

The Cruising Voyages of William Dampier, Woodes Rogers and George Shelvocke and their Impact.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis proposes that the cruising voyages of Dampier, Woodes Rogers and Shelvocke were not, as David J Starkey suggests, ‘an anachronistic activity’ of minor historical significance, but were of considerable contemporary importance and provided a model of British maritime endeavour that was to be widely disseminated and through literature had an enduring impact on the public imagination. They were more successful in terms of financial return and more impressive as maritime achievements than has previously been recognised.

The voyages are placed in the historical context of South Sea exploration and plunder beginning with Drake’s 1578 circumnavigation and ending with Anson’s 1740 expedition. The purposes, origins, costs and rewards of each voyage are investigated using HCA, Chancery and East India Company records (a number of which are cited for the first time), contemporary newspapers, manuscript and printed first-hand narratives. Such records confirm how each voyage embodied - in its attention to detailed plans, reliance on written agreements, constitutions and governing councils - British commercial values. A full account of the range and scale of commercial investment involved supports the argument that the voyages were of considerable contemporary interest and significance. Contemporary responses to the printed accounts are recorded and there is analysis of how they link to new and rapidly evolving literary forms.

The total financial rewards of the three voyages were considerable – amounting, at a conservative estimate, to more than £240,000 (£17.65 million in today’s money). They were not repeated partly because the risks appeared to outweigh the potential rewards, but largely because efforts to take a share of South American wealth began to focus on a state solution involving a large naval force. Nevertheless the voyages and the narratives that followed provided an important contribution to the debate – central to British foreign policy during the first half of the eighteenth century – over how to exploit the ‘inexhaustible fountain of gold’ that was Spanish South America. They influenced trade and economic policy through their impact on the South Sea Company and naval strategy by providing models for Anson’s expedition.

They were also, through their published narratives, instrumental in the development of a new literary form (the novel) and the genesis of an enduring literary genre (maritime fiction). They had a wide and long-lasting influence on English literature, its forms and styles. *Robinson Crusoe* (and therefore the whole novel form), *Gulliver’s Travels* and maritime literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have their origins in the books of Dampier, Rogers, and Shelvocke.

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INTRODUCTION

A total of 1,441 vessels were licensed by the High Court of Admiralty to operate as privateers in the wars of 1702-13 and 1718-20.¹ One small but distinctive feature of this surge in privateering activity was a revival of so-called cruising voyages. These were privately funded, costly and ambitious long-distance expeditions which carried great risk for their investors but promised great reward. Three of these voyages had the common intention of travelling west into the Pacific in order to plunder the coast of Spanish America and carry off the ‘prize of all the oceans’, the Manila galleon. The first expedition, which sailed in 1703, was led by William Dampier and the second (and by far the most successful) by Woodes Rogers in 1708. The third, which set out from Plymouth in February 1719, is usually named after George Shelvocke, captain of the *Speedwell*, though this was not how it was described at the time.

The reports on these ventures would excite the imaginations of politicians, projectors, journalists and poets for much of the eighteenth century. They contributed greatly to the swelling enthusiasm for the South Sea Company and by extension to the subsequent catastrophic collapse of confidence in the practicability of its ambitious plans. They fascinated the major intellectual and literary figures, including Addison, Defoe and Swift (but excepting Doctor Johnson, who remarked on a newly published book of voyages to the South Sea: “a man had better work his way before the mast than read them through”) and became a source for some of the greatest literature of the period, including *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver’s Travels* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. More recently the importance of their contribution to British maritime and cultural history has been subject to question. It is customary now to dismiss these expeditions

¹ D.J. Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter, 1990), 89 and 113.

as having, at best, a marginal part to play in the history of the British navy in the eighteenth century. David J Starkey has suggested that they were out of their time:

Essentially it was an anachronistic activity, an attempt to seek the treasures which had drawn the Elizabethan adventurers to the New World. It was a form of enterprise confined to the Anglo-Spanish wars of the first half of the Eighteenth century.²

Thus the buccaneering spirit which may have inspired these expeditions was backward looking and soon to be supplanted by the more sophisticated attractions of trade supported and defended by a commanding navy. Whether or not they were anachronisms, they have been considered, as a whole, to be somewhat unsavoury failures. N.A.M. Rodger notes, in reference to Shelvocke's voyage that 'There were some survivors from the usual squalid tale of greed, strife and betrayal, but the voyage yielded no financial or military profit'.³ Jonathan Lamb is equally trenchant, citing 'Rogers's sad catalogue of mutinies, plots, wild gambling, detentions, late payouts and failed contracts' as typical of all the voyages.⁴ This is severely to undervalue their remarkable maritime achievement. The voyages were indeed beset by strife, intrigue, mutiny and betrayals, but what was being attempted – the circumnavigation of the world - was so challenging and was with so few precedents, that it is scarcely surprising that, although carefully planned and well-supplied, they encountered the same problems as Magellan, Drake and Cavendish had done before.

This thesis aims to establish what the voyages set out to achieve, how successful they were and what impact they had on British policy, naval strategy and literature.

² D.J.Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, 48.

³ N.A.M Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (London, 2004), 228.

⁴ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1740* (Chicago, 2001), 195.

The thesis proposes that the voyages were significant events embedded in and expressing the mercantile and political ambitions of the age; they represented, in their operation as privateers on a cruising voyage and in their organisation, management and conduct, the values and developing ambitions of British merchants. They were recognised and supported by important contemporary figures, attracted considerable investment and influenced state policy and naval strategy in the South Sea.

They were more successful than has hitherto been recognised because they achieved a better financial return than has previously been understood and they were, collectively, an example of exceptional maritime endeavour which, though recognised at the time, has since been overshadowed by an overemphasis on the trials and controversies that accompanied them.

The printed narratives which grew out of the voyages were of wide and lasting cultural significance in that they contributed to the growing demand for knowledge about the world led by organisations like the Royal Society but enthusiastically supported by a substantial educated readership; their influence was sustained and extended through their reproduction in several voyage anthologies, which in turn provided source material for British strategic thinking throughout the eighteenth century and they adopted styles and approaches that were to be taken up in eighteenth century literature (in particular by *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*) and evolved through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into a peculiarly British novel form.

Cruising voyages and privateering

The expeditions were linked in a number of ways. They were, firstly, cruising voyages.

William Dampier's orders, according to William Funnell, the voyage's chronicler:

were to go into the River of *Plate*, to *Buonas Aires*, to take two or three *Spanish Galleons* which Captain *Dampier* gives an account are usually there: And if by that Expedition we got the value of 600000 Pounds then to return again without proceeding further: But if we missed Success there, to cruize upon the Coast of *Peru*, for the *Valdivia* ships.⁵

The 'Scheme of Voyage' presented on Shelvocke's return set down the aims of his expedition in similar terms. It began: 'Voyage to the South Sea, to cruise on the Spaniards under his Majesty's Commission with two ships'.⁶ The words 'cruise' (spelt interchangeably with *cruize*) and 'cruising' appear to have been in use for only a few decades before these voyages. The first reference quoted in the Oxford English Dictionary is in 1651: G. CARTERET in *Nicholas Papers* (Camden) I. 236 'Van Trump is with his fleete crusinge about Silly', and in the more specific predatory sense meant by Dampier and Rogers, in 1668 in the play *She Would if She Could* by George Etherege: 'Two men-of-war that are cruising here to watch for prizes'. 'Cruise', 'cruiser' and 'cruising voyage' had, by the turn of the eighteenth century diverged somewhat both from their Dutch original and each other. At this time also the Navy had begun to apply the term *cruiser* to smaller warships that could be detached from the line to patrol independently in search of enemy merchantmen or privateers. The Act (Anne 6) of 1708 entitled the 'Cruizers and Convoys Act' is the first official use of the term in this context, for it required the detachment of naval ships from the line or from convoy duty to patrol areas of the British coast in order to defend trading ships from the depredations of French and Spanish privateers. Rogers's use of the term *cruising voyage* in the title to his book seems to be unique, but its meaning is clear and goes

⁵William Funnell, *A Voyage Round the World* (London, 1707), 5.

⁶George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, ed. W.G.Perrin, Seafarer's Library (London, 1928), xii.

some way to define the particular aims of Dampier's and Shelvocke's voyages as well as Rogers's. They were all cruising voyages in that the ships embarked with the aim of patrolling an area of the South Sea and taking what opportunities for plunder presented themselves. Implicit in the connection with naval usage is the assumption that such voyages were undertaken by warships (Rogers describes his ships as 'private men of war') licensed to attack enemies of the crown. It might, therefore, be mistaken to describe Drake's circumnavigation of 1578 – 80 as a cruising voyage, since his right to plunder the Spanish colonies (with which Britain was not at war) was, to say the least, questionable. Neither could voyages of exploration such as Frobisher's, and trading expeditions like Narborough's be described as cruising voyages. That of Cavendish, however, probably could be so described, since it carried a commission to attack enemy ships in time of war.

Contemporary usage, therefore, enables us to define a cruising voyage as being an extended predatory expedition with more or less loosely defined objectives put in the form of instructions to the captains by its managers. The instructions would often be precise about the directions to be taken and the seas to be patrolled, to the point of directing the ships to take a specific route into the South Sea, but their statements of objectives were couched in terms that gave the captains considerable flexibility as to targets.

This leads us to the second way in which the three voyages were connected. The intentions of Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke – to enter the South Sea by the south west route, plunder the coasts and shipping of Spanish South America and, if possible, take the Manila galleon – were nearly identical. There were precedents for such enterprises, the most famous being Drake's circumnavigation of 1578 which brought back sufficient

plunder, according to some sources, to double Queen Elizabeth's yearly revenue.⁷ The last successful voyage of plunder into the South Seas by an English ship was that of Thomas Cavendish, over one hundred years before Dampier set off on his own attempt.

Thirdly the voyages were undertaken by privateers carrying letters of marque. Until recently privateers have been, in the eyes of the general public at least, indistinguishable from buccaneers and pirates. Even now a respectable biography of Woodes Rogers is given the title *Spanish Gold: Captain Woodes Rogers and the Pirates of the Caribbean* presumably to be sure of attracting those interested in pirates but uncertain about the role of privateers.⁸ In fact the connection of these three voyages to the buccaneers and pirates is a glancing one. Dampier spent much of his seafaring life up to the publication of *A New Voyage with the buccaneers of the Caribbean and the South Sea* and he brought his knowledge of them on both his own and Woodes Rogers's expeditions.⁹ Rogers and Defoe dismissed sentimental perceptions of the buccaneer current in their own time as being based on 'romantick Accounts' put about by the buccaneers themselves. Both Dampier and Shelvocke were, however, accused of 'turning pirate'.

Vessels obtained a letter of marque or commission by making a declaration to the Lord High Admiral. The declaration would usually state the name of the ship, tonnage, number of guns, quantity of munitions, size of crew and names of the commander, lieutenant, gunner, boatswain, carpenter, cook, surgeon and owners. In recognition of the special status granted by the letter of marque officers under the captain were often given the title lieutenant rather than mate. Owners were obliged to sign a bond (as

⁷ N.A.M Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Britain, Volume One, 660 - 1649* (London, 1997), 245.

⁸ David Cordingly, *Spanish Gold: Captain Woodes Rogers and the Pirates of the Caribbean* (London, 2011).

⁹ Joel H. Baer, 'William Dampier at the Crossroads: New Light on the "Missing Years", 1691-97' *International Journal of Maritime History*, 8 (December 1996), 97-117, provides an account of Dampier's connections with the pirate captain Avery.

much as £3,000 in the case of the Dampier voyage) indemnifying the crown against any breaches of the conditions of the letter of marque. This was to ensure that privateers only attacked ships from those countries named in the commission.

In the opening pages of his account of the 1708-11 cruising voyage Woodes Rogers describes his ships as ‘Private Men of War’, a term that preceded ‘privateer’ by a number of years and which more precisely describes the status of such ships.¹⁰ J.W.D. Powell identifies three kinds of armed merchant ship:

- 1) Hired ships, which were private ships taken in to the Navy for a period and which were manned by naval officers.
- 2) Private ships of war, further sub-divided into “letters of marque” and privateers.
- 3) Merchantmen ‘upon their lawful occasions’ armed for defensive purposes only.¹¹

The second category, since it is most germane to the thesis, needs further explanation.

A letter of marque was not just the piece of paper or commission signed by the Lord High Admiral or his deputy which gave the named captain of a named vessel the right to attack the vessels of named enemy countries. It was also applied metonymically to the vessel itself which, since 1695, would often be described as “a letter of marque”.¹²

The term was normally applied to those merchantmen whose primary purpose was trade but which had obtained permission to attack enemy merchantmen should an opportunity arise. An interesting example of this was the *Whetstone*, one of whose owners was Woodes Rogers, which obtained a letter of marque in 1707, had 11 prizes condemned in the same year but cleared from Africa in 1708 with 270 slaves for Jamaica.¹³ Slavers

¹⁰ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* (Seafarer’s Library, London, 1928), 2. Page numbers cited in references are, unless otherwise stated, taken from this edition.

¹¹ J.W.D. Powell, *Bristol Privateers and Ships of War* (Bristol, 1930), xv-xvi.

¹² Powell, *Bristol Privateers*, xvi.

¹³ Meyer, W.R. ‘English Privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession 1702-1713’, *Mariner’s Mirror* LXIX (1983), 435-446. Richardson, B., *Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth Century Slave Trade*, 38 (Bristol Records Society, 1986), 13.

needed to employ sufficient people to control the slaves during the middle passage and were well armed. The *Whetstone* had 16 guns, which was substantial for a merchantman at this time. It would thus have made sense to employ their superior manning and firepower to take up whatever opportunity offered itself on the outward or homebound voyages.¹⁴

The privateer proper was a ship possessing a letter of marque but whose principal aim was to seek out and capture or destroy enemy merchantmen. These were the additional forces that ‘formed an effective constituent of England’s naval power’.¹⁵ Some privateers, such as Rogers’s *Duke* were purpose-built but many were converted merchantmen. Slavers, as has been remarked, made ideal privateers since they were built to be fast, were well-armed and had space for a large crew.

One significant stimulus to privateering activity in the War of the Spanish Succession was the Cruizers and Convoys Act (Anne 6) of 1708, which removed 43 ships from Admiralty control and assigned them to specific home stations with the duty of protecting merchantmen from French privateers. Rodger suggests this may have had the unforeseen effect of reducing vessels available for convoy escort.¹⁶ The other provision of Anne 6 was to grant privateer owners and crew all the profit (after customs dues had been taken) from a captured ship, where previously one tenth had been reserved to the crown. The aim was to stimulate a responding privateering activity by British ships against their enemies and in this it appears to have been successful, particularly in Bristol, where only 40 letters of marque declarations were made between

¹⁴ Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1993), 49.

¹⁵ David J. Starkey records that between 1702 and 1711 there were 1260 prizes condemned to the Navy and 956 to privateers; *British Privateering Enterprise*, 89; W.R. Meyer, ‘English Privateering in the War of the Spanish Succession’, 436, claims that privateers took more ships than the Navy.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 177.

1702 and 1707 but 117 between 1708 and 1712.¹⁷ The most notable consequence, therefore, of both the French privateering campaign and the British Government's response was to stimulate increasingly effective privateering ventures from Bristol, Whitehaven, Liverpool and other out ports.

'Protestant, commercial, maritime and free'¹⁸

Apart from the specific conditions and rights imposed by their letters of marque, privateers were financed, operated and controlled in the same way as ordinary merchant ships, though it is apparent from the orders, agreements and directions given by the owners that the three cruising voyages were planned and set forth with exceptional care, each venture being accompanied by sufficient paper to launch a company, not just a voyage. Money was raised by subscription and each ship was owned by a consortium of investors although one matter in which the cruising voyages differed from other privateering ventures was that the captains were not, with one possible exception, shareholders.¹⁹ There would usually be a managing owner and often a 'ship's husband' responsible for the setting out of the ship and its provisioning. The captain and each of the crew would sign an agreement with the owners which stipulated the terms of employment, identified the particular role to be taken by each person (landman, able-bodied seaman, master's mate etc.) and confirmed the basis on which each person would be paid. Thus in the case of Dampier's voyage the whole crew agreed to sail on the basis of 'no purchase no pay', which meant that they would only receive a share of such prize money as was taken. The profit from the voyage would be shared 1/3 to the

¹⁷ Figures from Powell, *Bristol Privateers and Ships of War*.

¹⁸ N.A.M. Rodger, 'Queen Elizabeth and the Myth of Sea-power in English History', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Cambridge, 2004), 153-74.

¹⁹ Captain Courteney of the *Dutchess* is described in some accounts as a shareholder but there is no record in the chancery documents or elsewhere of how many shares he had.

crew and 2/3 to the owners.²⁰ The profit split was the same for the Woodes Rogers voyage but the crew were given the choice of shares only or part share, part pay. The Clipperton expedition offered a more generous 50% share to the crew. Crew were awarded shares according to their role and, in recognition of any notable service they had performed. There was provision for 'storm money' if they had taken part in storming a city and 'smart money' if they had been seriously injured. The precise number of shares to be awarded was set down for each of the voyages and written into the individual agreements. As became apparent for the Rogers voyage, even such tightly drafted agreements failed to prevent disputes, since they were unable to take account of deaths, promotions and the vexed issue of 'plunder'.

The business-like sets of articles and instructions were reflected in the voyages' governance. Although only the Rogers voyage adhered to the procedure, each expedition was supposed to be ruled by a council consisting of the chief officers, in which all major decisions about discipline, destinations, targets and modes of operation were agreed. In the case of the Rogers expedition the membership of the council was fixed at the start, and decisions were made by vote if necessary. The minutes were written up by a clerk and displayed on the deck for the ship's company to see. It would be wrong to see in this ordered process a parallel with the democratic decision-making of the buccaneers, who famously elected and deposed their captains with great regularity. The letters of marque named the captains and chief officers to whom the commission applied and the habit, peculiar to privateers, of giving the title of 'second captain' to the second-in-command underlined the fact that there was, in the event of the captain's death, a recognised deputy to take his place. In the same way as it became commonplace to see the naval ship as being, in its organisations, hierarchies and

²⁰ TNA C6/390/82, sheet 1.

domestic affairs, a metaphor for the way of the world – a wooden world in fact – so the private man of war might be seen as, in many ways, a more accurate mirror of early eighteenth-century British mercantile society than was the ship of the line.²¹ The stories that follow are therefore as revealing about how British society conducted itself at the time as they are about shipboard life.

Historic precedents and contemporary background

Given that these were the first voyages of their kind for over 100 years and were never repeated (Anson's 1740 voyage was a naval expedition) it is necessary to look for the particular historical conditions which nurtured them.

John Campbell, a near contemporary chronicler, is in no doubt of these voyages' significance in terms of British maritime trade and holds them up, whatever their outcomes, as examples to be emulated. His work is dedicated, (in a possibly conscious echo of Woodes Rogers's dedication of *A Cruising Voyage* to the merchant venturers of Bristol) 'To the Merchants of Great-Britain'. It proposes that such voyages are a high expression of a country's endeavour since it is:

To commerce we owe our Wealth; for though Labour may improve, though Arms may extend, yet Commerce only can enrich a Country. It is this that encourages People, not barely to labour for the Supply of their own Wants, but have an eye for those of other Nations, even such as are at the greatest Distance. It is this that establishes and extends Manufactures, and while it employs all Ranks of People, provides suitable Rewards for their several Employments. It is this, and this alone that can excite and encourage universal Industry, by providing, that all who take Pains, shall reap Profit, and what raises the Fortunes of Individuals, shall prove at the same Time, and to the same Degree, beneficial to Society.²²

²¹ A contemporary example of the use of the ship as societal metaphor is the satirical pamphlet by Ned Ward, *The Wooden World Dissected in the Character of a Ship of War* (London, 1707).

²² John Harris, ed. John Campbell, *Navigantium Atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca: Or, a Compleat Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1744-8). Dedication.

That the voyages carried risks is evident. In every case the investors underestimated the total time taken by each expedition, allowing provision for eighteen months to two years when in fact it was more than three years in each case before the survivors, with or without ships, returned. This long wait before any possibility of financial return, coupled with the very large setting out costs mark out these three expeditions as exceptional examples of British mercantile enthusiasm.

The three expeditions were interconnected; one cruise led to another, spurred on by the predecessor's failure (the next would be better managed) or success (there was more where that came from) but only one, Rogers's, completed the intended circumnavigation, carried off the Manila treasure ship and produced a handsome return for its investors. William Dampier, the most famous name of all those involved, was appointed commander-in-chief of the first expedition and, almost as soon as he had returned from that, was made 'Pilot of the South Seas' on the second. He took with him as surgeon on both expeditions his friend John Ballett. Alexander Selkirk went out master of the *Cinque Portes* on the first expedition, was marooned on Juan Fernandez island and picked up four years later by the second expedition; Simon Hatley sailed as third mate of the *Dutchess* on the second voyage and second captain of the *Speedwell* on the third, in which he was accused by George Shelvocke of shooting an albatross in an incident that was famously exploited by Coleridge in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Perhaps the most unlucky of all these double voyagers was John Clipperton, who was by some accounts a good seaman but deserted the Dampier expedition in despair at the antics of its commander. He returned 15 years later to command the third expedition only to find that his fellow captain, George Shelvocke, was intent on undermining the voyage and betraying his owners. Clipperton died, it was said, of drink and despair months after he returned home from this last voyage.

Recent research and primary sources

A good starting point for anyone carrying out research into British excursions into the Pacific is *The Great South Sea: English Voyages and Encounters 1570-1750* (New Haven & London, 1997), by Glyndwr Williams. This masterly history covers so much and draws on such an impressive range of archive sources that it sets a daunting challenge to a scholar attempting to find something new to say on the subject.

The Great South Sea surveys the rise and fall of the British ‘obsession’ with the Pacific from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. It places the various voyages by British navigators in the context of the changing commercial, navigational and scientific ambitions of Britain and of the rival expeditions of the other European maritime powers. It also draws together a number of themes connected with Pacific exploration, chief of which are the search for Terra Australis Incognita; the lure of the ‘inexhaustible fountain of gold’ that inspired the expeditions of, among many others, Drake, Woodes Rogers and Anson; the impact of voyagers’ accounts on the literary and publishing world in England; the subsequent growth of a new fictional genre epitomised by the works of Swift and Defoe and finally the art of the cartographers and their influence on the congeries of myths and realities that formed the British perception of distant places. It also touches on some recurring narrative features in works of fact and fiction, such as the ritual of the ‘first sighting’, shipwreck, the island paradise, the plight of the marooned sailor and encounters with giants and noble savages (or, alternatively, humanoid monsters).

The chapters on Dampier, Woodes Rogers, the South Sea Company and Anson benefit from extensive primary research which throws more light, for example, on the tortuous road to publication of Dampier’s *A New Voyage* and the distribution of the spoils from

Woodes Rogers's voyage. Williams provides a warning for researchers tempted to follow him into those murky waters:

The encounters of my subtitle were as likely to be imaginative as physical. It was difficult to tell what was real from what was fictitious. Apocryphal voyages, rumours of discoveries, claims by cranks and liars attracted the curious and uncritical. A study of English enterprise in the South Sea is, to some extent, a study in credulity.²³

Perhaps it is possible to be too sceptical. Williams is inclined to discount, for example, the achievement of the Rogers voyage and to question the qualities of its commander; it is one of the aims of this thesis to show that there are aspects of all the voyages which command respect and that their impact on eighteenth-century Britain is greater than has been hitherto believed.

In the last ten years there has been a revival of interest in the voyages of William Dampier, Woodes Rogers and George Shelvocke. New biographies of Dampier and Rogers have been accompanied by reprints of their books and two new accounts of Shelvocke's voyage, (one, entitled *The Real Ancient Mariner*, from the perspective of Simon Hatley, Shelvocke's second captain) have been published.²⁴ One speculative but well-researched book on Alexander Selkirk is a useful antidote to more sober narratives and suggests at one point that Selkirk notched the ears of his goats to indicate which had been used for sexual purposes.²⁵

In the last century much work has been done to clarify the crucial part played by British, French and Spanish privateers in the maritime conflicts of the eighteenth-century.

J.W.D Powell assesses the scale of privateering enterprise in Bristol and provides detailed information about ownership and costs, drawing on a range of Bristol-based

²³ Williams, *Great South Sea*, Preface, xiv

²⁴ Cited below.

²⁵ Diana Souhami, *Selkirk's Island* (Paperback edition, London, 2002), 101.

sources to fill in the background relating, in particular, to the Rogers voyage.²⁶ J.S.

Bromley provides a continental perspective on privateering enterprise and is particularly useful in quantifying the success of French corsairs such as Duguay Trouin and Gouin de Beauchesne whose signal achievements in the South Seas piqued the interest of Woodes Rogers.²⁷

David J Starkey provides the single most authoritative account of the economic impact of privateering between 1702 and 1783.²⁸ He accomplishes a comprehensive review of Admiralty archives and the records of the High Court of Admiralty to provide a full picture of the scale, risks, and significance of privateering enterprise in the period. He does not, for a number of reasons, attempt to give a figure for the total prize taken in each war but he concludes that ‘As an impermanent aspect of commercial life, privateering enterprise had a limited impact upon the development of the British economy in the eighteenth century’.²⁹ A recent essay by Starkey explores the various methods of payment used to attract crews of private men-of-war, an issue which is also reviewed in Peter Earle’s *Sailors*.³⁰

One aspect of the expeditions which has not previously been much considered is the remarkable feat of seamanship, endurance and, in one case, leadership that they represent. Expeditions over such great distances were enormous challenges for the

²⁶ J.W.D. Powell, *Bristol Privateers and Ships of War* (Bristol, 1930).

²⁷ J.S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies 1660-1760* (London, 1987) and ‘Duguay Trouin: The Financial Background’, *Mariner’s Mirror* 71 (1985) 148-163.

²⁸ David J. Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise, 1739-1815* in Starkey, David, J., E.S. van Eyck van Heslinga and J.A. de Moor, Eds. *Pirates and Privateers: new Perspectives on the War on Trade in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries* (Exeter, 1997).

²⁹ Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, 268.

³⁰ David J Starkey, ‘“To excite the Whole Company to Courage and Bravery”: The Incentivisation of British Privateering Crews, 1702-1815’, in Helen Doe and Richard Harding, eds., *Naval Leadership and Management, 1650-1950* (London, 2011); Peter Earle, *Sailors: English Merchant Seamen 1650-1750* (London, 1998)

ships and men of that time. The ships were small, overcrowded, ill-fitted for the fearful conditions of the southern ocean and their hulls prey to the destructive marine borers of the South Sea; their men had limited navigational aids, were unable to fix longitude accurately and were vulnerable to scurvy and other conditions brought on by malnutrition and overcrowding. While there are many books about the development of line-of-battle ships in the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries there is a dearth of literature about the smaller war ships – and particularly about the ships of the transitional period between about 1690 and 1730. If one further limits the search to the smaller merchant ships and privateers (such as the ‘galleys’ and ‘Bristol runners’ used by Dampier and Rogers) the best sources are Rif Winfield, *British Warships 1603-1714* and Phillip Bosscher, *The Heyday of Sail: The Merchant Sailing Ship, 1650-1830*. Michael W. Marshall makes extensive use of French and Dutch drawings as well as English plans to trace the evolution of the trading/fighting ship of the early eighteenth century and is particularly informative about the changes in hull shape and rig that took place at the time.³¹ A description of the fighting ships of the time and their limitations may be found in Brian Lavery, *The Arming and Fitting of English Ships of War, 1600-1815* (London, 1987). *The Line of Battle: the Sailing Warship 1650-1840* has a chapter on the evolution of the frigate but is, again, less informative on the small vessels used as privateers in the early part of the century.³² The *Mariner’s Mirror* is a rich source of articles on the evolution of sailing ships and has recently carried articles on the working of the whipstaff (which was almost certainly used by all the cruising voyage ships) and

³¹ Michael W. Marshall, *Ocean Traders from the Portuguese Discoveries to the Present Day* (London, 1989)

³² Brian Lavery, ed., *The Line of Battle: The Sailing Warship 1650-1840*, Conway Maritime Series (London, 1992).

the sailing characteristics of fighting ships.³³ Peter Earle details the pay, conditions and disciplinary regime to be found in merchant ships at the time and compares them with those in privateers as well as the navy, but the best source of information about discipline and reward on the cruising voyages remains the eyewitness accounts of the voyagers.³⁴

Percy G Adams suggests that the travel narrative marks the shift from the favourite story of the middle ages – the fall of princes – to the ‘characteristic fable of the modern age’ – the rise of merit and the march of progress, as embodied in the character of Robinson Crusoe.³⁵ Philip Edwards notes how voyage literature became, in the early eighteenth-century ‘the chief materials to furnish out a library’ and demonstrates how the published accounts of Narborough, Dampier and others contributed elements of style, sensibility and structure to their fictional followers.³⁶ More recent scholarship has focussed on the transformative effect on voyagers of the Great South Sea itself. Neil Rennie places the fictional narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* against Dampier’s ostensibly factual accounts and traces the evolution of the Western idea of the South Sea.³⁷

Jonathan Lamb suggests that Dampier and Shelvocke (though not Rogers) succumbed to the strangeness of the South Sea, their accounts distorted through its prism.

Shelvocke, particularly, seemed ‘preternaturally aware of himself as someone voyaging between the lines of other seamen’s yarns’.³⁸ Jason H Pearl provides a useful summary

³³ John Harland, ‘The Whipstaff’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 97 (February 2011), 103-126; Patrice Decenciere, ‘Some Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century French Trials of Square-rigged Warships Tacking’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 97 (November 2011) 289-298.

³⁴ Peter Earle, *Sailors*.

³⁵ Percy G Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962); *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (Lexington, 1983).

³⁶ Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage: Sea-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994).

³⁷ Neil Rennie, *Far-fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South-Seas* (Oxford, 1998; Oxford Scholarship Online, 2011).

³⁸ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1740* (Chicago, 2001), 194. Neil Rennie also notes how fiction and fact coalesced in the waters of the South Sea in *Far-fetched Facts*.

of recent scholarship in a piece which argues that *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* is a demonstration of Woodes Rogers's painstaking and largely successful attempt to provide a verifiably factual narrative.³⁹

The importance of *Robinson Crusoe* as an early example – possibly the earliest – of the novel form has been established at least since Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* in 1957, though possibly since as far back as Arthur Secord's 1924 study of Defoe's narrative techniques.⁴⁰ There is, of course, a vast literature on Defoe and Swift but, apart from Glyn Williams and Philip Edwards, much less on the undoubted connections between these writers and their forerunners Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke. Charles L. Batten and John Richetti explore some of these issues.⁴¹

Manuscript Sources

Any study of the voyages of Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke must be grounded in the original manuscript and primary printed sources and while the modern researcher can make use of the work of others to help locate much of this voluminous resource it is still possible to find significant material that has been overlooked. Earlier scholarly work, such as B.M.H Rogers on Dampier's and Rogers's voyages and Masefield on Dampier's provide much useful material but seldom give precise references.⁴²

The researcher into voyages by naval ships has available a wide range of documentation – the masters' and captains' logs, correspondence, surveyor's and navy board records –

³⁹ Jason H. Pearl, 'Woodes Rogers and the Boundary of Travel Facts', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, Vol.31, fall 2007, 60-75.

⁴⁰ Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (London, 1957); Arthur W. Secord, *Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe* (Illinois, 1924).

⁴¹ The Batten essay is in Derek Howse, ed., *Background to Discovery: The motives for Pacific Exploration from Dampier to Cooke* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990); John Richetti, *Popular Fiction before Richardson: Narrative Patterns 1700-1739* (Oxford, 1969).

⁴² B.M.H.Rogers, 'Dampier's Voyage of 1703', *Mariner's Mirror*, 10 (1924), 367-81, William Dampier, ed. John Masefield, *Dampier's Voyages*, 2 vols. (London, 1906).

readily accessible at the National Archive or the National Maritime Museum. The same cannot be said of merchant ships, even privateers, since in most cases the ship's records were the property of the owners and have not been centrally collected. In the case of the three cruising voyages such primary records have to be looked for in a wide range of archives. The letter of marque declaration made by the owners of a privateering expedition marks the beginning of a paper trail of information about a voyage. Owners were required to lodge the declarations with the High Court of Admiralty and these may be found in the National Archive under HCA 25 and 26. The declaration gives the name of the ship, its tonnage, number of guns and crew. It lists the managing owners, the amount of the required government bond (forfeit on breach of the letter of marque conditions), the names of those acting as sureties, the captain, lieutenants, gunner and other principal officers and a brief statement of the objective of the voyage and the countries considered to be legitimate targets. At the end of a successful voyage the purchase accumulated by a privateer would be 'condemned' at the London Prize Court at Doctor's Commons. Prize papers produced for the court (HCA 32) include ships papers, claims and affidavits. The 'sentence' of the court (HCA 34) provides details of the date of condemnation, the name of the prize vessel, its master, the status of the captor (whether privateer or naval) and the name of its captain. As Starkey points out, one omission from the sentence is the total value of the prize.⁴³ Appeals by the owners of the prize or others protesting the judgement of the court were dealt with by the Court of Prize Appeals (HCA 42).

The Dampier and Shelvocke voyages produced no purchase for the owners and there was no case brought to the Prize Court, so the usual evidence – including ship's logs and details of the capture of prizes and their cargoes – is not available. The owners of

⁴³ David J Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, 289.

the Shelvocke voyage attempted to charge the *Speedwell*'s captain and crew with piracy and there are some affidavits relating to this case (which was quickly dropped) in HCA 32.

One outcome of each of the three voyages was a series of legal disputes which for various reasons fell outside the jurisdiction of the High Court of Admiralty but were taken up in the Court of Chancery. As a rule cases were brought in chancery when the evidence for the plaintiff was considered too weak to succeed in the High Court of Admiralty. The procedure for bringing a chancery case was rather different from that of other courts. The people bringing the case (called the 'complainers' or 'orators') would have drawn up on vellum a bill of complaint – a large document (six foot by four in the case of the *Speedwell* complaint) - containing a detailed account of the grounds for complaint. At the same time supporting evidence in the form of logs, account books, letters, signed agreements and affidavits of witnesses would be lodged with the clerk in chancery. The defendants in the case would be asked to produce their 'reply' to the complaint. The Lord Chancellor would nominate a chancery master to study all the evidence, consider the arguments of complainer and defendant and produce a report recommending what action should be taken. Based on this report the Lord Chancellor would decide for or against the complainer and set down how (if at all) they should be compensated for the wrong done.

Chancery cases were brought – or at least initiated – in relation to each of the cruising voyages and the various documents arising from the complaints provide much useful material. Unfortunately it is not always easy to find. Chancery archives are gradually being digitised, but there are still gaps and the researcher struggles with the legacy of a tortuous catalogue system. One archivist, when asked how I could find some master's exhibits relating to the bill of complaint I had in front of me, replied 'with great

difficulty'. Sometimes no bill seems to exist (strangely the bill in the case of the Rogers voyage does not appear to be listed in the chancery catalogue, although it is mentioned by B.M.H.Rogers) or it has been listed in such a way that it is hidden from view. The case arising from the Shelvocke voyage, for example, was brought by Edward Hughes, the managing owner, so one would expect it to be listed as *Hughes v Shelvocke, 1723*. In fact the bill is bundled with a later case brought by another owner and is listed as *Gumley v East India Company, 1732*. Perhaps the most important collection in the Chancery files are the 'master's exhibits' relating to the Rogers voyage, the contents of which are described below.

Other primary sources consulted in relation to the three voyages include state papers (particularly in connection with the Dampier expedition), the Court minutes of the East India Company, some letters and the manuscript narratives of the buccaneers contained in the Sloane Collection in the British Library. The references to these are in the bibliography.

Contemporary Printed Sources

The most important printed sources relating to the voyages are the accounts written by the voyagers themselves. These are dealt with in detail in Part II which also surveys the anthologies which provide an invaluable guide to contemporary attitudes to the voyages and their leaders. Dampier did not write an account of his 1703 voyage, but his *A New Voyage Round the World*, published before the *Roebuck* expedition, was immensely successful, was reprinted several times in various formats and is still an invaluable background resource for any study of British involvement in the South Seas at the time. The other principal contemporary resource is the rapidly expanding newspaper industry of the time. *The Daily Courant*, began daily publication in 1702, the year before Dampier's expedition set off. This and other newspapers such as the *Post-boy*, the

Flying-post or Post-master, and the *Observer* provided regular reports on the arrivals and departures of the voyages. The *Post-boy*, managed at one point by George Ridpath, was an assiduous follower and supporter of the Dampier voyages and the *Observer* campaigned on behalf of merchants and privateers, berating the government for its half-hearted support of privateering expeditions to South America. All these are referred to several times in the thesis.

Primary Sources for each voyage

Dampier

The chief primary source of information about Dampier's cruising voyage of 1703 is the Bill of Complaint brought by Richard and Elizabeth Creswell: C6/390/82 *Creswell v Dampier*, 1712. This bill, which is folded in with the reply by William Dampier, has only now been brought to light. It is almost certainly the same, or a copy of the same, document described B.M.H.Rogers as 'a bill or statement' which forms the basis of his 1924 *Mariner's Mirror* article on Dampier's voyage.⁴⁴ The statement, Rogers writes, was among papers 'lent to me by F.H.Goldney of Corsham, Wilts'. Thomas Goldney would have received a copy of the bill as he is named as one of the defendants. A collection of depositions by crew members of the *St. George* collected in support of the complaint is in C24/1321 and C33/317. The protest by the 'old' East India Company to the Prince's council is in SP42/7, (again, not previously cited in connection with the voyage) and the subsequent inquiry provides useful detail about the owners and the setting out of two ships.⁴⁵ John Masefield, in his introduction to a two volume edition of

⁴⁴ B.M.H.Rogers, 'Dampier's Voyage of 1703', *Mariner's Mirror*, 10 (1924), 367-81.

⁴⁵ TNA, SP42/7, Anne, 1, 1702-1706.

Dampier's *Voyages*, quotes letters relating to the voyage but does not give a reference.⁴⁶

The letter of marque declaration for the *St. George* is in TNA HCA 26/18.

Dampier did not himself write an account of the expedition, possibly because he had too little time in England before departing on the Woodes Rogers expedition in 1708, although John Campbell, writing some forty years after the event suggests a less charitable reason:

The reasons are very evident to me why Dampier did not publish this last Voyage of his to the South Seas. If he has spoken the truth, he must have done himself no great credit, and if he had attempted to impose Falsehoods on the World, his officers were mostly alive, and ready to contradict him.⁴⁷

James Knapton, the publisher of all Dampier's previous works, produced a book by William Funnell, who is described on the title page as 'Mate to Captain Dampier', in 1707.⁴⁸ Funnell's account is, on the surface, objective and factual. There is little direct criticism of Dampier's leadership or behaviour but he offers damning observations more, as it were, in sorrow than in anger. The tone is set in his preface which hints at what is to come:

The Success indeed of our Expedition, was not such as might at first have been expected from the skill of our Commander and the Resolution of our Men. Disagreements and Mismanagements having broken our Measures, and defeated our most promising Hopes; as they have often been occasions of the miscarriage of the greatest and noblest attempts.⁴⁹

Despite its measured tone Funnell's book enraged Dampier, who published a vituperative eight page rejoinder: *Captain Dampier's Vindication of his Voyage to the*

⁴⁶ William Dampier, *Dampier's Voyages*, 2 vols, with an introduction and 'Life of William Dampier' by John Masefield (London, 1902).

⁴⁷ John Harris, ed. John Campbell, *Navigantium*, 148.

⁴⁸ William Funnell, *A Voyage Round the World. Containing an Account of Captain Dampier's Expedition into the South-Seas in the Ship St George In the Years 1703 and 1704* (London, 1707).

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, Preface.

South-Seas, which was in turn subject to a highly critical repost by John Welbe, a midshipman on the *St George*.⁵⁰

The voyage is mentioned in a number of newspapers and it is apparent that Dampier's fame guaranteed interest in anything he undertook. It seems that Dampier had a special relationship with the *Post Boy*, which published several letters from him during the voyage and took a broadly sympathetic view of his trials, unlike the *Observer* which was more sceptical.

There have been several recent reprints of Dampier's works and two biographies - *The Devil's Mariner* written in 1997 and *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind* in 2004, though in the latter case the coverage of the 1703 expedition is brief.⁵¹

Woodes Rogers

The primary manuscript sources for the Woodes Rogers expedition are well-known and much plundered, but their voluminous nature and the physical state of many of them means that it is almost impossible for a researcher to claim that everything relevant has been exposed to light. Some mistakes in attribution have accumulated over time. The bulk of the material is contained in the ten boxes of documents collected for the Chancery Master in the case of *Creagh v Rogers*, 1712. The earliest reference to the master's exhibits is in B.M.H. Rogers's article in the *Mariner's Mirror* of 1933.⁵² The most comprehensive bibliographic study of these documents and primary sources of information on the voyage in general is a pamphlet by Donald Jones produced for the

⁵⁰ William Dampier, *Captain Dampier's Vindication of his voyage to the South-Seas in the Ship St. George* (London, 1707); John Welbe, *An Answer to captain Dampier's Vindication of his Voyage to the South-Seas, in the Ship St. George, with particular Observations on his ungenerous, false and barbarous usage to his Ship's Crew* (London, 1707).

⁵¹ Anton Gill, *The Devil's Mariner, William Dampier, Pirate and Explorer* (London, 1997); Diana Preston and Michael Preston, *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind: The Life of William Dampier, Explorer, Naturalist and Buccaneer* (London, 2004)

⁵² B.M.H. Rogers, 'Woodes Rogers's Privateering Voyage of 1708-1711', *Mariner's Mirror*, 19 (1933), 196-211

Bristol Branch of the Historical Association.⁵³ Glyndwr Williams provides a useful summary of the available material, although two of the document numbers he cites (TNA C104/60 and C104/61)) belong to a different case altogether.⁵⁴ The references attributed to these documents should read C104/160 and C104/161.

The Master's exhibits are remarkably comprehensive because, unlike normal chancery cases, the exhibits were not returned to the plaintiffs. The reason for this was that there were 209 plaintiffs being represented by Creagh and the exhibits did not belong to any of them. Thus:

The Lord Chancellor called in all relevant Logs, Documents, Account Books, Orders, Agreements and Council Minutes of all meetings on board, Accounts of all goods exchanged and purchased at each port of call, and a complete list of all treasure captured from the 20 prizes. Woodes Rogers and Edward Cooke retained their journals but all the rest of the material found its way into the Public Record Office.⁵⁵

The documents now available in the National Archives are: C104/36 (two boxes), 37 (two boxes), 40, 160 and 161 (two boxes); another two boxes, C104/38 and 39 are described by Jones and Williams as in too poor condition to be made available, although this researcher was able to see them. They are indeed in poor condition, with many of the individual documents stuck together or partially shredded but they appear on tentative inspection to consist of signed individual agreements and powers-of-attorney made between Stephen Creagh and the plaintiffs, and are therefore unlikely to reveal significant new material. Donald Jones suggests that:

The real monuments to this remarkable voyage are the papers, letters and documents, ledgers, account books and wills , committee books and books of sale, sales catalogues and lists of medicines taken off prizes, which have survived in the Public Record Office.... These records are a treasure in themselves and provide

⁵³.,Donald Jones, *Captain Woodes Rogers' Voyage Round the World 1708-1711*, Bristol Branch of the Historical Association (Bristol,1992).

⁵⁴ Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*, chapter V, notes 81, 98, 106, 110.

⁵⁵ Jones, *Captain Woodes Rogers' Voyage* , 27.

historians with insights into Bristol's maritime history which can hardly be bettered.⁵⁶

Anyone who has been lucky enough to open the boxes in the National Archive, detect the faint aroma of stockholm tar and observe the wonderful variety of materials, from scraps of paper or parchment bleached by tropical sun, to cloth, vellum or board bound books, can only agree. The master's report on the case has been transcribed and printed for the first time in APPENDIX IV.

The accusations made by the Creswells in C6/390/82 cited in the Dampier section above also have a bearing on the Rogers voyage, as they accuse Dampier and others of improperly using a mortgage taken out on Elizabeth Creswell's property to finance the Rogers expedition. Dampier found time at the end of the voyage to enter his own complaint, not previously cited, against the owners in C9/225/43.

The House of Lords Library holds petitions made by the crews of the *Duke* and *Dutchess* on 17 June, 1714 and 31 August 1715.

B.M.H.Rogers and Donald Jones mention 26 documents contained in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Among them are the appeals by the owners (which are not in the chancery documents) against the findings of the chancery master. Neither Jones nor Rogers gives a full reference number for the documents (although one is referred to as MS 20) and this researcher's email correspondence with the Library of Congress has so far failed to locate them.

The Goldney Archive in Bristol University Library's special collections contains information about Thomas Goldney's connections with Dampier and Woodes Rogers and the debts which bedevilled Goldney's affairs in 1708 and resulted in his imprisonment. One account book reveals that Goldney kept close control of his affairs

⁵⁶ Ibid.

in Bristol while he was in prison.⁵⁷ P.K. Stembridge provides substantial detail about Thomas Goldney's involvement in the voyage, as well as that of other Bristol Quakers.⁵⁸

B.M.H Rogers has the first detailed account of the financial outcome of the voyage in three pieces written for the *Mariner's Mirror* in 1924 and 1933. Two of them, 'Dampier's Voyage of 1703' (which alludes to the later voyage) and 'Woodes Rogers's Cruising Voyage of 1708-11' are cited above. 'Dampier's Debts' attempts to determine what share of the prize he received from the 1708 voyage.⁵⁹

The principal printed sources on the voyage are the books, whose publication history is dealt with elsewhere, written by Woodes Rogers and Edward Cooke.⁶⁰ Accounts of the voyage, although not, generally, its aftermath, are contained in a number of books of voyages published during the eighteenth-century, and while they consist mainly of digests of Rogers's and Cooke's books they contain introductory passages that give an interesting picture of contemporary attitudes towards the voyage and its commander-in-chief. These include anthologies by John Harris, J. Callander, Captain Berkley and the pseudonymous Edward Cavendish Drake cited above.

A reprint of *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* with an introduction by G. E.

Manwaring was published in 1928. There have been a number of reprints of *A Cruising*

⁵⁷ University of Bristol special collections, DM 1466/9, 1708, Account book of Thomas Goldney of Bristol, 'owner of the ships Duke and Dutchess'

⁵⁸ P.K.Stembridge, *The Goldney Family: A Bristol Merchant Dynasty* (Bristol: Bristol Records Society, XLIX, 1998).

⁵⁹ B.M.H. Rogers, Dampier's Voyage of 1703, *Mariner's Mirror*, 10, 1924, 366-72.

⁶⁰ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* (London, 1712); Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea, and Round the World*, (London, 1712)

Voyage, the most recent in 2011, and substantial biographies of Woodes Rogers by Bryan Little in 1960 and Patrick Cordingly in 2011.⁶¹

Shelvocke

In the past scholarly assessments of Shelvocke's voyage relied largely on the conflicting accounts of George Shelvocke and William Betagh. Recently discovered documents in Chancery and East India Company files have, however, thrown significant new light on the voyage. The most important manuscripts relate to the legal proceedings initiated by the owners. Edward Hughes, the managing owner, caused a number of members of the crew of George Shelvocke's ship *Speedwell* to be arrested and held in the Wood Street Compter. The affidavits taken from them at this time are in TNA HCA 15/37 'S'. A letter from Hughes to the East India Company asking them to retain any goods and money lodged with them by Shelvocke and his crew is in IOR/E/1/13, f 449. When the attempt to prosecute in the High Court of Admiralty failed Hughes submitted a chancery bill of complaint, TNA C11/1831/45. This was accompanied by a plea for an order of *ne exeat regnum*, TNA C33/339, pt. 1, 7. The Chancery Master's initial report on the case is in TNA C33/341, p.54. Shelvocke wrote an account of the voyage and sent it to the Admiralty in 1725. The manuscript is in the Admiralty Library at Portsmouth, entitled MS18, 'Shelvocke's Voyage'. It is, as Glyn Williams describes, 'an abbreviated and bland affair' designed to placate the lords of the Admiralty to whom it was addressed and which omits many of the more interesting incidents, such as the shooting of the albatross.⁶² W.G.Perrin points out that the manuscript was written by a copyist with a few corrections in Shelvocke's hand.⁶³ The 'Diary and Consultation

⁶¹ Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain, Being the Life of Woodes Rogers, Seaman, Trader, Colonial Governor* (London, 1960); Patrick Cordingly, *Spanish Gold, Captain Woodes Rogers and the Pirates of the Caribbean* (London, 2011).

⁶² Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 202.

⁶³ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, with an introduction and notes by W.G.Perrin, (London, 1928), xix.

book' of the East India Company supercargoes provides a useful alternative, if not entirely independent, account of Clipperton's and Shelvocke's dealings in Canton in BL IOR/G/12/22, 33.

W.G. Perrin, in his introduction to the 1928 reprint of Shelvocke's book, finds him to be the most untrustworthy reporter and in this he may have been swayed by two voyage anthologies - John Campbell's of 1744-8 and James Burney's of 1803-17 – both of which find Shelvocke's narrative wholly unconvincing.⁶⁴ Two more recent books on the voyage have, on the other hand, sided with Shelvocke.⁶⁵ The authoritative account by Glyndwr Williams, which is largely dependent on Betagh and Shelvocke, doubts the reliability of either and cites O. K. Spate's comment that they were: 'Hard liars both... it would be as difficult as unprofitable to decide which was the more atrocious traducer'.⁶⁶ As Jonathan Lamb points out, in his ODNB entry on George Shelvocke, 'Although twentieth-century studies of the voyage have relied to a large extent on Betagh for important details, particularly concerning the legal aftermath, the lack of official confirmation has left him vulnerable'.⁶⁷ Philip Edwards, in *The Story of the Voyage*, remarks that 'The two narratives are an angry dialogue, and we can neither wholly trust nor wholly discredit either of the disputants, though the balance of credibility is certainly on Betagh's side'.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Ibid.; John Campbell, (ed.), *Navigantium*, Vol.1, and James Burney, *A Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean* (London, 5 Vols., 1803-17)

⁶⁵ George Shelvocke; Vincent McInerney (ed. & intro.), *A Privateer's Voyage around the World* (Barnsley, 2010) and Kenneth Poolman, *The Speedwell Voyage* (Naval Institute Press, 1999).

⁶⁶ O.H.K. Spate, *The Pacific since Magellan: II Monopolists and Freebooters* (London & Canberra 1983), 383, quoted in Williams, *Great South Sea*, 197.

⁶⁷ Shelvocke, George (1675–1742)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/25320>, accessed 13 Jan 2010]

⁶⁸ P. Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, 49.

Structure of the thesis.

Part 1 sets the three voyages in their historical context and investigates the achievement of each one in detail.

Chapter 1 provides a brief survey of British forays into the Pacific beginning with Drake's 1587 circumnavigation and ending with the 1689 privateering voyage of the *Welfare*. These voyages established a pattern for the type and composition of South Sea expeditions which was to continue until 1740. The successful voyages of Drake and Cavendish would supply an important example for the cruising voyages.

Chapters 2-4 provide detailed analysis of the origins, financing, planning, setting out, conduct and achievement of each voyage. A range of primary sources is used to check and verify or question the existing scholarly research and in the process assess the achievement of the managers, commanders and crew of each. Planning, management and investment are assessed in some detail to establish the extent to which the voyages were typical privateering ventures of their time and to identify the causes of their success or failure. Care has been taken to establish more precise figures for the total prize money and its distribution in order to give a more accurate assessment of the financial impact of the voyages.

Part 2 assesses the impact of the voyages on the contemporary political, strategic and cultural concerns of Britain.

Chapter 5 investigates the impact of the voyages on British strategic and political thinking and the extent to which their successes and failures contributed to the pressure on government to mount Anson's expedition to the South Sea. It also compares the achievement of Anson and Rogers in order to throw light on the qualities of

organisation and leadership required when conducting a South Sea voyage in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Chapter 6 investigates the contribution to contemporary literature of the five published eye-witness narratives of the voyages. The narratives are placed in the context of a growing public enthusiasm for voyage narratives generated by William Dampier's highly successful *A Voyage round the World*. The requirements of the Royal Society and Grub Street are shown to combine in influencing the style and content of the narratives whose differing attempts to provide a truthful relation of events was to have an important impact on contemporary literature. The extent of editorial assistance provided the 'illiterate sailors' who were the authors of the books is investigated. Voyage anthologies, in which the voyage narratives were to have a significant afterlife, are investigated and their usefulness as contemporary reflectors of attitudes to mariners, the South Sea and Britain's global ambitions is assessed.

Chapter 7 assesses the importance of the voyage narratives as influential precursors of the fictions of Defoe and Swift. It investigates the proposal that *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* are not only linked to the narratives through incidents like those involving the marooned Alexander Selkirk but that there are more profound links in the use of language and narrative voice. Other connections are made, through Smollett and the nineteenth century naval novels to the historical fiction of today, to indicate a hitherto unrecognised range and depth of the influence of these narratives.

PART I

THE THREE VOYAGES

CHAPTER 1.

FORERUNNERS

The charge that the three cruising voyages were anachronistic is understandable but does not bear scrutiny. It is based on the contention that the high point of English plundering adventure in the South Sea was reached in the reign of Elizabeth I and was built almost entirely on the spectacularly successful voyages of Drake and Cavendish. These voyages, it is maintained, were followed by over 100 years of failed projects and abandoned schemes which, by the turn of the eighteenth century, had resulted in the state turning its attention away from the Spanish South Sea and towards its Atlantic and Caribbean possessions. The three cruising voyages were thus backward-looking private expeditions which had little connection with British maritime policy. This chapter aims to show that the voyages form part of a continuum of British activity in the South Sea which began, certainly, with Drake's circumnavigation, but which was revived in the seventeenth century whenever England was able to turn its gaze away from its immediate national and European concerns. In times of war with Spain the object would be plunder, in times of peace, trade, but the 'obsession' with the Spanish South Sea remained and continued until the end of the eighteenth century.

The naming of the South Sea was an accident of geography. From the peak in Darien where Vasco Nunez de Balboa stood in September 1513 the ocean stretched out to the southern horizon, while behind him lay what the conquistadores had already named the North Sea. Had he faced the ocean almost anywhere else on the Pacific coast of America he might more accurately have called it the West Sea. Nevertheless the name

stuck and ‘remained for over two centuries, in fact nearly three, the South Sea not only in common speech (especially that of seamen) but very generally on maps and in academic discourse’.⁶⁹ Six years after Balboa’s first sighting Ferdinand Magellan battled through the straits named after him and became the first European to enter the South Sea. From there the *Trinidad* and the *Victoria* sailed across the vast, unknown expanse of ocean for fifteen weeks, sighting only two uninhabited islands on the way, before making a landfall at Guam. Magellan, or his chronicler, named it the Pacific Sea and a 1531 map by Oronce Fine names the sea on either side of the Straits *Mare Magellanicum*.⁷⁰

Into this sea sailed, in 1578, Francis Drake with his fleet of little ships and an undisclosed purpose that evolved into the first English circumnavigation and a voyage of plunder whose success remains unequalled. K.R. Andrews judges that Drake accomplished much more than his original and secret plans had intended. The voyage was ‘more daring, more controversial, more tragic and in the end, more famous than could ever have been imagined at its inception’.⁷¹ For many reasons, the most important being the Queen’s sensitivities about the possible damage to Spanish self-esteem and the desire by the investors to minimise payment of duty, estimates of the total plunder vary from about £100,000 (said to be the value of the silver taken from the treasure ship) to several million pounds. An often quoted, though still vague, valuation sets the total due to the crown at ‘more than the Queen’s annual ordinary revenue’.⁷² Williams is not as specific as N.A.M. Rodger, who draws on K.R. Andrews and O.H.K. Spate to provide his reckoning:

⁶⁹ O.H.K. Spate, "'South Sea' To 'Pacific Ocean'", *Journal of Pacific History* XII (1977), 206

⁷⁰ Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*, fig.1.

⁷¹ K.R. Andrews, "Beyond the Equinoctial: England and South America in the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 10 (1981), 4-24.

⁷² John Sugden, *Sir Francis Drake* (New York, 1990), 148-9

[Drake's] officially declared booty was worth £307,000; the true total was probably at least £600,000. The investors made a 4,700% return on the £5,000 it had cost to fit out the expedition. The queen's share was £300,000, more than an entire year's ordinary income. With this she paid off her foreign debt, and still had £42,000 to invest in the new Levant Company.⁷³

Thus galvanised, England and its seafarers embarked on a period of activity whose aims were to capitalise on Drake's success and enhance its formerly insignificant presence in the South Sea. In what was to become the leitmotif of British state involvement in the South Sea an expedition that was eventually to set out in 1582 under the command of Edward Fenton was hampered by uncertain aims, ambiguous sailing orders and poor leadership. It failed to break through into the Pacific and achieved nothing of lasting value either for the Queen or its investors, chief of whom was the Earl of Leicester. Much more successful was a spirited piece of private enterprise largely uncontaminated by state intervention. Thomas Cavendish set up his own expedition and, intent on emulating Drake, took three ships into the South Sea via the Straits of Magellan and succeeded in becoming the first Englishman to capture the Manila galleon. Since England was now at war with Spain he was, unlike Drake, able to inflict much damage on Spanish shipping and trade in his progress up the coast of South America. Although the plunder he brought home in 1588 was considerably less than Drake's (though by how much is unclear since reports of both vary widely), Cavendish was greeted in triumph, the success of his expedition a pleasing coda to the recent victory over the Spanish Armada.

After Cavendish's first voyage English adventures into the South Sea petered out in failed projects and the death of Drake and Hawkins. A second expedition by Cavendish which set out in 1591 with the same purpose in mind and a more formidable fleet met

⁷³ N.A.M Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Britain, Volume One, 660 - 1649* (London, 1997), 245.

with disaster of such proportions that it may well have inhibited further such adventures for many years.⁷⁴

Williams and others see this later failure to make an impact as typical of the Elizabethan age, in which the efforts of English seafarers could be described by J. A. Williamson as ‘a long series of failures and disasters, only occasionally relieved by some brilliant feat’.⁷⁵ Whatever the reality on the water, the exploits of Drake and Cavendish set down a marker for their successors, opening up the prospect of great plunder and nurturing a growing consciousness that the English were uniquely qualified as seamen, fighters and navigators to prosper in the South Seas. Hakluyt’s remark, ‘[the English] to speake plainly, in compassing the vaste globe of the earth more than once have excelled all the nations and peoples of the earth’ was, in its patriotic partiality, a more accurate reflection of the spirit of the age than Williamson’s dry balance of profit and loss.⁷⁶

Glyndwr Williams mentions a ‘shadowy’ project from the Commonwealth period which proposed to send an expedition to seize bases in Chile, but it was to be more than seventy years before another English commissioned ship entered the South Sea.⁷⁷ The genesis and ultimate failure of the 1669 expedition of John Narborough had aspects that were to become, if they had not already done so, familiar attributes of many such voyages. Its orders from the Duke of York, Lord High Admiral, were vague: Narborough was to ‘make a Discovery both of the Seas and Coasts of that part of the World, and if possible to lay the foundations of a Trade there’. He was also instructed ‘not to do any injury to such Spaniards as you shall meet with, or meddle with any

⁷⁴ There is a recent account of what went wrong in R.F. Hitchcock, ‘Cavendish’s last voyage: The charges against Davis’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 80 (1994), 259-269.

⁷⁵ J.A. Williamson, ed., *The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins*, xlix

⁷⁶ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*. p.43

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

places where they are planted'.⁷⁸ Since the Spanish were 'planted', at least as far as they were concerned, along the whole discovered west coast of America the orders contained an inherent contradiction that was to become a crucial factor in the voyage's failure. Furthermore Narborough took with him the bearer of the Duke of York's orders, a mysterious Don Carlos who, like the buccaneers that Woodes Rogers was to complain about later, made what proved to be unwarranted claims to knowledge of the region. The voyage failed either to promote trade or establish an English presence in South America and Narborough was lucky, as Williams puts it, to 'withdraw his head from the Spanish noose with the loss of only four men (and the dubious Don Carlos)'.⁷⁹

The voyage did have two products that were to be of enduring significance. The first was Narborough's detailed chart of the Straits of Magellan, published in 1673, which was to prove the standard authority for many years to come. The second was the publication in 1694 of Narborough's journal three years after his death and some twenty years after the voyage's completion.⁸⁰ Its impact was greatest on a later group of adventurers and, at least according to Philip Edwards, may have provided the initial impetus for the surge in the publication of mariners' journals, voyages and sea-narratives that began with William Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World*.⁸¹

For nearly 30 years after Narborough the only English excursions into the South Sea were the quixotic 1689 voyage of the privateer *Welfare* in search of sunken treasure off the coast of Peru and those of the buccaneers, most of whom arrived there via the Isthmus of Panama, who seized or occasionally bought whatever vessels came to hand and plundered, with mixed success, the ports of Mexico and Peru.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 80

⁸⁰ Anon, *An Account of Several Late Voyages & Discoveries to the South and North* (London, 1694).

