

A Protestant Seafarer's Testament to the Atlantic World, 1778-1795:

The Memoir of Samuel Kelly

by

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To my loving parents,
for their steadfast support

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes the seafaring career of Samuel Kelly, a late-eighteenth century merchant mariner from Cornwall, using his published autobiography. It chronicles the development of Kelly's career and how his experiences were characterized by family, faith, and a strong attachment to the land during the Age of Revolution. As a British seaman, Kelly's Protestant identity was effectively the ideological link between the sea and shore, which were often considered separate and incompatible worlds by eighteenth century society and much of modern maritime scholarship. Kelly did not discern a tension between the shore (which symbolized family, faith, and his home) and the sea (which represented labor, duty, and ambition) and was comfortable in both environments, though he retained an affinity for Cornwall throughout his career. While Kelly's life and memoir are distinctive, his experience is a useful point of comparison that can give a more complete picture of the collective body politic of seafarers during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. His memoir is a richly detailed testament to the seventeen-year-long career of a Protestant seaman and adds important dimensions to our understanding of the social history of early modern Anglo-American seafarers and their adherence to religion.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Whilst my eyes were roving over the different parishes in view, my memory revived many a happy scene and caused me to recollect many an unpleasant circumstance. On yonder eminence I often ranged with jovial youths, many of which have long since left the habitation of mortals, and slipped into vast eternity. From the dreadful cliff, whose jutting rocks lurk in ambush to wreck the weather-beaten bark, often have I stood secure to view the shattered fragments of stately vessels dashed upon the beach below, and at its base lays many a grave of gallant seamen.¹
- Samuel Kelly, ship *Thetis*, May 1794

British shipmaster, Samuel Kelly, inscribed these words in his memoir to document a time in his life when he sailed past familiar scenes off Cornwall's coast from the quarter-deck of his ship, the *Thetis*. In this excerpt, Kelly disclosed how from an early age, he was aware of the juxtaposition between the picturesque parishes of England's west coast, where he was born and raised, and how equally terrifying and devastating the cliffs could be to ships. By 1794, Kelly was an experienced salt and had sailed an estimated 100,000 miles on the Atlantic Ocean,² but many of his contemporaries had not lived past the milestone of turning thirty like he had. Indeed, his only brother tragically died at sea twelve years prior at age twenty. His father, also a merchant master, had similarly experienced the dangers of earning a living at sea and was shipwrecked twice at St Ives Bay in the late 1750s, but survived. Throughout his seventeen-year-long career, Kelly would have been familiar with the popular saying, a merry Life and a short one,³ amongst sailors. But unlike those who harnessed this outlook that insinuated the urgency of pursuing pleasure due to the uncertainty and brevity of life, Kelly used Protestantism as his primary ideological framework. Interestingly, unlike his brother and the multitudes of other

¹ Samuel Kelly and Crosbie Garstin (ed.), *Samuel Kelly: An Eighteenth Century Seaman Whose Days Have Been Few and Evil, to Which is Added Remarks, Etc, on Places He Visited During His Pilgrimage in This Wilderness* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1925), 192.

² Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 233.

³ Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1987), 148.

young seamen who were lost to the depths or disease, Kelly was fortunate to retire from deep-sea sailing in 1795. He lived another thirty years in Britain and spent his last years in St Ives with his family. In proximity to the cliffs that reminded him of life as much as death, Kelly himself died in 1822 at age fifty-eight.

This thesis explores the memoir of Cornish mariner, Samuel Kelly, whose career at sea spanned from 1778 until 1795. Kelly worked in a variety of maritime trades throughout his profession where he principally traversed the Atlantic Ocean. Kelly's memoir and career can be broken down into four distinct phases: the packet service (1778-1782), the Royal Navy transport service (1782-1785), the coastal trade (1786-1789), and the merchant service (1789-1795). He began his vocation as a ship's boy and finished it as a shipmaster, an impressive accomplishment that most mariners did not achieve. Indeed, over the course of his occupation, Kelly generally maintained consistent upward social mobility. This begs the question: what factors enabled Kelly to succeed in the back-breaking world of transatlantic seafaring? This thesis proposes and investigates three key variables that worked together to allow Kelly to advance in the wooden world: his family, faith, and ambition. Each chapter maintains these three factors, though Kelly's stage of life principally determined how they intersected. Chapter Two traces Kelly's formative years as a sailor and charts his employment with the packet service. Chapter Three examines his transitional years and surveys his expeditions with the transport service. Lastly, Chapter Four is defined as Kelly's authoritative years and analyzes his terms as chief mate and shipmaster in the coastal trade and merchant service. In addition to analyzing these key variables which conditioned Kelly for consistent promotion, this thesis explores an unconventional trait in Samuel that defines as well as differentiates him from other mariners in the eighteenth century: his Protestantism.

The Memoir

Crosbie Garstin, an acclaimed early twentieth century novelist, first edited and published Kelly's autobiography in 1925. He titled the work: *Samuel Kelly: An Eighteenth Century Seaman; Whose Days Have Been Few and Evil, to Which is Added Remarks, Etc, on Places He Visited During His Pilgrimage in This Wilderness*. In his introduction, Garstin remarked how the memoir was originally written in three volumes. The original documents were discovered in St Ives in the early 1920s after they had laid undiscovered in an old chest for one hundred years. Garstin speculated that Kelly had drafted the memoirs as log-books,⁴ judging by the coordinates that were written on the front covers.

The content of Kelly's published memoir exhibits considerable detail regarding dates, times, distances, and cargo. Kelly had kept a personal journal until 1792 (he was literate and attended school in Cornwall until he went to sea at fourteen) and likely transplanted anecdotes and personal reflections from his journal into logbooks to supplement the technical and nautical language. After 1792, he called his journal "imperfect," perhaps writing in it less frequently, and completed the last section of his memoir partially by memory.⁵ Kelly's acknowledgment of the imperfections of his journal, and therefore his memoir, discloses the problematic nature of analyzing these sources for historians. Memoirs are innately written "after-the-fact" and can omit valuable information by the author, both consciously and subconsciously. Authors can embellish certain details and make themselves appear more acceptable, praiseworthy, and admirable in the eyes of their intended readership as well as their own. In addition, the editors of these historical

⁴ A logbook is a record of important events in the management, operation, and navigation of a ship. It is an essential element to the tradition of navigational sailing and must be filled out daily.

⁵ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 175.

texts can further complicate interpretation due to their own editorial liberties and tastes, such as in the case of Garstin.

Indeed, Garstin removed a significant portion of Kelly's original account, though, perhaps what is most interesting about his edits is that he deliberately chose to subtract what he believed was an excess of religious expression. Kelly's published memoir is characterized by his frequent references to the Bible, providential invocations, adherences to the Sabbath day, and lamentations about the "immoral" maritime world that he endeavored to reform. Garstin stated that in Kelly's original source he included hymns, prayers, and significantly more scripture and religious language to define his experiences. Garstin called "psalm singing," a phrase that alludes to Methodism, "a common disease among retired mariners of that day."⁶ He remarked how:

Somebody falls off the yard-arm and is picked up little the worse for his ducking, but Kelly must (sic) needs moralize on the insecurity of life over a page and a half, ending with a string of Biblical quotations and a hymn. These I have removed at the cost of a second pencil, and in so doing reduced the book by more than one-half.⁷

Garstin's decision to remove an alarming amount of Kelly's religious writing with indifference suggests that he was uninterested in religion. To Garstin, his apparent objective was to emphasize Kelly's adventures as a deep-sea sailor, not his adherence to evangelical Protestantism. If one is interested in Kelly's seamanship and voyages exclusively, then Garstin can be commended for his construction of the published memoir. However, based upon Garstin's allusion to the quantity of religious content in Kelly's original source, Samuel's intention behind drafting his memoir was to unquestionably ground his career in spiritual meaning. Garstin's decision to minimize Kelly's spiritual worldview is an unfortunate oversight, and this thesis intends to expound and reconstruct the importance of Protestantism to Kelly's career at sea. With

⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 7.

⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 8.

this in mind, a second question will be explored: what motivated Kelly to depict and conduct himself as a religiously devout seafarer in the late eighteenth century?

“Jack Tar”

Kelly was deliberate in his portrayal of himself as a member of the Church of England and, later in life, the Methodist movement. He was also calculated how he depicted others. When men joined the maritime trades during this period, they were often referred to as “Jack Tar” by other sailors and society at large. Jack Tar was a common term that referred to seamen in the Royal Navy or merchant service. Marcus Rediker notes that by 1740, Jack Tar was a man of distinctive appearance, easily recognizable as a man of the sea by his contemporaries.⁸ Sir John Fielding observed that “When one goes into Rotherhithe or Wapping, which places are chiefly inhabited by sailors, a man would be apt to suspect himself in another country. Their manner of living, speaking, acting, dressing and behaving, are so very peculiar to themselves.”⁹ Paul Gilje asserts that Jack Tar was an idealized heterosexual male¹⁰ and symbolic of British nationalism, especially after the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763). Margarete Lincoln claims that the Jack Tar figure made the ordinary seamen “safe and acceptable” between 1750 and 1815 by placing a sentimental gloss over his reputation for drunkenness, womanizing, and violence.¹¹ In fact, Lincoln proposes that the increase in depictions in print and material culture of sailors as faithful to their loved ones by the end of the eighteenth century was partly to counteract the threat they posed to social order on shore.¹²

⁸ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 11.

⁹ John Fielding, *A Brief Description of the Cities of London and Westminster*(1776), xv.

¹⁰ Paul A. Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 34.

¹¹ Margarete Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 3.

¹² Joanne Begiato, “Tears and the Manly Sailor in England c. 1760-1860,” *Journal for Maritime Research*, 17, 2 (July 2015): 117.

Despite efforts by shore-based society to sanitize Jack of his ill-famed traits, most seafarers aboard ship did not live up to this ideal. Jesse Lemisch states how even if a seaman attempted to conform to this cultural image, he was still not defined as a gentleman ashore due to his vocation and the public's fear of his associated vices which were bred in the "violence" of shipboard culture through impressment, disease, oppressive officers, warfare, and the ever-present risk of sudden death at sea.¹³ Lemisch ascertains that the violent conditions of Jack Tar's existence throughout the eighteenth century drove sailors to notorious immoral pastimes as temporary reprieve from their wooden worlds. To eighteenth and nineteenth century evangelical reformers, who were widely influential during the First (1730-1755) and Second (1795-1835) Great Awakenings, Jack Tar's sins included "habits of intemperate drinking," reckless spending, gambling, swearing, and "intimately interwoven with intoxication and profaneness, is the sin of lewdness."¹⁴ To quote Gilje, "The very things that made the stereotypical sailor a man of the sea, made him an object of reform."¹⁵ As a religious seafarer, it would seem as though Kelly

¹³ Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of the Revolutionary America," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 25, 3 (July 1968): 406.

¹⁴ *Christian Herald and Sailors Magazine*, 11 (March 7, 1824), 153-154.

¹⁵ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 202.



Figure 1. Artist Unknown. *The Sailor's Pleasure*. Date Unknown. 314 mm x 250 mm. Caricature Print. London: National Maritime Museum. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-128180>

employed his memoir to juxtapose his commendable morality against the immoral backdrop of the maritime sector in order to not be collectively defined or condemned by society as a “common tar.”

To be sure, earning a living from the sea affected how mariners were perceived and treated ashore. Peter Earle claims that sailors were regularly denounced by their stay-at-home

contemporaries as idle, drunken, irreligious, and thoughtless young men.¹⁶ Seventeenth and eighteenth century observers never tired of pointing out how seamen were “careless” and “irresponsible” with their money by squandering many months of wages in a matter of days at sailortowns.¹⁷ Sailortowns were the districts of merchant or naval ports where sailors visited, often lived, and entertained.¹⁸ It was a district characterized by its brothels, public houses, boardinghouses, and low entertainment that employed significant numbers of working class people.¹⁹ Brad Beaven describes sailortowns as cultivating an “Otherness” which flouted conventional moral and civic norms.²⁰ Sailors in these towns were physically and culturally marginalized from the centers of economic and political power. Indeed, “Sailortown was a world in, but not of, that of the landsman. It was a world of sordid pleasure, unlimited vice, and lashings of booze, but a dangerous place too.”²¹ Sailors in this period were culturally ascribed as “drunken and violent ruffian[s] from the “dregs of society” who inhabited “a world of [their] own, separated from landward society.”²²

Sailors were not only geographically marginalized due to their anti-social behaviours, but their distinctive physical appearances and mannerisms typified their vocations. Sailors were seen as being bred in “that very shambles of language.”²³ The stereotypical merchant marine, as

¹⁶ Peter Earle, “The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries,” *The Social History of English Seamen, 1650-1815*, ed. Cheryl A. Fury, (Boydell & Brewer: Boydell Press, 2017), 137.

¹⁷ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 147.

¹⁸ Brad Beaven, “The Resilience of Sailortown Culture in English Naval Ports, c. 1800-1900,” *Urban History*, 43, 1 (February 2016): 72.

¹⁹ Beaven, “The Resilience of Sailortown,” 72.

²⁰ Beaven, “The Resilience of Sailortown,” 72.

²¹ Beaven, “The Resilience of Sailortown,” 74.

²² Simon P. Newman, “Reading the Bodies of Early American Seafarers,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 55, 1 (January 1998): 63.

²³ Lemisch, “Jack Tar in the Streets,” 371.

Lemisch described him, was “foul-mouthed, his talk alien and suspect.”²⁴ He spoke in technical nautical terms, unusual syntax, distinctive pronunciation, and a generous portion of swearing and cursing.²⁵ The seafarer also had an unusual gait that illustrated his ability to walk firm on rolling decks, “where all other Creatures tumble[d].”²⁶ Sailors’ bodies similarly signaled their trade. Simon Newman asserts that sailors were virtually the only Americans in the late eighteenth century to wear tattoos, which were visible indicators of long service at sea and marked a man as a professional seafarer.²⁷ His dress was also unusual. Jack Tar wore tarred breeches to protect against the cold, numbing wetness.²⁸ He frequently wore a checked shirt of blue and white linen, a blue or grey “fearnought” jacket, grey stockings, and a Monmouth cap.²⁹ Sailors’ physical, social, political, and economic “otherness” spoke to two old apprehensions among landmen: that life at sea eventually rendered men incapable of life on shore³⁰ and that “once a sailor, the chances were that [Jack Tar] would always be a sailor.”³¹ In other words, after a few voyages, the sea possessed an unexplainable power to transform landmen irreversibly into sailors who were unable to reenter civil society due to their troublesome peculiarities.

Historiography:

The approach of this project draws on Daniel Vickers’ work regarding the life cycles of eighteenth century seafarers and builds on his argument that seafaring was predominantly a young man’s profession. Such as in the case of Ashley Bowen’s diary that Vickers’ analyzes in

²⁴ Lemisch, “Jack Tar in the Streets,” 372.

²⁵ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 11.

²⁶ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 11.

²⁷ Newman, “Reading the Bodies,” 60-61.

²⁸ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 11.

²⁹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 11.

³⁰ Daniel Vickers, “An Honest Tar: Ashley Bowen of Marblehead,” *The New England Quarterly*, 69, 4 (December 1996): 531.

³¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 83.

“An Honest Tar,” sailors’ diaries and memoirs can offer a contextually rich window into preindustrial maritime culture. According to Vickers, “While a single biography cannot answer the problem of social history definitively—and, indeed, the issue of typicality must constantly be borne in mind—[Kelly’s] life can provide one case against which the reigning theories can be tested.”³² As such, Kelly’s source is utilized as a microhistory that juxtaposes the maritime historiographic metanarrative.

There is a long-standing scholarly debate in maritime historiography that pertains to whether sailors in the eighteenth century Atlantic World should be surveyed as a collective body politic or if it is more conducive to analyze the experiences of seamen as individual actors during the preindustrial age. While viewing early modern seafarers as a collective unit helps in understanding the broader patterns of labour at sea and its contextual changes over time, it risks oversimplifying or generalizing the unique experiences of sailors. Rediker, often in collaboration with Peter Linebaugh, have dedicated their work to telling the story of the “working men who got wet.”³³ Lemisch, Isaac Land, and Christopher Magra have similarly focused their work on the fore-castle and not the privileged space of the quarter-deck, a necessary approach that naval historians such as Margarete Lincoln and N.A.M. Rodgers have notably overlooked.

In Rediker’s acclaimed *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, he argues that eighteenth century Anglo-American merchant seamen were overwhelmingly irreligious, revolutionary, and alienated from shore-based society due to their wooden worlds. Rediker and Linebaugh’s work presents sailors as estranged from the land and belonging to an Atlantic World

³² Vickers, “An Honest Tar,” 533.

³³ David Alexander, “Literacy Among Canadian and Foreign Seamen, 1863-1899,” in *Working Men Who Got Wet*, ed. Rosemary Ommer and Gerald Panting (St. John’s, Nfld.: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1980), 32.

rather than to any particular terrestrial locality.³⁴ However, Vickers, often in collaboration with Vince Walsh, has challenged this approach. In their article, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth Century Salem, Massachusetts,” Vickers and Walsh assert that though sailors were men on the move, they were not homeless life-long proletarians.³⁵ Furthermore, they argue that sailors were overwhelmingly young men who tried many things other than sailing in their time. Not unlike Kelly’s own economic situation, Vickers and Walsh ascertain that sons of working-class families in seaside communities went to sea principally because, for a significant minority, it offered the possibility of promotion and a decent if seldom lucrative career as a master mariner.³⁶ For the remainder, it furnished several years of the steadiest employment likely to be found in the waterfront world where underemployment was ubiquitous.³⁷ Less ambitious young seamen with “sea-fever” might work for a few years, save up money to marry, and settle ashore.

In “An Honest Tar,” Vickers emphasizes how one of the most persistent characteristics of Bowen’s sailing career was the amount of time he spent on land.³⁸ Indeed, over the course of Bowen’s career, he was based ashore in some port or other between passages.³⁹ Similarly, in “Beyond Jack Tar,” Vickers challenges maritime historians to integrate what is known about life at sea with increasingly sophisticated understanding of life in port.⁴⁰ Vickers’ stance is in agreement with Kelly’s own life cycle, as he wrote about his time ashore as much as at sea. Kelly

³⁴ Isaac Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 1750-1850* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2009), 3.

³⁵ Daniel Vickers and Vince Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth Century Salem, Massachusetts,” *Social History* (London), 24, 1 (January 1999): 9.

³⁶ Vickers and Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring,” 19.

³⁷ Vickers and Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring” 19.

³⁸ Vickers, “An Honest Tar,” 537.

³⁹ Vickers, “An Honest Tar,” 537.

⁴⁰ Daniel Vickers, “Beyond Jack Tar,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 50, 2 (April 1993): 422.

spent months at sea during long passages, but he was also docked in port for extended periods where the ship's cargo was handled, additional crewmembers were hired, and the vessels underwent repairs. When Kelly was not at sea or in port, he endeavoured to be home in Cornwall with his friends and family.

Maritime labour in all English Atlantic seaports was seasonal and casual. The exception was during wartime, where the demand for manpower in the Royal Navy and merchant services was at its peak.⁴¹ Many mariners were unable to find year-round employment, the only exceptions being East Indiamen (a two-year voyage) and slavers to West Africa (a one-year voyage).⁴² Young unmarried sailors who found work in the coastal or West Indian trades and were still based at home returned to their families at each voyage's end; where they stayed until they could find reemployment.⁴³ This was a less costly alternative to boardinghouses. These sailors might find themselves ashore with their families for months, sometimes finding temporary employment on land before a new employment opportunity at sea emerged. Fortunately, every able-seaman knew how to "hand, reef, and steer," and a thing or two about the weather,⁴⁴ which allowed seafarers to quite literally become "Jacks of all maritime trades" and find employment in a diversity of work. Young men circulated from ship to ship, from merchant vessels to the Royal Navy, into privateering or piracy and back again due to the similarity of tasks performed and skills required by each trade.⁴⁵ Land remarks that over the course of a five or ten-year career, a sailor might serve on several different types of vessels, broadening his

⁴¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 82.

⁴² Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 136.

⁴³ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 23.

⁴⁴ Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor*, 19.

⁴⁵ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 83.

experience.⁴⁶ This pattern, once again, is illustrated through Kelly's own varied vocational experiences.

Kelly's extended periods ashore served to connect him to organized religion and the values of shore-based society. Regrettably, the prevalence of religion at sea in maritime scholarship has been largely dismissed and requires reevaluation. Rediker states that seafarers commonly believed in omens, apparitions, and superstition but they did not believe many of the teachings of the Church of England, "or any church for that matter."⁴⁷ He asserts that the seaman's work experience generated irreligion thorough a process of dechristianization, which was reinforced by the powerful isolation, social and spatial, of life at sea, as well as by the class composition of the maritime labor force.⁴⁸ Rediker is not alone in his assertions. N.A.M. Rodger goes as far as to eschew any discussion of religion on the grounds that there is virtually no primary evidence.⁴⁹ More recently, Gilje has argued how serious Christian efforts to reform sailors' conduct did not occur around the Atlantic World until the nineteenth century and such efforts were met with active resistance, if not outright hostility, by mariners.⁵⁰

Yet there is a growing number of historians who advocate for the presence of religion amongst Anglo-American seafarers. Richard Blake in *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy, 1775-1815* has maintained the presence and influence of Methodism amongst naval officers and sailors in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Rear Admiral, Richard Kempenfelt, and Comptroller of the Navy, Charles Middleton, are credited for spearheading the Blue Light movement within

⁴⁶ Land, War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor, 19.

⁴⁷ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 153.

⁴⁸ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 174-175.

⁴⁹ N.A.M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London: Fontana Press, 1986), 11-12.

⁵⁰ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, chap. 7.

the Royal Navy; a Methodist campaign that sought to restore formal religious adherence in the Navy. In a similar vein, Magra has discussed the Protestant doctrine of providentialism at length in his article, “Faith At Sea: Exploring Maritime Religiosity in the Eighteenth Century.” Magra has agreed with other historians in that eighteenth century sailors could be overtly irreligious and that their inclinations to cling to traditional forms of folklore inspired superstitious tendencies.⁵¹ However, he also insists that irreligious and superstitious behaviours represented only part of sailors’ complex worldviews, as those who crossed the Atlantic at the height of the age of sail carried not only their sea trunks, but a myriad of religious ideas due to the rise of evangelicalism.⁵²

That Kelly clung to his religion despite inhabiting an otherwise “dechristianized” workplace is likely due to his long recesses ashore where he habitually attended Protestant churches, at home in Britain and abroad. Magra identifies three characteristics of formal land-based religion that can be discerned in sailors’ lives: a providential worldview, an awareness that certain aspects associated with different maritime cultures were sinful, and a strong antipathy towards Roman Catholics.⁵³ Ashore, Kelly was reacquainted with the societal values and norms of shore-based society. Even while being docked in various sailortowns, Kelly did not identify with the cultural stereotypes of Jack Tar or partake in the self-indulgent living of his contemporaries. Indeed, in his memoir, Kelly physically and verbally separated himself from other sailors by condemning their immoral conduct and tendencies. His memoir is strewn with language that verbally disassociates him from the mannerisms, behaviours, and appearances of

⁵¹ Christopher P. Magra, “Faith at Sea: Exploring Maritime Religiosity in the Eighteenth Century,” *International Journal of Maritime History*, 19, 1 (June 2007): 88.

⁵² Magra, “Faith at Sea,” 88.

⁵³ Magra, “Faith at Sea,” 97.

sailors and appeals to the more respectable, refined, and gentlemanly image he was endeavoring to create.

While Kelly may be understood as unusual due to the existence of his memoir, which not only professes his outspoken faith but exemplifies his professional aptitude, he was nevertheless a highly conventional British subject. Despite working and living during the Age of Revolution, Kelly was a loyalist. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* note that loyalism associated itself with dynamic conceptions of social order, Englishness and Britishness, Protestant Christianity, monarchy, commerce, and empire.⁵⁴ Though Kelly sailed during two revolutionary wars, Bannister and Riordan maintain that ascribing the last quarter of the eighteenth century as the “revolutionary era” risks the danger of homogenizing complex phenomena and overstating the influence of the Patriots.⁵⁵ This stance partly responds to scholars’ tendencies to generalize sailors as radical and revolutionary during this contentious period due to frequent hot presses, press gangs, and periods of war; subsequently leading to portside riots, mutiny, piracy, work stoppage, and desertion as a means to assert their own ends.⁵⁶ Kelly, on the other hand, maintained his Episcopal convictions and British identity, not to mention an aversion to Roman Catholicism, throughout his career. He even participated in the northern and southern United Empire Loyalist evacuations from New York and East Florida while employed in the transport service.

Kelly adhered to the Church of England throughout his early career, but he visibly displayed Methodist leanings as a chief mate and shipmaster. Methodism was part of a broader

⁵⁴ Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, ed., *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 9.

⁵⁵ Bannister and Riordan, *The Loyal Atlantic*, 143.

