development of research in the field of Royal Navy social studies but, most unfortunately, his view entered popular

mythology as the reality of life afloat and from where historians are still trying to extricate it. Other naval historians followed Masfield's lead, particularly Mainwaring and Dobree in their account of the naval mutinies of 1797, concluding, in the face of contrary evidence, that the harsh disciplinary conditions suffered by the lower deck were instrumental in causing the mass disaffection that resulted in the Spithead and Nore mutinies.<sup>17</sup>

The next serious attempt to look at the social conditions of the Royal Navy occurred with the publishing of *A Social History of the Navy 1793-1815* by Michael Lewis.<sup>18</sup> First published in 1960 it still stands the test of time as one of the most comprehensive and analytical works concerning life on board Nelson's ships. The book is divided into four parts. The first part looks at the social background and geographical origin of quarterdeck officers and lower deck men. The second part goes into the question of how officers and men were recruited. The third part considers the naval profession as a whole but in particular looks at conditions of service for officers and men and examines how hierarchy at all levels in the Navy worked. The fourth part considers the cost in lives, ships and ill health of the war. In this work Lewis has identified and explored issues that still vex scholars today. The breakdown of how the Navy met its massive need for skilled and semi-skilled manpower, particularly in the operation of the infamous press gangs, is still not resolved but Lewis runs out his guns and gives us a 'typical' breakdown of a ship's crew. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of Lewis' views on recruitment is his vitriolic treatment of the Quota Men. The Quota Acts were passed by Parliament in 1795 and required local county and seaport authorities to provide a quota of men for the fleet.<sup>19</sup> Always seen as a quantitative success (they raised around 30,000 men) contemporary naval opinion castigated the



Quota Men, as they became known and Lewis follows this line.<sup>20</sup> However research into ship and county records is changing our view on this group of people who served their country well during a period of crisis.<sup>21</sup> This highlights the main weakness of Lewis' work, which is his uncritical use of a handful of memoirs in building up a picture of life in Nelson's Navy. Despite this weakness the book is still the benchmark by which any other work on the social history of Nelson's Navy will be judged. In 1968 Lloyd produced *The British Seaman 1200-1860*.<sup>22</sup> Only part of this work covers our period but there is a particularly useful chapter on the manning of the Navy. During Lloyd's discussion on the number of desertions that occurred he states that: 'The number of deserters from the Navy can never be ascertained until all the names marked 'Run' in all the muster books are counted up'. Like Lewis, Lloyd's view of conditions of life on the lower decks is much more favourable than Masefield's.

The next major publication concerning life in the Royal Navy was Peter Kemp's *The British Sailor* published in 1970. Like Lloyd's work, Kemp only devoted part of the book to our period and there is little use of primary sources. In 1981 Dudley Pope's *Life in Nelson's Navy*, was published. Pope whilst acknowledging that conditions were harsh and brutal in Nelson's Navy follows the trend set by Lewis and Lloyd that reject Masefield's 'floating hell'. Pope's work suffers from a lack of footnotes needed to support his facts and strong views.

Most of the above works, with the exception of Kemp, concentrate most of their social content on the ship's officers rather than the crew and, apart from Masefield, see life on the lower deck as harsh but by the conditions of the day, acceptably so. None of the above works go into much detail concerning individual ship's records; the

wealth of information set out in muster and pay books is largely ignored and unanalysed.

The publication in 1986 by Rodger of *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy* was a turning point in the study of social conditions in the Royal Navy. Although Rodger's work is set in the period of the Seven Years War (1755-1763) its extensive use of contemporary sources, including muster and pay books has demonstrated the wealth of social information that is contained within them. The picture that Rodger paints of the Royal Navy of the Seven Years War period is of a naval society set apart from British society but at the same time coming from within and having commonality with that society. Rodger's Navy is much more at peace with itself than the Navy described by Masefield. But as Rodger points out, no society stays still but is constantly evolving and the Navy of Nelson could well be very different to the Navy of Anson:

*One of the banes of naval social history is the assumption, still widespread in the teeth of all probability, that nothing ever changed... This is emphatically not true; the Navy, like society in general, was continually developing... Another study is required to test how far sea life in Nelson's time really appeared in the bloody colours that Masefield painted*

Rodger goes on to say that 'the Service which suffered the mutinies of 1797 must have been very different from that of forty years before'. Rodger concludes that the French Revolution, inflation, the coppering of ships and the huge expansion of the Navy during the French Wars must have changed the Navy to some extent but that

further research is required to establish exactly how much. In his study of the social conditions of the Georgian Navy Rodger relies heavily on the use of contemporary naval records including muster books. He states that.<sup>23</sup>

*They will certainly find that even the evidence I have used, which comes largely from the Public Record Office, has not been exploited to the limit. In particular the ship's musters and pay books are a vast archive (there are about a quarter of a million of them extending over two centuries) upon which any social history of the Navy ought to be founded, and the use of computers in analysis of such material makes it for the first time feasible to draw out their real value. I have not had that opportunity. any historian possessed of one who cares to master these admittedly very technical documents should find a rich field of social analysis*

A clarion call that this thesis hopes to start answering.

Two major works on the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period were published in 1989. The first of these was Byrn's *Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy: Discipline on the Leeward Islands Station 1784-1812*.<sup>24</sup> Byrn's thesis is that naval discipline conformed in most respects to how law and order were conducted on land in contemporary society:

*Simply stated, the methods used to maintain harmony in the king's fleet were similar to those of the eighteenth-century English system of criminal justice ... In short, the precepts of the unreformed system of criminal justice were applied at sea wherever feasible.*<sup>25</sup>

To support his thesis Byrn examined all the extant court martial records for the period and station in question as well as other contemporary naval records including ships muster books. However in his use of naval records Byrn looks exclusively at matters relating to crime and punishment rather than wider social issues. Byrne, like Rodger, accepts that his thesis does not measure change over time and that that is 'a subject for future investigation'. Byrn and Rodger both reject the Masefield 'floating hell' view of life at sea during the Nelsonian period. The second work first published in 1989 is *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815* by Brian Lavery. Lavery's work is a formidable work of reference but is descriptive rather than evaluative in its approach. Lavery followed this with *Shipboard Life and Organisation 1731-1815* a collection of important primary documents relating to shipboard life.<sup>26</sup>

In conclusion we have a background of research that has been dominated by the views of John Masefield. All subsequent researchers set *Sea Life in Nelson's Time* as the benchmark to put their work against. Over the last decade the move has been very much away from the Masefield view of a seagoing hell that common sailors were subjected to. The present view of naval seagoing life is that of a society that mirrored the larger society that it ultimately came from and that had developed its own versions of control that derived from and attempted to emulate those of the larger society. However it is to be regretted that Masefield's legacy is still with us today. A recent biography of Admiral Sir William Hargood, who captained *HMS Bellisle* at Trafalgar, follows in full the Masefield tradition of a lower deck pressed into service and thrashed into obedience despite considerable evidence to the contrary.<sup>27</sup>

## **The nature of the evidence**

The use of source material to support the various arguments and thesis put forward has also changed over time. Up until the 1980s the largest body of contemporary evidence came from personal memoirs and reminiscences.

Evidence relating to the social history of the Royal Navy during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars falls into two broad categories primary and secondary. Primary evidence can be further categorised by its source. Broadly speaking these categories consist of personal memoirs and reminiscences, ship's records, admiralty records, letters, private papers and technical manuals. Also of use are contemporary illustrations,<sup>28</sup> press reports, handbills, pamphlets and other general literature of the period such as published sea shanties and sailor songs. Secondary sources of particular use are contemporary histories, biographies and naval journals. In trying to use contemporary secondary and some primary sources a number of problems arise. The single biggest problem is their bias. Written shortly after the events that they describe they were normally written by establishment figures or Royal Navy officers that understandably wanted to show the Royal Navy in the best possible light. This bias tends to reveal itself in the description of events, or more problematically in the leaving out of important information that, in the writer's opinion, cast bad light on the Navy. As an example we can take the case of Rear Admiral Sir Edward Hamilton KCB. Born in 1772 Hamilton came from a naval family and went to sea as a boy, saw action against the French aged eight years old and gained his commission aged 21. He then went on to command several successful sea actions and to make a small fortune in prize money.<sup>29</sup> His crowning glory came when, as captain of *HMS Surprise* a 28

gun frigate, he cut out and took the ex-Royal Navy frigate *HMS Hermione* in 1799. The crew of the *Hermione*, following their mutiny and the slaying of most of the officers - including the captain, Hugh Pigot, had handed over the *Hermione* to the Spanish (then at war with Great Britain). Pigot had subjected the crew to a barbarous regime that even contemporary historians commented on and decried. The mutiny and handing over to the Spanish of the *Hermione* by her crew had sent shock waves through the Royal Navy. Hamilton's taking of the *Hermione*, in which he was severely wounded was, and still is, regarded as a brilliant feat of arms.<sup>30</sup> As would be expected, contemporary praise and adulation was heaped onto Hamilton for his exploits and naval biographers record this fulsomely. However careful digging reveals a darker side to Hamilton. What his biographers fail to point out is that following recovery from his wounds he was appointed captain of *HMS Trent* on 1 November 1800.<sup>31</sup> After a year of this appointment, in what can only be described as a reign of terror, Hamilton was dismissed from the Service for 'gross cruelty' following a court martial on 23 January 1802, just over a year after taking command<sup>32</sup> and entered into the Admiralty 'Black Book'.<sup>33</sup> A study of the captain's log of the *Trent*<sup>34</sup> for the period of Hamilton's command demonstrates that he was as fond of the lash as Hugh Pigot.<sup>35</sup> In a personal memoir Admiral G. V. Jackson who served as a midshipman under Hamilton on board the *Trent* records that: 'as each day passed, so did I conceive new terrors of this man. A more uncompromising disciplinarian did not exist, or one less scrupulous in exacting the due fulfilment of his orders, whatever they were...the "cat" was incessantly at work' and that although the ship was 'in excellent order' this was 'at no small sacrifice of humanity'.<sup>36</sup> This dark side to Hamilton is not revealed in any of the contemporary or near contemporary biographies and histories.



Another difficulty that arises when using contemporary accounts is that there is very little reference to the lower deck. Admirals, captains and commissioned officers are often named and discussed but virtually no light is shed on the ordinary sailors except in general terms of xenophobic superiority. Contemporary histories<sup>37</sup> and biographies<sup>38</sup> can be useful, most of the authors knew their subject very well, had access to Navy records and some of the personalities involved in the actions they portrayed and knew that their readership would be very knowledgeable about the subject. There are a number of personal memoirs concerning the Royal Navy during the French Wars. There are some memoirs written by lower deck sailors, probably the most famous of these is Jack Nastyface's *Nautical Economy*,<sup>39</sup> but as Byrn points out, Nastyface's memoir was written with a political axe to grind and therefore has to be viewed with caution.<sup>40</sup> Some useful extracts from this and other lower deck memoirs are contained in Henry Baynham's *From the Lower Deck* published in 1969.<sup>41</sup> These personal memoirs are very useful but their overriding weakness is that there is so few of them. How typical are the experiences of Jack Nastyface and John Nicol,<sup>42</sup> even if we were to accept their veracity at face value?

Perhaps the most useful body of primary evidence is the contemporary records kept by ship's captains and officers as part of their general duties in running a Royal Navy vessel. These records consist of muster and pay books as well as officer log books (primarily the captains and the master's log). If we take *HMS Trent* as an example, during her active service commission of around eight years (1796-1803) just about every week the crew was mustered, accounted for and any changes in the crew recorded, a total of 318 individual musters. Every day of those eight years the captains and master's log book were filled in and the position and duties of the ship recorded.

All of these records survive and are stored at Kew: a unique social and historical record. The difficulty in using this evidence is in its sheer quantity and accessibility. The National Archive at Kew contains many different records relating to the Navy of this period but, with the exception of the muster and pay books, these tend to be 'varied and fragmentary'<sup>43</sup> and so it is the muster books and to a lesser extent the pay books that form the primary source of the findings in this thesis. Other primary sources are used such as the captains and master's logs and court martial records but largely in support of the muster book findings.

Muster books had a dual purpose. In the first instance they recorded the service on board of each individual in order to determine their wage entitlement. Secondly they recorded an individual's consumption of 'necessaries' (items such as hammocks, 'slops' and bedding) to be charged against their wages.<sup>44</sup> In order for a ship's captain and purser to be paid, the muster and pay books had to be passed by Admiralty inspection. Failure to pass could result in financial loss to captain and purser.<sup>45</sup> Therefore it was in the captains and purser's interest to ensure that the records were accurate and up to date. To assist in their recording the Admiralty provided pre-printed muster and pay books consisting of a number of headed columns (for a list of these headings see **Appendix I**). Admiralty regulations required that a captain's log book (called a journal) was a day-to-day account of the ship's position, duties performed, punishments carried out and 'remarks on unknown places; and in general every circumstance that concerns the ship, her stores and provisions'.<sup>46</sup> The main difference between the muster books and captain's log for the purposes of database use is that muster books were filled out under set, proscribed headings, which are easy to put onto a computer database. In contrast, the captain's log is a much more

idiosyncratic document that was filled out as an individual captain felt fit. The captain's log is very useful in putting the muster book information into context and providing additional information. For example when analysing desertion rates recorded in the muster book these can be cross-referenced with the ship's position. Another example is how punishment could effect crew desertion, promotion or sickness rates and it is also possible to work out sea time; that is how much time a sailor spent at sea as opposed to in dock or moored (see Chapter 2 below). The master's logs were generally much more detailed than the captain's log, particularly when the ship was at sea. The master recorded technical matters relating to the ship such as sail settings and course changes on an hourly basis and it is clear that some captains copied out entries from the master's log rather than compose them themselves. Due to the volume and complexity of the master's logs they have been used as a supplement or to fill in gaps in the captain's logs.

### **Aims, objectives and methodology**

The shift from the use of memoirs, reminiscences and Admiralty records to that of individual ship's records has only just started and with the parallel development of computer record keeping and record interrogation much information remains to be revealed. The use of computer databases should also allow the social historian to attempt to see how the Royal Navy changed over a period of time as both Rodger and Byrne advocate and to test the views and thesis put forward by social historians.

Part of the reason for this lack of work on the social history of the navy is concerned with the evidence available. At one end of the scale there is very little evidence in the form of reminiscences and memoirs from the lower deck. However at the other end of

the scale there is a wealth of evidence in the extensive shipboard records that the Admiralty required ship's captains to keep. The great majority of these records survive and reside in The National Archive at Kew, London (formerly The Public Records Office). However the ability to exploit this evidence to the full has only really been realised since the development of computer database techniques that allow fast and accurate processing of data. However Lewis,<sup>47</sup> writing in the 1960s, in referring to the study of ship's muster books, stated that 'It is an overpowering surfeit of knowledge now, so overwhelming indeed that to analyse it in tabular form would be a matter, probably, of several years' labour. And it would not repay the doing... so theoretically, it could be done. But what an undertaking!'<sup>48</sup> An undertaking indeed. In order to test Rodger's (see above) and Lewis's theories of the use of databases in mining the information contained in ship's records a pilot study was carried out and formed the basis of a final dissertation for a Master's Degree.<sup>49</sup> The frigate *HMS Trent* was selected for study and 17 months worth (April 1796 to July 1797) of muster book entries were put onto a Microsoft Access database and the results analysed. The reasons for selecting the *Trent* for study was that the frigates' size in manpower was manageable, that some work had already been carried out on aspects of the frigate's commission and that all the records relating to the vessel were extant and stored at, the then, Public Record Office at Kew. The main aim of the dissertation was:

*To see to what extent computer databases can assist the historian in unravelling the immense amount of data that is stored in the various ship's record books and how that information can be exploited. It is intended that the outcomes of this dissertation can be used for a more comprehensive study of ship's record books in the future.*<sup>50</sup>

The outcomes of the dissertation demonstrated that much useful information could be extracted from the use of such a computer database and lessons were learnt on how to go about constructing a database based on muster books, what questions could possibly be addressed with the information and how that information could be analysed. However the question of typicality arose from the findings. How typical were the 300 odd crewmen of the *Trent*, when the Navy of that period consisted of around 140,000 men and over 850 vessels of all sizes?<sup>51</sup> Therefore it was recommended that a larger sample of ships and men were looked at in order to prove the utility of database technology in exploiting the information held in the various ship's records of the period.<sup>52</sup> Therefore the main aim of this thesis is to build on the work carried out in the pilot study, extend the size of the sample to increase validity and to address some specific questions relating to the social study of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period.

In order to meet this aim it was decided to extend the *Trent* database to cover its entire active service commission from March 1796 to June 1803 and to look at a number of other ships' commissions as well. The other vessels selected were *HMS Emerald* and *HMS Glenmore*, both sister ships of the *Trent*, that were commissioned and served at roughly the same time (*Emerald* August 1795 until March 1805 and *Glenmore* April 1796 until January 1803).<sup>53</sup> The *Emerald*, following an extensive refit in 1805, had a second active service commission from June 1806 until December 1811 and it was decided to include this in the study as well. In order to distinguish between the two *Emerald* commissions the first commission is referred to in the text as *Emerald1* and the second as *Emerald2*. Also when members of the *Emerald's* crew are referred to their muster number carries the prefix of 'E' for *Emerald1* and 'EM' for *Emerald2*.

One of the main reasons for selecting these vessels was that in manpower terms, frigates were roughly in the middle of the spectrum of Royal Navy vessels of this period and each of the three frigates (four commissions) had an official complement of 264 men, marines and boys. A huge man-of-war such as *HMS Victory* would carry a crew of 850 men<sup>54</sup> while a small, armed brig such as *HM Brig Badger* would carry less than one hundred.<sup>55</sup> Frigates were also selected as they were a common class of vessel, they were the workhorses of the fleet carrying out many different roles and appointed to stations throughout the world.<sup>56</sup> It was felt that these criteria addressed the 'typicality' issue discussed above. It should be pointed out that by and large crewmen were not ship type specialists. That is, once you had served on a frigate did not mean that you were confined to service on this class of vessel. Men and officers were regularly transferred and allocated to different classes and size of vessel.<sup>57</sup> Therefore looking solely at men serving on frigates does not mean we are confining research to a particular group of men and excluding others. This class of frigate was selected as work had already been carried out on one of them (the *Trent*) and because all the muster and most of the log books from these ships exist at The National Archive, Kew and therefore the life and lives of the men on these vessels could be viewed without a significant break.

A secondary aim has been to look at ship's records in a 'horizontal' or narrative plane. That is, ship's records have been looked at before and compared with other ship's records but this has been done at a point in time or 'vertically'. For example Rodger has looked at ship's muster records for evidence but has tended to select a single muster record for one date rather than looking at a continuum of muster books for the same ship(s) over an extended period of time.<sup>58</sup> The 'vertical' approach produces



much useful information but can only be used as a 'snapshot' of a particular ship's crew at a particular time. In this survey the details of every muster taken from four commissions over a period of 7-16 years has been recorded and gives us a unique opportunity to test the value of database research for the social history of the Royal Navy for this important period.

In conjunction with entering the data onto the databases a review of the historical literature relating to the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars was carried out with a view to identifying key questions that the database information could assist in answering. A host of questions arose but perhaps the most intriguing that has not really been properly articulated is why was the Royal Navy of the period so good? It was not by chance that at Trafalgar a British fleet went into action outnumbered, outgunned and out manned but with both sides knowing that a British victory was all but a foregone conclusion.<sup>59</sup> Haythornthwaite states that 'it is difficult to describe the Royal Navy as anything other than perhaps the most successful force of its era; for such was the excellence of its operation that even with ships that were not always the equal of their opponents', the navy's campaigns were a series of triumphs'.<sup>60</sup> It is difficult to argue with this assessment which flies in the face of Masfield's view that the ordinary seaman were kept in a state of semi-bondage and tyrannised by despotic officers wielding the lash - such groups of men do not achieve great victories and military dominance. This is a crucial and complex question, which this study cannot answer in full, however a conscious effort has been made to try and look at a number of key factors that could help explain the level of excellence achieved. Early into the research it became clear that the information extracted from the databases was so rich that the topics originally selected for study could not all be

fitted within the framework of a single PhD thesis. This has meant that much work has had to be excluded including a chapter on discipline, one on recorded deaths on board ship, one on health care, disease and accident and another on the development of surgeons and surgeon's mates although some of the findings in these areas that relate to the topics discussed has been included. It is hoped that these chapters can be published separately.<sup>61</sup>

### **The database**

A computer database is 'a collection of interrelated data organised in a pre-determined manner according to a set of logical rules, and is structured to reflect the natural relationships of the data and the uses to which they will be put'.<sup>62</sup> Data from all of the ship's muster books were put onto a computer database which then allowed a single viewing of all the data and the opportunity to interrogate that data, an 'electronic filing system'.<sup>63</sup> The findings from the database, supported by other data such as ship's log books comprise the core of this research in trying to answer questions posed by historians concerning the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

The major problem in the use of databases in historical research is that historical data is rarely recorded in a form that lends itself to easy use on a database, that is, data is not often put in tabular form and under headings that are consistently applied and exist in enough quantity to produce statistically viable projections and conclusions. However this not the case with naval muster books of our period. Muster books were issued to ship's captains pre-printed as a series of *pro formas* and captains were required and directed to fill them in accurately and consistently. This means that the

data contained in a muster book can be copied onto a computer database and then interrogated.

The computer database management system used was Microsoft Access. Originally version Access 2.0 was used but this was later upgraded to Access 97 when that became available. Due to the problems encountered during that conversion no other upgrading conversion has been carried out. The databases developed on that computer programme consist of a number of fields and columns in which data is inserted. The data put into a database can then be 'interrogated', known as 'queries' on Access.<sup>64</sup> Database interrogation allows complex mathematical calculations between data to be rapidly calculated and translated into tabular and/or graphical form. This allows the historian to look at statistical trends, patterns and comparative analysis that might not otherwise be apparent. Each database consists of a number of tables and each table is sub-divided into a series of 'fields'. Data is then entered into the fields that make up the table. Following the entry of data, queries can be set up in order to interrogate the data. As an example the *Trent* database consists of 10 tables<sup>65</sup> each of which contain fields containing information from either the *Trent's* muster or log books. For the purposes of this study, five databases were compiled, one for each of the four frigate commissions (*Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore*) and one specifically relating to Midshipmen (see Chapter 6).

There were three major difficulties encountered during the compilation of the databases. The first difficulty was the very technical nature of the entries. Some entries were heavily abbreviated and required considerable research and groundwork to interpret. Some entries, particularly under the column heading 'Whence and

Whether Pressed or not' which state how a man came to be on board his respective ship, have still not been resolved and Rodger admits that 'this is a difficult column to interpret'.<sup>66</sup> The second problem was that some of the handwriting was difficult to decipher: a log book written during a fierce North Sea storm is not always perfectly legible. However as many entries were repeated and with experience gained of reading the various hands employed in writing the log and muster books this problem was largely resolved. The third problem encountered was the sheer volume of entries to be transcribed, checked and in some instances cross-referenced. The amount of work transcribing the information was considerable and there are in excess of 100,000 data entries within the four databases which took over five years to transcribe (on a part-time basis). In a sample of this size it is inevitable that some data miss-entries will occur but every effort has been made to ensure that the data is as accurate as possible.

Early in the development of the various databases a decision had to be made as to what was to be included and what was to be left out? It was decided that the databases should be developed to give information in a number of predetermined areas of study (these areas are discussed below). Therefore much data has been left out, largely relating to economic aspects such as pay and deductions. However it is relatively easy to expand the existing database at a later date to include this information if required.

Table 1.1 gives a breakdown of the men and boys who served on the three ships (four commissions) and gives an overall picture of the size of the sample.

**Table 1.1: *Amazon* Class frigates: complement details over service life**

	<b>Crew</b>	<b>Marines</b>	<b>Vol. and Boys</b>	<b>Complement<sup>67</sup></b>
<b>Emerald1</b>	867	100	113	1080
<b>Emerald2</b>	508	73	64	645
<b>Glenmore</b>	599	129	105	833
<b>Trent</b>	952	158	98	1208
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2926</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>3766</b>

Where names of individuals are given in the text these are followed by a letter and a number code in parenthesis, the letter refers to the ship/commission: T = *Trent* (1796-1803), G = *Glenmore* (1796-1803), E = *Emerald's* first commission (1795-1805), EM = *Emerald's* second commission (1806-1811). The following number refers to an individual's muster book number. This number was given sequentially to individuals as they came on board ship and were 'entered' into the ship's muster book. This number would normally follow them through their stay on board and if they left the ship the number would not be reused. If an individual returned to the ship, say from sickness, after being discharged they would be given a new number. This system of numbering should not be confused with the modern practice of giving a member of the armed services a number that is personal to them throughout their service career. The numbering system adopted here enables any reference to individuals to be checked against the data entered on the relevant database and crosschecked against the original muster book. For example, if we wish to follow the career of seaman Michael Haynes (T89) from the *Trent* we can first look at the crew database under the field title 'ID no.' and scroll down to number 89. Moving along the row from the ID number we can see that he was paid a bounty for volunteering ('Bounty' field), that he was 'entered' onto the ship's book on 10 May 1795 ('Entered' field) but actually

‘appeared’ or joined the ship on 13 May 1795 (‘Appeared’ field). Further along we can see that he came from the *Enterprize* (a receiving ship) as a volunteer (‘Pressed’ field), that he came from Kilkenny in Ireland (‘Origin’ field), that he was 22 years old when he came on board (‘Age’ field), that his name was Michael Haynes (‘Name’ and ‘Surname’ fields) and that he was rated ‘landsman’ (‘Quality’ field). We can further tell that he was discharged the ship sick (‘D/DD/R’ field, this stands for ‘discharged’, ‘discharged dead’ or ‘ran’) on 7 August 1797 (‘Date left’ field) but that he returned to the ship shortly after but with a new muster number SB390 (SB stands for ‘Ship’s Book’ meaning the muster book) under the ‘Reason’ field. If we then look up muster number 390 we find a repeat of the above information except that we see that Michael Haynes deserted the ship on 27 October 1797 when the ship was stationed in Barbados. However we can look for more biographical material by searching the ‘Crew Changes’ table on the database and looking up the muster numbers 89 and 390. Neither muster number appears. This means that Haynes was rated landsmen for his entire career on board the *Trent*. A search of the ‘Punishment’ table reveals that Michael Haynes (T89) was flogged twice when serving on the *Trent*. He was given 24 lashes for ‘neglect of duty’ on 23 December 1796 and a further 24 lashes on 21 September 1797 for ‘mutinous expressions, drunkenness and neglect of duty’ a month before he deserted. This use of multiple table databases including punishment, rating changes and ship’s logs in order to produce biographical and social information is unique.

For ease of reference and to avoid confusion, volunteers and boys of the first, second and third class as well as marines have been given a suffix to their muster number as well as the commission prefix. Volunteers and boys have the suffix ‘VB1’, ‘VB2’ or

‘VB3’ depending on their class and marines the suffix ‘M’. Therefore William Gallahan, a third class boy muster number 18 from the *Glenmore* is number G18VB3 and muster number 57 marine Corporal Francis Stephenson of *Emerald*<sup>2</sup> is number EM57M.

The research carried out has concentrated on the sailors (men and boys) recruited to serve rather than the marines (Royal Marines from 1802<sup>68</sup>). This was not the original intention but it was found that little biographical information was included on the ship’s muster books concerning the marines and that study into these men would best be served by a separate study linked to the marine divisional records.<sup>69</sup> Some analysis regarding marines is included where information is supplied in the ship’s muster books but the focus of this study has been the sailors.

### **Topics selected**

As stated above, much consideration was given to which topics to concentrate on in order to determine how effective database technology could be applied to the social study of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The pilot study had demonstrated the necessity of providing context via the captain and master’s log books. Therefore it was felt that a chapter supplying contextual information concerning the frigates was necessary and this is supplied in Chapter 2. Perhaps the most controversial topic surrounding studies of Royal Navy manpower of the period is how those men were recruited and this subject is addressed in Chapter 3. How the Royal Navy developed its sailors and particularly the system of using child labour has received scant coverage by historians and it was felt that this was a field of study in which the use of databases could be particularly useful and Chapter 4 looks at the

system of developing boy sailors into trained seamen. Likewise, Chapter 5 follows the development of men who volunteered (as opposed to being pressed) for the Royal Navy and looks at how they were trained and what sort of career structure they followed. The development of the Royal Navy officer corps via the ratings of volunteer and boy first class, midshipman and master's mate has long been a controversial and debated subject. Therefore a special database covering the development of the 143 midshipmen that served on the three frigates was constructed and the results are given in Chapter 6. The findings from the thesis are brought together in Chapter 7. The main Appendices consist of the Microsoft Access databases. It was felt that these were best presented on a CDROM as to print out the databases would require upwards of 700 pages of text that would be difficult to interpret.

Each topic follows a similar format. A general introduction, an overview regarding current thinking on the subject and the questions that the chapter addresses are put forward. This is followed by the findings from the databases commission by commission, then the commissions are combined and brought together by a conclusion. The exception to this is Chapter 3 concerning the development of midshipmen where a commission by commission approach was considered unnecessary and instead a series of topic headings are discussed.

## **Conclusion**

As Rodger identified in 1986 in *The Wooden World* the history and historiography of the Royal Navy of the eighteenth century has lagged behind other periods and



historians who have extended the boundaries of social military history. Nearly twenty years on from Rodger's observation some 'green shoots' of recovery have been forthcoming but given the size and importance of the period and subject not much has changed. The public perception of Nelson's Navy is still one of pressed men being flogged and cowed into submission by tyrannical officers and on the year of the bicentenary of Trafalgar this is a sorry state indeed and, quite frankly, not good enough. From the tsunami of histories and biographies appearing on the bookshelves for 2005 there is, as far as the author is aware, no definitive work on the social history of Nelson's Navy. It is hoped that this thesis, based on primary, documentary evidence can help move us away from our reliance on officer reminiscences and the handful of controversial seamen memoirs that dominate the social history of the Royal Navy.

In conclusion the aim of this thesis is to hypothesise that the use of computer databases can provide us with valid and reliable evidence concerning the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815). By taking a number of identified and controversial questions related to the subject and applying the results of the databases constructed we can test this hypothesis and, hopefully, draw lessons on the use and value of such technologies and, perhaps, help us move out of the doldrums.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p. 81

<sup>2</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, (London, 1986) p. 11

<sup>3</sup> Marshall, S. L. A. *Men Against Fire* (University of Oklahoma, 1947)

<sup>4</sup> Keegan, J. A. *The Face of Battle*, (London, 1976)

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- <sup>5</sup> Keegan, J. A. *Six Armies in Normandy* (London, 1983)
- <sup>6</sup> Overy, S. *Why the Allies Won* (London, 1995)
- <sup>7</sup> Ellis, J. *The Sharp End* (Compendium, 1990)
- <sup>8</sup> Carlton, C. *Going to the Wars: The Experience of the English Civil Wars 1638-1651* (London, 1992)
- <sup>9</sup> Hanson, V. D. *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece* (London, 1989)
- <sup>10</sup> Griffith, P. *The Art of War of Revolutionary France 1789-1802* (London, 1998) p. 9
- <sup>11</sup> Masefield, J. *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*, (First published 1905, Conway edition, 1971)
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. p xi
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 27
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 30
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. xi
- <sup>16</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 13
- <sup>17</sup> Manwaring, G. E. and Dobree, B. *The Floating Republic* (London, 1935) p. 247
- <sup>18</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960)
- <sup>19</sup> For a full account of the Quota Acts, Quota Men and Lewis' views see Chapter 6.
- <sup>20</sup> Lewis p. 126
- <sup>21</sup> See Emsley, C. *North Riding Naval Recruits: The Quota Acts and the Quota Men 1795-1797*, (North Yorkshire County Council, 1978)
- <sup>22</sup> Lloyd, C., *The British Seaman 1200 – 1860*, (New Jersey, 1968)
- <sup>23</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 12
- <sup>24</sup> Byrn Jr. J. D. *Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy*, (Aldershot, 1989)
- <sup>25</sup> Byrn p. 5
- <sup>26</sup> Lavery, B (ed.), *Shipboard Life and Organisation 1731-1815* (NRS, 1998)
- <sup>27</sup> McGrigor, M. *Defiant and Dismasted at Trafalgar: The Life and Times of Sir William Hargood* (Barnsley, 2004)
- <sup>28</sup> Lincoln goes further and states that 'the Navy had such influence on public life that a study of its representation adds to our understanding of British culture, cultural politics and the ideology of empire' (Lincoln, M. *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power 1750-1815* (Ashgate, 2002) p. 1)
- <sup>29</sup> O'Byrne, W. R. *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1849) pp. 450-451

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<sup>30</sup> Hamilton took the six ship's boats of the *Surprise* containing 100 men into Puerto Cabello on the Spanish Main and boarded and successfully cut out the *Hermoine*. The port was defended by 200 guns as well as the *Hermione*'s own broadside and there were 265 Spanish crewmen on board. For a full account of the *Hermione* mutiny, Hamilton's recapture of the ship and the aftermath see Pope, D. *The Black Ship*, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), James, W. *The Naval History of Great Britain, Vol. II* (London, 1837) pp. 360-366 and Spinney 'The *Hermione* Mutiny' *The Mariner's Mirror* XLI, 1955, pp.123-136

<sup>31</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>32</sup> The court martial evidence (ADM1 5360) revealed that Hamilton had, as a punishment, had the aged gunner of the *Trent* lashed to the rigging during inclement weather. This was a clear breach of Admiralty regulations that stated that warrant and commissioned officers could only be punished by court martial.

<sup>33</sup> ADM12 27E. The Admiralty Black Book was a record of sea officers who had misdemeanours to their name that could be consulted when promotions and appointments were being considered.

<sup>34</sup> ADM51 1352

<sup>35</sup> Slope, N. *HMS Trent, A Social Survey: 5 April 1796 to 25 July 1797* (unpublished MA Dissertation, Thames Valley University, 1996) p. 38

<sup>36</sup> Jackson, G. V. *The Perilous Adventures of a Naval Officer 1801-1812* (London, 1927) pp. 4-12

<sup>37</sup> In particular James, W. *The Naval History of Great Britain, Vol. I-VI* (London, 1837) and Clowes, W. L. *The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present* Vol. I-VI (London 1899)

<sup>38</sup> In particular O'Byrne, W. R. *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1849)

<sup>39</sup> Nastyface, J. *Nautical Economy or Forecastle Recollections of Events During the Last War* (London, 1836)

<sup>40</sup> Byrn states that Nastyfaces' memoirs 'were written with a definite political purpose' and this was to influence the case for Navy reform of impressment and discipline in the 1830s (Byrn Jr. J. D. *Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy*, (Aldershot, 1989) p. 2).

<sup>41</sup> Baynham, H. *From the Lower Deck: The Old Navy* (London, 1969)

<sup>42</sup> Nicol, J. *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner* ed. Gordon Grant, (Edinburgh, 1822 reprinted London 1937)

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- <sup>43</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *Naval Records for Genealogists*, Public Office Record Handbooks No. 22 (HMSO, 1988) p. 2
- <sup>44</sup> Pappalardo, B. *Tracing your Naval Ancestors* (Public Records Office, 2002) p.99
- <sup>45</sup> Rodger *Naval Records* p. 45
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted Lavery, B (ed.), *Shipboard Life and Organisation 1731-1815* (NRS, 1998) p.14
- <sup>47</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960)
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 81
- <sup>49</sup> Slope, N. *HMS Trent, A Social Survey: 5 April 1796 to 25 July 1797* (unpublished MA Dissertation, Thames Valley University, 1996)
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid. p. 8
- <sup>51</sup> Haythornthwaite, P. J. *The Napoleonic Source Book*, (London, 1990) p. 215
- <sup>52</sup> Slope p. 78
- <sup>53</sup> For technical details of the ships looked at see Chapter 2.
- <sup>54</sup> Goodwin, P. *Nelson's Ships: A History of the Vessels in Which he Served 1771-1805* (London, 2002) p. 234
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 73
- <sup>56</sup> Gardiner, G., *Frigates of the Napoleonic Wars*, (London, 2000) pp. 152-179. For details on frigate duties see Chapter 2.
- <sup>57</sup> For example, in January 1799 11 men were transferred to the *Glenmore* from the *Expedition* a small cutter that had a crew of around 55 men (ADM36 15089 and Lyon, D., *The Sailing Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy - built, purchased and captured 1688-1860* (Conway, 1993) p. 101) and in October 1801 49 men were transferred from *HMS Russell* a 74 gun man-of-war with a crew of around 550 men also to the *Glenmore* (ADM36 15091 and Lyon p. 69).
- <sup>58</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* pp. 348-368
- <sup>59</sup> Nelson's prayer written just prior to the Battle of Trafalgar predicts victory and following his mortal wound during the battle he tells Captain Hardy that he expected to take 20 of the enemy vessels. The French Admiral Villeneuve's state of mind seems one of a man already defeated and there was much discussion between the Combined Fleet's captains as to whether they should face the inferior British Fleet or not (Clayton, T. and Craig, P. *Trafalgar: The Men, the Battle, the Storm* (London, 2004) pp. 137-8, 241-2 and p. 85)

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<sup>60</sup> Haythornthwaite p. 215

<sup>61</sup> For an early look at discipline on board *HMS Trent* see: Slope, N. *Discipline Desertion and Death: HMS Trent 1796-1803*, Chatham Historic Dockyard, July 1997 (awaiting publication as part of the proceedings of the 1797 Mutiny Conference)

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, C. and Press, J. *Databases in Historical Research: Theory, Methods and Applications* (London, 1996) p. 22

<sup>63</sup> Lewis, M. J. and Lloyd-Jones, R. *Using Computers in History: A Practical Guide* (London, 1996) p. 22

<sup>64</sup> See Microsoft Access *User's Guide* (Microsoft Corporation, 1992) for a full breakdown of Access capabilities

<sup>65</sup> The tables are: 'Crew' (this consists of the data from the crew muster entries), 'Marines' (marine muster entries), 'Boys First Class' (boy first class muster entries), 'Boys Second Class' (boy second class muster entries), 'Boys Third Class' (boy third class muster entries), 'Crew Changes' (crew rating changes from the muster books), 'Muster Table' (muster table complement from the muster book), 'Punishment' (floggings recorded in the logs), 'Marine Punishment' (marine floggings recorded in the logs) and 'Captains and Master's Logs' (a weekly summary of the log books).

<sup>66</sup> Rodger *Naval Records* p. 38

<sup>67</sup> The large difference between the numbers of crew serving on the various commissions is due to the length of service of each commission which ranged from *Emerald1*'s commission of just under ten years to *Emerald2*'s commission that lasted half that period (see Chapter 2).

<sup>68</sup> Lavery, B., *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815*, (London, 1989) p. 146

<sup>69</sup> The marines were organised on shore from three 'Divisions' these were Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth and then drafted into ships when need arose (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* pp. 148-150)

## Chapter 2

### ‘You are all Frigate Mad’:<sup>1</sup>

#### The Ships and the Men

##### Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical and technical framework and context for the findings from the four frigate commissions (*Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore*). The first section **Amazon Class Frigates** gives the technical details of the three frigates and the second section **The Role of Frigates** considers what duties frigates were called upon to carry out and gives examples of these duties from the log and muster books of the frigates in question. The section **History, Sea Time and Gunnery Practice** details the history, the amount of time that the ships spent at sea as opposed to being moored and the amount of gunnery practice recorded for each of the frigates in turn. The section on **Muster Tables** examines the muster tables that were set out at the beginning of each muster book. These tables were compiled as an easy reference document for the Admiralty to be able to ascertain the number of men serving on board, those men who were part of the ship’s company but who were deployed elsewhere (such as prize crews), the number of men too sick to carry out their duties and the number of passengers and prisoners of war carried by the vessel at any given time. The muster tables have been transcribed onto a database for each of the commissions and the results interrogated and analysed. The final section **Conclusion** brings the findings together.

### ***Amazon* Class Frigates**

The three frigates under consideration are *HMS Trent*, *Emerald* and *Glenmore* (originally called *Tweed*). These ships were all of the 'Amazon' class of frigate; *Amazon* the first of the class was wrecked off Ile de Bass in 1797 two years after launching in the 'Droits de l'Homme'<sup>2</sup> action and therefore does not feature in this study. All of the *Amazon* class were designed by Sir William Rule and were fifth rate 36 gun frigates. They were 926 tonnes, 143 feet in length, 38 feet width and armed with twenty six 18 pounder, eight nine pounder, two 12 pounder cannon as well as two 32 pounder and two 12 pounder carronades.<sup>3</sup> The frigates carried a theoretical complement of 264 men, marines and boys.<sup>4</sup>

The *Amazon* and *Emerald* were launched in 1795 and the *Trent* and *Glenmore* in 1796. The major significant difference between the frigates was that *Amazon* and *Emerald* were primarily constructed of oak while *Trent* and *Glenmore* were built out of fir. The advantages of fir built vessels were that they allowed a speedier construction time and oak was, at that time, in short supply.<sup>5</sup> The disadvantages of fir were that the wood rotted much quicker than oak and was said to splinter easier in action.<sup>6</sup> The use of different woods appears to be reflected in the ship's length of service. Both *Trent* and *Glenmore* saw nearly seven years active service while *Emerald* saw 15 years active service. This supports Albion's argument that the average duration of fir built ships was between six and eight years.<sup>7</sup> However when the *Trent* and *Emerald* were decommissioned from active service they continued serving in other roles. The *Trent* became a hospital ship moored in the Cove of Cork from 1803 until 1815 and the *Emerald* became a receiving ship in Portsmouth

Harbour from 1812 to 1822. The basic details of the three frigates under consideration are:<sup>8</sup>

*Trent*: Launched 1796 (Woolwich Dockyard), fir built, commissioned on active service March 1796 decommissioned June 1803

*Emerald1*: Launched 1795 (Pitcher, Northfleet), oak built, commissioned on active service August 1795 decommissioned March 1805.

*Emerald2*: re-commissioned on active service June 1806 decommissioned December 1811.

*Glenmore*: Launched 1796 (Woolwich Dockyard), fir built, commissioned on active service April 1796 decommissioned January 1803

### **The Role of Frigates**

Frigates performed different roles to that of ships-of-the-line.<sup>9</sup> They were not normally expected to fight in the great fleet actions such as Trafalgar (1805) or Camperdown (1797) and there was a convention, observed by all sides during the wars, that, in a fleet action, frigates would not be fired on unless they fired first.<sup>10</sup> In the Battle of the Nile (1798) when Admiral Lord Nelson defeated the French fleet under Admiral De Bruey, the French frigate *Sérieuse*, in a desperate attempt to stop the British ships getting to the landward side of the anchored French line, fired on the 74-gun ship-of-the-line *HMS Orion* injuring two men. The *Orion* replied with a single broadside that reduced the frigate to matchwood and she sunk shortly after.<sup>11</sup> Frigates played an important role in fleet actions as scouts, ‘the eyes of the fleet’, and in repeating signals between ships during the smoke and confusion of battle. However, despite the fact that the frigates under consideration often accompanied major fleets they were never called upon to repeat signals during battle. During the



Nile campaign lack of frigates severely hampered Nelson and he wrote to the Admiralty stating that 'Were I to die this moment "want of frigates" would be found engraved on my heart'.<sup>12</sup> During the 1797 campaign that led to the Battle of Camperdown the *Trent* was employed in such a scouting activity. From March to July 1797 the captain's log records that the *Trent* was working as part of Admiral Duncan's fleet observing the Dutch fleet moored in the Texel. The *Trent* would sail within range of the Dutch shore batteries and then signal back to Duncan on the Dutch fleet's state of preparedness for sea.<sup>13</sup> Frigates were often used as supply vessels taking out water and stores to fleets at sea, particularly during the close blockade of the French and Spanish Atlantic ports. For example, *Emerald2* performed this service running between Plymouth Harbour and the British fleet blockading the French coast between May and August 1808. During this period there are frequent references in the captain's log to 'supplying ship's of the squadron with supplies'.<sup>14</sup>

Frigates were often employed in a *guerre de course* role, protecting British commercial shipping, attacking enemy merchantmen and stopping and checking merchant vessels, their papers and cargoes. All the frigates under consideration were employed in this role at one time or another and it would appear that this was what they did most of the time. For example, the captain's log of *Emerald2* records in April 1807 when patrolling off Cape Finesterre that 'boarded an American ship from Philadelphia bound to Liverpool which had been captured by a French Privateer ten days since, took possession of her'. A few days earlier after chasing and firing several shots the *Emerald2* 'captured a Spanish Poleacre'<sup>15</sup> *Prince of Asturias* and then chased a 'strange sail' and after firing at the chase 'took possession of the *Austerlitz* French Privateer Brig of Nancy'.<sup>16</sup> The capturing of enemy vessels and the recapture

of friendly merchantmen was, apart from any patriotic feelings, a matter of great concern to all members of the ship's company. Throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars any ship taken that was considered to be a lawful prize was sold and the sale price distributed by a complicated formulae to all the ship's company. This was an age when there was not seen to be a conflict of interest between serving your country and enriching yourself in the process. Hill estimates that during the course of the wars around £30 million was awarded in prize money, a staggering amount of money for the period.<sup>17</sup> Wareham states that frigates took over twice as much prize money as ships-of-the-line<sup>18</sup> and that this, along with other factors, made service in frigates most desirable for aspirational midshipmen and he quotes the narrative of William Henry Dillon who states that 'Several of the Mids became dissatisfied with the duty of a line of battle ship. They were not only anxious for more active service, but also to touch some Prize Money. Their applications to the Captain (Gambier) to remove them into frigates annoyed him, and he used frequently to declare, "You are all frigate mad"'.<sup>19</sup> Ships sailing together would often agree to share prize money and it is clear that the captains would consult the ship's company on this issue and that any agreement reached was considered important enough to record in the log books. For example the captain's log for *Emerald* for November 1799 states that 'the Ship's Company agreed to share prize money and other money arising from captures with *HMS Powerful, Swiftsure, Phoenix and Incendiary*'.<sup>20</sup> As well as stopping vessels at sea, another method of capturing enemy merchantmen was to send the ship's small boats 'armed and manned' into enemy controlled ports, harbours and anchorages, normally during the hours of darkness. If all went well, the enemy vessel(s) were captured by boarding parties from the boats, their mooring lines were cut and then they were sailed out to rendezvous with the waiting frigate. This operation was

referred to as 'cutting out'<sup>21</sup> enemy ships. If the vessels could not be captured then they were often set on fire but of course this meant that no prize money was then forthcoming. All of the frigates under consideration were involved in cutting out enemy vessels at one time or another. For instance the captain's log of the *Trent* records that during June 1799 when the ship was off Porto Rico that 'sent the green and small cutter after a schooner in the (Augauda) bay...heard firing...small cutter returned with wounded men...the green cutter returned towing a French prize...received 10 prisoners'.<sup>22</sup> The *Trent's* muster book reveals that the captured vessel was the '*Triumphant* schooner prize'. The muster book also reveals that the ship's coxswain Robert Williams (T558) subsequently died of the wounds that he had received in this action.<sup>23</sup>

A large part of protecting British merchantmen consisted of convoy escort. This was clearly not a popular task with frigate captains<sup>24</sup> and the logs of the three frigates are peppered with feisty entries concerning merchant ships that failed to obey escort commands. It was not unusual for the frigates to put shots across the bows of tardy merchant vessels. *Emerald* during a particularly difficult convoy escort of 70 merchantmen from the West Indies to Great Britain during the later part of 1804 and the early part of 1805 gives us a glimpse of one of the reasons for the unpopularity of such a task. After setting out from the West Indies the convoy immediately ran into foul weather and the *Emerald* found great difficulty in keeping the convoy together and getting the merchant vessel's masters to obey commands. The captain's log for 29 October 1804<sup>25</sup> records that 'strong gales with rain...at 6 found the head of the rudder as far as the pentail broke entirely off...at 9.15 made signal of distress to the convoy at 9 having carried away the rudder chain and pendant and the rudder beating so much

about as to endanger the stern post at 11 unhung it and cut it away'. The carpenters of the *Emerald* made a new rudder and it was shipped in heavy seas and the ship survived. The log records that 'received no assistance from the convoy'.<sup>26</sup> After reaching the stopping off place of the Island of Madeira in early December 1804 the convoy moored in Funchal Bay but the *Emerald*'s trials were far from over. The captain's log records that 'a merchant ship near us run on board and carried away the larboard quarter gallery and stove a cutter on the quarter' and a few days later the same thing happened but this time it was *Emerald*'s starboard quarter gallery that was destroyed.<sup>27</sup> No wonder convoy duty was unpopular.

Frigates were regularly employed ferrying personnel and these were almost always entered into the supernumerary columns of the ship's muster books either as 'supernumeraries for victuals' and occasionally 'supernumeraries for wages and victuals'. Personnel transported ranged from prisoners of war, soldiers and their families, displaced immigrants and invalids up to ambassadors and their retinues. For instance, during *Emerald*'s service in the West Indies during 1802 the captain's log for 18 April states that 'Came on board Lord Lavington and took to Bermuda Roads'.<sup>28</sup> The ship's muster book fills in more detail and records that the 'Right Honourable The Lord Lavington KB Governor General of Antigua' was on board. Furthermore he had with him the Speaker of the Assembly of Antigua, the Treasurer, the Chief Justice, the Governor's ADC as well as six servants.<sup>29</sup> A month later the captain's log records that 'received out of a schooner 100 men women and children emigrated from Guadeloupe'<sup>30</sup> and the muster book records the names of 100 individuals under the heading 'supernumeraries for victuals only' as 'for Antigua French emigrants escaped from Guadeloupe'.<sup>31</sup>

Frigates also got involved in land operations, either in conjunction with other forces or acting independently. On the face of it a single frigate would not seem an adequate force to take on land defences but as Gardiner points out<sup>32</sup> at the Battle of Salamanca in 1812 Wellington possessed 70 field pieces, none above 12 pounders. Each of the three frigates under consideration boasted 42 cannons and carronades, 26 of which were 18 pounders, the equivalent of well over half Wellingtons entire artillery component. Some frigate commanders, such as Lord Cochrane (later The Earl Dundonald),<sup>33</sup> specialised in raiding the enemy coastline and caused considerable damage, disruption and confusion. The *Trent*, *Emerald1* and *Emerald2* were all involved in individual attacks on land defences. It was quite often the case that such land attacks were to assist in the cutting out of enemy vessels. The captain's log of the *Trent* for 20 April 1799 states that 'sent in the boats to Porto Rico returned with one man dead and two schooners as prizes'<sup>34</sup> and the muster book confirms the death in action of quarter gunner Robert Cockburn (T213) 'killed by a shot from the enemy at Porto Rico'.<sup>35</sup> However we have more detail on this and a subsequent action from O'Byrne's naval biography.<sup>36</sup> Captain Robert Waller Otway (T553) was captain of the *Trent* at the time of this attack and in O'Byrne's biography of him states that:

*At the commencement of 1799 Captain Otway landed on the south side of Porto Rico, and surprised a battery of 6 24 pounders, under the protection of which lay an enemy schooner, whose capture was in consequence secured. In the execution of his service he displayed his accustomed tact, and, although he had but 1 man killed, was under the necessity of putting 20 enemy to the sword. A few weeks subsequently, being in the same vicinity with the SPARROW cutter, he discovered two French privateers, each*

*mounting 18 guns, together with a Spanish brig of 10 guns and some coasting vessels at anchor under a small battery within the Dead Man's Chest. The enemy's guns on shore were soon silenced by the TRENT, and her boats sent under cover of the SPARROW to attack the vessels. On their approach each of the privateers hoisted the bloody (red) flag, as an indication that no quarter would be given; but notwithstanding this they resolutely pushed on, and after a smart action carried the whole without losing a man, while the enemy had not less than 50 killed and wounded.<sup>37</sup>*

In these two actions Otway stormed the first protective land battery with a landing party and silenced the second using the *Trent's* firepower.

Both the *Trent* and *Emerald* were involved in land operations in conjunction with other ships. Most notoriously was that of Nelson's ill-fated attack on the Spanish town of Santa Cruz on the island of Tenerife in 1797 in which the *Emerald* played an important and tragic part. A squadron of British ships (*Theseus* (74), *Culloden* (74), *Zealous* (74), *Leander* (50) frigates *Seahorse*, *Emerald*, *Terpsichore*, cutter *Fox* and bomb-vessel *Terror*) under the command of the then Commodore Nelson attempted an opposed landing on the seaport of Santa Cruz.<sup>38</sup> The Spanish defenders put up a spirited and well-organised defence and defeated the attempted landing. The proposed landing force included around 100 of the *Emerald's* men, 10 of which were packed with around 200 men into the *Fox* cutter as a reserve force. The rest of the *Emerald's* men commanded by their captain Thomas M. Waller (E351) landed on Aduana Beach as part of Captain Troubridge's force and fought their way into the main town square. However as the other attacks had failed, the force became isolated and only managed

to get back to their ships by threatening to burn down the town unless they were allowed to leave unmolested. During the assault the *Fox* had received a 24 pounder shot through the waterline and had sunk with heavy loss of life.<sup>39</sup> The captain's log of the *Emerald* records that '...was told that the Fox cutter was sinking. At 3 saw her go down 2 men swam from the cutter'.<sup>40</sup> It was a disaster and the *Emerald* lost 10 men drowned in the *Fox*, four sailors killed in action, three marines killed in action and two sailors who subsequently died of their wounds.<sup>41</sup> *Emerald* was then given the unenviable task of taking the dispatches concerning the defeat and news of Nelson losing his right arm back to the fleet moored off Cadiz.<sup>42</sup>

### **History, Sea Time and Gunnery Practice**

The following information concerning the three frigates (four commissions) is primarily based on the captains and master's logs. The log books were largely concerned with technical matters of sailing and fighting the ship such as position, weather, sail settings, headings, crew duties, discipline, gun practice and administrative details such as supplies that were spoilt and had to be thrown away. Other events considered worthy of note were also recorded but these were entered at the whim of the ship's master and/or captain. This largely idiosyncratic filling in of 'events' means that the following information should be taken as indicative of what was occurring on board the frigates at any one time rather than as a definitive statement of frigate life.

The captains and master's logs of the four commissions were studied in some detail and put onto a table within a ship's commission database. This allowed cross-referencing and database interrogation between the crew muster records and the logs.

This is a unique approach to the use of databases in naval history and has enabled some important information to be revealed, in particular concerning frigate sea time (as opposed to time spent moored or anchored) and the frequency that the crew practised gunnery. However there are gaps in the log entries for all the ships looked at ranging from around four weeks (*Trent*, *Emerald1* and *Emerald2*) to 30 months (*Glenmore*).

### ***Trent***

The *Trent*'s logs commence on 27 June 1796 whilst she was fitting out for sea following her launch in March of that year. In August she escorted a convoy to Norway and then joined Admiral Duncan's North Sea fleet blockading the Dutch fleet in the Texel. She spent the next year with the North Sea fleet but then got involved in the Nore mutinies. The captain's log for early May 1797 states that 'read a late Act of Parliament respecting the Navy to the ship's company' and a few days later 'read a memo of the 18th inst. From the Lord's Commissioners of the Admiralty... likewise a letter from the Commander in Chief signifying that good order and discipline is restored in the fleet'.<sup>43</sup> On 22 May 1797 the crew of the *Trent* mutinied and refused to raise their anchor and leave their moorings.<sup>44</sup> Duncan had his flagship *HMS Venerable* taken alongside the *Trent*, the gunports opened and the guns run out. The crew of the *Trent* then wisely unmoored. News then reached Duncan that the enemy Dutch fleet was preparing to sail. However contrary winds prevented Duncan from setting sail until 29 May. As Duncan sailed out of the Thames estuary one by one his ships mutinied and turned back to join the main mutiny at the Nore or to return to their moorings at Yarmouth. By the time that Duncan reached the Texel he only had two line-of-battle ships (*Venerable* and *Adamant*), two frigates (*Trent* and *Circe*) and



some unrated vessels with him. In order to convince the Dutch that he had his whole fleet with him, Duncan ordered the *Trent* and the *Circe* to patrol the Texel and send out signals to a non-existent British fleet supposedly below the horizon. The ruse proved successful and the Dutch fleet remained in harbour.<sup>45</sup> The *Trent* took no further part in the Nore mutinies and in July 1797 sailed to join the Channel fleet at Portsmouth. The captain's log records that on 15 October 'a great illumination and firing took place in honour of Admiral Duncan and the fleet under his command having totally defeated the Dutch fleet'.<sup>46</sup> This was in celebration of the Battle of Camperdown when Duncan defeated the Dutch fleet after it had finally left the shelter of the Texel. In November 1797 the *Trent* left the Channel fleet and sailed to the West Indies on convoy escort. The *Trent* stayed in the West Indies spending most of her time cruising between the various islands checking shipping and taking enemy merchantmen and privateers until returning home to Portsmouth in September 1800.<sup>47</sup> Following a major refit at Spithead the *Trent* spent her time working with the Channel fleet in blockading the French Atlantic ports, checking shipping and raiding enemy shipping until February 1802 when she sailed again to the West Indies.<sup>48</sup> The country was no longer at war as the Peace of Amiens (March 1802 to May 1803)<sup>49</sup> had been signed and so the *Trent* was engaged in peacetime duties for the next 14 months. The *Trent* sailed back to Portsmouth in February 1803 and after a short interlude working with the Channel fleet the ship was decommissioned and the crew was paid off in June 1803.<sup>50</sup> The *Trent* was turned into a hospital ship and moored in the Cove of Cork until 1815.

Rodger's calculation is that a fifth rate frigate would expect to log up 50% sea time.<sup>51</sup> Although Rodger's calculation is based on an earlier period (1758 to 1762), not that

much had changed in vessel capability except that copper sheathing had now been fitted to almost all Royal Navy vessels<sup>52</sup> allowing less time in port or beaching for cleaning hulls. Every day of the *Trent's* commission has been looked at in order to calculate as to whether the ship was 'at sea',<sup>53</sup> moored, anchored or docked to see how this matched Rodger's estimate. Of the 2,490 days that were considered (this is slightly less than the *Trent's* full commission as some four weeks of log entries are missing) the *Trent* was at sea for 1,350 (54%) and moored for 1140 (46%). This is very close to Rodger's estimate and perhaps the copper sheathing is responsible for the extra 4% of sea time.

It has largely been a given that British gunnery was superior to that of French and Spanish<sup>54</sup> but some historians have recently questioned if this was indeed the case.<sup>55</sup> Each time that gunnery training, termed 'exercising the great guns' in the logs, took place has been recorded as well as live firing of the guns in order to help answer this question as to the efficiency of British naval gunnery. It was Admiralty instructions that captains should train their men in the use of the great guns and a small annual allowance of powder, an expensive commodity, was provided for this purpose.<sup>56</sup> There were a total of 28 recorded instances of 'exercising the great guns' and three instances of live practice firing during the *Trent's* commission. This works out at around one practice every three months and a live firing once every year and a half. On the face of it this seems an incredibly low amount of gunnery drill but it is quite possible that not all practices were recorded. However every captain that served on board the *Trent* logged practice gunnery several times therefore we are not seeing some captains logging practice and others not. It is also possible that training on

individual guns was carried out frequently and not logged and only when the captain decided to drill the whole ship at once was this recorded.

### ***Emerald1***

Of the four commissions looked at, that of *Emerald1* is by far the longest and eventful. The *Emerald1* was commissioned on 22 August 1795 and de-commissioned for a major refit on 18 March 1805 and was in commission for a total of 496 weeks or nine and a half years. After fitting out was completed at Woolwich Dockyard the *Emerald1* sailed to Portsmouth to join the Channel fleet. In early February 1796 the frigate set out for her first operational cruise but met heavy storms off Ushant and lost her mainmast overboard and had to limp home to Portsmouth. Two months later she escorted a convoy to the River Tagus and spent some months thereafter on convoy duty eventually joining Sir John Jervis' fleet based at Gibraltar.<sup>57</sup> On the 10 February 1797 lookouts on the *Emerald1* spotted the Spanish fleet at sea off Cadiz and hoisting all sail sped to give Sir John the news. The fleet set out in pursuit and on the 14 February 1797 caught up with and defeated the Spanish fleet at the Battle of Cape St. Vincent.<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately the *Emerald1* was not present at the battle but could hear and see it as she desperately attempted to beat up and join the British fleet. This had unfortunate consequences for the crew of the *Emerald1* as she was refused a share of the prize money awarded to the British crews that had taken part in the battle. This was too much for the *Emerald1*'s boatswain Patrick Toben (E266) and he was overheard saying that the ship's crew should mutiny. Toben was court-martialled, found guilty and hung at the *Emerald*'s yardarm on 19 August 1797.<sup>59</sup> The *Emerald1* then joined Commodore Nelson on the ill-fated attack on Santa Cruz (see above).

The *Emerald* remained based in the Tagus and took several prizes.<sup>60</sup> In May 1798 *Emerald* was ordered to join Rear Admiral Nelson as part of the fleet put together to regain control of the Mediterranean and to attack Napoleon's Egyptian venture. She took an active part in what has become known as the Nile Campaign including capturing a French vessel out of Toulon carrying dispatches. Like all of Nelson's frigates she was not present at the Battle of the Nile on 1 August 1798 but joined the victorious fleet in Aboukir Bay on 13 August. The *Emerald* spent the next two years serving in the Mediterranean and off the Spanish Atlantic coast until she returned to Portsmouth for a refit in early October 1800.<sup>61</sup> In February 1801 the *Emerald* left Portsmouth and, as part of an escort of '110 sail of convoy', sailed for the West Indies. After arriving at the Island of Barbados the *Emerald* cruised the Caribbean protecting British shipping and harassing enemy commerce. On 13 August 1801 the ship hit a submerged reef and the captain's log records that 'struck and stuck fast on a sunken rock...made signals of distress and fired guns... start water and throw ballast overboard, put great guns into a sloop, assisted by *HMS Magnaime*... ship making water at 3 1/2 inches in two hours'. The *Emerald* managed to limp into English Harbour, Antigua where she spent the next three months in dock being repaired. The captain of the ship James O'Bryen (E487) was court-martialled for running onto the reef but the captain's log for January 1801 records that 'captain found not guilty by court martial for having run the ship on an uncharted reef'.<sup>62</sup> The Peace of Amiens was now in full effect and so the *Emerald* took up peacetime duties. In May 1803 war resumed and *Emerald* started cruising the Caribbean stopping and checking shipping. On sailing out of English Harbour, Antigua in early November 1803 the captain's log records that 'at 6.40 put the helm a lee to tack ship and in hauling the head yards the ship struck on the NE point ...found she had stuck fast'. The ship

started making water and soon the crew became exhausted from pumping ship. However the local planters rallied round and 'came on board a great many Negroes from different estates who was kept at the pumps'. A total of nearly 300 Negroes as well as men from the 64<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot came on board the ship and stayed from 11 to 17 November helping to keep the ship afloat. The ship eventually limped back into harbour and spent the next four months undergoing repairs. In April 1804 the *Emerald* accompanied a fleet under Commodore Hood that re-took the Dutch province of Surinam (Surinam had been previously captured by the British but had been returned as part of the Amiens Peace Settlement). Once again the *Emerald* ran aground but this time managed to re-float herself without significant damage. Running aground was always a problem in the shallow seas of the Caribbean. Shortly after the capture of Surinam the *Emerald* returned to England to pick up and escort a convoy back to the West Indies. This task completed she escorted an eastbound convoy back to the British Isles. However she encountered heavy seas and nearly foundered on several occasions, at one stage losing her rudder (see above) and diverting to the Tagus estuary in order to carry out repairs until she was seaworthy enough to make Portsmouth, which she did on 16 March 1805. The *Emerald* was then de-commissioned and the crew paid off.<sup>63</sup>

In looking at *Emerald*'s sea time the first few months of the ship's commission have been ignored as the ship was some way away from being ready for sea and a large number of the crew had not been recruited. Therefore a total of 468 weeks (3,276 days) continuous service have been analysed for days at sea and days moored. The *Emerald* spent a total 1,975 days (60%) 'at sea' and 1,319 days (40%) moored. This is higher than the *Trent*'s 56% and considerably higher than Rodger's 50% figure. It

could be that the fact that the *Emerald1* was oak built meant that she did not have to go in for repairs as often as the fir built *Trent* although her tendency to run aground and then have to spend considerable time in dock undergoing repairs would mitigate against this difference. It is also possible that spending so much time in the generally quieter Mediterranean and Caribbean also meant that she required less dock time.

Gunnery practice was also put onto the database whenever it was recorded in the *Emerald1*'s logs. A total of 93 gun drills were recorded and five live practice fires. This equates to a practice session around once every five weeks and a live firing just under once every two years. Again this seems an incredibly low number of practice sessions given the supposed superiority of British naval gunnery of the period and if these figures are accurate begs the question of whether it was indeed superior to other navies? During this commission *Emerald1* had four captains so we can rule out a single captain's idiosyncratic behaviour in limited gunnery practice. It is possible that an accurate record was not kept of gunnery practices; unfortunately most of the gunner's records from the period have not survived so we cannot check powder and shot expenditure.<sup>64</sup> However a master's log entry<sup>65</sup> for *Emerald1* in March 1798 reads 'drew the guns being long charged... 9 eighteen, 5 nine and 3 thirty two pound cartridges unserviceable' and this seems to support the evidence of there being little live gunnery practice.

### ***Emerald2***

From March 1805 the *Emerald* underwent a major rebuild in dock at Deptford on the Thames. The work completed, she was re-commissioned on 3 June 1806 and served until 2 December 1811 and a total of 276 weeks (just over five years) of her

commission have been recorded on the database. The first five months of *Emerald2*'s commission was spent in getting the ship ready for sea.<sup>66</sup> At the commencement of *Emerald2*'s active service the Hon Frederick Lewis Maitland (EM227) was appointed captain on 27 November 1811.<sup>67</sup> Maitland was to serve as *Emerald2*'s captain for the rest of the ship's commission and of the four commissions looked at this is unique. Maitland was the cousin of the Earl of Lauderdale and is described by Wareham as '...an exemplary seaman and excelled as a cruiser' and he quotes Captain Michael Seymour of the frigate *Amethyst* (*Amethyst* and *Emerald2* worked together for some time off the French coast) who wrote that Maitland was 'the best cruiser I ever met with, we have taken the *Le Patrie* (letter of marque)...*Le Serpent* (letter of marque)...*La Coroline* brig...*La Venturier* (letter of marque)'.<sup>68</sup> The *Emerald2* started her active service with the Channel fleet based in Portsmouth and Plymouth and her main activity was patrolling the Western Approaches and the Atlantic coast of France. Maitland soon started his war on French shipping and the captain's log for January 1807 records that 'in company with Renown and Santa Marganta... 1.30 2 sail close in with the Isle of Groa made sail in chase of them at 2 fired several shot at a French lugger drove her on shore out boats and took possession of a French Ketch the *Angelique* of Nantz loaded with salt. 1 man in the cutter got wounded by a musquet (sic) shot from the shore...' and three months later 'captured a Spanish Poleacre *Prince of Asturias*...took possession of the *Austerlitz* French Privateer Brig of Nancy'.<sup>69</sup> The *Emerald2*'s successes against enemy shipping continued but she also took part in reconnoitring the French fleet blockade in the port of L'Orient and patrolling off Bordeaux.<sup>70</sup>

1808 continued in much the same way as the previous year. The captain's log for March 1808 includes two typical actions 'at 4.30 saw a schooner in Vivero Bay...cleared ship for action. At 5 anchored, engaged two Forts, sent boats which stormed the batteries and spiked the guns, sent two boats to take possession of the schooner. At 8 people employed in getting her off under a heavy fire of musketry from the shore...At 9.30 a battery opened from the southward a heavy fire at the ship. At 11.30 the boats returned, set fire to her finding it impossible to get her off, she is called *L'Aprupos* a French schooner pierced for 16 guns and mounting eight eighteen pound carronades' and 'at 1 a battery from the WNW opened a very heavy fire at the ship. At 2 silenced it...lost the large cutter with all her gear. Observed several gun boats in chase of a brig...made chase. At 9 calm saw 6 gun boats pulling for the ship...At 9.30 commenced a heavy fire on them, received several shot in the hull and rigging...gun boats returned into Veras Bay...bore up and spoke to an English brig privateer'.<sup>71</sup> In April 1809 the *Emerald*<sup>2</sup> joined Lord Gambier's fleet that was about to attack the French fleet of nine capital ships lying in the Basque roadstead with fireships. The captain's log records for 11 April 1809 that 'cleared for action, West Point Isle of Aix SWBS fired several broadsides. At 9 the Fire ships closed with the enemy's fleet...at midnight fire ships still burning...people at quarters...saw 13 of the enemy aground'.<sup>72</sup> Although none of the French ships had caught alight the British fireships had done their work, as most of the French vessels, having cut their cables to avoid the fireships, were aground. There then seemed to be a paralysis of command and no follow up action to take advantage of the grounded French fleet was ordered. Following the attack there was much criticism of Gambier and he was court-martialled for his actions. He was acquitted of incompetence although one of his chief

reference  
Gambier  
single ship



critics, Frederick Maitland, who was now stationed, with *Emerald2* with the Irish squadron based at Cork, was not available to give evidence.<sup>73</sup>

The *Emerald2* based at Cork continued harassing enemy shipping until April 1811 when she sailed to Portsmouth Harbour for a two-month refit and took on board stores for a trip to the Cape of Good Hope. The ship had orders to escort a convoy and to take Lieutenant General Sir John Craddock, his wife, son and servants to the Cape. The round trip to the Cape was conducted without incident although the captain's log records that some beef was lost overboard due to 'the carelessness of George Foulston (EM116) which was ordered to be charged against his wages' and on the return to Portsmouth in November 1811 one of the last entries records that 'employed getting Captain Maitland's wine to the custom house'.<sup>74</sup>

The sea time for the *Emerald2*'s commission was not put onto the database<sup>75</sup> but the amount of recorded gun practice was. However it must be noted that effectively the *Emerald2* had only one captain during its five year commission, albeit an active one. There were a total of 37 recorded instances of 'exercising the great guns' and one recorded instance of live practice fire. This works out at an average of one practice every seven and a half weeks and one live practice fire in five years. Once again we are seeing a very low level of recorded gun drill.

### ***Glenmore***

Although the *Glenmore* was formally commissioned from April 1795 to December 1802, a period of around seven and a half years, the captains and master's logs are missing for around 30 months of this commission (October 1798 to March 1801). The

period of extant log entries amounts to 228 weeks or four and a quarter years and this is what the following information is based on. The *Glenmore* entered active service in July 1796 and joined her sister ship *Trent* with Admiral Duncan's North Sea fleet based at the Nore, Leith and Yarmouth roadstead. Until May 1797 the *Glenmore* was involved in escorting convoys to and from the Baltic, stopping and checking shipping, attacking enemy shipping and reconnaissance for the fleet. In May 1797 she was made part of the Channel Fleet and dispatched to Portsmouth where she arrived in time to take an active role in the fleet mutiny at Spithead. Unlike the *Trent*'s officers, a detailed account of the mutiny as it affected the *Glenmore*'s crew was kept in the captain's log and extracts are given below (the naval day started at midday rather than midnight therefore p.m. comes before a.m. on the daily record).<sup>76</sup>

*Sunday 7 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Unbent the sails and tallied the rigging.*

*AM: Employed about the rigging. Saw boats from St Helens board the Marlbro. And from her go to the London Admiral Colpoy's. Presently heard the firing of muskets and soon after.*

*Tuesday 9 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Moderate and cloudy. At 1 a boat came on board with a crew of delegates.*

*Assembled and harangued the people on the forecastle who gave three cheers upon their leaving the ship. Rove the yard ropes. Sailed the Marlbro and London with several frigates and sloops for St Helens. In the evening the ship's crew took possession of the small arms and powder chest. Ducked (threw overboard) the sergeant of marines and placed sentinels in all parts of the ship.*

*AM: Strong breezes. The crew still in a state of mutiny at 8 they sent a boat with delegates (elected representatives) to St Helens for orders as they sailed during the forenoon they replaced the fire arms in their places and requested they might be permitted to return to their duty which was agreed to by the officers but they were still frequently cheering and no duty done.*

*Wednesday 10 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Ditto weather. The delegates returned at 4 they ducked a marine.*

*AM: Moderate weather. At 8 two notices was given the commanding officer ordering Lieutenant Landless (G89), Mr Grey Surgeon (G78), Mr Swan Carpenter (G81) William Reckie Master's Mate (G14) and messers Warner (G295) and Garrett (G29) Midshipmen would be ready to leave the ship by 10 o'clock, but altered their minds respecting Mr Grey and sent his 1<sup>st</sup> Mate Mr Mackintosh (G45) along with the rest onshore in the launch after hearing the Act of Parliament read they returned to their duty.<sup>77</sup>*

*Thursday 11 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Moderate and hazy. Employed about the rigging.*

*AM: Fine. Answered our signal for a lieutenant who upon his return informed the ship's company that the fleet at St Helens were reconnected and quiet except the Mars and Latona frigate but that the seamen of the fleet were trying to quiet them. Swayed up the topmast and rattled down the rigging. Got the topgallant masts through the cap and sent a party to the dockyards.*

*Saturday 13 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Employed storing provisions and about the rigging.*

*AM: Received a lighter of coals and stores from the yard. Ships company in a state of mutiny*

*Sunday 14 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Employed reaving running rigging and cleaning ship, got the lower yards up, arrived and anchored here Admiral Roger Curtis and squadron. Ships company in a state of mutiny*

*Monday 15 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Employed about the rigging. A boat with delegates attending Lord Howe.*

*Remain in a state of mutiny.*

*Tuesday 16 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Employed scraping and washing the decks. At 3 answered the signal for all captains at 4 the captain returned and informed the ship's company that the fleet has returned to their duty and that officers who had been sent on shore was to be again received and the people to bring forward their complaints against them in order that they might be tried by Court Martial. A boat was sent for our officers which meeting with that attending Lord Howe the delegates refused their coming on board at all.*

*AM: Employed cleaning the ship, sailmakers repairing the Mizen Topsail. Rove the remainder of the running rigging. The people quick and at their duty.*

*Wednesday 17 May 1797: Moored in Spithead*

*PM: Cleaned between decks. At 2 the captain read His Majesty's Proclamation and pardon to the people.*

*AM: Fresh breezes and cloudy with rain. Sailed Admiral Lord Bridport with the fleet under his command to the westward. Employed as before.*

On 26 May the *Glenmore* sailed from Spithead in order to join the Irish squadron based in Cork Harbour. On route they captured a smuggler in Cawsand Bay after 'firing 10 shots at her' and then sailed to Belfast Loch.<sup>78</sup> In August 1798 the *Glenmore* moored in Cork Harbour and this was to be her base until the end of her commission. She spent most of her time patrolling the Western Approaches checking shipping and chasing enemy vessels. In May 1798 while escorting a convoy the captain's log records that they met a ship that reported to them the 'Rebel Uprising of United Irish Men'. The *Glenmore* immediately joined the Irish squadron in search of French ships landing troops. On the 20 June, off Wexford, the log reports that 'squadron in company...boats from *Glenmore*, *Endymion*, *Malumpus*, *Phoenix* and *Unicorn* plus 5 cutters sent against rebel outposts'. Later the log reported that troops had routed rebels and Rebel generals 'Roach Hayes... Bishop Sutton' had been killed at the Battle of Vinegar Hill.<sup>79</sup> Following the putting down of the rebellion the *Glenmore* returned to her patrolling duties for the next couple of years.<sup>80</sup>

In June 1801 the *Glenmore* set sail as convoy escort 'for Newfoundland' but shortly after setting out they found an east bound convoy that 'had lost their escort in a storm' and the *Glenmore* took over escorting this convoy. As they approached the Irish coast the convoy was attacked by a French privateer that managed to burn one of the convoy before being chased and captured by the *Glenmore*. The *Glenmore* then had

an immense stroke of luck and spotted four ships that turned out to be West Indiamen that had been taken by the 'Bravo French Privateer'. The *Glenmore* sailed into Cork Harbour with her four re-captured vessels and, no doubt, frantic calculations were taking place on board about the amount of prize money due to the crew.<sup>81</sup>

On 1 October 1801 the captain's log records that able seaman Joseph Williamson (G143) was hung at the yardarm of the *Glenmore* 'by sentence of a court martial'. The court martial of Williamson was held on board *HMS Gladiator*, Portsmouth Harbour and concerned events that had started some months earlier when the *Glenmore's* captain, George Duff (G1) had been promoted and replaced by Captain John Talbot (G461) in February 1801.<sup>82</sup> It would appear that Duff had been a popular captain and that the crew was not so enamoured with his replacement Talbot. This dissatisfaction with Talbot eventually led the crew to petition (the petition was attached as an annex to the court martial proceedings) the authorities concerning him.<sup>83</sup>

*Cove of Cork May 2<sup>nd</sup> on board His Majesties Ship Glenmore*

*Sir*

*We humbly beg pardon for taking of addressing you but we hope the occasion will excuse us the transition from the command of a paternal officer to one quite the worse makes it necessary to implore your interference as British seamen we wish to serve our King and country and as such we wish to be used, but it is different, it is needless to enumerate the several occasions of our grievances we shall relate a few out of numbers. Viz;*

*The appellation of cowards lubberly rascals and every epithet of degradation is common to us the B. Mates is allowed to carry sticks with orders to thrash us aft that we might get three dozen a man two men was punished for not carrying M. S. hammocks up though they being on their duty on deck the same time he told all hands any one man that would come before him let the complaint be as it would he would punish him, two marines was punished on account of prisoners getting drunk though having no charge of them, we hope you will be pleased to give us a personal hearing and our wish is to be draughted or our captain changed for we never can think of going to sea under the command of Captain Talbot again.*

*We remain sir with the greatest respect your most obedient and humble servants.*

*Signed by the crew of His Mass. Ship Glenmore<sup>84</sup>*

The captain's log for early June 1801 records that 'Thomas Oxford, Charles Turner and Robert Philips sent to *HMS Dryad* as prisoners for mutiny. Lawrence Kelly put in irons for same'.<sup>85</sup> At the subsequent court martial Joseph Williamson (G143), John Daniel (G396), Thomas Oxford (G309), Robert Philips (G393) and Charles Turner (G458) were charged with 'having been guilty of Mutiny and taken an oath not to proceed to sea while Captain John Talbot commanded her (the *Glenmore*)'. The court was read the letter of complaint from Captain Talbot. The trial then began. The first witness called was Lieutenant John Clayton and the second lieutenant and a number of seamen witnesses followed his testimony. What seems to have happened is that on 5 June 1801 the seamen John Henscow and Thomas Brown had insulted the Boatswain's Mate Thomas King. After hearing the complaint Captain Talbot had ordered Henscow and Brown to be flogged. The ship's company began to 'murmur' and Charles Turner (one of the accused) was heard to state that it was not right to hit

men with broomsticks. Lieutenant Clayton then grabbed Turner and 'handed him to the marines'. The crew started going below but Clayton followed them down with the other officers and forced them back on deck at sword point and the punishment was resumed. During the flogging of Turner, Clayton stated that Turner was 'looking at the men as if for rescue'. However Talbot had ordered the marines to stand by with loaded arms 'at the present', no rescue was attempted and eventually Turner broke down under the punishment and asked for the Captain's mercy. Williamson complained to the captain that he had been ill-treated by the boatswain.