⁸¹ Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, 30-32

Despite this activity and the increasing interest of the reading public in the South Seas, there had been no successful privateering voyage into the area since Cavendish.

Although Dampier's 1703 privateering voyage was a venture with few precedents nurtured by a particular set of encouraging circumstances, it can also be seen as a logical continuation of a tradition of British involvement in the South Sea which began with Drake but continued through much of the proceeding 150 years.

CHAPTER 2.

WILLIAM DAMPIER'S VOYAGE OF 1703-7

We were at first Two ships, of twenty-six guns and One hundred and twenty Men each; designed for the South-Seas: The one was named the *St George*, Captain *William Dampier* Commander, on Board of which I was; and the other was named the *Fame*, *John Pulling* Captain. We were each of us supplied with all War-like Stores, and very well victualled for nine Months; and had Commissions from his Royal Highness the Lord High-Admiral, to proceed in a War-like manner against the *French* and *Spaniards*: And we Both were upon the same Terms, of No Purchase, No Pay.⁸²

William Dampier's privateering expedition of 1703-7 was the first of its kind since Cavendish. It was unquestionably a failure but it was to have a profound influence on the plans and objectives of the subsequent voyages of Rogers and Shelvocke. It is Dampier's voyage which first sets out the aims of the South Sea cruising voyage and the means by which those aims should be accomplished. Campbell, again, describes the purpose: 'there is a short and speedy passage to very rich and pleasant Countries, from whence we may immediately derive large Quantities of Gold'.⁸³

This chapter aims to show that the Dampier voyage of 1703 was a costly, significant expedition supported by the Lord High Admiral and notable figures in the City of London and the Royal Society. The preparations for the voyage were followed closely and with interest by the Queen and her Council and can be seen to have been, at the very least, in accord with state policy towards Spanish South America; the appointment of Dampier as its leader is recognition of the fact that he was perhaps the only commissioned officer with suitable South Sea experience to lead a state-sponsored

⁸² William Funnell, *A Voyage Round the World. Containing an Account of Captain Dampier's Expedition into the South-Seas in the Ship St George In the Years 1703 and 1704* (London, 1707), 1.

⁸³ Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol.1, 149.

expedition. While the voyage made little money for its investors there is evidence to suggest that considerable prize money returned to Europe by one route or another.

The organisation and financing of the ships as private men-of-war with Admiralty commissions sets the pattern for the subsequent privately funded merchant ventures. It was Dampier's expedition that determined that there should be two ships, sailing in concert; that they should be private men-of-war crewed by merchant mariners and led by experienced commanders who were not required to have naval commissions. The agreements under which the crews of the ships sailed were essentially similar but varied in the detail of how any profit should be distributed. The two ships, the *St. George* and *Cinque Portes*, that sailed on this expedition were not large (they were respectively about 200 and about 90 tons) but their experience underlined that the ideal size for such a lengthy expedition was between 200 and 300 tons – sufficient to defend themselves against all but the biggest enemy warships and just sufficient to take the very large but ill-defended Pacific galleons. Their goals, to attack the ships and coastal cities of Spanish America and, ultimately, take the Manila galleon, were similar and the aspect that particularly marks out these voyages from other privateering expeditions is that they would achieve their objects by sailing west round Cape Horn (or through the Magellan Straits) rather than east via the Cape of Good Hope.

Origins

Thomas Estcourt, the managing owner of the expedition, was the son of a Wiltshire baronet but was described in *Burke's Landed Gentry* as “a student of Lincoln's Inn”, so may have resided in London.⁸⁴ Estcourt was owner of half of the ship *Nazareth* of about 260 tons burthen and in 1702, spent a total of £4,000 fitting her out as a

⁸⁴B.M.H. Rogers, ‘Dampier's Voyage of 1703’, *Mariner's Mirror*, 15 (1924), pp367-78.

privateer.⁸⁵ This substantial sum, confirmed in the agreement with a new owner, John Mascall, seems, in the light of our knowledge about spending on the ships of Woodes Rogers's expedition, quite large, and may have been inflated in the interests of the case. The ship's name was changed to *St George* and William Dampier was employed as Captain. Richard Creswell claims in his chancery bill of complaint that Estcourt was persuaded by Dampier to finance a cruising voyage to the South Seas which, he promised, would provide 'vast profit and advantages thereby'. Creswell claims that Estcourt was further persuaded to engage Edward Morgan, a former shipmate of Dampier's from his buccaneering days who was at the time in prison, as agent and purser. Dampier contends in his reply to the complaint that he made no 'boastings of great advantage' and that Morgan was appointed 'on the recommendation of one William Price', one of the managing owners.⁸⁶

Dampier was possibly the most widely known and generally admired mariner of the day. He had sailed with the buccaneers in the South Seas and the East Indies and on his return to England had published a record of his adventures. *A New Voyage Round the World* was immensely successful, was reprinted several times in the first year of publication and is still in print today.⁸⁷ His reputation as a chronicler and hydrographer among members of the Royal Society was such that in 1699 he was appointed to command a naval ship, the *Roebuck*, on an expedition to explore New Holland and the East Indies. In 1702, however, he had just arrived home from this disastrous voyage in which many of the crew had abandoned him and his ship had been lost.⁸⁸ He was court

⁸⁵ TNA C6/390/82 Creswell v Dampier 1712, sheet 1 gives details of costs and tonnage.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, sheet 3, Dampier Reply.

⁸⁷ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (London, 1697). An account of its publication is given in chapter 6.

⁸⁸ His own account of this voyage is in *A Voyage to New-Holland &c. In the Year 1699* (London, 1703).

martialled on June 2 and found ‘not a fit person’ to command a naval vessel.⁸⁹ He himself admitted that ‘I suffered extremely in my reputation by that misfortune’.⁹⁰ It is, on the face of it, surprising that Dampier was in a position to persuade anyone to place their trust in him as the leader of a privateering expedition so soon after this debacle, and it is a tribute to his resilience and charm that he was to continue to impress investors despite all the evidence against his being a fit person to invest in. The two books that he had already published were his most persuasive weapons. They may, indeed, have inspired the investors to try the riches of the South Sea he so eloquently described.⁹¹ This, combined with the opportunity brought on by the war with France and Spain that had just begun, provided a fertile ground for such a voyage to be contemplated.

The earliest official reference to the expedition is in a report by the Prince’s Council (the Prince being George, Anne’s consort and Lord High Admiral) on April 3, 1703.

The East India Company was fearful that any voyage into the South Sea might encroach on its trading monopoly and made strong objections to the Queen. The Prince’s Council took immediate action.

We have by the Queen’s command considered the representation of the Old East India Company concerning Captain Dampier in the ship *St George*, Captain Pullerine in the ship *Fame* and some other vessels now fitting out to sea in order, so ‘tis said, to cruise on the Spaniards in the West Indies [sic]. We sent for the persons concerned, and told them that the Company were afraid that something may be done by them (the vessels) which might be prejudicial to the Company’s affairs in India, and recommended them to give such security to Dr Bramston, surrogate to the Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, as might satisfy the Company. We send Dr Bramston’s report on their security for her Majesty’s consideration and approval, pending which the ships are, by her Majesty’s orders, stopped in the Downs.⁹²

⁸⁹ TNA ADM1/5262 Dampier’s Court Martial. There were two court-martials: a routine one, for losing his ship, of which he was acquitted and a second for mistreating his first lieutenant, of which he was found culpable.

⁹⁰ Diana and Michael Preston, *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind*.

⁹¹ The second was *Voyages and Descriptions*, Vol. II (London, 1699).

⁹² Anne, 1. 1702-1706, TNA, SP42/7.

Dr Bramston's report states that the owners met him and agreed to the posting of penal securities of £3,000 per ship, three times, as he points out, the amount required by the Queen's instructions to privateers, to prevent the ships from doing anything that might injure the East India Company's interest. The report was signed by the following owners and sureties:

Michael Milford Esq.

Thomas Estcourt Esq.

William Price Gent.

Citizenry:

Jasper Waters

William Arnold

Edward Fowler

Charles Buckingham

Thomas Brown

Richard Collett

Sureties: Wm Price and Robert Coleman – scrivener, for *St George*

Pole Beresford, embroiderer and Samuel Proctor, grocer for *Fame*

In addition to the above B.M.H. Rogers and Masfield mention the following owners

Robert Southwell President, Royal Society

Edward Southwell Sec. of State for Ireland

Richard Longford Gent., Inner Temple

John Jacob (alias John Gascoign) Scrivener

John Mascall of New Romney, Gent. And ‘Felip Calvert’ , owners of the *Cinque Portes*, joined after the *Fame* had parted company.

The chancery bill records that the defendants had shares in the *St George* as follows:

Richard Collett 1/16

Richard Longford 1/32

John Gascoign 1/32

It is clear from the list of investors that Dampier was still in good favour with some, at least, of his Royal Society acquaintances. Chief among these were Sir Robert Southwell, the President of the Society and his son Edward, who was at that time Secretary of State for Ireland, though a letter from Admiral Smyth states that ‘their names were carefully kept out of view’.⁹³ William Price had recently been appointed Surveyor of Duties for the Treasury.⁹⁴

The respectability of the enterprise was further underlined by an exceptional royal acknowledgement. According to the *Royal Gazette* of April 16 ‘Captain Dampier, being prepared to depart on another Voyage to the West Indies, had the Honour to kiss her Majesty’s Hand, being introduced by his Royal Highness the Lord High Admiral’.⁹⁵

The Voyage

The original plan of the expedition, as set down in Funnell’s book was to mount a privateering expedition to attack Spain’s vulnerable South American territories. The ships were to sail to Buenos Aires in the hope of capturing Spanish treasure ships which

⁹³ Anton Gill, *Devil’s Mariner*, 281.

⁹⁴ Treasury Books ,Vol.6, September 12, 1702.

⁹⁵ *London Gazette*, April 16, 1703.

‘Captain Dampier gives an account are usually there’.⁹⁶ If they took prizes worth more than £600,000 they were to return home, but otherwise they would carry on into the Pacific and ‘seek for a great Galleon that trades from Manila, one of the Philippine islands, to Acapulco, on the coast of Mexico’.⁹⁷

The letters of marque were issued to the *St George* and the *Fame*, on 3 April 1703.⁹⁸

Articles were signed between Estcourt and William Price for the owners and Dampier and Morgan for the crew, who were to ship on the principle of ‘No Purchase No Pay’.⁹⁹

The agreement set down that regular accounts of purchase were to be kept and there were to be regular meetings of a council of officers. Dampier was bound to ‘diligently and faithfully observe perform fulfil accomplish and keep all and every of sd.

Articles’.¹⁰⁰

In the event the *Fame* disappeared from the Downs after its captain had had ‘differences’ with Dampier and a new ship, the *Cinque Ports* and a new investor, John Mascall, were found to continue the expedition. The agreement between Mascall and Estcourt valued the *St George* at £4000 and the *Cinque Ports*, a galley of only 90 tons burthen, at £2000. The *St George* was to have 2/3 the purchase and the *Cinque Portes* 1/3, which suggests that, unlike the Rogers expedition, the investors put their money into one ship rather than the expedition as a whole.¹⁰¹

The desertion of Pullings and the *Fame* aside, the expedition seems to have been carefully thought out and well-organised. Dampier was accused of unnecessary

⁹⁶ Ibid, 2. Dampier vehemently denied he had any such plan (*Dampier’s Vindication*, 2).

⁹⁷ Ibid, 3. The highly ambitious figure of £600,000 may be a literal. £60,000 would have been a substantial and worthwhile sum.

⁹⁸ TNA HCA 26/18

⁹⁹ An account of the various methods of payment may be found in David J. Starkey, ‘“To Excite the Whole Company to Courage and Bravery”: The Incentivisation of British Privateering Crews, 1702-1815’, in Doe & Harding, eds., *Naval Leadership and Management, 1650-1950*.

¹⁰⁰ TNA C6/390/82 sheet 1.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

expenditure (as were both Rogers and Shelvocke later) but relations between the commander and owners appear to have remained amicable and Dampier records a visit by ‘Southwell and the Duke of Ormond’ while they were in Kinsale.¹⁰² Like Rogers after him Dampier took the opportunity of an enforced stay in Ireland waiting for the arrival of the *Cinque Portes* to take on stores and crew and make adjustments to the ship. There is one letter to Edward Southwell from Price, who seems to have been acting as ship’s husband, that may have rung alarm bells in London:

10 July 1703

I observe also that they have spent in about five weeks time above nine tuns of harbour beer, which is more than a hogshead every day, and everything also seems to be managed with the same sort of husbandry, and I see the captain gives up the conduct of these matters to others without exercising his own reason, and therefore I wish you would be pleased to take some notice of his improvidence and enjoin him to look better after things for the future.¹⁰³

It must have been galling for the owners to look back, after the debacle of the expedition, and note the significance of these observations, but, to be fair, much the same was to be written about Woodes Rogers when he, too, overspent his budget in Cork.

The *St George* and the *Cinque Portes* set off from Kinsale on September 11, 1703. Six days before a report in the *Daily Courant* records what must have been a severe blow to the expedition:

Kingsale, September 5th

Last night Captain Charlton of the Rye Galley and Mr Griffith first Lieutenant of Captain Dampier’s ship, being drinking together in this town, words arose between them and they went out; Mr Griffith was Killed Captain Charlton was committed to prison.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Anton Gill, *Devil’s Mariner*, 285. This is presumably Edward, who had reason to be in Ireland, rather than his father.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 284.

¹⁰⁴ *Daily Courant* 16/09/1703

The replacement for Griffith was not a success. On the evening of sailing Dampier and his new first lieutenant Huxtable ‘had such high words in the Cabbin, that Captain *Dampier* call’d to the Master, in order to put the Ship about, and stand in again for *Kinsail*, in order to put him [Huxtable] ashore’.¹⁰⁵ In the event Dampier changed his mind but it turned out to be the first of a series of rows and disputes between Dampier and his officers which was eventually to result in the desertion of almost all of them. On St Jago in the Cape Verde Islands, according to Funnell, Dampier turned Huxtable ashore ‘with his Chest and Cloaths and Servant, much against both their Wills, at about twelve at Night’.¹⁰⁶ Huxtable died on the island three months later. At the island of Grande in Brazil Dampier’s newly promoted first lieutenant, James Barnaby, absconded along with eight of the crew.¹⁰⁷

The myth of William Dampier, mariner, buccaneer, adventurer and hydrographer, which had begun to unravel on his voyage in command of the *Roebuck*, was further undermined as the *St George* entered the South Seas. At the *Roebuck* court martial Dampier was accused by his lieutenant, George Fisher, of being ‘a very mean artist’ and while the court dismissed this accusation there are grounds for believing Fisher.¹⁰⁸ According to Funnell, Dampier badly miscalculated his westing when rounding Cape Horn and turned North, thinking he was in the Pacific, only to find he was still to the east of Tierra del Fuego.¹⁰⁹ He later failed to recognise Juan Fernandez, which he had visited in his buccaneering days, and sailed straight past it, only being persuaded of its

¹⁰⁵ Welbe, *An Answer*, 1.

¹⁰⁶ Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 6.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 11. Welbe suggests (p2) that the men merely took Barnaby ashore and then returned.

¹⁰⁸ TNA ADM1/5262, Fisher’s petition to the Earl of Pembroke. ‘Artist’ refers to his navigational ability.

¹⁰⁹ Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 14. Funnell also questions Dampier’s observations of nature, remarking that alligators’ eggs were ‘quite round; although Captain Dampier in Vol. II, Part II page 75 says that these eggs are longer than a goose’s; which I suppose he took upon hearsay.’ *Ibid.*, 54.

identity when his crew pointed out that his companion ship, the *Cinque Portes*, was already anchored there.¹¹⁰ Welbe is sarcastic about Dampier's skills and motives:

...by a greater Providence than what Captain Dampier says, we got safe to Amboyna. For his Part, he was a great Pilot, and he had been there before, but none of us ever had; and if he could have help'd it, never should; for then he would be sure none could give any Account of his Transactions and Conduct, but the World must have been Amuz'd with his stories.¹¹¹

Woodes Rogers's experience on the 1708 voyage matches that of Funnell and Welbe.

Dampier had been appointed by the owners of Rogers's expedition as 'Pilot of the South Seas' but once there Rogers seems very rapidly to have lost faith in Dampier's navigation and his memory, remarking at one point that 'Captain Dampier has been here before but it was all a long time ago' and rating his ability not much above the 'Spaniards, who are generally ignorant,' since he was 'uncertain whether [Tecames] was the Port under our Lee, tho' I never saw more remarkable Land'.¹¹² The last straw was Dampier's insistence that the islands they had previously visited were not the Galapagos at all since he was:

very positive of seeing other Islands about 100 or 110 Leagues from the Main under the Equinox. He tells us he was at them formerly when he was a Buccaneer, and has describ'd'em in one of the Volumes he calls his Voyages, and says that those Islands we were at lay to the Westward of them; but he must be mistaken, or we had seen them in the last Runs to and from these Islands.¹¹³

Rogers's next entry triumphantly confirms Dampier's mistake:

Sept. 8. We are run over and beyond where our Pilot affirm'd the Islands were, and no sight of them; so we all agree that the Islands he was at when a buccaneering can be no other but those we were at, and are going to now; the nearest part of them lies 165 Leagues to the Westward of the Main Land.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 17

¹¹¹ John Welbe, *An Answer*, 8.

¹¹² Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 183.

¹¹³ Ibid., 190

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

Biographers have tended to blame Dampier's navigational failings during the Rogers expedition on his advancing years (he was sixty in 1711), but are still inclined, despite the lack of evidence in either Rogers's or Edward Cooke's narratives, to believe that he provided invaluable navigational assistance to the expedition. Dampier claims, at various times in *A New Voyage Round the World*, to have been a useful navigator but the facts of his seafaring career are against him. The ships he travelled in suffered various changes of captains and senior officers, but it is noteworthy that Dampier was never promoted from the forecabin. This is surprising, given that, as Rogers commented, buccaneers were notorious for changing officers "at every caprice".¹¹⁵

Defoe went further, quoting:

he once knew a buccaneering pirate vessel, whose crew were upwards of seventy men, who, in one voyage, had so often changed, set up and pulled down their captains and other officers, that about seven and forty of the ship's company had at several times, been in offices of one kind or another: and among the rest they had, in particular, had thirteen captains.¹¹⁶

Buccaneers elected their captains and usually chose those who seemed likely to bring in the most plunder. They were not necessarily the best navigators. Thus sensible buccaneers (a rare breed according to Rogers) took care to appoint officers who balanced fighting ability with a sound command of seamanship and navigation. Dampier does not seem to have impressed his fellows with his grasp of either. At one point, when Swan decided to divide his forces between two ships – the *Cygnets* and a smaller Portuguese barque – he placed Dampier in the barque under the newly appointed Captain Teat but still gave him no office.¹¹⁷ When Dampier found himself (reluctantly, according to his journal) among the mutineers who seized the *Cygnets* from Swan at Mindanao he claimed that the mutineers would not let him go, for fear they should need a man to 'navigate the ship', and yet he was not chosen when they

¹¹⁵ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage* (1712), xvii.

¹¹⁶ [Daniel Defoe]. *An Account of ...the Late John Gow* (London, 1725), 279-80, quoted in Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 87.

¹¹⁷ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (1999), 132..

appointed a new captain, master and quartermaster to replace Swan and his officers.¹¹⁸

There is no surprise in this. Dampier gives an account of his early years at sea in *A Voyage Round the World*, Vol.II. Like many of Dampier's statements about himself it implies that he was in some way trained in the art of navigation, although a closer reading suggests quite otherwise:

Upon the Death of my Father and Mother, they who had the disposal of me, took other Measures; and having removed me from the *Latine School* to learn *Writing* and *Arithmetick*, they soon after plac'd me with a Master of a ship at *Weymouth*, complying with the Inclinations I had very early of seeing the *World*: with him I made a short Voyage to *France*, and returning thence, went to *Newfoundland*, being then about eighteen Years of Age. In this Voyage I spent one *Summer*; but so pinched with the Rigour of that cold Climate, that upon my return I was absolutely against going to those parts of the *World*, but went Home again to my Friends. Yet going up a while after to *London*, the offer of a *warm Voyage* and a *long* one, both which I always desired, soon carried me to Sea again. For hearing of an outward bound *East-India* Man, the *John* and *Martha* of *London*, Capt. *Earning* Commander, I entered my self aboard, and was employed before the mast, for which my two former *voyages* had some way qualified me.¹¹⁹

It is clear from this that his benefactors intended Dampier to be educated for the sea, and it was usual to begin such an education at a 'mathematical school'. This would normally be followed, for those intending to be an officer, by apprenticeship to a ship's master for a period of one to four years.¹²⁰ This was the course followed, for example, by Woodes Rogers. It is not clear from Dampier's statement whether he was apprenticed to the master of the Weymouth ship, but if he was, it clearly ended unsatisfactorily since he was next taken on 'before the mast', i.e. as a seaman. No qualification was required for this, though his few months at sea may have entitled him to be rated as able. His naval commission as Captain of the *Roebuck* tells us little about his navigation and seamanship skills, since it seems to have been given on the same basis that Edmund Halley was commissioned to command the *Paramore*, that is, as

¹¹⁸ Preston & Preston, *William Dampier*, 225.

¹¹⁹ William Dampier, *Voyages and Descriptions*, Vol.II (London, 1699), Part II, 2.

¹²⁰ See Peter Earle, *Sailors*, for a description of the apprenticeship system operating at the time.

acknowledgement of his status as a writer and as a protégé of Hans Sloane and, most significantly, Prince George of Denmark, the Lord High Admiral. Funnell awards rather grudging and possibly ambivalent credit for Dampier's hydrographic skills:

I cannot in justice but take notice, that upon all this Coast, and during our whole stay in the South Seas, we found Captain Dampier's Descriptions of places very exact; and his account of Winds, Currents &c. very extraordinary.¹²¹

What Funnell does not say is that Dampier was a good navigator.

Those other attributes, in the public's imagination, of the buccaneer – courage, bravery and seamanship - were not notably present in Dampier, according to his contemporaries. Welbe accuses Dampier of cowardice, incompetence, drunkenness, sharp practice and poor leadership, and cites as examples his behaviour in key incidents during the voyage. The first began on 29th February 1704. Both ships chased a sail first seen while they were at anchor off Juan Fernandez. She turned out to be a French man-of-war of, according to Funnell, about 30 guns and well-manned – a formidable opponent for the *St George* (20 guns) and the *Cinque Portes* (16 guns).¹²² Funnell goes on to describe how they traded broadsides for seven hours (the *Cinque Portes* having fallen back after firing 'ten or twelve guns') and had nine men killed before withdrawing and allowing the French ship to escape. On the face of it this sounds a creditable performance in which the *St. George* persevered in an action against a much stronger opponent despite considerable losses and Funnell leaves the distinct impression that they were probably lucky to escape a worse mauling. Dampier must surely have come to regret, therefore, his intemperate attack on Funnell's account in which he blames their failure on the crew

¹²¹ Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, Preface.

¹²² Funnell, *Voyage round the World*, 25.

leaving the deck and running below at a crucial moment.¹²³ Welbe's reply to this is scathing:

As for the *French Ship*, that we engaged near the island of *Juan Fernando's*, 'tis true, we chased her all the Afternoon and fetch'd upon her; but taking her to be an *European Ship* (as Captain Dampier says in his own scandalous *Vindication*) he did not care to engage her, (he believing that she might have Guns on Board, to which he always had a natural Aversion); and besides not knowing how to behave himself, or work his Ship in Time of Engagement, as it plainly appeared afterwards.)... None of our men quitted their Posts during the Time of Engagement, except Captain Dampier himself, who the whole time of the engagement, neither encourag'd his men, nor gave any regular Command, as is usually required from a Commander at such Times; but stood upon the Quarter-Deck behind a good Barricado, which he had order'd to be made of beds, Rugs, Pillows, Blankets &c. to defend him from the small shot of the Enemy; where he stood with his fusee in his Hand, and never so much as took Care to have the Quarter-Deck Guns and Paterero's fir'd.¹²⁴

As Dampier turned away from the enemy, Welbe continues, 'one of our men told him to his Face, *He was a coward*, and asked him *Whether he came to those parts of the World to fight, or not?* And he reply'd, *He did not come to fight; for he knew where to make a voyage without fighting*'.¹²⁵

The Falstaffian figure conjured up by this account is highly entertaining but may be unfair. Welbe proved afterwards to be a strange, obsessive character whose several schemes to exploit the South Seas and particularly Terra Australis Incognita ended in frustration and failure.¹²⁶ Nevertheless his accusations that Dampier was neither a fighting man nor a seaman, are echoed in the affidavits of fellow crew members submitted for the Creswell case and in the evidence given at Dampier's court martial by Fisher, first Lieutenant on the *Roebuck*.¹²⁷ Rogers also notes Dampier's reluctance to

¹²³ Dampier, *Vindication*, 3.

¹²⁴ Welbe, *An Answer*, 3.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ An account of Welbe's doomed attempts to interest the South Sea Company and others in his projects may be found in Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 183-89.

¹²⁷ TNA ADM1/5262.

face the enemy at Guiaquil, though in this instance Dampier was abetted by Thomas Dover, who seems to have been something of a kindred spirit.

Possibly the most serious accusation made by Welbe, and in their affidavits a number of members of the crew, was that Dampier attempted to defraud the owners and his fellow crew of their due shares of the purchase. In the period immediately after the attack on the French ship the *Cinque Portes* and *St. George* took a number of prizes, but in at least three cases Dampier's orders concerning the plunder were suspect. According to Funnell, still the mildest of Dampier's accusers, they took a ship of about 150 tons laden 'as far as we could perceive' with valuable commodities including 'a pretty good sum of money' but 'having taken out a little of everything our Captain discharg'd her, alledging that, if we kept her, it would be a hindrance to his later designs'.¹²⁸ Four days afterwards a 'new ship' of 200 tons, 'laden with several good commodities as Indico and Cochineel' was likewise taken and then set free with much of its cargo apparently still on board, Dampier reasoning that 'he would not cumber up his ship, for that he intended to make a voyage at one stroke upon some rich Town, on which he had a speedy Design'.¹²⁹ In his reply to the Creswell bill Dampier maintains that he was unable to take these ships as prizes because he had insufficient crew to man them.¹³⁰ Alexander Selkirk, mate (or possibly master) of the *Cinque Portes* accused Dampier, Stradling and Morgan of secretly distributing the prize amongst themselves, and William Sheltram and Ralph Clift claim that Dampier and Morgan had seized 'great Ingotts or wedges both of silver and of gold' which were kept in the captain's cabin.¹³¹

¹²⁸ William Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 32.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹³⁰ TNA C6/390/82, sheet 3

¹³¹ C.D. Lee, 'Alexander Selkirk and the Last Voyage of the *Cinque Portes* Galley', *Mariner's Mirror*, 73(1987), 387-9, discusses Selkirk's probable rank; the crew depositions are in TNA C24/1321 Pt 1.

The voyage - and the ships – began to disintegrate. Stradling and Dampier parted company and Stradling returned to Juan Fernandez to pick up men and sails abandoned there on the previous visit, only to discover that they had been taken by the French; it was at this point Selkirk decided to maroon himself on the island believing, as it happens correctly, that the *Cinque Portes* was in no condition to carry them home. It sank not long afterwards with Stradling and just eighteen of the crew surviving to be taken prisoner by the Spanish.

Dampier sailed his almost equally rotten ship up and down the coast, taking a number of small prizes until the condition of his ship forced him to careen her on a beach in the Gulf of Nicoya. There Clipperton, the chief mate, decided to sail off in a captured bark with the master, gunner and twenty of the crew and, more damagingly, all of the ammunition which had been placed there while the *St George* was careening.¹³²

Funnell writes that Clipperton sent a note informing Dampier that he had left the ammunition and some guns on a nearby island. Dampier, in his *Vindication*, claims that Bath, Bellhash and some others of the deserters came back the next day demanding clothes but ‘these I stopt’.¹³³

The *St George*, with, according Dampier, her mutinous crew, cruised the waters off Mexico until they sighted the Acapulco galleon on 6 December 1704. Funnell’s account of the attempt to take this ship is measured and merely states that they argued so long amongst themselves as to how to attack that the initiative was lost and the initially unprepared galleon was able to clear her much heavier guns and beat them off.¹³⁴ Dampier’s barely coherent response blames everyone else for poor seamanship, being ‘drunk and bewitched’ and disobeying his orders. At one point, Dampier claims,

¹³² William Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 69.

¹³³ William Dampier, *Vindication*, 6.

¹³⁴ William Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 84.

he ‘offered to shoot [the helmsman] through the head’ for edging his ship away from the Spaniard.¹³⁵ Welbe confirms that this event took place, though claims that Dampier was, on the contrary, trying to prevent the helmsman from closing with the galleon.¹³⁶ It is quite apparent from all three accounts that there was little discipline, less leadership and much confusion on the *St George* during the action, and that its failure was to lead shortly to a complete collapse of morale among the crew. As Funnell puts it, ‘Thus our design being disappointed, all our Men grew discontented, and were for going Home; knowing we could do no good in these Parts, either for our selves or Owners’.¹³⁷ A major confrontation took place on January 6 when, according to Welbe, Dampier called all hands on deck and asked ‘Who would stay with him to get money? For his Part, he came with that Design, and did not intend to go out of them seas, ‘till he got some’.¹³⁸ Those who wished to stay were to come to the quarter deck and those who wished to go would be given the bark and provisions to go.

Mr Morgan ask’d him, upon what Account was he going? That if he continu’d still upon the account he came out upon, he would not leave him; but otherwise he would not stay; the Captain made Answer, that then he would not resolve him; but that he was going upon the Queen’s account. Mr Morgan answer’d, That was not the Queens but the owner’s. No matter for that (said he) I have a commission.¹³⁹

This account may be too neat a summary of the legal position of Dampier and his crew to be genuine, particularly as it was written nearly three years after the event. Morgan, and this would seem to give support to Dampier’s contention that Morgan was proposed by William Price, one of the owners, asks whether Dampier will still be acting according to his agreement with the owners and Dampier replied that he would be sailing for the Queen since he had her commission. This is both a prevarication and

¹³⁵ William Dampier, *Vindication*, 7.

¹³⁶ Jonathan Welbe, *Answer*, 6.

¹³⁷ William Funnell, *Voyage Round the World*, 84.

¹³⁸ Jonathan Welbe, *Answer*, 7.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

meaningless, as all letters of marque were awarded on the basis that the captains would abide by their contract with the owners.

It is impossible to gauge how truthful Funnel's account is. Clift's deposition confirms that the conversation between Dampier and Morgan took place, but neither Funnel nor Welbe refer to it directly. Williams points out that 'other accounts accuse Clipperton of having taken Dampier's commission with him when he deserted in 1704' which, if true, throws into question what commission Dampier was supposedly waving at his crew.¹⁴⁰

What is agreed is that, on reaching the gulf of Amapalla, 32 members of the crew, (including Morgan and Funnell) left the *St George* and set off across the Pacific in the remaining prize, a 40ft bark. Dampier, with the twenty nine men remaining, cruised for six weeks off the coast of Mexico and Peru, abandoned the *St George* for a more seaworthy bark and then crossed the Pacific, where, according to the bill of complaint, Dampier was imprisoned for piracy by the Dutch authorities in Batavia.¹⁴¹ He arrived back in England some time before June 24th 1707 (the date of his appearance at Windsor).

The Rewards

The published account of the voyage by Funnell, followed by Dampier's *Vindication* and Welbe's *Answer to Captain Dampier's Vindication* offer no substantive account of purchase taken or brought back, but the list of prizes and their cargoes provided by Funnel suggests that it could have been considerable. The *St. George* took twelve prizes, ranging from 40 tons to 550 tons burthen. Even taking into account the fact that Dampier appeared uninterested in the bulk cargoes of the larger ships, taking only that which was useful – food, drink, timber and gunpowder – and leaving otherwise

¹⁴⁰ Williams, *Great South Sea*, 140, footnote 33.

¹⁴¹ B.M.H. Rogers, 'Dampier's voyage of 1703'.

profitable commodities like silk and linen, we can assume that the crew's suspicion that there were undisclosed quantities of bullion and money was probably true. Funnel states that prisoners taken from the largest prize claimed that there was 80,000 dollars (c.£20,000) concealed on board but 'our Captain did not believe this' and other ships were said to be carrying pearls, cochineal and other 'very good commodities'.¹⁴²

Sheltram, one of the crew who went with Morgan, claimed in his deposition that Morgan sold the owners' share of the purchase for £600. The deposition of Ralph Clift claimed that Morgan made about £10,000 for himself out of further sales in Batavia.

The chancery bill reiterates the accusations in the affidavits but adds some detail to the speculation about the amounts and whereabouts of the prize money. It maintains that Dampier and Morgan conspired to dispose of the bulk of the purchase in Batavia and convert it into bills worth upwards of £12,000 payable in Amsterdam. 'One Capt. Hudson, an English Captain in Batavia' also paid £2,000 for some goods.¹⁴³ Morgan informed the owners of his arrival in Holland and remitted '£600 - £700' to the owners by the hand of 'Sir Stephen Evans'. Meanwhile (according to the bill) Dampier left 'several thousand pounds' with the Governor of Batavia.

In his reply to the bill Dampier denies all the accusations, claiming that Morgan, as owners' agent, kept an account of all purchase which Dampier never saw, that Clipperton and some of the crew mutinied and took their share, amounting to about 25 dollars each, 'violently and by force and left [Dampier] what they pleas'd', that a further mutiny led by Morgan and Funnel took most of what was left and that just £700 remained to return to the owners.¹⁴⁴ Dampier makes the curious and unexplained statement that 1500 dollars 'got into the hands of the Indian King' but otherwise

¹⁴² Funnel, *Voyage Round the World*, 32 and 47.

¹⁴³ TNA/C6/390/82 sheet 1.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, sheet 3

maintains he received nothing. While the frustration of the Creswells at the disappearance of their money is understandable it seems most likely that Dampier made little or nothing out of the voyage, since he embarked on another such expedition shortly after his return to England in 1707.

Dampier's reputation remained remarkably undamaged. He was again received at court and 'introduced to His Royal Highness [Prince George] at Windsor, to whom he gave an account of his last Voyage, and was received very favourably'.¹⁴⁵ *The Observer* printed an intriguing dialogue in which two characters ('Observer' and 'Countryman') debate the merits of such South Sea expeditions. Observer reports the voyage's disasters as printed in the *Post Man* and Countryman replies:

I shan't cruise with Capt. Dampier, nor any Body else, at that Rate. But pray, Master, if you can, give me an account of this Cruise, because you have so often recommended this Voyage to the *South Seas*, as an expedition, so very profitable and advantageous to such as may concern themselves therein; and, by this account, I find no Profit at all.¹⁴⁶

Observer proceeds to tell the story of the expedition in a most unflattering light, ending with the one 'memorable fighting story' in which the *St. George* attacked a ship that had been abandoned by all except a monkey who nevertheless fought gamely for some time before finally surrendering to Dampier's ship. This *Observer* account is quite detailed which suggests, since Funnel's book was not to be published for another two months, that a version of events was being widely circulated. Oddly the source may have been Dampier, who mentions and confirms the monkey story in his *Vindication*, appearing to see it as reflecting badly on his crew rather than him.¹⁴⁷

Navigantium Atque Intinerantium provides a reflection on Dampier's part in the voyage which is accurate and just:

¹⁴⁵ *Post Man and Historical Account*, 24 June 1707

¹⁴⁶ *Observer*, 21 June 2007.

¹⁴⁷ William Dampier, *Vindication*, 4.

This was the end of Captain *Dampier's* unfortunate Expedition, who returned naked to his Owners, with a melancholy Relation of his and their Misfortunes, occasioned chiefly by his own odd Temper, which made him so self-sufficient and overbearing, that few or none of his Officers could endure him; and, when once Dissension begins amongst those who have Command, all Success may be justly despaired of. Yet, as there was a Degree of Compassion due to so eminent a man, notwithstanding all his Failings, the Public expressed it, in the strongest Manner possible, to Captain Dampier, on his coming home, even in his Distress; and he was introduced to the Queen, had the Honour to kiss her Hand, and to give her some Account of the Dangers he had run through. The Merchants, however, were so sensible of his Want of Conduct, that they resolved never to trust him more with any Command; and this, with the Poverty brought upon him by his last unlucky Voyage, obliged him to make the Tour of the World once more, in Quality of Pilot, on board the *Duke*, commanded by *Woodes Rogers*.¹⁴⁸

In conclusion it is apparent that the expedition was a failure as far as its investors were concerned but it was not an unmitigated disaster. Firstly it showed that it was possible to raise considerable sums to invest in a privately funded and operated expedition. Secondly that such an operation, which was at that time beyond either the will or the ability of the navy to manage, could be successfully set out, could enter the South Sea and succeed in capturing several valuable prizes. It showed that, with properly prepared ships and better leadership, it was possible for British ships to achieve much in the South Sea – a lesson which was quickly learnt by the managers of the Rogers expedition. That it did not achieve what was hoped may largely be blamed on the deficiencies of its commander and to a lesser extent on the limitations of the ships and their ability to resist marine borers.

¹⁴⁸ Campbell, *Navigantium*, 149.

CHAPTER 3.

THE CRUISING VOYAGE OF WOODES ROGERS (1708-1711)

This chapter aims to show that the Woodes Rogers voyage was exceptional and, as Campbell said 30 years later ‘there never was any Voyage of this nature so happily adjusted, so well provided for in all respects, or in which Accidents, that usually happen in Privateers, were so effectually guarded against’.¹⁴⁹ It was conceived by Bristol merchants, ship owners and shipbuilders, some with dissenting sympathies and carried through with a mercantile zeal for proper procedure and accounting. It brought back a Manila galleon – a feat unequalled before or since – accumulated more prize than any previous such expedition except Drake and it did so without the loss of one of its ships. Its crew losses were also modest in comparison with the other cruising voyages and with those of Drake or Anson. Finally, despite much argument and recourse to law on the part of the owners, officers and crew and despite a very long delay, an equitable distribution of the prize was achieved. The voyage’s impact on the development of the South Sea Company and on contemporary literature is dealt with in chapters 5 and 6.

Origins

The expedition set out from Bristol in August 1708 under the leadership of Woodes Rogers, the ‘Commander-in-Chief’ (the title may have been his own coinage for there is no mention of it in the owners’ orders). Rogers was from a respectable seafaring family hailing from Poole in Dorset. G.E Manwaring, in his introduction to the 1928 edition of *A Cruising Voyage* suggests that Rogers may have been the “worthy friend...Captain Rogers” who had supplied Dampier with an account of the trade winds from the Cape of

¹⁴⁹ John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol. 1, 150.

Good Hope to the Red Sea.¹⁵⁰ The dates make this unlikely (Rogers was twenty at the time Dampier's *Discourse of Trade Winds* was published in 1699) and there were a number of other seafaring Rogers (including Woodes's father, also called Woodes) to whom these comments might have referred.¹⁵¹ Francis Rogers, a major shareholder and ship's husband for the expedition, had business connections with Woodes – Woodes senior had been joint owner with Francis of the “*Delavall* privateer” in 1693 – but there is no evidence that he was a relation.¹⁵² Francis had a brother, Noblett, who acted as the agent for the expedition during its fitting out at Cork and was, as we shall see, the instigator of an anguished correspondence with Francis over Woodes junior's profligate expenditure there. Their father Robert Rogers was also in business in Cork. There is no suggestion in any of the letters of a familial connection to Woodes, nor is any reference to him made in Francis's will of 1711.¹⁵³ Equally Woodes, who was happy to claim kinship to his “Chief Lieutenant” Robert Fry, admits no such connection with Francis.¹⁵⁴

It seems that the Woodes Rogers family prospered in the early years of the century. In December 1702 a lease was granted to ‘Woodes Rogers, of this City, Mariner’ for a ‘substantial mansion’ to be built before Lady Day 1704.¹⁵⁵ This is probably Woodes senior, who died at sea in 1706, two years after its completion and less than a year after Woodes junior had married the daughter of Rear-Admiral Sir William Whetstone. Whetstone was a prominent Bristol merchant and ship owner who had combined business with a successful career in the navy. He commanded the West Indies fleet after the death of Benbow and was the man who ordered Captains Kirby and Wade to be

¹⁵⁰ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), viii.

¹⁵¹ Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 17.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵³ TNA Prob. 11/256, Francis Rogers will.

¹⁵⁴ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 116. ‘Mr Fry...being related to us’.

¹⁵⁵ Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 22.

shot for cowardice on their own quarterdecks. Rogers married Sarah at the moment Whetstone's naval reputation was at its highest – he was promoted to Rear Admiral of the White in 1705 – and it was inevitable that some of his consequence would attach itself to Rogers, who was made freeman of the city of Bristol six weeks after the marriage.¹⁵⁶

We know that Rogers was apprenticed as a mariner to John Yeamans in Bristol on November 30, 1697.¹⁵⁷ Apprentices were considered to be the equivalents of midshipmen in naval service, the difference being that the apprentice was required to pay anything up to £100 to the master for his training and keep. At eighteen Rogers seems to have taken up his apprenticeship rather late but the period of training could last anything from three to seven years, at the end of which time he was qualified to act as master of a ship.¹⁵⁸ A “Wood Rogers” is also listed as “Master of the *Elizabeth* to Newfoundland” in 1700 and it is possible this was his first command following the completion of his apprenticeship.¹⁵⁹ Rogers mentions his experience of the Newfoundland fishery while extolling the great variety of fish to be found at Juan Fernandez:

‘Near the Rocks there are very good Fish of several sorts, particularly large Craw-fish under the Rocks easy to be caught; also cavallies, gropers, and other good Fish in so great plenty any where near the shore, that I never saw the like, but at the best fishing season in *Newfoundland*.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ J. K. Laughton, ‘Whetstone, Sir William (d. 1711)’, rev. Peter Le Fevre, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/29199>, accessed 25 Sept 2012]

¹⁵⁷ Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 19.

¹⁵⁸ Peter Earle, *English Merchant Seamen 1650-1775* (London, 1998), 22.

¹⁵⁹ W.E. Minchington, *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol: Bristol Records Society, XX, 1957), 6.

¹⁶⁰ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 99.

Rogers's book about the voyage never indicates any prior knowledge of the South Sea and its harbours and Dampier is the only senior officer quoted as having been there before. It is inconceivable that the expedition's investors – some of whom were seamen as well as members of the Society of Merchant Venturers - would have left such a perilous and costly expedition in the hands of a seafaring tyro, so we have to assume that Rogers had proved himself a skilful and resourceful mariner, if not a particularly experienced one.

The earliest written references to the voyage are two letters, dated February 21 and March 13 1707. The first is an order to Mr J. Welch from some Bristol merchants to purchase guns in London. He was asked to return with '42 guns throwing about 15lbs, 4 guns throwing about 24lbs weight each, 8 guns about 5lbs to 6lbs wt., 12 guns about two lbs, and four swivel guns(?) for the topps'.¹⁶¹ The second is a contract between "John Batchelor, James Holledge, Thomas Goldney, Christopher Shuter, Francis Rogers and respective commanders" setting out the "obligation of Alexander White to serve in the two ships, called the Duke and the Dutchess, on a certain cruising voyage as Pilate and Linguist". In return White was promised £300 on completion of the voyage. It is interesting to note that the commanders are not named – possibly because they had not yet been confirmed in their posts.¹⁶²

There are questions about both of these pieces of evidence. The first is that the dates are almost certainly 'old style', in which the new year began on 25 March. Most of the correspondence in the archives dated between 1 Jan and 24 March writes the year as, for example, 1707/8, but it is quite possible that these letters have omitted to do so, and

¹⁶¹T NA C104/36 Part 2, Letter to J Welch. Donald Jones has 'carronades for the topps' but this must surely be a misreading, since carronades did not come into use until fifty years later and were heavy guns not suited to employment in the fighting tops. It seems more likely they were swivels guns.

¹⁶² TNA C104/161 Part 1 Roll No.13, Linguister contract.

therefore that their actual date, new style, is 1708. This appears the more likely in that there is no other document relating to the voyage dated before June 1708. A fifteen month gap between these communications and all others seems improbable. It is worth noting that similar communications – the contracts for the two owner’s agents, for example, are dated July 1708 – and it seems unlikely that the linguist would have been employed so long before other officers of equal or greater importance. The second problem is that the order for guns is so completely different from the eventual outcome. In the letter most of the guns ordered are 15 pounders, whereas those actually carried by the *Duke* and *Dutchess* were 6 pounders. It is possible, of course, that Mr Welch was unable to obtain the larger guns, but it is also possible that the writers of the letter were ordering for a number of vessels being fitted out as letters of marque at the time. Nevertheless the very fact that the letter is contained in the chancery documents suggests that the master felt it to be relevant to the case.

If these letters are put aside as of doubtful date, the earliest known reference is to be found in a chancery bill of complaint made by William Dampier against Thomas Batchelor and others in November 1713. This refers to an agreement made between the owners and Dampier on 20 January, 1708 – seven months before the departure - concerning the terms on which he was to sail on the voyage.¹⁶³ The owners’ answer confirms that an agreement was made to employ Dampier as pilot and that the terms were that he should receive 1/16th of the owners’ 2/3rd of the profits.

We do not know who proposed the venture but we do know a little about its beginnings and evolution. Edward Cooke, in his introduction to his book, suggests that Dampier was behind it:

¹⁶³ TNA C10/420/47, *Dampeere vs Batchelor* Nov 8, 1713. The owners’ answer is in TNA C9/225/43. The date given in the complaint for the agreement is 1707 but it is clear from accompanying information that this date is old style.

Capt. *Dampier*, in the Year 1704, was in the *South Sea*, and design'd upon the *Manila* or *Acapulco* Ship, which he met, but she proved too hard for him, and his Voyage unsuccessful. This was a great Discouragement to those who had Money to hazard upon such attempts, in fitting out of ships for the Purpose; but the said Capt. *Dampier* never gave over the Project, 'till he had prevail'd with some able Persons at *Bristol* to venture upon an Undertaking, which might turn to a Prodigious Advantage.¹⁶⁴

There is no evidence in the source material to support this claim by Cooke, and there is circumstantial evidence against Dampier's being involved at an early stage in the proceedings, despite the fact that his agreement with the owners is the earliest that can be dated. The main circumstance throwing doubt on Dampier's leading role in the genesis of the voyage is the fact that he arrived back from his 1703 voyage too late to be involved in the initial planning of this one. The earliest evidence of Dampier's return is the *Post Boy* report, quoted above, of his meeting with Prince George on 22nd June 1707.¹⁶⁵ The agreement to employ Dampier as pilot was made in January 1708 but the same chancery document that records this also sheds some light on the timing of the voyage. The owners, or defendants, had agreed that Dampier should go 'as pilot for them... of two ships or vessels which they should buy and fit out to Newfoundland and the South Seas.....[but] the said parties not meeting with such ships as they thought fit ready built did build two ships for the said voyage at Bristol..which ships were named as in the bill .. the ships not [being] gotten ready for sailing till August [1708]'.¹⁶⁶ This suggests that the *Duke* and *Dutchess* were laid down in January 1708 and completed, according to Cooke, in June.¹⁶⁷ Even if we accept this remarkably quick build (ships of their size normally took about a year to complete), it seems most unlikely that Dampier was the initiator of the plan. It is also apparent that if Dampier

¹⁶⁴ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea*, Preface.

¹⁶⁵ *The Post Man and Historical Account*, June 24-26, 1707.

¹⁶⁶ TNA C9/225/43.

¹⁶⁷ Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, 2.

and the other defendants in the Creswell case were discussing the voyage in August 1707 they were unlikely to have been its initiators.

Another reason to doubt that the idea for the voyage was Dampier's is that he had, as we have seen, launched his previous ventures from London using London finance.

There were, however, some intriguing Bristol connections. Richard Creswell, brother-in-law of Thomas Estcourt, the managing owner of the *St George*, accused Thomas Goldney of conniving with Dampier and others to take out an illegal mortgage against his wife's estate in order to finance the Rogers expedition.¹⁶⁸ Creswell was also a cousin of John Duckinfield, another of the investors in the 1708 voyage.¹⁶⁹ Goldney categorically denied any involvement in the Creswell mortgage, stating that only his own money was used to finance the Rogers expedition.¹⁷⁰ The coincidence of Dampier's and Goldney's names appearing on the Creswell complaint may be just that, a coincidence; it is equally possible that it is the first indication of a developing relationship between these two men that was to result in one being the chief shareholder and the other the 'Pilot of the South Seas' of the Rogers expedition. Certainly Dampier seems to have impressed the expedition's venturers, since their "Orders and Instructions" to Rogers make clear that he was to submit himself 'in the South Seas to the pilotage of Capt. Wm Dampier on whose knowledge in these things we do mainly depend for satisfactory Success'.¹⁷¹ Woodes Rogers's biographer, Bryan Little, suggests that Rogers was the most likely instigator of the voyage, but offers no substantive evidence.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ See below

¹⁶⁹ B.M.H. Rogers, 'Dampier's Voyage of 1703-7', 377.

¹⁷⁰ P.K. Stembridge, *The Goldney Family: A Bristol Merchant Dynasty* (Bristol: Bristol Records Society, 29, 1998).

¹⁷¹ TNA C104/36 part 1.

¹⁷² Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 43.

The elements of the plan, to sail round Cape Horn and attack the lightly defended coast and shipping of Pacific South America, with the voyage culminating in the capture of the Manila galleon, are almost identical to those in Dampier's 1703 proposal, but this is not necessarily confirmation that he was the progenitor of the Rogers expedition.

Rogers had a motive (the losses sustained at the hands of French privateers) but he also had a stimulus. He had obtained an account of a hugely successful French expedition by Gouin de Beauchesne, commander of a French trading venture to the South Seas (1698-1701) and he calculated that French privateers and traders had brought back over the period goods worth £25,000,000 (£2 billion in today's terms).¹⁷³ Others, apart from Dampier's owners, had already been tempted by the prospect of such riches. In August 1706 William Plowman, a merchant trading to Leghorn had put fairly detailed proposal to Sir Charles Hedges, Secretary of State at the time, for an expedition to harry the French in the South Sea and capture the Acapulco galleon, thereby supplying bullion for Anne's depleted coffers. He offered to give the Queen one third of the prize money in return for her supplying two frigates which he undertook to man and provision.¹⁷⁴ This proposal was not acted on, but it is possible that Rogers heard of it and that this energetic young man, with his new family, new house in Queen Square, Bristol and new status as a freeman of the City took up the idea and put a similar plan to his fellow merchants.

Perhaps the strongest case for Rogers's early involvement lies in his close connections with the voyage's investors. Like its predecessors the Rogers expedition was a commercial venture supported by the Crown but funded privately. Unlike its predecessors, which had generally been bankrolled by aristocrats or City of London silversmiths, this voyage's backers were an interesting collection of Bristol grocers,

¹⁷³ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), ix.

¹⁷⁴ TNA SP 34/8 f.45 William Plowman to Hedges

linen drapers, ship owners and slavers. Between them they invested more in the preparations for the voyage than had been spent on any previous such venture. Furthermore they were to entrust their fortunes to a comparatively inexperienced commander, the 29 year-old Woodes Rogers. Rogers had every reason, in his dedication to his book to 'take an opportunity of expressing my Gratitude to you, who had the Courage to adventure your Estates on an Undertaking, which to Men less discerning seem'd impracticable'.¹⁷⁵ The normal practice at the time was to dedicate books to someone of rank such as the Earl of Oxford, the dedicatee of Edward Cooke's *A Voyage to the South Sea*.

There were about 20 venturers in all. The number and names of the investors is difficult to pin down. Rogers himself dedicates his book to sixteen, 'Worthy Gentlemen, my surviving Owners', but he leaves out Thomas Clement and John Batchelor (who had died that year), as well as Dr Thomas Dover and Stephen Courtney, perhaps because they were both on the voyage, but possibly because the acrimony with which the voyage ended led him to believe he had no reason to thank them. Edward Cooke, in the introduction to his book, names nineteen original investors, including Captain Courtney and a Mr Webb. He adds 'and since our setting out, Mr Palmer, a Merchant, Mr Acton, a Goldsmith and some other London gentlemen'.¹⁷⁶ The significance of these late additions will become apparent. B.M.H Rogers lists 15 (see APPENDIX II) and David Starkey, 17 owners and their shareholdings.¹⁷⁷ There are, however, only seven owners of the *Duke* and *Dutchess* named in their letter of marque commissions.

From this uneasy mix of information it is possible to draw some conclusions. First, it is quite clear that there was a comparatively small core of managing owners. The letter of

¹⁷⁵ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, dedication.

¹⁷⁶ Edward Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, preface.

¹⁷⁷ David J. Starkey, *British Privateering*, 67.

marque declarations for the *Duke* and *Dutchess* are dated 26 April, 1708 and list John Batchelor, Christopher Shuter, James Holledge, Thomas Goldney, Sir John Hawkins, John Romsey and Thomas Clement as owners.¹⁷⁸ Contracts, orders and instructions for the voyage were all signed by a smaller group of John Batchelor, Thomas Goldney, James Holledge, Christopher Shuter and Francis Rogers. Second, all the original investors were from Bristol and had close connections with the Society of Merchant Venturers and the Corporation of Bristol. John Batchelor, as Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers, was the acknowledged leader to whom all correspondence was addressed and for whom the prize ship was renamed; Goldney was the chief contributor of funds and Francis Rogers was “ship’s husband” responsible for fitting out the *Duke* and *Dutchess*. Sir John Hawkins, despite the salty connections of his name, was a brewer and Thomas Clement was a sheriff and the shipbuilder who supplied the hull of the *Duke*.¹⁷⁹ James Holledge was mayor in 1708, Christopher Shuter in 1711, Philip Freake was sheriff in 1708 and John Romsey was town clerk.¹⁸⁰ Public office was not the only thing that linked these men. There were also strong family links. Francis Rogers had been a witness at Goldney’s wedding, John Corsely and Richard Hawksworth, both investors in the voyage, were brothers-in-law and Francis Rogers’s “good friend” Christopher Shuter was executor of his will.¹⁸¹ Hawksworth was also a kinsman of Thomas Goldney.¹⁸² Bristol mercantile society was a network of such close familial and business connections, and it is not surprising to see this exemplified in the expedition’s chief investors.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ TNA HCA 25/20, *Duke*.

¹⁷⁹ TNA C104/36 Part 1, *Duke & Dutchess* Lib ‘B’.

¹⁸⁰ Jones, ‘Woodes Rogers’ Voyage Round the World,’ 5.

¹⁸¹ TNA Prob. 11/546.

¹⁸² Stembridge, ‘Goldney Family’, 14.

¹⁸³ A picture of the religious and political pressures acting on Bristol mercantile society at this time may be found in Jonathan Barry, ed., ‘The Society for the Reformation of Manners’ in Jonathan Barry and

The largest shareholder, Thomas Goldney, had rather different credentials to most of the other investors. It is therefore all the more surprising that he should be the major shareholder. There is evidence to suggest that the origins of Goldney's interest in the voyage were quite unlike those of his fellow merchants, and that the losses he was trying to recoup were nothing directly to do with the Atlantic trade.

Goldney, like Hawksworth, was a Quaker. It seems that the radical precepts of equality, simplicity, individualism and pacifism, which lie at the core of Quaker belief were not uniformly adhered to in the early days of the Society of Friends. While we might not go so far as the compiler of a web account entitled: 'The Quaker Gouldney Family – A Brief Survey showing over 100 years of Capital Accumulation based on Colonial Plantations, Slavery and War' it is clear that both father and son took a relaxed view of the rules.¹⁸⁴ Goldney senior probably profited from slavery, Thomas Champion, another Bristol Quaker certainly did, and Goldney junior, as we have seen, invested heavily in a privateering voyage. This apparent backsliding from the tenets of Quakerism did not go unnoticed, however. The Society of Friends Bristol Men's Monthly Meeting discussed the issue of Goldney's involvement in 'a voyage carrying commission to fight and force' and deputed two Friends to 'inform themselves more thoroughly'.¹⁸⁵ In the meantime the Men's Meeting censured him 'though not the only Quaker taking part'. This may have been a reference to Richard Hawksworth, another of the investors, whose marriage to Elizabeth Corsley was recorded in the minute book of the Bristol Quaker Men's meeting on July 4, 1707.¹⁸⁶ The two deputed Friends reported back in October 1708 (by which time Woodes Rogers was at the Cape Verde islands on his way

Kenneth Morgan, eds., *Reformation and Revival in Eighteenth Century Bristol*, (Bristol Records Society, 1994).

¹⁸⁴ R Stephen, 'Living Easton',

<www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/~rstephen/livingeaston/localhistory/gouldney.html>.

¹⁸⁵ Stembridge, 'Goldney Family', 14.

¹⁸⁶ Bristol Records Office SF/A1/4, 81.

to the South Seas) that ‘no friends or their sons were involved, with the exception of TG who is now in prison’. This last rather startling development was indeed true. Goldney was imprisoned for an alleged debt of £9,500 in August 1708, just as the *Duke* and *Dutchess* were sailing down the Bristol Channel. He was not to be released until July 1710.¹⁸⁷

What was Goldney doing in prison and how did he manage to run up such an enormous debt? He gives all the appearance of having been a prosperous, successful businessman more used to lending money than borrowing it. The persecution of Quakers (and dissenters generally) under Cromwell, Charles II and James II was much diminished under William and Anne, and Goldney was becoming a prominent member of the city’s establishment. He was made a freeman in 1688, inherited his father’s business and town houses in 1695 and a considerable fortune from his father-in-law in 1703.¹⁸⁸ We know he had interests in shipping (even though, as a Quaker, he was still not permitted to join the Society of Merchant Venturers) and was involved in the Grand Banks fishing trade.¹⁸⁹

Goldney’s 36 shares in the Rogers expedition amounted to an investment of £3,726 (see APPENDIX II) and this was no doubt a drain on resources, particularly since the venture was so speculative and unlikely to see a return for several years. But this was less than half of his alleged debt. Where did the rest come from? Enter Carleton Vanbrugh, a young London merchant, who was to be owner’s agent on the voyage and, increasingly, a thorn in the side of the Commander-in-Chief.

¹⁸⁷ Stembridge, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ His election as freeman may have been more to do with the general relaxation of restrictions on non-conformists introduced following the accession of William and Mary than to any personal achievement.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

Carleton was the eighth child of Giles Vanbrugh, a successful Cheshire sugar merchant.¹⁹⁰ Soaring above his eleven siblings was the eldest son, Sir John Vanbrugh, the writer of two of the greatest restoration comedies and architect of Blenheim Palace, the Southwell family house at King's Weston (just outside Bristol) and Castle Howard. Carleton, on the other hand, seems on the slight evidence available, to have been a black sheep. He first appears on the scene in 1707 as 'a London merchant' trading to Holland and Denmark, possibly in partnership with Goldney and John Sansom, the collector of customs for the port of Bristol.¹⁹¹ Sansom was married to the daughter of the town clerk - and investor in the Rogers expedition - John Romsey. Sansom, according to John Latimer, had fallen out with his father-in-law in 1703, and became involved in a notorious and much publicised scandal:

The [Bristol] Council complained to the Government for 'notorious violations of her Majesty's peace upon private persons, indecently contemning the authority of the magistrates by words and writing and executing a challenge to a principal officer of the city [i.e. Romsey]...' The Quarter Session Grand Jury made a 'presentment' accusing Sansom of 'endeavouring the ruin' of the trade of the city by imposing illegal oaths.¹⁹²

In 1706 Romsey was imprisoned in Newgate 'at the suit and eager prosecution of his daughter and Sansom'.¹⁹³

Goldney had for some time been acting as Sansom's agent in the transfer of customs revenue from Bristol to London. Shortly after the events described above Sansom absconded leaving debts of, according to Latimer, £30,357, some of which were laid at Vanbrugh's door. Vanbrugh then 'caused several of Goldney's bills to be protested,

¹⁹⁰ Bryan Mawer, <www.mawer.clara.net>.

¹⁹¹ TNA SP 44/390,p364, passes issued to CV for Holland; Stembridge, 'Goldney Family', 14.

¹⁹² John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, 1893).

¹⁹³ Ibid.

amounting to £8,000'.¹⁹⁴ Soon after this Vanbrugh was declared bankrupt. Quite where Vanbrugh's money had gone is not clear, but his indigent state does seem the more remarkable given that he had, only a year before, been the sole beneficiary of an estate in Cheshire which included a manor with 'property in Shrewsbury and elsewhere'.¹⁹⁵ He did not invest in the Rogers expedition. John Goddard, who had stood surety for Sansom, then sued Goldney for the debt, thus precipitating his imprisonment.¹⁹⁶ On the face of it Goldney seems to have become the scapegoat for a series of failed investments by Vanbrugh and Sansom, which eventually toppled him as guarantor.