⁵⁶ Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh, “The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, and the Atlantic Working Class in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 3, 3 (September 1990): 196.

evangelical religious revival touching much of the western world during this period. Methodism arose among Anglicans who felt that the Church of England was Christian only in form.⁵⁷ Adam Hochschild explains that the evangelical movement itself was reaction against the entire mood of eighteenth century England. William Hogarth famously captured the carnal excesses of English society during this period through his satirical caricature prints. Public executions had become a popular spectacle in market squares where vendors sold gingerbread, liquor, and copies of bawdy ballads to large crowds.⁵⁸ London street names such as Gin Lane and Bladder Street reflected the country's disorderly inclinations and fondness of drink. In London during this period, an average of one quart of gin per week per person was consumed.⁵⁹ Covent Garden was known for its higher-priced brothels, the sex workers of which serviced some of the most genteel Londoners. In addition, the Church of England had become heavily involved with the transatlantic slave trade and profited off its Caribbean plantations through its missionary arm, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; whose governing board included the Regius Professors of Divinity at Oxford and Cambridge and the head of the church, the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁶⁰ The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to a fellow bishop in 1760 and stated that "I have long wondered & lamented that the Negroes in our plantations decrease, & new Supplies become necessary continually. Surely this proceeds from some Defect, both of Humanity, & even of good policy. But we must take things as they are at present."⁶¹ To the evangelicals, Britain was a nation that had lost its moral bearings and forgotten God. Evangelicalism, but specifically Methodism, enabled Anglicans to protest the failings of the Church without rejecting

⁵⁷ Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 77.

⁵⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 77.

⁵⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 78.

⁶⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 72.

⁶¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 72.

it outright.⁶² In other words, Methodism supported the political ideology of loyalism. It also instructed followers to implement religious reforms on an individual basis so that all spheres of society might collectively improve.

While many sailors lived in sailortowns while they were on land, other young men, like Kelly, returned home. Surrounded by their boyhood communities, God-fearing sailors were reacquainted with the values, mannerisms, and customs of shore-based society through the medium of the local and national church. Indeed, Kelly's decision to return to St Ives in his declining years underscores the strong tie he retained to England's west coast throughout his life. What apprehensions landsmen held towards the sea and its mysterious powers to transform an individual irreversibly, appears rather baseless with consideration to Kelly and his memoir. This thesis is organized in the following order: Chapter Two explores Kelly's background, the influence of his father on his early career, and the evolution of his competence at sea with the packet service; Chapter Three examines how Kelly's identity as a British, Protestant seaman was influenced through frequently alternating periods at sea and at shore with the transport service; Chapter Four surveys the apex of Kelly as a sailor in the coastal and merchant services and how his Methodism motivated his authority as chief mate and shipmaster to enact cultural and religious reform within the maritime sector. In sum, this thesis argues that Kelly's seafaring career was contingent on his family, faith, and ambition, the former two of which were reinforced by his frequent visitations ashore during the revolutionary age.

⁶² John Wesley, the father and founder of Wesleyan Methodism, claimed that he died a cleric of the Church of England. Nevertheless, his Methodist movement was eventually obliged to find an ecclesiastical home of its own, separate from the national Church: Richard Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy, 1775-1815* (Boydell & Brewer: Woodbridge, 2008), 27.

CHAPTER TWO:

Samuel Kelly in The Packet Service, 1778-1782

Samuel Kelly's career at sea launched during the height of the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). For four years, he traversed the Atlantic Ocean and made regular stops in Madeira, the Leeward Islands, South Carolina, Jamaica, and Portugal. At these locations, he delivered mail, sold goods, and ran errands for his captains ashore. Kelly made a total of nine voyages with the packets where he gained significant seafaring experience. In-between voyages, he regularly visited his father in Falmouth and reconnected to the land; a prevailing theme throughout Kelly's career that began in this service. This chapter analyzes the key actors, places, and situations that served to shape Kelly as a young sailor. It explores the following questions: what specific challenges did Kelly face with the packets; what relationships bolstered Kelly's positions at sea; and how did his father influence his early career?

The packets situated Kelly in a transnational Atlantic World.⁶³ With the exception of one voyage Kelly made with his father to Charleston in 1774, he grew up in an isolated and sheltered region in Cornwall until he was fourteen. Until 1778, his perception of the world was limited to the west coast of England and the only distress he experienced as a boy was the high frequency of death in his family. The packets exposed Kelly to a world of iniquity as much as it enriched the depth of his experiences. In Jamaica, Kelly was personally confronted with the temptation to desert while being immersed in the culture of slavery. He learned the dangers of sailing during times of war, as his vessel, the Grenville, was captured by an American privateer. He also

⁶³ It is important to note that the Atlantic World is a useful frame of reference and not a historical entity: Hilary MacKinlay, "Atlantic Culture In The Pacific World: Maritime Whaling Voyages, 1827-1848," (MA Thesis, Dalhousie University, 2016), 22.

observed the aftermath of the shipwreck of the HMS Royal George, one of the deadliest disasters in British maritime history.

The case studies analyzed in this chapter illustrate how these work-related experiences carried moral weight for Kelly and added to his religious development. Chapter Two congruently surveys the factors that enabled Kelly to advance through promotion. Interestingly, as Kelly's social mobility accelerated towards the end of his service, he began to invoke moral judgements against his fellow sailors more frequently. Kelly's four years with the packet service were innately formative. As such, this chapter argues that this period, which saw Kelly transform from a landsman into a second mate, conditioned his aptitude at sea and served as a foundation upon which he built the remainder of his career.

2.1: The Kelly Family

Samuel Kelly was doubtlessly “bred to the sea.”⁶⁴ The Kelly family originally hailed from the seaside village of St Ives in Cornwall, which allowed Samuel to grow up next to the Atlantic Ocean. Indeed, most sailors who came from places associated with the sea and ships had fathers who had been mainly men of the sea before them. According to Earle, such an upbringing more or less pre-determined choice of career.⁶⁵ The Kelly men were resilient servicemen used to hard work and frequently engaged in periods of manual labour throughout their careers.

Samuel's grandfather on his father's side had been a surgeon in the British army. His father, Michael Kelly, had served in the Navy before joining the smuggling trade between Jamaica and the Spanish Main. Kelly was not explicit about the dates or duration of his father's seafaring career, but Michael likely sailed from the 1740s until the mid-1770s. When Michael was based

⁶⁴ Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (London: Macmillan, 1962), 153.

⁶⁵ Earle, “The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen,” 131.

in Kingston, Jamaica, he married his first wife, Mary Thomas, from whom he received “considerable property,”⁶⁶ but Mary died shortly after their union. Around this time, Michael had quit the smuggling trade and joined the merchant service, where he had found success as a shipmaster.

Kelly described his father’s life in more salient detail than any of his other close relatives. In fact, Kelly does not mention his mother’s name. Only is her name disclosed as Mary Wheelwright on her and Michael’s marriage certificate, which stated the solemnization of their marriage in the presence of Tim Wheelwright (her father) and Stephen (last name unclear) on “this sixth Day of November in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty-Nine by [the] 21st Sumonds Vicar.”⁶⁷ Curiously, the only details Kelly mentioned about his mother, other than her untimely death, was that she was courted by his father shortly after his ship, the *General Wolf*, was wrecked in St Ives Bay in the late 1750s.

Samuel, the oldest of Michael and Mary’s children, was born in 1764, one year after the end of the Seven Years’ War. His brother John, also a seafarer, was born in 1765. The brothers had five younger sisters, but only Martha, born in 1769, survived past infancy. The year 1771 marked a turning point in Samuel’s life, as both his mother and youngest sister had died shortly after childbirth. Perhaps to grieve and gain distance between himself and Cornwall, Michael shipped aboard a merchantman for Charleston and arranged for Samuel and John to live with an aunt in Helstone. At Helstone, Kelly attended school where he learned to read, write, and calculate; all necessary skills for young sailors with any ambition.⁶⁸ Samuel noted that the

⁶⁶ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 12.

⁶⁷ Michael Kelly and Mary Wheelwright, “Marriage Certificate (1759),” *England Marriages, 1538 -1973*, FamilySearch, (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NFKS-HMP>: 11 March 2020).

⁶⁸ Earle asserts that the English were among the most literate people in Europe during this period. There were schools staffed by former ships’ captains, accountants, and surveyors that trained boys with the skills necessary for officers in the merchant service. In fact, two-thirds of ordinary sailors and over 90%

Helstone household was one of ‘the strictest morality.’⁶⁹ The brothers lived with their relatives until 1778, during which time they could only associate with the “most respectable and orderly boys.”⁷⁰ Kelly did not disclose his aunt’s religion, but it is probable that she held evangelical views, which stressed the importance of morality to one’s upright Christian walk. Perhaps these relatives can be credited for planting a spiritual seed in young Samuel’s conscience that would later grow to become one of his most defining characteristics. After all, he lived with his relatives during his most impressionable childhood years; namely, from the time he was seven until fourteen.

In early 1778, Samuel’s father married his third wife, Nancy Mitchell of Penzance. This marriage set in motion Samuel’s seafaring career, as Michael and Nancy were misled to believe that the other had substantial property to be endowed upon marrying, which was not the case. By this time, Michael had quit sailing and required financial assistance from his sons. Thus, at fourteen, Michael removed Samuel from school and arranged for him to be placed upon the Thynne packet ship. John followed suit and joined the packet service one year later in 1779. For the duration of the brothers’ service with the packets, most of their earnings were allocated to their father. To compound Michael’s financial troubles, his third marriage was as short-lived as his first two. Nancy died within their first year of marriage, shortly after the birth and death of her and Michael’s child.

By age fourteen, Samuel had been regularly exposed to the hardships of late eighteenth century life. He, John, and Martha were the only Kelly children who survived to adulthood, outliving their mother, step-mother, and five siblings. But despite the obvious trials of close

of men who held office aboard ship could sign their names: Earle, “The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen,” 131-132.

⁶⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 14.

⁷⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 14.

family members dying, a father being regularly absent at sea, and living with strict relatives, Samuel remarked that his first voyage aboard the Thynne – the maiden voyage of his seafaring career – was what dated the beginning of his life’s troubles.⁷¹

2.2: The Packet Service

Table 2.1: Kelly’s Voyages with the Packet Service

SHIP(S)	PERIOD	NO. OF VOYAGES	CAPTAIN(S) / SHIPMASTERS	GEOGRAPHY	KELLY’S POSITION
Thynne Packet	1778	1	C: Robert Johnstone S: Sampson Hall	Madeira, Barbados, Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent, Monserrat, Antigua, St. Christopher’s, and Jamaica	Landsman Midshipman
King George Packet	1778-79	2	C: “Wachope” S: N/A	Portugal	Foremastman
Thynne Packet (Again)	1780-81	2 or 3	C: Robert Johnstone S: C. Spurrier	Madeira, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Monserrat, Antigua, St. Christopher’s, and Jamaica	Foremastman
Grenville Packet	1781-82	3	C: James Nankivel and “Lofty” S: C. Spurrier	Madeira, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts, and South Carolina	Foremastman Steward Second mate

Prior to the eighteenth century, the circulation of international mail was literally placed in the hands of ship captains. English merchants who had dealings in the colonies dropped letters at taverns where captains who traded to particular regions would collect and deliver letters when

⁷¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 14.

they arrived at port; receiving a small sum for the carriage of each letter.⁷² This system was tenuous but normally effective. However, war complicated this process. Letters were delayed if convoys had to be formed and letters were lost if ships were captured.⁷³ The War of Spanish Succession (1702-1713) motivated merchants to petition the British government to establish a packet service that would serve the Western Hemisphere, where many merchants had dealings with the colonies.

In 1702, the Falmouth packet service to the West Indies was launched and continued to run intermittently until 1823. These vessels were the first to sail between European and American ports on a regular schedule. Prior to 1702, there were existing packet runs to the European continent, but none that serviced the West Indies or North America. Edmond Drummer, the organizer of the first transatlantic packet service, wrote in a letter to Sidney, First Earl of Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer, how “It being a certain Maxim that as Trade is the producer of Correspond[en]ce so Trade is govern’d & influenc’d by the certainty & quickness of correspondence.”⁷⁴ In other words, Drummer’s transatlantic packets were purposed to expedite the delivery of mail and evade enemy war ships due to their swiftness of travel. After the War of Spanish Succession, the packets were put back on peacetime establishment and did not service the West Indies again until 1745, when a new war again threatened mercantile and governmental lines of communication.⁷⁵ By the time Kelly joined the British packet service it had become “the

⁷² John J. McCusker, “New York City and the Bristol Packet: A Chapter in Eighteenth-Century Postal History,” *Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic World*(London: Routledge, 1997): 122.

⁷³ McCusker, “New York City and the Bristol Packet,” 122.

⁷⁴ Edmond Dummer, “In a Letter to Sidney, First Earl of Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer, 15 February 1706,” 356. The original version of this chapter was published in *Postal History Journal*, XIII (July 1968), 15-24.

⁷⁵ McCusker, “New York City and the Bristol Packet,” 124.

envy of the world” in terms of reliability and speed.⁷⁶ The rapid growth in population, production, and consumption, and the rising demand for free and unfree labor throughout the New World during the eighteenth century had solidified the need for faster travel and correspondence; especially during war time.⁷⁷

The packets, as the vessels were called, were purposed chiefly for mail but also carried bullion, private goods, livestock, and passengers.⁷⁸ They measured between 100 and 200 tons and generally carried 20 to 30 crewmen, though some might carry up to sixty. By the early 1790s, the General Postal Service (GPO) was operating 36 packets. Sixteen of its smaller vessels covered internal British routes and its twenty larger packets operated out of Falmouth and sailed to Lisbon, the West Indies, and North America. Packets were identified by their function rather than any distinctive vessel type, but were typically medium-sized vessels and characterized by their speed. While they certainly could pick up passengers, during wartime they were considered more as a military than a civilian service.⁷⁹ Packets were known to be safer than merchant ships for military communications as packet commanders could be relied upon to sink the mail if their ships were captured.⁸⁰ They were also known to carry fewer guns compared to other ships; often between fourteen to eighteen, but some could have as many as twenty-six guns so that they might not be weighed down by excessive munitions.⁸¹ For added defense, it was common

⁷⁶ Brian Vale, “The Post Office: The Admiralty and Letters to Sailors in the Napoleonic Wars,” *Mariner's Mirror*, 105, 2 (April 2019): 148.

⁷⁷ Daniel Vickers and Vince Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007), 67.

⁷⁸ Vale, “The Post Office,” 151.

⁷⁹ Rohit T. Aggarwala, “‘One Chief Letter Office at New-York’: Packet Ships, Imperial Administration, and the Geography of the American Post, 1692-1783,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 48, 2 (March 2020): 209.

⁸⁰ Aggarwala, “‘One Chief Letter Office at New-York,’” 209.

⁸¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 50.

practice for packets to sail across the Atlantic Ocean in fleets during times of war as they were frequently targeted by privateers and warships who sought prize money.

2.3: The Thynne Packet

By 1778, the American Revolutionary War had been waged for three years. In addition to the West Indies being an unpopular destination among sailors due to its high rate of death from tropical disease, American cruisers laid elusively in wait for British merchantmen within the region's copious islands. That same year, Kelly sailed in a company of sixty men and boys in a vessel of fourteen guns, bound for Madeira, the Leeward Islands, and Jamaica. Though this was his first voyage to the West Indies, Kelly had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean once before with his father to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1774.

At ten years old, Samuel was taken out of school and momentarily shipped across the Atlantic for the "benefit of [his] health" after contracting scarlet fever.⁸² Though Kelly suffered from terrible seasickness throughout the voyage, he nevertheless spoke fondly of this adventure with his father. This opportunity allowed him to be exposed to interesting peoples, foreign landscapes, and gain real seafaring experience. In addition, Samuel personally witnessed the precursors of the American War. He noted how he "often viewed the colonists trained to arms," the conflict breaking out only one year later.⁸³ Indeed, this transatlantic adventure would have stood in stark contrast to his sheltered home in Helstone. On this voyage to Charleston, Kelly noted his father's tenderness towards him and how he was indulged with nuts, splendid fruits, and exotic birds to bring home to England. To Kelly's boyish perceptions, mercantile seafaring likely seemed an idyllic trade. In fact, this particular experience planted in Kelly a desire to be placed at sea after he finished school.

⁸² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 13.

⁸³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 13.

Ralph Davis postulates that young men went to sea “to see the world, to get a good rate of pay, to get a job of some sort at any price, [and] to do what father did.”⁸⁴ Though Kelly admitted that he desired to become a sailor himself, he would have been told from an early age that a life at sea was inevitable. As the first-born son, Michael would have been preparing Kelly for the family trade from a young age and the voyage to Charleston is one example of this. Yet seafaring was more than a familial tradition, it was one of the few avenues before the twentieth century that offered young men from the lowest reaches of society an opportunity to advance to its middle ranks.⁸⁵ Earning a living at sea offered seamen the opportunity of moderate promotion, whose income might at least double that of most artisans or rural labourers on the land.⁸⁶

The sea was financially attractive to the unskilled and lowly-paid in all rural districts and small towns of England, especially during wartime where commercial wages spiked dramatically.⁸⁷ Despite being an unskilled worker himself where he first went to sea, Kelly wrote of his dislike of such inexperienced sailors. He noted how packets rarely rejected able-bodied landsmen because their labour was cheaper. As a Methodist writing later in life about his experiences with the packets, Kelly commented how the vessels were “receptacles for a number of dissolute and depraved young men, who were either ashamed, or afraid to continue in their native place in the county of Cornwall.”⁸⁸ For some sailors then, going to sea, and especially shipping with the packets, was a means to obtain reliable, if temporary, employment.

⁸⁴ Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 146.

⁸⁵ Davis, *The Rise of The English Shipping Industry*, 144.

⁸⁶ Davis, *The Rise of The English Shipping Industry* 144.

⁸⁷ Davis, *The Rise of The English Shipping Industry* 145.

⁸⁸ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 50.

But to individuals who had the ambition, capacity, and perseverance to achieve the status of shipmaster of ocean-going ships, their prolonged experiences at sea would propel their social status to become firmly established members of the prosperous middle class.⁸⁹

Though Kelly's father enjoyed such professional and social recognition, shipmasters were nevertheless poorly paid despite their dangerous and highly specialized line of work. Wages for mercantile masters of transatlantic voyages were relatively consistent throughout the eighteenth century, ranging from £5 to £6 per month.⁹⁰ Unlike petty officers and tars who enjoyed a 10 percent increase in wages during wartime, captains' wages were less affected by the fluctuations of war and peace than any other category of maritime worker.⁹¹ That Michael, not unlike Ashley Bowen, another eighteenth century mariner, concluded his sailing days with little property to his name could have resulted not only from low wages, but a general irregularity of maritime employment that affected sailors in this period.⁹² This, paired with the unfortunate tendency of room and board ashore, quickly depleted for many shipmasters what had been earned afloat.⁹³ Thus, Michael's decision to remove Kelly from school to contribute to the family's income was expected and timely, as the great majority of sailors who first went to sea were between the ages of twelve and sixteen.⁹⁴

Despite Kelly's youthful enthusiasm to become a sailor like his father, he described his first voyage aboard the *Thynne* as virtually intolerable. He was struck again with seasickness, which not only lasted weeks, but more than seven years. During these early weeks, Kelly called

⁸⁹ Davis, *The Rise of English Shipping* 144.

⁹⁰ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 121.

⁹¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 121.

⁹² Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 540.

⁹³ Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 540.

⁹⁴ Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 131.

himself a “neglected cast-away,” his younger enchantment with the sea evidently broken.⁹⁵ Though Kelly sailed on this voyage independent of his father, Michael nevertheless played a decisive role in shaping Kelly’s early career at sea. His father arranged for Kelly to be placed in the mess of the chief mate and second mate instead of with the crew, which speaks to his insight into shipboard hierarchies and relationships. Michael additionally arranged for Kelly to receive no wages for the first month’s voyage so that he might curry favor with the captain, Robert Johnstone.⁹⁶ However, upon leaving Falmouth, Kelly’s messmates took little notice or care of him in his weakened state.⁹⁷ Through Michael’s deliberate positioning of Kelly aboard ship, not to mention any preexisting connections his father might have had with the officers, Samuel received the attention and pity from Sampson Hall, the sailing-master, not long after disembarking from Falmouth.

Soon after making Hall’s acquaintance, Kelly was appointed midshipman and stationed on the quarter-deck for the remainder of the passage. With Hall as his master and mentor, Kelly obtained an education in navigation that was traditionally reserved for apprentices. Vickers explains that for young men considering a career at sea, it was better to begin as an apprentice than a “green hand”⁹⁸ since these boys were twice as likely as regular seamen to become masters themselves someday.⁹⁹ Apprentices often came from wealthy backgrounds whose fathers had paid a premium to captains for their education in navigation and seamanship, sometimes well over £100. These boys could expect rapid promotion once their terms had been completed with the probability of becoming masters or mates by their early or mid-twenties.¹⁰⁰ Such was the case

⁹⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 15.

⁹⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 14.

⁹⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 15.

⁹⁸ A term for an inexperienced crew member.

⁹⁹ Vickers, “An Honest Tar,” 536.

¹⁰⁰ Earle, “The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen,” 132.

with Ashley Bowen of Marblehead whose father, a lawyer, arranged for Bowen to be placed aboard a merchantman at thirteen-years-old to fulfill a seven-year-long apprenticeship.¹⁰¹ While Kelly's father could not afford to pay a premium to Johnstone, what he could offer his son was first-hand experience and connections, which effectively placed Kelly in a similar position to apprentices under Hall.

But life at sea for fourteen-year-old Kelly continued to be strenuous and uncomfortable despite the quarter-deck. Though he was glad to receive the attention from Hall, he noted the severity of his disposition. On one particular occasion, Kelly crept behind the cabin stairs to shelter himself from the winds on night watch until Hall detected him and ordered that the officer of the watch place Kelly on the poop deck, the most exposed area of the ship by way of punishment.¹⁰² Additionally, if Kelly fell asleep during watch, the second mate drenched him with water so that his clothes were soaked through. He also underwent the boisterous ceremony of "shaving

¹⁰¹ Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 536.

¹⁰² Kelly's explanation of the "shaving and ducking" ritual: "Nothing of moment transpired from our quitting Madeira, till the day of crossing the tropics, when preparations were made as usual, for shaving and ducking those seamen and boys that had never before been this voyage. Accordingly about twenty or thirty men and boys were confined below, and the hatchways closed and guarded. After putting a half-crown in my pocket (which was the fine to escape the ducking), I pushed forward to get it over as soon as possible and afterwards to enjoy the sport with the crew. Accordingly after one or two had been shaved, I presented myself at the hatchways when my eyes were closed with a wet cloth or stocking bound round my head; I was then conducted and placed on the edge of a large tub of water, but escaped with a little wetting on the captain's interference. I had then an opportunity of inspecting the actors, and process. Two seamen, representing Neptune and an attendant, disfigured with blacking, flour, and an odd kind of dress, were the shavers, the lather was composed of tar, grease, etc., and the razor an old iron hoop jagged at the edge, like a saw; and what was scraped off the face with this vile instrument, was drawn between the teeth when the person opened his mouth (being blinded). They then threw him on his back into the tub of water while many other seamen poured buckets of water on his face till he had nearly lost his breath, and thus ended the shaving:" Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 15.



Figure 2. George Cruikshank. The Ceremony of Shaving as Performed by Young Sailors. Date Unknown. 150 mm x 205 mm. Caricature Print. London: National Maritime Museum. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-138504>

and ducking,” a common custom on eighteenth century British sailing vessels. The ritual entailed “shaving” new seamen and “ducking” them in the sea the first time they crossed the Tropic of Cancer.¹⁰³ Sailors, like Kelly, could pay a fine to escape the rite of passage, as the ducking involved tying a rope around a sailor and dunking him in the sea three times from the main-yard arm.¹⁰⁴ However, Michael’s orchestration of Kelly working for no wages did seem to leave a positive impression on Johnstone. On the Thynne’s arrival in Madeira, Johnstone permitted Kelly to accompany him and the passengers on shore to see the town, which he found “very pleasant and gratifying.”¹⁰⁵ Johnstone also ordered Kelly to fire the guns on one side of the ship when

¹⁰³ Samuel Gamble and Bruce L. Mouser (ed.), *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica, 1793-1794* (Indian University Press, 2002), 31.

¹⁰⁴ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 16.

¹⁰⁵ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 16.

quitting the anchorage “in order to make [Samuel] a warrior.”¹⁰⁶ They proceeded to Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent’s, Monserrat, Antigua, and St. Christopher’s before arriving in Jamaica, their final destination.

The influence of Kelly’s father extended well beyond the limits of the Thynne itself. Michael had sailed (as well as settled) in the Caribbean before returning to St Ives to marry Kelly’s mother in 1759. He had married his first wife, Mary Thomas, in Kingston, Jamaica, and for the duration of this short-lived union, Michael remained in Jamaica. Fortunately for Kelly, Michael extended his Caribbean connections to him through a letter of introduction to one of his old acquaintances, Daniel Gully, a shipbuilder. Upon docking in Kingston for the first time, Kelly not only met Gully, but another one of his father’s contacts who passed outstanding “gifts” for Michael onto him. In addition to a present of coffee, cocas, nuts, and a case of old rum, Kelly was given “the hire of some negroes (which my father had left under his care).”¹⁰⁷ It is possible that these enslaved Africans were part of Thomas’ “considerable property,” endowed to Michael upon their marriage. Shortly thereafter, the Thynne sailed back to Falmouth, where Kelly was immediately met by his father on shore. Kelly’s lack of comment regarding the undisclosed number of enslaved Blacks who had shipped with him suggests that they were transferred to his father without complication, though the same cannot be said of the case of old rum and cocoa nuts that was confiscated by the customs officers.

2.4: The King George Packet

Shortly after arriving in Falmouth, Kelly found employment in a different packet ship. Once again, it was Michael who determined Kelly’s next move at sea. Displeased at the treatment Kelly received aboard the Thynne, Michael arranged for him to be placed on the King

¹⁰⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 16.

¹⁰⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 17.

George, bound for Lisbon, Portugal. Though still very early in his career, the patterns of Kelly's experiences at sea align with the assertions Vickers and Walsh make regarding eighteenth century mariners from Massachusetts. Namely, that by the time young seafarers reached the age of twenty, they had normally visited the southern mainland colonies of America, several Caribbean islands, and several European cities.¹⁰⁸ At barely fifteen years old, Kelly was years ahead of his contemporaries in matters of position, experience, and transatlantic connections due to his father's management of his career.