The Sergeant of Marines later informed Clayton that the crew had sworn an oath not to go to sea while Captain Talbot was in command, Clayton then informed Captain Talbot of this information. The next day Captain Talbot went ashore and returned with the petition that the crew had sent anonymously to Lord Gardiner. Talbot 'turned the hands up' and read them the Articles of War. Talbot then told them that he had the letter they sent and that Lord Gardiner had told him to ignore it. He went on to say that if the men had any allegations about his conduct that they should apply for a Court Martial and that any man could come forward if he had a complaint. William Barnes, seamen, stepped forwards and said that the men's grievances were such that they would not go to sea with him 'if they could help it'. Barnes then turned to the ship's company and berated them for not coming forward. Another seamen, William Mason then stepped forward but Barnes ordered him back as he was 'mortal drunk'. Barnes also revealed that he had been 'forced by the men' to go round their 'various births' with a ship's bible getting them to swear the oath not to go to sea until Captain Talbot had been replaced. It emerged that about 150 of the crew had taken the oath.



On 7 June Lord Gardiner came close to the *Glenmore* in a schooner and the men assembled on the forecastle, some 'quitting their stations' to do so. Clayton ordered them back to their 'duty'. The next day there were mutterings when the ship was ordered to unmoor. Talbot left the ship briefly and on his return ordered the arrest of the prisoners and they were sent to *L'Engageante*.

During the trial of the five men there were many witnesses called from the lower deck to try and establish who had sworn on the Bible but there was clearly a lot of evasiveness going on – one seamen saying that he would not 'pitch' on his mates. The First Lieutenant was convinced that John Daniels had written the letter but could not prove it. After two days of witness questioning (there is over 30 pages of minutes of evidence) the court withdrew and found Williamson and Oxford guilty of mutiny and sentenced to be hanged. The other prisoners were found 'not proved' of the charges and discharged.<sup>86</sup>

In March 1802 the Peace of Amiens came into effect and the *Glenmore's* wartime service was at an end. For the next nine months she was largely employed transporting troops to various stations and in December 1802 sailed to Portsmouth where she was formally de-commissioned on 2 February 1803.<sup>87</sup>

The sea time for the *Glenmore* works out at 651 (44%) days sailing activity against 833 (56%) days moored or at anchor out of 1484 (100%) days looked at. This is the lowest sea time of all the commissions (*Trent* 54% and *Emerald* 60%) and less than Rodger's calculations of 50%. It does seem likely that the station that a frigate was serving at had some bearing on the amount of time spent at sea. The *Emerald* spent

around 80% (60% sea time) of her time outside British waters, the *Trent* spent about 50% (54% sea time) of her time in foreign waters and the *Glenmore* spent her entire commission (44% sea time) based in British ports. Rodger's calculations support these findings. Rodger's calculations for station sea time are West Indies waters 52% and home waters 39%. However Rodger's calculations for station sea time are based on the average of all rates and types of navy vessel and as frigates were the ships that spent most time at sea the calculation is likely to be higher by about 7%.<sup>88</sup> This would give an almost exact match between the two sets of figures although this does not take into account the other stations that some of the frigates visited. If the sea time for the three frigate commissions is combined it amounts to a total of 3976 (55%) days at sea and 3292 (45%) moored or anchored out of a total of 7250 (100%) commission days looked at. This is around 5% higher than Rodger's sea time for frigates and this can be accounted for by the coppering that had been introduced to almost all navy warships since Rodger's period.

There were a total of 14 recorded great gun practices for the 228 weeks looked at for the *Glenmore* and six live practice firings. This works out at about one gun practice every four months and a live firing once a year. However these figures are a little deceptive as all the live firings took place within one four week period during August and September 1801.<sup>89</sup> There is no apparent reason for this sudden burst of live firing practice and we can only guess at the reasons for it. Perhaps the captain felt that action was imminent and the crew needed the training? Whatever the reason and assuming that all or most gun practices were recorded we are still left with the unmistakable impression that 'dummy run' gun practice was rare and live practice firing even rarer. If the total number of weeks recorded service (1314<sup>90</sup>) of the four

commissions is divided by the combined number of recorded practice firing (172) and live practice firing (15) we are left with an average practice or 'dummy' firing of about once every two months (7.6 weeks) and a live practice firing of over once every year and a half (88 weeks). If these figures are accepted, this lack of practice firing must make us question the accepted notion that the British fired their guns considerably faster than their French and Spanish enemy. Perhaps what is most striking about this evidence is that it is consistent from ship to ship and captain to captain. Could it be that contemporaries recorded that the British fired more often than their enemies during action because of other reasons? Most likely perhaps is that the superior sailing ability of British crews allowed captains to manoeuvre to raking and quarter positions where they could fire and the enemy could not thus giving the impression that they were firing faster.

### **Muster Tables**

Ship's muster tables were a set of tables that accounted for all the men (and very occasionally women and children) who served or were passengers on board a ship.<sup>91</sup> Musters of the men were taken approximately four times per month and the results were tabulated on an Admiralty pro-forma that usually, but not always, covered a two month period of eight musters. Muster tables provided the Admiralty with a breakdown of the number of men who served on board as part of a vessels allocated complement as either 'company' (sailors), volunteers and boys and marines. In three of the four commissions the frigates' official complement was set at 274 until June 1796 when it was reduced to 264.<sup>92</sup> *Emerald2*'s official complement was always 264 as her commission started in 1806. The muster tables also recorded men who were on board ship who were entitled to wages drawn on the ship (supernumeraries for wages)

or just to be fed from the ship's store of food and drink (supernumeraries for victuals). Supernumeraries for victuals could be extra marines or soldiers allocated to the ship for a specific operation or time period, technical craftsmen such as shipwrights or other craftsmen working on the ship, passengers that were traveling on the ship such as invalids being taken home or senior officers and their staffs. Supernumeraries for wages could be extra marines, soldiers and/or sailors who were extra to the ship's complement and had been put on board for a specific campaign. Prisoners of war that were present on board were recorded separately as were soldiers in transit and occasionally their families (as opposed to those put on board and expected to serve). Each muster table category (company, volunteers and boys, marines, supernumeraries for wages, supernumeraries for victuals, prisoners of war and other passengers on three quarters rations) was sub-divided into four headings. The four headings were 'borne' (the total), 'mustered' (those who attended the muster), 'checked' (those who were part of the ship but were not present for example prize crews on board captured vessels) and 'sick' (those who were in the sick bay and could therefore not attend muster). As the categories for those on three quarters rations were not included on the pro-forma these were normally drawn in separately when required by the captain's clerk. The muster table was placed at the front of every muster book. The usefulness of the muster tables is that they can give us a snapshot of the crew's situation concerning those unfit for work due to sickness or injury, the number of crew and passengers carried and the number of men not on board the vessel but 'belonging' to it on a weekly basis.

In the following discussion, averages that fall below half a percent are not considered, as the numbers are so small as to be insignificant. For instance, in most cases the

number of volunteers and boys and marines that were sick at any given time is very small, well below half a percent, and are therefore not given. All the numbers of men given below are an average and rounded to the nearest whole number for the sake of clarity. This means that occasionally figures in the tables may not add up precisely, however all figures will be within one integer of totals given.

### ***Trent***

All of the *Trent's* muster tables<sup>93</sup> have been put onto the database; a total of 318 musters and the average for the ship are shown in Table 2.1. As can be seen the *Trent* carried an average of 203 crew, 15 volunteers and boys, 29 marines, three supernumeraries for wages, 11 for victuals and two prisoners; an average total of 263. This average is only one below the official Admiralty complement for the frigate of 264 but of the ship's average of 263, sixteen are supernumeraries or prisoners of war. This makes the average crew carried by the *Trent* as 247, seventeen men or 7% below the official complement, not a bad average given wartime conditions.

**Table 2.1: Muster record of the *Trent***

On board	Borne	%	Mustered	%	Checked	%	Sick	%
Company (sailors)	203	77%	192	95%	8	4%	2	1%
Volunteers & Boys	15	6%	15	100%				
Marines	29	11%	29	100%				
Super. for wages	3	1%	3	100%				
Super. for victuals	11	4%	11	100%				
Prisoners	2	1%	2	100%				
Soldiers								
<b>Totals</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1%</b>

The *Trent's* muster table shows us that, on average, eight (4%) of the ship's company (sailors) were not on board the vessel. The reasons for these absences are varied and are not always given, but a look at the ship's logs show that typically men were called away to assist other ships, prize crews were put onto captured vessels, men were sent

in the ship's boats to collect water and other sundry tasks. The average for crewmen to be in the sickbay is two (1%). As there are no surgeon's logs extant for the *Trent* or the other frigates in this survey it is not possible to establish what these men were sick of or what injuries they might have sustained. However a one percent average of men in the sickbay, on the face of it appears quite small.

**Table 2.2 Muster record: *Trent*, Crew sickness in West Indies – 121 musters**

	Borne	Sick	%
Company (sailors): W.I.	200	2	1%

Table 2.2 gives the average number of the ship's company (sailors) and the sickness average during the *Trent's* two stays in West Indian waters, a total of 121 musters.

The average number of ship's company borne is 200, three men fewer than the general average and the average number of those in the sickbay is the same, two men (1%). This would indicate that for sickness and injury that did not require hospital treatment the West Indies was no worse a place to be than elsewhere.

### ***Emerald***

The *Emerald* had a total of 445 musters<sup>94</sup> during her first commission and the average of these is given in Table 2.3. Like the *Trent*, the *Emerald* had an official Admiralty complement of 264 crewmen (including volunteers and boys and marines). However on average she carried 276 men: 208 company (sailors), 14 volunteers and boys, 24 marines, five supernumeraries for wages, 22 supernumeraries for victuals and three prisoners. These averages are very close to the *Trent's* although there are almost twice as many supernumeraries borne for victuals. This difference can largely be explained by the *Emerald* having hit a reef in November of 1803 off Antigua.<sup>95</sup> She made so much water through her damaged hull that several hundred soldiers and

slaves were put on board in order to take turns in pumping the ship to prevent it sinking. The captain's log records that: 'came on board a great many Negroes from different estates who was kept at the pumps'.<sup>96</sup> For an eight-week period following the accident the *Emerald* had an average of 253 supernumeraries borne for victuals only.<sup>97</sup>

**Table 2.3: Muster record of the *Emerald***

On board	Borne	%	Mustered	%	Checked	%	Sick	%
Company (sailors)	208	100%	195	94%	7	3%	6	3%
Volunteers & Boys	14	100%	14	100%				
Marines	24	100%	24	100%				
Super. for wages	5	100%	5	100%				
Super. for victuals	22	100%	20	90%	2	10%		
Prisoners	3	100%	3	100%				
Soldiers								
<b>Totals</b>	<b>276</b>		<b>261</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>6</b>	

The average number of crewmen serving on board the *Emerald* totalled 246, 18 or 7% below the official complement of 264 and this matches the *Trent*'s average of 17 men or 7% below complement almost exactly. Also almost exactly matching the *Trent* is the number of sailors, on average, not on board their respective ship, seven as opposed to eight. The major difference between the two ships is the average number of sailors who were in the sickbay, two or one percent for the *Trent* and six or three percent for the *Emerald*. Part of the reason for this discrepancy can be seen in Table 2.4 that demonstrates that *Emerald* suffered higher levels of men off sick on average in the West Indies than the *Trent*, nine or five percent for the *Emerald* against two or one percent for the *Trent*.

**Table 2.4: Muster record *Emerald*, Crew sickness in West Indies - 169 Musters**

	Borne	Sick	%
Company (sailors): W.I.	202	9	5%

**Table 2.5: Muster record of the *Emerald2***

On board	Borne	%	Mustered	%	Checked	%	Sick	%
Company (sailors)	191	100%	181	95%	9	5%	1	1%
Volunteers & Boys	16	100%	16	100%				
Marines	44	100%	43	98%	1	2%		
Super. for wages	9	100%	8	89%	1	11%		
Super. for victuals	5	100%	5	100%				
Prisoners	1	100%	1	100%				
Soldiers								
<b>Totals</b>	<b>266</b>		<b>254</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>1</b>	

Again we have a similar pattern of sailors 'checked' or 'off board' ship, an average of nine or 5% (*Trent* eight or 4% and *Emerald1* seven or 3%). The main difference between the *Emerald2* and the *Trent* and *Emerald1* is the average number of sailors who were confined to the sick bay. *Emerald2* averaged only one man per muster or 0.5% that compares well with *Trent*'s two men confined (1%) and *Emerald1*'s six men confined (3%). Apart from a final, brief trip to the Cape of Good Hope, *Emerald2* did not visit any tropical areas and this could well help account for this record.

### ***Glenmore***

There were a total of 215 musters<sup>100</sup> taken during *Glenmore*'s commission and the average of these is given in Table 2.6. On average *Glenmore* carried 204 sailors, 18 volunteers and boys, 29 marines, five supernumeraries for wages, five supernumeraries for victuals and one prisoner of war a total of 262 men. The *Glenmore*'s combined complement of men adds up to 251, 13 or 5% short of the Admiralty complement and this compares with the *Trent*'s 17 (7%), *Emerald1*'s 18 (7%) and *Emerald2*'s 13 (5%).



**Table 2.6: Muster record of the *Glenmore***

On board	Borne	%	Mustered	%	Checked	%	Sick	%
Company (sailors)	204	100%	198	97%	4	2%	1	1%
Volunteers & Boys	18	100%	18	100%				
Marines	29	100%	29	100%				
Super. for wages	5	100%	5	100%				
Super. for victuals	5	100%	5	100%				
Prisoners	1	100%	1	100%				
Soldiers								
<b>Totals</b>	<b>262</b>		<b>256</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>	

The number of the *Glenmore's* men 'checked' or off board ship are four or 2% of the sailors and this compares with *Trent's* eight (4%), *Emerald1's* seven (3%) and *Emerald2's* nine (5%). For those confined to the sickbay, *Glenmore's* average is one or 0.5% compared to *Trent's* two (1%), *Emerald1's* six (3%) and *Emerald2's* nine (0.5%). Like *Emerald2*, *Glenmore* did not visit the West Indies and this could account for its low sickbay occupation.

### ***All ships***

Table 2.7 details the number of crew musters for each frigate, the total number of musters and the average.

**Table 2.7: Number of musters all ships**

<i>Trent</i>	318
<i>Emerald1</i>	445
<i>Emerald2</i>	256
<i>Glenmore</i>	215
<b>Total musters</b>	<b>1234</b>
<b>All ships average</b>	<b>309</b>

The total of 1234 musters equates to over 23 years of weekly musters at an average service time of nearly six years per commission.

Table 2.8 shows the average muster records for all the ships combined. An average of 202 sailors, 16 volunteers and boys, 32 marines, six supernumeraries for wages, 11

supernumeraries for victuals and two prisoners of war a total of 269 men. The average ship's complement (sailors, volunteers and boys and marines) was 250 men, 14 or 5% short of the 264 men laid out in Admiralty instructions.

**Table 2.8: Muster record of all ships**

On board	Borne	%	Mustered	%	Checked	%	Sick	%
<b>Company (sailors)</b>	202	100%	192	95%	7	4%	3	2%
<b>Volunteers &amp; Boys</b>	16	100%	16	100%				
<b>Marines</b>	32	100%	32	100%				
<b>Super. for wages</b>	6	100%	6	100%				
<b>Super. for victuals</b>	11	100%	11	100%				
<b>Prisoners</b>	2	100%	2	100%				
<b>Soldiers</b>								
<b>Totals</b>	<b>269</b>		<b>259</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>3</b>	

The average number of men 'checked' as off the ship was seven or 4%. Of those unavailable for muster due to sickness, the average is three or 2% of the crew. The average number of supernumeraries for victuals is high at 11 men or 4% of those on board. However the category supernumeraries for victuals included pilots, craftsmen, passengers, boat's crews from other ships and it was not unusual for new recruits to the ship to be supernumeraries until they were formally put on the ship's books (entered). The average given for prisoners carried is also a little misleading. Prisoners tended to be put on board in large numbers for short periods of time rather than one or two for long periods.

Despite the limitations of the muster tables being simply a headcount and providing no contextual background, useful information can be derived from them. The muster tables of the four commissions reveal that on average the frigates crews were undermanned, according to Admiralty manning instructions, by about 5%. This figure of 5% is also fairly consistent within the four commissions (*Trent* 7%, *Emerald1* 7%, *Emerald2* 5% and *Glenmore* 5%). However added to this must be the number of men

in the sickbay and the men 'checked' or off board ship. Sick bay occupancy averaged out at 2% of the crew (*Trent* 1%, *Emerald1* 3%, *Emerald2* 0.5% and *Glenmore* 0.5%) and the average number of men off board ship was 4% (*Trent* 4%, *Emerald1* 3%, *Emerald2* 5% and *Glenmore* 2%). This gives us an average total of 11% of the ship's official complement either not having been recruited, sick or off board ship. It is difficult to gauge how this affected the running of the ship but given the number of supernumeraries on board, averaging around 17 men, this largely makes up for the 'missing' 24 men (14 short, seven checked and three sick). Given the wartime situation and the pressing problems of manning Royal Navy vessels this is probably not a bad state of affairs.

Without more work on the muster tables of Royal Navy vessels prior to 1795 it is difficult to establish if an average of 2% of crewmen in the sickbay is an improvement or not. Given the medical situation of the Royal Navy of the period detailed above, on the face of it 2% seems a low figure. However as no comparative work has been carried out in this field it is not possible to say at present.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter has been to give a context and framework to the four frigate commissions under consideration. The principle sources used for this framework have been the captains and master's logs of the four commissions looked at. These log books provide a daily record of position, weather, administrative and ship management detail as well as any events of note that the captain and/or master felt worthy of note.

Technical details of the three frigates in question have been provided and, while all three frigates were built to the same design and plan, two of the three ships were constructed primarily from fir (*Trent* and *Glenmore*) and one from oak wood (*Emerald*). The difference in timber used for construction surely accounts for the fact that both the fir built ships had an active service life of one commission of around seven years and the oak built *Emerald* had two commissions, one of ten years and the other of five, a total of around 15 years active service.

The captains and master's log, supported by other evidence such as court martial records and biographies, have enabled us to build up a picture of where the frigates went and what they did. In particular this has allowed us to compare what a frigate's role was considered to be, set against recorded actions and events and to provide examples of the various activities that they were engaged in. The logs looked at have provided us with examples of frigates working with the fleet in scouting, signalling and supply roles. Many examples of frigates protecting British commerce and attacking enemy merchant vessels have been given and it is clear that this appears to have been the frigates main role. All the frigates looked at were involved with convoy escort, checking ship's document, taking enemy commerce raiders and capturing enemy merchantmen and spent much of their time 'cruising', that is patrolling areas with a general brief to harass the enemy. One role that frigates performed that perhaps has been overlooked in the past is their employment as passenger carriers. Many passengers were carried on all the ships at various times and these were normally recorded in the supernumerary lists in the ship's muster book. For instance the *Emerald*'s supernumerary list 'for victuals only' sequential numbering of passengers carried goes up to 3,575 by the end of her commission and this list does not include

prisoners that were carried.<sup>101</sup> We have also seen that the frigates were involved in land operations operating on their own or with other vessels destroying land batteries, usually in order to get at enemy shipping that was sheltering under shore defences, or in company with a fleet or squadron undertaking major amphibious assaults.

The history of each of the frigate commissions have been extracted from the captains and master's logs and this provides a context for where a frigate was and what role it was performing at any given time during its commission. Any particular event of note, such as the *Glenmore*'s involvement in the fleet mutiny at Spithead in 1797, has been given (and looked at). In order to establish what amount of time a frigate could expect to spend at sea, compared to how much time it was moored or at anchor, every day's sea time has been recorded and analysed for three of the four commissions. The results show that where a frigate was stationed had an effect on the amount of time spent at sea. Service in the home waters of the Channel, Western Approaches and off the French Atlantic coast resulted in around 44% sea time whilst service in the West Indies was nearer 60%. These findings correspond very closely to Rodger's<sup>102</sup> study of sea time, even though the period he looked at was some 40 years prior to the time of this study. However little had changed in ship design from that period with the exception of the coppering of ship's hulls that meant that there was less hull marine growth that required time moored, beached or in port in order to clean growth off. This factor almost certainly accounts for the finding that the average sea time for the three frigates amounted to 55% compared to Rodger's figure of 50%. Perhaps the most surprising revelation from the frigate's log books is how little the ship's crews appeared to practice gunnery. The average for the four commissions amounted to one gun drill around every two months and a live practice firing every year and a half.

This seems an inordinately low practice regime given the supposed superiority of British gunnery over that of the French and Spanish ships. Therefore perhaps we should be looking at other factors as to why British ships almost always defeated their French and Spanish opponents in anything approaching a fair fight.

A study of the ship's muster tables taken from the frigate's muster books has given us an overview of how well manned the frigates were as well as how many men were likely to be either off board ship performing other duties, in the sick bay and how many passengers were being carried. The headcount average for the four commissions shows us that the frigates were down by 5% of their official complement of 264 crewmen, boys and marines. A further 2% of the men were on average unavailable due to sickness and 4% on other duties off board which meant that ships were, on average, about 11% below complement. However sickness and off board duties were common place and it is quite likely that this 6% shortfall had already been put into the Admiralty's calculations concerning the number of men required to effectively sail and fight the ship. Also helping to balancing the manpower shortfall was the number of passengers carried that amounted to an average of 17 or 6% of the ship's complement. Given the conditions of wartime and the large numbers of men required to crew a sailing vessel it would seem that the Admiralty did manage to keep manning levels to an acceptable level and this is an important factor to be considered when looking at Chapter 3 that focuses on how the fleet was manned.

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<sup>1</sup> From the narrative of William Henry Dillon (Quoted Wareham, T. *The Star Captains: Frigate Command in the Napoleonic Wars* (London, 2001) p. 50).

<sup>2</sup> On 13 January 1797 two British frigates, *HMS Indefatigable* (Captain Sir Edward Pellew) and *HMS Amazon* (Captain Robert Carthew Reynolds) spotted the French 74-gun man-of-war '*Droits-de-l'Homme*' (Commodore la Crosse) off Ushant and gave chase. The *Droits-de-l'Homme* lost her fore and main topmasts in a squall and this allowed the British ships to close and engage. In a spirited action the two frigates pummelled the French ship for over eight hours until almost all ammunition had been expended by both sides. By then the *Droits-de-l'Homme* had lost her mizzen mast and suffered over 250 casualties and the British ships had received considerable damage to their masts and rigging. During the action night had fallen and the sea state had increased to gale force. At this point land was spotted to the north east and the *Indefatigable* immediately tacked and, after much difficulty, managed to weather the coast. The *Amazon* and the *Droits-de-l'Homme* were not so fortunate and both struck the land. The *Amazon* lost six men before the survivors got ashore to become prisoners of the French. The *Droits-de-l'Homme* suffered great loss of life before the survivors reached shore (James, W. *The Naval History of Great Britain*, vol. (London, 1837) pp. 11-19)

<sup>3</sup> Colledge, J. J. *Ships of the Royal Navy: Vol. I* (London, 1987), D Lyon *The Sailing Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy – Built, Purchased and Captured, 1688-1855* (London, 1993) p. 123

<sup>4</sup> In 1806 the official ship's complement of these vessels was raised to 274 men. However by then only the *Emerald*<sup>2</sup> was still in commission. See: Slope, N. 'Volunteer Landsmen Recruits to the Royal Navy 1795-1811: The case of three Thames built frigates' ed. Owen, R. *Shipbuilding on the Thames and Thames-Built Ships* Proceedings of a second symposium, held on 15 February 2003 at The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. (Oxford, 2004) p. 133

<sup>5</sup> See: Albion, R. G. *Forests and Sea Power: The Timber Problem of the Royal Navy 1652-1862* (Harvard, 1926). However Knight (Knight, R. J. B. 'New England Forests and Seapower: Albion Revised' *The American Neptune* Vol. XLVI, No.4, (Massachusetts, Fall 1986) pp. 221-229) disagrees with Albion's contention that oak was in short supply prior to 1800 and claims that the main problem was lack of skilled shipwrights (p. 224). He goes on to state that "There was unquestionably both a softwood and a hardwood crises from the early nineteenth century but the timber shortage of the Royal Navy before 1800 is largely illusory" (p. 229).

<sup>6</sup> Albion p. 388

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Lyon, p. 123

<sup>9</sup> Gardiner (Gardiner, G., *Frigates of the Napoleonic Wars*, (London, 2000) pp. 152-179) divides the role of frigates into two main categories, Fleet Duties (sub-divided into *Strategic Reconnaissance*, *Tactical Reconnaissance*, *Fleet engagements*, *Squadron Actions*, *Blockade Duties* and *Miscellaneous Fleet Duties*) and Independent Operations (sub-divided into *Convoy Escort*, *Cruisers* and *'The Annoyance of the Enemy'*). Lavery (Lavery, *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815*, (London, 1989) p. 49) divides a frigate's role into convoy escort, commerce raiding and patrolling

<sup>10</sup> Lavery, B. *Nelson and the Nile: The Naval War against Bonaparte 1798*, (Chatham, 1998) p. 181 and Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 49

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted, Price, A. *The Eyes of the Fleet: A Popular History of Frigates and Frigate Captains 1793-1815* (London, 1992) p. 91

<sup>13</sup> ADM51 1167 and ADM51 4510

<sup>14</sup> ADM51 1820

<sup>15</sup> A poleacre or polacca was a Mediterranean ship or brig in which the masts were formed of a single spar of wood (King, D., Hattendorf, J. B. and Estes, J. W. *A Sea of Words: A Lexicon and Companion for Patrick O'Brian's Seafaring Tales* (New York, 1995) p. 288 and Smyth, W. H. *The Sailor's Word-Book: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms* (1867), Re-printed Conway 1991).

<sup>16</sup> ADM51 1656

<sup>17</sup> Hill, R. *The Prizes of War: The Naval Prize System in the Napoleonic Wars* (Stroud, 1998) p. 246

<sup>18</sup> Wareham p. 42

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 50

<sup>20</sup> ADM51 1295

<sup>21</sup> King p. 144, Smyth p.299

<sup>22</sup> ADM51 1305

<sup>23</sup> ADM36 15227

<sup>24</sup> Gardiner p. 174

<sup>25</sup> ADM51 1530 and ADM52 3610



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<sup>26</sup> However this dig at the merchantmen is somewhat unfair as the supernumerary column of the muster book (ADM36 14846) records that a total of nine carpenters did come on board from some of the merchant ships 'to assist making a rudder' and that they were 'returned to their proper ships' after a couple of days on board the *Emerald*. Therefore the comment in the captain's log that no help was received from the merchantmen is somewhat disingenuous.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>29</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>30</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>31</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>32</sup> Gardiner p.177

<sup>33</sup> For example the exploits of Cochrane on the French held Spanish coast during 1807-8 during his command of the frigate *HMS Impérieuse* stretched the French defences to breaking point (Dundonald, Earl of, T. *The Autobiography of a Seaman*, London, 1995 (first published 1861) pp. 234-338).

<sup>34</sup> ADM51 1305

<sup>35</sup> Robert Cockburn (T213) was a 23 year old able seaman from Perth, Scotland who joined the *Trent* on 16 June 1796 (ADM36 13253) when he was turned over from *HMS Prince*. Cockburn was rated quarter gunner on 1 September 1798 (ADM36 15226), in which capacity he served until killed in action on 20 April 1799 (ADM36 15227).

<sup>36</sup> O'Byrne, W. R. *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1849)

<sup>37</sup> O'Byrne pp. 842-3. The *Trent*'s muster book reveals that the captured vessels were the 'La Confiance (sic) Schooner French Letter of Marque' and 'La Revanche (sic) French Privateer Schooner'. A total of 62 prisoners were taken with the privateers (ADM36 15227).

<sup>38</sup> James, W. *The Naval History of Great Britain, Vol. II* (London, 1837) pp. 56-60

<sup>39</sup> White, C. *1797 Nelson's Year of Destiny: Cape St. Vincent and Santa Cruz de Tenerife* (Stroud, 1998) pp. 103-131

<sup>40</sup> ADM51 1166

<sup>41</sup> The sailors who were killed, drowned or died of their wounds were captain's clerk Dixie Woodward (E300), quarter master John Bracelin (E180), able seamen John Kelly (E207), Thomas Thompson (E191), Christopher Wild (E210), John Gillam (E102), ordinary seamen Thomas Della (E273), John

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Robinson (E293), Thomas Shoemaker (E294), Henry Williams (E307), John Sytel (E314), landsmen John Phillips (E226), Henry Field (E43), John Irwin (E46), William Brown (E182) and John Mattocks (E297). Marines killed were 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant William Basham (E1M), Privates Thomas Odes (E15) and Jurge Burger (E16).

<sup>42</sup> Although there is no mention of it in any of the contemporary records concerning the Santa Cruz attack, the *Emerald*'s crew took a battle flag that consisted of a Union Flag with the word 'EMERALD' stitched onto it. This flag was captured by the Spaniards and is now on display in the Military Museum Santa Cruz. I am grateful to Mr David Shannon, editor of *The Nelson Dispatch* for this information and for Mrs Wendy Kennedy supplying a photograph of the flag.

<sup>43</sup> ADM51 4510

<sup>44</sup> ADM3 137

<sup>45</sup> Manwaring, G. E. and Dobree, B. *The Floating Republic* (London, 1935) p. 171-179 and Lloyd, C. *St Vincent and Camperdown* (London, 1963) p.127

<sup>46</sup> ADM51 4510

<sup>47</sup> ADM51 4510, ADM51 1305 and ADM51 1429

<sup>48</sup> ADM51 1352 and ADM51 1397

<sup>49</sup> Haythornthwaite, P. J. *The Napoleonic Source Book*, (London, 1990) p. 22

<sup>50</sup> ADM51 1439 and ADM36 15230

<sup>51</sup> Rodger, N.A.M. *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, (London, 1986) Appendix II, p.352

<sup>52</sup> Brian Lavery *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815*, (London, 1989) p.70

<sup>53</sup> For the purposes of this study 'at sea' is considered to mean any day in which the vessel sailed. Therefore if the *Trent* sailed and then moored on the same day then this would count as an 'at sea' day. Likewise a day in which she began moored and then sailed.

<sup>54</sup> Price p. 259, Lavery p.172, Padfield, P. *Guns at Sea* (London, 1973) p. 121, Jenkins, E. H. *A History of the French Navy* (London, 1973) p. 216, 220 and 232, Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p. 368

<sup>55</sup> Gardiner states that gunnery had sunk to a low due to the fact that the manpower crises (see Chapter 6) in the Royal Navy during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars had led to more unskilled labour

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being recruited and as a result captains were forced to concentrate training on sailing rather than gunnery (Gardiner p. 38).

<sup>56</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.178

<sup>57</sup> ADM51 1139

<sup>58</sup> White, p.10. For a full account of the Battle see White pp. 29-85, Lloyd pp. 56-93

<sup>59</sup> ADM51 1222 , ADM36 14843 and ADM1 5341 For an account of the trial and events surrounding the trial see Slope, N. 'The Trials of Nelson: Nelson and the Emerald', *The Nelson Dispatch*, January 2002, Vol. 7, Part 9, p. 612-617

<sup>60</sup> ADM51 1166 and ADM51 1236

<sup>61</sup> ADM51 1268 and ADM51 1295

<sup>62</sup> ADM51 1333

<sup>63</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>64</sup> B. Lavery (ed.), *Shipboard Life and Organisation, 1731-1815*, (NRS, 1998) p. 543

<sup>65</sup> ADM52 2967

<sup>66</sup> ADM51 1603

<sup>67</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>68</sup> Wareham p. 123

<sup>69</sup> ADM51 1656

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> ADM51 1820

<sup>72</sup> ADM51 1957

<sup>73</sup> For a full account of the attack on the Basque Roads and Gambier's court martial see James Vol. V pp. 98-130. For a more one-sided and partisan account see Dundonald pp. 338-428.

<sup>74</sup> ADM51 2336

<sup>75</sup> The reason for not putting the *Emerald2's* sea time on the database is that it was only after the database had been set up and the log information put onto the database that the question of sea time arose. As this information was subsequently recorded in all the other ship's logs database (*Emerald2* was the first log database to be set up) and the results were seen to be very similar it was felt that this would give sufficient information without the necessity of having to go back over all the *Emerald2's* log entries again.

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<sup>76</sup> ADM51 1212. The fleet mutinies of 1797 came close to collapsing the war effort and gave the Admiralty a great fright. The nature of the seaman's profession in that, unlike a soldier, he had a sister trade to go to in the merchant marine led to a different type of military discipline than in the army. Petitions and mass disobedience was not uncommon in the navy and was, generally speaking, dealt with in a sympathetic manner by the Admiralty. The Spithead mutiny broke out in April 1797, some days before the arrival of the *Glenmore*, following petitions presented by the sailors concerning pay and conditions that had been ignored. At a given signal the fleet moored at Spithead mutinied and refused to weigh anchor. The mutineers sent a list of demands and grievances to the Admiralty that was largely met and the mutiny subsided. However an incident on board the *London* moored at St. Helens resulted in the marines firing on and killing a number of sailors and the mutiny erupted again. Lord Howe was dispatched to Spithead and following negotiations with elected seamen representatives more concessions were granted and the mutiny finished and the fleet put to sea on 16 May. The 'mutiny' would nowadays be classed as an industrial dispute as the men always stated that had the French tried to take advantage of the situation they would have obeyed orders to go out and fight them. (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 142).

<sup>77</sup> Landless (89), Swan (81), Warner (295) and Mackintosh (45) did not return to the *Glenmore* but were Discharged as 'Superseded' or 'on promotion' (ADM36 13172).

<sup>78</sup> ADM51 1212

<sup>79</sup> ADM51 1243

<sup>80</sup> ADM51 1282 and ADM51 1335

<sup>81</sup> ADM51 4452

<sup>82</sup> ADM36 15091

<sup>83</sup> ADM1 5358

<sup>84</sup> The facts would seem to support the men's claims of harsh treatment. A look at the recorded disciplinary record of both captains shows that during the 29 month period between April 1796 and October 1798 (ADM51 1172, ADM51 1212 and ADM51 1243) Captain Duff ordered a total of 28 floggings, an average of around one per month. In contrast Captain Talbot ordered 20 floggings in the first four months of his command (ADM51 4452), an average of five floggings a month.

<sup>85</sup> ADM51 4452

<sup>86</sup> ADM1 5358

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<sup>87</sup> ADM51 1417

<sup>88</sup> Rodger's calculations, based on Admiralty captain's log abstracts from 1758 to 1762, give sea time for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rate ships as 23%, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> rate 41%, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> rate (frigates) 50%, sloops 49% and others 29%. The average for all the above is 43%, of which frigates are 7% above average sea time (Rodger *Wooden World* p. 352).

<sup>89</sup> ADM51 4452

<sup>90</sup> The weeks between formal commissioning and active service have not been counted as it would not be practical to carry out such training during the working up process and cannon were normally one of the last items to be placed on board a vessel so practice would not be possible.

<sup>91</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *Naval Records for Genealogists*, (London, 1988) p. 47

<sup>92</sup> The reduction of the number of the ship's complement is recorded in all the muster books except *Emerald2* whose commission commenced long after the changes in manning requirements were stipulated.

<sup>93</sup> ADM 36 13253 March 1796 to July 1797

ADM 36 15226 July 1797 to December 1798

ADM 36 15227 January 1799 to April 1800

ADM 36 15228 May 1800 to June 1801

ADM 36 15229 March 1801 to June 1802

ADM 36 15230 July 1802 to June 1803

<sup>94</sup> ADM36 14842 September 1795 to December 1796

ADM36 14843 January 1797 to June 1798

ADM36 14844 July 1798 to December 1799

ADM36 14845 January 1800 to June 1801

ADM36 14846 September 1801 to December 1802

ADM36 15558 August 1802 to December 1803

ADM36 15559 November 1803 to August 1804

ADM36 15560 September 1804 to April 1805

<sup>95</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>97</sup> ADM36 15558

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>99</sup> ADM37 1226 June 1806 to January 1807

ADM37 1227 February 1807 to November 1807

ADM37 1228 December 1807 to November 1808

ADM37 1229 December 1808 to December 1809

ADM37 2543 January 1810 to April 1811

ADM37 2544 May 1811 to November 1811

<sup>100</sup> ADM36 13171 April 1796 to February 1797

ADM36 13172 March 1797 to December 1797

ADM36 13173 January 1798 to December 1798

ADM36 15089 November 1798 to December 1799

ADM36 15090 January 1800 to December 1800

ADM36 15091 January 1801 to December 1801

ADM36 15092 November 1801 to January 1803

<sup>101</sup> ADM36 15560

<sup>102</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p.352

## Chapter 3

“...rogues, criminals, poachers, gipsies”<sup>1</sup>

### Naval Recruitment and Manning 1796-1811

#### Introduction

This chapter looks at perhaps the most intriguing and difficult to answer question concerning the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period, how did the Admiralty manage to man the huge fleet that it possessed?<sup>2</sup>

In order to address this question this chapter has been divided into a number of sections. Following the **Introduction** is a section on **Background: Naval Recruitment – Problems and Policies**. This section looks at the nature of the problem facing the Admiralty at a fleet and shipboard level. The section gives an overview of the manning situation and examines the measures taken by Parliament and the Admiralty to try and ensure that if and when war broke out then sufficient ships and men would be available to fight. Also looked at within this macro area of policy is how the Admiralty moved from a peacetime to a wartime footing and considers the numbers of men required to man a fleet that, by war's end, consisted of over 1,000 ships. There follows a review by various historians and commentators on aspects of the nature of the problem, particularly concerning the three largest areas of recruitment: the Impress Service, volunteers and quota men. The effectiveness of these recruitment measures is considered and how they worked in practice. The background given here should also be seen as relevant to Chapter 4 that looks at the use of child labour in the Royal Navy and Chapter 5 that focuses on the training and development of volunteer landsmen, that is volunteers that were new to the sea.

The next section **Shipboard Recruitment** examines the various recruitment measures employed at a shipboard level and attempts to explain the nature of them set against muster and pay book entries. Looked at are sea officers, men 'turned over' from other ships, pressed men, volunteers, quota men, boys, prisoners of war, substitutes and those sent by the civil powers. Also re-entrants such as returned deserters and men returned from sick quarters are considered. For each category of entrant examples are given from the records of the three frigates under consideration.

The section **Recruitment in Practice** concentrates on the findings from the databases of the three frigates (four commissions) in relation to recruitment and tries to answer a number of fundamental questions relating to shipboard recruitment to the Royal Navy of the period. The findings are compared to two recruitment surveys carried out by Rodger (1986)<sup>3</sup> and Lewis (1960).<sup>4</sup> Specific questions addressed in the findings from the ship's records are; how did the various processes of recruitment work in practice? How effective were these processes in manning the ships? What proportion of the various recruitment categories existed on board ship? What was their age profile? What ratings and rank were men given when they came on board? Geographically where did recruits come from? Did a man's recruitment profile effect his chances of being flogged? How and when were men's ratings changed? Why did men get discharged their ship? Particular attention is paid to the careers of quota men due to the controversy surrounding this recruitment practice. Each commission is looked at in turn in the following sub-sections, *Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore* followed by the section **All ships** that looks at the combined commissions. The chapter is then brought together by the **Conclusion**.



## **Background: Naval Recruitment – Problems and Policies**

No problem more vexed the Admiralty in wartime than how to provide the vast numbers of men required to sail and fight the fleet. As Rodger states, 'There was no difficulty in waging war at sea which caused the Navy so much anguish as manning. In almost every aspect of wartime operations, the problem of finding and keeping men was the first obstacle to be met, and the last to be overcome'.<sup>5</sup> Ships of the period required much brute muscle in their operation such as hauling on ropes, weighing anchor and loading and unloading stores; operations that could be carried out by largely unskilled and untrained men. However the very technical nature of sailing vessels required, for the most part, a skilled and experienced workforce. It is generally thought that most Royal Navy sailing vessels could get away with about one quarter of the men being unskilled but that the rest of the crew should be competent mariners to some degree.<sup>6</sup> The problem that faced the Admiralty was twofold. The first problem was how to move from a peacetime Naval establishment to a wartime footing and secondly how to maintain, and increase, the number of skilled mariners in the fleet for the duration of the war or crisis. Following the conclusion of a war or 'armament' sailors would be released from the fleet in order to bring down numbers to a peacetime footing, with a subsequent reduction in the wages and victualling costs. Many of the Navy's ships would be put in what was called 'ordinary',<sup>7</sup> a practice that still continues to this day and is termed 'mothballing'. Ships in ordinary would be given a skeleton crew and moored awaiting the next crisis. Therefore the Admiralty could, at a reasonably short notice, expand the fleet rapidly by bringing the ships in ordinary to readiness. Subsequent losses due to enemy action, accident and general wastage as well as further expansion to the fleet if the war or crisis was prolonged could be dealt with by building new ships and refitting out captured enemy ships, a

common practice of the time but was on the assumption that you won more naval battles than you lost. Therefore the Admiralty had a tried and tested system for the expansion and maintenance of the fleet in time of crisis. Getting the skilled sailors to man a rapidly expanding fleet was another matter, as Emsley points out, 'There were good stocks of naval stores, the warships were in good order: the principle problem was finding the crews'.<sup>8</sup>

The heart of any military establishment is its officer and petty officer corps. In order to provide an officer corps 'in waiting' the Admiralty had developed a system of putting unemployed commissioned naval officers on 'half-pay'. Commissioned officer half-pay was graded according to rank and was conditional on an officer being able and willing to serve when called upon to do so.<sup>9</sup> This gave the Admiralty a pool of available, trained commissioned officers of all ranks that could rapidly meet any expansion of the fleet. In fact the wealth of commissioned officers that the Admiralty could call on meant that officers could even find themselves 'beached' on half-pay during wartime itself and ashore on half-pay was an occupational hazard for career naval officers and occurred to even such famous officers as Nelson.<sup>10</sup> Warrant officers, those officers who were appointed by warrant from the Navy Board rather than commissioned officers that received an officer's commission from the Board of Admiralty, can be broken down into a number of categories. Firstly those of wardroom (gunroom on frigates) status such as the master and surgeon who were socially almost the equivalent of commissioned officers, secondly master's and surgeon's mates who aspired to wardroom status in due course, thirdly 'standing officers' (so called as they stayed with the ship when in ordinary and technically were supposed to serve on the same ship throughout its commission although in practice

this technicality was largely ignored) and lastly other, lower grade officers.<sup>11</sup>

Although there was no half-pay for warrant officers, when a ship went into ordinary the 'standing officers' such as the purser, boatswain, cook and carpenter stayed with the ship on full pay in order to maintain her while in ordinary and to provide a cadre of technical officers for the eventuality of returning to full operational status. As an example, when *Trent* was decommissioned in June 1803 five men stayed on board when the rest of the crew were paid off, these were the cook, the purser, the carpenter, the boatswain and the gunner.<sup>12</sup> For the lower rank warrant officers these could be taken from the existing crews of naval vessels and/or from the general manning of the fleet discussed below during rearmament. For the rank of master there appears to be no formal process for maintaining numbers during peacetime however masters could realistically be recruited from the merchant service as the pay, conditions and status of a Royal Navy master were relatively high and existing master's mates could be brought forward in rank at a pinch.

The problem the Admiralty had with providing the fleet with adequate seamen was a qualitative as well as a quantitative dilemma. The Navy could accept a limited number of untrained and unskilled men but what it required above all in an emergency were large numbers of competent seamen at short notice and there was only one ready source – the merchant marine. The problems of quantity coupled with quality were not new to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars nor were they a singularly British Royal Navy predicament. All navies of the time suffered the same problem,<sup>13</sup> it was just that the British Royal Navy had grown to be proportionally larger and therefore the demand was greater and harder to satisfy. Unlike the army, the Royal Navy had the benefit of men trained in the required skills in a sister profession that could be

called on in times of crises. However this was a double-edged sword as it also meant that deserters from the Navy had a trade to go to with a small chance of being apprehended if they decided to vote with their feet, and vote they did.

Just before the outbreak of war in 1793 James<sup>14</sup> states that Parliament voted for a total of 20,000 seamen for the Royal Navy and that this figure rose to just fewer than 73,000 for 1794, a jump of over 350%. Numbers voted steadily rose and plateaued at around 100,000 from 1797 to 1800 then dipped before reaching around 105,000 in 1800. Following the Peace of Amiens in March 1802<sup>15</sup> numbers of seamen voted fell to around 45,000 in 1803 rising to nearly 80,000 in 1804 following the re-commencement of hostilities with France in May 1803.<sup>16</sup> The numbers of seamen voted by Parliament then steadily rose to a peak of around 115,000 for the period 1809 to 1812 and then declined steadily as it became clear that the war was being won and that France no longer possessed a navy that could seriously threaten British maritime supremacy. However we must be cautious about accepting these figures at face value. Lewis<sup>17</sup> points out that numbers voted for does not mean numbers obtained and using surviving Admiralty papers<sup>18</sup> he estimates that in 1794 there was a small shortfall on seamen recruited against those voted for but that in 1800 and 1804 there were more seamen recruited than voted for.<sup>19</sup> However Hall<sup>20</sup> states that apart from the years 1808-9 the Navy was always between 3,000 and 16,000 men short of requirements but he does not specify if this figure includes marines. Lloyd's figures of numbers voted against numbers 'Borne' (that is registered as 'belonging' to the ship) for the years 1793 to 1813 show a low of 15,000 men short of those voted for (1813) to a high of 9,000 men over those voted for (1799) but Lloyd's figures do include marines in the calculation.<sup>21</sup> However, as a broad estimate, these figures give us some

idea of the nature of the problem. Lewis goes on to quote the 1801 Census that records a total of 144,558 merchant seamen in Britain, although he considers this figure too low as these statistics included only seamen in registered British vessels and did not take account of foreign sailors serving in British vessels.<sup>22</sup> The numbers of Royal Navy sailors voted for the year 1801 was 105,000<sup>23</sup> and combined with the Census figures this gives us a total of almost exactly 250,000 men involved in British seafaring for the year 1801. This figure matches closely that of Bromley's<sup>24</sup> given for the year 1809 where he estimates that there were 98,600 Royal Navy seamen and 157,105 merchant seamen serving giving a total of 255,705. Palmer and Williams<sup>25</sup> argue that the number of seamen serving in the merchant marine is very difficult to estimate but they give a figure of 95,000 for 1800. All these figures seem to suggest that there were between 250,000-300,000 seamen at any given time during the years of war of which about 40% were in the Royal Navy and 60% in the merchant marine. Against these figures must be set an estimated loss in the Royal Navy from all causes of around 85,000 men during the war's duration.<sup>26</sup> If we accept Palmer and Williams' estimate that the average length of a seaman's service was around 10 years duration this means that during the course of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars the whole number of serving Naval and merchant seamen would have to be replaced at least once.<sup>27</sup> How then did the Royal Navy manage to replace these losses and, in most years, increase the number of men required to serve and maintain high numbers of skilled men? This question will be addressed below.

The vexed question of maintaining a merchant fleet with enough skilled mariners to man the Navy in time of need had occupied successive governments since the middle of the seventeenth century. Going hand in hand with this strategy of developing a

‘nursery’ for seamen was the acceptance of the growing importance of Britain’s developing maritime power and the need to ensure that it had sufficient skilled manpower.<sup>28</sup> In 1660 the Navigation Act<sup>29</sup> was passed that required British registered vessels to carry a minimum of 75% British crews and also the Impress Service was created that allowed the pressing of seamen into Royal Navy vessels. The Navigation Act was almost always suspended in times of national crisis in order to allow merchant ships to recruit foreign seamen to help man the ships that had been denuded by the Royal Navy. In 1696<sup>30</sup> the government attempted to set up a register of merchant seamen and in order to induce men to sign on proposed an annual two pound bounty for men on the register as well as allowing registered disabled and sick seamen to be cared for at Greenwich Hospital for which six pence a month was deducted from their wages. The register was a failure as it was easy to avoid signing on and the inducements were insufficient to tempt sailors to register and in practice the Greenwich Hospital provision, although largely paid for by merchant seamen, was only open to ex-Royal Navy seamen.<sup>31</sup> The 1704 Act<sup>32</sup> was aimed at getting poor boys of over ten years of age out of the workhouse and into colliers as well as allowing certain debtors to be freed in exchange for serving in the Royal Navy. It is even claimed, anecdotally, that the government stopped coal mining south of the Tyne in order to ensure the health of the northeast collier trade.<sup>33</sup> In 1727 legislation was passed that made Navy Commissioners responsible for assisting shipwrecked and castaway mariners to get back to Great Britain<sup>34</sup> and a 1729 Act<sup>35</sup> made desertion from a merchant vessel an offence. In 1786 an Act<sup>36</sup> was passed that made the registration of British ships compulsory and enforced contractual agreements to be established between owners and the crew. The 1797 Act<sup>37</sup> required merchant vessels to carry one seagoing apprentice per 100 tons registered. All these Acts and other

legislation were aimed at ensuring that Britain's nursery of seamen was developed and maintained at levels that could keep the merchant and Royal Navy fleets with sufficient manpower in peace and war. The question to ask about the above legislative framework is; how successful was it in practice? Dixon<sup>38</sup> argues that the effect was only marginal in effecting the sailor's lot but it is clear that the legislation was not aimed at improving sailor's working conditions but in ensuring a ready supply of trained seamen. In this regard Dixon claims that the legislation was 'almost a total failure'<sup>39</sup> and cites evidence of high merchant navy wages during wartime that kept sailors 'of the right quality' from volunteering for the Royal Navy to support his argument. However it is difficult to see how successive governments could have done any better in juggling the balls of supply and demand that dominated naval thinking. It is clear that the seaman's register was a long term failure, largely because the seamen saw it as an oppressive measure and it was all too easy to evade given the transient nature of the mariner's trade. It is difficult to state precisely how effective other legislative measures were in providing sufficient seamen to service merchant and Royal Naval needs in time of crisis but the fact remains that when the test of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars came the Royal Navy met it and excelled. Haythornthwaite states that 'It is difficult to describe the Royal Navy as anything other than perhaps the most successful force of its era'.<sup>40</sup> It would not have been possible for the Royal Navy to achieve what amounted to global maritime dominance without sufficient skilled manpower to sail and fight the 800 odd ships that the Navy had in commission by the end of the war and at the same time expand its merchant tonnage and it is difficult to see how that could have been possible without an effective regulatory framework. All major maritime nations of the period felt the need to regulate their merchant marine to some degree or other in order to ensure a pool of

trained seamen<sup>41</sup> and as Kindleberger states 'Markets for seamen were never free, always regulated to some degree'.<sup>42</sup>

When war with France was declared in 1793 and the Navy mobilised for war how did the Admiralty man the ships that were coming out of ordinary? There were a number of methods available for naval recruitment but in 1793 there were two primary ones. The first method was to ask for volunteers and the second was to press men into the Royal Navy. In order to encourage volunteers they were offered, in addition to their normal wages, a bounty. Initially this bounty amounted to thirty shillings but this could be supplemented by other bounties supplied by local authorities in a bid to raise more men and it is claimed that by 1797 bounties as high as thirty and seventy pounds for able seamen were being offered.<sup>43</sup> Men volunteered for many reasons, some for love of adventure, some with genuine patriotic feelings, some in resignation that it was that or be pressed but most volunteered for economic reasons and that is the reason that the authorities offered such large bounties in order to compete with the high wages now available to merchant seamen. Apart from bounties, a large economic inducement for men to join up was prize money. At the start of our period pay had not improved since 1653 and it took the mutinies of 1797 in order for the Admiralty to address this problem.<sup>44</sup> However in addition to pay, the lure of prize money was a real inducement to officers and crew. On the capture of an enemy ship, providing that certain conditions were met and the capture was adjudged to be a 'lawful prize', then the vessel and its cargo were sold and the money raised divided between the officers (including any Admiral whose orders the ship was operating under) and men by a complicated formula. Although the men did not get a great share, just a quarter of the money raised shared between all the sailors and marines on board, prize money was a



real prospect particularly on frigates which were much more able to carry out a *guerre de course* than ships of the line.<sup>45</sup> As an example, during the 1812 War with America the Royal Navy and privateers captured 1,593 American merchant vessels.<sup>46</sup> That the crew of a Royal Navy vessel were very conscious of the possibilities for prize money can be demonstrated by the court martial of Daniel McAlpine (T34) master at arms on board the *Trent*. McAlpine was charged by the *Trent's* captain Edward Bowater (T12) for, amongst other things, sending an anonymous letter from the crew of the *Trent* to the Admiralty criticising Bowater for his lack of zeal in 'chasing strange sails' and therefore denying the crew legitimate prize money.<sup>47</sup>

The other primary source of recruitment was the press gang. It is almost impossible to discuss the operation of the Impress Service without being influenced by shades of Masfield's '... blood and agony of thousands of barbarously maltreated men'<sup>48</sup> that has entered folk memory. No issue other than the flogging of men is guaranteed to produce a strong opinion from contemporaries as well as modern historians. The arguments range from impressment being worse than a prison sentence for the innocent to being a necessary evil that was generally accepted by the men who were its victims. Black argues that 'The Press... represented one of the most formidable impositions of the eighteenth-century British monarchy on its subjects. It led to violence, bribery, legal disputes and much misery. Not only was it the underside of British naval triumphs, but also a major qualification of naval popularity'.<sup>49</sup> Hall describes the impressment of men as 'legalised kidnapping' but accepts that it was, at the time, thought the only real method of manning the fleet,<sup>50</sup> Lewis describes 'Prest' as a 'sinister word'<sup>51</sup> and Kindleberger describes the press as 'Violent and indiscriminate'.<sup>52</sup> Bromley goes so far as to say that impressment 'perverted' seamen

away from the Navy and turned seamen into 'artful dodgers' and 'emigrants'.<sup>53</sup> However, as Rodger points out, there was little alternative to the press given the political landscape in Britain where the watchword of 'liberties' largely described local authorities attempts at curbing central state power and 'Though it bore harshly, erratically and inefficiently, it bore largely on an inarticulate and politically weak group'<sup>54</sup> and Lloyd states that 'No one could discover an alternative which would be equally acceptable to Parliament and the Navy'.<sup>55</sup> In a country that did not possess, and was fiercely opposed to, conscription it is difficult to see how the Navy could have been manned without the work of the press gang and pressing had the advantage of selecting those individuals who were of immediate use to the Navy. However as Rediker states 'The State's demand for maritime labor and the seaman's refusal to be the supply produced something of a civil war over maritime muscle and skill'.<sup>56</sup> As wages in the merchant service grew in line with the demand for skilled seamen there were just not enough volunteers to man the Royal Navy ships. As hated as the press was, even the victims, the sailors, largely accepted it as a necessary evil. However the one aspect of the press that did seem to cause real resentment to the sailors was the open-ended nature of service in the Royal Navy. Originally a man taken by the press was released following the end of a ship's commission or voyage but by our period he was simply turned over to another ship and his only chance of release was war's end, death, invalidity or desertion.<sup>57</sup>

The Impress Service was, by 1795, a well-organised and controlled institution. Regulating captains were appointed to oversee set districts and the individual press gangs operating in those districts, examine men as to their fitness and compile reports on progress to the Admiralty.<sup>58</sup> Pressed men were dispatched from a 'rendezvous', the

press gang's headquarters, either directly to Navy vessels requiring men or to the receiving ships moored in harbour from whence they would be sent to a Navy ship. The other method of impressing men was for individual ship's captains to take the initiative and to send out press gangs from the crew in order to recruit directly to the ship. This could be done in port or at sea and the logs of all the ships involved in this survey contain examples of this in practice. Captains would also take the opportunity to press men out of vessels that they had stopped at sea in order to establish their identity, cargo and where and wither bound and again this practice is widely described in the captain's and master's logs. Men pressed did not always end up serving in the Navy. There were a number of exemptions to the press such as apprentices and certain types of seafarers such as whaling men and exempt men could obtain a 'protection', a certificate issued by the Admiralty, stating that the bearer was exempt from Naval service.<sup>59</sup>

How effective was the press? This is a difficult question to answer. As Palmer and Williams point out '...historical understanding of the basis of recruitment in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is still very limited. Indeed determining the proportion of volunteers to pressed men is fraught with difficulty'.<sup>60</sup> That large numbers of pressed men served in the Royal Navy is without doubt but their exact, or even probable, number will not be determined, if it can be, until further research has been carried out on the muster books of receiving ships.

Following the declaration of war with France in 1793 at first the government tried to man the rapidly growing fleet by volunteers alone. When it soon became clear that this would not raise sufficient men the Admiralty issued press warrants and sent the

Impress Service into action. However by 1795 the press and volunteer system was not producing enough men to man the fleet. Pitt's government therefore passed a series of bills known as the Quota Acts.<sup>61</sup> These Acts required local authorities to recruit an allocated number of men for the fleet. The first Act instructed each county to provide a set number of men to be raised by local justices of the peace and the second Act required the same from principal seaports, a third Act covered Scotland. To ensure compliance an embargo was placed on shipping on all ports until the quotas had been met. It would seem that most local authorities managed to meet their quotas, which would have given the Navy around an extra 25,000 to 29,000 men (approximately 10,000 men from the county quota and 20,000 from the seaport quota).<sup>62</sup> This figure could be misleading as the demand for trained seamen was such that an able seaman counted as two landsmen in consideration of meeting quota numbers. Emsley concludes in his study of the North Riding quota men that most of the men were not seamen but were a cross-section of lower class county trades.<sup>63</sup> However it is likely that port quotas contained a higher number of seamen (in their quotas) but at present it is not possible to give precise figures. Whatever the exact number of men that the Quota Acts brought in, from a quantitative point of view they were seen as a success at the time and by subsequent historians.<sup>64</sup> From a qualitative perspective we get a different reaction. It is clear that quota men were generally unpopular with naval officers, some going so far as to blame them directly for the 1797 mutinies and this negative view has been followed by some historians. The quota men have been accused of having Jacobin sympathies and being the sweepings of the goal and the gutter and 'outcasts from society'. Kemp claims that the Quota Acts gave local justices the opportunity to empty the jails of convicted felons and that '...they (quota men) were largely responsible for the increased incidence of flogging during the

period of the two wars with France'.<sup>65</sup> Kindleberger follows this view and states that the Quota Acts '...rapidly degenerated into clearing out the jails, delivering tramps, idlers, poachers, beggars, minor thieves and pickpockets'.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps the most virulent critic of the quota men is Lewis whose pen, dipped in venom, castigates them as 'miserable specimens' and '...gaolbirds, ne'er-do-wells and puny starvelings... social misfits and outcasts...riffraff of the new town slums', calls their introduction into the navy an 'infection' and concludes that 'Sufficient bodies were forthcoming but, full and by, they were the wrong bodies'.<sup>67</sup> However the evidence produced by Emsley<sup>68</sup> does not seem to stack up with this view and other historians are more measured in their view of quota men. Bromley calls the castigation of quota men a 'fashionable denigration'<sup>69</sup> and '...the Quota Acts of 1795-6 – anathema to naval officers (and to historians who follow their opinions)'.<sup>70</sup> Until more research has been carried out on local county and seaport records as well as tracing quota men's subsequent Naval service it is difficult to assess where the truth lies. However a number of quota men did serve on board the vessels under consideration and the results are discussed below.

The three frigates (four commissions) under consideration will not be able to tell us much about how the Navy moved from a peacetime establishment to a war footing in 1793/4 as the ships were not in commission until 1796 at the earliest. However the muster books can give us valuable information on recruitment and retention practices that were employed to ensure that enough skilled men were available to man the fleet as the war progressed. The specific questions addressed in the findings from the ship's records are: How did the various processes of recruitment work in practice? How effective were these processes in manning the ships? Geographically where did

recruits come from? What was their age profile? To what extent was the Navy reliant on foreign seamen? How long did men serve and why did they leave the ship? What ratings were the men given and how did promotion and demotion on the lower deck work? In attempting to answer these questions perhaps we can reveal more of how the Navy recruited, retained and trained men on board ship.

## **Shipboard Recruitment**

### **Muster Book Entries**

Ship's captains were required to record in the muster books under the heading 'Whence & Whether Prest or not' how and where individual sailors were recruited to the ship. As Rodger points out,<sup>71</sup> this is a difficult column to interpret. The reasons for the difficulties in interpretation are that this column was subject to much abbreviation and shorthand and information given is not always complete or able to be traced back easily. For example, abbreviations such as 'S.L.' (Supernumerary Lists), 'S.B.' (Ship's Book – earlier entry number) and 'S.Q.' (from Sick Quarters) abound. However in the context of trying to establish empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the Navy's various recruitment policies it is a very important source of information.

There were many reasons why individual seamen ended up on board a ship and most of those reasons are given in the 'Prest' column. From the three frigates (four commissions) a number of general categories of reasons for being on board ship have been established. These categories are discussed below and then considered in more detail on a commission-by-commission basis.

### **Sea Officers<sup>72</sup> (Commissioned and Warrant)**

For sea officers appointed to the ship the 'Prest' column normally records whether the officer is a commissioned or warrant officer, sometimes the date of the commission or warrant, occasionally where the officer came from and sometimes who issued the warrant /commission or simply 'per order'. For example, James Wooldridge (T687) was appointed first lieutenant of the *Trent* in February 1800 and in the 'Prest' column of the *Trent's* muster book is recorded against his name, 'Commission, Sir Hyde Parker'.<sup>73</sup> Frederick Tollet (E76) was appointed cook to the *Emerald* in October 1795 but all that is recorded in the 'Prest' column is 'Warrant'.<sup>74</sup> It is safe to assume that most commissioned and warrant officers were volunteers<sup>75</sup> even though it does not specifically say so in the muster records.

### **Turned Over**

This is by far the largest group of entrants into all the ships. These are men who have been taken from one ship and put into another. 'Turning over' was a common practice that caused much resentment with sailors and figured strongly in the Spithead mutiny of 1797. The reasons for the sailors dislike of this practice was that they had no choice in the matter, that they could be given a new rate or quality when they entered another ship with a subsequent loss of status and wages, that they would not necessarily be transferred with their messmates and that they were rarely, if ever, allowed leave in between ships. It was not uncommon for seamen who had been on a foreign station for several years to arrive in England only to be put on another ship and sent out again.<sup>76</sup> Due to the high rate of desertion whenever ships put into port, the authorities were keen to get men transferred to a new ship as soon as possible and out to sea and thus away from temptation. Therefore the crews of ships that were being put out of

commission were normally transferred either directly to another ship in commission or else to receiving ships or guard ships where they could be kept under supervision. For instance, when the *Glenmore* was preparing to commence its first voyage 21 men were transferred to her from the *Sandwich*<sup>77</sup> receiving ship on 21 April 1796 and the 'Prest' column records for all of them 'Sandwich late Ambuscade'.<sup>78</sup> Trying to establish Admiralty recruitment practices from men who had been turned over can be difficult but is possible by tracing them back through the receiving ship muster records (men being kept on board receiving ships for transfer to other ships are recorded in the muster books supernumeraries list).<sup>79</sup> Tracing some of the turned over sailor's original reasons for joining the Service is possible by tracking back individuals through relevant muster records but their last ship is not always given. For the purpose of this thesis only the muster books of the ships in question have been consulted and considerable further research in this area would have to be undertaken in order to establish the reasons for the turned over men joining the Royal Navy.

### **Pressed**

Pressed men were normally taken either by the Impress Service that controlled a nation wide operation with gangs and regulating captains in Great Britain's major seaports or by individual ship's press gangs. Pressed men were taken on land and at sea. If they were taken at sea by the ship's press gang then the name of the ship that they were pressed from was often given. For example, Robert Hay (EM164) and William Robson (EM165) were pressed from the *Favourite* merchant ship on 7 September 1806 and the 'Prest' column records 'Pressed out of the Favourite'.<sup>80</sup> The *Trent's* log book for November 1798 records that 'Impressed 2 men from a Danish brig then impressed 1 man and two boys from an English brig'.<sup>81</sup> During this period



the *Trent* was patrolling off the West Indian island of Porto Rico and stopping and inspecting merchant shipping. During this month the *Trent*'s muster book<sup>82</sup> records that a total of 13 men were pressed from merchant ships but the name of the ships that they were taken from is not given.

One of the main difficulties in establishing if men had been really pressed or not is the practice of pressed men being 'offered' the opportunity to volunteer. A volunteer received a substantial bounty as an inducement to join the Service and it is clear from the ship's records that some pressed men were given the opportunity to 'volunteer' and gain this bounty. This practice is revealed by the way that many of the men were put onto the ship's books. It was often the case that men recruited to the ship, for whatever reason, were first entered onto the supernumerary list rather than the full muster role. This was common practice when there could be some dispute about a man's eligibility to serve. For instance, the *Emerald2* pressed two seamen on the 13 May 1810 while the ship was moored in Plymouth Sound and they were entered as 'Supernumeraries for victuals only'. Four days later, before they were put onto the ship's books proper, the muster book records that they 'Ran in a bumboat',<sup>83</sup> they had deserted. It was likely that these men were under investigation to see if they could be legally pressed or not. There were many exemptions to the press such as some fishermen, whalers, apprentices and watermen and men were often kept on the supernumerary list until these exemption possibilities had been cleared up. For example, the crew of the *Emerald1* pressed 11 men 'at Sea Reach' on 16 November 1795. The Captain's log records that 'sent launch down river to impress'<sup>84</sup> and the supernumerary list in the muster book<sup>85</sup> records that 11 men were subsequently pressed (supernumerary list numbers 250 to 260) although it does not give the name

of a ship or whether the men were pressed on land. Subsequently five of the men were discharged the ship. For four of the men no reason for their discharge is recorded although the abbreviation 'A.O.' (Admiralty Order?) is given after the date of their discharge, 9 December 1795. It is clear that investigation was carried out on these men as two of them are revealed to have aliases.<sup>86</sup> The fifth man, James Holborn, is discharged as 'A.O. An indented apprentice' on 17 December 1795. The remaining six men 'appear' on the crew muster on 10 December 1795 but only one of them, Francis Smith (E208) is recorded as being a pressed man, the others are all said to be 'volunteers' and are subsequently awarded a volunteers bounty.<sup>87</sup> The pressed man, Francis Smith (E208) is shortly afterwards discharged the ship on 12 January 1796 as 'Port A.O.' (Port Admiral's Order?). So here we see clear evidence of pressed men offered a chance to 'volunteer' and collect a bounty and doing so. The one man not to take the bounty is later discharged and it appears that he was sure enough of his case for exemption to refuse the siren call of making a virtue of a necessity. This is not the only case of the practice of giving pressed men the opportunity to volunteer and these are discussed in further detail below. The question that must be asked is why allow pressed men to volunteer? Presumably captains believed that men with a financial interest would either be happier in their enforced lot or that they would be less likely to desert while they waited for their bounty to be paid. The upshot of this practice is that we must be careful when considering the numbers of men pressed into service against the number of 'true' volunteers.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers normally came to the ship via one of three routes, receiving ship, rendezvous or directly volunteering to the ship. For example, Michael Harrington

(T289) was recorded as 'Christiansand, Norway, Vol.'<sup>88</sup> in the 'Prest' column of the *Trent's* muster book<sup>89</sup> for August 1796 when *Trent* was employed escorting convoys to Denmark and Norway and back<sup>90</sup> when it appears that he directly volunteered to the ship. John Clark (G331) 'appeared' on the *Glenmore's* muster books on the 8 September 1797 and is recorded as 'Volunteer Cork Rendv.'<sup>91</sup> Rendezvous were prearranged meeting places where volunteers could meet in order to volunteer for the Navy. Pressed men were also often brought there further reinforcing the fiction that they were not pressed.<sup>92</sup> Henry Field joined the *Emerald1* on 13 September 1795 via the receiving ship *Enterprize*<sup>93</sup> and is recorded as 'Enterprize Volunteer'.<sup>94</sup>

### Quota men

The first Quota Act was passed in 1795 and required local civil authorities to provide a set number of men for sea service per county. The second Quota Act, following shortly after, focused on the seaports of Great Britain again requiring a set number of men for each port authority to provide.<sup>95</sup> Authorities agree that quantitatively the Acts were a success and provided much needed manpower for the Navy although precise numbers are difficult to estimate. However there was much criticism at the time concerning the quality of the men provided and the politically radicalising effect that they had on ship's crews, one Admiral claiming that they had a significant part to play in the Naval mutinies of 1797 at Spithead and the Nore.<sup>96</sup> Modern historians have followed the tradition of a scathing regard for the men raised by the Quota Acts although little empirical evidence has emerged to support or challenge this view. Quota men are recorded to have served on the *Trent*, the *Emerald1* and the *Glenmore* and there were probably quota men on the *Emerald2* but they are not recorded as such as they had been 'turned over' from other ships and their original reason for joining

the Royal Navy is not given. For example, William Crighton (G215) was recorded in the *Glenmore's* muster books as appearing on board 16 June 1796 as 'Sandwich Elgin Quota'.<sup>97</sup> The fate of the quota men will be discussed in detail below.

### **Volunteers and Boys**

Each Royal Navy ship was required to carry a number of 'volunteers and boys' and these were divided into three classes, first, second and third. For a frigate the number of boys was set at six of the second class and ten of the third class.<sup>98</sup> It was intended that first class boys were potential officer material and sons of sea officers could volunteer aged 11 while for others the entry age was restricted to 13.<sup>99</sup> Second and third class boys were intended to be youngsters who were serving their sea-going apprenticeships. Second class boys were aged between 15 and 17 and were organised into watches like the men while third class boys aged below 15 acted in a number of shipboard roles such as supporting the men's messes and powder monkeys.<sup>100</sup> When a boy was deemed by the captain to be ready to join the ship's crew proper he was put onto the crew muster (there was a separate muster for boys) and rated according to his abilities. For example John Giles (EM150) a third class boy was entered onto the *Emerald2's* muster book and rated landsman on 4 August 1806 aged 18.<sup>101</sup> For more details on volunteers and boys see Chapter 4.

### **Prisoners of War**

As surprising as it may seem, it was not uncommon for prisoners of war to volunteer to serve in the Royal Navy and all four commissions have examples of this. Although large numbers did not volunteer, to a navy bereft of manpower they must have been very welcome. However none of the volunteered prisoners of war on any of our ships

were recorded as having received a volunteer's bounty. Also included in this category are liberated British ex-prisoners of war and those who had been 'exchanged',<sup>102</sup> for enemy prisoners of war. For example following the capture by the *Emerald1* of a French privateer in February 1798<sup>103</sup> George Patris (E369) an American volunteered to serve on board the *Emerald1* and in the Prest column of the muster book is recorded 'Chasseur Barque French Privateer SL 1291' (the SL stands for his Supernumerary List number).<sup>104</sup> The reason for including both prisoners of war and British ex-prisoners of war in the same category is that it is often difficult to tell them apart. George Patris is a good example of this; was George a prisoner of the French or was he one of the privateer's crew?

### **In Lieu and Substitutes**

It was possible for men in the Service to arrange for 'substitutes' to take their place or to pay a sum of £80 to cover the cost of their replacements. The substitutes had to be persuaded (bribed) to take a man's place. The practice was also referred to as 'in lieu'<sup>105</sup> and men who joined the ship were entered as 'substitutes' or 'in lieu' in the 'Prest' column of the muster book. As an example of this system in practice, on 15 September 1811 Eugene Connellan (EM335) was discharged the *Emerald2* for 'From the Service having paid £80 for 2 substitutes'.<sup>106</sup> Although the practice of substitution was fairly small, it did occur and there are a few examples of it occurring on all the frigates at one time or another. For instance four able seamen joined the *Trent* in November 1800 when she was moored in Portsmouth and they are all listed as 'Portsmouth in lieu'.<sup>107</sup>

## Sickness

A large number of men were entered into the ship as having either returned from hospital/sick quarters having been originally sent there from their ship or coming from hospital/sick quarters where they had been recuperating from illness, wounds or accident from other ships. In the first case the old entry number of the man is usually given such as John Charles (G444) of the *Glenmore* who is entered into the muster book as 'L'Engageante Sick Quarters SB 132'<sup>108</sup> (SB stands for 'Ship's Books' and refers to his previous number on board) on his return from the hospital ship *Engageante*<sup>109</sup> moored in the Cove of Cork on 16 September 1800. John Charles (G132) had been sent sick from the *Glenmore* on 13 July 1800.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, William Bennett (E14) was entered into the *Emerald1*'s muster book as 'Sick Quarters Woolwich late Inflexible' on 3 September 1795.<sup>111</sup> However for the purposes of establishing how men were recruited to the Service these are of not much use as they are re-entries although it does give us some idea of aspects of Naval health care.

## Deserters

Like returning sick sailors, captured deserters fall into two categories, those from the ship in question and those from other ships. Both categories appear in the ship's records but nowhere near the number of those who actually deserted and like the returning sick are actually re-entries. For example, Charles Hope (EM436) of the *Emerald2* was entered into the ship's books on 2 August 1810 as 'Deserter Trent SB 365'.<sup>112</sup> In fact Hope had deserted from the *Emerald2* 'from leave' in Portsmouth on 4 May 1810.<sup>113</sup> What appears to have happened is that Hope had deserted and been recaptured and ended up in the hospital ship *Trent* possibly as a result of a flogging he

received for his 'crime' as there is no record of him receiving any punishment aboard the *Emerald*.<sup>2</sup>

### **Civil Powers**

Some debtors and vagrants could be handed over to the Navy by the civil authorities.<sup>114</sup> Contrary to popular opinion, in practice the Navy was reluctant to take felons although debtors were welcomed and there are a few examples in the ships under consideration.

### **Unknown**

A number of entries into the muster book do not provide enough information or cannot be understood. Most of these concern men from receiving ships where only the name of the receiving ship is given and the records concerning men being held pending allocation to commissioned ships cannot be located or no longer exist or very occasionally where little or no information concerning a man is given.