Goldney went off to join his neighbour, Romsey, in Newgate and seems to have borne Vanbrugh no grudge, for he paid various legal charges for him while he was in prison and Vanbrugh was at sea.¹⁹⁷ It is also probable that he was instrumental in obtaining for Vanbrugh the post of owners' agent for the *Duke*, a job with the double value of providing paid employment at the same time as it removed him from the clutches of his creditors. It did Vanbrugh no good. He fell out with most of the officers, but particularly with Rogers who had him removed from the expedition's ruling council. He died in Cape Town on the way back, complaining that he had been 'most inhumanly dealt with' and accusing Rogers of being a 'most villainous Defamator'.¹⁹⁸ He left what appears to be an unpaid bill for one periwig, made in Batavia, and some bottles of beer.

¹⁹⁹ His share of the voyage's proceeds (£324) was eventually credited to Goldney; it seems likely that Vanbrugh was made an offer by his creditor that he couldn't refuse

¹⁹⁴ Stembridge, 'Goldney Family', 14.

¹⁹⁵ Allingham Collection, 112/5/1.

¹⁹⁶ Stembridge, 'Goldney Family', 15.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ TNA C104/160 Letter: Vanbrugh to Goldney.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. A small piece of paper: 'For the Att. Capt Rogers' – will – Carleton Vanbrugh. To a periwig £35 – 4 doz of beer £16.

and embarked on the voyage with the chief purpose of paying off his debt to Goldney.²⁰⁰

Preparations

A total of 256 shares at £103-10/- each was issued by the managing owners.

B.M.H.Rogers lists the allocation of all but eleven of these shares (APPENDIX II), so while it is clear that there were other investors, the total nominal investment appears to have been , by extrapolation, £25,357-10/-.²⁰¹ Although it is not possible to compare this directly with those of the other voyages it is clear that this was by far the greatest initial investment of any equivalent cruising voyage up to that time. What is less clear is whether all the investment was available to the managers from the beginning.

Building, fitting out and provisioning the ships cost £13,188.²⁰² Woodes Rogers, Cooke and the Owner's Proposals all give different accounts of the tonnage and number of guns in each ship. The *Duke*, for example, is described as being of 'about' 350 Tons burthen (Owners' Proposals), 320 Tons, (by Woodes Rogers) and 300 tons (by Cooke).²⁰³ She carried either 36, 32 or 30 guns. These are not mistakes so much as different estimates of imprecise measures. Burthen tonnage was based on an estimate of cargo capacity – a calculation made harder by the fact that the ships were built as men-of-war rather than traders – and the number of guns was complicated by the fact that there were extra guns stowed below for use as armament for prizes. I have found no drawings or descriptions of the ships. Later illustrations and engravings in, for example, Cavendish Drake's *Voyages and Travels*, show the *Duke* as a two-decked ship looking much like a cut down version of a late seventeenth century ship-of-the-line, and the *Dutchess* as a single-decked galley. It seems possible that the ships were built on

²⁰⁰ TNA 104/36 part 2.

²⁰¹ B.M.H Rogers, 'Woodes Rogers's Privateering Voyage'.

²⁰² TNA C104/36 Part 2, Noblett Rogers Account Book

²⁰³ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 2; Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, 1.

the lines of the famous Bristol runners, which, as has been noted, were designed for speed and much admired by the Navy's shipbuilders at the time. Captain Richard Edwards, Commissioner at Plymouth, wrote to the Navy Board commending these fast, seaworthy ships as being superior to the Navy's own sixth-rates:

25th May 1712

I humbly desire the Navy Board will make inquiry to what an extravagant length the masts and yards of merchant ships built for runners are enlarged. As, for example, several runners of Bristol, of about 28 guns, and breadth of about 28 and 29 ½ feet, having longer topmasts and square yards than Her Majesty's ships of 40 guns, which are 33 feet broad; ...and as [during] the last war the merchants at Bristol lost the greatest part of their ships that sailed without convoy, so, since this improvement, they have had better success.²⁰⁴

The *Duke's* guns were almost certainly arranged in two tiers; we know that the bottom tier had rowing ports, as Rogers mentions using oars and 'rowing and towing' on a number of occasions. She is, however, described not as a galley but as a frigate, a term that was used somewhat indiscriminately at this time to describe ships with one or two gun decks and anything between 20 and 50 guns. Both ships would almost certainly have been steered using a whipstaff rather than a wheel, with a consequent constraint on their manoeuvrability.²⁰⁵

The 'outsetts' (as the costs were described) on the *Duke* and *Dutchess* as recorded in accounts of Robert and Noblett Rogers, make interesting reading. The hull of the *Duke*, built by Thomas Clement, one of the investors, cost £1310.²⁰⁶ A George Packer was paid £850 for the hull of the *Dutchess*.

²⁰⁴ R.D.Merriman (ed.), *Queen Anne's Navy* (Navy Records Society, London, 1961).

²⁰⁵ John Harland, 'The Whipstaff', *Mariner's Mirror*, 97:1(2011), 107-126. Harland suggests that the whipstaff may not have been as great a constraint to a ship's manoeuvrability as previously believed.

²⁰⁶ Clement was an experienced warship builder and was commissioned by the Navy to build the 60 gun *Gloucester*, captured by Duguay Trouin in 1709; Powell, *Bristol Privateers*, xvii.

Duke costs:

Hull	£1310
Cordage	£961
Sailmaker	£104
Beef etc.	£105
Gunsmith	£110
Blockmaker	£110
Biskett	£52
Cooper	£15
Tobacco & Pipes	£16
Bedding	£55
Nails	£66
Gunner's Stores	£278
Guns	£454
Canvas and cloths	£656

There were other sums for 'Dr Dover's physick' (£107) and the Apothecary (£63); a 'first note of disbursement' of £326 to Woodes Rogers; the account also includes £569 'to Noblett Rogers in Ireland' and £1340 to Robert and Noblett Rogers.²⁰⁷ It is not entirely clear whether these sums were part of the initial fitting-out costs in Bristol or

²⁰⁷ TNA C104/36 Part 1, *Duke and Dutchess Lib. B*

whether they formed part of the extra cost of £2027-02-6 1/2 incurred by both ships refitting in Ireland.²⁰⁸ The total costs incurred were £8,198 for the *Duke* and £4,990 for the *Dutchess*, making a combined total for outsets of £13,188. It is clear from other accounts that these sums were not borne entirely by the Rogers brothers, who, as ships husbands were acting on behalf of the owners. It is apparent from the statement of account made by Thomas Goldney to the chancery master that the outset costs were borne in proportion to shareholding. Goldney's share of the outsets was £1,854 12s 11d.²⁰⁹

The size of Rogers's and Courtney's expenses in Ireland were to be a bone of contention among the owners, though it is difficult not to side with Rogers when he describes the necessity of repairing the considerable deficiencies in sailing qualities and crew that had become apparent on their journey down the Bristol Channel:

Our Ship and the *Dutchess* did not sail so well as the major part of the Gallies, our Masts and Rigging being all unfit for the Sea, our Ships out of trim, and every thing in disorder, being very indifferently mann'd; notwithstanding our Number, we had not 20 Sailors in the Ship, and it's very little better on board the *Dutchess*.²¹⁰

Things improved greatly once they arrived in Cork where Rogers effected radical changes to the *Duke's* trim, dispensed with some of the crew, 'being ordinary Fellows and not fit for our Employment', and replaced them with better men recruited by Noblett Rogers.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ TNA C104/160 Invoice from Francis and Noblett Rogers

²⁰⁹ TNA C104/36 Part 2, Master's report p.14.

²¹⁰ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 2.

²¹¹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 3.

What was a boon to the expedition's commanders was seen in a very different light by the shareholders. Francis Rogers wrote to Thomas Batchelor about the enormous extra expense incurred by Woodes Rogers as he took on more crew and extra gear at Cork:

3rd September 1708

“We are now to advise you that with the greatest difficulty that we met with in any affairs, we at last got the Duke and Duchess in a readiness to Saile the 1st Instant... God send them well, and that they may be Successfull to Answer the Vast expence they have beene for you ...a Summe we doubt not but will be as surprizing to you as it was dayly uneasy to us to Expend Soe much which could not be avoided, and would have swelled vastly more, if we had not refused many things to both Captns. that they said was necessary... we cannot Express by our pens the fateagues and trouble we have had in this affaire.”²¹²

Francis Rogers lays the blame for all this trouble firmly on Woodes Rogers:

“Capt. Rogers Mnagmt. made ye Matters worse. It would be endless to relate what has hapened... I hope there will be more regularity and a better harmony between ym when they gett into deep Water.”

It seem possible, given the enormous initial investment, that Francis Rogers was being unduly parsimonious. The figure of £13,188 accepted by the master in chancery as the total outsets included the extra costs incurred in Ireland. If we accept that the total invested was at least £25,357 it is difficult to see why the managing owners were so concerned about the costs when they had £12,000 in the bank. Yet it is clear from the following letter (not previously published) from Francis Rogers to Batchelor dated 10 September, 1708 that they were.

The Misfortune of Mr Goldney flew quickly hither however from a Letter he wrote on the 26th past I was in hopes the Storm would in a great measure have blown Over So that what you write now is the more Surprising: the misfortunes of Mr Goldney will increase our burthen unless other partners, now they are sailed and compleatly Mann'd, Ingadge therein. For my own part I should be much easier (induced?) to it now than before – we have now put our Hands to

²¹² TNA C104/160 Francis Rogers to Thomas Batchelor

the Plow there's no looking back – I hope all the loss they can sustain by this extent will be the repayment of the money Mr Goldney has paid inn and the burthen of taking his part amongst us. It will be the height of injustice to expect the (wholes?) he subscribed for without making good his deficiency. For my part its I confess out of my sphere... Though since you have the Mannagment of all I doubt not your accustomed care in extricating us as much as possible out of this Labirinth.²¹³

The misfortune referred to is presumably Goldney's imprisonment for debt. Francis Rogers seems to be suggesting a possible way out of the difficulties encountered by the shareholders, and particularly Goldney, by the extra expense incurred in Ireland. They could take on more shareholders now the voyage was underway and use their investment to cover the extra costs and pay off Goldney thus getting him out of gaol. He further argues that if this were done it would be unfair on Goldney if by paying off the debt he was deprived of his share in the venture. New investors would also ensure that Noblett, Robert and Francis Rogers had their bills paid in full. Here, too, is confirmation of Edward Cooke's assertion that further investors were enrolled after the voyage had started. The letter does not, of course, answer the question over the disparity between the sum invested and what was spent. There are two possible answers. The first is that more money was spent than is apparent from the accounts presented to the master. This seems most unlikely as it was obviously in the interests of the investors to declare all costs, since they were paid out of the general prize fund before division into owner and crew shares. The second possibility is that the shareholders may not initially have paid full value for the shares they purchased (i.e. they were, in modern parlance, buying forward) and may have found themselves unable to do so when called upon unexpectedly. It is certainly possible that this was the case with Goldney and Romsey, both of whom were in financial straits by 1708.

²¹³ TNA C104/160 Francis Rogers to Thomas Batchelor.

There does not appear to have been any provision for purchasing food, drink and goods en voyage, although there are a number of references in Rogers's account to the buying of fresh food and supplies of wine and spirits. It is possible that funds for this came from the 'disbursement' of £326 mentioned above, supplied to Rogers before the start of the voyage. Because the voyage had been provisioned for eighteen months and lasted over three years, it was inevitable that food would run out, but this was largely replaced by captured supplies.

The Constitution

Bristol merchants, unlike, perhaps, their more gentlemanly London rivals, valued precise accounting and tried to manage the Woodes Rogers voyage in a way that would ensure an accurate valuation of the prize. These owners, conscious, by the time of setting out, of the failure of Dampier's 'last unfortunate Voyage Round the World' set down a constitution, a set of orders for the captains and agents, and an 'Agreement between the owners and the men'.²¹⁴ This in itself was no different to Dampier's expedition.²¹⁵ The difference was that in Dampier's case the constitution and orders were largely abandoned, while those for the Woodes Rogers expedition were, until near the end of the voyage, meticulously observed. There is a charming flourish in the final paragraph of the constitution that urges the two ships to work together, and 'in everything behave yourselves one towards another as a kind Duke regarding his beloved Dutchess'.²¹⁶

The agreement began life as a handbill dated July 1st 1708 which announced the setting out of the *Duke* and *Dutchess* and stated 'The following Proposals are made by the Owners, to all such seamen and Landmen as shall Enter themselves and Serve on board

²¹⁴ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea*, Introduction.

²¹⁵ See previous chapter and TNA C6/390/82 sheet 1.

²¹⁶ A copy of the constitution is included in Cooke's introduction to his book.

the said Ships'.²¹⁷ These proposals set down the arrangements for the division of purchase and the payment of wages and are reprinted in APPENDIX I. It is on these, and the published list of shares (APPENDIX III) to be awarded to each rank of officer and seaman, that the chancery master was to fall back when dealing with the several disputes over the distribution of the prize.

The owners of the Rogers expedition, in a spirit more mercantile than adventurous, wrote a constitution for the conduct of the voyage that they hoped would prevent the abuses that had beset Dampier's expedition. The Constitution, signed by the five 'Owners and appointed Directors of the Ships *Duke* and *Dutchess*', named the membership of councils for each ship which would be required to:

Conjunctly, at the Summons of the Captains, Rogers, Dover and Courtney, or any two of them, to come on Board either ship, and be the Council referr'd to in our general Orders, to determine all matters and Things whatsoever, that may arise, or be necessary for the general Good during the whole Voyage.²¹⁸

The Council was required to meet regularly and to consult and debate 'all Attempts, Attacks, and Designs upon the enemy, either by Sea or Land'. It would also act as a disciplinary court of appeal. Everything was to be decided by vote and, in one of the most questionable aspects of the constitution, 'in Case of an Equality, Capt. Dover is to have the double Voice, as president of the Council, and we do accordingly order him to be President'.

It is clear from the terms of the Constitution that the owners were hoping to ensure that no one person would be able to take autocratic control of the voyage, and there is certainly a suggestion that they felt unable to trust the young and inexperienced Woodes Rogers with absolute command. In fact the only distinction that is awarded him is the

²¹⁷ TNA, C104/160, Owners' Proposals.

²¹⁸ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea*, Introduction.

ambiguous title ‘Commander’ in contradistinction to that of ‘Captain’ conferred on Dover and Courtney. Dover, a Bristol physician who did ‘gratuitous’ service at the orphanage run by the Bristol Guardians, was second captain of the *Duke* and captain of marines.²¹⁹ Both these titles were largely honorific since he had little experience of the sea and none of fighting on land. He may have been made President of the Council because, as a major shareholder, he could be expected to act in the owners’ interest, though this expectation was diminished somewhat by the fact that Dover was also due a substantial crew share. As it transpired he was adept at running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. Williams remarks that ‘the link between financial outlay and executive power was one of several features of the muddled command structure that led to increasing problems as the ships reached the South Sea and enemy waters’.²²⁰ As Rogers commented in the Introduction to *A Cruising Voyage*:

There was no sufficient Power lodg’d in any one hand to determine Differences amongst our chief Officers; which was a great Omission, and might have prov’d of dangerous Consequence, because of the Divisions which happen’d among us.²²¹

Despite these odd provisions in the constitution it was zealously operated by Rogers and the other captains. In his Introduction to *A Cruising Voyage* Rogers manages to convey the earnest adherence to the letter of the Constitution at the same time as hinting at its weaknesses:

We held frequent Councils to make such Agreements as Occasion required, that the Officers who signed them might see them put in execution; for without this method we could never have performed the voyage, nor kept together. As the first Command lay on me, I had also the care and trouble to propose and draw up almost every Resolution and Agreement; which if they be not exactly according to Form, I hope will be readily excus’d, being such as the Necessity of our

²¹⁹ L.A.G Strong, *Dr. Quicksilver 1660-1742: The Life and Times of Thomas Dover M.D.* (London, 1955), 72.

²²⁰ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 145.

²²¹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), xix.

Affairs oblig'd us to make from time to time, and the Law being none of my study, I was oblig'd to do the best I could in this case, where all must be Voluntary; for we had no power of compulsion, nor any other rule to direct us but our Owners' Instructions, which it was impossible to accommodate to all Emergencies in an undertaking of this nature and at so great a Distance.²²²

The Voyage

After the refit the *Duke* and *Dutchess* sailed from Cork on September 1, overloaded with men and stores: 'Our holds are full of provisions; our Cables, a great deal of Bread, and Water-Casks between Decks; and 183 Men aboard the *Duke*, with 151 aboard the *Dutchess*; so that we are very much crowded and pester'd ships, not fit to engage an Enemy without throwing Provisions and Stores overboard'.²²³ There were 35 officers aboard the *Duke*, 'above double the number...usual in Privateers...to prevent Mutinies, which often happen in long Voyages, and that we might have a large Provision...in case of Mortality'.²²⁴ If we assume that the *Duke*'s dimensions were as described above it is reasonable to estimate that the crew area would be about 30 feet square – that is, one third of the lower deck space. This would give room for around 75 hammocks. Even assuming that half the crew would be on watch at any one time, conditions for the 150 men would be unimaginably cramped. The officers, also, were competing for cabin space designed for fewer than half their number. The crew were to suffer these crowded conditions until the ships had rounded the Horn and started to take prizes six months later. It is a tribute to Rogers's management and leadership that they suffered no damaging revolt or serious illness for the whole of that period.

On September 11 a ship flying Swedish colours was stopped and searched, but Rogers was unable to find any evidence that the ship was carrying contraband or had broken her

²²² Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), xviii.

²²³ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 7.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

neutrality and so released her. He returned to the *Duke* to be confronted by a full-scale mutiny led by the boatswain, Giles Cash. Rogers acted quickly and with remarkable effect. He called the ten ringleaders – ‘not one a foreigner’ as he acidly pointed out, to come onto the quarterdeck and explain their grievance. Thus separated from their supporters Rogers and his fellow officers grabbed them and put them in irons. The rest of the mutineers were punished & discharged. Some begged for pardon and others, as Rogers records ‘I was forced to wink at’.²²⁵ His resolute action calmed things temporarily but the atmosphere on board both ships remained uneasy and Rogers spent some time trying to convince the crew that there was no secret deal between him and the captain of the Swedish ship and no point in taking her to a neutral port to be searched.

Three days later Giles Cash, who was still in irons, began to name his accomplices. At this point ‘a Sailor came aft to the Steeridge Door with near half the Ship’s Company of Sailors following him, and demanded the Boatswain out of Irons’. Rogers calmly suggested to the leader that they could discuss the matter more easily on the quarterdeck. It is difficult to believe this transparent trick should work twice in three days, but the hapless seaman obediently climbed to the quarterdeck where he was promptly seized by the officers on deck and tied to the jeers ready for punishment. Rogers then walked to the gangway and ordered one of the disheartened gaggle of seamen in the waist to come forward. He was offered a choice. He could join his mate in irons and be whipped, or he could escape punishment by administering the whipping himself. He chose the latter. This nicely calculated humiliation was accompanied by ‘different correction to other offenders [which] allayed the tumult; so that now they begin to submit quietly and those in irons beg pardon and promise amendment’.²²⁶

Cash, the most senior and serious offender, was transferred, still in irons, to the Swedish

²²⁵ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 10.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

ship now sailing for Madeira. It would be hard to match this demonstration by a ship's commander of such quick thinking, determined action and reasoned persuasion. In his introduction to his book Rogers complains of the limited sanctions available to a privateer captain in comparison to those available to naval commanders, with the consequence that discipline was 'always very difficult in Privateers'.²²⁷ In fact, it is quite apparent that actions such as the above gained him such a reputation with the crew that the potentially dangerous mutiny (see below) planned when the ships were in the South Sea was largely driven by the sailor's fear that Rogers was to be replaced as commander of the voyage by Courtney. Rogers's more serious problem was, as will be seen, with his officers.

The voyage continued into the south Atlantic in orderly fashion. A small prize was taken and sent in to Tenerife, where, after a brief but heated correspondence the Governor agreed to ransom the ship and release Carleton Vanbrugh, who, much to Rogers's annoyance, had insisted on going ashore with the prize. Committees were held, and the 'fresh water sailors' were ducked on crossing the tropic line. The ships stopped at the Cape Verde Islands to take on fresh fruit, vegetables and water but in the process lost one of their linguists who decided to desert. The crew had to be prevented from exchanging their clothes for 'trifles'.

It was at this point that the issue of plunder was raised. The two agents, Carleton Vanbrugh and William Bath, were given strict instructions on their duties in the documents issued, as we have seen, on July 14, 1708. They were to 'keep exact and just Accompts of all transactions in the Ship ..., relating to Prizes or Purchase, in Books provided on purpose for that use.' They were to board any prize 'in the first Boat, as near you can, to take an account of the Prisoners, or by your own, and your Men's

²²⁷ Ibid, 11.

observation, what Goods, Merchandize, or Treasure, the Capture does consist of...’.

Finally:

In every Thing you are to act on the Owner’s behalf, that you may be able to give an exact Accompt of all Particulars coming under your Cognizance, as above; which, together with prudent Conduct towards the Officers and Men, will be the greatest Satisfaction to us at your Return, that you have faithfully discharg’d your Trust.²²⁸

One thing that was not specifically mentioned in the agents’ orders was plunder. The term plunder, as distinct from ‘purchase’, applied to the personal belongings, including jewellery, of the crew of a captured enemy which was, by tradition, shared amongst the crew of the victorious ship. It was not a tradition that went unchallenged by owners, as David J. Starkey points out:

The embezzlement of prize goods was invariably outlawed though in some ventures petty or private plunder was allowed, with each crew member being given the right to relieve an opponent ‘of the same degree or station of his wearing apparel, buckles, watches, bedding & plate’.²²⁹

The agents’ orders do not mention plunder, but they do stipulate that ‘all Gold, Silver Pearl or such valuable Goods of small Bulk’, be put under lock and key by the agent, thus depriving the crew of their perk. Rogers realised that while the mutiny over the first prize had been successfully suppressed, one of the crew’s complaints had legitimacy and needed to be resolved:

For Disputes about Plunder is the common occasion of Privateers Quarrelling amongst themselves, and ruining their Voyages. Sailors usually exceed all Measures when left to themselves and account it a privilege in Privateers to do themselves justice on these Occasions, tho’ in everything else I must own, they have been more obedient than any Ship’s Crews engag’d in the like Undertaking that ever I heard of.²³⁰

A committee meeting was held on October 4th 1708:

²²⁸ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea*, Introduction.

²²⁹ David J. Starkey, *British Privateering*, 71.

²³⁰ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 173.

To prevent Embezlements in Prizes, and to hinder Feuds and Disorders amongst our Officers and Men for the future, because the small prize had shew'd us, that without a Method to be strictly observ'd in Plunder, it might occasion the worst of Consequences to both ships, and such Quarrels as would not easily be laid. So with the Consent and Approbation of the Officers appointed for a Committee, we unanimously agreed on it, to prevent those Mutinies and Disorders amongst Men of both Ships, who were not yet reconcil'd since the taking of the small *Canary*-prize. They all insisted there was never any Privateer's crew hinder'd from Plunder, so that we were forc'd to agree on the following Instrument of a Dividend when we should meet any Prize.²³¹

It is quite apparent that Rogers was uneasy about this major modification to the owners' terms of agreement with the crew, and he spends some time in his book (published before the master in chancery had made any decision on the share of purchase) justifying the decision and explaining that, in making the new 'Instrument of a Dividend' 'We had a particular Regard, however, to the Sentiments of the Owners, deliver'd on this head in Discourses at several times with divers of the Committee, as myself, Capt. Dover, Capt. Courtney, Mr. Robert Frye, and Mr. Carleton Vanbrugh; and particularly in Kingroad to the Men, at the time of signing their Instrument'.²³² It was obviously important that Dover, in his capacity as a major shareholder, and Vanbrugh, owners' agent on the *Duke*, agreed the changes.

The 'Instrument' signed by the crew was thus hedged about with conditions designed to placate the owners. The judgement of what was plunder would be made by senior officers and the agents, and the agents would keep a book detailing all plunder and its distribution. These changes, which were challenged by the owners but largely accepted by the master in chancery, did have significant impact on the final distribution, partly because the agents' books of plunder are incomplete or non-existent, but mainly because some of the plunder was distributed during the voyage and thereafter became

²³¹ Ibid., 21.

²³² Ibid.

unaccountable. A later committee order suggests that much of it was being redistributed round the crew by means of gambling.²³³

Another flaw in the articles was that they depended for their acceptance on the quality of the agents, and in this the owners seem to have either shown poor judgement or been very unlucky. It has already been said that Vanbrugh's selection was connected to the tangled business dealings of Thomas Goldney, but he quickly upset almost everyone, and the Council formally reprimanded him on three separate occasions. He was replaced as agent on the *Duke* by William Bath, who conducted himself 'very idle and sottish' and by February 1709 Vanbrugh was back in the *Duke*.²³⁴ Relations with Rogers did not improve, however, and Vanbrugh's attempts to carry out his duties were, as this note implies, often rebuffed.

You will order me an account of the distribution and value or assessment of the plunder at Gorgona also what gold chains, stone and plain rings and other gold and plate remains yet undistributed and in whose possession they are – unless you think its no concern of mine or the owners to know.²³⁵

A diary entry written after Vanbrugh had been badly burnt during the failed attack on the *Bigonia* gives full vent to his frustration:

8th Aug. 1710.

Capt. WR absolutely refused me the opening or being present, while Mr White and he perused the letters brought by myself on board from Navarro's bark [This was the *Havre de Grace*, taken eighteen months before and now called the *Marquis*] or giving me the possession then, or at any other times, when he could prevent it, of any letters, papers etc or papers of business contracted with prisoners or acc't when he gave away negroes etc so that he must answer for his agent CV, for he ever acted himself and never suffer'd me to act free, as an owners agent, who had received his instructions from them – the others of the committee, never protected or countenanced me, but suffer'd him, the whole

²³³ Ibid., 207.

²³⁴ B.M.H. Rogers, 'Woodes Rogers's Privateering Voyage'.

²³⁵ TNA C104/160, Note from Vanbrugh to Rogers.

voyage, almost, to use me as just such a villainous defamator as he, WR, deserved to be himself, but I pray God change his heart and forgive him.²³⁶

Vanbrugh, whose allegiance is indicated by the fact that he generally corresponded directly with Goldney rather than Thomas Batchelor, had some cause to complain about his treatment. A few days after Vanbrugh had returned to the *Duke* in February 1709, the council appointed four officers from each ship to be ‘Managers of the Plunder’.²³⁷ Their orders made it clear that they would report to the chief officers (i.e. Rogers, Dover and Courtney) and not to the owners’ agents, thus flouting the owners’ instructions and by-passing Vanbrugh and Bath in the management of a significant portion of the total prize; how significant may be gathered from the minutes of another meeting – one of several in which the scope of plunder was defined – which set out the following ‘Articles’ to regulate plunder:

Impr. Gold rings found in any Place, except in a Goldsmith’s shop, is plunder. All Arms, Sea Books and Instruments, all Cloathing and Moveables, usally worn about Prisoners, except Women’s Ear-rings, unwrought Gold or Silver, loose Diamonds, Pearls or Money; all plate in use aboard Ships, but not on Shoar, (unless about Persons or Prisoners) is plunder.

All manner of Clothes ready made, found on the upper Deck, and betwixt Decks, belonging to the Ship’s Company and Passengers, is Plunder also, except what is above limited, and is in whole Bundles and Pieces, and not open’d in this Country, that appears not for the Persons use that owns the Chest, but design’d purposely for merchandize, which only shall not be Plunder.²³⁸

Rogers was a pragmatist and justified many of his decisions on the grounds that the success of the voyage required them. The articles set out above are defended by Rogers in his book on the grounds that they limited the ‘unreasonable Expectations of some among us: This made us wait till now we had a proper Opportunity, and could better

²³⁶ TNA C104/160, Vanbrugh journal (loose sheets) 8.8.1710

²³⁷ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 103.

²³⁸ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 171.

insist on our Owner's Interest'. Behind all these disputes about plunder there is implicit the threat that a too strict adherence to the owner's orders would result in mutiny or the descent into anarchy which bedevilled Dampier's voyage. Rogers, by the use of negotiation and compromise, and by ensuring that all decisions were properly agreed and recorded, was able to bring home the prize, where Dampier, and later Shelvocke, were not. In a further defence of his action Rogers is at pains to point out that he and Courtney had given up the right (according to privateering custom) to all the great cabin plunder 'which in all probability is the major part' in return for a much lesser 5% share of the total.

The voyage continued first to the island of Grande in Brazil where the ships were careened, their sheathing cleaned and repaired and more fresh food taken on. After this they spent three weeks in the southern ocean and rounding Cape Horn before arriving at Juan Fernandez. In his introduction Rogers makes the remarkable observation that 'The general distemper in such long runs is the scurvy; and the methods to prevent the ill-effects of it are so well known, that they may easily be provided against'.²³⁹ This statement, made some 30 years before the terrible destruction scurvy wrought on Anson's fleet and 35 years before Lind's treatise on scurvy, might be considered braggadocio were it not for the fact that during the whole voyage Rogers lost one man to 'the cold' and none to scurvy.²⁴⁰

At Juan Fernandez they found Alexander Selkirk, who had lived there since he had abandoned Dampier's expedition four years earlier. Rogers, who immediately christened Selkirk 'the Governor', gave a characteristically wry description of his arrival on the *Duke*.

²³⁹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712),xii.

²⁴⁰ The reasons for this are given in more detail on

Our pinnacle return'd from the shore, and brought abundance of Craw-fish, with a man cloth'd in Goat-Skins, who look'd wilder than the first Owners of them.²⁴¹

It is clear from Rogers's narrative that he grew to value Selkirk, first rating him mate on the *Duke* and later giving him command of a prize. Cooke provides a revealing insight into Selkirk's previous existence as master of the *Cinque Portes*. It seems that Selkirk 'first enquir'd whether a certain Officer that he knew was aboard; and hearing that he was, would rather have chosen to remain in his solitude, than come away with him, 'till informed that he did not command'.²⁴² The officer Cooke is so reluctant to name is Dampier – the only senior officer on the Rogers expedition to have been on the previous one – further confirmation that he had a much more doubtful standing among fellow mariners than he enjoyed in London's coffee houses.²⁴³

After recouping at Juan Fernandez the two ships set about the business of harrying the coast of Peru with zest. Both Cooke's and Rogers's accounts emphasise the efficiency with which strategy and tactics for engagement of enemy ships were agreed and set down in the council minutes. At the time they were not aware that one important aspect of their plan - to keep the Spanish authorities ignorant of their presence for as long as possible - had already been compromised. While ships of increasing size were captured and either ransomed or brought in as additions to the fleet, careful preparations were being made for the storming of Guiaquil.

The attack was preceded by an event that, for Rogers at least, cast a shadow over the whole voyage. A large galleon was sighted close to the shore, and it was decided that it would be quicker to attack by boat rather than wait for the two ships to come up.

Rogers describes how his brother John, who was second lieutenant on the *Dutchess*, was

²⁴¹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 91.

²⁴² Edward Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, introduction, xx.

²⁴³ John Ballett, who was appointed third mate and 'Capt. Dampier's doctor' had been on the previous voyage but in a very junior capacity.

by chance on the *Duke* and ‘stepped into our Boat. I had before this oppos’d his landing [i.e. being part of the landing party for Guiaquil] which he resented as a slight; and this hinder’d me from stopping him now, tho’ it was not his business’.²⁴⁴ The attack was bungled and John Rogers was shot in the head ‘and instantly died, to my unspeakable sorrow: but as I began this voyage with a resolution to go thro it, and the greatest Misfortune or obstacle shall not deter me. I’ll as much as possible avoid being thoughtful and afflicting my self for what can’t be recall’d’.²⁴⁵ Rogers delivers a moving, simple tribute to his brother:

‘about Twelve we threw my dear Brother overboard’ with one of our Sailors. We hoisted our colours half-mast up: we began first, and the rest follow’d, each firing some Volleys of small Arms. All our Officers express’d a great Concern for the loss of my brother, he being a very hopeful active young man, a little above twenty Years of Age.²⁴⁶

Guiaquil lies some 30 miles up the river Guyas, and while it was navigable for ships Rogers decided to take his storming party of about 100 men in ship’s boats, which could be rowed quickly, quietly and at night. After securing Puna, the large island at the river entrance, the boats rowed and sailed up river, anchoring at low tide amongst the mangrove trees that lined the banks. At midnight after two days they arrived at their destination to find the town a blaze of light and beacons burning on hilltops. They were told by their guides that the town had been alarmed (in fact there was a festival) and retreated into the mangroves to consider what to do. Rogers was for continuing with the attack but Dampier advised that buccaneers never attacked when an alarm had been given. The most cautious, however, was Dover, who loudly and vociferously urged them to wait until morning and then send a party under flags of truce to treat with the

²⁴⁴ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 116.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

officials of the town. At one point the row amongst the officers was so loud that they were overheard by the Spanish, thus ending the possibility of surprise which had been maintained until then. Rogers writes that he was forced to give way when Dover – who, as captain of marines, had been appointed to lead the landing party - said that if he, Rogers, continued with the assault he would be answerable for all the damage that might happen to them on landing. Rogers finally gave way and thus forfeited the chance of taking the estimated 200,000 dollars in money and bullion that were removed from the town during the protracted ransom negotiations that followed. After two days it became clear that the Spanish negotiators were stalling and Rogers stormed the town, leading his seventy men (as he is at pains to emphasise) against the defending cavalry and guns lined up before the church. Later there were arguments about who had performed well and who badly in the storming of Guayaquil, but Rogers's account makes it clear that he commanded the attack and that Dover (who had the title of commander on land) could not be relied on to stay at his post. There is, however, a diary entry of Vanbrugh's, dated over a year and a half after the raid on Guayaquil, which offers an alternative view of events.

11 December 1710

Last night upon Deck, as Capn Rogers and I and others were Chatting, and ye main Subject the taking of Guayaquill, my opinion made the Enterprise less daring and difficult than Captn. Rogers did – upon wch. he immediately retorted by Reflecting upon me, that I Chose to stay in the Bark where I was, to eat my dinner, and so to avoid by delay, the Danger, by landing after the others... I did tell Capn. R. yt whenever he charg'd me with this I wou'd tell him openly of a worse charge on him; tell him my Author and swear to my Evidence – I will here Deliver it , in case of Mortality – Viz. that Capn. Thos Dover told me, once in discourse (I cant say Just the time) that Capn. Rogers turn'd his back on ye enemy and came Retiring towards the place he was at, under some sham pretence of our mens being like to shoot him in the back etc. God knows the truth.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ TNA C104/160, loose-leaf journal fragment, cited in Williams, *Great South Sea*, 149.

Glyndwr Williams believes that this account ‘carries some conviction’, though neither Vanbrugh nor Dr Dover, who accused him of being ‘notoriously false’, could be described as objective witnesses. Rogers’s account of the storming of Guiaquil is very precise and reports every movement of the three groups of attackers as they stormed the city. As he was to say in the introduction to his book :

I thought myself oblig’d in Justice to my own Reputation, and for the Information of my Friends, to write what I have done; though I have only touch’d it where I could not avoid it, and as softly as possible, keeping strictly to the Truth, in which I am not afraid of any Contradiction worth notice.²⁴⁸

The crew were praised for their steadiness under fire but ‘like Sailors, could be kept under no Command as soon as the first Piece was fired’.²⁴⁹ The proceeds were disappointing, consisting of jewellery worth about £1,000 (extracted, so the sailors said, from some Spanish ladies without offending their modesty), stocks of food and two hostages held in lieu of a 30,000 dollar ransom. This was small compensation when set against Guiaquil’s parting gift to the expedition – a virulent infection which struck down most of the participants in the raid and resulted in the death of eleven, including Dover’s brother-in-law and ‘chaplain’, Samuel Hopkins. Dover, in his memoir, describes it as a form of plague caught from the dead bodies in the church where they slept while in Guiaquil, but this seems unlikely as none of the crew who remained on the ships was infected. It seems at least as likely that the night they spent in the mangrove swamps pestered by mosquitoes was to blame.²⁵⁰

From this point the story of the voyage is one of deteriorating relationships between the senior officers and increasing unrest among the crew; this last culminated in a

²⁴⁸ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), xix.

²⁴⁹ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 129.

²⁵⁰ Dr Thomas Dover, *The Ancient Physician’s Legacy to his Country* (London, 1732), 94.

threatened mutiny that involved too many men to be easily suppressed but which Rogers, in his pragmatic way, managed to resolve by a mixture of concessions and appeals to their common purpose. One document in the National Archives, a petition by members of the crew, suggests that the main aim of the conspirators was to prevent a rumoured attempt by Dover and Courtney to wrest command from Rogers. Dover was later to accuse Rogers of conspiring with the crew against his fellow officers and the owners and while this was almost certainly false, it does suggest that the crew trusted Rogers above the others.

The dissension among the senior officers was potentially much more dangerous. Neither Rogers nor Cooke, with, for their time, heroic restraint, provide detail about the nature of the dispute, but its seriousness may be gauged by the agreement, drawn up by Rogers and sworn by the senior officers, to support each other in battle. Rogers prefaces his recording of this extraordinary measure with the following:

We have had lately almost a general Misunderstanding amongst our Chief Officers, and some great Abuses which I suppose sprung from several unhappy Differences arising at and before our Attempt on Guiaquil. This made me so particularly relate all that pass'd material in that Attempt, so that I doubt not any ones contradicting this Journal to my Disadvantage; yet in Differences of this kind amongst the Sailors we all join, and I hope agree: Tho' I long for a Reconciliation and good Harmony amongst Us, which is so Essential to the Welfare of the Voyage; but not being willing to make the Reader a Party-taker, or to trouble his patience over unreasonable Feuds, I have left'em as much as possible out of my Journal.²⁵¹

His account, it is worth noting, was not contradicted.

The galleons that sailed between Manila in the Philippines and Acapulco in Mexico were attractive prospects to the privateers for a number of reasons. First and most important they carried most valuable cargoes – silver to Manila and silks and spices to

²⁵¹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 174.

Acapulco – but equally they were famous for travelling unescorted along familiar routes to a known timetable. Dampier had himself met and unsuccessfully attacked the Manila galleon in December 1704, and it was felt unlikely that this later expedition would encounter one much before November 1709. They therefore made plans to live out the next six months away from the mainland, using the range of islands off the coast, including the Galapagos, to recoup, water and careen their ships. While in the Galapagos Rogers, who generally makes little comment on local flora and fauna, was clearly struck by the tortoises or ‘land turtles’ and pinpoints the riddle which was not to be resolved until the publication of the *Origin of Species*. ‘I saw no sort of Beasts; but there are Guanans in abundance, and Land Turtle on almost every Island: ‘Tis strange how the latter got here, because they can’t come of themselves, and none of that sort are to be found upon the Main.’²⁵²

On October 24, 1709 the committee agreed their plan for locating the galleon and spread out to trawl for her off Cape St Lucas. There began nearly two months of waiting that was to try the temper and morale of the officers and crew. Dover fell out with Rogers and removed to the *Dutchess*, a sailor was put in irons for threatening the cooper ‘and one Peter Clark, an ill abusive fellow, I order’d to have the like punishment, because he had wished himself aboard a Pirate, and said he should be glad that an Enemy, who could over-power us, was a-long-side of us’.²⁵³ Another agreement was signed to prevent gaming, which was rampant, some sailors having lost most of their clothes. They ran out of liquor and were forced to land in California to take on food and water. An ingenious and hungry thief stole food from the Lazarette despite

²⁵² Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 194.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 205

the fact that the steward had lain 'next the door with the key fasten'd to his privy parts'.²⁵⁴

The shortage of supplies became so desperate that on December 20 Rogers gave his opinion to the committee that they would have to leave for Guam for 'we have prolonged our cruize to the utmost Extent, in hopes to meet the Rich *Manila* Ship: but since Fortune has not favour'd us, we must think of other Methods to promote our Safety and Interest'²⁵⁵. They arranged to return to Port Segura, where the *Marquis* was being repaired, but contrary winds impeded their progress until 'to our great and joyful surprise, about 9 a clock the Man at the Mast-head cry'd out he saw a sail, bearing West half South of us, distant about 7 Leagues'. Having confirmed with the *Dutchess* that it was indeed the Manila galleon, both ships, having little or no wind, put out their boats and began towing and rowing through the night. In the morning Rogers ordered up a kettle of chocolate (there being no liquor), held prayers and started the attack. It took about an hour and a half of steady cannonade to bring the galleon to surrender. On the *Duke* two were wounded, Rogers himself, who had been shot in the mouth, and one sailor who was 'slightly wounded in the buttock'. The ship they had taken was the *Nostra Senora de la Incarnacion Disenganeo* of 20 guns, about 400 tons burthen and with 195 crew. She was not loaded with bullion but, almost as valuable, spices, porcelain, 52 'atlasses' and Chinese cloth, including several tons of raw silk, satin, damask, taffeta and 4,310 silk stockings.

The Captain, Jean Pichberty, told Rogers that another, larger galleon had set off from Manila with him, but that they had separated four months ago. The triumphant flotilla returned to Segura where a row broke out among the officers. Those of the *Dutchess*,

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 210

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 212

which had been unable to play much part in the attack on the galleon, felt that they should hunt for the second ship while the *Duke* remained in harbour. Rogers, who was in considerable pain from his wound and hardly able to speak or swallow, pleaded unsuccessfully that both ships should sail and leave the *Marquis* to deal with the prize and the prisoners. Rogers lost the argument and the *Dutchess* and *Marquis* sailed alone. This proved a serious miscalculation, as the *Bigonia*, when they came up with her, was an altogether more formidable opponent. According to Cooke she weighed about 900 tons, carried 60 guns and more than 600 men. Courtney and Cooke (at this time commanding the *Marquis*) fired broadsides into the *Bigonia* throughout the night of December 26th, and when Rogers, who had been alerted of the encounter by signalmen on a hill at Port Segura, came up in the *Duke* they continued the attack for several hours. All three ships received serious damage to their masts and rigging and suffered according to Rogers, about 30 casualties, one of whom was Rogers himself, who had half his heel shot away and was unable to stand. The *Bigonia* was a new ship made in Manila of ‘excellent timber, that will not splinter; they have very thick Sides, much stronger than we build in Europe’.²⁵⁶ Is this the first reference by an English sailor to a teak-built ship?

The three captains decided that they were too damaged to continue and gave up the attack. They returned to Port Segura to find that Dr Dover (who had decided to stay at Segura rather than take part in the second battle) had promoted himself captain of the prize, now renamed the *Batchelor* in honour of their chief sponsor. The ‘paper war’ which ensued when Rogers learnt of this coup is dealt with elsewhere, but the upshot, that Dover would be captain in name only and would leave all decisions concerning handling and navigating the ship to his appointed lieutenants, was a further tribute to

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 221.

Rogers's diplomatic skills, this time achieved when he was incapacitated by his wounds, weak from loss of blood and unable to move or talk above a whisper.

After the capture there seems to have been no repeat of the mutinies and rumoured mutinies that characterised the first half of the voyage. The crew had, in part, been pacified by judicious distributions of plunder. The disputes of the officers, however, grew more and more strident as the ships reached Cape Town. The catalyst was, according to Rogers, the abortive storming of Guiaquil, in which, Rogers implies, Dover and Dampier had suffered a failure of nerve. Relations between Rogers, Dover and Dampier deteriorated to the point at which the latter both removed from the *Duke* to the *Dutchess*, and seem, by so doing, to have initiated a rift between the officers of the *Duke* and those of the *Dutchess*. This rift was confirmed when Dover managed to persuade a majority of the Council to support his appointment as captain of the prize ship, despite the fact, as Rogers pointed out, that he had no experience of sea command and was temperamentally unsuited to it. By Cape Town the disagreements and discontents began to centre on the issue of plunder, and Rogers's part in forging an agreement with the men. Rogers defended his own actions in a letter to John Batchelor, Christopher Shuter and Thomas Goldney:

The World may believe I have procur'd a fortune, because itt's Customary the Commander of a Privateer has many Priviledges, and Plunder allowd in so much Purchase as we have gott, wch. Would have been, (according to Custom) considerable to any other Commanders. But we have follow'd no Presidents from Privateers.... What I have separated from the generall Interest is so insignificant, that itt's not Worth mentioning... I don't Expect that my shares (wch. Is little more than what's given to nine common Sailors) will amount to more in this successful long Voyage, than what Joseph Eastmont's did, who told me he gott a thousand pound in a Trip to Newfoundland.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Cited in Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 155.

Shortly after this Dover wrote such an intemperate letter that must, when it arrived in England in July, have caused great concern among the owners:

Cape of Good Hope Febry. 11th: 1710/11

Tis by ye Almighty's Especiall providence I honor myself to Congratulate you with Or. Safe arrival at this place & to yor. Comfort very rich. Woodes Rogers is a person of a different Intrest to ors. Has prov'd a dead weight to all or. Undertakings who scorns to lett his tongue utter anything but Satyr agst. His Country & owners so swoll'd wth. Pride yt. He makes itt a Capitall Offence for any Officer or man to mention or. Names too often punishing merit & too too often advanceing Such as have prostituted their words and Consciences to his exorbitant desires & Commands his Sole Business has been to promote discord amongst us, not valueing what stories he could frame to ye end of assureing(?) ye greatest Falsitys and calling to Wittness in ye Manner of a Corporall Oath for his Justification ye contents of ye Evangelist; Kissing ye same wth. Additions of ye severest Imprecations if what he swor was not true wch, has since appeared to us to be Notoriously false. He first made so strong an Intrest in both ships Company's by threat and promises yt. He became as though master of both threatening to cutt or. throats to make bloody Noses & warme work holding a Correspondence with or. Enemys this he affected by contriving a Species of plunder to sweeten sailors too many hungry officers wch. I exposed alledging ye Shares and wages Answer'd all & yt. Every man wch. He entred himself aboard was contented to abide by ye printed Encourag'ment given by ye Owners this I was forc'd to sign ytt was hardly Sufficent to preserve me from his Divelish and Underhand Contrivances wch. was no less to Captain Courtney beleiving yt. a removal of either of us might make way to his designs. What can be Expected from a man yt will begin & drink ye Popes health, but I trust ye Divine power will still preserve us.²⁵⁸

In his book Rogers puts one of these accusations – that he drank the Pope's health – in a more agreeable context:

Nov. 28 [1708]

This Morning we got our Ship out by our Consort, and the Wind being out of the way, and but little, we went with our Boat to the Town, to get Liquors for the Voyage, and bring the gentlemen of the Town aboard our Ships, where we treated'em the best we could. They were very merry, and in their Cups propos'd the Pope's health to us; but we were quits with'em, by toasting the Archbishop

²⁵⁸ TNA C104/160 Dover to Batchelor.

of *Canterbury*: to keep up the Humour, we also propos'd *William Pen's* to them; and they lik'd the liquor so well, that they refus'd neither.²⁵⁹

The tone of the letters can only have helped Rogers's cause, since the reasoned if somewhat disingenuous explanation of his case would have contrasted singularly with Dover's bizarre personal attack on his motives, actions and beliefs. The letters' purposes were, however, similar. It is clear that both Rogers and Dover were trying to distance themselves from the consequences of their signing the articles of plunder, Dover by claiming to have signed them under duress (an unlikely claim, given that he was quite easily able to thwart Rogers's purpose over the issue of the captancy of the prize) and Rogers by saying that they were essential if mutiny was to be prevented and that he had gained nothing by them anyway.

One consequence of the deteriorating relations between the officers of the *Duke* and the other two ships was that every proposal put to the council by one faction was derided by the other. Rogers's suggestion that the purchase in the *Batchelor* be shared between the three ships in case one was taken by the enemy on the way home was interpreted by Dover as an attempt to embezzle some of the prize. Dover and Courtney became increasingly concerned that Rogers would make off with the chest of valuables already kept on board the *Duke* and convened a meeting in mid-Atlantic on June 19th 1711 to which Cooke and Dampier, but not Rogers, were invited. His absence is justified because 'being a man whose Circumstances are very indifferent for whatever reasons... [the Committee] have consider'd since Mr Vanbrugh is dead and had part of the charge of the aforesaid gold etc... we have herein asserted we do hold itt highly Necessary to

²⁵⁹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 32.

remove the aforesaid Commodities'.²⁶⁰ In case they may have appeared in the sober light of a London court room to have exceeded their authority, the committee members gave a further reason - that the *Duke* was dangerously leaky - why they felt that, in the interest of the owners, they should remove 'all Gold Plate, Pearls, Jewells, Ear rings out of the Duke, and to put them aboard the *Dutchess*, she being a tite ship and where we expect less danger'.

Dover's letter was not sent until July 16th, when the convoy bringing them back to Europe rounded the north coast of Scotland. Dover added a long note before handing the letter to a 'running M of W to the Texel', in which he reports on an attempt to carry out the orders of the June 16 meeting:

Or. Councill is att last of noe force. Woodes Rogers disposeing of wt He thinks fitt out of his Ship, we call'd a Councill & would have had a Chest out of Him of Pearl Jewells & Gold but he swore by-G: We shoud not, upon which I propos'd to ye Councill to confine Him; according to His usuall Custom I was threatn'd with Death saying if he cou'd not doe my Business he had one yt. wou'd. We protested aggt. this wch. I said was like hacking a Dead Body. But he says ye Owners are a Pack of Fools yt They did not understand Their orders wn They gave ym & yt he'l dispute ym with ym.²⁶¹

Williams is inclined to give Dover's account some credence since it was also signed by Dampier, who was 'not before publicly involved in the disputes'.²⁶² Dampier had, however, been a supporter of Dover from the time of his removal to the *Dutchess* and in particular signed the letters proposing Dover as captain of the prize. It might be more pertinent to note that Courtney, who had jointly signed all the letters at Cape Town, did not sign this one. Reading between the lines it is also apparent that if Dover really did attempt to arrest Rogers he was unable to attract sufficient support from the other

²⁶⁰ TNA C104/36 Part 2. John Parker's Minute Book

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 156.

members of the council to do so. The contrast with Rogers's letter sent by fishing boat on the same day is marked:

Everyone seems weary of the Voyage, & we have not so good an understanding amongst the Officers in Each ship as we ought to have, wch: I am sorry to tell you; but now the voyage is so near att an End, the consequence of Disagreements, is little, to what itt would have been att the beginning of ye voyage.²⁶³

The dispute over plunder would be added to the growing list of people and organisations bidding for a share of the prize, which had, by the time the ships reached Erith on October 14th been variously valued at between £200,000 (by Rogers), £800,000 (in the Creswell bill) and £3,000,000 (by some of the crew). The master in chancery calculated the 'gross sums of the several prizes according to the best account which I could collect from the ships' books and from the several letters, papers and memorandums' at £147,975 12s 4d.²⁶⁴ The voyage was remarkable in many ways, but in this one it was unique. It was the only one of all the cruising voyages until that time and afterwards for which a precise figure for total prize money has been given. Since it is unlikely that every item of purchase, some of which was certainly distributed to the crew during the voyage, was presented to the court, the figure is almost certainly an underestimate.

The rewards

A writ issued by the East India Company had been thrown on the deck of the *Batchelor* as she arrived. The EIC had been preparing its claim to a share of the prize since the ships had arrived in Cape Town, and the owners had equally been preparing their defence to the charge that the prize fell within the EIC's jurisdiction. The EIC case was thin, particularly since the act creating the South Sea Company had put the Americas

²⁶³ TNA C104/160 Rogers to owners, 16 July 1711.

²⁶⁴ TNA C104/36, part 2, paper book containing the master's report, 28 July 1714, second schedule, 52.

under the aegis of the SSC. Nevertheless the Directors of the EIC were powerful and influential and the owners eventually agreed to pay the Company what was effectively a bribe of £6,000 (see below).

While at the Texel the owners and crew set about protecting their interests by appointing lawyers to represent them. At first Rogers and most of the ships' crews employed Messrs Ward and Campbell as their agents to the prize courts but a Stephen Creagh, a privateer owner and by some accounts, untrustworthy opportunist, managed to persuade 209 members of the crews to sign a paper appointing him as their agent in return for 5% of their eventual receipts.²⁶⁵ In January 1712, having obtained their signatures, blots and crosses on powers of attorney Creagh brought a complaint on behalf of the crew against Rogers and the owners in the Court of Chancery.²⁶⁶ The complaint cited the owners and captains as guilty of irregular practices and charged Rogers with 'fraud against the Owners'.

The prize goods were offloaded into a warehouse in the charge of Robert Patterson, and sold 'by the candle' in nine public sales between 27 February 1712 and May 1713.²⁶⁷ The chancery proceeding, *Creagh vs Rogers* came before Rt Hon. Simon Harcourt, the Lord Chancellor and his decision was given on 12 December 1712. The profits from the sales were to be divided as originally set down, that is 2/3 to the owners and 1/3 to the crew, after all costs had been paid. He left the critically important decisions about the precise allocation of shares and costs to John Meller, the master in chancery appointed to report on the case. Meller was asked to decide on whether the agents' shares should come out of the crew's share or the owners', whether crew should receive storm money or plunder money and on a host of individual decisions about specific

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Donald Jones, 'Captain Woodes Rogers' Voyage', 21.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 20.

claimants. As one reads through the reports, the balance sheets, schedules and crew share lists, the records of meetings with owners, agents and lawyers of various complainers and defendants that contribute to the master's final report of 10 August, 1717, just under five years after he began his work, one can but admire the man's dedication to his task. Every attempt, by the owners to load costs on to the general account or by crew members to claim more shares than their due, is treated equitably and the decisions are sensible and clearly argued. He gives thought to the circumstances of the seamen who have had to wait years for even an interim payment. After pointing out the problems encountered by those who had made over their shares to their wives or friends he notes how the sailors are prone to exploitation:

There appears also a case of very great hardship to many of ye seamen who have been persuaded by their landladies to execute Bills of Sale for more than the amount of their shares whereas they have not had a quarter part of ye value and it is represented to me that £30 is a Common price for dyet and lodging to a saylor for a fortnight and in some of their merry meetings they have reckoned £10 for each man's clubb in one Nights Expenses.²⁶⁸

Meller gives thought as well to the particular difficulties of sailors who are, by the nature of their employment, constantly going to sea. When a share payment was announced notices were put in newspapers, various prominent places in the City and at the master's chambers in Chancery Lane for crew members to come on particular days, in alphabetical order, to claim their shares, 'and to ye intent that such seamen who are now home may not be hinder'd from making their intended voyages I have given them ye preferences in ye two first days of payment'²⁶⁹. Despite these efforts the crew expressed their frustration by means of two petitions, in 1714 and 1715, to the House of Lords complaining about late payment and accusing Rogers and his fellow officers of

²⁶⁸ TNA C104/36, part 2, paper bound book containing the master's report, 10.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 11.

concealing much of the prize from the crew. Meller dismissed these latter accusations and, given the care he showed in the crew's interests as described above, it seem most likely that he had received no evidence that prize had been concealed.

As B.M.H.Rogers points out a straightforward distribution of the total would give £98,650 to the owners and £49,325 for the crew. Before this division could be made, however, the total costs of the voyage, including the outsets, crew wages, East India company bribe and customs duties had to be paid. Many of the disputes over the prize distribution centred on what costs should be deducted from the 'general account' (i.e the total before division into shares) and what should be taken out of the owners' share. In the end costs deducted from the general account amounted to £42,159 which included customs duty of £27,524, storm money for the crew of £4,880 and the master's fee of £1,584. The owner's share, which amounted to £87,293 suffered a charge of £49,584 which included:

Wages paid to the men	12,262
East India Company bribe	6,161
Provisions in Holland	2,575
Provisions before Holland	8,720
Outsetts of Duke and Dutchess	13,188
Commission to 7 man'g owners	2689

The total remaining for distribution among the shareholders was therefore £37,709. The costs have been seen as bringing about a disappointing reduction in the total profit of the shareholders, although it is important to point out that, with the exception of the East India Company payment, the costs were, in effect, repayments of the initial investment or, in the case of wages, were covered by the crew shares allocated to the owners.

B.M.H. Rogers cites a letter retained by the Goldney family in which Thomas Goldney expresses his considerable displeasure at what he saw as extravagant spending: ‘two or three of ye Managing Owners without ye privity of ye rest’ had been guilty of ‘great negligence and non-attendance’ to their duties and had ‘allowed themselves large expenses and salleries for their trouble’.²⁷⁰ He underlined his point by appending a list of money, totalling £10,000, which he considered to have been wasted. The list is acerbic and includes:

Bribes to Customs House Officers	£149
Gave East India Comp.	£6,000
Solliciting ‘em to take it	£161
Commissn Inwd to ye Managers	£2,400
Gave Mr Huggins for nothing	£162

A piece of paper folded in with the master’s report indicates how the shares were allocated in the case of Thomas Goldney:

Mr Thomas Goldney to the Ownrs and Proprietrs of the ships Duke and Dutchess is ---

Dt

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 203.

The whole produce of the voyage as in Report 10 Augt 1717 £87,29 3 : 16: 02

Charges £49,584: 12 04

Deduct Dampier's 16th pts thereof: £2,356: 16: 05

Profit to be divided among owners £35, 352: 07: 05

On the credit side "per contra" we have:

By 18/128ths of the clear profits of the voyage of ye ships 4971: 7: 06

By rem. Of Mr Vanbrugh's shares of ye said Ship 324: 8: 08

Prizes in whose place Goldney stands after deducting

what was due to the Owners from Mr Vanbrugh

Outsett 1845:12:111/4

Dt. to Ball. 59:18:07 3/4

7210:17:09

There are a number of oddities about this balance. First the figure given for Goldney's share of the profits is much less than the £6,826 that other sources say he received. The figure of 18/128 shares refers to an original offer that was changed by the simple expedient of doubling the shares and halving the price, presumably, as B.M.H.Rogers suggests, to make them more attractive to small investors. Goldney seems to have forgotten this. Nevertheless the total means that each share of a total of 256 was worth £138, much less than the £189 quoted by B.M.H. Rogers. Part of the answer lies in the fact that a different definition of profit has been used. By this method some of the costs have been taken out, only to be added back to the balance as the outsets his original investment paid for. If the sum for Vanbrugh's crew shares are removed the total of share return plus outsets comes to £6816. The problem here is that the accepted total for distribution had already excluded the outsets as costs to be paid before distribution. Starkey, Williams and Rogers calculate that Goldney should have been entitled to £6,828 for shares plus his share of the outsets costs.

There is a further entry in this account which needs explaining. On the debit side is entered:

To a debt due to the crown for wch bond was £7210:7:9

given 1st feb 1711 by six of the ownrs and since paid off as appears by the several endorsements thereon.

An undated document in the Goldney Archive at Bristol University is headed: 'Draft of a Covenant indemnifying the Owners of the *Duke and Dutchess*'. It is signed by Thomas Shuter and appears to be a promise by Thomas Goldney that he will 'pay all charges & expenses that they or any of them have been put to by reason of ye Bond to

the Crown for £7250'.²⁷¹ We know that Goldney had paid £2000 to be released from prison in 1710, so this, coupled with the sum above equals £9,250, near enough the sum for which he was arrested in 1708. It also confirms that the debt was to the Crown, and therefore presumably connected with his role as banker for the Bristol customs revenue.

Crew shares were set at £42 18s each.²⁷² The number of shares due each officer or crew member had been decided by the investors before the voyage and published in the articles. The master felt it would be inequitable to change the terms of the agreement and thus a large number of men who had been promoted or rewarded for particular service during the voyage found that their allocation of shares remained unchanged. The master did, however, accept that those crew involved in the storming of Guiaquil should receive 'storm money' despite the owners' claim that there was no provision for it in the agreement. The amount varied from £10 for a landsman to £100 for a captain. Some also received 'smart money' in recognitions of wounds received in battle.

Plunder money was a matter of dispute at the end of the voyage as it had been at the beginning. The owners claimed that the agreement clearly stated that all purchase was to be collected into the general account while the crew claimed that later agreements made while the expedition was underway permitted crew to take plunder for themselves. They further cited an act of Charles II that 'seamen in the navy are allowed to take as plunder all goods and merchandise upon or above the gun deck except arms, ammunition, tackle, furniture and stores'.²⁷³ The problem was further exacerbated by the fact that much of the plunder had already been distributed during the voyage and the death of both the agents for the owners meant that it would have been

²⁷¹ Goldney Archive 1398/8 Box C

²⁷² TNA C104/36 part 1 'Duke G'

²⁷³ TNA C104/36 part 2, master's report book, 40.

difficult to recover much of it. It is probably for this reason that the master seems to have accepted the crew's case and allowed reasonable claims for plunder money.