Kelly completed two voyages between Falmouth and Lisbon with the King George. He sailed under Captain Wachope and noted that the rough treatment he received by the officers was not unlike that on the Thynne. Nevertheless, Kelly's capacities at sea sharpened with the King George and he adjusted to the toughened masculine culture aboard ship. Here, he was trained in the mast-tops, where he was regularly stationed for the remainder of his service with the packet ships. Aboard the King George, Kelly transitioned into foremastman, the most common name for a trained sailor.¹⁰⁹ Earle explains how "common ship boys," who were simply young sailors, if competent, could be eventually considered men and paid a man's wage in their mid or late teens.¹¹⁰ There was no formal examination, it was simply agreed upon by the captain. While employed with the King George, Kelly could continue to rely on his father to shape his experiences, as Michael's influence was not limited to the Caribbean. Furnished once again with a letter of introduction, Kelly found himself in the company of influential merchants in Lisbon by extension of Michael.¹¹¹ These men not only invited Kelly to dine with them when he was ashore, but took him to see a traditional bull fight.

¹⁰⁸ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 20.

¹⁰⁹ Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 135.

¹¹⁰ Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 134.

¹¹¹ The mercantile house of Caffre & Tibbs of Lisbon: Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 18.

Kelly's arrival in Falmouth after his second voyage with the King George was met with unwelcome news: his step-mother and her infant had died due to childbirth complications. Kelly "stayed at home a few weeks" to comfort his low-spirited father. Around this time, John, only thirteen months younger than Kelly, had shipped in the Cartaret packet for the first time to the West Indies. After remaining in Falmouth with Michael for several weeks, undoubtedly in the company of other grieving family and friends, the death of Kelly's step-mother still a recent occurrence, Kelly shipped aboard the Thynne for a second time. Both Michael and Kelly likely understood that lack of continuity at sea could affect his chances of promotion.¹¹²

2.5: The Thynne Packet (Again)

Bound to Madeira, the Leeward Islands and Jamaica, a familiar heading, Kelly sailed under Captain Johnstone and new sailing-master, Mr. C. Spurrier, a different seaman in 1780. He had gained notable experience and a specialization for the mast-tops through his employment with the King George, not to mention more professional connections. Between 1780 and 1781, Kelly concluded three more voyages aboard the Thynne between Falmouth and the West Indies.

Aboard the Thynne for a second time, Kelly estimated that he slept hundreds of hours in the main-top mast. Here, he used a gunpowder box as a pillow and bunked beside blunderbusses in the event of engaging the enemy.¹¹³ Richard Henry Dana Jr., in his acclaimed memoir, *Two Years Before the Mast*, affirmed that "a sailor can sleep anywhere – no sound of wind, water, wood or iron can keep him awake."¹¹⁴ The mast-tops were a dangerous station and vulnerable position to the elements. Sudden jerks against a head sea or rogue waves over the gunwale threatened to throw sailors out of the top and onto the deck or overboard. Kelly remarked that

¹¹² Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 140.

¹¹³ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 19.

¹¹⁴ Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast: A Personal Narrative*, (Cambridge, Mass.: University Press, Welch, Bigelow & Co., 1869), 67.

“through mercy, [he] was never thrown out of the top,” but such accidents at sea were common.¹¹⁵ Dana wrote about the death of a crew member from the mast-tops while he sailed as a common sailor in the American merchant service from 1834 until 1836. The young English sailor, who Dana remarked was the “life of the crew,” went aloft one morning to service the main-top masthead, carrying heavy equipment.¹¹⁶ Inexplicably, with the equipment strapped around his neck and shoulders, he fell into the sea and did not resurface despite the ship’s search efforts. From this event, Dana lamented how “death is at all times solemn, but never so much so as at sea”¹¹⁷ and likened losing a crew member at sea to:

losing a limb... There are no new faces or new scenes to fill up the gap. There is always an empty berth in the forecabin, and one man wanting when the small night-watch is mustered. There is one less to take the wheel, and one less to lay out with you upon the yard. You miss his form, and the sound of his voice, for habit had made them almost necessary to you, and each of your senses feels the loss.¹¹⁸

While Kelly was fortunate to evade brushes with death in the mast-tops, he nevertheless called attending the sails a “painful and teasing employment.”¹¹⁹

Kelly’s voyages under Johnstone and Hall shipped him regularly to Madeira, Barbados, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Jamaica, Montserrat, Antigua, and St. Christopher’s. In Barbados, he saw the aftermath of a hurricane that destroyed much of Bridge Town’s infrastructure and noted the melancholy tone of the port of St. Kitts, which was also damaged from the storm. Upon recalling this scene, Kelly remarked that “[were] it not for a superintending Providence, how few seamen would be spared to old age, considering the perils they go through.”¹²⁰ As this quotation suggests, Kelly experienced his share of professional and personal trials, but he was also

¹¹⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 19.

¹¹⁶ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*, 74.

¹¹⁷ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast* 74.

¹¹⁸ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast* 75.

¹¹⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 19.

¹²⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 19.

cognizant of the tribulations of other seamen who were oppressed by the services that employed them.

While docked in Port Royal, Jamaica, Kelly witnessed the brutal flogging of two Navy seamen. These men were “fixed to a kind of gallows in a boat, and exposed to a tropical sun whilst going through their punishment.”¹²¹ Kelly called the penalty for desertion in the Navy “a most cruel punishment, especially as the desertion is sometimes occasioned by severe and cruel treatment.”¹²² Overwork and abuse led many sailors to desert the Navy. The Caribbean saw high occurrences of desertion in this period and perils of life at sea often brought forth mass desertions immediately after the arrival of ships.¹²³ Land asserts that the one thing virtually every sailor had in common in the eighteenth century was an experience with impressment.¹²⁴ Indeed, impressment and desertion were closely related in this period. Between 1740 and 1815, forty percent of the 450,000 men who served in the British Navy were pressed.¹²⁵ Rediker states that by 1700, the basic skill among sailors was sufficiently similar across the seafaring trades for the Navy to consider any who “used the sea” to be worthy of the attentions of the press gang.¹²⁶ In fact, he remarks how impressment had become so common by the early eighteenth century that it would be “impossible to separate” the experiences of the Royal Navy’s sailors and those of the merchant service.¹²⁷ Impressment fueled the cycle of desertion by unwilling sailors, which fueled the demand for manpower in the Navy, especially during times of war. While maritime work was

¹²¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 20.

¹²² One of the deserters died from his wounds and exposure: Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 20.

¹²³ Titas Chakraborty, “Desertion of European Sailors and Soldiers in Early Eighteenth-Century Bengal,” *A Global History of Runaways: Workers, Mobility, and Capitalism, 1600-1850*, ed. Marcus Rediker, Titas Chakraborty, and Matthias van Rossum, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 80.

¹²⁴ Land, *War, Nationalism, and the British Sailor*, 19.

¹²⁵ Magra, “Anti-Impressment Riots,” 134.

¹²⁶ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 83.

¹²⁷ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 154-155.

diverse in this period and each occupation assigned a certain identity to its workers, sailors were nevertheless able to find varied work within their profession that served to broaden their skills and experiences. Kelly was a packet sailor when he witnessed the flogging of the two naval seamen, but his resentment towards their punishment suggests that he was aware of the fragility of his own position and shared in the afflictions of Navy sailors.

2.6: The Grenville Packet

In October 1781, after his fourth voyage with the *Thynne*, Kelly quit the ship to follow Spurrier aboard the *Grenville* packet. Not unlike Sampson Hall, the sailing-master of the *Thynne* who Kelly shipped with on his first voyage to the West Indies, Spurrier had taken Kelly “under his protection to instruct [him] in navigation.”¹²⁸ As Earle maintains, a sailor’s real education began at sea¹²⁹ and Spurrier was conditioning Kelly for the possibility of a long-term future aboard ship. Samuel does not disclose details about his and Spurrier’s relationship, but the amicability between the two men was evidently considerable after three transatlantic voyages. At seventeen-years-old, with Spurrier as his master and mentor, Kelly sailed under Captain James Nankivel aboard the *Grenville* until he quit the service. Once again bound for the Leeward Islands on this seventh voyage from Falmouth, he was a far cry from being the dirty and neglected cast-away he was three years prior. Aboard the *Grenville*, whose complement was composed of fourteen guns and sixty men, Kelly successfully transitioned into becoming a confident and competent sailor. His aptitude was confirmed through complex and challenging situations which characterized much of this employment. While these events had the ability to quell Kelly’s sailing career, he nevertheless benefited from these personal and professional trials.

¹²⁸ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 20.

¹²⁹ Earle, “The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen,” 132.

Perhaps the most evocative test of character for Kelly was when the Grenville docked in Kingston, Jamaica during the winter of 1781. While moored at port, sailors routinely sold “adventures” to colonists. Michael Jarvis states that by 1711, it had become “common practice” among merchant seamen “to carry abroad to other parts beyond the seas adventures of brass, pewter, platt, bongraces, capes, etc.” for sale or barter.¹³⁰ Adventures were portable goods that were acquired from various travels. Kelly was employed by Spurrier to sell his adventures on his behalf in the islands. This was not only gainful for the sailing-master, but Kelly likely obtained a modest cut in the profits as added incentive. Interestingly, Jarvis mentions that among enslaved and free Black Bermudian seamen, they could sell and trade their own personal adventures ashore, returning home with cash, rum, silk, lace, jewelry, fancy dresses, fine clothing, and other imported goods, which they gave or sold to their families and friends.¹³¹ It is possible that as a favour to his sailing-master, Kelly sold Spurrier’s adventures ashore in addition to his own to obtain extra income. Thus, packet sailors were shrewd barterers on top of being capable seamen and carried their wares in heavy sacks upon their backs as they wandered around town centers ashore. In the winter of 1781 and 1782, Kelly was “again saddled with [his] bag, and the sailing-master being acquainted with a man here of the name of Byrne...” sent Samuel to deposit his adventures in Byrne’s store.¹³²

In addition to owning a storefront in Kingston, Byrne was a custom’s officer and had a reputation for purchasing adventures from the packets for his inventory. He was also a slave owner and perceived Kelly as someone who could be serviceable to him. Between 1700 and 1758, Kingston was the sole port of entry for enslaved Africans shipped into Jamaica and it

¹³⁰ Michael Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 150.

¹³¹ Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade*, 15.

¹³² Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 24.

continued to function as a major port for such shipments from 1758 until 1807.¹³³ During this time an estimated 830,000 enslaved individuals were imported into Jamaica.¹³⁴ White populations in Jamaica were heavily outnumbered by Blacks, especially in its rural countryside. However, the enslaved were still populous in Kingston as well, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the population in 1730, 1774, and 1788.¹³⁵ Kelly agreed to work for Byrne with the understanding that he was to receive a “liberal salary” and pledged to quit the *Grenville* on its next sailing.¹³⁶ Samuel acted as Byrne’s personal assistant. He was tasked with unloading goods that Byrne had purchased from the harbour, wrote correspondences on Byrne’s behalf, and hunted down Byrne’s twelve-year-old enslaved boy, Cuffee, who frequently absconded and was identifiable by a brass collar around his neck.¹³⁷

Prior to sailing, Kelly and the crew had legally signed on to complete the voyage between Falmouth and the West Indies with the *Grenville*. In 1729, wage payments came under legislative regulation with the Act for the Better Regulation and Government of Seamen in the merchant service. This provided that all seamen were to make contracts in writing with the captain or owners and were to “sign on” until the contract, or the voyage, was completed.¹³⁸ Wages were to be paid upon final discharge, unless contrary terms had been stated in the contract, or within thirty days of the ship’s entry at the Customs House, whichever was earlier.¹³⁹ Prior to the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), it was customary for seamen to receive

¹³³ Trevor Burnard and Emma Hart, "Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina: A New Look at Comparative Urbanization in Plantation Colonial British America," *Journal of Urban History*, 39 (March 2013): 221.

¹³⁴ Burnard and Hart, "Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina," 221.

¹³⁵ Burnard and Hart, "Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina," 219.

¹³⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 25.

¹³⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 25.

¹³⁸ Davis, *The Rise of English Shipping* 135.

¹³⁹ Davis, *The Rise of English Shipping* 135-136.

one month's wages as added incentive to sign on to deep-sea voyages. The one month's advance was meant to discharge sailors' debts contracted to their landlord with whom they lodged ashore or to fit themselves with clothes and necessities for the voyage.¹⁴⁰ However, this war marked the practice of seamen bargaining their labor due to the scarcity of maritime employment, the added danger of impressment, and the risk of capture at sea. Such risks and petitioning resulted in the greater range and amount of wartime wages endowed by shipmasters.¹⁴¹ A two-month's advance before disembarking was adopted and became a standardized practice across seafaring trades in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁴² This wage advancement resulted in the common practice of absconding in the West Indies before one's contract was completed, which was prevalent among merchant and Navy sailors. Thus, the Statute of Labourers and Statue of Artificers branded desertion a penal, if not a capital, offence, to attempt to dissuade sailors from prematurely jumping ship.¹⁴³

Byrne's promise of a liberal salary was likely what swayed Kelly into his temporary service and temporarily out of the packet service. As a packet foremastman, Kelly received 22 shillings per completed voyage, which was comparable to the Navy.¹⁴⁴ He did not disclose the wages he earned under Byrne, but the amount evidently tempted him to desert the Grenville and violate his contract with Nankivel; potentially endangering his life. Kelly was required to endow the bills of sales of sold adventures to Spurrier when the time to sail back to Falmouth drew near, but he avoided this interaction entirely and hid at Byrne's residence. He thus delayed the sailing

¹⁴⁰ Davis, *The Rise of English Shipping* 137.

¹⁴¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 123.

¹⁴² Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 123.

¹⁴³ Chakraborty, "Desertion of European Sailors and Soldiers in Early Eighteenth-Century Bengal," 92.

¹⁴⁴ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 41.

by ten days.¹⁴⁵ Suddenly, Kelly was confronted with two dangerous accusations: theft as well as desertion.

Despite his childhood wish to become a sailor like his father, Kelly had grown weary of the packet service by early 1782. He noted how “many a time (when wet and cold, and no dry clothes to shift) [he had] wished [himself] in any menial situation on shore.”¹⁴⁶ But Kelly understood that his father could not afford to pay a premium or afford to maintain him while apprenticed in specialized landed trades. Sailors earned more than unskilled landed labourers, nevertheless, it was a grueling profession with petty pay and exhausting labour. Sailors worked seven-day work weeks and while they came ashore from any long voyage with plenty of money, sailors’ families would often need most of it.¹⁴⁷ Davis remarks how in-between voyages, sailors were their own masters, but their neighbours who worked ashore were their own masters every Sunday.¹⁴⁸ Calling himself “naturally proud,” Kelly was ashamed to quit the service due to his father’s dependency on his income.

Even so, 22 shillings per month proved insufficient. Michael had regularly received Kelly’s wages since the start of his service, but had nevertheless become increasingly destitute and ill by early 1782. As such, he became incapable of providing a suitable home for Martha and arranged for her to live with Uncle Wheelwright, his late wife’s brother. A former slave ship captain, “Uncle W.,” as Kelly more frequently called him, lived on a modest estate with his daughter in St Ives. Until this period, Michael routinely provided Kelly with clothes and supported him however he could. With the packets, Kelly had regularly stayed with his father in Falmouth in-between voyages, where he furnished Samuel “any kind of victuals that [he]

¹⁴⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 26.

¹⁴⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 22.

¹⁴⁷ Davis, *The Rise of The English Shipping Industry*, 144.

¹⁴⁸ Davis, *The Rise of The English Shipping Industry*, 144.

fancied, that [he] might recruit [his] strength before [he] began another voyage” after returning “thin and meagre from sea.”¹⁴⁹ In contrast to the packets, working for Byrne provided Kelly with two advantages: landed work as well as an increase in wages that could benefit his father. By this time, Michael had “nearly expended his money, [and] he was at last obliged to sell his furniture, and go to lodgings where he became entirely a bed-layer and very low spirited.”¹⁵⁰ Thus, it is likely that Kelly’s motivation to desert the Grenville was birthed out of his own discontent as much as his family’s financial troubles.

Yet Kelly did not entertain serious thoughts of theft and desertion for long. After avoiding detection from the Grenville’s officers for a few days, Kelly turned himself over to Spurrier and Nankivel “not being so desirous of staying with Mr. Byrne as [he] was at first.”¹⁵¹ To be sure, his choice to return to his duties spared him a hanging, but he did receive a stern lecture from the captain.¹⁵² It is difficult to postulate what motivated Kelly to leave Byrne’s service, but such an incident did not reoccur in his memoir.

By the time Kelly left Byrne’s employment in early 1782, the American rebels had largely won their independence from Great Britain. With a combined force of more than 4,000 American and French fighters, Charles Cornwallis was forced to surrender the entire British army at the Siege of Yorktown. Though the British Parliament had passed a resolution that petitioned the nation to end the war in March 1782, Britain would not formally recognize the independent United States until September 1783 through the Treaty of Paris. Until the Treaty of Paris was signed, which definitively ended the war, the bulk of the British army remained

¹⁴⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 22.

¹⁵⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 22.

¹⁵¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 27.

¹⁵² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 27.

stationed in New York and Charleston. As a result, British and American seafarers remained vulnerable to capture by letters of marque in the contested waters of the Atlantic.

Despite Kelly's brief brush with desertion, his relationship with Spurrier remained intact. Their bond was further displayed when the *Grenville* was captured by the American privateer, the *Franklin*. Captain Duvel from Salem, Massachusetts overtook the *Grenville* on the 19th of March 1782 as it sailed for the British stronghold of Charleston. Kelly remarked how "all was in confusion" as the *Grenville*'s crew hustled below deck to secure their clothes and belongings after Captain Nankivel ordered the mail to be sunk and surrendered the vessel to Duvel without resistance.¹⁵³ After four days of chase, the *Grenville* became a prize, and the crew, prisoners, of the Americans.

But of the *Grenville*'s sixty men who were sent aboard the *Franklin* to be deposited as prisoners at the Capes of Virginia, Kelly was one of five who remained aboard the prize. Spurrier negotiated with Duvel to allow Kelly to remain aboard ship, along with himself, a sick man, a boy, and the surgeon. Duvel granted Spurrier's request and Kelly quickly offered his services and ingratiated himself with the Americans by acting as steward and maintaining his duty in the mast-tops. Indeed, the *Grenville*'s capture marked a turning point in Kelly's career. He continued to perform these duties for the *HMS Garland*, a British warship which captured Duvel and his officers only a few days after the *Grenville*'s original seizure, until the ship docked in its original destination of Charleston.

Kelly, with the instrumental aid of Spurrier, showed himself to be an asset to the Americans as well as to the crew of the *HMS Garland*. He also displayed cunning, as he concealed three valuable watches of Spurrier's adventure in his shirt tail, which he successfully

¹⁵³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 33.

hid from the Americans. Although Spurrier created the conditions that allowed Kelly to be noticed and set apart from the other captured sailors of the *Grenville*, Kelly confirmed his own abilities and resourcefulness by being adaptive and inventive while captured. This quickness of mind recommended him to an individual whom Kelly called, “Captain Lofty,” a young man only two years older than himself who took over Nankivel’s position as captain of the *Grenville*. Interestingly, Kelly recognized Lofty from childhood. Lofty’s father had been a retired captain and lived not far from his own father at Falmouth. In fact, Kelly called Lofty his “intimate acquaintance and boon companion” before they both went to sea.¹⁵⁴ This connection speaks to Vickers’ and Walsh’s assertion that many seamen from coastal communities sailed with masters who had dwelt in the same part of town as they did.¹⁵⁵ Shortly after Lofty took command of the *Grenville*, Kelly was promised the promotion to second-mate by his new captain and old friend.

The position of second mate was more of a promotion of status than pay or even respectability. Though Kelly’s promotion required additional responsibility and composure, his wages remained unchanged at 22 shillings, 6 pence per month. Richard Henry Dana called the rank of second mate a “dog’s berth.”¹⁵⁶ From his experiences in the American merchant service, Dana observed that the men did not respect the second mate as an officer and that he was tasked with the most unappealing tasks. He remarked that there was an expectation upon him by the captain to maintain dignity and enforce obedience while kept at a “great distance from the mate, and obliged to work with the crew.”¹⁵⁷ However, the second mate was paradoxically not one of the crew. He was often called the “sailor’s waiter,” as he was tasked with furnishing the men

¹⁵⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 36.

¹⁵⁵ Vickers and Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring,” 23.

¹⁵⁶ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*, 37.

¹⁵⁷ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*, 37.

with spun-yarn, marline, and all other stuffs they needed for their work.¹⁵⁸ Kelly would likely agree with Dana's assessment of the second mate position. While the *Grenville* was docked in Charleston, the lieutenant of the HMS *Princess Caroline* invited Kelly to his cabin for refreshments and conversation upon learning that he was acquainted with his relations in Falmouth. Kelly remarked how he received more respect from this commissioned officer than the lowest officer aboard the *Grenville*.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the rank of second mate was the necessary next step towards obtaining senior officerships.

Kelly sailed to Falmouth from Charleston aboard the *Grenville* for the last time at the end of July 1782. Though it was customary for sailors to receive 40 shillings per man after being captured to replace clothing and bedding, Kelly received nothing from the post office agent in Falmouth. By this time, Kelly had no home to return to in Falmouth, as his father had sold his furnishings and moved into a poor house. Thus, he was "under the necessity of living on board the vessel," but had grown "tired of this Service."¹⁶⁰ He continued on to London, the *Grenville*'s final destination, eager to see the metropolis. On route, however, he witnessed one of Britain's most deadly maritime disasters: the shipwreck of the HMS *Royal George*.

The sinking of the HMS *Royal George* occurred in late August 1782, while the first-rate ship was anchored off Spithead at Portsmouth, Britain's premier naval port. It was the largest warship at the time of its launch in February 1756 and served in the Seven Years War and American Revolution, most notably. Hundreds of lives were lost, including Rear Admiral, Richard Kempenfelt's, who wrote to his friend, Charles Middleton, three years earlier, that the

¹⁵⁸ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*, 37.

¹⁵⁹ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 40.

¹⁶⁰ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 41-2.

Royal Navy was in need of religious revival.¹⁶¹ In fact, Kempenfelt's letter is the foundational document of the Blue Light movement.¹⁶² The Grenville navigated through a floating graveyard of bodies as it docked briefly in Portsmouth. The vessel would have arrived just days after the wreck and as no reward was being offered at that point for burying the dead, Kelly remarked how few people troubled themselves about the victims who "floated and passed our ship both with ebb and flood tide."¹⁶³

Kelly's account of the sinking of the HMS Royal George is not only an expressive description of the shipwreck's aftermath, but it marked the first time he distinguished himself from his contemporaries. Coolly, he charged the crew of the HMS Royal George with numerous imagined offences:

'Tis more than probable that as this crew had just been paid their wages, that they had been the day before rioting in drunkenness and debauchery, little considering what a change a few hours would make. 'In the midst of Life we are in Death.'¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ The Second Great Awakening (1795-1835) is credited for the great wave of "missions to seafarers" that began in the early nineteenth century. However, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, religious mariners such as Kelly, Kempenfelt, and Middleton were the conduits for instituting religious revival at sea. According to Gilje, it was only after the War of 1812 that the reform movement gained momentum in New York and Boston. However, the formation of societies such as the Marine Bible Society of New York, founded in 1817, the Society for Promoting the Gospel Among Seaman in the Port of New York (SPGAS), founded in 1818, and the New York Bethel Union, founded in 1821, and others like them, were directly related to eighteenth century reformist religious impulse felt by people like Kelly: Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 199. For more ways in which nineteenth century evangelicalism manifested itself among mariners, see Richard Blake, *Religion in the British Navy 1815-1879* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014); and John Hunt, *Religious Thought in England in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Gibbings and Co. Limited, 1896).

¹⁶² Kempenfelt's letter to Middleton: "Divine service should...be performed every Sunday; and I think a short form of prayer for morning and evenings, to be used every day, would be proper...The French and Spaniards, in their ships, have their matins and vespers every day. Our seamen people are more licentious than those of other nations. The reason is, they have less religion. Don't let anyone imagine that this discipline will disgust the men, and give them a dislike to the service, for the very reverse will be the consequence:" Charles Barham and John Knox Laughton (ed.), *The Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham, 1758-1813*, Vol. III, I, 308.

¹⁶³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 43.

¹⁶⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 45.

If Kelly had known that Kempenfelt had died in the shipwreck, with a score of other officers and sailors who likely held similar religious convictions, perhaps he would have minced his words, or, at the least, breathed a sigh of relief for their eternal state. Yet among the drowned were some for hundred women, most of them sex workers as well as four hundred Bibles, delivered just the previous day as a gift from the Naval and Military Bible Society.¹⁶⁵ Kelly's quotation demonstrates his distaste for the ascribed immoral behaviours of mariners as much as his unwillingness to be identified and linked with such a group, perhaps especially as an officer. Despite efforts by evangelicals to reintroduce Christianity to Navy sailors aboard the HMS Royal George specifically, the hundreds of prostitutes and Bibles that went down with the ship is a grim illustration of the maritime sector's reluctance to purge itself from its ubiquitous carnal pasttimes.

