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In general, maritime historians have ignored the Royal Navy's smallest or unrated warships. Although in some ways larger vessels appear more attractive, and information about them is certainly more accessible, unrated warships are no less historically significant.

In an attempt to demonstrate the historical potential of unrated warships this study presents an analysis of the Royal Navy advice boat Swift. She was built in Arundel, West Sussex, in 1697, and designed ostensibly to carry messages and dispatches. Shortly after her construction, the Swift was sent to Chesapeake Bay to help enforce the 1696 Navigation Act. Unfortunately, she was lost on the Outer Banks of North Carolina before starting this tour of duty. The Swift was selected for study partly because of her relative obscurity. Little, if anything, was known of her duties, construction, rig, history, or fate. If the importance of this vessel could be demonstrated then other unrated warships would surely merit attention.

The historical significance of the Swift is presented to three sections of the historical profession - technical maritime historians, history enthusiasts, and members of the mainstream historical community. It is argued that the details of the Swift's rig, construction, history, and

functions, render her important to all three groups. Much of this study, however, is directed towards convincing scholars of the mainstream historical community. This represents a philosophical outlook. Too frequently, maritime specialists have focused narrowly upon the technical details of naval architecture, or dramatic seafaring sagas, and not demonstrated the importance of their studies in relation to broad historical issues. In doing so they have deprived the profession of key interpretations on a multitude of issues. If maritime history is to be recognized for its worth, its students must address issues with broader vision. In this study it is argued that an examination of the Swift's functions can help re-interpret the workings of the customs service in colonial America and ultimately the very nature of the first British Empire.

The Royal Navy Advice Boat Swift and the Potential of Unrated Warships

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Introduction

The Royal Navy's Rated and Unrated Warships

In January 1653, the Commonwealth under the Protectorship of Oliver Cromwell, decided to reorganize the navy by dividing England's warships into six categories or rates. In most instances first rates were the largest, heaviest gunned and best manned warships in the navy, while sixth rates were the smallest, lightest gunned and least well manned of the rated vessels. The basic structure of the rating system survived for more than 200 years, but from the outset certain vessels were omitted.[1] The number of these unrated or auxiliary craft, many of which were designed for specialized functions, grew during the later seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century. When these vessels patrolled English waters or voyaged to foreign lands they carried with them important historical information as yet unrevealed by scholars. This study demonstrates the historical potential of these warships by examining one little known vessel, HMS Swift, representative of a class of warships called advice boats. This vessel was built in Arundel, Sussex, in 1697, was immediately sent to Maryland to prevent illegal trade, and was lost within a year on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Unrated warships have received little attention from historians. Naval scholars have tended to concentrate on the higher rated men-of-war.[2] Arguably the reasons for this

academic disparity are twofold. First, more information about large vessels of the seventeenth-century Royal Navy has survived the passage of time. As the navy demands a tremendous amount of scholarly endeavor, it is only natural that these vessels received attention first. Second, the glory and splendor of the first and second rate ships-of-the-line with over ninety guns blazing away, or the superbly versatile, yet powerful, third rates, have seduced historians away from the lesser and unrated vessels. Although the fate of nations could depend on the outcome of grand fleet actions, these seldom occurred, and when they did, the navy inevitably had a host of small vessels surrounding the major warships for reconnaissance, relaying signals, transporting dispatches, and counteracting enemy fireships. At times when no fleet actions occurred the routine duties of the navy, patrolling and protecting merchantmen, were performed predominantly by the lesser vessels.

Although our knowledge of unrated naval craft is severely limited, naval historians have managed to piece together some rudimentary information. The seventeenth century saw the demise of the armed merchantman as an auxiliary naval craft. They were too bulky and beamy to perform the functions of patrol boats, dispatch vessels, and hunters of pirates and privateers. At the same time, English warships were known for their structural integrity rather than their speed or sailworthiness. In response, Charles I

ordered the construction of a fleet of small cruisers, the first of which were the ten so called Lions Whelps built in 1627.[3] Although these vessels were largely unsuccessful they signaled the beginning of a trend which led to the development of a tremendous variety of unrated craft during the second half of the century. These included doggers, fire-ships, fly-boats, hoys, hulks, ketches, pinks, sloops, smacks, yachts, brigantines, bomb vessels, machines, and advice boats.

Although at any one time there may not have been many of each of these classes of unrated craft in the navy, their rate of attrition, and therefore rate of construction, appears to have been higher than for rated vessels. The result was that unrated warships represented a significantly greater proportion of the Royal Navy than one might expect. For example, the total number of vessels in the Royal Navy between May 1660 and March 1686 was 566, of which 291 were unrated craft.[4] Similarly, the total number of vessels entering the Royal Navy between 5 November 1688 and 1 January 1698 was 477, of which 215 were unrated. In both these cases unrated warships represent approximately half of the Royal Navy.[5] By 1700, through a system of trial and error, the smallest craft of the Royal Navy had undergone a rapid and significant evolution. This process continued throughout the eighteenth century and incorporated important advances in naval architecture. Such advances, combined with developments in ordnance, have led some naval historians to

claim that the eighteenth century was the "century of the small ship."[6] Not only, then, were there a large number and variety of unrated warships during the latter part of the seventeenth century, but this was also a crucial period in their development.

Historians have made some specific attempts to address the issue of unrated warships. In 1911, S. Goodwin discussed the distinctions between "Cutters and Sloops," and in the following year R. Morton Nance presented an analysis of "Ketches." Both authors used documentary evidence in a partially successful attempt to establish the details of these rigs.[7] E. A. Dingly, L. G. Carr Laughton, and R. C. Anderson accomplished more with respect to naval brigantines.[8] They discovered, however, the complexity of trying to analyze a type of rig in a period of transition.

Although, William A. Baker examined the problem of sloops and shallops in 1966, probably the only substantial knowledge of unrated warships thus far documented is associated with bomb vessels and Royal yachts.[9] David Wray has traced the development of bomb vessels from their origins in the mind of French engineer Renan D'Elicagaray, through their initial construction for the French navy in 1682, to the first English bomb vessel, the Salamander, built at Chatham in 1687. In consequence, we know something of bomb vessel rigs, their construction and main armament. These vessels were used principally for "bombarding harbors, moored

shipping and coastal defenses."[10]

Royal yachts have also received attention from scholars. C. G.'t Hooft and C. M. Gavin have both treated the subject in some detail.[11] We now know that naval yachts varied considerably in terms of both tonnage and dimension. They all, however, performed similar functions, namely transporting important dignitaries and Royalty. In addition, they were often used as pleasure craft and sometimes performed ceremonial roles during fleet reviews. Their flamboyant decoration reflected these functions. Occasionally, Royal yachts would be used as dispatch vessels or as guardships in river mouths and estuaries.

The first Royal yacht, Mary, was presented to Charles II by the Dutch upon his restoration to the throne of England in 1660.[12] During the early years a Royal yacht was typically gaff-rigged, and had a mainsail and probably a fore staysail. At first they were single masted, but after about 1682 a ketch-rig was introduced. Our knowledge of Royal yachts, and particularly the Mary, was some what enhanced by the discovery of her wreckage, and subsequent archaeological work, in the early 1970s.[13] Indeed, it may be that examining the physical remains of unrated warships will be necessary in order to fill gaps in the historical record.

Such studies of unrated craft, important as they are, have generally only established the significance of unrated warships in a limited manner. Describing the evolution of these warships, proclaiming their proliferation, and

analyzing their design only goes part way to illustrating their historical significance. In an attempt to solve this problem a different approach has been adopted here. The strategy has been to take one vessel and demonstrate its historical importance in a broader fashion.

The advice boat, Swift, is arguably one of the most obscure vessels in the history of the Royal Navy. It was on active service for less than a year, was representative of a little known, unsuccessful class of warship, and prior to this study the fate of the vessel was unclear. The apparent scarcity of information was one of the advice boat's attractions, for if the historical importance of the Swift could be shown, then, by implication, the study of better known vessels could be justified. In this research arguments that the Swift is historically important are presented to three sections of the historical community - technical maritime historians, history enthusiasts, and members of the mainstream historical community.

To the technical maritime historian the significance of a vessel is frequently derived from the information it provides on unknown ship types, constructions and rigs. This person undertakes the daunting task of tracing the evolution of ship architecture, but does so secure in the knowledge that this is also the story of past society's most advanced technology, much of its national and international trade, its fishing industry, and naval warfare.

Chapter I of this thesis illustrates the importance of the Swift to these scholars. It is an investigation into the design and construction of nine purpose built advice boats ordered at the end of the seventeenth century, of which the Swift was one.[14] The chapter explains that the advice boats were part of a series of experiments in the evolution of the Royal Navy.

To many history enthusiasts, both professional and amateur, a passion for the past stems from tracing the unfolding of events and observing people's successes, failures, problems, hopes and fears. All historical subject matter should generate intrigue and interest. In the process much will be learnt about past society.

Chapter II attempts to stimulate this interest, by tracing the bizarre history of the Swift, a vessel that sailed almost as well without a crew as with one. At the same time the chapter attempts to establish the location of the Swift's final resting place. This is done in the knowledge that an examination of the physical remains of certain unrated warships may be the key to filling in technical details.

To the scholarly historical community at large, the importance of any subject is derived from the contributions it makes to the general historical picture. For the real historical significance of the Swift to emerge, therefore, scholars must be convinced that this vessel sheds light on broad historical issues and helps re-interpret past society.

Much of this study, therefore, is aimed at this final audience, for if naval history is to realize its tremendous potential it must do so with solid argument, sound reasoning and, most essentially, broad vision. Chapters III and IV are dedicated to this process. Chapter III argues that the Swift was supposed to play an integral part in the implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act. Its failure to do so had grave implications for the control of commerce in the late seventeenth century. It is argued that, as the Swift can provide a unique and informative perspective on the way England perceived the navigation system, so unrated warships in general can reveal important information about broad historical issues.

Chapter IV takes the argument one stage further. It begins by asking the question, if the Swift can help reveal the nature of the 1696 Navigation Act, can the story of her station illustrate the workings of the navigation system, the colonial customs service, and commerce control in the Empire? The chapter answers this question in the affirmative and demonstrates that an examination of the Swift, her station, and unrated warships can ultimately help us re-interpret the very nature of the first British Empire and seventeenth-century Anglo-American relations. The result enables us to reassess the work of some colonial historians.

With chapters III and IV as the core, this study reveals the historical information carried with the Swift on

her only voyage. A mosaic of historical significance is generated, and used to justify and stimulate study of unrated warships.

Endnotes

[1] Brian Lavery, The Ship of the Line, I, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1984), 19-21; By 1659 there were twelve pinks and ketches, one yacht, one sloop, one hoy, and seven hulks, see Frank Fox, Great Ships: The Battlefleet of Charles II (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1980), 183.

[2] See for example, Frank Howard, Sailing Ships of War, 1400-1860, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1979), 151-152; Frank Fox, Great Ships: The Battlefleet of Charles II; Lavery, The Ship of the Line.

[3] Howard, Sailing Ships of War, 151-152.

[4] J. R. Tanner, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Naval Manuscripts in the Pepysian Library (London: Publications of the Navy Records Society, 1903), I, 296, (hereafter cited as NRS).

[5] Clements R Marcham, ed., The Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740 (London: NRS, 1895), 193.

[6] Howard, Sailing Ships of War,, 216.

[7] S. Goodwin, "Cutter and Sloops," The Mariner's Mirror, 1 (1911), 306-312, (hereafter cited as Mar. Mir.); R. Morton Nance, "Ketches," Mar. Mir., 2 (1912), 362-370.

[8] E. A. Dingley, "Brigantines," Mar. Mir., 6 (1920), 292-299; L. G. Carr Laughton, "H.M. Brigantine Dispatch, 1692-1712," Mar. Mir., 7 (1921), 354-359; R. C. Anderson, "Some Additions to the Brigantine Problem," Mar. Mir., 8 (1922), 109-116.

[9] William A. Baker, Sloops and Shallops, (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1966; reprint, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

[10] David Wray, "Bomb Vessels, Their Development and Use," Model Shipwright, 1977, 242-245. Bomb vessels usually carried of two, large, thirteen inch mortars, which had three principal advantages. First, their considerable range

frequently meant they could be used outside the range of the defending armament. Second, the high trajectory of the fire meant that shot could be projected over obstacles such as hills and fortifications. Third, the projectile, being incendiary could cause far greater damage than many other forms of shot.

11 C. M. Gavin Royal Yachts, (London: 1932); C. G.'t Hooft, "The First English Yachts, 1660", Mar. Mir.. 5 (1915), 108-124.

12 P. N. Davis, Peter W. J. McBride and Keith Priestman, "The Mary, Charles II's Yacht", The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology, 2, No. 1, (1973), 59-73, (hereafter cited as IJNA); Howard, Sailing Ships of War, 156-159. The derivation of the word "yacht" or "jacht" literally means "hunter" or "fast mover." The Mary measured fifty-two feet along her keel, nineteen feet across the beam, and drew seven and a half feet of water. This shallow draft and broad beam made her ill suited to British waters, so English shipwrights soon altered her lines.

13 Davis, McBride and Priestman, "The Mary, Charles II's Yacht", IJNA, 2, No. 1, (1973), 59-73; Another important source for determining the characteristics of the navy's smallest vessels are the paintings of William Van de Velde the Younger, and Admiralty models.

14 "Purpose built" here refers to those vessels ordered by, and built for, the Royal Navy.

Chapter I

The Swift and Late Seventeenth-Century Advice Boats of the Royal Navy

The construction of the advice boat Swift, and other vessels in her class, was part of England's naval build-up during the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-1697). During this Anglo-French conflict the navy acquired 178 ships, of which 117 were below fourth rate. Yet the 1690s were problematic times for English shipbuilding, as an inexperienced and somewhat reluctant Admiralty, operating amid the uncertain wake of the Glorious Revolution, experimented with naval architecture.[1]

In truth, the number of warships in the Royal Navy, particularly the lower and unrated vessels, had been increasing throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.[2] The characteristics of this trend, however, became exaggerated in times of war. Naval scholars have not yet fully appreciated the details of this process, its implications, or the characteristics of the new vessels.[3] This chapter uses HMS Swift as a vehicle for analyzing part of the naval build-up by establishing the design, rig, and functions of late seventeenth-century advice boats. Inevitably, the traumatic politics and inconsistent naval policy of the age is reflected in the story of these small warships. Whitehall's directives to the dockyards and the fleet fluctuated as England faced shifting fortunes at sea.

In 1690 the French navy defeated the British at Beachy Head and sent ripples of concern throughout the nation. Few realized the strength of a French navy that found victory through simple numerical superiority. Parliament had already authorized the construction of three new third rates, eight fireships, and eight ketches. Now the legislature provided funds for seventeen more third rates and ten fourth rates.[4] The House of Commons, however, was concerned with the quality of the navy's administrators. Officials such as Samual Pepys and Anthony Deane had been swept from office during the Glorious Revolution, leaving inexperienced men in power, many of whom had minimal knowledge of naval architecture.[5] Yet these same men were now charged with managing the most ambitious shipbuilding program in a generation.

In 1692 England's fortunes changed; the Royal Navy won an important victory in the bay off La Hogue, sinking twelve French warships and taking command of the sea. Fireships wrought chaos on the French fleet, which was caught at anchor. English legislators were quick to call for more fireships and other small vessels. Voices grew stronger when Whitehall realized that France had adopted, for the first time, the guerre de course, or commerce raiding, as her major wartime naval policy. The Royal Navy did not have enough small cruisers, or the experience, to deal with the fast nimble privateers dispatched from ports such as Dunkirk and St. Malo.[6] The rest of the decade was a time of

experimentation and error for English shipbuilding, as the inexperienced Admiralty tried to cope with changing demands of naval warfare. Ironically, this system of trial and error ultimately led to improvements in naval architecture, but only after some painful lessons. The Swift, and other vessels in her class, were products of these confusing and unfortunate times. The navy's first purpose built advice boats represent just one of decade's failed experiments in naval architecture.

The foreign equivalents of the term "advice boat" certainly precede the seventeenth century. In the early years of expansion into the New World the Spanish used "aviso" and "patches" to keep in contact with their overseas possessions. Later the French used their "avis" in a similar fashion. These terms mean quite literally "news, advice" or "information." The theoretical functions of advice boats, no matter their country of origin, were to carry dispatches or orders either between ships, within a fleet, or to overseas countries and colonies. They might also be used for patrol work and reconnaissance.[7]

Much of our knowledge of advice boats stems from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In continental Europe advice boats at this time were probably yacht like in appearance, but in Britain a schooner-rig was invariably preferred. An advice boat, built for speed, was of fairly light construction. The vessel's ability to sail a

few points closer to the wind was supposed to keep her away from larger warships and ensure that her duties were fulfilled. It made sense, then, for the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century vessels to have a fore-and-aft-rig. The term "advice boat" is unusual in that it is a description of function rather than rig. As such it is possible that various classes of advice boat were rigged differently.[8] The definitions of advice boats' functions discussed above represent theory more than practice. There was not always harmony between these two, this was particularly true during the late seventeenth century.

In 1692, exactly the time that France was changing to commerce raiding and England was in dire need of more cruisers, the Royal Navy captured two small French vessels, the Germoon Prize and the Tartan Prize. These were the first two Royal Navy warships to be classified as advice boats, and probably stimulated the construction of England's own dispatch vessels. Dimensional comparisons, however, indicate that the French designs were not copied outright, (see Table 1).

Between 1694 and 1697 the Admiralty ordered the construction of nine purpose-built advice boats. By 1703, only nine years later, four of these had been lost at sea and a further three captured. A comparison with the fate of seven brigantines built between 1692 and 1696 shows how relatively disastrous the advice boats were. For of these seven, three were sold out of service in 1712, two were burned by the

Admiralty in 1705 and 1706, one was captured in 1701 and one was wrecked in 1700.[9] Clearly, this is a far superior record.

For another reason the loss of the seven advice boats stands out in the history of the Royal Navy. It has not been possible to trace a single advice boat loss after 1712 until, the wreck of the Tryall in 1777. Neither has it been possible to trace the construction of any new vessels during the same period. It seems, therefore, that late seventeenth-century advice boats were a failed experiment in Royal Navy ship construction.[10]

What, then, were the advice boats of the late seventeenth century like and how were they employed? Essentially, they entered the navy from three directions. First, the navy built seven in the Royal dockyards at Portsmouth and Plymouth between 1694 and 1695. Second, two, which are of the most interest to the present study, were built at the private dockyard of Arundel in 1696 and 1697. Third, the navy periodically classified captured vessels as advice boats. Two of these prize vessels, the Germoon Prize and the Brilliant, are interesting to the present discussion. At some point in their histories, both vessels received a classification other than advice boat. The Brilliant was clearly identified as a sloop, while the ship-rigged Germoon Prize was sometimes classified as a sixth rate. This demonstrates that no one rig was universal among advice

boats.[11] It would be more beneficial, however, to eliminate the captured and purchased vessels from the present discussion. The reasons for this are twofold. First the object of this research is to provide insight into those vessels constructed for the Royal Navy. Second, as advice boat is a description of function, the navy's guidelines for classifying prize vessels as dispatch boats were relatively weak. This, then, leaves us with nine vessels built between 1694 and 1697.

Detailed information about these nine advice boats, particularly concerning their rig, has been, and in fact remains, elusive. In an effort to reach some cautious conclusions three tables are presented below. The first contains some rudimentary information about the advice boats in service between 1694 and 1702. The second presents a run-down of the other major unrated vessels that appear on the Admiralty's monthly list of December 1699, whilst the third contains estimates of the cost of building advice boats presented to the Admiralty between 1693 and 1697.

Table 1. Advice Boats on Duty, 1697-1702

Purpose Built Advice Boats (Portsmouth & Plymouth)

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Mercury	4-6	73	61-6x16-1	Portsmouth	1694	C. 1697
Fly	4-6	73	61-6x16-1	Portsmouth	1694	W. 1695
Postboy	4-6	73	50-11kx16-5	Plymouth	1694	C. 1694
Messenger	4-6	73	50-11kx16-5	Plymouth	1694	F. 1701
Scout	4-6	38	38-6kx13-8	Plymouth	1694	S. 1703
Express	4-6	77	65-6x16	Portsmouth	1695	S. 1712
Postboy	4-6	77	65-6x16	Portsmouth	1695	C. 1695

Purpose Built Advice Boats (Arundel)

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Eagle	10	153	76x21	Arundel	1696	W. 1703
Swift	10	154	78x21.5	Arundel	1697	W. 1698

Captured Vessels Used As Advice Boats

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Germoon Prize	10	103	68x18		C.1692	W. 1700
Tartan Prize	4	49	36kx16-6		C.1692	C. 1693
St. John Prize	4	77	59x16-4		C.1695	C. 1696
Sloop Brilliant	6	60			C.1696	S. 1698

Brigantines With Similar Duties in 1697

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Spy	6	78	64x17	Woolwich	1693	B. 1706
Intellegence	4	75	52kx16-6	Woolwich	1696	W. 1700
Fly(ketch)	4	70	61-6x16	Portsmouth	1696	S. 1712

Key:
1. W = Wrecked
2. S = Sold
3. R = Rebuilt
4. F = Foundered
5. C = Captured
6. B = Burned
7. All measurements in feet and inches
8. Unless otherwise indicated all dimensions represent the length on the gundeck followed by the beam measurement. Keel measurements given are indicated by the letter "k."

Table 1 continued

(Sources: R. C. Anderson, Lists of Men of War 1650-1700, Part 1: English Ships 1649-1702, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935); J. J. Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 2 vols.; W. L. Clowes, The Royal Navy, A History from the Earliest Times to the Present (London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co. Ltd., 1898, reprinted, New York: A.M.S. Inc., 1966), II 535, III 310, IV 109, IV 548; Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, ADM 8/6).

The first thing to notice about Table 1 is that one vessel, the Scout, stands out as an anomaly. Although the navy built her in one of the Royal dockyards during the same period as the other advice boats, she was clearly a smaller vessel. Furthermore, as far as can be determined, she was the only one of these nine purpose built advice boats ever classified as a different type of vessel. This occurred in 1703 when the navy sold her as the yacht Scout.[12] Even the Express, as the only advice boat in service between 1703 and 1712 was categorized alone. There is little reason to suppose that the Scout was anything other than a yacht. As Table 2 demonstrates, yachts could vary in size considerably, and indeed a vessel as small as the Scout would probably have been a one masted, fore-and-aft-rigged vessel. Furthermore, other types of unrated naval craft were seldom constructed so small as the Scout.

Could it be, then, that the other advice boats were also yachts? This seems unlikely, for yachts tended to be built to individual designs and generally performed different functions from advice boats. Moreover, if the eight remaining advice boats were yacht-rigged, then it would seem that at some point they would have been classified as such. Such references have not been possible to trace.

Table 2: Breakdown of Unrated Vessels in December 1699

Advice Boats

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Express	6	77	65-6x16	Portsmouth	1695	S. 1712
Messenger	6	73	50-11kx16-5	Plymouth	1694	F. 1701

Brigantines

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Fly(ketch)	4	70	61-6x16	Portsmouth	1696	S. 1712
Intellegence	4	75	52kx16-6	Woolwich	1696	W. 1700
Postboy	4	76	51-6kx16-8.5	Deptford	1696	C. 1701
Discovery (ketch)	6	75	64x16	Woolwich	1692	B. 1705
Despatch	2	77	63-3x16-7	Deptford	1692	S. 1712
Diligence	2	80	63-3x16-9	Deptford	1693	S. 1712

Storeships

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Katherine	6	292	97x25		P.1692	S. 1701
Canterbury	8	367	96x29		P.1692	S. 1703

Sloops

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Bonetta	2-4	66	58-2x16-1	Deptford	1699	S. 1712
Prohibition	2-4	68	48-4kx16-4	Sheerness	1699	C. 1702
Sharke	2-4	66	48kx16-1	Deptford	1699	C. 1703
Merlin	2	66	48-10kx16	Chatham	1699	S. 1712
Swallow	2-6	66	48-10kx16	Chatham	1699	C. 1703
Swift	2-4	65	48x16	Portsmouth	1699	C. 1702
Woolfe	2	65	48x16	Portsmouth	1699	S. 1712
Fox	2-6	68	58-6x16	Sheerness	1699	W. 1699

Table 2 continued.

Yachts

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
William and Mary	8-10	152	76-6x21-7	Chatham	1694	R. 1765 S. 1801
Fubbs	12	148	73-6x21-1	Greenwich	1682	R. 1701 R. 1724 B. 1781
Henrietta	8	162	65kx21-8	Woolwich	1679	S. 1721
Katherine	8	131	56x21	Chatham	1674	R. 1720 S. 1801
Isabella	8-10	126	65-8kx18-11	Greenwich	1683	R. 1703 S. 1716
Isle of Wight	4	31	32x13-6	Portsmouth	1673	R. 1701 S. 1712
Soesdyke	8	116			P.1692	R. 1702 S. 1713

Pink: Listed April 1699

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Paramour	6	89	64x18	Deptford	1694	S. 1706

Key:
1. W = Wrecked
2. S = Sold
3. R = Rebuilt
4. F = Foundered
5. C = Captured
6. B = Burned
7. All measurements in feet and inches
8. Unless otherwise indicated all dimensions represent the length on the gundeck followed by the beam measurement. Keel measurements given are indicated by the letter "k."

(Sources: Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, ADM 8/6); R. C. Anderson, Lists of Men of War 1650-1700, Part 1: English Ships 1649-1702, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935); J. J. Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 2 vols).

The main focus of the present discussion, then, must shift to the eight remaining advice boats. Returning to Table 1, it is interesting to note that the names of these advice boats; Fly, Express, Messenger, Postboy, Mercury, Swift, and Eagle all seem to indicate either speed or advice boat function. The first six vessels were all of similar dimensions, tonnage, and were constructed at naval dockyards within a two year period. It seems likely, therefore, that they were similarly designed and rigged. Likewise, the Swift and the Eagle had similar dimensions and tonnage, and were built within a year of each other. In addition, they were built at the same private dockyard in Arundel, Sussex. It seems likely that the Eagle and Swift were sister ships. Treasurer's ledgers indicate that the Arundel vessels were built to similar specifications, and that they cost the Admiralty the same amount: £806 five shillings.[13]

As Table 1 shows, however, there were distinct differences between the Arundel and Royal dockyard vessels. In fact, it is entirely possible that the Eagle and Swift were rigged differently from the Portsmouth and Plymouth craft. Dimensional comparisons with the other unrated vessels of the time suggest that the Royal dockyard advice boats could have been brigantines or sloops (see Table 2). This does not, however, discount other rigs; it is even possible that an early form of schooner-rig was employed. Dimensional comparisons between the Arundel vessels and other unrated warships are less helpful as there is no clear association.

Clearly, on the basis of the evidence thus far presented, it is not possible to pinpoint the exact rig of these purpose built advice boats. The idea of a schooner-rigged advice boat, however, is interesting. It has already been suggested that other vessels with clearly identifiable rigs, namely the sloop Brilliant and the yacht Scout, were sometimes listed as advice boats. This makes sense, for a variety of vessels could perform dispatch vessel functions. But it has also been argued that the Brilliant and Scout should not be regarded as typical advice boats, and that in the surviving records from the period 1696-1703, no typical, named, purpose built advice boat is listed with any other class of vessel, not even when only one such warship remained in service. This may indicate that advice boats were rigged unlike any other naval vessel of the time, or perhaps that their rig was new, and, therefore, one that seventeenth-century bureaucrats found difficult to describe. If this is true then we can discount brigantines, sloops, and yachts.