The distribution meant that officers could expect anything from a captain's share (Courtney of the *Dutchess* received £1115) through to a Lieutenant's (John Conelly of the *Dutchess* received £503). Crew members received from £24 to £250 depending on their rate, how they had elected to be paid and whether they got storm money and plunder money. Michael Kendall ("a Free Negro from Jamaica" mentioned admiringly by Rogers in his account of the voyage) who escaped to the *Duke* from the silver mines in Peru, was awarded two half shares which, after deductions for clothing and breakages, ("1 piece blew pott damaged – 15/-") meant he was paid £24.²⁷⁴

B.M.H.Rogers found that Woodes Rogers, who was not a shareholder and had been declared bankrupt on 23 July 1712, eventually received £1,530, not a princely sum for three years work and only a third more, as Woodes Rogers pointed out, than he might have expected to get from "a trip to Newfoundland".²⁷⁵ B.M.H.Rogers further reports: 'I have not found any plunder money to his credit'. There is, however a page in the *Duke* Debt book headed 'Capt. Woodes Rogers to the Owners of the *Duke* and *Dutchess*' for Sundrys at sundry Times and Places', which mentions plunder money and another item that suggests Rogers's plea for fair treatment did not fall entirely on deaf ears.²⁷⁶ At the bottom of the 'per Contra' page there is a description of the final settlement with Rogers that includes £496 6s 4d to be 'stopt out of his shares ac. Ye particulars Ent. In Ledger book No. 133'. Among the items being stopped are:

²⁷⁴ Ibid. and TNA C104/161, *Duke* Debt Book.

²⁷⁵ TNA B4/1 Woodes Rogers Commission for Bankruptcy.

²⁷⁶ TNA C104/160 *Duke* Debt Book, 179.

For Plunder money	27: 11: 09
For 5 p. cent Cabin plunder	40: 15: 021/2

It seems, therefore, that the articles agreed by the crew in the South Seas were accepted by the owners and the master, and that cabin plunder did not exceed the £50 that Starkey finds was the usual maximum allowed captains of privateers.²⁷⁷ The statement continues:

Out of this sum of 496: 6: 4 the Ownrs. then agreed to allow Rogers One Hundred Guineas as a Bounty... But ye same is at present stopt to make good some Demands agt. Him wch. are not yet adjusted.

The good news, for Rogers at least, is that a note in the margin dated 14th Feb 1716/17 records ‘This £100 guineas paid acc. To Agreeet.’ This sum must therefore be added to the total given by B.M.H.Rogers.

Until now accounts of Dampier’s rewards from the voyage have proved, as Glyndwr Williams puts it, “baffling”. B.M.H.Rogers cites a note in the master’s report that records a payment of £1050.²⁷⁸ The master also clearly stated on 21st November 1713 that ‘Dampier is entitled to 1/16th part of all such prize as should belong to said owners’. This he calculated as being £3,560, (based on a figure for the owners’ share of £56,975), considerably more than has been previously estimated but this was, it is clear from later reports, reduced eventually to nothing by 1719.²⁷⁹ Dampier claimed that he should, according to his agreement with the owners, have received not just the 1/16th of 1/3 that they accepted, but also 11 shares as a ‘sailor’.²⁸⁰ The owners’ answer denied that this was agreed but added that his contribution as a sailor was ‘very little serviceable’ – an

²⁷⁷ David J.Starkey, *British Privateering*, 72.

²⁷⁸ B.M.H.Rogers, ‘Woodes Rogers’s Privateering Voyage’.

²⁷⁹ TNA C104/36 Part 2, Master’s report, p.14, and see Goldney account above.

²⁸⁰ TNA C9/225/43, Chancery bill of complaint, *Dampeere v. Courtney*, 1713

echo of Rogers's own judgement on Dampier's abilities and usefulness.²⁸¹ On December 19th 1713 the master wrote "I have paid out £500 on account to Captain Dampier". There is also an entry in a ledger dated March 31st 1713 that appears to be the final payment list for the crew of the *Dutchess* (to which Dampier had removed on the voyage home) which states:

"To Captain William Dampier for his service in this expedition 1/16th of the clear profits of the voyage as per his agreement of which already paid him of the owners about £400".²⁸²

Apart from the 1/16th owners share Dampier is recorded in the share book as being entitled to crew shares totalling £653.²⁸³ This runs contrary to the master's original decision that Dampier had signed no agreement and was therefore only entitled to his 1/16th.²⁸⁴ Finally there is the statement, dated 1716, on the balance sheet above which gives a figure of £37,709 for the total profits of the voyage after crew shares had been taken, and adds:

Deduct Dampiers 16 th part thereof :	£2356:16:05
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The Creswell complaint, submitted to the court in 1712 after the Woodes Rogers expedition had returned in triumph, provides interesting information about Dampier's share. The second page of the complaint (sheet 2) describes what the Creswells believed happened to the money which Dampier and Morgan had obtained from the 1703 voyage.²⁸⁵ It is claimed that in August 1707 Dampier, Morgan and three of the *St. George's* owners – Richard Longford, Richard Collett and John Gascoign *alias* Jacob –

²⁸¹ Ibid, defendants' response.

²⁸² TNA C104/37 *Dutchess* ledger.

²⁸³ TNA C104/36 Part 1, *Duke 'G'*.

²⁸⁴ TNA C104/36, part 2, master's report book, 62

²⁸⁵ TNA/C6/390/82 sheet 2.

had several meetings in the Young Devil tavern, Temple Bar and at Collett's house where they divided the spoils from the first expedition and agreed to put the money into a second. Richard Longford, as trustee of the estate bequeathed to Elizabeth Creswell, Sir Thomas Estcourt's daughter, agreed to raise a mortgage of £4,000 on the estate which was put in the hands of Dampier, the other defendants and Thomas Goldney of Bristol. Goldney, it is claimed, bought the shares in the Rogers expedition and was to hold them in trust for Longford, Collett and Jacob/Gascoign. Dampier was to receive 1/16 of the owner's share in return for his investment. The complaint goes on to describe how the *Duke* and *Dutchess* had taken £800,000 prize money of which half was disposed of in Batavia and half returned to London. £9,000 of this prize, the complaint claims, belongs to the Creswells and should be taken from the profits awarded to Dampier, Morgan, Longford, Collett, Jacob, Stradling, Calvert, Mascall, Goldney and William Price. Dampier denied that any of this happened, as did Thomas Goldney and much of the tale, when set against the total lack of corroborating evidence from the voluminous documents available about the Woodes Rogers voyage, seems implausible.²⁸⁶ The only name on the complaint which appears in those documents (apart from Dampier and Goldney) is Richard Longford, who acted as solicitor for some of Rogers's crew and received the substantial fee of £333 for his work.²⁸⁷ Given Dampier's indifferent performance on the 1708 voyage it seems unlikely that he was capable of masterminding such a conspiracy as is suggested in the complaint. If £4,000 was invested in that voyage it was well hidden from view and Thomas Goldney was an unlikely intermediary, particularly as an account handed to the chancery master investigating the 1708 voyage shows that the profit he made went to pay a debt to the

²⁸⁶ B.M.H. Rogers, 'Dampier's Voyage of 1703'.

²⁸⁷ TNA C104/36, part 2, master's report book, 48.

Crown – not any private individuals.²⁸⁸ On the other hand we know from Cooke that unexpected additional costs were covered by bringing in new investors from London and not all of these are named. We know also that Elizabeth Creswell was a cousin of John Duckinfield, one of the chief investors.²⁸⁹ Apart from Dampier –who did receive a 1/16 share of the profits - none of the alleged conspirators appears in the lists of shareholders, but then we would expect their investment – if it took place – to be hidden from view. It is a case which merits further investigation.

Dampier had died in 1715. A final master's report of 9 May 1719 disallows the 1/16th share on the grounds that Dampier's executrix, Grace Mercer, could not prove an agreement, and that therefore Dampier received a total of £1351 14s 10d.²⁹⁰ The 1/16th share was presumably redistributed among the shareholders.

Thomas Dover received £6067 as a shareholder but he was also entitled to storm money (£100), shares as a captain (£1,015) and as a physician (£423), which will have made him the chief beneficiary of prize money. It certainly enabled him to set up a successful medical practice in London where he would subsequently boast of the time “when I took by storm the twin cities of Guayaquil, under the line in the South Seas”.²⁹¹

The Rogers expedition is arguably the most successful privateering expedition ever to leave England. Rogers's achievement has been recently subject to question, with Glyndwr Williams noting that ‘for many who sailed on the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, ‘the success and Profit of this long and Hazardous Voyage’ (the words of Woodes Rogers in

²⁸⁸ See p.115

²⁸⁹ B.M.H. Rogers, ‘Dampier's Voyage of 1703’.

²⁹⁰ B.M.H. Rogers, ‘Dampier's Debts’, *Mariner's Mirror*, 10(1924), 322-24.

²⁹¹ Thomas Dover, *The Ancient Physician's Legacy* (London, 1742), 94.

the Dedication of his book) ... turned sour'.²⁹² Diana Souhami describes Rogers as a man of no particular education who, by the end of the voyage, was uneasy about his share of the prize money, at odds with his fellow captains, bankrupt and desperate.²⁹³ All of this may be true, but should not detract from the remarkable fact that the Rogers expedition was the first circumnavigation by a British fleet since Drake, captured prizes worth more than any other privateer except Drake, and did so with comparatively small loss of life. The exact number of dead is not easy to establish, since neither Rogers nor Cooke give a total, though the crew's petition to the House of Lords in August 1715 refers to 'nearly' 100 deaths. Above all, and unlike any of his predecessors or followers, he succeeded in bringing home the Manila galleon to the Thames. The prolonged and fractious process by which the prize money was distributed undoubtedly cast a pall over the voyage's aftermath. Glyndwr Williams argues that 'for the seamen involved [the voyage] was a byword for deception and fraud'. There is, however, substantial evidence that the chancery master did his best for the crew in difficult circumstances and that almost everyone who took part in the voyage received his fair share.²⁹⁴ If the crew received less than they had hoped the blame may more reasonably be laid at the door of the legion of opportunist attorneys, solicitors, rapacious inn-keepers and landladies who preyed on the sailors ashore. The lawyers fees, the East India Company bribe and the customs dues together took over 30% of the total purchase.

There are other factors which make the Woodes Rogers voyage stand out. The regular committee meetings in which decisions were written into a book, undersigned and displayed on deck for the crew to read provide a record that is without precedent.

²⁹² Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 160.

²⁹³ Diana Souhami, *Selkirk's Island* (Paperback edn, London, 2002) 167.

²⁹⁴ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 160.

Robert C Leslie entitles his account of the voyage (misleadingly described as ‘The Journal of Captain Woodes Rogers’) as ‘Life Aboard a British Privateer in the Time of Queen Anne’.²⁹⁵ In fact it was in no way typical of its age. It employed a form of corporate governance in which important decisions were made in committee and voted on by its members. The *Dutchess* had a band consisting of ‘trumpets, hautboys and violins’. Church services were held every day as the ships entered the southern ocean, and religious tolerance was practised to the extent that captives were allowed to hold Catholic services in the great cabin. Rogers himself treated the religious observance of his Catholic prisoners with amused scepticism and a certain contempt for their credulous belief in the power of relics and indulgences, but he prevented the burning of the churches in Guiaquil. The determination of both Rogers and Cooke, in their accounts of the voyage, to distance themselves and their behaviour from that of the notoriously ruthless buccaneers is clear. They emphasise that their many prisoners were treated honourably and humanely. In support of this Rogers points to the chivalrous treatment of the young ladies of Guiaquil.²⁹⁶ In all of this there is more than a hint of the enlightened attitudes beginning to emerge in Britain and particularly Bristol at the time.

One lesson that may have been drawn from the Woodes Rogers expedition is that however carefully the articles were drafted and however meticulously the accounts were kept, the vicissitudes of a long sea voyage through extremes of heat, cold and damp and subject to storms, battles and disease, meant that many of the carefully compiled records had been destroyed or become illegible; through the gaps in the record crawled an army of disappointed adventurers to argue their various cases for the next eight years.

²⁹⁵ Robert C. Leslie, *Life Aboard a British Privateer in the Time of Queen Anne* (London, 1894)

²⁹⁶ This account was not contested by contemporary Spanish writers, according to Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 96.

CHAPTER 4.

CAPTAIN SHELVOCKE'S VOYAGE OF 1719-22

This chapter will show that the cruising voyage which set out in 1719 was a significant and costly expedition, supported by major figures in the City of London and linked with the ambitions of the South Sea Company. The expedition was a direct descendent of the Woodes Rogers voyage. Although ten years separate them the latter expedition took place as soon as opportunity (war with Spain) arose to mount a similar venture. The managing owners effectively used the Woodes Rogers book as their instruction manual, placing a copy in the hands of each of the two captains. It is therefore not surprising that the objectives and preparations closely mirror those of the earlier voyage. Although disastrous for most of the adventurers the voyage achieved a much greater return for some than has previously been realised. The 'great noise' which attended the return to England of George Shelvocke and his remaining crew did much, however, to destroy the enthusiasm for South Sea expeditions that followed Woodes Rogers's successful exploit. As well as the mutinies and deceptions which beset the voyage of George Shelvocke there were also remarkable examples of courage, seamanship and skill – further contribution to the developing picture of the resourceful British mariner which would be purveyed to an admiring public through the subsequent printed accounts.

The expedition is generally named after George Shelvocke, captain of the frigate *Speedwell*. In the chancery case brought by the investors after the voyage was over it was called - certainly more correctly – the Clipperton expedition, after John Clipperton,

the ‘commander in chief’ and captain of the larger ship *Success*.²⁹⁷ Shelvocke owes his promotion by posterity to the fact that he was the first to publish an account of the voyage and possibly also because (as with the Woodes Rogers expedition) one incident – in this case the shooting of an albatross - gave his book wider currency long after the events it described had passed.

The Clipperton expedition was a disaster for most of its participants and investors. The aim, as with the other two voyages, was to attack the ships and harbours of Spanish South America and, if the opportunity presented, carry off the Manila Galleon. Two days after they set out the two ships were separated and never met again. The *Speedwell* was wrecked on Juan Fernandez Island but Shelvocke managed to build a new vessel which enabled him and his much reduced crew to sail up the Peruvian coast, capture a number of ships and sail one of these prizes to Canton. The *Success* also took a number of prizes but by the time of her arrival in Macao was riddled with worm and had to be sold. The owners’ half share of such purchase as the *Success* managed to take was lost at sea on a Portuguese merchantman and whatever Shelvocke took disappeared from view in China.²⁹⁸ The owners attempted to bring Shelvocke before the High Court of Admiralty for piracy on a Portuguese ship off Brazil. Edward Hughes wrote to the East India Company asking for their assistance in bringing Shelvocke, who he describes as behaving in ‘a piratical manner’, to justice.²⁹⁹ The Court refused to execute warrants, however, because none of the crew would swear that any money had actually been taken from the ship.³⁰⁰ Equally the judge, according to William Betagh, discouraged

²⁹⁷ TNA C11/1831/45, Sheet 1, *Hughes v Shelvocke, bill of complaint, 1722*.

²⁹⁸ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World. Being an Account of a Remarkable Enterprize begun in 1719, chiefly to cruise on the Spaniards in the great South Sea (London, 1728)*, 165. The ship was burnt while lying at Rio de Janeiro and all but £1,800 of the £6,000 owners’ share was lost.

²⁹⁹ IOR/E/1/13, ff 449, Hughes to EIC 14/09/1722.

³⁰⁰ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 229. Affidavits in pursuit of the piracy action were taken from crew members of the *Speedwell* while they were held in Wood Street Counter.

the owners from issuing a suit at common law because the case was ‘intricate and doubtful’.³⁰¹

In 1726, four years after his return, Shelvocke published his account of the voyage, defending his own part in it and naming those he felt were most implicated in the disaster.³⁰² Two years later William Betagh, captain of marines on the *Speedwell*, and one of those named by Shelvocke, published his counterblast, insisting that Shelvocke’s book was ‘nothing but a bundle of falsehood and scandal: and John Bunyan’s *Pilgrims Progress* is a much better journal, and better writ’.³⁰³ The problem since then has been to decide which, if either, of the two very different versions of events to believe.

Until recently there has been little independent corroboration of Shelvocke’s or Betagh’s book, a lack which is made more significant by their apparent partisanship and vitriolic tone. Jonathan Lamb’s recently written (2004) entry for George Shelvocke in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* throws up one new piece of evidence in support of Betagh’s claim – the grant of a writ of *Ne Exeat Regnum* in Chancery against Shelvocke.³⁰⁴ A recent book about Shelvocke’s second captain, Simon Hatley, locates the affidavits cited above.³⁰⁵ We have, however, no reliable information about the costs of setting out the voyage, the purchase obtained or its distribution. What is known about

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World by way of the great South Sea*, (London, 1726). Page numbers are taken from the Seafarer’s Library reprint, edited with an introduction by W.G. Perrin (London 1928).

³⁰³ Ibid, 227.

³⁰⁴ Jonathan Lamb, ‘Shelvocke, George (1675–1742)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008

[<http://0www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/25320>, accessed 13 Jan 2010]

The writ is in TNA C33/339, pt. 1, 7.

³⁰⁵ TNA HCA 15/37 ‘S’, affidavits of James Morville, William Burrow, George Gill and Jacob Robins etc., cited in R. Fowke, *The Real Ancient Mariner: pirates and poesy on the South Sea* (Bishop’s Castle, 2010)

these matters comes entirely from Betagh's book which, so W. G. Perrin states, 'is a rather incoherent jumble of accusations, padded out with a description of the places he saw while a prisoner in Peru'.³⁰⁶ Betagh's account certainly has one serious flaw in that it is partially dependent on hearsay evidence, since he left (or was ordered off) the *Speedwell* before it was wrecked and before Shelvocke took his largest prizes.

In sum there is a reasonable body of biased and partisan eyewitness testimony but very little substantive evidence to support any of it. This lack of evidence is the more puzzling because Betagh is insistent that the owners of the ships embarked on a series of legal actions as soon as Shelvocke returned home in August 1722. After the failure of the attempts to bring a case in the High Court of Admiralty they applied to chancery, which required a lesser standard of proof based on probability. First the writ of *Ne Exeat Regnum* was applied for.³⁰⁷ Unfortunately for the owners the writ, issued under royal prerogative, which required Shelvocke to stay in England to answer the chancery complaint, was not served because Shelvocke had disappeared. A further 'writ of rebellion' was issued, a process of contempt in which the sheriff ordered the defendant to present himself to the court 'under pain of his allegiance', but by this time, according to Betagh, two of the complainers (one being Edward Hughes) had come to an accommodation with Shelvocke and dropped the case.³⁰⁸

Campbell is able to add some near contemporary, if circumstantial, colour to Betagh's account:

It is very clear, from the Whole of [Shelvocke's] Relation, that the Captain's Work was intended to be what we have represented it, Viz. An Apology for his own Behaviour; which was occasioned by a Law-suit commenced by the

³⁰⁶ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, (1928), xix.

³⁰⁷ This is the writ cited earlier: NA C33/339, pt. 1, 7 and mentioned in Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 229.

³⁰⁸ William Betagh, *A Voyage round the World*, 230.

Proprietors against him on his return home. This created great Noise in the World and People gave their Opinions very freely, without, perhaps, entering into the Merits of the Cause. Captain Shelvocke, therefore, wrote this Book to bring the Affair before the Public, and to leave, for the judgement of Posterity, his State of his own Case.³⁰⁹

All these law suits, and all the ‘great Noise’ accompanying them, should, surely, have left documentary traces, and yet up to now none, except for the Chancery writ and affidavits, has been found. There is, however, one reference to a case in the National Archives, Kew: *Gumley v. East India Company*, 1732, whose unpromising date, complainer and defendant disguise a document that proves to be the key to the archive of the ‘Clipperton Expedition’.

This document, C11/1831/45, consists of three sheets of parchment. The first is dated November 7, 1722 and is a formal bill of complaint brought by Edward Hughes and other owners against George Shelvocke, various members of his crew and the East India Company. It is faded and difficult to read. The second, about 6ft by 4ft in size, is another bill of complaint dated 1732 brought by John Gumley and other owners against the East India Company, the Attorney General, George Shelvocke and Edward Hughes. It is much longer than the original petition, in generally good condition and quite readable, although the writing is very small and the size of the document makes transcription difficult. The third sheet is the East India Company’s answer to the 1732 complaint. Between them these documents add considerably to what is already known about the Shelvocke voyage and its aftermath.

The first two sheets put the case, essentially against Shelvocke, very fully, describing the setting out and progress of the voyage of the *Speedwell* and the subsequent adventures of Shelvocke and his remaining crew. They accuse Shelvocke of planning

³⁰⁹ Harris, *Navigantium*, 238.

first to give Clipperton the slip, which he succeeded in doing on the second day of the voyage, then conniving with his crew to change the articles of agreement in his favour, and after the wreck of the *Speedwell* proposing to carry on under the ‘Jamaica Discipline’ of the Caribbean privateers in which all decisions on prize distribution were put to the vote of the crew. They also accuse him of making no record of purchase distributed on the voyage and of depriving the owners of their share of the prize. In support of this latter point the owners list the values of the various prizes taken based on a lucky find:

Your orators have lately discovered two books of and belonging to the said Matthew Stewart [Shelvocke’s steward] all of his own handwriting containing the Dividends of Several prizes taken by and divided between [the conspirators] one being entitled Matthew Stuart his log book from March 18th 1720-21 and the other being a journal of the said voyage.³¹⁰

According to Betagh the Warden of Dover castle had relieved Stewart of these books as he came ashore in England, and the owners duly handed what was clearly important incriminating evidence to the chancery clerk responsible for their case. A short report by the chancery master was issued on November 28 1723.³¹¹ This suspends judgement on the owners’ complaint on the grounds that Shelvocke had not responded and that the money he had supposedly stolen could not be located. It also supports the East India Company claim that it was entitled to keep the silver it had taken in Canton.

The evolution of the 1722 bill by Hughes against Shelvocke into the much longer one by Gumley against the East India Company is revealing.³¹² In the index volume for the chancery division where the case is listed (IND 1/4197) E Hughes is named as the first complainer in the case in 1722, but by 1732 his name has been crossed out and replaced by Gumley. The reason for this is explained towards the end of the bill, where Edward

³¹⁰ TNA C11/1831/45 sheet 1.

³¹¹ TNA C33/341, p.54.

³¹² TNA C11/1831/45, sheet 2, *Gumley v East India Company*, 1732.

Hughes appears as one of the defendants, along with the East India Company, George Shelvocke, some members of his crew and Sir Robert Raymond, the Attorney General. It is apparent from the later petition that the first had failed in its object. Betagh admits as much when he complains that Shelvocke had evaded justice by ‘absconding’ despite the writ of *Ne Exeat Regnum* being granted by the Lord Chancellor, only reappearing in 1724 to submit his journal to the Admiralty and later publish his book.³¹³ Betagh also suggests that his return was facilitated by Shelvocke’s ‘coming to an accommodation’ with two of the owners, who therefore presumably dropped their suit.³¹⁴ One of these must have been Edward Hughes, who, being the leading complainer, was the only one who could effectively prevent the continued prosecution of the case. The consideration for the help provided to Shelvocke by Hughes was, according to the petitioners, a sum equivalent to the 5% share he had originally agreed to in an indenture of 1718. This sum, the petitioners claim, was received (secretly) from Shelvocke and, rather surprisingly, from Clipperton. Quite how this latter payment was effected is debatable, since Clipperton died a few days after his arrival in Ireland in June 1722.

There was another reason why the complainers felt compelled to continue the case.

Before the start of the voyage two of the owners, Edward Hughes and Humphry Thayer, had signed a bond for £2000 each which would be repaid on the payment of the “King’s tenth” – the 10% bounty payable on the value of their prize by privateers -that had been reinstated in 1712.³¹⁵ Thus Thayer, particularly, was not only to be deprived of his share but, because the Attorney General claimed that there was undoubtedly prize that should have been declared, of his bond as well.

³¹³ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 230.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ TNA C11/1831/45, Sheet 1.

Thus the 1732 case, ostensibly against the East India Company and the Attorney General, but in practice seeking redress from the same old enemy and his confederates, was a last desperate attempt to recoup the owners' losses. Now, however, Edward Hughes is named as being one of the conspirators who had contrived to deny the other owners their share of the prize.

It is now possible to piece together an account of the Clipperton/Shelvocke voyage which, for the first time, is supported by documentary evidence. The evidence is one-sided in that it represents the views of plaintiffs and defendants in a case, but the fact that it was subject to legal scrutiny and accompanied by a number of supporting documents gives it much greater plausibility than Shelvocke's or Betagh's books. It adds some new information but, more significantly, it adds credibility to Betagh's account, with which it largely concurs. In fact since Betagh's book was produced six years after the original bill, it is reasonable to conclude that much of the information about, for example, the costs of the voyage (about which a lowly officer such as Betagh was unlikely to be privy) was obtained by Betagh from that document.

Origins

The idea for the expedition seems to have come first to Edward Hughes esquire. Hughes had been a purser in the Navy and at one point was a shipmate of Shelvocke, but he had retired from the sea after inheriting, according to Betagh, a small estate. Shelvocke had been commissioned as a lieutenant in 1705 and later became purser of the *Monck* (60 guns).³¹⁶ By 1718, according to Betagh, Shelvocke had fallen on hard times and applied to Hughes for help:

³¹⁶George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World (1928)*, Introduction, xi.

His circumstances were so low, that he did not scruple to declare he had no bread to eat; nor a friend in the world except him, to expect any favour from. Whereupon [Hughes] having served with him in the navy aboard the same ship, generously invited Shelvocke to his country house, where he made him a present of a twenty pound note on his goldsmith, till he could effectually provide for him, having then this enterprise in view. When he first told him he should command some of these ships, Shelvocke was so thoroughly pleas'd with the news, that he vow'd it was greatly beyond his expectations; and rather than not go on the voyage at all, he would content himself to be boatswain's mate.³¹⁷

This is a curious story, uncorroborated (unsurprisingly) by Shelvocke who merely states he was appointed commander-in-chief by 'various gentlemen adventurers'. It appears to have originated with Hughes, but it must also be seen in the context of the date of publication, by which time Hughes had become one of the villains of the affair as far as Betagh was concerned. Betagh may be implying that Shelvocke had some hold over Hughes which resulted in the secret accommodation they came to at the end of the voyage. It is also possible that the meeting of Hughes and Shelvocke was the trigger that set the project in train, although it is difficult to imagine that Shelvocke would have kept quiet about such a key role.

It is possible, by combining evidence from the two books, the letter of marque declarations, the Chancery bill and a surviving share certificate to identify the principal 'gentlemen adventurers'.³¹⁸ They were:

Edward Hughes of Bloomsbury esquire

John Gumley of Twickenham esquire

Humphry Thayer of London esquire

Beake Winder “ “ esquire

³¹⁷ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 8.

³¹⁸ The share certificate is reproduced in a plate in *A Voyage Round the World* (1928), 112.

Richard Chichely	esquire
Henry Neale of Hatton Garden	goldsmith
Andrew Drummond	goldsmith
Alexander Strahan	goldsmith
George Middleton	goldsmith

According to the share certificate, dated 18th June 1720 – after the ships had sailed – Hughes, Drummond, Winder and Strahan were ‘managers and directors’ and Thayer was ‘Trustee’. Hughes appeared before the High Court of Admiralty as the declarant of the letters of marque, in which Neale, Gumley, Winder and Thayer are named as ‘owners and setters out’.³¹⁹

These are a different type of investor from those in the Woodes Rogers expedition who were, as we have seen, merchants, ship captains and ship owners with but one ‘esquire’ and one knight in their number. By contrast, four of the Clipperton investors are described as gentlemen. John Gumley, although strictly a tradesman, was a very successful cabinet maker whose clients included George I and George II and who used the influence of his son-in-law, Lord Bath, to become an MP.³²⁰ Gumley died in 1728, leaving a substantial fortune to his second son and heir John.³²¹ It is this John who is chief complainer in the 1732 Bill. Richard Chichely was an aristocrat who numbered admirals and bishops in his family. Humphry Thayer did have some similarities with Thomas Goldney II. Like Goldney he was a banker, although on a rather grander scale since he funded , among other things, John Wood’s development of Bath, and like

³¹⁹ TNA, HCA 26/29,5

³²⁰ Romney Sedgwick, *House of Commons, 1715-1754*, 91. A brief history of John Gumley may also be found on the website of Gumley House convent school in Twickenham: www.fcjsisters.org/golive/golive.../heritage-gumley

³²¹ Ibid.

Goldney he had dealings with the excise since he was appointed a commissioner for England in 1722.³²² Shelvocke describes the investors as ‘gentlemen adventurers’ rather than merchant venturers and none, except Hughes, whose experience had been as a purser rather than a seaman, appears to have had a direct interest in ships and the sea. Herein may lie the underlying weakness of the project that resulted in the selection of one unsuitable commander and his replacement by another.

The bill of complaint provides little on the costs of setting out the voyage, but there may have been supporting evidence supplied to the court (as was the case for the Woodes Rogers voyage) in the form of invoices and receipts. The bill states that:

Your orators did agree to fit out at their own Expense two ships as privateers in order to cruise upon the Spanish ships in the South Seas ... and in One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighteen did order to be built or purchased two ships or vessels one of them called the *Success*..., and the other the *Speedwell*, fitted out and equipped them the charge of which amounted to the sum of fourteen thousand pounds and upwards...³²³

Betagh echoes the wording of the bill, but adds a significant comparison : ‘The charge of our expedition was upwards of fourteen thousand pounds, and I believe the *Duke* and *Dutchess* did not stand the Bristol gentlemen so much’.³²⁴ One is inclined to suspect, in the absence of any material corroboration, that the outsett figure has been arrived at partly because it was thought to be a little larger than that for the Rogers expedition, although, as we have seen, this sum would have covered only the cost of setting out the Bristol ships, not the whole expense of the voyage. The bill is oddly vague about whether the *Success* and *Speedwell* were new built for the expedition or bought and re-fitted, but if new then the *Success*, of about 36 guns and 350 tons burthen (as with the *Duke* and *Dutchess* these numbers vary depending on where they are recorded) and the

³²² *Treasury Books & Papers*, Vol.2, 1731-34.

³²³ TNA C11/1831/45, sheet 2.

³²⁴ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 238.

Speedwell, 22 guns and 200 tons, were comparable in size to the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, so the figure of £14,000 is plausible.³²⁵ It is more than likely that the *Speedwell* was the very same as that advertised for sale ‘by the candle’ in the *Daily Courant* of August 9 1718. This *Speedwell* is described as a ‘galley, foreign built, burthen 200 tons or more’.

The example set by the successful Woodes Rogers expedition hangs like a minatory shadow over that of Clipperton. For Betagh the conduct of that voyage was a model which Shelvocke ignored or flouted:

And as to *Shelvocke*’s officers they were so far from being accessory to any miscarriage, that he never consulted us on any occasion whatever tho’ he as well as *Clipperton*, had strict orders in all enterprises to follow that excellent scheme framed and practised by captain *Woodes Rogers* in his memorable voyage round the globe; which is certainly the safest method for all navigators, who mean to execute any project of this kind and for which end *Rogers*’s printed journal was put aboard each ship. It was his rule never to undertake anything of moment, without first calling a council of his chief officers, who in writing testify’d their approbation of, and concurrence in the execution of the design: but our captain was above confining himself to any precedents or orders, his will being the only reason for all he did, so that he never kept any journal or diary at all;³²⁶

For Shelvocke, on the other hand, the Woodes Rogers expedition was indirectly responsible for the crew of the *Speedwell* mutinying to re-negotiate the terms of the owners’ agreement, since one of the supposed ringleaders, Simon Hatley, had been on the Rogers expedition and ‘knew by woeful experience how they were used on board the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, being paid not one-tenth of their due’.³²⁷

Gumley and his fellow plaintiffs were at pains to show that they had absorbed the lessons of the Rogers expedition in that they had provided clear instructions to the captains and bound them and every crew member with, they supposed, watertight

³²⁵ TNA HCA 26/29, 5.

³²⁶ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 11.

³²⁷ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 22.

articles of agreement modelled on those of the Bristol ships. The terms were that the profits from both ships would, after owners' costs had been taken, be shared half to owners and half to crew (a rather more generous payment to the crew than the 2/3 to 1/3 division of the Rogers expedition). Each member of the crew agreed the extent of his own share based on rank and contribution 'by them respectively signed to, to be in full payment and satisfaction of wages'.³²⁸ The arrangements for counting and storing the purchase were precise but it is notable that the owners failed to learn one of the important lessons of the Rogers expedition – that privateer crews had a strong sense of customary right where issues of plunder were concerned. The agreement makes no mention of plunder, but instead insists

‘that all small particulars of value should be locked in a chest or chests with three locks the keys whereof should be kept by the Commander in Chief [Clipperton] the Agent General [Godfrey] and the Boatswain of the ship on behalf of the ship's company and the same delivered up at the end of the voyage to the owners... on penalty of losing twenty times the value of the stated goods.’³²⁹

One of the enduring mysteries of the Clipperton expedition is the dramatic change of plan and organisation that occurred immediately before the ships set out. Shelvocke gives a full account of the initial arrangement, whereby the owners applied to the Emperor Charles VI for a commission to cruise against the Spanish (Britain at the time experiencing an uncharacteristic period of peace with Spain).³³⁰ The ships were renamed the *Prince Eugene* and the *Staremburg* in honour of the new patron and Shelvocke sailed in the *Staremburg* to Ostend in order to collect the commission. Shelvocke claims that the original plan was for him to return with the commission and remove to the larger *Prince Eugene* as Commander-in-Chief of the expedition. Betagh's

³²⁸ TNA C11/1831/45, sheet 2.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, (1726), ix.

account, while broadly confirming Shelvocke's, contains one significant difference. He maintains that the owners 'obtained his Imperial Majesty's commission' and Shelvocke was merely its courier.³³¹ In order to confound this account Shelvocke, 'since I hear it has been disputed whether we ever had those commissions or not' printed a copy of the translation from the Latin which confirmed that it was made out in his name alone as 'the most deserving Man George Shelvocke, upon a certain and experienced opinion of his honesty, confirm'd by a long series of good actions'.³³² It is, of course possible that this document is a forgery, since Shelvocke did not offer up the original, but the subsequent conduct of the owners does suggest that the commission was in his name and consequently presented a serious obstacle to his removal from the command of the expedition.

Quite why Shelvocke had to be removed is unclear. The appointment as Commander-in-Chief and his gracious treatment by the Emperor clearly went to his head, as even his own account appears to accept. Betagh is unforgiving, and relates how three of the owners set out to meet him at the Downs on his return from Ostend, only to find that he had failed to arrive at the appointed time.

Upon his arrival, they inquir'd into the cause of his delay, and were surprised to find he had idly neglected joining his consort as he ought, had broke thro' his orders, made entertainments, hoisted Imperial colours, brought over ninety *Flemings* and six officers, fir'd away five barrels of powder and began upon his wine and brandy which the owners had put aboard him, and was designed as the whole stock for both ships, to comfort them in their long and hazardous voyage. And in short so ill did he behave, as to bring his owners to change the command...³³³

³³¹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 4.

³³² George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1726), xiv.

³³³ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 6.

Such behaviour does not, on the surface, appear sufficient grounds for removing him from command. In one of the many instructive parallels with the Rogers expedition it is worth noting that Rogers was admonished for profligate spending in Cork, but there was no suggestion of removing him from command.

The dilemma for the owners was that while it was easy enough (though potentially fatal to the health of the expedition) to change the command it was not so easy to remove or disavow the Emperor's commission granted to, and signed by, Shelvocke. As luck would have it the war that had been expected between Britain and Spain was finally declared on December 17, enabling the owners to obtain Admiralty letters of marque for both ships, under their original names, on January 1, 1719.³³⁴ Nevertheless, the original imperial commission was still in existence and had the potential to bolster Shelvocke's legal position as holder of a commission unattached to a ship.

The bill of complaint, while providing a very full account of the expedition from the point at which the letters of marque were obtained, does not mention, significantly, the imperial commission or Shelvocke's voyage to Ostend. All mention of Shelvocke's brief period as commander-in-chief is thus expunged and replaced with a statement of the command structure which emphasises Shelvocke's subordinate position:

The said captain John Clipperton was to be Commodore or chief commander and the said Captain George Shelvocke senior was to be subject to the command and obey the Orders and Directions of the said John Clipperton.³³⁵

These sudden changes, whatever their motives or their necessity, reveal a singular lack of judgement on the part of the voyage's managers. Shelvocke was a strange appointment in the first place. His experience as a second lieutenant and later purser (a less senior but often more prosperous position) on a 60 gun ship hardly seems an

³³⁴ TNA HCA 26/29, 5.

³³⁵ TNA C11/1831/45, sheet 2.

adequate qualification, and Perrin surmises that it may have been felt that a commissioned naval officer was needed to command the foreign crew taken on at Ostend.³³⁶ Shelvocke himself seems to have had little idea why he was appointed and was, as we have seen, astonished to be so. That, when his inadequacies became apparent, the owners should appoint John Clipperton in his place was merely to compound the error with another, since Clipperton's qualification for the post was even more doubtful than Shelvocke's. He had sailed as Dampier's chief mate (that is, the fourth most senior officer after Dampier, the master and two lieutenants) on the *St George* but deserted, according to Dampier, (who also accused him of stealing his letter of marque), or was sent away, according to both Funnel and Welbe, along with twenty of the crew, in a prize in September 1704.³³⁷ From there he sailed to Batavia, where the ship was condemned but he continued home, along with his surviving crew, in an Indiaman. Nothing is known of his career from 1706 until this voyage, although Shelvocke, who has otherwise nothing complimentary to say about him, admits that he had twice been on the shores of Chile and Peru.³³⁸ Shelvocke, although assuring Hughes that he would show Clipperton 'all the respect in the world' after the new command arrangement was announced, still could not resist writing in his book that Clipperton was 'neither an Officer, nor fit to be one, he having always been a stranger to regular discipline', and 'nobody that had a thorough knowledge of him wou'd have given him charge of a *collier*'.³³⁹

³³⁶ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1728), x.

³³⁷ William Dampier, *Capt. Dampier's Vindication*, 5; John Welbe, *An Answer to captain Dampier's Vindication*, 5.

³³⁸ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1728), xxi. One chronicler of the voyage, C. Fox Smith, describes Clipperton as going 'cruising for prizes on his own account' after he left Dampier. 'It was probably during this cruise that he discovered the island that still bears his name; and thus achieved the doubtful distinction of being one of the most disreputable persons commemorated on the map of the world'.

³³⁹ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1726), xxii and xxv; James Cook, of course, commanded just such a ship on his first Pacific voyage.

Shelvocke completes his preface, and his diatribe against Clipperton with a homily so unctuous that, if we believe only the smallest part of Betagh's attack, is a model of hypocrisy:

In a word, I would advise any set of Gentlemen, who may for the future be inclin'd to be concern'd in such an Expedition, as it is an affair of an extraordinary kind to be at extraordinary pains in a prudent regulation of their scheme and articles, to let their chief care to be in the choice of a Captain, or Captains who have experience accompanied with a strict disposition to honour and honesty, let his or their Officers be such as have been us'd to command, and such as are indear'd either to him or to them, or some of the gentlemen concern'd by a friendly, if not an intimate acquaintance, let them be Men who have given some proof of their integrity; and, in short, let it be so order'd that the Captains, and their chief Officers shall be bound together, if possible, by bonds of natural affection, or contracted friendship, so shall they have it both in their power and inclination to quell the unreasonable discontents and mutinies of their people in the remotest parts of the Earth, so shall *Gentlemen-Adventurers* have well grounded reason to hope to reap the fruit of their hazardous expence.³⁴⁰

Much though it must have galled the gentlemen adventurers of his voyage to admit it, he was, of course, right.

The Voyage

Shelvocke's manuscript account of the voyage contains in it a 'Scheme of Voyage'. It appears to have been drawn up by the managing owners but it contains a discrepancy in the dates given which throws some doubt on its authenticity. The introductory paragraph states:

Voyage to the South Sea, to cruise on the Spaniards under his Majesty's Commission with two ships, viz.:

³⁴⁰ Ibid., xxxi.

The *Success* of 350 tons 30 guns commanded by Capt. Jno. Clipperton, and the *Speedwell* of 200 tons 22 guns and 100 men commanded by Capt. George Shelvocke with 18 month provisions at short allowance.

To gain your passage you must get clear of the Channel in the middle of November; then you have three months to get into the Straits of Magellan (though you may gain your passage in six weeks). In the straits you must wood, water and clean your ships, which brings on the end of January. The beginning of February you will be in the South Sea, the properest season of the year.³⁴¹

The discrepancy lies in the fact that the expedition's composition, with Clipperton in the larger ship, was only formalised with the signing of the letters of marque on January 1st 1719, and yet the scheme seems to have been written before November 1718 – the suggested time for setting out.

In fact the various changes in command described above, and the enforced delay in Plymouth waiting for a favourable wind, meant that the two ships did not set out until February 13th 1719. Two days later, according to Shelvocke, the *Speedwell* came under the lee of the *Success* and asked Clipperton to collect his share of the liquor which had been brought back from Ostend, in order to reduce *Speedwell*'s 'crankness'.³⁴² He adds that in return he was expecting to pick up his share of the charts and waggoners that had been loaded onto the *Success*. Betagh offers the evidence of the journal of the mate of the *Success*, George Taylor, to question whether the two ships ever met in the way described by Shelvocke, although strangely he does not offer the evidence of his own eyes (he was, after all, on the *Speedwell*) to confirm Taylor's report, and is uncharacteristically cautious about condemning Shelvocke's account out of hand, preferring instead to suggest that if Clipperton had failed to collect his liquor at that point it was because he expected to rendezvous at the Canaries in a few days.³⁴³ Neither

³⁴¹ Shelvocke MS, Admiralty Library, Ms.18.

³⁴² Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 2.

³⁴³ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 12.

account offers an explanation as to why the liquor – and the charts - were not shared out during the weeks both ships lay at Plymouth.

Whether or not the offer to send over the liquor was rejected, all accounts agree that the two ships sailed separately and independently from then on. Betagh mocks Shelvocke's explanations for his failure to meet at the agreed rendezvous and claims that Shelvocke deliberately avoided a meeting with Clipperton and had planned all along to cruise independently.³⁴⁴ In support of this accusation Betagh uses Taylor's journal to show that, despite being together on February 15th the *Success* reached the Canaries 19 days later whereas the *Speedwell* covered the same ground in 30 days. By the time Shelvocke reached St Catherine's in Brazil the *Success*, despite having waited at the Canaries and St Vincent for a total of twenty days, was already in the South Sea. Shelvocke blames the poor performance on his ignorant crew and the fact that the *Speedwell* was 'pestered' (overloaded).³⁴⁵ The fact that Shelvocke failed to arrive at any of the rendezvous points in time, despite having favourable winds, seems to support Betagh, although Betagh himself – captain of marines and therefore unlikely to be a seaman – is not necessarily a reliable reporter of winds and tides. As Shelvocke sailed on, the evidence of, if not a plan, then at least a set intention to abandon his employers and their scheme, accumulated. The bill of complaint sets out the case in some detail, accusing him of shedding crew members at the Canaries and the Cape Verdes islands, of avoiding the next agreed rendezvous at St Vincent and 'turning out of the service' the master, gunner and chief mate. Later he put ashore 'some of his best Seamen' because they 'would not comply with his unjust Measures to defraud these said Owners of the benefit of the said Voyage'.³⁴⁶ He boarded, according to the bill, a Portuguese (and

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ TNA C/11/1831/45, sheet 2.

therefore allied) ship off Cape Frio and sent Simon Hatley, whom Shelvocke described as ‘the best busker’, to frighten its crew into giving up damasks, silks, china and gold moidores.³⁴⁷ This was interpreted as an act of piracy by the owners, who later attempted to persuade the Portuguese Government to bring an action. Shelvocke contests all these accusations, though the accumulation of detailed accusations in Betagh’s book and the owners’ complaint fatally weaken his case.

As the *Speedwell* lay off St. Catherine’s in Brazil an incident took place that was to become a focus for the subsequent arguments over the ownership of the prize. According to Shelvocke he received a letter from the ship’s company ‘with articles annexed to it, which they said they were resolved to insist on, threatening that they would not stir a step to sea till what they demanded was securely agreed upon by me and the chief officers’³⁴⁸. The letter is dutiful and appears designed to arouse sympathy in an audience not actually present, by emphasising the vulnerability of the ignorant common seamen when confronted by rich people with clever lawyers bent on depriving them of their just rewards:

For it is known to all, how the people on board the ships Duke and Dutchess were treated, and if we carry our money to London can expect no better treatment. Secondly, That the articles we signed at Plymouth were never read in our hearing, neither would Mr Godfrey [the owners’ principal agent] allow us to read the same. He told us they were the same with those on the cabin door, though we are now assured of the contrary. One thing we saw in them was, that there was three times as much writing in them as in those on the cabin door, and written by several hands, and interlined in several places, which we do not know the meaning of. And lastly, how dangerous is it for poor men to trust their fortune in the hands of rich men?³⁴⁹

³⁴⁷ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 25. ‘Busker’, in this context, meant a man skilled in the piratical art of extracting plunder from reluctant prizes (OED).

³⁴⁸ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 18.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

The annexed articles provide a detailed statement of how plunder ought to be distributed. Shelvocke follows the printing of the articles with a critique of their syntax and style, which, he suggests, is proof that they are an authentic product of common seamen (and not, as the Bill suggests, a paper of his own devising):

This is a true verbal copy of the original letter and articles, which I have now by me. And , I dare say, nobody will doubt of it when they read the needless tautologies, insignificant expressions, incoherency and dull confusion with which the Articles, etc., were drawn up.³⁵⁰

I have discovered a major flaw in this account. Far from being the product of semi-literate seamen these articles are, in fact, a largely word-for-word copy of those devised by the officers on the Rogers expedition as printed in *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* – the very book given to Shelvocke and Clipperton at the start of their voyage (APPENDIX VI). Any incoherency and confusion must therefore be laid at the door of Captains Woodes Rogers, Stephen Courtney and Thomas Dover. There are minor differences between the two sets of articles, but these are either alterations of names etc. to fit the different circumstances - for example only one ship is referred to by Shelvocke rather than two as with Rogers – or reflect badly on Shelvocke. Shelvocke has omitted, for example, any reference to the public recording of plunder as required in number four of the Rogers articles, as he has left out mention of the agents' roles in judging what is plunder. So thoroughly has Rogers's book been combed that article three in the Shelvocke version has been taken verbatim from a separate agreement made between the officers and crews of the Rogers expedition a year later than the original.

³⁵⁰ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* , 21.

This adds credence to Betagh's claim that Shelvocke, far from being the victim of a mutiny by his crew, was actually the cause of it, and had sent his steward, Matthew Stewart, as emissary to foment mutiny among the crew who would otherwise have been content with their lot.

The tenor of this letter set forth their diffidence of the gentlemen owners, and their fears of being all cheated: which the fellows before had no notion of, and if not prompted to these apprehensions... by Shelvocke himself; who finding all that he had done and said fail of the desir'd effect, had now made use of this Emissary Stewart, to poison the men's minds, when otherwise they would have been quiet at their duty. I need no stronger argument to prove the honest and orderly disposition of the ship's company, than this writer's own words, page 4. who says himself, they were four fifths landmen; whose first complaint, 'tis well known, is always for want of provisions;³⁵¹

Betagh goes on to point out that Shelvocke had nine officers who could easily have suppressed any serious attempt at mutiny, and that the articles he claims to have been forced to accept were actually to his advantage, in that they awarded him 5% of all cabin plunder. The fact that these articles were copied from Woodes Rogers's book adds considerable weight to Betagh's claim, for it is difficult to see how the crew could have had access to the book without the connivance of its possessor, Shelvocke.

After wintering in St Catherine's, Shelvocke set off for the South Sea on August 20, 1719. By October 1 the *Speedwell* was struggling through storms off Cape Horn and it was then that Simon Hatley shot the 'disconsolate black albatross' that seemed to be the only living creature to inhabit that desolate sea apart from the *Speedwell's* crew.³⁵²

The *Speedwell* sailed on into the South Sea and up the Chilean coast, first stopping at Chiloe, ostensibly to wood and water but probably to avoid meeting Clipperton at the appointed rendezvous of Juan Fernandez. For the next two months Shelvocke sailed

³⁵¹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 37.

³⁵² George Shelvocke *A Voyage Round the World*, 41. Shelvocke's manuscript makes no mention of this event.

slowly up the coast, taking three prizes and eventually arriving at Juan Fernandez where they found that Clipperton had left a message carved into a tree. Staying only to replenish supplies they sailed on, sacked Payta, narrowly escaped capture by Spanish warships, lost several men (including William Betagh who fell captive to the Spanish), and took significant prizes. In May Shelvocke had an abrupt change of plan which involved them returning to Juan Fernandez and from there attacking (again) the coast of Chile. His justification for this plan – that the Spanish would not consider pursuing them to windward (i.e. to the south) – is unconvincing and lends credibility to Betagh’s otherwise extraordinary claim that Shelvocke had a devious secret intent.³⁵³

Shelvocke took the final, irrevocable step from privateer to pirate in Juan Fernandez. The *Speedwell* arrived there on May 6th 1720 and, according to Shelvocke – who provides the only eyewitness account of the episode –

Here I plied off and on till the 21st, but could not get off as much water as we daily expended, which made me think of anchoring in the road for a few hours; and in order to do it, I prepared twenty tons of casks to raft ashore, and then worked in and anchored according to the best direction I had, in forty fathom water, and made a warp which was the length of three hawser and a half [800 yards], which was made fast to the rocks to steady the ship, and by which we hauled our raft of casks ashore and aboard. The very next morning we were ready to go to sea, but had not the least opportunity in four days.

May 25. A hard gale of wind came out of the sea upon us (a thing very uncommon as has been reported) and brought in a great tumbling swell, so that in a few hours our cable (which was never wet before) parted. A dismal accident this, there being no means to be used or the least prospect of avoiding immediate destruction. But providence interposed in our behalf so far that if we had struck but a cable’s length to the Eastward or Westward of the place where we did, we must inevitable have perished... In short, words can’t express the wretched condition we were in, or the surprise we were under at being so

³⁵³ Ibid., 112.

unfortunately shipwrecked, or the dread we had upon us of starving on the uninhabited island we were thrown upon, in case we should escape the sea.³⁵⁴

The bill of complaint deploras Shelvocke's carelessness in being thus cast ashore, but does not go as far as Betagh, who dismisses the storm as 'the plausible reason he gives for losing his ship, being a wind rais'd only in his brain, and of his own invention'.³⁵⁵ Betagh, by this time, was not there, and his account of the events on the island is thus based on the evidence supplied by Thomas Dodd, lieutenant of marines, who survived the wreck, contained in an affidavit supplied to Chancery.³⁵⁶ Glyndwr Williams believes that Betagh's case – that Shelvocke had deliberately wrecked his ship in order to free himself from his contract with the owners – 'does not ring true'. Jonathan Lamb and Philip Edwards both consider Shelvocke's account of the wreck to be more of a romantic fiction than a true record, noting particularly how the diction and style are noticeably different from much of the rest of the book and that: 'To pretend is not simply to lie, as Shelvocke did when he said a sudden storm from the north drove the Speedwell onto the shore of Juan Fernandez, when no less an authority than Selkirk said that in four years he never knew the wind to blow off the sea there (Rogers 1712, 134)'.³⁵⁷ On the other hand Lamb also suggests that the wreck could not have been deliberate:

Shelvocke's carelessness towards the lives of his men suggests that after the shipwreck, he acted as if his self-preservation was the only business he had in hand. But to read anything more into his plan than that – to assume that he had calculated on taking a treasure galleon, and had figured out how best to secrete his fortune – is to credit him with a clairvoyance and a faculty for probable calculations he could not have possessed.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 114.

³⁵⁵ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 173.

³⁵⁶ The order for a writ of *Ne Exeat Regnum*, TNA C33/339, pt1, 7, mentions the affidavit but I have been unable to find it in the National Archive.

³⁵⁷ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the self*, 198; Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, 49.

³⁵⁸ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the self*, 197.

It is almost inconceivable that Shelvocke deliberately wrecked his 200 ton, 20 gun ship in order to replace it with a makeshift bark of forty tons with only one gun. Yet there is an impressive body of circumstantial evidence that suggests it might just be true.³⁵⁹

Firstly, as Betagh is at pains to point out, Shelvocke, by his own account, had left the *Speedwell* in a perilous position less than half a mile from the rocks for five days, but even so, when (and if) the storm did get up it should still have been possible for a good crew to drop more anchors or make sail. The dangers of a lee shore are ingrained in the minds of mariners and Shelvocke's argument that he had 'not the least opportunity' (see above) to escape this danger in the preceding four days is very weak and begs the question: 'why not?' The winds were comparatively mild for much of the time and even if they were blowing onshore it should have been possible to warp, row, tow or sail the *Speedwell* off.³⁶⁰ At the very least he is guilty of gross negligence in an area – seamanship – in which he showed himself to be otherwise thoroughly proficient.

Betagh, however, goes much further than accusing him of negligence. In his view the shipwreck was the culmination of a long-planned intention to keep the bulk of the prize for himself. He points out that Shelvocke had acquired a pair of bellows and a forge from a French ship in St. Catherine's, things which would be almost essential for making the bolts, spikes and nails necessary for building a large vessel such as that which eventually took the survivors from Juan Fernandez, but were otherwise of dubious value.³⁶¹ These were, indeed, two of the small number of items that were rescued from the wreck. Betagh quotes Dodd who reported to him that, far from being wrecked in a storm, the *Speedwell* was hauled athwart the rocks and deliberately

³⁵⁹ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 199.

³⁶⁰ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 114.

³⁶¹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 175.

smashed on them in calm weather.³⁶² Against this must be laid the affidavits of two of the crew members who were later accused of being confederates of Shelvocke: James Moulville and John Theobald. Theobald states that ‘he was onboard the ship *Speedwell* when she was cast away and lost and that he is well-assured that the same happened by stress of weather and not by any neglect, negligence or willfulness of the ships company’.³⁶³ Betagh’s case is strengthened by the flaws in Shelvocke’s own account of the wreck. The ‘dread we had upon us’ of starving on the uninhabited island is disingenuous at best. Rogers’s book, which, as we have seen, Shelvocke read carefully, makes it very clear that Juan Fernandez was a remarkably productive island in terms of food, having plenty of goats, seals, shellfish, edible roots and ‘cabbages’. Indeed Shelvocke had been heard to say ‘It was not difficult living at Fernandes, if a man should accidentally be thrown there, since Mr Selkirk had continu’d upon it four years by himself’.³⁶⁴

However it was accomplished the shipwreck brought about a complete change in the way the voyage was run from there on. Shelvocke claims he was forced by most of his surviving officers and crew to renounce his owners and his position as captain and subjugate himself to the ‘Jamaica discipline’ espoused by Caribbean pirates.³⁶⁵

Shelvocke blames the whole affair on the regrettable familiarity shown by his officers to the men, and particularly by his first lieutenant, Brooks, who ‘had contracted such a liking to the fore-castle conversation and way of caballing that he became dead to all the civilities I had continually heaped upon him, and now openly, and before privately,

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 174.

³⁶³ NA HCA 15/37 ‘S’, affidavit of John Theobald, mariner, 3rd Nov 1722. As an alleged confederate of Shelvocke Theobald must be considered an unreliable witness.

³⁶⁴ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 172.

³⁶⁵ George Shelvocke *A Voyage Round the World*, 122. There is account of the origins of the ‘Jamaica Discipline’ in Marcus Rediker, ‘Hydrarchy and Libertalia’, in ed. Starkey et al, *Pirates and Privateers*, 29-46.

preferred the despicable familiarity of the common sailors'.³⁶⁶ Betagh, predictably, gives a very different slant to the story, claiming that it was Shelvocke who proposed adopting the Jamaica discipline.³⁶⁷ There was another factor which, according to Shelvocke, drove what would otherwise have been seen as mutiny. The crew believed that the destruction of the *Speedwell* meant that they were no longer tied to the terms of the articles they had signed in England and were therefore at liberty to act as they saw fit without reference to the owners or their captain, who had only been appointed to command the *Speedwell*. Whether this was legally the case was much debated at the time and became a contentious issue following the wreck of the *Wager*, a frigate in Anson's South Seas fleet, in 1741, where the example of Shelvocke's predicament loomed so large in the sailors' memory that they named their makeshift yawl the *Speedwell*.³⁶⁸ Betagh maintained that even the new name for the ship built on Juan Fernandez was deliberate:

On the fifth of *October* 1720, the bark is completed, launched and call'd the *Recovery*. And thus by giving her a new name, captain Shelvocke has the new fashioned assurance to tell mankind that the owners title is quite sunk, as if there never had been any such thing: tho' he still proceeded with the king's commission, being the property of the Owners.³⁶⁹

Betagh adds weight to his accusation by pointing out that Shelvocke, far from suffering from the mutiny, was actually better off under the new than the old system, since he originally had 60 of 650 shares of half the total, whereas he now had 6 of 52 of the whole.³⁷⁰

Thus freed from the constraints of his obligations to the owners of the *Speedwell*, Shelvocke set about building his bark, the *Recovery* and after she was launched sailed

³⁶⁶ George Shelvocke *A Voyage Round the World*, 123.

³⁶⁷ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 177.

³⁶⁸ Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 230.

³⁶⁹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 180.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 177-178.

with his crew of ‘upwards of forty’ men up the Pacific coast of South America, plundering small towns and seizing prizes as he went.³⁷¹ Finally he and his crew transferred from the *Recovery* to a prize, the *Jesus Maria*, and on January 25, 1721 sighted the *Success* off the coast of Mexico. This meeting, after a separation of almost two years, is not quite the extraordinary coincidence that it appears to be. The reasons Shelvocke gives for missing the various rendezvous arranged before the start of the expedition are very unconvincing, while Betagh’s contention that Shelvocke was deliberately avoiding his ‘chief commander’ is more plausible. Shelvocke must, however, have felt that by 1721 Clipperton would have been well on his way home, and that Shelvocke had the South Sea to himself. In fact both ships were converging on the spot off Mexico that would allow them to follow the approved method of crossing the Pacific by running down the line of Latitude 15 degrees North, and the chances of their meeting at this point and time were therefore quite high. What happened at this and the subsequent meetings of the two ships is hotly disputed by Shelvocke and Betagh, the latter relying on Taylor’s log for his account. The only certainty is that their stories are so different that at least one is lying, and possibly both.

Shelvocke’s version of events is certainly more intemperate, accusing Clipperton of ‘unpardonable mismanagement’ and of having ‘an inhuman disposition’.³⁷² Taylor’s journal is, by contrast, unadorned. As mate of the *Success* he was a junior officer and it is apparent from his narrative that he was not present at the meetings between Shelvocke or his representatives and Clipperton. Many of his statements are therefore based on hearsay, but in some ways this gives them more credibility since he (and Betagh) seems to have avoided the temptation to invent. On the first meeting there is a

³⁷¹ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 144.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 172 and 179.

shouted conversation between the *Success's* pinnace and the *Happy Return* (the newly renamed *Jesus Maria*) and Taylor reports its gist:

They differ much in their account; but having no regular command among them, being all alike as the West-Indies privatiers. They have chosen a quarter master, carrying everything by a majority of votes: so that we find, they have quite broke their articles with the owners, and have shared all among themselves.³⁷³

The significance of the appointment of Matthew Stewart as quartermaster would have been well known to all mariners, since it was at that time a position peculiar to buccaneers.³⁷⁴ As Betagh had previously pointed out the quartermaster ‘officiated as one who had rather been used to the *Jamaica* discipline than a well regulated ship of war’ and was chiefly employed in collecting and distributing the purchase.³⁷⁵ The term ‘West-Indies privatiers’ was equally loaded, for commissions from West Indies officials, such as the governor of Jamaica, were notoriously easy to obtain and their provisions often ignored.³⁷⁶

There followed a number of meetings, first Shelvocke coming aboard the *Success* and then some of the officers of the *Success* rowing to the *Happy Return*. Shelvocke’s narrative is quite detailed at this point but gives very few dates, so it is difficult to match the two accounts. It is clear, however, that Clipperton became increasingly uneasy about Shelvocke and reluctant to make any joint plans. His suspicions were further roused when three of Shelvocke’s crew, James Hendry, the purser whom Shelvocke had designated owners’ agent, John Rainor and Thomas Dodd (both lieutenants of marines

³⁷³ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 148.

³⁷⁴ Quartermaster, a term applied interchangeably with coxswain, was a recognised senior rating on merchant ships according to Peter Earle, *Sailors*, 43. As many as five quartermasters would be employed on East Indiamen. The buccaneer use of the word seems to relate more closely to its army use, where the quartermaster had a role not dissimilar to the purser in the navy.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 37.