Such an extensive spectacle of death as the aftermath of the HMS Royal George shipwreck unsurprisingly inspired Kelly to reflect on his dangerous vocation and the fragility of life. Indeed, Kelly had evaded shipwreck and certain death not long prior to the sinking of the HMS Royal George. He had declined a position as second mate aboard the East India packet, the *Antelope*, due to his father's inability to financially support his outfit as chief mate to the East Indies. The *Antelope*, he later discovered, hit a reef near modern Palau in July 1783 and had sunk.¹⁶⁶ When hundreds of mariners' lives were visibly lost in the HMS Royal George tragedy, not to mention, those of the *Antelope*, Kelly somehow evaded death. But Kelly's ability to cheat death was not limited to the sea. Within his own family, he had outlived his mother, step-mother, and five younger siblings. He would continue to do so, surviving his brother upon his

¹⁶⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 70-71.

¹⁶⁶ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 189.

disappearance in the East Indies three years later as well as his father, one year later; consistently crediting his luck and life to the “kindness of Providence.”

Upon docking in London, the crew of the Grenville had shrunk due to frequent desertions. The few Scotsmen that remained convinced Kelly to join them in the Royal Navy transport service. Its vessels docked in London and able-seamen’s wages were known to be a generous £3 per month. Although Kelly had obtained the position of second mate, he would have still been acutely aware of his father’s dependency on his earnings as well as his desperate living situation. Accordingly, he quit the Grenville and the packet service at the end of 1782. In one of Kelly’s last remarks about the service, he maintained that “in these [packet] vessels the effect of original sin was to be seen in its horrid perfection, and [he] saw little or no appearance of religion, or even morality, while [he] continued in this service, which was about four years.”¹⁶⁷ He additionally stated that “if a man-of-war is considered as a floating hell, [he was] well convinced that a Falmouth Packet (at the time [he] sailed in one), was far from being a floating heaven.”¹⁶⁸ At eighteen-years-old, Kelly had gained four years of deep-sea sailing experience as well as the competence and composure of a foremastman, steward, and officer. Though his remarks pertaining to the packet service and its sailors are perhaps unforgiving, such a work environment nevertheless prepared Kelly for the remainder of his career.

2.7: Conclusion

When Kelly left Cornwall in 1778 at fourteen-years-old, he had little more than his father’s letters of introduction to recommend him to the packet service. He began as a landsman, an inexperienced and unskilled sailor, the lowest paid position aboard ship. However, despite a rocky first two voyages aboard the Thynne and King George packets, Kelly’s seamanship

¹⁶⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 52.

¹⁶⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 52.

steadily improved. He quickly evolved into a foremastman, gaining notable experience in the mast-tops, and even obtained the specialized roles of steward and second mate. While Kelly proved to be a resourceful and talented sailor over time, his father's guidance was indispensable. Michael's deliberate positioning of Kelly aboard the Thynne and King George packets enabled him to gain the attention of his officers and connect him with his former acquaintances in Jamaica and Portugal. By joining the service, Michael benefited from the income of his eldest son and Kelly profited from his father's former connections, reputation, and insight regarding shipboard hierarchies and etiquette. Indeed, Kelly's first two years at sea were largely dictated by Michael, but as he gained seafaring experience, Kelly determined his own course and relationships (albeit still motivated by his family's dependency on his wages).

Sampson Hall, the shipmaster of the Thynne, took special notice of Kelly on his first voyage to the West Indies. Though a landsman, Hall nevertheless favored Kelly, or perhaps took pity on him, by offering navigational instruction and the position of midshipman aboard the quarter-deck. However, this was not the only instance that Kelly received attention from his superiors. Shipmaster, "Mr. C. Spurrier," of the Thynne after Hall, and later, the Grenville, similarly taught Kelly lessons of navigation and arranged for Samuel to sell his adventures ashore. In fact, it was through Spurrier's connection with customs' officer, "Mr. Bryne," that Kelly entertained the notion of desertion in Jamaica in 1781. Despite Kelly's temporary evasion of service, Spurrier and Kelly retained an influential relationship, as demonstrated when the Grenville was captured by the American privateer, the Franklin; where he arranged for Kelly to remain aboard the prize with himself and the American crew instead of becoming a prisoner aboard the Franklin.

Kelly's experience with the packets was innately formative to his career. By the end of his service, at eighteen-years-old, Kelly concluded his term with the packets as second mate, a notable accomplishment. Kelly's father shaped the trajectory of his early years at sea, but the relationships he formed with his shipmasters equipped Samuel with the navigational knowledge and opportunities to advance his social mobility. As demonstrated with the sinking of the HMS Royal George, by the end of this period, Kelly began to distinguish himself morally from his contemporaries in his memoir more frequently. While Kelly's religious expression and moral judgements are somewhat absent during this time, they were nevertheless developing and gaining traction in his memoir and life. Towards the end of his term with the packets as second mate, Kelly increasingly displayed a providential worldview and moral code, suggesting a link between his social mobility and faith. Indeed, Kelly's sense of decorum as an officer would continue to influence his conduct and perceptions of morality in the transport and merchant services.

CHAPTER THREE:

Samuel Kelly in the Royal Navy Transport Service, 1782-1785

This chapter explores Kelly's time with the Royal Navy transport service. His youth was defined and determined by maritime trades and the transport service continued to build on the skills he obtained from the packets. This chapter examines four expeditions: the Channel Islands and Scotland, New York and Nova Scotia, East Florida and the Bahama Islands, and East Florida to England. These operations that Kelly undertook with the transport service serve to illustrate the regularity by which he was ashore in this period. Indeed, with the transports, Kelly was ashore significantly more often than he was at sea. The one exception was during his first expedition.

For three years Kelly labored aboard the *Jason* and did not return to Great Britain until his service ended. Unlike the packet service, where Kelly spent his time in a personal manner in-between voyages in Falmouth, the transport service required Kelly to be at his post for the full duration of service, even while ashore. This chapter explores the questions: how did the Loyalist migrations shape Kelly's own loyalism? How did Kelly's personal and professional life transition during this time? What factors anchored Kelly ashore? These expeditions were fundamentally shaped by the aftermath of the Revolutionary War, Britain's loss of the American colonies, and the Peace of Paris Treaty (1783). This chapter surveys Kelly's first expedition to the Channel Islands and Britain to transport convalescent and discharged troops who served during the Revolutionary War. Secondly, it analyzes his expedition to New York to assist in the northern evacuation of Britain's forces and Loyalists to Nova Scotia and fledgling New Brunswick. Next, it examines Kelly's third expedition, where the *Jason* participated in Britain's relinquishment of East Florida to Spain and the southern Loyalist migration to the Bahama

Islands. Lastly, it chronicles his last expedition in East Florida and the Jason's final departure to Britain.

The make-up of the Atlantic World shifted dramatically after the Revolutionary War due to the Loyalist migrations. Transport crews and vessels played a vital role in this regional metamorphosis that saw the redistribution of thousands of British subjects and the inter-imperial transferring of territories. Kelly likely did not conceive of the significance of his involvement in such a historically momentous period. To an eighteen-year-old sailor, joining the transport service was likely motivated by the fact that demand for labor was high, as were wages, and transport crews were protected from the press.¹⁶⁹ In addition, to Kelly specifically, the transports offered alternative employment from the packet service. If Kelly's term with the packets was innately foundational to his career, the transport service was a transitional period that challenged his seamanship and his roles at sea and ashore. Moreover, this phase in Kelly's life displayed his adherence to the Church of England, which contrasts against the evangelical beliefs he developed later in life. In sum, this chapter argues that, in tandem with his rapidly transitional external world, Kelly was internally transitioning as a sailor, a British subject, and a Protestant while employed in the transport service.

¹⁶⁹ Rodger, *The Wooden World* 158.

3.1: The Transport Service

Table 3.1: Kelly's Expeditions with the Royal Navy Transport Service

EXPEDITIONS	SHIP(S)	PERIOD	TIME AT SEA	TIME ASHORE	KELLY'S POSITION
I. The Channel Islands and Scotland	The Jason	December – May 1783	Approximately Four Months	Approximately Two Weeks	Common Tar Steward
II. New York and Nova Scotia	The Jason	June – December 1783	Approximately Three Months	Six Months	Steward
III. East Florida	The Jason	December 1783 – August 1784	One Month	Eight Months	Steward
III. (Cont'd) The Bahamas	The Jason	August 1784 – April 1785	One Month	Seven Months	Steward
IV. East Florida to England	The Jason	April – August 1785	Ten Days	Five Months	Steward

The development of the transport service during the long eighteenth century is complex. It descends in part from the Transport Board, an organ of naval administration, which was originally established in 1689 during the Glorious Revolution to handle the transport and

supplies of the Army in Ireland and Flanders.¹⁷⁰ The Transport Board principally oversaw the provision of ships for the conveyance of troops by sea, but disbanded in the early decades of the eighteenth century. In turn, other governmental boards and departments of the War Office assumed the transport service's functions. Four governmental boards competed for the hire and supply of transports: the Treasury, Victualling Board, Navy Board, and Ordnance Board. While the dockyards were managed by the Navy Board, which chartered transports under the direction and supervision of the Lords of Admiralty, the Treasury chiefly oversaw the transport service.

The War of Jenkin's Ear (1739-48) marked a turning point in the military history of Great Britain. For the first time, a significant portion of British military power was projected across the Atlantic to conduct sustained operations in the western hemisphere.¹⁷¹ The Navy Board chartered merchantmen to act as transports, a far less costly alternative to converting warships to carry troops and supplies. By this period, the English merchant marine was comprised of 421,000 tons of shipping and shipowners stood to profit from letting their ships to the Navy.¹⁷² Willing shipowners received 13 shillings per ton per month for freight, plus "all other conditions which were publish'd to them."¹⁷³ After the vessel was received at the dockyard, it was inspected, measured, and appraised and fitted to accommodate troops. By chartering his ship to the commissioners of the Navy, the shipowner could receive steady income without the risk of losing his vessel through enemy action, as the Navy Board paid the owner the full appraised value of any transport lost in such an event.¹⁷⁴ The practice of hiring transports for sustained

¹⁷⁰ N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815* (Allen Lane: London, 2004), 196.

¹⁷¹ David Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports for Cartagena," *War in History*, 9, 2 (April 2002): 127.

¹⁷² Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports for Cartagena," 140

¹⁷³ Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports for Cartagena," 130.

¹⁷⁴ Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports for Cartagena," 140.

overseas operations from the merchant fleet was subsequently applied to the Seven Years and American Wars. Indeed, in 1776, the Navy Board employed more than 400 chartered transports to supply the Crown's forces in America.¹⁷⁵

Sharing the transport service between the four boards, however, was not a productive arrangement. The Treasury funded the military overseas but remained inexperienced in the field of organizing transports and victuals from Britain.¹⁷⁶ The Victualling Board was responsible for providing the military with food, drink, and supplies; the Navy Board chiefly oversaw the maintenance of ships and naval expenditure and was overseen by the Admiralty; and the Ordnance Board acted as the supplier of munitions and equipment to both the Army and Navy overseas. Though these boards had commonalities, David Syrett explains that one of the notable problems of the American War of Independence was the competition for the hire of transports. Charles Middleton sought to reduce this competition when he assumed chairmanship of the Navy Board in 1778.¹⁷⁷

Middleton was one of the most influential figures in shaping British naval history for almost thirty years. In office from 1778 to 1790, Middleton was head of the Navy Board with its wide-ranging responsibilities for stores and provisions and for the design, construction, and refitting of warships at the royal dockyards of Deptford, Woolwich, Portsmouth, and Chatham.¹⁷⁸ In 1779, Middleton successfully negotiated with the Treasury for the Navy Board to manage and absorb the transport service under its jurisdiction for the Army and Navy. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the functional responsibility for army transport and victualling was

¹⁷⁵ Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports for Cartagena," 140.

¹⁷⁶ Roger Morriss, "Colonization, Conquest, and the Supply of Food and Transport: The Reorganization of Logistics Management, 1780-1795," *War in History* 14, 3 (July 2007): 313.

¹⁷⁷ David Syrett, *Shipping and the American War, 1775-1783: A Study of British Transport Organization* (Bloomsbury: New York, 2015), 78.

¹⁷⁸ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy, 1775-1815*, 43.

progressively transferred from the Treasury to the naval departments, owing in large part to Middleton.¹⁷⁹ When the American War broke out, outfitting a portion of Britain's large merchant fleet in the event of war was a standard and effective practice. Indeed, it afforded the military the ability to operate in virtually any region of the world that could be reached by sea and expanded the Royal Navy's fleet considerably.¹⁸⁰

3.2: First Expedition: The Islands of Guernsey and Jersey and Scotland

Kelly found work aboard the Jason transport at Deptford in autumn 1782. However, Kelly's anticipation of a wage increase to £3 per month did not materialize for him or his shipmates. In fact, his new captain demoted Kelly to common tar, as he had not served an apprenticeship in the English coal trade.¹⁸¹ His wages were fixed at 40 shillings per month, while his Scottish companions enjoyed a monthly income of 60 shillings as able-seamen. Kelly nevertheless accepted the terms of this demotion, as "less ability would be expected." Although Kelly obtained considerable seafaring experience with the packets in the mast-tops and as a midshipman, foremastman, steward, and second mate, his know-how before the mast was limited. As such, his disposition aboard the Jason was "inclinable to diffidence" and accepted the pay and position allocated to him willingly.¹⁸² After all, a monthly wage of 40 shillings as a tar

¹⁷⁹ Morriss, "Colonialization, Conquest, and the Supply of Food and Transport," 312.

¹⁸⁰ Syrett, "The Navy Board and Transports," 141.

¹⁸¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 53.

After 1700, the east coast coal trade grew in productivity to become the largest shipping flow for English vessels. The trade was incredibly important and central to Britain's industrialization. Between 1700 and 1850 improvements to the trade were made that included the adoption of larger vessels, increased annual voyages per ship, reduced manning requirements, port development, the growth of insurance, and the introduction of risk-reducing navigational aid: William J. Hausman, "The English Coastal Coal Trade, 1691-1910: How Rapid Was Productivity Growth?" *The Economic History Review* 40, 4 (November 1987): 588.

¹⁸² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 53.

with the transports was still a wage increase of almost double from what he earned as second mate with the packets.

By early 1783, the American War was over and thousands of British armed forces stationed in the new United States of America and the British Isles were being discharged from the military. Transports were partly tasked with the mission to evacuate troops and bring them back to Britain and the *Jason* was commissioned by the Navy to do exactly that. Kelly's first expedition with the transport service dispatched him to the Channel Islands of Guernsey and Jersey as well as the port of Leith in Edinburgh, Scotland. The *Jason* was part of a fleet of transport vessels that were tasked with transporting convalescent and discharged troops between the Channel Islands and Britain.

The Navy Board oversaw the transport service by this period, but it was nevertheless characterized as a civilian service due to its merchantman association. The government employed a wide network of specialist transport and victualling agents who loaded, dispatched, received, and redistributed transports. They worked under the instruction of, and reported to, a board of commissioners in London who coordinated flows of provisions and transports according to the demands and distribution of the Army and Navy.¹⁸³ Agents formed an infrastructure that spread and multiplied during wartime and became the controlling officers in their field.¹⁸⁴ As such, there was an absence of commissioned officers aboard ship, though a naval agent might be assigned to lead a fleet.

The *Jason* completed four assignments within this first expedition, which spanned from January to April 1783. A small crew of thirteen members, only Kelly and his three former packet shipmates were before the mast. Aside from Kelly, the complement was composed of a

¹⁸³ Morriss, "Colonialization, Conquest, and the Supply of Food and Transport," 312.

¹⁸⁴ Morriss, "Colonialization, Conquest, and the Supply of Food and Transport," 312.

shipmaster, chief mate, second mate, carpenter, cook, three young apprentices, three able-seamen, and a “little negro,” who was reportedly picked up by the shipmaster on a former voyage to Antigua.¹⁸⁵ This small crew allowed for maximum carrying capacity, but it also left Kelly and the crew routinely outnumbered by the large companies they transported.

The assignments proved challenging for different reasons. For its first assignment, the Jason transported 190 sick and convalescent men of the 96th Regiment of Foot (British Musketeers) between the islands of Guernsey and Jersey; a short voyage of only 23 nautical miles. Nevertheless, the journey was a “most formidable navigation of rocks, and small islands, awful to behold.”¹⁸⁶ The second assignment proved no less treacherous. The vessel received 212 men of the 18th Royal Irish Regiment at Jersey, with dozens more of their women and baggage with the orders to sail back to Guernsey. The vessel endured heavy winds, a near collision with an accompanying transport, and drifted dangerously into shoal water. By all accounts, the journey to Guernsey saw hurricane-like conditions. The climate aboard ship proved no less chaotic. In addition to a soldier’s wife delivering a child aboard the vessel, passengers were crawling around on their hands and knees below deck, not being able to stand due to the vessel being tossed violently by rogue waves.¹⁸⁷ Six days after setting sail, the Jason safely made port at Guernsey, but it was not without distress guns being fired or the fear of shipwreck gripping the pilot and crew alike.

The third assignment was exceptionally unproblematic. It required the Jason to sail to Portsmouth to off-load 211 men of the 83rd Regiment of Foot (or the Royal Glasgow Volunteers) that were received at Guernsey for foreign service in India; likely to assist in the Second Anglo-

¹⁸⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 53.

¹⁸⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 55.

¹⁸⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 56.

Mysore War (1780-1784). Kelly received news of his father's death around the time of this third assignment. Michael's health had steadily declined concurrently with his assets from the time Kelly went to sea. Samuel's reflection on his father is limited to only one page in relation to his death, but Michael's influence in Kelly's career and memoir until this period is significant. Indeed, everyone else in Kelly's life paled in comparison to his father. After all, Samuel's first transatlantic voyage in 1774 to Charleston was spent in his father's company. And only four short years later, Michael orchestrated the beginnings of Kelly's seafaring career; knowledgeably positioning him aboard the Thynne packet. Until this period, Kelly's career was shaped and motivated in large part by his father. Samuel had retained a co-dependent relationship with him throughout the packet service, often staying with Michael in Falmouth in-between voyages before he sold his possessions and moved into a poorhouse, where his health continued to deteriorate. Undoubtedly one of the principal reasons that Kelly joined the transport service was to earn a higher wage so that he might better support his family ashore.

In Kelly's excerpt about his father's death, he reveals more of Michael's characteristics as well as his own sentiments about him. Above all, he commended his father's "upright" character, noting how he was "much of the gentleman to be discovered in his address and conversation."¹⁸⁸ Additionally, he called him a "kind and an affectionate parent, though very reserved in communicating anything relative to his past life to his children."¹⁸⁹ Yet perhaps Kelly's most compelling description of Michael was how he "believed him to have been an upright, honest man, though he did not profess to be a serious Christian."¹⁹⁰ This might have been an attempt to shield Michael from his work as a smuggler in the Caribbean or the fact that

¹⁸⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 58.

¹⁸⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 58.

¹⁹⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 58.

he owned enslaved Blacks at one point or other. However, it also reveals that Kelly's evangelicalism was not inspired or inherited from his father. Kelly's early career might have owed much to Michael, but from this period onwards, he determined the course of his profession as well as his faith.

The Jason's fourth and final assignment of its first expedition further tested Kelly, though not strictly with regards to his seamanship. In early April 1783, the Jason received 127 men from the Edgar and Elizabeth line of battleships in Portsmouth. For this particular voyage, bound for the port of Leith in Edinburgh, there were in fact several naval officers who shipped with the men. However, these recently discharged troops acted "free from restraint" during the voyage to Scotland. Despite the few naval officers present aboard ship, they and the crew of the Jason were greatly outnumbered. In fact, Kelly remarked how "the Navy officers we had on board thought it prudent to join the men in their dances and merriment, for fear of what might otherwise happen."¹⁹¹ As these men were sailors themselves, they took over the management of the Jason by making sail at their leisure. In addition, these ex-navy men drank in abundant supply¹⁹² and purchased spirits that only "increased wantonness and disorder."¹⁹³ By this assignment, Kelly had received a promotion to steward. Unfortunately for him, the men had "great antipathy" towards pursuers and stewards and Kelly accordingly did not feel safe to appear on deck with the men. Dana remarked how the crew generally does not consider the steward part of their number and is subsequently left to the "mercy of the captain."¹⁹⁴ Perhaps this voyage to Leith exemplified the licentiousness that Kempenfelt accused the Royal Navy of harbouring in his

¹⁹¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 58.

¹⁹² Excessive drinking was only a slight offence in the Georgian Navy: Rodger, *The Wooden World* 74.

¹⁹³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 58.

¹⁹⁴ Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast* 38.

letter to Middleton. Fortunately for Kelly and the crew, this voyage was relatively short, lasting only one week.

The crew of the *Jason* spent several weeks docked in Scotland. In Edinburgh, the transport's deck and sides received a new paint job, Kelly and his shipmates explored the city, and the crew frequented a local public house. During this period in Kelly's life, prior to becoming a shipmaster, he maintained an Anglican faith and a budding moral framework, but had not yet ascribed to evangelicalism and its zealous convictions. Thus, he noted how at this public house "at that time in my natural state, and an enemy to God, [he] saw no harm in being one of the party at a dance. [He] had been under the tuition of a French master at Helstone, and was fond of this vanity."¹⁹⁵ Evangelicals advocated for the close reading of the Bible, frequent prayer, rigorous keeping of the Sabbath Day, and believed that one could start a Christian life only with a conscious experience of conversion. They disapproved of concerts or balls on Sundays, of plays, gambling, most dancing, and pubs.¹⁹⁶ This would not be the only time Kelly staunchly condemned his behavior before his evangelical conversion.

The *Jason* sailed back to Portsmouth in the later part of May 1783. After four consecutive assignments within a four-month period, the *Jason* had carried a total of 740 men and dozens more of their women and children. Unlike the packets, where Kelly was "confined to a particular kind of duty," aboard the *Jason* he was "traversing from mast-head to mast-head, and from one end of the ship to the other, there being no other man before the mast, but myself and three old shipmates."¹⁹⁷ His seamanship was continuing to develop and improve and earned the position of steward by the end of the *Jason*'s first expedition. Kelly's father's death was undoubtedly a blow

¹⁹⁵ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 62.

¹⁹⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 78.

¹⁹⁷ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 53.

to the nineteen-year-old. However, Michael had done all he could to prepare and condition his eldest son for a successful seafaring career, not unlike his own. The treacherous seas and rowdy company that characterized these assignments did not diminish Kelly's resolve. If anything, these experiences propelled him forward.

3.3: Second Expedition: The Northern Loyalist Evacuation from New York to Saint John

The Jason and its crew spent two weeks at Portsmouth while the vessel underwent repairs and was cleared of a rat infestation. By the middle of June, the transport was fit again for service and the crew received sensitive orders from the Navy Board to proceed to New York to participate in the northern evacuation. The evacuation process began in the late spring of 1783 as American and British commissioners began to negotiate and arrange for the transferring of control of New York after preliminary articles of the Treaty of Paris had been drafted.¹⁹⁸ However, the transference itself began in the early summer and was carried out over a six-month period as transports were commissioned to New York to receive British subjects and relocate them to Britain and its Atlantic colonies. Although "Evacuation Day" was commemorated on November 25th, 1783 and recognized as the last day British Loyalists and soldiers boarded their transports to disembark from New York (allowing America to formally obtain sovereignty) the northern evacuation was an effort that spanned six months.

It is estimated that over 80,000 British subjects, loyal to the Crown, fled the former Thirteen Colonies between 1783 and 1785. The bulk of these Loyalists, which were in the tens of thousands, migrated to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick,¹⁹⁹ though many thousands returned to

¹⁹⁸ Clifton Hood, "An Unusable Past: Urban Elites, New York City's Evacuation Day, and the Transformations of Memory Culture," *Journal of Social History*, 37, 4 (Summer, 2004): 885.

¹⁹⁹ It is imperative to recognize the Peace and Friendship Treaties, a series of written documents produced by Britain between 1725 and 1779, that effectively undermined the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, Abenaki, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy peoples' Indigenous sovereignty in what is now the Maritimes and Gaspé region in Canada and the northeastern United States. While these treaties were purposed to guarantee

Britain or migrated to the British West Indies and Upper Canada. In 1784, New Brunswick was separated from Nova Scotia to specifically accommodate the influx of migrants that landed north of the Bay of Fundy.²⁰⁰ Indeed, Saint John, the capital of New Brunswick, was regarded as the “Loyalist City” for centuries. When the Jason docked in New York City in late August 1783, the Loyalist migration was well underway and the city served as a major center for the evacuation.

Jason laid at port in New York for several weeks as it underwent repairs from a treacherous crossing and got resupplied.²⁰¹ By mid-September Kelly noted that the vessel was fit to receive on board “emigrants, or Loyalists’, furniture, stock, etc. for St. John’s River, in the Bay of Fundy.”²⁰² He counted 76 Loyalists who embarked aboard the Jason, though it is unclear if his tally included or excluded women, children, Black Loyalists, and enslaved individuals. In addition, the transport received 48 soldiers from the 42nd Highland Regiment of Foot who were posted to Nova Scotia. With Kelly’s headcount of 124 passengers, the Jason shipped to the Bay of Fundy at the end of September and arrived in the Saint John’s River Valley one month later. James W. St. G. Walker estimates that by mid-October 1783, over 27,000 Loyalists had sought refuge in Nova Scotia.²⁰³ The Royal Proclamation of 1763, issued by George III, established a monopoly over Indigenous lands by the British Crown and maintained that only the Crown could

rights and protections for Indigenous people, they were also signed under coercive circumstances. The Peace and Friendship Treaties are amongst a long series of treaties broken by Britain and neglected under colonial rule, such as when thousands of United Empire Loyalists flooded into the British North American colonies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the 1780s and irreversibly altered traditional Indigenous land and livelihoods. See William C. Wicken, *Mi’kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshall Junior* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) for further information relating to this topic.