### **Recruitment in Practice**

Rodger and Lewis have both developed tables looking at the recruitment profile of Royal Navy vessels based on the study of ship's records.<sup>115</sup> Rodger's calculations are based on the study of the muster records of five ships (*Achilles*, *Ambuscade*, *Arundel*, *Elizabeth*, and *Hampton Court*). However these records are from the period 1755 to 1759 during the Seven Years War, around 40 years before the start of our era but in a time of war when the Navy was experiencing the same wartime recruitment problems as faced the Admiralty during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Rodger's figures are not taken from complete ship's commissions but are 'snapshots' of various

muster records over a limited period of time during a ship's commission. Recruitment to the ships in this survey is a complete record of every crewman that served during a particular ship's commission and this is an important difference to Rodger's calculations. When a ship was fitting out for sea service at the start of its commission it required a lot of crew in a relatively short space of time and these were mostly supplied by turned over men. As crew left the ship for various reasons they tended to be replaced by pressed men and volunteers. Therefore it would be expected that the ships in this survey are likely to have a higher percentage of men 'turned over' from other ships than in Rodger's findings. Where a ship had been stationed would also effect the numbers of men turned over from other ships against those pressed or volunteered. A ship stationed in home waters close to Portsmouth or Chatham where ships were being commissioned and de-commissioned on a regular basis was more likely to receive turned over men than say a ship stationed in the West Indies where ships were decommissioned less frequently. The other aspect of difference between Rodger's findings and the findings from this survey is that Rodger's figures include marines. Marines of the Seven Years War period could be recruited by impressment and a 'considerable number were recruited in this way'<sup>116</sup> while during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars the Royal Marine Corps was a volunteer only service<sup>117</sup> and was not included in the recruitment figures given below. Rodger's findings are shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Rodger's 'Origin of Ship's Companies' 1755-59**

<b>Ship</b>	<b>Pressed</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>Turned Over</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Achilles</i>	45 (6.5%)	365 (52.6%)	281 (40.5%)	694
<i>Ambuscade</i>	36 (4.1%)	526 (60.1%)	304 (34.7%)	875
<i>Arundel</i>	25 (6.3%)	127 (32.1%)	131 (33%)	396
<i>Elizabeth</i>	258 (36.4%)	431 (60.9%)	19 (2.7%)	708
<i>Hampton Court</i>	246 (17.7%)	809 (58.3%)	315 (22.7%)	1,387
<b>Totals</b>	<b>610 (15%)</b>	<b>2,258 (55.6%)</b>	<b>1,050 (25.9%)</b>	<b>4,060</b>



Rodger's figures show a very high proportion of volunteers to pressed men, 15% pressed, 55.6% volunteers and 25.9% turned over. If we take just the percentage of volunteers to pressed men, disregarding the men turned over, giving us a total of 2,868 men, we have an average of 21% pressed men to 79% volunteers but with considerable variation between ships; *Achilles* 11% pressed to 89% volunteers, *Ambuscade* 6% pressed to 94% volunteer, *Arundel* 17% pressed to 63% volunteers, *Elizabeth* 37% pressed to 63% volunteers and *Hampton Court* 23% pressed to 77% volunteers. However as Rodger points out, it is very difficult to establish who is a true volunteer and although there were many volunteers they tended to dry up as war progressed and often they were not the sort of men that the Navy was in real need of; trained seamen.<sup>118</sup>

Lewis' table (Table 3.2) is based on 'an average 1812 crew' and like Rodger he claims no 'meticulous accuracy'<sup>119</sup> and therefore we must view his figures as a broad-brush attempt at developing crew recruitment breakdown.

**Table 3.2: Lewis' 'Modes of Entry' table (c.1812)<sup>120</sup>**

Groups	%	Voluntary	Compulsory	Seamen	Non-Seamen
Volunteers (boys)	8%	8%	0%	8%	0%
Volunteers (men)	15%	15%	0%	10%	5%
Pressed men (British)	50%	0%	50%	45%	5%
Foreigners	15%	2%	13%	12%	3%
Quota-men, etc	12%	0%	12%	0%	12%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>

If Lewis' figures are accurate then the 12% of quota men recorded demonstrate the positive effect that the Quota Acts had had on naval recruitment. The problem is that by 1812 it would be almost impossible to establish who was a quota man from ship's records as almost all surviving quota men from 1795 would have been turned over

several times. It is extremely unlikely that this percentage of quota men had remained in the Service until 1812. Lewis also lists quota men under the 'compulsory' heading and this is incorrect. Although the quotas were compulsory for local authorities to find or risk heavy fines, the quota men were largely recruited through voluntary means and Lewis accepts this by arguing that one of the principle causes of resentment of the quota men by sailors in the fleet was the large volunteers bounty that the quota men had received.<sup>121</sup> Furthermore Lewis' figures show that all the quota men were non-seamen but Emsley's findings demonstrate that while the majority were landsmen, there was a significant minority of seamen amongst them.<sup>122</sup> In broad terms Lewis states that about 25% of the crew of a Royal Navy vessel of 1812 were likely to be volunteers, 50% pressed men, 15% foreigners and 12% quota men and others.

Both Lewis and Rodger's tables are unsatisfactory in different ways. Lewis' calculations are largely based on educated guesswork, a combination of muster records and a handful of personal memoirs and Rodger's table is a snapshot of a number of vessels over a short period of time.<sup>123</sup> Both tables suffer from the vexed question of who was a true volunteer and who was a pressed man who had been 'persuaded' to be entered as a volunteer. Lewis argues that a ship's captain would be lucky to have as many as 15% of his crewmen true volunteers and that it was likely that around 50% would be pressed men although he admits that this is not the impression given in the ship's muster books of the period. Rodger's figures come directly from the muster books of the ships concerned recording directly what was entered without trying to establish which men had been actually pressed but then entered as a 'volunteer'. By looking at ship's log books and the supernumerary lists in muster books it is possible to establish the practice of pressed men being induced to enter as volunteers. However this only gives us a glimpse of this practice and it is

impossible to say precisely how many men were true volunteers. What can be said is that the practice was widespread and there are examples of men initially being entered as pressed and subsequently as volunteer on all the ships looked at in this survey. For example, on 18 August 1796 the captain's log of the *Trent* states that while the ship was employed in escorting a convoy that the ship's boats were engaged in 'impressing men from the convoy... received 13 impressed men'.<sup>124</sup> However the muster book of the *Trent* records for that day that only seven pressed men were received into the ship but that six 'volunteers' also joined.<sup>125</sup> All of the 'volunteers' are recorded as having received a volunteer's bounty. Of the seven pressed men five were subsequently discharged by Admiral Buckner or Admiral Duncan on the ship's return to Yarmouth three weeks later and the other two were invalided out of the service shortly after.<sup>126</sup> Based on this evidence it would appear that those who thought that they had a good case to appeal against their impressment, perhaps they had exemption certificates or that they were foreigners (unfortunately, in this case, the reason for their discharge is not given), refused to accept the volunteers bounty. On the other hand those that believed they had no case to appeal made a virtue out of a necessity and took the volunteer's bounty.<sup>127</sup>

Where this survey differs from Rodger and Lewis' is that it considers the recruitment of men over the lifetime of four ship's commissions. A horizontal view from a ship's initial commissioning to its de-commissioning rather than a 'snapshot' of time and place (Rodger) or a 'best guess' (Lewis).

## ***Trent***

Table 3.3 lists the various categories, discussed above, of entrant and re-entrant to the *Trent* during her commission.

**Table 3.3: *Trent* Entry and Re-entry breakdown**

<b>Entry</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Turned Over	340	36%
Volunteer	203	21%
Pressed	126	13%
From sickness	76	8%
Quota men	48	5%
Warrant officers	33	4%
Commissioned officers	25	3%
Boys	24	3%
Substitutes/in lieu	7	1%
Volunteer POWs	6	1%
Captured deserters	5	1%
Returned prisoners	2	
Widows men	3	
Unclear	54	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>102%</b>

We can best divide the category of entrants into four distinct groups, firstly those men turned over from other ships, secondly re-entrants (men returned sick, captured deserters and returned prisoners) thirdly officers (commissioned and warrant) and lastly those men recruited for the first time into the Service (volunteers, pressed men, quota men, volunteers and boys and substitutes).<sup>128</sup> The volunteer and boy entry category given in the table (headed 'Boys') refers to those who have 'come of age' and been moved onto the main muster from the volunteer and boy muster itself which

will be dealt with separately. If we remove those whose entry reason is unclear (54 men or 6%), the three 'widows men', the officers (58 men or 6%) and re-entrants (83 or 9%) we end up with the following breakdown shown below in Table 3.4.<sup>129</sup>

**Table 3.4: *Trent* Entry group breakdown**

Grouping	Numbers	%
New entrants	414	55%
Turned over	340	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows that where a man's entry is clear, 45% of all entrants to the *Trent* were turned over from other ships while 55% are 'new' entrants, not including officers. This compares with Rodger's findings of approximately 26% turned over men and the reasons for this difference are discussed above. Table 3.5 gives a breakdown of how 'new' men were recorded as having been recruited to the *Trent*.

**Table 3.5: *Trent* Entry breakdown: new entrants**

Entry	Number	%
Volunteer	203	49%
Pressed	126	30%
Quota men	48	12%
Volunteers and boys	24	6%
Volunteer POWs	6	2%
Substitutes	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>101%</b>

Nearly half of the men were recorded as having volunteered for the Service, 30% were pressed, 12% quota men, 6% ex- boys and 2% each for volunteer POWs and substitutes. Comparing this with Rodger's findings of nearly 80% volunteers and 21% pressed men shows that although there are differences they are not as far apart as a

first glance might indicate. For Rodger's period there were no Quota Acts and therefore no quota men.<sup>130</sup> If our quota men were added to the volunteer category along with ex-boys and volunteer POWs we get to around 70% volunteer status, 30% pressed and therefore, in broad terms, show only a 10% difference to Rodger's calculations. Given factors such as the time difference (about 40 years), station and other variables this is quite a good match. In comparison with Lewis' figures of 50% pressed men we are some way away at the *Trent's* 30%. However given the difficulty discussed above of identifying who really was a 'true' volunteer and who was a pressed man accepting the volunteer's bounty, perhaps the figures are not so far away as they at first appear.

Concentrating on the *Trent's* volunteers, pressed and quota men, the *Trent's* muster books give us the following information on the age profile (where given) of the crew in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6: *Trent* Entry (recorded) against age (829 recorded)**

Age band	Vol (195)		Press (115)		Quota (48)		Crew (829)	
-15								
15-20	55	29%	22	19%	22	46%	214	26%
21-25	80	41%	53	46%	11	23%	336	41%
26-30	28	14%	25	22%	8	17%	138	17%
31-35	16	8%	6	5%	2	4%	46	6%
36-40	13	7%	5	4%	4	8%	53	6%
41-45	1	1%	1	1%			18	2%
46-50	2	1%	2	2%	1	2%	17	2%
50+			1	1%			7	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>101%</b>

Rediker gives the ages of merchant seamen from the period 1700 to 1750 as 15-19 11%, 20-29 60%, 30-39 19%, 40-49 9% and 50-59 as 2% for 'common seamen'.<sup>131</sup>

Our sample shows a younger bias for the full crew but the age range 21-30 contains 58% of the men, very close to Rediker's 60% in this age group. However we can see

significant age differences between the three recruitment paths. Volunteers closely match the general crew age profile, within 3% but the age profile of pressed men shows a marked bias for those aged between 21-30, 68% as opposed to 58%. This difference can largely be explained by the fact that press gangs were primarily interested in experienced seamen rather than young boys and apprentice seamen (those of less than two years sea service) were ‘protected’ against pressing<sup>132</sup> and so the men pressed were likely to have an older age profile than other groups. The largest single difference between age profiles belongs to the quota men. Nearly half (46%) of the *Trent’s* quota men were aged between 15 and 20 compared with a crew profile of 26% in this age band. This difference can best be explained as most of the quota men were entered as landsmen, only three of them were rated as able seamen and none as ordinary seamen.<sup>133</sup> Therefore it would seem that most of the *Trent’s* quota men recruited were young and inexperienced, as far as the sea was concerned.

Table 3.7 examines the recruitment method of entry against men’s initial rating or quality where given.

**Table 3.7: *Trent* Entry against quality**

Quality	Vol (203)		Press (126)		Quota (48)	
Landsman	102	50%	8	6%	45	94%
Ordinary Seaman	31	15%	55	44%		
Able Seaman	66	33%	62	49%	3	6%
Midshipman/MM	2	1%				
Other	2	1%	1	1%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

Exactly 50% of those who volunteered were rated landsman as opposed to 6% of pressed men and 94% of quota men while 50% of volunteers had some knowledge and experience of the sea as did 94% of the pressed men but of the quota men only 6% had worked at sea before. Here we can see the Navy’s recruiting dilemma at

shipboard level. The press gang recruited almost entirely immediately useful seamen but was deeply unpopular with its victims, recruiting officers and the public at large. Of the volunteers, only half of their number were useful seamen, and the quota men contained few experienced sailors but did make up the numbers.

Table 3.8 looks at the country of origin against recruitment where given.

**Table 3.8: *Trent* Entry against origin**

<b>Origin</b>	<b>Vol (194)</b>		<b>Press (113)</b>		<b>Quota (48)</b>		<b>Crew (827)</b>	
English	108	56%	46	41%	6	13%	388	47%
Irish	45	23%	19	17%	1	2%	201	24%
Scottish	20	10%	14	12%	41	85%	139	17%
Welsh	4	2%	7	6%			25	3%
Foreign	17	9%	27	24%			74	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>100%</b>

Nearly half (47%) of the crew was recorded as having been born in England. However 56% of those who volunteered were English but this is not surprising as the *Trent* spent about 50% of her commission in English waters thus making it much easier to pick up English volunteers. In other respects volunteers follow the general crew profile quite closely although there are fewer Scottish volunteers (10%) than the general profile (17%) but again this can be explained as due to the fact that the *Trent* did not visit Scottish waters. Of those pressed, the most significant figure relates to the number of foreigners that were taken on board, 24% as compared to a general crew profile of 9%. It is well known that the Royal Navy of the period pressed foreigners and a large proportion of these were American, or said to be American. The impressing of American seamen into the Royal Navy was a hot issue of the period and in large part led to the American War of 1812.<sup>134</sup> The British argument was that many British sailors evaded impressment by pretending to be American and that false American identity papers were easy to come by.<sup>135</sup> This led to ship's captains ignoring



protests from captured seamen that they were 'American' and pressing them anyway. Unfortunately it is not possible to disentangle from the muster records all who were the 'real' Americans and who were British seamen trying, unsuccessfully, to evade impressment. Of the 27 pressed foreigners, 11 or 41% were 'Americans' and two of them, Roland Ross (T534) ordinary seaman<sup>136</sup> and Milo Williams (T585) able seaman<sup>137</sup> were both discharged the *Trent* 'being an American' and Benjamin Lindsey (T787) was discharged 'by Admiralty Order',<sup>138</sup> probably because of his nationality and therefore these three must have been active enough to get proper confirmation of their nationality. Of the rest of the pressed foreigners, 4 were recorded as being of German origin,<sup>139</sup> three Swedish,<sup>140</sup> two Frenchmen,<sup>141</sup> two West Indians,<sup>142</sup> and one each from Norway, Denmark, Sierra Leone, Gibraltar and Egypt.<sup>143</sup> Therefore it is clear that the pressing of foreigners into the Royal Navy was a common practice. The high number of Scottish quota men, 85% can be explained by the fact that the muster book records that they were from the Scottish towns of Edinburgh, Perth, Largo, Dundee, Cupar, Linlithgow, and Dumfermlin<sup>144</sup> and therefore men from the Scottish quota. It would appear that men from the Scottish quota had been brought down to Chatham in order to be put on board the large number of ships being commissioned there. Why *Trent* received such a high number of men from the Scottish quotas is unclear but most likely it was simply the luck of the draw.

Table 3.9 looks at the flogging record of the *Trent* over its full commission where it is possible to verify men flogged against the muster record. This is not always possible as some of the records are incomplete, the names of men are not always given and some of the men flogged cannot be reconciled to the muster list and these are most likely supernumeraries or men from other ships. The record of flogging given in the

table below is not the total number of floggings carried out on board the *Trent* but the number of the crew who were recorded to have been flogged at least once during their time on the ship. Several men were flogged more than once but this is not included in the table.

**Table 3.9: *Trent* Entry against floggings**

<b>Floggings</b>	<b>Vol (203)</b>		<b>Press (126)</b>		<b>Quota (48)</b>		<b>Crew (894)</b>	
Flogged	22	11%	19	15%	2	4%	95	11%
Not flogged	181	89%	107	85%	46	96%	799	89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>100%</b>

The records show that a total of 11% of the crew were flogged during the *Trent's* commission. Volunteers to the ship follow the crew profile exactly having 11% of their number flogged. Pressed men were flogged a little more than the average at 15% and we are probably seeing dissatisfaction with their enforced circumstances emerging in their attitude to service in the navy. However it is possible that as pressed men were generally already skilled mariners that they were expected to have a high standard of competence and that they were more likely to be punished for poor work. The quota men were flogged the least by a considerable margin, 4% compared to 11%. This disciplinary record does not stack up against the views of contemporaries and some historians who were, and are, convinced that quota men were 'criminals and petty thieves'.<sup>145</sup> Of the two quota men flogged, both were flogged only once, James Stewart (T358) receiving nine lashes for theft on 12 November 1798<sup>146</sup> and David Benny (T365) received 24 lashes on 4 April 1799 for 'disobedience and drunkenness'.<sup>147</sup> In both cases the men had been serving on board the *Trent* for some considerable time before the floggings took place, Stewart for nearly 21 months and Benny for 24 months and by that time Benny had been promoted to 'ship's corporal'.<sup>148</sup>

Table 3.10 looks at the promotion and demotion record of volunteers, pressed and quota men. For the purposes of this study, promotion is considered to be when a man moves up the ladder from landsman through ordinary seaman to able seaman or specialist (such as gunner's mate, sailmaker's mate) and then inferior and finally superior petty officer. Demotion is considered the reverse of this. Demotions were comparatively rare but did occur as is illustrated below. The table below only looks at the initial promotion/demotion of the men involved. In the table below, no crew comparator is given as in other tables. The reason for this is that when the crew as a whole is viewed the distinction of promotion/demotion becomes blurred and movement and rating changes between specialist areas would not likely to have been considered a promotion or a demotion. For instance one of the conditions that a midshipman had to fulfil in order to pass for lieutenant was to have served as an able seaman (see Chapter 6). On the face of it a move from midshipman to able seaman would appear to be a demotion but in reality was not so. Therefore it was felt that it was safer not to use the full crew promotion/demotion statistics as a comparator.

**Table 3.10: *Trent* Entry against promotion**

Promotion	Vol (203)		Press (126)		Quota (48)	
Promoted	57	28%	31	25%	14	29%
Demoted	3	2%	3	2%		
Unchanged	143	70%	92	73%	34	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

Quota men appear to have the best promotion record, 29% of them being promoted during the course of their time on board the *Trent*. However this statistic could be a little deceiving since, as is shown above, all but two of them were rated landsmen on entry to the ship thus there was only one way most of them could go which was up. But even allowing for this factor the promotion record of almost one in three quota

men being promoted is a good one and once again gives the lie to the negative image given of these men.<sup>149</sup> Of the volunteers to the ship a total of 28% of them were promoted and 2% demoted and pressed men 25% promoted and 2% demoted. All of the demotions seemed to have occurred when initial ratings of the men as able seamen was seen to be too high and they were subsequently disrated to ordinary seamen or landsmen. It was in a sailor's interest to get a high rating as this would mean higher wages and status in the ship and it is possible that some men deliberately overqualified themselves in order to get a higher rate than they perhaps deserved. The *Trent's* muster book reveals this phenomena in action. On 23 June 1796 the muster records a total 48 (100%) rating changes for crew members. Of these changes 27 (56%) were from an initial shipboard rating of able seaman to ordinary seaman, ten (21%) able seaman to landsman, nine (19%) from ordinary seaman to landsman and only two (4%) changes that could be counted as a promotion and these were from landsman to ordinary seaman.<sup>150</sup> Men were also demoted as a punishment for a minor offence where flogging was considered too harsh a punishment.<sup>151</sup> All in all the levels of promotion for the three classes of recruitment under consideration are quite close and it would appear that the reasons why a man came on board the ship were not related to his chance of moving up the promotion ladder.

Table 3.11 compares men's entry against the reason given for leaving the ship. Those under the 'Discharged (D)' are men who left the ship by order, most usually turned over to other ships, 'Discharged sick (Ds)' are men who were discharged from the ship to hospital or sick quarters, 'Discharged Dead (DD)' are men who died on board or on ship related duties while they were on the ship's books and 'Ran (R)' is those men who deserted the ship.

**Table 3.11: *Trent* Entry against discharge**

Reason	Vol. (203)		Press (126)		Quota (48)		Crew (944)	
Discharged (D)	55	27%	61	48%	6	13%	429	46%
Discharged sick (Ds)	56	27%	21	17%	18	38%	181	19%
Discharged Dead (DD)	12	6%	8	6%	15	31%	81	9%
Ran (R)	80	39%	36	28%	9	19%	253	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>101%</b>

A total of 46% of all the ship's combined crew were discharged their respective ship in the normal course of events, largely being turned over to other ships. However we see some marked differences between those that volunteered, were pressed or came on board as quota men. Pressed men are very close to the average at 48%, volunteers are considerably below average at 27% and the quota men are very low at 13%. For those who were discharged sick, again we see significant differences as, once more, pressed men are close to the average of 19% at 17%, volunteers are a high 27% and the quota men are double the average at 38%. For those men who died in the *Trent's* service, both volunteers and pressed men are below the 9% crew average at 6% but the quota men suffered a staggering 31% death rate. Of those men who deserted the ship, pressed men are very close to the 27% average at 28%, volunteers deserted at a higher rate than average at 39% and the quota men were below average at 19%. What do these figures tell us? The high sickness rate in both volunteers and even higher rate of quota men is probably due to the fact that the more landsmen there were in each category the less inured they were to sea going life and therefore the more likely that they were to fall sick. The same is true of the death rate. All of the 15 quota men who were discharged dead either died on board the *Trent* or in hospital of sickness. However none of the 15 fell sick and died immediately, the first man to die was George Anderson (T352) who succumbed 'on board' the *Trent* nearly eight weeks

after appearing on board<sup>152</sup> and the average length of service before death was just less than two years (100 weeks).<sup>153</sup> Desertion from the Royal Navy was endemic and there is no reason to believe that the *Trent's* average of 27% is anything other than normal. What does appear odd is that pressed men do not appear to have deserted anymore than the crew average. It would be logical to suppose that those who had been recruited against their will and who were skilled enough to find a berth in a merchant ship would be the most likely to desert but this does not seem to be the case. The highest rate of desertion recorded is of those who had volunteered. Perhaps those who volunteered found the Service life not for them and took the only course open to them to escape, which was desertion. However, to set against this argument, although 54% of all volunteers were rated landsman on entry to the ship, only 44% of volunteer deserters were landsmen. This means that the desertion rate of volunteer landsmen stood at 33%, not much higher than the 27% average. It is possible that we are seeing men signing on as volunteers in order to get the large bounties offered and then jumping ship at the first opportunity, perhaps to repeat the process. Of the quota men deserters, two jumped ship within 10 weeks of coming on board the *Trent* but the average time served before desertion was 91 weeks. What is perhaps surprising is the low rate of desertion of quota men given the difficult time that it would appear they received at the hands of officers and crew if contemporary accounts are to be believed.<sup>154</sup> The low percentage of volunteers who were discharged the ship (27%) against a crew average of 46% can best be explained by the high number of volunteers who were discharged the ship due to sickness (27% compared to a crew average of 19%) and who deserted the ship (39% compared to 27%). Perhaps the most significant finding from this table is extremely high mortality rate of quota men.

We have to be cautious as the overall numbers are quite small but even allowing for this a 31% mortality rate compared to 6% for other entrants is quite staggering.

### ***Emerald1***

Table 3.12 lists the various categories of entry recorded on the *Emerald1*'s muster book.

**Table 3.12: *Emerald1*: Entry and Re-entry breakdown**

<b>Entry</b>	<b>Number</b>	
Turned Over	299	35%
Volunteer	320	37%
Pressed	105	12%
From sickness	13	2%
Quota men	9	1%
Warrant officers	28	3%
Commissioned officers	17	2%
Volunteers and boys	30	4%
Substitutes/in lieu	9	1%
Volunteer POWs	3	
Captured deserters	8	1%
Returned prisoners/exchanged	4	
Widows men	3	
Unclear	19	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>

In broad terms the figures correspond with the *Trent* findings, particularly in men turned over (35% in the *Emerald1* and 36% in the *Trent*), pressed men (12% and 13% respectively), officers (Warrant 3% compared to 4% and Commissioned 2%

compared to 3%) and boys (4% compared to 3%). The main difference occurs with the numbers of volunteers entering the two ships, *Emerald1* records a 37% intake from volunteers compared to the *Trent*'s 21%. There appears no ready explanation for this discrepancy. It is possible that the *Emerald1* was seen as an 'active ship', she was involved in a number of actions and campaigns such as the Battle of Cape St. Vincent, Nelson's abortive attack on Santa Cruz in which he lost his arm and Nelson's Nile campaign culminating in the Battle of the Nile (Aboukir Bay), and that this attracted volunteers. In comparison, the *Trent* saw much active service but little major action. The difference in the number of quota men that were recruited to the two ships (1% for the *Emerald1* compared to 5% for the *Trent*) is probably down to the availability of such men to the Port Admiral.

Table 3.13 shows the entrants to the *Emerald1* broken down into new entrants, those men who are coming fresh into the Royal Navy, and those men turned over from other ships. However this table does not include commissioned or warrant officers, widow's men,<sup>155</sup> re-entrants (such as those returned from sick quarters) or boys.

**Table 3.13: *Emerald1*: Entry group breakdown**

Grouping	Numbers	
New entrants	467	61%
Turned over	299	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>100%</b>

When looking at new entrants to the ship, the findings from the *Emerald1* compare closely with that of those from the *Trent*. The *Trent* had a total of 45% of new entrants recorded as having been turned over from other ships compared to the *Emerald1*'s 39%, a difference of only 6%. These figures are closer to Rodger's figures of 26% of turned over men than the *Trent*. Table 3.14 breaks down the *Emerald1*'s new entrants into the categories outlined above.



**Table 3.14: *Emerald1*: Entry breakdown: new entrants**

Entry	Number	
Volunteer	320	69%
Pressed	105	23%
Quota men	9	2%
Volunteers and boys	30	6%
Volunteer POWs	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>101%</b>

The *Emerald1* findings differ from the *Trent* in the larger number of volunteers recorded (69% compared to 49%), less pressed men (23% compared to 30%) and less quota men (2% compared to 12%) all of which is discussed above. However the figures of the *Emerald1*'s volunteers and pressed men at 69% and 23% respectively are closer to Rodger's findings of 80% volunteers and 15% pressed men than the *Trent*. However these findings are even further away from Lewis' figures of 50% pressed men and 15% volunteers.

A more detailed look at the age profile of the *Emerald1*'s volunteers, pressed and quota men gives the following table (Table 3.15):

**Table 3.15: *Emerald1* Entry (recorded) against age (792 recorded)**

Age band	Vol (315)		Press (95)		Quota (9)		Crew (792)	
-15	1						5	1%
15-20	67	21%	23	24%	2	22%	174	22%
21-25	126	40%	37	39%	6	66%	290	37%
26-30	63	20%	17	18%	1	11%	145	18%
31-35	27	9%	11	12%			78	10%
36-40	15	5%	5	5%			52	7%
41-45	7	2%	2	2%			24	3%
46-50	8	2%					14	2%
50+	1						10	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>101%</b>

For all the age bands the percentage of volunteers, pressed men, quota men and the whole crew is within two percentage points of one another with one exception and this is quota men in the age band 21-25 and 26-30. However this discrepancy should not detain us long as the numbers of quota men are so small (nine men, just 1% of the crew) that any variation from the norm can produce extraordinary figures.<sup>156</sup> As with the *Trent*'s figures when compared to Rediker's calculations of merchant seaman's ages we can see a younger bias to the crew, 26% aged between 15-20 compared to Rediker's 11% aged between 15-19. Likewise comparing the age bands 21-30 the *Emerald1* has 57% of crewmen in this age band compared with *Trent*'s 58% and Rediker's 60%.

Table 3.16 looks at the recorded quality or rating that crewmen were given on entry to the ship for volunteers, pressed men, and quota men and the crew in general.

**Table 3.16: *Emerald1* Entry breakdown: Quality on entry**

Rating	Volunteer		Pressed		Quota		Crew	
Landsman	73	23%	23	22%	9	100%	156	18%
Ordinary Seaman	161	50%	54	51%			325	38%
Able Seaman	76	24%	28	26%			275	32%
Midshipman/MM	6	2%					28	3%
Other	4	1%					83	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>101%</b>

The *Emerald1*'s profile differs significantly in some aspects to the *Trent* findings. The main difference lies in the profile of volunteers and pressed men. The *Emerald1* shows a very different percentage of volunteers who were rated landsman and ordinary seaman, 23% and 50% respectively compared to the *Trent*'s 52% and 13% respectively. Perhaps the various captains of the *Emerald1* persuading more pressed men to take the volunteers bounty than the *Trent*'s captains can explain this difference. This would also help explain the higher percentage of volunteers as opposed to pressed men being recorded on the *Emerald1* as compared to the *Trent*

(69% compared to 49%). What is also significant is the high number of pressed men on board the *Emerald* that are rated landmen, 22% compared to the *Trent*'s 6%. It would appear that the *Emerald*'s captains were more likely to press non-seaman than the *Trent*'s. Given that authorities all agree that the press were primarily concerned with taking trained seamen, 22% rated landman on entry seems to somewhat contradict this view. It is possible that some seamen taken by the press were simply not very good and so rated as landmen or that they were new to the seafaring world although press gangs were not supposed to take seamen of less than two years experience. Alternatively we may have to review our understanding of the press gangs operation and accept that non-sailors were pressed in greater numbers than we thought.<sup>157</sup>

Table 3.17 looks at the recorded origin of new entrants, where given.

**Table 3.17: *Emerald* Entry against origin**

Origin	Vol (312)		Press (96)		Quota (9)		Crew (782)	
English	145	47%	43	45%	7	80%	391	50%
Irish	67	22%	8	8%	2	20%	148	19%
Scottish	33	11%	8	8%			74	10%
Welsh	15	5%	3	3%			32	4%
Foreign	52	17%	34	35%			137	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>101%</b>

*Emerald* has nearly the same percentage of English volunteers as the *Trent*, 50% as opposed to 47% although less Irishmen on board, 19% as opposed to 24%, and less Scotsmen 10% as opposed to 17%. The difference in the number of Irishmen and Scotsmen on board can be explained due to the fact that *Emerald* was never stationed in Ireland, unlike the *Trent*, and therefore had less access to Irish manpower. Also the *Trent* received 48 men from the Scottish quotas that, if removed from the *Trent*'s crew statistics would give a figure of 12% Scottish crewmen, as opposed to 17%, taking it close to the *Emerald*'s 10% of the crew recorded as having originated

from Scotland. The other significant difference between the two ships in regard to crew origin is the number of foreigners (non-British) serving on board the *Emerald* as opposed to the *Trent*, 18% of the crew compared to 9%. This difference can be explained by the amount of time that *Emerald* spent in non-British waters as compared to the *Trent*. The *Trent* spent approximately 50% of her commission overseas in West Indian waters. The *Emerald* however spent roughly 85% of her commission in non-British waters including the Mediterranean, off the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic coast, off the Dutch Plyades as well as the West Indies. Therefore when the *Emerald* required more manpower her captains had a lot less opportunity to recruit British seamen than the *Trent*. This fact is underlined when the origin of volunteer and pressed men is looked at. The *Trent*'s captains recruited 7% of their volunteers from foreigners compared to the *Emerald*'s 17% and 24% of the *Trent*'s pressed men were foreign as opposed to the *Emerald*'s 35%.

**Table 3.18: *Emerald* non-British crew**

Nationality	Number	
American	65	47%
West Indies	19	14%
Swedish	16	12%
Dutch	6	4%
French	6	4%
Danish	5	4%
Prussian	4	3%
Germans	3	2%
Canadians	3	2%
Maltese	2	2%
Norwegian	2	2%
Portuguese	1	1%
African	1	1%
Minorcan	1	1%
Gibraltar	1	1%
Indian	1	1%
Italian	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>102%</b>

Table 3.18 is a breakdown of all the non-British seamen recorded that served on board the *Emerald*. As in the *Trent*'s findings, we see that nearly half of all recorded

foreigners are put down as American, a total of 65 or 47%. Perhaps what is most surprising is the number of different nationalities that served on board the *Emerald*. It is clear that the *Emerald*'s various captains were either happy or desperate enough to employ foreign seamen. Of the foreigners serving on board the *Emerald*, one volunteer Gustaff Gamboorm (sic) (E393) was discharged the ship 'being a subject of the King of Sweden' in March 1804<sup>158</sup> although it had taken him over four years in order to get his discharge as he is recorded to have 'appeared' on board the *Emerald* in November 1799.<sup>159</sup> Of the pressed foreigners another Swede Peter Strum (E343) was discharged the *Emerald* on 23 November 1800 'by Admiralty order', presumably due to his nationality, after nearly three years service.<sup>160</sup> William Row (E564) a pressed American was discharged the *Emerald* in February 1803, 'being a foreigner' after 10 months service<sup>161</sup> and Joshua Hill (E746) was discharged the *Emerald* in August 1804 after six months service 'being an American'.<sup>162</sup> Therefore it is clear that foreigners could appeal against their service in the ship and that those appeals could be successful but that it could be a long time before redress was granted. We do not know how many of the foreign crewmen of the *Emerald* appealed against their service in the ship and were unsuccessful or events such as death or discharge for other reasons occurred before their appeal was granted. It is also possible that rather than appeal against service immediately, an event occurred that made a crewman unhappy and he subsequently looked for a way out of the Service. For example, the Swede Gustaff Gamboorm (E393) was flogged for drunkenness in January 1803<sup>163</sup> (his one and only flogging) and this could well have prompted him to apply for discharge on the grounds of being a Swedish national.

Table 3.19 details the recorded floggings of new crewmen against their method of entry.

**Table 3.19: *Emerald1* Entry against floggings**

Floggings	Vol (320)		Press (105)		Quota (9)		Crew (867)	
Flogged	47	15%	20	19%	3	33%	152	18%
Not flogged	273	85%	85	81%	6	66%	715	82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>100%</b>

A higher percentage of the men were recorded as having been flogged on board the *Emerald1* as opposed to the *Trent*, 18% compared to 11%. However volunteers appear to have been flogged slightly less than average, 15% compared to 18% (on board the *Trent* volunteers were flogged at the average 11%) and pressed men were flogged slightly more than average, 19% as opposed to 18% which matches the *Trent* findings. The major difference between the *Emerald1* and *Trent* findings is that the *Emerald1*'s quota men were flogged at a rate of 33% compared to the average 18% as opposed to the *Trent*'s quota men who were flogged at 4% compared to 11%; a significant difference. The difficulty with drawing any conclusions from these figures is the small number of *Emerald1* quota men involved as discussed above. Of the three men flogged, James Clark (E231) was given 12 lashes on the 18 June 1797 for 'Drunkenness and neglect of duty'<sup>164</sup>, William Tubb (E234) was given 24 lashes on 23 April 1804 for 'Neglect of duty and drunkenness'<sup>165</sup> and William Brown (E236) received 24 lashes for 'Drunkenness and disobedience of orders' on 1 June 1799.<sup>166</sup> It is clear that drunkenness played a major factor in why men were flogged which is hardly surprising given the amounts of alcohol distributed to the men<sup>167</sup> and the prevailing attitudes towards drink in the Service.<sup>168</sup>

Table 3.20 considers the promotions and demotions that occurred to new entrants to the *Emerald1*. As in the *Trent* table (Table 3.10) looking at the same issue, discussed above, the same factors of why a man is considered promoted or demoted are applied.

**Table 3.20: *Emerald1*: Entry against promotion**

Promotion	Vol. (320)		Press (105)		Quota (9)	
Promoted	84	26%	20	19%	7	77%
Demoted	7	2%				
Unchanged	229	72%	85	81%	2	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>99%</b>

A total of 26% of volunteers were promoted during their stay on board the *Emerald1* and 2% were demoted. This compares well with the *Trent*'s figures of 28% volunteers promoted and 2% demoted. However promotion of pressed men in the *Emerald1* was lower than the *Trent* at 19% compared to 25% but no pressed men were demoted compared to 2% of the *Trent*'s pressed men. However in broad terms the figures are comparable. The *Emerald1*'s quota men have a very high promotion rate at 77% which is even higher than the *Trent*'s 29%. However, once again we must be cautious in reading too much into this statistic, as the quota men numbers are so small.

Table 3.21 looks at the recorded reason why men were discharged the ship against new entrants.

**Table 3.21: *Emerald1*: Entry against discharge**

Reason	Vol. (320)		Press (105)		Quota (9)		Crew (864)	
Discharged (D)	172	54%	61	58%	3	33%	494	57%
Discharged sick (Ds)	18	6%	6	6%			47	5%
Discharged Dead (DD)	49	15%	10	10%	5	56%	134	16%
Ran (R)	81	25%	28	27%	1	11%	189	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100%</b>

The figures for *Emerald1* show significant differences to the *Trent*'s findings. In general terms a higher percentage of the men of the *Emerald1* were discharged in the normal course of events such as being turned over to other ships than the *Trent*, 57% compared to 46%. Fewer of the *Emerald1*'s men were discharged sick than the *Trent*'s, 5% compared to 19%, but many more were discharged as dead, 16%

compared to 9% and fewer men deserted the *Emerald* than the *Trent*, 22% compared to 27%. The difference between the two ships, although not huge, is significant and the most likely explanation can be put down to the stations that the two ships served on. As discussed above, *Trent* spent about 50% of her time in home waters and - *Emerald* about 15%. This would most likely mean that desertion from the *Emerald* was more difficult as she spent most of her time in foreign waters. The high mortality rate of overseas stations of those men falling sick could account for low sickness rate but high mortality rate. *Emerald* was also involved in several major campaigns that cost her more men killed in action than the *Trent*. It is also possible that the *Emerald* was a happier ship than the *Trent* and consequently had a lower desertion rate.

In comparing the modes of new entrants into the *Emerald* with reasons for discharge, the volunteer and pressed contingents match the crew profile fairly closely, all within 6% of the average. However the quota men are once again out of line with the crew average. Over half of the quota men died during their service with the *Emerald*. All of the quota men deaths were due to sickness, two during Mediterranean service and three in the West Indies.<sup>169</sup> Once again we must be wary about drawing conclusions from such a small sample but it fits the *Trent*'s findings where the death rate due to sickness for quota men was at 31%, over three times the average of 9%, virtually the same ratio as the *Emerald*'s (56% compared to 16%). On the face of it, it would seem that quota men, for the most part landsmen in their early twenties (77%) were just not physiologically and perhaps psychologically equipped to deal with the diseases that they were likely to meet during foreign service in the Royal Navy. What is a bit of a mystery, if this conclusion is correct, is that before falling sick and dying the quota men had all served over two years in the ship and some up to seven years. It



would have been thought that by that period of time some immunity would have been developed.

Of those men who were discharged the ship in the 'normal' course of events, that is not from sickness, death or desertion, the following reasons for their discharge were recorded. The great majority of men were either discharged to other ships, paid off when the ship went out of commission, invalided or promoted into other ships. Of those that suffered a different fate, seven were discharged as 'having been sent in a prize and not heard of since',<sup>170</sup> five were taken prisoner by the French on Guadeloupe,<sup>171</sup> five were discharged 'in lieu' of other men,<sup>172</sup> two were discharged the Service 'at their own request',<sup>173</sup> two were discharged 'not having joined from the ship he was lent to',<sup>174</sup> and one each were; 'given up to the civil power', 'on parole of honour', 'as a sentence of a court martial' and 'Appointed to act as Naval Storekeeper at Antigua'.<sup>175</sup>

## *Emerald2*

Table 3.22 breaks down the various reasons for men's entry onto the main crew muster for *Emerald2*.

**Table 3.22: *Emerald2*: Entry and Re-entry breakdown**

Entry	Number	%
Turned Over	71	14%
Volunteer	260	51%
Pressed	71	14%
From sickness	22	4%
Quota men		
Warrant officers	27	5%
Commissioned officers	9	2%
Volunteers and boys	20	4%
Substitutes/in lieu	2	
Volunteer POWs	11	2%
Captured deserters	6	1%
Returned prisoners/exchanged	5	1%
Widows men	3	1%
Unclear	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>99%</b>

What is immediately significant in this table is the low number of men recorded as having been turned over from other ships, 14% compared to the *Trent*'s 36% and *Emerald1*'s 35% and the high number of volunteers, 51% for *Emerald2*, 21% for the *Trent* and 37% for the *Emerald1*. The number of those men recorded as having been pressed into service is very similar, 14% for *Emerald2*, 13% for *Trent* and 12% for *Emerald1*. Men entered into the ship from sickness accounts for 4% of the crew as

opposed to 8% for *Trent* and 2% for *Emerald1*. Officers (commissioned and warrant) make up 7% of the crew as they do for the *Trent* and close to *Emerald1*'s 5%.

Volunteers and boys account for 4% of the crew close to the *Trent*'s 3% and the same as *Emerald1*. Other categories of entrant make up 5% of the crew (volunteer POWs, captured deserters, returned prisoners and widow's men) close to the *Trent*'s and *Emerald1*'s 3%. As *Emerald2* was commissioned in 1806 there were no entrants recorded under the Quota men category.<sup>176</sup>

Table 3.23 looks at the *Emerald2*'s crew divided between new entrants and men turned over to the ship.

**Table 3.23: *Emerald2*: Entry group breakdown**

Grouping	Numbers	
New entrants <sup>177</sup>	364	84%
Turned over	71	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>100%</b>

Perhaps the large number of volunteers compared to turned over men can be accounted for simply because the receiving ships that sent the men to the *Emerald2* did not have a significant number of ships coming out of commission at that time and because of that could only supply volunteers rather than turned over men. Whatever the reason, this table differs sharply to Rodger's overall findings of 26% compared to the *Emerald2*'s 16%. However Rodger's ships varied in crew entry make up from around 3 – 40% turned over men and so maybe we should expect such variations to occur.

Table 3.24 breaks down the 364 recorded new entrants into a number of categories.

**Table 3.24: *Emerald2*: Entry breakdown: new entrants**

Entry	Number	
Volunteer	260	71%
Pressed	71	20%
Volunteers and boys	20	6%
Volunteer POWs	11	3%
Substitutes	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>101%</b>

This table shows that when looking at new entrants alone, the percentage of volunteers is much closer to the other ships: 71% *Emerald2*, 49% *Trent* and 69% *Emerald1*. The number of those recorded, 20%, as having been pressed into the ship is lower than that of the *Trent* at 30% and *Emerald1* at 23% but close to Rodger's figure of 15%. It is possible that the *Emerald2*'s captains were more insistent or successful at getting pressed men to 'volunteer' for the ship although the percentages are within 10% of each extreme and perhaps simply reflect differences in circumstance and opportunity. All the other categories of new entrant are within 1% of each other between the ships and therefore should not detain us here.

Table 3.25 looks at the recorded age of volunteers and pressed men to the *Emerald2* and compares them to the full crew age profile (where given).

**Table 3.25: *Emerald2* Entry (recorded) against age (792 recorded)**

Age band	Vol. (256)		Press (66)		Crew (459)	
-15	1				6	1%
15-20	60	23%	15	23%	111	24%
21-25	108	42%	25	38%	173	37%
26-30	42	16%	15	23%	85	19%
31-35	18	7%	5	8%	36	8%
36-40	21	8%	2	3%	32	7%
41-45	4	2%	1	1%	9	2%
46-50	2	1%	3	5%	7	2%
50+						
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>100%</b>

All the age bands for both volunteers and pressed men are within 5% of the crew average age bands and show a consistent profile. The age profile of the crew reflects the *Trent* and *Emerald2* profiles when compared to the Rediker calculation. That is that Rediker states that 11% of merchant seamen were aged 15-19 as opposed to *Emerald2* where the age profile for the ship's crew appears considerably younger, 24% aged 15-20 (*Trent* 26% and *Emerald1* 22%). However Rediker calculates that 60% of seamen were aged 20-29 and the *Emerald2* figures give us 56% aged 21-30 (*Trent* 58% and *Emerald1* 55%) a very close match.

Table 3.26 looks at the quality or rating of volunteer and pressed crewmen when they were first entered onto the *Emerald2*'s crew muster.

**Table 3.26: *Emerald2* Entry against quality**

Quality	Vol. (260)	%	Press (71)	%
Landsman	83	32%	15	21%
Ordinary Seaman	75	29%	20	28%
Able Seaman	69	27%	35	49%
Midshipman/MM	15	6%		
Other	18	7%	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>99%</b>

Of the 253 recorded volunteers from *Emerald2*, 83 or 32% were entered as landsmen under the appropriate muster column on their entry to the ship and this compares with 52% from the *Trent* and 23% from *Emerald1*. For those rated ordinary seamen the respective percentages are 29% for the *Emerald2*, 13% for *Trent* and 50% for *Emerald1*, for those rated able seaman 27%, 33% and 24% respectively, midshipmen or master's mates 6%, 2% and 2% and other ratings such as specialists 7%, 1% and 1% respectively. It would appear that there is little consistency in the ratings of volunteers except in the broadest of terms. However this is not unexpected given the

different circumstances and stations of the various ships during their respective commissions. For those men recorded as having been pressed into the *Emerald2*, 15 or 21% were rated as landsmen. This figure is the same as *Emerald1*'s 21% of pressed men being rated landsman but in marked difference to the *Trent*'s 6%. Once again are we seeing a high proportion of pressed men who are new to the sea being pressed due to the very real pressures of manning the ship? A look at the muster and log books of the *Emerald2* show that at least 11 (73%) of the pressed landsmen were pressed at sea out of merchantmen and one of them, William Bruce (EM418), was aged 48 years old and under the 'pressed' column of the muster book was recorded as 'Thomas and Jane Pressed'.<sup>178</sup> It would seem that we are perhaps seeing desperate captains pressing incompetent or inexperienced sea going men rather than luckless landlubbers. A total of 20 or 28% of pressed men were recorded as being rated ordinary seamen compared to the *Trent*'s 44% and the *Emerald1*'s 51%. In all 49% of the *Emerald2*'s pressed men were rated able seamen, the same percentage as the *Trent*, but much higher than the *Emerald1*'s 26%. Only one or 1% of pressed men received other ratings and this was James Loutar (sic) (EM31) who was rated quarter gunner after being sent from the 'Dundee Rendezvous'.<sup>179</sup> although how he managed to get from the Dundee Rendezvous to Gravesend where the *Emerald2* was fitting out is not explained.<sup>180</sup>

Table 3.27 looks at the recorded origins of crewmen against those who were marked down as volunteers or pressed men and set against the general crew origin profile.

**Table 3.27: *Emerald2* Entry against origin**

Origin	Vol (245)	%	Press (64)	%	Crew (441)	%
English	136	56%	33	52%	230	52%
Irish	53	22%	4	6%	79	18%
Scottish	26	11%	8	13%	52	12%
Welsh	1		1	2%	3	1%
Foreign	29	12%	18	28%	77	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>101%</b>

Just over half of those who volunteered or were pressed are recorded as having originated (born) in England and this matches the general crew profile quite closely (56%, 52% and 52% respectively). The number of Irishmen who volunteered is slightly above the crew average (22% as opposed to 18%) but the number of Irishmen pressed is considerably below the crew average at 6% compared to 18%. There appears no ready explanation for the low number of pressed Irishmen but it is consistent with the findings from the *Trent* and *Emerald1*. The *Trent's* crew Irish percentage of pressed men stood at 17% compared to the crew profile of 24% whilst on board the *Emerald1* the percentage of pressed Irishmen worked out at 8% compared to a crew profile of 19%. Are we seeing reluctance on the part of Royal Navy officers to press Irishmen, despite the desperate manpower shortage, due to the fear of Jacobin sympathies being brought on board by disaffected Irishmen?<sup>181</sup> The profile of Scottish volunteers and pressed men is close to the crew average (11%, 13% and 12% respectively) as is the Welsh profile and this is mirrored in the *Trent* and *Emerald1* findings. The number of foreign volunteers recorded on the *Emerald2's* muster books at 12% is below the crew average of 18% but the number of pressed foreigners is 28% as opposed to the crew profile of 18%. Once again this is consistent with the findings from the *Trent* and *Emerald1* where the numbers of pressed foreigners were 24% and 35% respectively set against crew profiles of 9% and 18%. Again the number of pressed foreigners claiming to be American is by far the highest

foreign grouping. A total of 8 (44%) of the 18 (100%) foreigners stated that their origin was American and this is again consistent with the *Trent's* 41% of foreigners claiming to be American and the *Emerald1's* 47%. Of the other foreigners pressed were three Swedes<sup>182</sup>, three Germans<sup>183</sup>, and one each from Spain, Norway, Canada and the West Indies.<sup>184</sup> Of these pressed foreigners, five were discharged from the Service by an Admiral's order, presumably due to them being foreign but there is only one instance when this is formally recorded when Harn. Engelskind (EM374) from Westphalia was discharged on 1 January 1810 'per order being a foreigner'.<sup>185</sup> Engelskind had served for a total of just less than four months before obtaining his release.

Table 3.28 looks at the number of men who received at least one flogging during the *Emerald2's* commission. The flogging record of crewmen is set against volunteers and pressed men.

**Table 3.28: *Emerald2* Entry against floggings**

<b>Floggings</b>	<b>Vol (260)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Press (71)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Crew (508)</b>	<b>Crew %</b>
Flogged	44	17%	11	16%	90	18%
Not flogged	216	83%	60	85%	418	82%
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>100%</b>

A total of 44 (17%) volunteers were recorded as having been flogged and 11 (16%) pressed men. This compares very closely with the crew average of 18% and is close to the *Trent* and *Emerald1* findings, *Trent* recording 11% volunteers flogged, 15% pressed men flogged against a crew average of 11% flogged and the *Emerald1* records a flogging record of 15%, 19% and 18% respectively. The only real difference is that the *Emerald2's* pressed men were flogged slightly less than the average while



*Trent* and *Emerald1*'s pressed men were flogged slightly more than average but all are within 5% of the norm.

Table 3.29 considers the promotion and demotion profile of volunteer and pressed crewmen.

**Table 3.29: *Emerald2* Entry against promotion**

Promotion	Vol (260)	%	Press (71)	%
Promoted	76	29%	14	20%
Demoted	19	7%	7	10%
Unchanged	165	63%	50	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100%</b>

The number of men promoted following their arrival on board the *Emerald2* is 76 or 29% for volunteers and 14 or 20% for pressed men. These figures are very close to the *Trent*'s 28% promoted volunteers and 25% promoted pressed men and the *Emerald1*'s 26% and 19% respectively. This demonstrates that volunteers were slightly more likely to be promoted than pressed men were. This would point to the belief that either pressed men were generally nearly as happy being on board ship as volunteers or that, despite their unhappiness, they simply knuckled down to the job and were promoted at almost the same rate as volunteers. The number of both volunteers and pressed men that were demoted on board the *Emerald2* is higher than the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* and there appears no ready explanation for this. However this high figure is consistent with both volunteers and pressed men and so could reflect a more exacting attitude of the captains of the *Emerald2* than the other ships. The average demotion rate for the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* works out at slightly less than 2% but for the *Emerald2* it is just over 8%.

Table 3.30 looks at the reasons given for crewmen being discharged the ship set against those men recorded as having volunteered to serve on the ship or who were pressed into service.

**Table 3.30: *Emerald2* Entry against discharge**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Vol (195)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Press (126)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Crew (502)</b>	<b>%</b>
Discharged (D)	151	60%	44	62%	328	65%
Discharged sick (Ds)	26	10%	9	13%	52	10%
Discharged Dead (DD)	24	10%	7	10%	41	8%
Ran (R)	53	21%	11	16%	81	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>99%</b>

For those men discharged ('D') in the normal course of their duties such as being turned over to other ships, promoted or paid off at the end of the ship's commission the crew average stands at 65% and the average for volunteers and pressed men is close to this at 60% for volunteers and 62% for pressed men. This contrasts with the *Trent's* findings for volunteers being discharged in the normal course of events, 27% opposed to a crew average of 46%, but are close to the *Emerald1* findings of 54% of volunteers being discharged against a crew average of 57%. The average of crewmen recorded as having been pressed into service is consistent with the other ships (*Trent* 48% discharged against a crew average of 46% and *Emerald1* 58% as opposed to 57% respectively). For men discharged sick ('Ds' or 'Dsqr') both volunteers and pressed men are close to the crew average of 10% at 10% and 13% respectively and this compares well with the *Emerald1* findings at 5% average for the crew and 6% each for volunteers and pressed men. The *Trent's* figures show a higher sickness rate for volunteers at 27% as opposed to a crew average of 19% although pressed men are close to the average at 17% discharged sick. For those men discharged dead ('DD') both volunteers and pressed men record a 10% fatality rate, slightly higher than the crew mortality average of 8%. This compares to the *Trent's* findings of 6% mortality

for both volunteers and pressed men as opposed to a crew average of 9%. The desertion rate ('R') for volunteers from *Emerald2* is higher than the crew average at 21% although for pressed men the desertion rate matches that of the crew. Both the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* mirror these findings of a higher than average desertion rate for volunteers, *Trent* volunteers recording a desertion rate of 39% as opposed to a crew average of 27% and *Emerald1* recording 25% desertion for volunteers as opposed to a crew average of 22%. For pressed men both the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* show a slightly higher desertion rate for pressed men than the crew average, the *Trent* pressed men desertion rate is 28% as opposed to 27% crew average and *Emerald1* is 27% as opposed to 22%.

It would appear from these figures that a pattern of crew behaviour is emerging concerning leaving the ship. Generally speaking the volunteers and pressed men of the *Emerald2* are close to the crew averages for reasons for leaving the ship although *Emerald2* volunteers were more likely to desert their ship than the general crew average (21% as against 16%).

### *Glenmore*

Table 3.31 considers the recorded reason for entry of the crew of *Glenmore*.

**Table 3.31: *Glenmore*: Entry and Re-entry breakdown**

Entry	Number	%
Turned Over	218	36%
Volunteer	220	37%
Pressed	19	3%
From sickness	21	4%
Quota men	37	6%
Warrant officers	25	4%
Commissioned officers	15	3%
Volunteers and boys	23	4%
Substitutes/in lieu	8	1%
Volunteer POWs	1	
Captured deserters	4	1%
Civil Powers	2	
Widows men	3	1%
Unclear	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>101%</b>

The percentage of men recorded as having been turned over from other ships almost exactly matches that of the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* at 36% (*Trent* 36% and *Emerald1* 35%), although the *Emerald2* has a lower percentage of turned over men at 14%. The reason for this difference is unclear but it does match Rodger's findings in so far that the numbers of turned over men joining Rodger's ships show an individual ship variation ranging from 3% to 41% and this variation can be seen reflected in our ships albeit to a much lesser extent. Of those that were recorded as having volunteered for the ship the percentage comes out at 37% for the *Glenmore* which is the same as the

*Emerald1* but higher than the *Trent*'s 21% and lower than the *Emerald2*'s 51%. The numbers of men recorded as having being pressed into service on board the *Glenmore* comes out considerably lower than any of the other ships at 3% (*Trent* 13%, *Emerald1* 12% and *Emerald2* 14%). The reasons for this difference are unclear although it is possible that the *Glenmore*'s officers were more persuasive in getting pressed men to 'volunteer' than in the other ships. The *Glenmore* recorded an average number of men returning from sickness at 4% (*Trent* 8%, *Emerald1* 2% and *Emerald2* 4%) and included 37 quota men (6% of the crew) on her books. A total of 7% of the *Glenmore*'s crew consisted of warrant and commission officers compared to the *Trent*'s 7%, *Emerald1*'s 5% and *Emerald2*'s 7%. A total of 4% of the crew consisted of volunteers and boys who had moved from that rating to the main crew muster and this is exactly the same percentage for all three ships (four commissions). Other entry reasons (substitutes, ex-POWs, captured deserters and civil powers) made up 3% of the crew compared to the *Trent*'s 3%, *Emerald1*'s 2% and *Emerald2*'s 4%.

In Table 3.32 the reasons given for entry to the *Glenmore* have been broken down into new entrants to the ship and men turned over from other ships. Men returning to the ship such as those from sickness or volunteers and boys have been excluded in order to compare the result with Rodger's findings outlined above in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.32: *Glenmore*: Entry group breakdown**

Grouping	Numbers	%
New entrants	310	59%
Turned over	218	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>100%</b>

In comparing these figures to Rodger's findings we can see that the number of men recorded as having been turned over from other ships is 41% for the *Glenmore* as

opposed to 26% for Rodger's ships but the probable reasons for this apparent disparity is discussed above and, with the exception of *Emerald2* is consistent with the findings from the other ships in this survey (*Trent* 45%, *Emerald1* 39% and *Emerald2* 16%).

Table 3.33 looks at the category of new entrants into the ship.

**Table 3.33: *Glenmore*: Entry breakdown: new entrants**

Entry	Number	%
Volunteer	220	71%
Pressed	19	6%
Quota men	37	12%
Volunteers and boys	23	7%
Volunteer POWs	1	
Substitutes	8	2%
Civil Powers	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>99%</b>

At 71% the percentage of volunteer new entrants to the *Glenmore* make up the largest single group in this analysis and this matches the findings from the other ships (*Trent* 49%, *Emerald1* 69% and *Emerald2* 71%). The percentage of pressed men is low compared to the other ships and this is discussed above.

Table 3.34 looks at the age profile on entry to the ship of those *Glenmore* crewmen who were recorded as being volunteers, pressed or quota men against the general crew profile where the age is given.

**Table 3.34: Glenmore: Entry (recorded) against age (453 recorded)**

Age band	Vol (186)	%	Press (17)	%	Quota (37)	%	Crew (453)	%
-15					1	3%	5	1%
15-20	40	22%	1	6%	8	22%	83	18%
21-25	83	45%	9	53%	18	49%	194	43%
26-30	26	14%	5	29%	4	11%	71	16%
31-35	15	8%	1	6%	3	8%	38	8%
36-40	12	7%			2	5%	34	8%
41-45	6	3%	1	6%			15	3%
46-50	4	2%			1	3%	9	2%
50+							4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>99%</b>

For those aged between 15-20 we see that the percentage of volunteers and quota men in that age band are slightly higher than the crew average and that pressed men are well below the average; 22% volunteers and quota men and 6% pressed men as opposed to 18% for the crew. For the age band 21-25 all three categories of entrant are above the average; 45% volunteers, 53% pressed, 49% quota men against an average of 43%. Of those aged between 26-30 volunteers and quota men at 14% and 11% respectively are close to the crew average of 16% whilst pressed men record a high 29%. These figures most likely reflect the idea that volunteers and quota men were largely newcomers to the sea and therefore younger while pressed men were mostly those who had seen sea service and were therefore older. This profile is reflected in the *Trent's* and the *Emerald2's* findings but not in the *Emerald1* although the reason for this difference in the one ship is not clear but could be put down to the large amount of foreign service that the *Emerald1* saw. All the other age bands are within 3% points of each other and therefore should not detain us further. Returning to Rediker's figures of the age of merchant seamen, he states that 11% were aged between 15-19. The *Glenmore's* percentage aged between 15-20 is higher than this at 18% however in the age band 21-30 the crew average comes out at 59%, very close to Rediker's calculation of merchant seaman age between 20-29 as 60% and these

findings are matched by the other ships in this survey (*Trent* 58%, *Emerald1* 55% and *Emerald2* 56%).

Table 3.35 looks at the quality on entry of volunteers, pressed and quota men to the *Glenmore*.

**Table 3.35: *Glenmore*: Entry against quality**

Quality	Vol (220)	%	Press (19)	%	Quota (37)	%
Landsman	70	32%	2	11%	22	59%
Ordinary Seaman	48	22%	4	21%	12	32%
Able Seaman	92	42%	13	68%	3	8%
Midshipman/MM	10	6%				
Other						
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>99%</b>

From this table we see a familiar pattern emerging. A high percentage of volunteers and quota men rated landsman on entry to the ship as opposed to a low percentage of pressed men (32% volunteers, 59% quota men and 11% pressed men). For those rated ordinary seaman the volunteers and pressed men average is very close at 22% and 21% respectively and there are a high percentage of quota men in this category at 32%. For able seaman we see a high percentage of pressed men at 68%, a very low percentage of quota men at 8% and for volunteers, a total of 42%. If we combine the ordinary seaman and able seamen on the basis of them clearly having served at sea before and set it against those rated landsman who, generally speaking probably had not, we get the following figures; Volunteers 32% landsmen and 64% experienced seamen, pressed men 11% landsmen and 89% experienced seamen and quota men 59% landsmen and 40% experienced seamen. The pattern that emerges from this shows that press gangs were more likely to press older, more experienced seamen while volunteers and quota men were much more likely to be new to seafaring and this finding is broadly reflected in the conclusions from the other ships.



Table 3.36 looks at the origin (birthplace), where given, of volunteers, pressed and quota men set against the general crew profile.

**Table 3.36: *Glenmore*: Entry against origin**

Origin	Vol (180)	%	Press (18)	%	Quota (37)	%	Crew (438)	%
English	86	48%	7	39%	7	19%	193	44%
Irish	48	27%	2	11%	3	8%	111	25%
Scottish	23	13%	1	6%	25	68%	84	19%
Welsh	6	3%	1	6%			13	3%
Foreign	17	9%	7	39%	2	5%	37	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>100%</b>

The national makeup of the *Glenmore*'s crew broadly follows that of the other ships in this survey. A total of 44% of the crew are recorded as having come from England (*Trent* 47%, *Emerald1* 50% and *Emerald2* 52%), 25% from Ireland (*Trent* 24%, *Emerald1* 19% and *Emerald2* 18%), 19% from Scotland (*Trent* 17%, *Emerald1* 10% and *Emerald2* 12%), 3% from Wales (*Trent* 3%, *Emerald1* 4% and *Emerald2* 1%) and 9% were of non-British origin (*Trent* 9%, *Emerald1* 18% and *Emerald2* 18%). Those crewmembers that were rated landsman on entry to the *Glenmore* follow the general crew profile quite closely; the only significant difference is that there are 13% Scottish volunteers compared to an average of 19%. However the high numbers of Scottish quota men that push the Scottish average up can explain this. The number of pressed Englishmen is slightly below the crew average at 39% compared to 44% and this is consistent with the other ships with the exception of *Emerald2* where the average is the same (*Trent* 41% pressed Englishmen compared to 47%, *Emerald1* 45% compared to 50% and *Emerald2* at 52% for both). Once again we see a low number of pressed Irishmen, 11% compared to a crew average of 25% (*Trent* 17% pressed Irishmen compared to 24%, *Emerald1* 8% compared to 19% and *Emerald2* 6% compared to 18%) and this cannot be put down to coincidence. There is no reason

to suppose that there was no seafaring tradition in Ireland, quite the reverse, and so we cannot claim that there were less Irish merchant sailors available for pressing.

Therefore the inescapable conclusion is that there was a clear reluctance of press gangs to press Irish seafarers into the Royal Navy although they seemed willing enough to accept volunteers and this is most likely to be because of the political and religious sensibilities of the time. The number of Welsh pressed men is double that of the crew average, 6% compared to 3% but the numbers are so low that no significance can be drawn from this. The number of pressed volunteers is again much higher than the crew average 39% compared to 9% and this is consistent with the other ships in the survey (*Trent* 24% pressed foreigners compared to 9%, *Emerald1* 35% compared to 18% and *Emerald2* 28% compared to 18%). While there seems to be a marked reluctance of press gangs pressing Irishmen, foreigners seem fair game. Of the seven pressed foreigners, four were recorded as originating from the United States of America<sup>186</sup> and one each from the West Indies, Denmark and Sweden.<sup>187</sup> None of the seven were formally recorded as having been discharged due to being foreigners, one, Peter Anderson (G436) from Denmark was discharged the *Glenmore* on 18 May 1801 'per order' a year after he was pressed and it is quite likely that this was due to him being foreign and having appealed against his impressment.<sup>188</sup> The majority of the quota men clearly came from the Scottish quotas and 20 of the 25 Scottish quota men are recorded as such, 13 from the Elgin Quota and 7 from the Forfar Quota, which accounts for the high number of Scottish quota men. What is most surprising is that two of the quota men are recorded as non-British. Ramon D' Vadel (G235) is recorded as coming from Galicia<sup>189</sup> and the unlikely named Peter Hereabout (G236) from Denmark.<sup>190</sup> Both men were rated ordinary seamen, both were paid a bounty for

enlisting and both deserted, Peter Hereabout after only two months on board the ship and Ramon D' Vadel after just over five years service.

Table 3.37 looks at volunteers, pressed and quota men who were recorded as being flogged at least once during their time on board the *Glenmore* compared to the crew average.

**Table 3.37: *Glenmore*: Entry against floggings**

<b>Floggings</b>	<b>Vol (220)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Press (19)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Quota (37)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Crew (599)</b>	<b>Crew %</b>
Flogged	26	12%	3	16%	1	3%	58	10%
Not flogged	194	88%	16	84%	36	97%	541	90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

The flogging record of the *Glenmore* is low compared to the other ships at 10% of the crew compared to the *Trent*'s 11%, *Emerald1*'s 18% and *Emerald2*'s 18%. The percentage of volunteers who received floggings is slightly higher than the crew average at 12% as opposed to 10%, pressed men were flogged more than average at 16% and only one quota man was flogged giving an average of 3%. Again we see pressed men flogged slightly more, as we would probably suspect, volunteers near the average and quota men being well below average. The one flogged quota man was Lawrence Burn (G234) who was given eight lashes for 'fighting and disobedience of orders' on the 1 October 1800 along with William Mussum (sic) (G201) and William Murphy (G101) who were given 12 lashes each for the same offence.<sup>191</sup>

Table 3.38 considers the promotion and demotion record of the volunteers, pressed and quota men of the *Glenmore*.

**Table 3.38: *Glenmore*: Entry against promotion**

Promotion	Vol (220)	%	Press (19)	%	Quota (37)	%
Promoted	52	24%	10	53%	13	35%
Demoted					1	3%
Unchanged	168	76%	9	47%	23	62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

A total of 52 or 24% of volunteers were promoted during their stay on board the *Glenmore*. This is a lower percentage than either the *Trent* at 28%, the *Emerald1* at 26% or the *Emerald2* at 29% but is within five percent of them and can therefore be considered to be consistent with their findings. However the percentage of pressed men who were promoted is very high at 53% compared to the *Trent* at 25%, the *Emerald1* at 19% or the *Emerald2* at 20%. The reasons for the high number of pressed men being promoted is not clear however the small number of men pressed (16) should make us cautious in drawing too many conclusions concerning this finding. The majority of those pressed men who were promoted were able seamen who were moved into specialist posts. Four able and one ordinary seaman were promoted to quarter gunners; one able seaman was promoted to sail makers mate and one to carpenters mate.<sup>192</sup> The other promotions were a landsman to ordinary seaman, able seaman to carpenter's mate, able seaman to sail maker's mate, an ordinary seaman to acting armourer and another ordinary seaman to captain's cook.<sup>193</sup> None of the volunteers or pressed men was demoted. Of the *Glenmore*'s 37 quota men, 13 or 35% were promoted and 1 or 3% demoted. The demoted man, George Watson (G223), was initially rated ordinary seaman when he joined the ship on the 16 June 1796 and was demoted to landsman three days later. It is quite probable that Watson had exaggerated his sea skills in order to receive a high volunteer's bounty and that on coming on board ship it became clear that he was not a competent mariner. Whatever the reasons for his demotion, Watson was discharged 16 days later to the *Sandwich*

receiving ship 'Sandwich per order Captain Savage' (Savage was the Port Admiral).<sup>194</sup> Of the 13 promoted quota men 10 were initially rated landsmen and were subsequently promoted to ordinary seaman, two initially rated ordinary seamen were promoted to able seaman and one able seaman promoted to quarter master's mate.<sup>195</sup> Once again we see a high proportion of quota men promoted.

Table 3.39 looks at the reason given for volunteers, pressed and quota men when they were discharged the ship compared to the crew discharge profile.

**Table 3.39: *Glenmore*: Entry against discharge**

Reason	Vol (220)	%	Press (19)	%	Quota (37)	%	Crew (596)	%
Discharged (D)	145	66%	12	63%	17	46%	408	68%
Discharged sick (Ds)	26	12%	5	26%	6	16%	72	12%
Discharged Dead (DD)	7	3%			2	5%	18	3%
Ran (R)	42	19%	2	11%	12	32%	98	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>99%</b>

Of the 220 volunteers to the *Glenmore* their profile of reasons for being discharged the ship matches the general crew profile very closely with only a 3% higher desertion rate, 19% as opposed to 16%, and a slightly lower general discharge rate, 66% as opposed to 68%. For pressed men a larger number were discharged due to sickness, 26% as opposed to the crew profile of 12%, none were discharged dead as opposed to a crew mortality rate of 3% and 11% deserted compared to a crew desertion rate of 16%. Why the pressed men fell sick so easily compared to the crew in general is unclear and does not match the other ship's findings where the sickness rate of pressed men is very close to the crew profile, *Trent* 17% sickness rate compared to a crew profile of 19%, *Emerald1* 6% compared to 5% and *Emerald2* 13% compared to 10%. It is possible that the low numbers of pressed men on the *Glenmore* are

distorting the averages. The same could also be said of the low desertion rate although it is also possible that the high promotion rate of pressed men (see above) led to them being more willing to stay on board and not to desert. The quota men also have a higher sickness discharge rate than the crew average, 16% as opposed to 12%, a higher mortality rate, 5% compared to 3% and considerably higher desertion rate, 32% as opposed to 16%. Why there is such a high quota man desertion rate from the *Glenmore* is uncertain. Half of the men (six) deserted within six months of coming on board the *Glenmore* but the other six were spread out over a number of years.

### All ships

Table 3.40 breaks down the reasons given for men entering all three ship (four commissions).

**Table 3.40: All ships: Entry and Re-entry breakdown**

Entry	Number	%
Turned Over	928	32%
Volunteer	1003	34%
Pressed	321	11%
From sickness	132	5%
Quota men	94	3%
Warrant officers	113	4%
Commissioned officers	66	2%
Volunteers and boys	97	3%
Substitutes/in lieu	26	1%
Volunteer POWs	21	1%
Captured deserters	23	1%
Returned prisoners/exchanged	11	
Civil Powers	2	
Widows men	12	
Unclear	77	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2926</b>	<b>100%</b>

As Rodger's findings illustrate, variation of recruitment to ships could be wide-ranging. A number of external factors could and would influence how men came to be on board their respective ships. Reasons for these variations could include station, task, type of ship and time. For example, a ship fitting out in a busy port area such as

London or Plymouth could expect a steady flow of men turned over from other ships and conversely if losing men to disease in a far off station, would have to largely rely on pressing men from merchantmen encountered. Likewise a frigate escorting a large merchant convoy would have access to the merchant sailors serving on the convoy ships while a frigate scouting for the fleet would not be so likely to have this opportunity. Frigates, by the nature of their work, were much more likely to encounter and stop merchantmen or to chase and capture enemy privateers allowing them greater access to trained seamen than say a ship-of-the-line.<sup>196</sup> Timing could also influence recruitment such as when quota men arrived in port ready to be sent to the fleet. All of the above conditions applied to one or other of the frigates in this survey at one time or another and therefore the findings from this section must be considered within this framework.

If we compare the findings from Table 3.40 with Rodger's figures in Table 3.1 a number of differences emerge. Rodger's totals for the five ships in his survey worked out at 26% men turned over, 56% volunteers, 15% pressed men and about 3% unclassifiable. Compared to this we have about 32% of the ships crew turned over from other ships, 34% volunteers, 11% pressed men, 3% quota men, 8% from other sources (substitutes, POWs, returned from sickness and returned deserters), officers and boys 9% and 3% unclassifiable. If we add the officers and boys to the volunteer total we end up with 43% volunteers. However Rodger calculated his figures slightly differently than this survey, that is, he looked at a given muster book in a ships career rather than the entire muster books of a ship(s) commission. It is likely that the first draft of crewmen into a newly commissioned ship was largely men turned over and this can be demonstrated by the *Glenmore's* experience. The percentage of men

turned over to the *Glenmore* during her commission works out at 36%, however if the first 250 men who came on board the ship during its fitting out phase in Woolwich and the Nore in June 1796 are analysed the percentage of turned over men works out at 54% (136 out of 250).<sup>197</sup> Therefore we would expect Rodger's figures relating to turned over men to be lower than ours. On balance, given the difference in time and types of ships (Rodger's survey includes line-of-battle ships as well as frigates) the overall figures are remarkably close. It would appear that with the exception of the quota men little had radically changed in recruitment practices since the Seven Years Wars.

Table 3.41 looks at new entrants to the ships and breaks them down into a number of categories.

**Table 3.41: All ships: Entry breakdown: new entrants**

<b>Entry</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Volunteer	1003	65%
Pressed	321	21%
Quota men	94	6%
Volunteers and boys	97	6%
Volunteer POWs	21	1%
Substitutes	17	1%
Civil powers	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1555</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3.41 can now be compared to Lewis' calculation of a 'typical' ship's crew make up from around 1812 as laid out in Table 3.2 (Table 3.2 is reproduced again below for ease of comparison). In considering these figures it must be borne in mind that Lewis states quite clearly that in his calculations 'no meticulous accuracy is claimed'<sup>198</sup> and that these figures were likely to vary during the war.<sup>199</sup>



**Table 3.2: Lewis' 'Modes of Entry' table (c.1812)**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Voluntary</b>	<b>Compulsory</b>	<b>Seamen</b>	<b>Non-Seamen</b>
Volunteers (boys)	8%	8%	0%	8%	0%
Volunteers (men)	15%	15%	0%	10%	5%
Pressed men (British)	50%	0%	50%	45%	5%
Foreigners	15%	2%	13%	12%	3%
Quota-men, etc	12%	0%	12%	0%	12%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>

Lewis estimates that 8% of a crew was made up of boys, 15% volunteer men, 50% pressed British men, 15% foreigners and 12% quota men and others. Before we compare our findings in Table 3.41 with Lewis' calculations we must first make some adjustments in order to compare like with like. Most importantly we must extract those men recorded as non-British and adjust the other figures accordingly. A total of 13% of all the crews from the four commissions were recorded as non-British. The results of these adjustments are given in Table 3.42.

**Table 3.42: 'Modes of Entry' all ships (after Lewis)**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Voluntary</b>	<b>Compulsory</b>	<b>Seamen</b>	<b>Non-Seamen</b>
Volunteers (boys)	6%	6%	0%	6%	0%
Volunteers (British men)	57%	57%	0%	36%	21%
Pressed men (British)	15%	0%	15%	13%	2%
Foreigners	13%	7%	6%	11%	2%
Quota-men, etc	9%	9%	0%	3%	6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>

The number of boys in this survey is 2% lower than Lewis' calculations. However it appears that Lewis included the 'Volunteer and Boy' category in his calculations whilst in this survey they are looked at separately and 'boys' are those who moved from the 'volunteer and boy' muster to the crew muster and that this could account for the difference. However if the total number of boys of the three classes (first, second and third) are added to the full crew muster and then given as a percentage of the two we end up with 12% of the crew being boy volunteers and therefore neither calculation matches Lewis exactly. Like Lewis, those in the boy category are

considered to be trained seamen and all volunteers although there is some evidence that boys were pressed, the numbers would appear to be very small (less than half a percent). In the numbers of adult British volunteers there are major differences between Lewis and this survey. Lewis calculates a volunteer ratio of only 15% whilst this survey's findings come out at 57% volunteers. Lewis bases his calculation not on the number of men recorded as being volunteers but on those he considers to have been pressed men who subsequently 'volunteered' and were marked down as such.<sup>200</sup> How many men were 'true' volunteers and how many were pressed men prepared to take the bounty and were then entered onto the ship's books as 'volunteer' is unclear and will in all probability never be satisfactorily answered. However an attempt to make an 'educated guess' based on ship's records is discussed below but for the purposes of this comparison the criteria used is that which was entered onto the ship's muster record without any second-guessing of what was behind the entry. Lewis calculates that of his 15% 'true' volunteers about two thirds of them (66%) would be men with at least some knowledge of the sea and seafaring and one third (33%) new to the trade. The findings from this survey indicate, based on a new man's initial rating of landsman, a slightly higher ratio of non-seamen at 37% and seamen at 63%. However both these sets of figures are within a few percentage points of one another and in broad terms agree. With regards to pressed men we run into the same guessing game problems as with the volunteer category. Lewis calculates that around 50% of a ship's crew was likely to be *de facto* pressed but set against this is this survey's findings that show that only 15% of the crew were entered onto the ship's muster books as being pressed men. With regard to pressed men's seagoing experience Lewis states that about 10% of pressed men were new to the sea but that around 90% had seagoing experience. The findings from this survey show that 13% of pressed British

men were rated landsman on entry to the ship and 87% were given a rating that indicate seafaring knowledge. However, as demonstrated in the *Emerald2* findings (see above) several pressed crewmen initially rated landsmen were pressed at sea from merchant vessels and would almost certainly have had seagoing experience and therefore in real terms the 13% figure is probably a little high and should be closer to Lewis's 10% of pressed men having no previous experience of the sea. For the category of foreigner, that is non-British, Lewis' findings are a little higher than in this survey. Lewis calculates that approximately 15% of a ship's crew were likely to be foreigners as opposed to 13% from this survey. There is not much difference between the two figures and it is possible that by 1812 mounting Royal Navy manpower problems coupled with large numbers of enemy prisoners allowed greater recruitment of foreigners into the Service both desirable and possible. As to the ratio of seamen to non-seamen, Lewis calculates that about 20% of foreigners were non-seamen and 80% had previous experience at sea. This survey's findings show a slightly higher percentage of seamen at 85% and only 15% of foreigners rated landsmen on entry to their respective ship, but the two sets of figures are not that far apart. Lewis goes on to say that of the foreigner category of Royal Navy seaman 87% were there by compulsion and 13% volunteers. This survey's findings show that 46% of foreigners were recorded as pressed and 54% as volunteers but the same argument applies to foreigners as to the British 'volunteers' as discussed above – who was a true volunteer? Lewis' final category consists of quota men 'etc.' and includes men sent from the civil powers, substitutes and the like. Lewis estimates that this category of entrant comprises about 12% of the whole and is only a few percentage points away from the findings of this survey at 9%. However Lewis attributes no seagoing experience to any of these men but in this survey 66% of this category were rated

landsmen on entry to their respective ship and 33% were given ratings that indicate that they had previous seagoing experience. Likewise, Lewis claims that none of these men volunteered for service and that all were forced into the Royal Navy but this is clearly not the case and Lewis is wrong in this. Quota men and substitutes were not pressed, they were often offered tempting monetary inducements to join but this is not the same thing. We are undoubtedly seeing Lewis' personal vendetta against quota men rearing its ugly head. In conclusion the major difference between the two sets of findings rests on the interpretation of who was a true volunteer and who was not and this is discussed in more detail below.