A painting from around the turn of the seventeenth century, presumed to be the work of Van de Velde the Younger, shows two English vessels with what today we would describe as a schooner-rig.[14] These have caused some mystification for no known English term of the period exists to describe them. In other words contemporaries would have had trouble describing the rig. Could it be that these were advice boats? If so, seventeenth-century advice boats may

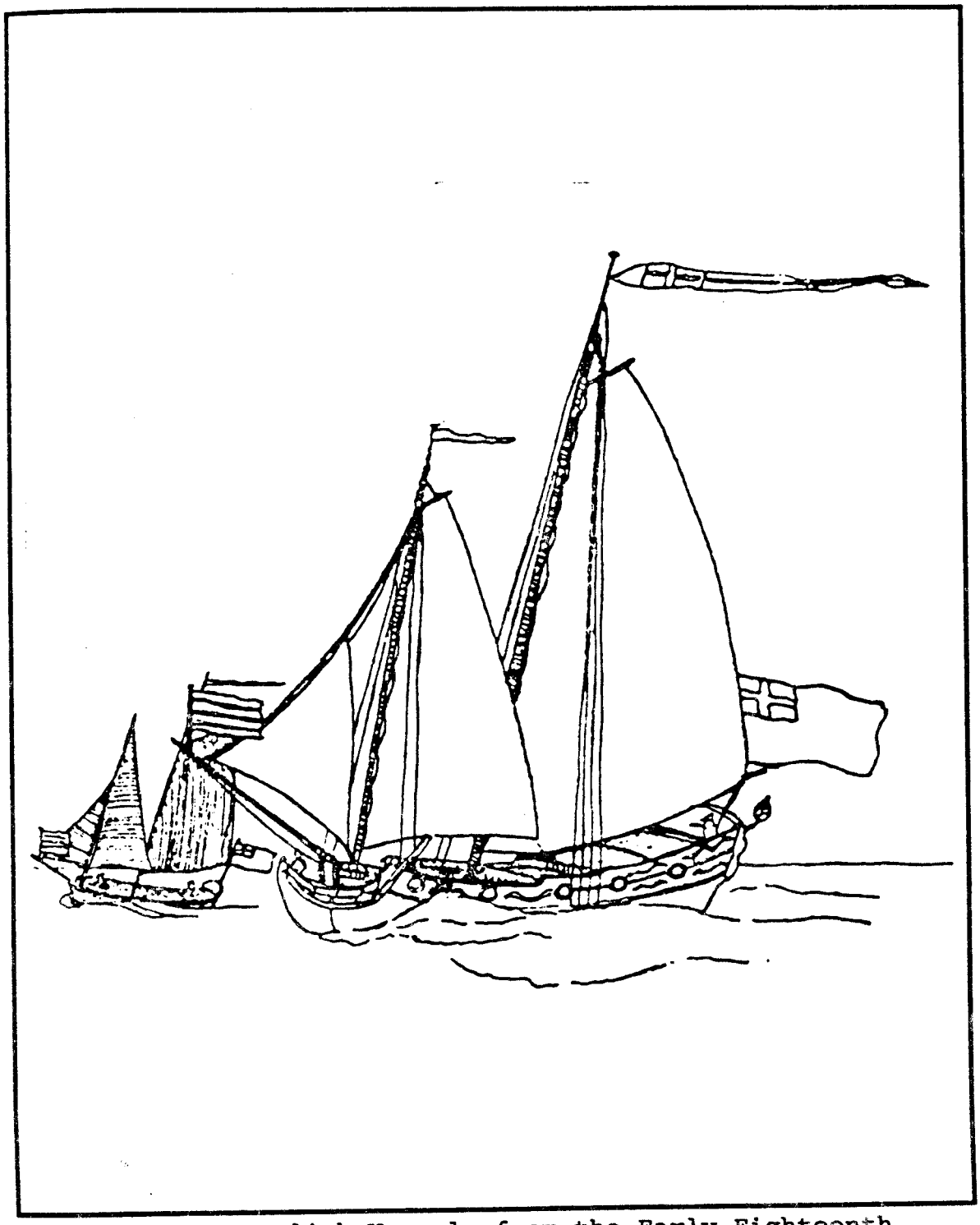

Figure 1. Two English Vessels from the Early Eighteenth Century, Van De Velde the Younger. (Source: William A. Baker, Sloops and Shallops, (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1966; reprint, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 50).

well have been some of the earliest schooners in the Royal Navy. (Figure 1).

Although the suggestion that some of the advice boats from the late seventeenth century were schooners fits the available evidence, it does so only circumstantially. Without further sources it would be negligent to draw even tentative conclusions.

In the 1690s the Navy Board asked for a number of estimates for the cost of building advice boats. Table 3, below, shows considerable variation in the estimated cost of building these vessels. One shipbuilder quoted the Board £2596 for the construction of two advice boats, whilst another estimated the cost of building four vessels at £1630. Two further documents quote the cost of building a single advice boat to be £409 and £874 respectively.[15]

Clearly we are looking at two, if not three, different vessels. Indeed, it might be tempting to argue that the

Table 3. Estimates for Advice Boats, 1693-1696

Number	Year	Keel	Deck	Beam	Hold	Tons	Cost	Cost/Boat
2	1696	--	76'	21'	8'6	--	2596	1298
4	1693	53'	--	16'	6'	71	1630	407
1	1693	62'	--	16'9	6'4	93	874	874
1	1693	53'	--	16'	6'	71	409	409

(Source: Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, ADM 8/6).

differences in estimated cost of advice boats indicates that they were rigged differently. This statement appears to be supported by the comparatively consistent cost of building

other naval craft. During the same period, estimates for the building of rated warships do not vary much from the following figures: first rate £36012, second rate £27726, fourth rate £18630, fifth rate £4574, sixth rate £2275.[16]

While advice boats may have been rigged differently from one another, an analysis of estimated cost does not justify such conclusions. It must be remembered that these vessels were unrated, and therefore did not conform to the strict dimensional standardizations like the larger vessels. Consequently, differences in estimated cost may simply correspond to variations in vessel size. They do not, therefore, really help us identify the rig of the Swift and other late seventeenth-century advice boats. Once again we must look to other sources.

Following the loss of the Swift, her commander, Captain Nathanial Bostock, wrote a series of letters to the British authorities explaining the unfortunate events. He described how his fore mast and main mast sprang at the partners on his voyage to Maryland.[17] The Swift, therefore, had at least two masts. The impression that one gets from these accounts is of a schooner or brigantine-rig, but there is one fundamental problem. If we are correct in presuming a similarity in the rig of the two advice boats from Arundel, then it would appear that the Swift had three masts. In the court martial proceedings resulting from the loss of the Eagle in 1703, there is mention of a mizzen mast. If this is

correct, the most logical assumption is that the Swift and Eagle were ship-rigged. This seems strange for one might presume that an advice boat would best perform her functions with a fore-and-aft-rig. The notion of a ship-rigged advice boat, however, does have precedent. A Dutch dispatch vessel or "advijs-yacht" from about 1670, measuring 115 feet by twenty-seven feet five and a half inches, was rigged in this manner.[18] Furthermore, Falconer's Universal Dictionary of Marine gives "barque d'avis, aviso" as being the French equivalent of advice boats. If we then look up "bark" the French equivalent is given as "barque." Quite literally, then, one French conception of an advice boat was an "advice bark." Falconer defines bark as: "a general name given to small ships, it is however peculiarly appropriated by seamen to those which carry three masts without a mizzen topsail."[19] This, then, increases the possibility that some advice boats were ship-rigged.

Although it has not been possible to eliminate any rig from having been fitted to the eight, typical, purpose built advice boats, two hypotheses have gained greater credence. The first is that the Swift and Eagle were ship-rigged, while the remaining vessels (excluding the Scout) had an early form of the schooner-rig. The second is that all these eight advice boats were ship-rigged. Perhaps verification of these theories will be possible by examining the log books of the vessels in question. The log of the Swift no longer exists, but a detailed analysis of the Eagle's and some others is

possible.

An examination of the captain's and master's logs from the Eagle shows that the Arundel vessels were almost certainly ship-rigged (see Appendix A). In many ways this is a stroke of good fortune, as ship-rigged vessels from the period tended to have certain common characteristics regardless of their size.[20] Consequently, it has been possible to rectify some of the ambiguities in the logs. The Eagle, and therefore the Swift, had three masts and flew fore and main courses, topsails, and topgallant sails.

Determining the sail plan for mizzen mast is somewhat more complicated. On 7 May 1698, Captain Baker's journal reads: "6 a clock reefed staysayles and at 8 handed them and halled up courses and at 10 sayd her under a mizon."[21] The "mizon" to which the Captain refers was almost certainly a full lateen sail. This was standard on British ship-rigged warships at least into the first decade of the eighteenth-century.[22] There is evidence that the Eagle and Swift also had mizzen topmasts and topsails. On 14 July Captain Baker writes "we put up our old mizzen topsail."[23] This conforms to scholars' conceptions of how late seventeenth-century ships were rigged. It is generally held that the mizzen topsail came into fashion around 1620 and survived well beyond the period of our present discussion.[24] It follows from this that the Eagle must have had a crossjack yard: a spar to which the base of the mizzen topsail was attached but

which held no sail of its own.

Evidence from the logs also shows that the Eagle had a spritsail. Again this would be standard; ship-rigged vessels carried such sails throughout the seventeenth century and beyond.[25] Perhaps one of the most difficult questions about the rig of the Eagle is whether she carried a spritsail topmast. This was a small mast standing on the end of the bowsprit. There is no obvious reference to such a mast in the logs of the vessel, although it would have been standard in most warships until 1719.[26] There remains, however, the possibility that the Eagle did not have a spritsail topsail. By 1705 the jib and jib boom appeared on English ship-rigged vessels, but they were probably tried as early as 1700.[27] This is important because it was the jib that drove out and replaced the spritsail topsail.[28] When this is combined with the fact that some of the smallest warships are known to have discarded the spritsail topsail in the late seventeenth century, we must accept that the Eagle may have had a jib instead of the more common spritsail topsail.[29]

The nature of the Eagle's remaining staysails also poses some problems. The captain and master referred to these as "small sails," but did not indicate their position. The degree of uncertainty amongst scholars as to the standard of the day, further complicates matters. The following passage from R. C. Anderson demonstrates not only this uncertainty, but also one of the best estimates as to the likely staysails flown by the Eagle and Swift.

> In a general way it might be said that there should (or might) be mizzen, main, main topmast and fore topmast staysails from 1660-1690, and after that mizzen topmast and main topgallant staysails might be added. From 1705, or a few years earlier there might be a jib, though this was by no means universal.<30>

As staysails were very important for steerage and tacking, the captain of an advice boat would benefit greatly from their use. It would seem logical, then, but by no means certain, that the Eagle had many of the staysails that Anderson mentions. The most dubious of course is the jib, because of its relationship to the spritsail topsail described above.

The Swift and Eagle were also fitted with studding sails, or stunsails. These were simply extra sails flown from extensions to the yards of certain square sails. Stunsails were introduced into the Royal Navy sometime between 1655 and 1660. To begin with they were most commonly fitted to the main mast, but after about 1690 fore mast stunsails were introduced. There was also a tendency for the navy to adopt course and main stunsails before topsail stunsails.[31] The log of the Eagle, however, only contains definite references to studding sails on the main mast, although this does not preclude the possibility of fore stunsails since the Arundel vessels were built after 1690.

What, then, for the remaining vessels - those built in the Royal dockyards? The logs books from the Express and Messenger show that these vessels were rigged in a similar

manner to the Arundel advice boats (See Appendix B). There are, however, some differences. The most important is that there are at least two references to the Portsmouth and Plymouth vessels using sweeps. It was not unusual for smaller warships to carry oars; it is known, for example, that some sixth rates and brigantines from the time period did so.[32] It has not been possible to find any evidence to suggest that the Swift and Eagle were fitted with sweeps, but it is certainly plausible. They would be advantageous to a captain trying to carry dispatches and evade an enemy, particularly when the vessels in question were not fore-and-aft-rigged. Although there is no mention of any staysails having been carried by the Express or Messenger, it seems likely that the Royal dockyard advice boats did carry them. It is difficult to conceive of a late seventeenth-century ship-rigged vessel without such sails. Neither do the logs of these advice boats record the use stunsails, but again, it is certainly possible that the Portsmouth and Plymouth advice boats did possess this option.

It has now been possible to make some real progress in determining the rig of late seventeenth-century advice boats. There is little reason to doubt that the typical, purpose built vessels were ship-rigged. As such we must dismiss the idea of advice boats being an early form of schooner. The differences in estimated price of advice boats can now be explained in terms of differences in vessel size. Further, the Admiralty classed advice boats by themselves, not because

their rig was unfamiliar, but simply because there were no other unrated ship-rigged warships comparable with advice boats during the time period.

Although no plans or specifications for late seventeenth-century advice boats survive today, other drawings do exist that might be similar. For example, there may be some similarities between the Arundel advice boats and a vessel called the Peregrine Galley, for which plans have survived. This vessel was a small, ship-rigged, sixth rate, built Deptford only three years after the Swift, and fitted with sweeps. Although, the Peregrine Galley was about eight feet longer than the Swift, her beam measurement was within a foot. Perhaps one of the most significant differences between these two vessels was that the Peregrine Galley had a long, successful career, and was reputed to have been a "very fast sailer." In 1749, she was lengthened by 3'9" and classified as a ten-gun sloop-of-war. She was lost at sea in 1761 while carrying dispatches to Lisbon.[33] Figure 2, then, gives an impression of what the Swift may have looked like, although the advice boat was certainly smaller. Short of an archaeological investigation this may be the best estimate of an advice boat's appearance. The next problem is establishing their duties and functions.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, it is difficult to find evidence of the advice boats at the end of the seventeenth century specifically carrying messages or dispatches. They

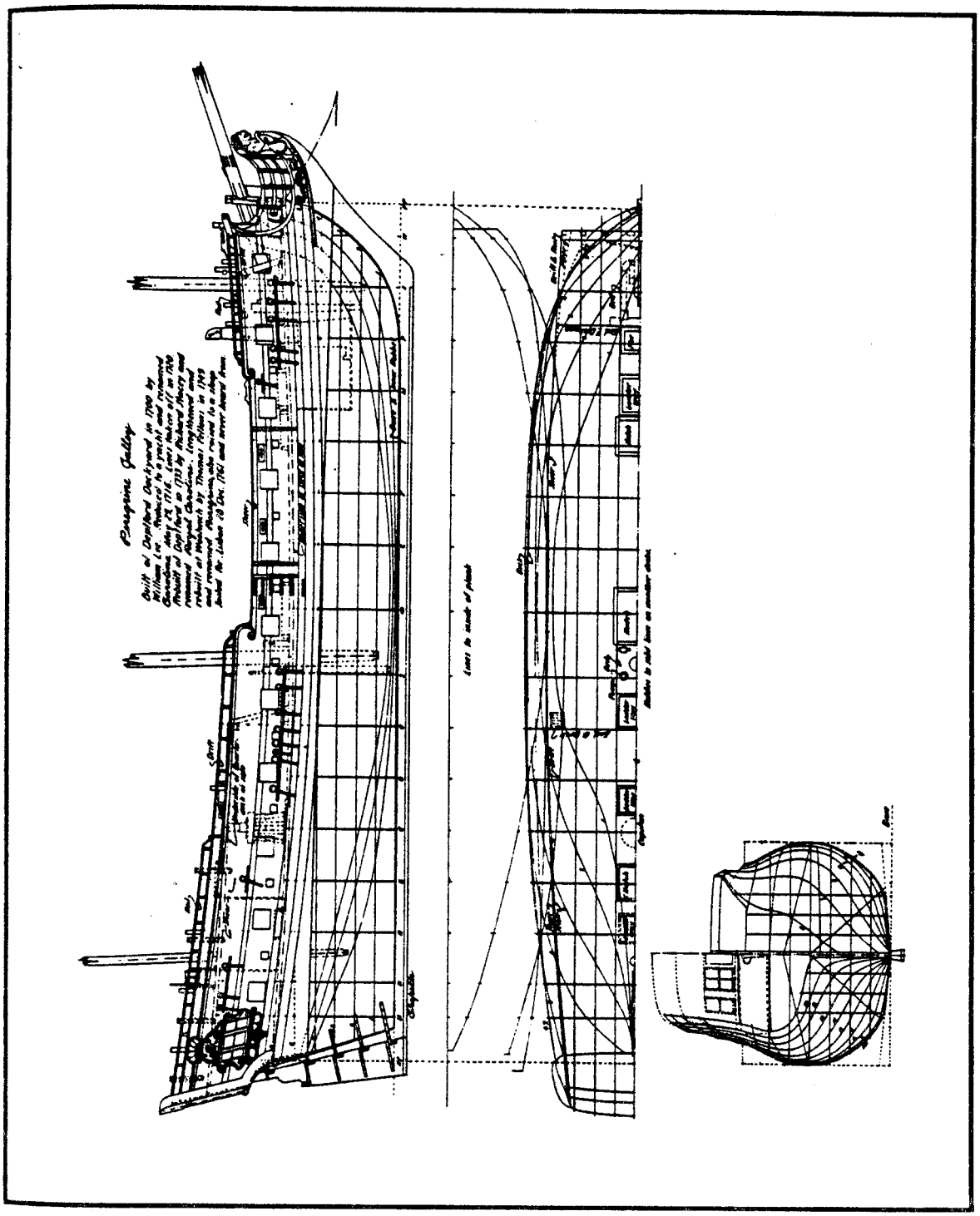

Figure 2. Plan for the Peregrine Galley. Dimensions: Length bet perps. = 86-3, Breadth, moulded = 22-6, Breadth, extreme, 22-10, Burthen = 218.5 tons. (Source: Howard I. Chapelle, The Search for Speed Under Sail, 1700-1855 (New York: Norton Press, 1967; reprint, London: Conway Maritime Press, 1983), 37).

seem to have been deployed mostly in the regulation of trade and in the war against smuggling. In December 1697, five advice boats were on duty. Three were attempting to prevent the illegal export of wool from the south coast of England. A fourth, the Swift, was involved in the regulation of trade in Chesapeake Bay, and the fifth was anchored at the Nore.[34] The duties of the three vessels involved in preventing the illegal export of wool are illustrated in Figure 3. The sloop Brilliant was cruising between the Foreland and Dungeness, the Express between Dungeness and Beachy Head, and the Messenger between the Two Forelands. At the same time many naval brigantines as well as a few larger ships were performing similar functions.[35] The connection between advice boats and brigantines, in terms of function, extends beyond this and will be returned to later in this chapter. It is interesting to note that the Swift, one of the larger advice boats, was on station abroad. Indeed, when the Lords of the Admiralty requested estimates for this vessel they stated that the advice boat should be capable of foreign voyaging.[36] A similar tour of duty, four years later by the advice boat Messenger provides one of the few first hand impressions of a late seventeenth-century advice boat. Governor Nathanial Blakison of Maryland wrote of the Messenger:

> I Look upon her fitting enough to be in quest of illegal traders, but she is very small, she has not above four guns and four patareros, she has indeed 40 men, but is not capable of engaging with great seas without the Capes.<37>

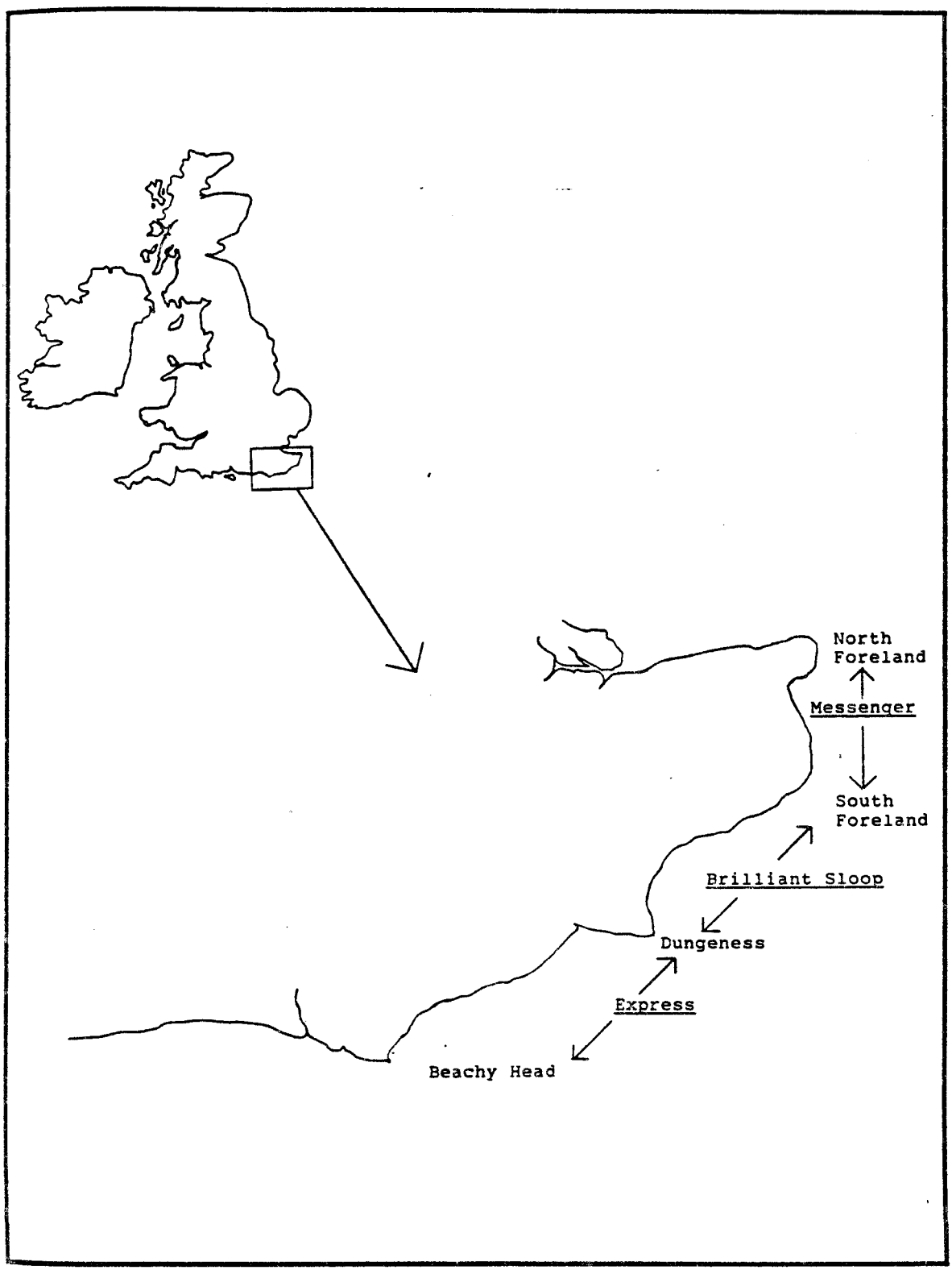

Figure 3. Advice Boats Involved in the Prevention of Owling (Wool Smuggling), December 1697.

The vessel's inability to venture beyond the Capes created considerable problems for the colonial authorities. An alternative role for her would have been to sit off Point Comfort, Virginia. Unfortunately, this was impossible as "the worm biting much more there than in Maryland" would mean that the vessel would be "mightily endangered." The problem was exacerbated because the Messenger was not sheathed.[38]

On the other hand, it was accepted that the Messenger's size might have distinct advantages. Her shallow draft would allow her "go into Smith's Island and other shoal places about the Capes, where pirates do sometimes haunt, and there is not water enough for the Shoreham," a fifth rate. It was argued, however, that this would only be possible if she was fitted with a more powerful armament.[39]

The regulation of trade and the control of smuggling did not completely dominate the tasks of advice boats. In May 1698 the Swift's sister ship, the Eagle, delivered a package to the Leeward Islands and then immediately returned to England.[40] This is direct evidence that advice boats did perform their theoretical functions. Most of the time, however, they performed additional duties, typical of other unrated naval craft during this period.

In 1699 concern about "wool stealers" shifted to the east coast of Ireland. Advice boats, brigantines, and the newly constructed sloops now began regulating trade in these waters.[41] An understanding of these duties helps assess the relative importance of advice boats to the late

seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century navy.

The Royal Navy lost seven advice boats during eight years around the turn of the eighteenth century, but did not suffer a single loss during the subsequent seventy-five years.[42] As mentioned earlier, the most likely explanation is that the Admiralty stopped building advice boats after the 1690s.

The navy managed without purpose-built advice boats because there were other vessels capable of performing typical advice boat functions both before and after the 1690s. As early as 1668 sloops or shallops were being used to prevent the exportation of wool from the south coast of England.[43] Moreover, during the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) sloops protected trade and carried dispatches.[44] In 1699 at least eight of these vessels were constructed in the Royal dockyards at Chatham, Deptford, Sheerness, and Portsmouth (see Table 2). All were of similar tonnage and dimensions.[45] Clearly, these vessels could have taken over some of the duties of advice boats.

Perhaps a closer and even more immediate association can be drawn between advice boats and brigantines. During the last decade of the seventeenth century both these classes of vessel were actively employed on the English channel coast in the regulation of trade. Some respected documentary sources have even grouped advice boats and brigantines together.[46]

If we look at the characteristics of brigantines during

the War of the Spanish Succession, a time when no advice boats were being built, the parallels between these two classes of vessel can clearly be seen. First, brigantines were involved in the sending of dispatches. Admiral Sir George Rooke, in September 1701, while at anchor near Lizard, received and sent dispatches on board the brigantine Diligence.[47] Second, brigantines continued to perform coastal patrol work. The brigantines Fly and Post Boy were at one point both involved in the protection of the fishery at the Swinn, before the Fly was ordered in 1703 to cruise between Folkestone and Hastings to prevent the running of wool.[48] Finally, brigantines and advice boats appear to have possessed similar weaknesses. At the beginning of the war, Admiral Philips van Allemonde was reluctant to take brigantines with his fleet because it was likely to be the "winter season" before he returned.[49] In May 1702, Sir George Rooke recounted the vulnerability of brigantines:

> a French privateer that fell in with the fleet in the night between the stern and the rear guard, seized and carried of the Post-Boy brigantine and a small pink, ladened with ordnance stores, the masters of those vessels having been careless in not keeping near any ships of war.<50>

It is not being argued here that other vessels did not sometimes perform similar functions. The same sources provide evidence of fourth rates carrying orders, sixth rates protecting fisheries and even, albeit under exceptional circumstances, powerful second rates protecting trade.[51] It has already been shown that sloops consistently performed

similar functions. But surely it is true that the vessel that would most closely fill any immediate void caused by a cessation of advice boat construction would be the naval brigantine.

During the 1770s the navy resumed the construction of advice boats. The available evidence indicates that these vessels were schooner-rigged. The Tryall, which sank in 1777, and the twelve advice boats ordered to be built in Bermuda in 1804 and 1807, were schooners.[52] Because of the number of vessels ordered, these Bermudian advice schooners, as they are sometimes called, probably represent a watershed in the history of the class. From this point onward their functions are more easily identified, and their construction and rig more readily assessed. They were probably, however, a far cry from the late seventeenth-century ship-rigged vessels. The design for the Bermudian advice boats was based on a schooner pilot boat called, curiously enough, the Swift which was built in Norfolk, Virginia (see Figure 4).[53] Using this vessel's lines the Admiralty drafted the plan of the Haddock. In 1803 the Navy Board placed an order for twelve advice schooners with the London agent of a leading St. Georges merchant, Edward Goodrich. The Goodrich Company then sub-contracted the work to twelve local shipbuilders. Once completed the navy divided these vessels equally between the Newfoundland, Jamaica, and Bermuda/Halifax stations. It was said that "every merchant and shipbuilder" who saw the Haddock agreed that she was the "completest vessel ever built

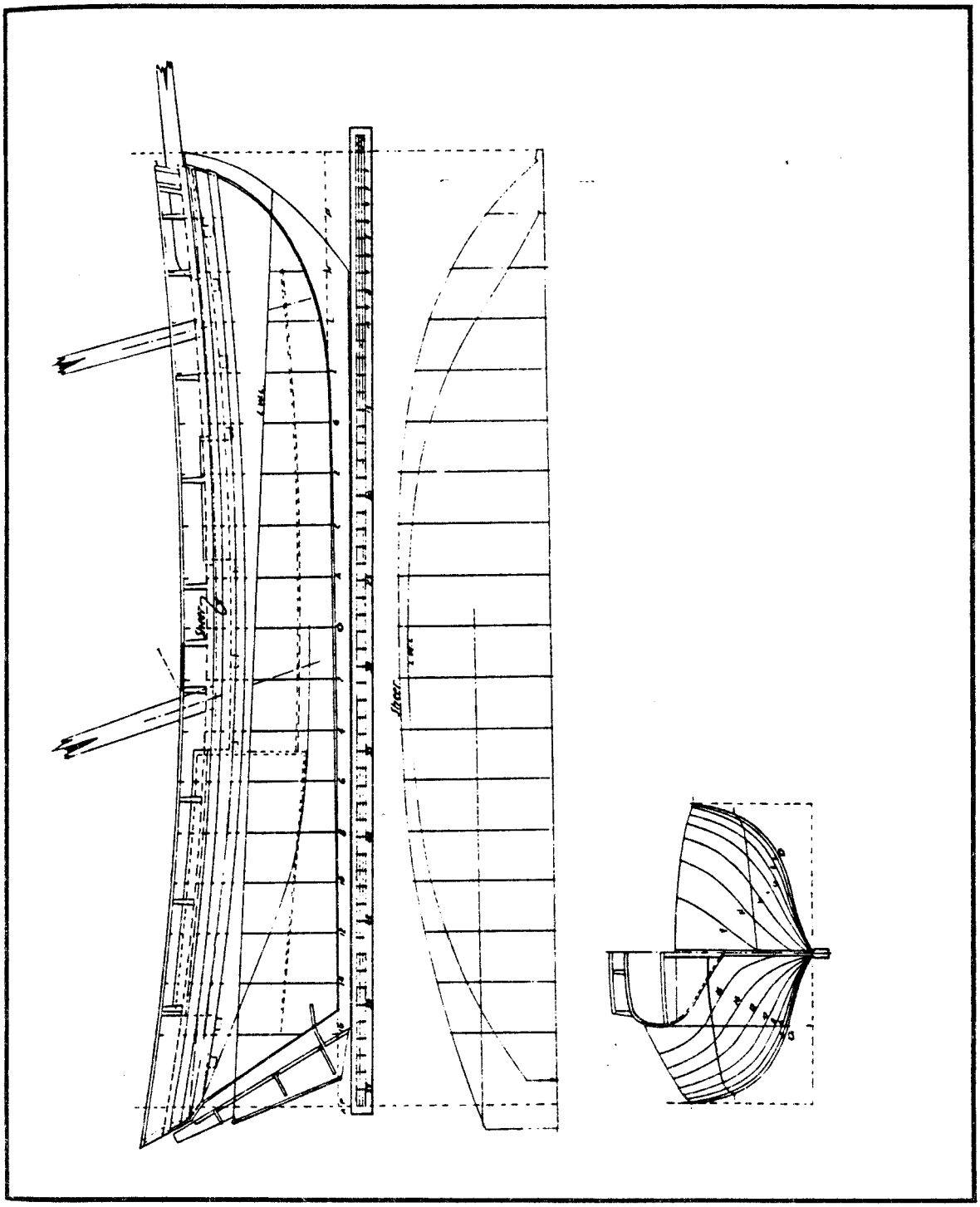

Figure 4. Plan for twelve Advice Boat Schooners for the Royal Navy Based on the Virginia Pilot Boat, Swift. (Source: Howard I. Chapelle, The Search for Speed Under Sail, 1700-1855 (New York: Norton Press, 1967; reprint, London: Conway Maritime Press, 1983), 164).

in Bermuda."[54] The plans for the vessel give the following dimensions:[55]

Deck	= 56-2
Keel	= 42-4
Breadth, extreme	= 18-3
Breadth, molded	= 18-0
Draft	= 8-9
Burthen	= 73 tons

At the same time, twelve more vessels, to be constructed on the Haddock's plans, were ordered from English shipbuilders. It is unclear whether these vessels were to be employed as advice boats, but it is logical to assume that their functions would be similar to those of the ships built in Bermuda. Table 4 gives the specifications of these vessels.