³⁷⁶ Charles Johnson, [Daniel Defoe] *A General History of The Pyrates* (1724); Page numbers from edition edited by Manuel Schonhorn, (London, 1972), 342.

originally under Betagh's command) asked to transfer to the *Success*.³⁷⁷ Shelvocke implies that their reasons for swapping ships was more to do with their fear of hard work than distaste for the prevailing regimen on the *Happy Return*, but the story they had to tell added to the distrust developing between the captains of the two ships.³⁷⁸

We lye to for his boat, which came aboard with a letter for Captain Clipperton who immediately sent back the boat for their purser to be examin'd concerning their actions on the coast of *Brazil*, and in the rest of the absence from us. Sent away the boat: but the purser mr Hendrie stays; who gives but a dark story of their proceedings; and that he was not allow'd to take any account of the treasure for the owners.³⁷⁹

The ships parted and both accounts at this point agree that although Shelvocke sighted and signalled the *Success* several times over the ensuing days his efforts to meet were ignored by Clipperton until, according to Taylor's journal, 'our officers consult, and resolve to joyn captain *Shelvocke* the next time we meet, in order to attempt the *Acapulco* ship homeward bound'.³⁸⁰ On the 13th Shelvocke came aboard the *Success* for the last time and the two captains agreed 'in general' that if they met the galleon they would both 'run her aboard at once'.³⁸¹ Two days later Clipperton consulted again with his officers and sent further proposals to Shelvocke in the form of a plea to regularise his behaviour:

That if he and his crew refund all the money shared among themselves contrary to their articles with the owners, and agree to put it in a joynt stock, then all faults shall be forgot; both companies would unite, and proceed to cruise for the *Acapulco* ship.³⁸²

³⁷⁷ George Shelvocke, MS 18. There is a list of Shelvocke's officers at the beginning of his manuscript of the book.

³⁷⁸ George Shelvocke *A Voyage Round the World* (1728), 174.

³⁷⁹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 148.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

³⁸² *Ibid.*

So reasonable was this suggestion and yet so unacceptable to Shelvocke that he sailed away without replying and the ships did not meet again. Shelvocke's explanation for this final parting is melodramatic, claiming that he suffered at Clipperton's hands 'the most cruel and perfidious piece of treachery that could be committed'.³⁸³ According to this account Clipperton deliberately led him onto a lee shore and then sailed away for good. Shelvocke supports his story by claiming that he had heard from some of Clipperton's officers, when they later met in China, that their Captain told them it was his intention to 'leave the cruise clandestinely'.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, and here Shelvocke resorts to the language of a later gothic tradition, Clipperton 'put off their serious and just expostulations with an inhuman sneer, saying, what could it signify if I [i.e. Shelvocke] should through want, be obliged to surrender, I should only suffer the same fate that, perhaps, some others had done before me'.³⁸⁵ The manuscript account omits the colourful language and also the accusation that Clipperton had tried to wreck Shelvocke's ship.³⁸⁶ Taylor's account of these events is laconic. Two days after the meeting he writes: 'Not hearing from captain *Shelvocke*, and the time for the *Manilla* ship being several days past: resolved in a council to make our best dispatch for *East India*'.³⁸⁷ It seems the most likely story.

From this moment on the only account of the voyage of the *Happy Return* and its successor is Shelvocke's. Betagh was detained by the Spanish and Dodd, who provided the evidence for what, according to Betagh, had really happened on Juan Fernandez, was now on the *Success*. Unfortunately for the voyage's investors this was also the period of Shelvocke's greatest success, during which he captured two ships, the *Sacra*

³⁸³ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 179.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

³⁸⁶ George Shelvocke Ms., 119.

³⁸⁷ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 151.

Familia of 300 tons, to which he transferred with most of his crew, (but without his first lieutenant who was sent to parley with the Spanish and never came back) and the *Conception* of 200 tons.³⁸⁸ In his book Shelvocke states that the plunder from these ships was of little value. The *Sacra Familia* ‘had nothing in her but fifty jars of gunpowder, a small parcel of rusk, and jerked beef’, and the *Conception* ‘laden with flour, loaves of sugar, bales of boxes of marmalade, jars of preserved peaches, grapes, limes &c’.³⁸⁹ To this last list Betagh adds, after sight of the seized log of Matthew Stewart: ‘Now be it known to ALL MEN, That, that et.caetera was A hundred and eight thousand six hundred and thirty six pieces of eight: and Shelvocke little thought when he took this prize or compiled his book, that I of all men should have this exact state of the affair’.³⁹⁰ Betagh provides a transcription of a page of Stewart’s account book (APPENDIX VII) as evidence for his claim. Betagh’s account differs substantially from the owners’ complaint in the matter of the first prize, the *Sacra Familia*. Shelvocke claims, in his manuscript, ‘She was not worth the trouble we took for her, for there was no booty of any kind on her’.³⁹¹ Betagh, unusually, concurs with this claim, remarking that ‘She proved no great prize’.³⁹² The complaint throws doubt on the more dramatic, though somewhat vague claim in the chancery bill that Shelvocke had taken ‘another called the Sacra Familia or some other name on board of which was on board four hundred thousand dollars or pieces of eight or some other great sum of money or foreign coin’.³⁹³ More specifically the bill of complaint goes on to enumerate two distributions of prize made, according to Stewart’s book, in April 1721 to the ‘confederates’; the first was of 98,621 dollars taken from the *Sacra Familia* and the

³⁸⁸ Shelvocke names the ship ‘*de Conception de Recova*’ but Betagh has, more plausibly, ‘*Conception, Don Stephen de Recova* commander’. Shelvocke (1928), 204; Betagh, 202.

³⁸⁹ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 205.

³⁹⁰ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 203.

³⁹¹ Shelvocke MS., 121.

³⁹² William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 193.

³⁹³ TNA C11/1831/45 Sheet 1.

second 97,819 dollars taken from the *Conception*. Neither of these figures precisely matches those transcribed by Betagh, but it seems likely that the complainers would have been careful to ensure their figures corresponded with those in the books that had been submitted to the court as evidence.

The Rewards

The total amount of prize money taken by Shelvocke and his surviving crew of 33 between 1720 and 1721, was according to the bill, more than £137,000. In the initial plea of *Ne Exeat Regnum* brought by Hughes and the other plaintiffs, it is claimed that Shelvocke had ‘gotten by ye voyage’ £8,000 and upwards, Coldsea (the master) £1,200 and other defendants £1,000.³⁹⁴ These are huge sums and put Shelvocke’s success on a par with the Woodes Rogers expedition. £8,000 would indeed have been a greater dividend than that of any of the investors, with the possible exception of Dr Dover, in the earlier voyage.

Shelvocke and his remaining crew sailed on to Canton, where they met some of the crew of the *Success* and heard, to Shelvocke’s delight, of that ship’s last battle and the humiliation of Clipperton who had, according to all accounts including Betagh’s, been incapacitated by drink and played no part in the fighting. The *Success* was extricated from her predicament by Clipperton’s surviving lieutenant Cook.

What happened at Canton was, like every other stage of the voyage, a matter of much dispute. There is, however, one additional piece of evidence, the diary of the supercargoes of two East Indiamen - the *Cadogan* and *Francis* – which gives additional detail about the arrival of Clipperton and Shelvocke in Canton and a precise listing of possessions reported as carried home on the Indiamen by Shelvocke and his crew.

³⁹⁴ TNA C33/339, pt 1, 7.

Shelvocke's account is brief, vague and confusing. Things began badly when one of the crew, (David Griffiths) shot a Chinese customs official who was trying to prevent him removing his booty out of the *Holy Family* and into a British Indiaman nearby. The corpse of the Hoppo was literally 'laid at the door of the English factories' and a supercargo, 'Mr C***k', who had the misfortune to be the first Briton to appear at the door, was arrested.³⁹⁵ Shelvocke blamed this episode for the subsequent break down of relations between him, the East India Company and the Chinese authorities. It is clear that the Chinese took an extraordinary interest in the *Holy Family* and her cargo, and carried out their measurement of the ship (in order to calculate harbour dues) with assiduity and a large retinue. Shelvocke records that 'this gave me much trouble, for I began to think that the Chinese, through a false report of our great riches, had an intention to gratify their love of money at any rate'.³⁹⁶ The Chinese were not alone in their suspicions or their greed. The crew, all except Shelvocke (conveniently in his sickbed) and his son, jumped ship, carrying their share of the plunder with them, and distributed themselves among the several European ships then in the river. Shelvocke absolves himself of any blame for their behaviour claiming that 'my ship's company had so many ways of disposing of their effects that it was impossible to oblige them to do what I should have thought justice to the gentlemen in England and myself'.³⁹⁷ By his own reckoning Shelvocke, as ever, was not to blame, but rather was beset on every side by the East India Company, its supercargoes, various mandarins and other people intent on separating him from his cargo which was by turns 'not inconsiderable' or falsely reported as 'great riches'. He claimed that the East India Company supercargoes agreed to give passage to Shelvocke and his crew, but charged their captains 'not to receive anything belonging to us, except it was consigned for the East India Company in

³⁹⁵ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World*, 247.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 248.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

England'.³⁹⁸ Furthermore Shelvocke was to pay the Chinese anchorage charges of 6,500 Tael - £2166.13.4 – six times those imposed on the *Cadogan* which was a much more substantial ship and five times that of the *Success*. Betagh makes much of this, claiming that the heavy charge indicated that the Chinese were well aware of the cargo's substantial value. One of the supercargoes (effectively owners' representatives or factors in Canton) was the son of Beake Winder, one of the expedition's owners and was, according to Betagh, consulted over the sale of the *Success* for £4,000.³⁹⁹ The fact that the owners had a representative as eyewitness to the proceedings at Canton may give credibility to their claims of East India Company duplicity.

The account of the East India Company's supercargoes, while broadly confirming Shelvocke's story, adds significant detail. The supercargoes' 'diary and consultation book' is a carefully composed record of all the transactions completed by the eight supercargoes on the four Company ships which had arrive in Canton in early 1721 and were to leave with full cargoes of china, tea and silk in December of the same year.

They report the arrival of the *Success*:

We received news about two months after our arrival that an English ship was come to Amoy which prov'd to be the Success – Captain Clipperton commander but the crew demanding dividends of what Spanish prizes they had taken, and not being courteously rec'd there, nor any conveniency to repair their ship, the Captain has brought her to Macao where upon producing his Majesties commⁿ they were received with civility.⁴⁰⁰

By November the supercargoes – now acting as factors – had nearly completed their trade and two ships, the *Morrice* and the *Macclesfield*, were preparing the slow and perilous journey down the Pearl River to Macao and thence to England. On 14 November the diary reports that when the ships were off Macao they sighted

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 251.

³⁹⁹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 165.

⁴⁰⁰ BL IOR/G/12/22, 33.

a Spanish ship commanded by one Shelvocke which he had taken in the South Seas where he had lost his own that he came out from England in on Juan Fernandez Island, the ship they have now is a ship of 16 guns and about 45-50 men.⁴⁰¹

The contrast between the respectful treatment of ‘Captain Clipperton’ and the dismissive ‘one Shelvocke’ is noteworthy and suggests that Clipperton, with the probable assistance of Dodd and Hendry, who had transferred from the *Sacra Familia* to the *Success* when the ships met off Mexico, had been busily spreading their own version of events. Shelvocke’s arrival at Whampoa on 21 November is reported and is followed by a transcript of a letter from Shelvocke received by the factors on 6 December:

To the Chiefs of the English Factories at Canton

Gentlemen,

I formerly acquainted you that the necessities which drove us into these ports was our being embark’d on a bottom incapable of any other navigation to avoid falling into the hands of a most cruel enemy and being very well assur’d of meeting English ships in this place at this season of the year we did not doubt getting a passage to England.⁴⁰²

He goes on to beg a passage for himself and his crew and ‘as for my plate and the little mony I have, it shall be readily consign’d to the Company but give me leave to assure you that the hardships and impositions of this port have reduced me very much’.⁴⁰³ The hardships he refers to being, presumably, the hefty harbour dues demanded by the Chinese. The supercargoes’ reply agrees to grant passage to Shelvocke and his crew provided that they:

consign their plate, mony and other effects to the Hon United Company of Merchants of England trading to ye East Indies and satisfie the captains [of the ships *Cadogan* and *Francis*] for your passage.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, 40.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

Attached to the bill is a reply by the East India Company which categorically denies the complainers' charges but does admit that the *Cadogan* and the *Francis* had brought back to England 'five thousand six hundred and seventy ounces ... of silver and no more to the best of our knowledge' and that this money was now in the custody of their treasurer; furthermore this sum was 'forfeit with double the value thereof according to Statute' but they would not press this claim if a fee of 5% of the sum was paid for carriage and passage.⁴⁰⁶ It seems, though, that the ownership of even this comparatively small sum was disputed by William Sheed and George Shelvocke. The Company therefore determined to keep it until all disputes over ownership were resolved.

So did the owners receive any reward for their substantial investment? The *Success* had taken, according to Betagh, 'not above 70,000 dollars' in total (c. £17,000). Betagh goes on to state that the 'owners moiety' amounted to upwards of £6000, though this is nowhere near half of £17,000 (nor half of the £15,887 from which the crew shares were drawn). It was sent on a Portuguese Indiaman (probably to avoid the problems encountered above) which was 'burnt at Rio de Janiero' along with all but £1,800 of the prize money.⁴⁰⁷ Hughes and one other owner may have received a substantial sum from Shelvocke after they agreed to drop the bill. There is no sign that the other owners received anything. Humphry Thayer, indeed, was liable to forfeit the £2,000 bond put up for the letter of marque and was therefore further in debt. Even the crew of the *Success* did better, with 'foremast men' receiving £97 each and Clipperton £1,466 – a substantial amount for a voyage considered to have been a failure.

⁴⁰⁶ TNA C11/1831/45, Sheet 3

⁴⁰⁷ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 164.

If we assume that the account books taken from Matthew Stewart and handed to the chancery clerk are genuine, it is possible to arrive at a figure for the total purchase taken by Shelvocke and his crew. According to the extract printed in Betagh (p.205) – which lists only one of several distributions of prize - Shelvocke was entitled to 6 shares of $52\frac{1}{4}$. £8000 (Shelvocke's total according to the writ of *Ne Exeat Regnum*) is $6/52\frac{1}{4}$ of £65,667. This does not, of course, take into account the various sums (including the moidores from the *Frio*) that Shelvocke had kept separate from the general purchase. Total from the two ships was unlikely, therefore, to be less than £80,000.

By his own admission Shelvocke connived (albeit reluctantly) in a plan to deprive the voyage's investors of a prize share that was rightfully theirs. On the evidence set out above it is possible to confirm, without reasonable doubt, that he was the instigator and chief beneficiary of a plot that involved piracy, mutiny and theft on a grand scale, and that his later account of the voyage of the *Speedwell* and its successors contains substantial fabrications. There is strong evidence that he deliberately parted from and later avoided meeting his consort the *Success* and that he deliberately shed crew, at first to get rid of possible objectors, and later to reduce the numbers of conspirators entitled to shares. In the process he placed people in positions of danger and thereby was instrumental in their death or capture. Far from being a reluctant victim of a mutiny he actively encouraged the crew to take up the 'Jamaica discipline' and to deprive the owners of their due shares. He wrecked, or at the least took advantage of the wreck of the *Speedwell* on Juan Fernandez in order to provide a legal fig leaf for flouting the articles of agreement, and later refused Clipperton's offer to re-establish legal and regular conduct. As a captain he treated his crew with contempt, promoted his cronies and humiliated his officers. Yet despite this and the accumulation of evidence for his criminal conduct, he emerged relatively unscathed, with a share of around £8,000. His

son, who had not signed articles, was not on the ship's roll and had no official position was also entitled, if we extrapolate from Matthew Stewart's account book, to a junior officer's share amounting to over £1,000. Shelvocke, according to Perrin, 'died in November, 1742, at the age of 66, apparently highly respected, at the official residence in Lombard street of his son, who was then Secretary to the Post Office'. His estate was £7,000.⁴⁰⁸ Whether the owners he had robbed or the 80 or so men he had abandoned in the South Sea ever troubled his conscience is not recorded.

The overall impact of the voyage is difficult to calculate. Betagh pointed out that Shelvocke's ability to avoid justice must have been a discouragement to future gentleman adventurers:

Now let mankind judge what a check this must be to all future aid and assistance to the crown; when at any time a prince upon a declaration of war, shall require his loving subjects to fit out private ships to cruise upon and annoy the enemy!⁴⁰⁹

Until now the Clipperton expedition has been seen as a disaster which effectively inhibited any further investment in private ventures into the South Sea. In fact it was, in some ways, a remarkable achievement. Both ships, though working independently, succeeded in accumulating purchase which more than covered the cost of the expedition. The prize taken by the *Success* was more than double the cost of setting it out; that taken by Shelvocke ten times greater. This was achieved despite the loss of the *Speedwell* at Juan Fernandez and the near loss of the *Success* at Guam. The building of a new ship on Juan Fernandez and the capture of larger vessels by Shelvocke and his small crew are testament to the courage and seamanship displayed by the crew and, it has to be said with some reluctance, the leadership of Shelvocke. It is also the case that while Clipperton rounded Cape Horn in late winter and Shelvocke in early spring

⁴⁰⁸ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1928), Introduction, xix.

⁴⁰⁹ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 230.

neither ship appears to have lost great numbers to scurvy or cold, despite encountering, according to Shelvocke, fierce storms, extreme cold and contrary winds.

Against this achievement must be set the fact that the expedition became a notorious disaster involving mutiny, fraud, deceit and the loss of large sums by its investors.

Sadly but understandably it was this aspect which poisoned opinion and turned off further investment in such ventures.

PART 2

THE IMPACT OF THE VOYAGES

CHAPTER 5.

POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC IMPACT

This chapter aims to demonstrate that the cruising voyages were to have a significant impact on the direction of British policy and action in the South Sea. They showed that properly planned expeditions could achieve much against the poorly defended Pacific coast of Spanish America. They stimulated interest in the South Sea Company and particularly in the opportunities for trade and plunder offered within its area of interest. Throughout the period of peace which began in 1721 the success of the Woodes Rogers expedition and the failure of Clipperton's informed political and commercial debates about how to exploit 'the inexhaustible fountain of gold' and helped direct attention towards a state-funded solution. The blue water policy first mooted in the time of William III was to be significantly extended with Anson's circumnavigation and without the pioneering exploits of the privateers the government might not have been tempted to trust its own ships on a venture so far outside its experience. On the other hand the failure of the Anson expedition to accomplish most of its objectives in South America suggests that the navy was not yet fully capable of carrying through long-distant expeditions of this kind.

Robert Harley's Bill by which the Government's unsecured creditors were to be incorporated as 'the Governor and Company of Merchants of Great Britain trading to the South Seas and other parts of America and for running the Fishery' received the Royal Assent on 12 June, 1711, and the South Sea Company was incorporated in

October, the same month as the *Duke*, *Dutchess* and ‘Acapulco ship’ moored at Erith. The progress of Woodes Rogers’s little flotilla from the Cape to the Texel and then to London had been eagerly followed in the public prints and provided an encouraging background to the debate about the opportunities open to the Company’s investors. Plans for a South Sea expedition were being formulated and Sir George Byng (one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty) remarked that if ‘Dampier’s ships returned in time, experienced seamen might be found in them for the new venture’.⁴¹⁰ During the winter following their return the senior officers of the expedition, including Rogers, Cooke and Dampier were consulted about the possibilities for a South Sea trade.⁴¹¹ It is unsurprising therefore to find that Cooke’s narrative, *A Voyage to the South Sea* was dedicated to Robert Harley while Rogers’s introduction is effectively an essay, to add to that of Robert Allen on the potential for such a trade.⁴¹²

Rogers makes it clear that his success should stand as an answer to those who saw South Sea ventures as foolhardy and prone to fail.

That the Thing is practicable in itself, I dare boldly affirm from my own Experience. Had there been a proper force there when I was in the *South-Sea*, we might easily have settled many places, where we could have commanded Provisions, without those Difficulties to subsist we met with. Had a Trade been promoted at the beginning of the War, we might not only have prevented the *French* from bringing those vast Sums out of America, but brought much greater ourselves.⁴¹³

In the last sentence Rogers pinpoints the reason why Britain failed to capitalize on his voyage. By the time the *Batchelor* had moored at Erith the treaty negotiations between Britain and France were well advanced, and there was no time to mount a full scale naval expedition before the war ended. Rogers puts forward an impassioned plea for

⁴¹⁰ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 164. Given Dampier’s subordinate role on the expedition this remark is yet further evidence of the enduring power of his books to promote his reputation.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 172-173.

⁴¹² Robert Allen, *An Essay on the Nature and Methods of Carrying on a Trade to the South Sea*, (London, 1712).

⁴¹³ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), vii.

Britain's engagement in a South Sea trade, which he sees as vital to counter French expansionism in the Caribbean where they convoy the Spanish Flotta and dominate trade with South America.

Necessity has frequently put private men on noble undertakings; and I think it can't be deny'd that our Nation is under a necessity to make an extraordinary Effort for settling a Trade there. That we are concern'd to do it for the preservation of our Liberty and religion, is evident enough from what has been said already; and that we are likewise oblig'd to do it for the Recovery of our sinking Trade, will be evident from what follows. Our Spanish Commerce, which formerly supply'd us with Bullion, yields us so little now, that our money must insensibly ebb out of the Nation, whilst it flows into the Enemies Country through a new Channel, of which he alone is Master.⁴¹⁴

His proposal, however, depended on Britain obtaining favourable terms of trade with Spain, and in the event such hopes were dashed. His ambition and that of the South Sea Company that Britain would dominate the trade from the Orinoco to Cape Horn and along the whole Pacific seaboard of America were frustrated by the government's failure, during the treaty negotiations with France, to secure any of the bases required for such a trade. In effect Britain's South Sea ambitions were brought to a halt by the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht. Nevertheless, Rogers's was just one of a number of schemes being promoted by Defoe, Secretary of State Henry St John, the directors of the South Sea Company and others. In January 1712 the Company put plans forward for an expedition employing ten ships of the line, forty transports and four thousand soldiers which would be ready to sail in June. What it was supposed to do, given that the treaty terms effectively debarring any such venture were already known in outline, is not clear, and the project faded from view.⁴¹⁵

In effect British South Sea ambitions were, and had always been, dependent on there being war with Spain. The three cruising voyages took place during and at least partly

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., x.

⁴¹⁵ There is an account of this and other schemes being projected at the time in Williams, *Great South Sea*, 161-174.

as a consequence of wars with Spain and other attempts to develop colonies and trade in the South Sea failed because they were proposed during or just before periods of peace when Spain had no intention of sharing the produce of its golden goose. It was for this reason and not the lack of interest or support for such ventures that a follow-up to the Rogers voyage did not emerge for eight years.

One of the plans for a large-scale expedition to the South Seas was put to Harley some time in 1711. It was not, for the reasons argued above, taken up at the time but the memoir was published in 1732, in a time of growing anti-Spanish sentiment bolstered by the incident in which the ‘notorious’ *guarda-costa* Juan de Leon Fandino had boarded the English merchantman *Rebecca* and cut off its captain’s ear.⁴¹⁶ The memoir, by John Pullen, a mariner and one-time Governor of the Bahamas, sets out a plan designed to ‘ruin [French] commerce in the South Sea, which is the most beneficial to them, and consequently most prejudicial to us’.⁴¹⁷ It proposes sending a fleet of eight 50 and 60 gun ships, carrying as many marines or detachments of ‘marching regiments’ as sailors. The squadron should set out in early August, rather than the accepted correct time of September, so that it would arrive before the French trading fleets and be able to destroy them as they arrived in South America. It recommends the Cape Horn route into the Pacific rather than the Straits of Magellan (which had proved disastrous for one in three French ships). Once in the Pacific the ships would sail for Juan Fernandez to refresh the men but also to settle and fortify the islands in Britain’s name. Pullen noted that French sailors he had spoken to all agreed ‘that they never miss’d that Island if they could help it, because their Men are almost all in the Scurvy by that time’.⁴¹⁸ The squadron should afterwards sail for Arica, on the coast of Peru in order to intercept the

⁴¹⁶ N.A.M. Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, 235

⁴¹⁷ John Pullen, *Memoirs of the Maritime Affairs of Great-Britain* (London, 1732), 20.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

galleons carrying plate from the mines at Potosi. Pullen draws on the buccaneers' accounts – particularly Sharpe and Ringrose – and Funnell's account of the Dampier voyage, to suggest other enticing targets, such as the eastbound Manila and westbound Acapulco galleons. At the same time, he proposes, half the squadron should lie off Panama ready to attack all incoming cargoes and then repair and careen their ships at the Galapagos. He also suggests that the Galapagos would provide an excellent place for a settlement and garrison.⁴¹⁹ Finally he recommends attacking and then settling Coquimbo in Chile, which, he believed, abounded 'with the finest Gold in the World', before returning by Cape Horn.

This published version of Pullen's memoir appears to have provoked as little reaction in 1732 as it did when originally sent to Harley and presumably for the same reason since the bellicose atmosphere generated by the incident of Jenkin's ear did not provoke war with Spain for another seven years. Nevertheless it formed an important part of the growing patriotic campaign for Britain to humble Spain and its navy. When war was declared in 1739 the proposal to send a substantial naval squadron into the South Seas with essentially the same objectives as those proposed by Pullen was being seriously discussed at the Admiralty.

The product of those discussions was the Anson expedition of 1740-44, which may be seen as the high point of an imperial adventure begun by Narborough in 1669 and revitalised by the three cruising voyages. There were originally plans for two operations, one to attack the Manila galleon near the Philippines and the other a more elaborate expedition on similar lines to Pullen's proposal which would combine the aims of settling the Pacific coast of South America with the storming of cities and the

⁴¹⁹ Pullen was writing before the publication of Rogers's book or he would have known that the Galapagos were far from suitable for a garrison as they lacked abundant supplies of fresh water.

capture of the galleon at the Acapulco end of its journey.⁴²⁰ The inherent contradiction in a plan designed to trade as well as conquer had been noted by Henry St John in 1711 who pointed out that ‘the prospects of opening new trades with the Spaniards and attacking their colonies at the same time tend to be repugnant to one another’.⁴²¹

The squadron that left England under the command of Commodore Anson on September 18, 1740 consisted of the *Centurion* (60 guns), *Gloucester* (50 guns), *Severn* (50 guns), *Pearl* (40 guns), *Tryal* (8 guns), two merchant vessels, three companies of ‘raw’ marines and five companies of invalid Chelsea pensioners. The late start, coupled with further delays on the way, meant that the squadron arrived at the Straits of le Maire on 7 March 1741, at the end of the brief summer and beginning of the autumn storm season. Unable to make progress against a strong east flowing current and a series of westerly gales, the ships constantly battered by enormous seas and the men dying in their hundreds from a lethal combination of typhus, hypothermia and scurvy, Anson’s squadron and territorial ambitions were all but destroyed in the six weeks it took to round Cape Horn. Of the warships, only the *Centurion*, *Gloucester* and *Tryal* sloop reached the rendezvous at Juan Fernandez, though by this time none had sufficient crew healthy enough to sail the ships. The merchant supply pink *Anna*, however, made the rendezvous without any loss to its 16 man crew.

From there the voyage was a tale of small successes and further disasters culminating in the abandonment of the *Gloucester* and the near destruction of the *Centurion*. Finally Anson searched for and found the Manila galleon off the Philippines, took upwards of £300,000 in silver and, with the assistance of a very favourable account of the voyage,

⁴²⁰ There is a full account of the genesis and conduct of Anson’s expedition in Glyn Williams, *The Prize of All the Oceans: The Triumph and Tragedy of Anson’s Voyage Round the World* (London, 1999)

⁴²¹ Glyn Williams, *Prize of all the Oceans*, 14.

converted a catastrophe into a triumph.⁴²² The eventual capture of the Manila galleon was little compensation (except for Anson and his surviving crew) for the enormous cost in lives and ships and the failure to achieve any of the other objectives such as the capture of Callao or the installation of a government in Peru sympathetic to the British cause. The dream of a British South Sea dependency had, for the moment, been swept away by bungled preparation and dreadful weather.

The voyages of Woodes Rogers and George Anson provide instructive comparisons of naval and merchant achievement in the conduct of long-distance maritime expeditions. There are striking similarities. Both expeditions set out with the intention of harrying the vulnerable Pacific coast of Spanish South America and capturing the Manila galleon. Both succeeded in their main aims and returned triumphant with crews enriched by their shares of the prize money. Both became entangled in dispute with an envious East India Company.

The differences are equally striking. Anson's expedition was authorised and financed by the navy and undertaken on naval warships. Rogers was privately financed by Bristol merchants. Anson set off with six warships, two supply vessels and about 1900 men. Rogers had the *Duke* (30 guns), the *Dutchess* (26 guns) and 333 men. Anson's fleet encountered a catalogue of appalling disasters which culminated in the loss of 1400 men and five of his ships. Rogers gained one ship overall (the Acapulco galleon) and lost between 70 and 100 men. Anson's voyage was beset by navigational errors which threatened to wreck the whole fleet and condemned hundreds to death by scurvy and starvation. On this point alone the difference in the conduct of the two voyages is striking. During its stay at St. Catherine's 28 of the *Centurion's* crew died and 96 of a

⁴²² Richard Walter, *A Voyage Round the World In the year MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV. by George Anson, Esq;* (London, 1748)

complement of 500 (including marines) were sick from typhus, dysentery and other ailments. Some of this appalling rate of attrition is attributable to the age and poor original health of the Chelsea pensioners drafted on board but conditions in these cramped, poorly ventilated and overcrowded vessels undoubtedly contributed. By contrast Rogers, whose small ship contained over 180 men (as opposed to 115 that a privateer of that size would normally carry) and was equally ‘crouded and pestered’ arrived at Grande without one loss to sickness. Brazil was the last opportunity to careen and ‘bream’ the ships, stock up on fresh provisions and generally prepare for the long and arduous journey round Cape Horn. Rogers, who had already taken in plentiful supplies of fresh food at the Cape Verde islands, took full advantage, and also ensured that his men were set to sewing their own hard weather clothing, ‘they being very meanly clothed, and ill provided to endure the Cold;’ as his Newfoundland experience would have taught him, extreme cold and wet weather is as damaging to health as lack of fresh food. It is also Rogers who casually remarks, some forty years before Dr James Lind’s treatise on the scurvy, that ‘The general Distemper of such long Runs is the Scurvy; and the Methods to prevent the ill effects of it are so well known, that they may be easily provided against’.⁴²³ There is some doubt as to whether Anson laid sufficient emphasis on stocking fresh fruit and vegetables while at St. Catherine’s. In his account of the voyage Pascoe Thomas insists that fresh fruit for just one day’s consumption was bought.⁴²⁴

Despite arriving at Cape Horn in mid-summer Rogers’s ships suffered damage from the weather and losses due to scurvy and the cold (one died on the *Duke* and three on the *Dutchess*) and by the time they reached Juan Fernandez the *Dutchess* had thirty down

⁴²³ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), introduction, xii. Rogers had a physician, Dr Dover, on board the *Duke*, but his prescription for the prevention and cure of scurvy (oil of vitriol) was traditional and unlikely to have been very helpful. See Thomas Dover, *The Ancient Physician’s Legacy*.

⁴²⁴ Glyn Williams, *Prize of all the Oceans*, 34.

with scurvy and another eight 'sick', which Rogers attributes to their 'want of clothes', but may equally have been due to the fact that the *Dutchess* had been knocked down and nearly sunk by a big sea, which made it nearly impossible to provide hot food or dry clothing for much of the passage round the Horn. These losses were tiny in comparison with the catastrophe suffered by Anson's ships. The causes of this were much debated at the time and later, but it is generally accepted that the ships encountered appalling weather – at least partly as a consequence of their late arrival – which they were ill-prepared to cope with. A voyage which took Rogers six weeks lasted for three months, and scurvy, which had begun to appear in the crew as soon as they entered the Straits of le Maire, claimed most of the 600 who died rounding Cape Horn. 70 or 80 of the losses on the *Centurion* were a consequence of straightforward navigational error, though whose error this was, Anson's, his charts or the *Centurion*'s master, is debatable. The semi-official narrative blames Shelvocke, whose book was being used as a pilot and who gave an inaccurate position for Juan Fernandez, thus condemning the *Centurion* to a further eleven days of fruitless searching for the islands. Anson seems to have mistrusted the *Centurion*'s master after he had placed the ship several hundred miles to the west of its true position off Cape Horn and placed, according to Glyn Williams, too much reliance on the readings of the ex-naval officer Shelvocke.⁴²⁵ Why Anson should have relied on Shelvocke, whose account was generally suspected of being partially fabricated, rather than the readings given by Cooke, Rogers or Dampier, all of which were more accurate, is difficult to fathom, but it may have had something to do with an inclination to favour the work of an ex-naval officer against that of merchant captains. If so it was a damaging and unjustified prejudice. No less a figure than Edmund Halley used Rogers's observations of compass variation in a paper delivered to the Royal

⁴²⁵ Glyn Williams, *Prize of all the Oceans*, 54.

Society remarking: ‘I was highly pleased to find the care he had taken to set down the variations of the *Magnetical Compass* in his passage from the South Cape of *California* to the Island of *Gana*’.⁴²⁶ The nautical education of merchant officers was in many ways more thorough than that of naval officers. It was possible for an officer to enter the navy at the age of fourteen, receive a fitful and unsystematic education in mathematics and navigation and pass the lieutenant’s examination with only a cursory test of his abilities. Anson himself confessed in later life to an imperfect understanding of some aspects of navigation. ‘Being ignorant myself I always doubted whether my pilot knew as much as he ought to do’.⁴²⁷ By contrast Rogers had no compunction about ditching his pilot when he disagreed with him, as this episode at the start of his voyage indicates.

We had a Kinsale pilot on Board, who was like to have endanger’d our Ship, it being dark and foggy. Before day he would have turn’d us into the next Bay to the Westward of Cork, had not I prevented it; which provok’d me to chastise him for undertaking to pilot a Ship, since he understood his business no better.⁴²⁸

In most cases the masters of naval ships received the same thorough training – mathematical school followed by an apprenticeship to a ship’s master – undergone by merchant captains, but they were less likely, at this time, to have had the same invaluable deep sea experience as a merchant officer on, say, the East Indies or Atlantic trades. Whatever the cause, the evidence suggests that Woodes Rogers’s navigation was superior to that of Anson and his officers.

There was another area in which naval performance compared unfavourably with the merchant marine. It has been noted that the *Anna* pink, which had experienced the same appalling conditions as the rest of Anson’s squadron, arrived at Juan Fernandez in

⁴²⁶ Edmund Halley, ‘The variation of the Magnetical Compass observed by Capt. Rogers’ *Philosophical Transactions* (1720-21), 173.

⁴²⁷ Williams, *Prize of All the Oceans*, 230.

⁴²⁸ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 3.

reasonable condition and with an undiminished crew. In 1772, when Joseph Banks objected to Captain James Cook's proposal to sail on his second voyage in a small collier similar to the *Endeavour*, Lord Sandwich, the First Lord of the Admiralty, argued that such a choice was correct on the grounds that the *Anna* – 'a collier like the *Resolution*' - had performed so well for Anson off Cape Horn.⁴²⁹

Both expeditions became mired in legal battles over the distribution of the prize money. Anson was clearly more successful only in the matter of purchase. The total value of prize money from Anson's voyage has been estimated to be upwards of £300,000 and from Rogers's around £148,000.

By whatever yardstick you choose to measure it Rogers appears to have been the more successful commander and his voyage better planned and executed, better run, happier and more destructive of the enemy than Anson's. Yet after the voyage Anson was promoted Rear Admiral and quickly rose to become a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty. Rogers became briefly famous, not so much for the success of his voyage as for being the rescuer of Alexander Selkirk, an event quite incidental to its purpose. One cause of the very different experiences of the two commanders may be found in a letter sent to Harley, the Lord Treasurer, by a British agent in Amsterdam reporting the Bristol flotilla's arrival at the Texel: 'Dampier is alive, and one Captain Dover alias Doctor Dover seems to be the man of sense and conduct in all that affair'.⁴³⁰ It is very possible that Rogers was condemned to be undervalued because of his provincial background and untutored address, and that the plausible Dampier and the pompous and self-serving Doctor Dover knew much better how to ingratiate themselves to authority.

⁴²⁹ Glyn Williams, *Prize of all the Oceans*, 63.

⁴³⁰ Robert Harley, *Letters and Papers, III*, in *Manuscripts of the Duke of Portland, V* (London Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1899), 66.

Woodes Rogers stands out as a leader and seaman. Whether taming a mutiny by outwitting the leaders, running cables from ship to shore – a distance of half a mile – in order to haul water casks through the surf, stocking up on fresh fruit and vegetables at every opportunity or ordering the crew to become tailors in order to make enough cold weather gear to cope with the Southern Ocean, Rogers had, as Campbell admiringly commented, ‘ a peculiar art ... of maintaining his authority over his seamen, and his readiness in finding out expedients in the most difficult conjectures’.⁴³¹ He led the charge at Guiaquil and the wounds he received in each of the actions against the two Manila ships are testament that he did not (as Dampier was accused of) hide behind ‘barricades’ during battle. After the success of the 1708 voyage Rogers was considered for leading at least one government sponsored expedition to the South Seas, which, if it had materialised, would no doubt have seen him commissioned into the navy. He was, after considerable lobbying on his behalf, appointed Governor of the Bahamas in 1718 and energetically set about eliminating piracy in the area, but the qualities that enabled him to bring home the Manila galleon were less successful in winning over the disgruntled colonists of New Providence, and he returned to England in 1721 in debt and ‘in a very low state of health’.⁴³² By the time his qualities were eventually recognised and he was reinstated as governor in 1728 with an annual income of £400 it was too late, and he died in 1732 aged 53.

The history of British attacks on Spain’s Pacific empire ended with a successful expedition to capture Manila, but this time from the west. Some, though not all, of the lessons of Anson’s voyage had been learnt. The seven ships of the line and some transports under Admiral Samuel Cornish were in poor condition, and the 1,700 troops led by Colonel William Draper were (in an echo of Woodes Rogers’s complaint) ‘a

⁴³¹ Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol.1, 150.

⁴³² David Cordingly, *Spanish Gold*, 201.

composition of deserters of all nations, whom I take with me more to ease the fears and apprehensions of the people at Madras, than from any service I can expect of them'.⁴³³

Despite these difficulties the expedition entered Manila harbour on September 23, 1762 and stormed the city on 6 October. There was much plunder, including an Acapulco galleon that arrived during the British occupation. The British stayed in Manila for only a few months, and at the end of the war in 1763 it was returned to Spain. Once again British ambitions were frustrated by peace, and perhaps the one lesson that was learnt from this expedition was that it was much easier to attack the Manila galleon from Madras than from the east via Cape Horn.

To summarise there were clear links between the cruising voyages and the Anson expedition; without their precedent the expedition would probably not have taken place; the failures, as well as the successes, of the cruising voyages ensured that a subsequent expedition would be naval, since the apparent risks of such voyages had stifled private investment. A comparison of the Rogers and Anson expeditions indicates that the navy was not, at this time, sufficiently prepared to undertake large-scale operations at such a distance and in such challenging conditions and that, in many ways, merchant mariners were more experienced and better prepared to accomplish them.

⁴³³ To the Secretary at War, 27 July 1762, in N.A.M. Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, 286

CHAPTER 6

THE VOYAGE NARRATIVES

Five books provide eye-witness accounts of the three voyages. This chapter aims to show that these narratives were of wide and lasting cultural significance because they contributed to the growing demand for knowledge about the world which was led by organisations like the Royal Society but enthusiastically supported by a substantial educated readership. The accounts given in the five books are of varying reliability and truthfulness and the chapter compares their credibility with that of the seminal travel narrative of its age, Dampier's *Voyage round the World*.

The influence of the voyage narratives was sustained and extended through their reproduction in several voyage anthologies, which in turn provided source material for British strategic thinking throughout the eighteenth century.

The publishing boom in travel literature that reached its zenith in the first half of the eighteenth-century was unprecedented. The English Short-title Catalogue (ESTC) lists 2,222 books with 'voyage' or 'voyages' in the title published between 1688 and 1815. As early as 1710 the Earl of Shaftesbury noted that voyage-narratives 'are the chief materials to furnish out a library... These are in our present day what books of chivalry were in those of our forefathers'.⁴³⁴ The eye-witness accounts contained in the eight published works immediately arising from the cruising voyages of Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke made a considerable impact on the publishing world of the time. Most were

⁴³⁴ Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, 3, quoting Frantz, *The English Traveller*, 8.

reprinted, some several times. Along with the various accounts of the Anson circumnavigation they formed the backbone of voyage collections such as John Campbell's *Navigantium atque Itinerantium* and provided inspiration and source material for Defoe and Swift.

Recent scholarly work on European voyages of discovery, exploration and plunder has progressed from noting and regretting the extraordinary difficulty with which travellers' tales could be verified to a philosophical investigation of the varying definitions and forms of fact and fiction to be encountered in this most colourful and expressive of genres. When contemplating the sub-genre of south sea tales some scholars postulate a romantic relationship between the writer and the Great South Sea where the world is turned upside down and strange events and unaccountable phenomena induce a kind of madness in the European observer. Jonathan Lamb sees parallels between the plight of the abandoned or marooned sailor in the South Seas and the philosophical dilemmas confronting contemporary thinkers like Lord Shaftesbury: 'Where am I, or what?... Where are we? On board what vessel? Whither bound? ... under whose guidance?' In such circumstances notions of self are tested and truth gives way to romantic invention.⁴³⁵ No wonder, therefore, that great difficulty is encountered when trying to establish the veracity of published accounts, journals and diaries submitted by the explorers. From the mischievous jibes of anonymous sceptics: ('Some think it true whilst other some do doubt/ Whether Captaine Drake Compaste the Worlde about') to the more formal attempts of the Royal Society to establish criteria for believability, travellers' tales have been seen, from their earliest manifestation, as unreliable and difficult to verify⁴³⁶. Travellers, as Jason H. Pearl observes, 'were subject to differing

⁴³⁵ Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas 1680-1840* (Chicago and London, 2001), 37.

⁴³⁶ Anon. 1612, Quoted in Thrower, Norman J.W. ed. *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577-80* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1984), 112.

expectations: at first welcomed for their strange new information, they were soon distrusted precisely because their information was strange and new. If empiricist philosophy had empowered travellers to act as proxy observers, it also empowered readers at home to disbelieve everything that they themselves had not witnessed personally.⁴³⁷ Their scepticism has proved amply justified, and the extent to which truth and fiction shift and elide in eighteenth-century voyage texts has itself been explored by Glyndwr Williams, Percy G. Adams, Michael McKeon, Neil Rennie and Jonathan Lamb among others.⁴³⁸

Dampier's tales

The seminal work that both revitalised the voyage genre and inspired its many followers was William Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World*, published in 1697.⁴³⁹

Dampier's account of his time with the buccaneers Swan and Davis and his adventures in the South Sea is not strictly about a voyage round the world at all, so much as a series of adventures on different ships that ends with Dampier's return to England as a passenger in a naval vessel. It lacks much in the way of derring-do but makes up for it with tales of undiscovered lands, the strange and colourful people who lived there and exotic flora and fauna. The narrative, based, so he said, on the journals he kept carefully rolled into a bamboo cane and stoppered with wax at each end, was written with some style and was an instant success. *A New Voyage Round the World* was reprinted three times in nine months.⁴⁴⁰ A recent biography of Dampier by Diana and Michael Preston

⁴³⁷ Jason H. Pearl, 'Woodes Rogers and the Boundary of Travel Facts', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, Volume 31, Number 3, Fall 2007, 60-67.

⁴³⁸ Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*; Percy G. Adams, *Travellers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley 1962); Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* (Baltimore, 1987); 201-12; Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas* (New York, Oxford University, 1995); Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the self in the South Seas*, also 'Eye-Witnessing in the South Seas' *The Eighteenth-Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 38 (1997).

⁴³⁹ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (London, 1697).

⁴⁴⁰ Diana and Michael Preston. *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind: The Life of William Dampier, Explorer, Naturalist and Buccaneer* (London 2004), 326.

attributes its success to the fact that its approach and content were such a radical departure from previous accounts of the adventures of pirates and freebooters.⁴⁴¹ *A New Voyage* 'offered the reading public a detailed and accomplished travelogue of a type not seen before, combining action with natural wonders and experiences of everyday life in exotic places'.⁴⁴² The published volume may also have been influenced by another book of voyages published in 1694, three years after Dampier returned to England and three years before publication of *A New Voyage. An account of several late voyages & discoveries to the south and north* contained a 'Bookseller's preface or Introduction' written by Tancred Robinson, Fellow of the Royal Society, which proposed a model for the voyager's journal that may have stimulated Dampier to introduce new material:

The advantages of taking judicious and accurate Journals in Voyages and Itineraries, are so great and many, as the Improvement of Geography, Hydrography, Astronomy, Natural and Moral History, Antiquity, Merchandise, trade, Empire, &c., that few books compare with them either for Profit or Pleasure.⁴⁴³

In urging voyagers to become diligent observers and recorders Robinson was acting as spokesman for the Royal Society, which, since its inception, had promoted careful travel reporting. Robert Hooke recommended the giving of instruction to seamen and travellers 'to shew them what is pertinent and considerable to be observ'd... and how to make their Observations and Registers or Accounts of them'.⁴⁴⁴ Further papers by Robert Boyle and John Woodward provided more detailed instruction for voyagers.

This intense interest in travellers' tales as evidence for understanding the natural world

⁴⁴¹They mention, in particular Alexander Exquemelin, *Bucaniers of America...Inlarged with two Additional Relations, viz. the one of Captain Cook and the other of Captain Sharp* (London, 1684) and [Basil Ringrose]...*The Second Volume containing the Dangerous Voyage and Bold attempts of Captain Bartholomew Sharp and Others* (London 1685).

⁴⁴² Preston & Preston, *Dampier*, 326.

⁴⁴³ Anon., *An account of several late voyages & discoveries to the South and north towards the Streights of Magellan, the South Seas, the vast tracts of land beyond Hollandia nova &c.* (London, 1694), Preface; Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 116.

⁴⁴⁴ Barbara J. Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca, London, 2000), 73.

was at its peak at the time when Dampier was considering writing *A New Voyage* and it is clear that members of the Royal Society took an interest in what he had to say from the beginning. Dampier undoubtedly met and consulted members of the Society, including Hans Sloane, Edmond Halley, Robert Hooke, Lord Vaughan and the president, Sir Robert Southwell (who was later to invest in his 1703 privateering expedition).

In noting that Dampier seems to have been motivated by a different spirit than that which inspired previous voyage narratives, Philip Edwards touches on a significant feature of *A New Voyage* – its ‘schizophrenic dithering between the demands of science and the claims of the general reader’.⁴⁴⁵ To begin with it employs, like no other before it, a mixture of both the two travel forms described by Barbara Shapiro:

Travel writing tended to adopt two forms, sometimes blended in the same work. The first was the eyewitness report of a voyage or “adventure” in which the narrator proceeded chronologically, often beginning with the day his ship sailed. It recounted a variety of events, human and natural – storms, conflict aboard ship, encounters with pirates or native inhabitants or foreign enemies, hardships, and other interesting sights and “adventures” along the way. Narratives might be continuous or a series of diary-like entries, or some combination of the two. These accounts were readily labelled “matters of fact” since they involved particular events or actions and merged easily with what might be called “contemporary history”. Such first-hand reports tended to exhibit clear beginnings, middles and ends, the return of the voyager typically marking the end of the work.

The second variety was a descriptive-chorographic one that abandoned chronology for a cross-sectional description of a particular locale using some or all of the standard chorographical and travel topics or the later Royal Society articles of enquiry. The voyage or adventure mode involved movement in time, whereas the chorographic was more static, with the author suggesting that he was providing a “description” or “survey” of the locale being visited. The

⁴⁴⁵ Philip Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 7.

traveller was thus free to deal with chorographical topics such as climate, plants, agriculture, or local customs at the length or detail required.⁴⁴⁶

A New Voyage is by this definition undoubtedly a voyage narrative – being factual, chronological (although with significant gaps), in diary form and an “adventure”. It is also, however, descriptive and chorographic, most famously in its account of the inhabitants and culture of New Holland, the Philippines and Cambodia. In another way (not noted by the above commentators) it is unique. Dampier’s book begins and ends, not with a voyage but with himself. The opening lines of the introduction are ‘I first set out of England on this Voyage at the beginning of the year 1679, in the *Loyal Merchant* of London, bound for Jamaica, Captain Knapman Commander. I went a passenger, designing when I came there to go from the Bay of Campeachy in the Gulf of Mexico to cut Logwood’.⁴⁴⁷ This is the tale, not so much of a voyage as of the man that embarked on it, and as a story-telling technique it was to reverberate through eighteenth and nineteenth-century fictional narrative, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *Gulliver’s Travels* and eventually to *Moby-Dick*.

A New Voyage was also a publishing phenomenon. In his ambition to make as much of Dampier’s story as possible, James Knapton employed a number of innovative techniques to keep the book, and Dampier’s subsequent works, in the public eye. As well as publishing new editions as demand called for them, Dampier was urged to deliver a follow-up work in 1699 containing ‘*A Supplement to the Voyage round the World*’ together with *Voyages to Campeachy* and by way, perhaps, of bulking up the copy, *A Discourse of Trade winds*. This is firmly linked to the first book by the imprint ‘Vol.II’ although ‘Vol.I’ continued to be reprinted separately. Dampier’s next

⁴⁴⁶ Barbara Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact*, 70.

⁴⁴⁷ William Dampier, *A New Voyage*, Introduction.

work, *A Voyage to New Holland* was published as ‘Vol.III’ and, since this only covered Dampier’s voyage out to New Holland, *A Continuation of the Voyage to New Holland* was published as Vol. III pt 2. This ingenious titling enabled Knapton to present all four works as part of a continuous narrative and enabled the less popular works to bask in the reflected glory of *A New Voyage*. He then issued all his ‘explorer’ volumes in one collection containing the four Dampier books and, as ‘Vol.IV’, the accounts of the voyages of Funnell, Cowley, Sharp, Wood and Roberts.

The works produced by Dampier’s precursors and contemporaries, particularly the commercially successful *Bucaniers of America*, lacked the kind of information sought by the Society and Robinson laments that the voyagers had not taken with them ‘some skilful Painters, Naturalists and Mechanists’.⁴⁴⁸ The problem of reliability could sometimes be resolved by the efforts of travelling members of the Society like Edmond Halley and Hans Sloane, whose own accounts of their voyages in the Atlantic could be relied on as ‘matters of fact’. Sloane sailed to Jamaica in 1687 to act as physician to the Duke of Albermarle, and justified the utility of his natural history of the island on the grounds that ‘these matters of Fact being clearly laid down, may perhaps afford some hints for the more clear Reasonings and Deductions of better Heads’.⁴⁴⁹ Sloane could also be trusted to acknowledge his own limitations and was careful to send his botanical specimens to John Ray, the naturalist and Fellow of the Royal Society, for confirmation of his classification.

Where distant and largely untravelled places were concerned the Society was often forced to rely on less reliable witnesses. There were no doubt concerns over Dampier’s

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Hans Sloane, M.D.. *A Voyage to the Islands of Madeira, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the Herbs and Trees, Four-footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. of the last of those Islands*, (London, 1707), Preface.

qualification to provide a reliable account of the South Sea – he was, after all, neither the captain nor an officer on any of the ships he had sailed in up to that time – but he was all there was. Dampier was sensitive to the accusation that his lack of rank put the reliability of his narrative in question, and justifies his authority in a note in the margin of the surviving manuscript:

It may be demanded by some why I took these voyages and discoveries of mine seeing I was neither master nor mate of any of the ships; to such demands I answer that I might have ben master of the first I went out in if I could have accepted it for it was known to most men that were in the seas that I kept a Journall & all that knew me well did ever judge my accounts were kept as exact as any mans besides most if not all that kept Journalls either lodged them [when they] gott to Europe or ellse are not yet returned nor euer likely to come home[;] therefore I think I may most justly challenge as a right to those dyscoveryes then any other man yet I can plainly see that some men are not soe well pleas'd as if it came from any of the commanders that were in the south seas though most of them I think besides Captain Swan were wholly incapable of keeping a sea Journall & took noe account of any actions neither did they make any obseruations in those partes yet such is the opinion of most men that nothing pleaseth them but what comes from the highest hand though from men of the meanest capacityes. But I feare I am too prolix in this Discourse I am only to answer for myself & if I haue not giuen a Dyscription of those places to the satisfaction of my frinds I must beg pardon & desire them to [blame?] the defects they find in these my writings on the meanness of my information and not in me who haue ben faithfull as to what is written of my own knowledge or in getteing the best information I could.⁴⁵⁰

Another test of authenticity lay in the style of the report. Plain writing unvarnished by rhetorical flourishes was considered the appropriate style for retailing ‘matters of fact’:

Honesty in the factual genres required unadorned prose. Rhetorical fluency and highly ornamented and figurative language had connotations of deception and flattery.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵⁰ BL, Sloane 3236, f233 r and v.

⁴⁵¹ Barbara Shapiro, *Culture of Fact*, 72.

In *A New Voyage* Dampier is apologetic about the plainness of his prose, ‘As to my style, it cannot be expected that a Seaman should affect politeness’.⁴⁵² By the publication of *A Voyage to New Holland* in 1703 this simple style has become a virtue:

It has been objected against me by some, that my Accounts and Descriptions of Things are dry and jejune, not filled with variety of pleasant Matter, to divert and gratify the Curious Reader. How far this is true, I must leave to the World to judge. But if I have been exactly and strictly careful to give only *True* Relations and Descriptions of Things (as I am sure I have;) and if my Descriptions be such as may be of use not only to my self (which I have already in good measure experienced) but also to others in future Voyages; and likewise to such Readers at home as are more desirous of a Plain and Just account of the true Nature and State of the Things described, than of a Polite and Rhetorical Narrative: I hope all the Defects in my Stile, will meet with an easy and ready Pardon.⁴⁵³

Plainness aside, the authenticity of *A New Voyage* is still questionable. Both Edwards and Glyndwr Williams explore its provenance and express some doubt about the existence of the journals on which it is based. The only surviving manuscript now in the British Library is not the journal kept on the voyage, is considerably shorter than the published work and the main text is not written in Dampier’s hand. The style and substance of the manuscript are also very different from the published book. This manuscript, with its alterations and additions, raises a number of questions, not all of which are easy to answer.⁴⁵⁴ Preston and Preston are inclined to accept Dampier’s own account of the pains he took to preserve his journals:

He had rolled his parchments in tubes of bamboo sealed with wax to protect them...he had plucked his manuscripts from the waves when his canoe capsized in the Nicobar Islands, and carefully dried them. He had guarded his journals through turbulent days on mutinous ships, fighting for physical space, and making sure that whatever else be lost, they always came with him.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵² William Dampier, *A New Voyage*, preface.

⁴⁵³ William Dampier, *A Voyage to New Holland &C.* (London, 1703), preface.

⁴⁵⁴ Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 112.

⁴⁵⁵ Preston & Preston, *William Dampier*, 313.

This picture of journals and charts heroically preserved against the odds is somewhat undermined by Dampier's own admission that, on the last leg of his journey home:

I came by stealth from Bencoolly, and left all my books drafts and instruments cloaths bedding [illegible] and wages behind. I only brought with me this journal and my painted prince.⁴⁵⁶

This account is significantly changed in the published book:

I brought with me my Journal, and most of my written papers, but I left some Papers and Books of value in haste, and all my furniture, being glad I was at Liberty, and having hopes of seeing England again.⁴⁵⁷

Thus 'my written papers' have been miraculously restored, though at the expense of the painted prince, who disappears from the narrative from this point.

It is impossible to tell which is the more accurate version of events, but it is reasonable to speculate that either Dampier or an editor noticed the apparent contradiction contained in the manuscript version and changed it. Edwards does not see the alterations to the manuscript as evidence that *A New Voyage* was substantially the work of others:

The changes made between the Sloane manuscript and the published text are often sophisticated improvements which suggest an experienced literary editor. On the other hand, almost every retelling of an incident includes additional eye-witness material which could not have been provided by an editor.⁴⁵⁸

The argument put forward here is not entirely convincing, in that it seems to exclude the possibility of invention. An equally plausible scenario is one in which the editor, frustrated by the incoherence of the manuscript and the paucity of lively incident contained in it, prods Dampier to enliven the book with dimly remembered 'eye-witness' accounts. We know from the two quotations above that Dampier's memory

⁴⁵⁶ BL Sloane MS 3236 f.232v. Dampier had bought a half share in the painted prince 'Joely' from an English businessman. They hoped to make money displaying his much tattooed body in England.

⁴⁵⁷ William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World*, ed. Mark Beken (London, 1999), 252.

⁴⁵⁸ Philip Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 21.

was suspect, and Woodes Rogers was later to make fun of his wayward recall of places and events. It would not be surprising if many of the tales in *A New Voyage*, set down, of necessity, some years after they took place, were the product of collaborative imagination rather than accurate recollection.

Williams argues that *A New Voyage* should be seen as a product of Dampier's memory of events, his reading of other journals kept by, for example, Captain Swan of the *Cygnets* and the help of unnamed writers or editors in England. Dampier acknowledged help and claimed it was 'far from being a Diminution to one of my Education and Employment, to have, what I write, Revised and Corrected by Friends'.⁴⁵⁹ On the other hand he was sensitive to criticism that the work was not his own:

Others have taxed me with borrowing from other Men's journals; and with Insufficiency, as if I was not my self the Author of what I write, but published Things digested and drawn up by others. As to the first Part of this Objection, I assure the Reader, I have taken nothing from any Man without mentioning his Name, except some very few Relations and particular Observations received from credible Persons who desired not to be named; and these I have always distinguished in my Books, from what I relate as my own observing.⁴⁶⁰

A New Voyage was not the first traveller's tale to be embellished in order to render it more palatable for general consumption. It is difficult to know the extent to which Dampier was guilty of such practice in *A New Voyage* since there is very little first-hand corroboration of his early travels. It has already been noted that his manuscript draft was altered significantly, first by him and later, probably, by his publisher Knapton. Dampier's manuscript description of aborigines, for example, was significantly altered for publication in order, Preston and Preston suggest, to sensationalise.⁴⁶¹ Dampier, a "self-conceited" man according to his former employer, William Whaley, was evasive

⁴⁵⁹ William Dampier, *A New Voyage*, preface.

⁴⁶⁰ William Dampier, *A Voyage to New Holland*, preface.

⁴⁶¹ Preston & Preston, *William Dampier*, 248

about the part he had played in the various buccaneering expeditions recorded in *A New Voyage*, seeking rather to emphasise his role as naturalist and hydrographer.⁴⁶² Some of what he sought to suppress or obscure Knapton reinstated on the grounds, presumably, that piratical deeds made good copy. Dampier's more obvious attempts to justify and explain his behaviour have also been toned down, again probably by Knapton, where it might appear too self-serving. Ironically it is the narrative of his buccaneering adventures that emerges as the most verifiable and his scientific observations that are the most questionable. His voyages with Cook, Swan and Davis were mostly well-documented and corroborated by fellow buccaneers like Lionel Wafer and Basil Ringrose. How useful such corroboration is may, of course, be subject to question. Woodes Rogers, in his introduction to *A Cruising Voyage* is scathing about the exploits and the records of the buccaneers and found them of little help to the South Sea navigator.

It's probable there is such an Island, because one Capt. Davis, an Englishman, who was Buckaneering in these Seas, above 20 Years ago, lay some Months and recruited here to Content: he says, that it had Trees fit for Masts; but these sort of Men, and others I have convers'd with, or whose Books I have read, have given very blind or false Relations of their Navigation, and Actions in these Parts, for supposing the Places too remote to have their Stories disprov'd, they impose on the Credulous, amongst whom I was one, till now I too plainly see, that we cannot find any of their Relations to be relied on.⁴⁶³

The elements that made *A New Voyage* different from the books of previous voyagers, its anthropological, botanical and hydrographic observations, are even less easily verifiable. The problem is not that Dampier's observations on these matters are inaccurate (though some are) so much as one wonders how much they are his own.⁴⁶⁴

Much of the scientific material was added following extensive consultation with

⁴⁶² Ibid., 322.

⁴⁶³ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage*, (1928), 155.

⁴⁶⁴ One striking example of questionable observation is Dampier's description of the durian fruit, whose uniquely foul smell he describes as "an excellent scent" in *A New Voyage Round the World* (1999), 144.

members of the Royal Society and, no doubt, more speculative discussions in coffee houses. It is possible that the Secretary of the Royal Society, Hans Sloane, who later acquired an early draft of *A New Voyage*, encouraged him to insert the scientific material. It is also possible that Dampier, who impressed many of these eager natural philosophers with his grasp of physical phenomena that they only partially understood, got as much as he gave in their meetings, and was clever enough to insert what he had learnt in his final draft.