²⁰⁰ Greg Marquis, “Commemorating the Loyalists in the Loyalist City: Saint John, New Brunswick, 1883–1934.” *Urban History Review*, 33, 1 (Fall 2004): 26.

²⁰¹ During this time, Kelly boarded the HMS Diomedeto inspect its victuals, where a young Horatio Nelson was acting as first lieutenant and commanding officer: Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 66.

²⁰² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 66.

²⁰³ James W. St. G. Walker, “The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870 (University of Toronto Press, 1999), 18.

buy land from Indigenous nations in North America after the Seven Years War. There was approximately 26,000,000 acres of Crown land in Nova Scotia in 1783 and 13,722,134 cultivable acres were allotted for distribution to Loyalists.²⁰⁴ The Crown catered to refugees who had lost significant property due to the American War. They were served first by colonial authorities and received grants comparable to the estates left behind in rebel hands. Those who “lost less” during the war received 100 acres for the family head, plus 50 acres for every member of his family, including any enslaved persons owned.²⁰⁵

Kelly’s first impressions of fledgling New Brunswick left little to the imagination. He was impressed by the “great numbers of new wigwams, framed and log houses [that] were continually beginning as the Settlers arrived.”²⁰⁶ He also took note of the lack of roads, the poor soil, and the presence of bears as migrants disembarked from their transports in wild, undomesticated land that would evolve to become Saint John. Interestingly, Kelly considered taking advantage of the Loyalist land-granting system while docked north of the Bay of Fundy. As an unmarried, white, male, British subject, Kelly was entitled to 150 acres.²⁰⁷ However, his decision to stay ashore in British North America was contingent on his captain, who intended to hire Kelly to work the land for his family if he too decided to settle. This plan fell through for both men when winter descended upon the settlement in late October and “cooled the courage of [Kelly’s] master” making Samuel “give up the idea of obtaining an estate in this dreary province.”²⁰⁸ His shipmaster’s idea of settling in the Saint John River Valley was partly inspired by an aversion to service and to “avoid another expedition from New York.” For several weeks,

²⁰⁴ Walker, “Black Society in Loyalist Nova Scotia,” 19.

²⁰⁵ Walker, “Black Society in Loyalist Nova Scotia,” 19.

²⁰⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 67.

²⁰⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 68.

²⁰⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 68.

the crew participated in rescuing refugees whose rafts and boats had sunk while sojourning down the Saint John River looking for land. They fetched firewood and processed wild game, and Kelly cared for a fellow seaman who had caught smallpox. At the beginning of November, however, “the agent drove [the crew] from [their] nest, and [they] got ready for sea.”²⁰⁹

The political, cultural, and physical landscapes of British North America and the young United States of America in late 1783 were highly transitional. Britain’s Atlantic colonies in particular were inundated with soldiers, migrants, and sailors that served to domesticate and populate Crown land. Though the patriots had won the Revolutionary War, the northern Loyalist migration only shifted where loyalism, as an ideology, was practiced. This, in turn, allowed loyalism to be developed in regionally specific ways, ultimately expanding its influence in the Atlantic World.²¹⁰ Indeed, Loyalists were recompensed for their adherence to the Crown, even though it required their households be transplanted to an otherwise undomesticated and undesirable region. Although Kelly was no Loyalist, the opportunity to obtain 150 cultivable acres effectively rewarded those who, like him, retained their subjecthood and loyalism. In the end, he did not obtain land in New Brunswick, owing to his shipmaster’s disinclinations to the cold winter. However, such a notion nevertheless piqued Kelly’s interest and likely affirmed to him that Britons (or at least Britons who shared his sex and race) stood to economically profit from remaining politically loyal to Britain.

3.4: Third Expedition: The Southern Loyalist Evacuation in East Florida

The Jason returned to New York “about the third week in November 1783.” It would not be amiss to surmise that the Jason was likely in the city the week before Evacuation Day, according to November’s calendar month. In fact, Kelly noted how “we arrived at New York and

²⁰⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 70.

²¹⁰ Bannister and Riordan, *The Loyal Atlantic*, 158.

found the northern evacuation nearly completed... [it] gave our master great hopes of returning to Great Britain.”²¹¹ While the northern evacuation was effectively concluded, the same could not be said of the southern evacuation in East Florida. The Jason did not receive orders to return to the Bay of Fundy, but rather make sail to St Augustine to assist in the southern evacuation, the colony’s cession to Spain, and the transference of Loyalists to the Bahama Islands. Through his memoir, Kelly offers personal insight and perspective into the British-Spanish handover of the Floridas.²¹²

The Treaty of 1763 formally ended the Seven Years’ War between Britain, France, and their allies and signaled the beginning of an era of British dominance over North America. The exchange of territories between empires was extensive and as part of the agreement, Spain ceded West and East Florida to Britain. However, the Treaty of 1783 reversed this claim and Britain was forced to relinquish East and West Florida back to Spain. As per the treaty’s terms, Loyalists who had found asylum in East Florida were given eighteen months to evacuate and relocate to the British Caribbean or submit to Spanish occupation. After Britain’s withdrawal from Georgia and South Carolina in 1782, Loyalists, with their property, enslaved and otherwise, arrived in droves to St Augustine, the capital of East Florida. By this time, there were 17,000 people living in East Florida.²¹³ Approximately 5,090 Whites and 8,285 Blacks were classified as refugees, though many of these people had lived in the colony for years, endeavoring to rebuild livelihoods

²¹¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 71.

²¹² See Mary Elizabeth Fitts, *Fit for War: Sustenance and Order in the Mid -Eighteenth Century* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2017), Richmond F. Brown, *Coastal Encounters: The Transformation of the Gulf South in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), and Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*(New York: The Penguin Group, 2002) for further information regarding Indigenous relations and treaties with various colonial powers over the course of the eighteenth century within the southern American colonies.

²¹³ Thelma Peters, "The Loyalist Migration from East Florida to the Bahama Islands," *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, 40, 2 (1961): 131.

and businesses that were destroyed or confiscated due to rebel occupation.²¹⁴ St Augustine was reputed to be the last southern Loyalist refuge due to the security afforded by its garrison.

However, this respite from the imperial struggle for refugees was short-lived. Most southern Loyalists who migrated to East Florida during the war left by the end of 1785 for Britain, Nova Scotia, Dominica, the Bahamas, Jamaica, and the Mosquito Coast in transport vessels.

Kelly's third expedition aboard the *Jason* was an ordeal that spanned twenty-one months; thirty-six weeks of which the vessel laid at Amelia Island, a barrier island in East Florida, located 25 miles south of St Mary's in Georgia. St Mary's served as the center for transport shipping in the southern Loyalist evacuation, as St Augustine's coastline was notoriously treacherous. Johann David Schoepf, a German writer and traveler who visited East Florida in the spring of 1784, remarked that East Florida's beaches were strewn with wreckage and estimated that there was one wreck near St Augustine every two to four weeks.²¹⁵ Schoepf also called St Augustine's harbour a "mousetrap;" easy to get into but difficult to get out of.²¹⁶ For this reason, many evacuees embarked from St. Mary's, as it was a safer port to navigate than the port of St Augustine. St Mary's River, Amelia Island, Clapboard Creek, the Talbot Islands, and St John's River, all regions north of the capital of St Augustine and downriver to St Mary's, were where Kelly and the crew of the *Jason* spent most of their time in the first half of 1784.

Unlike the northern operation, which was conducted and completed within a relatively short period, the southern operation was designed to be concluded by March 1785, eighteen months after the Treaty of Paris issued its terms. Despite this conservative estimate, the governor of East Florida, Patrick Tonyn, was granted a four-month extension by Spain due to logistical

²¹⁴ Peters, "The Loyalist Migration from East Florida to the Bahama Islands," 131.

²¹⁵ Johann David Schoepf and Alfred J. Morrison (ed.), *Travels in the Confederation* (Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1911), 226.

²¹⁶ Peters, "The Loyalist Migration from East Florida to the Bahama Islands," 130.

delays. Indeed, the southern operation necessitated an extended effort due to the unique nature of the evacuation. A notable logistical challenge were the waterways and vegetation of East Florida. The topography of the northeast was a humid maze of tight creeks, large forests, and alligator and mosquito-infested marshlands. Such conditions allowed for disease, banditry, and slow movement of military personnel who relied upon pilots to navigate the inland waterways of East Florida and Georgia. During this period, Kelly and the crew of the Jason transported large quantities of Loyalists' personal effects by small boats down the rivers and delivered them to St. Mary's, where Southern evacuees separately arrived aboard small coastal vessels and were transferred to docked transports.²¹⁷

One of the migration's biggest challenges was the prevalence of bandit gangs due to the disorganization of the colony. These gangs hid in the dense forests of the region and robbed Loyalists of their horses and enslaved property and sold them to the Spanish in West Florida.²¹⁸ Kelly often expressed sympathy towards refugees and volunteered with members of his crew to protect their property as it traveled downriver. These efforts did not go unnoticed or unrewarded by the refugees, who, as they disembarked in St Mary's, greeted sailors with grog and fresh clothes.²¹⁹ Safeguarding the movement of Loyalists' effects was one way Kelly personally contributed to the logistical flow of the evacuation, but it was nevertheless a laborious station. On one occasion, in a four-oared boat, Kelly and a few men paddled inland from Amelia Island to a small settlement called Davis' Bluff to camp overnight, traveling forty miles in one day "with only a little respite at dinner."²²⁰ He and the crew were likewise tasked with transporting

²¹⁷ Wilbur H. Siebert, "East Florida as a Refuge of Southern Loyalists, 1774—1785," *American Antiquarian Society*, (October 1927): 245.

²¹⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 76.

²¹⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 77.

²²⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 73-74.

ordnance stores upriver to galley ships that were designed to maneuver the challenging topography. The movement of supplies up and downriver during the migration was essential for British operations, but it was undeniably exhausting, even for young seamen.

Vickers and Walsh assert that the stories sailors could tell multiplied with every voyage and this was certainly true of Kelly's memoir during his station in East Florida.²²¹ Kelly provides factual, narrative sections, that most frequently deals with provisions. He describes animals, plants, buildings, people, weather, trivia, general information, history, local customs, and what he perceived as the exoticism of the colony. From the time the Jason landed in Georgia in early January 1784 until its departure to the Bahama Islands in August, Kelly's source is reminiscent of a traveler's journal. Still acting as steward during this period, Kelly frequently mentioned what the crew subsisted on: typically bread and gruel, though once per week, venison, turkey, or lean beef (as hunted by the crew) was offered for dinner.²²² He complained of the mosquitos, the hot sun "which made [his face] turn nearly to the colour of an Indian," and lush vegetation, which he was poorly dressed for.²²³ Kelly included anecdotes, such as when he and a few crew members, armed with cutlasses, pistols, and muskets, laid in wait for a bandit to attack a number of boats laden with property of the Loyalists. It is difficult to precisely measure or contextually situate the numerous anecdotes and stories that Kelly chronicled during the eight months he spent in East Florida, but his narration is similar to that of another late eighteenth century English seaman's journal, that of Aaron Thomas. Sarah Glassford describes Thomas as a storyteller who offered frequent anecdotes in the most dramatic or comedic manner possible and

²²¹ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 21.

²²² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 74.

²²³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 74.

exaggerates events “as any good storyteller must.”²²⁴ Not unlike his contemporary, Kelly portrayed this period in his life as an exciting adventure, with references to Indigenous peoples, enslaved Africans, the climate, and the Spanish.

By mid-1784, Spain began the process of taking possession of the Floridas as Spanish ships arrived at St Mary’s and St Augustine.²²⁵ Due to the prolonged southern evacuation, which spanned nearly two and a half years, the major part of it was conducted under Spanish auspices.²²⁶ Transport vessels were ordered by agents to assist in landing Spain’s troops and stores. Kelly noted how he and the crew piloted twelve Spanish ships into safety at St Mary’s, receiving a gratuity.²²⁷ However, apart from piloting, Anglo-Spanish relations between sailors ashore appeared openly hostile. Although Kelly characteristically endeavored to evade conflict, he recorded the tensions between the two groups at St Mary’s. An intoxicated altercation at a grog shop on St Mary’s beach between British and Spanish seamen resulted in the death of a Spaniard and the decision to establish a land boundary to avoid future disputes.²²⁸ Kelly did not disclose his involvement in any quarrels, but his attitude towards Spanish seamen was typical. To Kelly, his greatest complaint against the Spaniards was their use of “obscene language,” in front of Loyalist women. He also noted the high death rate of Spanish seaman from a “contagious disease, whist the English remained free from it,”²²⁹ a possible allusion to syphilis.²³⁰ Kelly and the Jason’s crew were not subject to the company of Spanish seamen for long, however.

²²⁴ Sarah Glassford, “Seaman, Sightseer, Storyteller, and Sage: Aaron Thomas’s 1794 History of Newfoundland,” *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, 21, 1 (January 2001): 150.

²²⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 78.

²²⁶ Sibert, “East Florida as a Refuge of Southern Loyalists,” 226.

²²⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 78.

²²⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 78.

²²⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 79.

²³⁰ A tradition springs up in the later eighteenth century that links venereal disease to race and conquest. McAllister explains that “In 1772, N. D. Falck argues that syphilis was an appropriate reward for European conquest of the West Indies: “If these Spanish blood-thirsty hounds of hell had kept [syphilis]

Late August 1784 marked eight months docked at Amelia Island for the Jason and its crew, “long enough to have made four voyages to the Bahamas.”²³¹ Dozens of southern Loyalists boarded the Jason to rebuild and resettle their lives, many for a third-time, in Nassau, the capital of the British-controlled Bahama Islands. Of the twenty-five transports used in the evacuation, fourteen carried only government cargoes: timber, tar, pitch, turpentine, deerskin, and the ordnance, artillery, and personnel of the garrison.²³² Fifteen vessels, including the Jason, made a total of thirty-four trips laden with refugees and their property, most of which sailed during the late spring and summer of 1784 and 1785.²³³ At twenty-years-old, Kelly entered his second year with the transport service and sixth year at sea upon the Jason’s embarkation to Nassau. As the Jason laid at Amelia Island, Kelly worked tirelessly during this period transporting Loyalists’ effects up and down waterways, protecting them and ordnance stores from bandit gangs. Indeed, the southern effort posed many topographical, logistical, and situational obstacles for transport crews and Loyalists alike. Although arguably a terrestrial period, it was not a sedentary one in Kelly’s life due to the exhaustive nature of the evacuation. His position and station remained unchanged as steward, but his skills and experiences as a sailor diversified. With a full complement of Loyalists and ordnance supplies, the Jason arrived in New Providence, the most populous of the Bahama Islands, in late September.

3.5: Third Expedition (Cont’d): The Southern Loyalist Evacuation to the Bahamas

to themselves, and rotted alive by it, it would have been a punishment, but little adequate, to the unheard barbarity, which they committed to that poor race of people:” Marie E. McAllister, "Stories of the Origin of Syphilis in Eighteenth-Century England: Science, Myth, and Prejudice," *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 24, 1 (Winter 2000): 32.

²³¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 81.

²³² Carole Watterson Troxler, “Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, 60, 1 (July 1981): 23.

²³³ Troxler, “Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida,” 23.

Approximately 2,500 Loyalists migrated to the Bahama Islands during the mid-1780s. By the end of the Loyalist settlement period (1775-1795), former residents of Georgia and the Carolinas made up roughly 70 percent of Loyalists who received land in the Bahamas.²³⁴ Before the *Jason* departed to Nassau, Kelly noted its battered appearance, particularly its sheathing which was “coming off in flakes”²³⁵ after the vessel had lain thirty-three weeks in tropical waters at Amelia Island.²³⁶ He commented how the transport’s bottom had become “so ragged and foul that we could make little progress in sailing.”²³⁷ The *Jason* was at sea for one month and docked in Nassau at the end of September. It did not leave the shipyard at Hog Island (modern-day Paradise Island) for seven months.

As demonstrated with the evacuation of East Florida, sailors, while the most mobile of laborers, nevertheless spent a great deal of their time, not at sea, but ashore. Indeed, at Nassau, Kelly noted how the *Jason* was moored for “another long sleep” as it underwent repairs and received a new sheath.²³⁸ The crew fashioned a temporary home in an old warehouse at the shipyard, where they temporarily stowed the *Jason*’s stores and waited for it to be fit again for sail. Although mariners were undoubtedly seafaring men “possessed of a highly distinctive set of skills, a strong occupational culture, a technical language that was all but intelligible to outsiders,

²³⁴ Carole Watterson Troxler, “Uses of the Bahamas by Southern Loyalist Exiles,” in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, ed. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012): 185.

²³⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 79.

²³⁶ This was likely due to the teredo worm, a large wood-boring worm which exists in tropical seas: Peter Kemp, *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976): 777.

²³⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 81.

Sheathing had another purpose besides providing protection against the teredo worm; it significantly improved the sailing qualities of ships by being more resistant to weed and barnacles than the bare wood of a ship’s bottom: Kemp, *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, 778.

²³⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 81.

and even a gait that betrayed their calling,” as Vickers and Walsh describe, their homes lay ashore.²³⁹

Nassau, like all large seaports in the age of sail, possessed a sailortown. Sailortowns were shabby parts of town, where drink freely flowed and young men cruised the streets looking for fun, trouble, or work.²⁴⁰ Never one to look for trouble, Kelly kept busy working and living in Nassau’s waterfront sailortown. By day, as steward, he was tasked with the daily duty of procuring victuals for the crew from the market, often making note of the tropical fruits and unusual animals for sale. At night, he laid in his hammock, hung high to the rafter beams, endeavoring to avoid the rats and the warehouse’s dirty floor which swarmed with fleas.²⁴¹ Kelly may have earned his living on the deep, but a host of other factors, such as a ship needing significant repair work, conspired to ground seafarers like him in port throughout much of the year.

Characteristically, Kelly offered a variety of anecdotes, observations, and judgements about Nassau and its inhabitants as he lay at port for most of the year. Among his most scathing remarks, Kelly called the residents “dissipated in the extreme” due to their apparent night revels which reportedly “injured their health.”²⁴² He “saw little appearance of any religion, but heard that a man of colour frequently preached to the eastward of the town under a large spreading tree.”²⁴³ Kelly might have been referring to Nassau’s refugee population, many of whom were slave-owners. Prior to the Loyalist migrations, the governor of the Bahamas endeavored to select wealthier refugees as settlers to the islands in the hopes of building a competent plantation

²³⁹ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 131.

²⁴⁰ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 132.

²⁴¹ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 83.

²⁴² Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 84.

²⁴³ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 84-85.

economy.²⁴⁴ Schoepf, the German traveler, accompanied a shipload of refugees from St Augustine to Nassau in March 1784. Not unlike Kelly, he observed that residents liked to drink and dance and was puzzled “to see most of the white inhabitants of Providence living well and yet going about in idleness; but [planters] live by the sweat of their slaves.”²⁴⁵ Ashore in Nassau during the migrations, Kelly witnessed New Providence’s population and culture shift dramatically due to the influx of refugees. Prior to the migration, the Bahama Islands’ old inhabitants mainly subsisted off fishing and had close dependence on the sea. However, the arrival of agricultural planters and their enslaved workforce not only altered the physical landscape of the islands by introducing a cash-crop economy, but their presence impacted the heart of Nassau’s society. For instance, the election for the House of Assembly took place while the Jason was moored at Nassau and Kelly noted how a “great rancor was manifested between the contending parties, viz. the old inhabitants which were termed Conks, and the new Settlers termed Refugees.”²⁴⁶ Not unlike the Jason’s short mooring in St. John’s, Kelly observed the impact the migrations had in New Providence while being removed from it personally.

3.6: Fourth Expedition: The Southern Loyalist Evacuation to Britain

In mid-April 1785, the Jason left Nassau, newly sheathed, with orders to return to St Mary’s River. It anchored at Amelia Island ten days later. Shortly after its arrival, however, the ship was thrown into disrepair once again during a ferocious storm. The mainmast was struck by lightning and the electric current descended on deck, “tearing the mast to shivers” and electrocuted Kelly and his crewmembers.²⁴⁷ All survived except the cook, who died during the night. Among the trees and branches cut down in the nearby forest to replace the Jason’s masts

²⁴⁴ Troxler, “Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida,” 22.

²⁴⁵ Schoepf and Morrison, *Travels in the Confederation*, 273.

²⁴⁶ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 83.

²⁴⁷ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 86.

and spars, a coffin was built and a grave dug in the bushes for the cook. Kelly “read the burial service at the [cook’s] internment (sic)” though he expressed his doubts at whether his words did much good “to the dead or the living.”²⁴⁸

With one less shipmate, the crew of the Jason participated in the last stages of the Loyalist migration from East Florida between April and August 1785, an effort that spanned seventeen weeks ashore. The evacuation began in earnest in April 1784 and it was completed with governor Tonyn’s departure in November 1785 aboard the Cyrus frigate, the last British ship to leave East Florida. Kelly and his shipmates were ordered to St Mary’s in June 1785 and witnessed Tonyn’s arrival at the harbour to take up residence aboard the Cyrus. Kelly noted how the crew had “just got alongside our ship when the Governor arrived at St. Mary’s and we had the opportunity of seeing the Cyrus’s yards manned to salute him, as well as the firing of her guns.”²⁴⁹ Tonyn had ordered four transports to return to St Mary’s from the Bahamas, the Jason among them, to carry off the last of the Loyalists to Britain.²⁵⁰ The term of eighteen months allowed for the evacuation of East Florida ended on March 19, 1785. However, more time was requested by Tonyn to complete the undertaking, as there had been much delay in transporting quantities of personal effects by small craft and getting them to St Mary’s where the shipping lay.²⁵¹ The new Spanish governor of East Florida, Vincente Maduel De Zespedes, agreed to extend the deadline by four months until July 19. However, the pace of lading the transports slowed as evacuation proceeded. During the spring and summer of 1784, the average lading time

²⁴⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 87.

²⁴⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 89.

²⁵⁰ Wilbur H. Siebert, “East Florida as a Refuge of Southern Loyalists, 1774-1785,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 37 (April 1927): 246.

²⁵¹ Siebert, “East Florida as a Refuge of Southern Loyalists,” 245.

was about a month, but in 1785 the average was about fifty days, with a marked increase as the summer wore on.²⁵²

Despite the deadline for British transports to depart on July 19, there was still nearly four more months' delay in the evacuation. Kelly remarked that "sailors when idle are generally plotting mischief."²⁵³ He recounted that during these months, British sailors and subjects had burned houses, stables, and structures that had previously belonged to Loyalists so that the "Spanish who had taken possession of the province might not obtain the benefit of those dwellings."²⁵⁴ Such activities aroused the anger of Zespedes who wrote to Tonyn shortly after the July deadline and demanded that all English subjects, sailors, and transports remaining without permission in the colony depart.²⁵⁵ In August, Tonyn ordered the last division of transports, laden with refugees and their moveable property, to disembark and gave final orders to the vessels to proceed to their different destinations.²⁵⁶ After laying between Georgia and East Florida for nearly five months, the Jason departed St Mary's River on August 23, 1785 with its last complement of refugees and orders to proceed to London. The transport arrived in London one month later. With no further orders from the Navy Board to relocate Loyalists, Kelly left the service.

3.7: Conclusion

Between 1782 and 1785, Kelly completed four expeditions while employed as a sailor with the Royal Navy transport service. He began as a common tar, where he obtained exposure

²⁵² Troxler, "Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida," 23.

²⁵³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 88.

²⁵⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 88.

²⁵⁵ Siebert, "East Florida as a Refuge of Southern Loyalists," 246.

²⁵⁶ William Brown, Tonyn's assistant for the evacuation, composed a report that shows that as a general pattern, slave-owners went mainly to the West Indies and the Bahama Islands, and people with few or no enslaved individuals moved to Europe and Nova Scotia: Troxler, "Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida," 21.

to new shipboard responsibilities, but quickly obtained the position of steward, a role he maintained for the majority of his employment. Kelly's term with the transports was epitomized by transition, both internally and externally. The victory of the patriots reverberated throughout the Atlantic World, stretching from the British Isles, to New England, and Britain's Atlantic colonies. Consequently, British Loyalists were given an ultimatum: adapt to their new national identity or evacuate the former Thirteen Colonies. Transports and their crews were indispensable to the northern and southern Loyalist migrations and Kelly remarkably participated in both.

Kelly was both a participant and an observer during these four expeditions. As a sailor, he relocated ex-servicemen, transported Loyalists to Nova Scotia and the Bahama Islands, and supported the ground efforts of the migrations which were highly complex and slow-moving. As an observer, he offered his personal sentiments and anecdotes during these expeditions through his memoir, giving insight into the lived experience of a British transport sailor during the contextual aftermath of the American War.

Samuel's personal and professional life proved to be as transitional as the world that he sailed in during this tumultuous period. Within the span of three years, his father had died, he gained valuable but onerous experience as steward, and sailed and made port at new regions of the Atlantic. Despite his transient vocation, Kelly spent nearly two years ashore with the transports where his labour, loyalism to Britain, and Protestantism were further developed. By the time the Jason docked in London in September 1785 to land its last evacuees, Kelly was twenty-one and had obtained significant experience over the course of seven years in two maritime trades. With most Loyalists deposited and newly settled throughout the British Atlantic, Kelly returned to Britain with an internal world that was as solidified as the external world he occupied.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Samuel Kelly in the Coastal and Merchant Services, 1786-1795

This chapter chronicles Kelly's last nine years at sea in the coastal and merchant services. It surveys the first three years he acted as chief mate and the following six years he sailed as shipmaster out of the ports of Bristol and Liverpool. During this period, Kelly sailed in both the domestic trade within Britain and the deep-sea service, where he frequented Europe, Philadelphia, and the West Indies. When Kelly sailed in the packet and transport services, he was subordinate to higher-ranked officers who influenced him in matters of navigation, seamanship, and shipboard etiquette. As a young sailor, still very much a boy, Kelly required foundational training and experience in deep-sea seafaring and absorbed both the favourable and hostile instruction of his superiors. He applied all that he learned with the packets into his station with the transport service, which ultimately equipped him with further know-how and ability. Kelly's thorough conditioning as a tar prepared him for the coveted role of chief mate, which was offered to him shortly after he left the transport service.