Table 4. Early Nineteenth-Century Advice Schooners

Advice Schooners Built in Bermuda

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Pike	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	C.1807
Barracouta	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	W.1805
Mackerel	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	S.1815
Snapper	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	C.1811
Herring	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	F.1814
Flying Fish	4	70	55x18	Bermuda	1804	C.1804
Grouper	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1804	W.1811
Haddock	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1805	C.1809
Whiting	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1805	C.1812
Pilchard	4	78	56x18	Bermuda	1805	S.1813
Bream	4	80	56x18	Bermuda	1807	S.1816
Mullet	5	78	56x18	Bermuda	1807	S.1814

Schooners built in England from the Haddock's design

Name	Guns	Tons	Dimensions	Place Built	Date	Fate
Magpie	4	76	56x18	Newcastle	1806	C.1807
Jackdaw	10	80	56x18	Newcastle	1806	C.1807
Cuckoo	4	78	56x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	W.1810
Wagtail	4	76	56-6x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	W.1807
Woodcock	4	76	56x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	W.1807
Widgeon	4	80	56x18	Brixham	1806	W.1808
Sealark	4	80	56x18	Brixham	1806	W.1809
Rook	4	80	56x18	Ringmore	1806	C.1808
Landrail	4	80	56x18	Ringmore	1806	S.1816
Pigeon	4	75	56x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	W.1809
Crane	4	80	56x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	W.1808
Quail	4	75	56x18-6	Yarmouth	1806	S.1816

Key:
1. W = Wrecked
2. S = Sold
3. R = Rebuilt
4. F = Foundered
5. C = Captured
6. B = Burned
7. All measurements in feet and inches
8. Unless otherwise indicated all dimensions represent the length on the gundeck followed by the beam measurement. Keel measurements given are indicated by the letter "k."

(Sources: J. J. Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 2 vols.; Exhibit at the Bermuda Maritime Museum, Bermuda).

The history and development of advice boats beyond this period is not within the scope of this chapter. The eight typical, purpose-built vessels employed in the 1690s were ship-rigged. Although their purpose was to carry dispatches and messages, they were also involved in tasks typical of unrated warships, such as the regulation of trade and the protection of merchantmen. In this way they fitted into England's overall naval strategy during the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-1697). The cessation in advice boat construction did not unduly compromise the functioning of the Royal Navy, as other vessels easily fulfill their duties.

Why the navy stopped building advice boats in 1697 remains a subject of speculation. It seems likely that the problems within the naval administration during the 1690s, and troubles with English ship design, contributed to the demise of these vessels. This study has hinted at one of the possible problems with late seventeenth-century advice boats. The end of the seventeenth century was a time of significant progress in the development of the fore-and-aft-rig. Could it be, then, that the navy's experimentation with a ship-rigged vessel as small as an advice boat was destined to produce an obsolete warship? Support for this idea can be gleaned from the fact that the introduction of the schooner in the last quarter of the eighteenth century saw the return of advice boats. Furthermore, in time the larger 20-gun ship and the sloop-of-war would become the dominant type of small ship-rigged vessel. If we add to this the relatively poor

performance of advice boats at the end of the seventeenth century we have created an environment inhospitable to the survival of the ship-rigged class. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to trace contemporary policy statements alluding to the demise of advice boats. Further study in this area is clearly needed.

This chapter has also indicated one of the reasons for the difficulty in establishing the nature of advice boats. The discussion on the characteristics of the Swift, and other vessels of her class, has been predicated on the assumption that the vessel's rig is the most logical way to classify these craft. The discovery of a consistent pattern in the rig of the advice boats goes some way to justify this assumption. It may well be, however, that the configuration of the ship's hull is of equal, if not greater, importance. Unfortunately, no plans, paintings, or models of advice boats remain in existence. Here, then, lies the limitation of documentary sources. An archaeological examination of the wreck of an advice boat, combined with extensive documentary research, may provide the only possible method of determining the reasons for advice boat failure.

For the maritime historian an examination of the Swift and other vessels of her class has led to an analysis of the design and rig of a hitherto little known vessel type. It has also provided an opportunity to recognize some of the experiments in ship design undertaken during a troublesome

period for the Royal Navy. Finally, an examination of late seventeenth-century advice boats has demonstrated some of the possibilities and limitations of archival sources for the maritime historian. These statements demonstrate the historical importance of the Swift and illustrate the potential significance of other unrated warships.

Endnotes

[1] Brian Lavery, The Ship of the Line, I, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1984), 58-62.

[2] R. C. Anderson, Lists of Men of War 1650-1700, Part 1: English Ships 1649-1702, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935).

[3] See page 1.

[4] Lavery, Ship of the Line, I, 57-59.

[5] Debate of the House of Commons, 10 Jan. 1693, in Anchitell Grey, ed., Debates of the House of Commons, 1667-1694, X, (St John's Gate, London: Printed for D. Henry and R. Cave, 1763), 294-296.

[6] Lavery, Ship of the Line, I, 59.

[7] William Falconer, Dictionary of the Marine (1769, reprinted, London: T. Cadell and W. Davis, 1815); Alfred Dedszus and Ernest Henriot, Dictionary of Ship Types (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1986), 39; Robert F. Marx, Shipwrecks of the Western Hemisphere, 1492-1825 (New York: D. McKay Co., 1975), 8, 89;

[8] Falconer, Dictionary of the Marine; Dedszus and Henriot, Dictionary of Ship Types, 39.

[9] J. J. Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), 2 Vols.; D. J. Lyon, "Sailing Ships of the Royal Navy, from 1660," Unpublished Paper; Anderson, Lists of Men of War; W. L. Clowes, The Royal Navy, A History from the Earliest Times to the Present (London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co. Ltd., 1898, reprinted, New York: A.M.S. Inc., 1966), II, 535; III, 310; IV, 109, 548; Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, (hereafter cited as PRO).

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Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy; Lyon, "Sailing Ships of the Royal Navy, from 1660;" Anderson, Lists of Men of War; Clowes, The Royal Navy, II, 535; III, 310; IV, 109, 548; Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, PRO.

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Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy; Lyon, "Sailing Ships of the Royal Navy, from 1660;" Anderson, Lists of Men of War; Clowes, The Royal Navy, II, 535; III, 310; IV, 109, 548; Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, PRO.

12
Anderson, Lists of Men of War, 47.

13
Treasurer's Ledgers, ADM 20/57, PRO.

14
William A. Baker, Sloops and Shallops (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1966; reprint, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

15
Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, ADM 1/953, PRO, These estimates have caused some mystification for the most logical assumption to make would be that the quote for 1696 of 1298 per advice boat was for the Swift and Eagle. The treasurer's ledgers, however, reveal that the actual cost of the Eagle and Swift was £806 only 2/3 of the estimate. But a re-examination of the estimates show that the cost of the hull excluding the masting, rigging and fittings came to £806 per advice boat. It would seem, then, that these latter aspects of the construction were not completed at Arundel.

16
Ibid. Note: estimates for third rates of this period were not available.

17
Bostock to Secretary of the Admiralty, 3 Apr. 1698, Bostock to Admiralty Board, 3 Sept. 1698, ADM 1/1462, Bostock to Navy Board, 11 Oct. 1698, ADM 106/515, PRO. This means that the mast broke at the point where it comes through the deck.

18
Baker, Sloops and Shallops, 50.

19
Falconer, Dictionary of Marine.

20
Brian Lavery, ed., Deane's Doctrine of Naval Architecture (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 91-103.

21
Captain's Logs, ADM 51/4177, PRO; see Appendix A.

22
R. C. Anderson, The Rigging of Ships in the Days of the Spritsail Topmast, 1600-1720 (Centreville, Maryland: Cornell Maritime Press, 1927, reprinted 1982), 231; Lavery, The Ship of the Line, II, 86, 95; W. Salisbury and R. C. Anderson, eds., A Treaties on Shipbuilding and A Treatise on Rigging, Written About 1620-1625, (London: Society for Nautical Research, 1958), 59-60.

23
Captain's Logs, ADM 51/4177, PRO.

24
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 243-245; Lavery, The Ship of the Line, II, 86; Salisbury and Anderson, eds., Shipbuilding and Rigging, 59-60.

25
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 210-211; Salisbury and Anderson, eds., Shipbuilding and Rigging, 56-58.

26
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 210; Peter Goodwin, The 20-Gun Ship Blandford (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1988); Lavery, The Ship of the Line, II, 79. In 1719 the Spritsail topmast was abolished in all but the three deckers; see also Salisbury and Anderson, eds., Shipbuilding and Rigging, 57-58.

27
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 210.

28
Ibid.

29
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 210; Lavery, The Ship of the Line, II, 100.

30
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 294; see also Goodwin, The 20-Gun Ship Blandford.

31
Anderson, The Rigging of Ships, 252; Lavery, The Ship of the Line, II, 86.

32 Goodwin, The 20-Gun Ship Blandford; E. A. Dingley, "Brigantines," The Mariner's Mirror, 6 (1920), 292-299, (hereafter cited as Mar. Mir.); L. G. Carr Laughton, "H.M. Brigantine Dispatch, 1692-1712," Mar. Mir., 7 (1921), 354-359; R. C. Anderson, "Some Additions to the Brigantine Problem," Mar. Mir., 8 (1922), 109-116.

33 Howard I. Chapelle, The Search for Speed Under Sail, 1700-1855 (New York: Norton Press, 1967, reprinted London: Conway Maritime Press, 1983), 36.

34 Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, ADM 1/953, PRO.

35 Ibid.

36 Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, ADM 1/953, PRO.

37 Minutes of the Council of Virginia, 22 May 1700, in J. W. Fortescue, ed., Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1700 (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964), No. 459, (hereafter cited as CSPC).

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, PRO.

41 Ibid.

42 Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy; Lyon, "Sailing Ships of the Royal Navy;" Clowes, The Royal Navy, II, 535, III, 310, IV, 109, IV, 548.

43 Baker, Sloops and Shallops, 39.

44
Stephen Martin Leake, The Life of Sir John Leake, Rear-Admiral of Great Britain (London: Publication of the Navy Records Society, 1918-1919), I 94, II 138, (hereafter cited as NRS).

45
Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy; Admiralty's Monthly List of Ships, 1696-1702, ADM 8/6, PRO.

46
Clements R. Markham, ed., The Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740 (London: NRS, 1895), 193. The association is one of vessel function rather than rig.

47
Oscar Browning, ed., The Journal of Sir George Rooke, Admiral of the Fleet, 1700-1702, (London: NRS, 1897), 143.

48
Browning, ed., Sir George Rooke, 148-149; Leake, Sir John Leake, I 105.

49
Browning, ed., Sir George Rooke, 123.

50
Ibid, 153.

51
Browning, ed., Sir George Rooke, 149, 155; Leake, Sir John Leake, I 105, II 332-337.

52
Lyon, "Sailing Ships of the Royal Navy;" Clowes, The Royal Navy, II 535, III 310, IV 109, IV 548; Chapelle, Speed Under Sail, 158-165; From an Exhibit in the Bermuda Maritime Museum.

53
Chapelle, Speed Under Sail, 158-165.

54
Exhibit in the Bermuda Maritime Museum, Bermuda.

55
Ibid.

Chapter II

An "Unhappy Misfortune," The History of the Advice Boat Swift

Part of the understanding of history comes from tracing the daily routines, problems, misfortunes and traumas of people in the past. In doing so a more complete picture of past society is generated. This chapter recounts the story of the advice boat Swift and her unfortunate captain, Nathanial Bostock. It shows the daily monotony and frustration of preparing a seventeenth-century warship for her first voyage and demonstrates how rapidly life on board could change from the mundane and almost tedious, to the traumatic.

The history of the Swift supports two historiographical interpretations of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Royal Navy. First, it suggests that administrative inefficiencies in the Admiralty caused vessels such as the Swift tremendous delays in beginning their voyages.[1] Second, it supports N. A. M. Rodger's commentary that a small vessel's captain, frequently sailing alone, often faced far greater problems than commanders of warships participating in fleet maneuvers. This was particularly true when a captain's duties took him overseas.[2]

The ultimate purpose of this chapter is to stimulate interest in stories of unrated warships. James Henderson undertook a similar task in 1972 with the publication of Sloops and Brigs. His work concentrated on the later

eighteenth and early nineteenth century, by which time the Admiralty had fitted unrated warships with carronades. This gave them far greater firepower and produced some colorful engagements.[3] This chapter shows that unrated warships, through the frequently solitary nature of their voyages, were always prone to intriguing events. In the Swift's case such events were at first interesting, then traumatic, and finally bizarre. They were, however, always unfortunate for Nathanial Bostock.

The history of the Swift can also be seen as a two part detective story. Prior to this study the fate of the vessel was unclear. The advice boat's officers and crew gave conflicting interpretations of the events leading to the vessel's loss. Further, the ultimate resting place of the Swift has been a mystery. The solution to this conundrum is more important than simply satisfying intellectual curiosity, for an archaeological examination of the Swift may be the only way to provide clues to the demise of her class. Naturally, in order to conduct such an investigation the location of the wreck would have to be determined. The various accounts of the Swift's loss are unraveled here, along with the evidence for her final resting place.

In 1696, the stresses of war caused England's shipbuilding capacity to be stretched almost hopelessly, and the Navy Board had no alternative but to suggest that some ships be built in private dockyards. On 20 April 1696,

the Admiralty received an estimate for the construction of two advice boats, and decided that the private dockyard at Arundel, West Sussex, would be the most appropriate place for their construction.[4] The first of these warships was named the Eagle and the second the Swift. The Admiralty ordered both vessels to be built to the same specifications.

A shipwright named George Moore constructed the Swift in the small shipyard on the banks of the River Arun. Provincial yards, especially those away from the Thames estuary, were relatively unsophisticated. Sketches by Van de Velde the Younger indicate that small ships, such as pinks and hoys, could be built on little more than open beaches. It seems likely, therefore, that a sloping shoreline would have been a sufficient platform to lay down the Swift's keel.[5]

The Swift was launched shortly after 2 March 1697. The appointed captain, Nathanial Bostock, oversaw the final stages of construction and even managed to raise men for the ship, who "voluntarily came to him."[6] These men were entered into pay some weeks before the vessel's launch.[7] The estimate for the construction of the Swift had been divided into two parts. This was common procedure. The first part was for "Timber, Plank, Iron Works, Masts, Yards, and all others Materialls and Workmanship in respect to the Hull," while the second was for "Cordage, Anchors, and all other Materialls for Compleating the Rigging and for stores for Boatswain and Carpenter for Eight months."[8] On 7 May

1697, George Moore received payment equal to the first part of the estimate. This suggests that the advice boat was rigged somewhere other than Arundel, possibly at Littlehampton, situated at the mouth of the River Arun and the Swift's first port of call.

Whilst Nathanial Bostock's vessel was at Littlehampton the Admiralty ordered her to be manned and victualled.[9] Much has been written about the administrative inefficiencies of the Royal Navy during this period, ranging from poor co-operation within the various departments to problems with supplies.[10] The provisioning problems experienced by Captain Bostock in the following six or seven months support these historical interpretations.

During the early months of 1697 a combination of circumstances determined that the Swift would be sent to Maryland. Following a request by Colonel Francis Nicholson, the governor of Maryland, the Lords of Trade and Plantations recommended a small warship be stationed in Chesapeake Bay. The Lords of the Treasury supported this recommendation, suggesting that the vessel should be responsive to the directions of the colonial governor and help with enforcement of the Navigation Acts. On 6 May the Privy Council instructed the Admiralty to provide such a vessel.[11]

At first the Admiralty thought it best to send a brigantine for this duty, but the Navy Board persuaded them that one of the advice boats recently built at Arundel would

be better suited. So on 15 May 1697, whilst Captain Bostock was busily trying to raise men in Littlehampton, the decision to send the Swift to Maryland was communicated to him.[12]

On the same day the Admiralty ordered that the Swift be fitted with ordnance sufficient for her voyage to the colonies and in accordance with the 1685 Establishment.[13] Consequently, Bostock's vessel was fitted with what the Navy Board describes as four guns and six "pattereroes." These were breach loading, sometimes brass, weapons, with a removable chamber. They were designed to fire predominantly stones, but also nails, broken iron, and Partridge shot. Some pattereroes were a form of swivel gun.[14]

Captain Bostock made two major complaints to the Admiralty while preparing for his voyage. The first was that the Swift's armament was insufficient for his assignment. His request for further ordnance, however, was firmly refused.[15] Bostock's second concern was his vessel had not been sheathed. When he raised this matter, the Admiralty told him that it had not been the intention to sheath the Swift. Instead, they instructed Bostock to careen the advice boat as often as "conveniently may be done." This careening, their Lordships so elegantly suggested, would "prevent her bottom being eaten by the Wormes."[16]

By June 1697 Captain Bostock had failed to attract sufficient seamen at Littlehampton, so he moved to Portsmouth and then Gosport. Dockyard workers at Portsmouth cleaned his vessel and refitted her for the journey to Maryland. Bostock

then requested, and was granted, permission to leave his vessel and go to London to settle his "private affaires."[17] Upon the captain's return all was in good order. Seven months later Bostock would again leave his vessel, this time to deliver a letter to the governor of Virginia. His return, however, would be rather more eventful.

From the beginning of July 1697, events started to turn against Captain Bostock, who still lacked men and supplies. The Admiralty, faced with three vessels bound for the North American continent, decided to send them in convoy. On 30 July 1697, they ordered the Navy Board to ensure that the Swift, Deptford, and Fowey be supplied "with all possible dispatch." The Board concluded that this would be done best at Spithead, and instructed the three vessels to assemble there accordingly.[18] The inefficiencies in the administrative system were such, however, that eight weeks later the Swift still needed supplies of dry provisions for her voyage to Maryland.[19] Furthermore, Captain Bostock did not receive his operational instructions until September. Although the substantive analysis of these orders is presented in the following chapter, a small portion of the instructions are more appropriately dealt with here. The plan was still to send the Deptford, bound for New England, the Fowey, destined for New York, and the Swift on the journey together. Yet even now provisions were a problem for both the naval administration and Captain Bostock.

Consequently, the Navy Board instructed the captain to put his crew on two-thirds normal rations as soon as the advice boat cleared the English Channel.[20]

By 27 September, the Admiralty Board, realizing that the Swift had still not been supplied, was losing patience and ordered that the vessel be "immediately furnished with provisions,"[21] It appears, however, that the Swift never received adequate supplies.

Manning the advice boat also became increasingly desperate. On 12 October, nine months after the first men had been entered into pay, the Admiralty was forced to order the Commander-in-Chief at Spithead to supply the Swift with men from other ships under his command.[22] This so called "turn-over" process was common during the late seventeenth century. It was, however, considered an unsatisfactory, almost desperate, measure. The naval administration, therefore, was seriously concerned about the delay in the Swift's departure.[23]

The navy had still more difficulties. HMS Fowey and HMS Deptford experienced similar provisioning and manning problems. By mid-October the Fowey was not ready to sail, and the Navy Board feared that the Deptford would cause even further delays. The Admiralty decided that the Swift's voyage could be postponed no longer, and instructed Bostock to wait ten days for the Deptford and then sail to America in the company of another vessel, the Essex (prize), which was bound for Virginia.[24]

On 8 or 10 November, more than three weeks later, the Deptford, Essex, and Swift at last set sail together on the 3500 mile journey across the Atlantic. It seems likely that, the Deptford did indeed become ready within the allotted time, but that the small assemblage of naval vessels had to wait until the second week of November for favorable winds to take them out of the English Channel.

Clearly, Captain Bostock had difficult and tedious problems preparing his vessel. The Swift eventually sailed from Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, some six months after the decision had been made to send her to Maryland. Unfortunately, such problems were probably common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and contemporaries may well have accepted them as part of the normal preparations. For Bostock, however, these administrative problems paled into insignificance when compared with events to come. He was sailing across the Atlantic, in a small vessel during November, a time when many other ships were contemplating anchoring for the winter and officials recognized trans-Atlantic voyaging as a tremendous risk. In 1691 the Admiralty had suggested that the fleet could not safely be at sea after the end of August and on no account was it to be patrolling after 10 September. When the Swift set sail, therefore, in November 1697, she was clearly in danger.[25]

Ironically, after waiting such a long time for the Deptford, the Swift and Essex lost sight of her after only

two days at sea. Throughout the remainder of the journey the Swift and her crew suffered horrendous weather and fought to maintain contact with the Essex. But on 20 November, seventy leagues north-west of the Western Islands, with the wind blowing fiercely from the south to south-west, the two vessels became separated. They were forced to make their own way to America.

Less than a week later (26 November), with the storm now raging from the west and the Swift under extreme pressures from the treacherous Atlantic winter, the advice boat's "foremast sprang in the partners which occasioned the breaking of many ... chainplates and shrouds."[26] The crew set about the considerable task of keeping the vessel on course while repairing the damage. Fortunately, Captain Bostock kept the Swift on a latitude somewhere between that of Cape Charles and Cape Henry, but progress was painfully slow.

Still worse was to come. On 15 December in the continuing violence of the Atlantic storms, the Swift's mainmast was sprung. Again the break was at the partners and also resulted in damage to the chainplates and shrouds. Captain Bostock faced the daunting realization that he now lacked replacements for his damaged rigging. The only solution was to secure the main mast as well as possible with what Bostock called "strapps," and to lower and unrig the main topmast.[27] For another three weeks the advice boat fought against the westerly wind before a brief lull in the

storm gave the ship's commander an opportunity to make land. On 14 January, after a tortuous voyage the bedraggled Swift sailed between the Capes and into relative safety.[28]

Although the Swift's officers and crew produced two accounts of events that immediately followed their entrance into Chesapeake Bay, one version seems to be far more probable than the other. It is logical, therefore, to consider the more realistic account first before suggesting some reasons why the other should be considered fictitious.

As the Swift entered the bay she stopped briefly at Cape Charles to pick up John Mincon, a local pilot. He directed the advice boat to Kequetan, an anchorage close to Point Comfort on the James River. It was a safe mooring where ships frequently lay during the winter. In fact, a merchant vessel, the St. George, happened to be anchored nearby. Captain Bostock had to deliver a package to the Sir Edmond Andros, governor of Virginia. He also needed supplies to repair his vessel and was aware that some had been brought for another vessel the St. Albans (prize). These supplies fell under the Andros's auspices. For these two reasons, then, Bostock left his ship and journeyed to the governor's residence. He was accompanied by Mr. Merrit, the merchant owner of the St. George. But, before leaving, Bostock gave explicit instructions to the master of the Swift, Christopher Potter, that nobody was to leave the vessel.

The following day Potter and seven seamen, including the

Boatswain John Petrone, went ashore at Kequetan in the pinnace (a tender craft) to collect wood and water. This reason was part genuine and part pretext. A day or two later Potter came back on board, but only remained there for a few hours before being ferried ashore. This meant that the only men on board the advice boat with any real authority were, the carpenter (William Cornwall), the mate (Bonja Wilson) and the ship's surgeon (Richard Walton). Once again circumstances turned against Captain Bostock. Towards the end of January, the James River began to freeze. Apparently, this was very unusual; later Mr. Merrit from the St. George testified at a court martial that "No such thing had happened in the memory of man before."[29]

The ice was obviously a great cause for concern. The mate sent the pinnace in search of the master to persuade him to come back on board, or provide instructions for dealing with the worsening situation. Neither the master nor the pinnace returned. No instructions were forthcoming. Three days later the ice was causing so much of a problem that William Cornwall, the carpenter, raised the ensign and fired two guns to signal their distress. He thought that the signals might reach the pilot, but as hope faded Cornwall decided to go ashore in the long boat. Unfortunately, the ice prevented his return. Cornwall's decision to take the long boat was crucial to the fate of the Swift. Now the men could not leave the vessel short of swimming through the icy water.

The next day ice pressured the advice boat so much that it drove her an brought both her anchors home. In essence the advice boat was being driven stern first towards the sand off Point Comfort, dragging her anchors along the sea floor. With the departure of William Cornwall, surgeon Richard Walton was the only warrant officer on board. Hence there was no adequate chain of command nor any officer capable of managing the impending crisis. The Swift ran ashore in water two fathoms deep, refloated, turned ninety degrees and ran ashore again. The dragging anchors combined with the force of the ice caused the Swift to list violently. Seaman John Best claimed later that "the whole ships crew expected every minute that she would oversett and drown them."[30] Undoubtedly, panic ensued as the crew, several injured, pleaded with the surgeon to cut the anchor cables so that the ship might right herself. Walton refused the men's requests several times. Then as the pleas grew stronger he reluctantly moved into action. First, he ordered that the sails be set. Walton foresaw an evacuation of the ship and hoped the wind might then keep the vessel on the sands. Seizing an axe, the surgeon then struck one of the cables. Later he claimed that there was "no hope of escaping otherwise."[31] His action was somewhat of an anti-climax as the cable did not break. The carpenters mate had to complete the task. Whether the surgeon was incompetent or just wanted to avoid taking responsibility for cutting the cables is

unclear. In either case the ship righted herself once freed from the anchors. It is important to note that if the long boat been available the crew could have escaped without having to cut the anchor cables.

Although the crew could see that the ice had also driven the St. George onto the sands, now their major preoccupation was with escaping from the Swift. The men began climbing out of the vessel, scrambling across the ice and through the freezing water, carrying the wounded as best they could. Once on shore, the injured were taken for treatment at nearby Hampton. The advice boat remained where she had run ashore for for several hours. Setting the sails did indeed keep her on the sands, and for a time the crew dared to believe that the crisis was over. Then the unfortunate circumstances became bizarre. First the tide turned and refloated the vessel. Then the wind shifted from the south-east to the north-west. The crew could only watch in disbelief as the advice boat began to turn. With her sails full, but without a single crew-member, the Swift began to sail away from Point Comfort. Soon the astonished sailors lost sight of their deserted vessel as she sailed towards the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. The Swift must have been making good ground as she headed out into the Atlantic Ocean.[32] On board there was none of the trauma that had accompanied her previous voyage; ashore the stunned crew could only wait for the captain's return.

The Swift's master, Christopher Potter gave a different

account of the vessel's loss. This seems natural for the implication behind the first account is that Potter left the ship contrary to Bostock's explicit instructions. The master claimed that the blame for the disaster should be directed at Captain Bostock, for it was his obstinacy that caused the loss of the advice boat. During the court martial Potter said that pilot John Mincon had advised Bostock not to anchor off Point Comfort, but rather to proceed up Hampton Creek. The captain, even though he was a young man with no experience of the colonies and was told that no vessels anchored off Point Comfort in winter, refused to move his vessel. According to Potter he maintained this obstinacy even after the pilot offered to come aboard the following day and help move the Swift to a safer mooring. Instead, Bostock claimed that the Swift was a new vessel and, therefore, capable of anchoring off Point Comfort. Furthermore, the master asserted, that Bostock gave him no orders upon leaving the vessel.[33]

Richard Walton, the surgeon, gave a similar account of the Swift's loss. He claimed that when the pilot came on board he advised the Swift's commander that it would be impossible to sail to Maryland at that time of year due to the ice. Captain Bostock had then become angry and told the pilot to, "mind [his] own business."[34]

There are, however, four basic problems with the Potter-Walton account. First, of the dozen people examined by the

court martial, only Potter and Walton testified that disagreements between the Mincon and Bostock took place. Second, many of the witnesses, including three from the St. George, testified that Point Comfort was a safe anchorage, frequented by vessels during the winter. Third, it is virtually impossible to believe that Bostock left no orders whatsoever with the master when he departed for the governor's residence. Finally, the court decided that the master's version was untrue and directed much of the blame towards him.