Such speculation would be idle were it not for the fact that in at least one area of his supposed expertise Dampier was consistently found wanting by his fellow mariners. He was, according to Welbe and Funnell on the *St George* and Woodes Rogers on the *Duke*, a poor navigator – a judgement investigated in more detail in Chapter 2.

If Dampier's skill as a navigator is subject to question, how much credence can be given to his observations on the tides and ocean currents? Diana & Michael Preston claim that his *Discourse on Trade-Winds* was seminal, arguing that he provided new evidence about the ocean floor and produced "major advances in the knowledge of how tides, winds and currents are distributed and the mechanics of their global interaction".⁴⁶⁵ Again though, there is considerable doubt about how much of the *Discourse* was original and how much was the common currency of the time. His description of the ocean currents and his account of winds and tidal streams provides useful detail possibly based in his experience but it adds little to what Newton, in his *Principia Mathematica*, and particularly Halley, in *An Historical Account of the Trade-winds*, had already provided.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁵ Preston & Preston, *William Dampier*, 335.

⁴⁶⁶ Halley's paper was first put forward in 1686. It is certainly possible that Dampier was given sight of it by Halley although the printed version was not published until six years after Dampier's *Discourse*, in *Miscellanea Curiosa*, Vol. 1 (Royal Society, London 1705), 65-80.

In his *Discourse on Trade Winds* Dampier cites a number of people (including a Captain Rogers) who provided him with information, although he does not mention Halley.⁴⁶⁷ What was undoubtedly new and original in Dampier's treatise was the wealth of detailed information about tidal flows in particular areas (and particularly the effect of river mouths on the tidal range), as well as his much admired work on ocean currents. Even William Funnell, who in most other things was sceptical of Dampier's abilities, found his "descriptions of places very exact, and his account of winds, tides etc very extraordinary".⁴⁶⁸ On the other hand Dampier added little to the contemporary knowledge of trade winds and the course and causes of the Indian Ocean monsoons, which had already been very adequately described by Halley. Even the much praised map of ocean currents adds nothing new to that contained in Halley's discourse.⁴⁶⁹ Dampier offers no scientific explanation for the existence of the tides or trade winds, but merely observations of their nature, whereas Halley's discourse is able to use science to connect these phenomena to the rotation of the earth and the effects of the sun's heat on the density of air and the evaporation of sea water. To state that Dampier's Treatise stands as a "classic of the pre-scientific era", as Joseph C. Shipman does, is wrong on two counts: it is not a classic and was not pre-scientific.⁴⁷⁰

What makes the treatise unique is a particular narrative style that lifts it above the quotidian narratives of the buccaneers. Here Dampier describes the coming of a sea breeze on the coast of Chile:

These Sea-Breezes do commonly rise in the Morning about Nine a Clock, sometimes sooner, sometimes later: they first approach the shore, so gently as if they were afraid to come near it, and oftentimes they make some faint breathings,

⁴⁶⁷ William Dampier, *Voyages and Descriptions* (London, 1699).

⁴⁶⁸ Preston & Preston, *William Dampier*, 426.

⁴⁶⁹ Edmund Halley, *Discourse*, 76.

⁴⁷⁰ Joseph C. Shipman, *William Dampier, Seaman-Scientist* (Lawrence, KS, 1962), 8, quoted in Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 118

and as if not willing to offend, they make a halt, and seem ready to retire. I have waited many a time both ashore to receive the pleasure, and at Sea to Take the benefit of it.

It comes in a fine, small, black Curle upon the Water, when as all the Sea between it and the shore not yet reach'd by it, is as smooth and even as glass in comparison;⁴⁷¹

This is natural description of a high order and one which the first novel writers would have done well to emulate. Dampier's later writings do not match it. His account of the officially sanctioned exploratory voyage to New Holland was published in two parts in 1703 and 1709.⁴⁷² Dampier makes no mention of the disputes and near mutinies which characterised the voyage, but confines himself to descriptions of places and their inhabitants that he encountered. His description of the north-western coast of Australia adds little to what he had already described in *A New Voyage* and his account of the inhabitants is identical (to the printed version). Indeed, except for a small collection of plants taken from Shark Bay and the discovery of an island off the east coast of New Guinea which he named New Britain, the voyage and his books revealed nothing that was not already known. What is, perhaps, most striking about this voyage intended to discover and chart new lands is that Dampier seems deliberately to have travelled only on seas that had already been charted, in the case of New Holland by both Tasman, whose 'draught' he had aboard, and Willem de Vlamingh, although Tasman's chart was only approximate and Dampier did produce detailed charts of Shark Bay.⁴⁷³

The last work published by Dampier was his *Vindication*, an eight-page attack on William Funnel's book about the 1703 privateering expedition that Dampier

⁴⁷¹ Dampier, *Treatise on Trade-Winds*, 27.

⁴⁷² William Dampier, *A Voyage to New Holland &c. in the Year 1699* (London, 1703) and *A Continuation of a Voyage to New Holland &c. in the Year 1699* (London, 1709).

⁴⁷³ Williams, *Great South Sea*, 123

commanded.⁴⁷⁴ Even making allowances for the fact that Dampier was getting on in years (55), tired after his last voyage and distracted by preparations for the next, the *Vindication* still leads one to question the extent to which his earlier works could properly be called his own. The first paragraph will suffice to show how Dampier lapses into a rant:

In the first place, he calls himself my Mate; he went out my Steward, and afterwards I did make a Midshipman of him: indeed he had the advantage of perusing Draughts and Books, of which he afterwards gave but a slender Account, for some he pretended were lost and others the Draughts are torn out of them; Especially the Draughts of Winds, which I greatly suspect him of doing, because he is not the first man that has endeavour'd to build upon another Man's Foundation.⁴⁷⁵

While it is not difficult to question the truth of Dampier's accounts and the accuracy of his observations, the importance of *A New Voyage* in the evolution of English literature is undoubted. It established the use of first person narrative as a powerful device for drawing in readers and holding their attention. It follows the heroic and comic adventures of its protagonist with self-deprecating humour and a vivid turn of phrase that prefigures the picaresque novel and it employs an unadorned prose whose very lack of rhetorical flourish conveys authenticity. It is difficult to establish direct connections between *A New Voyage* and the fictional works of Defoe, Swift, Fielding and Sterne - although the first two almost certainly met Dampier and *Gulliver's Travels* refers to 'my cousin Dampier' - but the connections in terms of the narrative techniques used are

⁴⁷⁴ William Dampier, *Captain Dampier's Vindication of his Voyage to the South-Seas in the ship St George. With some small Observations for the Present on Mr Funnell's Chimerical Relation of the Voyage Round the World; and Detected in Little, until he shall be examin'd more at Large* (London, 1707).

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

unmistakable. They may be found also in other precursors of the novel such as the voyage narratives of Woodes Rogers and George Shelvocke.

Parallel narratives: Rogers's and Cooke's accounts of the 1708 expedition

Booksellers must have been eager to be the first to publish an account of Woodes Rogers's famously successful voyage and it is therefore curious that it was not Dampier, the best known travel writer of his age or Woodes Rogers, the commander-in-chief, who won the race, but Edward Cooke. Cooke, the second captain of the *Dutchess*, published *A Voyage to the South Sea*, printed by 'H.M. for B. Lintot and R. Gosling', in March 1712, just five months after the Manila galleon moored at Erith.⁴⁷⁶ Why Lintot, a literary publisher more associated with the works of Pope and Dryden than with travellers' tales, should have been so quick to take on the job is impossible to say.⁴⁷⁷ James Knapton, who had published and republished all of Dampier's books as well as several buccaneer journals would have been an obvious choice but it is possible he was relying on Dampier to produce the definitive account of the voyage. If so he was to be disappointed as Dampier wrote nothing except chancery bills of complaint and letters concerning his share of the booty. Cooke's first volume, rushed as it was, finished with the capture of the Manila galleon but its success was such that the second volume was printed on June 12. Rogers's *A Cruising Voyage round the World* was 'printed...for A. Bell.... And Bernard Lintote' a week later.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁶ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea and Round the World in the Years 1708, 1709, 1710 and 1711* (London, 1712). An advertisement for it was placed in *The Spectator* for March 27th 1712.

⁴⁷⁷ Lintot is described, unflatteringly, as a frog in Pope's satire on Grub Street, *The Dunciad*.

⁴⁷⁸ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World: First to the South-Seas, thence to the East Indies, and Homeward by the Cape of Good Hope. Begun in 1708, and finished in 1711*. An advertisement appeared in *The Medley* of June 20th but *The Post Boy* announced publication 'on this day' of July 1st.

The two books vary little in their depiction of events but noticeably in their approach. Cooke gives an account that is part gazetteer – with long political and historical descriptions of the countries of South America, part ‘waggoner’ - with plans of the coast and passages carefully recorded – and, with its copious engravings of flora and fauna, part natural history. Cooke and his publisher clearly took Dampier’s books as their model, hoping, no doubt, to appeal to the same market. Rogers adopts a similar no-nonsense writing style to Dampier (see below) but his intention in writing the book was different. Before *A Cruising Voyage* was published Rogers was being subjected to a barrage of complaints about his handling of the voyage and accusations that he had swindled his fellow officers, crew and investors out of a substantial portion of the plunder. One important motive for its publication was, therefore, self-defence. As Rogers writes in his introduction to *A Cruising Voyage*,: “I was not fond to appear in print, but the solicitations of my friends who had read my journal, and the mistaken reports that were spread abroad of our voyage prevail’d with me at last to publish it.”⁴⁷⁹ There is a hint here of the defensiveness that emerges again in the book’s Dedication, where he is unable to hide his frustration at the actions of his fellow captains: ‘I heartily congratulate you [the adventurers] on the Success and profit of this Long and Hazardous Voyage; which might have been greater, but the following sheets will show that it was not my fault’. He was also eager to capitalise on the much trumpeted success of his voyage to promote the aims of the South Sea Company and advertise his schemes for a lucrative trade to pacific South America. This enthusiasm may explain the proliferation of those passages, often lifted wholesale from earlier works, on the history, governance and trade of South and Central America, which can appear otiose to the modern reader and must surely have irritated a contemporary audience intent on

⁴⁷⁹ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World*, (1712), xiii.

enjoying a stirring South Sea adventure. *A Voyage Round the World by a Course Never Sailed Before*, a fictional work probably written by Daniel Defoe, condemns such a hotchpotch approach.

It is to be observ'd; of the several Navigators whose Voyages round the World have been publish'd, that few, if any of them, have diverted us with that Variety which a Circle of that Length must needs offer. We have very little account of their landings, their Diversions, the Accidents which happen'd to them, or to others by their Means; the Stories of their Engagements, when they have had any Scuffle either with Natives, or *European* enemies, are told superficially and by Halves; the Storms and Difficulties at Sea or on Shore, have nowhere a full Relation; and all the rest of their Accounts are generally fill'd up with Directions for Sailors coming that way, the Bearings of the Land, the Depth of the Channels, Entrances, and Barrs, at the several Ports, Anchorage in the Bays, and Creeks, and the like Things, useful indeed for Seamen going thither again, *and how few are they?* But not at all to the Purpose, when we come expecting to find the History of the Voyage.⁴⁸⁰

Rogers himself, in the introduction to *A Cruising Voyage*, attempts to distance himself from the fashion for padding a manuscript, and also takes a sideswipe at the main concerns of Dampier's *A New Voyage*:

I know 'tis generally expected, that when far distant voyages are printed, they should contain new and wonderful Discoveries, with surprising Accounts of People and Animals; but this Voyage being only design'd for cruising on the Enemy, it is not reasonable to expect such Accounts here as are to be met with in Travels, relating to History, Geography, &c. Something of that however I have inserted to oblige the Booksellers, who persuaded me that this would make it more grateful to some sort of Readers: But I have confin'd my self to those parts which are most likely to be frequented for Trade, and quoted my Authors from whom I had the Collections;⁴⁸¹

In a hastily produced memorandum written between the advertisement and the book's publication Rogers adds an apology for the absence of any charts or pilotage:

Since I advertis'd my publishing this Book, the Booksellers have thought it their Interest to hurry out a Continuation of Cooks Voyage; in which they have

⁴⁸⁰ [Daniel Defoe], *A Voyage Round the World by a Course Never Sailed Before* (London 1725), 2.

⁴⁸¹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), Introduction, xiii.

attempted at the Views of several Harbours and sights of Land in the *Southsea* which tho not done so effectually as I intend in mine, yet it has prevented my intention of Engraving the harbours, which, on second consideration, may at a proper time be better publish'd separate in a Coasting-Pilot-Book for that trade.⁴⁸²

What sets *A Cruising Voyage* apart from its contemporary rivals is its voice. Cooke lets the story tell itself, relying heavily on transcription of the journals and interspersed, as we have seen, with historical or cartographic information supplied from other works and captured charts and pilots. Although superficially similar – Rogers's book is told in journal form with each entry preceded by the date – it is apparent from the beginning that he is intent on employing sophisticated narrative techniques to engage his readers. It is worth comparing the first paragraph from Cooke's *A Voyage to the South Sea* with the equivalent in *A Cruising Voyage*. This is Cooke:

The Ships fitted out at *Bristol* as Privateers, for the *South Sea* Expedition, on such Motives and by such Owners as have been mentioned in the Introduction, were, the *Duke Burden* about 300 Tons, 30 Guns and 170 men, Capt. *Woodes Rogers* Commander, Capt. *Thomas Dover*, Second Captain with three Lieutenants, &co and the *Dutchess* Capt. *Stephen Courtney*, Commander Capt. *Edward Cooke*, second Captain, with three Lieutenants, Burden about 270 Tons, 26 Guns and 151 Men. Both Ships had legal Commissions from his Royal Highness Prince *George of Denmark*, Lord High Admiral of England, to Cruize on the Coasts of *Peru* and *Mexico*, in the South Sea, against her Majesty's Enemies the *French* and *Spaniards*, and to act jointly, as belonging to the same Owners, Merchants of *Bristol*.⁴⁸³

And this is Rogers:

About four in the Afternoon we weigh'd from *Kingroad* near *Bristol* on board the *Duke* frigate, whereof Capt. *Woodes Rogers* was Commander, in Consortship with the *Dutchess*, Capt. *Stephen Courtney* Commander; both Private Men of War, bound to *Cork* in *Ireland*, and thence to the Southward a cruising; the *Duke* Burden about 320 Tuns, having 30 Guns and 117 Men; and

⁴⁸² Ibid, Memorandum. Rogers had 11 days in which to explain himself (see publication dates above).

⁴⁸³ Edward Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, 1.

the *Dutchess* Burden about 260 Tuns by Measure, 26 Guns and 108 Men: both well furnish'd with all Necessaries on board for a distant Undertaking.⁴⁸⁴

The first is workmanlike and packed with rather indigestible names and facts. It is written in the pedestrian style appropriate to a ship's journal or, if it were to be produced today, an entry in Wikipedia. The second, by contrast, leaps off the page. We are given the essential information, but it employs the active past tense to transport us to the scene and tell us enough to engage our interest but not so much as to leave no room for surprise. This is consummate storytelling, and renders his comment in the Introduction to *A Cruising Voyage*, that "I had not time, were it my Talent, to polish the Stile; nor do I think it necessary for a Mariner's Journal", appear disingenuous.⁴⁸⁵ Like Dampier before him, Rogers pleads the case for plain, unvarnished prose:

Tho others, who give an Account of their Voyages, do generally attempt to imitate the Stile and Method which is us'd by Authors that write ashore, I rather chuse to keep to the Language of the Sea, which is more genuine, and natural for a Mariner. And because Voyages of this sort have commonly miscarry'd, 'tis necessary that I should keep to my original journal;⁴⁸⁶

It is apparent from the beginning that, while Rogers's language may affect a certain down-to-earth disregard for syntactical niceties – note the "'tis" and the sentence beginning with "And" above – the voice of *A Cruising Voyage* is complex and sophisticated. The first paragraph quoted above has the superficial look of a journal entry, but phrases such as "bound to Cork in *Ireland* and thence to the Southward a cruising" and "well furnish'd with all Necessaries on board for a distant Undertaking" have surely not been transcribed verbatim from a log. The construction and style of this 'journal entry' suggest either that the original record has been spruced up for publication or, at the very least, that Rogers was writing his journal with an eye to

⁴⁸⁴ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 2.

⁴⁸⁵ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712) Introduction, xiv.

⁴⁸⁶ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 1. The last sentence is probably referring to Dampier's 1703 voyage, in which the absence of any official journal precipitated the ugly pamphlet war noted above.

posterity. Nothing can have been more finely calculated to appeal to a public whose appetite for tales of exploration and the exotic had been awakened by William Dampier's adventures. The evocative phrase "to the southward a cruising" has a resonance even now, but to the early eighteenth-century reader it would have encapsulated the exceptional nature of the "distant undertaking".

Some recent scholars have seen Rogers as the Gradgrind of travel writers, only interested in recounting the facts and explicitly avoiding crossing the line between fact and fiction:

Rogers, for one, was intensely interested in determining how the factual should look. In blustering pronouncements, he treats the question of truth as though it were black and white, but in practice, he seems to regard truth-telling as largely presentational and to believe that truth had to be made recognizable through formal features. Accordingly, he not only presents his narrative as truthful, but also foregrounds the literary principles by which truthfulness should be apparent, repeatedly invoking these principles as though they constituted an actual line, the crossing of which entailed favouring the creations of the mind over the perceptions of the senses.⁴⁸⁷

Rogers, Pearl contends, prefers to deal in fact rather than commentary, and when he does stray over the clear line, as in his homily on the moral messages to be found in the Selkirk story, he quickly returns to the safety of the factual: 'I must quit these Reflections, which are more proper for a Philosopher and Divine than a Mariner, and return to my own Subject'.⁴⁸⁸ This is a reductive view of Rogers's intentions, which were more complex than a determination to convey facts, and it fails to recognise the extraordinary restraint with which Rogers records the schisms which racked the voyage in its later stages. Since it was not possible for him to stand above events in which he was so centrally involved Rogers fell back on recording only what could be

⁴⁸⁷ Jason Pearl, 'Woodes Rogers and travel facts', 62

⁴⁸⁸ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 96.

corroborated by reference to the letters, meeting minutes and journals of the voyage.

His approach is very clearly explained in the introduction to *A Cruising Voyage*:

From our first setting out, I took the best method to preserve an unquestionable relation of the Voyage, by having a daily Account kept in a publick Book of all our Transactions, which lay open to every one's View; and where any thing was reasonably objected against, it was corrected. This Method we observ'd during the whole Voyage, and almost in the same manner as you have it in the following Relation.⁴⁸⁹

The 'publick Book', written by Robert Parker, a midshipman acting as clerk, is there in the chancery documents, noticeably bleached by the tropical sun.⁴⁹⁰ It contains the minutes and decisions of all the many meetings held by the council and was almost certainly used by both Rogers and Cooke as their principal objective source for the accounts of meetings given in their books.

Bryan Little suggests that Rogers may have had assistance in the writing of *A Cruising Voyage* and speculates that Defoe would have been a likely candidate.⁴⁹¹ In support of this idea he notes that Defoe's *The Essay on the South Sea Trade*, published in the same year, contained arguments and proposals that mirror those found in Rogers's introduction to his own book. Bryan Little also notes that there is not much evidence in Rogers's private (that is, unmediated by secretaries or copiers) correspondence to suggest he had had more than a basic education and doubts whether he had the linguistic resources to write his book unaided. In this Little has the support of Defoe, who described both Dampier and Rogers as those two "illiterate sailors".⁴⁹² This may be unfair. There is plenty of evidence in the chancery papers on the voyage that Rogers could write good, clear, unambiguous prose in circumstances that would have tested the

⁴⁸⁹ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), Introduction, xx.

⁴⁹⁰ TNA C104/36 Part 2, Robert Parker's Committee Book

⁴⁹¹ Bryan Little, *Crusoe's Captain*, 157.

⁴⁹² West, Richard, *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe* (London, 1997), 237.

most accomplished writers.⁴⁹³ His writing stands up very well, for example, against that of Doctor Dover, the one leading member of the expedition with a university education. There is a muscular jauntiness in Rogers's prose style that marks it out from other voyaging accounts. Here, for example, Rogers describes his crew shortly after starting the voyage:

Several of her Majesty's Subjects on board were Tinkers, Taylors, Hay-makers, Pedlers, Fidlers, &c. one Negro, and about ten Boys.⁴⁹⁴

It is, of course, the (almost certainly deliberate) juxtaposition of "her Majesty's" with the motley list of trades that distinguishes the passage, but this is not an isolated example. On approaching Cork Rogers describes coming to anchor "off of the two Rocks call'd the *Sovereign's Bollacks*". This name for the Sovereigns does not appear in Dampier, Cooke or Funnell and it seems perfectly possible that Rogers heard it from a local pilot or seaman and, because he was entertained by it, could not resist including it. Here is one last example out of many more:

Our Crew were continually marrying whilst we staid at *Cork*, tho they expected to sail immediately. Among others there was a *Dane* coupled by a Romish Priest to an *Irish* Woman, without understanding a word of each other's Language, so that they were forc'd to use an interpreter; yet I perceiv'd this Pair seem'd more afflicted at Separation than any of the rest: The Fellow continu'd melancholy for several days after we were at Sea. The rest understanding each other, drank their Cans of Flip till the last minute, concluded with a Health to our good Voyage, and their happy Meeting, and then parted unconcern'd.⁴⁹⁵

At times Rogers can appear sententious and uninspired, but overall there is a lightness of touch, a curiosity about human nature and a wise tolerance that looks forward to the Fielding of *Tom Jones*.

⁴⁹³ I am told by Donald Jones that Little was not aware of the master's exhibits and so was not really in a position to make judgements about Rogers's writing skills.

⁴⁹⁴ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*(1928), 6.

⁴⁹⁵ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*(1928), 5.

There is another reason to think that Defoe did not have a hand in *A Cruising Voyage*.

An extract from a memorandum book kept by Lintot is published in *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*.⁴⁹⁶ An entry for 25 October 1712 (four months after its publication) reads:

Rogers's Voyages	One half	£20.0.0
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Paid Mr Ridpath for correcting Rogers's Voyage, my share £5.0.0⁴⁹⁷

Assuming Bell (the other publisher) paid the other half we may deduce that Rogers was paid £40.0.0 for the book – a not insubstantial sum for the time. As interesting is the total of £10 (assuming equal payments by the two printers as with Rogers) to ‘Mr Ridpath’. That this is George Ridpath, a pamphleteer and editor of the *Flying Post* and *The Post-Boy*, is confirmed by a pencil written direction found on the back of a document in the chancery exhibits. The document is a hessian bound account book containing a list of dead seamen (John Rogers, Woodes's younger brother, is one of them) and the sums of money owing to their heirs from the Chatham Chest and from the sale of their clothes and belongings on board the ships. The book is addressed, on the front cover, ‘To Capt Woodes Rogers to be left at Capt. (unreadable) merchant in London. The note on the back reads: ‘Inv Geo. Ridpath att Mrs Weavers in Gravel Street Hatton Garden one dore this side of white post’.⁴⁹⁸ Ridpath had been well-known as a supporter of the Presbyterian cause and opponent of union with Scotland. Perhaps of more significance in the context of Woodes Rogers's book is that the *The Post Boy* – a newspaper which at one point was edited by Ridpath – had shown a supportive

⁴⁹⁶ John Nichols, ed. Colin Clair, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1967), 212.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ TNA, C104/36 part 1.

interest in Dampier's later voyages. It expressed some outrage when reports from Dampier's lieutenant on the *Roebuck* accused him of Piracy:

We have had a malicious Report, industriously spread about this City...as if Capt. *Dampier*, so famous for his several Voyages, particularly that round the World, who was intrusted some months since with one of the king's ships... to make further discoveries on the *Terra Australis*, had betaken himself to that wicked Trade of Pirating, all which is grounded upon a Letter from his Lieutenant, who is come to Lisbon and who says, That Capt. Dampier was always telling his Men what a brave life it was to be a Pirateering, seeming to encourage them to Join with him, which this Lieutenant did not approve of, disswading him from it; whereupon he clapt him in Irons, and set him ashore in *Brazil*... But those that know *Dampier* can harbour no such thought of this great Travel'er, he being always aversed to that pernicious Imploy, as it appears by the two Volumes he writ of his several Voyages, and that this is only to blast his Reputation, he having a fairer prospect of making his Fortune at Home, than by Pirating.⁴⁹⁹

By 1707, in the face of the failures of the *Roebuck* voyage and Dampier's later expedition, *The Post Boy* has become rather more cautious in his support, providing, in another of his publications, a measured review of Funnel's critical account of the 1703 voyage.

In the sketch I here give, I have taken the liberty to Entertain the Reader more particularly with the most Material of Capt. Dampier's Adventures, knowing that the World was in great Expectation of the Success of his Expedition; and would be willing to know the Circumstances of his Disappointment.⁵⁰⁰

Ridpath had probably collaborated with Defoe on a pamphlet opposing the imposition of the Book of Common Prayer in Scotland, but they later fell out and in September 1712 Ridpath was arrested for publishing sedition against Defoe's sometime sponsors, Queen Anne and the Harley government.⁵⁰¹ Six months later Defoe himself was

⁴⁹⁹ *The Post Boy*, November 20, 1699.

⁵⁰⁰ A review of 'A Voyage Round the World' in *The History of the Works of the Learned*, March 1707, 179.

⁵⁰¹ G.A. Aitken, 'Ridpath, George (d.1726)', rev. John R. Young, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), accessed 12 July 2011.

arrested for sedition and Ridpath was his chief accuser.⁵⁰² Defoe responded in the *Review* of April 18, 1713: ‘I say if thou, Mr George Ridpath, art the author of the Flying Post, thou hast published a lie!’ Defoe was to have his revenge, however, when Ridpath jumped bail and fled to Holland just as his own trial was about to be heard. In the *Review* of May 7 Defoe mocked Ridpath’s hasty flight:

To see a person who had frequently reproached me with suffering the indignity of the Pillory, though in a cause he pretends to espouse, run away from his friends, and his cause too, for fear of the Pillory!⁵⁰³

It is reasonable to conclude that if Ridpath was helping with Rogers’s book Defoe was not. Besides Defoe, if he did help Rogers, is oddly dismissive of his efforts as well as those of Dampier. As has been noted, *A New Voyage Round the World, by a Course Never Sailed Before* condemns the content of voyage books, but it is equally censorious of the pretensions of the writers:

It has for some Ages been thought so wonderful a thing to sail the Tour or Circle of the Globe, that when a Man has done this mighty Feat, he presently thinks it deserves to be recorded like *Sir Francis Drake’s*. So as soon as men have acted the Sailor, they come a-shore and write Books of their Voyage, not only to make a great Noise of what they have done themselves, but pretending to show the way to others to come after them, they set up for Teachers and Chart Makers to Posterity. Tho’ most of them have had this Misfortune, that whatever success they have had in the Voyage, they have had very little in the relation; except it be to tell us, that a seaman when he comes to the Press, is pretty much out of his element, and a very good Sailor may make but a very indifferent Author.⁵⁰⁴

The severity of Defoe’s judgement would no doubt have been encouraged by the knowledge that his enemy had been closely involved in the creation of at least one of these sailors’ books. Furthermore it is Rogers’s book which is clearly written by a far from ‘indifferent’ author. It is interesting to note that Swift, no friend of Ridpath’s, wrote that he had been described as ‘one of the best Pens in England’, so it is probable

⁵⁰² Richard West, *Daniel Defoe*, 198.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴[Defoe, Daniel] *A New Voyage Round the World by a Course Never Sailed Before* (London, 1725), 1.

that at least some of what lifts *A Cruising Voyage* above the humdrum is provided by Ridpath.⁵⁰⁵ Rogers's book has been reprinted many times in several editions throughout the last three centuries. It still stands as a remarkable achievement, in many ways comparable to *Robinson Crusoe* which it inspired. It is witty, humane and shot through with entertaining detail about daily life aboard a ship of war in the early eighteenth century. It deserves to be better known today.

Cooke's account is more typical of the kind of narrative Defoe abhors. The charts are excellent and the daily reports of events are earnest and accurate. He faithfully reports the meetings and council decisions that peppered the voyage and, since he spent most of the voyage on the *Dutchess*, provides eye witness accounts of events on that ship that were not available to Rogers on the *Duke*. *A Voyage to the South Sea* has neither the wit nor human perspective of Rogers's book, but it provides considerable insight into the preoccupations of mariners and, it appears in his case, a navigator busily concerned with positions, soundings and the weather. As a cool-eyed observer of events he at least equals Rogers, and his account of the sea that almost sank the *Dutchess* as they approached Cape Horn is worthy of Conrad or Hughes:

Wednesday, January 5. 1708-9. This day we had a violent gale of Wind at N.W. and very bad weather; at Two in the Afternoon reef'd both courses, and then lower'd our Foreyard, and lay by 'till Five; at which Time our Waste was fill'd with water, and we expecting the Ship would sink every Moment. Got down our Fore-yard as well we could, and loos'd the Sprit-sail, to ware the Ship, which at last we did, but in waring, we thought she would have founder'd with the Weight of the Water that was in her, by reason she had so deep a waste. Thus we scudded before the Wind, the Duke following and at Nine shipp'd a Sea at the Poop, as we were in the Cabbin going to eat; it beat in all the Cabbin-Windows and Bulk-Head, and hove the first lieutenant half way between the Decks, with several Muskets and Pistols that hung there, darting a Sword that was against the Bulk-Head of the Cabbin, through my Man's hammock and Rig,

⁵⁰⁵ While supporting Bryan Little's view that Defoe assisted Rogers in the writing of *A Cruising Voyage*, Schonhorn notes the 'disturbing entry in a memorandum book of the Lintots' that mentions George Ridpath; *History of the Pyrates* (1972), xxix, note 1.

which hung against the Bulk-Head of the Steeridge, and had not the Bulk-head of the Great Cabbin given way, all we who were there must inevitably have been drowned, before the water could have been vented. Our Yaul was stav'd on the Deck, and it was a Wonder that many were not kill'd with the Shutters, the Bulk-Head and the Arms, which were drove with a prodigious Force; but God in his Mercy deliver'd us from this and many other Dangers.⁵⁰⁶

On the bitter rivalries that almost destroyed the voyage Cooke is virtually silent, and is thus unsatisfactory either as corroboration or contradiction of *A Cruising Voyage*. We see the quarrels and confrontations largely through Rogers's partial eyes, and then only dimly, possibly because, in 1712, Rogers was himself being careful not to write anything that might affect his still undecided share of the prize money. One of the few occasions in which both Cooke and Rogers deal directly with dissension among the officers was over the appointment of Dr Dover as captain of the Acapulco prize. The dispute centred on Dover's competence to command a ship. This is Rogers:

'Twas our great Unhappiness, after taking a rich Prize, to have a Paper-War amongst our selves. I am sorry to trouble the reader with these Disputes, which continued for two Days about a proper Commander for this Prize; because it highly concern'd us to take the utmost Precautions for her Safety, having a long Run through Dangerous unknown Passages, into the East Indies, and most of the Recompence for our great Risques and Hardships lay in her Riches. I had always desired that Capt. Dover might be aboard her, for being a considerable owner, we all agreed he was a very proper person to take Care of her Cargo.⁵⁰⁷

The dispute took place immediately after the attempt on a second, larger galleon had failed. Rogers, wounded in the face and foot, was unable to talk or move and had to deliver his arguments by letter. The officers of the *Duke* sided with Rogers but Courtney, Cooke, Dampier and the other officers of the *Dutchess* were persuaded by Dover to support his claim to be absolute commander of the prize. Accusations flew until finally Rogers, lying in considerable pain in the great cabin of the *Duke*, offered a compromise:

⁵⁰⁶ Edward Cooke, *Voyage to the South Seas*, 32

⁵⁰⁷ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*(1928), 227

My opinion is, That 'tis not for the Safety of the rich Spanish Prize, that Capt. Dover command her, because his Temper is so violent, that capable Men cannot well act under him, and himself is incapable. Our Owners directed me to use the securest Method to bring the Ship home, if we should have the good Fortune to take her; and 'tis not so, if an ignorant Person have the Command: I am content and desire Capt. Dover may be aboard, and have Power to take Care of the Cargo, and all the Liberty and Freedom in her, he can in reason otherwise desire, and that none may have the like Power on board the Prize but himself. This is my Opinion. Jan.9 1709-10.⁵⁰⁸

Rogers indicates the pressures that were building after the voyage by concluding:

This dispute is against my desire already put in Print, from the wholly publick Notes of the Voyage, otherwise I had left it wholly out of my Journal, as I had done several other of our Differences, being unwilling to trouble the Reader with the Contests that too often happen'd in the Government of our sailing Commonwealth.⁵⁰⁹

It is interesting to note here that Rogers sees no fault in altering his 'Journal' in order to avoid controversy. The 'Publick Notes of the Voyage' is presumably a reference to Cooke's narrative, which was published three months before *A Cruising Voyage*. The two accounts of this event are virtually indistinguishable, relying, as they both do, on the records of the council meetings held at the time. Cooke's only addition is to say:

At this time we had several Differences and hot Disputes about appointing a Commander for the Manila ship, being a prize of considerable Value. Capt. Dover, being an Owner, desir'd he might command in chief Aboard her. Capt. Rogers, and several Officers of the Committee, voted that my self or Capt. Fry should command her; but having a ship already I voted against it, and proposed, together with Capt. Courtney, and several of our Officers, that it would be for the Interest of the whole, that Capt Dover should command the said Ship.⁵¹⁰

How Cooke was persuaded to give up the offer of command of the great prize and vote to stay with the crank and leaky lesser prize of the *Marquis* is not revealed by either

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ Edward Cooke, *Voyage to the South Sea*, 355.

account. Cooke stays silent also about the other major dispute that arose at the Cape of Good Hope, in which Dover, Courtney and Dampier accused Rogers of endangering his ship and planning to steal away to Brazil with much of the prize goods.

This reticence about key episodes on the voyage is characteristic and frustrating for the researcher, and cannot, as Pearl implies, be entirely blamed on a determination to stick to the facts and avoid opinion or expressions of judgement. As Rogers expresses and Cooke implies their aim was not just to put themselves in a good light but to suggest that such occasions were untypical of a voyage undertaken for the most part, they would have us believe, in harmony. In their haste to publish both authors were forced to cut short their narratives at the point of arrival in Erith in October 1711, and were thus unable (and almost certainly unwilling) to include any account of the legal war that began at that point.

One Travel Liar

Shelvocke's account of his voyage is a special case. His motives were quite unlike those of Dampier and Rogers and his main aims in publishing '*A Voyage Round the World*' were to cover up his criminal actions and to rebut the claims of the voyage's investors that he was a pirate and a thief. Unlike Dampier, who invents or plagiarises in order to fill in the gaps in his narrative, or Rogers, who sternly insists on his adherence to fact, Shelvocke, as we have seen (Chapter 4) deliberately constructs a fictional account in order to hide the truth. As Philip Edwards has pointed out there are passages in the narrative where Shelvocke employs a distinctive 'dramatic' style more akin to the fictional works of Swift and Defoe. Over 70 years later William Wordsworth was so struck by one of these passages – the account of the shooting of an albatross – that he drew it to the attention of Coleridge as a suitable crime against nature to trigger the events described in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

The incident as described by Shelvocke took place as the *Speedwell* entered the Straits of le Maire to the east of Cape Horn. After recording how a topman, William Camell, his fingers so numb that he could not hold, had fallen from the yard and drowned, Shelvocke reflected:

we had not had the sight of one fish of any kind since we were come to the Southward of the Straits of le Mair; nor one sea bird excepting a disconsolate black albatross, who accompanied us for several days, hovering about us as if he had lost himself, till Hatley (my second captain) observing, in one of his melancholy fits, that this bird was always hovering near us, imagined from his colour, that it might be some ill omen.But be that as it would he, after some fruitless attempts , at length shot the albatross not doubting (perhaps) that we should have a fair wind after that. I must own, that this navigation is truly melancholy, and was the more so to us, who were by ourselves without a companion, which would have somewhat diverted our thoughts from the reflection of being in such a remote part of the world and, as it were, separated from the rest of mankind to struggle with the dangers of a stormy climate, far distant from any port to have recourse to...⁵¹¹

The surviving manuscript of *A Voyage Round the World* contains no mention of this episode, and in fact jumps from the account of a falling topman on October 1st to November 21st - some seven weeks later - by which time the ship had rounded Cape Horn and was off the coast of Chile. William Betagh makes no comment on the story – either to confirm or deny – but he dismisses Shelvocke’s rhetorical flourishes on the ‘melancholy navigation’ as a joke, pointing out that he was all alone in the south latitudes because he had deliberately evaded his consort and was therefore hardly in a position to complain about being lonely.⁵¹² So what is the provenance of the tale? Philip Edwards notes that ‘Shelvocke was a spirited writer, but his best passages by far are those like the albatross passage in which he was romancing or misrepresenting the facts’.⁵¹³ Is it possible that Shelvocke invented – or stole – the idea? It would not be

⁵¹¹ George Shelvocke, *A Voyage Round the World* (1928), 40.

⁵¹² William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 57.

⁵¹³ Philip Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 49.

out of character but it seems likely, in the absence of any source story, that his publisher had asked Shelvocke (or possibly a hack editor) to enliven the manuscript for the benefit of the general reader – something they were no less prone to then than now, and that Shelvocke had recalled or invented this curious incident to add colour. It had the additional benefit, for Shelvocke, of adding weight to his contention that his deputy, Simon Hatley, was not just insubordinate but melancholic and mad as well.

The other ‘romantic’ passage is that describing the defining moment of the voyage – the wreck of the *Speedwell* on Juan Fernandez. Pearl accuses Shelvocke of producing ‘an explicitly imaginative account of Juan Fernandez and his experiences there’ and Edwards notes that the description of the wreck introduces an element of ‘simulated distress’ reminiscent of the albatross story.⁵¹⁴ This may be, as is suggested in Chapter 7 below, because Shelvocke was drawing upon the fictional source of *Robinson Crusoe* to enhance the credibility of his narrative.

William Betagh adopts techniques of critical analysis to question another section of Shelvocke’s narrative. Shelvocke describes his stay at Puerto Seguro on the Californian coast where he careened his ship in preparation for the voyage across the Pacific to China. Betagh suggests that the description of the place and its inhabitants has been copied from a section of Woodes Rogers’s *Cruising Voyage*. He contends that ‘His pretended natural history of California is all dull and tasteless, except just that which is taken from captain Rogers who was there in 1710’ and goes on to quote line for line similarities.⁵¹⁵ A reading of the two accounts suggests that Betagh’s claim is exaggerated. There are some similar passages (one in particular where Shelvocke uses Rogers’s description of some rocks as being similar to the Needles off the Isle of

⁵¹⁴ Jason Pearl, ‘Woodes Rogers and Travel Facts’, 68; Philip Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 51.

⁵¹⁵ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 217.

Wight), but there is also enough original description to suggest that Shelvocke had, at least, been there. A more balanced view than Betagh's would be that Shelvocke probably had Rogers's book open in front of him when he was writing the passage.

Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke all claimed to tell the truth, but the nature of that truth is defined in different ways by each of them. In reality Dampier invented what he could not remember in order to fill substantial gaps in his written journals or to hide incidents that might reflect badly on him; most of all, however, he invented in order to enhance the story and render it more exciting to the reader. It would be unfair to describe this as deliberate deceit – a modern travel writer would probably describe Dampier's inventions as a legitimate technique for enhancing the reader's pleasure – but it must in part undermine our faith in the reliability of his reportage and therefore in his books' utility as records of fact about the South Seas. There is no such relativist excuse for Shelvocke. He lied and his main motive for doing so was to cover up his crimes. If the story was more interesting because of the lies this was mere contingency. The intention to deceive was absolute, and to attempt to excuse it as being equivalent to Defoe's fictions dressed as truth would be misleading.

Unlike Dampier and Shelvocke, Rogers strays over the borders of truth only rarely and then only to protect and enhance the drive of the narrative. *A Cruising Voyage* is presented as a true transcript of his journal with additions from extant letters and minutes, yet, as has been described, the journal entries have clearly been rewritten and improved for public consumption after the voyage. Nowhere, however, is there any evidence that Rogers falsified the record or resorted to invention. By sticking to recording the facts and supporting his account with written evidence Rogers risked the possibility of dullness and, as he described it when comparing his account with those of the buccaneers, insipidity. What he loses by this approach he more than overcomes by a

liveliness of observation and a gift for anecdote, and it is this which accounts for the long-lasting popularity with the reading public of *A Cruising Voyage Round the World*.

Contemporary Chroniclers

In addition to traveller's tales the eighteenth century saw a boom in the publication of voyage anthologies and— a field which, according to Thomas Lediard, had hitherto suffered from 'blind neglect' - naval histories.⁵¹⁶ The first of these histories was Josiah Burchett's *Complete History of the most Remarkable Transactions at Sea*, published in 1720, some 15 years before Lediard's own *Naval History of England*.⁵¹⁷ These works were followed, in comparatively quick succession by Samuel Colliber, *A Critical History of the English sea-affairs* (London, 1739), John Campbell, *Lives of the Admirals*, 4 Vols (London, 1742 and 1750) and George Berkley, *The Naval History of Britain* (London, 1756).

An Appeal to the Publick; or Burchett and Lediard Compar'd by a Lover of Truth and a Friend to both these Authors was published shortly after Lediard's book, and purports to be an impartial comparison. It is, in fact, a blatantly partisan puff for Lediard's book, almost certainly written by Lediard himself, which claims it is in every way superior to Burchett's. Thus the fact that Burchett was Secretary of the Navy at the time he was writing, far from giving the work authority, merely showed that he had either devoted too little time to his book or too little to the navy, and his accounts of events (such as the circumstances in which Benbow's officers deserted him) were fatally influenced by his concern to preserve the reputations of friends. Apart from these flawed passages, the critic contends, Burchett had relied heavily on copying from uncited documents. An

⁵¹⁶ Thomas Lediard, *The naval history of England, in all its branches; from the Norman conquest in the year 1066. to the conclusion of 1734*, 2 vols (London, 1734), quoted in N.A.M. Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, Introduction, lxiii.

⁵¹⁷ Josiah Burchett, *A Complete history of the most remarkable transactions at sea, from the earliest accounts of time to the conclusion of the last war with France* (London, 1720).

Appeal to the Publick is an interesting early example of literary rivalry but it is also a useful illustration of how the naval histories of this time were never merely records of events. They proclaimed in their prefaces and revealed in their selections their political and patriotic motives. They contributed to the debates on administration, naval strategy and the ‘obsolete issue’ of gentlemen versus tarpaulins.⁵¹⁸ These histories focussed on the admirals and fleet actions of the navy and the exploits of privateers were either ignored or confined to brief acknowledgements. Burchett and Campbell do not mention Dampier, Rogers or Shelvocke’s privateering voyages; Colliber and Lediard provide brief summaries of the Rogers voyage, Lediard providing a rather longer footnote on the prizes taken. In comparison with the Navy’s not always successful efforts during first two decades of the century the cruising voyages were seen, as they are now, of marginal interest by naval historians.

To gauge contemporary opinion on the relevance of Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke to British maritime endeavour it is necessary to consult a sub-genre of maritime history – the voyage anthology. Starting in the 1690s and growing in number and size throughout the rest of the century, these collections of voyages of exploration are vivid evidence of a new, outward-looking sensibility in the British reading public. *The Cambridge History of the book in Britain* states that there were 85 collections of travels published between 1694 and 1830.⁵¹⁹ Their success may be gauged not only by their numbers but by the fact that many of the later examples list subscribers who have, like the adventurers of earlier days, reckoned the volumes a worthwhile investment. They also paid their

⁵¹⁸ So described by N.A.M. Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, 202.

⁵¹⁹ Michael F. Suarez and Michael L. Turner, eds., *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain*, 5 vols. (Cambridge, 2009).

authors – or editors – extraordinarily well. John Hawkesworth is said to have been paid £6,000 for his 1773 ‘redaction’ of the voyages of Byron, Wallis, Cartaret and Cook.⁵²⁰

We encounter, by reading the prefaces and introductions of the collections of Harris, Campbell, Cavendish Drake, Callander, Barrow, Smollett, Adams, Henry and many others, statements of Britain’s evolving imperial ambition, at first focussing on the prospect of acquiring wealth in South America and later, after the mixed fortunes of the Anson expedition, on unexplored and therefore unclaimed lands in the western Pacific. British aims are, by these anthologies, placed in a historical context whereby the conquest of the Pacific becomes manifest destiny. The collections take the chronicles of Hakluyt and Purchas as their models and most start with Columbus, although Callander’s collection, since it concerns only voyages to the Pacific, begins with Magellan. There are full accounts of Drake’s and Cavendish’s expeditions and later of Dampier’s early travels and of the three cruising voyages. British endeavour in the Pacific is thus given a prominence it hardly deserves, while the pioneering explorations of Magellan, Tasman, Quiros and Torres are treated as no more worthy than voyages whose sole intention was to acquire wealth. Later collections include accounts of the voyages of Anson, Byron, Wallis and Cook - expeditions whose inception owed something to the patriotic clamour of earlier anthologies.

The earliest and most influential (if we go by how often it was plagiarised) voyage collection of the eighteenth century was *Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca or, a Complete Collection of Voyages and Travels*, by John Harris. This was first published in 1705 but a revised and updated version, in four rather than two volumes edited by John Campbell, was published in 1744. Since Harris died in 1719 it is reasonable to

⁵²⁰ Philip Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 6. This figure was, however, exceptional. Johnson was paid £1,575 for his dictionary in 1755 and Gibbon £490 for the first volume of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776); Shef Rogers, *Cambridge History of the book*, Vol.5, 786.

assume that the accounts of the three cruising voyages were written by Campbell. It is this edition from which all the following references are taken. The first chapter of the first volume is devoted to circumnavigations and, apart from the usual accounts of Magellan, Drake and Cavendish, it contains full accounts of all the three cruising voyages. These rely heavily, but not exclusively, on the several books published by participants but in cases like that of Clipperton's expedition, where the accounts differ markedly, Campbell devotes separate chapters to each version. In addition to reporting the voyages Campbell offers his opinion on who is the more reliable chronicler and on what lessons may be learnt about the conduct of sea-power. This original commentary is often paraphrased or repeated verbatim (and unacknowledged) by later voyage anthologists such as Callander and Cavendish-Drake.⁵²¹

There is a significant difference between the world view that Campbell wishes to promote in *Navigantium* and that of the naval histories. Naval histories are dedicated, at times in the most absurdly obsequious manner, to the holders of high office in the government or navy. They promote the vital role played by the navy in enhancing British global power and influence. Campbell, on the other hand, dedicates his book to 'The Merchants of Great-Britain' and argues throughout that sea power exists in order to defend routes and facilitate the expansion of trade.

To Commerce we owe our Wealth; for though Labour may improve, though Arms may extend, yet Commerce only can enrich a Country. It is this that encourages people, not merely to labour for the Supply of their own Wants, but to have an Eye to those of other Nations, even such as are at the greatest Distance.⁵²²

⁵²¹ John Callander, *Terra Australis Incognita: or, Voyages to the Terra Australis or Southern Hemisphere during the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, four vols.* (London, 1766); Edward Cavendish Drake, *A New universal Collection of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages and Travels from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (London, 1768).

⁵²² John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol. 1, Dedication.

Campbell goes on, in a manner reminiscent of some modern market economists, to argue that there are sound moral and political as well as economic benefits to be gained from trade. The wealth of merchants made rich by trade will trickle down to the next generation and ‘thus the Evils created by trade, are corrected by trade, which as it is the only natural Way of acquiring Riches, so whatever temporary Inconveniences attend it, disappear of themselves, if we do not through Impatience interpose, but suffer Nature to take her Course’. Trade, in effect, makes us better people, and the more trade a nation does, the more civilized, rich, powerful, brave and free it will be. Campbell justifies privateering activity as trade conducted in conditions of war when normal trading activity is curtailed; privateering voyages - sponsored by merchants - are thus seen as particularly worthy adventures which, if properly conducted, will contribute to the nation’s prosperity. The fact that many contributed little does not diminish his enthusiasm for the concept. In his chapter on Dampier’s 1703 expedition he provides a positive gloss on what was essentially an abject failure:

It is very clear, from the several Particulars recorded in this Voyage, [Campbell is relying on Funnel’s published journal] which I take to be as honestly and sincerely written, as any I have ever met with, that there is no mighty Force requisite to carry on a Privateering War in the South Seas; since, if Dampier’s Temper would have suffered him to live on such Terms as were requisite to preserve the Affections of his People, it is most certain, that he might have raised an immense Fortune for himself and his Owners, inspite of anything the *Spaniards* did against him.⁵²³

Smollett, in his *Compendium*, is also fulsome in his praise of the merchants who set out the expeditions, not least those who supported the Rogers voyage.

I do not recollect any trading city in England, that has been so forward to promote expeditions for the improvement of commerce, and discovery of unknown lands, as Bristol, where, by the wealth which has been amassed by many private people in business, we may see that fortune is not always blind to

⁵²³ Ibid., 41.

desert, but sometimes smiles upon industry. Among the many ships fitted out from that opulent city for adventure, few have made a more remarkable voyage than the *Duke* and *Duchess*.⁵²⁴

It is no surprise that chroniclers who could find positive lessons in the least successful voyages should single out the one successful expedition for particular praise. Berkley neatly summarises the unusual achievement of the Rogers expedition.

We have read in very pompous Language the names of those who with great ships and great preparations encompassed the Globe. At this time came in two Privateers of *Bristol* who with no more than the common Strength of such Vessels, undertook the Voyage and at the End of three Years and two Months returned.⁵²⁵

Campbell is unstinting in his praise of the expedition's owners and commander.

It has been universally allowed by such as are proper Judges of such Expeditions, that there never was any Voyage of this nature so happily adjusted, so well provided for in all respects, or in which Accidents, that usually happen in Privateers, were so effectually guarded against. All this, I conceive, was chiefly owing to the personal Abilities of the Gentlemen of Bristol, who charged Themselves, not only with the Expenses of this Expedition, but the care of all things relating to it...Their first Care was to make Choice of proper Officers, in which they were very fortunate: captain Woodes Rogers, who commanded in Chief, was a bold, active, indefatigable officer, one that would not give up his Opinion too readily to others, and was not to be flattered by other peoples giving up their Opinions to him.⁵²⁶

After 1760 there is a notable change in the prime purpose of voyage collections. Where Colliber and Campbell emphasise the value to Britain of exploiting the poorly defended wealth of Spanish South America later chroniclers turn their attention increasingly to the vast but little known expanses of the western Pacific and the prospect, hovering tantalizingly just over the horizon, of an undiscovered continent. John Callander, in the

⁵²⁴ Tobias Smollett, *A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages*, 7 vols. (London, 1756), Vol. 4, 144.

⁵²⁵ George Berkley, *The naval history of Britain, from the earliest periods of which there are accounts in history, to the conclusion of the year M.DCC.LVI* (London, 1756), 620. One of the 'Names' referred to is presumably Anson.

⁵²⁶ John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol. 1, 150.

preface to the first volume of his teasingly entitled *Terra Australis Cognita*, states his hope that his collection will find willing readers.

We here offer the Publick, the First Volume of our collection of Voyages, to a distant, and hitherto little known Part of the Globe. The editor flatters himself, that the following Journals, (many of which never appeared in *English* before) may be of Use to advance the Knowledge of Geography and Navigation; and thus tend to promote the commercial interests of *Great Britain*, and extend her Naval Power.⁵²⁷

In the preface Callander goes on to note that his purpose in providing a translation of the French natural philosopher Pierre Louis Maupertuis is to stimulate patriotic British readers to action.

Vain are the repeated exhortations of the French Writer, addressed to a nation which is so far from being able to prosecute new discoveries; that they have been stripped, by the late war, of the best foreign settlements they possessed; and by the ruin of their marine, seem totally disabled at present to attempt any thing of moment in this way.

Far other is the case of this happy island. United among ourselves, respected by foreigners, with our marine force intire, and (humanly speaking) invincible, aided by a set of naval-officers superior in every respect to those of the nations around us, with a sovereign on the throne who is filled with the most ardent and laudable desires of seeing his Native country great and flourishing: These, I say, are incitements that seem to render everything possible to *Great Britain*. The extensive countries of the *Terra Australis*, hitherto untouched, open to us a field worthy of our attention in every respect.⁵²⁸

The timing and context of this change in focus is significant. The cry now was for the navy to build on the triumphs of the Seven Years' War and extend its global reach to the Pacific, where the examples of the cruising voyages had shown what was possible for well-supplied ships far from home. Accounts of the voyages are thus still included in anthologies for the examples they provide of British fortitude and maritime competence rather than for any light they could throw on *Terra Australis*. Of more significance in this context is Dampier's *A New Voyage* and *A Voyage to New Holland*, both of which

⁵²⁷ John Callander, *Terra Australis Cognita: or, Voyages to the Terra Australis, or Southern Hemisphere, during the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries*, 3 Vols (Edinburgh, 1766), Vol. 1, To the Reader.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, preface, iii.

are quoted. Whether the anthologies produced in the 1760s had any direct bearing on the voyages of Byron and Cook is questionable, but they certainly provide evidence of a growing national interest in the Pacific and its territories.

In summary it is clear that the writings which followed each of the cruising voyages were important, popular and influential documents of their time which sought to emulate and build on the enormous success of William Dampier's *A Voyage Round the World*. The books provided eyewitness accounts of events which were often a matter of dispute and places about which the British reading public were ignorant but intrigued. Both the Royal Society and the reading public were therefore eager to establish their reliability and truthfulness. A close analysis of the genesis of *A Voyage Round the World* suggests that it is neither reliable, accurate nor entirely by Dampier. Woodes Roger's book, *A Cruising Voyage round the World*, stands out as an accomplished, entertaining work of verifiable accuracy which attracts new readers to this day. Since Woodes Rogers, an untutored mariner, is unlikely to have been the sole author of this important book it is useful to establish that he had help, not from Defoe, but from George Ridpath, a pamphleteer, editor and rival of Defoe's. Shelvocke's book is clearly untruthful in places and his fictions provide interesting parallels to Defoe's experiments in creative writing.

The voyage anthologies which accompanied and followed the single voyage narratives offer near contemporary insights into the public response to the voyages. They provide condensed versions of the cruising voyage narratives, thus extending and broadening their influence and their readership. The anthologies offer a mercantile rather than naval perspective on British policy and public attitudes to South Sea ventures and show how, as the century progressed, attention became directed away from Pacific South America and towards New Holland and the central and western Pacific.

CHAPTER 7.

LITERARY FOLLOWERS

This chapter maintains that the literary impact of the cruising voyage narratives was profound and enduring. The story of Alexander Selkirk was certainly the germ, if not the whole substance of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Swift's debt to Dampier and the cruising voyage accounts is apparent in letters and the text of *Gulliver's Travels*. The longevity of the narratives' influence may be gauged from the significant part an incident in Shelvocke's book plays in Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, first published in *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798. The narratives may also have influenced the evolution of a peculiarly British literary form – the naval novel – whose stories and heroes mark a shift in the public perception of the navy and privateers which took place over the last part of the eighteenth century and is evident in a comparison of the naval satires of Smollett and the novels of Chamier and Marryat.

Even before Cooke and Rogers published the accounts of their voyage it became apparent that one episode of the adventure intrigued the public. In his Introduction to Volume II of *A Voyage to the South Sea* Edward Cooke feels obliged to answer critics of Volume 1. He dismisses the complaints of those who felt there was too much - or too little - in the way of navigational detail; likewise those who felt there was too much description of countries copied from foreign texts are informed that without it 'they should find nothing in it, but tedious Runs at Sea, with only an account of the Town of

Guiaquil, and the taking of some Prizes'.⁵²⁹ On one issue, however, he accepts, if grudgingly, that more could have been said.

In the first Volume there is Mention made of one *Alexander Selkirk* (so commonly call'd, but his right name is *Selcrag*) who being left on the island *John Fernandes*, continu'd there four Years and four Months, without any human Society. That short Hint rais'd the curiosity of some Persons to expect a more particular relation of his Manner of living in that tedious Solitude. We are naturally fond of Novelty, and this Propension inclines us to look for something very extraordinary in any Accident that happens out of the common Course. To hear of a Man's living so long in a desert Island, seems to some very surprising, and they presently conclude he may afford a very agreeable Relation of his Life, when in reality it is the most barren subject that Nature can afford. Even this solitary Life is not so amazing; we have in the aforesaid first Volume mentioned two other persons, who at several Times continu'd long on the same Island, and without those conveniencies this Man we here speak of was furnish'd; and yet it was never thought worth while to give any particular Account of their behaviour there.⁵³⁰

One of the 'two other persons', a Mosquito Indian named Will, is described in Dampier's *A Voyage round the World*. He was left on the island by Captain Watling and survived for three years until rescued by Captain Sharp. Cooke is right that these earlier stories of marooned sailors caused nothing like the stir created by Selkirk.

Cooke continues to provide a five page account of Selkirk's life on the island and the various measures he took to survive, but it is apparent that he still does not see what the fuss was about and concludes:

He came away with us, and arrived safe in England, where he has freely imparted thus much... to all that have had the Curiosity to converse with him.

This may suffice as to him, being the whole material Truth, and sufficient on such an Account; and with it we will put a Period to this Introduction, to proceed with the Voyage where we left off.⁵³¹

The first sentence makes it clear that there had been considerable interest in Selkirk's story even before the publication of Cooke's book. This further account came too late,

⁵²⁹ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea*, Vol.II (London, 1712), Introduction, iii.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, xix.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

one suspects to assuage the curiosity of the public, for whom the tale of the volunteer maroon was proving to be the single most captivating outcome of the voyage. A pamphlet produced at the time is an interesting example of “passing off”, since it purports to be Selkirk’s own story “written by his own Hand and attested by most of the Eminent Merchants upon the Royal Exchange”. Its title is a prime example of the publisher’s art, being a mixture of fact and fancy carefully primed to appeal to the widest audience: *Providence Display’d, or a very Surprizing Account of One Mr Alexander Selkirk, Master of a Merchant-Man call’d the Cinque-Ports; who Dreaming that the Ship would soon after be lost, he desir’d to be left on a Desolate Island in the South-Seas, where he liv’d Four Years and Four Months, without seeing the Face of Man, the Ship being afterwards cast away as he Dreamed.* With exception of the dream and its moral message the content is a verbatim transcription of the relevant section of *A Cruising Voyage*, topped and tailed with paragraphs that claim Selkirk’s authorship. The bookseller is J.Read, “in White Fryers” and not the publishers of *A Cruising Voyage*, so the assumption must be that Mr Read was seeking to exploit the wide interest in Selkirk’s story and had either obtained a draft or had just copied the account from Rogers’s book after its publication.⁵³² Without knowing the precise publication date (the year given is 1712) it is impossible to know whether this was produced before Rogers’s book or afterwards.

The tale told by Rogers in his book published on July 1, 1712 gives full justice to the drama of Selkirk’s discovery. From the sighting of a strange light on the shore of the supposedly uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez to the return of the *Duke’s* pinnace

⁵³² All editions of *A Cruising Voyage* were printed and published by Bell & Lintot. The law of Copyright (enacted in 1710) favoured the proprietary right of the publisher of a work over its author, from whom the ‘freehold’ had been purchased. See Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book, Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998), 311.

bringing an ‘abundance of Craw-fish, with a man cloth’d in Goat-Skins, who look’d wilder than the first Owners of them’ Rogers tale is vivid and entertaining.⁵³³

He had been on the Island four Years and four Months, being left there by Capt. *Stradling* in the *Cinque-Ports*; His name was *Alexander Selkirk* a *Scotch Man* who had been Master of the *Cinque-Portes*, a ship that came here last with Capt. *Dampier*, who told me that this was the best man in her; so I immediately agreed with him to be a Mate on our Ship.⁵³⁴

The Selkirk story, as told by Rogers, was tailor-made to appeal to the spirit of philosophical inquiry that permeated the world of letters at the time. Cooke tells merely how Selkirk survived, Rogers shows how his four years alone changed and, in many ways, improved the man. ‘The Governour, for so we call’d Mr Selkirk’ learnt first how to catch his food, in the process learning to run so fast that he easily outstripped members of Rogers’s crew when they joined him in a hunt.⁵³⁵ He became entirely self-sufficient, built two huts, one for living and one for cooking. In the larger hut he ‘employ’d himself in reading , singing Psalms, and praying; so that he said he was a better Christian while in this Solitude than ever he was before, or than, he was afraid, he should ever be again’.⁵³⁶ He tamed some kids ‘and to divert himself would now and then sing and dance with them and his cats: so that by the care of Providence and Vigour of his Youth, being now about 30 years old, he came at last to conquer all the Inconveniences of his Solitude, and to be very easy’. After mentioning the stories of previous marooned sailors Rogers sums up.