Sailors understood that promotion to mate augured well for the future, as a mariner knew that the chances of rising right to the quarterdeck were better than ever – especially if he persisted in his quest.²⁵⁷ This was true of Kelly. This chapter characterizes Kelly's authoritative years at sea as a senior officer. As a sailor in the packet and transport services, Kelly retained an adherence to the Church of England, but this chapter explores the evangelical thought he adopted when “heavenly light began its dawn on [his] mind;”²⁵⁸ a testimonial that distinctly characterized the Methodist conversion experience. The Methodist conversion event was known as the “warming of the heart” which effectively challenged the agency and autonomy of the

²⁵⁷ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 118.

²⁵⁸ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 119.

modern self as a secular and autonomous enterprise.²⁵⁹ This mystical occurrence proposed an irruption of divine presence into historical time and individual consciousness that threatened both to reveal the self and yet, in the same process, to change it.²⁶⁰ As a Methodist, Kelly did not break with the Church of England, but nevertheless veered and experimented with evangelical dissent.

Kelly's evangelicalism motivated his seamanship. He wedded his external secular world in the maritime sector with his internal spiritual world as a Methodist. Together, as a dutiful sailor and Christian, Kelly strove to transpose the religious instruction he acquired at various churches when ashore to his environments. Kelly viewed the maritime sector in grave need of missional activity and accordingly wielded his social influence as chief mate and shipmaster to administer cultural reform. To quote Gilje, "Jack Tar was such a good sinner that he seemed the perfect candidate for reform."²⁶¹ This chapter analyzes how Kelly achieved these senior positions and promotions, the methods he wielded to enforce discipline aboard ship and ashore, and how his evangelicalism motivated his ideology and conduct as an officer. This phase in Kelly's career is the culmination of the social, physical, and religious mobility that he obtained with the packet and transport services. Yet this period is simultaneously his declining years, both as a professional sailor and as a young, healthy man. In sum, this chapter argues that through Kelly's persistent connection to the land through regular religious attendance ashore, where he was directly influenced by the evangelical movements, he endeavoured to personally enact religious revival in the maritime sector.

4.1: The Merchant Service

²⁵⁹ Misty G. Anderson, *Imagining Methodism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2012), 4.

²⁶⁰ Anderson, *Imagining Methodism in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, 4.

²⁶¹ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 202.

Table 4.1: Kelly’s Voyages with the Coastal and Merchant Services

SHIP(S)	POSITION(S)	PERIOD	SERVICE(S)	GEOGRAPHY	WAGES (PER MONTH)
The Liverpool	Chief Mate	July 1786 – January 1787	Domestic Trade	Bristol and Liverpool	40 S
The Thetis	Chief Mate	April 1787 – April 1789	Deep-Sea Trade	Pennsylvania, France, Sicily, and Jamaica	£3
The Mayflower	Shipmaster	May – June 1789	Domestic Trade	Bristol and Liverpool	£5
The John	Shipmaster	July 1789 – June 1792	Deep-Sea Trade	Pennsylvania, Spain, New York, Gibraltar, and Ireland	£5
The Mayflower	Shipmaster	May 1793 – (unspecified) 1794	Domestic Trade	Bristol and Liverpool	£5
The Thetis	Shipmaster	May 1794 – August 1795	Deep-Sea Trade	St Domingo, Hispaniola, and Jamaica	£5

Although Kelly was a native British subject, he was simultaneously a citizen of what maritime scholars have deemed the “Atlantic World.” During the eighteenth century, more Anglo-American seamen and ships crossed the Atlantic Ocean than in any other early modern period. Magra emphasized how sailors were not “isolated sea creatures,” but were connected Atlantic citizens who shared time and traits with family ashore.²⁶² Some scholars, such as Pierre Gervais, have called the Atlantic World a misnomer; preferring to perceive the term in a

²⁶² Magra, “Faith at Sea,” 88-89.

geographic sense, emphasizing the Atlantic Ocean's inability to be a liveable space and instead underscoring its function as a well-trodden aquatic highway.²⁶³ Nevertheless, most historians agree that the Atlantic Ocean was a dynamic space that transcended national boundaries and allowed for the circulation of peoples, ideas, and commerce between Europe, the Americas, and Africa.

During the early modern period, the triangle trade, another name for the slave trade, was the heartbeat of the transatlantic's transactional process. Hochschild estimates that between 1660 and 1807, slave ships brought over three times as many Africans across the ocean as they did Europeans.²⁶⁴ Guineaships²⁶⁵ regularly disembarked from England, sailed south to West Africa, then headed west to the Caribbean and back east to Britain; completing a triangle. The triangle trade carried European goods to Africa, then enslaved Africans to the Caribbean or North America, and then sugar, coffee, cotton, rice, and rum back to Europe. This route was particularly profitable because vessels could carry cargo on each leg of the triangle. Not to mention, nature itself favoured the triangle, as North Atlantic currents flowed clockwise and the winds often blew in the same direction.²⁶⁶ At the height of the slave trade, the Atlantic World was unified by commerce, which was backed by state power. However, without merchantmen and sailors who carted commercial cargo across the Atlantic Ocean, human and otherwise, there would be little world to speak of.

²⁶³ Pierre Gervais, "Neither Imperial, nor Atlantic: A Merchant Perspective on International Trade in the Eighteenth Century," *History of European Ideas*, 34, 4 (January 2008): 465.

²⁶⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 8.

²⁶⁵ The term, "guineaships" or "guineamen," derives from the guinea coin which was closely linked with the slave trade. It was first minted from African gold and symbolized the trade's prosperity: Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 19.

²⁶⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 25.

For sailors and merchants alike, their participation in the transatlantic trade carried the high stakes of possible death and financial loss. Trade was what empires frequently went to war over, it was what criminals and opportunists preyed upon, and it was full of risk due to the unpredictable elemental forces of the Atlantic Ocean itself. Such high stakes ventures necessitated thick webs of trade relationships to form on both sides of the ocean, often held together by close familial and non-economic ties. Vickers and Walsh contend that Salem merchants, shipowners, and shipmasters in the eighteenth century were part of a dense network of kinship that connected many Salem families to one another. They add that when shipmasters' left port, they carried with them an "inheritance of obligations, resentments, family secrets, and fond memories that could well cut against the grain of economic exigency, and masters and men alike knew well that whatever they did to one another away would soon be known at home."²⁶⁷ Merchant and mariner networks were carefully chosen and nurtured, as personal reputation was a decisive element when incorporating a new trade relation. The sets of relationships each merchant created were geographically diverse, but identical in nature and function wherever they came into being.²⁶⁸ These professional connections drove eighteenth century transatlantic trade, dictated the navigation of vast Atlantic spaces, and could transcend imperial allegiances due to the universal motivation of profit, even during wartime. Although professional in practice, as Vickers and Walsh demonstrate, these economic relationships were deeply personal.

The Kelly and Wheelwright families maintained strong ties to the sea. By the time Kelly returned to London from the transport service, his brother, John, had recently arrived back in Britain an experienced seaman. On an East Indiaman, the Houghton, John had worked as a

²⁶⁷ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 128-129.

²⁶⁸ Gervais, "Neither Imperial, nor Atlantic," 470.

midshipman and coxswain during Kelly's station with the transports. Unlike their father who had found success in the merchant service, their "Uncle W." had demonstrated his prowess at sea through the triangle trade as a guinea captain. He sailed out of the port of Liverpool for the better part of his career, the earnings of which secured him a small estate in Cornwall.²⁶⁹ When Kelly docked in London in September 1785, his uncle had long left the sea. However, by this period, the ports of Liverpool and Bristol had nevertheless maintained their dark associations with the slave trade. Indeed, the early half of the eighteenth century saw Bristol as Britain's premier slave port, but by the late century, Liverpool had overtaken its position to become the world's largest slave ship port.²⁷⁰ The year 1783 marked the beginning of a boom in the British slave trade. With the end of the Revolutionary War, slave ships could sail unimpeded once again.²⁷¹ Between 1783 to 1793, Liverpool ships carried more than 300,000 Africans into slavery and most people who lived in Liverpool and Bristol were proud of its importance to the triangle trade.²⁷² Unlike his uncle, Kelly did not directly participate in the slave trade, and in fact, hotly condemned it, but during the last nine years of his career, he was regularly engrossed in Bristol and Liverpool's insidious maritime culture as he regularly sailed to and from its ports as a chief mate and shipmaster.

Kelly's professional anchorage in Bristol and Liverpool was due, once again, to familial connections. Ashore in Britain, Kelly strengthened his ties to his family and native county after two years abroad. To "[his] great satisfaction," Samuel stayed one month in London upon learning of John's short visit to the city with the intention to visit his relations in Cornwall

²⁶⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 98.

²⁷⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 119.

²⁷¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 88.

²⁷² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 120.

afterwards. He called “[his] brother a high-spirited young man, of good abilities.”²⁷³ At twenty-one and twenty years old in 1785, the Kelly brothers were at promising stages in their careers and had proven their abilities at sea. Competent young sailors who had gained steady promotions were generally on track to become chief mates by twenty-five and masters a couple years after that.²⁷⁴ However, as age distributions for Anglo-American seamen under sail imply, most who had shipped themselves before the mast at twenty had vanished from the forecabin by thirty.²⁷⁵

This statistic was true of John. Samuel saw his brother for the last time in October 1785 before he left London to visit his relations in the west. In the following spring, John sailed to Canton where Kelly “never heard what became of him correctly... [and imagined] he soon after paid the debt of nature.”²⁷⁶ Unlike his younger brother, Kelly became part of the slim one-tenth of Anglo-American seamen, aged thirty to thirty-four, who were as numerous as their twenty to twenty-four-year-old compatriots.²⁷⁷ Though this data reflects competency and mastery, as the majority of sailors who remained at sea past thirty were either chief mates or masters, it also implies inexplicable luck. Such a slim age bracket discloses the frequency of fatal accidents at sea and the many promising lives lost, such as John Kelly’s, due to the ever-present risks of shipwreck, drownings, tempests, exposure, and disease. To quote Kelly, “In the Atlantic one fright after another undermines the most robust constitution and brings on apparent old age in the prime of life.”²⁷⁸ While masters could work into their forties, many chose to retire sooner due to the physical strain of the trade. As a young man in the mid-1780s, Kelly had the bulk of his career still ahead of him if he wished it and could survive to achieve it.

²⁷³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 95.

²⁷⁴ Vickers, “An Honest Tar,” 451.

²⁷⁵ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 108.

²⁷⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 98.

²⁷⁷ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 108.

²⁷⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 101.

4.2: Kelly Becomes Chief Mate of the Liverpool

Kelly arrived in Cornwall five weeks after saying his last goodbye to John. In St Ives, he stayed with his Uncle W. and sister, Martha, at his estate for the better part of three months and commented that “[His] sister was a little girl when [he] had last seen her, but now she was a woman.”²⁷⁹ Aside from his uncle and sister, Kelly remarked how he was greeted by “all orders and degrees of people” when he visited St Ives; from the mayor to the town crier, and from the church minister to the sexton.²⁸⁰ He stated that most of these people who had greeted him had known him since infancy. Though he had not landed in Cornwall since 1782, Kelly’s warm homecoming demonstrates Vickers’ and Walsh’s assertion that “throughout their seafaring careers, most [seamen] retained important social ties to the town of their birth.”²⁸¹ And though seafaring demanded sailors leave their homes for months, even years, at a time, sailing as a vocation did not socially sever sailors from home.²⁸² On the contrary, upon visitation, a sailor might be heartily welcomed by his family and native townsfolk precisely due to his prolonged absence.

Kelly’s visit in St Ives not only reconnected him to his relatives and the shore, but it provided him with an opportunity to advance in his career. He inherited his late father’s “silver watch, shoes, knee and stock buckles, shaving apparatus, sea charts, a quadrant made by [John] Davis, and a hat.”²⁸³ Outfitted to fit the bill as a merchant officer, all Kelly lacked was a ship and

²⁷⁹ Born in 1769, Martha would have been sixteen when Kelly saw her in November 1785; Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 97.

²⁸⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 97.

²⁸¹ Vickers and Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring,” 19.

²⁸² Vickers and Walsh, “Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring,” 19.

²⁸³ Recognized by the French as the “English quadrant,” John Davis (1550-1605), the prolific navigator and explorer of Elizabethan England, led three voyages in search of the North-West Passage and invented this quadrant for measuring the altitude of the sun which precluded the need for sighting it directly; Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 98.

a position. Luckily, or Providentially, a cousin of Kelly's was visiting St Ives at the same time he was. This cousin lived in Bristol and was a shipmaster in the domestic coastal trade between Bristol and Liverpool and was looking for a suitable lad to fill the position of chief and only mate in a new brig he was building in Bristol. He offered the posting to Kelly, to which he consented.

Kelly reached Bristol in February 1786, but found only the lower futtocks laid in the brig, merely the skeleton of a ship. It did not launch until June. Thus, between his arrival in London in September 1785 and his departure from Bristol in 1786, Kelly was ashore nearly nine months. During this time, he lodged with his cousin and "spent much of his time in ranging round the country and in copying verses and epitaphs into a book of 184 pages from the different repositories of the dead in this vicinity."²⁸⁴ While perhaps a peculiar hobby to occupy his recess ashore, this period of waiting supports Vickers' assertion in "Beyond Jack Tar," that young merchant seamen "lived most of their lives – even most of their working lives – on land."²⁸⁵

Indeed, sailing and waiting to set sail were persistent patterns throughout Kelly's career. Ashley Bowen maintained a similar pattern of employment as Samuel. In "An Honest Tar," Vickers notes how Bowen was based ashore in some port or other for five months or more per annum.²⁸⁶ Though sailors might not persistently sail throughout the year, they were often still affiliated with a broader pattern of maritime employment which speaks to a business plagued by storms, disease, and volatile markets. Even shipmasters in the mid-1700s, presumably the most dedicated of mariners, only undertook an average of 0.8 voyages per year (or one voyage every fifteen months).²⁸⁷ Thus, sailors such as Kelly and Bowen were as familiar and comfortable with life at port as they were with work at sea.

²⁸⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 100.

²⁸⁵ Vickers "Beyond Jack Tar," 422-423.

²⁸⁶ Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 537.

²⁸⁷ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 24.

Due in part to his cousin's proposition, Kelly acted as chief mate aboard the brigs, the Liverpool and Thetis, from 1786 until 1789. During these years, he reportedly "never slept a single night on shore," though Kelly regularly visited port.²⁸⁸ For six months, aboard his cousin's brig, the Liverpool, Kelly acted as mate and sailed domestically between Bristol and Liverpool. During this time, he established more professional connections with shipmasters and ships' agents and sailed with complicated characters. On one of Kelly's runs to Liverpool, one of the crewmen was an "old Guineaman," who "found means to get the command of a Guinea ship" upon docking in Liverpool.²⁸⁹ But before this sailor left the Liverpool for Liverpool with run-money in his pockets, he had given Kelly "...such an amount of the iniquity practiced in the slave trade that [Kelly] determined never to go into that employ."²⁹⁰ In the eighteenth century, the slave trade promised wealth, independence, and even adventure for seafarers in a manner that carting cargo back and forth between the English Channel never could. Kelly's Uncle W. understood the draw of the trade personally. The lucrative profits he obtained as a guinea captain allowed him to not only purchase his estate in St Ives, but relish in the respectability, wealth, and status that the slave economy's profits promised. In addition, according to Kelly, his uncle impressively retained his reputation as a "very moral, prudent man" despite his professional ventures.²⁹¹ However, by the late eighteenth century, conceptions of morality and prudence in the West were becoming progressively detached from the slave trade. This was due in large part to the evangelical and abolition movements. Kelly became a loyal member of the former.

At the beginning of 1787, Kelly quite literally jumped ship after the Liverpool docked in Liverpool. At this time, despite his former profitable line of work, Uncle W. had nevertheless

²⁸⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 100.

²⁸⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 101.

²⁹⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 101.

²⁹¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 98.

become "...so far [financially] reduced as to break up housekeeping and go to sea again, being about seventy years of age."²⁹² He had sold his estate and arranged for Martha to live in Liverpool with his late wife's friends. Whether Liverpool itself had become a difficult port to frequent due to Kelly's growing distaste for the slave trade or because he associated the city with his family's hard times, he nevertheless "...had now much reason to dislike this berth which brought me in 40 [shillings] per month."²⁹³ In a manner that was not dissimilar from his father's decision to ship out soon after the death of Kelly's mother and away from his family's troubles, he "wished to go abroad in the foreign trade, [and] Providence soon prepared [him] the means."²⁹⁴ While docked in Bristol, Kelly had made the acquaintance of a ship's husband,²⁹⁵ who maintained three trading vessels out of its port. The agent had purchased a vessel for the deep-sea service to Philadelphia and offered Kelly the chief mate's berth aboard the *Thetis*. Characteristically crediting his good fortune to God, he "readily embraced the proposal."²⁹⁶

4.3: Kelly Becomes Chief Mate of the *Thetis*

Kelly was twenty-three when he assumed the role of chief mate aboard the *Thetis*. Employment as mate or shipmaster aboard smaller vessels that coasted the British Isles and the United States' Atlantic shore were available and attainable for sailors in their early and mid-twenties.²⁹⁷ However, promotion to steady employment as a ship's officer aboard deep-sea voyages necessitated distinct intelligence, maritime experience, know-how, toughness, self-

²⁹² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 103.

²⁹³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 103.

²⁹⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 103.

²⁹⁵ In the early modern period, ships' husbands were agents who had the power to advance and lend money, made all necessary payments with regards to the freight carried aboard ship and received all money obtained from the sale of any freight, being accountable to the owners for all the transactions: Kemp, *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, 407.

²⁹⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 103.

²⁹⁷ Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 541.

control, and business sense; all characteristics that mattered vitally in the command of a ship.²⁹⁸ For this reason, deep-sea merchant captains, chief mates, surgeons, and petty officers tended to be in their early to mid-thirties and carried a certain eminence due to their onerous line of work.²⁹⁹ Kelly's education, his personal and professional relationships, and the varied maritime trades he had shipped with until this period had qualified him for such a position well ahead of his contemporaries.

As chief mate, Kelly was second in the chain of command to the shipmaster. Earle states that most senior positions on a ship required more education and influence than most sailors possessed.³⁰⁰ Chief mates had to be literate and sufficiently numerate to be competent at navigation in the event of the master's death.³⁰¹ Advantageously, due to Hall and Sampson's lessons in navigation aboard the Thynne and Grenville packets, Kelly was prepared for his station. In addition to navigational sense, the chief mate commanded the watch, oversaw the daily functioning of the ship, was charged with the internal management of the vessel, set the men to work, governed the crew, secured the cargo, and directed the ship's course.³⁰² To mirror his demanding labour role aboard ship, the mate also had an equally important social role. Shipmasters communicated with their crewmen mainly through the medium of the chief mate to maintain social isolation. Customarily, shipmasters did not venture beyond the quarter-deck or their cabin, areas aboard ship tars were not permitted to visit. This social separation between the highest ranked officer and the lowest ranking seamen was purposed to bolster the authority and respectability of the shipmaster and discourage familiarity.

²⁹⁸ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 29.

²⁹⁹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 156.

³⁰⁰ Earle, "The Origins and Careers of English Merchant Seamen," 138.

³⁰¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 84.

³⁰² Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 84.

Naturally, not every master revered the old Saying, “Familiarity Breeds Contempt.”³⁰³

After the *Thetis* set sail for Philadelphia in April 1787, Kelly was confronted with the uncomfortable dichotomy of his master, who:

...though a civil man and an excellent seaman, had nothing more of a gentleman about him than what was confined to his clothes; his whole delight was vulgarity in the extreme, and not only associated with the seamen but played at half-pence with the [ships'] boys.³⁰⁴

Kelly's master's lack of decorum put undue pressure on him to run a tight ship. In December, he noted how the captain had reportedly lost all respectability with the crew due to familiarity and that he “...found it necessary to kept a tight rein on [the crew] that they might feel who was their master.”³⁰⁵ Discipline was paramount at sea. That sailors laboured on a frail wooden vessel surrounded by omnipresent forces of nature, necessitated a special urgency to cooperative labour.³⁰⁶ Acting not only as chief mate, but as the *Thetis*' mock-master, Kelly implemented order partly out of his arsenal of Protestantism.

While Kelly sailed with the *Thetis*, he made a point to regularly attend church on Sundays. In Philadelphia, he visited Episcopal churches, a member church of the worldwide Anglican communion. Although Kelly espoused evangelicalism as his social mobility advanced, he never broke with the Church of England. In the middle-third of the eighteenth century, widespread Protestant revival was taking root in the West. Evangelical leaders set in motion a series of revivals called the Great Awakening in the American colonies and the Evangelical Revival Movement in Britain. These revivals were characterized as intense periods of unusual response to Gospel preaching that were linked with unusual efforts at godly living, marking this

³⁰³ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 155.

³⁰⁴ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 103.

³⁰⁵ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 108.

³⁰⁶ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 94.

period as a distinct evangelical era.³⁰⁷ The crucial spiritual emphasis for this movement was its stress on “primitive Christianity” or the faith-thought that had been practiced with great purity in the church’s very first centuries.³⁰⁸ Evangelical leaders looked back to the early church as a model of fervent piety and lamented the spiritual stagnation and moral corruption of the Church of England during the eighteenth century.³⁰⁹

Kelly identified with these beliefs when he sailed in the Philadelphia trade. Ashore, he “endeavored to visit a place of worship on the Sabbath, not only from custom but in hopes [his] good deeds would help [him] finally to Heaven.”³¹⁰ The High-Church Anglican ideal of Christian primitivism was founded in the promotion of personal piety and doing good among people as a whole.³¹¹ As a mechanism to transcend strict racial barriers and create a culture of social inclusion, evangelicalism, but particularly Methodism, welcomed Black converts.³¹² Indeed, John Wesley and his followers believed slavery and the slave trade to be amongst the greatest evils that a Christian should fight.³¹³ Olaudah Equiano, a Black late eighteenth century seafarer who purchased his own freedom from slavery and composed an autobiography about his life, was a fervent Methodist. Methodism strove to cultivate a spiritual community among members that concentrated on the soul and not the physical body, which was a truly radical philosophy at the height of the transatlantic slave trade. The Methodists urged adherents to cultivate a religious social life that encouraged gatherings of the faithful in small group meetings,

³⁰⁷ Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 18.

³⁰⁸ Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 66.

³⁰⁹ Hannah Wakefield, “Olaudah Equiano's Ecclesial World,” *Early American Literature*, 55, 3 (January 2020): 652-653.

³¹⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 104.

³¹¹ Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 67.

³¹² Wakefield, “Olaudah Equiano's Ecclesial World,” 656.

³¹³ Donald G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 5.

corporate prayer, group worship, and hymn singing.³¹⁴ Wesley's messages were not meant to convince the mind, but move the heart in a manner that ideally allowed converts to experience life-transforming results.³¹⁵

Kelly's hopes that his "good deeds" would secure him eternal life speak to the Wesleyan tenets. These tenets affirmed the centrality of justification by faith, but also (against the Calvinists) treated repentance from sin and church duties as good works pointing towards justification.³¹⁶ They proclaimed the assurance of salvation as a birthright of all Christians but also maintained that believers could expect varying degrees of assurance as they journeyed through life.³¹⁷ The adherence to scriptural holiness was purposed to transform one's personal life from "disobedience and hate" into "obedience and love," which meant avoiding evil, doing good, and attending the ordinances of the Church of England.³¹⁸ Wesley never considered his

³¹⁴ Hannah Wakefield, "Olaudah Equiano's Ecclesial World," 658.

³¹⁵ John Wesley (1703-1791) was an Anglican clergyman, evangelist, and founder, along with his brother Charles, of the Methodist movement in the Church of England. His distinct piety was originally inspired by Moravian missionaries aboard a turbulent voyage to Georgia, where they demonstrated an inner spiritual strength and faith throughout the perilous elements of a storm; seemingly unbothered by the bleak conditions unlike the ship's other passengers. Wesley was deeply moved by the pietism of the Moravian missionaries. He later joined a religious society comprised of Moravian Christians in London to learn more about their spirituality. In May 1738, Wesley experienced what he came to call his conversion experience to evangelicalism, where he felt his heart warmed and subsequently began his own ministry. Like George Whitefield, one of the leaders of the First Great Awakening (1730-1755), Wesley traveled across Great Britain and preached outdoors to large crowds. He helped form and organize Christian societies that rallied around personal moral accountability, religious instruction, and discipleship. Under Wesley's leadership, Methodists became leaders in many social issues of the day, such as prison reform and the abolition of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. Wesley's teachings were collectively known as Wesleyan theology or Methodism, which informed the doctrine of Methodist churches across the British Empire. One of Wesley's most compelling teachings was how by faith a believer was transformed into the likeness of Christ and could subsequently achieve a state where the love of God reigned in their hearts; giving them an inward, rather than an outward holiness. Through this doctrine, Methodists attracted many Black converts. See Colleen R. Derr, "The Role of Obedience in Child Faith Formation: Insights from the Teachings and Practices of John Wesley," *Christian Education Journal*, 11, 2 (September 2014): 367-382 for further discussion relating to Wesley's life and teachings.