If Potter lied then why did Richard Walton support his story? This is particularly important since the court placed no blame on the surgeon for cutting the anchor cables. Walton's second testimony at the court martial provides evidence concerning his motive. Here Walton claimed that Bostock stole or defrauded him of some personal possessions. The captain sent him back to England after the vessel's loss thereby preventing him from searching the wreck for the objects in question. Furthermore, this dispute continued after Bostock's return to England. It appears that the surgeon hounded his former captain, paying him unwelcome visits, using abusive language, threatening to bring charges against him and calling him a "Robing Rogue."[35] This bitter dispute probably explains Walton's motive for giving false evidence at the court martial.

Captain Bostock must have been astounded at the story that greeted his return from the governor's residence. Even

so, he immediately began a search for the Swift. First he made unsuccessful overtures to the governor for a sloop. Sir Edmond Andros probably wanted to help the unfortunate captain but was unable to do so. His desire to assist the search can be seen in his order for the pilot on board another English warship to be bought over to help search for the Swift.[36] Andros' inability to provide a vessel left Bostock no option but to go to Cape Charles, where the pilot John Mincon lived, and hire his sloop. This he did, but somehow and at some undetermined point the captain acquired a second vessel. Bostock placed, William Cornwall, the Swift's carpenter, in command of this other sloop. Whilst Cornwall searched the coastal area to the south of the capes, Bostock sailed North examining the coast line from Smith Island to Hog Island. Unfortunately neither search was successful.[37]

Around 15 February 1698, Sir Edmond Andros learned that an unmanned vessel had recently run aground in North Carolina.[38] By the 26th Captain Bostock was at the scene. It was a place he called "Gingitch", near Roanoake and twenty-five leagues south of the capes. The captain immediately tried to get support from North Carolina's proprietary government. He complained to Deputy Governor Thomas Harvey that people from the Outer Banks were looting his vessel. Further, he requested logistical support and asked that a survey of the advice boat be carried out with a view to refloating her. Both these requests were approved.

His major problem, however, was acquiring a vessel capable of dragging the Swift from the banks.

In March, Andros provided a sloop large enough for the task at hand. Captain Bostock, optimistic that his vessel could be saved, left some men at "Gingitch" and traveled back to Virginia. Having loaded cables and anchors from Point Comfort, he sailed the sloop, manned by the remainder of his crew, back down the coast of North Carolina. During his brief absence, however, events had once more turned against him. By April 1698 it looked as if saving the Swift would now be virtually impossible. The problems are excellently illustrated by the survey that North Carolina's deputy governor authorized. It reported that the structural integrity of the ship was sound with the only damage being the loss of some caulking, some loose bolts, and broken chain plates. In just a few weeks, however, the tides had buried the vessel in seven feet of sand. No longer would it be possible simply to drag the vessel from the banks. The surveyors concluded that because of the reburying action of the tides any attempt to dig out the vessel would be futile. Moreover, any operation would require a considerable amount of timber. The surveyors were adamant that bringing this to the site would be impossible. They argued that there were no trees available close by on the Outer Banks, and the sand hills prevented timber being brought over-land. Neither was transporting it by sea an option, for the nearest inlet was impassable. The surveyors were probably referring to New

Inlet or Currituck Inlet.[39]

Four months after Captain Bostock had first seen his grounded vessel on the Outer Banks he accepted that she could not be saved. Once again he had been truly unlucky, for clearly the vessel was in a good state to be salvaged had she not been buried so quickly. As it was, on 17 June 1698, Bostock and his crew loaded all the sails, rigging, ordnance and provisions they could salvage and prepared to sail back to Virginia. Having more men than the sloop could carry he gave some the option of travailing back to Kequetan by land rather than by sea. Interestingly, Bostock was apparently unconcerned about his men deserting. This is stark contrast to the worries of many other Royal Navy commanders in the following decades.[40]

On 23 July, having discharged his men and deposited the salvaged items into the custody of the governor of Virginia, Bostock departed from the colonies for England. He probably had few, if any, fond memories of his stay in the plantations. From the time of the vessel's launch, the young captain had spent six months attempting to secure provisions and men and two months being battered by the North Atlantic seas. On this voyage two masts had sprung and his rigging was severely damaged. He had eventually made land only to suffer the bizarre set of events that caused the loss of his vessel. He managed to find the Swift only to have his hopes of salvaging her dashed by the shifting sands. It was a

truly dejected man who wrote to the Admiralty upon his return to London; "I beg your Lordships favorable opinion of me in this my unhappy misfortune."[41] At least in the case of Nathanial Bostock, the captain of a small vessel traveling to England's overseas possessions suffered tremendous problems. He was clearly unlucky, but this does not explain his difficulties entirely. Bostock lacked the support of other warships, the equipment to save his vessel, and the administrative support of the motherland. If the administrative network was insufficient to run the navy at home, it was even less capable of projecting naval power overseas. Fate, however, was not destined to destroy Captain Bostock completely. In the ensuing court martial, Christopher Potter, the Swift's master, received most of the blame for the vessel's loss. Bostock was fined four months' pay, but retained his position in the Royal Navy.[42]

The Swift was the second advice boat to be wrecked or foundered in the eight years from 1695-1703. The third, the Messenger, was also lost whilst on duty in Maryland. The last advice boat to be lost during this period was the Swift's sister ship, the Eagle, wrecked during the Great Gale of 1703. Considering Bostock's misfortunes, somehow it does not seem surprising that he was the commander of the Eagle during that fateful storm.[43]

One of the most important reasons for tracing the history of the Swift was to establish solid references for the location of the wreck. We must, therefore, deal with

this aspect in a more detail.

In a letter to Colonel Nicholson, governor of Maryland, on the 15 March 1698, Governor Andros of Virginia referred to the Swift running aground near Roanoake.[44] This coincides with Bostock's stated location for the wreck twenty-five leagues south of the capes, providing, of course, we take Cape Henry as the datum point.[45]

Perhaps the best piece of locational data contained in the documentary evidence is that the Swift ran aground at a place called "Gingitch." This is important because it is mentioned on three separate occasions spread over a period of seven months.[46] Thus there is a persistency of locational data. Furthermore, Governor Andros' description of "Gingitch" as being near Roanoake, links all the documentary locations for the wreck together.[47] The major problem has been finding further references, either in documents or maps, for the exact location of "Gingitch." Clearly, determining this will be the key to finding any remains of the vessel. North Carolina maps from the time are very scarce. In fact only the Ian Lawson map of North Carolina produced in 1709 shows the location of Gingitch (see Figure 5).

Unfortunately the Lawson map does not show any recordings of longitude. Gingitch is recorded as being 36 degrees 9'30" north latitude on an area of the Outer Banks to the north of Roanoake Island. Despite a lack of information in the North Carolina Gazetteer, some details on Gingitch have

been pieced together. Apparently, the settlement took its name from Gingite Creek. The modern day name for this geographic feature is either Jean Guite Creek or Martin's Point Creek. The evolution of the name as far as European settlers are concerned is as follows: Gingite Creek, Ginguite Creek, Ginguite Bay, Guinguys Creek, Jane Guite Creek, Jeangite Creek, Jean Guite Creek, and Martin's Point Creek. The original Algonquian Indian name, Chincoteague, means large stream or inlet. The European names seem to be a corruption of this. In fact, the feature is not a creek at all but rather a bay on the sound side of the Outer Banks. The sound has flooded a swale between two ridges forming a bay two miles long, .02 miles wide, and located at 36 degrees 06'57" north latitude and 75 degrees 44'42" west longitude.[48] Today the closest town to the bay is Southern Shores located at 36 degrees 07'09" north and 75 degrees 43'45" west. Rodger Payne in his study of Place Names of the Outer Banks, lists the historical name of Southern Shores as Jeanguite. Although the historical derivations Jean Guite Creek and Southern Shores along with the co-ordinates are very encouraging, this does not necessarily mean that the present day Southern Shores is located on the site of seventeenth-century Gingitch. All that we have traced is the development of the name. It is possible that the settlement may have moved during the passage of time, especially considering the dynamic nature of the Outer Banks.[49]

At present, however, the best estimated location for the

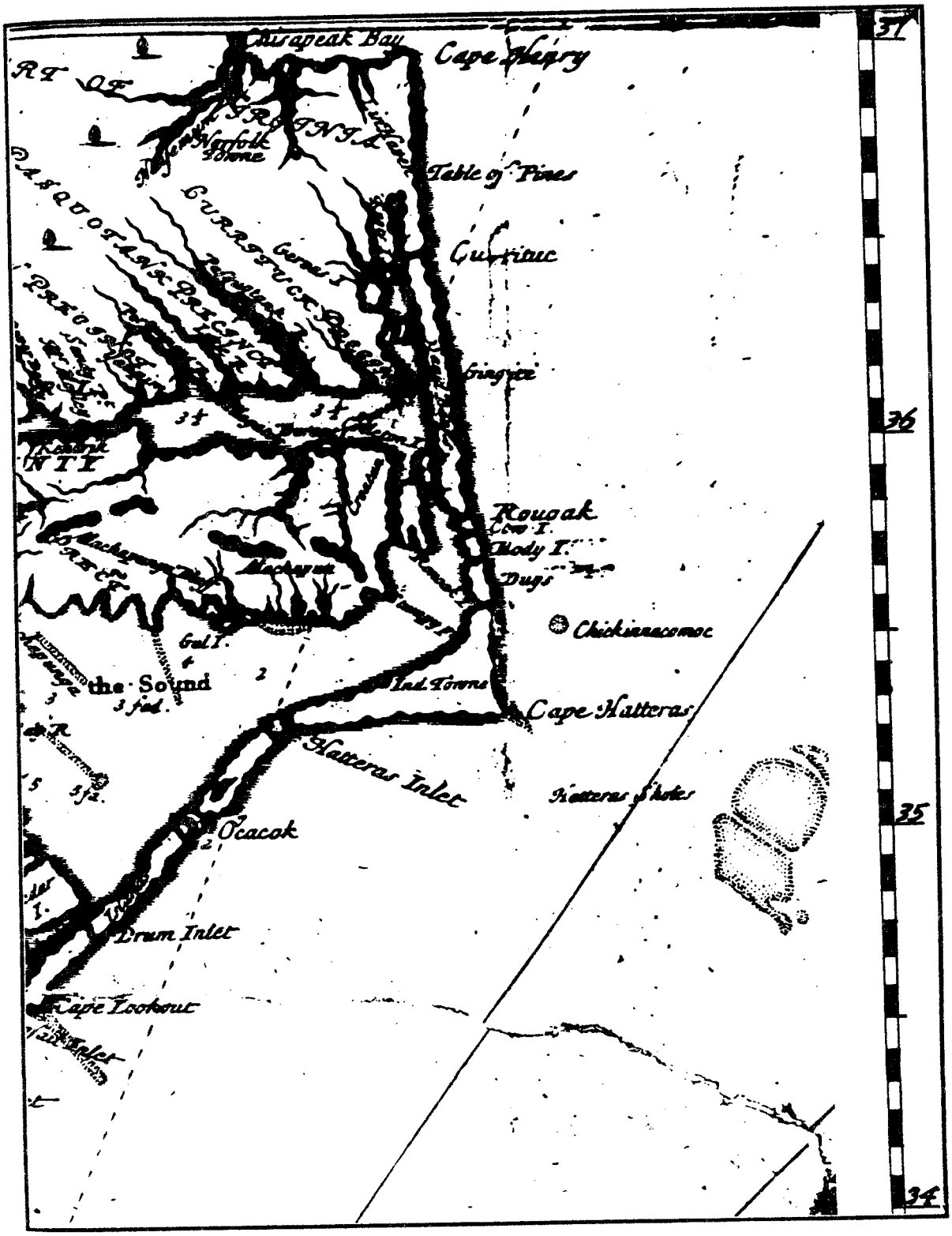

Figure 5. Ian Lawson, Map of North Carolina, 1709. (Source: North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina).

Swift's remains is somewhere along a two mile stretch of the Outer Banks roughly corresponding to the length of Jean Guite Creek. There are two methods for calculating the degree to which the Outer Banks shoreline has moved during the past three hundred years. One involves comparative cartography in which historic maps are compared to each other and modern charts in an attempt to compute shoreline movement. At its best, this strategy can be extremely accurate. The other method simply multiplies the modern annual erosion rate by the desired number of years to produce a distance of shoreline movement. This method is only accurate when the modern erosion rate is similar to ones in the past. Both methods, however, should be used prior to any survey.[50]

This chapter has traced the brief and bizarre history of the Swift, the unfortunate story of her captain, and examined the evidence for her final resting place. It is hoped that these presentations, combined with commentary on seventeenth-century naval inefficiencies and the problems for small vessels cruising alone, will stimulate interest in unrated warships amongst all sections of the historical community. The two aspects of the Swift's story, however, that have been deliberately ignored are her orders and intended functions. By adding a consideration of these aspects to the story of the Swift, the real importance of the vessel emerges, as does the true potential of unrated warships. In the following chapter it will be demonstrated that an examination of the Swift's intended functions leads us to a unique and

informative understanding of a broad historical issue, the 1696 Navigation Act.

Endnotes

1 See Daniel A. Baugh, British Naval Administration in the Age of Walpole (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); John Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); N.A.M. Rodger, The Wooden World, The Anatomy of the Georgian Navy (Glasgow: William Collins, 1986; reprint, Fontana Press, 1988); Robert Albion, Forests and Sea Power (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1965), 47-55, 72-89; Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, vol. IV, England's Commercial and Colonial Policy (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1912, reprint, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 277-279.

2 Rodger, The Wooden World, 18.

3 James Henderson, Sloops and Brigs (London: Adlard Coles Ltd., 1972).

4 Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, ADM 1/953, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, (hereafter cited as PRO).

5 Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, 71; Admiralty Board to Navy Board, 2 Mar. 1697, ADM 2/178, PRO.

6 Admiralty Board to Navy Board, 2 Mar. 1697, ADM 2/178, PRO.

7 Paybook of the Swift, compiled on the 1 Nov. 1700, ADM 33/200, PRO.

8 Navy Board Estimates, 1692-1697, ADM 1/953, PRO.

9 Josiah Burchett to Nathanial Bostock, and, to Commissioners, 13 May 1697, ADM 2/392, PRO.

10 See Baugh, British Naval Administration in the Age of Walpole; Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III; Rodger, The Wooden World; Albion, Forests and Sea Power, 47-55, 72-89; Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 277-279.

11
Admiralty to Navy Board, 11 May 1697, ADM 2/178, PRO.

12
Admiralty Board to Navy Board, 15 May 1697, ADM 2/178, PRO.

13
Admiralty Board to the Earl of Romney, 15 May 1697, ADM 2/178, PRO.

14
H. L. Blackmore, The Armories of the Tower of London, I Ordnance (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1976) 237; Ian Hogg and John Batchelor, Naval Gun (Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1978), 8.

15
Burchett to Bostock, 9 Aug. 1697, ADM 2/392, PRO.

16
Ibid.

17
Burchett to Bostock, 26 June 1697, ADM 2/392, PRO.

18
Admiralty Board to Navy Board, 30 July 1697, ADM 2/178, Navy Board to Bostock, 2 Aug. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO; The Deptford and Fowey were sailing from the Nore and the Swift from Portsmouth.

19
Bridgeman to Navy Board, 27 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/393, PRO.

20
Navy Board to Bostock, 20 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO. It was so common for warships to be short of victuals that it became almost standardized procedure to put the men on two-thirds rations once the voyage had commenced.

21
Bridgeman to Navy Board, 27 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/393, PRO.

22
Bridgeman to Bostock, 12 Oct. 1697, ibid.

23
Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, 133.

24
Navy Board to Bostock, and, to Captain Aldred," 15 Oct. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO.

25 Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, 379.

26 Bostock to Secretary of Admiralty," 3 Apr. 1698, ADM 1/1462, PRO.

27 Ibid.

28 The account of the trans-Atlantic journey is taken from two major sources, Bostock to Secretary of Admiralty, 3 Apr. 1698, and, to Admiralty Board, 3 Sept. 1698, ADM 1/1462, PRO.

29 Testimony of Mr. Merrit, Court Martial Inquiry into the Loss of the Swift, 6 Oct. 1698, ADM 1/5260, PRO.

30 Testimony of John Best, Court Martial," ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 This account of the events leading directly to the loss of the Swift has been drawn from the following sources: Testimonies from the Court Martial, 6 Oct. 1698, ADM 1/5260, Bostock to Secretary of the Admiralty, 3 Apr. 1698, and, to Admiralty Board, 3 Sept. 1698, ADM 1/1462, Bostock to Navy Board, 11 Oct. 1698, ADM 106/515, PRO.

33 Testimony of Christopher Potter, Court Martial, 6 Oct. 1698, ADM 1/5260, PRO.

34 Testimony of Richard Walton, Court Martial, ibid.

35 Bostock to Burchett, 24 Dec. 1698, ADM 1/1462 PRO.

36 Log of the Dover (prize), 2 Feb. 1698, ADM 52/26, PRO.

37 Bostock to Admiralty Board, 18 Nov. 1698, ADM 1/1462, PRO.

38 Bostock to Navy Board, 11 Oct. 1698, ADM 106/515, PRO.

[39] Report to the Deputy Governor and Council, 8 June 1698, CCR 192, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, N.C. (hereafter cited as NCSA).

[40] The account concerning the attempted salvage of the vessel is taken form the following sources: Bostock to Secretary of Admiralty, 3 Apr. 1698, to the Secretary of Admiralty, and, to Admiralty Board" 3 Sept. 1698, to the Admiralty Board, 18 Nov. 1698, to Burchett, 24 Dec. 1698, ADM 1/1462, Bostock to Navy Board, 11 Oct. 1698, ADM 106/515, Edmond Andros to Francis Nicholson, 15 Mar. 1698, Bostock to Nicholson, 5 Apr. 1698, Nicholson to Bostock, 26 Apr. 1698, CO 5/714, PRO; North Carolina Scilicet By the Honourable Deputy Governor and Council, Mar. 1698, CCR 191, Report to the Deputy Governor and Council, 8 June 1698, CCR 192, NCSA.

[41] Bostock to Admiralty Board, 3 Sept. 1698, ADM 1/1462, PRO.

[42] Court Martial, 6 Oct. 1698, ADM 1/5260, PRO, following the loss of a vessel a court martial was the normal procedure.

[43] W. L. Clowes, The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present (reprint, New York: AMS Press Inc., 1966), 388-389; Bostock can not be blamed for the loss of the Eagle as the Great Gale of 1703 was one of the biggest disasters in the history of the Royal Navy.

[44] Nicholson to Andros, 15 Mar. 1698, CO 5/714, PRO.

[45] Bostock to Admiralty Board, 3 Sept. 1698, ADM 1/1462, PRO.

[46] Andros to Nicholson, 15 Mar. 1698, CO 5/714, Bostock to Secretary of Admiralty, 3 Apr. 1698, ADM 1/1462, Bostock to Navy Board, 11 Oct. 1698, ADM 106/515, PRO.

[47] Andros to Nicholson, 15 Mar. 1698, CO 5/714, PRO.

[48] Rodger L. Payne, Place Names of the Outer Banks, (Washington, N.C: Thomas A. Williams, 1985), 108, 176.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Personal communication with Dr. Stan Riggs and Dr. Richard A. Stephenson, East Carolina University.

Chapter III

The Swift and the 1696 Navigation Act

When the Swift set sail in November 1697 she was supposed to perform an important role in enforcing the 1696 Navigation Act. Although the vessel never had an opportunity to perform her intended functions, her story provides unique insight into England's methods for controlling colonial commerce. Imperial authorities envisioned the Swift actively contributing to the regulatory system in three ways. First, she was to survey shipping in an attempt to enforce commercial regulations. In this respect many of her orders paralleled the exact wording of the 1696 Navigation Act. Second, she was supposed to support and monitor the activities of collectors and customs officials in the Chesapeake. Finally, she was to support Edward Randolph, Surveyor General of Customs, in his overall supervision of the Navigation Acts. The Swift was also involved the implementation of the regulatory system in a passive way. As part of the 1696 effort to control commerce, Parliament gave legislative support to the establishment of Admiralty courts in the colonies. These courts, without juries, would hear cases arising from the Navigation Acts. Ironically, the loss of the Swift played an important part in the establishment and character of the Admiralty court for North Carolina. This chapter demonstrates these inextricable links between the Swift and the implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act.

In doing so, it illustrates the advice boat's historical significance and demonstrates that research into the functions of unrated warships can lead to better understanding of broad historical issues.

The appointment of Colonel Francis Nicholson as governor of Maryland in the final days of 1693 enhanced the prospects of a resolute implementation of the Acts of Trade in Chesapeake Bay.[1] There seems little doubt that a strict implementation of these laws was amongst his aspirations.[2] In March 1696, as part of this commitment, Nicholson asked the Lords of Trade and Plantations to dispatch a small navy vessel to cruise off the Maryland coast.[3] After a year with little prospect of success, Nicholson repeated his request. This time the governor was more specific as to the precise role the vessel would play. He suggested that a warship would curtail the desertion of merchant seamen, which caused considerable delays in the loading of the bay's commercial fleets, and would protect various Maryland counties from the mischievous activities of pirates and "privateers." He argued that the bay was so large and the cost of building forts so extensive, that naval power was the only way of protecting it. Nicholson's arguments concerning the prevention of illegal trade, however, appear to have had a greater impact in London than his suggestions pertaining to the colony's security.[4]

Nicholson was not alone in supporting a permanent naval

station off the coast of Maryland. Surveyor General, Edward Randolph had presented similar arguments with respect to the desertion of mariners and illegal trade some eighteen months before. Randolph was a respected, knowledgeable official whose opinion of the colonies carried considerable weight.[5]

It was shortly after Colonel Nicholson's second request that the first assignment for the Swift was determined. In May 1697, the Privy Council, acting on a recommendation that the Commissioners of Customs had made to the Lords of the Treasury, ordered the Admiralty to prepare a small vessel for duty in the Chesapeake.[6] This vessel, of course, was destined to be the Swift.

Captain Bostock sailed for Maryland to help prevent illegal trade in 1697. Some association, therefore, between the orders of the Swift and the 1696 Navigation Act should be of little surprise. Any analysis of 1696 Navigation Act implementation can not take place, however, without some understanding of the problems faced by the colonial customs service prior to that year. Why was it that England deemed another Act of Parliament necessary? It is to these questions, then, that the discussion turns first.

The duties of a colonial customs officer were not without risk. Strict enforcement of the Acts of Trade would cost offenders time and money. It is not surprising, therefore, that physical violence against customs officers sometimes occurred. Captain Allan of HMS Quaker commented in the 1680s that "Noe officer of the customs service in

Maryland can live without good guard."[7] This problem was exacerbated by confusion as to the exact powers of the colonial officials; did these powers extend beyond enforcing the 1673 Act, which had created the first colonial customs service? Discrepancies in interpretation paved the way for law suits directed against customs officials. This undoubtedly prejudiced the operation of the regulatory system.[8]

Conflict was not limited to attacks on the customs service from without; animosity and rivalry were also born from within. Disputes surfaced from the relationship between the customs staff (the collectors, comptrollers and surveyors) and the colonial officials (the governors and naval officers). They were caused by competition for fees and shares of forfeitures. These officials all jostled for the spoils of successful prosecution. Dichotomy and discord, then, were almost institutionalized in the colonial customs service.[9]

In the face of threats, temptation, and inter-service disputes, it is hardly surprising that some officials became untrustworthy or even corrupt. Considerable evidence exists of dereliction of duty by officials in both Virginia and Maryland, although it is likely that the corruption was fairly evenly distributed throughout the colonies.[10]

The governor himself was perhaps the most controversial colonial official. His sworn duty to enforce the Navigation

Acts invariably created a coalition of opposition to his authority. Even a strong governor like Francis Nicholson, who enjoyed the support of powerful friends, generated enemies by his strict enforcement of the trade laws in the Chesapeake. These enemies waited for the governor to make the mistakes that could be used to force his transfer.[11] Evidence suggests that it was extremely difficult for colonial governors to uphold the customs regulations. The English desire to center the real source of colonial authority in London deprived the governors of the necessary power to adapt the enforcement system so as to make it effective. Neither was it possible for the governor, separated from the motherland by several thousand miles of ocean, simply to go to his superiors and get plans sanctioned.[12]

Some contemporary accounts ascribe to colonial governors a far more active role in compromising the colonial customs service. Edward Randolph was probably the most avid exponent of such a viewpoint. Although he claimed that the governor of Rhode Island was "enriching himself by piracy," he saved most of his derogatory remarks for the governors of proprietary colonies.[13] For example, in a memorial to the Commissioners of Customs about the Navigation Acts he said: "It can not be reasonably imagined that the Proprietary Governors are persons qualified or fit to be entrusted with the conduct and execution of the principle powers reposed in those Acts."[14]

These criticisms merely represent a small segment of a much broader attack on proprietary colonies. Randolph viewed them as a harbor for illegal traders, a haven for runaway seamen, and a refuge for pirates.[15] During his time in the colonial customs service, he frequently advocated the seizure of "independent" colonies from proprietary control. Without this, he argued, "should a hundred Acts be made for the regulation of them" they will still "pay no obedience."[16] A note of caution must be injected at this time, for Randolph is clearly capable of overstating his case. On one occasion he claimed that the government of Pennsylvania had declared itself independent of the crown by "not acknowledging his present Majesty William the Third to be their sovereign Lord and King."[17] It is difficult to find any other evidence to support this particular claim. Nevertheless, it seems that there is some truth in the notion that the non-Royal colonies were more difficult to regulate.[18] Frequently, charters were used as a basis for claiming that undesirable regulations did not apply to proprietary colonies. In Carolina, for example, where the charter had been granted after the passing of the 1660 Navigation Act, it was argued that the inhabitants were exempt from the necessity of compliance.[19] It is also true that difficulties in controlling Massachusetts led to its takeover by Royal authority in the 1680s.[20] It seems likely, then, that some governors, more often than not those associated with

proprietary colonies, helped to frustrate implementation of the Navigation Acts.

The customs service also encountered problems in the courts. Of the thirty-six cases of illegal trade that Randolph took to trial between 1680 and 1682, thirty-four were acquitted.[21] The problems were three-fold. First, common law courts invariably tried cases pertaining to the violation of trade regulations. In these court rooms the defendants could use the customs and precedents that had evolved in the colonies to their advantage.[22] Second, prosecutors often found it difficult to assemble the necessary evidence to prove a violation of the Navigation Acts.[23] Finally, the sympathies of the local population for the activities of illegal traders made it difficult to get a jury to convict. Francis Nicholson wrote to the Lords of Trade and Plantations explaining precisely this problem. "If there is no way of attainting [by-passing] juries in these parts," he complained, "I fear that the King will not have justice done to him about illegal trade."[24]

These, then, were some of England's major problems implementing the navigation system prior to 1696.[25] Let us now examine the link between the Swift and the new customs structure allowed for by the Act for Preventing Frauds and Regulating Abuses in the Plantation Trade. It will be demonstrated that the orders and history of the Swift provide valuable insight into this new structure.

In September 1697, Captain Bostock received two types of

instructions. The first were procedural, and the second the "on service" instructions most important to the present discussion. Although some of these orders were concerned with peripheral issues such as the procedure for replacing deceased officers or impressing men, the majority mirrored precisely the terms of the 1696 Navigation Act.[26] Bostock's instructions required him to comply with any orders given to him by Colonel Nicholson to "cause a due Observance of the several Acts of Trade made for preventing frauds and Abuses of the Plantation Trade." He had to ensure that merchant ships trading in the Chesapeake belonged to English or colonial owners, and that their master and at least three quarters of the mariners on board were English. He was instructed that no ship could load enumerated commodities without either first producing a certificate from an English customs house to prove that bond had been given to take these commodities to an English or colonial port, or placing bond with the colonial governor to do the same.[27] Violators of any of these regulations would be subject to forfeiture of their ships and cargoes. Captain Bostock was called upon to exert his "utmost endeavors to find out, seize and prosecute" offenders.[28] Furthermore, loading enumerated goods would subject the ships' masters to certain fines. These were to be paid to the customs collectors in accordance with the rates specified by the Act.

The Navy Board reminded the Swift's captain that the

payment of bond did not excuse the merchant from paying duties on certain commodities. Neither was it legal to import any foreign product into the colonies unless it had been transported via England in English-built and -manned ships.

Imperial authorities also ordered Bostock to ensure that no vessel coming into Maryland loaded or unloaded without first informing the colonial customs officials of her arrival. He was to ensure that this information had been recorded, along with details of the ship and her voyage, and an inventory of the goods on board.

Finally, his instructions suggested that exceptional care should be taken when examining certificates of bond to ensure that they were not counterfeit. If Captain Bostock was able to prove that any ship had discharged her cargo contrary to the bond, or excessive time had passed since bond was given, he was to take the necessary action to put the bond in suit.[29]

These, then, were the Swift's orders that directly paralleled the terms of the 1696 Act. There can be little doubt as to the duties she was supposed to perform. Two other instructions given to Bostock, however, help describe further ways in which the Swift was going to be involved in the implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act. An examination of these orders shows how the English authorities intended to attack some inherent weaknesses in the system of customs implementation.