Table 3.43 looks at the age profile (where given) of volunteers, pressed and quota men from all the ships against the general crew age profile.

**Table 3.43: All ships: Entry against age**

Age band	Vol (952)	%	Press (293)	%	Quota (94)	%	Crew (2533)	Crew %
-15	2				1	1%	16	1%
15-20	222	23%	61	20%	32	34%	582	23%
21-25	397	42%	124	42%	35	37%	993	39%
26-30	159	17%	62	21%	13	14%	439	17%
31-35	76	8%	23	8%	5	5%	198	8%
36-40	61	6%	12	4%	6	6%	171	7%
41-45	18	2%	5	2%			66	3%
46-50	16	2%	5	2%	2	2%	47	2%
50+	1		1				21	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>2533</b>	<b>101%</b>

Those men recorded as volunteers on entry to their respective ships follow the crew age profile quite closely, within 3% in all age bands. In broad terms pressed men also follow the crew age profile although in the age bands 21-25 and in particular 26-30 there is a higher ratio of men in these bands, 21-25 42% as opposed to a crew profile of 39% (exactly the same ratio as volunteers) and 26-30 21% as opposed to 17%. However this should not surprise us as these age groups are almost certainly when a

seaman was at his prime, young enough to work aloft but with experience of the sea; the apple of every impress officer's eye. Quota men show a high percentage of young men in the age band 15-20, 34% in this age band compared to 23% general crew profile. In all other age bands the quota men are either below the average by up to three percentage points or equivalent to the crew average. So we can see that quota men recruitment favoured young men and whether this was policy or that young men were tempted by the high bounties is unclear. When we compare the crew age profile with Rediker's findings of merchant seamen of the first half of the eighteenth century we see that Rediker calculated that 11% of the crew of a merchant ship was aged between 15-19. Our survey demonstrates a much higher proportion of crewmen in a similar age bracket, 26% aged between 15-20 and the reasons for this large difference is not clear. It is possible that the Royal Navy deliberately targeted young men for service and when you add in the large numbers of boys also serving on board ship you end up with over one in three of the crew of a Royal Navy frigate aged below 21. Rediker further calculated that 60% of a merchant ship's crew was aged between 20-29 and the findings from this survey support this demonstrating a 58% crew age profile from 21-30.

Table 3.44 considers volunteers, pressed and quota men's initial rating on entering their respective ship.

**Table 3.44: All ships: Entry against quality**

Quality	Vol (1002)	%	Press (321)	%	Quota (94)	%
Landsman	328	33%	48	15%	76	80%
Ordinary Seaman	315	31%	133	41%	12	13%
Able Seaman	303	30%	138	43%	6	6%
Midshipman/MM	33	3%				
Other	23	2%	2	1%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1002</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99%</b>

In broad terms one in three volunteers were rated landsman on entry to their ship and just under one in three rated ordinary and able seaman respectively, 3% were midshipman or master's mates undergoing officer training and 2% were put in specialist positions such as carpenter's or sail maker's mate. Therefore we can claim that one in three volunteers had little or no seagoing experience and two out of three did. For pressed men only 15% were rated landsman on entry to their ship and as we have seen from the *Glenmore* at least some of those rated landsman had seagoing experience as they were pressed out of merchantmen at sea and were therefore probably just not very good sailors but helped make up the numbers. As would be suspected, the great majority of pressed men were competent mariners to a greater or lesser extent and we see that 84% of them were given ratings of ordinary or able seamen almost evenly divided between the two (41% ordinary seaman and 43% able seaman). For quota men 80% were rated as landsmen and again this is no surprise although 19% were rated either ordinary or able which would indicate that about one in five quota men had seagoing experience.

Table 3.45 looks at the origin or place of birth, where given, of volunteers, pressed and quota men compared to the general crew origin profile.

**Table 3.45: All ships: Entry against origin**

Origin	Vol (931)	%	Press (291)	%	Quota (94)	%	Crew (2488)	%
English	475	51%	129	44%	20	21%	1202	48%
Irish	213	23%	33	11%	6	6%	539	22%
Scottish	102	11%	31	11%	66	70%	349	14%
Welsh	26	3%	12	4%			73	3%
Foreign	115	12%	86	30%	2	2%	325	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>2488</b>	<b>100%</b>

The members of the crew who were recorded as having volunteered to serve on their respective ships show an origin profile similar to that of the crews in general. The

main variation from the general crew profile concerns English and Scottish sailors. There are recorded 3% more Englishmen who volunteered for the Service compared to the main crew profile (51% English volunteers against 48% of English crewmen in general) and the reverse for Scottish sailors (11% Scottish volunteers against 14% crew). This can be best explained by the fact that all ships spent most of their commission in English or Irish waters making it easier for those nationalities to volunteer and the crew average of Scottish sailors on board is pushed up by the introduction of Scottish quota men. For pressed men the same applies to explain away a lower Scottish percentage of sailors than the crew average (11% Scottish pressed men against 14% Scottish crew average). Where the origin of pressed men really diverges from the crew profile is in the number of Irish and foreign sailors pressed. The percentage of Irish pressed men is half that of the crew average and this is a consistent theme in each of the four commissions looked at (*Trent* 17% Irishmen pressed against a crew profile of 24%, *Emerald1* 8% as opposed to 19%, *Emerald2* 6% as opposed to 18% and *Glenmore* 11% against 25%). This is conclusive evidence that Irishmen were about half as likely to be pressed as Englishmen, Scotsmen or Welshmen. The reason for this reluctance to have pressed Irishmen on board ship must surely relate to the fears of Irish rebellion and sedition prevalent at the time. In direct contrast to the low percentage of pressed Irishmen on board is the high percentage of pressed foreigners, 30% of all pressed men were recorded as being of foreign, non-British, origin compared to a crew profile of 13%. Nearly half (47%) of all foreigners pressed claimed to be of American origin and a few of them managed to secure their release from the Royal Navy on this basis (see above for details). However the great majority did not and there was widespread belief in the Royal Navy that most pressed men who claimed to be American were in fact Englishmen

trying to avoid the press and this led to their claims being dismissed and the men pressed anyway. A message that these findings can give is that it was probably better to put on an Irish accent than an American if a sailor wished to avoid the press. The origin profile of quota men does not fit the crew profile in any real respect and this is due to most of the quota men being sent on board from the receiving ships as being from the Scottish quotas and therefore it is not surprising that 70% of all quota men were recorded as having come from Scotland.

Table 3.46 looks at those men who were flogged at least once during their time on board one of the ships compared to those men recorded as being volunteers, pressed or quota men.

**Table 3.46: All ships: Entry against floggings**

<b>Floggings</b>	<b>Vol (1003)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Press (321)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Quota (94)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Crew (2868)</b>	<b>Crew %</b>
Flogged	139	14%	53	17%	6	6%	395	14%
Not flogged	864	86%	268	83%	88	93%	2473	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1003</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>2868</b>	<b>100%</b>

The volunteers flogging record matches exactly that of the crew in general at 14% but pressed men show a slightly higher chance of being flogged at 17%. It is not surprising that pressed men would appear more disobedient than volunteers but perhaps it is unexpected that this percentage is not even higher. The most startling evidence to come from this table is the very low incidence of quota men being flogged, 6% compared to 14%. Are these the same men that contemporaries and some modern historians rail at? It would appear that not only are the quota men not the hounds from hell portrayed but that they are actually much better behaved than other groups of men on board.



Table 3.47 considers all those volunteers, pressed and quota men who were either promoted or demoted at least once during their time on board their respective ships.

**Table 3.47: All ships: Entry against promotion**

Promotion	Vol (1003)	%	Press (321)	%	Quota (94)	%
Promoted	269	28%	75	23%	34	36%
Demoted	29	2%	10	3%	1	1%
Unchanged	705	70%	236	74%	59	63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1003</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100%</b>

A total of 28% of all volunteers received some sort of promotion during their time on board one of the ships and 2% were demoted from their initial rating. Pressed men had a low promotion rate at 23% and a slightly higher demotion rate at 3%. Again it is not a surprise that pressed men were not promoted as often as volunteers and were demoted more but the difference is very small and perhaps a larger gap would have been expected. The highest promotion rate and the lowest demotion rate falls to the quota men: 36% of all quota men were promoted and only 1% demoted. Again we see the quota men outperforming other groups and must seriously make us reconsider their role and effect on the Royal Navy of the time.

Table 3.48 looks at the reasons that were given for volunteers, pressed and quota being discharged their respective ships compared to the general crew.

**Table 3.48: All ships Entry against discharge**

Reason	Vol (997)	%	Press (321)	%	Quota (94)	%	Crew (2906)	%
Discharged (D)	523	53%	178	56%	26	28%	1659	57%
Discharged sick (Ds)	126	13%	41	13%	24	26%	352	12%
Discharged Dead (DD)	92	9%	25	8%	22	23%	274	9%
Ran (R)	256	26%	77	24%	22	23%	621	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>997</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2906</b>	<b>99%</b>

For those men entered as volunteers 53% were discharged in the normal course of events such as being turned over to other ships or paid off at the end of a commission

which is 4% below the crew average of 57%. However this difference can be explained if we look at the number of men who deserted. A total of 26% of all volunteers were marked down as having deserted their ship compared to a crew average of 21% and this 5% difference can account for our earlier discrepancy. The volunteer discharged sick rate is only one percent higher than the average at 13% as opposed to 12% and the discharged dead rate is the same as the crew average at 9%. For those men recorded as having been pressed the discharge profile is very similar to the crew average with a slightly higher than average desertion rate, 24% against 21% and only one percent lower in all other categories. The quota men's discharge profile shows marked differences between the crew average as well as between volunteers and pressed men. The quota men's general discharge rate is well below the average at 28% as opposed to the crew's 57% average, the discharged due to sickness rate is double that of the crew, volunteers and pressed men's average at 26% compared to 12% for the crew and 13% for both volunteers and pressed men and this ill health is reflected in a quota men mortality rate of 23% compared to a crew and volunteer death rate of 9% and a pressed men death rate of 8%. It would seem that all categories of men were prone to desert; the worst offenders in this respect are the volunteers and the quota men desert the least although the percentage differences between all groups are low. Sickness and death seem fairly even handed between volunteers, pressed men and the crew as a whole but quota men are nearly twice as likely to fall sick and over twice as likely to die than other groups. It would seem that not only were quota men flogged less than other men and were promoted more often, they also suffered the most through sickness and death through sickness. In broad terms a quota man coming on board one of our frigates had a one in four chance of dying, deserting or being discharged sick. The difference between volunteers and pressed men in the

categories of promotion, demotion, flogging and desertion are remarkably small, never more than 5%. It might have been expected that pressed men would be much less likely to perform well on board given the compulsory nature of their service but this does not seem to be the case. It is quite possible, as some contemporaries suggested that once pressed a man had accepted the inevitable then; generally speaking, he settled down and got on with the job.

## **Conclusion**

It has been clearly established that the primary problem that faced the British Admiralty during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars was the manning of the fleet of warships that shielded the British coastline, threatened the enemy coastline, protected British merchant vessels, attacked enemy shipping and allowed the great naval victories of the war to take place. The manning issue was a twofold one. Firstly the Admiralty had to move from peacetime to a wartime footing and secondly maintain and increase the numbers of mariners during the course of a long war. Manning the fleet was a qualitative problem as well as a quantitative one. The mariner's profession was an extremely skilled one which, on average took two and half years of 'on the job' training to move a novice to at least a semi-skilled sailor and a further year and a half for him to reach the peak of his profession (see Chapter 5). The average working life of a sailor has been calculated at around ten years' service,<sup>201</sup> and if correct, means that the Admiralty was only likely to get six years of skilled sea service from a raw recruit. The size of the problem can be illustrated by the estimate that there were, at any one time, between 250,000-300,000 sailors serving British interests during the war of which around 40% were in the Royal Navy (see above). Up to the outbreak of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars successive

governments had, with varying degrees of success, attempted to control the maritime labour markets to allow for the sudden requirement of trained sailors when war or armament occurred. How successful each piece of legislation was is difficult to judge but the fact remains that when war broke out the fleet was manned and British naval supremacy quickly established and, despite a few difficulties with the fledgling United States Navy, maintained.

When war broke out in 1793 and the Royal Navy expanded to meet the crisis there were two main instruments of recruitment at the disposal of the Admiralty. The first was a call for volunteers. Men volunteered for various reasons but the Admiralty believed that the primary draw to the service was an economic one and therefore encouraged men to join by the offer of large bounties on enlistment. When insufficient numbers of men were forthcoming the second instrument used was the issue of press warrants and the setting up of the Impress Service that allowed, with some exceptions, the legal kidnapping and forced service of mariners. The Press was widely hated but it is difficult to see how, without conscription, it would have been otherwise possible to effectively man the fleet. Despite all the controversy surrounding the Press nobody could come up with a better system and the Press Gangs were active until peace was declared. The Press had the advantage that, by and large, it brought in that priceless commodity, trained mariners. Despite the Press and increasing bounties to attract volunteers, by 1795 there was a naval manning crisis and to try and resolve the situation Parliament drafted a series of Bills known collectively as the Quota Acts. The Quota Acts required that Counties and seaport towns of England, Scotland and Wales provide a pre-determined number of recruits. It is likely that the Quota Acts provided as many as 30,000 men for the fleet and

authorities agree that quantitatively the Quota Acts were a success but much controversy surrounds how effective the men recruited were. It was said that the Quota men were resented by serving officers and men due to the high bounties that local authorities were prepared to offer for enlistment and that they were the 'sweepings of the gutter' and a hotbed of Jacobin radicalism that contributed to the naval mutinies of 1797.

The Admiralty had other means of recruitment to call on other than volunteers, the Press and quota men. These tools included inducing prisoners of war to join the Service, allowing pressed men to provide substitutes or the cost thereof, recruiting debtors from sponging houses and a system of training up young boys aged 13 and above. The boys were carried on board ship, separately mustered from the men and when they reached the age of 18 were transferred to the main crew muster, hopefully, as trained seamen (see Chapter 4). However these tools only accounted for a small percentage of the need, a total of 8% on the frigates under consideration.

Another method of ensuring that ships were manned was to look after the men already on board. The two major losses of men to the Service were through desertion and sickness. Desertion was endemic in the Royal Navy of the period and in the three frigates looked at accounted for over 20% of crewmen leaving their respective ship. One of the main methods employed to counter desertion were to impose draconian penalties on those caught deserting, trying to desert or even encouraging others to desert. Ship borne Royal Marines were largely responsible for preventing the men from deserting, particularly when a ship was in port or moored just off a friendly coast. However the main strategy used against desertion was to try and keep the men

on board. Leave was rarely if ever given and men were transferred from one ship to another when de-commissioning took place in order to keep them away from temptation. Although the number of desertions were high it must be the case that the majority of those who deserted returned to the pool of trained seaman either in the merchant marine or into other Royal Navy ships.

In looking at how men were recruited to the three frigates (four commissions) a number of factors were examined. These included a comparison between the findings of Lewis and Rodger in relation to the breakdown of recruitment categories, the age profile of men recruited and compared to Rediker's estimates, the various ratings that crewmen were awarded on entering a ship, where men geographically came from, disciplinary records compared to recruitment method, rating changes during crewmen's time on board and why men were discharged the ship. In relation to the above, particular attention was paid to quota men to see how they matched up to their negative image.

Some difficulties were encountered in comparing Lewis and Rodger's tables for different reasons. Lewis' calculations were based on a 'best guess' developed from some muster books and memoirs and Rodger's from a 'snapshot' examination of muster books covering a number of ships over a short period of time 50 years before our period. In comparison, this survey's findings are based on all the muster books of four frigate commissions. Table 3.49 compares this survey with Rodger's findings. It is unclear if Rodger included officers and boys (that is, crewmen who moved from the boy category to the main crew muster). If he did then the 9% in the Frigate column

could be added to the volunteer category thus making it 43% and much nearer Rodger's findings.

**Table 3.49: Recruitment Rodger (1986) compared to Frigate Survey**

Category of Recruitment	Rodger	Frigates
Turned Over	26%	32%
Volunteers	56%	34%
Pressed	15%	11%
Unclassifiable	3%	3%
Quota men	N/A	3%
Other (Substitutes, POWs and re-entries)	N/A	8%
Officers and boys	N/A	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Given the differences in time, station, type of ship and sampling technique these figures are quite close.

**Table 3.50: Recruitment Lewis (1960) compared to Frigate Survey**

Category of Recruitment	Lewis	Frigates
Volunteers	15%	57%
Boys	8%	6%
Pressed	50%	15%
Foreigners	15%	13%
Quota men and others	12%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

When dealing with Lewis' figures adjustments have to be made as Lewis does not include men turned over from other ships in his calculations, separates non-British mariners from volunteers and pressed men, and includes quota men with 'other categories'. Most importantly Lewis estimates that large numbers of volunteers were actually pressed men who had decided to take the bounty and were then entered into their respective ship as a 'volunteer'. Lewis is quite correct in this assumption as this practice was widespread and examples of it occurring have been found in all the frigates looked at. The difficulty is estimating the extent of the practice. In Chapter 5 a careful analysis has been carried out in order to establish the number of 'true'

volunteer landsmen carried on the three frigates. The total established was 302 (30%) out of a total 'volunteer' entry of 1003 (100%). Therefore it seems that at the very least 30% of all volunteers were exactly that, and it is likely that there were other true volunteers amongst the other men coming on board ship. Therefore a realistic breakdown of a crew's entry mode (ignoring men turned over from other ships) is given in Table 3.51.

**Table 3.51: Recruitment Categories**

Category of Recruitment	Probable	Recorded
Volunteers	36%	57%
Boys	6%	6%
Pressed	36%	15%
Foreigners	13%	13%
Quota men and others	9%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The estimation of pressed men and volunteers is calculated by taking the 30% of volunteers known to be such and weighting the figure by a small percentage (6%) to allow for the fact that at least some of the non-landsmen volunteers must have been just that. However it is likely that the number of true volunteers is higher but at present it is not possible to say exactly by how much. In conclusion it would appear that just over a third of men recruited to the service from our period were volunteers, just over a third pressed men and the rest were raised by the Quota Acts, the system of developing boys for the sea service, prisoners of war, non-British mariners, substitutes and sent from the civil powers.

Rediker calculated the age of 'common seamen' in the merchant marine in the period 1700 – 1750 and this is compared to the age profile findings from the three frigates and the results set out in Table 3.52.



**Table 3.52: Crew age profile Rediker (1987) compared to Frigates**

<b>Age Band</b>	<b>Rediker</b>	<b>Frigates</b>
15<		1%
15-19	11%	23%
20-29	60%	56%
30-39	19%	15%
40-49	9%	5%
50-59	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>101%</b>

Both sets of figures appear quite close although the frigate profile is a slightly younger one and probably reflects large numbers of young men joining up as volunteer landsmen with no previous sea going experience.

The initial rating of men coming on board ship has shown us that around one third of all volunteers were rated landsman, one-third ordinary seaman and one-third able seaman. However we still have the sticky problem concerning who was a true volunteer and it is likely that the landsman category was in reality much higher. Given that Emsley has demonstrated that the majority of the quota men, certainly from the County Quotas, came from lower class county trades it is not surprising to see that 80% of the frigates quota men were rated landsman, 13% ordinary seamen and only 6% able seamen. For those men recorded as having been pressed into service 43% were rated able seamen, 41% ordinary and only 15% landsmen. This demonstrates that the press did largely take trained mariners but could and did take a few non-seamen.

The geographical place of origin of the crew was found to be 48% English, 22% Irish, 14% Scottish, 13% non-British and 3% Welsh. Roughly half of the men claiming to be non-British stated that they were born in the USA and it is difficult to establish, as it was at the time, whether these men were truly from the USA or British sailors

trying to escape impressment by claiming to be non-British. Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the crew's origins was that the percentage of pressed Irishmen was half that of the overall total (11% compared to 22%) and would appear to show reluctance by some captains to press Irishmen. A total of 14% of the frigates' crews were recorded to have been flogged at least once and while pressed men's ratio of flogging was slightly higher than the norm at 17%, quota men were flogged less than half the average rate at only 6%. This seems to give the lie to the idea that quota men were troublemakers, it would seem that quite the reverse was true. The same is true when the statistics for the career ladder for volunteers, pressed men and quota men are looked at. A total of 28% of the volunteers that came on board received at least one move up the promotional ladder during their time on board, for pressed men the ratio was 23% but for quota men 36% received a new rating during their service. The quota men again break the pattern when the reasons for leaving the frigates are looked at. Roughly half the men were discharged their respective ship in the normal passage of events such as moving to other ships, 12% were discharged sick, 9% died of various causes and 21% deserted. Although the rate of desertion is slightly higher for pressed men, volunteers and quota men than the norm (24%, 26% and 23% respectively) the other reasons for leaving the ship are within a couple of percentage point of the norm. However the quota men's profile is very different. Only 28% of quota men were discharged in the normal course of events – half the average, 26% were discharged sick and 23% discharged dead - over double the average. Although the number of quota men that served on board the three frigates is small, just under 100 compared to a combined crew of nearly 3,000, these findings clearly indicate that we should drastically review our perception of these men. Far from being the 'gaolbirds, ne'er-do-wells and puny starvelings' of Lewis' rantings, the evidence points to them being

better behaved and promoted more often than the crew in general but suffering double the sickness and death rate. It is time that we re-addressed our view of these men and the contribution that they made to the success of the Royal Navy of this period.

In conclusion, this Section has reviewed British naval recruitment policy, examined the various methods employed to recruit men to the Service and looked at shipboard recruitment on a ship-by-ship basis. Recruitment methods to the three frigates have been compared with other historian's findings, notably Rodger and Lewis. A breakdown of crew entry to the frigates demonstrates that just over one third of recruits were volunteers, just over a third pressed men and the rest of the crew were made up of boys, POWs, substitutes, quota men and men given up by the civil powers. Also established has been the crew's age profile, where they came from, their disciplinary and promotional records and why they were discharged from their respective ships. The record of the quota men has been examined and thrown new light on these much-maligned men. The results obtained from the three frigate, four commission database has enabled us to extend our knowledge of Royal Navy recruitment practices of the period, shed new light on aspects of shipboard life and asked new questions concerning the role of at least one group of recruits.

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<sup>1</sup> Masfield's description of the men sent by County Sheriffs and Lord Mayors to fill the quotas set by Parliament in 1795 (Masfield, J. *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*, (First published 1905, Conway edition, 1971) p.56).

<sup>2</sup> At the outbreak of war the Royal Navy possessed around 160 ships-of-the-line, 230 smaller vessels and 45,000 men. By 1815 this stood at around 208 ships-of-the-line, 633 smaller vessels and 130,000 men Haythornthwaite, P. J. *The Napoleonic Source Book*, (London, 1990) p. 215

<sup>3</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London, 1986)

<sup>4</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960)

<sup>5</sup> Rodger *The Wooden World* p. 145. Although Rodger was commenting on the period 1740 to 1775 little had changed in the intervening years except that the situation had arguably got worse, particularly in view of the extended nature of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (nearly 20 years of almost continuous warfare).

<sup>6</sup> Bromley, J. S. 'The British Navy and its Seamen: notes for an unwritten history' p. II 40 from Adam, P. (ed), *Seamen in Society*, International Commission for Maritime History, 1980

<sup>7</sup> Smythe, W. H. *The Sailor's Word-Book: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms* (1867, reprinted Conway, 1991) p.509. Rodger *Wooden World* p.21-2

<sup>8</sup> Emsley, C. *North Riding Naval Recruits: The Quota Acts and the Quota men 1795-1797*, (North Yorkshire County Council, 1978) p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Brian Lavery *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815* (London, 1989) p. 99

<sup>10</sup> Howarth, D. and Howarth, S. *Nelson: the Immortal Memory* (London, 1988) p. 88

<sup>11</sup> Lavery, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup> ADM36 15230. The men were: John Metcalf (T450) cook, Thomas Carroll (T720) boatswain, Henry Wooldridge (T783) carpenter, William Bowman (T838) Gunner and Benjamin Wheatly (T951) Purser.

<sup>13</sup> See Bruijn, J.R. and Eyck van Heslinga, E. S., 'Demand and Supply of Seamen in Dutch Shipping during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries' from Adam *Seamen in Society* and van Royen, P.C., Bruijn, J.R. and Lucassen, J. (eds.) *"Those Emblems of Hell"? European Sailors and the Maritime Labour Market, 1570-1870*, International Maritime Economic History Association No. 13, 1997, Phillips, C. R., "'The Life Blood of the Navy': Recruiting Sailors in Eighteenth Century Spain', *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 87, No. 4, November 2001, p. 420-445 and Kindleberger, C. P. *Mariners and Markets* Harvester (MIT, 1992) p.19-20.

<sup>14</sup> These figures are based on the Parliamentary estimates of the number of seamen needed for the current year and voted for in Parliament. The annual figures so voted on are given in the yearly Appendices to James, W. *The Naval History of Great Britain*, Vol. I-VI, London, 1837.

<sup>15</sup> Haythornthwaite, p. 22

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Lewis, M., *A Social History of the Navy 1793-1815* (London, 1960) p.120

<sup>18</sup> ADM7 567

<sup>19</sup> Lewis' figures (p.120) show that the major shortfall appears to be in marine recruitment. For the years 1794 12,115 marines were voted for and only 7,908 recruited, 1800 22,696 voted and 19,398 recruited and 1804 22,000 voted and 15,663 recruited. For seamen the figures are: in 1794 72,885 voted for against 72,835 recruited, 1800 92,304 voted for and 93,813 recruited and 1804 78,000 voted for and 84,168 recruited.

<sup>20</sup> Hall, C. D. *British Strategy in the Napoleonic War, 1803-1815* (Manchester UP) 1992, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Lloyd, C., *The British Seaman 1200 – 1860* (New Jersey, 1968) Appendix I, Table 3, p. 288-9.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, p. 121

<sup>23</sup> James, Vol. III, Appendix No. 10, p.351. James records an initial vote for 97,304 seamen but that the figure was revised upwards later in the year (1801) to 105,000.

<sup>24</sup> Bromley, J.S. (ed.) *The Manning of the Royal Navy: Selected Public Pamphlets 1693-1873* (NRS, Vol. 119, 1976) p. 166.

<sup>25</sup> Palmer, S. and Williams, D. M. 'British Sailors 1775-1870' p. 99-100, from *"Those Emblems of Hell"*.

<sup>26</sup> Haythornthwaite, p. 215.

<sup>27</sup> Palmer, S. and Williams, p. 109.

<sup>28</sup> Dixon, C. 'Legislation and the Sailor's Lot 1660-1914', p.III 96. From *Seamen in Society*. International Commission for Maritime History, 1980 and Lavery p.269.

<sup>29</sup> 12 Chas 2 c18, s. 7

<sup>30</sup> 'For the Increase and Encouragement of Seamen' (7 and 8 Will 3 c 21).

<sup>31</sup> Dixon, p. 97, Lloyd, p. 173-193. Lloyd discusses the various proposals put forward as an alternative to impressment.

<sup>32</sup> 2 and 3 Anne c6.

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<sup>33</sup> Kindleberger, C. P. *Mariners and Markets* (MIT, 1992) p. 15

<sup>34</sup> 1 Geo 2 c14

<sup>35</sup> 2 Geo II c36.

<sup>36</sup> 26 Geo III c60.

<sup>37</sup> 37 Geo III c73, s. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Dixon, P. III 102

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, P. III 97

<sup>40</sup> Haythornthwaite, p. 214. Haythornthwaite supports his arguments with the statistics that the French only took one British ship of the line that was not recaptured and in comparison the British took 90 French capital ships.

<sup>41</sup> See: Davids, K. 'Maritime Labour in the Netherlands', Le Goff, T. J. A. 'The Labour Market for Sailors in France', Philips, C. R. 'The Labour Market for Sailors in Spain 1570-1870' from "*Those Emblems of Hell*". Also Philips 'Lifeblood of the Navy'.

<sup>42</sup> Kindleberger, p. 63

<sup>43</sup> Kemp, P. *The British Sailor: a social history of the lower deck* (London, 1970) Lavery, p. 124.

<sup>44</sup> Lavery, p. 130

<sup>45</sup> Lavery, p. 116

<sup>46</sup> Stranack, I. *The Andrew and the Onions: The Story of the Royal Navy in Bermuda 1795-1975* (Bermuda, 1990) p. 10

<sup>47</sup> ADM1 5338 McAlpine was also charged with letting prisoners out of irons and being 'frequently in liquor'. The court found McAlpine partly guilty of letting prisoners out of their irons but innocent of the other two charges. His punishment was to be reprimanded and moved to another ship – hardly a ringing endorsement of Bowater.

<sup>48</sup> Masefield, J. *Sea Life in Nelson's Time*, (First published 1905, Conway edition, 1971) p. 56

<sup>49</sup> Black, J. *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth-Century* (Leicester UP, 1988) p. 21

<sup>50</sup> Hall, p. 10

<sup>51</sup> Lewis, p. 95

<sup>52</sup> Kindleberger, p. 17

<sup>53</sup> Bromley, *Unwritten History*, p. II 37

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- <sup>54</sup> Rodger, p. 164.
- <sup>55</sup> Lloyd, p. 139
- <sup>56</sup> Rediker, M. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, (Cambridge UP, 1987) p. 33
- <sup>57</sup> Lavery, p. 117, Bromley, p. II 37
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p. 120
- <sup>59</sup> Lavery, p. 128
- <sup>60</sup> Palmer, S. and Williams, p. 105
- <sup>61</sup> The first was 35 Geo III c5 and the second was 35 Geo III c29
- <sup>62</sup> Kemp, p. 163. He gives the exact figures as: County Quota 9,764 men and Seaport Quota 20,354 men
- <sup>63</sup> Emsley, *North Riding Naval Recruits*, p. 11
- <sup>64</sup> Lavery, p. 128. Lewis, p. 118. Kemp, p. 163
- <sup>65</sup> Kemp, p. 164
- <sup>66</sup> Kindleberger, p. 18
- <sup>67</sup> Lewis p.116-127. Lewis quotes seamen and officers in support of his view but it does seem that the large bounties that quota men were reputed to get were the main cause of other sailor's resentments.
- <sup>68</sup> Emsley, *North Riding Naval Recruits*, p. 11-13
- <sup>69</sup> Bromley, *Manning Pamphlets*, p. xlii
- <sup>70</sup> Bromley, *Unwritten History*, p. II 34
- <sup>71</sup> Rodger, N.A.M. *Naval Records for Genealogists* (London, 1988) p.48
- <sup>72</sup> 'Sea officers' refers to those Royal navy officers who served at sea as opposed to those officers who had shore-based appointments (Rodger *Naval Records* p.5)
- <sup>73</sup> ADM36 1429
- <sup>74</sup> ADM36 14842
- <sup>75</sup> Rodger, *Naval Records* p.49
- <sup>76</sup> Lavery, p.131-2
- <sup>77</sup> Lyon, D.J. *The Sailing Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy Built, Purchased and Captured 1688-1860*, (London, 1993) p.63. The *Sandwich* was a second rate (98 gun) line-of-battle ship launched in 1759 and turned into a receiving ship in Chatham dockyard in 1790.

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<sup>78</sup> ADM36 13171. The muster book also records that the men were 'entered' onto the ship's books on 11 February 1796 but that they 'appeared' on board on 21 April 1796, that is that they had been allocated to the *Glenmore* in February but that they were received on board in April.

<sup>79</sup> For example, a number of men sent to the *Emerald* (nos. 215-251) from the receiving ship *Sandwich* are listed in the *Sandwich's* muster book, ADM36 11617 with some, but not all, information concerning why they were there such as quota men, pressed and volunteers.

<sup>80</sup> ADM37 1226. It is unclear from the muster or log books if these men were taken by the Impress Service or by the ship's press gang.

<sup>81</sup> ADM51 1305

<sup>82</sup> ADM36 15226

<sup>83</sup> ADM37 2543. Bumboats were small craft that would surround ships in port carrying items for sale and prostitutes.

<sup>84</sup> ADM51 1139

<sup>85</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, Alex Hanson is recorded as 'alias Erick Hanson' and Alexander Foyer as 'alias Albert Foyer', not very convincing aliases.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, The other men are William Rose (E206), John Kelly (E207), Joseph Orton (E209), Christopher Wild (E210) and John Burn (E211)

<sup>88</sup> Sailors of the period were often to be found on merchantmen of many different countries and it is quite possible that Michael Harrington had come from a Norwegian ship, see Sætra, G. 'The International Labour Market for Seamen, 1600-1900: Norway and Norwegian Participation' p.205, from van Royen, P.C., Bruijn, J.R. and Lucassen, J. (eds.) *"Those Emblems of Hell"? European Sailors and the Maritime Labour Market, 1570-1870*, International Maritime Economic History Association, Newfoundland, 1997.

<sup>89</sup> ADM36 13253

<sup>90</sup> ADM51 1167

<sup>91</sup> ADM36 13172

<sup>92</sup> Lavery, p.121



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<sup>93</sup> *Enterprize* was a sixth rate, 28 gun, frigate that was launched in 1774 and became a receiving ship moored by the Tower of London in 1791 (Lyon, D., *The Sailing Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy - built, purchased and captured 1688-1860* (London, 1993) p.86).

<sup>94</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>95</sup> Lavery, p.126-8

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, p.128. Lavery quotes Admiral Collingwood on this issue.

<sup>97</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>98</sup> Lavery, p.138

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, p.88

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, p.138

<sup>101</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>102</sup> It had been the practice in earlier wars to regularly exchange prisoners of war but the revolutionary nature of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars caused some breaking down of this system and so both sides held vast numbers of prisoners kept, for the most part, in poor conditions. Further complicating the issue was that whilst thousands of French and allied seamen were held by Britain comparatively few British seamen were captured and available for exchange. Despite this exchanges did take place and the prison hulks moored in many British seaports proved a fertile recruiting ground for volunteers. See Lavery, p.320-1 and p.318-21, Rodger, *Naval Records* p.49, Crimmin, P. K. 'The sick and Hurt Board and the Health of Seamen c.1700-1806' *Journal for Maritime Research*, December 1999 and Alger, J.G. *Napoleon's British Visitors and Captives 1801-1815* (London, 1904)

<sup>103</sup> ADM51 1268

<sup>104</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>105</sup> Rodger, *Naval Records* p.49

<sup>106</sup> ADM37 2544

<sup>107</sup> ADM36 15228. The men were Hector McNeal (T760), William Carty (T761), John Thomas (T762) and Jasper Murphy (T763).

<sup>108</sup> ADM36 15090

<sup>109</sup> Lyon, p.245. The *Engageante* was a French frigate that had been captured in 1794 and was equipped as a hospital ship and moored in the Cove of Cork.

<sup>110</sup> ADM36 15090

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<sup>111</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>112</sup> ADM37 2543

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>114</sup> Rodger, *Naval Records* p.49.

<sup>115</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* Appendix III, p. 353 and Lewis p. 139

<sup>116</sup> Rodger *Wooden World*, p. 170

<sup>117</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 146-7

<sup>118</sup> Rodger, *Wooden Wall*, p. 153

<sup>119</sup> Lewis, p.138

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 139

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, p. 122

<sup>122</sup> Emsley p. 16-18

<sup>123</sup> Lewis does not list any particular muster book or set of muster books that he used and admits that the figures would vary from ship to ship (Lewis, p. 138) and Rodger's records cover the period: *Achilles* Jan 1757-Apr 1758, *Ambuscade* Feb 1755-May 1761, *Arundel* May 1758-Jan 1761, *Elizabeth* Feb 1755-Dec 1755 and *Hampton Court* Apr 1755-Mar 1759 (Rodger p. 353).

<sup>124</sup> ADM51 1167

<sup>125</sup> ADM36 13253

<sup>126</sup> Of the men recorded as having been pressed (all on 18 August 1796) William Carroline (T279) a 35 year old able seaman from Whitby was discharged 'unserviceable' (invalided) on 23 January 1797, Nicholas Hogson (T280) a 29 year old able seaman from Ostend was discharged 'by order of Admiral Duncan' on 19 September 1796, John Shults (T283) a 23 year old ordinary seaman from Norway was discharged 'by order Admiral Buckner' on 9 September 1796, William Pickering (T284) a 22 year old ordinary seaman from Yorkshire was discharged 'by order Admiral Buckner' on 3 September 1796, John Cassiao (*sic*) (T286) a 23 year old ordinary seaman from Hamburg was discharged 'by order Admiral Buckner' on 9 September, John Clark (T287) a 20 year old able seaman from Hull was discharged 'unusable' (invalided) on 9 June 1797 and Mark Hisp (T288) a 23 year old able seaman from Durham was discharged 'by order Admiral Buckner' 9 September 1796 (ADM36 13253).

<sup>127</sup> Of the men recorded as having been volunteers, John Ostrea (T277) was a 24 year old able seaman from Gosport who served on board the *Trent* until he deserted the ship on 17 May 1797, Robert

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Steward (T278) was a 20 year old able seaman from Scotland who served on board the *Trent* until discharged sick on 1 February 1797 (ADM36 13253), John Holdright (T281) was a 22 year old able seaman from Yorkshire who served on board the *Trent* until discharged sick on 7 August 1797 (ADM36 15226), Richard Evans (T282) was a 22 year old landsman from Wales who served on board the *Trent* until he deserted on 2 December 1800 (ADM36 15228), David Buckley (T285) was a 21 year old landsman from Waterford who served on board the *Trent* until he deserted the ship on 10 February 1797 (ADM36 13253) and Michael Harrington (T289) was a 23 year old able seaman from Cork who served on board the *Trent* until the ship was paid off in June 1803 (ADM36 15230).

<sup>128</sup> The general grouping of those 'first recruited into the Service' is not strictly correct as a fair proportion of the men had almost certainly served in the Royal Navy before and a number are likely to have deserted from other ships. This can be demonstrated by the ship's muster records that occasionally record that a man was found to have deserted from another ship such as Joseph Knight (T512) an able seaman pressed in Port Royal Jamaica on 16 May 1798. Knight was recorded as having been discharged the ship on 11 June 1798 for 'being a deserter from HMS *Regulus* who gave himself up', (ADM36 15226). However to establish exactly who or who is not a true 'first time' entrant into the Navy given the fluidity of the sailor's life is not currently possible.

<sup>129</sup> This table and similar tables from the other ships in this survey follow Rodger's practice of leaving out officers, widow's men and re-entrants.

<sup>130</sup> The Quota Acts were passed and applied to the year 1795 only (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 128)

<sup>131</sup> Rediker, Appendix A, p. 299

<sup>132</sup> Lavery, *Nelson's Navy* p. 128

<sup>133</sup> The three quota men entered as able seamen were; William Scarvill (T244) aged 40, James Williams (T245) aged 47 and John Thompson (T332) aged 26 (ADM36 13253).

<sup>134</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.127 and 286, J. F. Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen*, Columbia UP, 1925, p.184-6

<sup>135</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 286

<sup>136</sup> Roland Ross (T534) a 20 year old ordinary seaman was pressed in Port Royal, Jamaica on 1 June 1798 (ADM36 15226) and served on board the *Trent* for just over two years until discharged the ship 'being an American' 28 July 1800 whilst the ship was moored in Port Royal (ADM36 15228). During

his career on board the *Trent* he was promoted to able seaman on 1 January 1799 (ADM36 15227). It would appear that it took him two years to establish his nationality.

<sup>137</sup> Milo Williams (T585) a 23 year old able seaman from Portsmouth, America was pressed into the *Trent* along with eight others and one 'volunteer' from the merchantman 'Atla' (?) on 15 November 1798 whilst the *Trent* was employed stopping and checking shipping in West Indian waters. He was discharged the ship on 26 January 1799 after only a few weeks on board (ADM36 15227).

<sup>138</sup> Benjamin Lindsey (T787) a 25 year old ordinary seaman from Philadelphia was 'pressed out of a smuggler' on 23 January 1801 and discharged two months later on 19 March 1801 'out of the service by Admiralty order' (ADM36 15228).

<sup>139</sup> The pressed Germans were; Thomas Sunsbury (T255) a 22 year old able seaman from Prussia who joined the *Trent* on 27 May 1796 (ADM36 13253) from the receiving ship *Enterprise* and who therefore must have been pressed by the Impress Service rather than the *Trent's* crew. Sunsbury eventually deserted the ship in Port Royal Harbour on 29 April 1798 (ADM36 15226). John Cassiao (*sic*) (T286) (see footnote 126), Bernard Hatpens (T579) a 25 year old ordinary seaman from 'Germany' who was pressed into the *Trent* on 15 November 1798 (ADM36 15226) and was involaided out of the ship on 5 July 1800 (ADM36 15228). Anthony Barney (T580) a 20 year old able seaman from Hamburg was pressed into the *Trent* on 15 November 1798 (ADM36 15226) and deserted the ship on 31 December 1798 (ADM36 15226).

<sup>140</sup> The pressed Swedish sailors were; Anders Husselgreen (T473) was a 46 year old able seaman from Sweden who was pressed into the *Trent* from the merchantman 'The Three Sisters' on 28 December 1797 (ADM36 15226) until discharged 'by order' on 27 November 1800 (ADM36 15228), probably due to his being a foreigner although this is not specified in the records and it would have appeared to have taken him three years to achieve this. Frederick Miers (T515) was a 25 year old ordinary seaman from Sweden who was pressed into the *Trent* from Port Royal Harbour on 21 May 1798 (ADM36 15226) who served until the ship was paid off in June 1803 (ADM36 15230). During his service on board the *Trent* he was made able seaman on 1 December 1800 (ADM36 15227) and then quartermaster on 2 April 1803 (ADM36 15230). Abraham Norbloom (T528) was a 28 year old ordinary seaman from Sweden who was pressed into the *Trent* from Port Royal Harbour on 21 May 1798 (ADM36 15226) and served until he deserted the ship on 8 January 1799 (ADM36 15227).

<sup>141</sup> The pressed Frenchmen were; Nicholas Hogson (T280) (see footnote 126) and Jean Louis (T582) a 19 year old ordinary seaman from Brest who was pressed into the *Trent* on 15 November 1798 (ADM36 15226) and served until 'killed by a shot' during a cutting out expedition off Costa Rico on 28 March 1799 (ADM36 15227 and ADM51 1305).

<sup>142</sup> The pressed men from the West Indies were; Louis Asleagh (T489) who was a 25 year old able seaman from Martinique who was pressed into the *Trent* from Port Royal Harbour on 17 January 1798 (ADM36 15226) and who served until 'discharged by order' on 31 October 1800 (ADM36 15228) and William Buck (T506) who was a 26 year old ordinary seaman from Barbados who was pressed into the *Trent* from Port Royal Harbour on 10 May 1798

<sup>143</sup> The Egyptian entry has 'Alexandria' as his place of origin. It has been assumed that this is Alexandria in northern Egypt but his name is John Morrison (T525), hardly a native Egyptian name. It is possible that this is a Briton that had been born in Alexandria or that there is an Alexandria in America where this man comes from, in which case he should be added to the American list of foreigners serving on board the *Trent*. Morrison was pressed into the *Trent* on 28 May 1798 aged 28 and rated ordinary seaman (ADM36 15226). He was promoted to able seaman on 1 September 1798 in which capacity he served until he deserted the ship in Port Royal on 20 January 1799 (ADM36 15227). The Norwegian pressed into the *Trent* on 18 August 1796 was John Shults (T283) a 23 year old ordinary seaman who served until discharged 'by order of Admiral Buckner' (possibly because he was a foreigner) on 9 September 1796 (ADM36 13253). Jon Miller (T496) was a 27 year old ordinary seaman from Denmark who was pressed into the *Trent* on 28 December 1797 (ADM36 15226) in which capacity he served until he deserted the ship in Port Royal on 5 May 1799 (ADM36 15227). Joseph Norry (T502) was a 23 year old ordinary seaman from Sierra Leone who was pressed into the *Trent* on 7 May 1798. Norry was flogged on 12 November 1798 for 'disobedience of orders' (ADM36 15226) and was eventually discharged the ship on 5 July 1800 'invalided' (ADM36 15228). James McConnell (T684) was a 25 year old ordinary seaman from Gibraltar who was pressed into the *Trent* from the 'Nymph' merchantman on 12 December 1799 (ADM36 15227) and he served until he was turned over to *HMS Plantagenet* in June 1803 when the *Trent* was decommissioned (ADM36 15230).

<sup>144</sup> ADM36 13253

<sup>145</sup> Masfield, J. *Sea Life in Nelson's Time* (Conway, 1971 edition) p. 57. Although Masfield wrote *Sea Life* in 1905, the centenary of Trafalgar and the death of Nelson, his work caught the public

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imagination and set the debate for historians for the following century and his words still resonate today.

<sup>146</sup> ADM36 15226

<sup>147</sup> ADM36 15227

<sup>148</sup> A ship's corporal main duty was to instruct the crew in the use of small arms (Smyth, W. H. *The Sailor's Word-Book: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms* ((1867, Re-printed Conway 1991) p. 215)

<sup>149</sup> All the quota men 'appeared' on board the *Trent* between June 1796 and March 1797 (ADM36 13253), William Kendall (T227) was promoted from landsman to ordinary seaman on 1 January 1798 as was John Ramsay (T350) and George Cumming (T364). Kendall was further promoted to able seaman on 1 September 1798 (ADM36 15226). John Stevenson (T326), Peter Patton (T327), John Walker (T338), George Taylor (T339), William Hastie (T344), Robert Martin (T346), Philip Crombie (T355) and Alexander Campbell (T368) were all promoted from landsman to ordinary seaman on 1 December 1800 (ADM36 15228). Taylor and Crombie were further promoted to able seaman on 25 February 1802 (ADM36 15229). John Patterson (T366) was promoted from landsman to ordinary seaman on 10 November 1797 and David Benny was promoted from landsman to ship's corporal on the same day (ADM36 15226). Robert Nish (T360) was promoted from landsman to ship's corporal on 1 July 1797 (ADM36 13253).

<sup>150</sup> All the men that experienced rating changes on that day (26 June 1796) had come on board the *Trent* within a few days of each other (between 13 and 16 June 1796), mostly from the receiving ship *HMS Enterprize*. It would appear that the ship's officers had initially rated them, perhaps without testing their claims, higher than their abilities allowed and that they later decided to review the men's ratings and down graded them (ADM36 13253).

<sup>151</sup> For instance the muster book of *HMS Europa* for 23 March 1800 records that midshipman Lawrence Griffin was demoted to able seaman 'for drunkenness on duty' (ADM36 14698).

<sup>152</sup> George Anderson (T352) was an 18 year old landsman from Linlithgow who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797 and served until discharged dead on 1 June 1797 (ADM36 13253)

<sup>153</sup> The other quota men who died were as follows. William Scarville (T244) a 40 year old able seaman from London who joined the *Trent* on 28 June 1796 and died 'on board' on 7 July 1797 (ADM36 13253) having served for just over a year. John Davidson (T325) a 37 year old landsman from

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Dunfermline who joined the *Trent* on 4 March 1797 and died 'on board' on 25 June 1797 having served for four months (ADM36 13253). James Haggard (T333) a 22 year old landsman from Dundee who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died 'at sea on board' on 5 September 1799 (ADM36 15227) having served for two and a half years. Robert Erskine (T336) a 30 year old landsman from Casterton who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died 'on board' on 6 July 1798 (ADM36 15226) having served for just under a year and a half. Robert Lowe (T341) a 23 year old landsman from 'Newburgh' who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died 'on board' on 4 December 1798 (ADM36 15226) having served for over a year and a half. William Dall (T342) a 26 year old landsman from 'Newburgh' who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died at 'Hospital Cape Nicola Mole' on 19 June 1798 (ADM36 15226) having served for 15 months. William Gowrie (T343) a 20 year old landsman from Dalkeith who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797 and died 'on board' on 20 June 1797 (ADM36 13253) having served for just under four months. Robert Martin (T346) a 25 year old landsman from 'Westlington' who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797 (ADM36 13253) and died at Port Royal Hospital on 10 November 1802 (ADM36 15230) having served for over five and a half years. John Ramsay (T350) a 23 year old landsman from Carlisle who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died at Port Royal Hospital on 10 February 1799 (ADM36 15227) having served for just under two years. Archie McGregor (T354) a 18 year old landsman from Perthshire who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797 (ADM36 13253) and died at Port Royal Hospital on 7 January 1799 having served for nearly two years (ADM36 15227). James Stuart (T358) a 18 year old landsman from Dumfermline who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died 'on board' on 4 December 1798 having served for just under two years (ADM36 15226). George Cumming (T364) a 22 year old landsman from Glasgow who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797 (ADM36 13253) and died 'at sea' on 23 August 1800 (ADM36 15228) having served for three and a half years. David Benny (T365) a 23 year old landsman from Moreton who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died at Port Royal Hospital on 25 September 1799 (ADM36 15227) having served for two and a half years. John Patterson (T366) a 27 year old landsman from 'Laswade' who joined the *Trent* on 6 March 1797(ADM36 13253) and died at Port Royal Hospital on 26 January 1800 (ADM36 15227) having served for just under three years.

<sup>154</sup> Of the nine quota men who deserted the *Trent* James William (T245) a 47 year old able seaman from Plymouth joined the ship on 28 June 1796 and deserted just over eight months later at Sheerness

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(ADM36 13253). John Stevenson an 18 year old landsman from Carron (T326) joined on the 4 March 1797 (ADM36 13253), was promoted to ordinary seaman on 1 December 1800 (ADM36 15228) and deserted nearly five years after joining the ship on 11 December 1801 at Portsmouth (ADM36 15229). All of the following quota men who deserted the *Trent* joined the ship on 6 March 1797 rated landsmen (ADM36 13253). David Gordon (T335) a 23 year old from Hamilton deserted on 4 September 1797 at Portsmouth (ADM36 15226) following six months service. John Watson (T340) a 24 year old from Galloway deserted on 17 September 1799 from 'Port Royal from duty' following two and a half years service (ADM36 15227). James Webster (T347) a 26 year old from Scotland deserted on 4 September 1797 from Portsmouth after six months service (ADM36 15226). John McCarty an 18 year old from 'Anbuin' deserted at Yarmouth on 30 June 1797 following four months service (ADM36 13253). George Hoggan (T356) a 19 year old from Dumfermline deserted from the *Trent* from the Barbados Islands on 27 December 1797 after over 10 months service (ADM36 15226). David Miller (T361) aged 27 and John Johnson (T363) aged 19 both from Caithness deserted the *Trent* on 13 May 1797 at Yarmouth after only ten weeks service (ADM36 13253).

<sup>155</sup> Widow's men were fictitious entries, sanctioned by the Admiralty who received the pay of an able seaman and ships were allowed two in every hundred of a ship's complement. The money raised was assigned to a pension fund for officers widows (Rodger *Naval Records* p. 50)

<sup>156</sup> All of the *Emerald*'s quota men 'appeared' on board ship on the 24 December 1795 rated landsman from the receiving ship *Sandwich*. They were: William Folkestone (E217) a 27 year old from Bawtry in Yorkshire, William Mitchell (E220) a 21 year old from East Smithfield, Francis Longbray (E222) a 19 year old from Armagh, Ireland, John Main (E223) a 23 year old from North Chapel Sussex, John Gridley (E224) a 21 year old from Melford, Suffolk, James Clark (E231) a 21 year old from Dublin, Robert Pickworth (E233) a 17 year old from Hogsthorpe, Lincolnshire, William Tubb (E234) a 21 year old from Oxford and William Brown (E236) a 24 year old from Windsor (ADM36 14842).

<sup>157</sup> Of the pressed landsmen, John Blake (E262) a 20 year old from Dorchester who had been pressed into the *Emerald* on 29 January 1796 (ADM36 14842) was promoted to ordinary seaman on 22 April 1798 (ADM36 14843) and then to able seaman on 4 January 1801 (ADM36 14845). William Fern (E267) a 36 year old from Dublin who had been pressed into the *Emerald* on 12 April 1796 (ADM36 14842) was promoted to ordinary seaman on 1 May 1799 (ADM36 14844). John Brock (E520) a 20



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year old American who had been pressed into the *Emerald* on 10 July 1801 (ADM36 14845) was promoted to able seaman 1 November 1802 (ADM36 15558) and then made quarter gunner on 10 March 1804 (ADM36 15559). Therefore some at least of the pressed landsmen became capable seamen.

<sup>158</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>159</sup> ADM36 14844

<sup>160</sup> Peter Strum (E343) a 32 year old ordinary seaman from 'Vesterwick, Swedenland' was pressed into the *Emerald* on 26 December 1797 (ADM36 14843) and discharged the ship on 23 November 1800 (ADM36 14845).

<sup>161</sup> ADM36 15558

<sup>162</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>163</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>164</sup> ADM51 1166

<sup>165</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>166</sup> ADM51 1295

<sup>167</sup> Macdonald, J. *Feeding Nelson's Navy: The True Story of Food at Sea in the Georgian Era* (Chatham, 2004) p.152

<sup>168</sup> See Slope Slope, N. 'The Trials of Nelson: Nelson's Camel', *The Nelson Dispatch*, July 2001, Vol. 7, Part 7, p. 436-445

<sup>169</sup> William Mitchell (E220) was recorded as dying in Antigua Hospital on 28 November 1802 (ADM36 15558), John Gridley (E224) died in St Kitts Hospital on 4 July 1801 (ADM36 14846), William Brown (E236) died in Antigua Hospital on 16 November 1802 (ADM36 14846), John Main (E223) died 'on board' on 14 May 1798 off the island of Minorca (ADM36 14843) as did Robert Pickworth (E233) on 1 July 1798 (ADM36 14844).

<sup>170</sup> The seven men recorded as having been 'sent in a prize and not since heard of' were 'yeoman of the sheets' (a former midshipman (ADM36 14846)) Simon Reid (E666), ordinary seaman John Jones (E732), ordinary seaman James Taylor (E769), ordinary seaman William Angus (E773), ordinary seaman John Chambers (E787), ordinary seaman Daniel Jacobs (E792) and able seaman Hugh Galligher (*sic*) (E794) (ADM36 15560). During October 1804 *Emerald* was engaged in escorting a convoy from the West Indies to Britain. An enemy ship was captured and the seven prize crew put on

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board. Shortly after the convoy encountered heavy gales and the ship's log records that 'strong gales with rain...at 6 found the head of the rudder as far as the pental broke entirely off...at 9.15 made signal of distress to the convoy at 9 having carried away the rudder chain and pendant and the rudder beating so much about as to endanger the stern post at 11 unhung it and cut it away' (ADM51 1530). The *Emerald* nearly foundered on several occasions and only just made it home. It would seem that the prize and its crew were not so lucky.

<sup>171</sup> On the night of 6 September 1803 off Guadeloupe the *Emerald*'s captain sent the ship's boats in a cutting out expedition against French merchantmen. Later the boats returned with their prizes but at a cost. The ship's log records that 'French schooner La Enfant Tronue and La Belle Dame and the Swede schooner Laurelt which was out from their anchor from under the battery at Bay Des Hayes having lost 2 seamen killed and 1 wounded 1 sergeant and 1 private marine wounded. One boat sunk the launch missing with Lieutenant Young and 13 seamen. Lieutenant Higginson and one sergeant and 6 private marines'. Several days later the log states that 'sent the barge with a flag of truce to Basseterre with 31 French prisoners at 7 the barge returned with 18 English prisoners 11 of them belonging to the ship who had been taken in the launch...4 being killed Lieutenant Young and Lieutenant Higginson of marines wounded' (ADM51 1530). It would appear that most of those captured were exchanged for French prisoners, but not all. Five crewmen did not return and were kept on the ship's muster until 26 October 1804 (ADM36 15560), presumably when news of their fate reached the ship. The five men were landsman Thomas Franklin (E588), ordinary seaman Joshua Thompson (E695), able seaman J. Hatchell (E528), ordinary seaman James Diton (E700) and ordinary seaman Bart. Wilson (E705).

<sup>172</sup> These were ordinary seaman John McDonald (E240) who was discharged 'in lieu' on 10 February 1801 (ADM36 14845), able seaman Julius Falconer (E258) and Quarter Master's Mate Patrick Hose (E268) who were discharged 'in lieu' on 29 January 1801 (ADM36 14845), ordinary seaman Richard Vinner (E474) and ordinary seaman Daniel Cousins (E486) who were both discharged 'in lieu of a pressed man' on 15 September 1801 (ADM36 14846).

<sup>173</sup> These were the captain's clerk Edward Worthington (E263) who was discharged on 16 January 1801 (ADM36 14845) (Worthington had joined the *Emerald* as a 14 year old midshipman on 29 January 1796 (ADM36 14842), been re-rated able seaman on 4 May 1798 (ADM36 14843), back to midshipman on 12 November 1798 and rated clerk on 1 November 1799 (ADM36 14844)) and captain's clerk Thomas Hambleton (E462) who was discharged on 31 March 1805 'From the Service

by request' (ADM36 15560). Hambleton had joined *Emerald1* as an able seaman on 3 December 1800, was re-rated Quarter Master's Mate on 30 January 1801 (ADM36 14845) and then clerk on 31 July 1804 (ADM36 15559). It would appear that the skills developed as a captain's clerk perhaps allowed a career outside the Royal Navy.

<sup>174</sup> Landsman Nathaniel Jones (E653) and John Peel (E672) were both turned over from the 'Staunch Gun Brig out of service' on 7 February 1803 and were discharged 'Not having joined from the ship he was lent to' on 26 April 1803 (ADM36 15558).

<sup>175</sup> Able seaman John Duncan (E12) joined the *Emerald1* on 22 August 1795 (ADM36 14842) and was 'Given up to the Civil Power' on 5 February 1801 when the ship was moored at Spithead (ADM36 14845). No details of why Duncan was handed over are recorded. Acting lieutenant John Young (E594) was captured on the night of 6 September 1803 off Guadeloupe during a cutting out expedition (see endnote 171) and was parolled back onto the *Emerald1* conditional on his return to Britain in order to be exchanged (ADM36 15558). The muster record states that he was transferred to *HMS Alligator* 'on his parole of honour' and arrived back in England on 24 January 1804 (ADM36 15559). Third lieutenant Matthew Connolly (E345) was discharged the ship 'By sentence of a court martial' on 13 January 1802 (ADM36 14846). The captain's log records that 'Lieutenant Connolly received sentence of Court Martial to be dismissed the ship' (ADM52 2969). Ship's purser John Archdeacon (E5) was 'Appointed to act as Naval Storekeeper at Antigua' on 3 November 1802 (ADM36 15558).

<sup>176</sup> The Quota Acts were only passed for the year 1795 (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 126-8).

<sup>177</sup> Although the *Emerald2* received a large proportion of new entrants this did not necessarily mean that they were landsmen without seagoing skills. A breakdown of the 508 (100%) of crewmen that served shows that on entry to the ship 140 (28%) were rated as able seaman, 124 (24%) were rated ordinary seaman and only 126 (25%) were rated landsmen. The other 118 (23%) men were variously rated as officers, petty officers and specialists such as the carpenter's crew (see Table 3.26).

<sup>178</sup> Landsman William Bruce (EM418) was pressed out of 'the Thomas and Jane' on 2 June 1810 however he was returned to that ship three days later and the muster records that the Thomas and Jane was an 'Ordnance Sloop'. As the *Emerald2* was moored in the Cove of Cork at the time, it is quite likely that Bruce was pressed by a press gang from the *Emerald2*, a number of other sailors were pressed at the same time, but he was given back to the Thomas and Jane when it transpired that that ship was employed in Royal Navy work.

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<sup>179</sup> The 'Dundee rendezvous' is where the press gangs operated from in that area.

<sup>180</sup> James Loutar (EM31) was a 45 year old quarter gunner from Dundee who was drafted into the *Emerald2* on 17 June 1806 after falling foul of the Dundee press gang. After ten months service Loutar was given 12 lashes for 'quarrelling' on 16 April 1807 but was then promoted to 'quartermaster' on 31 October 1808 in which capacity he served until being turned over to the *Royal William* on 3 December 1812 when the *Emerald2* was paid off.

<sup>181</sup> The numbers of Irishmen in the fleet was certainly a cause for concern in the Admiralty and the fleet mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797 were attributed by some to disaffected Irishmen (Elliot, M. *Partners in Revolution: The United Irishmen and France* Yale UP, 1982, p. 134). Elliot states that when the French Directory were contemplating the invasion of Ireland in 1796 that '...the mutinous disposition of the large Irish element in the British Navy' was a factor in their calculations (p. 101). Elliot further states that the Admiralty had good reason to be concerned as one of the main functions of the United Irishmen was to infiltrate the British armed forces (p. 149).

<sup>182</sup> The Swedes were Charles Andrews (EM99) a 19 year old landsman from Stockholm who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 28 February 1806 and served until discharged by 'by order' of Admiral Rowley on 6 November 1806 (ADM37 1226), John Baxtram (EM260) a 24 year old able seaman also from Stockholm who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 28 March 1807 (ADM37 1227) and served until discharged by 'by order' of Admiral Young 15 September 1808 (ADM37 1228) and John Hanson (EM497) a 26 year old able seaman from 'Stramstadt' who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 18 June 1811 and served until discharged into the *Royal William* when the ship was paid off on 3 December 1811 (ADM37 2544).

<sup>183</sup> The Germans were John Daniel Keslar (EM286) a 25 year old able seaman from Hamburgh who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 12 October 1807 (ADM37 1227) and served until taken prisoner by the French on 13 May 1808 (ADM37 1228). Harn. Engleskind (EM374) a 27 year old ordinary seaman from Westphalia who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 9 September 1809 (ADM37 1229) and served until discharged 'per order being a foreigner' on 1 January 1810 (ADM37 2543) and John Tube (EM423) a 21 year old landsman from 'Dantzick' who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 4 June 1810 until he deserted the ship on 20 September 1810 (ADM37 2543).

<sup>184</sup> Peter Johnson (EM355) a 22 year old able seaman from Lisbon was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 13 July 1809 but deserted the ship two months later on 16 September 1809 (ADM37 1229). Another

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sailor named Peter Johnson (EM100) was a 27 year old landsman from Norway who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 28 February 1806 and served until discharged by 'by order' of Admiral Rowley on 6 November 1806 (ADM37 1226). Roger Ormond Harris (EM170) was a 22 year old ordinary seaman from Quebec who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 28 September 1806. Harris was dis-rated to landsman on 20 December 1806 (ADM37 1226) but later re-rated ordinary seaman on 14 October 1808 (ADM37 1228) and deserted the ship on 28 August 1809 (ADM37 1229). Frederick Ayres (EM221) was a 20 year old ordinary seaman from 'Demerara' who was pressed into the *Emerald2* on 8 July 1806, he was dis-rated to landsman on 20 December 1806 (ADM37 1226) but re-rated ordinary seaman on 4 April 1811 (ADM37 2543). He was finally discharged into the *Royal William* when the *Emerald2* was paid off on 3 December 1811 (ADM37 2544).

<sup>185</sup> ADM37 2543

<sup>186</sup> The four Americans were William Hayes (G252) a 23 year old able seaman from Boston, America who was sent from the receiving ship *Enterprize* to the *Glenmore* on 28 June 1796 (ADM36 13171). During his time on board the *Glenmore* Hayes was promoted to quarter gunner on 26 May 1797 (ADM36 13172) and was flogged twice. He was given 12 lashes on 16 March 1798 for 'disobedience' (ADM51 1212) and 24 lashes on 19 December 1798 for 'desertion' (ADM51 1243). He was eventually turned over with 47 other men to *HMS Stork* on 15 October 1801 'per order Admiral Millbank' when the *Glenmore* was undergoing a major refit (ADM51 4452 and ADM36 15091). Alexander Clark (G346) was a 22 year old able seaman from Philadelphia who was pressed into the *Glenmore* on 17 December 1797 along with Ware Fowler (G347) a 26 year old able seaman also from Philadelphia (ADM36 13172). It would appear that Fowler was light fingered as he was flogged for 'embezzling stores' on 16 January 1799 and given another dozen lashes on 6 September 1799 for 'theft' (ADM51 1282). Clark was discharged into sick quarters 12 October 1799 (ADM36 15089) and did not return to the ship and Fowler was turned over to *HMS Stork* on 15 October 1801 (ADM36 15091). Richard Brenard (G405) was a 22 year old able seaman from New York who was pressed into the *Glenmore* on 27 April 1799 (ADM36 15089) and served until he was turned over to *HMS Stork* on 15 October 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>187</sup> Samuel Williams (G208) was a 23 year old ordinary seaman from Antigua who was pressed into the *Glenmore* on 16 June 1796 (ADM36 13171). Williams was made captain's cook on 7 July 1799 (ADM36 15089) but clearly his culinary skills were not to Captain Duff's (G1) taste as he was returned

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to ordinary seaman's rating on 16 February 1800 (ADM36 15090), in which rating he served until discharged sick into 'L'Engageant Hospital Ship Cork' on 10 August 1801 (ADM36 15091). Peter Anderson (G436) was a 22 year old ordinary seaman from 'Elsenburg' who was pressed into the *Glenmore* on 2 May 1800 (ADM36 15090) and served until discharged 'per order' a year later on 18 May 1801 (ADM36 15091). Andrew Latterman (G260) was a 41 year old able seaman from Stockholm who was pressed into the *Glenmore* on 28 June 1796 (ADM36 13171). Latterman was made a quarter gunner on 5 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) and then quarter master's mate on 29 July 1799 (ADM36 15089), in which capacity he served until the *Glenmore* was paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092).

<sup>188</sup> ADM36 15091

<sup>189</sup> Ramon D' Vadel (G235) was a 20 year old ordinary seaman from 'Gallicia' who joined the *Glenmore* on 16 June 1796 (ADM36 13171). D' Vadel was made able seaman on 1 November 1797 (ADM36 13172) and served in that capacity until he deserted on 5 July 1802 (ADM36 15092).

<sup>190</sup> Peter Hereabout (G236) from Denmark was a 22 year old ordinary seaman from Denmark who joined the *Glenmore* on 16 June 1796 and deserted a month later on 17 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) when the *Glenmore* was moored in Elsinore Roadstead in Denmark (she had been on convoy escort duties (ADM51 1172)).

<sup>191</sup> ADM51 1335

<sup>192</sup> The pressed men promoted to quarter gunners were all pressed into the *Glenmore* on 28 June 1796 (ADM36 13171) and they were Robert Williams (G254) a 28 year old able seaman from Burton, Lincolnshire. Following his promotion to quarter gunner on 1 September 1800 (ADM36 15090) he was re-rated ship's corporal on 29 May 1801 (ADM36 15091) in which capacity he served until discharged 'per order' on 15 June 1802 (ADM36 15092). John McKenzie (G258) a 27 year old able seaman from Stornaway who was made up to quarter gunner on 1 May 1798 (ADM36 13173) in which capacity he served until discharged sick on 20 September 1800 (ADM36 15090). Joseph Carr (G267) a 26 year old ordinary seaman from London. Following his promotion to quarter gunner on 5 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) he was re-rated quarter master's mate on 22 February 1800 (ADM36 15090) and then gunner's mate on 24 March 1801 (ADM36 15091) in which capacity he served until the ship was paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092). For William Hayes (G252) (see endnote 186) and Andrew Latterman (G260) (see endnote 187).

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<sup>193</sup> Joseph McFarlane (G372) a 23 year old landsman from Newry who had been pressed into the *Glenmore* on 28 June 1796 (ADM36 13171) was made ordinary seaman on 1 May 1800 (ADM36 15090) in which capacity he served until discharged into the *Scout* on 15 October 1801 (ADM36 15091). George Weir (G207) a 23 year old ordinary seaman who had been pressed into the *Glenmore* on 15 June 1796 was made acting armourer the next day however the new post seemed not to his liking as he deserted less than three months later on 1 September 1796 (ADM36 13171). Thomas Hervey (G205) a 27 year old able seaman from Berwick who had been pressed into the *Glenmore* on 15 June 1796 was made carpenter's mate, again on the following day (ADM36 13171), in which capacity he served until the ship was paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092). John Atkinson (G261) a 35 year old from Northumberland who had been pressed into the *Glenmore* on 28 June 1796 was made sail maker's mate on 11 August 1796 (ADM36 13171) and then ship's corporal on 24 May 1800 (ADM36 15090). Atkinson was given 24 lashes for 'neglect of duty' on 7 March 1801 (ADM51 1282) and was finally discharged the ship on 18 May 1801 'per order' (ADM36 15091). For Samuel Williams (G208) (see endnote 187).

<sup>194</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>195</sup> All of the promoted quota men from *Glenmore* 'entered' the ship in June 1796 (ADM36 13171). Five of the quota men were all promoted from landsman to ordinary seaman on 1 May 1798 (ADM36 13173) and these were William Maxwell (G209) a 21 year old from Forfar who served until discharged into *Scout* on 15 October 1801 (ADM36 15091), William Crighton (G215) a 21 year old from Dundee who served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092), Thomas Nicholson (G218) a 26 year old from Inveresk who served until he deserted the ship on 16 November 1802 (ADM36 15092), John (alias Robert) Greenhill (G219) an 18 year old from Dundee who served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092) and Robert Wilson (G225) a 14 year old from 'Newbigging (*sic*) N. B.' (N. B. in this case stands for 'North Britain') who served until he deserted the ship on 30 March 1801 (ADM36 15091). Three of the quota men were all promoted from landsman to ordinary seaman on 1 May 1800 and these were Thomas Keates (G94) a 23 year old from Aylesbury who served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092), John Graham (G211) a 19 year old from 'Kirkaldie' who served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092) and James Brown (G213) a 22 year old from 'Limberton' who served until he was discharged 'per order' on 14 June 1802 (ADM36 15092). Andrew Marshall (G211) a 21 year old

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landsman from Linlithgow was made carpenter's crew on 5 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) and served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092). Another James Brown (G220) a 21 year old ordinary seaman from 'Borrastones N. B.' was made able seaman on 1 May 1798 (ADM36 13173) served until he deserted the ship on 30 March 1801 (ADM36 15091). Henry Lane (alias Law) (G227) a 26 year old landsman from 'Cubross N. B.' was made carpenter's crew on 5 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) and served until the crew were paid off on 1 February 1803 (ADM36 15092). Robert Wilson (G257) a 46 year old able seaman from Newhaven was made quarter master's mate on 1 July 1796 (ADM36 13171) and served until discharged sick to 'L'Engageant Hospital Ship Cork' on 28 July 1799 (ADM36 15089) (For the career of Ramon D' Vadel see endnote 189). None of the promoted quota men received any further rating changes nor were recorded as having been flogged during their service on the *Glenmore*.

<sup>196</sup> For a listing of the duties expected to be performed by frigates of this period see Gardiner, G., *Frigates of the Napoleonic Wars* (London, 2000) Chapter Twelve 'Frigates in Action' p. 152-190.

<sup>197</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>198</sup> Lewis p. 138

<sup>199</sup> Ibid p. 135

<sup>200</sup> Ibid p. 136

<sup>201</sup> Palmer, S. and Williams, p. 109



## Chapter 4

### Volunteers and Boys

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the system that had been developed to regulate and categorise the use of youngsters on board Royal Navy ships and how that system worked in practice.

The system that had been developed and put in place in 1794 continued throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period and centred around classifying three types of youngster up to the age of 18 when they would be expected to be transferred to the main ship's muster if they were not already there. The three classifications of youngster were termed 'volunteers and boys' of classes one, two and three. Theoretically they were all 'volunteers' as ship's captains were not allowed to press boys and were therefore designated as such although in reality ship's captains did press boys (see below).

When referring to individual boys their muster number is given in parenthesis. To aid referencing the boys to their ship and class the following code has been developed. The first letter indicates the ship's commission (T = *Trent*, E = *Emerald1*, EM = *Emerald2* and G = *Glenmore*); the number following the ship code is the boy's muster number and then is given the class that the boy is mustered in (VB1 = volunteer and boy of the first class, VB2 = volunteer and boy of the second class and VB3 = volunteer and boy of the third class). Therefore, for example, James Lynch (G20VB2) served in the *Glenmore* and mustered as number 20 and is a volunteer and boy of the second class.<sup>1</sup>

The first section of this chapter **Background** looks at the development of the three classes of ‘volunteers and boys’ and poses the questions that the chapter will attempt to answer. Each commission is looked at in turn in the following sections, *Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore* followed by the section **All ships** that looks at the combined commissions. The chapter is then brought together by the **Conclusion**.

## Background

In an age of little schooling for the great mass of the population boys started their working careers early. In discussing child labour during the eighteenth century Rule states that 'Child labour not only existed but was lauded and widespread'.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, like other skilled trades, the training of young boys as apprentice seaman was accepted as a proper policy to pursue. As discussed in Chapter 3,<sup>3</sup> Acts of Parliament were introduced that required merchant vessels to carry one seagoing apprentice per 100 registered tons<sup>4</sup> and to encourage merchant vessels to take destitute boys.<sup>5</sup> The Royal Navy had always had youngsters on board training as potential officers and seamen as well as acting as servants to some of the officers. The Admiralty decided that it needed to regulate the use of boys and passed an Order-in-Council in 1794 that specified the division of boys into three classes. The Admiralty Order-in-Council of July 1794 that created the three classes of volunteer and boy from the general rating of 'servant' states that:

Class 1: 'To consist of Young Gentlemen intended for the Sea Service'

Class 2: 'To consist of Boys between 15 and 17 years of age to be divided into watches with the seamen in order to make them such'

Class 3: 'To consist of Boys between 13 and 15 years of age of whom Lieutenants and other officers who are now allowed servants might be permitted to recommend to the Captains, each of them one, to be the attendants upon such officers'.<sup>6</sup>

In broad terms therefore, first class boys were expected to become midshipmen and then officers, second class boys were to become trained seaman and third class boys were to act as officer's servants and to then progress to second class boys.

Each of the ships in this survey carried boys of the three classes and they were mustered separately from the rest of the crew in three separate musters. Therefore it is possible to look at each class of boy from each ship as well as from the ships as a whole. How the first class boy category worked in relation to developing an officer corps is discussed in detail in the chapter on midshipmen (Chapter 6) and therefore will not be discussed here, although it will be touched on. However the general questions that this section on boys seeks to address are: how did the boy system work in practice? What was the age profile of serving boys? What was the recorded origin, or birthplace of the boys? How were the boys recruited (with a particular look at boys sent by the Marine Society)? Where did they go when they were discharged from their respective muster? How effective was the system in producing trained and competent seamen for the Royal Navy of the period?

### *Trent*

There were a total of 19 volunteers and boys of the first class recorded as having served on board the *Trent*. First class boys were destined for the quarterdeck and this rating replaced the title of 'captain's servants' of a previous era.<sup>7</sup> This rating was normally reserved for those boys who were later rated midshipmen and had some claims to 'gentility'. The development and rating of midshipmen is discussed elsewhere so shall not detain us here (see Chapter 6). However we will look at some aspects of first class boys. Of the 19 boys in this class, seven appear to be volunteers, five were turned over from other ships, four came from the boys second class muster, two came from the boys third class muster and one boy was recorded as having been pressed. The pressed boy, 15

years old Charles Bingham from Ireland, was first entered onto the *Trent's* main crew muster as number 784 (T784) on 26 November 1800 until 25 February 1801 when he was transferred to the boys first class muster, number 14 (T14VB1).<sup>8</sup> On 30 September 1801 he was transferred back onto the main muster, number 849 (T849), and rated midshipman where he served until turned over on 13 December 1801 to 'Stork by Order Adml. Milbank'.<sup>9</sup> Of the four boys that came from the second class muster it would appear that all of them were volunteers as were the two boys from the third class muster. There appears no apparent reason for their transfer to the first class boys muster other than that they may have been considered potential midshipman. All but three of the 19 boys were recorded as being English, two were Irish and the last one was of Scottish origin. The age, where given (18 out of 19), ranged from 10 to 18 but the average was 15. Two of the boys died during their time on the first class muster, 12 year old Edward Bennett (T3VB1) was 'Killed by a fall from the Mizen Top' on 5 June 1796 15 days after arriving on board<sup>10</sup> and 13 year old Isaac Parkinson (T6VB1) died 'on board', presumably from illness, on 11 July 1798.<sup>11</sup> Six of the boys were turned over to other ships, three were discharged without further explanation, one was discharged 'by request' (that is he, or perhaps his parents, formally requested the Admiralty for his discharge and that this was granted), one was discharged onto the boys third class list, five were discharged onto the *Trent's* crew muster, and for the final one the reason for discharge is unclear. Of those five boys put onto the crew muster, three were rated midshipman, one landsman and the other ordinary seamen. The boy rated third class after serving just over a year in that muster was moved to the crew muster rated landsman. So here we see the first class boy system in operation. A predominately English set of boy volunteers most of who are

destined for midshipman status and possible officer rank. However it is clear that there is flexibility practiced in the way that the captain takes boys from other classes and clearly those who do not make the grade, or were never intended for the officer corps, were transferred or rated on the crew muster as landsman and ordinary seaman.