³¹⁶ Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 126.

³¹⁷ Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 126.

³¹⁸ Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 5.

movement as separate from the Church of England and was known to urge members of his society to attend their local Anglican parish. In fact, while Kelly was docked in London in November 1788, he attended Allhallows Church one Sunday, to "...hear Mr. Wesley preach."³¹⁹

Kelly's own personal conduct and work ethic at sea demonstrates his Wesleyan thought. Methodists exhibited their salvation by refraining from drunkenness, slave trading, fighting, gambling, swearing, buying smuggled goods, charging excessive interest, or enjoying any self-indulgence. In addition, followers were to obey the Biblical injunction to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick.³²⁰ These instructions to the faithful were outlined by Wesley in the General Rules; a guide to Christian ethics and living. The idea of "conscience" was also a central component of Methodist thought that informed one's morality and shaped believers' conduct. Magra ascertains in "Faith at Sea" that the ways in which religious sailors, such as Kelly, perceived life at sea represents a significant measure of eighteenth-century religiosity that transposed itself to the maritime world.³²¹

Methodism had a reputation for preaching strict morality and its ordinances did not easily translate to the culture and environment of seafaring. Yet Kelly found methods to implement his own spiritual obedience aboard ship that promoted his crews' practical adherence to discipline. For example, he used his authority as chief mate to disallow drunkenness. When the *Thetis* was docked at Marseilles to unload a cargo of copper bolts for the French Navy in November 1787, Kelly noted how "[the crew] were much inclined to visit the cordial shops on shore, to which I kept them close at work from daylight till after dark."³²² While this made him unpopular with the crew, his master permitted Kelly's measures, for he was known to command the ship "to a late

³¹⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 119.

³²⁰ Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 5.

³²¹ Magra, "Faith at Sea," 90.

³²² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 108.

hour at night” while the captain engaged in licentious pursuits until “two or three in the morning.”³²³ Another vice Kelly combated aboard ship was gambling. When discussing the captain and crews’ incessant “card playing,” he noted that “...they could never prevail on me to associate with the seamen, as I was well aware that by so doing I should lose my respectability.”³²⁴ Despite his master being an “excellent seaman,” Kelly evidently thought of himself as the authoritatively competent voice aboard the *Thetis*. While sea-life could foster irreligious behaviour through weakening land-based religious principles,³²⁵ Kelly being a “strict churchman on Sundays”³²⁶ reinforced his faith at sea by regularly attending religious service ashore.

As Kelly advanced in his seafaring career, his interest and exposure to the evangelical trends within the Church of England influenced his conduct. In conjunction with Wesleyan thought, his efforts to prove to his crew “who was their master” demonstrates that through this position, Kelly developed his own definitions of respectable and despicable behaviour that were doubtlessly inspired by reformers such as the Wesleys and their published works as well as by the Bible itself, as Kelly kept one on his person throughout his employment in the merchant service.³²⁷ Unlike the master of the *Thetis*, Kelly understood that a shipmaster’s isolation and supreme authority produced cooperative respectability that was imperative for the preservation of ship and cargo. At age fifty,³²⁸ Kelly’s master undermined his own role aboard ship and complicated Kelly’s. Nevertheless, by adopting the social role of captain aboard ship in lieu of

³²³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 108.

³²⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 112.

³²⁵ Magra, “Faith at Sea,” 92.

³²⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 143.

³²⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³²⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 112.

his actual master, Kelly exhibited that not only did he possess the skills of a chief mate, but those of a shipmaster through his crew management and commercial abilities.

4.4: Kelly Becomes Shipmaster

Kelly's three years as chief mate aboard the *Thetis* conditioned him to receive an offer that evaded most mariners. Upon docking in Liverpool in the spring of 1789, Kelly was given a brig of his very own command in Bristol's domestic trade: the *Mayflower*. Where most young men by twenty-five who failed to secure promotion at sea would have steadily circled inwards towards home, fortune smiled differently at Kelly.³²⁹ After eleven years at sea, Kelly achieved the ambitious position and status of shipmaster; a role that his father personally modelled and endeavored to prepare both him and John to achieve, though John did not have the luck Kelly did to survive to socially advance. These factors aside, Vickers and Walsh report that a measurable characteristic of mariners who rose to positions of command was simply their determination to do so:³³⁰ a trait Kelly certainly exhibited throughout his memoir and continued to model until his final voyage to Britain.

From 1789 until 1795, Kelly shipped with varying vessels and trade routes. He accepted the posting as shipmaster and proceeded to command one voyage in the *Mayflower* between Bristol and Liverpool in mid-1789. However, soon after, his merchant offered him the position of master aboard the *John*; a brig in the Philadelphia trade. Kelly, never one to shy away from the challenges and distinction of deep-sea sailing, noted how this change of course "was good news to [him]."³³¹ Kelly commanded the *John* until it was outfitted as a letter of marque at the outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars in 1792. Between 1792 and 1793, Kelly was given

³²⁹ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 28.

³³⁰ Vickers and Walsh, "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring," 29.

³³¹ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 123.

temporary command of the *Mayflower* once again, though he “was not at all pleased that no other vessel was provided, for [him].”³³² His final command as shipmaster was aboard the *Thetis*, the very brig he sailed in as chief mate, between 1794 and 1795.

At only twenty-five-years-old, Kelly had reached the pinnacle of social mobility within the merchant service and could enjoy the advantages that commanding a vessel merited. Two plain benefits were an increase in wages and the ability to trade in credit. As chief mate, Kelly had received a monthly income of £3; a significant increase from the 22 shillings, 6 pence he earned with the packets or the 40 shillings he earned in the transport service. Upon his promotion to master, Kelly’s wages increased to £5 per month, which was fairly standard for the merchant service during this period. However, despite this raise, Kelly noted that £5 was “a miserable income for the duty, anxiety and responsibility of a shipmaster.”³³³ Even during the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802), Kelly never made more in wages and perquisites than “barely £75 per annum,” and from this income, supported three of his relatives.³³⁴ If money was not already tight, out of his wages, Kelly “always [had] to pay for [his] board whilst at home in Liverpool” and accordingly “could save nothing.”³³⁵

But if amassing wealth was a primary motivation for Kelly, he would not have been a master in the merchant service. The Navy was a profession of high honour that not only attracted the nobility and gentry, but it also remained open to talented seamen of relatively humble origins to become officers. According to Rodger, for young officers who aspired to command, nothing was more swiftly effective than to take an enemy ship of equal or greater force during wartime;

³³² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 180.

³³³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 124.

³³⁴ Kelly does not explicitly state which relatives he was supporting, but his elderly Uncle W., his cousin (Uncle W.’s daughter), and Martha, who was living with their cousin in Liverpool, were the likely recipients: Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 124.

³³⁵ Kelly and Garstin Samuel Kelly, 124.

the captured prize supplementing officers' and tars' wages alike.³³⁶ However, from the time Kelly was a boy, his father "was averse to [his] going into the Navy," and explained that "unless midshipmen had opulent friends to support their appearance on the quarter-deck, they were treated with not only neglect but contempt."³³⁷ Other than joining the transport service, which was itself a civilian organization though affiliated with the Royal Navy, Kelly conveyed little desire to join the Navy, even after the death of his father. This might have had something to do with the fact that while he was momentarily ashore in London with the Grenville packet, he was "overhauled but twice by the [press] gangs," but escaped their attempts to lure him aboard a man-of-war.³³⁸ On a similar note, during wartime, British privateer captains could enjoy an 8 per cent share in any captured prize, with the remainder of the ship's company sharing 32 per cent of the value of the prize between them.³³⁹ Though Kelly's merchant showed interest in privateering during the French Revolutionary War and offered him the command of a letter of marque in 1793, "[Kelly] considered [privateering] in no other light but a kind of licensed robbery, or as plunderage of peaceable and innocent individuals."³⁴⁰

It is little surprise, therefore, that Kelly also declined an offer to take a chief mate's place in a slave ship that same year. In addition to a monthly income of £4, mates aboard Guineamen often received the revenue of two "privilege" enslaved individuals that were bought with the merchants' capital and sold for the mate's own benefit at the going market rate.³⁴¹ However, Kelly, likely compelled by his Methodist beliefs, noted how "this proposal I declined, being well

³³⁶ Rodger, *The Wooden World* 295.

³³⁷ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 27.

³³⁸ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 46.

³³⁹ Rodger, *The Wooden World*, 128.

³⁴⁰ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 179.

³⁴¹ Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking, 2007), 133.

aware of the iniquity practiced in that trade.”³⁴² The year 1793 was marked by vast bankruptcies in Britain and the United States due to the Bank of England’s efforts to crack down on the rampant false credit within the empire. Kelly noted how he and the port of Liverpool were “especially affected by the storm.”³⁴³ Indeed, during 1792 and 1793 Kelly sailed once more with the *Mayflower* in the domestic trade due precisely to these difficult economic times, though reluctantly. Nevertheless, it appears that Kelly remained dissuaded by the profitable line of work that the Navy, privateering or slaving offered experienced sailors. If Kelly was in want of income, which he admitted he was, especially with three relatives dependent on his wages, then his decision to remain in the merchant service was motivated by another matter: his strong sense of morality. Kelly likely would have been familiar with Jesus Christ’s warning in the Gospel of Matthew pertaining to material wealth: “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”³⁴⁴ While he considered himself a poor man, Kelly’s principles remained intact.

4.5 Kelly’s Reform Efforts at Sea

As an evangelical shipmaster, Kelly clung to the exhortations of Methodist reformers, but particularly to those of John Wesley and his instruction to “reform the nation, more particularly the Church [of England]; to spread scriptural holiness over the land,”³⁴⁵ -- or perhaps, also to the sea. Through the sermons that Kelly absorbed from reformers ashore at church, he was among the seamen who welcomed religion and reform on the waterfront and began to espouse middle class values of liberty. Many evangelical leaders were middle or upper class and were alarmed at

³⁴² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 196.

³⁴³ Kelly and Gustin, Samuel Kelly, 178.

³⁴⁴ Matthew 16:26 (KJB).

³⁴⁵ Mathews, Slavery and Methodism, 5.

the sinful behaviour of the working class.³⁴⁶ Gilje asserts that the evangelical call between the individual and God ignited a “new morality that demanded a certain mode of behaviour and insisted that the individual claim responsibility for his own actions.”³⁴⁷ Evangelicals took the ideals of revolution and incorporated them into a middle-class mentality that offered its own ideas of liberty; namely, a liberty to open one’s heart to God and pursue one’s own economic interests through hard work and personal discipline instead of overthrowing the existing order.³⁴⁸

As Rediker, Lemisch, Linebaugh, and Magra demonstrate in their works that maintain the prevalence of maritime radicalism³⁴⁹ during the revolutionary era, American sailors appear to have been predisposed to an idea of liberty that often was expressed through pre-war anti-impressment riots that opposed the Royal Navy and the British government in the colonies. To eighteenth century seamen, impressment into the British naval service was a form of state-sponsored slavery.³⁵⁰ Magra claims that the ever-present risk of impressment fueled American maritime labourers’ resentment towards the top-down structure of British society and through it, merged lived experiences aboard men-of-war with radical ideas.³⁵¹ However, as a British seaman, Kelly embodies not a radical philosophy of political reform, which often manifested itself in rioting and violence towards press gangs and Navy officers, but a liberal one through the medium of evangelicalism. Perhaps being a seaman who witnessed and experienced the threat of impressment throughout his career and understood that seafarers’ lexicons were deeply ingrained by freedom and liberty, especially American seamen, Kelly utilized religion to not only enact

³⁴⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 78.

³⁴⁷ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 198.

³⁴⁸ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 198.

³⁴⁹ Maritime radicalism: radical idea and behaviour directly related to life at sea: Christopher P. Magra, “Anti-Impressment Riots and the Origins of the Age of Revolution,” *International Review of Social History*, 58, 21 (December 2013): 134.

³⁵⁰ Magra, “Anti-Impressment Riots,” 140.

³⁵¹ Magra, “Anti-Impressment Riots,” 143.

shipboard discipline, but offer an alternative, less violent ideology than radicalism, which could save one's body and soul.

During the last six years of his career, Kelly harnessed his role as commanding officer to gain total control over his company's conduct, work ethic, and even their leisure, likely sharing the sentiment of Reverend Edward Dorr Griffin, who explained to his New York congregation, "As ruined and immortal beings, seamen are certainly the proper objects of Christian compassion,"³⁵² Kelly perceived the wooden world he commanded as fertile missional grounds for religious implementation and conversion. Thus, he shaped his company's work culture in such a way as to reflect the ideals of evangelicalism.

Prior to the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Church held a firm grip over maritime culture and devised tangible means of reminding sailors of their religious duties. However, the Reformation disrupted these daily rhythms of religious adherence and ultimately left the care of souls in the hands of shipmasters.³⁵³ Sailors' lack of religious reverence in the post-Reformation age was what Kempenfelt believed led to British sailors being "more licentious than those of other nations."³⁵⁴ As a means to reinforce shipboard discipline through the implementation of religious rituals, Middleton and Kempenfelt headed the Blue Light movement. Though this aquatic evangelical sub-revival was closely affiliated with the Royal Navy, merchant vessels also saw "psalm-singers" gather together below deck during the late eighteenth century. Blue Lights, as these evangelical naval officers were called, were socially and politically conservative, but were nevertheless certain that the status quo would not do; tainted as it was with religious

³⁵² Edward Dorr Griffin, *The Claims of Seamen: A Sermon Preached November 7, 1819, in the Brick Church, New York: For the Benefit of the Mariner Missionary Society of that City*(New York, 1819), 7.

³⁵³ With shrines and images aboard ship, a liturgy of prayer marked the passing hours at sea and church-based fraternities cared for sailors ashore: Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 9

³⁵⁴ Barham and Laughton, *The Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham*, 308.

lethargy and moral decline.³⁵⁵ For these staunch Protestants, a primary motivation for reintroducing Christianity into British maritime life was to link ideological and work-related discipline as one in order to make “disciples” of seamen. Aboard his various merchant vessels, Kelly contributed to this broader movement at sea by installing methods of reform at his shipboard level.

How exactly Kelly wielded and implemented his religious and professional authority at sea was the culmination of his own treatment as a tar and officer. In the packet and transport services, Kelly reported how “during these several years I suffered innumerable hardships and ill-treatment”³⁵⁶ at the hands of his superiors. As previously discussed, aboard the *Thetis* as chief mate, he sailed under a master who personified everything that Methodists believed was morally corrupt and necessitated spiritual transformation in the maritime sector. Thus, as a master, Kelly attempted to right the wrongs of his own past treatment as well as reincorporate Christianity’s influence into shipboard culture. Although doubtlessly unaware of Kempenfelt’s personal sentiments about Navy sailors, his attitude pertaining to them perhaps mirrored Kelly’s own: [to Middleton] “Don’t let anyone imagine that this [religious] discipline will disgust the men, and give them a dislike to the service, for the very reverse will be the consequence.”³⁵⁷

In his memoir, Kelly gave rich detail as to the ways he endeavored to wed religious and shipboard discipline aboard ship. While Rediker claims that religion during times of crisis could be “worse than irreligion; [as] it could be dangerous if allowed in any way to stand between a seaman and the task at hand,”³⁵⁸ Kelly’s religion effectively commanded his seamanship.

³⁵⁵ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 29.

³⁵⁶ Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 233.

³⁵⁷ Barham and Laughton, *The Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham*, 308.

³⁵⁸ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 175.

Crediting his “kind Providence [as] being the director [of his ship],”³⁵⁹ he recalled an event where the Thetis’ wheel-rope was jammed and the ship was in danger of running at high speed into port. However, Kelly “had long known that a grain of exertion in the time of danger was of more value than a load of unavailing lamentations.”³⁶⁰ Due to Kelly’s quick action, the crew and ship effectively escaped shipwreck. Far from despairing of the ship’s inevitable doom, such as many of the crew did, Kelly immediately and knowledgably applied his practical expertise to the situation at hand, giving thanks to God upon redirecting the ships’ course and evading port. Thus, Kelly’s evangelical faith was not misplaced or an inconvenience to his seamanship. Indeed, through his astute abilities as commander to effectively avoid danger, he illustrated that faith and prowess can be mutually beneficial.

Kelly’s gratitude to his God for rescuing his ship and crew from perilous situations bolstered his quest to influence faith aboard ship. He sought to obtain the best quality of provisions for the crew and “laid no restrictions on the quantity, unless I found some wasted, and then two or three days’ short allowance taught them its value.”³⁶¹ When the weather was severe and his company’s clothes wet, he gave them each a dram of spirits, and a bottle of rum on Saturday nights, “provided that their behaviour merited it.”³⁶² He noted that whenever the crew was unloading the cargo ashore, he would assist them, but after “being the humble servant to the crew during their shipment on shore,” he would converse with them little at sea and instead “[issued] [his] orders through the medium of the mate, which kept up [the mate’s] respectability.”³⁶³ Kelly “neither made use of swearing, nor allowed any” and gave the mate

³⁵⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 193.

³⁶⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 193.

³⁶¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 165.

³⁶² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

orders to punish all “improper language” by giving additional work to those who “made use of profane words, and also plenty of work to those who manifested a disposition to shrink from duty.”³⁶⁴ Kelly allowed no “unnecessary work on the Sabbath” and encouraged the crew to read their Bibles and “sometimes lent mine when wanted.”³⁶⁵ He allowed no one to “chastise the [ship] boys but [himself]” and indulged the men when seasick, noting how he “experienced very cruel treatment myself when a boy” when he sailed aboard the Thynne for the first time. Cognizant to lead by example, Kelly noted how when a sailor did not obey orders as “quick as [he] wished, [he] speedily moved past him and preformed the work [him]self, giving a reprimand.”³⁶⁶ Kelly explained that having grown up in a hard-working household and gone to sea at fourteen, he had been “brought up to labor” and assisted his crew in carrying out daily tasks when additional strength was needed. He noted how doing so “always kept [his] hands hard in the palms, and encouraged the men in their work.”³⁶⁷ Kelly rewarded “industrious able seamen” by not overworking them and gave such members a glass of grog “to certify that [their] behaviour was not unnoticed.”³⁶⁸ Samuel defended his professional and virtuous measures by stating how “this treatment always kept me popular with brave seamen, but backward lazy people seldom offered themselves a second voyage.”³⁶⁹ Ultimately, Kelly’s efforts at sea can be seen as a means to not only reform the conduct of his company, but in fact his own socio-cultural depiction as a tar.

While ocean-going sailors seemed to shore-based society like a race apart, a breed of men whose habits, dress, appearance, and language were distinctive, Kelly modelled a contrasting

³⁶⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

³⁶⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 166.

image to his contemporaries.³⁷⁰ Due in large part to his belief-system that concentrated on faith, morality, and the Bible, Kelly endeavoured to conduct himself and his men according to the principles of the evangelical movement within the established Church. At sea as on land, Kelly's attempts to reform his immediate maritime world reflected Wesley and the Methodists' central message: those who shared in this evangelical faith must engage in evangelistic activity wherever their sphere of influence resided.³⁷¹

As a shipmaster, Kelly's social influence was substantial. Working in an environment alongside men who were culturally renowned for their reckless pursuit of transient pleasures such as drink, sex, conviviality, brawling or gambling, with little regard for moral convention, it is not surprising that as an evangelical, Kelly perceived his ship and sector in grave need of reform.³⁷² Indeed, his actions such as when he assisted his crew in unloading cargo on shore and whenever "additional strength was required" is in alignment with the idealism that Blue Lights strove to cultivate at sea: grouping officers and men together in a religious unity that bridged social status.³⁷³ Although Kelly lived during a post-Reformation era at sea, his involvement in the evangelical movement compelled him to reintroduce Christian principles to sailors; a collective that, to Kelly, lacked proper command both professionally and morally. In alignment with the Blue Lights' message and the broader movement of evangelical living, Kelly endeavoured to combine the seemingly incompatible worlds of secularism and spiritualism aboard his vessels.

4.6: Kelly's Reform Efforts On Land

³⁷⁰ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 6.

³⁷¹ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 29.

³⁷² Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 9.

³⁷³ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 30.

The merchant service was no different than the packet or transport services with regards to Kelly's visitations ashore. As a shipmaster, Kelly spent months at port, predominately in Liverpool, until his merchant ordered him to collect and deliver freight to Europe, the United States or West Indies. When business was slow, Kelly traveled to the west of England to see his relations. Kelly's evangelistic fervor, however, persisted on shore; often reinforced by his regular attendance at church on Sundays and lodgings in Liverpool.

At his lodgings, Kelly sought to effectively reform the conduct of his fellow boarders, most of whom were also mariners. By 1794, Kelly had resided periodically at the same boardinghouse for seven years and "exerted [his] influence occasionally to adopt regulations for the control of ill-bred, illiberal lodgers."³⁷⁴ On one occasion, he sought to teach his fellow mariners manners at the dinner table to ensure that every one seated had a turn at the best cut of roast after a slave ship surgeon reportedly "helped himself to at least three people's share [of food]."³⁷⁵ Satisfied by his efforts, Kelly noted how "in this manner I checked many a greedy ill-behaved lodger."³⁷⁶ However, just as Kelly came and went regularly from his lodgings, so did the sailors he shared a table with. Whenever he arrived back from sea, he regretted that "the good [he] had introduced one voyage was all undone by the time [he] returned."³⁷⁷ Nevertheless, he simply reintroduced his standards of propriety to the residence and recycled his efforts among new boarders. The Second Great Awakening inspired reformers to establish Christian boardinghouses for sailors, where morality would reign and there would be libraries with the proper literature for the edification and entertainment of seamen.³⁷⁸ Indeed, by the 1830s,

³⁷⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 198.

³⁷⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 198.

³⁷⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 198.

³⁷⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 198.

³⁷⁸ Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 209.

reformers opened temperance boardinghouses in America's largest seaports. However, prior to the nineteenth century, evangelical sailors like Kelly simply had to make do with their secular environments and be the catalysts of moral and civil reform themselves.

If not in Liverpool attempting to correct the conduct of off-duty sailors, Kelly sought the company of his community and comfort of Cornwall. After Kelly was discharged from his post as shipmaster aboard the *Mayflower* in the domestic trade, he was “determined to pay a visit to [his] friends in the west.”³⁷⁹ He associated his faith with St Ives somewhat, as he reflected how “In yon church on one of the lower hills, for more than six long years I heard, once a week, a dry, sluggish lesson on morality.”³⁸⁰ Perhaps his early exposure to Biblical lessons from Protestant pulpits confirms Magra's theory of how land-based organized religious training directly impacted eighteenth century sailors' lives and worldviews at sea.³⁸¹ Kelly intended to spend a few weeks in St Ives, where he was heartily welcomed by his family, friends, and townsmen; specifically an uncle, his married nieces, and “the surgeon,” a childhood friend who hosted Kelly at his home and was “possessed of an excellent garden and summerhouse [which was] “delightfully situated for overlooking the pier, bay, and pilchard fishery.”³⁸²

The St Ives Kelly visited at twenty-nine-years-old in 1793 was recognizable, but altered. Physically, Kelly commented on the positive improvements made on the town's infrastructure, its roads and walkways especially. However, relationally, his native place lacked close family to heartily embrace him home on this visit. His mother was long dead, as was his father and brother. Uncle W. is not mentioned again in Kelly's memoir after he returned to sea and sold his estate. And his sister, Martha, likely married in Liverpool and continued to live there with their

³⁷⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 180.

³⁸⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 192.

³⁸¹ Magra, “Faith at Sea,” 89.

³⁸² Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 181.

cousin, Uncle W.'s daughter. Nevertheless, to Kelly, St Ives still had its cliffs that overlooked the sea, townsfolk that persistently welcomed him home after long voyages, and the memories of his boyhood that he was fond of recollecting. Ashore in Cornwall, there seemed to be little concern or urgency for reform. Perhaps to Kelly, St Ives served as a respite not only from his responsibilities as a shipmaster, but his engagement with evangelistic activity. The place itself was home and appeared to retain its idealism, requiring little bettering at Kelly's behest.

Shortly after his visit home, Kelly exhibited a growing distaste and impatience with seafaring. In 1794, he had turned thirty and began to suffer from bouts of stomach pain. The French Revolutionary War was burgeoning and the owners of the *Thetis*, Kelly's vessel, had been dealt serious financial blows due to the implications of the fight at sea. Nevertheless, for want of vessels to load cash crops for Britain, Kelly accepted a freight to the West Indies, specifically St Domingo, Hispaniola, and Jamaica, "never liking to shrink from duty."³⁸³ Although Kelly retained his characteristic resolve to work faithfully, with diligence, the same could not be said of other sailors. He shipped a young mate due to a lack of available seamen and experienced officers. Kelly called his mate "extremely vain, ignorant, and assuming," traits that earned him the moniker of "Mr. Self-Sufficiency."³⁸⁴ But as seamen were scarce during wartime, Kelly hired who was obtainable. In his desperation, he sought the help of a crimper,³⁸⁵ who procured only one able-seaman in addition to four "boys," all under fifteen, and a carpenter that Kelly hired. Before setting sail in September 1794, Kelly scraped together a motley crew of thirteen members, four of whom were boys and two of whom were lame.³⁸⁶

³⁸³ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 197.

³⁸⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 202.

³⁸⁵ Crimps made it their business to persuade seamen to desert from a ship in order to sell them to another or to deliver them to the press gang on payment of head money: Kemp, *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, 213.

³⁸⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 204.