The first of these orders instructed Bostock to correspond with the collectors of customs in Maryland and inspect the clearing of all ships in their books.[30] This would facilitate the discovery of forged certificates. He was also told to inform the collectors of any useful information that might come to his attention. This order clearly parallels the almost schizophrenic spirit of the 1696 Navigation Act. On the one hand authorities wanted to help the customs officials. This is evidenced by the stationing of the Swift in the Chesapeake and the additional powers and protection given to the collectors within the legislation. But on the other hand there was a desire to scrutinize the colonial officials and ensure their diligent performance of duty.[31] Another example of this latter motivation can be seen in the new requirement that naval officers give bond to uphold the Navigation Acts.[32]

The Swift's second order also demonstrates England's method for revamping the customs service. Captain Bostock was instructed to transport Edward Randolph from Virginia or Pennsylvania to Carolina and Bermuda for the administering of oaths, and to do so sometime before 28 March 1698. In addition, he was ordered "likewise to carry the said Surveyor General when and as often as he shall find necessary for his Majesty's service, to visit the several proprietaries on the continent of America and its islands adjacent."[33] The imperial authorities had inextricably linked the Swift

with the man who was to play a crucial role in the implementation of the new customs structure. As the order to the Swift suggests, Randolph was going to administer the governors' oaths which the 1696 Act required. This is important because under these oaths governors swore to uphold the whole navigation system not just the 1696 Act. It was an attempt to encourage a stronger commitment to the regulation of trade, particularly from proprietary governors.[34]

Captain Bostock also knew that he should transport Randolph whilst he investigated the lesser colonial customs officials. Imperial authorities had charged the Surveyor General with important functions in this regard. Randolph replaced untrustworthy or incompetent officials with new appointees, and ensured that any vacant positions were filled. He carried, as a product of the 1696 Navigation Act, a greatly expanded series of instructions for the colonial customs officers: sixteen new articles to be added to the 1673 instructions. Moreover, Randolph himself was responsible for enforcing the Navigation Acts. In the last three years of the seventeenth century he conducted a general survey of the colonial customs service, checking that all forfeited bonds were put in suit and, where appropriate, seizing vessels upon his own authority.[35] It is no wonder that the Commissioners of Customs wanted him to travel to the colonies immediately after 1696, for Randolph was to play a key role in the implementation of the new Act.[36] To

function properly Randolph needed to travel easily between the plantations. Therefore, in practical terms, the Swift was to be one of Randolph's most important assets.

It seems clear, then, that the role envisaged for the Swift was important for the smooth implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act. Both in terms of her perceived duties under Colonel Nicholson in Chesapeake Bay and her role as a transport for Edward Randolph, the Swift should have been at the forefront of the revised customs system.

The loss of the advice boat before she managed to perform any of these functions provides an opportunity to check the validity of the above statements. If she was to be so important her loss must have caused great alarm and inconvenience. Francis Nicholson certainly felt this way. When he heard of the disaster that had befallen the Swift, he wrote to the Council of Trade and Plantations: "I beg you to send another ship with all expedition."[37] He then listed all the functions that the Swift was supposed to perform in the bay.

Nicholson's response, however, was restrained in comparison with Edward Randolph's. First, the Surveyor General stressed the importance of having a naval vessel in Chesapeake Bay, claiming that without a ship on this station "100 Acts of Parliament ..... will signifie nothing towards preventing" illegal trade.[38] Following this Randolph complained of the restrictions the loss of the Swift placed

on his duties: "I am going to Providence and Carolina .... where several .... Pyrates are settled; The Swift ffrigott appointed to transport me from one Plantation to another is drove ashore and not fitt for service, otherwise I should be in a condition to manage them."[39] Randolph also wrote a series of letters complaining that the loss of the Swift had left him without transport. These demonstrate a growing desperation that culminates with the following:

> The want of a small vessel to support the loss of the Frigate, which was appointed by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transport me form one Plantation to another, makes me stay a great while at one place for a passage to another, which is uncertain, difficult and dangerous.
>
> I have by the extreme of cold last Winter in Maryland and Pennsylvania, and by my tedious passage in the Winter time from New York to this place, got a great Numbness in my right leg and foot. I am in hopes this warm climate will restore me to my health. I have formerly wrote to your Board and the Commissioners of H.M. Customs, the necessity of having a Vessel to transport me from one Plantation to another.<40>

Clearly, then, imperial authorities on both sides of the Atlantic saw the Swift as playing an important role in imposing the 1696 Navigation Act.

Toward the beginning of this chapter it was suggested that obtaining convictions in the common law courts was one of the greatest problems for the colonial customs service. Often this problem became exacerbated in proprietary colonies. The unfortunate story of the Swift demonstrates the way English authorities tried to solve for this problem. In the months before the passage of the 1696 Navigation Act

the Royal government considered three possible strategies for assisting colonial officials in the courts. These were introducing courts of Exchequer to the colonies, turning the colonial office of Attorney General into a Royal appointment, and setting up Admiralty courts in the plantations.

The idea of courts of Exchequer seemed logical. In England similar courts tried cases arising from violations of the Acts of Trade. They had also been established in some colonies. Procedure in these colonial courts of Exchequer, however, was difficult to follow, especially for colonial officers unfamiliar with to the intricacies of the process. Furthermore, because local inhabitants were appointed as officials, Whitehall feared that the same problems of achieving conviction would arise. The first option was, therefore, abandoned.[41]

The second idea, that of making the Attorney General a Royal appointment, was certainly popular with certain sections of the imperial administration, including Randolph.[42] This option, however, was probably unconstitutional and consequently could not be implemented.[43] The idea of instituting Admiralty courts in the plantations gained far greater credence. Randolph and other colonial office holders had recommended this approach on several occasions.[44] Imperial administrators expected that these courts, by virtue of experience in condemning prizes, would be familiar with the processes of prosecuting seizures. Furthermore, the judges understood maritime practice, and presided without

juries.[45] Although the 1660 Navigation Act had allowed for the creation of colonial Admiralty courts and the Privy Council could authorize such a move without legislation, the creation of these courts had been sporadic.[46] For this reason the Parliamentary sanction provided in the 1696 Act was important. In 1697 the Privy Council ordered Admiralty courts to be established in the colonies. Shortly thereafter, the High Court of Admiralty issued commissions to the colonial governors to appoint court officials. Admiralty jurisdiction was to be divided into eleven districts.[47]

The process of instituting Admiralty courts in the colonies also gave the imperial authorities an opportunity to deal with some of the proprietary colonies. If Admiralty districts were established so as to include one Royal and one proprietary colony, and the former received commission over the whole district, then imperial appointees would be trying cases in proprietary colonies. This scheme was supposed to apply to Virginia and North Carolina, but events involving the Swift transpired to undermine it.

In June 1697, the High Court of Admiralty in England authorized Governor Edmond Andros of Virginia to appoint a judge and other officials to a vice-Admiralty court. This court was to have authority over both Virginia and North Carolina. Consequently, on 8 March 1698 Edward Hill, a member of the Virginia council, was appointed to this position. Shortly thereafter, both Hill and Andros wrote to

Thomas Harvey, deputy governor of North Carolina, informing him of the newly established court, and enclosing copies of their respective commissions.[48] Naturally, officials in the proprietary colony viewed this as a gross encroachment upon their rights. They immediately set about looking for a loophole, which they found in the unfortunate events surrounding the loss of the Swift.

By the end of February 1698 the Swift was stranded on North Carolina's Outer Banks where local inhabitants plundered her. When the North Carolina officials learned of these activities in March 1698, they sent the provost marshal and deputy marshal to the scene. These officers arrested more than twenty people, who were incarcerated while awaiting trial. The defendants should have been tried by the general court, which had convened on 1 March 1698. Three days later, however, the court had adjourned due to the illness of Samuel Swann, the chief judge. As a result, the deputy governor and council issued a commission to oyer and terminer to Henderson Walker so that the imprisoned persons might be bought to trial.[49]

Walker's appointment to try those persons specifically accused of pillaging the advice boat Swift, gave the North Carolina officials an opportunity to evade the jurisdiction of the Virginia Admiralty court. Andros' commission stated that he could appoint judges to the court of Admiralty "upon any present vacancy."[50] Therefore, if it was possible for the North Carolina officials to construe the appointment of

Walker as judge of the Admiralty there would be no vacancy. Using this strange but successful logic, Harvey wrote to Andros denying the jurisdiction of the Virginia court of Admiralty.[51] North Carolina officials had fended off an attack on their prerogatives. It seems, then, that the North Carolina's Admiralty court came into being as a consequence of the 1696 Navigation Act and the wrecking of the Swift. It was, however, almost an afterthought.

Once again the Swift had become linked to England's methods for implementing the Navigation Acts. Clearly, these aspects dominated her history. Her orders for cruising Chesapeake Bay and for transporting Randolph in his activities as Surveyor General illustrate that her role in the post-1696 customs service should have been vital. In reality, however, the Swift contributed nothing to the imposition of imperial regulations. Ironically, her impact was, if anything, a hindrance. Because the advice boat was thought of as such a powerful weapon for the customs service, her loss caused delays in the stationing of a naval force in the Chesapeake and almost stifled the early activities of Edward Randolph. Although the Swift was deeply involved in the establishment of an Admiralty court in North Carolina, this court was not structured in the way Royal authorities envisioned. In practice the Swift had merely helped the proprietary colony of North Carolina evade another method of Navigation Act implementation. In these conclusions lies the

historical importance of the Swift. An analysis of her functions and operations has provided a unique perspective on England's attempts to control her empire's commerce.

Endnotes

[1] Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations (Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl.), 27 Dec. 1693, in J. W. Fortescue, ed., Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1693-1696 (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964), No. 745, (hereafter cited as CSPC); Randolph's Letter to the Board, 26 April 1698, in Robert Toppan, ed., Edward Randolph Papers, 1676-1703 (Boston: Publication of the Prince Society, 1898-1910), V, 172.

[2] Ibid.; Lawrence A. Harper, The English Navigation Laws: A Seventeenth Century Experiment in Social Engineering (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 215.

[3] Francis Nicholson to the Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 18 Mar. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC 1693-1696, No. 2303; Nicholson also requests a court of Exchequer.

[4] Council of Trade and Plantations (Coun. of Tr. and Pl.) to Nicholson, 25 Sept. 1696, ibid., No. 261; Nicholson to Coun. of Tr. and Pl., 27 Mar. 1697, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1697, No. 862, Nicholson uses the term privateer but perhaps pirate is would have been more appropriate. The reasons why officials in London were more concerned with trade regulation than the security of the colonies are discussed in Chapter IV.

[5] Randolph to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 31 Dec. 1695, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 125-129; see also Michael G. Hall, Edward Randolph and the American Colonies, 1676-1703 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1960).

[6] Admiralty to Navy Board, 11 May 1697, ADM 2/178, Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, (hereafter cited as PRO); This story is recounted in Chapter II.

[7] Quoted in, Thomas C. Barrow, Trade and Empire: The British Customs Service in Colonial America, 1660-1775 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967), 28.

[8] Harper, The English Navigation Laws, 170-172.

9
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 40; Harper, English Navigation Laws, 174.

10
Edward Randolph, chose to ascribe a less sinister interpretation to the minor officials' actions. He suggested that miscarriages amongst these people were due either to "ignorance or convenience" rather than blatant corruption. see Randolph to Commissioners of Customs (Comm. of Cust.), 31 July 1696, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 135; also Barrow, Trade and Empire, 45.

11
Harper, English Navigation Laws, 215.

12
Ibid., 215-216.

13
Randolph to the Board, ? June 1698, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 186.

14
Randolph to Comm. of Cust., 31 July 1696, Memorial of Edward Randolph, 1697; ibid., V, 135, 155.

15
Randolph to Benjamin Bathurst, 12 May 1698, Randolph's Letter to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, Paper from Randolph: Loss of Revenue from Tobacco, 5 Nov. 1700, ibid., V, 179, 181, 190, 232.

16
Randolph's Letter to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, Randolph's Letter to Secretary Popple, 25 Apr. 1698, ibid., V, 171-176, 169; for an excellent contrast see Randolph to Benjamin Bathurst, 12 May 1698, ibid., V, 179; Barrow, Trade and Empire, 51.

17
Randolph's Letter to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, ibid., V, 173.

18
Harper, English Navigation Laws, 159; For other views see Nicholson to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 18 Mar. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 2303; Nicholson to the Coun. of Tr. and Pl., 27 Mar. 1697, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1697, No. 862.

19
George Muschamp to [Lords Proprietors of Carolina?] (Lds. Prop. of Car.), 11 Apr. 1687, Lds. Prop. of Car. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., Aug. 1687, Lds. Prop. of Car. to [Governor James Colleton?], 10 Oct. 1687, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 1204, 1417, 1457.

20
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 34.

21
Ibid., 31; see also Carl Ubbelohde, The Vice-Admiralty Courts and the American Revolution (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

22
Harper, English Navigation Laws, 184-185.

23
Ibid., 193-196.

24
Nicholson to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 18 Mar. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 2303; An Account of Illegal Trade in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, 16 Oct. 1695, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 118.

25
The extent of and the problems with, Royal Navy involvement in the regulation of colonial trade are dealt with in Chapter IV.

26
Instructions to Nathanial Bostock, 20 Sept. 1697, 30 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO.

27
Ibid. Enumerated commodities mentioned were sugar, tobacco, cotton, wool, indigo, ginger, and drying wood. Posting bond simply meant that a merchant would be liable for pre-specified sum of money if he failed to carry enumerated commodities to an English port. At the time this amounted to £1000 for a vessel of less than 100 tons burthen and £2000 for any vessel with a greater capacity.

28
Instructions to Bostock, 30 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO.

29
Ibid.; Excessive time was considered to be about 18 months.

30
Ibid.

31
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 64; Harper, English Navigation Acts, 161, 176; The 1696 Navigation Act gave colonial officials the same powers as their English counterparts. This meant that if they were sued or molested they could plead the general issue and use any of the customs Acts in evidence.

32
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 76.

33
Instructions to Bostock, 30 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/24, PRO, The only restriction to this would be an objection by the governor of Maryland.

34
Randolph's Letter to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 174, 189; Harper, English Navigation Acts, 206.

35
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 65-66.

36
Ibid., 65.

37
Nicholson to Coun. of Tr. and Pl., 20 Aug. 1698; in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1698, No. 760; Nicholson to Comm. of Cust., 12 Sept. 1699, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1699, No. 450iv.

38
Randolph's Letter to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 191.

39
Randolph to Bathurst, 12 May 1698, ibid., V, 182, Randolph uses the word frigate here simply to mean a small warship.

40
Randolph to the Lds. of Tr., 16 Mar. 1698, ibid., V, 199-200; see also Randolph to Bathurst, 12 May 1698, Randolph's Letter to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, Randolph to Bathurst, 12 May 1698, Randolph's Letter to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, Randolph to the Earl of Bridgewater, 22 Mar. 1698, ibid., V, 174, 182, 191, 204.

41
Harper, English Navigation Laws, 183-185.

42
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 63.

43
Ibid.

44
Extract of Presentment from Comm. of Cust., 23 July 1696, Randolph to the Comm. of Cust., 31 July 1696, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 131, 135.

45
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 56; Harper, English Navigation Laws, 184-185.

46
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 56; Harper, English Navigation Laws, 191.

47
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 60.

48
Thomas Harvey to John Archdale, 10 July 1698, CCR 188, Edward Hill to [Harvey?], 10 Mar. 1698, CCR 142; Commission to Hill, 8 Mar. 1698, CCR 192, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, N.C. (hereafter cited as NCSA); Mattie Erma Edwards Parker, ed., North Carolina High Court Records, 1697-1701, (Raleigh, N.C: North Carolina University Print Shop, 1971), lvi; Although the colony of North Carolina was not legally independent of Carolina at this point, the administration of Carolina was divided into North Carolina and Carolina. Governor Archdale's residence was in Charleston where he did have overall control of the colony. He had, however, appointed a Deputy Governor Thomas Harvey to administer the North. Officials in London and the colonies, both in private and public correspondence, used the name North Carolina. The Virginia Admiralty court jurisdiction only covered the northern part of Carolina. Captain Bostock applied to Thomas Harvey for help in salvaging the Swift. It is for these reasons that "North Carolina" is used in the text.

49
Harvey to Archdale, 10 July 1698, CCR 188, NCSA; Parker, ed., High Court Records, lvi.

50
Andros to [Harvey?], 3 May 1698, CCR 142, Harvey to Archdale, 10 July 1698, CCR 188, NCSA.

[51] Ibid; In Harvey's letter to Governor Archdale on 10 July said that he had written to Andros and recounted the details of that correspondence.

Chapter IV

The Swift, The Royal Navy, The Colonial Customs Service, and The British Empire, 1683-1713.

In the preceding chapters, the story of the advice boat Swift and her operational instructions, permitted us to make the following two assertions. First, the imperial authorities considered her role to be vital in the implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act. Second, investigations into the functions of small naval craft can provide unique and informative perspectives on larger historical issues. These statements, however, beg an important question. If the Swift can help reveal the nature of the 1696 Navigation Act, can the story of unrated and lesser rated warships on her station in the Chesapeake shed light on the whole navigation system and the colonial customs service? This chapter will not only demonstrate that they can, but also show that consideration of the Royal Navy in colonial waters can ultimately help clarify the very nature of the first British Empire. The time period considered here dates from 1683, with the stationing of the first peacetime vessel in Chesapeake Bay, to 1713, the end of the War of the Spanish Succession.

By looking at the activities of the Royal Navy during this period, some important questions about the Swift will also be answered. To what extent, for example, were her functions typical of Royal Navy craft stationed in the

colonies? Were the failures and problems encountered by the Swift typical or in some way remarkable?

Imposing an effective administrative system upon the colonies was a difficult task for England, but in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the mother country made a concerted effort to improve this structure. The primary motivation for establishing colonies had been the aggrandizement of the mother country. The regulation of trade, therefore, was of the utmost importance. England based her strategy for improving control on effective administration of the Navigation Acts.

We have seen some of the problems associated with trying to implement this strategy. Inadequate protection for the customs officers, confusion over their powers, institutionalized rivalry between Royal officials, corruption within the bureaucracy, untrustworthy colonial governors, and the difficulty of convicting illegal traders in colonial courts, all contributed to the problems of administering the colonies. In fact, the difficulties were such that during the latter part of the seventeenth century authorities in London faced a barrage of reports that illicit trade was rampant in the colonies. In response, England charged her navy with enforcing the regulatory system. Indeed, one of the major justifications for establishing some colonial naval stations, particularly in Chesapeake Bay, was that they would help prevent illegal trade. The Royal Navy tried vigorously to enforce the navigation system, but a series of largely

uncontrollable problems made its efforts generally ineffective. The navy's difficulties in colonial America between 1683 and 1713, therefore, represent yet another reason for England's inability to force the navigation system on her colonies. Evidence suggests, however, that illegal trade began to decline during the early part of the eighteenth century. If the Royal Navy was unable to perform a principal role in imposing trade laws, and illegal trade became less frequent, then we have a strong indication that the Navigation Acts were not enforced at all, but were voluntarily adhered to by people recognizing the benefits of the mercantile system. This highlights the commercial nature of the first British Empire upon which Royal Navy activity in the colonies was founded. It also has some important historiographical implications for colonial American history. This chapter, born as it was from consideration of a virtually anonymous naval vessel, demonstrates the accuracy of these ideas.

I

An adequate examination of the Royal Navy's role in the regulation of trade between 1683 and 1713, first requires an assessment of illegal trade in colonial America. Without this, a discussion of the importance of the naval policy in the enforcement of the navigation system would lack foundation.

Some scholars have suggested that during the eighteenth

century the level of illicit trade declined. They argue that the passage of the Navigation Acts, particularly those passed in 1673 and 1696, made the risks associated with illegal trade too great for most ship owners and merchants. Simultaneously, the high potential profits to be made within the monopolistic trading system benefited Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic. The imperial trend, therefore, was towards conformity rather than dissension.[1]

The principal exception to this eighteenth-century trend seems to have been violations of the 1733 Molasses Act. Obedience to this Act would have been economic suicide for many colonial merchants. Broadly speaking, these historical interpretations seem indisputable. So too is the conclusion of two notable historians that by "the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713 colonial trade conformed in almost every particular to the navigation system."[2]

The problem of illegal trade, however, is not so easily dismissed. It would be absurd to suggest that no infringements of the Navigation Acts took place, for there "is probably no law that has never been violated, nor is there any general condition where each and every violator is publicly punished."[3] More important, it appears that conformity to the Navigation Acts only matured during the eighteenth century. Some scholars argue that it took a long time for the colonists, conditioned to lax trade regulation by 1660, to change from their established practices and

conform to the new legislation. Even the staunchest advocates of colonial conformity to the trade Acts in the eighteenth century accept that the seventeenth century was a different story. Oliver M. Dickerson, writes, "There was a time prior to 1700 when there seemed to have been some evasion of tobacco enumeration."[4]

Dickerson is referring to the practice of shipping tobacco from Virginia and Maryland to the northern colonies and from there directly to southern Europe. A similar practice occurred with rice from Carolina after its enumeration in 1704. This staple was carried to Newport, Rhode Island, and from there shipped directly to Portugal. Unfortunately, the extent of this activity, as with all illegal trade, is difficult to establish.[5]

Imperial authorities recognized and accepted some forms of illegal trade. In 1720, it was reported that for many years Spanish ships visiting the English Caribbean had been unloading their cargoes and purchasing Negroes and English manufactured goods. Even if the Spanish ships had not unloaded cargoes, this practice would still have violated the Navigation Acts, which said that any products exported from English colonies had to be transported in English vessels. Whitehall knew about the practice but turned a blind eye because of the hard currency it produced.[6]

There are further examples of pragmatic interpretation of the trade laws. For example, captains, who, being hopelessly short of mariners took on more foreign seamen than

the Navigation Acts permitted, were sometimes treated leniently.[7] Direct importation from the European continent in violation of the 1663 Navigation Act was probably one of the most difficult practices to stop. Massachusetts merchants developed a tradition of importing a few hogsheads of wine directly from Europe for their own consumption. Similarly, they brought foreign goods to America as gifts. Although during the early part of the eighteenth century courts clamped down on this practice, customs officials in Boston suggested that it was as "common and ... ancient as the port" itself.[8] Evidence also suggests that a clause in the same Navigation Act allowing provisions to be imported into the colonies from certain countries other than England, was abused. One ship's master claimed that the soap he brought into the colonies was part of his provisions and argued that "one might live upon it for a month."[9]

Shortage of customs officers appears also to have been a problem for effective regulation of trade. Maryland collector David Kennedy wrote, in 1698, that whilst he visited the Justice of the Peace, who lived some ten to twelve miles away, "the traders may take liberty to run what goods they please."[10] Ignorance, and sometimes corruption, amongst various colonial officials compounded this problem.[11]

Considerations of this nature have led some historians to argue that there was considerable illegal trade in America

prior to 1700. Charles M. Andrews says of the 1660s: "Breaches were numerous during these years. Secret trade with the Dutch and West Indies went on without interference, direct connections with the European continent were maintained with Holland and Hamburg."[12]

A word of caution must be entered at this point for the records from vice-Admiralty courts show that a very low percentage of cases arose from breaches of the Navigation Acts.[13] Does this mean that there was very little smuggling in the colonies or simply that much of the smuggling went uninformed? How many times did a captain not declare all his cargo? How often in the seventeenth century were customs officials avoided or bribed? Although categoric answers to these questions remain elusive, on balance it would seem that smuggling in the seventeenth century went beyond the occasional minor infringement.[14]

Testimony from Royal officials in the colonies provides further evidence, albeit somewhat exaggerated, of illegal trade. It also suggests one of the few real certainties in this discussion, namely that the authorities in London were presented with what they considered indisputable evidence of extensive smuggling in the colonies. Edward Randolph, Surveyor General of Customs (1696-1702), believed that virtually all the colonies were involved in such activities.[15] He suggested, however, that the proprietary colonies, along with Rhode Island and New York were the worst offenders. Rhode Island, he said, had "free ports to illegal

traders and pirates from all places."[16] Randolph also suggested that New England acted as a clearing house for much illicit trade. An interesting exchange occurred in 1690 between Randolph and the agents of New England. The Surveyor General produced a long list of vessels that he claimed had violated the Navigation Acts, and challenged the agents to produce evidence to dispute his allegations.[17] The reply must have seemed transparent to English authorities. "It is difficult at this distance," the agents wrote, "to disprove his [Randolph's] statements as to the various ships."[18] When, in 1696, an apparently more reliable governor, Lord Bellomont, was charged with the responsibility for New England, the situation improved. His assessment of illegal trade in New York prior to his arrival was similar to Randolph's.[19]

Two other imperially respected governors shared Randolph's assessment. Governor Francis Nicholson of Maryland was deeply concerned with illegal traders in his region, as was Governor Christopher Codrington in St. Kitts. The latter sounded like a disillusioned man when in 1701 he wrote:

> I am sure if your Lordships knew of all the folly and knavery I have to struggle with, especially in relation to the Acts of Trade, you would pity me. The disorder in our Trade is so great that I almost despair of doing any good in it, there is so much ignorance, laziness, or corruption in the Naval and Customs house officers, and so general a conspiracy in people of all ranks and qualities here to elude the Acts of Trade.

> I have the mortification of knowing of a hundred things are done every day, which I cannot possibly prevent, prejudicial to the trade and interest of England.<20>

The difficulty in obtaining convictions for breaches of the Acts of Trade gave the impression that the colonists considered such offenses as misdemeanors, necessitating only minimal punishment. Governor Nicholson stated that he had put on the "Courts of Juncture ... able, rich and honest men, except in the way of illegal trade."[21]

This evidence is impressive. Some historians have accepted it completely and even suggest that illegal trade was important to colonial economic development. They argue that such activities helped balance a trade deficit with England, and, more importantly, should be seen as a vital factors in seventeenth and eighteenth-century colonial economic growth.[22] While this may well be an exaggeration, it seems that the authorities in London during the late seventeenth century, with at least some justification, saw smuggling as a part of everyday colonial life. One of their goals, then, was to stop it.

II

The association between the Acts of Trade and the Royal Navy is a logical one. In many ways they formed a symbiotic relationship; trade produced wealth for the England to build the navy, which reciprocated by protecting trade and opening new markets. In essence the navy and the imperial system evolved together. With this in mind, it is surprising how

little consideration has been given to the Royal Navy's role in implementing the Navigation Acts.

The First Navigation Act of 1660 identified two agencies of enforcement: colonial governors and the Royal Navy. The latter was instructed to seize any vessel violating the terms of the Act and to pay particular attention to foreign ships trading in regulated waters.[23] In 1660 the administration saw these measures as completely logical. Warships carried the latest instructions from England and had the means with which to enforce the regulations. Essentially, the navy was to act as a policing force and the most tangible method of two way communication between the mother country and her colonies.

Naval participation in the Navigation Acts was reiterated several times during the seventeenth century. In 1669 the Privy Council ordered that all commanders of English warships should seize illegal traders.[24] Thirteen years later, Samuel Pepys, secretary of the Admiralty, acting on a recommendation that had originated from the Commissioners of Customs, instructed commanders of warships on colonial stations to be particularly vigilant in their enforcement of trade regulations.[25] In 1686, the trend continued, when naval commanders were formally deputized into the customs service.[26] Thus, the imperial system required captains to enforce trade regulation, not only by statute, but also by virtue of their offices in the customs service.

The desire to regulate trade was also a key factor in the establishment and development of some colonial naval stations. The founding of the Virginia station provides a good example and helps identify those factors influential in the decision to establish a permanent naval presence in the colonies. By examining this station a better understanding of the empire in which these warships operated will also be generated. Although all warships were supposed to seize violators of the Navigation Acts, vessels on station, being the navy's most permanent presence, encountered the problem most routinely.[27] Clearly, then, an examination of colonial naval stations is central to an understanding of the navy's role in trade regulation. An analysis of the Virginia station will also establish the historical setting for the Swift's voyage to the colonies.

Not all imperial agencies perceived the Virginia station performing the same functions. The three most common arguments used in its favor were that a warship would help suppress insurrections, defeat piracy, and prevent illegal trade.

In 1667, the first English warship to be stationed off Virginia entered the bay. When Colonel Francis Moryson, President of the Virginia council, appealed for the naval protection of colonial commerce, the Admiralty dispatched the forty-six gun ship Elizabeth to the Chesapeake. Thenceforth until the end of the century, stationing warships in the bay during times of war became an accepted naval policy.[28]

The first peacetime naval station in the Chesapeake owed much to the efforts of two colonial governors of Virginia, Lord Thomas Culpeper and Lord Howard of Effingham, and the colony's council. They used a variety of arguments in their quest for the station, the most common of which related to the prevention of insurrections and the defeat of pirates. Their arguments were not entirely convincing to certain sections of the English imperial administration, which revised the nature of the vessel's role to include the prevention of illegal trade.