But whatever there is in these Stories, this of Mr *Selkirk* I know to be True; and his Behaviour afterwards gives me reason to believe the Account he gave me how he spent his time, and bore up under such an Affliction, in which nothing but the Divine Providence could have supported any Man. By this one may see

⁵³³ In one of those curious coincidences that seem to pepper tales of the South Sea an earlier voyager, Richard Simson, records that they anchored off Juan Fernandez and ‘saw a fire on the highest place on the island’. Sloane MS 86, *Richard Simson’s voyage to the Straits of Magellan and the South Seas in the year 1689*.

⁵³⁴ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 91.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 96

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

that Solitude and Retirement from the World is not such an unsufferable State of Life as most Men imagine, especially when People are fairly call'd or thrown into it unavoidably, as this Man was, who in all probability must otherwise have perish'd in the seas, the Ship which left him being cast away not long after, and few of the Company escap'd. We may perceive by this Story the Truth of the Maxim, That Necessity is the Mother of Invention, since he found means to supply his Wants in a very natural manner, so as to maintain his Life, tho not so conveniently, yet as effectually as we are able to do with all our Arts and Society.⁵³⁷

There is more philosophising in this, for Rogers, uncharacteristic vein and it is not difficult to see how the story of Selkirk became the subject of improving sermons as well as pamphlets. Richard Steele, who claimed to have met and talked to Selkirk in London, published an essay in the *Englishman* about 'an Adventure so uncommon, that it's doubtful whether the like has happen'd to any of the human Race'.⁵³⁸ The moral of his tale is much the same as Rogers's, and he quotes Selkirk as saying: '*I am now worth eight hundred pound but shall never be so happy, as when I was not worth a farthing*'. William Cowper captured some of the enduring appeal of his plight in *The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk* written in 1782:

I am monarch of all I survey,
 My right there is none to dispute;
 From the centre all around to the sea,
 I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
 O solitude! Where are the charms
 That sages have seen in thy face?
 Better dwell in the midst of alarms
 Than reign in this horrible place

There have been attempts to distance Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* from the story of Selkirk. One biographer has claimed that Selkirk's story is not likely to have been 'the

⁵³⁷ Ibid., 95.

⁵³⁸ The *Englishman*, 6 October, 1713.

main or even a major inspiration for Robinson Crusoe'.⁵³⁹ The argument is based largely on the fact that the island Crusoe was wrecked on was in the Atlantic rather than the Pacific Ocean but there are so many other parallels and connections between the two stories that to claim Defoe did not draw on Selkirk is to strain credulity. It seems much more probable that Defoe chose to put the island in the Atlantic in order to distance himself from the original lest he be accused of reheating a well-known and popular story. *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* was first published April 25 1719. The seven years that had elapsed since the publication of the Selkirk story is sometimes cited as evidence that there was no direct connection but it is equally likely that the reprinting of Rogers's *Cruising Voyage* in 1718 had revived Defoe's interest. *Robinson Crusoe* was an instant and long-lasting success. It was reprinted three times in four months. It was translated into French, German and Dutch within a year. It was, in the words of one writer, 'serialised, abridged, pirated, adapted, dramatised and bowdlerised'.⁵⁴⁰ Its publisher, William Taylor, took legal action against the publisher of *The Adventures and Surprising Deliverance of James Bourdieu* as being 'very proper to be bound up with *Robinson Crusoe*'.⁵⁴¹ Defoe was himself quick to exploit the success and published first *The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* and later in the same year the *King of Pirates; being an Account of the famous Enterprises of Captain Avery, the mock King of Madagascar*.

Among the many successors to Robinson Crusoe there was one tribute which has not previously been noted. George Shelvocke, in his 1726 narrative, describes the circumstances of his shipwreck on Juan Fernandez Island.

⁵³⁹ Richard West, *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe* (London, 1997), 237.

⁵⁴⁰ Souhami, *Selkirk's Island*, 189.

⁵⁴¹ West, *Life of Defoe*, 248

I myself made a very narrow escape. In this surprise, the first thing I took care of was my commission; and remembering the powder to be uppermost in the bread-room, I got most of it up, with about seven or eight bags of bread. These were secured to windward and saved, the ship not coming to pieces immediately. In a few minutes after she first struck, she was full of water; so the surgeon's chest being stowed below there was little or nothing preserved of that. We saved two or three compasses and some of our mathematical instruments and books...

...[the armourer] had, with much labour, got his bellows out of the wreck that morning, with five or six spadoes, which would afford him steel, and that there could be no want of iron along the shore, and that he did not doubt that he should find a great many useful things... and desired that I would, without loss of time, order some charcoal to be made for him whilst he set up his forge...

...In a word, the people found a great many useful materials about the wreck, and, amongst the rest, the top mall, which being made fast to the head of the main mast, was washed ashore, and, though of no small weight and of iron, would not, at this time, be exchanged for its weight in gold.⁵⁴²

Robinson Crusoe was still being reprinted when Shelvocke returned to England in 1722.

It is very possible that Shelvocke drew inspiration from it when writing his account of his own shipwreck. The two tales have remarkable similarities. Here is Crusoe's version:

For you may be sure my first work was to search and to see what was spoiled and what was free; and first found that all the ships provisions were dry and untouched by water, and being very well disposed to eat I went to the bread-room and filled my pockets with biscuit, and ate it as I went around other things, for I had no time to lose; I also found some rum in the great cabin, of which I took a large dram... and it was after a long searching that I found out the carpenter's chest, which was indeed a very useful prize for me, and much more valuable than a ship loading of gold would have been at that time.⁵⁴³

Given the popularity of *Robinson Crusoe* it would no doubt have been foolhardy for Shelvocke to copy the tale wholesale, but the homily on how changed circumstances change the value of things is remarkably similar to Defoe's, as is the description of the rush to bring ashore everything of value before the *Speedwell* broke up. As we have

⁵⁴² Shelvocke, 117-119.

⁵⁴³ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Penguin Popular Classics, 1994), 52-54..

seen, it would not have been the first time that Shelvocke drew from unacknowledged sources. It is certainly possible that he also stole some ideas from Defoe in order to give plausibility to an entirely fictitious account of the wreck of the *Speedwell*. It presents us with the tantalising possibility that a brand new form of literary fiction, whose origins lay in actual events, was exploited by a crook and a liar in order to give an aura of truth to a made-up event. If so, he was unconsciously emulating Daniel Defoe, who wrote, in the preface to *Robinson Crusoe*,

The editor believes the thing to be a just history of fact; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it. And however thinks, because all such things are disputed, that the improvement of it, as well to the diversion, as to the instruction of the reader, will be the same;

Defoe was a master of fiction masquerading as fact, and this teasing preface, which suggests that there is as much of value in the one as there is in the other, would have appealed to Shelvocke. Since the truth of such travellers' tales was always in doubt, his lively, if possibly untrue, account of the shipwreck was firmly in the tradition of the genre.

Travels into Several Remote Regions of the World, in Four Parts, by Lemuel Gulliver, first a Surgeon and then Captain of Several Ships was published in the same year as Shelvocke's *Voyage Round the World* but was to achieve success equal to or greater than that of *Robinson Crusoe*. Universally known as *Gulliver's Travels*, Jonathan Swift's satire was an instant success despite, or because of, the fearlessness of its attack on aspects of the Whig government. John Gay wrote to Swift that 'from the highest to the lowest it is universally read from the Cabinet-council to the Nursery'⁵⁴⁴. Swift does not directly acknowledge any debt to the writers of the cruising voyage journals, though

⁵⁴⁴ Clive Probyn, 'Swift, Jonathan (1667–1745)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/26833>, accessed 1 Oct 2012/19 June 2012].

he makes an interesting claim in his introduction to the second edition of *Gulliver's Travels*, written in the form of a letter from Gulliver to 'Sympson', his supposed publisher.⁵⁴⁵

I hope you will be ready to own publicly, whenever you shall be called to it, that by your great and frequent urgency you prevailed upon me to publish a very loose and uncorrect account of my travels; with direction to hire some young gentlemen of either university to put them in order, and correct the style, as my cousin Dampier did by my advice, in his book called *A Voyage Round the World*.

Swift adds a publisher's note to the reader, in which 'Sympson' explains, in a manner echoing the prefaces of both Dampier's and Rogers's books, that he has omitted 'innumerable passages relating to the winds and tides... together with the minute descriptions of the management of the ship in storms, in the style of sailors: but I was resolved to fit the work as much as possible to the general capacity of readers'.⁵⁴⁶ Swift thus employs the forms and conventions of voyage literature to add verisimilitude to his fictional tale.

It is possible that Swift met Dampier. He was in Ireland in 1703 when Dampier was fitting out the *St George* in Kinsale and had briefly been in the employ of Sir Robert Southwell, the former Secretary of State for Ireland, who was an investor in Dampier's expedition. He was a close friend of Richard Steele and would certainly have been aware of, if he had not met, Alexander Selkirk. There are other intriguing connections. Gulliver's ship on his first voyage to the Pacific is the *Antelope*; this left England in the same year as Dampier left for Terra Australis in the *Roebuck*. The artist who drew the maps for *Gulliver's Travels* almost certainly used Herman Moll's *New and Correct Map of the Whole World* (1719) and 'my worthy friend Mr Moll' is acknowledged in

⁵⁴⁵ Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Dublin, 1735), A Letter from capt. Gulliver to his cousin Sympson.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, The Publisher to the Reader. It is very likely, given the extent to which Swift steeped himself in voyage literature, that this Richard Sympson was a deliberate reference to the Richard Simson who wrote an account of Capt. Strong's expedition of 1689.

Book IV.⁵⁴⁷ Swift describes how he steeped himself in the products of this most popular genre and it is a tribute to its popularity that he chose it as the form for his satire. Apart from naming Dampier and Moll there are echoes from *Robinson Crusoe* and the cruising voyage narratives. In Book IV Gulliver describes how he furnishes himself with all life's necessities in the land of the houyhnhnms, employing techniques made famous by Selkirk and Crusoe, with the 'sorrel nag' playing the role of Friday:

I had beaten hemp, which there grows wild, and made of it a sort of ticking: this I filled with the feathers of several birds I had taken with springs made of Yahoos' hairs, and were excellent food. I had worked two chairs with my knife, the sorrel nag helping me in the grosser and more laborious part. When my clothes were worn to rags, I made myself others with the skins of rabbits... I often got honey out of the hollow tree, which I mingled with water and ate it with my bread. No man could more verify the truth of these two maxims, *That nature is very easily satisfied*; and *That necessity is the mother of invention*.⁵⁴⁸

The last maxim is that used by Rogers in the conclusion to his description of Selkirk's life on Juan Fernandez. Gulliver's final journey from the land of the Houyhnhnms to New Holland has many echoes of Dampier's *Voyages* and when Gulliver is taken up by a Portuguese ship his difficulties communicating with the crew are similar to Selkirk's when he was first picked up by Rogers. According to Gulliver the 'honest Portuguese ... were equally amazed at my strange dress, and the odd manner of delivering my words which, however, they understood very well'. Selkirk, similarly, 'at his first coming aboard on us, he had so much forgot his Language... that we could scarcely understand him, for he seem'd to speak his words by halves'.⁵⁴⁹

Gulliver's Travels is also an example of a sub-genre of the voyage narrative employed by *Robinson Crusoe* – the South Sea island story. Neither Defoe nor Swift acknowledge previous examples of the type, such as Thomas More's *Utopia*,

⁵⁴⁷ Glyndwr Williams, *Great South Sea*, 208

⁵⁴⁸ Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels and other Writings* (Bantam Classic, London, 1962), Book IV, Chapter X, 260.

⁵⁴⁹ Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1963), 268; Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1928), 94.

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* or the many examples of austral utopias published in the seventeenth century. It is clear, however, that the many examples which followed – including *Swiss Family Robinson* (1812), *Masterman Ready* (1841), *Coral Island* (1857) and *Treasure Island* (1882) - owed much to *Robinson Crusoe*. The enthusiasm of the public for the story of Selkirk's solitary existence on Juan Fernandez may therefore be seen as just one example of a long-running preoccupation with the real and metaphorical riches to be mined from desert islands.

Shelvocke's book was the source of another famous literary event. The origin of the incident in which Simon Hatley, second captain of the *Speedwell*, shot a solitary black albatross, has already been discussed. Shelvocke is an unreliable witness, and the incident may or may not have taken place, but it is another illustration of the enduring appeal of the voyage narratives. It was Wordsworth who suggested that the shooting of an albatross would be a suitable crime against nature to trigger the events described in Coleridge's poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. He had been reading, he recorded, 'Shelvocke's Voyages' in which just such an incident had taken place. We only have Wordsworth's testimony for this, and as George Soule points out there are other matters in the poem – the description of icebergs and sea snakes for example – which suggest that Coleridge himself may have read Shelvocke's book and plundered it for its evocative eye-witness testimony about the high south latitudes.⁵⁵⁰

The origins of the 'naval novel'

The public perception of mariners underwent a perceptible shift in allegiances towards the end of the eighteenth century, and this is reflected in literary works of the period.

For much of the eighteenth century privateering was considered an important and

⁵⁵⁰ George Soule, 'Coleridge's debt to George Shelvocke in "The Ancient Mariner"', *Notes & Queries*, September 2003, 286; Shelvocke mentions having seen 'abundance of things appearing like white snakes' which turned out to be jelly-like cylinders, *Voyage round the World* (1928), 34.

honourable activity that contributed greatly to the country's maritime achievement. At the start of the War of the Spanish Succession public prints made clear what they considered to be the nation's priorities. The *Observer*, which offered itself as the spokesman for merchants and traders, pronounced: 'In a War at Sea, the chief Care ought to be the Security of our merchant Ships, by providing sufficient Convoys, and next to that, the encouragement of Privateers'.⁵⁵¹ Newspapers printed letters of 'instruction' from borough electors to their MPs: 'You will contribute your utmost assistance for the Encouragement of Privateers in relation to the prizes they shall take or any other Naval Forces for the annoying of the Enemy, and serving the Trade and Commerce of this Nation'.⁵⁵² The relative strength of British and French privateering activity was much discussed and the supposed disadvantages suffered by the British privateer decried:

It's true the *French* Privateers have a great advantage over our *English* in several respects: we have double their number of Ships, and they have five times the number of Privateers; when we have taken a prize, we are a long time plagued in the court of *Doctors Commons* to get her condemn'd; and when that's done we wait on the *Prize Office* about Kings Quota; many times our lading is no prize, by reason it must be either burnt or staved... whereas nothing is burnt or staved for the French.⁵⁵³

The achievements of privateers were often compared favourably to the sometimes uncertain performance of the navy. In the early stages of the war privateers were thought vital to make up for the deficiencies identified in the management of the navy: 'For my part, Sir, I am no Judge in Sea Affairs, tho I know so much, that of late our Navy has been under an ill-management'.⁵⁵⁴ The navy was also subject to the satirical gaze of Grub Street. *The Wooden World* was just such a squib which delivered a complex mixture of admiration and ridicule, so 'It's Old Nick's Academy, where the

⁵⁵¹ *The Observer*, 29 April, 1702.

⁵⁵² *Flying Post or Postmaster* 27 Dec. 1701

⁵⁵³ *The Observer*, 29 April, 1702.

⁵⁵⁴ *The Observer*, 15-19 Aug. 1702

seven liberal Sciences of Swearing, Drinking, Thieving, Whoring, Killing, Cozening and Backbiting, are taught to full perfection,' but it is also 'the mighty Guardian of our Island, defending us all round from foreign Dangers as watchfully as a Mastiff in an Orchard'.⁵⁵⁵ The conceit of the *Wooden World* is that it is a painting whose subject is 'the most glorious piece of creation, called a *Tar*', and the author asks for the reader's indulgence since 'fam'd *Kneller*, no doubt, when first he touch'd the pencil, brought forth such imperfect productions'.⁵⁵⁶ Each chapter is devoted to a portrait of a particular naval figure – the purser, surgeon, gunner etc – but it is clear from the preface addressed 'to the reader' that the chief targets are the sea officers and the chief hero is the poor, put-upon sailor. The author admits that 'we have some captains in the Navy, as much the glory of our Isle, as are the Ships they command' but places them firmly in the minority. Most captains, he maintains, are similar to the one in his portrait:

A Leviathan or rather a kind of Sea God, whom the poor Tars worship as the Indians do the Devil, more through Fear than Affection. .. But this ruler of the Roast, has so little Christian Honesty, as to force sailors not only to work, watch and fight, but even to starve too, for his sole Advantage.⁵⁵⁷

This proud, ignorant, avaricious and cowardly gentleman is a far cry from the noble picture painted by Chamier and Marryat and some are inclined to dismiss it as an uncharacteristic view. There is no doubt, however, that the navy was not universally admired at this time. The uproar which followed the death of Benbow in 1702 was long-lived and may have encapsulated a popular discontent with some aspects of naval behaviour. In the contest for supremacy between the 'tarpaulins' and the 'gentleman' Benbow epitomised the tarpaulins. Though probably not as humble of birth as believed

⁵⁵⁵ Anon. [Ned Ward], *The Wooden World Dissected* (London, 1707), 2. In the Introduction to his own *Wooden World* N.A.M. Rodger dissociates himself from this forerunner, on the grounds that the author, Ned Ward, was a publican who had little knowledge of the navy and his book 'does not deserve to be used as evidence'. For the purpose of this thesis what matters is the picture it reveals of how some people perceived, however inaccurately, the navy of their time. The fact that it was reprinted three times is an indication that it was received with interest.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, To the Reader

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

at the time his rise through the ranks (via service in merchant ships) was achieved by demonstrations of courage and seamanship whereas the officers who failed him in battle owed their place, so it was maintained by some, to birth and interest. Whatever the truth of the case, Benbow's death, and the trial and execution of Kirby and Wade for deserting him in battle, generated ballads and broadsides that contributed to an enduring myth of the true British sailor. The character of the sailor, as exemplified in 'Jack Tar' emerged in its full panoply at about this time.

Character of an English Seaman, and peculiar to the English Nation.

Jack is a very generous fellow when he has money; will take up with the first trull who falls in his way, and be steady to her to the last farthing, provided she does not literally pick his pocket. Jack is a great stranger to the passion of fear as he is a stranger to the tender feelings of humanity; yet if a brother falls overboard, he will be the foremost to man a boat, in a dangerous sea, to save a man's life... Let the weather be ever so bad, or the danger ever so great, Jack will obey orders, if he be a thorough seaman, and go aloft, though he is almost certain the mast will go overboard with him.⁵⁵⁸

A WANDERER

The contrast between the noble Jack Tar and the autocratic and venial officer is evident. Tobias Smollett spent two years as a surgeon's mate in the navy and provides a fictionalised account of his experiences in his satire, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*. Smollett's navy is peopled by tyrannical, incompetent and foppish captains, ignorant and vicious surgeons and, in the likes of Tom Bowling and Jack Rattlin, a few fine seamen. Furthermore his witness to the siege of Cartagena in 1744, is a picture of lost opportunities and incompetence which does the navy no credit. His description of the appalling conditions suffered by sailors confined in the insufferable heat of a ship's sick bay is a well-known indictment that should not be dismissed as the unreliable

⁵⁵⁸ The origin of this passage is obscure. It appears as front matter of the ECCO digital copy of a first edition of *The Wooden World* and is followed by some manuscript matter on the same theme. It is possible that the material was included because it was found interleaved with the particular copy used for making the digital version. It is similar in spirit, though different in fact, from the sketch provided by Ned Ward in section 14 of *The Wooden World*.

account of a satirist. Smollett was, unquestionably, there. By way of contrast it may be noted that the one well-run vessel sailed in by the hero is a privateer commanded by the noble Tom Bowling.

The ideal of the British mariner as a descendent of Drake – a swashbuckling hero who fought the Queen’s enemies as a privateering adventurer – seems therefore to have survived, somewhat diminished, through most of the eighteenth century. At some point – or rather over some period – the public perception changed. Over a time of fluctuating fortunes and mixed success opinion, not just of the importance but the overall competence, of the navy to do the job assigned to it began to crystallise, and at the same time the enthusiasm for privateers as a second line of maritime defence began to fade. By the mid-nineteenth century Frederick Marryatt produces a portrait of a privateer who lacks morality, discipline or courage and is, by comparison with his naval characters, contemptible.⁵⁵⁹ In this he is merely echoing the view of many officers in the navy of his time who saw them at best as competitors for prize money, at worst as a ‘stain upon the nation’s character’. Nelson remarked that ‘the conduct of all privateers is, as far as I have seen, so near piracy that I only wonder any civilized nation can allow them’.⁵⁶⁰ The public image of the privateer had thus, by the nineteenth century, become much diminished.

Marryatt was one of a number of ex-naval officers whose enforced retirement at the end of the Napoleonic war led to a burst of literary activity and the ‘naval novels’ of Frederick Chamier, Basil Hall, William Glascock as well as Marryatt were all written in the years 1820-1848.⁵⁶¹ P. J. van der Voort suggests that these writers may have taken their inspiration and something of their style from the ‘improved narrative technique’ of

⁵⁵⁹ Frederick Marryatt, *The Privateersman* (Boston, 1866)

⁵⁶⁰ David J. Starkey, *British Privateering*, 260.

⁵⁶¹ *The Wooden World*, 14.

Rogers and Shelvocke, but it is clear that Smollett was himself an important influence.

⁵⁶² So taken was Frederick Chamier with the character of Tom Bowling that the resurrected him as the hero of one of his own novels. On the surface these tales of high adventure in Nelson's navy have little connection with the narratives of privateer voyages a century before, but there are common features. Marryat, particularly, makes much of the exceptional accomplishments of the mariner and in his children's book, *Masterman Ready*, describes how a family wrecked, like the *Swiss Family Robinson*, on a desert island, survives through the resourcefulness and skill of a wise old seaman. This is the same resourcefulness and self-sufficiency we find when Rogers careens and repairs his ships or Selkirk survives for four years alone on an island or Shelvocke builds his bark on Juan Fernandez. Marryat was a naval officer and had a naval contempt for merchant navy practice but would certainly have read, and drawn ideas from the cruising voyage narratives. At one point he puts into the mouth of his sailor hero a tribute to the moral dimension of good seamanship and naval discipline.

I beg your pardon, madam, if I talk too much; but I assure you I never should have known what could have been done by order and arrangement, if I had not been pressed on board of a man-of-war. After being so long in the merchant service, where all was noise and confusion at the best of times, I found that everything was done in silence; indeed there was no occasion for anyone to speak except the officer carrying on duty. Every man was to his post; everyone had a rope to haul upon, or a rope to let go; the boatswain piped, and in a few seconds every sail was set or taken in as was required. It seemed to me at first like magic. And you observe Mr Seagrave, that when there is order and discipline, every man becomes of individual importance.⁵⁶³

This description of the mariner as a moral paragon who embodies practical accomplishment with sound values, wisdom and probity is central to the genre of the maritime novel, reaching, perhaps, its most exalted expression in the works of Joseph

⁵⁶² P.J. van der Voort, *The Pen and the Quarter-deck: Life and Works of Captain Frederick Chamier*, R.N. (Leiden, 1972), 9.

⁵⁶³ Captain Marryat, *Masterman Ready* (London 1896), 128.

Conrad. One has only to compare Captain MacWhirr in *Typhoon* with Ahab in *Moby-Dick* to realise that the ship's captain as moral exemplar is a peculiarly English literary phenomenon - one which it is possible to trace to the present day through the naval novels of C.S.Forester, Alexander Kent and Patrick O'Brian.⁵⁶⁴

In conclusion it is apparent that the impact of the cruising voyage narratives was wide and long-lasting. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the Selkirk story as a cultural event and there is evidence that Defoe and Swift drew on the style and substance of the voyage narratives in the creation of their own most important literary works. Dampier's *Voyage Round the World* and the other voyage narratives supplied stories about exotic lands and people, shipwreck, survival, self-sufficiency, resourcefulness and the actions of divine providence which became important themes in *Robinson Crusoe* and recurring elements in the novels (and some romantic poetry) that followed. The narrative structure and voice of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* owe a debt to the journal form and first person narrative found in the books of Dampier, Rogers and Shelvocke. There is also evidence that the narratives played a part in the development of a peculiarly British literary phenomenon which continues to this day. It is possible to follow a connecting thread from the voyage narratives through Defoe, Swift and Smollett via the naval novels of Chaumier and Marryatt to modern naval historical fiction. In so doing it is possible to identify a gradual change in the British perception of its mariners, in which the Elizabethan ideal of the gentleman privateer gives way, by the late eighteenth century, to that of the heroic naval officer. One enduring legacy of this later genre of fiction is the establishing of a particularly British stock character – the naval captain as an ideal of leadership, courage and probity.

⁵⁶⁴ A More recent example of contrasting American and British depictions of ship's captains is that of the imperturbable Captain Ericsson in *The Cruel Sea* with the mad Captain Queeg in *The Caine Mutiny*.

CONCLUSION

Why the cruising voyages happened

The primary impetus for the voyages was undoubtedly the existence of war with Spain. The Dampier voyage began just over a year after the start of the War of the Spanish Succession, the Rogers expedition set out while the same war continued and that of Clipperton took place during the brief war of the Quadruple Alliance (1718-1720). The Spanish Empire was perceived as weak and even less able to protect its possessions than in Drake's time and therefore presented an attractive proposition for adventurers. There were new publications, such as that of Narborough's voyage, which provided invaluable intelligence about passages and harbours in the South Sea and other voyage narratives such as that of Gouin de Beauchesne, whose account of the riches to be had from South America stimulated Woodes Rogers's interest. The accounts of the buccaneers, which Rogers was later to denigrate, and Dampier's *Voyage Round the World* all provided tantalising glimpses of the wealth of the Americas and the absence of any substantial force to defend it.

British commerce was in a position to raise the substantial sums required to finance the voyages. Although the slave trade, perhaps the most profitable of all trades in the eighteenth century, was still in its infancy the growth of other trades to the East Indies and North America was rapid. Such long-distance trading ventures had habituated British merchants to credit terms – essential for the slave trade and imports of tobacco, sugar and silks – of twelve months or more and rendered the long-term capital investment required for the cruising voyages more acceptable.⁵⁶⁵ The costs of a cruising

⁵⁶⁵ Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the Atlantic Economies* (New York, 1973), 236.

voyage were, however, exceptional. The investors in the Dampier expedition claimed to have put up £15,000 for the voyage (over one million pounds in today's terms). Among other items was an indemnity of £3,000 (£234,000 in today's money) against any possible encroachment on East India Company rights. Thomas Goldney II, the chief shareholder in the Woodes Rogers expedition, invested £3,000 in a venture whose total subscription was for £25,000, for which the most recent precedent (Dampier's 1703 expedition) was a disaster, that could not have brought a return in under two years (in fact it took six) and in which the chance of losing everything was high.⁵⁶⁶ They were, these merchants and bankers who, in Woodes Rogers words, 'adventured their estates', essentially gamblers (though the Quaker Thomas Goldney would certainly have rejected such a label) and their sensibilities were very much of their time.⁵⁶⁷ Britain at this time was 'gripped by gambling fever' and the adventurers' investments were comparable in risk, if not in size, to the enormous amounts being gambled on cards, racing and lotteries by every stratum of society.⁵⁶⁸ Later in the century the gambling element in privateering investment was even more apparent. The *London Chronical* of November 3 1778 notes that 'The shares of privateers are divided like lottery tickets in London, and a number of servants club together to buy one'.⁵⁶⁹ Gambling against their promised share of plunder became so prevalent among the crews of Woodes Rogers's expedition, and so endangered discipline and morale, that the governing council was forced to issue a ban accompanied by draconian sanctions. Both Woodes Rogers's and Shelvocke's expeditions were affected by the most famous gamble of the period – the South Sea Company. Campbell claims that the arrival in London of the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, along with their prize, the Manila galleon, in the

⁵⁶⁶ Currency values are taken from the National ArchiveS currency converter.

⁵⁶⁷ Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage*, Dedication.

⁵⁶⁸ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1982), 238.

⁵⁶⁹ Quoted in Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise*, 67.

month that the South Sea Company was launched, was an important boost to the credibility of the Company's aims.

I might, perhaps, go too far, should I assert that this Voyage gave rise to the South Sea Company; but this much I can lately say, that the success of this Voyage was what the Patrons of that Company chiefly insisted upon in their Defence, when the plan of it was attacked as insufficient and chimerical.⁵⁷⁰

George Shelvocke left for the South Sea at the time when the Bubble was at its most inflated, and returned to witness the consequences of its deflation. To those who had lost fortunes when the bubble burst, the return of Shelvocke, apparently penniless, from an expedition of the kind the Company was initially set up to promote must have been very provoking. The master in chancery responsible for the case brought by the owners of the Clipperton expedition had himself just been required by the lord chancellor to pay back over £20,000 that he had embezzled from complainants to the court - a consequence, it appears, of his need to recoup enormous losses incurred on South Sea Company shares. It is impossible to say how this affected his judgement in the case but he was certainly an interested party.

The risks taken were not, however, so great when seen in the context of the times.

French privateering enterprise during the war of Queen Anne was causing serious disruption to British trade. David J. Starkey quotes an article in the *Observer* of 22 Nov. 1707:

Our ships have been taken by our enemies as the Dutch take our herrings by shoals upon our own coasts...our merchants are beggared, our commerce broke; our trade gone; our staple and Manufacture ruined.

In the same year a committee of the House of Lords was set up to report on a petition presented by 154 London merchants concerning inadequate protection afforded by the

⁵⁷⁰ John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol.1, 184.

Admiralty to overseas trade. It found that part of the blame for the loss of 1,146 ships in the first five years of the war lay with the merchants, who were inclined to set out inadequately defended ‘runners’ and ‘galleys’ independently of convoys. The merchants replied by furnishing a lesson in merchant ship construction and performance:

A galley is built to sail and row with oars and measures twice her burthen or loading, is broad and sharp and carries twice the breadth in sail of common sailing ships that usually sail with convoy and is double the charge in number of seamen [and will] sail four times faster than your common sailing ships....with such nimble galleys has the trade been carried to the great advantage of the Kingdom and increase of the custom during the late war as well as during this war, until lately, where there have not been either cruisers of men-of-war to guard the coast in proper stations – with the result it is now almost a miracle for a trading vessel to escape the enemy in British seas.⁵⁷¹

There was growing public pressure to exploit the enormous trading and plunder opportunities offered by the South Seas which appeared to be a de facto French monopoly. Reports of the enormous sums being brought back to St Malo and Port Louis by traders and privateers enraged the British press.

It may not be amiss here to remark what vast Profit the *French* have got since the Union of the Crowns, by trading to the *South Seas*: They make 150, 2, 3 hundred *per cent.* Profit. A vast advantage to a nation impoverish’d, and wanting *Specie* to carry on a war.⁵⁷²

The writer goes on to berate the government and navy for their timidity, stating his opinion that the best way to reduce the power of the French and Spanish was to attack them in the West Indies and the South Seas: ‘with five or six small Frigats, we might

⁵⁷¹ Sir Julian Corbett, ‘Galleys and Runners’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 7 (1921), 133-35.

⁵⁷² *Observer*, May 1707.

have taken all their trading ships in those Seas.... And so in eighteen Months Time, have brought into England some millions of Money, only at the charge of fetching it'.⁵⁷³

Even as the *Duke* and *Dutchess* were waiting for a wind to blow them from the Texel to England, dispatch after dispatch from the French ports was belittling their achievement: 'They write from Brest that the *Auror*, the *Philipeau* and *St. Anthony of Padua*, were arrived there from the South Seas; and that their lading is valued at 12 million livres'.

Another upbraids the merchants for their lack of enterprise:

What shall we say to our merchants, that fit out privateers and cruise upon the *French* and make little enough of it? And why Gentlemen, did you never try your fortune in the Bay of *Mexico*, or on the coast of *Cartaghena*, or in the *South Seas*, where the *French* do now so great and so profitable a trade? Ten or Twelve large ships of 40 to 50 guns each, for such the *Dutch* have now in the straits... they would sweep the *South Seas* of the *French*, they would have plundered *Lima*, *Panama* and all the coast of *Chile*; they would have gone into their ports, and taken the very shipping out of the harbours; they would have done anything they had desired.⁵⁷⁴

Though some were inspired by patriotism and some by the possibility of obtaining great wealth there were other reasons for undertaking such a voyage. Woodes Rogers gives his reasons for embarking on the 1708 expedition succinctly: 'Most of us, the chief Officers, embraced this trip of privateering round the world to retrieve the Losses we had sustained by the Enemy'.⁵⁷⁵ The losses Rogers mentions were not unique to him. The Bristol shipping trade at the time of Queen Anne was in a period of transition. Since Cabot's voyage of 1497 Bristol had laid claim to, though was slow to exploit, a prime interest in the Atlantic trade, in which packages of textiles, metalware and hardware, supplemented by passenger volunteers and indentured labour, would be exchanged for imports of tobacco, sugar, Newfoundland cod and other raw materials from the American colonies. In 1700, 4,270 out of 4,660 tons of goods imported from

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ *Review of the State of the British Nation*, 25th Oct.1707

⁵⁷⁵ Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* (1928), 6.

North America came from Virginia and Maryland alone – an indication of the pre-eminence of the Chesapeake tobacco trade.⁵⁷⁶ In addition wine was imported from the Atlantic Islands, Spain and Portugal and there was an exclusive trade with Ireland through Cork and Dublin. In the first decades of the eighteenth century the increasingly injurious predations of enemy privateers was having a severe effect on the important Newfoundland and Caribbean trades. Between 1707 and 1710 seventeen, that is one third, of the vessels cleared for Africa from the Port of Bristol were taken by French or Spanish privateers.⁵⁷⁷ The ‘tobacco fleet’, which left West Virginia for Bristol in 1706, lost 30 ships and 15,000 lbs of tobacco to the weather and French privateers.⁵⁷⁸ This alone must have been a staggering blow, not just for the burgeoning Bristol tobacco business, but also for ship owners like John Batchelor and Francis Rogers who were major investors in the Rogers expedition. Edward Cooke, second captain of the *Dutchess*, was one such victim of enemy cruisers. Having, he explains in the introduction of his book, within a period of eight months captained two ships lost to French privateers, he joined the expedition in order to recoup his reputation with the ship owners and restore his fortunes.⁵⁷⁹ In the light of these depredations a cruising voyage against soft, ill-defended Spanish South America, with the prospect of enormous returns, must have appeared an attractive alternative. It may also have been the only practicable means by which privateer owners could secure great riches given that vessels carrying bullion on the Atlantic were far too well-defended to be attempted by even the largest private men of war.

⁵⁷⁶ Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1993), 15.

⁵⁷⁷ B. Richardson, ‘Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth Century Slave Trade’, *Bristol Records Society*, 38, (Bristol 1986), xv.

⁵⁷⁸ J Hemphill, ‘Virginia and the English Commercial System’, (Ph.D Thesis Harvard, 1964).

⁵⁷⁹ Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea and Round the World* (London, 1712), preface.

In the dedication of *A Cruising Voyage* Rogers adds another motive both for making the voyage and publishing his book:

“I make no doubt, it will be to your lasting Honour, that such a Voyage was undertaken from *Bristol* at your Expence; since it has given the Publick a sufficient Evidence of what may be done in those Parts, and since the Wisdom of the Nation has now agreed to establish a Trade to the *South-Seas*, which, with the Blessing of God, may bring vast riches to GREAT BRITAIN.”⁵⁸⁰

In the introduction that follows Rogers writes an impressively coherent account of the present position and future potential of the trade with the South Sea, by which he appears to mean all of Spanish colonial America, since he mentions admiringly the “private” trade set up between English merchants and Spanish colonists in the Caribbean. It is in this introduction that Rogers puts forward the post hoc justification for making the voyage. After noting that the English had enjoyed a favourable trading relationship with the Spanish colonists in the past, he goes on to describe how this had become increasingly threatened by the expansive activities of the French. He cites as a critical event the exploratory expedition of Bouchène de Gouin, who took two ships from St. Malo to the South-Sea in 1698 “with a cargo of goods, to try what could be done in a Trade there; as appears by his journal, of which I have a Copy”.

They have so improv’d on his Discovery, and carry’d on such a vast Trade in those seas ever since, that there have been in the *South-Sea* in one Year seventeen *French* Ships of War and Merchant-Men, with all sorts of Goods; and the advantage they made by it was so great, that I was informed by several Merchants we took in those Seas, that by a modest Computation the *French* in the first Years of that trade carry’d home above 100 million dollars, which is near 25 millions Sterling; besides the Advantages they make by trading to the *North-Sea*, when they convoy the *Spanish* Galleons and Flota to and from the *West-Indies*. By this means they are now absolute masters of all that valuable Trade, which has enabled the Monarch Hitherto to carry on the War against most of the potentates of *Europe*, which otherwise could not have done.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁸⁰ Rogers. *Cruising Voyage* (1928), Dedication

⁵⁸¹ Rogers, *Cruising Voyage* (1712), Introduction, vii.

Rogers's claim is not much exaggerated. Duguay-Trouin and other St. Malo privateers had been increasingly turning from the difficult and unprofitable business of attacking English convoys in the Channel to the easier pickings to be found in the South Seas. In May 1705 three ships which returned from Peru declared cargoes "worth more than half the entire gross earnings of all the privateers of the port between 1702 and 1713".⁵⁸²

How well-prepared were the voyages?

The intelligence reaching Britain about conditions in the South America may well have stimulated enthusiasm for the expeditions but it was less successful in supplying the necessary information about the strength of the enemy and the condition of their ports. In the absence of concrete evidence there was a tendency to decry Spanish ability to defend its assets. Rogers at various times writes scathingly of Spanish ships, navigation and fighting ability. One factor that affected both Dampier and Shelvocke but which seems to have escaped the notice of the managers was the willingness of French ships and crews to put themselves under the command of Spanish authorities in the South Sea. Both captains survived fierce battles with French ships and were compelled to break off action. Nor were Spanish ships as badly maintained and handled as had been believed, for both Dampier and Rogers encountered stiff resistance from Manila galleons.

Charts and 'waggoners' of the territory were in short supply and of doubtful reliability. Dampier had, of course, sailed in the area but, as we have seen, he was not a wholly reliable navigator. Narborough's charts, particularly of the straits of Magellan were considered reliable, those of Davis and the other buccaneers less so. The presence,

⁵⁸² Rodger, *Command of the Ocean*, 177.

therefore, of a mariner with experience of the South Sea was considered invaluable and explains the enormous emphasis put on Dampier's role as 'Pilot of the South Seas' on the Rogers expedition. It may also explain why Clipperton was offered the role of 'chief commander' and Hatley that of second captain on the *Speedwell* when neither appears to have commanded a ship before. There was no such expert on the Anson expedition and this may explain some of the navigational difficulties it encountered.

The voyage projectors may have underestimated the obduracy of the East India Company in asserting its claim over the proceeds of the voyages. Dampier's voyage was required to put up a penal indemnity and the Bristol owners were forced to pay a bribe of £6,000 despite the weakness of the EIC's claim. In the case of the Clipperton voyage the EIC appears to have behaved honourably and this may, in part, be due to the fact that at least one of the owners (Beake Winder) had an interest in the Company.

The Woodes Rogers voyage is the only one of the three cruising voyages for which a comprehensive record of preparations and financing is available but it is possible to extrapolate from the details of that expedition to its forerunner (which would, through Dampier, have provided an example) and to its successor (which we know to have been greatly influenced by it). The chief difference between the preparations for the Rogers voyage and the other two was that the Bristol owners spent more money. Both the *Duke* and the *Dutchess* were specially built for the voyage. It is clear from the records of the other voyages that none of their ships were new, although most underwent some form of refit as part of the preparations. Dampier's voyage was further compromised by the fact that the *Fame*, which was of comparable size to the *St George*, defected and had to be replaced with a much smaller and less well-armed ship. The owners of the Clipperton voyage claimed that they spent £14,000 on the outfits but this is possibly an exaggeration. It seems likely that the *Speedwell* was bought at auction shortly before

the start of the voyage and the owners do not claim that the *Success* was specially built. It seems that one lesson from the Dampier expedition that was taken to heart by the Bristol owners was that such a voyage presented an exceptional challenge to the ships of the time; the anguished correspondence between Noblett Rogers and Thomas Batchelor about the cost of fitting out the ships at Cork are testament to the tensions such demands created, but the money was spent and bore fruit: Only the *Duke* and *Dutchess* out of the ships that set out on the voyages returned to Britain. Despite attempts by all the captains, with the possible exception of Stradling in the *Cinque Portes*, to clean and preserve the hulls, they all suffered from the terrible effects of worm and both ships on Dampier's expedition became unseaworthy and had to be abandoned. Rogers's ships survived firstly because they were purpose built for the voyage and secondly because they were properly sheathed and well-maintained. Nevertheless both the *Duke* and *Dutchess* developed leaks and were barely seaworthy by the time they reached the Texel. There is no doubt that such voyages tested the technological capabilities of the time to their limits.

Other aspects of the fitting out proved to be significant. Supplies of fresh food and warm clothing were to prove crucial for the health of the crews and the importance of these will have been impressed on the owners of the Rogers expedition through their experience of the Atlantic trade. Both Dampier and Rogers used their passage to Ireland as 'working-up' voyages and Rogers spent much time in Cork correcting the trim of the *Duke*, which he had found to be slow and crank. Dampier found the 6 pounder cannon he carried of little effect against large, well-built ships and it is therefore surprising that both subsequent expeditions carried the same calibre of weapon and consequently experienced similar problems. Rogers remarked that his ships fired 'not less than 500

shot into [the Manila Galleon's] hull which 'did her no great hurt'.⁵⁸³ Cost was undoubtedly a factor here but it is also possible that the captains were wary of carrying too much weight above the waterline for their passage into the South Sea. The terrible damage inflicted on Anson's squadron suggests that they may have been right to sacrifice offensive power for seaworthiness. Whatever the reasons the small calibre of their weapons was to have significant consequences and contributed to the failure to take two very valuable prizes.

The duration and distance of the voyages presented particular problems for their command and control. Firstly the quality of the commanders and the support for them provided by the managing owners were critical. The commanders had to contend with extraordinary circumstances. They were travelling over distances seldom attempted before, in conditions that were, at times, worse than most sailors had ever encountered, into places where the charts were few and of unknown quality and where there were few friendly ports. Much of their time was spent searching, not for prizes but for supplies of food, water and suitable timber for repairs. It is not surprising that there were mutinies and dissent. It is more surprising that only Dampier's expedition suffered from a complete breakdown of command.

Secondly, controlling an expedition over great distances proved almost impossible. The Bristol managers, with the disastrous example of the Dampier voyage readily to hand, made particular efforts to construct a constitution which would enable them to exert some measure of control even while the ships were on the other side of the world. They not only employed agents to look after their prize but ensured that their interests would be represented by one of their number, Doctor Dover, in the council meetings at which all important decisions were made. Despite this, and the fact that the constitution was

⁵⁸³ Woodes Rogers, *Cruising Voyage*, 220.

adhered to almost to the end, the voyage very nearly foundered in the face of dangerous disagreement among the senior officers. No constitution will survive its deliberate flouting, as happened in Shelvocke's case, but its near failure on the Rogers expedition suggests that a system of command based on that of a commercial company might, as Rogers suggested, have serious flaws when applied to such adventures. Rogers was able to overcome these problems partly by sheer force of personality but also, as he says himself, because he was supported by an unusually large number of officers whose express tasks included the suppression of mutiny. One has to doubt, however, whether even Rogers could, without the support of naval discipline, have survived the catastrophe experienced by Anson and still have been obeyed as Anson was.

How successful were the voyages?

Overall, the three voyages provided a poor return for their investors. The Dampier and Clipperton expeditions seem to have provided little or no purchase and even the successful Rogers expedition, whose profit was double the original investment, looks less spectacular when the period of time between promising the money and obtaining a profit – not less than five years – is taken into account. It is therefore unsurprising that recent historians have tended to dismiss the significance of the voyages. They were untypical in a time of massive coastal privateering activity, small-scale in comparison with naval fleet deployments, beset by intractable difficulties and, all-in-all, unsuccessful. The overall losses in ships and crew were enormous. The Dampier voyage lost about 150 of the total of 183 men who set out, Rogers between 70 and 100 out of 333 and Clipperton perhaps 250 of 310 in both ships. After Clipperton no other privately funded expeditions to the South Sea were mounted, possibly, as William Betagh suggested, because political and legal repercussions of that voyage had severely dampened enthusiasm for them.

Now let mankind judge what a check this must be to all future aid and assistance to the crown; when at any time a prince upon a declaration of war, shall require his loving subjects to fit out private ships to cruise upon and annoy the enemy!⁵⁸⁴

Despite such questions about their effectiveness the voyages were more successful and had a greater impact than has sometimes been appreciated. They were undoubtedly considered to be important at the time. They attracted the attention, financial support and interest of the Prince Consort, the President of the Royal Society and other significant figures in banking and commerce and even when they failed, as did Dampier and Shelvocke, the reputations of the captains remained relatively unscathed. Dampier was still received at court and Shelvocke's son (who was on the *Speedwell*) became a fellow of the Royal Society and Secretary of the Post Office. Rogers, though denied the kind of triumph afforded Cavendish and Anson, eventually obtained the governorship of the Bahamas.

The voyages, despite all their vicissitudes, provided examples of seamanship, courage and resourcefulness at a time when the Navy's performance in these areas was mixed. Campbell notes the extraordinary feats of seamanship displayed on all the voyages, from Clipperton's passage from the South Sea to China in a ten-ton bark, Funnell's 'doing the same thing in a vessel not much bigger' and Shelvocke building and then sailing the *Recovery* a thousand miles up the coast of South America. In a conscious homage to Shelvocke's expertise the survivors of the *Wager*, a frigate in Anson's squadron wrecked on the shores of Patagonia, named their rebuilt longboat the *Speedwell*, for, as one of the crew put it 'Though Sh-lv-k was a Rogue, he was not a Fool'.⁵⁸⁵ It has been noted that James Cook inspired in his junior officers a regard for the skills of seamanship and navigation that was to provide a model for followers like

⁵⁸⁴ William Betagh, *A Voyage Round the World*, 230.

⁵⁸⁵ John Bulkeley and John Cummins, *A Voyage to the South-Seas, in the Years 1740-1* (London, 1743), 27.

Bligh and Vancouver. Rogers, Shelvocke and even Clipperton provided an example – in seamanship if nothing else – for Cook. All the voyages displayed the remarkable fighting ability of British mariners. Even poorly led, as they were by Dampier, the *St George* managed to fight off a vastly superior French frigate and Shelvocke's little bark, one gun and tiny crew were able to capture a much larger and more heavily gunned ship and take it over. The *Success*, despite its captain being incapable through drink, managed to survive attack from batteries on land and ships at sea for 50 hours while she lay grounded on a bank at Guam, until she could use her boats to row her off – still under the guns of the shore battery – to safety. The determined attempt of the *Duke* and *Dutchess* to capture the 900 ton heavily armed, teak-built *Bigonia* could also be described as a heroic failure.

The financial product of the voyages is more significant than has sometimes been claimed. The Woodes Rogers voyage produced at least £148,000 but the total, if we include plunder shared out on the voyage and unaccounted for, is certainly more. Setting aside the fact that the money did not go where it was supposed to, the total purchase of the Clipperton expedition was, at a conservative estimate, around £80,000. There is no firm evidence for the actual returns of Dampier's voyage and the figures we have, ranging from £10,000 to £40,000 are based on partial and hearsay statements made in affidavits. Taking the low figures the total product of the three voyages amounts to at least £240,000, (£17.65 million in 2005) against which must be laid the total costs, including, in the case of the Rogers expedition, customs duty and the East India Company bribe, of about £75,000 (£5.74 million in 2005). This is still a very respectable return. The South Sea Company set up a subscription to cover a total government debt of around £9,000,000, against which even the Rogers voyage must

have appeared of small consequence, though to a certain kind of investor it would have been more exciting than the 6% promised on the government issue.

What was the political and strategic impact of the voyages?

A historiographic approach emphasises the importance of ideological pressures on the development of policy and encourages a view that these voyages were important not so much for what riches they accrued but for what they revealed about British maritime prowess – for the weight given by the chroniclers and analysts of the time to the manifest superiority of competence and courage displayed by British merchant seamen. N.A.M. Rodger has noted how, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, a myth of English sea power had grown up to the effect that England had been saved by the efforts of semi-private, anti-Spanish seafarers and that British expansion in the eighteenth century was predicated on the assumption that it should be ‘protestant, commercial, maritime and free’.⁵⁸⁶ This myth was fostered and maintained in much of the contemporary and near contemporary naval and voyage literature, and it is in the eighteenth-century collections and anthologies of British maritime achievement that one finds a more positive, at times triumphal, interpretation of the value of these voyages. John Campbell, writing while Britain still basked in the comparatively successful conclusion of Anson’s circumnavigation, draws such a lesson from the mixed fortunes of the South Sea expeditions. Even the least successful could be seen in a positive light.

It cannot be denied that [the Clipperton expedition] was, almost in every respect, an ill-conducted, as well as an unsuccessful Expedition; and yet, if we examine Things closely, we shall see, that there is no Reason to be discouraged by the Unluckiness of this Attempt. There is a Light, in which this

⁵⁸⁶ N.A.M. Rodger, ‘Queen Elizabeth and the Myth of Sea-power in English History’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Cambridge, 2004), 153-74.

Voyage may be viewed, that will afford quite another kind of Prospect... it is possible for a Ship of 200 tons, with 100 stout Men on board, under proper officers, to make such an Expedition into these Seas, as may prove advantageous to them, and their Owners; for according both to captain Shelvocke and captain Betagh's Account, the Expence of this Ship did not much exceed 6000 *l.* and the profits of their voyage, if prudently and honestly managed, could not have amounted to less than 50,000 *l.* If therefore we consider this case as it is now stated, instead of frightening, it ought to encourage us to Undertakings of a like kind.⁵⁸⁷

Campbell constructs, on the example of the three voyages, a strategy for the exercise of British maritime power that proposes, rather than the maintenance of large fleets in being, the mounting of small-scale expeditions that would quickly and economically assert British dominance over great distances.⁵⁸⁸ Not everyone was so sanguine about such schemes, seeing the opportunities offered by the new South Sea Company as lying in trade rather than prize money; as Glyndwr Williams remarks,

The new venture would redound to the wealth and power of the nation, even if there was no tapping into Spanish commerce to the north. There was a lack of realism in much of this, but in essence the plans of Defoe, Moll and the rest look forward, not back. To them, the images of Drake, Manila galleons, ransoms and prizes had little relevance in the coming age of more constructive British enterprise in the South Sea.⁵⁸⁹

At least as significant as the financial rewards brought in was the challenge the three voyages presented to Spanish hegemony in South America and the South Sea. They were, as David J. Starkey points out, 'A further erosion of the anachronistic commercial monopoly claimed by Spain in the New World and a formidable expression of Britain's emergence as the most dynamic mercantile power of the era'.⁵⁹⁰ They established, as John Campbell was at pains to point out, that there were riches to be acquired in the South Sea that well-organised, well-manned and well-led British ships would have little difficulty in acquiring. Williams, while dismissing the excursions of English

⁵⁸⁷ John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Vol.1, 239.

⁵⁸⁸ Harris, *Navigantium*, 186.

⁵⁸⁹ Williams, *Great South Sea*, 170.

⁵⁹⁰ David J. Starkey, *British Privateering*, 256.

adventurers into the South Sea between 1670 and 1750 as ‘of negligible importance’, grants that ‘in terms of interest roused, speculation excited and projects advanced, they form the essential preliminary to the upsurge of British activity in the Pacific in the late eighteenth century’.⁵⁹¹

What was the literary impact of the voyages?

The three voyages fed, through the narratives of their participants, a growing desire for books of adventure, exploration and travel which had been stimulated by Dampier’s immensely successful book about his buccaneering days in the Caribbean and South Sea, *A Voyage Round the World*.⁵⁹² Dampier’s 1703 voyage was the least productive of the three in terms of its literary impact – there was only one full account by William Funnell, mate on the *St George* – although the stranding of Alexander Selkirk was subsequently to prove of great literary significance. The narratives of the second expedition by Woodes Rogers and Edward Cooke each ran to several editions and provided, in the account of Selkirk’s rescue, a captivating tale that was reproduced in pamphlet form and taken up by Richard Steele in the *Englishman*.⁵⁹³ Rogers’s account, in particular, provided ammunition for the proponents of the South Sea Company and impressed the ‘gentlemen adventurers’ of the Clipperton expedition so much that they recommended it as a model to their two captains. This last expedition produced two full accounts – one by George Shelvocke and the other by William Betagh, captain of marines on the *Speedwell*. Subsequent South Sea voyages by Anson and Byron made use of the navigational and hydrographic information contained in the narratives of all

⁵⁹¹ Glyndwr Williams, ‘The inexhaustible fountain of gold’: English projects and ventures in the South Seas, 1670-1750, *Perspectives of Empire: Essays presented to Gerald S. Graham*, ed. John E. Flint and Glyndwr Williams (London, 1973), 27-53.

⁵⁹² William Dampier, *A Voyage Round the World*, (London 1697).

⁵⁹³ *The Englishman*, 1-3 December, 1713

three voyages. They were often cited by naval officers as inspiration and useful sources of information. According to his father Nelson thought Dampier's *A Voyage round the World* to be 'the most interesting book he had ever read'.⁵⁹⁴ Anson kept Shelvocke's book in his cabin - using it as a code key for secret letters - and Cook and Flinders acknowledge the value of Dampier's.⁵⁹⁵

The voyages were events which inspired a variety of literary responses. They were all the subject of speculation and comment in newspapers from the moment they were announced until some years after their return. Supporters of South Sea expeditions, such as the *Post-boy*, gave Dampier a platform to record his difficulties as the voyage progressed. The procession of the Rogers fleet with its Acapulco ship was eagerly followed in the *Daily Courant* and the subsequent wrangling over the spoils in court and Parliament were described in newspapers and pamphlets. Such sustained interest contributed to the fervour of activity surrounding the formation of the South Sea Company and added to the excitement which would lead to the Bubble.

The eye-witness narratives stimulated further controversy over who were the heroes and villains of each voyage and contributed the material for influential and popular voyage anthologies by Campbell, Berkley, Callander and Cavendish Drake.⁵⁹⁶ The importance of private enterprise in the expansion of British power and trade is given full prominence in these works and it is clear from the comments in many that the three

⁵⁹⁴ William Dampier, *The Buccaneer Explorer, William Dampier's Voyages*, ed. Gerald Norris (London, 2005), xix.

⁵⁹⁵ Glyn Williams, *The Prize of All the Oceans* (London, 1999), 54.

⁵⁹⁶ John Harris, ed. John Campbell, *Navigantium*, Captain George Berkley and John Hill, *The Naval History of Britain: From the Earliest Periods of Which There Are Accounts in History, to the Conclusion of the Year M.DCC.LVI*, 2 vols. (London, 1756); J Callander, *Terra Australis Cognita or Voyages to the Southern Hemisphere*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1766-8); Edward Cavendish Drake, *A New Universal Collection of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages and Travels, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (London, 1768).

voyages are seen as significant events in the development of Britain as a global maritime power.

They provide the raw material and a template for how that material could be turned, by Defoe and Swift to begin with but by increasing numbers of followers as the centuries pass, into literary gold. The cruising voyages produced records that were to have significant bearing on what has often been described as the first English novel (*Robinson Crusoe*), on a satire (*Gulliver's Travels*) recognised as a crowning achievement of eighteenth-century literature and on a poem (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*) recognised as a key text of the Romantic movement. Dampier's *A New Voyage* may also be seen – in its relation of the personal voyage of discovery of one man who stands as an observer on the sidelines of action – as a direct precursor of the picaresque adventures of the heroes of Defoe, Swift, Smollett and Fielding. They also played a significant part in the development of a literary form which signals a change in the public perception of the navy and mariners at the end of the eighteenth century. The naval novels of the nineteenth century were characterised by a new type of protagonist – the heroic ship's captain – which was to continue through Conrad to the nautical fiction of the twentieth century. It is worth noting that Patrick O'Brian, probably the most successful 'naval novelist' of the twentieth century, used the Anson voyage as the setting for his first sea novel and set a number of his Aubrey/ Maturin novels in the Pacific. The influence of the journals of those 'illiterate mariners' is extensive and long-lasting.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

TNA C104/160. Handbill issued by the owners of the *Duke* and *Dutchess*.

July 1st. 1708.

Two Ships being now in Fitting out at Bristol, as Private Men of War, to go in Consortship, viz. *The Duke*, Burthen about 350 Tuns, 36 Guns, Capt. Woodes Rogers Commander: *The Dutchess*, Burthen about 300 Tuns, 30 Guns, Capt. Stephen Courtney Commander: The following Proposals are made by the Owners, to all such Seamen and Landmen as shall Enter themselves and Serve on board the said Ships.

Dutchess

I. THE Owners are to be at the Cost of the said Ships Artillery, Provision, Ammunition, and all other Charges relating to the said Ships.

II. All Prizes and Purchase which shall be Taken by the said Ships, shall be divided viz. Two Third Parts of the clear Profits to the Owners of the said Ships, and the other Third Part to the Officers, Seamen and Landmen, as shall be at the Taking such Prizes and Purchase.

III. If any Provisions or Ships Materials, taken in any Prize, shall be wanting for the Use of the abovesaid two Ships, one Third Part of the Value of all such Provisions and Materials so made use of, shall be paid for by the Owners, to the Officers and Men.

IV. If any Seaman or Landman on board the said Ships, shall in Fight lose Limb or Limbs, or be so Disabled as not to get a Livelihood, every such Seaman shall have out of the Profits, a Reward of Thirty Pounds; and every Landman, Fifteen Pounds; and if any married Man happen to be Killed in Fight, there shall be paid out of the Profits to the Widow of such Persons, the like Reward of Thirty Pounds to a Sailor's Widow, and Fifteen Pounds to a Landman's Widdow, and this over and above their respective Shares: And if any Man shall in Fight or otherwise, Signalize himself, he shall have a farther Reward given him, according to the Bravery of the Action.

V. Every able Seaman, going wholly on Shares, shall have Two Shares and a Half, and every Landman One Share.

VI. If any Seaman or Landman desire to go part on Wages, and part on Shares, every such Seaman shall have Twenty Eight Shillings *per Month*, and One Share and a Quarter; and every Landman Fourteen Shillings *per Month*, and half a Share; the Wages to be paid them at the Return with the Ship, or Ships, to *England*, and their Shares in all Prizes, to be paid to any Person they shall think fit to order to receive it, as soon as the said Prizes are Condemned and put into the Possession of the Owners of the said Ships.

VII. Every Seaman Entering himself, and giving his Attendance on Board, to do the Service of the said Ship, or Ships, shall have Provisions, and Twenty Five Shillings *per Month*, Wages, from the Time they Enter, till the Ships fail.

Lastly The Owners will be Obliged to make good all the foregoing Proposals, and that the above Ships shall go only as private Men of War, and not as Trading Ships.

Memorandum, That by the Acts of Parliament passed the last Session, all Purchases that shall be taken, is to be to the sole Use and Benefit of the Owners and Men, and not liable to pay Tenth's; and no Captains of Men of War can Impress any Privateer's Men, under Penalty of Twenty Pounds for each Man.

Cap Courtney

APPENDIX II

Table showing the number of shares, amount subscribed and receipts of the Owners.⁵⁹⁷

Name	No. @	Subscribed			@	Receipts		
		£	s	d		£	s	d
Thomas Goldney	36	3,726	0	0		6,826	1	0
Thomas Dover	32	3,312	0	0		6,067	12	0
Christopher Shuter	30	3,105	0	0		5,688	7	6
Philip Freake	22	2,277	0	0		4,171	9	6
John Grant	20	2,070	0	0		3,792	5	0
Francis Rogers	20	2,070	0	0		3,792	5	0
John Batchelor	16	1,656	0	0		3,033	12	9
John Rumsey	15	1,552	10	0		2,844	3	0
Sir John Hawkins	10	1,035	0	0		1,896	2	6
John Duckinfield	10	1,035	0	0		1,869	2	6
James Hollidge	10	1,035	0	0		1,869	2	6
John Corsley	10	1,035	0	0		1,869	2	6
Laurence Hollister	5	517	10	0		948	1	3
Daniel Hickman	5	517	10	0		948	1	3
Thomas Clemens	4	414	0	0		758	9	0

In addition the following are named by Woodes Rogers or Edward Cooke:

Richard Hawksworth,
William Saunders,

Edward Acton

Webb

⁵⁹⁷ Table taken from B.M.H.Rogers, "Woodes Rogers's Privateering Voyage of 1708-1711," *Mariner's Mirror* 19 (1933), 196-211.

APPENDIX III

Introduction to Edward Cooke, *A Voyage to the South Sea* (London, 1712), containing a list of investors in the Woodes Rogers expedition, a copy of the agreement signed by each member of the crew, the allocation of crew shares, the orders to the owners' agents and the general orders of the owners.