A total of 32 boys were entered onto the muster records of the *Trent* rated as 'volunteers and boys of the second class'. Of those 32 boys, three were re-entries of boys who had been discharged as sick and then returned from hospital/sick quarters, therefore a total of 29 second class boys actually served. Of the 29, 11 were recorded as being volunteers, five were turned over from other ships, four were moved from the boys third class muster, two were recruits from the Marine Society and for seven of the boys the reason for them joining is unclear but it is likely that they were volunteers. One of the boys, 13 year old John Storey (T27VB2), was recruited from among the 11 prisoners from the captured 6 gun French privateer *Renard* following its capture by the *Trent* in April 1801 off the Channel Islands after a chase that involved 'much firing', where, presumably he had been a prisoner.<sup>12</sup> The Marine Society was a philanthropic organization founded in 1756 by Jonas Hanway that recruited destitute men and boys for a life at sea, in peacetime largely the merchant marine but in wartime for the Royal Navy.<sup>13</sup> The Society took boys of between 12 and 17, equipped them, and in some cases gave them elementary training and then packed them off to the Navy.<sup>14</sup> The Marine Society contributed around 500-600 boys a year to the fleet.<sup>15</sup> Where given (25 out of 29), the overwhelming number of boys of this class was recorded as being of English origin, 19 out of 25. Three boys were of Irish origin and one each of Scottish, American and French birth. However the

French boy's name is Charles Hutchinson (T28VB2) and, not being a French name, indicates that he may have been born in Paris but he was likely to have had English parents or at least an English father.<sup>16</sup> Ages of the boys, where given, range from 12 to 18 and the average age is 16. Eleven of the boys were transferred to the main crew muster in the due course of events, nine were turned over directly to other ships or discharged in port, four were discharged sick of which three returned and were re-entered, three deserted the ship, four were transferred to the boys first class muster and one was invalided out of the service.

A total of 47 entries to the boys third class muster record of the *Trent* were recorded although one of these was of a boy who had been discharged sick and then returned to the ship, therefore a total of 46 boys served in this category. Of these 46 boys, 14 are recorded as volunteers, six came from the Marine Society, 15 were turned over from other ships, one was transferred from the boys first class muster and for the other 10 the reasons for being on board the *Trent* are not given or are unclear. Once again the predominant nationality (41 nationalities recorded out of 46) is English, 28 English boys as opposed to six foreigners, three Irish, two Scottish and two Welsh. The high number of foreigners can be explained by the *Trent's* two cruises in the West Indies. Recruitment of trained seamen in the West Indies was difficult enough but in order to keep up the complement of boys, captains had to recruit locally. Therefore we see that of the six foreign boys, five were from the West Indies (Barbados, Puerto Cavello, St Bartholomew's, Havana and two from Jamaica) the other foreign boy is recorded as coming from Quebec. Of these foreign boys, at the very least one of them, William

Partridge (T46VB3), is black as he was later discharged the ship 'being a slave', presumably as his owner had re-claimed him.<sup>17</sup> Ages of the third class boys, where given (38 out of 46) ranged from 12 to 17 with an average age of 15. Seventeen of the boys were discharged in the normal course of events to other ships or in port, nine deserted the ship, three were discharged sick of which one returned, one died of sickness, eight were transferred to the main crew muster, one was discharged 'by request', four were moved onto the boys second class muster, one to the boys first class muster, one was discharged as a slave and the final boy, William McDougall (T47VB3) was discharged 'from the Service by Order' and it is possible that he too had been a slave as he came from the same merchant ship as William Partridge and his origin is given as Jamaica, although he was not discharged until after the *Trent* had returned to England.<sup>18</sup> The use of black seamen in the Royal Navy of the period was quite common and there is no reason to suppose that this did not extend to the recruitment of boys. It was only in Victorian times and later that a quasi-official colour bar was introduced into the Royal Navy that extended until the end of the Second World War.<sup>19</sup> As Rodger points out 'The Navy's attitude to them (blacks) was liberal by the standards of the societies from which they had come, and it is easy to see the attractions of a world in which a man's professional skill mattered more than his colour'.<sup>20</sup>

How effectively did the volunteer and boy system work on board the *Trent* in providing a nursery for seamen? Table 4.1 compares boys from the three classes that were transferred to the main crew muster against their initial rating on that muster.



**Table 4.1: *Trent* Boys as crewmen (24)**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Landsman</b>	<b>Ordinary</b>		<b>Midshipman</b>		
1st Class	5	1	20%	1	20%	3	60%
2nd Class	11	5	46%	4	36%	2	18%
3rd Class	8	3	38%	4	50%	1	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25%</b>

Table 4.1 demonstrates that boys from all the classes appear to have learnt their basic seaman's trade and of those who were moved onto the crew muster a total of nine or 38% were rated ordinary seamen. Equally however, the same number of boys were rated landsmen on entry to the main crew muster, which seems to suggest that service as boys had not turned them into competent seaman. Six, or 25%, of the 24 boys moved onto the main crew muster were rated midshipmen and were clearly seen as potential officers; petty, warrant or commissioned. Although the primary source of midshipmen was from the boys first class, as the Admiralty intended, captains did not discriminate against the other classes of boys. This can be demonstrated by the evidence that as many boys became midshipmen directly from second and third class combined as they did from the first class. Of the 24 boys that were moved onto the main crew muster only one changed rating during the *Trent's* commission and this was second class boy Philip Stimpson (T25VB2) who was initially rated midshipman on the crew muster and was subsequently rated able seaman and then midshipman again.<sup>21</sup> This is the normal process of developing the seamanship of midshipman and time as an able seaman was a requirement for passing as a lieutenant and so there is nothing untoward in these rating changes. Perhaps the most interesting question to arise from these findings is were 'young gentlemen' being put in the second and third class of boys as well as first or were the boys from the second and

third classes who had no claims to gentility being groomed for the quarterdeck? This question is addressed in Chapter 6. The one area of boy recruitment that does not seem to have been a success is the boys from the Marine Society. Of the eight Marine Society boys (two from the second class and six from the third class), three deserted the ship, two were discharged sick, two were turned over to other ships and only one boy, Henry Martin (T4VB3, T17VB2 and T930) made it onto the *Trent's* main crew muster as an ordinary seaman. It is possible that the turned over boys later became competent seamen and that the sick boys recovered and were put into another ship, they certainly did not return to the *Trent*. The careers of eight boys is a small sample on which to damn a philanthropic institution but it is certainly an area that could do with some further investigation into the effectiveness of the Marine Society as a recruiting ground for the Navy. Of the 24 boys that made it onto the main crew muster 16 (67%) were turned over to other ships in the normal course of events, four (17%) deserted the ship and were marked down as 'Ran', two (8%) died of illness, one (4%) was invalided and one (4%) was captured by the enemy, exchanged and eventually turned over.<sup>22</sup> Two (8%) of the 24 boys that were transferred to the main crew muster were subsequently flogged, which was less than the average of 11% for the crew. One boy was given 12 lashes for 'neglect of duty' and the other boy's offence was unspecified.<sup>23</sup> Only one of the boys that were transferred to the main crew muster was re-rated during their career on board *Trent*. This was Philip Stimpson (T32VB2 then T810) who was originally rated as midshipman when he was transferred from the second class boys muster and was subsequently rated able seaman and then back to midshipman, a normal part of junior officer training (see Chapter 6).<sup>24</sup> However as most of the boys were moved to the main crew muster in the

later stages of the *Trent's* commission not too much should be read into this and it was quite possible that a number of them subsequently moved up the promotional ladder and became competent and skilled seamen. On balance, it would seem that the system of recruiting boys as potential seamen of the future was a qualified success aboard the *Trent*.

### ***Emerald1***

A total of 25 volunteers and boys of the first class served on board the *Emerald1* during her commission. Of these boys nine are recorded as directly volunteering for the ship and being put into the first class category, five were turned over from other ships, ten were moved from the second class to the first class and one directly from the third class to the first class. Of the ten boys from the second class five had progressed from third class, two were Marine Society boys, two were volunteers (one from Portsmouth prison and one who volunteered 'at sea') and one was from sick quarters. Of the five boys who had progressed from third to second and then first class, three were volunteers, one was turned over and one was a Marine Society boy. The recorded origins of the 25 first class boys reflects the *Emerald1's* overseas service, 13 of the boys were of English origin, three were Maltese, three Irish, two from Antigua and one each from America, Port Mahon, Barbados and Scotland. The average age of the boys was 17 although the youngest recorded was aged 11 and the oldest 22. Five boys were turned over to other ships, 17 were transferred onto the main ship's muster, one was put back to third class (he later fell from the masthead and was killed)<sup>25</sup> and Francis Pons (E11VB1) was discharged 'By order at Mahon'.<sup>26</sup> Of the 17 first class boys transferred to the main ship's muster only three of them were rated midshipman. The majority of the others, a total of 10, were

rated ordinary seaman and the remaining four were rated landsman. Of the three midshipmen James Tyrry (sic) (E525) died in Antigua Hospital<sup>27</sup> and Francis Skeede (E686) and William Jacob (E783) were eventually turned over to other ships.<sup>28</sup> Of the four landsmen Robert Ayoen (E496) died in Martinique Hospital<sup>29</sup> and Charles Sussex (E558) in Antigua Hospital<sup>30</sup>, Robert Baker (E559) was promoted to ordinary seaman, flogged for theft and then shortly after deserted the ship<sup>31</sup> and John Fitzgerald (E533) who was also promoted to ordinary seamen, also flogged, this time for neglect of duty and was finally turned over to the *Royal William* when the *Emerald*'s crew was paid off in 1805.<sup>32</sup> Of the 10 boys rated ordinary seaman, two were subsequently rated able seamen and two were flogged. The fates of the ten were that two deserted the ship, three were turned over to other ships, one died in action at Tenerife, one was drowned, one was killed when the mizzen mast went overboard during a gale, one was discharged sick and one invalided. The fate of some of the first class boys clearly demonstrate that this category was used not only as intended as the first rung in the ladder for midshipmen but also for older boys who were never expected to reach the quarterdeck.

A total of 39 boys are recorded as having served in the boys second class category. However one of these, Joseph Purser (E4VB2) was discharged sick to Haslar Hospital on 9 October 1795 and returned to the ship on 13 October 1795 as a second class boy but with a new entry number (7VB2).<sup>33</sup> Therefore a total of 38 different boys served in this category. Of the 38 boys of the second class, 13 came from the boys third class muster, 12 were recorded as volunteers, six were turned over from other ships, six were Marine Society boys and one, John Fowler (E8VB2) a 19 year old American, was pressed.<sup>34</sup> The

12 second class boy volunteers illustrate the vexed question of how many of those recorded as 'volunteers' were true volunteers and how many were coerced by press gangs to register as volunteers. Six of the volunteers are recorded as having volunteered at ports where the *Emerald* happened to be berthed and there is no reason to suspect that these were anything but true volunteers. However one, 16 year old Robert Baker (E26VB2) 'volunteered' from Portsmouth Prison on 31 January 1801,<sup>35</sup> two 16 year old boys, Thomas Lang (E38VB2) and Major Harris (E39VB2) both 'volunteered at sea' when the *Emerald* stopped some English merchant vessels,<sup>36</sup> Hugh McCormick (E34VB2) 'volunteered' from a French prize that the *Emerald* recaptured in July 1803<sup>37</sup> and Charles Cousins (E37VB2) 'volunteered' after being released from a French prison (an exchanged prisoner) in January 1804.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps the most distinguished boy to serve on the *Emerald* was the French prisoner Napoleon Bonaparte (E35VB2) who was serving on board the French schooner *La Belle Dame* when a boarding party from the *Emerald* cut her out during September 1803.<sup>39</sup> As our Napoleon Bonaparte was recorded as aged 10 years old at the time it is unlikely that this was the monster of Europe. However the Royal Navy can claim to have captured Napoleon Bonaparte and then released him (the boy was discharged the *Emerald* a year later).<sup>40</sup> How likely is it that these six boys were volunteers in the true meaning of the word? It is probable that these boys volunteered under the duress of either spending time as a prisoner of war, of being pressed or of spending time in a civilian prison.

Of the 38 second class boys, 23 were recorded as being of English origin, nine foreigners, four Irish, one Scottish and one boy's origin is unclear. The high number of foreigners

can be explained by the fact, as discussed above, that the *Emerald* spent a large part of her commission out of home waters and therefore had to rely more on foreign crewmen to replace losses. Four of the foreign boys were from the West Indies, two from America, two from Malta and one from Canada. The ages of the second class boys ranged from 10 to 19 but the average age on entry was 16 years old. Of the 38 boys, 10 were moved into the first class boy muster, nine were transferred onto the main crew muster, five were turned over to other ships, three died during the outbreak of disease during the *Emerald*'s refit in Antigua in November 1802, three were moved onto the boys third class muster, three were discharged 'per order' or in port (presumably by order) two were discharged sick, two deserted the ship and one was discharged as 'unusable' (invalided). All but one of the nine boys moved onto the main crew muster were entered as ordinary seamen. The one exception, H. Murray (E27VB2 and E571) was rated midshipman, then able seaman and back to midshipman before being turned over to another ship.<sup>41</sup> Two of the eight rated ordinary seamen were promoted to able seaman and one, William Farley (E2VB2 and E375) was further promoted to quarter gunner and both were subsequently turned over to other ships.<sup>42</sup> Of the other six, two deserted the ship, two were turned over, one drowned in an accident and one was discharged as 'sent in a prize and not heard of since'.<sup>43</sup> Only one of the above was flogged and that was William Farley who was given 12 lashes for 'neglect of duty' on 4 February 1800.<sup>44</sup>

A total of 48 boys of the third class are recorded as having served on board the *Emerald*. One of these, John Baptiste (E1VB3), was discharged sick and sent to sick quarters at Woolwich on 5 November 1795 but returned a few days later and was re-entered with a

new number (E10VB3).<sup>45</sup> Therefore a total of 47 individual boys served in this category. Of these 47 boys 28 were recorded as volunteers, ten were turned over from other ships, four were sent from the Marine Society, three were transferred from the boys second class, one from boys first class and one was recorded as having been pressed. As with the boys second class, a number of the 'volunteers' are of suspect status. Four of the boys are recorded as having volunteered from British privateers boarded by a party from the *Emerald* in June 1800. Here we have clear evidence of men and boys being 'encouraged' to volunteer. The captain's log for 24 June 1800 states that men were pressed out of a British privateer.<sup>46</sup> The muster supernumerary list records a total of 15 men 'Volunteers from the *General Keppel* Brig Privateer' and two men pressed. The pressed men were transferred to another ship and never appeared on the *Emerald*'s crew muster but 12 of the 'volunteers' were transferred to the *Emerald*'s crew muster and three to the boys third class.<sup>47</sup> The fourth boy came from another privateer intercepted by the *Emerald* and in this case the five sailors taken were entered onto the supernumerary list as 'Pressed' but this was subsequently crossed out and 'Volunteer' overwritten.<sup>48</sup> The origin of all the boys of the third class is not given, only 45 out of 47 and of these 32 are recorded as being English, four Irish, two Scottish and seven foreigners. Of the seven foreigners four were from Malta and one each from Gibraltar, Guadalupe and North America. The age of the boys ranged from 11 to 19 with an average of 14 years old. Of the 47 boys 14 were transferred to the second class, 11 were turned over to other ships, seven deserted the ship, five died, four were transferred to the main crew muster, three discharged the ship 'by order', one was transferred to the boys first class muster, one (12 year old William Reynolds (E17VB3)) was discharged the ship 'being a deserter'<sup>49</sup> and

one was invalided. Of the four boys transferred to the main crew muster two were rated ordinary seaman one was rated landsmen and one midshipman. However three of these four died during the epidemic that struck the *Emerald* in Antigua in November 1802 and the fourth was subsequently turned over to another ship. Seven desertions (15%) out of 47 (100%) young boys was quite a high rate and the reasons for this are not entirely clear. The general high rate of third class boys desertion is discussed further below.

It is worth considering in some detail the careers of volunteers and boys of the second class from *Emerald*. This is because *Emerald's* first commission was of considerable length (August 1795 – March 1805) and this therefore allows us to better see the boys' development over a long period. Also the second class boys were generally older than the third class and were therefore more likely to move onto the main crew muster during the commission of the ship under consideration. We have already seen that nine of the 38 second class boys were moved onto the main crew muster and all but one rated ordinary seaman, the other H. Murray was rated midshipman although it would appear that he never made lieutenant. Ten of the second class boys were transferred into the boys first class muster. Of these ten one was turned over to another ship<sup>50</sup> and all the other nine were eventually moved to the main crew muster. Two of the boys were rated landsman when moved to the crew muster<sup>51</sup> and the rest were all rated ordinary seaman which demonstrates that they must have developed sea going skills during their period as boys of the various classes.<sup>52</sup> One of the boys rated ordinary was re-rated able seaman two and one half years later<sup>53</sup> the rest remained as ordinary seamen during their subsequent



careers aboard the *Emerald*. So here we see the system of volunteers and boys designed to produce competent seamen in action.

**Table 4.2: *Emerald* Volunteers and Boys Second Class**

<b>Fate</b>	<b>Number</b>	
Ordinary Seaman	16	42%
Midshipman	1	3%
Landsman	2	5%
Turned Over	7	18%
Discharged reasons unknown	3	8%
Discharged sick	3	8%
Discharged Dead	3	8%
Invalided	1	3%
Deserted	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2 shows the fate of *Emerald*'s boys second class. Of the 38 boys second class that served on board *Emerald* a total of 19, exactly half, were transferred to the crew muster 16 rated ordinary seaman, two were rated landsman and one midshipman. Of the other boys that served in this class, seven were turned over to other ships before reaching the age that they would normally be expected to move to the main crew muster, three were discharged for unknown reasons, three were discharged sick and did not return to the *Emerald*, three died of disease, one was invalided from the service and two deserted the ship. Given that some of the seven boys turned over to other ships were likely to have ended up rated as competent seaman and that some of those discharged sick may have returned to other Royal Navy vessels, it can be seen that it is probable that well over 50% of the boys passing through the *Emerald*'s second class boys muster became proficient seamen. On the face of it this seems a good return on the investment of the boys system and this would help ensure that the service maintained a steady influx of competent seamen.

## ***Emerald2***

A total of 20 entries are recorded in the 'Volunteer and Boy First Class' muster, however two of these are re-entries and so we are looking at 18 individuals who served in this category. A total of 10 first class boys were recorded as being 'volunteers' on their entry to the ship, six came from the boys second class muster, one from the boys third class muster, for one boy there is no entry in the 'pressed' column of the muster book and two boys, as stated above, are re-entries. The first re-entry was William Conner who came on board the *Emerald2* on 9 December 1808 aged 13 and was entered onto the boys first class muster (EM11VB1) where he served until 31 January 1810 when he was entered on the crew muster (EM392) as 'Midshipman'. Conner stayed on the crew muster as midshipman until 23 April 1810 when he was returned to the boys first class muster (EM15VB1).<sup>54</sup> The same sequence occurred to Peter Christie (EM14VB1) who arrived on board the ship on 23 April 1810 was entered as midshipman on the crew muster (EM452) on 5 April 1811 and was returned to the boys first class muster 10 days later (EM18VB1).<sup>55</sup> Why these entries and re-entries occurred is unclear but as Conner was entered as aged 13 and Christie aged 14 it is most likely that they were entered in error or in haste in the wrong muster and that the mistake was later rectified. Of the 18 individuals on the boys first class muster 11 were recorded as having 'originated' from (come from) England, five from Ireland and two from Scotland. The average age of those on the muster was 15 on entry to the ship and ages ranged from 13 to 18 years old. However a word of caution should be issued concerning ages. If we take the case of William Conner (EM392) outlined above, the process of entry and re-entry to the various

ship's musters took nearly two years but at every stage his age is given as 13 and it would seem that his details were simply copied from muster to muster without updating and the same is true of a number of boys who are moved from muster to muster.<sup>56</sup> Of the 20 entries in the boys first class muster 12 were discharged onto the main crew muster and of these seven are rated 'midshipmen', two 'midshipman ordinary'<sup>57</sup> and three as 'volunteers'. Both midshipmen ordinary and one volunteer were subsequently rated 'midshipman' and one midshipman, Edward Wylde (EM9VB1 and then EM313) was subsequently rated able seaman, back to midshipman and finished his career on *Emerald* as master's mate, clearly going through the required process of becoming a lieutenant.<sup>58</sup> Five of the other boys first class were turned over to other ships, one was discharged 'From the Service', one was moved onto the boys second class muster and one was discharged 'Per Order' with no other details given. Of those 12 boys who were transferred to the crew muster two were returned to the boys first class muster as discussed above and all the others were subsequently turned over to other ships.

A total of 27 boys of the second class were entered onto the ship's muster. Nine of these boys were recorded as being volunteers, eight were turned over from other ships, two were transferred from the boys first class, one from the boys third class muster, two from the crew muster and five from the supernumerary muster. Of the five boys from the supernumerary muster only one can be identified<sup>59</sup> and he is 14 year old John Shearman (EM3VB2) who was pressed on 25 June 1806, put onto the supernumerary muster and then transferred to the boys second class muster on 7 July 1806.<sup>60</sup> The two boys who came from the crew muster Adam Graham (EM12 and then EM4VB2) and Henry Hall

(EM386 and then EM21VB2) were both recorded as being volunteers and were transferred to the boys second class muster after only a few days of coming on board the ship.<sup>61</sup> Of the 27 boys second class 17 are recorded as being of English origin, seven Irish and three Scottish. The average age of the boys was 16 years old and the ages ranged from 13 to 19. Five of the boys deserted the ship and were marked down as 'Ran', six were transferred to the boys first class, two to the boys third class, one died at sea 'off the island of Groa',<sup>62</sup> three were turned over to other ships, four were 'Dismissed the Service Per Order', one was transferred to the supernumerary list, one discharged as 'unusable' (invalided) and four were transferred to the crew muster. Of the four boys who were put onto the crew muster three were rated landsman and one ordinary seaman. One of the landsmen was subsequently re-rated carpenter's crew. The four served on the ship until one deserted and the other three were turned over to other ships.<sup>63</sup>

A total of 17 individuals were recorded as having served in the category of 'volunteers and boys of the third class' during *Emerald2's* commission. Of the 17 boys, seven were recorded as being volunteers, seven were turned over from other ships, two were moved from the boys second class muster and for one of the boys the method of his recruitment is unclear. A total of 12 boys were recorded as being of English origin, four Irish and one Scottish. The youngest boy is recorded as being eight years of age<sup>64</sup> and the oldest 18 with an average age of 15. Six of the boys were subsequently turned over to other ships, five boys deserted the ship, two were moved to the boys second class muster, two were transferred to the main crew muster, one was moved to the boys first class muster and one, John Shearman (EM11VB3), was discharged the Service 'By order Admiral

Montague being an apprentice'.<sup>65</sup> Of the two boys transferred to the main crew muster, John Giles (EM11VB3 and then EM150) was rated landsman when put onto the crew muster on 4 August 1806<sup>66</sup> and was subsequently promoted to ordinary seaman on 14 April 1811<sup>67</sup> and John Collins (EM6VB3 and then EM506) was entered as ordinary seaman when he was put onto the crew muster.<sup>68</sup> Both of the above were subsequently turned over to other ships.<sup>69</sup>

### *Glenmore*

A total of 23 individuals served on board the *Glenmore* in the 'volunteers and boys first class' muster. Six of these boys were recorded as having volunteered for the ship, six were turned over from other ships, six came from the boys third class muster, four from the boys second class muster and one entry is unclear. Eight of the boys first class are recorded as originating from Scotland, seven from Ireland, six from England, one from Montreal and one boy's origin is not given. The high number of Scottish boys can best be explained by the origin of the *Glenmore*'s first captain George Duff (G1) who served on board the ship from its commissioning in April 1796 to when he was turned over to command of the *Courageux* in February 1801.<sup>70</sup> George Duff was Scottish and it would appear that he brought with him a number of his relatives and followers. In an age of patronage and influence it was quite usual for captains to have a following of relatives and clients whose interest were looked after and this following accompanied a captain from ship to ship. Naval commissioned officer recruitment of the period was not carried out by the Admiralty but by individual ship's captains who would permit youngsters to enter the ship that they commanded and they would then be expected to look after that

youngster's interest provided that the youngster showed promise and with George Duff we can see this in action.<sup>71</sup> In the boys first class muster there is recorded Alexander Duff (G15VB1) and in the main crew muster midshipman Fife Duff (G32), second lieutenant Archibald Duff (G73 and after returning from sickness G355) and in the boys third class muster is listed Norwich Duff (G27VB2). These are all clearly relations of George Duff. Following his period of captaining the *Glenmore*, George Duff took command of the *Courageux*<sup>72</sup> and a total of 14 men and boys went with him, 10 were from the main crew muster, three from the boys first class muster and one from the boys third class muster and these would appear to be a mixture of those who were following his 'interest' and sailors who were part of his following.<sup>73</sup> Therefore the high number of Scottish first class boys can be attributed to George Duff's relatives and Scottish following (see Chapter 6 for more details of the Duff's and their following). The ages of the boys ranged from 12 to 18 with an average age of 15. Six of the first class boys were turned over to other ships, four were discharged 'Plymouth'<sup>74</sup>, one discharged 'per order', one sent to 'Greenwich Academy'<sup>75</sup> and one boy the reasons for discharge are not given. However 10 of the boys were transferred onto the main crew muster. Five of the 10 boys were rated midshipman when they were transferred, one able seaman and four landsmen. The able seaman, Patrick Warner (G7VB1 and then G295) was subsequently rated midshipman<sup>76</sup> and one of the midshipmen, Alexander Boyack (G3VB1 and then G72) was made able seaman, master's mate and then back to midshipman.<sup>77</sup> All of the 10 boys transferred to the main crew muster were eventually turned over to other ships.

A total of 28 individuals served on board the *Glenmore* as 'volunteers and boys of the second class'. Eight of those boys were recorded as having been volunteers, nine were transferred from the boys third class muster, five were sent by the Marine Society, four were turned over from other ships and for two boys the process of recruitment is unclear. For six of the boys their origin or birthplace is not given but for the other 22, 14 were recorded as coming from England, five from Scotland, one from Ireland and two Dutch boys, both aged 16 years old, John Larkes (G16VB2) from the Texel and Cornelius Fumfleet (*sic*) from Rotterdam (G17VB2).<sup>78</sup> The average age for the boys second class was 16 years old and individual ages ranged from 14 to 19. Of the 28 boys a total of six were turned over to other ships, four deserted the ship (including Cornelius Fumfleet), three were moved to the boys first class muster, one to the boys third class muster, one has no record of why he was discharged, one is discharged 'Sheerness' with no further explanation and the remaining 12 boys were all transferred to the main crew muster of the *Glenmore*. Eight of the boys thus transferred were rated ordinary seaman of whom two were later made up to able seamen, three were rated able seamen and one landsman.<sup>79</sup> Apart from the one landsman this demonstrates a high return of trained or at least semi-trained seamen from the boys system and even this ex-boy John Duncan (G11VB2 and then G326) after being rated landsman on 2 July 1797<sup>80</sup> was later rated ordinary seaman on 1 May 1798. However Duncan was clearly a bit of a handful as of all the ex-boys he was the only one who was flogged during his service on board *Glenmore* and this happened on three separate occasions. The first time he was flogged was on 4 May 1801 for 'drunkenness and fighting' and three weeks later flogged for 'disobedience of orders' for which offence he was again flogged 10 days later, on each occasion

receiving 12 lashes.<sup>81</sup> The effect of three floggings in the space of a month does not bear thinking about. Of the 12 boys moved to the main crew muster five were turned over to other ships, four were paid off at the end of the *Glenmore's* commission, two were discharged 'Plymouth per order Adm. Dacres' with no further explanation and one, George Wise was drowned off the Helder on 30 August 1802.<sup>82</sup>

A total of 54 individuals served as boys third class during *Glenmore's* commission. Of those 54 boys, 37 were recorded as being volunteers, seven were sent from the Marine Society, three were turned over from other ships, two came direct from a receiving ship and how they were recruited is not clear, one came from sick quarters, one came from the boys second class muster and for three boys it is not clear how they were recruited to the ship. For four of the boys their origin or birthplace is not recorded but for the other 50 boys, 25 were from England, 14 from Ireland, six from Scotland and five were foreigners or non-British. Of the five foreign boys, three were from the Netherlands, one was Spanish and the other was American. Ages of the boys ranged from 11 to 18 and the average age was 14. A total of 21 or 39% of the boys third class deserted the ship, nine were transferred to the boys second class muster, seven to the first class muster, six were turned over to other ships, four were discharged 'per order' without further details, five boys have no record of why they were discharged the ship, one was transferred to the main crew muster and one was discharged the ship 'being an apprentice'.<sup>83</sup> The one boy to be put on the *Glenmore's* main crew muster was Jeremiah Moore (G41VB2 and then G450) who was rated as landsman and was subsequently discharged the ship 'per order' with no further explanation.<sup>84</sup> The reason for the high desertion rate of the *Glenmore's*



boys third class, 39% compared to the boys second class desertion rate of 14% is a bit of a mystery of which there does not appear a ready answer. Perhaps the boys believed, or were led to believe, that they could not be flogged or hung for desertion due to their young age and therefore they had less to lose than other, elder boys and men if caught.

### **All ships**

A total of 378 volunteers and boys were entered on the three ships (four commissions) under consideration. However some of these were re-entries due to boys being sent sick and returning to their respective ships under a new muster number and a number of boys also moved between the three boy categories so that the actual number of individuals appearing on these musters is a total of 303 boys. Table 4.3 looks at those boys, broken down into the three classes, that were new to the Royal Navy, taking out boys being moved from one boy category to another, boys turned over from other ships and those whose recruitment method is not given or is unclear.

**Table 4.3: All ships: Boys new entry**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>		<b>Marine Soc.</b>		<b>Pressed</b>	
1st Class	33	32	97%			1	3%
2nd Class	57	42	74%	13	23%	2	4%
3rd Class	104	86	83%	17	16%	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2%</b>

Out of a total of 194 'new entries' 160 or 83% were recorded as having been volunteers, 30 or 16% were sent by the Marine Society and 4 or 2% were recorded as having been pressed. Lewis states that 'even in the most desperate manning crises, the Navy never sank so low as to impress children', which view we can now challenge.<sup>85</sup> Perhaps it

would be fairer to say that the Royal Navy of our period did press boys, but not very many compared to the men (21% of new crew entries were recorded as being pressed compared to 2% of boys). However the evidence discussed above indicates that the same problem in assessing the number of true crew volunteers as opposed to those men pressed whom were 'persuaded' to volunteer occurs when trying to assess the true ratio of volunteers to pressed boys. It is also a moot point as to how much free choice Marine Society boys had when picked off the streets, re-clothed and then sent to the Royal Navy. Both Lewis and Pietsch question the extent to which Marine Society boys were volunteers. Lewis states that 'the strict voluntariness of their (boy volunteers) presence on board is arguable. It must have often been 'Hobson's choice', especially with many of the Marine Society boys'<sup>86</sup> and Pietsch points out that 'there are many doubts about the notion that Marine Society's recruits were volunteers... even those labelled as landman volunteers are likely to have had some pressure placed on them'.<sup>87</sup>

Despite all these caveats it is clear that the majority of boys were volunteers and we can even see boys that were discharged from their ship when it was discovered that they were runaway apprentices and at least one, 16 year old William Partridge (T46VB3), 'for being a slave'.<sup>88</sup>

Table 4.4 looks at the origin or birthplace of boys, where given, against the categories of first, second and third class.

**Table 4.4: All ships: Boys origin**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>English</b>		<b>Irish</b>		<b>Scottish</b>		<b>Welsh</b>		<b>Foreign</b>	
1st Class	84	46	55%	17	20%	12	14%			9	11%
2nd Class	111	73	66%	15	14%	10	9%			13	12%
3rd Class	154	98	64%	25	16%	11	7%	2	1%	18	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12%</b>

A total of 217 or 62% of boys came from England and this compares with a general crew profile of 48%. The next largest group of nationalities is Irish at 57 or 16%, which is lower than the crew average of 22%, and the same is true of the 33 or 9% of Scottish boys that compare with a crew average of 14%. Surprisingly it is the foreign or non-British component of the boys, 40 or 12% that closely compares with the crew profile of 13%. We can see a clear preference for recruiting English boys at the expense of Irish and Scottish ones. However for first class boys, the potential officer corps, the national origin of the boys is very close to that of the crew average, 55% English as opposed to a crew profile of 48%, 20% Irish compared to 22%, 14% Scottish compared to 14% and 11% foreign compared to 13%. Perhaps boys volunteering for the lower deck predominately came from England because it was much easier for them to volunteer as the ships spent most of their time within reach of English seaports?

The age ratios and average age for the volunteers and boys on entry to the respective muster roles of all the ships is given in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: All ships: Boys age profile on entry**

Class	Age range	Average
1st Class	10 to 22	16
2nd Class	10 to 19	16
3rd Class	8 to 19	15

Age ranges of boys for the three classes given in The Admiralty Order-in-Council of July 1794 were 15-17 years old for second class boys, 13-15 for third class boys and were not specified for first class boys.<sup>89</sup> Although it would appear from the age ranges given in the muster books of the three ships that the regulations governing boys and their age brackets were not strictly adhered to it has to be remembered that this was a time when not everyone was exactly certain of their correct age, or had evidence of it, and also that in copying from one muster to another the age of an individual was not always updated (see above). However in broad terms it would seem that the principle of younger boys being put into the third class and older boys in the second seems to be followed.

Table 4.6 looks at the reason given for boys being discharged from their respective muster. The heading 'Crew muster' refers to those boys who were transferred to the main crew muster, 'Discharged' refers to those boys who were discharged for various reasons such as being a slave or an apprentice as well as those who were given no particular reason except, say, a geographical location such as Portsmouth.

**Table 4.6: All ships: Boys reason for Discharge**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>1st Class</b>		<b>2nd Class</b>		<b>3rd Class</b>	
Crew muster	44	51%	36	29%	15	9%
Turned over	22	25%	23	18%	34	21%
Ran			14	11%	42	25%
Discharged	13	15%	9	7%	18	11%
V&B 1st Class			23	18%	10	6%
V&B 2nd Class	1	1%			29	18%
V&B 3rd Class	2	2%	6	5%		
Discharged Dead	2	2%	4	3%	6	4%
Discharged Sick			7	6%	5	3%
Invalided			3	2%	1	1%
Own request	1	1%			1	1%
Unclear	2	2%	1	1%	5	3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>102%</b>

Just over half of all boys of the first class (51%) were transferred onto the main crew muster compared to 29% for second class boys and 9% of third class boys. The higher ratio of first class boys being transferred to the main crew muster is largely due to the fact that of the other two classes of boy a large percentage were transferred to other boy musters. If the percentages of boys moving to other musters on their respective ship are added together we get for boys first class a transfer rate of 54% (51% crew, 1% second class and 2% third class), boys second class 52% (29% crew, 18% first class and 5% third class) and for third class boys 33% transfer rate (9% crew, 18% second class and 6% first class). The lower rate for third class boys can best be explained by the high desertion rate of third class boys, 25% compared to 11% of second class boys and no deserters from the first class, lowering the percentages in other areas. The possible reason for the high desertion rate of third class boys is discussed above. Death and sickness rates for all boys were lower than the crew in general.

Table 4.7 considers the three classes of boy that were transferred to the main crew muster and the rating that they received on entry.

**Table 4.7: All ships: Boys as crewmen**

Class	Number	Landsman	Ordinary	Able	Midshipman
<b>1st Class</b>	44	9 (20%)	11 (25%)	1 (2%)	23 (52%)
<b>2nd Class</b>	36	9 (25%)	21 (58%)	3 (8%)	3 (8%)
<b>3rd Class</b>	15	6 (40%)	7 (47%)		2 (13%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>24 (25%)</b>	<b>39 (41%)</b>	<b>4 (4%)</b>	<b>28 (29%)</b>

As discussed above it was intended that first class boys were potential officers, second class were potential competent seaman, and third class were servants to the ship's officers. There is only a limited amount of evidence from the muster records that can assist us in determining to what extent policy was followed on board ship. However the rating and subsequent careers of boys coming up through the system can give us some general indicators. Slightly over half (52%) of all the first class boys who were transferred onto the main crew muster were rated midshipman, 20% rated landsman, 25% rated ordinary seaman and 2% rated able. If, according to the Admiralty instructions detailed above, first class boys were 'young gentlemen' and destined for the quarterdeck why were nearly half of them rated ordinary or landsman? None of those rated ordinary seaman or landsman were made midshipman during their stay on board their respective ship and so it would appear that either they were never intended to go there or that they failed to make the grade. The most likely explanation is that the various muster classes of boy were used loosely by the ship's captains and that although the first class boy category was primarily designed and used for potential midshipmen this was not exclusively so. Second and third class boys being rated midshipmen as well as first class boys can be used to support this argument. We can see from Table 4.7 that in broad terms it would

appear that the policy of using boys as trainee crew members worked quite well. As Chapter 3 shows, 6% of all new crew members (that is, not including re-entries to the ship or turned over men) to the ships in this survey were from the volunteer and boy category and we can see that of those boys 29% were initially rated midshipmen, 41% ordinary seamen, 4% able seamen and only 25% landsmen, a good return on investment. Lavery states that 'Clearly boy service did not necessarily give a flying start to a naval career'<sup>90</sup> but from this survey's perspective it appeared to, three times out of four. Of the 24 boys rated landsman on entry to the main crew muster two were later made ordinary seamen and one carpenter's crew. Of the 39 boys rated ordinary seaman on entry to the main crew muster six were subsequently rated able seaman and one of these went on to be made up to quarter gunner. Therefore we can see that the volunteer and boy system did provide a steady stream of trained and semi-trained seaman both for the quarterdeck and the lower deck and that this was an important contribution to providing the Royal Navy with the trained manpower that it required. If we take the all the volunteer and boys classes together we can see that of those that transferred onto the main crew muster at the completion of their training a quarter were rated landsman, indicating that they had developed few seafaring skills, but that three quarters moved into skilled or semi-skilled ratings; surely a high success rate.

A total of 30 boys were recorded as having come from the Marine Society, eight from the *Trent*, 10 from the *Emerald1* and 12 from the *Glenmore* (no Marine Society boys were recorded to have served on board the *Emerald2*). Although 30 boys is a small sample, it is worth examining their records in order to give some pointers as to how effective the

system was of sending destitute youngsters to serve in the Royal Navy. None of the Marine Society boys were put directly into the boys first class category, 13 were put into the second class and 17 into the third class. However three second class boys were later moved onto the first class muster, four third class moved to second class and one of those was eventually transferred to the first class. Therefore a total of four boys ended up as first class boys (13%) out of the original 30 (100%). All but two of the 30 boys were recorded as having come from England. Of the two non-English boys one was of Scottish origin and the other was recorded as having come from 'Philadelphia'. The age range of the boys on entry to the ship was seven (23%) aged 13, 10 (33%) aged 14, three (10%) aged 15, seven (23%) aged 16, two (7%) aged 17 and one (3%) aged 18. Giving an average age of entry of slightly under 15 years (14.7). Of the 30 Marine Society boys 13 (43%) were turned over to other ships, nine (30%) deserted their respective ships, four (13%) were discharged sick and did not return to the ship that they came from, three (10%) were discharged 'per order' and the reasons for their discharge were not given and one, William Jacob was 'discharged dead' when, according to the *Emerald*'s master's log book, he was 'drowned by accident' on 23 February 1801<sup>91</sup> following his transfer to the ship's main crew muster as an ordinary seaman in December 1800.<sup>92</sup> During the course of their stay on board their respective ships, eight (27%) of the 30 Marine Society boys were transferred to the main crew muster, all of them rated ordinary seaman.

Table 4.8 looks at those Marine Society boys who were transferred to the main crew muster. Under the headings VB3 (Volunteer and Boy Third Class), VB2 (Volunteer and Boy Second Class), VB1 (Volunteer and Boy First Class) and 'Crew' are given the



relevant muster numbers. The heading 'Fate' refers to their reason for discharge from the ship (TO stands for turned over or sent to another ship, DD discharged dead, R ran or deserted and Ds discharged sick), 'Promoted?' records if the crew member changed rating from ordinary seaman (AS stands for able seaman and QG quarter gunner).

**Table 4.8: Marine Society boys as crewmen**

Ship	Name	VB3	VB2	VB1	Crew	Fate	Promoted?	Flogged?
<i>Trent</i>	Henry Martin	T4VB3	T17VB2		930	TO		
<i>Emerald1</i>	William Jacobs	E4VB3		E10VB1	465	DD		
	James Jacobs	E5VB3	E12VB2		600	TO		
	William Hodges		E1VB2	E9VB1	464	R		Yes
	William Farley		E2VB2		375	TO	AS then QG	Yes
	Joshua Purser		E4VB2	E8VB1	380	TO	AS	Yes
	James Emery		E6VB2		463	Ds		
	William Buggs		G6VB2		469	TO		
<i>Glenmore</i>								

It is quite likely that William and James Jacob (E4VB3 and E5VB4) were brothers as they share the same surname, were both entered on the ship's books on the same day (22 August 1795), William was aged 14 on entry to the ships and James 13 and they are both recorded as coming from Oxford.<sup>93</sup> A sample of eight boys is too small to draw any meaningful conclusions from although it is interesting to note that of the two boys who were made up to able seaman (William Farley E375 and Joshua Purser E380) both were flogged, Farley was given 12 lashes for 'neglect of duty' on 14 February 1800 (some time before being made up) and Purser was also given 12 lashes for 'disobedience of orders' on 19 January 1803 some time after he was rated able seaman.<sup>94</sup> This finding matches that of volunteer landsmen discussed in Chapter 5 and perhaps we are seeing the livelier of the crew members being more likely to be promoted. William Farley went on to be rated quarter gunner before being turned over along with four other ex-Marine Society Boys. Therefore, it would appear, if the evidence of our small sample is in anyway

representative, that the Marine Society policy of recruiting destitute boys did provide the Royal Navy with a supply of youngsters that could, and were, trained up to serve as competent seaman and also that it gave some destitute boys the opportunity to learn a skill that was in high demand in wartime. However the very high desertion rate of 30%, compared to a general boys desertion rate of 11%, points to a lot of unhappy youngsters. Although the findings of the *Trent* concerning Marine Society boys point to a less successful return on producing competent seaman (see above), overall it could be said that Marine Society recruitment was in broad terms a limited success. As Sugden points out, it is also the case that individual ship's captains made a big difference to the progress of their Marine Society boys and gives the example of Nelson's care of his 'boys'. As captain of the *Agamemnon* in 1795 Nelson applied to the Marine Society for boys stating that he would take 'the greatest care' of them.<sup>95</sup> Perhaps contrary captains' regimes account for the differences in boy development from the three ships under consideration. This look at the small sample of Marine Society boys could certainly do with more research before we can say just how successful a policy it was.

## **Conclusion**

A look at the 378 boy entries from the muster books of the three ships (four commissions) has established a number of factors in regard to how the three classes of volunteers and boys worked in practice on board ship. Perhaps the most revealing is the manner in which captains appear to have interpreted the regulations concerning the application of the three class boy system. It would seem that captains took a flexible attitude to the system's operation particularly in relation to the boys first class category.

The Admiralty regulations specify that first class boys were 'To consist of Young Gentlemen intended for the Sea Service', that is, trainee commissioned officers. However we see from the ship's records that boys from the second and third class were appointed directly to midshipman rank and others transferred to the first class category. It would seem that captains, in practice, operated a system that relied more on meritocracy than slavish attention to regulations. It is possible that some of the movement of boys between the second and third class could have been to ensure that the regulation number of six boys carried of the second class and 10 of the third class were met<sup>96</sup> although this would not account for movement from second and third class to first. Although 52% of first class boys transferred to the main crew muster were rated as midshipman, 48% were rated as non-officer crew members: landsman (20%), ordinary seaman (25%) or able seaman (1%). This indicates that either the non-midshipmen had failed to make the grade as potential sea officers or that it was never intended that they should achieve that rank. Unfortunately the records do not provide us with the evidence to make a judgment on this. The issue of lower deck involvement in the rating of midshipman is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The age profile of the boys ranges from eight to 22 years and broadly corresponds to the regulations set out. However the regulations specify 13 years of age as the start of the boy category but captains clearly ignored this as all the commissions had examples of under age boys serving and a total of 26 boys from the boy musters were recorded as below the age of 13, some as young as eight.

The origin of those boys, where it is recorded, shows that they were predominantly English, 63% compared to a general crew profile of 48%. However as the great majority of the boys were volunteers and most of the ship's commissions were based in English waters this is no surprise. However what is most surprising is that roughly the same proportion of foreign (non-British) boys were recruited as with the crew profile (12% foreign boys compared to 13% of the crew). It would seem that nationality was no bar to being recruited into the Royal Navy, be it men or boys.

The vast majority of boys were recorded as being volunteers, a total of 87%. If the Marine Society boys are considered true volunteers then the percentage rises to 98% with 2% recorded as having been pressed. It is clear that boys were pressed although not in any great numbers but this then begs the question as to what extent were those recorded as volunteers pressurized into 'volunteering'? It is clear that pressure was applied to boy prisoners of the civil powers and prisoners of war to 'volunteer' and some did, but calculating the exact ratio of true volunteers to reluctant ones is not possible without further evidence forthcoming. It would appear that the authorities released boys from the Royal Navy if it was found that they were indentured apprentices or slaves and there is some evidence that boys could be discharged at their own request but this seems to apply mostly to first class boys. On the evidence of this survey it would seem that the boys sent to the Royal Navy by the Marine Society did have a good chance of learning seagoing skills and at the same time supplied the Royal Navy with much needed manpower although the younger ones were prone to a high rate of desertion.

Desertion appears to have been very high for third class boys in general at 25% of those mustered and it is possible that this is due to the boys believing that they were unlikely to be punished if caught due to their tender years. In comparison desertion for the older second class boys is low at 11% and there are no recorded instances of first class boys deserting which indicates that the first and second class boys were fairly happy with their lot. Just over 50% of first class boys were moved onto the main crew muster and just over 50% of these were rated midshipman following that move. Approximately 30% of second class boys were moved onto the main crew muster and a further 18% were moved from second to first class. Only 25% of those second class boys were rated landsman, the other 75% rated as having seagoing skills (58% ordinary seaman, 8% able seaman and 8% midshipman). If we look at the boys as a whole, extracting those entries that recorded boy movement between the classes, we end up with 310 entries of which 95 (31%) were made crew members, 79 (25%) were turned over to other ships as boys, 56 (18%) deserted, 42 (14%) were discharged for various reasons most of which are unclear and 38 (12%) were discharged as either sick, dead or invalided. If we assume that most of the turned over boys would eventually be made into crew members we see that the conversion rate of boys to crew members stands at around 50%. It is difficult to say exactly whether the Admiralty considered this a successful conversion rate or not and it would seem that as there was no formal mechanism in place to monitor boys' progress it is unlikely that the Admiralty knew how well the system operated apart from anecdotal evidence and experience. However the volunteer and boy system was used throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and we must assume therefore that it was thought to work reasonably well.

The above evidence of the volunteers and boys that served on our three ships (four commissions) has allowed us to look at the system in operation on board ship, given us an idea of the age profile and origin of boys, looked at how boys were recruited, what happened to them during their stay on board and, most importantly, demonstrated that about half of the boys did become competent seamen. Therefore we can say that, by and large, they did learn seagoing skills during their time as boys and that opportunities to progress to the quarterdeck did exist for all classes of boys and that the Royal Navy had a system for training youngsters to be competent seaman for both the lower and the quarterdeck.

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<sup>1</sup> James Lynch (G20VB2) first joined the *Glenmore* as a 'boy third class' (G32VB3) on 19 April 1799 where he is recorded to be aged 16 and from Cork, Ireland (ADM36 15089). He was then moved to 'boy second class' on 24 March 1801 (ADM36 15091) and then moved to the main crew muster on 22 July 1802 rated able seaman (G572) in which capacity he remained until he was paid off with the rest of the *Glenmore*'s crew in February 1803 (ADM36 15092). Here we see the volunteer and boy system working as intended. A 16 year old boy (technically a little old for the third class category which was intended for those aged from 13-15) was recruited, moves from third class to second class and emerges as a fully trained seaman after a little under three years training.

<sup>2</sup> Rule, J. *The Experience of Labour in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1981) p. 43

<sup>3</sup> Details and background to the Royal Navy's manning problems and how they attempted to overcome them is given in detail in Chapter 3 and is therefore not repeated here.

<sup>4</sup> 37 Geo III c73, s. 4.

<sup>5</sup> 2 and 3 Anne c6

<sup>6</sup> Admiralty Order-in-Council, 9 July 1794, quoted Lewis, M., *A Social History of the Navy 1793-1815*, (London, 1948) p. 89

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<sup>7</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p.153-154 and Lavery, B., *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815* (London, 1989) p. 138

<sup>8</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>9</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>10</sup> ADM51 1167

<sup>11</sup> ADM51 4510

<sup>12</sup> ADM51 1352. A total of 11 prisoners were captured from the *Renard*, a French privateer of six guns, including her captain Charles Resuff (*sic*). Also released with John Storey (T27VB2) were five other seamen prisoners of the French, Matthew Hunter (T825), John Pico (T826), William Todd (T827), Edward LeCourt (T828) and Thomas Lamb (T829). In the muster book these men are recorded as coming from the *Renard* but it does not record if they were volunteers or pressed men. They were not recorded as having received a bounty and one of them, William Todd, managed to get himself released 'From the Service by order Adm. Milbank' in November 1801. This points to the British seamen prisoners being pressed by the *Trent's* captain, exchanging one type of prison for another (ADM36 15228).

<sup>13</sup> For the background to the Marine Society see Pietsch, R. 'Urchins for the Sea: The Story of the Marine Society in the Seven Years War' *Journal for Maritime Research*, December 2000, p.1

<sup>14</sup> Lewis, p. 87-90

<sup>15</sup> Lavery, p. 124

<sup>16</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>17</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>18</sup> ADM36 15230

<sup>19</sup> See Sherwood, M 'Blacks in the Royal Navy' *BASH Newsletter* No. 23, January 1999 and Sherwood, M 'More on Blacks in the Royal Navy' *BASH Newsletter* No. 26 January 2000. Also Carretta, V. 'Naval records and eighteenth-century black biography. With particular reference to the case of Olaudah Equiano (Gustavus Vassa)' *Journal for Maritime Research* November 2003

<sup>20</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, (London, 1986) p. 159

<sup>21</sup> Stimpson was made midshipman in April 1801 (ADM36 15228), able seaman in February 1802 and back to midshipman in June 1802 (ADM36 15229).

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<sup>22</sup> Ordinary seaman Thomas Atkins (T675) was taken prisoner on 6 June 1800 during an attempted cutting out operation in the West Indies. The captain's log states that the Jolly boat with an officer and 7 men were taken by a French privateer 'close in shore' (ADM 51 1429) and he returned to the ship 7 February 1801 (ADM36 15228) when he eventually got back to England. Previously Atkins had been a third class boy (T22VB3).

<sup>23</sup> Charles Parker (T19VB3) joined the *Trent* from the 'Alka Volunteer at sea' on 16 November 1798 aged 16 and was entered as a boy 3<sup>rd</sup> Class (ADM36 15227). Being a 'volunteer' from a merchant ship it is quite likely that he had been pressed and then encouraged to volunteer and the *Trent's* log confirms this. The captain's log for the 15 November 1798 states that 'Impressed 2 men from a Danish brig then impressed 1 man and two boys from an English brig' (ADM51 1305). However no boy is recorded as having been pressed in the muster book during this period. Parker (T785) was transferred to the main crew muster on 10 December 1800 rated landsmen and was flogged for 'neglect of duty' on 5 May 1801 (ADM36 15228) and subsequently invalided out of the service on 2 August 1802 (ADM36 15230). George Whitehead (T5VB3) joined the *Trent* from the Marine Society on 27 May 1796. He fell sick and was transferred to sick quarters on 4 September 1797 and rejoined the *Trent* from Haslar Hospital 11 days later (T14VB3) (ADM36 13253). A year later he was moved to the boys 2<sup>nd</sup> class muster (ADM36 15226) and was eventually transferred to the main crew muster on 29 November 1801 rated landsman (T877) (ADM36 15229). Whitehead was given 12 lashes on 26 April 1801 but the reason for the flogging is not given (ADM51 1352).

<sup>24</sup> Philip Stimpson joined the *Trent* in Portsmouth on 1 November 1800 as a 16 year old landsman volunteer (T738). A month later he was moved onto the boys 2<sup>nd</sup> class muster (T32VB2) (ADM36 15227) where he stayed until transferred back to the main crew muster rated midshipman on 2 March 1801 (T810) (ADM36 15228). It looks as if we have here an example of a young volunteer who is seen by the *Trent's* officers as potential officer material. Original rating landsman points to Stimpson being from the lower deck and his rise to the midshipman's berth indicates that he was seen to have merit and potential. Stimpson made lieutenant on 17 June 1808 although there is no evidence that he moved any further up the command chain (Syrett, D. and DiNardo R L, *Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy* (NRS, 1994) p. 422).



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<sup>25</sup> Abraham Brown (E36VB3) fell from the masthead on 22 July 1804 (ADM51 1530)

<sup>26</sup> On 8 July 1799 (ADM36 14844)

<sup>27</sup> ADM36 14846. He died in November 1802

<sup>28</sup> ADM36 15560. Francis Skeede (E686) was turned over to the '*Beaulieu* by order' on 18 October 1804 and William Jacob (E783) to the *Galatea* on 3 October 1804.

<sup>29</sup> ADM36 14845. He died on 27 January 1801 in Martinique Hospital.

<sup>30</sup> ADM36 14846. He died on 21 November 1802.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Baker (E559) was transferred to the crew muster as landsman on 9 February 1802 (ADM36 14846), promoted to ordinary seaman on 10 July 1802 (ADM36 14846), flogged on 25 November 1803 (ADM36 15558) and finally deserted the ship on 20 May 1804 at Barbados (ADM36 15559).

<sup>32</sup> ADM36 15560

<sup>33</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>34</sup> John Fowler (E8VB2) joined the *Emerald* on 10 August 1796 when he and a number of other sailors were pressed out of the *Kingfisher* merchantman while the *Emerald* was moored in the River Tagus after escorting a convoy of merchantmen there (ADM51 1139). Fowler was first put on the supernumerary muster list and then transferred to the boys 2<sup>nd</sup> class a month later (ADM36 14842). He was moved to the main crew muster on 17 August 1798 (T325) (ADM36 14844) and rated ordinary seaman in which capacity he stayed on board until deserting the ship on 15 March 1801 (ADM36 14845).

<sup>35</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>36</sup> Major Harris 'appeared' on board on 10 August 1803 (ADM36 15558) and Thomas Lang was recruited on 1 January 1804 (ADM51 1530)

<sup>37</sup> ADM51 1530

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>40</sup> ADM36 15560

<sup>41</sup> H. Murray (E571) was rated midshipman on 18 May 1802, made able seaman on 12 November 1803 (ADM36 15559), back to midshipman on 10 January 1804 (ADM36 15559) and he was finally turned over to the *Royal William* on 5 April 1805 (ADM36 15560)

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<sup>42</sup> William Farley was made able seaman on 10 November 1801 (ADM36 14846), quarter gunner on 10 March 1804 (ADM36 15559) and turned over to the *Royal William* on 5 April 1805 (ADM36 15560).

<sup>43</sup> This was John Chambers who with a number of others were '...sent in a prize and not heard of since' in October 1804 (ADM36 15560)

<sup>44</sup> ADM51 1295

<sup>45</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>46</sup> ADM51 1333

<sup>47</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>48</sup> James Grey (E27VB3) was pressed from the '*La Ruse* Brig Privateer' on 29 June 1800 and then entered as a volunteer on the Supernumerary List (1490) and subsequently transferred to the boy third class muster on 21 July 1800 (ADM36 14845)

<sup>49</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>50</sup> William Manning (E14VB3) joined the *Emerald* on 10 February 1798 from *HMS Ville de Paris* as a third class boy aged 16 (ADM36 14843). He was moved to the boy second class muster on 15 November 1800 (E16VB2) and in just under a month was moved to the first class boy muster 5 December 1800 (E13VB1). He served in this capacity until 31 January 1801 when he was turned over to *HMS Snake* (ADM36 14845).

<sup>51</sup> Charles Sussex (E22VB3) joined the *Emerald* in Malta on 5 November 1798 aged 14 as a boy third class (ADM36 14844). He was transferred to the boys second class muster 17 December 1800 (E21VB2) and a year later was moved to the boys first class muster (E18VB1) rated landsman (E558). He served in this capacity until succumbing to disease in Antigua Hospital on 21 November 1802 (ADM36 14846). Robert Baker 'volunteered' from his prison cell on 11 February 1801 (ADM36 14845) and joined the *Emerald* as a boy second class aged 16. He was moved to the boys first class muster on 16 December 1801 (E20VB1) and then to the crew muster rated landsman (E559) on 19 February 1802 (ADM36 14846). He served in this capacity until deserting the ship in Barbados on 20 May 1804 (ADM36 15559).

<sup>52</sup> William Hodges (E1VB2) joined the *Emerald* from the Marine Society aged 15 on 22 August 1795 (ADM36 14842) as a second class boy and was transferred to boys first class muster on 30 April 1799 (E9VB1) (ADM36 14844). He was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman (E464) on 6

December 1800 and deserted the ship on 28 March 1801 (ADM36 14845). James Emery (E6VB2) was also a Marine Society boy who joined the *Emerald* on the same day as Hodges aged 18 as a second class boy and was transferred to the first class boy muster on 31 January 1798 (ADM36 14843). Emery was moved to the crew muster as an ordinary seaman (E463) 6 December 1800 and was sent to sick quarters on 27 February 1801 (ADM36 14845) and did not rejoin the *Emerald*. Joseph Purser (E7VB2) joined the *Emerald* as a second class boy from sick quarters on 13 October 1795 aged 17 (ADM36 14842). He was transferred to the boys first class muster on 31 January 1798 (E8VB1) (ADM36 14843) and to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman (E380) on 1 May 1799 (ADM36 14844). He was subsequently rated able seaman on 10 November 1801 (ADM36 14846) and given 12 lashes for 'disobedience of orders' on 29 January 1803 (ADM51 1530) and stayed with the ship until she was paid off on 4 April 1805 (ADM36 15560). Marine Society boy William Jacobs joined as a third class boy (E4VB3) aged 14 on 22 August 1795 (ADM36 14842) and was transferred to the boys second class on (E10VB2) 18 August 1797 (ADM36 14843) then to the first class on 30 April 1799 (E10VB1) (ADM36 14844). Jacobs was made ordinary seaman (E465) on 6 December 1800 and served in that capacity until drowned 'by accident' on 23 February 1801 (ADM36 14845 and ADM51 1333). Thomas Vivian (E2VB3) volunteered for the *Emerald* as a boy third class on 22 August 1795 aged 15 (ADM36 14842) and was transferred to the boys second class on 30 April 1799 (E14VB2) (ADM36 14844) then first class on 5 December 1800 (E12VB1) (ADM36 14845). He was moved to the crew muster as an ordinary seaman (E532) on 17 December 1801 (ADM36 14846) and served in that capacity until invalided out of the service on 10 May 1804 (ADM36 15559). Hugh Kelly (E25VB3) joined as a third class boy aged 15 as a 'volunteer' from the 'General Keppel Brig Privateer' on 24 June 1800 off Cape St. Vincent (ADM51 1333). Kelly was, along with 16 other crew from the *General Keppel*, first put on the supernumerary list (no. 1485) before being made third class boy a few days later. The muster book records that of the 17 crew from the *General Keppel* two were 'pressed' and the rest, including Kelly, were 'volunteers' (ADM36 14845). But the captain's log records that 'pressed 17 men from a privateer'. Once again we see pressed men and boys 'encouraged' to volunteer. Kelly was put onto the boys second class muster on 17 December 1800 (E23VB2) (ADM36 14845) and then the first class on 16 December 1801 (E19VB1). He was rated ordinary seaman on 22 August 1802 in which capacity he served until he was 'drowned by carrying away the mizzen mast' on 4 July 1804 (ADM36

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14846) during gales in the English Channel (ADM51 1530). Major Harris (E39VB2) 'volunteered' for the *Emerald1* on 26 February 1804 when the ship was undergoing a refit in Antigua dockyard and he was put on the supernumerary muster list (SL3013) until being transferred to the boys second class on 10 August 1804 (ADM36 15559). He was transferred to the boys first class on 10 September 1804 and put onto the crew muster on 1 March 1805 rated ordinary seaman. He served in this capacity until the *Emerald1* was paid off the following month (ADM36 15560).

<sup>53</sup> This was Joseph Purser (E380). See endnote 52.

<sup>54</sup> ADM37 2543. Connor (EM392) made lieutenant (ADM107 47) and later rose to be commander (Syrett and DiNardo p. 94) He retired in 1864 and died 20 years later aged 87 (O'Byrne p. 222).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* There is no record that Christie (EM452) made lieutenant.

<sup>56</sup> In order to try and ensure that the age of boys is as accurate as possible only the age at entry of a boy into a particular ship is given. All the dates of subsequent changes of circumstances such as rating changes, moves onto other musters, floggings and discharge are also given. This will allow the age of any individual at any given change of circumstance to be calculated.

<sup>57</sup> A midshipman ordinary was in effect a supernumerary midshipman from the Royal Navy Academy (from 1806 College), Portsmouth fulfilling their sea time requirements before being allowed to sit their lieutenant's examination. The Academy/College was never considered a great success and only had a maximum capacity of 40 places at any one time. (Rodger *Wooden World* p. 25 and Rodger, N. A. M. *Naval Records for Genealogists*, Public Office Record Handbooks No. 22 (HMSO, 1988) p. 20-1, Lewis *Social History* p. 301-2)

<sup>58</sup> Edward Wylde (EM313) made lieutenant on 16 March 1814 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 482) but there is no record that he rose any further.

<sup>59</sup> The *Emerald2*'s supernumerary lists are very difficult to interpret, as there seems to have been difficulties with the numbering system, numbers finish and then restart. It was not therefore possible to trace where these particular boys came from.

<sup>60</sup> John Shearman (SL129) was recorded on the supernumerary list as 13 years old but on his transfer 12 days later to the boys second class muster is recorded as 14 years old. It is possible that his birth date fell in

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those 12 days (a 3% chance) or that he was uncertain or unconcerned about giving his age. It is equally possible that his age was exaggerated in order to make pressing him less controversial (ADM37 1226).

<sup>61</sup> Adam Graham came on board in July 1806 (ADM37 1226) and Henry Hall in January 1810 (ADM37 2543)

<sup>62</sup> Adam Graham (EM4VB2) was discharged dead on 15 January 1807 'On board at sea off the Isle of Groa' (ADM37 1226).

<sup>63</sup> Stewart Stoville (EM8VB2) joined the *Emerald2* on 4 December 1806 aged 19, he was transferred to the crew muster rated landsman on 10 January 1807 (EM244) (ADM37 1226) and deserted the ship 'from a boat' 28 May 1810 (ADM37 2543). John Gilman (EM9VB2) joined the *Emerald2* on 4 December 1806 aged 19, he was transferred to the crew muster rated landsman on 10 January 1807 (EM244) (ADM37 1226), and made carpenter's crew on 18 July 1807 (ADM37 1227). He remained with the ship until she was paid off in November 1811 (ADM37 2544). John Pettifer (EM12VB2) joined the *Emerald2* on 2 February 1807 aged 18 (ADM37 1226), he was transferred to the crew muster rated landsman on 23 July 1810 (EM244) (ADM37 2543) and remained with the ship until she was paid off in November 1811 (ADM37 2544). Thomas Ryan (EM27VB2) joined the *Emerald2* on 24 March 1811 aged 14 (ADM37 2543), he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 15 September 1811 (EM244) and remained with the ship until she was paid off in November 1811 (ADM37 2544).

<sup>64</sup> ADM 37 1228, James Adams from Gosport, Hants. Eight seems very young even for Royal Navy standards of the day.

<sup>65</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>66</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>67</sup> ADM37 2543

<sup>68</sup> ADM37 2544

<sup>69</sup> John Giles (EM150) was turned over when the *Emerald2* was paid off in November 1811 as was John Collins (EM506) (ADM37 2544).

<sup>70</sup> ADM36 13171 and ADM36 15091

<sup>71</sup> Greenhill, B. and Giffard, A. *Steam, Politics and Patronage: the Transformation of the Royal Navy 1815-54* (London, 1994) p59-60.

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<sup>72</sup> George Duff (G1) and his retinue/following moved to the *Courageux* in February 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>73</sup> George Duff's (G1) retinue that moved with him to the *Courageux* consisted of: First class boys, Robert French (G13VB1), William Glascock (G14VB1) and Alexander Duff (G15VB1), third class boy Norwich Duff (G27VB3), midshipman Edward Garrett (G29) (made midshipman from ordinary seaman by George Duff), George Rich (G428) and Richard Davis (G456), able seaman George Hill (G433) and Alexander Fairbirne (G448), landsman Neil McDowell (G377) and Robert Payne (G431), coxswain John McCullough (G356) (made coxswain from ship's corporal by George Duff), captain's cook John Keimicheal (sic) (G427) (made cook from landsman by George Duff) and clerk William Pritchard (G441).

<sup>74</sup> ADM36 15092

<sup>75</sup> ADM36 13171. Greenwich Academy was set up in order to allow the training of the sons of naval seamen for the merchant and Royal Navy (Lavery p.133)

<sup>76</sup> ADM36 13171 on 6 January 1797

<sup>77</sup> He was made able seaman on 10 June 1801, master's mate on 6 July 1801 and then back to midshipman on 6 September 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>78</sup> ADM36 15089

<sup>79</sup> George Robinson (G1VB2) joined the *Glenmore* on 20 April 1796 aged 18, he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 9 June 1796 (G90) (ADM36 13171), promoted to able seaman on 1 July 1799 (ADM36 15089) and was subsequently turned over to another ship on 1 March 1800 (ADM36 15090). James Fairbrother (G2VB2) joined the *Glenmore* on 23 April 1796 aged 19, he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 9 June 1796 (G92) (ADM36 13171), promoted to able seaman on 14 June 1802 (ADM36 15089) and stayed with the ship until she was paid off in February 1803 (ADM36 15092). William Buggs (G6VB2) joined the *Glenmore* on 10 June 1796 aged 16 (ADM36 13171), he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 24 March 1801 (G469) and was subsequently turned over to another ship on 20 May 1801 (ADM36 15091). Thomas Holland (G9VB2) joined the *Glenmore* on 7 September 1796 aged 16 (ADM36 13171), he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 24 March 1801 (G470) and was subsequently turned over to another ship on 20 May 1801 (ADM36 15091). Alexander Clarke (G10VB2) joined the *Glenmore* on 5 February 1797 aged 16 (ADM36 13171), he was transferred to the crew muster rated ordinary seaman on 24 March 1801 (G471)

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<sup>88</sup> ADM36 15229. John Sherman (E211VB3) a 14 year old boy third class from *Emerald*<sup>2</sup> was discharged the ship 'being an apprentice' on 29 November 1806 (ADM37 1226) as was the *Glenmore*'s 13 year old William Edwards (G46VB3) on 18 November 1801 (ADM36 15091)

<sup>89</sup> Admiralty Order-in-Council, 9 July 1794, quoted Lewis p. 89

<sup>90</sup> Lavery p.138. Lavery bases this statement on the careers of three seamen who started out as boys.

<sup>91</sup> ADM52 2969

<sup>92</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>93</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>94</sup> ADM51 1295 and ADM51 1530

<sup>95</sup> Sugden p. 486

<sup>96</sup> Lavery p.138

## Chapter 5

### “By and Large an Unknown Man”<sup>1</sup>

#### Volunteer Landsman

##### Introduction

A question that is put concerning the Royal Navy of the French War period is; was it a provider or consumer of seaman? That is, did it rely largely on the merchant fleet to provide the trained seaman that it required or did it also train men for its own use? There is little doubt that it did both but to what extent has never been properly established. Starkey states that ‘...a vibrant shipping industry was widely and persistently held to be a “nursery of seamen” a vital source of skill and experience upon which the Admiralty could draw in times of national emergency’.<sup>2</sup> The muster books of the three ships (four commissions) of this survey give us a unique opportunity to address the question of the training of sailors for the fleet. Most lower deck crewmen appeared on board a Royal Navy vessel already trained to a greater or lesser degree either from other Royal Navy vessels or from the merchant fleet (see Chapter 3). However it is possible, through a systematic study of the muster records, to trace how newcomers to the sea progressed.

The first section of this chapter **Background** looks at how newcomers to the sea have been identified what the various ratings were that the men were given and sets out the questions that the chapter will attempt to answer. Each commission is looked at in turn in the following sections; *Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore* followed by the section **All ships** that looks at the combined commissions. The chapter is then brought together by the **Conclusion**.



## Background

When crew members came on board a Royal Navy vessel they were given a rating according to their perceived capabilities, normally by the ship's first lieutenant. There were three basic seagoing ratings as well as specialist ratings such as sailmaking, coopering and carpentry. The three ratings of seamanship were 'landsman', 'ordinary seaman' and 'able seaman'. A landsman was considered to possess little or no seagoing skills an ordinary seaman to be a semi-competent seaman and an able seaman to be able to 'hand, reef and steer' in other words a thorough-going seaman. These three ratings were important as a man's rating told a ship's officer of his expected capabilities or lack of them, it told the Admiralty how much a man should be paid and gave status and possible future employment to the individual seaman.<sup>3</sup> A crewmember's rating was entered into the muster book column entitled 'Quality'<sup>4</sup> so any glance at a muster book will give some idea of the ratio of landsmen to ordinary and able seamen. However it will not tell the whole story as men frequently had their ratings changed. For example during the seven years commission of the *Trent* there were 361 recorded changes of crew rating and some crew members changed rating several times.<sup>5</sup> When a crewman had his rating or quality changed there was no separate column in the muster book to record this change and so the new rating was normally written beneath the original rating giving the date of the change, which was important for calculating wages due. It was quite often the case that when a new muster book was started any new ratings of crewmen were put in the 'Quality' column and the old rating discarded, but this was not always so. Therefore the only method to follow a crewman's progress is to check each muster book and establish any changes to rating recorded. In all four commissions this has been done and every

rating change for every crewman has been put onto a separate table within each database for each commission that can now be cross-referenced and interrogated against the main crew muster in order to produce a complete picture of rating changes. This gives us the opportunity to examine the progress of all the crewmen on all the ships and to establish how they developed as seamen.

However there is a particular problem with this approach and that is that most of the men that came on board their respective ship already possessed some knowledge of the sea and are rated as such. This means that if we wish to establish the length of time it took for a seaman to move from one rating to another, particularly from landsman to ordinary and able seaman, we need to look at sailors who are starting their seagoing careers. Therefore the approach taken in this chapter has been to concentrate on those crewmen who have little or no prior knowledge of the sea and were rated landsman on entry to the ship. In order to exclude those crewmen who might have prior knowledge of the sea but have not yet learnt enough to be rated as ordinary or able seaman only those crewmen who were recorded as being landsman volunteers are looked at in this section. This is not guaranteed to exclude all crewmen who had been to sea before but is likely to weed out the great majority. The muster records do not in themselves record any training that was carried out but do record when a seaman was moved from one rating to another and thus give us some indication of the progress that individuals had made in learning seagoing skills. The captains' and master's logs do give some indication of training carried out but this is largely concerned with practice on gunnery and musketry (see Chapter 2). Occasionally the logs record that the men were exercised in reefing and setting sails but

this is very rare<sup>6</sup> and almost certainly reflects the idiosyncratic nature of the recording of events in the ship's logs rather than the true picture of shipboard training activities.

Another difficulty facing any attempts to track individual progress on board ship is that men are quite often discharged the ship, normally due to sickness but occasionally desertion, and return under a new muster number (muster numbers were not normally reused when a man was discharged the ship<sup>7</sup>) and these must be located. For example, of the *Trent's* 102 landsmen volunteers 13 or 13% were discharged sick and returned and one man deserted, was caught and returned to the ship (see below for details). Fortunately it was usual that the new muster number was given following the reason for discharge and so the individual can be traced and followed in this manner.

Therefore by following the careers of all the volunteer landsmen that served on our three ships (four commissions) we should have a large enough sample to establish a number of factors relating to what extent men progressed in their seagoing skills on board a Royal Navy vessel of the period as well as answer some social questions concerning new volunteers to the Royal Navy. These questions will include the following: What was the age profile of volunteer landsmen? What was the origin and nationality of volunteer landsmen? Did volunteer landsmen progress in developing seagoing skills? What sort of disciplinary regime did volunteer landsmen experience? What happened to the volunteer landsmen? How did shipboard rating work in practice? Was the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period a consumer or provider of trained seamen? Did volunteer landsmen have a career path?

In attempting to answer the above questions each of the four commissions will be examined in turn followed by a look at all the volunteer landsmen from all the commissions. For the purpose of this exercise quota men have not been included in the category of volunteer landsmen. The reason for this is that quota men were recruited at a local level by local authorities that offered large bounties for volunteers to fill the quotas imposed by central government. As a group quota men came in for universal abomination from officers and men of the period, if the memoirs of certain admirals are to be believed, and this baton of abhorrence has been passed to some modern historians and therefore it was felt that quota men should be dealt with as a separate group (see Chapter 3).

### *Trent*

A total of 102 individuals from the main crew muster of the *Trent* were recorded as being volunteers who were rated landsman on entry to the ship. Most of the landsmen volunteers, 75 (74%), came on board the *Trent* while she was fitting out following her launch in March 1796 and before she went to sea for the first time and these men came from the receiving ships *Enterprize* and *Sandwich*.<sup>8</sup> A further 14 landsmen volunteers joined her within the next few months. This means that 89 (87%) out of 102 (100%) landsmen volunteers were with the *Trent* from the start of her commission thus giving us an opportunity to look at how the careers of the landsmen volunteers progressed during that commission. Only three of the *Trent's* landsmen volunteers that joined the ship in 1796 were still with the ship when she was paid off seven years later in June 1803. The three landsmen volunteers who were still with the *Trent* at the end of her commission were Thomas Gee (T18), Thomas Young (T49) and John Arthurs (T230). By then Thomas Gee was rated able seaman, Thomas Young was rated ordinary seaman although

he had progressed to able seaman but had then been disrated to ordinary seaman and John Arthurs was also rated able seaman.<sup>9</sup>

The ages of all but one of the 102 *Trent* landsmen volunteers were recorded in the muster books and of these 101 men 34 (34%) were aged between 15 – 20, 45 (45%) between 21-25, 11 (11%) between 26 – 30, 9 (9%) between 31 – 35 and 2 (2%) between 36 – 40. This shows, not unexpectedly, a low age profile of landsman volunteers compared to the crew in general. A total of 56% of the landsmen volunteers are aged between 21 and 30 and this compares with the general crew profile of the *Trent* of 58%, not significantly different. However the crew profile for those aged between 15 – 20 stands at 26% compared to the landsmen volunteers of 34% and it is in this age group that we see the main difference. The youngest landsman volunteer was 16 year old Philip Stimpson (T738) who was recorded as a 'Portsmouth volunteer' appearing on board ship on 1 November 1800 but he was quickly transferred to the boys second class muster (T25VB2) on 15 November 1800.<sup>10</sup> Stimpson was later returned to the main crew muster and rated midshipman (T810)<sup>11</sup> in which capacity he was discharged to the sloop *Stork* on 20 March 1803.<sup>12</sup> Philip Stimpson eventually made lieutenant on 7 June 1808 but there is no record of him progressing to commander, the next step in the commissioned officer chain.<sup>13</sup> The oldest landsman volunteer was Patrick Quinn (T370), aged 37, who appeared on board the *Trent* on 6 March 1797<sup>14</sup> and served without changing rating until 11 November 1799 when he was discharged sick to Port Royal Hospital. However the muster book records that he deserted the hospital the day after he was admitted, was subsequently recaptured re-entered onto the ship's muster book (T668)<sup>15</sup> and returned to

the hospital where he deserted again on 28 June 1800<sup>16</sup>, this time there is no record of him being caught.