The idea of establishing a permanent peace time naval station in Virginia can be traced back to a meeting of the Virginia council in July 1680. The executive body thought that a sixty-ton vessel with ten guns patrolling the bay was necessary for the peace and safety of the colony. They suggested that this was of "equal concern if not superior to any reasonable land force."[29] If such a vessel had been established prior to 1676, they argued, it would have "in all probability prevented the late Rebellion."[30]

In October 1681, Lord Culpeper was on one of his all too frequent visits to England. He was anxiously trying to prevent the small detachment of soldiers in his colony from being withdrawn. He adopted the council's suggestion of July 1680 and recommended that instead of demilitarizing his colony, the imperial authorities should establish a naval station in Virginia. Culpeper's over-riding concern, like

that of his council, was that a rebellion, similar to the one of 1676, would take place in his colony. "The peace of Virginia," he argued, "is insufficiently secured without the two companies" of foot soldiers and a "small warship."[31]

Culpeper's suggestion received a mixed response. The Lords of Trade and Plantations, consulted with merchants and eventually agreed that Virginia was politically volatile. They recommended that the King retain the garrison but made no comment on establishing a naval station in the colony.[32] The Treasury and the Privy Council were unwilling to let the mother country continue paying for the garrison in Virginia and resolved to continue with the demilitarization of Virginia. This was to be completed by Christmas 1681 unless the colony itself was willing to finance the garrison.[33] Ultimately, Whitehall extended the Christmas deadline to 1 April because of a delay in transporting the instructions to Virginia.[34] Apparently, Lord Culpeper's had failed to expand Virginia's military forces.

The orders to disband the two companies of foot soldiers arrived in Virginia at a most inopportune moment. It was early May and the soldiers were incensed, not only by the order to disband, but also at the prospect of losing April's pay. In addition, Deputy Governor Sir Henry Chicheley faced a domestic insurrection. Tobacco prices were low, and troubles erupted when colonists with stockpiles tried to prevent farmers from planting further crops. When this failed, rioters destroyed the new tobacco plants. The matter

worsened when Chicheley convened the volatile assembly, the clerk of the assembly was probably the leader of the insurrection. The deputy governor had simultaneously to put down the civil disturbances and disband two companies of unpaid mutinous, soldiers. The assembly refused to pay the soldiers from colonial revenues. The secretary of Virginia saw the irony of the situation. The two companies of soldiers, he said, "far from being an assistance at the only moment when they have been wanted since their arrival," have a "mutinous temper" that doubles our "apprehensions of evil events."[35] Under severe pressure, the deputy governor called out the militia, which after several nerve-racking months, managed to quell the rebellion. Chicheley promptly reported the uprising to his superiors in London recommending that the imperial guard be re-established. He did not mention naval support for this guard.[36]

In June 1682 news of the Virginia uprising arrived in London. Memories of Bacon's Rebellion were still fresh in administrator's minds.[37] They immediately ordered Culpeper to sail for the Chesapeake. The governor asked that his transport vessel, a warship called the Mermaid, stay after their arrival in the Bay. He also requested that HMS Norwich, which was cruising in the Caribbean, visit Virginia on her return voyage.[38] By the time Culpeper, with his usual enthusiasm for his posting, was ready to sail, news of peace in Virginia had arrived in England. Consequently, the

Mermaid's captain received orders to complete his business in the Chesapeake and then to sail for Barbados. The governor arrived in the Chesapeake in December 1682, six months after being ordered back. He bought with him rigorous guidelines on when governors could take leave from their colonies, and an order to investigate ways to prevent further rebellion in his region.[39]

Within a month of his arrival, Culpeper asked the Virginia council to suggest ways of preventing further disturbances in the colony. While preparing a more detailed report the members proposed that for the "country's security" the governor should hire a small armed vessel, with about fifteen men, and a company of soldiers. Pending the council's more detailed report, the governor put this suggestion into effect.[40]

The council's second report came in March 1683. Again it recommended hiring a company of soldiers, and said that "there should be care taken to preserve the dominion of the Water, as the best, and indeed only means to hinder & prevent all commotions, tumults, and disturbances on land, and secure trade against pirates."[41]

Clearly, the council's primary concern was the prevention of domestic disturbances. A secondary concern was harassment by pirates. In many ways this makes sense since domestic insurrections would affect the privileged position of the council members. To some extent similar comments apply to the governor. This does not mean, however, that the

council and governor wanted to pay for the vessel or troops. The latter part of the council minutes reveals its plan. The members suggested that the governor hire a sloop "until his Majesty shall give directions for a better ship" to be stationed in the bay, "which they do not doubt but he will be pleased to doe next year."[42]

When the council members made their request to the Lords of Trade and Plantations for a substitute vessel, they presented a different argument in its favor. The council minutes of 1680 and 1683 discuss almost exclusively the role of a warship in preventing insurrections. Now, however, they suggested that a garrison of sixty soldiers was needed as a "safeguard against disorders ashore," while a ketch of war would "keep the peace at sea against pirates" and "suppress the frauds of dishonest traders."[43] The argument the council was presenting had shifted away from the prevention of civil unrest and towards the defeat of piracy and the prevention of illegal trade; their case had changed with the nature of their audience. A separate request from Nicholas Spenser, secretary to the council, to Secretary of State Sir Leoline Jenkins, further demonstrates this shift. Spenser only discusses the vessel's role in the prevention of piracy.[44] It would seem that the imperial appointees in Virginia believed that they had a better chance of obtaining a warship if they stressed the problems of piracy and illegal trade.

By the time Spenser wrote his letter, Culpeper, in customary fashion, had abandoned his post and headed for England. This time his frequent forays to the mother country caused consternation. The King relieved Culpeper of his post and appointed Lord Howard of Effingham in his place.[45] Within a month of receiving his commission the new governor took up the case for a Virginia naval station, which he thought "absolutely necessary."[46] Howard argued that stationing a vessel in Virginia would be efficient and cost effective. He included a role for the vessel in preventing insurrections but was careful to point out that such domestic disturbances would severely damage the "King's customs." He also suggested that a warship could help deter illegal traders, which themselves harm the "Kings revenue," and help counter the threat from pirates. In all these matters a warship could assist in both Virginia and Maryland, and might, on occasion, be sent to New England.[47]

In late September 1683, the imperial authorities in London began to consider Lord Howard's request and that of the Virginia council. The Lords of Trade and Plantations submitted the proposals to the Treasury, the Commissioners of Customs, and the Admiralty.[48] The latter confirmed that it was technically feasible to station a warship in Chesapeake Bay.[49] The Commissioners of Customs reiterated the obligation upon all warships to seize vessels violating the Navigation Acts. They then went on to suggest that a Virginia station would be "most beneficial" to the King's

customs. The vessel should receive instructions from them, from the surveyors and collectors in Maryland and Virginia, and, of course, from the colonies' governors. The Commissioners also argued that the Admiralty should give the Jamaica station similar orders. This suggests two things: first that regulation of trade was playing a greater part in the establishment of the Virginia station than in other colonial stations, and second that trade regulation was becoming a more important duty for warships stationed in the colonies. As a creature of imperial control, the Virginia station had undergone a metamorphosis in Whitehall. The idea that it should help control and regulate trade had emerged as the partner to the defeat of piracy. It had done so at the expense of controlling domestic disorder.[50]

The final decisions to establish the Virginia station support this idea. On 31 October 1683, the Lords of Trade and Plantations asked the King to station a ketch of war in Virginia. Her captain should receive instructions from the Commissioners of Customs and be under the direct control of the colonial governor. On the same day the Privy Councilors gave their sanction. After hearing a summary of Lord Howard's proposal, they reported that a warship in the Chesapeake Bay would be "conducive very much to his majesty's service and security of Virginia." In addition to the instructions from the Commissioners of Customs and from the colonial governor, the Privy Council ordered that the

vessel's captain consult with customs officials in both Maryland and Virginia.[51] The Admiralty ordered the ketch Quaker, under the command of Captain Allen, to prepare for the voyage.

By the time Captain Allen received his operational instructions, the regulation of trade had taken a substantial leap in importance. His orders were in many ways similar to those given to Captain Bostock of the Swift; essentially a summary of the terms of the first three Navigation Acts.[52] Once on station, evidence suggests that the Quaker's captain took the enforcement of the Navigation Acts very seriously. In June 1685, a series of detailed questions from Captain Allen concerning the Navigation Acts, foreign shipping, vessels from Ireland, and ships from Maderas and Cape Verde Islands was presented to the Privy Council. The members were asked to approve the equally intricate answers prepared by the Commissioners of Customs. Not only did they agree to the answers, but instructed that copies of the whole exchange be given to all Royal Navy captains visiting the colonies.[53]

It is clear, then that the authorities in London saw the basis of permanent naval involvement in the Chesapeake in a different light from colonial governors and the Virginia council. Virtually all agencies accepted that the defeat of piracy was important. After all, pirates affected both the commercial system and the colony's security. There was, however, some disagreement over how to rank the warship's other functions. London authorities concerned themselves

with the most cost effective method of controlling trade within the commercial empire, whereas imperial appointees in the colonies saw the threat of domestic uprisings as a direct challenge to their authority. The Virginia officials understood this dichotomy and presented their argument for the naval station accordingly. They realized that in order to get the desired military involvement they would have to craft a direct relationship between the warship's functions and the commercial system. It is of little surprise, therefore, that Nicholas Spenser was pleased to see the arrival of the Quaker, arguing that the warship would "not only protect us against pirates by sea but in this well watered country can command the land also."[54]

During the next twenty years the naval station in Virginia remained dedicated to controlling illegal trade and securing the bay against privateers and pirates. The latter problem was certainly a concern for the colonies were entering the so called "Golden Age of Piracy." Captain Kidd, Blackbeard, and Stede Bonet were operating, to name but three prolific seafarers of the time.[55] The Royal Navy's role in the prevention of illegal trade, however, did not diminish, but remained a constant concern for London's imperial authorities. For a time they instructed one vessel to perform both these functions in Chesapeake Bay, as was the case with the Quaker. The 1691 order to replace the Dumbarton with another warship provides another good

illustration. The Privy Council said that the vessel was to be sent "for the guard and service of (Virginia and Maryland) and hindering irregular trade in those parts." There is no mention of preventing insurrections.[56] Ultimately, the authorities stationed two vessels in the bay, one primarily to prevent illegal trade and the other to deter pirates. The Swift is a good example of a vessel sent principally for the former function. During the same time the idea that a naval station should be established for the prevention of civil disorder was mentioned less frequently. One of the major motives for colonial advocates of the Virginia station had become lost under the weight of different concerns in London. Not only were Royal Navy vessels required to seize violators of the Navigation Acts, but such infringements played a major part in establishing the Virginia station.

The establishment of this station has illustrated an imperial belief that naval participation in the regulation of trade was important. But how common was this attitude within the empire? To what extent did the Royal Navy actually become involved in the regulation of trade in the colonies, and how important was its role? It is to these questions that we turn next.

Certainly, many colonial governors and various Royal officers believed that the navy's role in the colonies was vital. As we have seen, in March 1683 Governor Howard requested a warship to be stationed of his coast, as did Governor Nicholson of Maryland in 1696. Governor Beeston of

Jamaica continued the trend by petitioning for six men-of-war.[57] There are many more examples of such requests, most of which contain references to the regulation of trade. In Virginia, however, we saw that these requests could be stimulated by other concerns. Frequently, colonial governors really sought help in defending their colonies. For example, the imperially respected Governor Codrington of Barbados requested a naval vessel primarily to deter privateers. He wrote, with anguish, "knowing that I have but one bad sailing frigate they [the privateers] insult us daily."[58] Even so it is likely that the authorities in London still viewed the regulation of trade as an important goal when establishing these naval stations.

It would be unreasonable to have any doubts about Edward Randolph's motives, for he was probably the person most directly concerned with the regulation of colonial trade during the period. He too, was quick to point out the necessity of naval vessels in the enforcement of the Navigation Acts. It would be impossible, he claimed, for the customs officers in the Delaware Bay to prevent "the carrying away" of "Tobacco ... and other illegal trade ... without the assistance of a frigott."[59] New York needed even greater naval assistance, requiring the presence of three or four vessels; otherwise, Randolph claimed, "All the Acts of Parliament and letters to Governors will signifie no more than old Gazetts."[60] Randolph cited examples of seizures

made possible by the presence of warships.[61] Providing more vessels, he argued, would save considerable funds:

> I humbly take leave to add that unless a small vessel well mand be Orderd to cruise, and looke into the Capes of Virginia, Delaware bay and N:York, and sometimes to Carolina, and Providence in Winter time, his Maj. for want thereof will loose in his Customs more in One year than will maintain 5 Men of warr in pay at home.<62>

Randolph carried considerable influence in London, and his arguments gained a wide audience. It is likely, therefore, that some of the most important elements in the imperial bureaucracy accepted his interpretations.[63]

Edward Randolph was keen to have warships stationed in the colonies for another reason. He was dependent upon them for transportation and therefore for his ability to carry out the duties of Surveyor General.[64] So too, were other Royal officials visiting the New World. This is just one indication of a much larger reason for stationing naval vessels in America, and in this case needing them for regulating trade. For England to maintain communications, inspect colonial officials and transport instructions, a regular naval presence was absolutely crucial. How else could a mother country determined to maintain real authority in London regulate her territories, especially when some of these were proprietary colonies?[65]

Undoubtedly, the imperial authorities considered the navy important in controlling trade throughout the Atlantic colonies. However, to find many of the references to the benefits of naval participation we have to return once more

to the Chesapeake. Several factors explain this phenomenon. First, Virginia had no fixed ports through which imported or exported goods were required to pass. Frequently, loading took place on remote wharfs in the middle of plantations, some distance from the customs officers.[66] As one informer suggested, "clandestine trade is easy as the collectors live far up the Country."[67] Randolph confirms this statement by suggesting that trading vessels would lie in "some obscure creek 40 or fifty miles distant from the collectors office and in a short time" be loaded and able to sail "out of the capes undiscovered."[68] To police these areas naval craft were essential. In 1683, the Virginia council recognized the importance of the bay's geographical features when it stated that, in Virginia's "well watered country" the suppression of dishonest traders was only possible with the assistance of a man-of-war.[69]

The geography of the bay decreased the effectiveness of forts in the control of shipping. There were few strategic positions upon which a fort could be built so as to oversee the essential shipping channels. The only controllable area through which all navigators had to pass was the stretch of water between the Capes, but of course command of this was only possible using warships.[70] Colonel Robert Quary, Randolph's successor as Surveyor General of Customs, supported these ideas by claiming that the only method of imposing control over the bay was by using naval

squadrons.[71]

In general, the authorities in London agreed with Quary's assessment. In 1694 the Lords of the Treasury suggested to the King that they could "think of no better remedy" to the problems of illegal trade in the Chesapeake, "than the appointment of a suitable vessel with a commander experienced in such matters to cruise on those coasts and inspect the Collector's books."[72] When, in 1702, the outbreak of war stretched the capabilities of the Admiralty and produced a corresponding plan to bring home the naval stations in winter, the Board of Trade defended the Virginia Station, which they regarded as even more essential than the others.[73] This is clear indication that a variety of Royal officials on both sides of the Atlantic regarded navy vessels as essential defending and regulating trade in the Chesapeake.

If we briefly look forward in time to the 1760s, the long term and persistent role of the Royal Navy in the regulation of trade can be seen. When, in 1763, Britain tried to impose her colonial policy with renewed vigor, she identified the navy as a principal agent of enforcement. In the same year the Treasury presented its proposals for improved enforcement of the regulatory system. The problems and solutions had not changed in substance during the preceding hundred years. Their Lordships suggested that more customs officers were needed, that the governors should be more vigilant, and that the Admiralty courts required

procedural changes. Once again, however, the imperial authorities placed great emphasis on the navy. The report said:

> The Advantages of a Sea Guard [in America and the West Indies] are sufficiently obvious. We depend on it as the likeliest means for accomplishing these great purposes; and the good Effects that have already been experienced lately taken for that purpose at home, make us earnestly wish that the same may not only be continued but even extended and strengthened as far as the Naval Establishment will allow.<74>

In accordance with this policy the navy was used to great effect. Indeed, historian Neil Stout has argued that naval enforcement was the key to tightening control within the Empire after 1763. Without it, he contends, the colonists would have continued in their semi-autonomous state under a system only weakly enforced.[75]

Let us considered our progress so far. It has been argued that illegal trade was a problem for England primarily before 1700, and that the authorities in London considered it to be severe. The navy shouldered much of the responsibility for enforcing the Navigation Acts, particularly in Chesapeake Bay. A desire to control illegal trade combined with a faith that the navy provided the best prospect for doing so, provided an important rationale for stationing warships in colonial America. The other factors were the defeat of piracy and the prevention of insurrections. The former of these remained a powerful motivation, while the latter was, at least in London, a minor consideration. The intended

functions of the Swift, therefore, were important but by no means unique. They should be regarded as representative of a much larger, long term naval commitment to the prevention of illegal trade in a geographical region requiring considerable regulatory support.[76]

III

The next problem is assessing the success or failure of the Royal Navy in regulating trade between 1683 and 1713. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to trace statistics of seizures made by the navy. A general bias in the quantity of documentary evidence in favor of the more dramatic encounters with pirates, rather than the mundane duties of trade regulation, compounds this problem. Certain specific factors, however, indicate that the Royal Navy had a virtually impossible task dealing with illegal traders. Taken together these factors suggest that, at least for the period under consideration, the Royal Navy failed to accomplish this task.

The problems experienced by the Royal Navy can be divided into several groups. First there are those problems that were beyond the control of any naval administration. Difficulties with the weather, disease, careening, ship-worm and to some extent desertion of seamen.[77] A discussion of such unavoidable problems, experienced by all navies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, would contribute little to the present discussion. A second group of problems were

purely administrative, such as delays in paying contractors, problems with victualling, poor cooperation within administrative departments, and dishonesty and corruption amongst high officials. Despite these difficulties, which have been considered elsewhere, England still managed to station warships in the colonies.[78] This brings us to the third and for our purposes, most important group of problems. Warships on station in the American colonies encountered these difficulties by virtue of the system in which they operated. These problems, more than anything else, hampered the activities of the Royal Navy in colonial waters and are the most useful to the present discussion.

The Acts of Trade did not specify with enough clarity the powers at the navy's disposal. The Navigation Act of 1660 commanded naval vessels to seize foreign shipping trading illegally in English and colonial waters. The Acts of 1663 and 1673, however, did not specifically enact such naval enforcement. The legislators almost certainly intended the navy to help enforce these laws, but omitting specific enforcement led to disputes over the Royal Navy's right to seize offenders under the later Acts. The Treasury eventually put the matter to rest in 1687 when it stated that naval captains could and should detain violators of all the Acts of Trade.[79]

Warships sent to Chesapeake Bay between 1683 and 1700 were in many instances small, in poor condition, or commanded by weak or inexperienced captains. The first two, HMS Quaker

(12 guns) and HMS Deptford (12), were small and would have had difficulties patrolling beyond the bay. Indeed, the Deptford probably still lies on the bottom of the James River, having been sunk by a squall in 1689.[80] The sixth rate HMS Dumbarton (18) was, if anything, less suitable. She was barely seaworthy and had to be broken up shortly after her arrival in 1691. The Henry Prize (24) was an old sixth rate, and the hired ship HMS Woolf ran aground and was stranded for three months.[81] In 1697 the Swift (10) ran aground before she had even started her tour of duty, and the advice boat Messenger (6), which succeeded her, was paralyzed by a lack of power.[82] The sixth rate Essex Prize (18), which accompanied the Swift on her voyage to the Chesapeake in 1697, was herself driven off by the pirate vessel Providence Galley (26) at Lynnhaven Roads in 1699.[83]

Elsewhere in the colonies, the navy encountered similar problems. Governor Ralph Grey of Barbados wrote in 1699 of the "heavy crazy vessel, miscalled a cruiser," sent to attend on his colony.[84] Governor Benjamin Fletcher of New York was also dissatisfied. In 1692 he wrote that the ketch Aldborough was of little use, "having neither the force to fight nor the heels to run." He suggested that she rode "in the harbor" until she was "worm eaten."[85] Later Fletcher made requests for a faster man-of-war.

The incident involving the Essex Prize and the pirate Providence Galley suggests that it was not only the size of

vessels that was important for success on station in the colonies but, also the courage of its commander. Captain Aldred of the Essex Prize was timid and unadventurous. As a result the number of pirates in the bay increased during his tour of duty.[86] Captain Aldred was not alone in his impotence and inexperience. In 1694, the Commissioners of Customs illustrated the problem by stating that "the former commanders of the Kings ships," on the Virginia Station, "were too unskilled."[87] Not all captains, however, were incompetent. Captain Pound, commander of the Dover Prize, patrolled with diligence and bravery. Consequently, the captain, despite the size of his small sixth rate man-of-war, intimidated many of the pirates operating in the Chesapeake.[88]

In 1700, the Shoreham (28), a fifth rate with a good commander, was stationed in Virginia. This vessel was probably the first reasonably successful warship to patrol the bay, a subject that will be returned to later. The Southampton (48), an even larger fourth rate, succeeded the Shoreham.[89] Then, during the War of the Spanish Succession, the Admiralty, faced with a desperate shortage of warships, abandoned the Virginia station. Authorities argued that fourth rates on convoy duty could defend trade during the most dangerous months from April to October. When, under mounting pressure, the station was reintroduced around 1708 once more the smaller sixth rates patrolled the bay.[90]

There is little doubt that one of the primary problems

with vessels stationed in the Chesapeake was that they tended to be small, in poor condition, and commanded by weak or incapable captains. But the discussion of vessel size does not end here, for this preliminary overview suggests a more important problem for colonial naval policy. This is the association between a vessel's size and its intended function. It is to this relationship that we must turn next.

As we have seen there were two principal functions ascribed to vessels on colonial stations, and particularly those in Chesapeake Bay. These were the regulation of trade and the defense of the bay, primarily against pirates and privateers. Simply stated, these two functions demanded different types of vessel.

The regulation of trade required a quick, small vessel with a shallow draft. This would enable the commander to follow potential smugglers into shallow water and to move easily alongside merchantmen to check their papers. However, a vessel with these characteristics would be unsuitable for transatlantic voyaging to the colonies. This crossing required a sturdy, larger, and deeper draft vessel capable of remaining self sufficient for several months. These two sets of characteristics are, and were, totally incompatible. The navy was looking for a coast guard vessel capable of shallow river navigation and transatlantic voyaging. This problem would remain as long as vessels used for the regulation of trade had their home ports in England.

Yet the problems did not stop there. The second duty of warships was the suppression of piracy. Although it is true that a small vessel would be preferable when chasing and catching small pirate ships and privateers, in most instances a larger craft was required. The most common problem for the Royal Navy in engagements with pirates was, quite simply, a lack of fire power.[91]

In essence the navy had two conflicts of size and function. For the suppression of piracy the warship needed to be large, but the regulation of trade required a smaller vessel. Perhaps more important, the latter of these two functions itself required the vessel to be both small and large. The manifestations of these problems can be seen in the activities of the Virginia Station from 1683-1713. In the 1680s the Royal authorities, concerned with trade regulation, favored the stationing of small vessels in the Chesapeake.[92] Although it is true that a small vessel with enough propaganda surrounding it could deter an attack from pirates, more commonly such a charade was impossible.[93] As early as 1686 the English bureaucracy realized that the Chesapeake required a larger vessel and resolved to send a fifth rate frigate with 30 guns and about 100 men to replace the bay's two ketches.[94] Although this promise was not realized the vessels stationed in the bay did become progressively larger. For those interested in the suppression of piracy this was an encouraging trend. In 1694, however, the Commissioners of Customs called for an

adjustment in this policy claiming that the previous warships had a "too heavy draft" for the regulation of trade.[95]

In the years of peace, 1697-1702, piracy increased so much that the Royal authorities simply had to station larger vessels in the bay.[96] Such a policy may not have been possible during the shortages of war. In order to maintain the important trade regulation duties the Admiralty adopted what might appear to have been the obvious solution. They stationed two vessels in the Bay, one, the Essex Prize, slightly larger than the other, the Swift. The idea was divide the functions of naval defense and suppression of illegal trade. This division, however, was only partially successful. It did go some way toward tackling the problem of piracy by starting a short term trend toward at least one larger ship in the Chesapeake.[97] The fifth rate Shoreham (28) and fourth rate Southampton (48) succeeded the Essex Prize. The solution to the dilemma concerning vessel size for the regulation of trade, however, remained illusive. Following the loss of the Swift, Edward Randolph suggested the next patrol craft should draw "much less water," if she was to be successful in the regulation of trade.[98] Whether by accident or design, the replacement for the Swift was a smaller advice boat, the Messenger. Though this vessel had a shallow draft and was in this respect good for detecting illegal traders, she lacked fire power, could only carry two months' provisions, and was only "capable of engaging the

great seas without the capes ... during two or three months of the year."[99] The problem with the Messenger, then, was not her ability to regulate trade, but her suitability to travel beyond her immediate coastal station. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Messenger was last seen as she sailed between the Capes on a fateful voyage home. When she failed to arrive in England, the Admiralty concluded that she had foundered at sea. The story of the Messenger supports the hypothesis that a vessel could not be both a coastal patrol boat and a transatlantic voyager. The advice boat Eagle, which replaced the Messenger, represented a return in size of vessel to that of the Swift. Edward Randolph could not have a smaller vessel; the risk was just too great.

Before discussing naval policy in the War of the Spanish Succession, let us look at one possible solution to these problems. On several occasions in the late seventeenth century the colonial executive hired a local sloop to regulate trade and act as tender to larger English warships. Because these vessels were required to patrol a vast expanse of coastline, however, they tended to be ineffective. Perhaps more telling was that the captains of hired colonial vessels were more likely to go into league with pirates or illegal traders than to effect their capture.[100] In the 1680s, Lord Culpeper ordered the colonial sloop Katherine, commanded by Rodger Jones, to patrol and defend the bay. The small size of this vessel rendered her useless in any

engagement with pirates.[101] Furthermore, Captain Jones almost certainly defrauded the Royal treasury by undermanning his vessel and pocketing the extra wages. He also colluded with pirates in exchange for gifts and payments.[102] Hiring the Katherine was unpopular for another reason. The Virginia council was reluctant to finance the vessel's upkeep. In November 1683, the councilors wrote that the sloop had not answered their "expectation and design," and as "noe certain wayes" could "be prescribed for defraying further charges," they had decided to discharge the vessel and her crew.[103] The problems with the integrity of the captain, then, were at least equaled by financial considerations of the colonial council.

Troubles with the Virginia station were such that by 1694 London authorities mandated both Virginia and Maryland to hire a colonial sloop to help regulate trade. They instructed the colonies' respective governors, Edmond Andros and Francis Nicholson, each to hire one or more forty-ton vessel to cruise specifically for illegal traders. Clearly, then, the regulation of trade was causing problems for the Royal Navy.[104] The implementation of these instructions in Virginia reveal once again the problems of hiring colonial vessels for Royal service. Virginia's executive hired a sloop called the Gawin & Katherine, which was owned by Gawin Corbin and placed under the command of Harry Beverley.[105] Within nine months the council summoned Beverley before them

to answer charges of colluding with, and releasing, illegal traders. Eventually Beverley was acquitted with the support of the collector of Rappohanock. It has been impossible to ascertain whether the two vessels that Beverley released, the Society and the Jane, were really trading legally or whether Beverley and the collector were bribed. There is, however, at least some doubt as to whether the captain was acting within the confines of the law.[106] Ultimately, the sloop Spywell replaced the Gawin & Katherine when the latter became unfit for service. Josuah Broadbent's experiences, the owner and commander of this vessel, demonstrate yet another problem with hiring a colonial sloop.[107] Broadbent believed that he could make money from the seizure of illegal traders and proposed, therefore, to charge the Virginia government less than half the sum demanded by his predecessor.[108] Clearly, Broadbent thought that there was sufficient illicit trade in the bay for him to make money from enforcing the Navigation Acts. After eight months, however, Broadbent requested a discharge from the colony's service for the task did not "Answer his charge and expectation."[109] He did seize several sloops, including one called the Content, and a ship during his tour of duty, but was unable to obtain convictions in the general court.[110]

The Virginia council did not employ a vessel to replace the Spywell. The matter was dropped until 1699, when Francis Nicholson became governor. He immediately began to deal with the familiar problems of piracy, insurrections, and illegal

trade.[111] Nicholson asked the Virginia council about the 1694 directive of to hire a local vessel. The executive body summed up some of the problems with hiring a colonial sloop suggesting that in the past it had been prohibitively expensive, "very prejudicial to ... fair traders" and had "never detected any illegal practices or discovered any unfair traders."[112] They could not recommend, therefore, hiring another colonial sloop.