T H E



Introduction.

THE immense Wealth of the *West Indies*, is the Bait that has always drawn Adventurers into those Parts, since the first Discovery by *Christopher Columbus*. Even that Great Man had the raising of himself and Family in View, at the Undertaking of that noble Enterprize, tho' not yet acquainted with the Product of those Countries he was going in Search of. Having succeeded so far, in his first Voyage, as to find the Island *Hispaniola*, and some others of less Note, his chiefest Care was to enquire after Gold, and to gather as much as might serve for a sufficient Testimony of its being the Product of those Lands, well knowing, that tho' his Design had been exploded by the graver Sort, and ridicul'd by the Wits, that precious Metal would not only silence them, but stir up
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many others to promote his Undertaking; the Rich, by hazarding some Part of what they were already possess'd of, to increase their Store, and the Poor to expose their Persons, in order to raise themselves above their present low Condition. Nor could he be deceiv'd in his Expectation. The Fame of that little Gold brought by him into *Spain*, had the intended Effect; and there follow'd such vying to go upon Discoveries, that *Columbus*, to whom the whole was due, ran a Risque of being defrauded of his deserv'd Reward; yet Merit at Length prevail'd, and his Family has since continu'd one of the greatest in *Spain*, by the Title of Dukes of *Veraguas*.

Many Men before unknown, became famous by following his Track; but the most remarkable among them, were, *Ferdinand Cortes*, and *Francis Pizarro*, the renown'd Conquerors of the mighty Empires of *Mexico* and *Peru*, whence such inestimable Treasure has been continually flowing into *Europe*, that the like was never before known or imagin'd. The *Spaniards* having engross'd to themselves those admir'd Countries, all other Nations conceiv'd Hopes of coming in for some Share with them, by discovering and making Conquests in those Parts, where they had not yet settled. Thus we see the *English*, the *French* the *Dutch* and *Portuguese*, canton'd themselves wheresoever they happen'd to light, but their Territories being destitute of those precious Metals, which are the main Incentives of Avarice, all the other Product, tho' never so valuable, was not sufficient to answer their Expectations. *Peru* and *Chile* afford inexhaustible Streams of Gold and Silver, the main Objects of Worldly Mens Desires.

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fires. The vast Distance, and the mighty Dangers of sailing round thither, did for some Time curb the eager Appetite of many, who would willingly have endeavour'd to make their Fortunes at the Expence of others. At length Sir *Francis Drake* broke the Ice, and ventur'd to follow the *Spaniards*, who had found that Way, thro' the Streights of *Magellan*. His Voyage proving successful, by the taking of a considerable Booty, Sir *Thomas Candish* follow'd soon after, then several *Dutchmen*, and from Time to Time, many others of both Nations have made Attempts in those Seas, as may be seen in the Course of this Work; and therefore it will be needless to make any farther Mention of them in this Place.

Capt. *Dampier*, in the Year 1704, was in the *South Sea*, and design'd upon the *Mamila*, or *Acapulco* Ship, which he met, but she proved too hard for him, and his Voyage unsuccessful. This was a great Discouragement to those who had Money to hazard upon such Attempts, in fitting out of Ships for the Purpose; but the said Capt. *Dampier* never gave over the Project, 'till he had prevail'd with some able Persons at *Bristol* to venture upon an Undertaking, which might turn to a prodigious Advantage. The Gentlemen who join'd together to fit out the Expedition, were,

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| 1. Alderman <i>Batchelor</i> , | | 7. Mr. <i>Francis Rogers</i> , |
| 2. Mr. <i>Ramsay</i> , | | 8. Mr. <i>Goldney</i> , |
| 3. Mr. <i>Hollidge</i> , | | 9. Capt. <i>Dover</i> , |
| 4. Capt. <i>Freake</i> , | | 10. Mr. <i>Webb</i> , |
| 5. Mr. <i>Sbater</i> , | | 11. Mr. <i>Duckingfield</i> , |
| 6. Sir <i>John Hawkins</i> , | | 12. Mr. <i>Costley</i> , |
| | b 3 | 13. Mr. |

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13. Mr. Saunders, 14. Mr. Grant, 15. Mr. Hickman, 16. Mr. Hauckworth,		17. Mr. Clemens, 18. Mr. Couls, 19. Capt. S. Courtney.
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And since our setting out, Mr. Palmer, a Merchant, Mr. Aston, a Goldsmith, and some other *London* Gentlemen.

These Persons of *Bristol*, in the Year 1708, fitted out the two Ships *Duke* and *Dutchess*, of the Force, and commanded by the Officers mention'd below, the said Commanders having Commissions from his Royal Highness Prince George of *Denmark*, then Lord High Admiral of *Great Britain, Ireland, &c.* The Conditions on which the Men were taken A-board, as follows :

A Copy of the Agreement between the Owners and the Men.

Note, The Swivel-Guns are included in the Number.

TWO Ships being now fitting out at *Bristol*, as private Men of War, to go in Consortship, viz. the *Duke*, Burthen about 350 Tuns, 36 Guns, Capt. *Woods Rogers* Commander, and the *Dutchess*, Burthen about 300 Tuns, 30 Guns, Capt. *Stephen Courtney* Commander ; the following Proposals are made by the Owners to all such as shall enter themselves, and serve on Board the said Ships.

1. The Owners to be at the Cost of the said Ships, Artillery, Provisions, Ammunition, and all other Charges relating to the said Ships.

2. All

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2. All Prizes and Purchase, which shall be taken by the said Ships, shall be divided, viz. two third Parts of the clear Profits to the Owners of the said Ships, and the other third Part to the Officers, Sea-men, and Land-men, who shall be at the taking of such Prizes and Purchase.

3. If any Provisions, or Ships Materials, taken in any Prize, shall be wanting for the Use of the abovesaid two Ships, one third Part of the Value of all such Provisions and Materials so made use of, shall be paid for by the Owners to the Officers and Sea-men.

4. If any Officer on Board the said Ships, shall in Fight lose Limb or Limbs, or be so disabled, as not to get a Livelihood, every such Officer, under the Degree of a Pilot, shall have out of the Profits a Reward of 40 Pounds; and every other Officer above that Degree 50 Pounds, and every Sea-man 30 Pounds; and in Case any Officer or Sea-man, being a marry'd Man, shall happen to be kill'd in Fight, there shall be paid to the Widow of such Officer or Sea-man, out of the Profits, the like Sum as in Case of being disabled. Whoever shall in Fight, or otherwise, signalize himself, shall have a farther Reward, according to the Bravery of the Action.

5. The Dividend of Shares to be made of the one third Part of the Profits, which belongs to the Officers and Men, is as follows.

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	If wholly on Shares.	If Part on Shares, and Part on Wages			
		Shares.	l.	s.	d.
A Captain	24				
Second Captain	20				
First Lieutenant	16	3	00	00	—8
Second Lieutenant	10	2	10	00	—5
Third Lieutenant	8	2	00	00	—4
Master	10	2	10	00	—5
Master's Mate	6	2	00	00	—3
Second Mate	5	1	15	00	—2½
Third Mate	4	1	10	00	—2
Surgeon	10	2	10	00	—5
Surgeon's Mate	6	1	10	00	—3
Owner's Agent	10	2	10	00	—5
Pilot	8	2	10	00	—4
Carpenter	6	2	00	00	—3
Carpenter's Mate	4	1	10	00	—2
Boatswain	6	2	00	00	—3
Boatswain's Mate	4	1	10	00	—2
Gunner	6	2	00	00	—3
Gunner's Mate	3½	1	10	00	—1½
Cooper	5	1	10	00	—2½
Cooper's Mate	3½	1	05	00	—1½
Midship-Men each	4	1	10	00	—2
Quarter-Masters each,	3	1	10	00	—1½
Sailers each	2½	1	08	00	—1¼
Land-Men each	1½	0	14	00	—0½

Instructions were also given to the Owners Agents aboard both the Ships, for the better managing of their Affairs, as follows.

Orders

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You must know all that goes in and out thence, and in your Book make it Debtor and Creditor. In every Thing you are to act on the Owners Behalf, that you may be able to give an exact Accompt of all Particulars coming under your Cognition, as above; which, together with prudent Conduct towards the Officers and Men, will be the greatest Satisfaction to us at your Return, that you have faithfully discharg'd your Trust; of which we will not doubt, but wish you very well.

*Dated in Bristol, this
14th of July, 1708.*

<i>James Hollidge, Fran. Rogers,</i>	<i>John Batchelor, Christopher Shuter, Tho. Goldney.</i>
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Constitution of a Council, for directing the Affairs of the Ships Duke and Dutchess, in their present Voyage to America.

FOR the better Government, and regulating of Affairs of the present Voyage, we whose Names are under-written, Owners and appointed Directors for the Ships *Duke* and *Dutchess*, do hereby appoint and constitute *Capt. Woodes Rogers* Commander, *Capt. Thomas Dover* second Captain, and Captain of the Marines, *Capt. Will. Dampier* Pilot, *Mr. Carlton Vanbrugh* Owners Agent, *Mr. Green* chief Lieutenant, *Mr. Fry* second Lieutenant, *Mr. Charles Pope*, *Mr. Glendall*, *Mr. Ballet*, and *Mr. Wasse*, all Officers on Board the *Duke*, to be Council on Board the said Ship; and *Capt. Stephen Courtney*, *Capt. Cooke*, his second Captain, *Mr. Will. Stretton* Lieutenant, *Mr. Balbo*

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Both Owners Agent, *John Rogers*, *Mr. White*, and the Master, Officers on Board the *Dutchess*, to be the Council on Board the said Ship, in Case they should be separated from each other; but when in Company, the Officers of both Ships, above-nam'd, are conjunctly, at the Summons of the Captains, *Rogers*, *Dover*, and *Courtney*, or any two of them, to come on Board either Ship, and be the Council referr'd to in our general Orders, to determine all Matters and Things whatsoever, that may arise, or be necessary for the general Good during the whole Voyage.

In Case of Death, Sickness, or Desertion, of any of the above Officers of either Ship, the rest that are of the Council appointed, as aforesaid, for the Ship, shall convene on Board their own Ship, and chuse another fit Person into that Office and Council.

We farther require and direct, that all Attempts, Attacks, and Designs upon the Enemy, either by Sea or Land, be first consulted and debated, either in the particular, if separated, or in the general Council, if together; and as the Majority thereof shall conclude, how or when to act or do, it shall be indispensably, and without unnecessary delay, put chearfully in Execution.

In case of any Discontents, Differences, or Misbehaviour among the Officers and Men, which may tend to the Disturbance of the good Concord and Government on Board, either the Men or Persons may appeal to the Captain, to have a Hearing and Decision by a Council, or the Captain shall call a Council, and have it heard and decided, and may prefer or displace any Man, according to Desert. All Decision and Judgment of this Council shall

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shall be finally determin'd by the Majority of Voices; and in Case of an Equality, Capt. *Dover* is to have the double Voice, as President of the Council, and we do accordingly order him to be President. All Matters transacted in this Council, shall be register'd in a Book by the Clerk appointed for that Purpose. Dated in *Bristol*, July 14. 1708.

John Batchelor,
Christ. Sbater,
James Hollidge,
Thomas Goldney,
Francis Rogers.

Note, Mr. *Green*, who is mention'd above, did not proceed with us, so Capt. *Fry* went first Lieutenant, Mr. *Charles Pope* second, and Mr. *Thomas Glendal* third.

The general Orders of the Owners to the Captains, were, to make all imaginable Dispatch to be gone with their Ships, first for *Cork* in *Ireland*, to victual and man, and then to proceed for the *South* Sea. If they met with any Prizes by the Way, either to send them *Home*, or to some of our Plantations in *America*, applying there to such Persons as are appointed by them for the Sale of such Ship and Goods, as should be met with in the Way to the *Southward*, as the Committee should think most convenient for the Interest of the Owners. Before any considerable Enterprize, to debate the Matter in Council, advising with Capt. *Dampier*, who went Pilot. If meet with the *Manila* Ship, to attack it with such Resolution, as was for our Interest and Reputation. To take particular Care to keep Company,

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any, and be assisting to each other in all Extremities, as much as possible, and both Ships Companies to be united, as if but one Ship, one supplying the other freely and willingly with what might be wanting, and to preserve Concord among all the Men and Officers Aboard both Ships.

Thus much may suffice as to the Voyage in general, the particular Motives that induc'd me to undertake such a tedious Navigation, were, two Misfortunes befallen me at Sea not long before. The first of these, was, my being attack'd in a Galley of 20 Guns, call'd the *Mead*, by four *Dunkirk* Privateers, and having fought them 'till I had lost all my Masts, except the Main-Mast, the Ship very leaky, and torn with the Enemy's Shot, my self and several of the Men wounded, and the Ship's Quarter set on Fire, I was taken by them, after endeavouring to run ashore, which they prevented, by keeping between me and the Land, being within a Mile of *Beachy-head*. I was carry'd to *Havre de Grace*, where the *French* treated me with extraordinary Civility, the Hospital Doctors took great Care of me; and, as soon as recover'd, the Governor sent me by Land to *Calais*, and three Months after got Liberty of the Commissary to come for *England*, in the first Transport. At my Return to *London*, *Richard* and *John Mead*, Esqs, my Friends and chief Owners, receiv'd me kindly, and gave me the Command of another Galley of 20 Guns, just built at *Bristol*, in which I sail'd for the *Streights*, being bound for *Leghorn*, and near *Oran*, on the *Barbary* Shore, maintain'd a running Fight from Noon 'till the Evening with a *French* Man of War of about 50 Guns, but another coming up at that

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that Time, I found it was a Madness to withstand them both; and seeing no Possibility of saving the Ship, therefore struck and went Aboard the *Gnaffella*, Capt. *de Cray*, Commander, who receiv'd me with singular Courtesy, promis'd I should have all my Money and Cloths restor'd, and desir'd I would command any Thing I stood in Need of, with the same Freedom as if I were Aboard my own Ship. I deliver'd him my Commission, which he return'd, saying, I did not deserve to lose it. These two Ships were taken from me in less than eight Months, being my self concern'd a considerable Part in each, both as to Ship and Cargo. Several Ships were offer'd me at my Return Home; but considering the great Hazards I must run, if concern'd again, the Sea swarming with Privateers, I resolv'd to try another Way of recovering my past Losses; and being acquainted with Alderman *Batchelor*, and several other Gentlemen that were the Owners of the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, I promis'd to go in one of those Ships, and proceeded accordingly.

Having thus briefly said as much as may suffice of the Voyage in general, and of the Occasion of my being concern'd in particular, I shall only add a few Words in Relation to the Work I here offer to the Publick. As to the Journal it self, the Reader may be assur'd it was exactly kept all the Time we were Aboard, and that I cannot presume to impose any Thing beyond the Strictness of Truth, as well in Regard it would be of no Advantage to me, as that there are so many Witnesses to be found to every Circumstance mention'd in it, besides that I have now by me an Abstract of all the Heads of it attested
by

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by the whole Company of the Ship *Dutchess*. The Descriptions of the Coasts, from the Streights of *Magellan*, to the Port of *Navidad*, or the *Nativity*, which is 70 Leagues to the *N. W.* of *Acapulco*, this last in 17 Degrees of *North* Latitude, are taken from the *Spanish* Manuscript Coasting-Pilots we found Aboard the Prizes, verify'd by the Experience of about 200 Years that Nation has been sailing on those Seas. Our Historical Relations are all collected from the best Authors who have treated of those Parts, whose Names it is needless to insert here, they being all quoted where made Use of. I thought it absolutely requisite to intersperse the said Descriptions and Relations in the Journal, for the Information and Entertainment of the Reader; to whom a continu'd Account of Winds, Latitudes, Longitudes, and such other Maritime Particulars, could be of little Use, and might prove heavy and tiresome.



APPENDIX IV

TNA C104/36 part 2. The master's report in the case of Creagh v. Rogers (1712) produced 28 July 1714. The report is contained in an untitled and unnumbered book bound in marbled card.

Transcription: Spelling is original but capitalization conforms to modern usage.

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28th July 1714 – 1st General Report

In pursuance of an order of the 12th December 1712 made upon the hearing of this case and severall subsequent orders I have been attended by the owners of the private men of war called the ships Duke and Dutchess and by the several agents concerned for the greatest part of the said ships company and by the respective councill and solicitors for all the said partyes also by the councill and solicitors for such officers and seamen who did not put themselves under the care of the said agents; and have considered the originall articles made between the said owners and ships company bearing date 10th May 1708. I have settled ye number of shares, according to which each person is to receive a dividend out of the clear third part of all prize taken in the late expedition to the South-Seas; and by adding the share of John Walker, a negro who made out his claim since the closing my report of the 12th June last I find the whole number of shares amount to 834 and two fifths of a share whereof 510 shares three quarters and two fifths belong to the officers and men and 323 shares and one quarter belong to the owners in satisfaction for the wages which they paid several of the men in lieu of shares pursuant

to the original articles. And have made an alphabetical list of the names of the said ships company together with their respective shares which have been hung up in publick for all persons to resort unto and I have also caused the same to be entered in a book remaining with me for the benefit of all persons concerned as by my reports of the 7th August 1713 and the 12th of June 1714 more particularly appears. I have also examined the books and papers brought before me upon oath by the owners and officers of the said writings and such of the papers as were written [as?] abstract of the said writings and such of the papers as were writ in Spanish or Dutch I have caused to be examined by persons who understood those languages; and according to best account which I could collect from the ship books and from severall letters papers or memorandums I compute the whole value of the severall prizes taken during the expedition amounts to £147,975 – 12s – 4¹/₂ d. The particulars whereof I have cause to be extracted from the respective accounts and papers and have entered the same in a book, remaining with me

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for the benefitt of all partyes; and have therein noted down mark and number of each book bundle and paper out of which the same respectively were taken and having reduced the said account to general heads, I have carried the gross sums of the several items to the end of that account; whereby at one view may be seen the nature contents and value of the severall prizes taken and I have therein also [?] the several folios wherein the particulars are explained: and the said severall gross sums I have brought as a charge upon the owners as is contained in the 1st schedule annexed to this report amounting to £147,975 – 12s – 4¹/₂ d as is aforementioned. I have also considered the several disbursements for which the said owners ought to have an allowance as also the costs of sales and all other deductions which ought to be taken out of the aforementioned charge and ye details of ye costs of suit I have stated in my 4th schedule.

And having settled the severall disbursements I have caused entries thereof to be made in the beforementioned book and having carried the items of the several gross sums into the 2nd schedule of this report amounting in the whole to £42,159 – 11s – 2¹/₂d which being deducted out of £147,975 – 12s – 4¹/₂ d there will remain £105,816 – 1s – 11d. Whereof one third part to be divided amongst the said ships company amounts to ye sum of £35,272 – 0s – ¹/₂d for which the said owners are to be accountable. To which said sum I have also added £547 – 1s - 11d for the interest of the money whilst it remained in my hands in the whole to £35,819 – 2s - 3¹/₄ d which being divided into 834 shares and two fifths I compute the proportion for each share will be £42 – 18s – 6¹/₂d. [much scored through] And according to such proportion the said owners are intitled to £13,876 – 11s – 11¹/₄d for 323 shares and one quarter due to them in lieu of wages as aforesaid; whereof £9,697- 10s was sett of to their account by ye former dividend of £30 per share and their remaining dividend will amount to £4,178 – 18s – 11³/₄d as is more particularly mentioned in the 3rd schedule. And the said ships company are intitled to 510 shares and are intitled to £4880 for storm money which hath been allowed them by an order of the 27th May last so that the whole money whereto the said ships company hath been intitled by virtue of their late expedition over and above

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their wages amounts to £26,822 – 13s – 3³/₄d whereof a dividend of £30 per share amounting to £15,334 – 10s – 0 hath been already made and the total of the remaining dividend for shares and storm money will amount to £11,488 – 03 – 03³/₄d. Out of which I conceive something ought to be deducted for the extraordinary trouble in going through this account. But there being so many persons concerned I was not willing to

deduct anything without the speciall direction of this court. And having settled the proportion's due to the severall partys as beforementioned I proceeded to state the account of the £28,487 – 14s – 0³/₄d brought before me by Mr Corsley the said owners treasurer towards satisfaction of the beforementioned whole third part amounting to £35,272 – 0s - 4d and £4880 storm money wherewith they stand charged as aforesaid. But in regard great part of that money will be coming back to the said owners both upon the former dividend of £30 per share and also upon the dividend that is now to be made. I have therefore given them a separate credit for all money that hath come to my hands (as also for all such money as was [throughout?] due to them on their former dividend) as appears in the third schedule. And I have considered the present account distinctly as it stands in relation to the men only; to whom (over and above the dividend of £30 per share already paid) there is also due for shares and storm money as aforesaid the sum of £11,488 – 3s – 3³/₄d towards satisfaction whereof there was remaining in my hands after the dividend of £30 per share as aforesaid the sum of £3,455 – 14s – 0³/₄d as appears in the third schedule; wherein I have made up account between myself, the owners, and said ships company and have charged myself with the whole money brought before me amounting to the sum of £28,487 – 14s – 0³/₄d as is therein particularly mentioned and to the said sum of £3,455 – 14s – 0³/₄d remaining in my hands I have also added the sum of £7,496 – 12s – 11d being the clear money due to the owners out of the sum £9692 – 10s – 0d for which I give them creditt as aforesaid on the 330 per share dividend (and as is mentioned in my 5th schedule); to which I also add the said £547 – 01s – 11d which I have brought to the account for interest money (as by particulars in my 6th schedule) making together £11,499 – 08s – 10³/₄d whereby there will be sufficient in my hands to discharge the sum of £11,488 – 3s – 3³/₄d due to the ships company as aforesaid with an overplus of £11 – 5s – 7d due to the

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said owners who by such credit allowed them aforesaid will have had satisfaction for all the shares due to them in lieu of wages; and the account will stand just the same as if they had brought before me the whole sum of £35,819 – 2s - 3¹/₄ d (to which the clear third part of the prizes [?] ;) As also £4880 for the storm money amounting together to £40,699 – 2s – 3¹/₄d and I had thereout divided back the separate shares due to the severall persons in the proportions beforementioned which will appear plain; as to the money in hand for paying ye men there [?] be added the two dividends to which the said owners are intitled; as also the dividend already paid to the men; as is more particularly sett forth at the latter end of the 3rd schedule. And that a clear and distinct account may appear of the money by me received and how and when paid away I have entred the names of the severall ships company in distinct ledger books and have therein given credit to each person for the respective shares to him due in like manner as they stand in the beforementioned lists, and have thereto added the storm money according to each mans proportion as it was stated by my report of the 24th April last which hath been since confirmed and on the debtor side of each mans account is and are to be contained the severall sums paid, the times when, and the persons to whom; with a number referring to the receipt given or to be given for the same; as also the number of the [letter of ?] , bill of sale, bond or note by virtue whereof the money was or is to be received, whereby the respective vouchers may be readily found upon the several files which are kept of the satisfaction of all the partyes concerned, and to which they have frequent resort without any charge whatsoever, and that I might be able to distinguish the priority of debts due from each person, I caused publick notice to be given in ye Gazette and ye other newspapers in July 1713 to the intent that all persons who had any

money due to them from any of the ships company might come and make their claims. And accordingly I attended for three weeks successively to take ye claims which I entered myself in a book under the name of each respective saylor. And at the time of payment in August then following I called over the names

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of the ships company in alphabetical course, who were severally admitted into the place of payment, together with all those who had claims on the person that was in the course of payment; and when person who had entred claims did not attend in the proper course I deferred payment untill I again went over the list which I did three times in an alphabetical course: and lists were every day hung up in publick, signifying what names stood next for payment. And by the help of the said book of claims, and the attendance of the severall persons concerned the priority of the debts were settled without prejudice to any person so far as I can since perceive and the said book of claims hath been publick and open to all who would come and enter their demands since the said dividend in August last. And I have lately caused the like publick notice to be given that all the creditors may be apprized of the time of the next payment. I have also taken due account between Captain Rogers and the ships company belonging to the Duke relating to arack by him sold to the men; but the nature of that account being so perplexed I have been forced to examine each particular item in Captain Roger's book of accounts; and to vary and cast up the same anew, according a common prize sett upon the said arack; for which purpose I have caused the said accounts to be transcribed into a new book charging each man's account separately giving to each his proper credit, and having cast up ye sums I carry ye balance into Captain Rogers ^{*(debtor to ye men or give him credit)}

account of shares and charge him these according to the nature of each man's account. But some objections being made to part of the items I have not had time to clear the same without delaying the general account which hath taken up all the time that I could possibly spare from other business; and I conceive the said account of arack, is of so different nature from the general account that the same may be very properly closed, and settled without any convenience to the account of arack; save only the difficulty of making a distinct payment of such small sums as will be due on the balance of each sailors separate account. And as to the arack that the sailors pretend was sold to them by the other officers I have examined the

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severall papers brought before me but cannot find any evidence whereon to ground an account. But I crave leave to observe that when I had closed the foregoing report the owners brought in severall demands by way of objection and insisted that I should state the same specially which I have accordingly done in the 7th schedule; also the agents for the ships company insist upon severall disbursements more than I have already allowed which matters I have stated in the 8th schedule and in the 9th schedule I have stated the demand of Mr Eyres who insists that he acted as broker on behalf of the ships company at the severall publick sales and that he ought to have an allowance for his said service as is mentioned in the said 9th schedule. 1398.

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THE 1ST SCHEDULE containing the gross sums of the severall prizes with which the owners stand charged. as particulars in ye account book folio 46

	£	s	d
Bark taken at Teneriff received in provisions	126	11	03
To goods bartered at the island of St Vincent for provisions	16	04	00
D. at the island of Grande	69	19	10
To sundry provisions and necessarys taken at Puna and Guiaquil	463	04	00
To provisions had at the island Gorgona	32	16	00
D. bartered for at Tecames	135	00	00
Provisions taken in the bark Beginning	05	00	00
D. and necessarys in the Jesu Maria Joseph	04	17	06
D. in the Ascension	18	10	00
D. in the Havre de Grace	11	05	00

D. in the St. Demas	04	10	00
D. in the Bachelor	184	08	00
Provisions bartered for at the island of Guam	537	00	00
D. the island Bouton in goods	17	05	00
Sundry goods of the purchase disposed of by Capt Rogers for provisions and purchases for the Duke	<u>392</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>00</u>
carried over	2019	15	07
	-		

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D. Capt Courtney for the Dutchess	46	00	00
17 negroes sold to Capt Courtney	473	00	00
Sundry goods of the purchase sold at the Cape of Good Hope to buy provisions and necessarys for the Duke, Dutchess and Bachelor	732	11	05
Sale of the ship Marquis	115	00	00
Medicines taken out of the prize Ascention and made use of aboard the Duke Dutchess and Marquis	36	07	10
Interest £500 lent Capt. Opie at Batavia	250	00	00

Ballance of the account of wax and soap taken and expended	473	00	00
Ballance of account of negroes	90	06	06
Amount of Doctors boatswains gunners stores taken in the several prizes and made use of aboard the Dutchess	187	10	04 ¹ / ₄
the amount of what plate, gold and silver was taken and expended abroad for provisions and other necessarys together with what was brought home and expended in London	10,122	11	02 ¹ / ₂
The amount of pearl, rings stones etc. sold in London	788	05	08
The amount of severall publick and private sales of the goods brought home and sold in London	126,918	19	04 ¹ / ₄
Sale of the ship Bachelor	895	00	00
Sundrys the owners had of the purchase more than what's accounted for in the publick and private sales	42	04	04
Ambergrace sold James Freeman	16	10	10
Debenturesd at the Custom House	2,837	11	00
More D. as of Mr Pattersons account	854	04	00
Warehouse room allowed Com. of customs	517	10	06

Severall sums in ye owners ledger books charged on the men
for several goods delivered to them during the voyage being pte of
prize which is to be brought to ye general account and each person
stand charged in his particular account as debtor to the owners

for that he received	<u>596</u>	04	07
	147,975	12	04 ¹ / ₄

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THE 2ND SCHEDULE containing the severall gross sums for which the owners ought to have
an allowance out of the general account as particulars in the account book. Fol.

	£	s	d
By Mr Corsleys Disbursements as treasurer upon the general account	3,762	13	07
Abatement at several sales	112	16	03
Sundry sums paid for smart money	208	00	00
Paid for customs	27,524	15	00 ¹ / ₂
By expenses at Batavia and the Cape on the ship Bachelor which is to be allowed out of the general account	596	12	00
By provisions for all the ships for which the Bachelor is to bear one third part	199	09	00

By expenses on the said ship in Holland	741	13	05
By materials taken out of the Duke and Dutchess to equip the Marquis	293	04	00
By the allowance for subsisting prisoners	570	00	00
Warehouse room paid Major Long	695	15	00
Brokerage paid Mr Proctor for selling of goods	319	10	00
To be allowed out of the general account for the storm money which the owners are to make good	4,880	00	00
Paid by the owners to their severall solicitors in part of the charges in the Admiralty suits in the Exchequer and in this court as by particulars in 4 th schedule	670	16	06
Paid the residue of the said charges by the Master out of the money due to the owners on the dividend of £30 per share as by the particulars in the 5 th schedule	<u>1,584</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>05</u>
	<u>£42,159</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>02¹/₂</u>

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THE 3RD SCHEDULE being an account of the money brought before the master and how the same hath been apply'd.

	£	s	d
Brought at several times by Mr Corsely who was the treasurer to the owners	<u>28,487</u>	14	<u>0³/₄</u>
Paid out of the said money by a dividend of £30 per share in August 1713 being the proportion due to the men for 510 shares ³ / ₄ ² / ₅	15,334	10	00
By a like dividend of £30 per share being the proportion for 323 ¹ / ₄ due to the owners in lieu of wages as carryed to their proper account in the 5 th schedule	<u>9,697</u>	10	<u>00</u>
Total of the dividends	<u>25,032</u>	00	<u>00</u>
Which dividend being deducted out of the first mentioned sum there remains	3,455	14	³ / ₄
To which is added £7,496 – 12s – 11d as allowed to ye owners credit being the clear money coming to them on the dividend of £30 per share after severall disbursements thereout made on their account as in the 5 th schedule	7,496	12	11
By intrest made of the money whilst in the masters hands as in the 6 th Schedule	<u>547</u>	01	<u>1</u>

Total of money so remaining in masters hands	11,499	08	10 ³ / ₄
Out of which sum is to be paid the money due to the ships company on their 2 nd dividend and for storm money as appears in the beforementioned report	11,488	03	03 ³ / ₄
So there will then remain due to the owners by money in the masters hands	11	05	07

M^{dd}. since ye time of taxing ye bills of costs mentioned in ye 4th schedule it appears that there will be some further costs; of which ye owners must pay two third parts and ye other third part must be deducted out of the aforementioned dividend coming to ye ships company.

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That the said owners and ships company will have had full satisfaction by this method will plainly appear; If to the said sum of £11,488 - 03s - 03³/₄d there be added the money which they have already received as also the two dividends coming to the owners. For then the total thereof will be equal to the whole money that was to be divided in shares together with the storm money; as appears by the following computation.

	£	s	d
The whole charge	147,975	12	4 ¹ / ₄
Discharge	<u>42,159</u>	11	<u>2¹/₂</u>
Remaining	<u>105,816</u>	01	<u>02</u>
Whereof $\frac{1}{3}$ amounts to	35,272	00	04 ¹ / ₂

To which add the intrest money as by particulars in 6 th schedule	<u>547</u>	01	11
Total of the money to be divided in shares	35,819	02	3 ¹ / ₂

To which add the storm money	<u>4,880</u>	00	00
Total of this account	40,699	02	3 ¹ / ₂

Which is made good by the following computation.

By the money due to the men for shares upon ye 2nd dividend	6,608	03	3 ³ / ₄
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Storm money to be added	<u>4,880</u>	00	00
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Which together make up the sum for which the men have credit

in the former part of ye schedule	11,488	03	3 ³ / ₄
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Add thereto the money paid them on their 1 st dividend	<u>15,334</u>	10	00
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Total whereto the men are intitled	26,822	13	3 ³ / ₄
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Add thereto the owners first dividend for [so?] they have credit

in ye 5 th schedule	9,697	10	00
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As also by proportion the owners 2 nd dividend (amended)	<u>4,178</u>	18	11 ³ / ₄
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The total makes good the account beforementioned	40,699	02	3 ³ / ₄
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THE 4TH SCHEDULE containing the severall bills of law charges.

£ s d

The bill of costs brought by Mr Woodford solicitor for Mr Ward

one of the mens agents amounting to £99 -2s – 0d which I have taxed at	71	05	06
--	----	----	----

By the bill of costs brought by Mr Hill solicitor for the plaintiff			
Mr Creagh and who upon the agents uniting carried on the suit for all			
the agents amounting to £711 – 6s – 9d which I have taxed at	587	06	10
Mr Altham's bill of costs who was concerned for ye men who did not			
sign to ye agency amount to £266 – 6s – 7d and taxed at	152	05	08
By the costs Capt Dampier was put in relation to this cause amounting			
to	<u>18</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>06</u>
	829	06	06
By Mr Coules bill of costs who was solicitor for the owners in the			
first part of this suit and in the Admiralty amounting			
to £744 – 11s – 2d which I have taxed at	433	17	04
Mr longfords bill in this suit and the charges of the prosecution			
against the owners in the exchequer at the suit of the silk throwsters			
amount to £421 – 14s -6d and taxed at	333	08	06
Mr Walkers bill amounting to 108 – 5s – 4d and taxed at	<u>90</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>02</u>
Total of law charges	1,687	04	06
Out of which said £1,687 – 04s – 06d abt. £269 – 16s – 05d hath been expended in ye			
Admiralty and in defending the prosecutions brought against the owners in the exchequer			
relating to ye ships cargoe in part of ye beforementioned costs ye owners have paid the severall			
sums following which are allowed them in the disbursements mentioned in ye 2 nd schedule.			
Paid Mr Coules his bill as taxed at	433	17	04

Paid Mr Walker's bill as taxed at	90	12	02
-----------------------------------	----	----	----

Paid Mr Longford in pte of his bill of £333 – 8s – 6d	<u>146</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>00</u>
---	------------	-----------	-----------

	670	16	06
--	-----	----	----

The remainder of the costs were paid by ye master out of the money remaining in his hands on account of ye owners share of ye dividend of £30 per share.

Paid to Mr Woodford, Hill, Altham, and Dampier as by the

particulars aforementioned

	829	06	06
--	-----	----	----

Paid the remainder of Mr Longford's bill

	<u>187</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>06</u>
--	------------	-----------	-----------

Total so paid by the master carryd forward to ye account in ye

	1016	08	00
--	------	----	----

5th schedule

Paid by the owners as above

	<u>670</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>06</u>
--	------------	-----------	-----------

Which s. payments make up the whole bills of costs as before

	1687	04	06
--	------	----	----

mentioned

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THE 5TH SCHEDULE containing the dividend of £30 per share coming to the owners out of shares of such men whom they allowed wages; together with the disbursements thereof made by the master on the said owners account.

	£	s	d
By the said dividend for 323 shares and one quarter due to the owners in lieu of wages	<u>9,697</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>00</u>
Paid thereof by the master on ye general account for which ye owners have credit in 2 nd schedule			
Money paid in pte of bills of law charges as in ye 4 th schedule	1,016	08	00
Paid Lieutenant Glendale for going to Bristol to procure certificates for ye seamen and his attendance to deliver them to the proper persons. As also his attendance at the time of payment and about settling the account of arack	21	10	00
P. Robert Berry for warehouse keeping & watching 95 days at 4s 8d a day	22	00	00
P ^d Jn. Parker who was the clerk on board the Duke for examining and sorting papers and writing out ye matters relating to the [pilots?] charge and for transcribing ye book of claims [posting?] ye new ledger and copying ye account book annexed to report	43	00	00
P. Mr Creagh's disbursements relating to ye ships and cargoes	195	09	00

Mr Ward for D. disbursements	21	12	08
Mr Thrup for D. disbursements	18	05	09
D. for attending on the charge and discharge and examining and sorting the papers of ye whole account in ye severall bundles	40	00	00
Pay mr Patterson for attending the warehouses and sales as ye report 28 th June 1714 and allowed per order	204	06	00
More pd to Mr Patterson as by him disbursed for certificates from the Custom House	<u>02</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>00</u>
	<u>1,584</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>05</u>
More money paid on the owners distinct account to capt. Dampier in payment of shares due to him from ye owners	500	00	00
By the charge of 2d per pound for making up ye owners account of £9697 – 10s – 0d	81	06	03
By D. for the owners last dividend of £4178 – 18s – 11d	34	16	05
By money paid for the owners on ye general account as beforementioned	<u>1,584</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>05</u>
	2,200	17	01
Which last mentioned sum being deducted out of £9,697 – 10s – 0d there will remain in the masters hands as due to the owners, and on which they have credit towards the payment of the mens distinct shares			

as in the 3rd schedule 7,496 12 11

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THE 6TH SCHEDULE containing an account of the interest of the money placed out by the master

By interest of £7600 Exchequer bills from 19th December 1712 to the 6th August following being 230 days at 2d per day 145 13 04

By interest of £3800 exchequer bills from 15th May 1713 to the said 6th August being 88 days 26 05 08

By interest of £5000 subscribed on the land tax 19th May 1713 and sold out 6th August following being 79 days at 5p/cent per annum amounts to 54 02 02

By interest of £3000 exchequer bills from the said 19th May to the 6th August following being 79 days 19 15 00

By interest of £3455 – 14s – 0³/₄ being the ballance of the money remaining after the dividend as appears in the 3rd schedule and secured in exchequer bills which from the 6th august 1713 to the 2nd August 1714 the day appointed for the pay^t of storm money being 361 days comes to 103 15 09

About 18th Nov. 1713 upon looking into the papers produced by the owners I apprehended that the money brought by the owners would not be sufficient to pay ye remaining shares due to the men and therefore (upon request of the agents) stopt what had been reservd in my hands on account of the owners proportion of the dividend of £30 per share. And after computing what might be necessary to make the severall

payments mentioned in the 5th schedule I placed £7,500 on exchequer bills for the benefitt of the men (which appears to be something more than the ballance remaining in my hands) on account of the owners.

The interest whereof to the 30th September next being 360 days

amounts to	<u>197</u> <u>10</u> <u>00</u>
Total of said interest	<u>547</u> <u>01</u> <u>11</u>

M^{dd} the interest for ye whole £7,500 should not have been carried on to ye 30th September for tho' at ye time of ye report there appeared not that sum in hand; yet by payment of ye storm money (which began on ye 2nd of August) ye [?] of ye money for paying ye 2nd dividend amounted to no more than £6,608 – 03s - 3³/₄d as appears in ye latter part of ye 3rd schedule so that I paid interest for £900 for 2 months more than in strictness I ought. M^{dd} interest for said £6608 is carried on to ye next dividend as appears in ye report of 22nd March 1715.

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THE 7TH SCHEDULE containing several demands made by the owners which they laid before me by way of objection to this report and which I have not thought fit to allow them in the foregoing account.

The said owner do insist that they ought to be allowed in their separate account the sum of £21 – 15s – 1d being the amount of ye three first articles in the charge for the prizes taken at Teneriff, St Vincent and the Island of Grande and which they insist were disposed of by the ships company and were never brought to the owners account. But on looking into the account of the said prizes I find they were exchanged for necessarys provisions and refreshments for the men the particulars of which I have caused to be transcribed in the book of accounts mentioned in my report. And it being agreed by the General Articles that the owners should furnish all necessary provisions for the ships company I have not allowed the demand.

Also they insist that they ought to be allowed £2,800 for the freight of 200 tun of goods which the officers and seamen brought from Batavia to Europe of which the owners were at the charge but had no manner of benefitt. But I have disallowed the said demand, because it hath not been made appear to me that there were any such goods save only such part of the prize as during the voyage had been divided amongst the men and which is now brought in the general account of which the owners have two thirds; and also except for severall quantities of arack brought home by the officers in their own private account and therefore ought not to be brought into the general account. But I have considered that the incumbering the ships with such goods was contrary to the officers duty and might have endangered the whole cargoe in case they had been pursued by any ships of war belonging to ye enemy and therefore in ye private account between Lt. Glendale and the owners which was brought before me I have already made an allowance to the owners (and which they accepted) being after

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the rate of £9 per tun for such goods and I proposed to make the like allowance in all other cases of the same nature . And therefore I conceive the owners had no occasion to clogg the present account with the beforementioned demands.

They also insist to be allowed £2,700 for damage which the said ships sustained by reason of their stay at Batavia and waiting for the Dutch convoy, or at least some part of such damage. And they further insist that by reason thereof and going to Holland with the Dutch convoy they were out 9 months longer than they needed to have been. And that during such time the owners paid about £300 per month wages besides wear and tear of their ships but I do not find by the articles that the voyage was confined to any certain time and if ye ships had not stayed for such convoy the whole cargoe might have been taken by the enemy. And I do not find any neglect or voluntary delay given to the said voyage by the ships company. And as to ye charge of wages, I conceive the same must be ruled by the originall articles whereby the owner's covenant that in

consideration of shares to them assigned they would pay the wages therein mentioned untill the return of the said ships to England. And therefore I have not allowed their demand. Also examining the account drawn up by the owners I find the whole wages by them paid amount to about £12,500 and the proportion of shares allowed them in lieu thereof amount to £13,876 – 8s – 11³/₄ so that they gain by such exchange.

They also insist to be allowed £2,500 paid and to be paid Capt. Dampier for his service as pilot in the said expedition which they say was for the common good of all and therefore ought to be brought into the general account. But I find by the articles bearing date 20th January 1707 made between the defendant Jno. Batchelor and others on behalf of themselves and such as should be concerned as owners in the ships then intended on a voyage to the South Seas on the one part and Capt. Dampier on the other that the said Dampier is intituled to a sixteenth part of all such prize as should belong to the owners which by agreement was to be two thirds of ye clear produce

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of all the prize that should be taken during the then intended expedition as more particularly appears by my report of the 21st November last . Also by the original articles of agreement bearing the date 10th May 1708 made between the owners and ships company It is agreed that one third part of the clear profitt and gain that should be made by the said expedition should be divide amongst the ships company who signed such articles according to the shares therein contained. But I do not find the said Dampier was a party to or anyways mentioned in the said articles. And I conceive that no person can be intituled to any share of the third part allotted to ye men save only such who were comprised in said articles or who were afterwards listed in Ireland and elsewhere pursuant to the conditions contained in the said articles and therefore I have not allowed the said demand .

Also the managing owners concerned for the said ships and goods insist to be allowed 2 per cent commission money for sale of the cargo of the said ships as is usuall in like cases; and it appears to me that some of the said owners have spent much time and taken great pains in relation to the said ships and goods and if the dispute had been between the severall owners I conceive the said managers would have been well intitled to a recompense for their loss of time and great pains and care taken for the benefitt of the rest of the part owners. But I conceive that they cannot have any recompense out of the shares coming to the ships company who have agents of their own that do attend and look after their separate interests in like manner as the managing owners attend the concern of the other part owners and large wages and sallarys are allowed out of the common stock to proper persons for taking care and managing the common concerns and therefore I have not allowed the said demands.

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They also insist to be allowed what was expended by the ships crew at Batavia amounting to £625 – 08s – 00d but that sum is not in their discharge nor have the particulars thereof been since made out to me. Besides the said demands appear to be provisions, which are to be provided at the charge of the owners; and therefore I have disallowed the said demands.

They also insist to be allowed £1666 – 08s – 05d or at least more than hath been allowed for provisions and other necessarys for bringing home the great PRIZE called the BACHELOR and for which I first allowed £899 – 15s – 06d. But upon looking more narrowly into the account I apprehend that some items were mistaken and others brought into that account which did not properly belong thereto, and therefore I caused all the items I thought fit to allow to be transcribed into the account book before mentioned amounting to £795 – 13s – 0d as appears in Fol:74. In which sum I conceive the owners have full satisfaction for whatever they may justly claim on ye before mentioned account.

They also demand to be allowed £6,000 which they insist was by them paid to the East India Company who (as 'tis alledged) had seized the ships cargoe under pretence that the said ships had traded to ye Indies contrary to the Company's charter. But the agents for the ships company insist that such money if paid was without their consent or privity and ought not to be paid and therefore I have not allowed same.

They also insist to be indemnified against a bond which they executed with Mr Ward one of the agents for the ships company for payment of £5,000 upon his giving security to indemnify them against the demands of the E. India Company. But the said Mr Ward not having given such security I conceive they are in no danger of being sued on the said bond.

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They also insist to be indemnified against an information in the exchequer by the Silk Throwsters Company for goods brought into England of £8,000 value contrary to act of Parliament. And the Jury having brought in a speciall verdict the Barons of the Exchequer have not as yett given judgement thereon. But how or in what manner the said owners ought to be indemnifyd I submit to the judgement of this honourable court.

Also since the finishing the report the owners have brought further objections on which I have been attended but as to aprt of the said objections I find the owners are mistaken. And as to the other part I conceive they are contained in the speciall matters before stated except only as far as to a bill of £28 – 16s – 10d for taking recognizance in the exchequer and other matters relating

to the Silk Throwsters Company which had not been brought before me until the time of the s[everal] objections and which I conceive ought to have been allowed in the 2nd schedule whereby the ships company would have borne one third part.

THE 8TH SCHEDULE containing the agents demands more than what hath been allowed in the 5th schedule

The agents for the ships company demand severall sums of money more than I have allowed in the general account and which they insist were laid out for the benefitt of the men; who in their general Power of Attorney have agreed to pay all charges over and above the poundage therein mentioned and therefore ye agents insist they ought to be allowed for such their disbursements (as hereafter is mentioned) out of the separate part belonging to the ships company. but it being too difficult for me to determine whether the same ought to be so allowed ; I have state such disbursements , and submitt ye same to the judgement of this honourable court.

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	£	s	d
Mr Ward's further demands			
To councill fees and several tavern expenses at meeting with the officers to clear the men that were impressed and to procure their protections	23	11	06
Money paid Mr Thrupp as per note	22	06	03
Paid Mr Fariane his bill of charges	37	12	06

Mr Holman's bill	17	07	00
Expenses at Doctors Commons for provision for ye officers	15	06	09
Men paid by order Capt. Fry	<u>15</u>	<u>06</u>	<u>09</u>
	<u>116</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>00</u>
MR Creagh's further demands			
His expenses from London to Holland whither ye men sent for him in order to take up the agency that they promised to allow him	60	00	00
Paid Mr Tully the attorney for drawing severall powers of attorney from the men to me drawing severall obligations from me to them and giving security to them for £20,000 including counsell fees. Also fees of protection and charges in getting clear the men [who were ?] impressed at Wapping	47	17	01
Paid Mr Hill the proctor att Doctors Commons for defending his agency against Mr Ward	15	07	00
Severall charges as coach hire tavern expenses about the general concern treats in divers persons for procuring protections and attending the chancery suit &c. amounting to £120 of which there was only allowed 60 so remains	<u>60</u>	<u>00</u>	<u>00</u>
	<u>183</u>	<u>04</u>	<u>01</u>

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THE 9TH SCHEDULE containing the demands of Mr Eyres....

Who insists that per order of Mr Ward and Mr Campbell two of the agents for the ships company he acted as broker at the time of the several sales. And by writing to his friends in Holland and elsewhere he very much advanced the price of the goods by procuring custom. And that he is hereby intitled to one third part of ye brokage amounting to £104 – 16s – 02d. But on looking into ye accounts of the owners disbursements I find there is charged as paid Mr Proctor their broker for selling the said goods at the rate of 5 per cent the sum of £319 – 10 – 0d and which sum I had allowed in the said account before the said Mr Eyres made his demands before me. Also I have allowed to Mr Patterson £204 – 0s - 6d for attending at the warehouses and sales and for taking an account to whom the goods were sold and for what prize[?]; and afterwards entring the same in regular books of accounts which he laid before me. And upon looking into my report of 28th June last (which as to the £204 – 0s - 6d hath been since confirmed) I find the assistance the said Patterson gave at the said sales and making up the said accounts was a great inducement for giving him so large an allowance and which he had actually received before Mr Eyres attended to make out his demands, So that having already allowed so largely for selling the said goods I conceive I ought not of myself to make any further allowance: Especially since the said Eyres hath lain by and suffered Proctor and Patterson to go off with their allowances and did not take out any summons to proceed on his said demand until I was ready to sign my report and although he insists he attended the sales and took down the price of goods and persons to whom sold, yet I do not remember they were ever produced before me; but the only assistance I ever received of that kind was from the said Patterson who produced his books before me, upon oath and by which I made up the account of sales and checqued the account brought in by the owners. And although the said Eyres in a paper lately laid before me have sett down the gross sums of the several sales he insisted that he had been instrumental. Yet when he was last before me he admitted that his own books was not then cast up;

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to prevent the keeping open this report I have stated the whole matter as it appears to me and have reserved to the said Eyres of making what proof he can relating to the said matters and humbly submit to the judgement of this honourable court what allowance he ought to have and from whom he is to receive the same.

_ exceptions argued 3rd November 1714 as per cop Ord er in Lib: pa 93.

1398

1714

7 August

special matter relating to ye share of Ballet.

IN pursuance of an order the 12th December made upon the hearing of this cause whereby I am directed to state any matter specially. I have been attended by the councell and solicitors for the owners of the ships Duke and Dutchess as also by John Ballett one of the officers belonging to the Duke and by his councell and solicitor and in their presence have considered the demands of the said Ballett as to three shares over and above the six shares for which he subscribed in the original articles bearing date 10th of May 1708 to which purpose he insists before he went the said voyage five of the managing owners by an instrument under their hands and seals covenanted with him on behalf of themselves and the rest of the owners that he should be intitled to three shares to be paid him by the owners over and above the six shares for which he had subscribed in the original articles and that the said instrument was lodged in the hands of John Legg of Bristol which Legg afterwards removed from Bristol and is not now to be found. And the said Ballett hath produced before me a paper writing which he insists was intended for a duplicate of the said instrument but the same was never executed. And the said Ballett hath produced before me an affidavit made by Thomas Glendale who went as Lieutenant of the ship Duke and John Parker clerk of the said ship who both remember that it was generally discoursed

both during the said voyage and since that the said Ballett was to receive nine shares in the whole and the said Glendale further deposes that the said Ballett refused to proceed in the voyage unless he should be allowed nine shares and there being then no place vacant except mate and supernumerary chyrurgeon for which according to the articles there was only allotted six shares that thereupon Capt. William Dampier did propose to part with three of his own shares for which he had agreed with the owners to the intent Ballett might have the benefit of the same and that thereupon the said Dampier did release the said owners his interest in three shares by a release bearing the date 15th July 1708 to which the said Glendale subscribed as a witness which release the said Glendale has seen in the hands of Mr Giles Batchelor and took a copy thereof which he hath set forth in his affidavit but the said owners do insist that the paper writing produced by the said Ballett was by him prepared in order to persuade the owners to sign the same but was never by them executed. All which matters I have stated at the request of the said parties and submit to the judgement of this honourable court.

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The subsequent reports are entred in the new book Fo

APPENDIX V

At front of George Shelvocke's manuscript account of his voyage contained in the Admiralty Library Portsmouth, MS 18: *Shelvocke's Voyage*.

A list of my Officers as follows:

Simon Hatley	Second Captain
Edward Brooke	1 st Lieutenant
Samuel Randall	2 nd Lieutenant
Pierre Le Port	3 RD Lieutenant
Blowfield Coldsea	Master & his 3 mates
Nicholas Adams mates	Surgeon & his 3
James Hendry	Purser
Turner Stevens mates	Gunner & his 3
Robert Davenport	Carpenter & his 3 mates
Henry Hudson	Boatswain & his 3 mates

Marine Officers

Will^m Betagh Captⁿ of Marines

John Rainor	Lieut ^t of Marines
Thomas Dodd	Lieut ^t of Marines
Gilbert Hamilton	Ensign of Marines
Robert Copps	Serjeant of Marines
John Giles	“ “ “ “
Peter Ferreau	Corporal of Marines
John Alderdash	“ “ “ “

APPENDIX VI

Articles agreed at St Catherine's by Shelvocke and the crew of the *Speedwell*,

George Shelvocke, *A Voyage round the World* (London, 1726), 34.

Text identical to the wording of the Rogers agreement (*Cruising Voyage*, 1712) is underlined

Imprimis, That our part of each prize we take, shall be equally divided, as soon as possible, after the capture thereof, between the ship's company, according to each man's respective shares, as born on the ship's books.

Secondly, That all plunder on board each prize we take, shall be equally divided among the ship's company, according to each man's shares, as above.

Thirdly, That gold rings found in any place, except in a goldsmith's shop, is plunder; all arms, sea-books and instruments, all cloathing and moveables, usually worn about prisoners (except women's ear-rings, unwrought gold and silver, loose diamonds, pearls and money) all plate in use aboard ships, but not on shore (unless about the persons of prisoners) is plunder; all manner of cloaths ready made, found on the upper deck, or between decks, belonging to the ship's company and passengers, is plunder also, except what is above limited, and is in bundles or pieces not opened in the country, that appears not for the person's use that owns the chest, but designed for merchandize, which only shall not be plunder. It is also agreed, that any sort of wrought silver or gold, crucifixes, gold and silver watches, or any other moveables found about the prisoners, or any wearing apparel of any kind, shall be likewise plunder.

Fourthly, That if any person on board the ship do conceal any plunder, exceeding one piece of eight, 24 hours after the capture of the prize, he shall be severely punished,

and lose his share of the prize and plunder, one half thereof to be given to the informer, and the other to be equally divided among the ship's company. The same penalty is to be inflicted for being drunk in time of action, or disobeying his superior Officer's command, or concealing himself in the sea or land service, except when the prize is taken by storm or boarding. Then whatsoever is taken shall be his own, as follows, viz. a sailor or man-man £10. an Officer below the Carpenter £20. a Mate, Gunner, Boatswain, and Carpenter £40. a Lieutenant or Master £80 and the Captain £100.

Fifthly, That all plunder shall be apprais'd and divided, as soon as possible, after the capture; also every person to be sworn and search'd, as soon as they come aboard, by such persons as shall be appointed for that purpose. The person or person's refusing, shall forfeit their shares of prize and plunder as above.

Sixthly, In consideration that Captain Shelvocke, to make the ship's company easy, has given the whole cabin-plunder (which, in all probability is the major part) to be divided as aforesaid, we do voluntarily agree, that he shall have 5 per cent. Over and above his respective shares, as a consideration of what is his due of the plunder aforesaid.

Seventhly, That a reward of 20 dollars shall be given to him that first sees a prize of good value, or exceeding 50 tuns in burthen. 31 July 1719

APPENDIX VII

A page from the account book taken from Matthew Stewart, Shelvocke's so-called quartermaster, when he arrived at Dover in 1722. The page, printed in Betagh, *Voyage round the World*, shows just one of several distributions of purchase.

A VOYAGE round the WORLD. 205

Names.	Quality	Number of Shares.	Dollars.	English Money.
<i>George Shelvocke</i>	Commander	6	11325	2642 10 00
<i>Samuel Randal</i>	Lieutenant	2½	4718	} 1100 17 4 each.
<i>John Rayner</i>	Capt. Marines	2½	4718	
<i>Blowfield Coldsea</i>	Master	2½	4718	
<i>Nicholas Adams</i>	Surgeon	2½	4718	
<i>Matthew Stewart</i>	First Mate	2	3775	} 880 16 8 each.
<i>Monsieur Laporte</i>	2 Mate	2	3775	
<i>George Henshal</i>	Boatfwain	2	3775	
<i>Robert Davenport</i>	Carpenter	2	3775	
<i>William Clark</i>	Gunner	2	3775	} 660 00 00 each.
<i>James Daniel</i>	Midshipman	1½	2830	
<i>David Griffith</i>	Ditto	1½	2830	
<i>Christop. Hawkins</i>	Ditto	1½	2830	
<i>Olivier Lefevre</i>	Sail Maker	1½	2830	} 440 7 2 each.
<i>John Doydge</i>	Surgeons Mt.	1½	2830	
<i>William Morgan</i>	Ditto	1½	2830	
<i>John Popplestone</i>	Armourer	1½	2830	
<i>James Moyet</i>	Cooper	1½	2830	} 330 6 10 each.
<i>John Pearson</i>	Carpent. Mt.	1½	2830	
<i>Geo. Shelvocke jun.</i>	Nothing	1½	2830	
<i>William Clement</i>	Able Seaman	1	1887½	
<i>John Norris</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	} 440 7 2 each.
<i>James Moulville</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	
<i>George Gill</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	
<i>Peter Fero</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	
<i>John Smith</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	} 330 6 10 each.
<i>Edward Atcocks</i>	Ditto	1	1887½	
<i>John Theobald</i>	Barber	1	1887½	
<i>William Burrows</i>	Ord. Scaman	1	1415½	
<i>Daniel mac Donald</i>	Ditto	1	1415½	} 220 04 02 each.
<i>Richard Croft</i>	Ditto	1	1415½	
<i>John Robins</i>	Grommet	1½	943½	} 220 04 02 each.
<i>Benedict Harry</i>	Cook	1½	943½	
33		52½	98604½	23007 15 6

Here

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High Court of Admiralty Papers

Letter of marque declarations for the voyages are in

HCA 26/18 (*St George*),

HCA 25/20 (*Duke*)

HCA 26/29 (*Speedwell*).

HCA 15/37 'S' contains affidavits by the crew of the *Speedwell*

State Papers

East India Company concerns about the 1703 Dampier voyage and the State response are aired in SP 42/7.

Chancery Papers

The chief source for Dampier's voyage is to be found in the chancery bill of complaint brought by Richard and Elizabeth Creswell, C6/390/82 *Creswell v Dampier*, 1712. The bill also refers to the later Woodes Rogers voyage.

Depositions by members of the crew made in connection with the above complaint are in C24/1321 and C33/317.

A wealth of material relating to Woodes Rogers's voyage of 1708 is in Chancery 104/36, 37, 160, 161. Donald Jones (see note below) lists the most important manuscripts in each box. Dampier's complaint about his share is in C9/225/43.

Chancery bills of complaint by Edward Hughes and John Gumley, along with the East India Company defence are in C11/1831/45. The order for a writ of *ne exeat Regnum* is in C33/339, pt1, 7. An interim response, in November 1723, by the chancery master to the Hughes complaint is in C33/341, p.54.

Admiralty Library, Portsmouth.

Shelvocke's manuscript journal of his voyage of 1719-22, received by the Admiralty in 1724, is in MS 18.

British Library (BL)

Additional Manuscripts

The Dampier journal which forms the basis of *A New Voyage Round the World* is in Add. MS 3236.

Correspondence about the South Sea Company in 1726 by Shelvocke and Woodes Rogers is in Add. MS 19,034 and 32,748.

Sloane Manuscripts

MSS of the journals of buccaneers and privateers between 1669 and 1700 include:

Sloane MS 44 Charts taken by B. Sharp from a Spanish ship 1684

Sloane MS 46A Sharp and Wood journals

Sloane MS 48 Basil Ringrose account of Sharp's South Sea voyage 1680

Sloane MS 49 J Cox's travels 1680-1681

Sloane MS 86 Captain Strong's voyage to the South Seas recorded by Richard Simpson.

Sloane MS 819 Voyage of the *Sweepstakes*, Capt. Nathaniel Pecket, 1669-71.

A review of Dampier's book *A New Voyage Round the World* is in

Sloane MS 3986. It appears to have been written by John Ray.

India Office Records

A letter from Edward Hughes to the East India Company Court (14/09/1722) asking it to retain the silver shipped by Shelvocke in company ships is in IOR/E/1/13 ff449.

The EIC supercargoes' record of Clipperton's and Shelvocke's dealings in Canton is in BL IOR/G/12/22, 33.

University of Bristol Library

Some letters and account books of Thomas Goldney II are contained in the Special Collections DM 1466/9 1708.

Bristol Records Office

Material relating to the Woodes Rogers's voyage is contained in the Quaker Men's Fortnightly Meeting minute books - SF/A/1/4.

Goldney papers relating to Bristol estates are in BRO 38640.

Proceedings of meetings at Merchant's Hall from 1697 to 1709 and 1712 to 1724 are in AC/JS/53/29.

There is a guide to the archive of the Society of Merchant Venturers in BK/83.

A note on other primary manuscript sources

Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

B.M.H. Rogers records the existence of 26 documents relating to the finances of the Rogers voyage, the most important being the appeals by the owners against the finding of the master on his general report. I have not been able to locate these, despite extended correspondence with the library.

Archivo de Indias, Seville.

Archives relating to the Woodes Rogers voyage have been researched by Bryan Little and the results may be found in *Crusoe's Captain* (see secondary sources)

There is a detailed description of manuscript sources relating to the Woodes Rogers voyage in Donald Jones's pamphlet: *Captain Woodes Rogers' Voyage Round the World 1708-1711* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1992).

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