The recorded origin (99 out of 102) of the landsmen volunteers set against the general crew profile is 60 English, or 61% compared to 47% of the main crew profile, 28 Irishmen or 28% compared to 24%, 8 Scots or 8% compared to 17%, 2 Welshmen or 2% compared to 3% and one foreigner or 1% compared to 9%. The main difference between the two sets of figures is the high number of English landsmen volunteers and low number of foreigners compared to the general crew profile. However this is not surprising given that most of the landsmen volunteers came from English based receiving ships (the *Enterprise* and *Sandwich* were both moored in the Thames<sup>17</sup>) while fitting out in the Thames estuary.

Of the 102 (100%) landsmen volunteers a total of 34 (33%) were promoted during their time on board the *Trent*. Of the 34 promoted men, 26 (77%) of the new rates were ordinary seaman; three (9%) were rated able seaman, three (9%) rated carpenter's crew and two (6%) armourer's mates. Two of the men rated carpenter's mates and one rated armourer's mate were given their new ratings within a month of coming on board the *Trent*. This strongly suggests that these men already had some skills in these areas and that the ship's officers were keen to utilize their specialist expertise. The time it took for volunteer landsmen to make ordinary seaman varied between one day<sup>18</sup> and 1,694 days but the average works out at 695 days or nearly two years. Rodger states that 'as a rule of thumb it was reckoned that one year at sea would make an ordinary, and two an able

seaman'<sup>19</sup> but Lavery claims that it needed 'years of experience'<sup>20</sup> before a landsman gained the necessary sea going skills. However as the average time served on board the *Trent* for volunteer landsmen was 94 weeks, it would appear that most volunteer landsmen would have been discharged the ship before they got the opportunity for promotion. The three volunteer landsmen who were promoted directly to able seaman took respectively 784, 807 and 840 days to achieve that rating, an average of 810 days or 116 weeks, a little over two years. Clearly these were young men (they were aged 19, 24 and 20 respectively on entry to the ship) with an aptitude and attitude for a life at sea in the Royal Navy.<sup>21</sup> Out of the 34 promoted to ordinary seaman 14 (41%) received another rating change, 10 to able seaman, two to captain's clerk, one to trumpeter and one to cooper. The role of trumpeter is an archaic one dating to when instructions to the crew were signaled by trumpet, however Admiralty regulations still allowed for one trumpeter per rated ship and it was rated as petty officer status<sup>22</sup> as was the cooper.<sup>23</sup> A captain's clerk was responsible for keeping the captain's written records up to date and implied that the holder of this position must have had a high degree of literate skills.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, it can be argued, that all these rating changes were a promotion of sorts. Apart from one rating change where the date of the change is not given, the time for the change from ordinary to able seaman varied between 92 and 582 days but averages out at 278 days or about 44 weeks. A total of 13 (13%) of the 102 landsmen volunteers ended up rated able seaman either directly or via the rate of ordinary seaman. The quickest to make it to able seaman was 22 year old John Doughton (T475) who spent one day as an ordinary seaman and was then rated able 30 weeks later<sup>25</sup> but it is clear from this rapid rise that Doughton had previous seagoing experience. Doughton was one of 16 men that 'appeared' on board

the *Trent* on the same day and it is quite likely that he was originally miss-rated and the mistake corrected the next day. The landsman volunteer who took the longest time to reach able seaman rating was Thomas Gee (T18) who took a total of 2276 days or six years and two months to reach able seaman rank. As Gee was 20 years old when he came on board he must have been 26 or 27 before he made able seaman.<sup>26</sup> However the average time for making able seaman from landsman (either directly or via the rank of ordinary seaman) works out at 960 days or 137 weeks, just over two and a half years. Three individuals had a further rating change. One able seaman, John Snelling (T276), was promoted to quarter gunner and two other able seamen, William Amor (sic) (T10 and T403) and Thomas Young (T49) were both dis-rated to ordinary seaman. The reasons for the two dis-ratings are unclear. It is possible that it was as a punishment for a misdemeanor not severe enough for a flogging or it could be that they did not match up to their new rating or perhaps it was for health reasons? The records are silent on the reasons.

In looking at the disciplinary record of volunteer landsmen the factor considered is recorded floggings. It is clear from ship's records of the period that other types of punishment were commonplace. These other types of punishment could include stoppage of drink, starting the men with a ropes end, running the gauntlet, drinking salt water, lashing the men to the rigging and other petty torments that the Service could devise.<sup>27</sup> However most of these are not recorded in the captain's log and we only know about their existence from occasional log entries, memoirs, court martial records and other official documentation. On the other hand captains were required to record the details of



any floggings that were carried out on board ship and by cross-referencing the log entries to the muster records we can establish individual disciplinary records. Out of the 102 (100%) *Trent* landsmen volunteers 15 (15%) are recorded as having been flogged at least once and this compares exactly with an overall crew punishment rate of 15%. Therefore it would appear that the volunteer landsmen were no more or less troublesome than the crew in general. Three or 3% of volunteer landsmen were flogged twice and this compares with the crew ratio of 2%. It would appear that the volunteer landsmen were less likely to have learnt their lesson although the number of repeat offenders is so low and the percentage difference so small that it is difficult to draw any conclusions. No volunteer landsman was flogged more than twice during their service on board the *Trent*. Five men were flogged for 'neglect of duty', two for 'disobedience of orders', three for drunkenness, two for 'quarrelling', one for theft, one for desertion, one for 'enticing others to desert', one for insolence, one for 'mutinous expressions' and for two others the reason for punishment was not specified.<sup>28</sup> Punishment varied from 12 to 75 lashes although the average beating received was 20 lashes. However this average could be a little misleading as almost all floggings were handed out in multiples of 12 and with the exception of Robert Massey (T36) who received 75 lashes for desertion on 27 November 1800 (see endnote 28) there were 10 sets of 12 lashes handed out and seven of 24 lashes. Of the 34 landsmen volunteers promoted six (18%) were flogged during their stay on board the *Trent*, a higher percentage than that of the crew and volunteer landsmen as a group. Therefore it would appear that a flogging did not effect a man's chance of promotion. The case of Robert Massey (T36), referred to above, demonstrates the ups and downs of seaboard life. Massey joined the ship on the 28 April 1796<sup>29</sup> as a 24 year old

landsman volunteer from Salisbury and was promoted to ordinary seaman after serving for approximately 18 months on board ship.<sup>30</sup> After just over another two years service he was promoted again on 9 October 1799 to captain's clerk, demonstrating that he was a literate man.<sup>31</sup> On 11 October 1800, during what can only be described as Captain Sir Edward Hamilton's reign of terror in command of the *Trent*.<sup>32</sup> Massey deserted during the *Trent's* stay in Portsmouth, but 13 days later he was apprehended and returned to the ship. Massey was given 75 lashes for desertion by Hamilton and entered onto the ship's books (T776) as 'landsman' until he was again rated ordinary seaman a couple of months later on 1 December 1800.<sup>33</sup> Massey ended his time on the *Trent* on the 18 March 1801<sup>34</sup> when he was turned over to the *London*.<sup>35</sup> One question worth addressing is, were landsmen volunteers flogged early in their careers in order to imbue them with a sense of awe of the Royal Navy? A look at the time between landsmen volunteers arriving on board the *Trent* and when they received their first flogging show that the earliest time that a man was flogged was 105 days,<sup>36</sup> well over three months but that the average time was 823 days, 118 weeks or well over two years service. This shows that men were not routinely flogged when they arrived on board but that flogging normally occurred after they had seen considerable sea service.

Of the 102 volunteer landsmen a total of 34 (33%) deserted the ship and were marked down as 'Ran'. The only man known to have been apprehended and returned to the ship was Robert Massey who is discussed above. A further 35 (34%) were discharged sick of which 12 (34%) returned to the *Trent* in due course but under a new muster number. A total of 10 (10%) landsmen volunteers died during their time on board, all, it would

appear, from disease and 10 (10%) men were turned over to other ships, eight were turned over to the *Plantagenet*<sup>37</sup> at the end of the *Trent*'s commission in June 1803<sup>38</sup>. Seven (7%) men were discharged from the ship by the Port Admiral, all within a couple of months of coming on board. The reason for this discharge is not given but is likely to be connected with the change of regulations in the ship's complement, see below. One (1%) man was invalided out of the *Trent*, one (1%) was transferred to the boys second class muster, one was discharged 'on promotion' and for two (2%) men the reason for their discharge is unclear. The desertion rate for the *Trent*'s crew counting landsmen, ordinary seamen and able seamen (discounting officers, petty officers and specialists) is 30% (244 deserted out of a population of 815) and so it would appear that in broad terms volunteer landsmen were no more or less likely to desert than the rest of the crew. The shortest time that a volunteer landsman spent on board the *Trent* before deserting was John Cunningham (T91) who absconded after only two weeks on board<sup>39</sup> and the longest serving was volunteer landsman William Gibson (T226) who deserted after over five and a half years service on board<sup>40</sup> but the average time that men took before opportunity and desire to desert coincided was 578 days or 83 weeks, just over a year and one half's service. Five men (15%) deserted within the first month of coming on board the *Trent* and a further seven men (21%) deserted before their first year of service had been completed. This would seem to point to a situation where around 36% of volunteer landsmen found life in the Royal Navy not for them and deserted within a year of the start of their nautical careers but would probably not have acquired enough seagoing skills to be immediately useful to the merchant marine and were likely to have returned to a landlubber's existence. By the time the other 64% had decided to desert they probably

would have acquired enough seagoing skills to get a berth in a merchant ship or even in another Royal Navy warship. Of those who stayed on the *Trent* for over a year before deserting 11 or 50% had by that time been promoted. In contrast, of those who deserted before the year was up only one (8%) had been promoted and that had been to carpenter's crew<sup>41</sup> a non-naval specific trade. Therefore it would seem that the majority of landsmen volunteers stuck with their new environment, developed new skills and joined the seafaring community. The volunteer landsmen of the *Trent* suffered a much higher incidence of sickness than the crew in general. The percentage of landsmen volunteers that were discharged sick or discharged dead through sickness was 34% and 10% respectively. This compares to the crew profile of 19% discharged sick and 7% discharged dead from sickness. However the recovery rate of the sick, that is they returned to the *Trent*, is similar; 34% for the volunteer landsmen and 37% for the crew in general. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that new crewmen were entering a novel environment to which their immune systems were not yet attuned. However the facts do not support this view. When the average time before falling sick are looked at it is found that the crew in general would fall sick after an average of 416 days service but that for new landsmen volunteers this was 465 days. The most likely explanation for this difference is that the volunteer landsmen had a lower resistance to the diseases of the West Indies than the rest of the crew, many of which had probably served there in previous commissions, and it was this factor that accounted for the high sickness rate. The death rate due to sickness is slightly higher than the crews, 10% compared to 7%, but that difference is not significant when dealing with a sample of just over 100 men.

A look at the volunteer landsmen that served on board the *Trent* has produced a number of answers to the questions that we set ourselves. The age profile shows that, as we would probably expect, the great majority of landsmen volunteers (79%) were aged 25 or below. It is also not surprising to find that all but one of the landsmen volunteers was of British origin and that Englishmen were the prominent nationality (61%). It would seem that volunteer landsmen were no more or less trouble than the rest of the crew as they appear to have been flogged to the same degree as the crew in general and furthermore they were not flogged into obedience as soon as they came on board but in most cases almost a year of service passed before they were flogged. Volunteer landsmen must have progressed in developing their seagoing skills as we have seen that 33% of them were promoted to ranks that required that they have those skills. This also demonstrates that volunteer landsmen coming on board ship did have a career open to them and it is probable that many of those who deserted the ship were taking that option in order to offer their new-found skills in a sellers market.

### ***Emerald1***

A total of 72 landsmen volunteers are recorded to have served on board the *Emerald*.<sup>42</sup> Like the *Trent*, most of the landsmen volunteers came on board the *Emerald1* whilst she was fitting out at the start of her commission. A total of 43 landsmen volunteers (60%) joined the *Emerald1* in September 1795<sup>43</sup> while she was moored next to a sheer hulk<sup>44</sup> in Woolwich dockyard, all but two of these men coming from the receiving ship *Enterprise*.<sup>45</sup> A total of 23 men rated landsmen were sent from the receiving ship

*Sandwich*<sup>46</sup> during the *Emerald*'s fitting out but these men have not been included in this survey. The reason for this is that it has been difficult to ascertain if the men were landsmen volunteers. It is very likely that they were volunteers but the *Emerald*<sup>47</sup> and the *Sandwich*'s<sup>48</sup> muster records are unclear on this point and so they have been left out. One other possible landsmen volunteer has been discarded from this survey and that is 47 year old Thomas Riley (E526) from Waterford, Ireland. Riley was recruited whilst the *Emerald* was moored in Antigua Harbor on 5 November 1801 and although Riley is entered as a landsman volunteer the word 'pressed' has been scored out and the word 'Vol.' inserted over it. Given Riley's age and the fact that he was adrift in the West Indies it is likely that he had been pressed and then 'persuaded' to volunteer, implying that he had already spent some time at sea, and therefore was not a true landsman volunteer. In the event, Riley was discharged the ship shortly after his recruitment on the 9 February 1802 as 'invalided'.<sup>49</sup> Only three of the first group of volunteer landsmen was still serving with the *Emerald* when she was decommissioned ten years later, awaiting a major refit, in April 1805. These were Matthew Cane (E38), Thomas Clark (E39) and Joseph Hind (E54).<sup>50</sup> Matthew Cane was from Galway, Ireland aged 29 when he joined the *Emerald*; Thomas Clark was from Llanethy (*sic*), Carmarthen, aged 32 on joining the ship and Joseph Hind was a 28 year old from the Isle of Man.<sup>51</sup> All three men were eventually rated ordinary seaman although the date of the appointment was, most unusually, not recorded for Cane and Clark, Hind was promoted on 1 May 1799, three and a half years after joining the ship.<sup>52</sup> Thomas Clark was given 36 lashes for 'attempting to desert' on 10 July 1804,<sup>53</sup> which seems rather harsh on a 41 year old man

who had given nine years service to the Royal Navy. All three men served on board *Emerald* until paid off when the ship was decommissioned in April 1805.<sup>54</sup>

The age profile of the *Emerald*'s 72 landsmen volunteers was 18 (25%) aged between 15-20, 25 (34%) between 21-25, 17 (23%) between 26-30, eight (11%) between 31-35, two (3%) between 36-40 and two (3%) between 41-45. This age profile, surprisingly, follows the crew age profile to within a few percentage points,<sup>55</sup> perhaps we would expect it to have been a younger profile, as was the *Trent*'s volunteer landsmen. The main difference between the *Emerald* and the *Trent* are in the lower age groups. For those aged below 20 the *Emerald* records 25% and the *Trent* 34%, for 21-25 *Emerald* records 34% and the *Trent* 45% and for 26-30 23% and 11% respectively. There seems no ready answer to account for this difference; perhaps it was simply the luck of the draw of who got sent to which ship? The youngest landsman volunteer to serve on the *Emerald* was 17 year old Robert Gibson (E264) from Manchester. Gibson joined the ship on 31 March 1796<sup>56</sup> at Portsmouth and he served until discharged 'Florentine on preferment' on 23 August 1800.<sup>57</sup> Gibson must have been considered a capable young man as he was made midshipman on 16 April 1797 then rated able seaman and back to midshipman before going to the *Florentine*.<sup>58</sup> Records show that he eventually made lieutenant on the 6 August 1807, over 10 years later aged around 27, but there is no record of him progressing any further as a commissioned officer and it is recorded that he died in 1841 aged around 62.<sup>59</sup> It is possible that Gibson was taken on as a protégé of Captain Velterers Cornwall Berkeley (T1) and was already destined for the quarterdeck. It is therefore possible that he did have claims to gentility or was a follower of Berkeley

and this is supported by the fact that he did not receive a volunteers bounty during his four years service on board the *Emerald*. The argument against Gibson being a Berkeley follower is that he was not put into the volunteer's first class muster but was put on the general crew muster. If Gibson was a Berkeley protégé, the lack of his progress beyond lieutenant could be ascribed to Berkeley's falling into disgrace following the events after the Battle of St Vincent (14 February 1797). Berkeley was thought to have not acted aggressively enough in attacking the disabled Spanish man-of-war the 'Santissimo Trinidad'.<sup>60</sup> The oldest landsman volunteer was 44 year old Michael O'Keefe (E48) from Thurlow in Ireland. O'Keefe joined the ship on 13 September 1795 and served on board the *Emerald* until discharged as 'unusable' on 1 February 1798. During his career on board the *Emerald* O'Keefe was given 48 lashes on 17 February 1796 for 'drunkenness, disobedience of orders and neglect of duty'.<sup>61</sup>

Just over half the volunteer landsmen of the *Emerald* were of English origin. A total of 37 (51%) were recorded to have come from England, 21 (29%) from Ireland, six (8%) from Scotland, five (7%) from Wales and three (4%) foreigners. This profile compares closely with that of the crew in general apart from a high number of Irishmen (29% volunteer landsmen compared with 19% crew) and the low number of foreigners (4% volunteer landsmen compared with 18% crew).<sup>62</sup> These differences can best be explained by the high number of Irish volunteers that were sent to the *Emerald* from the receiving ship *Enterprize* during its fitting out (9 out of 44 men or 21%) and the unlikelihood of foreigners volunteering for the Royal Navy without any duress being applied. However the foreigners that did appear to have volunteered were 19 year old Samuel McCanney



(sic) (E535) from Tortola in the West Indies, 22 year old John Hall (E742) from Massachusetts, USA and 19 year old John McNabb (E35) from Charles Town, Carolina, USA. John Hall joined the *Emerald* on 21 April 1804 and deserted the ship on 1 July 1804 just a few months later.<sup>63</sup> Samuel McCanney joined the ship on 18 December 1801<sup>64</sup> and was subsequently discharged the ship at St Lucia on 25 June 1803 but no reason was given for this discharge.<sup>65</sup> John McNabb came from the *Enterprize* on 12 September 1795 was promoted to ordinary seaman shortly after on 23 October 1795<sup>66</sup> and stayed on board the *Emerald* until deserting the ship in Gibraltar two years later on 30 September 1797.<sup>67</sup>

Out of the 72 landsmen volunteers a total of 34 (47%) were promoted during their stay on board the *Emerald*. Of the 34 men promoted, 23 (68%) were rated ordinary seaman, four (12%) rated able seaman, three (9%) rated carpenter's crew, one (3%) rated acting surgeon's second mate, one (3%) rated midshipman (discussed above), one (3%) rated clerk and one (3%) rated trumpeter. The fastest promotion to ordinary seaman from landsman was five days for 24 year old John Gardiner (E529) from Wexford who volunteered for the ship during its stay in Antigua on 5 November 1801 and was promoted on the 10 November.<sup>68</sup> This rapid promotion almost certainly meant that Gardiner already possessed seagoing skills. The same is probably true of the American John McNabb (E35) who was rated ordinary seaman after just 41 days on board.<sup>69</sup> The longest that any landsman volunteer had to wait before being promoted was 1328 days or 190 weeks, about three and a half years and this applied to two landsmen volunteers, 18 year old William Brown (E25) from Suffolk and 24 year old John Smalley from

Westminster. (E26) Brown and Smalley arrived on board together on 11 September 1795 from the receiving ship *Enterprize*, and were also promoted on the same day 1 May 1799.<sup>70</sup> However the average time spent for a landsman volunteer to reach ordinary seaman rating was 889 days or 127 weeks, about two years and five months. Only in the case of 19 out of the 23 landsmen volunteers is the date of promotion to ordinary seaman given. With the promotion of landsmen volunteers a pattern can be seen to emerge. In two cases promotion of a number of the men occurred at the same time. On 22 April 1798<sup>71</sup> four volunteer landsmen were promoted to ordinary seamen and on 1 May 1799<sup>72</sup> a total of seven more were rated ordinary. When all the ratings changes of the crew in general are looked at this pattern of block changes is clearly demonstrated. For example on 23 December 1795 a total of 35 rating changes took place and shortly after on 1 January 1796 a further 26 changes occurred under Captain Berkeley (E1).<sup>73</sup> This pattern of block rating changes can be shown to be not just the idiosyncratic action of one captain as a similar block of rating changes occurred on 1 January 1804 when 10 rating changes occurred and 10 March 1804<sup>74</sup> when a further five men are changed rating under Captain James O'Bryen (*sic*) (E487). It is quite likely that captains periodically decided to review the ratings and stations of the seamen and conduct a survey and even examine the men as to their capability or lack of it and that we are seeing this in action. Of the four landsmen volunteers made able seamen the quickest promotion took 178 days and the longest 1940 days but averaged out at 830 days or 119 weeks, about 2 years and three months. This indicates that none of the men had seafaring skills before their time on board the *Emerald* but, like the men promoted able seamen of the *Trent*, took to the sea and life in the Royal Navy.<sup>75</sup> One of the three landsmen volunteers rated carpenter's crew took 978

days to reach that rank and the other two both took 417 days making an average of 604 days or 86 weeks, just over a year and one half.<sup>76</sup> This suggests that these three men were not previously carpenters but either showed an aptitude or willingness to learn and one of them, 20 year old Thomas Powell (E23) from Gloucestershire, was subsequently made carpenter's mate on 23 December 1799<sup>77</sup> in which rating he stayed until being invalided out of the Service on 10 November 1803.<sup>78</sup> The other two carpenter's crew also suffered from poor health, 18 year old William Hopkins (E20) from Essex was invalided out of the Service on 8 November 1802 and 20 year old John Greenhill (E22) from Worcester was discharged dead from Antigua Hospital six days later on the 14 of November 1802, both victims of the epidemic that hit the *Emerald* during its stay in Antigua dockyard.<sup>79</sup> Of the 23 landsmen volunteers promoted to ordinary seaman 10 (44%) were further promoted. Nine of these were promoted to able seaman and one to armourer's mate. The dates of the promotion of all nine promoted to able seaman is given, however the time taken to move from ordinary to able seaman for one of the men cannot be calculated as the first promotion date to ordinary seaman was not recorded. But of the remaining eight the fastest promotion was 532 days or 76 weeks and the longest 1165 days or 166 weeks and the average works out at 803 days or 115 weeks, just over two years. One of the landsmen volunteers, 28 year old David Tyler (E32) from Angus, Scotland, who was rated able seaman directly from landsman was re-rated a second time as schoolmaster<sup>80</sup> which must demonstrate that he had literary and scholarly skills but he too succumbed to the Antigua epidemic and was discharged dead from the ship on 16 November 1802.<sup>81</sup>

It would appear that the *Emerald*'s volunteer landmen were a little more troublesome than the *Trent*'s as 16 out of the 72 were flogged at least once, 22% compared to the *Trent*'s record of 15%. However to set against that is the higher level of flogging in the *Emerald*. A total of 19% of the *Emerald*'s crew were recorded as having been flogged, which is higher than the *Trent*'s 15%. Therefore, in general, it would seem that either there was a stricter disciplinary regime on board the *Emerald* than the *Trent* or that the crew of the *Emerald* were a more troublesome bunch. It is certainly true that six, or 8%, of the *Emerald*'s volunteer landmen were flogged twice against 2% of the *Trent*'s. Also that two of the *Emerald*'s volunteer landmen were flogged three times but none of the *Trent*'s was flogged more than twice. A total of 6% of the *Emerald*'s crew were also flogged more than once which is close to the volunteer landsman total of 8%. However the difference of 2% is so small as to be not significant. Nine of the *Emerald*'s volunteer landmen were flogged for 'neglect of duty', six for fighting, five for drunkenness, two for 'disobedience of orders' and one each for 'defraud' (there is no further clarification), 'attempting to desert', desertion, 'absent without leave', 'going out through the gates without leave', 'mutiny',<sup>82</sup> 'theft' and 'insolence to his superior officer'. The amount of punishment handed out to the *Emerald*'s volunteer landmen is also harsher than on board the *Trent*. There were 12 recorded instances of men receiving 12 lashes, five of 24 lashes, three of 36 lashes, two of 48 lashes, one of 46 lashes and one of 18 lashes which averages out at 22 lashes per beating similar to that of the *Trent*'s 20. A look at the time it took between volunteer landmen coming on board the *Emerald* and their first flogging ranges between 57 days,<sup>83</sup> about two months and 3222 days or 460 weeks, nearly nine years<sup>84</sup> but the average works out at 927 days or 132 weeks, nearly two and a half years.

This would also support the findings from the *Trent* that demonstrate that newcomers to the Royal Navy were not beaten into submission on arrival. Of the 34 landsmen volunteers who received promotion during their time on board the *Emerald* 13 or 38% were flogged, a much higher percentage than volunteer landsmen in general at 22% or the crew at 19%. Or, to look at it another way, of the 16 volunteer landsmen flogged 13 or 81% were promoted. Floggings occurred before and after promotions and it would seem that there was no direct link between the two except that flogged men were much more likely to be promoted than non-flogged men. Was it the case that the more lively of the new volunteers were more likely to be promoted as well as flogged or are we seeing that flogging changed behavior – perhaps both?

Out of the 72 landsmen volunteers 21 (29%) were recorded as having deserted the ship and were marked down as ‘ran’, 13 (18%) were turned over to other ships, 13 (18%) were discharged the ship dead, 10 (14%) were discharged as invalids or ‘unusable’, nine (13%) were discharged sick and six (8%) were discharged for various reasons, most of which are unclear. The percentage of volunteer landsmen that deserted at 29% is slightly lower than that of the *Trent* at 33% but is considerably higher than *Emerald* 1’s desertion rate of landsmen, ordinary and able seaman (discounting officers, petty officers and specialists) at 19% (143 men deserting out of 756). The volunteer landsman who had the shortest career on board the *Emerald* 1 was 25 year old John Alexander (E512) from Kilmarnock, Scotland who deserted the ship after only six days service<sup>85</sup> and the longest service before desertion was 21 year old Samuel Johnstone (*sic*) (E261) from Beaconsfield, Bucks who ran after 1812 days or 259 weeks, about five years.<sup>86</sup> Three men deserted the *Emerald* 1

within a month of coming on board and a further 13 deserted within a year. This points to the probability of those 16 men (76%) deciding that the Royal Navy was, after all, not the career for them. Two of the men who deserted, Samuel Johnstone (E261) discussed above who deserted on 15 January 1801 and 20 year old Timothy Donovan (E53) from Ireland who deserted on 2 February 1797<sup>87</sup> were recaptured. Curiously neither man appears to have received a flogging or court martial for their desertion. The captain's log for February 1797 records that '3 men deserted from launch' and shortly after that '2 men returned on board'<sup>88</sup> but only one man is recorded as having deserted in the muster book and this is Donovan. Perhaps Donovan was spared a flogging as at that time the *Emerald* was involved in the preliminaries to the Battle of Cape St. Vincent?<sup>89</sup> However there appears no reason for Johnstone's avoiding a flogging unless he, or for that matter Donovan, were punished in some other way that was not recorded in the ship's records. Donovan deserted again six months later on 30 August 1797<sup>90</sup> and there is no record of him being caught for a second time. Coincidentally, Johnstone was turned over to the *Trent* on 10 February 1801<sup>91</sup> where he was entered on the books rated able seaman (T802) and where he served for just over a month until being turned over to the *Royal William*.<sup>92</sup> However the average time that a volunteer landsman spent on board the *Emerald* before deserting works out at 283 days or 40 weeks which is half that of the *Trent*'s 83 weeks. A high percentage of volunteer landsmen were discharged sick, invalided or dead, 63%. The reasons for this high rate is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 but in broad terms it was largely due to the active nature of the *Emerald*'s commission, four of the volunteer landsmen were killed in action, and the disease epidemic that hit the ship in Antigua in late 1802. Only one of those discharged sick were recorded as having

returned to the *Emerald* and this was (E24) who was sent sick at Woolwich on 23 October 1795 and returned on 12 January 1796 (E254) but clearly he was still sickly as he was invalided out of the Royal Navy on 16 November 1796.<sup>93</sup>

The evidence from the *Emerald*'s records concerning volunteer landsmen has revealed a number of issues. The age profile of volunteer landsmen is slightly higher than that of the *Trent* and matches the general crew's age profile quite closely. The origin of the volunteer landsmen again matches that of the crew in general except that there were fewer foreign volunteers (4% compared to 18% respectively), which perhaps we would expect, and more Irish volunteers (29% compared to 19% respectively) for which there appears no ready explanation other than the luck of the draw. For the development of seafaring competencies a pattern of developing skills emerges that shows that it takes on average just over two years to move from landsman volunteer to ordinary seaman and a further two years to move from ordinary to able seaman. However there does appear to be a 'fast track' available to those landsmen that show particular aptitude to a naval career that allows a move directly to able seaman in just over two years service and these findings are supported by the evidence from the *Trent*. From the log entries on floggings it would appear that volunteer landsmen were slightly more likely to be flogged than the crew (22% compared to 19% respectively) but that flogged men were much more likely to be promoted than non-flogged men. What is clear from the findings is that on coming on board the *Emerald* there was a very good chance that if you survived, avoided illness and did not desert that you would develop seafaring skills and follow a career path. Like

the *Trent*, no landsman volunteer that served on the *Emerald1* and was still there when the commission ended was still a landsman.

### ***Emerald2***

A total of 74 crewmen who served on board the *Emerald2* are recorded as being volunteer landmen<sup>94</sup> of which 41 (55%) came directly from receiving ships<sup>95</sup> and 33 (46%) who were simply stated to be 'volunteers'. A further nine men are recorded as being volunteer landmen but as these men were all from various ships<sup>96</sup> (not receiving ships) it is likely that they had been to sea before and had already acquired some seagoing skills and therefore they are not included in this sample. Of the 74 volunteer landmen 31 (42%) were still serving when the *Emerald2* was finally decommissioned in December 1811. This is a high number compared to the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* but the commission of *Emerald2* lasted just over five years compared to the *Trent's* seven year commission and the *Emerald1's* 10 year commission. Also *Emerald2* served almost exclusively in home waters, apart from a final visit to the Cape of Good Hope just before decommissioning, which improved the chances of men staying healthier for longer (see Chapter 3). However, it is also the case, that a number of the landmen volunteers still with the *Emerald2* at the end of her commission had not been long on board and therefore, for the purpose of establishing a career and seagoing skills development pattern, are not very helpful. If we therefore exclude those who came on board the ship less than two years before her decommissioning we can perhaps get a truer picture. A total of 62 men fit this new category and of those 23 (37%) were still serving on board the *Emerald2* when she was decommissioned. Out of the 23 volunteer landmen with



over two years service on board the *Emerald2* at the end of her commission 13 (57%) had received some sort of promotion. If these figures are anything to go by it would seem that if a volunteer landsman could avoid sickness, injury and remain on board that he had a better than evens chance of receiving some kind of promotion.

For two of the 74 volunteer landsmen their age is not given but for the other 72 their age profile works out at one aged 14 years old, 23 (32%) between 15-20, 22 (31%) between 21-25, 20 (28%) between 26-30, four (6%) between 31-35 and two (3%) between 36-40. Compared to the age profile of the crew in general there are a number of differences in the various bands<sup>97</sup> and overall a younger bias can be seen in volunteer landsmen. If the age bands are grouped together we see that 91% of volunteer landsmen are aged 30 or below compared to 81% of the crew, perhaps as we would expect.

For eight of the 74 volunteer landsmen their place of origin is not given or is unclear. For the remaining 66 a total of 40 (61%) were recorded as English, 20 (30%) Irish, three (5%) Scottish and three (5%) foreign (non-British). Compared to the crew in general there is a high proportion of Englishmen and Irishmen (61% compared to 52% and 30% compared to 18% respectively) and a lower proportion of Scottish and non-British (5% compared to 12% and 5% compared to 18% respectively) and this is broadly consistent with the findings from the *Trent* and the *Emerald1* and the reasons for these differences are discussed above. The main difference between the *Trent*, *Emerald1* and *Emerald2* is that *Emerald2* saw very little foreign service and this is a likely reflection of the low numbers of foreign crewmen recruited to serve on her.

Of the 74 volunteer landsmen a total of 21 (28%) are recorded as having received some sort of promotion, which is less than the 33% from the *Trent* and 47% from the *Emerald1*. However, as stated above, the *Emerald2*'s commission was considerably shorter than the other two commissions and this could account for the difference. Out of the 21 of those promoted for the first time 16 (76%) were rated ordinary seaman, three (19%) were rated directly to able seaman, one was rated carpenter's crew and one rated 'Yeoman of the Boat's Room and Store Room'. This pattern of the majority of men being rated ordinary seaman, a few directly to able seaman and some to specialist ratings follows the other commissions. However of the three volunteer landsmen rated able seaman one, Thomas Dunn (EM24) a 28 year old from Stafford, was rated after only 23 days service<sup>98</sup> and Luke Standing (EM137), a 26 year old from London, after 69 days service,<sup>99</sup> which almost certainly means that they both had previous seagoing experience. The other man, Thomas Hawkins (EM104), a 25 year old from Huntingdon, was rated able seaman after 1730 days or 247 weeks, nearly five years service.<sup>100</sup> Hawkins made able seaman directly from landsman and although this was not common it did occur. However it normally occurred after around two and a half year's service (see below) and why Hawkins did not take the normal route of landsman, ordinary seaman and then able seaman is not clear. Once again in the new ratings given the men we see the practice of changing ratings together. Of the 21 first time rating changes for volunteer landsmen 11 (52%) were recorded as having taken place on the same day, 4 April 1811.<sup>101</sup> The volunteer landsman who took the shortest time to reach ordinary seaman was 18 year old William Snell (EM403) from Saltash who took 329 days or 47 weeks, just under a year.<sup>102</sup> The volunteer landsman who took the longest to reach that rating was 30 year old

Rd. (Richard?) Reader (EM105) from London who took 1880 days or 268 weeks, over five years.<sup>103</sup> However the average time that it took a volunteer landsmen serving on board the *Emerald2* to make ordinary seaman was 1108 days or 158 weeks, about three years. This figure of three years is higher than the *Emerald1*'s two and a half years and the *Trent*'s two years. There is no immediate evidence to explain these differences between the ships although the most likely explanation is the training regime that ship's officers and in particular the captain and first lieutenant instigated on board their respective ships. The longer period it took to train a volunteer landsman up to ordinary seaman on board the *Emerald2* than the *Emerald1* and *Trent* could also help explain why a lower percentage of men had still not made ordinary seaman at the end of the ship's commission. Of the 16 volunteer landsmen promoted to ordinary seaman only one was promoted again and this was 20 year old Robert Atkins (EM254) from Sunderland who was rated able seaman on 4 April 1811 1097 days or 157 weeks, about three years after being made ordinary seaman.<sup>104</sup> Luke Standing (EM137), who had been made able seaman directly from volunteer landsman after just 69 days service, was demoted to ordinary seaman on 20 December 1806<sup>105</sup> after a further 91 days but was then rated back to able seaman on 2 April 1808,<sup>106</sup> 469 days or 67 weeks later. The reason for this demotion and then reinstatement is not given but the most likely explanation is that it was a punishment for a minor misdemeanor that was not severe enough to merit a flogging. The only other volunteer landsmen to be promoted twice was Thomas Dunn (EM24) who had been promoted to able seaman after only 23 days service (discussed above and see endnote 84) who was made armourer's mate on 3 November 1806,<sup>107</sup> a total of 119 days or 17 weeks.

Out of the 74 volunteer landmen a total of 20 (27%) were recorded in the captain's log of the *Emerald2* as having been flogged at least once and this compares with a 22% flogging record for the *Emerald1* and 15% for the *Trent*. The ratio of flogging for the whole crew of the *Emerald2* works out at 18% and so it would appear that the volunteer landmen suffered a harder disciplinary regime than on the other two commissions and compared to the rest of the crew or that they were a rowdier bunch. Of the 74 volunteer landmen six (8%) were flogged twice and two of these were flogged for a third time. The 8% recidivist rate is exactly the same as the *Emerald2*'s crew in general but higher than the *Emerald1*'s 6% and the *Trent*'s 2%. The reasons given for punishment were 10 counts of drunkenness, four of 'uncleanliness' (generally thought to mean urinating in an improper place), three of 'disobedience of orders', two each of theft, 'riotous behavior' and 'quarrelling' and one of desertion. Perhaps we can see the high rate of misbehavior as the effect of too much of the demon drink. Although the reasons for floggings given out to the volunteer landmen for 'drunkenness' would at first glance seem high, 10 out of 24 (42%), a look at the full flogging record for the *Emerald2* reveals that of a total of 149 recorded floggings during the ship's commission, 73 included 'drunkenness' (51%) in the reason for punishment.<sup>108</sup> Therefore we can conclude that, if anything, the volunteer landmen of the *Emerald2* were more sober than the crew in general. A total of 14 cases of volunteer landmen receiving 12 lashes, six of 24 lashes, one of 18 lashes and one of 46 lashes are recorded. This gives an average beating of 18 lashes per offence, lower than the *Emerald1*'s 22 lashes or the *Trent*'s 20. Therefore it would appear that as a volunteer landman serving on board the *Emerald1* you would be more likely to be beaten than on the other commissions but the punishment was likely to be less severe, a comforting

thought no doubt. As with the *Emerald1* and *Trent* commissions, no volunteer landsman was flogged during the early stage of their time on board the *Emerald2*. The first man to be flogged was James Mansell (sic) (EM110) an 18 year old from Limerick, Ireland who was given 12 lashes on 29 December 1806 for 'disobedience of orders'<sup>109</sup> after 173 days or 25 weeks on board the *Emerald2*. The average time before receiving a flogging for those unlucky enough to be in that situation was 436 days or 62 weeks, over a year. Of the 21 volunteer landmen promoted seven (35%) were recorded to have been flogged, again a higher ratio than the average of 27%. Looking at it another way, of the 53 volunteer landmen not promoted during their time on board the *Emerald2* 13 (25%) were flogged demonstrating that those who were flogged were more likely to be promoted.

Of the 74 volunteer landmen of the *Emerald2* 26 (35%) were discharged at the end of the ship's commission, 19 (26%) deserted the ship and were marked down as ran, nine (12%) were discharged sick, seven (10%) were discharged for various reasons, five (8%) were discharged dead, three (4%) were invalided, three (4%) were turned over to other ships, one (1%) was captured by the enemy and one (1%) was transferred to the boys second class muster. Most of those discharged the ship at the end of her commission were sent to others ships but three were 'discharged from the Service' but no further details are given. The three men invalided were also all discharged at the end of the ship's commission. The percentage of the *Emerald2*'s landmen, ordinary and able seamen that deserted the ship was 20% (77 recorded as deserted from 390 seamen), which is lower than the volunteer landsman average of 26%, but it is fairly close given the small numbers involved. Of the volunteer landmen that ran, two ran together on the same day

that they appeared on board on 2 September 1809 and the muster book records that they ran from 'Cove of Cork from a boat'.<sup>110</sup> The volunteer landsman that stayed on board the longest before deserting was Alexander McDonald (EM92) a 24 year old from Inverness, Scotland who served on board for 1807 or 258 weeks, nearly five years before deserting.<sup>111</sup> However the average time spent on board before deserting was 597 days or 85 weeks, about a year and a half, almost exactly the same average time on board as the volunteer landsmen that deserted from the *Trent* but twice as long as the *Emerald1*. Of the 19 men who deserted one, Charles Hope (EM365) a 23 year old Londoner, is recorded as having been caught and returned to the ship. Hope is recorded as having deserted at Plymouth whilst on leave on 4 May 1810 and reappeared on board the *Emerald2* on 15 August 1810 (EM436).<sup>112</sup> Of the volunteer landsmen deserters four were recorded as having deserted while 'on leave' and a total of 16 of the *Emerald2*'s crew deserted whilst on leave which demonstrates that leave must have been given to the men. A total of 24% of the *Emerald2*'s volunteer landsmen were discharged as a result of sickness, disability or death. Twelve percent were discharged sick, 8% discharged dead and 4% invalided (see Chapter 3). Of the seven volunteer landsmen discharged for various reasons most are just recorded as discharged 'per order' and no other details are given. However William Rough (EM118), a 23 year old from London and John Jenkins (EM69), a 19 year old also from London, were both discharged the *Emerald2* 'being an apprentice'. Rough was returned after 120 days service and Jenkins after 66 days.<sup>113</sup>

So, in summary, the muster and log books of the *Emerald2* have given us some evidence of how the volunteer landsmen that joined that commission fared. The volunteer landsmen of the *Emerald2* were proportionally younger than the crew in general but this

we would expect. The same is true of the recorded nationality or origin of the volunteer landsmen that shows a higher proportion of Englishmen and lower percentage of foreigners (non-British). Like the *Emerald1* and the *Trent* we can see that there is a career path for volunteer landsmen and that around one in three developed sufficient seagoing skills to be promoted. Although the promotion rate is not as high as the *Emerald1* and the *Trent* this could be the result of a shorter commission that allowed less time for individual development. However it does seem that there was less attempt to develop individual seaman and seamanship during this commission than the other two as volunteer landsmen took significantly longer to be promoted, about three years compared to the *Emerald1*'s two and a half years and the *Trent*'s two years. Like the *Emerald1*, we see that the re-rating of crew members, including volunteer landsmen, would often take place *en masse* with significant numbers of the crew being re-rated on one day. The flogging régime on board the *Emerald2* for landsmen volunteers was slightly higher than the crew in general and also higher than the *Emerald1* and the *Trent* (27% *Emerald2* compared to 22% for *Emerald1* and 15% for the *Trent*). However the numbers of lashes handed out per flogging were slightly lower than the other commissions (18 for the *Emerald2*, 22 for the *Emerald1* and 20 for the *Trent*) and like the other commissions volunteer landsmen were not flogged into submission when they came on board. It also is the case that, like the other commissions, flogged men were more likely to be promoted. A large proportion of the volunteer landsmen were still serving on board the *Emerald2* at the end of her commission, several men serving for the whole period of that commission. Desertion was higher amongst the volunteer landsmen of the *Emerald2* at 26% than the crew average of 20% but lower than that of the *Emerald1* at 29% and the *Trent* at 33%.

The general rate of sickness, death and invalidity were considerably lower than the other commissions (*Emerald* 2 24%, *Emerald* 1 63% and *Trent* 45%) but this can be explained by the lack of service in tropical waters compared to the other commissions. Therefore the picture that emerges shows similarities to the other commissions but also differences that would largely seem to come from circumstances such as a shorter commission and little service in unhealthy waters.

### *Glenmore*

A total of 70 volunteer landsmen are recorded on the *Glenmore's* muster.<sup>114</sup> Just over half, 36 (51%) of the *Glenmore's* volunteer landsmen arrived on that ship from the receiving ship *Enterprize* whilst she was being fitted out for service in the Thames estuary in June 1796 following her launch from Woolwich dockyard. A further six volunteer landsmen joined her before she put to sea in July 1796, four from the receiving ship *Sandwich* and two simply recorded as 'volunteer'.<sup>115</sup> Five volunteer landsmen joined the ship in 1797, two from the 'Cork rendezvous', two simply recorded as volunteers and one from the 'Yarmouth rendezvous'.<sup>116</sup> In 1798 three volunteer landsmen were entered onto the *Glenmore's* books, two 'volunteers' and one from the Cork rendezvous.<sup>117</sup> A total of 17 landsmen volunteers joined the ship in 1799, 11 were recorded as 'Sheerness tender from Expedition Cutter Volunteer'<sup>118</sup> four 'volunteers' and two 'Cove volunteers' (Cove of Cork).<sup>119</sup> In 1801 two more volunteer landsmen joined the *Glenmore* and they were simply recorded as 'volunteers'.<sup>120</sup> and after that date no more landsmen volunteers are recorded to have served on board. However there is a difficulty with the 70 volunteer landsmen if we wish to use them as a basis for looking at how their respective careers



developed on board the *Glenmore*. Of the 70 volunteer landsmen 14 were discharged on one day just before the ship sailed on the first cruise of her commission. All 14 men were discharged on 27 June 1796 and the reason for discharge was given as 'Sandwich by order Captain Savage'<sup>121</sup> with no further information in either the muster or log books. Captain Savage was the Port Admiral and it would appear that the removing of the men to the *Sandwich* receiving ship was a result of the change in the complement of men allowed on vessels of the *Glenmore*'s class.<sup>122</sup> Prior to June 1796 the official Navy Board complement was set at 274 crew, marines and volunteers and boys but this was changed to 264 men and boys in June 1796, presumably as a device to help address manpower shortages, and the change is recorded on the front of the *Glenmore*'s muster books. The muster table of the *Glenmore* also shows that by the start of June 1796 she had met her complement of 274 men 'borne' on the ship's books but for the muster of 29 June 1796 the number of 'borne' men had fallen to 262.<sup>123</sup> Therefore it is almost certain that the Port Admiral, responsible for ensuring that ships had their full complement of men, withdrew the 'excess' men from the *Glenmore*. None of the 14 men removed from the *Glenmore* had served on board more than 68 days and therefore for the purposes of this survey will not be considered. Two other volunteer landsmen were also removed from the *Glenmore* shortly after arriving on board and before the ship sailed and they were sent to 'The Garland in lieu' by Captain Savage. Neither had served more than 59 days<sup>124</sup> and so they too are not included in the survey leaving 54 volunteer landsmen to be considered.

A total of eight (15%) of the 54 (100%) volunteer landsmen were still serving on board when the *Glenmore* finished her commission and the crew was paid off in February

1803.<sup>125</sup> All of the volunteer landsmen that were still on board the *Glenmore* when she was paid off had been promoted and none were still rated landsmen and all but one of the eight had served throughout the commission, a period of over six and a half years.<sup>126</sup> Therefore it would seem that on board the *Glenmore* a volunteer landsman would, over time, gain seagoing skills, learn a trade and gain promotion.

The age profile of the volunteer landsmen of the *Glenmore* (53 out of 54 have their ages recorded) is as follows: 10 (19%) in the age band 15-20, 24 (45%) in the age band 21-25, 12 (23%) in the age band 26-30, five (9%) in the age band 31-35 and two (4%) in the age band 36-40. In general terms this compares well with the overall crew age profile although in the age band 26-30 there is a 7% higher percentage of landsmen volunteers than crew, 23% compared to 16% respectively.<sup>127</sup> A total of 87% of the *Glenmore's* volunteer landsmen were aged 30 or below when they came on board that ship compared with the crew's 77%. So once again we see a younger profile of volunteer landsmen.

Of the 54 volunteer landsmen the origin of 53 are given. Of these 53 volunteer landsmen 19 (37%) were recorded as English, 25 (47%) Irish, four (8%) Scottish, four (8%) foreign and one (2%) Welsh. The number of Englishmen is lower than the crew average (37% volunteer landsmen as opposed to 44% crew) although the number of Irishmen is considerably higher (47% compared to 25%). However this can easily be explained as the *Glenmore* spent a large part of her commission based on the Cove of Cork, Ireland where access to Irish volunteers would have been quite straightforward. This location of the ship would also explain the low number of Scottish volunteers compared to the crew ratio (8%

of volunteer landsmen were Scottish compared to 19% of the crew). The smaller ratio of foreign volunteer landsmen compared to the crew in general (8% as opposed to 9%) is consistent with the other commissions and not significant.

A total of 18 (33%) out of the 53 volunteer landsmen are recorded to have received at least one promotion during their service on board the *Glenmore*. This is lower than the *Trent*'s 33% promoted and the *Emerald1*'s 47% but is higher than the *Emerald2*'s 28%. However like the *Emerald2*, the *Glenmore*'s commission of around six and a half years was slightly shorter than that of the *Trent* at about seven years and much shorter than the *Emerald1*'s nine and a half years and this could easily account for the difference. Of the 18 promotions from volunteer landsman 12 (67%) were to ordinary seaman, two were to trumpeter and one each to 'acting surgeon's second mate', armourer's mate, armourer and cooper. Of the ordinary seamen, Charles Watt (G487) was promoted the day after he came on board the *Glenmore*. Watt had been carried on the ship's books for about six months<sup>128</sup> as a volunteer landsman before he 'appeared' on board<sup>129</sup> and was promoted. It would be likely that Watt had already gained seagoing experience given his rapid promotion but the reasons for the six month gap between being on the ship's books and appearing on board are not given. In the event Watt did not stay long on board and was turned over to 'Royal William per order Adm. Millbank' on 20 May 1801.<sup>130</sup> Of the other 11 volunteer landsmen made ordinary seamen the quickest to reach that rank was 16 year old Oulah (*sic*) Hanson (G288) from 'Bonholm' who took 215 days, or 31 weeks and this would suggest that he had previous seagoing experience.<sup>131</sup> Two volunteer landsmen took the longest time to reach ordinary seaman from landsman and these were 34 year old

John Flinn (G57) from Youghal and 20 year old Thomas Harris (G60) from Buckinghamshire who both took 1469 days or 210 weeks, about four years.<sup>132</sup> However the average time that volunteer landsmen took to reach ordinary seaman was 879 days or 126 weeks about two years and four months which is close to the *Emerald1*'s two and a half years, less than the *Emerald2*'s three years and more than the *Trent*'s two years but in broad terms is in the bracket of two to three years to train a landsman to ordinary seaman. The promotion of Flinn and Harris on the same day is consistent with the findings from the other commissions in which we can see crew members being re-rated together. Flinn and Harris were given their new rating on 1 May 1800 along with 10 other crew members. Likewise, on 2 November 1796 29 year old volunteer landsman James Wynn (G58) from Twickenham was rated armourer and 25 year old William Thomas (G37) from Anglesey was rated armourer's mate.<sup>133</sup> It is likely that both these men had some experience in metalworking as they were both given their new ratings seven months after coming on board although it is possible that they learnt the armourer's trade under the tutelage of the gunner, to whom the armourer reported,<sup>134</sup> as no armourer was recorded as being appointed to serve on board the *Glenmore* prior to Wynn. When James Wynn deserted the ship on 11 June 1800 William Thomas was made 'acting armourer' the next day.<sup>135</sup> The other warrant officer to be appointed was volunteer landsman 29 year old Thomas Bowcock (G264) from Woolwich who was made cooper on 1 November 1796 after serving for just four months<sup>136</sup> and therefore almost certainly already had some skills in this area. Volunteer landsman Charles Coxter (G85), a 22 year old from Philadelphia, was appointed trumpeter on his arrival on board *Glenmore* in May 1796 and he served in this capacity until the ship was paid off in February 1803.

However David Shields (G87) a 23 year old from Glasgow was also appointed trumpeter on 1 March 1798<sup>137</sup> after 91 weeks service. Why the *Glenmore* had two trumpeters is unclear but perhaps George Duff (G1), captain of the ship at the time, was particularly musically inclined. It is well established that some captains of large men-of-war developed and kept bands on board their vessels and perhaps a trumpet duo was the frigate equivalent. David Shields' musical career came to an end on 30 August 1800<sup>138</sup> when he was re-rated as 'swabber'. The swabber was a petty officer whose job it was to oversee the cleaning of the ship's decks.<sup>139</sup> The other volunteer landsman promoted was 26 year old John Darley (G40) from London who was made acting surgeon's second mate eleven weeks after coming on board. It is unlikely that Darley possessed any previous medical skills although anything was possible in the 'golden age of quackery'<sup>140</sup> but maybe he showed potential in this field or perhaps he was seen as not making the grade as a seaman and so given another role? Whatever the reason Darley deserted shortly afterwards just over four months later.<sup>141</sup> Apart from David Shields being made swabber and William Thomas being made armourer the only other volunteer landsman to be re-rated twice was Peter Knowling (G34) a 28 year old from Carlow who was made able seaman from ordinary seaman on 14 June 1802<sup>142</sup> a period of 774 days or 111 weeks, just over two years. The changes of rating of the volunteer landsmen of the *Glenmore* once again demonstrate that there was a clear career path for those men who wanted to develop their seagoing skills and that some specialist skills acquired on the land could also be used on board ship.

Ten (19%) of the *Glenmore*'s 54 volunteer landsmen are recorded as having received at least one flogging. This is higher than the *Trent*'s flogging record of 15% but less than the *Emerald1*'s 22% and the *Emerald2*'s 27%. The overall flogging record for the crew of the *Glenmore* was 10% which would seem to indicate that volunteer landsmen were treated to a harsher regime than the crew in general and this is supported by the findings from the other commissions where the volunteer landsmen were flogged *pro rata* more than the crew with the exception of the *Trent* where the ratio was the same.<sup>143</sup> Only two of the *Glenmore*'s volunteer landsmen were flogged twice (4%) and this equates roughly with a crew rate of more than one flogging of 3%. A total of one flogging of 36 lashes were recorded, three of 24 lashes, four of 12 lashes, two of six lashes and one each of 34 and 18 lashes with an average beating of 18 lashes. This is a lower number of lashes per beating than any of the other commissions (*Trent* 20, *Emerald1* 22 and *Emerald2* 18) and it would seem that the disciplinary regime on board *Glenmore* was, as far as floggings were concerned, less than the other commissions. There were a total of five counts of volunteer landsmen being flogged for disobedience or disobedience of orders, two each of drunkenness, fighting, quarrelling and neglect of duty as well as one each for insolence, contempt and 'drawing his knife on John Bolan Seaman'.<sup>144</sup> Of the 18 volunteer landsmen promoted five (28%) were recorded as having been flogged or, looking at it another way, five (50%) of the ten men flogged were promoted. Once again we see that a man flogged is much more likely to receive promotion than a man who was not flogged. As with the other commissions none of the volunteer landsmen was flogged shortly after coming on board. The first volunteer landsman to be flogged was 27 year old John Hickson (G62) from Cork who was given 12 lashes on 25 June 1797 for

'drunkenness, disobedience and contempt' after 428 days or 61 weeks, over a year's service.<sup>145</sup> The average time for a volunteer landsman to be flogged after coming on board the *Glenmore* was 1008 days or 144 weeks, over two and a half years service.

Of the *Glenmore*'s 54 volunteer landmen 9 (17%) were discharged for various reasons, 17 (32%) are recorded as having deserted the ship, 11 (20%) were turned over to other ships, nine (17%) were discharged as either sick, dead or unusable and eight (15%) remained on board until the end of the ship's commission. The desertion rate of the *Glenmore*'s volunteer landmen at 32% is higher than that of the combined landmen, ordinary and able seaman of the ship at 18%.<sup>146</sup> The *Glenmore*'s desertion rate of 32% of volunteer landmen is higher than the *Emerald1*'s 29% and *Emerald2*'s 20% but slightly lower than the *Trent*'s 33%. Most of the volunteer landmen spent some time on board the *Glenmore* before deserting but the quickest to run was 24 year old William Calloway (G330) from Liverpool who deserted after just eight days service.<sup>147</sup> The longest serving volunteer landsman to desert was 26 year old George Davis (G69) from Clarkenwell who ran after 2265 or 324 weeks, over six years.<sup>148</sup> However the average time that volunteer landmen spent on board the *Glenmore* before choosing to desert was 482 days or 69 weeks, about one year and four months which is less than the *Trent*'s average of 83 weeks and the *Emerald2*'s average of 85 weeks but more than the *Emerald1*'s 40 weeks. A total of 17% of the *Glenmore*'s volunteer landmen were discharged due to death, sickness, disability or injury and this ratio is much lower than the *Trent*'s 45%, *Emerald1*'s 63% and *Emerald2*'s 24%. Both the *Glenmore* and the *Emerald2* did not venture much out of British waters and so we would expect a lower percentage of death

and illness than on the other two ships, but even allowing for this factor the health of the *Glenmore*'s crew appears good. Of the four volunteer landsmen that were discharged sick only one, 25 year old David Maroney (G397) from Tipperary returned to the *Glenmore* (G442).<sup>149</sup> Of the four men discharged dead two died of illness, one on board the *Glenmore* and one on board the Hospital Ship *L'Engageant*, one 'Fell overboard and was drowned'<sup>150</sup> and the other 21 year old Thomas Bradley (G41) from Farringdon was reported to have 'Shot himself in London' on 9 June 1796 just over seven weeks after coming on board the ship.<sup>151</sup> The volunteer landsman invalided was John Colebourn (*sic*) (G74) a 38 year old from Derby who joined the ship 28 April 1796<sup>152</sup> and was discharged as 'unusable' nearly a year later on 5 April 1797.<sup>153</sup> Of the eight volunteer landsmen still serving when the *Glenmore*'s commission finished, one was turned over to another ship, four were 'paid off' and three were discharged 'on leave'. As the *Glenmore*'s commission ended during the Peace of Amiens<sup>154</sup> it is quite possible that the men paid off and sent on leave were not expected to return. Michael Neal (G392) a 23 year old from Cork was discharged from the *Glenmore* on 11 June 1800 after just over a years service after being identified as a deserter from the *Porcupine*.<sup>155</sup> However deserters serving on the *Glenmore* were not restricted to the Royal Navy and 21 year old Samuel Kennerly (G360) from Mansfield was discharged the ship 'Cheshire Militia as a deserter' on 26 January 1799 after serving for just over six months.<sup>156</sup> Another seven volunteer landsmen were discharged the *Glenmore* but the reasons for their discharge were not give except as 'per order' with occasionally the place where the man was discharged and/or Admiral who ordered it.



The careers and background of the *Glenmore*'s 54 volunteer landsmen under consideration have provided us with a number of conclusions. Like the other commissions being looked, at a large proportion of the volunteer landsmen (51%) came via receiving ships whilst the ship was fitting out prior to active service. Other men came by turning up at the ship and 'volunteering'. The age profile of the volunteer landsmen of the *Glenmore* follows the crew age profile fairly closely although there is a bias towards younger men (87% of volunteer landsmen were aged 30 or below compared to 77% of the crew). The nationality or origin of the volunteer landsmen is heavily biased towards Irish recruits compared to the crew in general (47% compared to 25%) but this is almost certainly because the *Glenmore* spent most of her commission based in the Cove of Cork where access to Irish volunteers would have been relatively easy. This supposition can be supported by the fact that out of the 25 Irish volunteer landsmen only seven were recruited when the ship was away from Ireland. All of the eight volunteer landsmen still serving on board the *Glenmore* when she came to the end of her commission had been promoted. Out of the 54 volunteer landsmen 33% received promotion during their time on board the ship. Taking into account that men were turned over to other ships and some men discharged sick might well return to other ships it would seem likely that the conversion rate of landsmen to sailors and specialists works out at around 50%. The other 50% are likely to have either deserted or been discharged due to death, invalidity or sickness. Most of those promoted (67%) were rated ordinary seaman and the others as specialists. A good example of a career for volunteer landsmen being open is the case of the two men made armourer. The armourer was a warrant officer with higher status and pay than even able seaman and could only be dis-rated under extreme conditions.<sup>157</sup>

Therefore it is clear that volunteer landsmen did have a career path open to them and that many took that opportunity. The disciplinary regime for volunteer landsmen appears much harsher than that of the crew in general, 19% flogged as opposed to 10%, although it would again seem that men were not flogged into obedience as soon as they came on board as the average time between arriving on board and being flogged was over two and a half years service. However again we see that flogged men are more likely to be promoted which would seem to suggest that the more troublesome of the volunteer landsmen made better seamen. The desertion rate of volunteer landsmen from the *Glenmore* was considerably higher than that of the crew in general, 32% compared to 18%, but again there does not seem to be an immediate stampede away from the ship as the average time between arriving on board and deserting was one year and four months. All in all we see a picture where volunteer landsmen serving on board the *Glenmore* were subjected to a harsh discipline, are inclined to desert but that there was a career path available to those that wished to take it and many did.

### **All ships**

From the four commissions looked at a total of 302 landsmen volunteers' careers are under consideration. This would seem, on the face of it, to be a small sample from a combined crew population of around 3,000. However the question, discussed above (see Chapter 3), concerning who was and who was not a true volunteer as opposed to a pressed man deciding to make a virtue out of a necessity, is a vexed one. Therefore the approach taken has been to eliminate, as far as is possible, all those volunteer entries that seemed suspicious in order to try and establish a core of true volunteers who had not seen

sea service before and to follow their progress on board ship. Unfortunately this process has not managed to eliminate all those that had seen sea service before as we occasionally see men who were promoted so quickly that they must have been to sea prior to their volunteering. However this is a rarity, and we can safely say that the vast majority of this sample were true volunteer landsmen who were new to the sea. One possible way of establishing volunteer status is to look to see if a man was paid a volunteer's bounty or not. However there are problems with using this as a criterion for selection. It is clear that pressed men were 'induced' to volunteer for the bounty (see Chapter 3) and so it makes using that as a criteria for a 'true' volunteer hazardous.<sup>158</sup> Also because a man was not recorded as having been paid a bounty does not necessarily mean that he was not a true volunteer. Wages and bounties were almost always paid in arrears, normally around six months,<sup>159</sup> and a man might die, go sick, desert or be transferred before they were paid. As an example, of the first 71 of the *Trent's* landsmen volunteers all but one of them who were not recorded as having been paid a bounty had either deserted the ship, discharged the ship or gone sick within three months of arriving on board. Therefore the receiving, or not, of a bounty is not considered as a criteria for selection as a 'true' landsman volunteer. Of the 302 volunteer landsmen 207 (69%) came on board their respective ship whilst it was being fitted out for sea service at the beginning of its commission and for the purposes of following career patterns this gives us the chance to look at individual careers over the whole period of a commission.

Of the 302 volunteer landsmen who served on one of the four commissions a total of 45 or 15% were still serving when the ship was decommissioned. However this statistic

could be misleading as the length of commission varied from the *Emerald1*'s ten years to the *Emerald2*'s five years. If we remove the short, five year commission of the *Emerald2* we find that only 14 (6%) of the 228 volunteer landsmen were still serving at the end of their respective ship's commission. However by the end of the three commissions, all 14 volunteer landsmen remaining had been promoted and none were still rated landsmen.

Table 5.1 shows the age profile on entry to their ship, where given, of all the volunteer landsmen set against the general crew profile.

**Table 5.1: All ships: Volunteer landsmen age profile**

Age band	Vol. Landsmen (298)		Crew (2533)	
<15	1		16	1%
15-20	85	28%	582	23%
21-25	116	39%	993	39%
26-30	60	20%	439	17%
31-35	26	9%	198	8%
36-40	8	3%	171	7%
41-45	2	1%	66	3%
46-50			47	2%
50>			21	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2533</b>	<b>101%</b>

What is perhaps most surprising about this table is that the volunteer landsmen age profile is very close to the crew profile, nowhere is there more than 5% difference. The one real area of difference, as one might expect, is that in the age band 15-20 the volunteer landsman percentage is 28% compared to the crew's 23%. If we look at those aged 30 or below we see that 90% of the volunteer landsmen are in this age bracket compared to 79% of the crew. Despite this it would appear that landsmen volunteers were not restricted to impressionable teenagers but that men in their twenties and thirties saw the Royal Navy as a career possibility.

Table 5.2 looks at the nationality or origin of the volunteer landsmen, where given and compares it to the general crew profile.

**Table 5.2: All ships: Entry against origin**

<b>Origin</b>	<b>Vol. Landsmen (290)</b>		<b>Crew (2488)</b>	
English	156	54%	1202	48%
Irish	94	32%	539	22%
Scottish	21	7%	349	14%
Welsh	8	3%	73	3%
Foreign	11	4%	325	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2488</b>	<b>100%</b>

In all 54% of volunteer landsmen came from England compared with a crew total of 48% and a further 32% were Irish as opposed to 22% of the crew. This higher number of Englishmen and Irishmen surely reflects two factors. Firstly that all four commissions were started in the Thames estuary and the majority of volunteer landsmen were drafted from receiving ships moored there and secondly that the ships spent considerable time in English and Irish waters, in particular the *Emerald*<sup>2</sup> and the *Glenmore* (see Chapter 2 for a breakdown of time spent in different waters) thus making it easier for English and Irishmen to volunteer than other nationalities. The low percentage of foreign volunteer landsmen compared to the crew average (4% as opposed to 13%) is probably due to the high percentage (69% see above) of volunteer landsmen being recruited in Great Britain during the various ship's commissioning and before any of them set sail.

Out of the 302 volunteer landsmen from the four commissions a total of 107 (36%) were promoted from landsman to another rating and these are shown in Table 5.3. The specialist category refers to such areas as armourer's mates or carpenter's crew,

commonly referred to as 'idlers' in the Royal Navy of the period, as they did not stand watch like the seaman.<sup>160</sup>

**Table 5.3: All ships: promotion from landsmen**

New rating	Number	
Ordinary seaman	77	72%
Able seaman	10	9%
Specialist	18	17%
Warrant officer	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority (72%) of volunteer landsmen promoted were rated ordinary seaman although a minority (9%) went directly to able seaman, the next rung of the seafaring skills ladder. A good proportion (17%) were given specialist roles in the ship and it would be likely that these men already possessed skills in these particular areas such as carpentry and iron working before they came on board and were selected for this reason. Two (2%) men were made warrant officers after a short time on board their respective ship and must have shown high degrees of skill in their specialist areas, in these cases armoury and cooperage. The average time that it took for a landsman to demonstrate that he had developed seafaring skills and be made an ordinary seaman varied from ship to ship but works out at 892 days, 128 weeks or just under two and a half years. Of the 107 promoted volunteer landsmen a total of 34 (32%) were re-rated again, mostly to able seaman but some to specialist areas and two were demoted, one from clerk to landsman<sup>161</sup> and the other from able seaman to ordinary seaman.<sup>162</sup> The average time that it took for a volunteer landsmen to move from ordinary seaman to able seaman was 594 days, 85 weeks or just over 19 months. So here we have evidence that shows that, on average, it took about two and a half years to make an ordinary seaman from a landsman new to the sea and a further year and a half for them to make able seaman, a total of

roughly four years. However it emerges that there was a 'fast track' available that allowed particularly skilled individuals to make able seaman directly from landsmen in a much shorter time. A total of 10 (3%) of the 302 volunteer landsmen were promoted directly to able seaman. For two of these men the time it took them to receive their new rate (23 and 69 days respectively) makes it almost certain that they had previous seagoing experience but for the other eight the times varied between 178 and 1730 days and the average works out at 935 days, 134 weeks about two and a half years, the same average time for landsmen to make ordinary seaman. All the ships looked at show evidence that changes in men's ratings often occurred together on the same date as well as individually. This indicates that captains changed men's ratings when need dictated, often following desertion or sickness, or even as a punishment, but would also reassess the men's skills periodically *en masse* and re-rate them according to their newly perceived skill levels.

Out of the 302 volunteer landsmen a total of 61 (20%) were recorded as having been flogged at least once during their service on board their respective ships. This compares with a combined crew average of 16% and indicates that landsmen volunteers suffered a harsher disciplinary regime than the rest of the crew and although the difference is not great it is consistent from ship to ship. A total of 18 (6%) of the 302 volunteer landsmen are recorded as having been flogged more than once and this compares with a combined crew average of a 5% recidivist rate and so it would seem that volunteer landsmen either learnt their lesson as well as the rest of the crew or that they were equally persecuted, depending on your view of the causes and effects of corporal punishment. Of the 107 volunteer landsmen promoted during their stay on their respective ships, 31 (29%) were

recorded as having been flogged, a higher percentage than the general crew rate of 16% and the combined volunteer landsman rate of 20%. Of the 31 men flogged 19 (61%) were flogged before they received a promotion, 12 (39%) after being promoted and some men were flogged both before and after promotion. What this tells us is that there seems to be no direct correlation between flogging and promotion except that promoted volunteer landsmen were more likely to have been flogged in the past or would be in the future than non-promoted men. An alternative view is that men who were flogged were more likely to be promoted than men who were not. Are we seeing the more lively crew members being more likely to be flogged and promoted? All commissions demonstrate that volunteer landsmen were not flogged into obedience on their coming on board ship but that floggings were spread out over time and the average time between a volunteer landsman coming on board and being flogged was 799 days, 114 weeks or just over two years.

Out of the 302 volunteer landsmen 91 (30%) are recorded as having deserted their respective ship, 104 (34%) were discharged for medical reason (either sick, dead or invalided), 37 (12%) were turned over to other ships and 70 (23%) were discharged for other, various reasons. The desertion rate of 30% is higher than the desertion rate of 24% of the combined crew of sailing ratings<sup>163</sup> but not that significantly. It would appear from this that volunteer landsmen were more likely to desert than established sailors but not by much. This would lead us to believe that volunteer landsmen were generally speaking as settled in their new life as those that had been there some time apart from a few individuals who found that the life did not suit them. Of those volunteer landsmen



discharged for medical reasons, terminal or otherwise, 57 (19%) were discharged sick, 32 (11%) were discharged dead and 15 (5%) invalided. In broad terms it would seem that volunteer landsmen were more likely to fall sick than the crew in general, 19% compared to the crew average of 12%. The same is true for those discharged dead, 11% compared to 9%. However the differences are not huge and we would perhaps expect those new to the sea and shipboard life to be less hardened than seasoned crew members. The details of those discharged for other reasons or turned over to other ships are discussed above under the various commission headings.

## **Conclusion**

The various reasons why men decided to go to sea and to volunteer for the Royal Navy cannot all be answered with this sample of 302 volunteer landsmen. Did men volunteer out of a sense of patriotism, duty, for a life of adventure, to escape debt or misery or for economic reasons? In this sample there are probably cases of all of these and perhaps other reasons but the records do not reveal most of their motives. Perhaps the nearest we can come to motivation is in the age profile of the volunteer landsmen. Although the age profile of volunteer landsmen is lower than that of the crew in general (90%, as opposed to 79%, of the crew aged 30 or below) as would probably be expected, 10% of volunteer landsmen were aged over 30. This would suggest that not all those who volunteered were starry-eyed youngsters carried away by jingoistic propaganda. Those types certainly existed and we can point to cases of returned apprentices who clearly saw a life at sea as preferable to a life in semi-bondage.<sup>164</sup>

The sample of men selected has been very carefully screened to try, as far as is possible, to ensure that only true volunteers who had not been to sea before were considered. It is clear however that one or two have slipped through that particular net but it is unlikely that these would amount to more than one or two percent and therefore should not skew the findings to any great extent. One positive feature of the sample is that two out of three men looked at (69%) joined their respective ship at the start of its commission and this has therefore given us the opportunity to view individual careers over a considerable period of time and given some measure of validity to the findings. If we exclude the men from the *Emerald2*, due to its short commission of five years we see that only 6% of the volunteer landsmen that joined the other ships were still there when their particular ship was decommissioned. However all of these men had been promoted and none were still rated landsmen when their ship was decommissioned which would suggest that even the most unhandy landlubber would get to ordinary seaman even if it took him six years to do so. Our sample shows a disproportionate number of Irishmen and to a lesser extent Englishmen coming on board as volunteer landsmen (32% Irish volunteer landsmen compared to a crew average of 22% and for Englishmen 54% compared to 48% respectively) but this is easily explained as the *Emerald2* and the *Glenmore* spent much time in Irish and English waters making it easier to pick up volunteers from those countries.

Generally speaking deciding if a crewman's change of rating is a promotion or a demotion can be difficult. Rating changes between specialized areas of a ship could be carried out to meet special circumstances and might mean for the crewman involved no

change of pay or status and not be a reflection of perceived performance in their previous role. A case in point is of midshipmen as it was a requirement that they change rating to able seaman and master's mate during their service if they wished to become lieutenants (see Chapter 6). However landsmen had the lowest pay and status on board than any other crewman rating<sup>165</sup> (excluding boys and marines) and therefore any change of rating must have been a step up and can therefore be considered a promotion. Included in the category of promotion are men moving from ordinary seaman to able seaman as they received higher pay and status and therefore this, for the purposes of this study, is also considered a promotion. It must also be borne in mind when considering rating changes that for the crew in general, not including warrant or commissioned officers, a man's rating was at the whim of the captain, often guided by his first lieutenant. Captains could and did change seamen's and marines ratings whenever they liked without recall to the Admiralty. It is clear that men's ratings were changed as a punishment<sup>166</sup> as well as by need and as a reward for good service. It was a common complaint of seamen that on being turned over to another ship they could well be given a new rating with subsequent loss of pay and status.<sup>167</sup> However when men got to warrant officer rank the captain was bound to refer any changes to the appropriate Navy Board with his recommendation. Of the 302 volunteer landsmen in this survey 107 (36%) received at least one promotion. Of these promotions most men were made up to ordinary seaman (77 or 72%) although others were given specialist ranks such as carpenter's mate or armourer's mate, which would suggest that they already possessed some skill in these areas from their landlubbing days particularly when it is seen that most of them received this promotion not long after coming on board ship. A study of the four commissions has given us an

average time for volunteer landsmen to reach ordinary seaman as about two and a half years with a further year and half to make able seaman, a total of four years from novice to skilled mariner. Although the time men took to advance from landsman to seaman varied from ship to ship, this would be expected in an organization where training and advancement was largely at the whim of an individual captain and does not negate the findings that clearly demonstrate that the Royal Navy of the period did take volunteer landsmen and train them up to be skilled seaman. Therefore the Royal Navy was not just a poacher of merchant seaman but also added to the pool of trained seaman itself. It is not possible at present to quantify the exact number of seaman that the Royal Navy produced but this survey shows that about one third of volunteer landsmen acquired sufficient seagoing skills to be rated ordinary seaman. If we allow for the fact that 12% of the volunteer landsmen were turned over to other ships and that 19% were discharged sick and that many of these must have found their way back into a Royal Navy ship we could conservatively estimate that around 50% of those recruited as volunteer landsmen would eventually end up as ordinary seaman or specialist and a further 50% of these men would eventually make able seaman, petty officer or even warrant officer. There is also the question of what happened to those 30% of volunteer landsmen who deserted? The findings show that although a few volunteer landsmen voted with their feet early on in their careers the average desertion time was around 18 months after joining ship. Apart from the early deserters, who were likely to have decided that a life at sea was not for them, the other men who ran must have taken some seagoing skills with them and it would not be fanciful to believe that many of them joined the merchant marine or even re-volunteered for the Service; certainly few of them were ever caught. Four of the 302

landsmen volunteers made warrant officer (two became armourers and two became coopers) and this may seem a small number but it has to be borne in mind that this is the start of their seagoing careers and that others could well have gone onto warrant officer rank. Some men were promoted directly to able seaman and if we remove the few that clearly had had previous seagoing experience we see that the average time it took for them to make that rating was two and a half years, the same as the average for volunteer landsmen to make ordinary seaman. Here we can perhaps see a 'fast track' for those who fitted into the Royal Navy well and were quick and willing to learn. Therefore we can safely claim that volunteer landsmen, if they wanted to and stayed healthy, did have a career path available to them, that they did develop seagoing skills and that the Royal Navy was a provider as well as a consumer of trained seamen.

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<sup>1</sup> Rediker, M., *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, (Cambridge UP, 1987) p. 5. The full quote is: 'The eighteenth century deep-sea sailor is still by and large an unknown man'.

<sup>2</sup> Starkey, D. J. 'War and the Market for Seafarers in Britain' in *Shipping and Trade 1750-1950*, Fischer L. R. and Nordvik H. (eds.) (Pontefract, 1990) p. 25

<sup>3</sup> Lavery, B., *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815*, (London, 1989) pp. 129-130

<sup>4</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *Naval Records for Genealogists*, Public Office Record Handbooks No. 22, (HMSO, 1988) p.50

<sup>5</sup> ADM36 13253, ADM36 15226, ADM36 15227, ADM36 15228, ADM36 15229 and ADM36 15230

<sup>6</sup> In October 1809 the captain's log of the *Emerald2* records several instances of 'exercised the men in reefing and setting sails' (ADM51 1957), as did the *Emerald1* in June 1804 (ADM51 1530). These are the only two recorded instances of seamanship training recorded during the four ship's commissions.

<sup>7</sup> Rodger, *Naval Records* p.48

<sup>8</sup> ADM36 13253

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<sup>9</sup>ADM36 15230. Thomas Gee (T18) was rated ordinary seaman on 1 December 1800 (ADM36 15227) and then able seaman on 6 July 1802 (ADM36 15230), Thomas Young (T49) was rated ordinary seaman on 10 November 1797 (ADM36 15226), able seaman on 1 September 1798 (ADM36 15226) and then back to ordinary seaman on 1 January 1801 (ADM36 15228); the reason for his demotion is not given. John Arthurs (T230) was rated ordinary seaman on 1 January 1798 (ADM36 15226) and then able seaman on 1 September 1798 (ADM36 15226).

<sup>10</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>11</sup> Stimpson was made midshipman in April 1801 (ADM36 15228), able seaman in February 1802 and back to midshipman in June 1802 (ADM36 15229).

<sup>12</sup> ADM36 15230

<sup>13</sup> Syrett, D. and DiNardo R L, *Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy* (NRS, 1994) p. 422

<sup>14</sup> ADM36 13253

<sup>15</sup> ADM36 15227

<sup>16</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>17</sup> The *Enterprize* was moored near the Tower of London (D Lyon *The Sailing Navy List: All the Ships of the Royal Navy – Built, Purchased and Captured, 1688-1855*, (London, 1993) pp. 86-87. Lyon states that the *Enterprize* was a receiving ship for ‘pressed men’ but a large number of the men were volunteer landsmen) and *Sandwich* was moored at Chatham (*Ibid* p.63).