The arrival of the War of the Spanish Succession further complicated naval policy. The navy's convoying duties became more importance, and another dilemma presented itself. Since the Admiralty could only spare two vessels for all activities in Virginia, should both escort merchantmen or should one convoy whilst the other remained on station? The convoy really needed two vessels, one to lead the merchantmen and chase away attackers while the other defended the flanks and rear. However, this would leave no vessel to protect and regulate Chesapeake shipping between convoys. The amount of non-convoyed shipping was significant. Not only were there the "runners," those vessels that sought better markets by risking the voyage outside the convoy, but there were also the important inter-colonial traders. The only alternative was to leave one vessel on permanent station and increase the risks to the convoy.[113]

During the early years of the war the two ships assigned to the defense of Virginia were involved in convoying. This

led to complaints that the bay was inadequately defended and trade unregulated. During the second half of the war the duties were divided into escort and guardship. This prompted claims that the guardship was of "too great bulk" for the regulation of trade and ultimately that colony needed two ships, one large, say a fourth rate, for defense, and one small, an eight- to ten-gun tender, for protecting and regulating trade.[114] Naval policy had gone full circle.[115]

By 1720 piracy was declining. Britain had developed a reasonably effective naval policy during the previous years, which undoubtedly helped. The killing of the notorious pirate "Blackbeard" at Oakracoke in 1718 by Lieutenant Robert Maynard symbolized this success.[116] At no time during this period, however, did the Royal Navy develop an effective method of curtailing abuses of the Acts of Trade. In truth it was probably impossible for it to do so because of the inherent contradictions between the size of vessel needed to patrol and that needed to traverse the Atlantic Ocean. An improved effort may have been possible with a much larger naval commitment or a naval base in the colonies. Neither of these was a realistic option for the early eighteenth-century English navy.

The confusions in naval policy just described were only some of the problems faced by the Royal Navy in regulating the Navigation Acts. Perhaps just as important was an ongoing conflict between Royal Navy captains and colonial

governors. Almost without exception, naval captains on station in the colonies received instructions from governors.[117] The captains, however, were ultimately responsible to the Admiralty in London. Consequently, the governor did not have the same degree of control over Royal Navy captains as he did over officials directly responsible to him such as local collectors.[118] Sometimes naval captains, who were of fairly high social standing, did not respect the governor's authority. Under such circumstances localized power conflicts developed.[119]

Although colonial governors were charged with the implementation of the Navigation Acts, they sometimes failed to do so. Frequently, officials in London thought that the governors were not performing their duties adequately. In 1667 the Lords of the Treasury wrote:

> his Majesty cannot but in great measure impute to the neglect of duty in his governors of the said plantations who have not been so careful as they ought in debarring all trade with such ships as have come without certificate from England nor in taking bonds from such as are permitted to trade from other plantations, and returning the same to the chief officers of customs in London.<120>

Further reports from the colonies suggested that some governors were involved in more blatant violations of the Acts of Trade. Randolph made this accusation against Governor Caleb Carr of Rhode Island, while Governor of New York, Richard Coote Earl of Bellomont, charged his predecessor, Benjamin Fletcher, with supporting illegal trade.[121] In the latter case, the Board of Trade

substantiated these accusations.[122] Apparently Governor William Markham of Pennsylvania was one of the worst offenders, and Governor William Phips of Massachusetts actually encouraged Philadelphia pirates to come to Boston, "assuring them their liberty to trade."[123] Elsewhere, Bermuda and the Bahamas were notorious for official encouragement of piracy, and a colonial court found the lieutenant governor of St. Christopher guilty of breaking the Acts of Trade.[124] It seems likely, then, that some governors surreptitiously supported illegal trade. Governor Codrington assessed the problem:

> Governors must be put on a very different foot before these Colonies are made so serviceable to the Trade of England as they may be.... Governors ought to have better salaries and not be permitted to take any presents from the people. Whilst they do, there will be illegal indulgences in point of trade, justice will be bought and sold. <125>

The navigation system, then, was under the direction of some of its most important offenders, who were also empowered to direct naval vessels in colonial waters. Under these circumstances what chance had the Royal Navy of stopping illegal trade? Conflicts inevitably occurred. Governor Phips of Massachusetts initiated an argument with Captains Fairfax and Short of the vessels HMS Conception and Nonsuch.[126] At one point Phips boarded the Nonsuch and actually assaulted Captain Short with his cane. This incident ultimately contributed to the governor's recall.[127]

Governors were not totally to blame for such conflicts.

Captain Crofts of HMS Deptford, a violent alcoholic who abused his crew and attempted to extort money from innocent traders, was largely responsible for his conflict with Governor Howard of Virginia. Their mutual animosity is interesting in that Captain Allen of HMS Quaker, in his support for Crofts, refused to accept Governor Howard's authority.[128] When the council at Jamestown summoned Captain Crofts, Captain Allen protested, suggesting that the dispute "should be submitted to the King, or tried by Court martial." Furthermore he did "not think the council here competent to deal with affairs of the Navy."[129] The summoning of captains before the council and a corresponding refusal to attend was not uncommon in colonial America. Captain Bostock, on his second voyage to the colonies, this time as commander of the advice boat Eagle, was summoned before the council of Maryland on charges of unlawful impressment, but simply refused to recognize the executive's authority.[130] In this case the matter quickly blew over, but solutions were not always so peaceful. Perhaps one of the most serious conflicts occurred between Nevis Governor Sir James Russell and the hot tempered Captain George St. Lo of the fifth rate frigate Dartmouth. The captain refused to accept orders from the governor who had seized some of his men's possessions and was suspected of supporting pirates. As tension rose, he prepared to sail, but Russell warned him not to leave. St. Lo recalls what happened next:

> At seven in the evening, I cut my cable and made sail. The forts at once opened fire, which I returned until we were out of range. There were a hundred and fifty guns bearing on the ship, several batteries to pass, the shore lined with small shot, and the channel so narrow that we were afraid to go within pistol shot. Two of my men were killed and two more wounded; the ship had several shot through her, fifty shot through her foresail, and most of her running rigging shot away. We were two hours before we got out of range. <131>

Something was clearly wrong with a system that oversaw a two hour dogfight between an English fort and one of the King's warships. How could effective trade regulation occur in this environment?

In response to this chronic situation, warships were gradually taken from the control of colonial governors between 1702 and 1715.[132] Despite this, disputes, particularly over impressment, still occurred.[133]

Even cooperation between naval captains and colonial governors provided no peace of mind for the Commissioners of Customs. The silence that fell over New York merely screened an alliance between the governor, Benjamin Fletcher, the Collector of Customs and the captain of HMS Richmond. All conspired together to aid piracy.[134]

There was still one final fault with the colonial system as it affected the Royal Navy. If a naval vessel seized an illegal trader the proceeds from its condemnation would be divided equally between the warship and the crown. If, on the other hand, the customs officers seized a vessel the proceeds would be divided equally among the crown, the governor, and the arresting officer. This caused

considerable conflict, even provoking confrontations between such respected officers as Captain George of HMS Rose and Edward Randolph. On one occasion Captain George made a seizure inside Boston Harbor. This action outraged Randolph, who claimed that the area was outside the captain's jurisdiction. At stake, of course, were the profits of seizure.[135] In a similar manner, Simon Rowe, captain of HMS Dunbarton, rearrested a pirate vessel that had surrendered to Captain Allen under William III's amnesty proclamation of 6 August 1688. A conflict immediately broke out as to whom should impound the accompanying treasure. As if two Royal officers battling over the custody were not enough, Captain Berry of the Deptford, Captain Allen's superior officer, also made a claim, as did the Virginia council.[136]

Conflicts of personality, power and financial gain severely hampered the navy's activities in colonial waters. The most frequent and damaging of these occurred between navy officers and colonial governors. The navy was a vital weapon for England in the battle to regulate trade, yet naval policy was ineffective in doing so. Furthermore, the mother country operated a system that placed the utmost importance on the control of commerce, yet violations in seventeenth-century America were almost acceptable practice.

After consideration of these ideas the history of the Swift appears in broader context. Her intended functions were important not only in the implementation of the 1696

Navigation Act, but also in the continuum of colonial naval policy. Her problems were just one manifestation of a much larger confusion, but a confusion that was beyond the Royal Navy's control. As England entered the eighteenth century she perceived herself to have serious problems managing colonial commerce. In an attempt to implement a coercive policy she used her navy. This was logical thinking for if the navigation system was to be forced on the colonies, the navy would be a vital instrument. But as we have seen the navy had virtually no alternative but to operate ineffectively. Consequently a period of "salutary neglect" was assured. And yet during the course of the eighteenth century illegal trade declined. We have no alternative, then, but to argue that the Navigation Acts were not enforced but conformed to. By and large, obedience to the system was voluntary, based on the perception that all within the empire benefited. This had to be so for it was impossible for late seventeenth-century England to police colonial trade effectively.

Where, then, does this leave the Swift? Her failure should be seen as symbolic of the navy's failure in general. It helps us to show the impossibility of coercive enforcement of the Navigation Acts within the structure of the first British Empire.

IV

Having suggested that a discussion of the ineffective

nature of Royal Navy activity between 1683 and 1713 can help demonstrate the workings of the English Empire, it would be negligent not to suggest how this might affect some broad historiographical issues.

In recent years a widely accepted view that the first British Empire had an essentially commercial structure has been challenged. Stephen Saunders Webb in two major works, The Governors General and 1676: The End of American Independence, has argued that the empire should be considered a primarily military organization.[137] Webb argues that since the days of Charles M. Andrews, historians have blindly followed the commercial and colonial interpretation of pre-revolutionary America.[138] In doing so they have missed the essentially militaristic nature of the empire, where forced dependence of peoples on the mother country predominated. The instruments of this enforcement were the British army and the colonial governors, 87.5 per cent of whom had previous military experience. Control of this nature Webb calls "garrison government." Interestingly, the only real vestige of a commercial empire that survives Webb's analysis is an alliance between the local colonial elite, English merchants, and "country politicians." Webb considers the time period from 1569-1681. Within this period, 1676 was crucial, for it was in this year that the English military establishment suppressed rebellions in New England and Virginia, thus ending all semblance of colonial political independence for a

century to come.[139]

Naturally, this important theory has attracted considerable scholarly debate and has become a major issue in colonial history. For if Webb is right then many historians of colonial America will be forced to reconsider long held perceptions of the first British Empire.[140] In light of this debate, the role of the Royal Navy in colonial America takes on renewed importance. What can the present study of England's naval establishment bring to consideration of a militaristic empire?

Several questions and issues immediately arise. The most fundamental, of course, is why we should consider the navy in relation to Webb's thesis. Also some analysis is required of Webb's treatment of the navy. Finally, a judgment must be made as to whether the research presented here supports, contradicts, or in some way modifies Webb's writings.

It may be useful to keep some of Webb's ideas in mind whilst assessing his work. The following quotations crystallize his major ideas. Webb says that the process of England's colonial expansion "was as much military as it was commercial"[141] He also writes that "In Anglo America from 1569 until 1783 commercial considerations while always present, were dominant only occasionally."[142] He then argues that "Anglo American relations were not primarily shaped by a commercial system, in which the stronger political element was 'colonial self government.' Rather

they were predominantly directed by a military system, in which the strongest political element was Anglo American Imperial Government."[143] Finally, and in many ways most important, Webb suggests that "[T]he political and military links prescribed by garrison government became the bonds of the first British Empire far more effectively and pervasively than those descriptions of commerce called the Acts of Trade."[144]

For the present discussion two issues need to be justified. First, we must consider in general terms why the navy is relevant to Webb's thesis. Then we need to justify extending the debate as to the nature of England's empire beyond 1681, the ending date for The Governors General.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the navy was an important part of England's military establishment. If she had, therefore, an essentially military outlook toward her first empire it would be surprising for the navy not to have played an active role. This takes on added importance when we consider that the Royal Navy competed strongly with other European navies during this period. At the same time, the English army did not rate very well against its European counterparts. In February 1685, the eve of James II's accession, the English army numbered 8865 men, a number that one leading historian of the Stuart armies has described as "pathetically small."[145] Even though the numbers rose dramatically

during James' short reign, by 1690 the army was still "not regarded as a formidable weapon."[146] The reason for this harsh judgment becomes clear when we compare the English army to the forces of other European monarchs. In 1690 Norway and Denmark, not noted for their military strength, could field a combined army of thirty-two thousand men. More importantly, during the 1680s France's ever increasing army amounted to at least hundred thousand regulars.[147]

That the later Stuart monarchs were not panic-stricken by such disparities in the armies of Europe is testament to the trust they put in the Royal Navy. Even though Louis XIV's finance minister Jean Baptiste Colbert had, within twenty years, turned the derelict French fleet of 1661 into a formidable fighting machine, the English navy still held its own. In 1673 the English had ninety-six ships with twenty guns or more whereas the French had ninety-two.[148] In 1688, the comparative strength of the Royal Navy had declined somewhat but it could still compete more effectively than the army. Although, by this time the total French fleet consisted of 221 vessels and the English 173, the Royal Navy still had superiority in ships of the line.[149] Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Britain relied on the navy, rather than the army, for her security and military power. Certainly the army was strong enough to garrison the colonies, but if Britain's empire was characteristically a military organization, surely the navy would have played a part.

Webb thinks that two of the most important people consciously involved in garrison government had direct links with the naval establishment. These were Samuel Pepys, secretary to the Admiralty, and James, Duke of York who held the post of Lord High Admiral. The clearest example in Webb's writings of support by Samuel Pepys for a militarized empire is the expeditious and efficient manner in which the Admiralty's secretary prepared Sir John Berry's expedition to quell Bacon's Rebellion in 1676.[150] If Webb is correct in this interpretation, and credit given to Pepys for a renaissance in effective naval administration is justified, then the navy must have been in a better position both ideologically and practically to participate in garrison government.[151] This, then, is another reason for considering the navy in relation to Webb's thesis.

James Stuart, both as Duke of York and King, has received much attention in Webb's writings and the ensuing historiographical debate. Webb clearly sees him as one of the key exponents of a militarized empire and makes much of his office as Lord High Admiral.[152] The author of 1676 argues that, "challenges to the outmoded authority in Virginia led the duke of York to dictate the introduction of Garrison and Government of the metropolis into the Old Dominion."[153] Similarly, he says that "the duke of York, and his clients in the admiralty, the army and the secretariat, dictated the orders, instructions and

commissions, designated the military and political officers, readied the expeditionary ships and regiments to recapture and Royalize Virginia."[154] This role, allegedly performed by James, provides yet another reason for considering the navy in Webb's thesis. Its importance is furthered by scholars consistent arguments that both James and Charles actively promoted naval improvements.[155]

By combining the interest of Stuart monarchs in the navy and the role ascribed to them in the establishment of garrison government, we have one of the most convincing reasons for examining naval participation in the administration of the American colonies.[156] Webb however, ends The Governors General in 1681. This requires us to provide some justification for considering the navy and empire after this date. It is particularly important to do so because Webb gives some indication that he thinks the nature of the empire changed after 1681.[157] The preponderance of evidence, however, suggests that Webb believes garrison government continued beyond the 1680s. In The Governors General he discusses events in Virginia until 1683, the eve of the first peace time naval station in the Chesapeake. In addition Webb's list of governors, from which he calculates that 87.5 per cent of colonial governors had previous military experience, is taken from the years 1660-1727. Although Webb stops The Governors General in 1681, in other writings he pushes the same thesis to later years. A good example is his second article on William Blathwayt.[158]

These then are the reasons from Webb's own writings for extending the debate beyond 1681. The justifications, however, do not stop there. If Webb is correct in attributing much of the design for a militaristic empire to James Stuart, then surely we can look at his thesis up to the end of James's reign in 1688. Indeed, the historiographical debate has already extended this far.[159] These then are the reasons, both general and more specific, for considering the navy in relation to Webb's thesis up to and beyond 1681.

Webb, of course, is not silent on the issue on naval involvement in colonial America and to some extent uses it to support his thesis. His most substantial analysis concentrates on Virginia in and around 1676.[160] Consider, for example, these two statements from 1676. First, the story of the Young Prince "testifies to the fighting abilities of English seamen and to the crucial importance of the English ships and it explains the English control of Virginia."[161] Second, the Concord "demonstrated the dominance of the English marine in the Old Dominion and in the New Empire."[162] One might be forgiven for thinking that the Young Prince and Concord were warships, and might be surprised to discover that they were in fact merchantmen. Webb's statements do not represent deceptions; neither are they entirely inaccurate. They do represent, however, carefully worded attempts to demonstrate the almost military role played by the merchant marine in the quelling of Bacon's

Rebellion. Presumably Webb wants to show that even the merchants acted in a militaristic fashion to support garrison government. This idea is the first major quasi-naval issue developed by Webb and requires further consideration.

There is little doubt that Webb provides an important account of the role played by the merchant marine in the suppression of Bacon's Rebellion. He argues that the two most important captains were Robert Morris of the Young Prince and Thomas Grantham of the Concord. Neither captain knew of the insurrection prior to his arrival in Virginia, but both declared their loyalty to Governor Berkeley. Under the powers invested in colonial governors, Berkeley had the right to enter vessels into the King's service and issue ad hoc military commissions. When Morris and Grantham offered their services, therefore, Berkeley eagerly accepted.[163]

Morris arrived in September 1676 and, after meeting with Berkeley, took up a position on the James River. There he blockaded the river, launched a series of attacks, and ultimately persuaded the rebels in the region to surrender.[164] Grantham arrived in November 1676 with the thirty-two gun merchantman Concord. He led the counter revolutionary forces against rebel positions on the York River and, by using a careful balance of diplomacy and force, persuaded the rebels in his region to surrender.[165]

Webb uses these activities to support a militaristic interpretation of the first British Empire. He continually refers to Morris as "Admiral," presumably believing the title

is justified by Berkeley's ad hoc powers of military commission. It must be remembered, however, that the Royal Navy did not consider Morris an admiral; he was not given the powers, rights, and responsibilities pertaining to such a rank. Webb also uses such phrases as "behind the naval vanguard" and "amphibious campaigns" to give the activities in Virginia a more regular militaristic air.[166] It does not change the fact, however, that these vessels were not warships but merchantmen. That imperial forces used them at all demonstrates the desperate state of affairs in Virginia and the absence of naval force in the region. By Webb's own admission the Cabinet was not convinced of Grantham's abilities to quell the rebels and speedily dispatched an expeditionary force to follow him.[167] In short, the absence of a naval presence in Virginia made necessary the use of the merchant marine.

In a continuing push to establish the military nature of the merchant marine in Virginia, Webb oversteps the mark most noticeably in his description of Grantham's ship, Concord. Webb draws a comparison between the Concord and two warships of the time, the Charles Galley and the James Galley. He makes no effort to justify this comparison.[168] More disturbing is Webb's uncited description of the Concord, which appears to be nothing more than a generalized account of a late seventeenth-century ship. Webb makes much of the physical characteristics of the vessel and talks of her

"powerful knightheads,...massive maststep,...massive shelves and chainplates,...huge staffs,...enormous English ensign,...massive mainmast," and "huge steering keg."[169] From this, Webb argues, that the Concord was a forceful expression of "England's emerging commercial and imperial stature."[170] Unfortunately, there is nothing particularly remarkable about the features Webb attributes to the Concord. A wooden, ocean going vessel of the time, be it a merchantman or warship, was made of sizable timbers, no matter its country of origin. Such features had more to do with its ability to float that its ability to fight, and hardly justify conclusions about the imperial strength of a nation.

The next principal area of naval involvement in colonial America in Webb's analysis is the expeditionary force sent from England to suppress the rebellion. There can be little doubt that Webb is correct in suggesting that the function of these four warships, eight transports, and a thousand Scots Guards was to put down the rebellion, with force if necessary. Sir John Berry was commander of the fleet, and Colonel Herbert Jefferys led the troops. Ultimately, these leaders employed their forces in a mopping up operation; the rebellion had crumbled before their arrival. They also removed Berkeley from the governorship, an office that Jefferys occupied while awaiting a replacement. Webb sees this combined military force as bringing garrison government to Virginia and ascribes, therefore, an active role to the navy in implementing military control in the empire.

Clearly, the Royal government was prepared to use force, including warships, to squash insurrections in the first British Empire.[171]

The third area in which Webb discusses sea power relates to the plant cutting riots in Virginia in 1682-1683. We have already seen the connection between these events and the founding of the Virginia station. A discussion of this final area of Webb's work, therefore, ties his writings directly to the present research.

Webb correctly identifies the enthusiasm of the Virginia council in 1682-1683 for a guardship in Chesapeake Bay, stemming as it did from a desire to secure the colony more effectively.[172] Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, however, Webb does not make the connection between this request and the stationing of the first peacetime naval station in the bay. The only connection that he mentions is, Culpeper's desire to have the vessel that transported him to Virginia stay in the Bay after their arrival. As we have seen this request eventually became redundant as news arrived of the rebellion's end. This neglect on Webb's part is surprising since the founding of the Virginia Station appears at first glance to support his thesis. It is possible to trace a clear train of thought, originating in Virginia, which saw a warship in the bay as conducive to controlling the population. The idea of imperial authorities using military force to control a dependent people seems to tie in nicely

with Webb's thesis. In addition, this chapter has demonstrated the increasing role for the Royal Navy in America. We have seen that it was supposed to play an important regulatory role within the empire. It is conceivable, then, that the navy supports Webb's thesis by demonstrating another military element of colonial government. Considering this, it is remarkable how relatively little Webb has to say about the navy.

If, however, we look more closely at the role the navy was supposed to play, we find that perhaps Webb was wise to cut short his treatment of the navy. Although the idea of preventing civil disorder was clearly a catalyst for founding the Virginia station and a primary concern for imperial appointees in the Chesapeake, it was not in itself sufficient reason for obtaining a naval commitment. Authorities in London had more important considerations and priorities, namely the regulation of trade and the defeat of piracy. We have seen how these priorities, bolstered by financial considerations, became the most essential elements in the decision to station a warship in Virginia. It would appear, then, that commercial concerns were ingrained at the highest metropolitan levels and were the basis for military involvement in the empire. They were not limited to some country politicians, merchants, and sections of the colonial elite as Webb suggests.[173]

Perhaps more importantly, the emphasis placed on illegal traders and pirates represented a long term trend. During

the 1680s, usually one warship at a time was stationed in Chesapeake Bay. It was given the dual function of preventing illegal trade and piracy. As the instructions and actions of these vessels demonstrate, great emphasis was placed on the former function. In the 1690s England's naval problems with preventing illegal trade stimulated the decision to station two vessels in the bay, one for trade regulation the other protection of merchantmen. The idea that a permanent naval force should be used to prevent insurrection or impose "state control on dependent peoples" declined dramatically.[174] If an insurrection happened to break out then the authorities in London would use naval/military force to suppress it. This reaction can be seen in Virginia in 1676 and 1682-1683, and ultimately during the American Revolution. But until such troubles arose, the navy would take its part in regulating and protecting the commercial empire.

Even if one was to argue that the instructions given to Royal Navy captains to obey orders from colonial governors represents a concern for preventing civil disorder, no solace could be found for exponents of an essentially militarized empire. For by 1708, colonial governors' pseudo-control of warships was removed altogether. This was partly due to the continuing troubles between Royal Navy captains and colonial governors.

It is true that the navy was supposed to use force in the regulation of trade and defeat of piracy. It could be

argued, however, that England was looking more for the control enacted by a civilian police force than a military establishment. If this argument is unacceptable to those who support the militarized empire thesis, they would do well to remember that, although the navy was considered important in trade regulation, it ultimately contributed little to the enforcement of the Navigation Acts between 1683 and 1713. During this same time period, however, illegal trade declined. Such obedience to the system, and therefore the smooth running of the empire, stemmed from the realization that the trading system held potential profits for people on both sides of the Atlantic. In different times and places, the navy, which was England's premier military force, was used to enforce trade regulation, but in late seventeenth-century America it did not contribute in a significant fashion to the control the empire's trade.

In light of these discussions, it is difficult to see how "the political and military links prescribed by garrison government became the bonds of the first British Empire far more effectively and pervasively than those descriptions of commerce called the Acts of Trade."[175] Neither is it easy to justify the notion that "Anglo American relations were not primarily shaped by a commercial system."[176]

The foundations of the first British Empire were primarily commercial, as were Anglo-American relations and the bonds of empire. Clearly, these commercial foundations are the basis of any discussion of naval involvement in the

empire. Such conclusions have been developed from a consideration of one of the most obscure unrated naval vessels in the history of the Royal Navy.

Endnotes

[1] John J. McCusker and Russel R. Menard, The Economy of British America, 1607-1789 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 49; see also John W. Tyler, "The Long Shadow of Benjamin Barrow: The Politics of Illicit Trade in Boston, 1760-1762," American Neptune, XL (1980), 245-279; Albert B. Southwick, "The Molasses Act, Source of Precedents," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Ser., VIII (1951), 389-405; Richard B. Sheridan, "The Molasses Act and the Marketing Strategy of the British Sugar Planters," Journal of Economic History, XVII (1957) 62-83; Oliver M. Dickerson, The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951; reprint, New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1963).

[2] McCusker and Menard, The Economy of British America, 49.

[3] Dickerson, The Navigation Acts, 63.

[4] Ibid., 66.

[5] John Lloyd to W. Popple, 30 Dec. 1708, in Cecil Headlam, ed., Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1708-1709 (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964), No. 268, (hereafter CSPC).

[6] Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, vol. IV, England's Commercial and Colonial Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 62; George Louis Beer, The Old Colonial System, 1660-1754, pt. 1, (New York: MacMillian Co., 1912) 362-363.

[7] Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 75-77.

[8] Quoted in ibid., 242.

[9] Sir Henry Morgan to Lords of Trade and Plantations (Lds. of Tr. and Pl.), 24 Feb. 1680, in J. W. Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1677-1680, No. 1304.

[10] Quoted in Andrews, The Colonial Period, vol IV, 152.

[11] Ibid., 148-149, 182-183, 189, 192, 197, 205-209, 215; see also the commentary in the previous chapter and, Edward Randolph, Surveyor General of Customs, to Commissioners of Customs (Comm. of Cust., 31 July 1696, in Robert Toppan, ed., Edward Randolph Papers, 1676-1703 (Boston: Publication of the Prince Society, 1898-1909), V, 135; Thomas C. Barrow, Trade and Empire: The British Customs Service in Colonial America, 1660-1775 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967), 45.

[12] Andrews, The Colonial Period, vol IV, 145.

[13] Ibid., 241.

[14] See Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 148-149, 183, 189, 208, 215, where the author argues that "connivance on the part of the customs house officials was in all likelihood a common feature of the service." Additional support comes from Popple to Sanson, 7 Feb 1700, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1700, No. 100.

[15] Randolph to the Comm. of Cust., 16 Oct. 1695, Petition to the Privy Council (P.C.), 31 Jan. 1695, to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 13 Dec. 1694, Memorial to the P. C., 10 Feb. 1695, to the Comm. of Cust., 31 July 1696, to the Board [of Trade], 26 Apr. 1698, to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, to the Commissioners for Trade, 5 Nov. 1700, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 117-124, 124-125, 125-129, 129-130, 135-136, 171-176, 189, 230-234.

[16] Randolph to the Comm. of Cust., 10 Nov. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 396.

[17] Randolph to the Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 19 June 1690, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1689-1692, No. 949.

[18] Answer of the New England Agents, 26 June 1690, in ibid., No. 967; Patrick Crowhurst, The Defense of British Trade, 1689-1815 (Folkestone, Kent: W.M. Dawson and Son, Ltd., 1977) 143-144.

19
Earl of Bellomont to Council of Trade and Plantations (Coun. of Tr.), 18 May 1698, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1697-1698, No. 472-473; Bellomont to Coun. of Tr., 21 Feb. 1699, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1699, No. 116.

20
Governor Codrington to Coun. of Tr., 5 May 1701, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1701, No. 401.

21
Governor Francis Nicholson to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 14 June 1695, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 1896.

22
Crowhurst, The Defense of British Trade, 118-119; Hugh F. Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, (New York: Holt Rhinehort, 1969), 57.

23
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 11. The very first naval vessels involved in trade regulation were with Venables Expedition to Jamaica in 1655; see Instructions of the Commanders of the West Indian Expedition, 6 Feb. 1655, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688,(Addenda 1653-1687), No. 1971.

24
P. C., 27 Jan. 1669, in Sir Almeric W. Fitzroy, ed., Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series (London: 1908-1912), I, No. 829, (hereafter cited as APCC).

25
Comm. of Cust. to Lds. of Tr and Pl., 26 Oct 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1335; Order of the King in Council (Ord. of K. in Coun.), 1 Apr. 1685, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 112.

26
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 11.

27
It is not being argued, however, that all vessels visiting the colonies were sent there to prevent illegal trade. Those on expeditions or convoy duty had other primary functions. In times of war, expeditionary forces, convoying vessels, and guardships visited the colonies. In peacetime, the Royal Navy often limited its presence to those vessels on station. The guardships, therefore, represent the navy's most permanent military presence in the colonies.

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P. C., 4 Jan. 1667, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, I, No. 695; Arthur P. Middleton, Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era, (Newport News, Virginia: The Mariner's Museum, 1953), 311.

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Journal of the Council of Virginia (Jour. Coun. Va.), 8 Jul. 1680, in H. R. McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia (Richmond: The Virginia State Library, 1925), I, 7.