Endeavouring to evade French cruisers, Kelly sailed to the Caribbean through the North Atlantic Channel. He stopped briefly in St Domingo in late October and continued to Hispaniola in early November, where he docked for one month. Kelly managed to dodge the French privateers who lurked around the smaller islands on route to Port-de-Paix; however, shortly after arrival, two separate Navy officers pressed two of his seamen. With two other men ill on board, Kelly was reduced to three able, healthy, seamen besides the boys. If the Navy preying on his company and French letters of marque, his ship, was not already cause for disquiet, Kelly's health continued to deteriorate. He took bitters to fortify his stomach, but bewailed that "if a person wishes to know what trouble and anxiety means he may find an index to it during war in the countenance of a careful conscientious shipmaster."³⁸⁷

There was little reprieve from anxiety or sickness in Jamaica. At Port Royal, three more of Kelly's crew were pressed and his carpenter and two remaining seamen absconded upon arrival in Kingston. In addition, Kelly docked at a poor time for freights, noting how had he "arrived a month sooner I should have had a better chance" at procuring cargo for Britain.³⁸⁸ Between 1793 and 1798, the North Atlantic seaboard and Caribbean experienced widespread sickness and high mortality due to a yellow fever pandemic. The virus spread by the great population movements caused by revolution and war. Fifty thousand British soldiers and seamen are said to have died in the West Indies in this period and an equal number been discharged as invalids.³⁸⁹ Indeed, Kelly's four boys contracted yellow fever while docked in Kingston and one died. He remarked that "most of the ships in the harbour had the yellow fever on board" and

³⁸⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 189.

³⁸⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 209.

³⁸⁹ David Geggus, "Yellow Fever in the 1790s: The British Army in Occupied Saint Domingue," Cambridge University Press, 23 (1979): 38.

noted the “colours of different ships were almost daily hoisted in mourning.”³⁹⁰ Kelly hired a Black man named King to assist him and his mate with caring for the sick boys. Upon their recovery, he paid King his wages, but expressed amazement that King refused to accept payment for the day he put the dead boy in his coffin and assisted in the burial. Upon inquiring of the reason for King’s “generosity,” King remarked that “It was God Almighty’s work and I will have nothing for it.”³⁹¹ Not only did King’s medical care and Christian charity towards Kelly’s deceased sailor undoubtedly impress him, but his reverence towards God perhaps moved Kelly to wield his influence as an evangelical shipmaster ashore one last time.

Due to the yellow fever pandemic and the French War impeding business ashore and voyages at sea for merchantmen, the *Thetis* was docked for a total of seven months in Jamaica. “Much dislik[ing] an idle life,” Kelly searched for opportunities to inject his social influence into environments that troubled him during this period. King’s kindness appeared to directly inspire Kelly to seek out a Black Baptist church in Kingston which he believed King was in the habit of attending. The congregation was likely comprised of both enslaved and free Blacks, as Kingston was home to over 20,000 Blacks by 1788, 3,280 of whom were free coloureds.³⁹² Keith Mason asserts that because both free and enslaved Blacks were widely discriminated against throughout the Atlantic World by White settlers, Blacks were disposed towards cultural and social separatism, centering around evangelical religion, in particular.³⁹³

Kelly’s interest in religion appears to transcend divisive and openly hostile racial and social barriers in Jamaica. And he did not attend “Mr. Lyle,” the minister’s, church alone. Kelly

³⁹⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 210.

³⁹¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 211.

³⁹² Burnard and Hart, “Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina,” 219.

³⁹³ Keith Mason, “The American Loyalist Problem of Identity in the Revolutionary Atlantic World,” in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* ed. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012): 64.

remarked that he “had the pleasure, in company with two other shipmasters, of protecting [Mr. Lyle’s] congregation from insult” occasionally.³⁹⁴ Kingston had more enslaved Blacks and free people of colour in its population than any town in eighteenth century British America.³⁹⁵ By 1788, there were 6,539 White people in Kingston, though enslaved people accounted for nearly two-thirds of the population.³⁹⁶ On Sundays, Kelly reported that Kingston’s White inhabitants were more “frequently intoxicated on [this day] than on any other day of the week.” On one particular Sabbath day, Kelly and his colleagues stood at the church door to guard the Black congregation from several young, drunk, White clerks who had arrived on horseback and had been reportedly “drinking to excess.” Requesting to ride their mounts into the chapel to effectively sack it, Kelly noted the clerks’ disappointment at “finding [he and his associates] disposed to protect the assembly,” afterwards “retir[ing] crestfallen.”³⁹⁷ This attempted assault was not an isolated incident. There was a trap-door installed near Mr. Lyle’s pulpit for his congregation to escape through in the case of an attack from Kingston’s White inhabitants.

Although this is the most detailed and dramatic account of Kelly’s opposition to White aggression in his memoir, he expressed sympathy towards Black peoples’ social inferiority repeatedly. To be sure, it was the slave trade that Kelly condemned and did not associate with, but chattel slavery as an economic system was an immovable extension of the trade and it also troubled him, though he never explicitly reviled it. On Jamaica’s city streets, Kelly witnessed the cruel public punishments inflicted on those whom he called the “poor slaves at Kingston.”³⁹⁸

When passing through the street in Kingston on one occasion, Kelly “saw a black woman with

³⁹⁴ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 211.

³⁹⁵ Burnard and Hart, “Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina,” 219.

³⁹⁶ Burnard and Hart, “Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina,” 219.

³⁹⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 211.

³⁹⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 25.

her hands tied behind her, and on inquiry found she had not washed the clothes clean.”³⁹⁹ His concern may appear subtle, but his choice to inquire personally as to the reason for the enslaved woman’s public ridicule could demonstrate his interest in her well-being. Kelly also mentioned an enslaved boy named Marcus three separate times who shipped with him on his first voyage aboard the Thynne packet. Shipmaster Hall had purchased Marcus on a previous stopover in the West Indies and sold him to a postmaster in Madeira. Whenever Kelly stopped at the post office in Madeira to deliver and receive mail, he remarked that “[his] old friend Marcus was glad to see [him]”⁴⁰⁰ and “returned to the ship well pleased with the gratitude of this poor African, who probably recollected that I had often given him a piece of gingerbread cake.”⁴⁰¹ Not only does Kelly demonstrate sympathy towards Marcus by calling him “poor,” perhaps an implicit allusion to and recognition of his bondage, but he also illustrates compassion by offering him sweets and calling him friend. Despite his family’s associations with slavery and the slave trade, Samuel desisted from any voluntary involvement in furthering the institution. Throughout his career and life stages, Kelly evidently saw himself as an ally and a friend, if not a saviour, to both free and enslaved Blacks.

Perhaps Kelly’s defense of Mr. Lyle’s church congregation against a few of the White pro-slavery residents of Kingston is reflective of his personal relationships with King and Mr. Lyle as well as the broader social, political, and religious forces that were attacking the nucleus of the slave trade in the West Indies at that time: the abolition movement. By the late 1780s and early 1790s, the abolition movement was gaining traction and public attention around the world. Founders, Thomas Clarkson, Grenville Sharp, and their Quaker associates called their committee

³⁹⁹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 26.

⁴⁰⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 31.

⁴⁰¹ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 18.

the “Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade” and later simply the “Abolition Society.” The group was originally comprised of twelve members: nine Quakers and three Anglicans. Anglican membership within the society increased the committee’s likelihood of influencing Parliament, but its values were mainly nonconformist and sympathetic to the Great Awakening. The committee’s most prominent member, William Wilberforce, an ardent evangelical and member of Parliament, delivered two parliamentary bills to abolish the slave trade, one in 1791 and the other in 1792; the second of which was passed years later. Kelly is not explicit about he and his colleagues’ motivations for protecting the church, but his actions were in alignment with evangelical principles that were woven into the fabric of the abolition movement and effectively provided Black people with networks of support not often available elsewhere.⁴⁰²

By the mid-1790s, anti-slavery sentiment was widespread throughout the Atlantic World. Abolitionist propaganda circulated throughout Britain and the colonies, millions signed abolition petitions, and leading politicians, such as Wilberforce, championed their cause.⁴⁰³ True, British slavers and West Indian planters found allies in imperial officials and members of the aristocracy who stressed the importance of the slave trade to national commerce and prosperity.⁴⁰⁴ However, like the congregation at Mr. Lyle’s church, many Blacks found unexpected allies in White evangelical shipmasters, whose vessels shared a harbour with incoming slave ships from West Africa and who personally breathed in the stench of the trade’s sins.⁴⁰⁵ Having no monetary

⁴⁰² Wakefield, “Equiano’s Ecclesial World,” 656.

⁴⁰³ Brooke N. Newman, *A Dark Inheritance: Blood, Race, and Sex in Colonial Jamaica* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018), 181.

⁴⁰⁴ Newman, *A Dark Inheritance*, 181.

⁴⁰⁵ Kelly’s description of Kingston’s harbour in November 1794: “I found myself now surrounded by slave ships from Africa, the stench from which about daylight was intolerable and the noise through the day very unpleasant.” Kelly and Garstin, *Samuel Kelly*, 210.

stakes or interests in the slave trade themselves, Kelly and his colleagues acted as if it was their moral imperative to defy the system of slavery in Kingston, at least within the church. Insisting on brotherly love and the significance of the soul, regardless of race, Methodism's inclusive messages likely compelled Kelly to stand defiant against those who meant harm to Black bodies and communities. After all, if race was secondary, and the soul of primary importance, to Methodists, then as a member of a diverse corporate body of believers, Kelly perhaps used his social influence to inform the pro-slavery White residents of Kingston that reform, in the broadest sense of the word, was unavoidable.

4.7: Back to Britain

In the spring of 1795, Kelly's health continued to deteriorate. He had a wound that needed dressing and required bed rest for several weeks. He recovered in time to gather a crew and load the *Thetis* with the May fleet to Liverpool.⁴⁰⁶ With the French War still waging, British warships escorted merchantmen in large fleets across the Atlantic Ocean. This specific convoy to Britain was composed of 120 merchantmen who sailed under four warships. However, despite Kelly's physical ability to set sail with the fleet, his command aboard ship fell on deaf ears. His crew mutinied against him shortly before disembarking from Kingston's harbour, orchestrated by the chief mate.

Prior to the mutiny, Kelly had refused the mate's request to smuggle rum into Britain, but their shipboard relationship had been tenuous since setting sail to St Domingo. Kelly's unwillingness to compromise his Methodist values culminated in his crews' refusal to work until he gave the mate a note for 50 guineas and the seamen notes for 45 guineas each, which "[he] was obliged to comply with before [he] could get up anchor and join the fleet."⁴⁰⁷ The three

⁴⁰⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 214.

⁴⁰⁷ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 221.

month voyage back to Britain cost Kelly the exorbitant sum of £383, which he lamented “would probably be spent in drunkenness and debauchery to the great injury of soul and body.”⁴⁰⁸ While his crew profited extortionately from this voyage, Kelly’s wages went unchanged at £15.

Despite his evangelical fervor and evangelistic efforts, Kelly’s last expedition recorded in his memoir, to the West Indies and back to Britain, spanning eleven months, appears disastrous. He arrived in the Caribbean during the height of a yellow fever pandemic which took the life of one of his young seamen and stalled his business. His crew members were quickly pressed by the Navy and those who were not, absconded upon arrival in Jamaica. Though he successfully evaded French cruisers, the intense stress of sailing during wartime further impeded his compromised health. And despite his faithful evangelism, the active proclamation of the message of the Gospel through missional activity,⁴⁰⁹ he was met with resistance, both ashore at Mr. Lyle’s church and at sea, by his crew who had mutinied against him. On the voyage back to Britain, a passenger the *Thetis* had acquired in Kingston additionally resisted Kelly’s religious rituals. He noted how:

[this passenger] saw me frequently reading in my Bible, and as he had imbibed principles of infidelity, he endeavoured to ridicule the Scriptures, saying that they have been proved a fabrication, erroneously translated from the original text to mislead the ignorant... this representation staggered me...⁴¹⁰

Based on Kelly’s final voyage, it seems that his religious beliefs were being actively discouraged, if not assaulted, by his company through their oppositional conduct and verbal challenges. Rediker is not incorrect in his assertions that a seaman’s work experience could generate irreligion through a process of dechristianization.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁸ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 222.

⁴⁰⁹ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 29.

⁴¹⁰ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 229.

⁴¹¹ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 174.

Yet this culture of apparent dechristianization aboard ship was precisely why Kempenfelt called eighteenth century Navy sailors “more licentious than those of other nations. The reason is, they have less religion” due to a lack of spiritual command to enforce discipline.⁴¹² Thus, the resistance that Kelly received largely due to his religious convictions and practices near the end of his career only reinforces the Blue Lights’ belief that the ship was a fertile missional ground for evangelistic activity. Kelly was not an effective shipmaster or evangelical Christian because his crew espoused his beliefs and reformed their “licentious” behaviours to reflect his own. He was effective because his beliefs existed and persisted, directly influencing his seamanship until the bitter end. While some scholars have otherwise accepted the notion that learning to live as a seaman meant subordinating religious preferences to practical activity,⁴¹³ Kelly prioritized each and compromised neither. In the end, he recovered from his passenger’s provocations, discrediting his arguments due to his immoral character.

4.8: Conclusion

After a long career at sea and approximately 100,000 miles traversed across the Atlantic Ocean, Kelly retired from deep-sea sailing in 1795. He was thirty-one-years-old. While his memoir concludes with his arrival in London with the May fleet in August, his life endured for twenty-seven more years.

While some shipmasters remained bachelors all their lives, Kelly simply made it to the quarterdeck before he did, the altar. On March 10, 1804, Kelly married Eleanor, also called “Ellen,” Williams Jose in Bristol. He was forty, his bride, twenty-four. Together, the Kelly’s had eight children. It is probable that Kelly found work in the domestic trade again between Liverpool and Bristol after his return from the West Indies. It was a route he was familiar with,

⁴¹² Barham and Laughton, *The Letters and Papers of Charles, Lord Barham* , 308.

⁴¹³ Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 174.

had pre-existing professional connections in, and it allowed him to remain close to his family who appeared to live in Bristol. Or perhaps like Ashley Bowen, Kelly found employment at Bristol's port as a rigger or in an adjacent maritime trade.⁴¹⁴ In any case, it appeared that Kelly heeded the orders a doctor gave him shortly after his arrival in London, requesting him to "use less exercise for awhile."⁴¹⁵ Between 1805 and 1814, five of Kelly and Eleanor's children were born in Bristol except one son who was born in St Ives in 1810. Several of the Kelly children were named after Samuel's own family: there was Mary (b. 1807), named after his mother, Samuel (b. 1810-1868), named after his father and born in St Ives, and John (b. 1812), named after his brother who died at sea. The others, Edwin (b. 1805-1815), Ellen (b. 1808), Caroline (b. 1814-1903), Edwin (b. 1817-1900), and Timothy (b. 1820) were names likely attributed to Eleanor's relations.

Samuel and Eleanor's two youngest children, Edwin, named after their first-born son who died in 1815, and Timothy, were both born in St Ives. Perhaps with the elder Edwin's death, the Kelly family relocated back to Cornwall where Samuel always obtained a "welcome reception;" in time to have two more children and compose his autobiography before his death. Though Kelly credited St Ives with "many a happy scene and caused [him] to recollect many an unhappy circumstance,"⁴¹⁶ with all its varied associations and memoires, to Kelly, it was still home. Perhaps especially to a transient shipmaster. His health had evidently improved since he left deep-sea sailing and adopted a more sedentary lifestyle in Britain, but at the age of fifty-eight,

⁴¹⁴ Vickers, "An Honest Tar," 544.

⁴¹⁵ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 232.

⁴¹⁶ Kelly and Garstin, Samuel Kelly, 192.

Kelly died in his native place and was buried on December 20, 1822. He was survived by his widow and their seven children.⁴¹⁷

Kelly commanded his ships in a manner that wedded his seamanship with evangelical Protestantism. The Anglican faith that he never strayed from as a young sailor only solidified as his responsibilities increased aboard ship. Moreover, Kelly's religion was not a stagnant, unresponsive element of his life. On the contrary, his Methodism spurred him to enact religious reforms aboard ship and on land within a maritime culture plagued by "dechristianization" and "licentiousness." Although Kelly's evangelical activity enjoyed mixed success, his endeavours to better his sector illustrates the values he retained within shore-based society. Whenever he was ashore, he regularly attended Anglican, Episcopal, and evangelical churches where he was influenced by the teachings of the broader evangelical movements, whose ordinances insisted that one's evangelical faith be expressed through evangelistic activity.⁴¹⁸

By age thirty-one, Kelly had spent the better part of his life as a seaman. Unlike the multitudes of seafarers who lost their lives before their thirtieth birthdays due to disease, exposure, drowning or fatal accidents at sea (such as his brother, John), Kelly retired from deep-sea sailing at an age which still granted him ample time to marry, have children, and return to his native home to live out the remainder of his life. Through the advantageous relationships he established throughout his career as well as his own natural talents as a sailor, Kelly achieved the "principal marker of mastery and a badge of adult competency in the seafaring world:"⁴¹⁹ the status of deep-sea shipmaster at the remarkable age of twenty-five. Kelly's career at sea and his life afterwards in Britain effectively proved the two old apprehensions among landsmen wrong.

⁴¹⁷ Registered as "Ellen Kelly" on an 1841 census of St Ives, she found work after Kelly's death as a postmistress: the document records her age of sixty. St Ives Archive. Accessed April 15, 2021.

⁴¹⁸ Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy*, 29.

⁴¹⁹ Vickers and Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea*, 129.

Indeed, with no higher status or promotion to obtain, but still many aspects of life left to explore, Kelly eventually returned to the very place he began his deep-sea sailing career: in Cornwall.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Using a qualitative approach to analyze Kelly's published memoir, his upbringing, family ties, profession, patterns, and religious beliefs were explored. There were certainly drawbacks to using such source material, especially when Kelly's memoir had been altered by Crosbie Garstin nearly one hundred years ago. In addition, in the case of his memoir being written on land years after a life at sea, certain memories of Kelly's were undoubtedly embellished by a desire to please Victorian audiences and sensibilities.⁴²⁰ However imperfect, employing Kelly's source still allows readers to examine a late eighteenth century sailor's worldview through his own recorded thoughts, habits, and interpretations of the world he occupied through his periods with the packet, transport, and merchant services. To be sure, the details of Kelly's life that are woven throughout his memoir and utilized for this thesis are imperative to understand his life. While his distinctive life cannot speak for the equally unique lives of other eighteenth century merchant sailors, it is a useful point of comparison that can nevertheless give a more complete picture of the collective body politic of seafarers who sailed during the Age of Revolution. Kelly's career was contingent on his family, faith, and ambition, these variables often linking him to the shore. Indeed, in a tumultuous maritime ecosystem, these three overlaid elements persisted throughout Kelly's vocation and eventually led him home.

For most of Kelly's life, from his birth in 1764 until his death in 1822, Britain was at war. On his first transatlantic voyage with his father in 1774, he witnessed the rebels in Charleston called to arms, the American Revolutionary War erupting one year later. Three years after the war's outbreak, Kelly was employed with the packet ships; the service rarely rejecting unskilled

⁴²⁰ Magra, "Faith at Sea," 89.

landsmen. Despite his inexperience and the absence of his father on the quarterdeck, Michael endeavoured to condition Kelly as a young sailor by connecting him with old acquaintances, situating him aboard ship in advantageous positions, and offering him respite from service while docked ashore in Falmouth during his first few voyages. Kelly at sea was a mutually beneficial arrangement, as his father received his wages and other provisions, while he underwent the uncomfortable but necessary transition into the Kelly family's vocation of deep-sea sailing. With each voyage, Kelly's shipboard skills evolved, his connections ashore multiplied, and his ever-increasing experiences which exposed him to new regions of the Atlantic World added to his competence as a sailor. His astuteness was demonstrated when the Grenville packet was captured by the American privateer, the Franklin, when Kelly successfully ingratiated himself into the service of the American captain with the aid of shipmaster Spurrier; effectively evading imprisonment. Kelly's service with the packets was characterized by the stressors of the American War and the Kelly family, both of which affected Samuel's conduct at sea and on land. Due to his step-mother's death and his father's depleting assets and dependency on his wages, Kelly was compelled to continue his employment in a service that by the early 1780s, he had grown to resent. Nevertheless, as the eldest son, Kelly's dutiful disposition persisted towards his father, if not his occupation, amidst a turbulent maritime backdrop. By 1782, Kelly had been effectively transformed from landsman to officer, his four years with the packets ultimately serving as a foundational initiation into a promising career at sea.

Although the American Revolutionary War was in its twilight when Kelly joined the Royal Navy transport service in 1782, the tremors of war still reverberated throughout the Atlantic Ocean. The demand for able-bodied seamen in the service was high and so were wages, likely attracting Kelly to better provide for his father. Not long after he joined, however, Michael died

destitute in a poorhouse. Nevertheless, Kelly still had relatives to financially support and a post to execute. With the transports, Kelly did not return to Britain for nearly two years. He participated in four expeditions that spanned three years, shipping to many different corners of the Atlantic World to assist in the widespread Loyalist migrations. He sailed with the same transport vessel during his station, where he worked before the mast as a tar and in the mess as steward. Despite the transient overtones of this period, Kelly spent most of his station ashore between Scotland, Nova Scotia, East Florida, and the Bahamas, where he had short leave, assisted in extensive grounds operations, or waited on the *Jason's* repair work. Each operation challenged Kelly professionally and further conditioned him as a British seaman. As his term with the transports demonstrates, Kelly was not a participant in the revolutionary streams of maritime culture. On the contrary, his involvement in the Loyalist migrations suggests his embedded loyalism to Britain and its institutions, the central pillars being the monarchy, the Church of England, and antipathy towards Roman Catholics. Kelly exhibited these principles throughout his career; his inclinations likely solidified through his participation in the transport service, where he shipped with hundreds of loyal British subjects who would rather resettle abroad than reside in a republic that bordered Spanish colonies. As Kelly's external world was in rapid transition, so was he. He cultivated additional skills at sea, joined a new maritime trade, and the person who perhaps had the greatest influence on his profession, his father, had died. This period in Kelly's life, as transitional as the world he occupied and helped shape, in fact solidified his seamanship, values, and beliefs that characterized his roles in the merchant service.

The merchant service represented Kelly's apex as a sailor and as a Protestant. Family continued to be a vital component in Kelly's professional life during this period despite his father and brother's deaths. Indeed, while visiting his relations ashore in St Ives shortly after quitting

the transport service, he received the post of chief mate which was offered to him by a cousin; a shipmaster in the coastal trade out of Bristol. This familial and professional partnership enabled Kelly's social mobility to climb and eventually climax as shipmaster, effectively establishing him as an authoritative officer for the last nine years of his career out of the ports of Bristol and Liverpool. As chief mate, for the first time in his vocation, Kelly sailed during a momentary peace and did not have to consider the tribulations of war. Nevertheless, the fluctuations of imperial conflict persisted. By 1792, war had once again broken out between Britain and France, the second revolutionary war to impinge on Kelly's career.

In the packet and transport services, Kelly was an Anglican and retained a reverence for the Church of England. Indeed, he had attended church as a boy in Cornwall and lived with religious relatives while his father was at sea. However, while a sailor in these trades, Kelly did not have impactful influence or authority. Even as a second mate with the packets, Kelly adhered to the orders of the chief mate and shipmaster and demonstrated a quieter faith. However, as a chief mate in the merchant service, he had substantial power over operations and the culture of the ship. Through his added control and agency, Kelly made a habit of attending church when at port and exhibited evangelical values during these authoritative years at sea. Perhaps the plainest example of Kelly's evangelicalism was his inability to restrain it. As a chief mate, but even more so as shipmaster, Kelly implemented reforms aboard ship and ashore that reflected the ordinances of Wesleyan Methodism. He revered the Sabbath day, regularly attended evangelical churches on land, lent his Bible to his crew (when wanted), and initiated prudent behaviour on his vessels and in his lodgings that replicated his own. Through his persistent attendance to organized religious institutions and gatherings ashore, Kelly remained connected to the shore-based evangelical movements that were influencing much of the western world during this

period. He applied the values he absorbed on land, amongst other evangelicals, to the maritime sector. Not unlike Middleton and Kempenfelt, Kelly perceived his immediate work environment as a ripe missional field where he could wield his authority both as a shipmaster and as an enlightened Christian to enact micro-reformation.

Over the course of his seventeen-year-long career at sea, Kelly exhibited remarkable ambition both as a sailor and a Protestant. However, as Kelly's last mutinous voyage to Britain from the West Indies in 1795 demonstrates, his evangelical efforts as commander were not widely accepted or espoused by other sailors. His endeavours attest to his atypicality as an eighteenth century seaman. At the same time, the implementation of such ordinances in his life and in his work environment reveals the evangelical values that were ubiquitous during this period and characteristic of the shore. Unlike many maritime historians, Kelly did not discern a tension between the sea and shore. In fact, the shore represented family, respite from the perils of war and the discomforts of sailing, and it offered spiritual instruction and solace from a sector often associated with irreligion. For Kelly, his seafaring career did not transform him beyond recognition or socially isolate him from shore-based society. If anything, Kelly's long passages at sea only deepened his longing to be at home, in port, and at church, where he felt most comfortable and accepted. Indeed, despite Kelly's transient profession and Cornwall's jovial and disquieting affiliations throughout his life, St Ives retained its essence of home to Samuel; even unto death. While a single mariner, Kelly's life and memoir nevertheless refutes the alleged disparity between the sea and shore in scholarship and the apparent disinterest in religion at sea among seafarers; suggesting the presence of others like him who were not radical, but loyal to Britain. In sum, Kelly's source may be understood as a compelling testament to the Atlantic

World by a late eighteenth century seaman, inviting historians to reimagine Jack Tar during the Age of Revolution.

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