<sup>18</sup> The landsman volunteer who only spent one day on board the *Trent* before being promoted to ordinary seaman was 22 year old John Doughton (T475) a ‘Yarmouth volunteer’ who joined the ship on 26 June 1797 (ADM36 13253). It is almost certain that Doughton had previous seagoing experience.

<sup>19</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, (London, 1986) p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 133

<sup>21</sup> The three men were William Willock (T267 and T530), John Dimpsey (T231) and Richard Woodland (T95).

<sup>22</sup> Smyth, W. H. *The Sailor's Wordbook of 1867: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms*, (London, 1867, reprinted Conway 1991) p. 700 and Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 140.

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<sup>23</sup> The cooper was responsible for the maintenance and repair of the many casks on board ship (Smyth p. 211 and Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.140)

<sup>24</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 113

<sup>25</sup> John Doughton (T475) was promoted ordinary seaman from landsman on 2 February 1798 (ADM36 13253 and then able seaman on 1 September 1798 (ADM36 15226). It is however possible that Doughton had learnt seagoing skills on board the *Trent* as the supernumerary list shows that he actually arrived on board ship on 26 June 1797 but was not put on to the main crew muster until 1 February 1798 (the reasons for this are not clear). Therefore he did have over seven months on board ship to pick up the skills necessary to be rated ordinary seaman.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Gee (T18) joined the *Trent* on 11 April 1796 (ADM36 13253) was promoted to ordinary seaman on 1 December 1800 (ADM36 15228) and to able seaman on 6 July 1802 (ADM36 15230).

<sup>27</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 218

<sup>28</sup> The number of offences listed here exceeds the number of floggings that occurred. This is because men were often flogged for more than one reason. For instance, volunteer landsman Samuel Still (T40) was given 24 lashes for 'drunkenness and insolence' on 11 September 1796 (ADM51 1167). Some authorities argue that as the legal maximum of lashes that a captain could order was 12 that the reason for recording more than one offence was to legitimize further punishment. However a summary of all the floggings that took part on board the *Trent* does not support this. It would appear that captains did not feel bound by the regulations when it came to flogging the men. For instance on 27 November 1800 volunteer landsman Robert Massey (T36) was given 75 lashes 'For desertion' (ADM51 1352). For the arguments see: Slope, N. *Discipline Desertion and Death: HMS Trent 1796-1803*, Chatham Historic Dockyard, July 1997 (awaiting publication as part of the proceedings of the 1797 Mutiny Conference), J. D. Byrn Jr. *Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy* (London, 1989) pp. 64-88. Lavery, B (ed.), *Shipboard Life and Organisation 1731-1815* (NRS, Vol. 138, 1998) pp.371- 416

<sup>29</sup> ADM36 13253

<sup>30</sup> He was promoted to ordinary seaman on 10 November 1797 (ADM36 15226).

<sup>31</sup> ADM36 15227

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- <sup>32</sup> Captain Sir William Hamilton (T733) earned fame when he led a successful cutting out expedition against the ex-British frigate *Hermione*. The *Hermione*'s British crew had mutinied and murdered most of the ship's officers including her captain Hugh Pigot, a notorious disciplinarian (For a full account of the *Hermione* mutiny, re-capture and Hamilton's part in it see Pope, D. *The Black Ship*, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977) also Spinney 'The Hermione Mutiny' *The Mariner's Mirror* XLI, 1995, pp. 123-136). After recovering from the severe wounds that he received during the action, Hamilton was appointed to the *Trent*. Hamilton captained the *Trent* from 1 November 1800 until he was discharged the ship on 23 January 1802 by order of a court martial for 'gross cruelty'. The court martial records reveal that Hamilton had had the elderly gunner of the *Trent* lashed to the rigging during inclement weather as a punishment (as a warrant officer, the gunner could only be punished by a court martial) (ADM1 5360). The *Trent*'s records reveal that during his 14 month stay on board *Trent* he ordered 71 individual floggings of men (ADM51 1352 and ADM51 1397). In his personal memoir Admiral G. V. Jackson who served as a midshipman on *Trent* under Hamilton states that 'as each day passed, so did I conceive new terrors of this man. A more uncompromising disciplinarian did not exist' (Jackson, G. V. *The Perilous Adventures of a Naval Officer 1801-1812* (London, 1927). See Slope, N *HMS Trent, A Social Survey: 5 April 1796 to 25 July 1797* unpublished MA Dissertation, (Thames Valley University, 1996)
- <sup>33</sup> ADM36 15228 and ADM51 1429
- <sup>34</sup> ADM36 15228
- <sup>35</sup> The *London* was a 90 gun second rate three-decker. Lyon p. 64
- <sup>36</sup> Samuel Still (T40) arrived on board the *Trent* on 28 April 1796 and was given 24 lashes for 'Drunkenness and insolence' on 11 August 1796 (ADM36 13253).
- <sup>37</sup> *Plantagenet* was a third rate 74 gun ship. (Lyon p.109)
- <sup>38</sup> ADM36 15230
- <sup>39</sup> Cunningham (T91) arrived on board the *Trent* on 13 May 1796 and deserted on 27 of that month (ADM36 13253).
- <sup>40</sup> Gibson (T226) arrived on board on 16 June 1796 (ADM36 13253) and absconded on 13 January 1802 (ADM36 15229).



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<sup>41</sup> This was 33 year old John Robinson (T84) from Birmingham who joined the *Trent* on the 12 May 1796 was re-rated to carpenter's crew on the 1 June 1796 and deserted three months later on 7 September 1796 (ADM36 13253).

<sup>42</sup> ADM36 14842, ADM36 14843, ADM36 14844, ADM36 14845, ADM36 14846, ADM36 15558, ADM36 15559 and ADM36 15560

<sup>43</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>44</sup> A sheer hulk was a vessel that had had her masts removed and a large 'A' frame crane fitted to her. The crane was used to remove and insert masts into other vessels moored alongside (Smyth p. 612 and Lyon p. xiv).

<sup>45</sup> ADM51 1139

<sup>46</sup> *Sandwich* was originally a second rate, 90 guns, three-decker launched in 1759 and subsequently became a receiving ship (Lyon p. 63).

<sup>47</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>48</sup> ADM36 11617. The muster records of receiving ships can be difficult to interpret. Unlike Royal Navy seagoing vessels they carried a small permanent crew but hundreds of transient sailors that may have stayed on board only a few days and as a consequence the records are not always as exact as they could be.

<sup>49</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>50</sup> ADM36 15560

<sup>51</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>52</sup> ADM36 14844

<sup>53</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>54</sup> ADM36 15560

<sup>55</sup> The crew age profile for the *Emerald* is (the landsmen volunteer percentages are given in parenthesis: 15-20 22% (25%), 21-25 37% (34%), 26-30 18% (23%), 31-35 10% (11%), 36-40 7% (3%), 41-45 3% (3%), 46-50 2% (1%), 50+ 1% (0%).

<sup>56</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>57</sup> ADM36 14845

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<sup>58</sup> Gibson (E264) was rated midshipman on 16 April 1797 (ADM36 14843), able seaman on 2 February 1798 (ADM36 14843) and back to midshipman 1 March 1799 (ADM36 14844). The changes in rating are almost certainly to ensure that he fulfilled conditions of promotion to lieutenant (see Chapter 3)

<sup>59</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p. 174

<sup>60</sup> For a full account of the action and its aftermath see: Slope, N. 'The Trials of Nelson: Nelson and the Emerald' *The Nelson Dispatch* January 2002, Vol. 7, Part 9, pp.612-617 and W. James, *The Naval History of Great Britain*, Vol. II (London, 1837) pp.49-51

<sup>61</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>62</sup> The nationality profile for the *Emerald*'s crew in general is (volunteers landsmen percentages are in parenthesis): English 50% (51%), Irish 19% (29%), Scottish 10% (8%), Welsh 4% (7%) and foreigners 18% (4%).

<sup>63</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>64</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>65</sup> ADM36 15558

<sup>66</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>67</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>68</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>69</sup> McNabb came on board the *Emerald* on 12 September 1795 and was promoted to ordinary seaman on 23 October (ADM36 14842).

<sup>70</sup> ADM36 14842 and ADM36 14844

<sup>71</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>72</sup> ADM36 14844

<sup>73</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>74</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>75</sup> The four men promoted directly from landsman to able seaman were: David Tyler (E32) a 28 year old Scott from Angus, 30 year old Samuel Farley (E36) from Devon, 42 year old John Mattock (E297) from Wexford, Ireland and 19 year old Archibald Crofts (E510) from Greenock, Scotland. It is surprising to see that a 42 year old could learn sufficient skills to move from landsman to able seaman.

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<sup>76</sup> All three men joined the ship in September 1795 (ADM36 14842). The three landsmen volunteers were 18 year old William Hopkins (E20) from Essex who was rated carpenter's crew on 15 May 1798 (ADM36 14843), 20 year old John Greenhill (E22) from Worcester and 20 year old Thomas Powell (E23) from Gloucestershire who were both rated carpenter's crew on 1 December 1796 (ADM36 14842).

<sup>77</sup> ADM36 14844

<sup>78</sup> ADM36 15559

<sup>79</sup> ADM36 15558

<sup>80</sup> Lavery states that a schoolmaster's status was rather unclear as to whether he was a warrant officer or a petty officer but that his role was to instruct the midshipmen in mathematics and teach the ship's boys to read and write (Lavery, *Nelson's Navy* p.104).

<sup>81</sup> ADM36 15558

<sup>82</sup> The captain's log for the 27 December 1799 records that eight men were given 48 lashes each for 'mutiny' but does not give any further information. The eight men flogged were, Thomas Byrne (E17), William Moore (volunteer landsman) (E57), Martin Doyle (E88), Lewis Painter (E109), James Williams (E136), John Wakeham (E243), Thomas Kelly (E302) and James Coleman (E320).

<sup>83</sup> Jacob Fletcher (E347) joined the *Emerald* on 28 December 1797 and was flogged 57 days later on 23 February 1798 when he was given 12 lashes for 'Disobedience of orders'.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas Clark (E39) joined the *Emerald* on 13 September 1795 and was flogged 3222 days later on 10 July 1804 for 'attempting to desert'.

<sup>85</sup> John Alexander (E512) joined the *Emerald* on 16 May 1801 and deserted on the 22 May 1801 (ADM36 14845).

<sup>86</sup> Samuel Johnstone (E261) joined the *Emerald* on 29 January 1796 (ADM36 14842) and deserted on 15 January 1801 (ADM36 14845) by which time he was rated ordinary seaman and been flogged twice. On 3 March 1797 (ADM36 14843) he received 24 lashes for 'neglect of duty' and was given a further 12 lashes for the same offense on 4 February 1800 (ADM36 14845). As he deserted nearly a year after his second flogging it would not appear to have been a primary cause for desertion.

<sup>87</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>88</sup> ADM51 1222

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<sup>89</sup> See Slope p.612-3

<sup>90</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>91</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>92</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>93</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>94</sup> ADM37 1226, ADM37 1227, ADM37 1228, ADM37 1229, ADM37 2543 and ADM37 2544

<sup>95</sup> Receiving ships that the landsmen volunteers came from were:

29 men from the *Zealand* a 64 gun third rate ship captured from the Dutch (Lyon p.239)

4 from the *Enterpize* (see endnote 17)

1 from the *El Corso* a converted brig taken from the Spanish (Lyon p.254)

5 from the *Thetis* a converted 38 gun fifth rate frigate (Lyon p.81)

2 from the *Ceres* a converted 36 gun fifth rate frigate (Lyon p. 84)

<sup>96</sup> The ships recorded are: *Wildman*, *Humber*, *Austerlitz*, *Trent* (the *Trent* was a Hospital Ship at this time), *Star* and the *Mercury* Brig.

<sup>97</sup> The crew age profile for the *Emerald2* is (the landsmen volunteer percentages are given in parenthesis: 15-20 24% (32%), 21-25 38% (31%), 26-30 19% (28%), 31-35 8% (6%), 36-40 7% (3%), 41-45 2% (0%), 46-50 2% (0%).

<sup>98</sup> Thomas Dunn (EM24) came on board the *Emerald2* on 14 June 1806 and was rated able seaman on 7 July 1806 (ADM37 1226).

<sup>99</sup> Luke Standing (EM137) came on board the *Emerald2* on 13 July 1806 and was rated able seaman on 20 September 1806 (ADM37 1226).

<sup>100</sup> Thomas Hawkins (EM104) joined the *Emerald2* on 9 July 1806 (ADM37 1226) and was made able seaman on 4 April 1811 (ADM37 2543).

<sup>101</sup> ADM37 2543

<sup>102</sup> William Snell (EM403) joined the *Emerald2* on 10 May 1810 and was promoted to ordinary seaman on 4 April 1811 (ADM37 2543)

<sup>103</sup> Rd. Reader (EM105) arrived on board the *Emerald2* on 9 July 1806 (ADM37 1226) and was promoted to ordinary seaman on 1 September 1811 (ADM37 2544).

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<sup>104</sup> ADM37 2543

<sup>105</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>106</sup> ADM37 1228

<sup>107</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>108</sup> ADM51 1603, ADM51 1656, ADM51 1820, ADM51 1957 and ADM51 2336

<sup>109</sup> ADM37 1226

<sup>110</sup> The two men were James Williams (EM369) and John Campbell (EM368) both of whom there is no record of their age or origin as the captain's clerk clearly did not have enough time to enter them (ADM37 1229).

<sup>111</sup> Alexander McDonald (EM92) appeared on board the *Emerald2* on 8 July 1806 (ADM37 1226) and deserted in Portsmouth 'from a boat' on 19 June 1811 (ADM37 2543).

<sup>112</sup> ADM37 2543. Curiously there appears no record of Hope being flogged for his desertion but two other men who were caught with him were given 48 lashes each (EM434 and EM435).

<sup>113</sup> William Rough (EM118) joined the *Emerald2* on 9 July 1806 and was discharged on 6 November 1806 and John Jenkins (EM69) 21 June 1806 and was discharged on 26 August 1806 (ADM37 1226)

<sup>114</sup> ADM36 13171, ADM36 13172, ADM36 13173, ADM36 15089, ADM36 15090, ADM36 15091 and ADM36 15092

<sup>115</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>116</sup> ADM36 13172

<sup>117</sup> ADM36 13173

<sup>118</sup> 'Sheerness tender from *Expedition* Cutter Volunteer' A tender was a small craft that 'served' another or other larger vessels with stores, volunteers etc. (Smythe p. 677). Therefore this phrase means that a volunteer seaman had been turned over from *HM Cutter Expedition* and been sent to the *Glenmore* in the tender based at Sheerness.

<sup>119</sup> ADM36 15089

<sup>120</sup> ADM36 15091

<sup>121</sup> ADM36 13172

<sup>122</sup> Rodger *Naval Records* p.46

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<sup>123</sup> ADM36 13172

<sup>124</sup> These men were: 22 year old Joseph Johnson (G68) from Hereford and 34 year old John McGraugh (*sic*) (G39) from Kilkenny. Johnson had served just 55 days and McGraugh 59 (ADM36 13171)

<sup>125</sup> ADM36 15092

<sup>126</sup> Of the eight volunteer landsmen that were still on board the *Glenmore* (William Thomas (G37), John Flinn (G57), John Bowlan (G394), Thomas Harris (G60), Charles Coxter (G85), Samuel Hill (G67), Peter Knowling (G34) and David Shields (G87)) when she was de-commissioned most had served about 354 weeks over six and a half years. The one man who had served for considerably less than that was John Bowlan who joined the ship in 1799 (ADM36 15089) rather than 1796 like the others, Bowlan served for over three and half years before the ship was paid off in early 1803 (ADM36 15092).

<sup>127</sup> The crew age profile for the *Glenmore* is (the landsmen volunteer percentages are given in parenthesis: 15-20 18% (19%), 21-25 43% (45%), 26-30 16% (23%), 31-35 8% (9%), 36-40 8% (4%), 41-45 3% (0%), 46-50 2% (0%).

<sup>128</sup> Charles Watt (G487) was 'entered' on the *Glenmore's* muster book on 1 November 1800 and 'appeared' on board on 1 April 1801 and was promoted on the 2 April 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>129</sup> Two dates are given in the muster book concerning men joining a ship. The first, in the column titled 'entry' refers to when a man is due to be paid wages against the ship in question. The second column titled 'appearance' is for when a man is paid and victualled. In most cases the dates in the two columns are the same or very close but the appearance date never predates the entry date. See Rodger, *Naval* p.48.

<sup>130</sup> ADM36 15091

<sup>131</sup> Oulah Hanson (G288) appeared on board the *Glenmore* on 28 November 1796 (ADM36 13171) and was rated ordinary seaman on 1 July 1797 (ADM36 13172).

<sup>132</sup> John Flinn (G57) and Thomas Harris (G60) both appeared on board the *Glenmore* on 22 April 1796 (ADM36 13171) and were made ordinary seamen on 1 May 1800 (ADM36 15090).

<sup>133</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>134</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.139

<sup>135</sup> ADM36 15090

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<sup>136</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>137</sup> ADM36 13173

<sup>138</sup> ADM36 15090

<sup>139</sup> Smyth p. 668

<sup>140</sup> Porter, R. *Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine* (London, 2002) p. 45

<sup>141</sup> John Darley (G40) arrived on board the *Glenmore* on 20 April 1796, was made acting surgeon's second mate on 6 July 1796 and deserted at Sheerness on 17 November 1796 (ADM36 13171).

<sup>142</sup> ADM36 15092

<sup>143</sup> The ratios for each of the ships are:

*Trent* crew and volunteer landsmen flogged: 15%;

*Emerald1* crew flogged 19% volunteer landsmen flogged 22%

*Emerald2* crew flogged 18% volunteer landsmen flogged 27%

*Glenmore* crew flogged 10% volunteer landsmen flogged 14%

<sup>144</sup> As with the other commissions, the list of reasons given for punishment can often include cases of men who were flogged for two or more reasons at the same time. For example, Patrick Power (G404) was given 36 lashes for 'quarrelling and disobedience of orders' on 31 March 1801 (ADM51 4452).

<sup>145</sup> John Hickson (G62) appeared on board the *Glenmore* on 23 April 1796 (ADM36 13171) and was flogged on 25 June 1797 (ADM51 1212).

<sup>146</sup> The combined number of landsmen, ordinary and able seamen of the *Glenmore* on entry to that ship is 488 (landsmen 125, ordinary seamen 129 and able seamen 244) of which 90 (18%) are recorded as having deserted the ship.

<sup>147</sup> William Calloway (G330) joined the *Glenmore* on 5 August 1797 and deserted on 13 August 1797 (ADM36 13172).

<sup>148</sup> George Davis (G69) joined the ship on 24 April 1796 (ADM36 13171) and deserted on 8 July 1802 (ADM36 15092) and by that time he had been made ordinary seaman (1 May 1798 (ADM36 13173)) and flogged once for 'neglect of duty' and given six lashes. However his flogging had been on 24 June 1799 (ADM51 1282), over two years before he deserted and was therefore unlikely to have been the cause of his desertion.

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<sup>149</sup> David Maroney (G397) joined the *Glenmore* on 21 April 1799 (ADM36 15089) and was discharged sick 44 weeks later on 25 February 1800. Maroney (G442) returned to the *Glenmore* from the Hospital Ship *L'Engageant* six months later on 15 August 1800 (ADM36 15090).

<sup>150</sup> John Grose (*sic*) (G76) a 20 year old from Cornwall was drowned on 20 April 1797 (ADM36 13172) just under a year after arriving on board the *Glenmore* on 4 May 1796 (ADM36 13171). Alexander Burnett (G66) a 31 year old from Banff joined the ship on 24 April 1796 (ADM36 13171) and died on board 'L'Engageant Hospital Ship Cork' on 9 October 1798 (ADM36 13173). Harry Farrow a 22 year old from Enfield, Middlesex (G61) joined the ship on 23 April 1796 (ADM36 13171) and 'died at sea on board' on 25 January 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>151</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>152</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>153</sup> ADM36 13172

<sup>154</sup> Philip J Haythornthwaite, *The Napoleonic Source Book* (London, 1990) p.22. The Peace of Amiens lasted from 27 March 1802 until 16 May 1803.

<sup>155</sup> ADM36 15090

<sup>156</sup> ADM36 15089

<sup>157</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 138

<sup>158</sup> The practice of 'persuading' pressed men at sea to enter as volunteers was widespread (Rodger *Wooden World*, p. 181, Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p. 137) and officially sanctioned (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 124). On the face of it this would seem illogical as the volunteers bounty was a considerable sum of money for the period and the Treasury was always starved of cash so why pay out a bounty when you did not have to? However it would seem that this was an action carried out by individual captains to try and give men an incentive to stay on board. Desertion was endemic (running between 20-30% see Chapter 6) and perhaps it was thought that by having a large sum of money, paid in arrears, 'waiting' for a sailor then he would be induced to stay on board ship and not desert. It was also the case that men could have part of their wages 'allotted' to family or dependants and it is possible that captains were actually trying to assist men to care for their dependants by allowing them to take the bounty.

<sup>159</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.131



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<sup>160</sup> Smyth p.398 and Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.195

<sup>161</sup> Thomas Price (E27) joined the *Emerald1* as a volunteer landsman on 12 September 1795 and was made clerk on 1 November 1795 and re-rated landsman on 1 July 1796 (ADM36 14842). The reason for Price's fall from grace is probably connected to the fact that he was given 18 lashes for 'defraud' 28 September 1796 (ADM51 1222).

<sup>162</sup> Luke Standing (EM137) joined the *Emerald2* as a volunteer landsman on 13 July 1806 and was made able seaman on 20 September 1806. Standing was demoted to ordinary seaman on 20 December 1806 (ADM37 1226).

<sup>163</sup> The crew desertion rate of 24% has been calculated by looking at those rated as 'Landsman', 'Ordinary seaman' or 'Able seaman' on entry to their respective ship. A total of 2459 men are recorded from the four commissions as having served in one of these ratings and of these 592 (24%) are said to have deserted.

<sup>164</sup> Most returned apprentices come from the volunteers and boys (see Chapter 4) but not all, William Rough (EM118) a 23 year old from London joined the *Emerald2* on 9 July 1806 and was discharged on 6 November 1806 for 'From Service being an apprentice' as did 19 year old John Jenkins (EM69) from London who joined the *Emerald2* on 21 June 1806 and was discharged for the same reason on 26 August 1806 (ADM37 1226).

<sup>165</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.130

<sup>166</sup> For instance in May 1804 the captain's log of the *Emerald1* records that 'Disrated Joseph Workman (E44M) Sergeant of Marines for drunkenness and neglect of duty' (ADM51 1530).

<sup>167</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* pp.129-30

## Chapter 6

### “Snotty boys of midshipmen”<sup>1</sup>

#### Midshipmen

##### Introduction

This chapter on midshipmen follows a different format to that of the other chapters related to the findings from the various databases. The sample of 143 midshipmen consists of all those who served in that rank during the four frigate commissions under consideration. In the other chapters the format has been to present background information on the topic, a commission by commission look at the findings followed by a consideration of all the commissions together and then the main findings brought together by a conclusion. Given the small number of midshipmen that served on each individual commission, an average of 36 per commission, it was felt that a commission by commission approach would not be suitable for this topic. Therefore the format developed is one of a background to the subject, followed by topic headings and a final conclusion.

The first section to the chapter, **Background**, looks at the structure of commissioned officer hierarchy, the historical development of officer training based on the rank of midshipman and master's mate and considers the questions that the findings from the databases hope to address. The section **Volunteers and Boys** describes the system of how youngsters were rated on board ship before becoming midshipmen and how the system worked in practice. The **Midshipmen's rating (quality)** section lists the various ratings that midshipmen were given on board their respective ships and examines why these various ratings were employed. Under the section **Origin** the nationality and place of birth of midshipmen is looked at, how that origin influenced

their chances of making lieutenant and the fate of non-British midshipmen. The section **Age profile** considers the recorded age at which midshipmen joined their ship and how the group of older or 'oldster' midshipmen fared. The section on **Interest** explains the system of patronage that was integral to officer promotions and looks at a number of examples of it in operation. The social origin of midshipmen is explored in **Midshipmen from the lower deck** followed by a section **Discharged the ship** that looks at how and why midshipmen left their respective ship. The section **Promotion** considers the prospects that midshipmen had for promotion to lieutenant and beyond. The chapter is then pulled together under the section **Conclusion**.

## **Background**

The purpose of this chapter is to look at a number of ships of the period and to examine in detail all the men and boys aboard whom, at one time or another, served in the rank of midshipman, a total of 143. From this examination it may be possible to answer a number of important questions relating to the development of the Royal Navy officer corps and perhaps enable us to develop a picture of how the system worked in practice. The questions that will be addressed are, how did the 'volunteer first class' system work in practice and how did it interact with the ratings of 'volunteers and boys'? Was the rate of midshipmen, as well as being seen as 'an officer under instruction', also used for training up warrant and petty officers? What nationality were midshipmen? What was the age profile of midshipmen? To what extent did interest and influence play a part in their recruitment and advancement? What was their social background? What happened to them when they left their ship? How did midshipmen progress on board ship and learn their trade? How many midshipmen made it to lieutenant and beyond? How did the midshipman process

work in practice? Could a landsman become an admiral? Why tackle these particular questions? The first reason is that the place of origin, age, changes of rating and where midshipmen were recruited from, were recorded in most cases on the ship's muster books. The various classes of 'volunteer and boys' were also recorded in a separate section of the relevant muster book. By looking at a number of ship's muster books over the whole period of the ship's various commissions we are able to get a view of how the midshipman training and selection process worked in practice. The second reason is that by cross-referencing individual midshipmen from the muster books in question against naval biographies and recent research into officer advancement we can extend our vision to cover some individual's entire naval careers and from this draw some overall conclusions about the prospects of midshipmen in the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period.

The managing, sailing and fighting of a Royal Navy warship was a highly technical and skilled operation and it required properly trained and proficient officers in order to ensure that it was carried out to a high standard. In an age where career progression largely depended on 'influence' and 'interest' and commissions into the army could be purchased, the technical nature of the Royal Navy required that considerable training of potential officers had to take place before they took real command and a system installed that would weed out unsuitable candidates. The system that had evolved and was in place at the start of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars continued pretty much unchanged throughout the period and was based around the rank of midshipman and to a lesser extent that of master's mate.

The hierarchy of commissioned sea officers, that is, those who sailed and fought the ships as opposed to shore-based commissioned officers, was established by the start of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and continued throughout our period. The first rung of the ladder was lieutenant, the second commander,<sup>2</sup> the third post captain and finally the various grades of admiral. All commissioned sea officers had to follow this path in order to reach admiral. The only exception to this hierarchy was the rank of commodore. A commodore was normally a temporary command given to a senior post captain in charge of a detached squadron or flotilla that did not merit an admiral's appointment.<sup>3</sup> Due to the temporary nature of this command it does not feature in this study. When a midshipman passed his examination for lieutenant and then received his lieutenant's commission (there was often a time delay between the two – see below) to a specific ship this was the start of his sea officer career. All Royal Navy vessels had lieutenants serving on them. A large man-of-war such as the *Victory* would have as many as eight, graded from first lieutenant down to eighth. However a lieutenant, who would then receive the courtesy title of captain, might command a small vessel such as a cutter.<sup>4</sup> A lieutenant promoted to commander would normally command an un-rated vessel such as a sloop or brig and would also be given the courtesy title of captain. The rank of commander (first called master and commander) was originally introduced in order to bridge the gap between those vessels that it was considered too small to justify having both a commander and a master but by our period was an established rung in the sea officer hierarchy.<sup>5</sup> A post captain commanded a rated ship. Large warships were 'rated' by the number of guns that they carried from a first rate ship like *Victory* of a 100 guns to a sixth rate frigate of 24 guns.<sup>6</sup> For example, all of the frigates in this study are fifth rates and therefore were commanded by a post captain and had three lieutenants as part of the ship's

complement. The particular importance to a sea officer of becoming a post captain was that they were put on the Admiralty post list, according to the date of their commission, and moved up it in seniority as those above died. At some point, providing a post captain lived long enough, they would become an admiral as an admiral's rank was based on seniority not appointment. The seniority list also assisted command when two or more rated ships were working together; the post captain who was the highest in seniority would take command.<sup>7</sup>

By the start of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars the process of junior officer training had, with some modification, been established from the days of Samuel Pepys<sup>8</sup> and the term midshipman, originally a petty officer rating,<sup>9</sup> came to mean 'officer under instruction'<sup>10</sup> along with the rating of master's mate. This meant that although technically a rating rather than a rank, midshipmen and master's mates possessed a quasi-officer status that was neither under warrant or commission.<sup>11</sup> Despite this midshipmen and master's mates were allowed to walk the quarterdeck, were expected to wear uniform and to command and to be obeyed by the men. The introduction of a systematic approach to commissioned officer training was brought about in the seventeenth century in order to reduce the amount of influence involved in sea officer appointments and to allow, as far as was possible, that only skilled and competent seamen would be put in command of Royal Navy ships.<sup>12</sup> The method employed to try and ensure the competence of potential sea officers was based on a number of principles. The first of these was to put conditions of service on individuals before they were allowed to take command, secondly to put a minimum age condition on candidates and thirdly a requirement to pass an examination in seamanship that included the checking of candidate's personal logs and journals that they were

expected to keep as well as character references supplied by ship's captains that the candidate had served under.<sup>13</sup> The conditions of service established by the start of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars was that before sitting an examination for passing for lieutenant, the first step in a commissioned officer's career, a candidate should have served at least six years at sea two of which had to have been with the rating of midshipman or master's mate. The minimum age set before a candidate could pass for a lieutenant was 20 years old. The exam in seamanship was an oral one taken before three captains whom asked the candidate questions relating to seamanship and navigation. If the candidate was successful the result of the examination, checks on age, service and good character were forwarded to the Admiralty who then issued a passing certificate. However passing for lieutenant did not automatically mean a commission and posting in that capacity as supply of sea officers always outstripped demand, even during wartime, and it was possible that freshly passed lieutenants could be 'beached' and put on half-pay because there were no lieutenant vacancies currently on hand.<sup>14</sup> It is also the case that some passed lieutenants were given the rank of sub-lieutenant and carried on board ship with a view to being made up to a full lieutenant if a vacancy arose (see endnote 116). Midshipmen and master's mates could be made acting lieutenants by a ship's captain if need arose but this did not mean that they would not have to sit the examination and that their status had to be confirmed by the Admiralty. For instance midshipman Francis William Fane (E338) of *Emerald* was made acting lieutenant on 15 June 1799 after the *Emerald*'s Lieutenant David Ivie (*sic*) (E356) was turned over to *HMS Saragossa*.<sup>15</sup> Acting lieutenant Fane continued in that rank for nearly 18 months on board the *Emerald* until he was 'superceded' on 12 November 1800.<sup>16</sup> Fane then served as a 'Supernumerary Lieutenant' until finally passing his exam on 1 May

1801.<sup>17</sup> Fane had a distinguished career finally ending up as Rear Admiral of the White in 1838.<sup>18</sup> However the powers that be generally frowned on ship's captains making midshipmen acting lieutenants when there were so many passed lieutenants on the beach<sup>19</sup> but at sea it was a not uncommon practice that the Admiralty had difficulty in preventing.<sup>20</sup> In 1718 the Admiralty had even created the rank of 'midshipman extraordinary' from midshipmen who had passed their lieutenants examination but for whom no vacancy as a lieutenant currently existed. A midshipman extraordinary was carried on board a ship with a view to filling any lieutenant vacancies that arose and thus giving captains no excuse to make a midshipman 'acting lieutenant'.<sup>21</sup>

Three senior Royal Navy captains stationed in London or abroad normally conducted lieutenant's passing examinations although by 1810 the exam could be taken in one of the main home ports.<sup>22</sup> The Navy Board administered the exams and issued the passing certificate, many of which survive in the The National Archives (NA), Kew.<sup>23</sup> The exam questions were made up by the examining captains and although reports vary on how tough the questioning was, it is clear that most candidates found it an 'ordeal'<sup>24</sup> and that some did not pass although this did not preclude them sitting the exam again.

It is said that widespread abuse of the system took place such as youngsters being 'entered' on ship's muster books in order to be able to show sea-time when they were actually not serving on board, fake baptismal certificates being purchased to show that a midshipman was older than he actually was and the use of influence to make an exam easier to pass.<sup>25</sup> While it is clear from personal memoirs of commissioned



officers that some nefarious practices did occur<sup>26</sup> a look at the lieutenant's passing certificates held in the NA show that the examiners went to great lengths in order to establish midshipmen's claims. For instance when Midshipman James Parker sat for his lieutenant's passing examination on 2 February 1802 the results were forwarded to the Admiralty Board with this attached note.<sup>27</sup>

*"Mr. James Parker has been disgraced in the Renommie and produced to me a certificate from Captain Peter Mackellar only stating the time he served on board the Renommie. On being asked for a better one he replied that Captain Mackellar refused to give it him one. He has since produced a certificate signed by Captain Peter Mackellar setting forth his good conduct, which signature we understand was made by Captain John Mackellar brother of the former. It remains with the Board to take such notice as they think proper of this business"*

When Midshipman Curry William Hillier (E337) of *Emerald* sat for his examination on 5 February 1800 he failed to produce the journals that he was required to present and there is an attached note signed by the examining officers and forwarded to the Admiralty Board.<sup>28</sup> "...he maketh an oath that he actually did keep journals... he lost his journals and captain's certificates... when the *Crucifix* Armed Tender was wrecked off Malta"

Similarly Midshipman John Thomas Lemoyne (E370) also of the *Emerald* had a letter attached to his examination documentation of 1 May 1805 stating that he had lost his journals and sworn an oath that he had kept them until they were lost '... when the *Imogen* was cast away'.<sup>29</sup> Midshipman John Arguimbau (T904) of the *Trent* had

attached to his examination documentation of 4 October 1809 a sworn affidavit that he was born in Minorca in November 1784 'according to the information he received from his parents (which information he believes to be true)'.<sup>30</sup> Therefore it is clear that abuses may have existed but that by and large the examining boards were punctilious in their checking of candidates' eligibility to pass for lieutenant.

It is perhaps not surprising that the Admiralty were punctilious in the checking of candidate's eligibility to pass for lieutenant given that the state did not recruit midshipmen but that this was left to individual ship's captains. Rodger states that, by 1810, because of that lack of control the supply of sea officers far outstripped demand and claims that of the 3058 lieutenants listed only 1848 were actually employed, for commanders 537 listed and 238 employed and post captains 728 listed against 299 employed.<sup>31</sup>

As explained above, the rate of midshipman was an archaic one and had evolved into the concept of an 'officer under instruction'. However some commentators argue that the rate of midshipman still preserved aspects of its earlier function, that of training warrant and petty officers.<sup>32</sup> Walker says that 'as their number increased, the old type of midshipman gradually died out, until the term took on its present meaning'.<sup>33</sup>

Rodger, states that 'but it was not true in the 1750's that all midshipmen and mates were future lieutenants. Many mates were would-be masters, learning navigation in assisting the master, and many persons in both rates were simply steady and experienced seamen, well able to discharge their duties without having any real pretensions to commissioned or warrant rank'.<sup>34</sup> To what extent this was still the case in the late 1790s and early 1800s is unclear and this issue will be discussed below.

Before being given the rate of midshipman or master's mate it was an Admiralty requirement that the individual should have at least three years sea going experience.<sup>35</sup> It was therefore normal that midshipmen and master's mate serve in another rate before achieving one of those rates. Prior to 1794 'young gentlemen' were normally rated 'captain's servants' but from 1794 the Admiralty created the category of 'volunteers first class'. This category was created for 'young gentlemen intended for the sea service' and the entry age was set at thirteen years old, but sons of sea officers could enter aged eleven.<sup>36</sup>

Aside from the ship's records this survey has relied heavily on the Naval Records Society publication *Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy*,<sup>37</sup> and then cross-checked where possible with William O'Byrne's *A Naval Biographical Dictionary*<sup>38</sup> for the subsequent careers of midshipmen who served on board the frigates in question and were still alive in 1845 (the cut-off date for O'Byrne's biographies). In most cases name and service record make matching midshipmen to commissioned officers comparatively easy. All the midshipmen were also cross-checked against the lieutenant's passing certificates held in the NA, Kew.<sup>39</sup> Many of these records contain much biographical information and this was used to fill gaps in the muster books. For the purposes of this study no distinction is made for the various grades of admiral.

### **Volunteers and Boys**

From 1794 young men entered into the ship's books were divided into three groups or classes of 'Volunteer and Boys'; 'First', 'Second' and 'Third' class. As discussed above, volunteers of the first class were considered young gentleman officer trainees.

Volunteers of the second class were those under 18 years old and volunteers of the third class boys under the age of 15. Second and third class boys were expected to develop into seamen and then be transferred to the crew muster with an appropriate rating usually either landsman or ordinary seaman.<sup>40</sup> The system of ‘volunteers and boys’ is covered extensively in Chapter 4 but how they relate to the selection of midshipmen is discussed here.

A total of 27 (19%) of the 143 (100%) midshipmen under discussion were recorded in the three frigates muster books as having come directly from one of the three volunteer and boy classes. It is probable that the great majority of the 143 midshipmen came via this route<sup>41</sup> but it is not possible at this time to determine the exact number. Of the 27 (100%) we know about, 15 (56%) came directly from volunteer first class rating to midshipman, three (11%) came directly from volunteer second class rating and two (7%) came directly from volunteer third class rating. Three (11%) third class boys moved to second class, first class and then midshipman. Four (15%) second class boys moved to first class and then to midshipmen. Therefore although most of the boys (22 (82%)) got to midshipman from first class rating, five (19%) were promoted directly from second or third class and a total of 12 (44%) spent time in second and/or third class.

**Table 6.1: Volunteer and Boys promotion (27)**

	DD	Fate unknown	Made L	Made CR	Made CA	Made ADM
1st Class (15)	1	6	8	3		
2nd Class (7)		1	6	3	1	1
3rd Class (5)	1	2	2			
<b>Total (27)</b>	2	9	16	6	1	1
<b>Percentage</b>	8%	33%	60%			

L = Lieutenant

CR = Commander

CA = Captain

ADM = Admiral

DD = Discharged Dead

Table 6.1 lists the fate, where known, of the 27 (100%) volunteers and boys under consideration. Two (8%) were discharged dead, nine (33%) disappear from the records and it must be assumed that they failed to reach the rank of lieutenant and 16 (60%) made it to lieutenants rank. Of the 16 who made it to lieutenant, six made commander, John Kingcome (EM432), initially rated second class boy also made captain and then admiral.<sup>42</sup>

Twenty seven midshipmen is too small a sample to draw any firm conclusion about how the volunteer and boy system worked in practice and whether it can tell us anything about the social background of those who eventually became midshipmen. However it is interesting to compare the promotion ratios of this sample with the overall promotion ratios given below. Both reflect a trend that gives midshipmen a rough 50% chance of moving from one rung of the ladder to the next, a sort of promotional half-life. What does emerge from this small survey is that there appears to be no strict following of the *Admiralty Instructions* concerning volunteers and boys. Captains move the boys from third class to second, from third to first and from third directly to midshipman. What is clear however is that being a third or second

class boy does not necessarily preclude an individual from the possibility of life on the quarterdeck.

### **Midshipmen's rating (quality)**

Table 6.2 shows that of the 143 (100%) midshipmen who served on board the three frigates 77 (54%) only received the rating or quality of midshipmen during their service on board.

**Table 6.2: Midshipmen's ratings or 'quality' (143 total)**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>number</b>	<b>percentage</b>
Midshipman only	77	54%
Midshipman rated as other	66	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100%</b>

However 66 (46%) received other ratings and these are listed in Table 6.3. (n.b. the gap in the text below has been inserted to allow Table 6.3 to be displayed on a single page rather than broken up).

**Table 6.3: Midshipmen's other ratings or quality (66 total)**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Initial rating 'Midshipman'</b>	
Mid to Master's Mate	7
Mid to Able	5
Mid to Master's Mate to Mid	3
Mid to Able to Mid	3
Mid to Able to Quarter Gunner	1
Mid to Able to Mid to Clerk	1
Mid to Master's Mate to Able	1
Mid to Acting Lieutenant	1
Mid to Yeoman of the Sheets	1
Mid to Able to Mid to Able	1
Mid to Able to Mid to Master's Mate	1
Mid to Master's Mate to Mid to Able to Master's Mate	1
Mid to Able to Master's Mate to Mid	1
Mid to Quarter Master to Able to Quarter Gunner to Able to Quarter Gunner to Able	1
<b>Initial rating 'Able Seaman'</b>	
Able to Mid	12
Able to Mid to Able	3
Able to Mid to Master's Mate	2
Able to Mid to Acting School Master	1
Able to Mid to Able to Mid	1
Able to Mid to Able to Quarter Master's Mate	1
Able to Mid to Master's Mate to Able	1
Able to Mid to Master's Mate to Able to Master's Mate	1
<b>Initial rating 'Ordinary Seaman'</b>	
Ordinary Seaman to Mid	3
Ordinary Seaman to Able to Mid to Able	1
<b>Initial rating 'Landsman'</b>	
Landsman to Mid to Able to Mid	1
Landsman to Able to Mid to Able to Quarter Gunner	1
<b>Initial rating 'Volunteer'</b>	
Volunteer to Mid to Mid Ordinary	1
Volunteer to Mid Ordinary to Mid to Mid Ordinary	1
Volunteer to Mid	1
<b>Initial rating 'Midshipman Ordinary'</b>	
Mid Ordinary to Mid to Master's Mate	2
Mid Ordinary to Mid	2
<b>Initial other rating</b>	
Master's Mate to Mid	1
Clerk to Mid	1
Master to Mid to Master	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

Mid = Midshipman

Able = Able Seaman

What is perhaps most surprising is the variety and quantity of the different ratings that some midshipmen received. The different ratings that crew members could receive, from landsman to captain are well known.<sup>43</sup> What is not so clear however is how

rating changes worked in practice on the lower deck. This is largely due to the method that captains employed to record such rating changes. It was essential for wage calculation that any changes in a crewman's status were recorded along with the date of the change. Crew rating changes were recorded in the ship's muster and pay books but as there was no printed column for these changes they were added to the 'Quality' column that recorded the crewman's initial rating.<sup>44</sup> In subsequent muster books it was often the case that the new rating was inserted rather than any change sequences. This means that only a study of the entire set of muster books for the same ship will reveal the process of rating changes of lower deck crewmembers.

Having revealed this sequence of midshipman rating changes the next question to tackle is why there were changes to different ratings and in some cases why so many changes occurred? Part of a midshipman's training was to perform the duties of an able seaman and any examining board expected evidence of this to be provided. We have already discussed the rating of master's mate above and therefore it is no surprise to see midshipmen rated in either of these categories. Forty four (67%) of the 66 (100%) midshipmen rating changes consist of some sort of combination of 'midshipman', 'able seaman' and/or 'master's mate'. A further seven crewmen are only differentiated by the use of the terms 'volunteer' (discussed below) and 'midshipman ordinary'. A further three rating changes consist of crewmembers moved from 'ordinary seamen' to 'midshipman', one crewman moved from 'ordinary seamen' to 'able seaman' and then 'midshipman', one 'landsman' moved to 'midshipman' and then 'able seaman' and one seaman from 'clerk' to 'midshipman'. Therefore it would be safe to assert that 57 (86%) of midshipmen in question followed a 'predictable' pattern of being rated either/or 'able seaman' or 'master's mate' as



well as 'midshipman'. Of the remaining nine midshipmen, one was promoted to 'acting lieutenant' (this was later ratified), one ended up rated as 'master' (the reasons for this are discussed below), two ended up rated 'quarter gunner', one ended up rated 'acting schoolmaster', one ended up rated 'yeoman of the sheets', one ended up rated 'quarter master's mate', one ended up rated 'clerk' and one was rated 'quarter master' (as well as being rated quarter gunner). It is possible that these seven youngsters were deemed unsuitable to pursue commissioned officer status by their respective ship's captain and moved to a petty officer grade. However it is more likely, given the evidence discussed below concerning the use of the rating of midshipman as a training ground for warrant and petty officers, that these men were never destined for commissioned officer status. It is also possible that captains used the rating of midshipman as a kind of selection board for both potential commissioned, warrant and petty officers. While most boys rated midshipman were clearly intended for commissioned officer status, the flexibility of the rating and training regime allowed captains the opportunity to 'try out' likely lower deck candidates. Those who showed particular promise could be encouraged to sit their lieutenant's passing exam and the others would become the equally essential warrant and petty officers that the Royal Navy needed. The selection of lower deck men and boys, some that did make commissioned officer status, supports this view (see below).

The number of rating changes for most midshipmen is clearly designed as part of their training as discussed above. What is more difficult to explain is why some crewmen received so many different ratings? For instance Robert Grey (E177) received seven different ratings during his time aboard the *Emerald* including that of midshipman (Grey eventually deserted the *Emerald* in Antigua).<sup>45</sup> It is certainly the case that

demotion was used as a punishment and this can be demonstrated by the muster book and captain's log of *HMS Europa*. It is clear that the *Europa* boasted a particularly demanding midshipman's berth. The muster book records that midshipman Lawrence Griffin (159) was demoted to able seaman 'for drunkenness on duty' on 23 March 1800. Midshipman John Mossam Johnstone (229) was demoted to able seaman on 28 June 1800 for 'theft and drunkenness' and midshipman William McMillan (176) was demoted to able seaman for 'neglect of duty' on 7 March 1800.<sup>46</sup> However it would seem that the majority of rating changes were in part to ensure that when midshipmen took their lieutenant's passing exam they had fulfilled the criteria for being competent seamen and navigators and also that they had a broad understanding of the important functions of key positions in the ship. However it is also possible that captains used the midshipman's berth as a pool of trained and competent youngsters that could be put into positions of responsibility when need arose.

## Origin

Table 6.4 lists the origin (place of birth) recorded for 127 of the 143 midshipmen under consideration. Also listed are the origins recorded for 831 (out of 952) of the *Trent's* crew as a contextual sample.

**Table 6.4: Midshipman's origin (127 out of 143)**

Nationality	Midshipmen		<i>Trent's</i> crew	
English	81	64%	390	47%
Irish	23	18%	202	24%
Scottish	16	13%	139	17%
Foreign (non-British)	6	5%	75	9%
Welsh	1	1%	25	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>100%</b>

Unsurprisingly the majority (81 (64%)) of the midshipmen recorded were from England. Twenty three (18%) of the midshipmen recorded were from Ireland, 16 (13%) were Scottish and six (5%) were listed as non-British. As in the *Trent's* crew, the number of Englishmen is considerably higher than the other categories. Perhaps what is most surprising is that there are any non-British midshipmen at all. Of the six non-British midshipmen Francis Skeede (E686) was recorded as coming from Barbados<sup>47</sup>, Joseph Keeny Jones (E687) from Tortola<sup>48</sup>, William Jacob (E783) from Antigua<sup>49</sup>, John Arguimbau (T904) from Minorca<sup>50</sup>, William Pringle Green (T934) from Halifax, Canada<sup>51</sup> and Christopher Cowell (T522) from Newbury Port, America.<sup>52</sup> Of these six, the three *Emerald* midshipmen were recruited during her long period stationed in the West Indies and given the high crew mortality rate on this station at this period it is likely that the Captain was anxious to ensure a local supply of midshipmen to make up his ship's complement. The tantalising question that cannot wholly be answered from these records is: were any of these midshipmen black? Francis Skeede (E686) and William Jacob (E783) both entered the crew muster as midshipmen directly from the 'First Class Volunteer Muster', which strongly indicates that they were from influential families and considered to be 'young gentlemen' and would therefore probably be white. Joseph Keeny Jones (E687) is listed as a 17 year old 'volunteer' and is immediately entered as a midshipman which also tends to suggest that he too was from an influential family and therefore white. Therefore it is unlikely, but not impossible, that any of these three young men were black. It is also possible that these three midshipmen, who were, almost certainly, from British colonial families, considered themselves British anyway; even though they came from West Indian Islands and that the captain and crew shared this view. The lieutenant's passing certificate of William Pringle Green (T934) from Canada

contains a copy of his baptismal certificate that states that his parents were 'Benjamin Green, Treasurer of the province and Lady Green' and it is quite likely that his parents were both British serving the Crown in Canada and that William had been born there.<sup>53</sup>

Christopher Cowell (T522) is recorded as having been 'Pressed' into the *Trent* on 28 May 1798 and originally rated as an 'ordinary seamen'. He was subsequently promoted to able seaman and then midshipman<sup>54</sup> but was subsequently discharged from the ship on 1 July 1800 'being an American'.<sup>55</sup> The pressing of American seaman into Royal Navy ships in this period was widespread, as any casual look at the muster records will demonstrate.<sup>56</sup> What seems strange however is that it took over two years before Cowell received his discharge and in the meantime he was placed on the first rung of the officer ladder. John Arguimbau (T904) came to *Trent* from the *Aurora* on 7 February 1802 and was immediately rated midshipman. He served on board *Trent* until 4 May 1802 when he was transferred to the *Goliath*.<sup>57</sup>

Of the six non-British midshipmen discussed above it would appear that only three Joseph Keeny Jones (E687), William Pringle Green (T934) and John Arguimbau (T904) made it further up the officer ladder.<sup>58</sup> All are recorded as having made lieutenant but there is no record of them having progressed any further. This does clearly demonstrate that ship's captains were prepared to take non-British sailors and groom them as potential officers and that it was possible for these men to progress. However much more work on ship's records will need to be carried out in order for the extent of non-British sailors being groomed as Royal Navy officers to be established.

Of the midshipmen recorded as having originated in England 68 of them can be identified as coming from specific cities or towns as opposed to a generic area such as a county. Of these 68 (100%), 23 (34%) are recorded as having come from London, four from Portsmouth (6%), three (4%) from Plymouth, two (3%) from Halifax and two (3%) each from Dover, Teignmouth, Liverpool, Bristol and York respectively. Of the 68 (100%) midshipmen 49 (72%) came from a seaport, or very close to a seaport town. This is a high proportion of our sample but it is hardly surprising that this is the case given that in a seaport town a nautical career would be a natural consideration for a young boy and his parents. However a note of caution must be sounded concerning the London entries. It is possible that a number of the midshipmen were born in London but that their parents were only staying in London for the parliamentary season.<sup>59</sup> By cross-referencing entries from the ship's muster books against baptismal certificates held with lieutenant's passing certificates some such anomalies can be found.<sup>60</sup> Of the midshipmen recorded as having originated in Ireland only nine can be identified as coming specifically from city, town or village. Most of the midshipmen from Ireland are recorded as coming from a county or just from Ireland itself. Four (44%) of the nine (100%) who can be attributed to a specific location are from Dublin, four (44%) from Cork and one (11%) from Belfast, all seaport cities. From Scotland only 10 (100%) midshipmen can be attributed to a specific location, six (60%) from Edinburgh, one (10%) from Dundee, one (10%) from Glasgow, one (10%) from Greenock and one (10%) from Aberdeen. Once again these are all seaport cities and towns. Therefore it is clear that if this sample accurately reflects the Royal Navy of the period then the officer corps is predominately from the seaport cities and towns of England, Scotland and Ireland.

When the nationalities of those who made lieutenant are compared to the nationalities of the midshipman who entered their respective ship it can be seen that of the 81 Englishmen 39 (48%) made lieutenant, of the 23 Irishmen seven (30%) made lieutenant of the 16 Scotsmen nine (56%) made lieutenant, of the six non-British three (50%) made lieutenant and the one Welshman also made lieutenant. Therefore it would seem that there was some bias against promoting Irishmen. Although the figures are low and therefore we must be careful of them, the much lower promotion rate of Irishmen, given the unrest in Ireland during this period, is significant.

### **Age profile**

Of the 143 Midshipmen recorded as having served on the three frigates the age on entry into the ship's muster books is recorded for 118 (83%) of them. Table 6.5 lists the various ages on entry, the number of midshipmen entered at that age and then the percentage of that age.

**Table 6.5: Midshipmen recorded age on entry (118 out of 143)**

Age	Number	%
13	3	2.5
14	9	8
15	19	16
16	9	8
17	12	10
18	18	15
19	6	5
20	8	7
21	6	5
22	6	5
23	3	2.5
24	4	3
25	3	2.5
26	1	1
27	5	4
31	3	2.5
36	1	1
38	1	1
39	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>

Over 80% of the midshipmen recorded were between 13 and 22 when entered onto the ship's books. However it must be stressed that the age on entry as midshipmen does not necessarily signal the start of the individual's naval career. Many midshipmen started as ship's boys as young as 11 and several were turned over from other ships where they had been midshipmen for some time previously. What is clear from these figures is that the majority of midshipmen started their term quite young by modern standards. However in an age where, as one historian puts it, 'child labour not only existed but was lauded and widespread'<sup>61</sup> this is perhaps not surprising. Where midshipmen's age of entry can be cross-checked against copies of baptismal certificates kept with the lieutenant's passing certificates most entries are very close, at most 18 months to two years awry. This indicates that large-scale falsification of age did not take place.

There are a significant minority of midshipmen (15 (13%)) entered into their respective ships at the comparatively ripe old age of 25 or over. There are contemporary accounts of 'oldsters' as they were known in the Royal Navy who had failed to make lieutenant but continued to act as midshipmen.<sup>62</sup> Of the 15 'oldsters' the fate of four is unknown, they left their respective ships for other ships still rated midshipman and there appears to be no record of them having made lieutenant.<sup>63</sup> One of them, Gerald Garnault (T24) was discharged 'on promotion' to *HMS Pelter* and the *Pelter's* Muster book reveals that he joined as master.<sup>64</sup> One oldster was made 'quarter master's mate' in which capacity he served until he left his ship.<sup>65</sup> One oldster, Dixie Woodward (E300) was re-rated to 'clerk'<sup>66</sup> but was subsequently drowned in the *Fox* cutter with a number of his *Emerald* shipmates on 25 July 1797 during Nelson's abortive attack on Tenerife in which *Emerald* took part.<sup>67</sup> Two other

oldsters succumbed to disease in the West Indies.<sup>68</sup> One oldster, Christopher Cowell (T522) (discussed above) was discharged 'being an American' after being re-rated back to able seaman following a period of five months as a midshipman. One oldster was discharged sick to hospital and not heard of again.<sup>69</sup> The fate of the oldest midshipman, Michael Constantine (E122) aged 39 on entry to the *Emerald*<sup>70</sup> was to be discharged his ship as 'unusable' (that is invalided as medically unfit to serve) five years after entry, making him an ancient 44 years old.<sup>71</sup> Before his discharge he was re-rated to able seaman and then to quarter gunner.<sup>72</sup> During this period he received a flogging for 'drunkenness and neglect of duty' on 30 June 1798 and was given a dozen lashes.<sup>73</sup> The other five oldster midshipmen deserted their respective ships and were put down in the muster book as 'ran'.<sup>74</sup> This gives us a desertion rate of 33% of oldster midshipmen. Compared to the overall midshipman desertion rate of 8% this tells its own story.

What comes out of the recorded age profile of the midshipmen is that the rank largely, but not exclusively, consisted of teenagers. Lavery states that 'the typical age of midshipmen was between fifteen and twenty-two'<sup>75</sup> and clearly this study supports his statement. However it is also clear that 'oldsters' did exist in the midshipman's berth and that they were not just those who had failed to move on from midshipman status but that some of them were selected for this rank. It is possible that despite their age they were still considered potential officers or perhaps the captain felt the need to fill his quota of midshipmen and younger men were not available. A more likely possibility is that, as discussed above, the rank of midshipman was seen as training for warrant and petty officers as well as commissioned ones and that these older seaman were seen as potential gunners, masters, schoolteachers and clerks. It was possible for



‘oldsters’ to gain promotion to lieutenant but the odds against success appear high. It would seem that the oldster midshipmen were aware of this equation given the number that voted with their feet. The muster books for the *Emerald’s* second commission (1806-1811) recorded very few oldsters. Of the 27 midshipmen listed, 24 are aged between 13 and 21 years old, the other three are aged 27, 25 and 23 respectively which compares quite starkly with the other ships and earlier commission that carried a higher proportion of oldsters. Is it possible that by this stage of the war all the real ‘oldsters’ had been weeded out, or perhaps the rank of midshipman had reverted to what it means now – a young gentleman undergoing commissioned officer training?

### **Interest**

The Admiralty required that a ship of any given size had to have the requisite number of midshipmen on board<sup>76</sup> but it did not specify how these young men were to be recruited. Here we see the British system of patronage at work at sea.<sup>77</sup> Captains would take to sea relatives, friends of relatives and even select likely lads from a ship’s company as midshipmen. It would seem that there was never any shortage of applicants and that captains were often pestered to take youngsters as midshipmen and how those youngsters progressed was to a large part in the hands of their new captain.

An important question regarding officer appointments is connected to what is termed ‘interest’. Unless circumstances were unusually fortuitous, such as an officer taking part in a successful action such as the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805<sup>78</sup> or a sudden officer vacancy occurring away from the beady eye of an admiral, then promotion relied heavily on the patronage of senior commanders. Commanders would put forward for

promotion men who were part of their own 'following'. This system of patronage extended from ship's captains to Parliament and the Crown and permeated the society of the day.<sup>79</sup> It was expected that loyal and effective followers would be rewarded and supported by their patron. It is important to understand that it was not necessary to be born with 'interest', although it certainly helped. A ship's captain would be quite likely to build up a following of midshipmen that consisted of his own relatives, relatives of friends and patrons, people he owed favours to and youngsters that he had selected on merit alone. Official recognition of this system allowed captain's moving from one ship to another to take a number of their following with them.<sup>80</sup> The importance of this system of patronage, that was not only at the heart of the navy's officer development and promotion structure but extended to the relationships between officers and crews, cannot be underestimated.<sup>81</sup> Like any system it had its strengths and weaknesses. Its strengths were that merit could be identified, nurtured and promoted whilst its main weakness was that it relied heavily on individual responsibility without real external controls and the sudden loss of a patron could leave a following foundering. It is easy to condemn such a system today as elitist and self-serving but the fact remains that brilliant warriors such as Nelson prospered, rose to high command and defeated the enemy despite early failures, crippling physical disabilities and modest background because his patrons believed in and supported his inherent abilities. It is interesting to speculate how well a one-eyed, one-armed, chronically ill philanderer with a patchy service record would prosper in today's armed services?

The ship's records allow us to view how some captains brought a following on board ship with them or developed such a following from scratch. An example of a captain

and retinue revolves around the Duff family. Fife Duff (G32) was a midshipman on board *Glenmore* where the first lieutenant was Archibald Duff (G73), first class boy Alexander Duff (G15VB1), third class boy Norwich Duff (G27VB3) and the captain was George Duff (G1). All the Duffs joined the *Glenmore* within ten days of each other.<sup>82</sup> When George Duff left the *Glenmore* on 8 February 1801 to command *HMS Courageux* the following he took with him were first class boys, Robert French (G13VB1), William Glascock (G14VB1), midshipman Edward Garrett (G29) (made midshipman from ordinary seaman by George Duff), George Rich (G428) and Richard Davis (G456), able seaman George Hill (G433) and Alexander Fairbirne (G448), landsman Neil McDowell (G377) and Robert Payne (G431), coxswain John McCullough (G356) (made coxswain from ship's corporal by George Duff), captain's cook John Keimicheal (sic) (G427) (made cook from landsman by George Duff) and clerk William Pritchard (G441).<sup>83</sup> Lieutenant Archibald Duff had previously been discharged the *Glenmore* on promotion on 22 May 1798<sup>84</sup> and Fife Duff had 'died on board' on 16 April 1800.<sup>85</sup> George Duff was subsequently killed commanding the *Mars* at Trafalgar, where he had on his ship Alexander Duff as master's mate (also killed) and first class boy Thomas Duff (brother of Alexander) and the captain's son Norwich Duff. All came from Banffshire.<sup>86</sup>

Captain Frederick Lewis Maitland (EM) joined the *Emerald2* on 4 December 1806 and he brought with him in his following a schoolmaster, five midshipmen, a master's mate, two quarter master's mates, a clerk, a coxswain and a master at arms.<sup>87</sup> One of these midshipmen was Charles Maitland, son of Alexander and Margaret Maitland.<sup>88</sup>

Captain Robert Otway (T553) took over command of the *Trent* on 29 August 1798 following the death by disease of his predecessor Captain Richard Bagot (T387) some six weeks earlier.<sup>89</sup> It appears that Otway brought no following with him, as the records show no immediate entries on the muster books for some considerable period of time before and after his appointment.<sup>90</sup> However by the time that Otway left the *Trent* nearly two years later he had built up a considerable following. Discharged on the same day as Otway, 31 October 1800, and all into the same ship were four midshipmen, three able seamen, two landsmen, two boys third class, a trumpeter, an ordinary seaman and a coxswain.<sup>91</sup> The coxswain, 24 year old William Strickland (T425) from Bermondsey had been rated ship's corporal on his entry to the ship in August 1797, a year before Otway appeared on board. However under Otway's captaincy he was first re-rated quartermaster on 10 November 1797<sup>92</sup> and then Coxswain on 7 June 1799.<sup>93</sup> Of the four midshipmen that followed Otway all subsequently became lieutenants. Peter Stephen Prieur (T666) from Aldeburgh, Suffolk passed his exam for lieutenant on 20 May 1803<sup>94</sup> although he had to wait until May 1804 before he received his commission. The following year he was reported drowned.<sup>95</sup> Flowers Beckett (T594) from Bloomsbury, Middlesex passed for lieutenant on 30 December 1801<sup>96</sup> fought at Trafalgar but did not receive his commission until four years later. He died, still a lieutenant, in 1862.<sup>97</sup> Thomas Jones (T409) from Plymton passed for lieutenant on 5 November 1800<sup>98</sup> and received his commission on 7 April 1801 and was subsequently killed in action in 1813.<sup>99</sup> John Priest (T694) from Telbury, Norfolk passed for lieutenant on 2 March 1804<sup>100</sup> and received his commission on 27 December 1808 and at that point his trail goes cold.<sup>101</sup> Apart from appearing to be an unlucky set of midshipmen (hardly Otway's fault) none went further than lieutenant and perhaps Otway himself did not possess the patronage

to push their careers further. It is also the case that when passed midshipmen received their commission they were usually put into other ships and away from their immediate patron's influence and this would probably require that, if they wished to progress further, that they would have to attach themselves to another patron if they could. This meant that in practice it was much more difficult for those without inherent family patronage to progress far and fast. This would have been a particular problem to sea officers taken from the lower decks and it is likely that the proportion of lower deck sea officers was quite high at lieutenant's level but decreased dramatically at every promotional stage above that. It was not a deliberate bar to lower deck candidates; it was just how the system worked. It is quite possible that many lower deck lieutenants never expected to advance any further and were more than content with a lieutenancy and half-pay at the end of their careers.

### **Midshipmen from the lower deck**

One of the most perplexing and difficult to answer questions regarding junior officer selection and training is to what extent was the lower deck involved in the process either as potential commissioned, warrant or petty officers? Rodger argues that in the eighteenth century all officers began their careers as ratings and therefore it is not possible to establish a social divide between the lower deck and gentlemen.<sup>102</sup> Despite this difficulty, in trying to establish the social origin of midshipmen a number of criteria will be considered. Firstly what 'quality' or rating that the midshipmen were originally given when they joined their respective ship. Table 6.6 gives the rating (recorded as 'Quality' in the muster books) that midshipmen were first entered into the ship's books as.

**Table 6.6: Midshipmen 'Quality' on entry and *Trent's* crew on entry**

Quality on entry	Midshipmen Number		<i>Trent's</i> crew number	
Midshipmen	108	75%	37	4%
Able Seaman	22	15%	389	41%
Ordinary Seamen	4	3%	220	23%
Landsman	2	2%	207	22%
Volunteer	3	2%		
Master's Mate	2	2%		
Master	1	1%		
Clerk	1	1%		
Officers, idlers and petty officers			99	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>100%</b>

There are complete records in this category for all the midshipmen (143) under consideration. In order to give some context of what a frigate of this class could expect to have in initial ratings of sailors on entry to the ship a breakdown of the *Trent's* initial crew's rating is also given in this table. Three quarters of the midshipmen were initially rated midshipman when entered onto the crew's muster. To this total should be added the 'volunteer' quality, this was only used on one ship (*Emerald2*) by one captain and appears to be an idiosyncratic use of the term (subsequently all those rated volunteer were made up to midshipman). Also the 'master's mate' quality should be added as it was normal for midshipmen to be rated master's mate<sup>103</sup> before becoming lieutenant. This brings the total up to 113 (79%) of 143 (100%) midshipmen who were initially entered into the crew's muster in a junior officer capacity.

Of the 30 (21%) men not originally entered as midshipmen, volunteers or master's mates we can deduce the following. Henry McCleverty (T593) was originally rated 'master' on his entry to the *Trent*.<sup>104</sup> The master of a naval vessel was the highest-ranking warrant officer<sup>105</sup> on board and to be 'demoted' to midshipman was quite a step down. Examination of court martial records reveal that McCleverty was reduced

in rank as sentence of a court martial<sup>106</sup> held on board *HMS Hannibal* in Port Royal Harbour, Jamaica on 8 February 1800, Captain Edward Tyrrel Smith presiding. The *Trent*'s captain, Robert Otway (T553), had charged McCleverty with:

*For having taken upon him, between the hours of eight and ten, on the night of the thirteenth of January, to alter the ship's course, without orders, he having charge of the first watch, from which circumstance an English ship was run aboard and dismasted, and His Majesties (sic) Ship suffered damage; and for conducting himself in a mutinous and contemptuous manner, to his said captain, on him having remonstrated on his unofficer, and lubberly conduct.*

McCleverty was found guilty of the charge of altering course without orders and of 'conducting himself in a contemptuous manner' although on the charge of 'conducting himself in a mutinous manner' he was found not guilty. However '...in consequence of his good character' the court sentenced him to be '...broke from being master' and to be put at any rank the station commander in chief thought proper and he was then rated midshipman. As a footnote to this incident, the court also ruled that:

*It appearing to the court that Lieutenant John Balderstone (T318), who was sworn and examined at the said court martial, did hold back and prevaricated in his evidence, do adjudge him to be confined for the term of three months in the Marshalsea, or any other prison in this Island*

The same verdict was given against Marine Lieutenant Joseph Honeyman (T65 marine muster list) although he received only two months confinement. Both lieutenants were discharged the *Trent* 'under suspension by order of Sir Hyde Parker

into *Greyhound*.<sup>107</sup> Clearly there were strong personal undercurrents operating in the gunroom of the *Trent* at that time at which we can only guess. McCleverty only served as midshipman for a month before being reinstated master, hardly a ringing endorsement of Otway's judgement.<sup>108</sup>

Of the 29 (20%) remaining lower deck ratings the clerk, William J Popham (E328), was invalided out of the Service at Antigua Hospital still rated as midshipman and disappears from the records.<sup>109</sup> Of the 22 crew originally rated able seamen five of them deserted the ship and were marked down as 'ran' and do not appear in the records again. Two more died and another two were 'discharged sick' and do not appear in the records again. Five more sailors originally rated as able seamen left their respective ships and do not appear in the records again; their fate is unknown. The following seven able seaman appear in *Serving Sea Officers* and their lieutenant's passing certificates further confirm their achievement as follows:

- Patrick Warner (G295) made Lieutenant<sup>110</sup>
- John Lemoyne (E370) made Lieutenant<sup>111</sup>
- Charles Burman (E574) made Lieutenant<sup>112</sup>
- Richard Lock Connolly (E391) made Lieutenant and then Commander<sup>113</sup>
- William Pearce (E286) made Lieutenant and then Commander<sup>114</sup>
- Richard Stuart (T796) made Lieutenant and then Commander<sup>115</sup>
- George Rich (G428) made Lieutenant, Commander, Captain and then Admiral<sup>116</sup>

However there is a problem concerning the judgement of whether the able seamen listed above are really lower deck men or not. Part of a midshipman's training was to



be able to perform the duties of an able seamen and it would appear that it was not unusual to rate them as such for a time<sup>117</sup> and it also seemed to be a practice that captain's would rate 'followers' as able seaman if the midshipman's berth was already full or to give them a higher wage rate.<sup>118</sup> In most cases it is impossible to tell whether they are 'true' lower deck men or 'young gentlemen' rated able for a short period of training. In the case of Patrick Warner (G295), referring back to his entries, it can be seen that he served time as a 'volunteer first class' that puts him firmly in the 'young gentleman' category. On the other hand the records show that William Pearce (E286) who eventually made Commander was a 'pressed' man and almost certainly comes from the other side of the social divide.

Of those midshipmen originally rated ordinary seamen and landsmen no such doubt exists. Of the four ordinary seamen one was Dixie Woodward (E300) who was lost in the *Fox* as described above, another was our old friend Christopher Cowell (T522) who was discharged the *Trent* 'being an American'. Both of the other two ordinary seamen made lieutenant. Thomas Dobson (G82) made lieutenant on 7 November 1798<sup>119</sup> and Edward Garret (G29) made lieutenant on 1 January 1806 (despite passing for a lieutenant on 1 April 1801) and then Commander on 16 January 1809.<sup>120</sup> Of the two sailors originally rated landsmen one, William Gibson (T266) deserted the ship<sup>121</sup> after being made quarter gunner<sup>122</sup> and the other, Robert Gibson (E264) was discharged into *HMS Florentine* 'on preferment' in September 1800.<sup>123</sup> Once again we see lower deck men made midshipmen and then warrant officers, further reinforcing the belief that the rate of midshipman was not just seen as a path to commissioned officer status.

The sample of 143 midshipmen has been 'trawled' for clues to lower deck origin and these are set out in Table 6.7.

**Table 6.7: Midshipmen from the lower deck**

Ref.	Pressed	Age	Prior Rating	Rating	Discharge	Biog.	Passed?
E122		39		QG			No
E177		25		QG	Ran		No
E178					Ran		No
E249					Ran		No
E251					Ran		No
E264			Landsman				No
E265					Ran		No
E286	Pressed		Ordinary				No
E300			Ordinary				No
E377						Parents	CR
E505			3 Class V&B				No
E518	Pressed	31			Ran		No
E571			2 Class V&B				No
E666				Y. S.			No
EM72		25					No
EM77		27					No
EM288			3 Class V&B				L
EM313			2 Class V&B				L
EM336			2 Class V&B				CR
EM432			2 Class V&B				ADM
G29			Ordinary				CR
G31		Swore					CR
G82			Ordinary				L
G431			2 Class V&B				L
G456			2 Class V&B				No
G488				School.			No
T226		25	Landsman		Ran		No
T24				Master			No
T455		27		QMM			No
T465					Ran		No
T468		26					No
T522	Pressed		Ordinary				No
T602					Ran		No
T618					Ran		No
T810			2 Class V&B				L
T850			3 Class V&B				No
T881			Landsman				L
T929			2 Class V&B				L
T952		27					No

QG = Quarter Gunner, QMM = Quarter Master's mate, Y.S. = Yeoman of the Sheets

School = Schoolmaster L = made lieutenant, CR = made commander, ADM = made Admiral

The identification of lower deck status rests on a number of criteria. It would be

highly unlikely that a pressed man would have claimed gentle birth and therefore any

midshipman who was recorded as having been pressed into service is identified as coming from the lower deck. It is likely that an older midshipman, for the purposes of this study 25 years or older on entry to the ship, lacked influence and therefore these midshipmen are also identified as coming from the lower deck.<sup>124</sup> From 1794 Admiralty regulations divided young men and boys into three classes, first class 'volunteers and boys' were categorised as 'young gentlemen' serving their sea time before being made midshipmen or master's mates and class two and three were viewed as potential sailors too young to be put on the crew muster (see above). Therefore any midshipmen who served as class two and three boys are identified as having lower deck status as are any men who were rated landsman or ordinary seaman on entry to their ship. Likewise any midshipman who was later given a non-commissioned rating or rank is also identified as lacking influence or as having been groomed for warrant or petty officer and, by extension, having come from the lower deck. It is most unlikely that any midshipman who deserted his ship was of gentle birth and any midshipman marked as 'ran' in the muster book is identified as having come from the lower deck. One midshipman, Curry William Hillier (E377) is included in the list of lower deck midshipman as his baptismal certificate states that his father was 'William Hillier mariner on the Green'.<sup>125</sup> The identification of lower deck midshipmen outlined above cannot be seen as in anyway exact but as an attempt, as far as is possible, to understand the role of midshipmen. Perhaps the strongest supporting evidence to this attempt is the low numbers of midshipmen identified as coming from the lower deck that made commissioned officers.

A total of 39 (27%) of the 143 (100%) midshipmen from this sample have been identified as coming from the lower deck. Of these 12 (31%) are recorded to have

gone on to make lieutenant. Of these 12 (100%) five (42%) made commander and one (20%) of these made captain and then admiral. Six (15%) of the 39 (100%) made warrant or petty officer although it is likely that more reached this status as nine (23%) lower deck midshipmen were discharged into other ships where their trail grows cold.

Table 6.8 shows the number of midshipmen who made commissioned officer status divided into lower deck midshipmen and those of gentle birth.

**Table 6.8: Midshipman made Lieutenant**

	Number	%	Made L	%
<b>Gentle</b>	104	73%	62	60%
<b>Lower deck</b>	39	27%	12	31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>52%</b>

The table shows us that out of a total of 143 (100%) midshipmen 74 (52%) made lieutenant. Of these 74 (100%) lieutenants 62 (84%) were 'young gentlemen' and 12 (16%) were from the lower deck. If the assumptions concerning lower deck status are correct, then this would indicate that around one in six lieutenants in the Royal Navy of the period had worked their way up by merit alone.

### **Discharged the ship**

Of the 143 midshipmen under consideration the reasons given for them being discharged their respective ships has been recorded in 138 cases. To have five 'missing' entries under this particular muster book heading (D/DD/R standing for 'Discharged', 'Discharged Dead' and 'Run') is very unusual and the reasons for this lacuna are not clear.<sup>126</sup> For the midshipmen whose fate is recorded see Table 6.9.

**Table 6.9: Midshipmen's reason for being discharged their ship (138 out of 143)**

Reason given for discharge	Number	%
Per Order (mostly to other ships)	106	77%
Discharged dead	11	8%
Run (deserted)	11	8%
Discharged sick	4	3%
Invalided	2	2%
On request	1	1%
Sent in a prize and not heard of since	1	1%
Being an American	1	1%
Taken prisoner	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>102%</b>

Table 6.10 compares the midshipmen's recorded reasons for being discharged their ship compared to the *Trent's* crew.

**Table 6.10: Comparison of reasons for being discharged ship**

Reason given for discharge	Midshipmen		<i>Trent</i>	
	Total		Total	
Discharged Sick (Ds, Dsq)	4	3%	180	19%
Discharged Dead (D)	11	8%	81	9%
Deserted (R)	11	8%	253	27%
Discharged per order (D)	112	81%	438	46%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>101%</b>

In Table 6.10 only the primary headings of Discharged sick (Ds, Dsq), Discharged Dead (DD), desertion or Run (R) and Discharged (D) are looked at. The vast majority of midshipmen (106 (77%)) were discharged 'per order', 'per Admiralty order' or 'per Admiral's (the name of the Admiral given) order' and the order relates to the new ship that they are ordered to serve on, in contemporary naval parlance they were 'turned over' to other ships. Eleven of the midshipmen (8%) are recorded as 'Discharged Dead'. One was killed in action as discussed above, nine were recorded as either having 'died on board' or 'died at sea', most likely from sickness or disease (accidents and drowning are normally recorded as such) and the reason for one death was not recorded.<sup>127</sup> The figures above compare well with the *Trent's* recorded

mortality rate of 9%. Therefore it would appear that a midshipman's life was no more or less fatal than that of an ordinary sailor.

If death was even-handed between midshipmen and crew then it is surprising to see such a disparity between the percentages of those midshipmen and crewmen discharged for sickness; 3% compared with 19% respectively. Perhaps this could be due to midshipmen not having to do the same level of hard physical work as crewmen, a younger constitution, healthier diet and many midshipmen coming from a more privileged background than most crewmembers. It must also be noted that being 'discharged sick' did not mean that your naval career was at an end. Many of the 'discharged sick' men returned to their ship at a later date and with a new muster book number. The three frigates were often receiving drafts of men 'from sick quarters'. These are clearly men who have been 'discharged sick' from other vessels that have subsequently left the vicinity of the sick quarters the men had been sent to. Rather than go to the bother of sending them to their original ship they were drafted into the next available ship in the vicinity.

Of those midshipmen discharged their ship 'per order', most were assigned other ships but six were discharged for other reasons and subsequently disappear from the records:

- Michael Constantine (E122): 'discharged unusable'(invalided)<sup>128</sup>
- Edward Worthington (E263): 'on request'<sup>129</sup>
- William John Popham (E328): 'invalided'<sup>130</sup>
- Simon Reid (E666): 'being sent in a prize and not heard of since'<sup>131</sup>
- Christopher Cowell (T522): 'being an American'<sup>132</sup>

- George Budge (T689): 'taken prisoner by the enemy'<sup>133</sup>

Eleven (8%) of midshipmen were recorded as having 'run' or deserted the ship compared to *Trent's* crew desertion rate of 27%. This disparity in percentage terms is not really surprising given that midshipmen are quasi-officers. During the entire service of the three frigates under consideration the only 'wardroom' officer to desert their ship was Mark Williams (T781) Surgeon of the *Trent* who deserted at Portsmouth on 21 March 1801.<sup>134</sup> Williams' desertion was during the captaincy of Sir Edward Hamilton (T733) a well-known disciplinarian who was later discharged the *Trent* by order of court martial for cruelty to another *Trent* officer<sup>135</sup> and this perhaps explains this unusual desertion.

### **Promotion**

The first rung of the commissioned officers ladder was that of lieutenant and, as we have seen, one of the principle aims of the midshipman system was to train up young men to a level of technical, administrative and managerial competence that would allow them to satisfactorily perform a lieutenant's duties. No other promotional step in a commissioned officer's career required a formal examination or rigid criteria such as age and sea going experience. The next promotional step up from lieutenant was that of commander. Commander was a rank that originally evolved in the late seventeenth century for the command of small naval vessels that it was thought did not require a full post-captain. The rank became increasingly used as the number of small vessels that the navy employed increased and by our period was established as a step in a commissioned officers promotional ladder.<sup>136</sup> From commander the next step up was post-captain. A post-captain could command vessels of sixth rate and above

and, most importantly for individual post-captains, they were put on the post-captains seniority list commencing from the date of their commission. As captains above them died so they would move up the list until eventually, if they survived, they reached the various ranks of admiral.<sup>137</sup> Therefore we have two ends of the promotional spectrum. At the lower end are the tough requirements of moving from midshipman to lieutenant and at the upper end is the test of longevity. Promotion from lieutenant to commander and commander to post-captain appears to be a combination of luck, influence and competence. While it is outside the remit of this chapter to consider commissioned officers promotion prospects in any depth, the evidence collected can provide some broad indicators of how successful, or not, an individual midshipman might expect to be and how the promotion system operated in practice.

As stated above, the first promotional hurdle for a midshipman that wished to become a lieutenant was to successfully complete the lieutenants passing exam. This, however, could produce its own difficulty as there were always more passed lieutenants than shipboard vacancies. This meant that there could be some considerable delay between passing as a lieutenant and fully serving in that capacity and we can see this in our records. By comparing passing certificates against commissions and biographies it is clear that several of our midshipmen incurred several years delay from passing for lieutenant to serving as one and it is quite possible that a number of them never actually received a full commission. As an example, Richard Lock Connolly (E391) passed for a lieutenant on 4 May 1803<sup>138</sup> but did not receive a commission until 29 January 1807,<sup>139</sup> a delay of nearly four years. This did not mean that he did not serve at sea as his biography states that he served on board *HMS Prince of Wales*, *HMS Hercule*, *HMS Driver*, *HMS Leander*, *HMS*



*Lapwing* and *HMS Hibernia* during this promotional interval. Connolly was then appointed Sub-Lieutenant of *HM Gun-Brig Tigress* before finally being made a full lieutenant on *HMS Electra* in 1807.<sup>140</sup> Although most passed lieutenants were commissioned within a year of receiving their lieutenant's certificate a number had long waits like Connolly. However for the purposes of this study, it is the passing of the lieutenant's examination and the receiving of the lieutenants certificate that will be used as the criteria for promotion from midshipman to lieutenant.

**Table 6.11: Midshipmen's progress (143 total)**

Event	Number	Percentage
Made Master	1	1%
Left the Service	6	4%
Made Petty Officer	7	5%
Died or killed	11	8%
Deserted	11	8%
Disappeared from the records	33	23%
Made Lieutenant	74	52%
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>101%</b>

Table 6.11 lists that of the 143 (100%) midshipmen under consideration 11 (8%) are recorded as having died or been killed during their service on board one of the three frigates, 11 (8%) deserted their ship, six (4%) were discharged their ship and out of the Service, seven (5%) were moved into petty officer positions and one (1%) crewman was made master (discussed above). Of the remaining midshipmen 33 (23%) disappear from the records. This leaves 74 (52%) of the midshipmen who appear to have made lieutenants rank. It must be assumed that the 33 'missing' midshipmen suffered similar fates to those others who did not make lieutenant and whose fate is recorded above. It is also possible that some did make lieutenant but that their records are missing.

Table 6.12 is a breakdown of the known progress of those who made lieutenant and beyond. The first column (Muster ref.) gives the ship code (described above) and muster number allocated to an individual. The second column (Date L) records the date when an individual received their lieutenant's passing certificate or commission if the certificate record is missing. Column three (Age L) records an individual's calculated age at that time, taken from their baptismal certificate or age on entry to their ship if the baptismal certificate cannot be located. Likewise column four (CR) and five (Age CR) do the same for the rank of commander, column six (CP) and seven (Age CP) for captain and column eight (ADM) and nine (Age ADM) for admiral (of any rank). Column ten (Died) gives the date of death where known and is followed by the calculated age at death (Age Died) [Please note that column headings in Table 6.12 are repeated at the bottom of the table for ease of reference].

**Table 6.12: Midshipmen's promotion**

Muster ref	Date L	Age L	CR	Age CR	CA	Age CA	ADM	Age ADM	Died	Age Died
E263	1802	22								
E286	1804	28	1837	61					1843	67
E309	1801	21								
E337	1801	26	1814	39						
E338	1801	26	1802	27	1803	28	1838	63		
E339	1799	24								
E354	1805	21	1807	23	1811	27				
E370	1805	24							1827	46
E381	1805	21	1819	35	1841	57				
E391	1807	21	1845	62					1869	86
E413	1803	20							1813	30
E415	1805	21	1808	24	1812	28	1846	62		
E574	1804	21							1810	27
E641	1806	22								
E686	1806	20								
E687	1809	23							1824	38
E691	1806	21							1814	29
E783	1813	24								
EM132	1811	25							1832	47
EM149	1814	20							1832	40
EM23	1811	23								
EM230	1815	23							1852	66
EM231	1814	29							1833	48
EM232	1812	20							1827	36

EM243	1809	20									
EM239	1810	21	1812	23	1814	25	1850	61			
EM248	1812	24	1854	62					1863	75	
EM288	1812	20									
EM313	1814	21									
EM336	1812	19	1854	61					1873	80	
EM375	1811	19									
EM392	1815	20	1864	69					1884	89	
EM399	1814	19									
EM432	1815	20	1818	23	1838	43	1857	62	1871	76	
EM452	1816	20									
EM453	1814	21							1857	64	
G18	1796	20									
G29	1801	23	1809	31					1802	26	
G295	1804	21									
G30	1801	26	1830	54							
G31	1803	25	1807	29					1855	79	
G428	1805	21	1813	29	1823	39	1853	69	1810	32	
G431	1804	19							1863	79	
G463	1806	23							1805	20	
G465	1806	19							1814	31	
G560	1807	21	1814	29					1811	24	
G594	1805								1814	24	
G592	1804	23									
G583	1803	21									
G584	1814								1825	43	
G591	1806	21									
G593	1805	22	1806	23	1807	24	1841	58			
G72	1801	24	1847	70							
G82	1798	27							1858	81	
T303	1801	25	1825	50							
T409	1800	21							1833	58	
T594	1801	27							1813	34	
T881	1804	22							1862	89	
T666	1803	28									
T694	1804	22							1806	31	
T745	1804	18									
T764	1803	19	1806	22					1811	25	
T777	1811	27							1836	52	
T786	1804	28	1842	66					1854	78	
T796	1807	23	1827	43					1854	81	
T810	1808										
T883	1811	26									
T884	1804	21	1815	32	1823	40	1853	70	1819	34	
T904	1809	25							1855	72	
T929	1808	21							1818	34	
T934	1806	24									
T935	1805	20							1846	64	
T938	1802	21							1822	37	
T939	1804	22	1812	30	1845	63			1804	23	

Muster ref	Date L	Age L	CR	Age CR	CA	Age CA	ADM	Age ADM	Died	Age Died
	<b>Total</b>	1586		1017		374		445		2095
	<b>Average</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>41</b>		<b>37</b>		<b>64</b>		<b>51</b>

### Key

**Muster ref.** = Ship code and muster number

**Date L** = date of Lieutenant's passing certificate (or when made lieutenant from *Commissioned Sea Officers*)

**Age L** = calculated age when passed for Lieutenant

**CR** = date of Commanders commission (from *Commissioned Sea Officers*)

**Age CR** = calculated age at Commanders commission

**CP** = date of Post-captains commission (from *Commissioned Sea Officers*)

**Age CP** = calculated age at Post-captains commission

**ADM** = date of Admirals commission (from *Commissioned Sea Officers*)

**Age ADM** = calculated age at Admirals commission

**Died** = date of death (from *Commissioned Sea Officers*)

**Age Died** = calculated age at death

With one exception, none of the midshipmen listed received their lieutenant's commission after 1815.<sup>141</sup> This must surely reflect a post-war reluctance to create any more lieutenants. It was a sad truth for midshipmen that if they did not make lieutenant by war's end then their shipboard career in the Royal Navy was most likely finished.

The calculated age of lieutenants, where their age is given (71 out of 74), when they received their certificate or commission ranges from 18 to 29 although the average age of reaching lieutenantcy is 22. A total of 43 (61%) of the 71 (100%) were aged 22 or under when they became lieutenants.

Table 6.13 looks at those midshipmen who were made lieutenant and subsequently received promotion to commander before the close of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1815). Of those 26 (100%), 13 (50%) were promoted to commander before or during 1815, 5 (19%) were promoted over the next 15 years (1816 – 1830), seven (27%) were promoted post-1830 and for one (4%) the date of their promotion is unclear.<sup>142</sup> A notable factor concerning this table is that the majority of lieutenants that were made commander are quite young, no lieutenants

over the age of 26 were further promoted. Perhaps most startling is that the average age of those made post-captain is younger than the average age of those made commanders, 26 as opposed to 28. Are we seeing here a fast tracking of talent? For instance, James Deans (G593) made lieutenant aged 22, commander aged 23 and captain aged 24. However, Deans had powerful patrons as well as a distinguished service record and surely we are seeing patronage and talent working together.<sup>143</sup> Edward Saurin's (EM239) promotional rise was almost as fast as Deans taking four years to make captain from lieutenant. Saurin was the son of the Attorney General of Ireland and there is no doubt that this assisted his career. However his promotion to commander from lieutenant was a reward following the result of a spirited cutting out action that Saurin led in which he was severely wounded having one arm cut off and the other shot through but despite these wounds he continued to lead the attack.<sup>144</sup>

**Table 6.13: Wartime Promotion from Lieutenant**

Muster ref	Name	Age L	Age CM	Age CP
E337	Curry William Hillier	26	39	
E338	Francis William Fane	26	27	28
E354	John Strutt Peyton	21	23	27
E415	James Pattison Stewart	21	24	28
EM239	Edward Saurin	21	23	25
G29	Edward Garrett	23	31	
G31	John Houston	25	29	
G428	George Frederick Rich	21	29	
G560	George Pratt	21	29	
G593	James Deans	22	23	24
T764	George Manners Sutton	19	22	
T884	Edward Boxer	21	32	
T939	George Truscott	22	30	
Total		289	361	132
Average		22	28	26

The age where recorded (25 out of 26) of promotion to commander varies from 22 to 70 and makes the average age of 41 rather meaningless. However during the war promotion ages to commander varied between 22 and 39 with an average of 28 years

old. From 1816 onwards ages varied from 23 to 70 with an average of 55 years old. Clearly youth was required in a wartime situation and a maturer outlook preferred in peace. It would also seem evident that many of these promotions were from a grateful country to superannuated heroes and bore no relationship to active service. In a period when beached Royal Navy commissioned officers received half-pay this would ensure that retired lieutenants would benefit with more income by being promoted to commander. Retired captains could eventually expect to make admiral by keeping the grim reaper at bay and thus benefit financially from increased pay. A cynical mind might also argue that promoting retired lieutenants to commander did not put any future call on the Treasury as promotion to captain, the next rung on the promotional ladder, was not on seniority but by appointment.

Of the ten (100%) commanders promoted to captain, five (50%) were promoted before 1815. Their age ranged from 24 to 28 with an average of 26 years old. The five (50%) commanders promoted to captain post-1815 ages ranged from 39 to 63 with an average age of 48. Again we see young wartime officers and much older peacetime appointments. Of the ten (100%) captains on our list, seven (70%) are recorded as having made admiral. The age that they made admiral ranges from 58 to 70 with an average age of 64. All the appointments to admiral came between 1838 and 1857, well outside our period. The average time that it took to move up the seniority list varied between 19 and 36 years but averaged out at 31 years.

Of the 74 (100%) midshipmen who made lieutenant we have the year of their death and their age at death of 41 (55%) of them with an average life expectancy of 51 years old. As would be expected, the rigours and dangers of war took their toll and 13

(44%) of our lieutenants died before the end of the French Wars. At least three of them were killed in action and two were drowned,<sup>145</sup> the rest, presumably, succumbed to sickness.

**Table 6.14: Midshipman's promotion prospects**  
(Midshipmen promoted out of 143)

Rank	Number	Percentage	Percentage of previous rank
Lieutenant	74	52%	52%
Commander	26 (19)	18% (13%)	35% (26%)
Captain	10	7%	39%
Admiral	7	5%	70%

Table 6.14 summarises the promotional prospects of midshipmen. Of our 143 (100%) midshipmen, 74 (52%) made lieutenant, just over half our sample. Of those 74 lieutenants (100%) 26 (35%) made commander, just fewer than one in five of the total sample (18%). However seven (12%) of those promoted commander were almost certainly promoted after they had effectively retired from active service, that is over 15 years from war's end and aged 60 or over. Therefore a more accurate promotional figure is likely to be 19 (26%) lieutenants promoted to commander or only 13% of our midshipman sample (the bracketed figures in Table 6.14 refer to these figures). From our 26 (100%) commanders a total of 10 (38%) were promoted to captain, 7% of our midshipman sample. A further 10 of our sample (7%) went on to achieve captain's rank and of these seven (5%) survived long enough to become admirals. Therefore it would seem that about 1 in 20 of our midshipmen achieved admiral's rank.

It has always been known that promotion from midshipman to lieutenant was a vital, difficult first step and our sample of midshipmen demonstrate that in real terms about half of them made it although we have to take into account that some that did not make it were clearly not intended for the quarterdeck and that they would not have

had expectations in this direction. A tantalising question that none of the many officer memoirs answer is how these midshipmen interacted with ‘gentlemen’ midshipmen and the rest of the crew. Did they wear a midshipman’s uniform and share the midshipman’s berth? At present we do not know the answers to these questions.

Further promotion had to come quickly or it might be a long time before a lieutenant made commander, if he made it at all. Other factors had also to be taken into account such as at what stage in the war a midshipman made lieutenant? It is clear that early war promotions gave much better chances of promotion than late war and that post war promotion almost came to a dead stop.<sup>146</sup> The odds of making commander were quite low, around 1 in 4 (taking out those who made commander in their 60s). The odds of making commander to captain were just over evens at 53%. However the evidence shows that the younger a man got made commander the more likely it was that he would make captain. After being made captain it was just a question of around a thirty year wait before the rank of admiral was automatically bestowed. It would appear that, if an individual survived the war, the chances of reaching admiral were good as nearly three quarters of our captains lived to be made admiral. The recipe for success in the promotion stakes was to get promoted young and to get promoted early in wartime.

## **Conclusion**

The study of the 143 midshipmen that served on the three ships (four commissions) of this survey have revealed much about how the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars period trained its sea officers. Combining interrogation of the ship’s muster and log book database, naval biographies, commissioned sea officer lists and



other records held in the National Archive Public Record Office at Kew (principally the lieutenants passing certificates) a unique picture of junior sea officer development has been painted.

In summary, to what extent have we been able to answer the questions set ourselves?

The nationality or 'origin' of our midshipman sample was, unsurprisingly, largely British (95%). However 5% of the sample were recorded as being non-British, but it is likely that most of these youngsters thought of themselves as being British as they originated from British colonies. One of the midshipmen was recorded as being American and pressed into the *Trent*. He was sufficiently convinced of his claim to pursue it and was eventually discharged from the ship 'being an American' but not before he had been rated midshipman. Another midshipman from the *Trent* originated from Minorca and subsequently made lieutenant. This demonstrates that the Royal Navy were quite prepared to recruit foreigners and train them up to be commissioned officers. We have also seen that most of the midshipmen recruited came from the seaport towns and cities of Great Britain. It is also the case that there appears to be discrimination against Irish midshipmen as their chances of becoming lieutenants were significantly lower than English midshipmen were, 30% of Irish midshipmen made lieutenant as opposed to 48% of English midshipmen.

Midshipmen were recruited young by modern standards but not by the standards of the day; out of our midshipman sample 80% were aged between 13 and 22. However older midshipmen, known as 'oldsters' did exist. It is clear from this survey that these oldsters were not just midshipmen who failed to make the grade as commissioned officers but that they had been selected to be rated as midshipmen, always seen as a

transitory rating, for other reasons. This would point to the use of the rating of midshipman as not just a tool for commissioned officer training but also as a developmental process for warrant and petty officers and even perhaps as a pool of young talent that could be put into positions of responsibility when need arose which was a vestigial legacy of the original role of midshipmen.

Perhaps the thorniest question centres on identifying the social background of midshipmen. The division of 'lower deck' and 'young gentleman' is a difficult one to sustain. As Rodger points out<sup>147</sup> they were all technically lower deck men and were often rated as such in order to learn the necessary seafaring skills. However close inspection of the records has given us some strong pointers between those who came on board as 'young gentlemen' with some level of influence and interest and those who were without such patronage and therefore likely to be of a lower social rank. By carefully trawling the social information available we have been able to show that a significant percentage of midshipmen, around 27%, were from the lower deck. It does seem clear from the evidence however that a number of these lower deck entrants were never destined for commissioned officer status but were being trained to fill warrant and petty officer roles and a number achieved this rank. Therefore to put an exact percentage figure on the proportion of the lower deck to be rated midshipman and to then make lieutenant is very difficult. However it surely must be greater than Lavery's estimate of three percent<sup>148</sup> or Lewis' of just under seven percent.<sup>149</sup> The crude calculations from this sample of midshipmen would point to a figure of around 16 percent, or one in six of lieutenants originating from the lower deck although it would seem that the higher up the officer hierarchy you went the proportion of lower deck men would drop considerably. This is an important question to answer as it

shows us perhaps a key to the success of the Royal Navy of this period. By engaging in a limited social meritocracy did the Royal Navy ensure that its officer corps was leavened with competent lower deck men? If it did, then this would surely communicate itself to seamen and potential seamen that there was a career structure present that could lead to career, monetary and social advancement. This in turn would undoubtedly aid in the recruitment and retention of competent seamen, always the Royal Navy's biggest headache. It would also appear that we have answered the question concerning the use of the rating of midshipman. That is, at this period in the navy's history the rating was not just for 'gentlemen officers under instruction' but was also used as a training ground for warrant and petty officers.

The three classes of Volunteer and Boy ratings at first glance appears confusing as it seems that captains did not adhere strictly to regulations. Boys were moved from third class directly to first, from third and second class directly to midshipman as well as progressing from third to second and then to first. The idea that just the first class boys were 'young gentlemen' waiting to be rated midshipmen does not appear to be wholly true. It is true that most boys from our sample who were recorded as having been rated midshipman were moved from volunteer first class but many of those boys came from second and/or third class as well as being directly rated midshipman. However this survey does give us some view on how the system of volunteers and boys worked in practice.

From our sample a clear picture emerges of how midshipmen were regularly rated able seaman and master's mate in order to develop their skills in seamanship and navigation and to provide evidence of this to the lieutenants examining board. This is

a unique view of officer training in action. We have also seen how seamen were rated midshipmen by their captain and subsequently put into petty officer positions such as quartermaster's mate and quarter gunner.

We have considered the role that 'interest' plays at a shipboard level. Captains were allowed to bring their 'followers' with them when they moved to another command and we have several examples of this occurring in this sample. More uniquely, we have seen how an individual ship's captain can build up a following from a ship's company new to him and then support that following in assisting in getting them promotion.

A number of factors emerge from our sample of midshipmen concerning the promotional ladder that they were attempting to climb. Broadly speaking most midshipmen seemed to have had a roughly even chance of making lieutenant. Death, sickness and desertion took their toll of the midshipman's berth as well as some that requested and received permission to leave the service. A number of midshipmen were made warrant or petty officers and all these factors combined to account for about a quarter of our sample. A further 25 percent disappear from the records and it is likely that they shared similar fates to those above. The records show that the remaining 50 percent passed their lieutenant's examination although some had to wait a considerable time before receiving a full lieutenant's commission and it is likely that a few were never commissioned. For those promoted to lieutenant it would appear that the next step up the ladder was the most difficult. Only 26 percent of those lieutenants, 18 percent of the original sample of midshipmen, made it to commander during their active service life although a number were promoted by a grateful nation

many years later when they were in their sixties. If a man made it to commander then he had about an evens chance of being promoted to captain and then just had to keep the grim reaper at bay for around thirty years in order to become admiral and around 70 percent did so.

The most important step for the ambitious midshipman to achieve was to make lieutenant before the war's end. Many midshipmen were rated lieutenant as the war finished and this was clearly recognition by the authorities that peace would mean an effective end to promotional prospects.<sup>150</sup> However the massive increase of ships and men in the Royal Navy during the war years created a lost generation of midshipmen to whom promotional prospects were negligible when peace eventually came. If promotion did come then most midshipmen could expect to be made lieutenant in their early twenties. If they made commander during wartime they could expect to be an age of about 28 years old. If they missed wartime promotion then they would have a long wait; few were promoted between wartime and their own retirement. The average age of promotion in wartime from commander to captain was 26 years old, younger than that from lieutenant to commander. This would seem to indicate that if you wanted to make captain you had to get promoted to commander in your early twenties. Peacetime promotion to captain from commander was a lengthy process, the average age of peacetime promotions to captain was almost twice that of wartime. For most midshipmen perhaps the most encouraging statistic to emerge from this study is that of those who we have records for, many made it to a ripe old age; life in the Service made for tough old birds.

In conclusion, this survey of 143 midshipmen from three Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars frigates has given us a glimpse of where midshipmen came from, their age profile, what social background they came from, how they were rated, what happened to them, how the volunteer and boys system worked in practice, how they were trained and what their chances of promotion were in practice. However we have our final question to answer: could a landsman become an admiral? The answer is he could, although none of our sample did, but we have demonstrated that one landsman did become lieutenant, one foreigner made lieutenant, one ordinary seaman made commander and one pressed man rose to commander rank. Perhaps the most important factor to come out of this case study is the broad church that ship's captains were prepared to draw from in order to get competent sea officers that would contribute to the Royal Navy's future successes and how that talent was nurtured and encouraged.

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<sup>1</sup> From Ashton, J. ed, *Real Sailor-Songs* (London, 1891) 'The Jolly Sailor's True Description of a man-of-war' p. v. The verse reads:

*There are snotty boys of Midshipmen*

*Han't done yet shitting yellow;*

*As to their age, some hardly ten*

*Strike many a brave fellow*

*Who dare not prate at any rate*

*Nor seem in the least to mumble;*

*They'll frap you still, do what you will;*

*It is but folly to grumble.*

<sup>2</sup> The rank of commander was originally called master and commander but this was changed to simply commander in 1794. Lavery, B., *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815* (London, 1989) p. 98

<sup>3</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* pp. 94-99

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* p. 96

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<sup>5</sup> King, D., Hattendorf, J. B. and Estes, J. W. *A Sea of Words: A Lexicon and Companion for Patrick O'Brian's Seafaring Tales* (New York, 1995) p. 248

<sup>6</sup> Lavery, *Nelson's Navy* p. 40

<sup>7</sup> Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) pp. 186-191

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* p. 89. For an account of Pepy's work at the Navy Board see Tomalin, C. *Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self*, (London, 2002) pp. 133-148 and pp. 179-194. The reason given for the development of a systematic approach to officer training was the poor performance of some of Britain's sea officers in the Dutch Wars of the seventeenth century that was put down to the use of influence and patronage in obtaining sea officer posts in what was a very technical profession. Pappalardo, B. *Royal Navy Lieutenant's Passing Certificates 1691-1902 Part 1 (A-H)*, List and Index Society vols. 289-290 (List and Index Society, 2002) pp. i-iii

<sup>9</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Great Britain, Volume One 660-1649* (London, 1997) p. 406

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, M *England's Sea Officers: The Story of the Naval Profession* (London, 1939) p. 213

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>12</sup> Pappalardo p. iii

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid* p. vi

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* p. xi, Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London, 1986) p.299 and Lavery, *Nelson's Navy* p. 25

<sup>15</sup> ADM36 14844

<sup>16</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>17</sup> ADM6 99 pp. 156-7

<sup>18</sup> Syrett, D. and DiNardo R L, *Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy* (NRS, 1994) p. 150

<sup>19</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 94

<sup>20</sup> Pappalardo p. xiii

<sup>21</sup> Baugh, D. A. *Naval Administration 1715-1750* (NRS, 1977) p.37

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. vii

<sup>23</sup> I am indebted to Bruno Pappalardo of the PRO who has kindly assisted in the tracing of lieutenants passing certificates of the midshipmen involved in this section of the thesis and who has offered much advice and guidance on where to find relevant documents in the PRO archive.

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- <sup>24</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 93
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93, Rodger *Wooden World* p. 297-8
- <sup>26</sup> For example Thomas Cochrane, later the Earl of Dundonald, in his memoir states that his uncle, Sir Alexander Cochrane, had falsely entered his name on the muster books of several ships under his command in order to 'give me a few years standing in the service' (Dundonald, Earl of, T. *The Autobiography of a Seaman* (London, 1995 (first published 1861) p. 46)
- <sup>27</sup> ADM107 27 pp. 87-90
- <sup>28</sup> ADM107 24 pp. 160-4 and ADM 6 98 p. 167
- <sup>29</sup> ADM107 32 pp. 311-4
- <sup>30</sup> ADM107 41 pp. 247-9 and ADM6 101 p. 7
- <sup>31</sup> Rodger, N.A.M. 'Commissioned Officers Careers' in the Royal Navy 1690-1815' *Journal for Maritime Research*, June 2001, p. 10
- <sup>32</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 25, Lewis *Social History* p. 213
- <sup>33</sup> Walker, C. F. *Young Gentlemen, the Story of Midshipmen* (London, 1938) p. 22
- <sup>34</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 25
- <sup>35</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 88
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, Lewis *Social History* p. 89
- <sup>37</sup> David Syrett and R L DiNardo *Commissioned Sea Officers of the Royal Navy* (NRS, 1994)
- <sup>38</sup> William R. O'Byrne *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1849)
- <sup>39</sup> These are held under the headings of ADM 107 and ADM 6
- <sup>40</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 129, Lewis *Social History* p. 89
- <sup>41</sup> Many of the midshipmen joined as 'captain's servants' before the introduction of the rating of volunteers and boys of the three classes in 1794 (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 88)
- <sup>42</sup> For a potted biography of Admiral Kingcome in which his service in the *Emerald* is mentioned see O'Byrne p. 616
- <sup>43</sup> See Lavery *Nelson's Navy* pp. 88-116 (Part IV) and pp. 129-144 (Part VI)
- <sup>44</sup> Rodger *Naval Records* p. 50
- <sup>45</sup> Robert Grey (E177) joined the *Emerald* on 14 November 1785 rated midshipman. He was rated quartermaster on 1 January 1796, able seaman 2 July 1796 (ADM36 14842), quarter gunner 8 October 1799 (ADM36 14844), back to able seaman on 15 August 1800, quarter gunner again on 2 March 1801



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and finally back to able seaman on 20 July 1801. He deserted on 19 September 1801 when the *Emerald* was moored in Antigua (ADM36 14846).

<sup>46</sup> ADM36 14698 and ADM51 1396

<sup>47</sup> ADM36 15558

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>49</sup> ADM36 15559 William Jacobs (E783) made lieutenant in October 1813 after serving under the notorious Hugh Pigot (see Pope, D. *The Black Ship* (London, 1977)) prior to his murder on board *HMS Hermione*. Jacobs was severely wounded in action in 1809 and never advanced beyond the rank of lieutenant (O'Byrne p. 575).

<sup>50</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>52</sup> ADM36 15226

<sup>53</sup> ADM 107/34 and ADM 6/104. William Pringle Green made lieutenant in 1805 following the Battle of Trafalgar where he had served on board *HMS Conqueror*. He eventually took possession of the French C-in-C's flagship the *Bucentaure* after having the *Conqueror*'s small boats twice sinking under him. O'Byrne states that 'Lieutenant Green was an officer of great mechanical powers. Although his exertions, rewarded in general with the most blasting ill-luck, seldom fructified into good to himself, he nevertheless unflinchingly devoted the greater portion of his life to the promotion of inventions and improvements connected with the service' (O'Byrne pp. 426-7)

<sup>54</sup> ADM36 15226

<sup>55</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>56</sup> See James F Zimmerman *Impressment of American Seamen* (Columbia UP, 1925)

<sup>57</sup> ADM36 15229 John Arguimbau (T904) Died in 1818 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 10)

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Keeny Jones (E687) Syrett and DiNardo p. 248, William Pringle Green (T934) Syrett and DiNardo p. 187, ADM 107 34 and ADM 6 104 and John Arguimbau (T904) Syrett and DiNardo p. 10, ADM 107 41.

<sup>59</sup> I am grateful to N. A. M. Rodger for pointing this possibility out

<sup>60</sup> The two examples located are Robert Payne (G431) who is recorded as coming from 'London' in the muster book (ADM36 15090) but his baptismal certificate states that he was born in 'Shelby, Herts.' (ADM 6 102, ADM 107 31) and his brother (the same parents are given on both baptismal certificates)

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Richard Payne (G18) who is also recorded as coming from 'London' in the muster book (ADM36 13171) and from Welford, Northampton on his baptismal certificate (ADM 107 20). The brothers did not advance any further up the promotional ladder, Robert died in 1802 and Richard drowned in 1805 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 351).

<sup>61</sup> Rule, J. *The Experience of Labour in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1981) p. 12

<sup>62</sup> Perhaps the most famous 'oldster' is William Culmer who was known in the fleet for being the oldest midshipman afloat. Culmer eventually passed his exam for lieutenant and his passing certificate reveals that he joined the service in September 1755 on board *HMS Newark* as an 'ordinary seaman', was made midshipman in 1758 and apart from various spells as master's mate, able seaman, cook and even acting lieutenant, he did not pass for a lieutenant until April 1790 after serving for over 27 years (ADM 107 13)

<sup>63</sup> These were Robert Bell (EM72) who was discharged into *HMS Boreas* (ADM37 1226), John Barker (EM77) who was discharged into *HMS Diana* (ADM37 1226), William Murdoch (T952) who was discharged into *HMS Salvadore* (ADM36 15230) and Gerald Garnault (T24) who was discharged into *HMS Pelter* 'on promotion' (ADM36 13253).

<sup>64</sup> ADM36 12578

<sup>65</sup> William Spears (T455) ADM36 15230

<sup>66</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>67</sup> See Chapter 2, endnote 41

<sup>68</sup> John Williams (T468) ADM36 15226 and Francis Grayham (T304) ADM36 15226

<sup>69</sup> John McLain (*sic*) (T21) ADM36 15226

<sup>70</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>71</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>72</sup> ADM36 14842

<sup>73</sup> ADM36 14843

<sup>74</sup> Robert Grey (E177) ADM36 14846, James Dummin (*sic*) (E518) ADM36 14846, William Gibson (T226) ADM36 15229 and John Smith (T618) ADM36 15228

<sup>75</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 90

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<sup>76</sup> Regulations concerning the number of midshipmen to be carried on board ship were 24 for a first rate vessel, 20 for a 74 gun vessel, 6 for a frigate and 2 for smaller vessels such as cutters, sloops and gun brigs. In the case of frigates it was six midshipmen to be carried on board (Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.89)

<sup>77</sup> When discussing the selection of midshipmen for the Royal Navy, Wareham states that '...it was still heavily influenced by the mechanisms of patronage and interest. This is because British Society generally operated through this process – and the navy was to a large degree that society afloat'

Wareham, T. *The Star Captains: Frigate Command in the Napoleonic Wars* (London, 2001) p. 17

<sup>78</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 97

<sup>79</sup> Greenhill, B. and Giffard, A. *Steam, Politics and Patronage: the Transformation of the Royal Navy 1815-54*, (London, 1994) p. 71

<sup>80</sup> For an excellent example of patronage at work see Sugden, J. *Nelson: A Dream of Glory* (London, 2004). In particular Chapter XXII *From Flag Captain to Ship-Boy* pp. 605-634

<sup>81</sup> The nature of the relationship between the captain and his crew of a Royal Navy warship is eloquently described in the journal of Captain Graham Moore. Graham Moore was the younger brother of General Sir John Moore of Corunna fame. Wareham's book (Wareham, T. *Frigate Commander*, Pen and Sword, 2004) is based on the private journal that Graham Moore kept during his time as a naval lieutenant and then frigate captain. Moore comes over as a sensitive, thoughtful and careful warrior. His bouts of depression and self doubt as well as his medical problems, in particular rheumatism, mark him out as sympathetic character and give us a real sense of the loneliness of command and the rigours of sea life in the age of sail. Moore hates the use of the lash but believes that it is a necessary evil if discipline is to be maintained. His care of his men and the relationship that he had with them comes over and he frequently records becoming emotional when addressing a ship's company that he is leaving. Perhaps the value of Moore's journal is that it appears as if it was not meant for publication and so lacks the boorish self justification, derring do and jingoism that taints many personal memoirs of the period.

<sup>82</sup> ADM36 13171

<sup>83</sup> ADM36 15091

<sup>84</sup> ADM36 13173

<sup>85</sup> ADM36 15090

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- <sup>86</sup> George Duff went on to command *HMS Mars* at the Battle of Trafalgar and was slain in that action (see James Vol. IV, p.22-108) and after a distinguished career Archibald Duff went on to become an Admiral (O'Byrne p.307-8). Also see Mackenzie, R. H. *The Trafalgar Roll* (London, 1913) pp. 122-7 for biographies
- <sup>87</sup> ADM37 1226
- <sup>88</sup> ADM 107 43, ADM 6 109. Charles Maitland made lieutenant on 20 November 1812 but does not appear to have risen further. He died in 1827 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 295)
- <sup>89</sup> ADM51 4510 and ADM51 1305
- <sup>90</sup> ADM36 15226
- <sup>91</sup> ADM36 15228
- <sup>92</sup> ADM36 15226
- <sup>93</sup> ADM36 15227
- <sup>94</sup> ADM107 29 and ADM6 101
- <sup>95</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p.367
- <sup>96</sup> ADM107 27 and ADM6 100
- <sup>97</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p and O'Byrne p. 27
- <sup>98</sup> ADM107 24
- <sup>99</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p. 249
- <sup>100</sup> ADM6 102 and ADM107 31
- <sup>101</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p. 367
- <sup>102</sup> Rodger *The Wooden World* p. 263
- <sup>103</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 93, Michael Lewis *England's Sea Officers: the Story of the Naval Profession* (London, 1948) p. 210
- <sup>104</sup> ADM36 15227
- <sup>105</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 100-101
- <sup>106</sup> ADM1 5352
- <sup>107</sup> John Bassett Balderstone (T318) did not return to the *Trent* but is recorded to have made commander in January 1806 and came to a sticky end when he was murdered in December 1808 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 18).
- <sup>108</sup> ADM36 15227

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<sup>109</sup> ADM36 14846

<sup>110</sup> Patrick Warner (G295) was the son of James and Elizabeth Little from Stoke Dameral, Devon (this is according to his baptismal certificate although his muster entry states that he was from 'Ayre, North Britain' (ADM36 13172 ))and was born on 26 March 1783. He passed as a lieutenant in May 1805 (ADM6 102, ADM107 31 and Syrett and DiNardo p. 458)

<sup>111</sup> John Thomas Lemoyne (E370) was the son of Abraham and Mary Lemoyne from Stonehouse and was born on 24 March 1781. He passed as lieutenant in May 1805 and died in 1827 (ADM 107 32 Syrett and DiNardo p. 272)

<sup>112</sup> Charles Burman (E574) was the son of John and Elizabeth Burman from St George, Hannover Square, London and was born on 25 June 1782. He passed as lieutenant in October 1803 but it appears that he did not get appointed to a ship as a lieutenant until June 1804. He died in 1810 (ADM107 30 and Syrett and DiNardo p. 63)

<sup>113</sup> Richard Lock Connolly (E391) was the son of Matthew and Mary Conolly from Portsea and was born on 27 July 1782. He passed as lieutenant in May 1803 but it appears that he did not get appointed to a ship as a lieutenant until January 1807 and only made commander in retirement in February 1845. He died in 1869. Before joining the *Emerald* he had been present at the Battle of the Nile as a volunteer first class on board *HMS Theseus*. After leaving the *Emerald* he served as a sub-lieutenant on the gun-brig *Tigress* where he was severely wounded. He was appointed lieutenant to *HMS Electra* and served in that rank until going on half-pay in 1821 (ADM107 29,ADM6 101, Syrett and DiNardo p. 95 and O'Byrne p.221)

<sup>114</sup> William Pearce (E286) was from Dawlish, Devon received his lieutenant's commission in December 1804 and made commander in July 1837 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 352)

<sup>115</sup> Richard Stuart (T796) was the son of John and Ann Stuart from Banff, Scotland and was born on 28 January 1784. He passed for a lieutenant in March 1807 but was not commissioned until June 1809. He made commander in March 1827 (ADM107 36 and Syrett and DiNardo p. 427)

<sup>116</sup> George Frederick Rich (G428) was the son of Admiral Sir Thomas and Elizabeth Rich from Sonning, Berkshire and was born on 22 February 1784. He passed for lieutenant in June 1805 and was commissioned into *HM Sloop Rosario* in December of that year. During the intervening six months he acted as a sub-lieutenant in a number of ships. He was made commander in 1813, captain in 1823, admiral in 1853 and died in 1863 (ADM107 32, Syrett and DiNardo p. 377 and O'Byrne p.972)

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<sup>117</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 93

<sup>118</sup> I am grateful to Dr Michael Duffy for pointing this practice out.

<sup>119</sup> Thomas James Dobson (G82) joined the *Glenmore* in May 1796 (ADM36 13171). His baptismal certificate states that his parents were 'Thomas (mariner) and Elizabeth Dobson' and that he came from Southwark, London further pointing to his lower deck origin (ADM 107 22)

<sup>120</sup> Edward Garret (G29) was the son of William and Elizabeth Garrett from Shoreditch, London and was born on 20 March 1778. He passed for lieutenant in April 1801 although his first commission was in January 1806. In 1805 he was serving on board *HMS Mars* at the Battle of Trafalgar where he was seriously wounded. He was made commander in 1809 following the taking of a Dutch brig in which he particularly distinguished himself and was commissioned commander of *HMS Hope* in October 1810. He was placed on half-pay in 1813, retired in 1861 and was admitted to Greenwich Hospital in 1844 (ADM107 25, ADM6 99, Syrett and DiNardo p. 171 and O'Byrne p.389-90).

<sup>121</sup> ADM36 15229

<sup>122</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>123</sup> ADM36 14845

<sup>124</sup> It states on John Huston's (G31) lieutenants passing certificate that he did not have a certificate and therefore he swore an oath that he was over 21 years of age (ADM107 29 and ADM 6 101). As he could not get a copy of his baptismal certificate he is also included in the lower deck category.

<sup>125</sup> ADM107 24 and ADM6 98

<sup>126</sup> The five midshipmen were all from the same ship, *Glenmore*, and four of the five 'appeared' at the same date, 9 February 1801 from the ship *HMS Eurydice*. They were: Samuel Marshall (G462), Corby Bourne (G463), Harling J. Nelson (G464) and Clifton Curtis (G464). The fifth, Daniel Ryan (G465) appeared on 9 May 1801 (ADM36 15091).

<sup>127</sup> Killed in action was Dixie Woodward (E300) (ADM36 14843), those who died of sickness/disease were: Charles Stones (E443) who died in Antigua Hospital on 1 November 1802 (ADM36 15558), H Townsend (E472) who died in Antigua Hospital on 13 October 1801 (ADM36 14846), H. Johnson (E505) who died in Antigua Hospital on 5 November 1802 (ADM36 15558), James Tyrry (*sic*) (E525) who died in Antigua Hospital on 16 November 1802 (ADM36 15558), James Hae (*sic*) (E488) who died on 12 January 1805 'at sea' (ADM36 15560), Francis Graham (T304) who died 23 June 1798 at Cape Nichola Mole Hospital (ADM36 15226), Thomas Ankers (T432) 27 who died on February 1800

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at Port Royal Hospital (ADM36 15227), John Williams (T468) who died on 16 June 1798 in hospital (the name of the hospital is unclear) (ADM36 15226) and Fife Duff (G32) who 'died on board' on 16 April 1800 (ADM36 15090). The reasons for the death of William Hall Young (EM18) on 27 December 1809 are, surprisingly, not given but as the *Emerald* was at that time moored in Cork Harbour the reason is most likely sickness (ADM37 1229 and ADM51 1957).

<sup>128</sup> Michael Constantine (E122) was discharged on 23 November 1800 (ADM36 14845)

<sup>129</sup> Edward Worthington (E263) was discharged on 16 January 1801 (ADM36 14845)

<sup>130</sup> William John Popham (E328) was discharged on 30 July 1802 from Antigua Hospital (ADM36 14846)

<sup>131</sup> Simon Reid (E666) was discharged on 26 October 1804 (ADM36 15560). Although Reid was discharged in October 1804 it is likely that he had been given command of his prize the previous month. The *Emerald's* log records that in September 1804 the ship's boats were engaged in cutting out French merchantmen. The captain's log states that: 'French schooner *La Enfant Tronue* and *La Belle Dame* and the Swede schooner *Laurelt* which was out from their anchor from under the battery at Bay Des Hayes having lost 2 seamen killed and 1 wounded 1 sergeant and 1 private marine wounded. One boat sunk the launch missing with Lieutenant Young and 13 seamen. Lieutenant Higginson and one sergeant and 6 private marines.' (ADM51 1530). It is likely that it was one of these vessels that were lost with Reid on board.

<sup>132</sup> Christopher Cowell (T522) was discharged on 1 July 1800 (ADM36 15229)

<sup>133</sup> George Budge (T689) was discharged on 6 June 1800 (ADM36 15228). Budge was captured during a botched cutting out expedition. The captain's log for June 1800 records that 'Jolly boat with an officer and 7 men taken by a French privateer close in shore' (ADM51 1352)

<sup>134</sup> ADM36 15228

<sup>135</sup> ADM1 5360

<sup>136</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 98

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid* p. 98-9

<sup>138</sup> ADM107 29 and ADM6 101

<sup>139</sup> Syrett and DiNardo p. 95

<sup>140</sup> Connolly went on to achieve the rank of Commander in 1845 dying in 1869 aged 86. O'Byrne p.

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<sup>141</sup> The one exception is Peter Christie (EM452) who passed his lieutenant's examination just one year later in 1816 (ADM107 48 and ADM6 114). However there is no evidence that he was ever commissioned as a lieutenant.

<sup>142</sup> Henry Watson Hall (EM453) is recorded in Syrett and DiNardo (p. 194) as retired as a commander in 1860 but does not give a date for his commission. O'Byrne (p. 443) does not record any promotion to commander.

<sup>143</sup> James Whitley Deans (G593) was the son of Dr. James Dean and Janet Dundas (ADM107 32), part of the powerful Dundas family. James Whitley Deans became an Admiral of the White, MP, Lord of the Admiralty in 1841 and 1846, and Naval Aide-de-camp to William IV and changed his name to Dundas (O'Byrne p. 312-3).

<sup>144</sup> ADM107 42 and O'Byrne p. 1031.

<sup>145</sup> William Bridges Champion (E691) was killed in action in 1814 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 78), George Pratt (G560) was also killed in 1814 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 365), Thomas William Jones (T409) was killed in 1813 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 249), Robert Payne (G431) was drowned in 1805 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 351) and Peter Stephen Prieur (T666) was drowned in 1806 (Syrett and DiNardo p. 367).

<sup>146</sup> Rodger *Commissioned Officers* p. 7

<sup>147</sup> Rodger *The Wooden World* p. 63

<sup>148</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 93

<sup>149</sup> Lewis *Social History* p. 31 (Table 1)

<sup>150</sup> Rodger calls the peace and wartime ebb and flow of promotions '...a succession of feast and famine' (Rodger *Commissioned Officers* p. 6)



## **Chapter 7**

### **Out of the Doldrums:**

#### **Conclusion**

In the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) the view was put forward that research into the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) was both unfashionable and neglected. Other areas of social military history, largely sparked by WWII studies, has moved on and left Royal Navy history of the period in the 'historical doldrums'.<sup>1</sup> The work that has been done in this field of social history, with a few notable exceptions, has tended to concentrate on using the memoirs of the senior officer class and a few, controversial, lower deck recollections; despite the fact that there is a vast archive of primary social evidence available in the muster, pay and log books held at The National Archive, Kew. The main barrier to the use of this material has been its sheer quantity; there is estimated to be over a quarter of a million such records held,<sup>2</sup> and the management of the vast amount of data held within. With the development of computer-based technologies, in particular data management systems, there is now the opportunity to transcribe and unlock the information stored within these records. In particular, ship's muster and pay books lend themselves to such techniques as the entries are largely confined to set headings that can easily be transferred to a data management system and the resultant information interrogated.

In order to test how effective such use of database technology could be in the study of social military history, to find out the pitfalls and difficulties in such a study and to try

and establish how information extracted could be exploited a pilot study was carried out as an MA dissertation.<sup>3</sup> The result of that pilot study proved encouraging and forms the basis of this PhD thesis. It was decided to expand the size and time span of the pilot study in order to address concerns about the 'typicality' of the sample and to look at a number of entire ship's commissions to allow a comprehensive and linear view of the men's careers on board their respective ships. This was termed a 'horizontal' approach to the study of muster and pay books as opposed to a 'vertical' study that looked at single muster or pay books at a given time. In the event, the lives and careers of a total of 2,926 sailors, 380 boys as well as, to a limit extent, 460 marines that served on three frigates (four commissions) over a 16 year period have been recorded and studied. A unique and comprehensive study that will, hopefully, extend our knowledge of the social history of Nelson's Navy and help move forward techniques, methodologies and thinking in the field of social history.

In order to test the utility of the information extracted from the databases constructed it was decided to select a number of topic areas within the field of the social military history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In the event the information extracted from the databases was so great that the number of topic areas had to be drastically pruned and it is hoped that those topic areas will be published at a later date. Therefore the topic headings should be seen as an example of what can be done utilising database technology, rather than as a complete picture of all that could be wrung out of the findings.

The aim of Chapter 2 was to provide a narrative context and a basic framework of the duties, stations, role and historical events of note that the three frigates were involved in during their active commission(s). During the construction of the databases it became apparent that it was essential that such a framework should be put in place. Rates of sickness, desertion and recruitment were all influenced by the factors of duties and station and therefore these factors had to be recorded and accounted for. The difficulty encountered with providing a large part of this contextual information was that it lay in the captains and master's log books that did not lend themselves easily to transferring to a database. Therefore several attempts were made to develop a database table framework. During the construction of these contextual tables it became apparent that other useful information could be extracted, in particular sea time (the time that the frigates spent at sea rather than moored in port) and gunnery practice.

Each of the three frigates (four commissions) carried out the main duties expected of such a class of ship such as convoy escort, scouting, fleet supply, carrying passengers and attacking enemy shipping both military and merchant, commonly referred to as 'cruising'. The ship's logs database tables also provided examples of the ships in action working alone or with other vessels. It is worth noting that none of the three frigates, despite active careers, ever exchanged broadsides with another enemy frigate but the actions that they were involved in largely consisted of amphibious landings or of cutting out enemy shipping from an enemy harbour.

Each day of three of the ship's commissions<sup>4</sup> were consulted and recorded as to whether the ship was at sea or moored in port, harbour or roadstead. The sum total of this showed that a frigate of the period could expect to be at sea around 55% of the time. This figure was subject to variation due to station but compares very well with Rodger's<sup>5</sup> finding of about 50% sea time. Rodger's figures were compiled from ship's logs from approximately 40 years earlier, before the introduction of copper sheathing to the hulls of Royal Navy vessels that was complete by our period and almost certainly accounts for the 5% difference.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the study of the ship's logs was the amount of gunnery practice, or lack of it, that the frigate crews experienced. It has been an historical given that British gunnery was far superior to that of her French and Spanish enemies.<sup>6</sup> There is little doubt that the amount of sea time that British crews spent together compared to her opponents would account for better teamwork and a faster handling of the guns. However it is practice that makes perfect and the logs reveal that 'dummy' practice was carried out on average once every two months and live firing once every year and a half. As the average length of service on board the *Trent*, for example, was also a year and a half it is quite likely that a large part of the crew never heard the guns fired except in salute and signalling! It would seem that British gunnery was not as superior as it is given credit for. However there must be an explanation as to why it was thought to be so superior to its European enemies. Gunnery at sea was notoriously inaccurate, particularly following the first discharges when the ships invariably became wreathed in gun smoke. Nelson himself wrote in a letter that 'The best and only method I

have found of hitting the enemy afloat is to get so close that whether the gun is pointed upwards or downwards, forward or aft, that it must strike its opponent'.<sup>7</sup> Long-range gunfire did little damage, exhausted crews and made accuracy difficult. It is well known that poorly trained gunners using flat trajectory weapons tend to fire too high and perhaps this, more than any tactical doctrine was responsible for the British belief that French and Spanish ships fired at their sails and rigging rather than their hulls. Nelson's sailors were consummate seamen and time and again they could out sail their French and Spanish opponents and put their ships in tactically superior positions on the enemy's stern, bow or quarter where they could fire a full broadside and their enemy could not. A shot down the length of a ship or 'raking' was particularly devastating as the shot travelled the length of an enemy ship (ships were not equipped with bulkheads at this period) rather than the width.<sup>8</sup> Combining superior sailing skills with the patience to wait until they were at point blank range were enough. Fresh British crews, at short range in tactically superior positions would provide devastating broadsides. It would take poor results against the fledgling US Navy during the War of 1812 to really start the British seriously thinking about gunnery tactics.

All the ship's muster tables were entered on a separate table within each ship's database and the results interrogated. Although only a simple 'head count' of those on board and off board ship, reported sick and supernumeraries and prisoners carried, they give us a unique insight into the manning situation of the navy at a shipboard level. A total of 1,234 individual musters reveal that on average 250 (95%) of the 264 (100%) official complement of men, marines and boys were on the ship's books at any given time. Of

these 250 men, seven (3%) were likely to be off board ship performing ship related duties and a further three (1%) were likely to be reported too sick for duty. It is quite likely that Admiralty manning calculations took account of the fact that some men would not be present due to off board duties and sickness and therefore it would appear that despite all the difficulties faced by the Admiralty in manning the fleet in practice they fell little short of achieving it, certainly for the period and ships under consideration. The muster tables also reveal the numbers of passengers that were carried on board, the average being 17 or 6% above the official complement. Many of these supernumeraries were sailors and marines and it is likely would, on average, go some way to making up for the 'missing' 14 men of the official complement.

Chapter 3 examined in some detail what contemporary and modern historians agree was the single most difficult task that the Admiralty faced during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and that was the manning of the 800 odd ships that the Royal Navy possessed.<sup>9</sup> The problem was twofold, firstly that of moving from a peacetime establishment to a wartime footing. A large part of the fleet was kept with just skeleton crews 'in ordinary' (mothballed) ready for an emergency and needed to be quickly manned in time of war or armament. The second problem was maintaining and increasing the numbers of sailors as the war progressed and the fleet expanded. The problem of manning was a qualitative problem as well as a quantitative one. Sailing vessels of the period needed large quantities of unskilled brute muscle but also needed considerable numbers of highly trained seamen and the only ready source of trained manpower was the merchant navy. The size of the problem facing the Admiralty was that by the middle of

the wars the navy had grown to around 100,000 men, about 40% of all those involved in seafaring serving in British ships. The problem of manning the fleet was not a uniquely British one. All the major seafaring nations faced similar problems and they all tried to regulate the seaman's profession to some extent, with varying degrees of success, in order to be able to call on trained mariners in time of war. Given the interest that scholars have shown in the various aspects of manning the fleet it was decided that this would be a good area in which to test the effectiveness of database technology linked to the muster, pay and log books of the ship's under consideration. As the frigates under question were all built and manned some years after the wars started then it was only possible to look at how the Admiralty maintained the flow of recruits to the Royal Navy. The questions that the database was used to address were developed and this was preceded by a detailed look at the manning situation and how the Admiralty recruited the men that it needed. The questions the chapter tried to answer focused on how the various methods of recruitment worked in practice, how effective they were and to compare them with other findings in this area by the historians Rodger<sup>10</sup> and Lewis.<sup>11</sup> Also addressed were the origin and age profile of the crew, foreigners that served on board ship, how the men were rated and moved between ratings and why they left the ship. Given the controversy surrounding 'quota men' (see below) it was also decided to look in some detail at the small numbers of these men that served in three of the commissions looked at.

The Admiralty followed a number of recruitment practices of which the main two were the encouragement of volunteers with a large bounty on enlistment and the use of impressment. At the start of the war volunteers were encouraged to join and when this did

not produce the required numbers press warrants were issued. Both these recruitment methods were used throughout the wars. In the chapter the various methods that the Admiralty used in recruiting seamen was explored in practice and examples of each were given. Perhaps the most revealing finding to come out of this section was the practice of impressed men being given the opportunity to 'volunteer', thus securing the bounty. This practice is well known but here we see it in action and a pattern emerges. Men pressed by ship's captains were offered to be enlisted as 'volunteers' and thus qualify for the volunteer's bounty and clearly this had attractions. For the ship's captain, as the bounty was normally paid around six months in arrears<sup>12</sup> it gave the men an incentive to stay on board and not jump ship at the earliest opportunity. It would seem that most of the men so pressed took this opportunity although those who seemed to think that they had a chance to appeal against the impressment would refuse the offer. However it must be emphasised that what we are seeing in action here refers to shipboard practice only, not the work of the Impress Service ashore.

In the early war years (1795) the manning crises reached such proportions that the government of the day decided to pass a number of Acts of Parliament collectively referred to as the Quota Acts. The Quota Acts required counties and seaports in England, Scotland and Wales to provide a set number of men for the fleet. Quantitatively these were a success and raised around 30,000 men but contemporaries and some historians claim that these men were the dregs of society and had a negative effect on the fleet introducing radical politics that in large part lead to the fleet mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797.<sup>13</sup> However the findings from this survey paint a very different picture of



the quota men. Although the sample was small, only 94 men, it showed that quota men were much less likely to be flogged than other men (6% of quota men flogged compared to a crew average of 14%) but that they were more likely to be promoted (36% of quota men promoted compared to 28% of other volunteers). Surely this must make us reappraise the effect that quota men had on the fleet and to move them away from the stigma of being categorised as 'miserable specimens' and 'riffraff' that some historians have chosen to deem them.

A breakdown of the ship's crew relating to their method of recruitment to their respective ship has given us a profile of around one third of the crew turned over (coming from) other ships, one third volunteers, and one third made up of pressed men, boys (coming from the boys' muster on reaching 20 years old), quota men and other recruitment methods. This was compared to Rodger's findings from the Seven Years War period and although on the face of it there were significant differences, largely to do with the method of calculation,<sup>14</sup> when these were taken into account the differences were quite small.

When looking at just the 'new' entries to the ship, that is precluding those turned over, we see a profile of 57% volunteers, 15% pressed men, 13% foreigners, 6% boys and 9% quota men and others. These findings were compared to Lewis' calculation of a 'typical' ship's company of 1812.<sup>15</sup> Lewis calculates that the number of pressed men were higher than in this survey putting them at 50% compared to 15%, a significant difference.

However Lewis believes that almost all those who volunteered were in actuality pressed men deciding to take the bounty. There is no doubt that many were; the trick is working out exactly how many. Analysis of the volunteer entries show that about a third of them

were landsmen new to the sea and it is unlikely that many of these would have been pressed. Taking this and other factors into account a realistic estimate of a 'typical' ship's crew is that just over a third were volunteers, a third pressed men and the rest came from the various other categories described.

A look at the age profile of the frigate's crews shows that 62% of them were aged between 15 and 25. However this figure is a little confusing, as it does not include all the boys that served under the boys muster headings (separate from the crew muster). If you include the boys in the calculations it works out that one in three of Royal Navy crews were aged below 21. Compared to the findings of Rediker<sup>16</sup> who looked at merchant seamen age profiles of the first half of the eighteenth century we see some similarities in that around 60% of seamen are aged between 20-29. However our survey shows a much lower age profile within this bracket, 26% aged between 15-20 compared to Rediker's 11%. A look at the seaman rating profile of the three frigates shows that around one third were rated landsman, one-third ordinary seamen and one-third able seaman. About half of the ship's crews in this survey originated from England, one in five were Irish, 14% Scottish, 3% Welsh and 13% were foreigners. Fourteen percent of the crews were recorded flogged at least once during their service on board one of the frigates. Pressed men were flogged a little more than average at 17%, volunteers exactly matched the average at 14% and, as discussed above, quota men much less at 6%. The reason for men leaving or being 'discharged' their respective ship is given in the ship's muster tables. Although some of these entries are vague and difficult to interpret, a pattern emerges that shows that just over half (57%) were discharged for routine matters such as being turned

over to other ships or the ship being paid off, 21% deserted or 'ran', 12% were discharged sick and 9% died whilst in service. Volunteers and pressed men follow this profile quite closely but there is a significant difference in the fate of quota men that relates to health. A total of 26% were discharged sick, over double the average rate and a staggering 23%, over two and a half times the average, died of illness. There is no ready explanation of this high rate of illness. Whatever the reason it is clear that more work should be done on the 30,000 odd quota men that served in the Royal Navy in order to get their true contribution to the war effort into a proper perspective.

This chapter has effectively demonstrated how the use of computer databases can challenge accepted wisdom, give us new insights into the workings of the Royal Navy of the period at a shipboard and policy level, answer some important questions relating to the social history of the navy and, inevitably, throw up new questions to address.

Little work has previously been carried out on the system of 'volunteers and boys' introduced by the Admiralty in 1794 that was designed to regularise the training and development of boys aged between 13 and 17 as trained seamen for the Royal Navy.<sup>17</sup> Chapter 4 examines the careers of over 350 boys, who all served in one of the three categories of 'volunteers and boys of the first second and third class' on the four frigate commissions under consideration. This survey of the careers of these boys on board is a unique insight into how the system worked in practice. It would appear that captains had a flexible view on how they interpreted the Admiralty instructions. Boys were frequently moved between classes and, perhaps most surprisingly, the first class category,

supposedly reserved for 'young gentlemen' was used for boys not intended to walk the quarterdeck. This can be demonstrated by the fact that in broad terms only half of the first class boys were transferred onto the main crew muster as midshipmen, the other half were rated as either ordinary seamen or landsmen. Conversely second and third class boys were rated midshipmen, some of which went on to make commissioned officers. Despite claims to the contrary,<sup>18</sup> it is also clear that ships' captains pressed boys into the Royal Navy and that others were coerced if not directly pressed. Analysis of the careers of the 30 boys sent to the three frigates from the Marine Society shows that they did roughly as well as other boy 'volunteers'. Eight (27%) were transferred to the main crew muster as opposed to 31% of the other boys although all the Marine Society boys that did make the crew muster were rated ordinary seamen which demonstrates that they did acquire seagoing skills. Where they differ compared to the other boys is in their desertion rate. Marine Society boys desertion rate was 30% compared to the boys in general at 11% which demonstrates that there were a lot of unhappy youngsters. However we must be careful in drawing conclusions from a sample of 30 boys but these findings do indicate that more research in this area is needed. This chapter has shown us that the volunteer and boys system, although not strictly used by captains as intended, did train and develop boys from all walks of life into competent seaman.

Chapter 5 takes the theme of training and development further and looks at how men new to the sea fared when they joined the Royal Navy and helps to answer the larger question concerning to what extent was the Royal Navy a consumer or supplier of trained seamen?<sup>19</sup> That is, did the navy simply rely on 'poaching' trained seamen from the

merchant marine or did they train up landsmen to become competent sailors and therefore add to the pool of available mariners? Detection of those men who were truly new to the sea proved difficult but a careful trawl of the records identified a total of 302 individuals from the four commissions who were thought to be 'true' volunteer landsmen. That is that they had volunteered for the Royal Navy and that they had not been to sea before. This look at the careers of volunteer landsmen is unique. The records show that volunteers to the navy who already possessed useful skills such as wood and metal working were quickly put into the ship's specialist areas and a number of these men rose to petty and warrant officer status, some quite quickly. Those without such skills were rated 'landsmen' and although, as would be expected, the time it took them to be moved to a higher, skilled rating varied, the average time that it took for a landsman to reach ordinary seaman was two and a half years. From ordinary to able seaman took a further year and a half giving a total time of around four years from landlubber to skilled mariner. However the evidence shows that there was a 'fast-tracking' system that allowed some men to reach able seaman direct from landsman and that this took on average two and a half years to achieve. All the above demonstrates that the Royal Navy of the period did take volunteer landsmen and turn them into competent seaman; they were suppliers as well as consumers of trained mariners. Although it would appear that only a third of volunteer landsmen made ordinary seamen and above, when it is taken into consideration that a number of deserters and those discharged sick were likely to have returned to the Royal Navy we can confidently estimate that around half of volunteer landsmen made the grade to competent seamen.

Rating changes to men did not just happen when need and competence coincided but captains regularly carried out 'surveys' of the men and re-rated numbers of men at the same time. During their service on board their respective vessels around 30% of volunteer landsmen deserted their ship. This seems a very high figure but must be put in the context of a general desertion rate of around 25%. The records show a pattern of desertion whereby a few men desert shortly after coming on board but on average the time to desertion is around a year and a half. This would mean that most of the men would have picked up some seagoing skills and it is likely that a number of them would have remained in the nautical world either in the merchant marine or re-enlisting in another warship and thus adding to the pool of trained mariners. The disciplinary record of volunteer landsmen shows that 20% of them were flogged during their service on the frigates. This compares with an overall flogging regime of 16% for the crews in general. However men were not flogged into obedience as soon as they came on board, the average time before a volunteer landsman was flogged was around two years. The most surprising statistic to emerge was that men who were flogged were more likely to have been promoted than non-flogged men were. Surely we are seeing the livelier crew members getting into trouble but also getting promoted. All the above is a unique view of a newcomer's experience and development at a shipboard level.

Chapter 6 looked at how sea officer development, particularly regarding midshipmen, worked in practice. A total of 143 midshipmen were looked at, all of those that were rated midshipmen during the four commissions. Their careers on board their respective vessels were compared to naval biographies, passing certificates, sea officer lists and other

primary documentation in order to give some idea of who they were, where did they come from, how did influence and interest effect their careers, what happened to them and what where there chances of promotion?

It was established that the majority of the midshipmen were from the seaport towns and cities of Britain although non-British youngsters were recruited and went on to make lieutenant. However, the majority of the non-British lieutenants came from the West Indies and other colonies and probably saw themselves as British anyway. Nevertheless, one midshipman who made lieutenant came from Minorca and demonstrates that the Royal Navy did recruit and train foreigners for commissioned officer rank. It is also clear that, although proportionate to the crew nationality profile, similar numbers of Irish boys were rated midshipmen to English. However percentage wise significantly more English boys (48%) made lieutenant than Irish (30%). The use of the rate of midshipmen was explored and it was demonstrated that the rank was not only used for 'officers under instruction'. The rate of midshipmen also retained, to some extent, its original function as a training ground for petty and warrant officers and it is likely that numbers of those rated midshipman were never destined for the quarterdeck. It is possible that ship's captains used the rate of midshipman as a pool of proficient seamen that could be put into key positions if need arose as well as a training ground for petty, warrant and commissioned officers. This could well account for the presence of numbers of older midshipmen that haunted the midshipman's berth. It was attempted to establish what proportion of the midshipman's berth came from the lower deck as opposed to those whom would have been considered of 'gentle' birth. Although a difficult statistic to verify, tentative analysis

suggests that although nearly a third of midshipmen were from the lower deck, only around 16% of lieutenants were. Further reinforcing the view that many lower deck midshipmen were never intended for the quarterdeck although it is clear that some were. However this figure does show that common seamen could reach commissioned officer status and this must have had a positive effect on the recruitment, development and retention of sailors.

Of the sample of 143 midshipmen almost exactly one half made it to lieutenant. Of the remainder around a quarter were made up to petty or warrant officer rank and the remaining quarter succumbed to death, disease, desertion and other sundry events. Of those that made lieutenant only a quarter made commander during the war, just one in five of the original sample. Of these one half reached post captains' rank and nearly three quarters of these survived to make admiral; one in twenty of the original sample. The clear lesson from the findings is that for a midshipman of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars to progress he needed a patron or series of patrons, to have begun his career early in the wars and to be made up young. Failing these criteria they had to take part in a successful fleet action or distinguish themselves in action.<sup>20</sup> These shipboard findings support Rodgers' work on commissioned officers that broadly draws the same conclusions.<sup>21</sup>

In Chapter 1 the aim of this thesis was stated to be; *...to hypothesise that the use of computer databases can provide us with valid and reliable evidence concerning the social history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815).*



*By taking a number of identified and controversial questions related to the subject and applying the results of the databases constructed we can test this hypothesis and, hopefully, draw lessons on the use and value of such technologies...* To what extent can we say that that aim has been met? The pilot study demonstrated that there was sufficient primary evidence available, that computer data management systems could successfully manage that evidence and gave some hints as to how the databases could be exploited to answer questions relating to the social history of the Royal Navy for the period in question. The expansion of the database to include other, similar frigates, extending the time period to cover four full ship's commissions and the inclusion of all the sailors, boys and marines who served on those commissions has allowed us to say that the evidence presented is, in most cases, both valid and reliable. Where this is not the case, such as in the study of Quota Men (see Chapter 3) or Marine Society boys (see Chapter 4) it is because the numbers that served on board in these categories was small and spread across several ships. However during discussion of these groups the size of the sample has been clearly indicated and even these small numbers have enabled us to draw tentative conclusions and to point to further research. A number of controversial questions have been identified, the background to the questions given and the databases have been interrogated in order to address those questions. In particular the question of how the fleet was manned has been comprehensively looked at from a shipboard perspective (Chapter 3). Information from the databases has permitted us to look in detail at the crew profile, how the men were recruited, their age, nationality, ability, service record, health, disciplinary record, why they were discharged their ship as well as allowing us to compare this study with other historian's findings. The study of how the 'volunteers and

boys' system worked (Chapter 4) and the development of volunteer landsmen new to the sea (Chapter 5) have never been covered in depth before. The findings have provided us with new evidence and insights concerning the Royal Navy's policy of taking boys and men new to the sea and training them up to be skilled mariners. Using the databases to provide the core of shipboard primary evidence, which can be built on from other sources, has allowed us to expand our knowledge on how the Admiralty developed its commissioned officer corps via the rate of midshipman (Chapter 6). It is difficult to conclude other than that the interrogation of the databases has provided us with new and revealing information concerning the social history of the Royal Navy of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, thus meeting the main aim of this thesis and demonstrating the value of such technologies in this field of study.

What of any lessons learnt and future possibilities? Twenty one years ago when Rodger first drew attention to the vast archives of muster and pay books available in the then Public Records Office, Kew (now The National Archive) database technology was in its infancy. Today databases are widely used in historical research and there are guides available to those who wish to develop such databases.<sup>22</sup> However one of the major lessons learnt from this study has been that the historian must be clear on the questions that they wish a database to address. The pilot study carried out prior to this thesis was invaluable in identifying what could and could not be attempted and such a pilot is recommended to anyone wishing to develop such an historical database. A number of developments have occurred since this study commenced that should make future database construction easier. The most significant development has been the recognition

by archive managers that new technologies have a major part to play in historical research. When work first started on the pilot study many libraries and archives would not allow laptop computers into reading rooms and as a result data had to be transcribed from source to notepad and then from notepad to computer. Happily this has now changed and most archives allow the use of laptops. The National Archive now permits non-flash digital photography of its records and this is a major advancement as it allows extensive private recording and study of archive material. At some stage in the future it is likely that Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology<sup>23</sup> will improve to such an extent that digital imaging will be able to be transferred directly to a database without the laborious process of transcribing word for word from archive to database. It is also likely that voice recognition technology will improve to such an extent that at some time in the not too distant future researchers will be able to 'talk' in data entries. All these developments will make the transcribing of data from source to database much faster and accurate and allow large amounts of data to be stored and studied.

Perhaps the most encouraging single feature of this study is the amount of material that has emerged that has had to be left out. Chapters on health, the development of surgeons, causes of death and discipline were all planned and largely written but space precluded their inclusion. This demonstrates the wealth of information that the use of database technology, under the right circumstances, can provide. In conclusion, the construction and interrogation of the five databases (*Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2*, *Glenmore* and *Midshipmen*) has provided us with much new and valuable evidence relating to the social

history of the Royal Navy of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and has, hopefully, helped move us out of the historical doldrums.

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<sup>1</sup> Griffith, P. *The Art of War of Revolutionary France 1789-1802* (London, 1998) p. 9

<sup>2</sup> Rodger, N. A. M. *The Wooden World: An anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, (London, 1986) p. 12

<sup>3</sup> Slope, N. *HMS Trent, A Social Survey: 5 April 1796 to 25 July 1797* (unpublished MA Dissertation, Thames Valley University, 1996)

<sup>4</sup> Only three of the four commission's sea times were recorded on the relevant database. The reason for this is that it only became clear what could be achieved in relation to sea time after the first table had been constructed and it was felt that enough information could be obtained from the remaining three commissions without having to go back and re-research the first commission.

<sup>5</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* Appendix II, p.352

<sup>6</sup> Price, A. *The Eyes of the Fleet: A Popular History of Frigates and Frigate Captains 1793-1815* (London, 1992) p. 259, Lavery, B., *Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organisation 1793-1815*, (London, 1989) p.172, Padfield, P. *Guns at Sea* (London, 1973) p. 121, Jenkins, E. H. *A History of the French Navy* (London, 1973) p. 216, 220 and 232, Lewis, M. *A Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p. 368

<sup>7</sup> Quoted White, C. *Nelson the New Letters* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2005) Letter 69, p. 59

<sup>8</sup> Nelson was aware of the tactical superiority of British ships against their French and Spanish foes and is quoted as stating in 1796 that 25 British men-of-war could beat 40 French and Spanish ships 'by taking those advantages which their (our) superior skill and management of the ships would not fail to afford' (quoted Sugden, J. *Nelson: A Dream of Glory* (London, 2004) p. 645)

<sup>9</sup> See: Kemp, P., *The British Sailor: A Social History of the Lower Deck*, (London, 1970) p. 160, Lavery *Nelson's Navy* pp. 117-8 and Rodger *Wooden World* p. 145,

<sup>10</sup> Rodger *Wooden World* p. 353

<sup>11</sup> Lewis *Social History* p.139

<sup>12</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p. 131

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<sup>13</sup> Kemp p.164, Kindleberger, C. P. *Mariners and Markets* (London, 1992) p. 18 and Lewis *Social History* pp. 116-27

<sup>14</sup> Rodger's calculations (Rodger *Wooden World* p. 353) were based on single musters of individual ships whilst this study was based on a compilation of all the ship's musters over a complete ship's commission. When a ship first recruited men to serve on her a large proportion were turned over from other ships. When this is taken into account the differences is small.

<sup>15</sup> Lewis *Social History* p 139

<sup>16</sup> Rediker, M., *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, (Cambridge UP, 1987) p. 299

<sup>17</sup> Lavery *Nelson's Navy* p.138

<sup>18</sup> Lewis *Social History of the Navy 1793 – 1815* (London, 1960) p.135

<sup>19</sup> See Starkey, D. J. 'War and the Market for Seafarers in Britain' *Shipping and Trade 1750-1950* Fischer L. R. and Nordvik (Eds.) (London, 1990) pp. 25-42

<sup>20</sup> For an example of a common seaman that made midshipman, lieutenant and then commander due to a successful cutting out expedition that he led see Slope, N. 'Commander James Russell 1767-1801' *The Nelson Dispatch*, October 2003, Vol. 8, Part 4, pp. 223-236

<sup>21</sup> Rodger, N.A.M. 'Commissioned Officers Careers' in the Royal Navy 1690-1815' *Journal for Maritime Research*, June 2001, p. 11. Rodger states that during the period leading up to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars more-or-less alternative periods of peace and war kept the supply and demand of sea officers roughly in balance. However due to the prolonged nature of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the lack of Admiralty control mechanisms the system of promotion of officers 'broke down'.

<sup>22</sup> For example: Harvey, C. and Press, J. *Databases in Historical Research: Theory, Methods and Applications* (London, 1996) and Lewis, M. J. and Lloyd-Jones, R. *Using Computers in History: A Practical Guide* (London, 1996)

<sup>23</sup> OCR (Optical Character Recognition) is a scanning technology that allows the transformation of paper documents into editable computer files.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Document dates and references for *HMS Trent*, *Emerald1*, *Emerald2* and *Glenmore***

The ship databases were all constructed from the following muster and pay books stored in The National Archive, Kew and their reference numbers are listed below by commission alongside the dates that they apply to:

#### ***HMS Trent***

##### **Muster Books**

ADM36 13253 March 1796 to July 1797

ADM36 15226 July 1797 to December 1798

ADM36 15227 January 1799 to April 1800

ADM36 15228 May 1800 to June 1801

ADM36 15229 March 1801 to June 1802

ADM36 15230 July 1802 to June 1803

##### **Captain's Logs**

ADM51 1167 April 1796 to July 1797

ADM51 4510 May 1797 to January 1799

ADM51 1305 August 1798 to August 1799

ADM51 1429 September 1799 to October 1800

ADM51 1352 November 1800 to October 1801

ADM51 1397 November 1801 to January 1802

February 1802 to April 1802

ADM51 1439 April 1802 to June 1803

## **Master's Logs**

ADM52 3500 June 1796 to January 1797

September 1798 to July 1800

November 1800 to November 1801

December 1801 to June 1803

ADM52 4367 July 1800 to October ?

## ***HMS Emerald***

### **Muster Books**

ADM36 14842 September 1795 to December 1796

ADM36 14843 January 1797 to June 1798

ADM36 14844 July 1798 to December 1799

ADM36 14845 January 1800 to June 1801

ADM36 14846 September 1801 to December 1802

ADM36 15558 August 1802 to December 1803

ADM36 15559 November 1803 to August 1804

ADM36 15560 September 1804 to April 1805

## **Captain's Logs**

ADM51 1139 August 1795 to August 1796

ADM51 1222 September 1796 to April 1797

ADM51 1166 April 1797 to August 1797

ADM51 1236 August 1797 to January 1798

ADM51 1268 January 1798 to February 1799

ADM51 1295 March 1799 to February 1800

ADM51 1333 March 1800 to January 1801

ADM51 1530 May 1802 to April 1805

### **Master's Logs**

ADM52 2993 September 1795 to May 1797

ADM52 2967 May 1797 to December 1798

ADM52 2969 November 1798 to February 1800

December 1800 to August 1802

ADM52 3610 September 1802 to March 1805

### ***HMS Emerald2***

#### **Muster Books**

ADM37 1226 June 1806 to January 1807

ADM37 1227 February 1807 to November 1807

ADM37 1228 December 1807 to November 1808

ADM37 1229 December 1808 to December 1809

ADM37 2543 January 1810 to April 1811

ADM37 2544 May 1811 to November 1811

### **Captain's Logs**

ADM51 1603 June 1806 to November 1806

ADM51 1656 November 1806 to November 1807

ADM51 1820 December 1807 to November 1808

ADM51 1957 December 1808 to December 1809

ADM51 2336 January 1810 to December 1811



### **Master's Logs**

ADM52 4089 June 1806 to August 1807

ADM52 3751 March 1807 to August ?

ADM52 4477 May 1811 to December 1811

### ***HMS Glenmore***

#### **Muster Books**

ADM36 13171 April 1796 to February 1797

ADM36 13172 March 1797 to December 1797

ADM36 13173 January 1798 to December 1798

ADM36 15089 November 1798 to December 1799

ADM36 15090 January 1800 to December 1800

ADM36 15091 January 1801 to December 1801

ADM36 15092 November 1801 to January 1803

### **Captain's Logs**

ADM51 1172 April 1796 to April 1797

ADM51 1212 May 1797 to April 1798

ADM51 1243 May 1798 to April 1799

ADM51 1282 May 1799 to April 1800

ADM51 1335 May 1800 to February 1801

ADM51 4452 February 1801 to July 1802

ADM51 1417 July 1802 to February 1803

## **Master's Logs**

ADM52 3051 May 1796 to May 1797

May 1798 to December 1802

ADM52 3052 May 1797 to May 1798

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