30
Ibid.

31
Quoted in, Culpeper to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 25 Oct. 1681, see also Lord Culpeper's Projects for the Relief and Improvement of Virginia, 18 Oct. 1681, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 268, 260.

32
Journal (Jour.) of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 31 Oct. 1681, Lds. of Tr. and Pl. to the King, 31 Oct. 1681, in ibid., No. 275, 277.

33
Ord. of K. in Coun., 22 Nov. 1681, Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 22 Nov. 1681 and 26 Nov. 1681, in ibid., No. 299, 300, 305.

34
Ord. of K. in Coun., 21 Dec. 1681, King to Sir Henry Chicheley, 21 Dec. 1681, Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 23 Dec. 1681, Culpeper to Chicheley, 23 Dec. 1681, Ord. of K. in Coun., 16 Jan. 1682, in ibid., No. 341, 342, 346, 347, 362.

35
Quoted in, Secretary of Virginia (Sec. of Va.) to Sir Leoline Jenkins, 8 May 1682, see also Minutes of the Council of Virginia, 3 May 1682, Chicheley to Jenkins, 8 May 1682, Sec. of Va. to Jenkins, 28 May 1682, Chicheley to Jenkins, 30 May 1682, Sec. of Va. to Jenkins, 7 June 1682, Sec. of Va. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 10 June 1682, Chicheley to Sir Thomas Chicheley, 12 June 1682, in ibid., No. 495, 490, 494, 524, 531, 546, 548, 550.

36
Chicheley to Jenkins, 30 May 1682, Sec. of Va. to Jenkins, 12 Aug. 1682, in ibid., No. 531, 652.

37
Lord Baltimore to Jenkins, 18 May 1682, in ibid., No. 507.

38
Lds. of Tr. and Pl. to King, 14 June 1682, Ord. of K. in Coun., 17 June 1682 (2 documents), Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 6 July 1682, in ibid., No. 561, 566, 567, 597.

39
Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 6 July 1682, Culpeper to Jenkins, 6 Oct. 1682, Capt. Tyrrell to the Admiralty, 1 Mar. 1683, in ibid., No. 597, 742, 983.

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Jour. Coun. Va., 11 Jan. 1683 and 22 May 1683, in McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals, 37, 43.

41
Jour. Coun, Va., 13 Mar. 1683, in ibid., 40-41.

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Ibid.

43
Council of Virginia (Coun. of Va.) to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 4 May 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1063.

44
Nicholas Spencer to Jenkins, 16 July 1683, in ibid., no. 1149.

45
Inquiry into Culpeper, 16 Aug. 1683, Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 17 Aug. 1683, in ibid., No. 1191, 1193.

46
Lord Howard's proposals, 27 Sept. 1683, in ibid., No. 1273.

47
Ibid.

48
Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 29 Sept. 1683, William Blathwayt to Henry Guy, 29 Sept. 1683, in ibid., No. 1279, 1281. The Lords objected to a garrison unless Virginia was willing to pay for it.

49
Duplicate of Howard's Proposals, 24 Oct. 1683, in ibid., No. 1327.

50
Comm. of Cust. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 26 Oct. 1683, in ibid., No. 1335.

[51] Lds. of Tr. and Pl. to King, 31 Oct. 1683, in ibid., No. 1342; see also, P. C., 31 Oct. 1683, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 130.

[52] Instructions for the Commander of the Ketch in Virginia, 3 Dec. 1683 and ? Dec. 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1429, 1492.

[53] P. C., 19 June 1685, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 192.

[54] Spenser to Jenkins, 20 June 1684, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1760. The Lords of Trade and Plantations adopted the middle ground by absorbing the spectrum of reasons for stationing a warship in Virginia.

[55] Rankin, The Golden Age.

[56] P. C., 15 Oct. 1691, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 423.

[57] Howard's Proposals, 27 Sept. 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, Nos. 1273; Nicholson to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 18 Mar. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 2303; G. H. Guttridge, The Colonial Policy of William III in America and the West Indies (London: Francass and Co. Ltd., 1922; reprint, 1966), 69.

[58] Codrington to Coun. of Tr., 5 July 1697, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1696-1697, No. 1148.

[59] Randolph to the Board, 5 Nov. 1700, in Toppan, ed. Randolph Papers, V, 237.

[60] Randolph to Secretary Popple, 25 Apr. 1698, in ibid., 170.

[61] Randolph to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, to Benjamin Bathurst, 12 May 1698, to the Comm. of Cust., 30 June 1686, in Ibid., V, 174, 181, VI, 183-184.

[62] Randolph to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, in Ibid., V, 191.

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For Randolph's influence see Michael G. Hall, "The House of Lords, Edward Randolph, and the Navigation Act of 1696," WMQ, 3rd Ser. (1957), 494-515; and Edward Randolph and the American Colonies, 1676-1703 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

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Randolph to the Board, 25 Aug. 1698, to the Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 16 Mar. 1698, to the Earl of Bridgewater, 22 Mar. 1698, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 189, 200, 204.

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Lawrence A. Harper, The English Navigation Acts: A Seventeenth Century Experiment in Social Engineering (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 230; Instructions to Bostock, 20 Sept. and 30 Sept. 1697, ADM 2/24 Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, London, (hereafter cited as PRO),

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Randolph to the Comm. of Cust., 16 Oct. 1695, in Toppan, ed. Randolph Papers, V, 118.

69
Coun. of Va. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 4 May 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1063; see also, Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 238 and 182, where a petition from the London Merchants to Parliament in 1705 is reproduced, "It having been found by experience that by the present practice of ships lying dispersed up and down at the election of the commanders and masters far remote from the places of the officers abode and their fixed residence the said officers have not been able to attend the due delivery of ships."

70
Col. Quary to the Coun. of Trade, 17 Mar. 1702, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1702, No. 210. Quary was very concerned about the security and defense of Virginia. "The country can not be secured from any attempts of an enemy, nor illegal traders prevented by [land] fortifications." He also mentioned problems of insurrections particularly the potential for disturbances by slaves and servants. "It is evident that the only way to protect and defend this government, must be by a Naval force, which will both strengthen it against insurrection within and enemies and

pirates without, and it will also be more effectual to detect and prevent illegal traders." Quary argued that the imperial authorities should send "at least five or six men of warr" to "defeat the attempts of an enemy, detect and discover illegal traders, and terrifie pirates, which very much infest [these] coasts."

71
Ibid.; Harper, The English Navigation Acts, 177.

72
Lords of Treasury to King, 10 July 1694, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 1139(i).

73
The Board had "no objection why those [vessels] attending New England and New York may not be called home in the beginning of winter, ... but as to Virginia and Maryland, their Lordships do conceive that the many rivers and the Bay being very large and open and exposed to privateers and pirates, it may be necessary that a ship of force be constantly left to cruise within the Capes." William Popple to Josiah Burchett, 13 Jan. 1703, in Headlam, ed.,CSPC, 1702-1703, No. 171; see also, P. C., 31 Dec. 1702, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 891.

74
P. C., 5 Oct. 1763, in Fitzroy, ed. APCC, IV, No. 520.

75
Neil R. Stout, The Royal Navy in America, 1760-1775: A Study of the Enforcement of British Colonial Policy in the Era of the American Revolution (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1973), 170.

76
Governor Molesworth of Jamaica to Blathwayt, 17 Apr. 1687, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC 1685-1688, No. 1212; for more on the Royal Navy performing a similar role see, Randolph to Secretary Popple, 25 Apr. 1698, to the Board, 26 Apr. 1698, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 170, 174; Crowhurst, The Defense of British Trade, 110; Guttridge, The Colonial Policy of William III, 59-66, 96-98; Harper, The English Navigation Acts, 177.

77
For some examples see, Governor Russel to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 24 Oct. 1694, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 1446; Governor William Beeston of Jamaica to the Duke of Shrewsbury, 18 Sept. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1696-1697, No. 232; Minutes of the Coun. of Va., 19 June 1702 and 23 Oct. 1702, Minutes of the Council of Maryland, 12 Nov. 1702, Governor Blakiston to the Commissioners of the Lord

High Admiral, 19 Nov. 1702, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1702, Nos. 635, 1093, 1146, 1174; Randolph to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 31 Dec. 1694, in Toppan, ed., Randolph Papers, V, 128; Journal of Council in Assembly of Maryland, 1 May 1700, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1700, No. 379.

78
See for example, J. Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); Danial A. Baugh, British Naval Administration in the Age of Walpole (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); N.A.M. Rodger, The Wooden World: The Anatomy of the Georgian Navy (Glasgow: William Collins, 1986; reprint, Fontana Press, 1988); Robert Albion, Forests and Sea Power (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1965), 47-55, 72-89; Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 277-279.

79
Barrow, Trade and Empire, 17.

80
J. J. Colledge, Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index, 2 vols., (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969); Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 314; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 52.

81
Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 314.

82
Minutes of the Coun. of Va., 22 May 1700, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1700, No. 459.

83
Account by Richard Burgess, Master of the Maryland Merchant, 13 Aug. 1699, Minutes of the Coun. of Va., 3 Aug. 1699, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1699, 711, 933. The Council thought that the Essex Prize was "small and weak" and resolved to make a "representation to the king praying for a ship of sufficient force to defend the colony." See also Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 65.

84
Governor Grey of Barbados to Secretary Vernon, 3 Feb. 1699, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1699, No. 72.

85
Governor Fletcher to William Blathwayt, 10 Sept. 1692, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1689-1692, No. 2460; A word of caution should be entered at this point for the Governor himself was accused on several occasions of harboring pirates. It could be, then, that his attacks on the Aldborough were born from a fear that this vessel could interfere with the enhancement of

his personal fortune, see for example, T. Smith to the Lords Justices of Ireland, 18 Dec. 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1696-1697, No. 517i; Coun. of Tr. and Pl. to King, 9 Nov. 1699, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1699, No. 167.

86
Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 314; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 63.

87
Comm. of Cust. to Lords of the Treasury, 22 Feb. 1694, CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 1005.

88
Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 55-56.

89
Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 314; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 76.

90
Crowhurst, The Defense of British Trade, 146; Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 314-315; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 75-78.

91
Crowhurst, The Defence of British Trade, 144.

92
Comm. of Cust. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 26 Aug. 1683, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1335; see also the account of the founding of the Virginia station in this chapter.

93
Col. Jennings to the Coun. of Tr., 26 June 1707, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1706-1708, No. 1010; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 55-56; see also, Governor Blakison to Admiralty, 19 Nov. 1702, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1702, No. 1774.

94
Blathwayt to Samuel Pepys, 25 Mar. 1686, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 608.

95
Comm. of Cust. to Lords of the Treasury, 22 Feb. 1694, CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 1005.

96
Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 317.

97
Ibid.

98
Randolph to Bridgewater, 22 Mar. 1698, in Toppan, ed. Randolph Papers, V, 204.

99
Blakison to Coun. of Tr., 2 Feb. 1700, Minutes of the Coun. of Va., 22 May 1700, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1700, No. 85, 459.

100
Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 45; see also, Andrews, The Colonial Period, IV, 153.

101
Spenser to Jenkins, 16 July 1683, in Fortescue ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1149.

102
Lt. Governor and Coun. of Va. to Lds of Tr. and Pl., 6 July 1692, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1689-1692, No. 2318.

103
Jour. Coun. Va., 29 Nov. 1683, in McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals, 53.

104
P. C., 9 Aug. 1694, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 558.

105
Jour. Coun. Va., 5 Mar. 1695, 3 May 1695, 19 May 1695, in McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals, 321, 326, 330.

106
Jour. Coun. Va., 13 Feb. 1696, 16 Apr. 1696, 28 Apr. 1696, in ibid., 339, 342, 344.

107
Jour. Coun. Va., 13 June 1696, 1 Oct. 1696, ibid., 347, 354.

108
Compare Beverley's bill of 450 for 11 months to Broadbent's for 18 per month, in, Jour. Coun. Va., 1 May 1696, 8 Oct. 1696, in ibid., 345, 354.

109
Jour. Coun. Va., 1 Nov. 1697, in ibid., 373.

110
Ibid.

111
Jour. Coun. Va., 9 May 1699, in ibid., 432.

112
Jour. Coun. Va., 17 May 1699, in ibid., 436.

113
Crowhurst, The Defence of British Trade, 143.

114
Col. Jennings to Coun. of Tr., 8 Oct. 1709, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1708-1709, No. 765.

115
Col. Jennings to Coun. of Tr., 21 Mar. 1709, in ibid, No. 421. When there was no warship on station Jennings hired a sloop. See also Lt. Governor Spotswood to Coun. of Tr., 18 Aug. 1710, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1710-1711, No. 349. Spotswood presented an informative account the problems of illegal trade. "It has" he said "been the practice for vessels bound to the West Indies (when they have found no men of warr in the Bay) to take in great quantities of Tobacco after they had cleared with the Officer," then to run to any foreign port before going to the port for which they had been cleared. This activity was most common in the lower James River. "In my opinion" he continued "nothing can more effectively break that trade, than having guardships constantly attending here, and more especially a sloop or other small vessel well fitted and mann'd were sent here to attend the guardship." This would make "it mightly difficult for any vessel to go out of the Capes without being examined."

116
Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 327; Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 123.

117
Lord Howard's Proposals, 27 Sept. 1683, Comm. of Cust. to Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 28 Oct. 1683, Sir Philip Howard's Proposals to Duke of York, ? Dec. 1684, Clause providing for the exemption, 20 Jan. 1684, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, Nos. 1273, 1335, 2032, 2055; P. C., 31 Oct. 1683, in Fitzroy, ed., APCC, II, No. 130.

118
George Louis Beer, The Old Colonial System, 312-313.

119
Harper, The English Navigation Acts, 177; see also, Blathwayt to Admiralty, 4 Dec. 1683, to Sir John Werden, 19 Dec. 1683, Jour. of Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 20 Dec. 1683, Sir Thomas Lynch's representations, 20 Dec. 1683, Mr Brisbane's Opinion, 20 Dec. 1683, Sir Philip Howard to the Duke of York,

? Dec. 1684, Jour. of the Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 13 Jan. 1685, Jour. of the Lds. of Tr. and Pl., 17 Jan. 1685, Clause providing for the exemption ..., 20 Jan. 1685, Ord. of K. in Coun., 21 Jan. 1685, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1681-1685, No. 1433, 1480-1484, 2032, 2044, 2055, 2051, 2060.

120
Quoted in Andrews, The Colonial Period, 144.

121
A Collection of Papers handed in By Edward Randolph, 31 July 1696, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1696-1697, No. 120; Bellomont to Coun. of Tr., 18 May 1698, Randolph to Coun. of Tr., 30 May 1698, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1697-1698, Nos. 472-473, 521.

122
Coun. of Tr. to King, 9 Mar. 1699, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1699, No. 167.

123
Cited in Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 56, 54; see also Articles offered against Sir William Phips by Jahleel Brenton, Collector of Customs, ? Nov. 1694, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696 No. 1507.

124
Order of Lord Justices in Council, 11 Sept. 1700, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1700, No.773; Codrington to Coun. of Tr., 14 Jan. 1701, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1701, No. 33, Guttridge, The Colonial Policy of William III, 143.

125
Codrington to Coun. of Tr., 11 Jan. 1701, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1701, No. 26.

126
Capt. Fairfax to Mr. Southerne, 31 Jan. 1693, to the Admiralty, 20 Mar. 1693, Capt. Short to Admiralty, 29 Mar. 1693, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, Nos. 41-42, 224-225.

127
Ibid., also see, Minutes of Lds. of Trade and Pl., 2 Feb. 1694, King William III to Governor Sir William Phips, 15 Feb. 1694, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1693-1696, No. 826, 879.

128
Effingham to Earl of Sunderland, 21 May 1687, Pepys to Blathwayt, 11 Nov. 1687, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 1264, 1507.

129
Extracts from letters of Capt. Allen, HMS Quaker, and, Capt. Crofts, HMS Deptford, to Pepys, 11 Nov. 1687, in Fortescue ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 1507i.

130
Minutes of the Coun. of Va., 22 Mar. 1703, Minutes of the Council of Maryland, 14 Apr. 1703, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1702-1703, Nos. 492, 575. Even respectable officials had confrontations; see Captain Aldred verses Governor Nicholson, Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 67.

131
Deposition of Capt. George St. Loe, 10 May 1686, in Fortescue, ed., CSPC, 1685-1688, No. 678v.

132
Stout, The Royal Navy in America, 7; It is not entirely clear when the governor's control of Royal Navy captains was withdrawn. The process started when Prince George of Denmark became Lord High Admiral at the beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession. In 1712 Governor Lowther of Barbados said, "there is not one time in twenty that men of war which attend this station take any manner of notice of the orders I give them. ... I have no power over the men of war by vertue of my Vice-Admiraltyes Commission or authority of the Lord High Admiral, or the Commissioners of the Admiralty.", Governor Lowther to the Coun. of Tr., 28 May 1712, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1711-1712, No. 434; see also, Coun. of Tr. to Secretary Stanhope, 15 Mar. 1715, Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to Stanhope, 28 Mar. 1715, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1714-1715, No. 283, 315.

133
See for example the dispute between Hovenden Walker and Governor Archibald Hamilton in, Earl of Dartmouth to Coun. of Tr., 14 Feb., 1713, in Headlam, ed., CSPC, 1712-1714, No. 277.

134
Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 57.

135
Randolph to Sir Robert Southwell, 10 July, 1686, to John Sanson (Secretary to the Comm. of Cust.), 30 June 1686, in Toppan, ed. Randolph Papers, IV, 92-93, 183-184. In 1740 the imperial authorities forbade naval vessels to make seizures within harbors, suggesting that this was the domain of the terrestrial officers; see Stout, The Royal Navy in America, 9.

136
Rankin, The Golden Age of Piracy, 49.

137
Stephen Saunders Webb, The Governors General, The English Army and the Definition of the Empire, 1569-1681 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); 1676, The End of American Independence, (New York: Alfred A Knoff, 1984); see also, "William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through to Empire, 1689-1717," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXVI (1969), 373-415; "William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer, From Popish Plot to Glorious Revolution," WMQ 3rd Ser., XXVI (1968), 3-21; "Brave Men and Servants to his Royal Highness: The Household of James Stuart in the Evolution of English Imperialism," Perspectives in American History, VIII (1974), 55-80; "The Strange Career of Francis Nicholson," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XXIII (1966), 513-548.

138
To show that this trend continues today Webb cites, Michael Kammen, Empire and Interest: The American Colonies and the Politics of Mercantilism, (New York: J. B. Lippincoll Co., 1970); Alison Gilbert Olson and Richard Maxwell Brown, eds., Anglo-American Political Relations, 1675-1775, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970); Thomas C. Barrow, Trade and Empire.

139
Webb, 1676, xv.

140
For some of the most recent exchanges in the historiographical debate, see, Richard R. Johnson, "The Imperial Webb, The Thesis of Garrison Government in Early America Considered" and Stephen Saunders Webb, "Data and Theory in Restoration Empire," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XLIII (1986), 408-459; Ian Steele, "Governors or Generals?: A Note on Martial Law and the Revolution of 1689 in English America," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XLVI (1989) 304-314; also interesting is, Richard R. Johnson, "Charles Mclean Andrews and the Invention of Colonial History," WMQ, 3rd Ser., XLIII (1986), 519-541.

141
Webb, Governors General xvi.

142
Ibid., xvi-xvii.

143
Ibid., 459.

144
Ibid., 147-148.

145
John Childs, The Army, James II, and the Glorious Revolution (New York: St. Martins Press, 1980), 1.

146
Ibid., 5; Childs estimates the maximum strength on paper of James II's army was 34320, but a number of these troops were undergoing training and were therefore unavailable for service. Webb and Johnson disagree as the England's military strength; see, Johnson, "Imperial Webb" and Webb, "Restoration Empire," WMQ (1986), 420-421, 444-445.

147
Childs, The Army, 5.

148
Brian Lavery, The Ship of the Line (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1984), I, 32, 39.

149
England had 100 ships of fourth rate and above, France had 93. See Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, 4.

150
Webb, Governors General, 349-351.

151
For Pepys' part in the revitalization of naval affairs, see Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, ch. 8; Arthur W. Tedder, The Navy of the Restoration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); Arthur Bryant, Samuel Pepys, The Saviour of the Navy, (London: Collins, 1938, reprint, 1949).

152
Webb, Governors General, 129n, 130-131, 136-137, 214, 229, 233, 2240, 265. Webb says that Sir John Berry was held in high regard by James and was therefore appointed leader of the 1676 expedition to recapture Virginia.

153
Webb, 1676, 172, 210-213; "Restoration Empire," WMQ, 454-458.

154
Webb, 1676, 211.

155
As Lord High Admiral, James actively promoted naval improvements. For example, he established a structure for the navy that survived almost unchanged until the nineteenth century, see Tedder, The Navy of the Restoration, 31, 41, 48, 51, 58-667; Lavery, The ship of the Line, I, 52. Charles II shared his brother's interest in naval affairs. He is

credited with introducing naval yachts into England and took over the role of Lord High Admiral shortly before his death, see Lavery, The Ship of the Line, I, 30, 52. Pepys said that Charles was a king "who best understood the business of the sea of any Prince the World ever had," quoted in ibid., 30.

156
There are some other reasons, although relatively minor ones, for considering the navy within the supposed military empire. For example, naval captains who convoyed the fishing fleets to Newfoundland for a long time performed the functions of governor. Also it is arguable that Royal Navy captains had a tendency to be more aggressive in their encounters with the colonial population than their army counterparts. This was particularly true when warships were short of men and resorted to the press.

157
Webb, Governors General, xviii.

158
Webb, "William Blathwayt," WMQ, (1969), 373-415.

159
See Steele, "Governors or Generals?" WMQ, (1989), 304-314.

160
Examples of other connections between imperial rule and the Navy outlined by Webb include: Royal Navy captains acting as governors of Newfoundland, and the roles of Samuel Pepys and James Stuart already described. For captains as governors in Newfoundland, see, Webb, Governors General, 495.

161
Webb, 1676, 103.

162
Ibid., 112.

163
Ibid.

164
Ibid., 87-98.

165
Ibid., 103-123.

166
Ibid., 89-93, 96.

167
Ibid., 112.

168
Ibid.; see text accompanying illustrations between pages 104-105.

169
Ibid., 115-118.

170
Ibid., 118.

171
Ibid., 127-131; Webb, *Governors General*, 346-372.

172
Webb, *Governors General*, 416, 421.

173
Ibid., 446-447, 464.

174
Ibid., xvii.

175
Ibid., 147-148.

176
Ibid., 459.

Conclusions

The Swift and the Potential of Unrated Warships

In November 1697, the advice boat Swift set sail from the Isle of Wight in the English Channel for Chesapeake Bay. Her captain, Nathanial Bostock, like many naval commanders in the late seventeenth century, had suffered difficulties in manning and supplying his vessel. Bostock knew that his tasks as captain of a small vessel sailing almost alone to Britain's overseas possessions would be particularly demanding, even by the standards of the day.

The Swift's coxswain, Will Ward took the helm as the master, Christopher Potter, and mate, Bonja Wilson, navigated the advice boat out of the channel. The voice of boatswain John Pettrone could be heard instructing the ship's crew in the first of many daily routines. The men looked similar to one another in their standardized slops: flat, buckled shoes, striped breeches, blue waist-coats and leather jackets, white kerchiefs and red caps.[1] Pettrone was also responsible for maintaining the supplies contained in the Swift's hull: ropes, cordage, anchors, sails and rigging. Down below the victuals of biscuit, beef, pork, peas, fish, butter, cheese and beer were only just sufficient for the vessel's journey to Maryland.[2]

Yet the Swift carried more than these essential supplies. As an advice boat she was designed to transport various sorts of messages and information. Although it might

appear that on this occasion little was carried (only a package for Governor Andros of Virginia) for modern historians and archaeologists she was laterally teeming with information. In her timbers, crafted together under the guidance of shipwright George Moore, and in her sail plan were undoubtedly clues to the failure of late seventeenth-century advice boats. In a broader sense, such construction details may have contained information about a problematic time for English naval architecture.

In Captain Bostock's cabin were his operational instructions. The Swift was to play an important part in the implementation of the 1696 Navigation Act, by surveying colonial shipping, supporting and monitoring customs officials, and by transporting Edward Randolph, Surveyor General of Customs, around the colonies. Bostock, however, did not realize just how entwined the advice boat would become in the enforcement of this Act.

The Swift also carried the problems of a navy trying to enforce trade regulation in colonial America. The small size of Bostock's vessel paralleled his chances of successful enforcement of the Navigation Acts. To regulate trade in colonial America a warship had to be small and maneuverable enough to patrol inland waters, but large enough to traverse the Atlantic, remain self-sufficient for several months, and carry enough fire-power to deal with pirates. Such characteristics were unobtainable. In addition, Bostock

faced possible conflicts of personality and financial gain between himself and colonial governors. Warships had traveled to Chesapeake Bay before and would certainly voyage there again. Some were sent primarily to deter illegal traders, others to defeat piracy. All, however, encountered similar problems to those face by Bostock. Although warships stationed in the Chesapeake were representative of the most sophisticated fighting machines of the day, their principle role was not to use military might to control England's overseas populations, but rather to help regulate an essentially commercial empire.

As the advice boat sailed down the channel she may have passed other warships. Undoubtedly, she would have appeared insignificant next to any first or second rates with their flamboyant decoration symbolic of the nation's power and prestige. The third rates, constructed to optimize firepower and seaworthiness, would also have overshadowed her, for they were the heart of the battlefleet. The Swift may have even seemed small against the fourth, fifth and even sixth rates, vessels used for important patrol work and convoying. Yet to Britain's naval administration the Swift was no less significant. The Admiralty was obliged to balance the navy, unrated warships such as the Swift, therefore, were absolutely crucial for patrol work, trade regulation, carrying dispatches, deterring privateers, and performing certain specialized military operations. They would also be used as a method of two-way communication with England's

overseas possessions, and as an important arena for experimentation in naval architecture.

Just as the Admiralty considered unrated warships to be important, so too should modern historians. Vessels such as the Swift can shed light on an array of historical issues from the architectural details of naval history to the generalized perceptions of empires. They are ignored to the detriment of the whole discipline.

In its broadest sense this is a study of failure. Failure of advice boats, failure of the Swift, failure of the navy, and ultimately, failure of force in the first British Empire. From these shortcomings emerges the historical importance of the Swift and other unrated warships. It is also a study of a failure in maritime history. All too frequently maritime historians fail to merge the technical details of marine architecture with the general historical picture. As a result the discipline suffers. Technical details, like those presented in Chapter I, only go part way to justifying further study of unrated warships. Although the benefits for historians of naval architecture my be considerable, the remainder of the historical community is deprived. Tales of the sea, like those presented in Chapter II, also contribute, but again in a limited fashion. It is only when a link is forged between maritime activities and the broadest historical issues that the discipline truly benefits from maritime history and, in this instance, further

study of unrated warships seems justified.

Endnotes

[1] John Ehrman, The Navy in the War of William III, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 122.

[2] Ibid., 121.

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Appendix A

Abstracts form: A Journal Kept on Board his Majesties Advice Boat Ye Eagle by Magdr Baker, 1698. (ADM 51/4177)

1698

Mar 1/22: Lowered yards and topmast got our spritsayle yard alongst ships.
Mar 23 : This morning our yards up hall'd home fore topsayle shrouds loosed main topsail....
Mar 24 : ... small anchor ... small bower....
Apr 2 : ... main topsail hauled up....
Apr 6 : ... mail topsail ... both topsails....
Apr 8 : ... both topsails....
Apr 9 : ... small sails....
Apr 13 : ... broke one of our backstays abaft....
Apr 17 : ... small sayles several times....
Apr 28 : ... we cut our main studdings sails abour 5 foot each they being too long.
May 7 : ... 6 a clock reefed staysales and at 8 handed them and halled up courses and at 10 sayd her under a mizan.
May 10 : ... mainsayle....
May 16 : ... handed and sett topsails wth reefs several times.
May 17 : ... handed foretops ... handed foretops....
May 20 : ... foretops....
May 27 : ... reefed both topsails ... in the morning let them out and set small sails it being fair.
Jul 3 : ... we got a dolphin and turtle.
Jul 7 : ... Wind blowing SSW and the ENE it put us by all our small sailers and made us reef topsayles.
Jul 8 : ... at 9 out main topsayle yard broke at ye parrell it split the sayle from earing to earing but no other loss... we got up our spare yard.
Jul 9 : Stout gail with close cloudy weather and rain it put us under our three lower sails though at evening sett fore topsayle with 2 reefs and in the morning main topsayle with the same.
Jul 10 : ... set and handed small sails several times....
Jul 12 : ... put us under our small sails several times....
Jul 14 : ... had ground in 60 fathoms a dark light sand ... we put up our old mizon topsail to cover ye top of ye foreasth (?).
Jul 17 : ... lowered yards and topmast used it almost two cables and let drop small bower.
Jul 30 : ... we hulled home our fore topsayle sheets though soon to furl all again ye ships lowered yards and topmast it being much wind.
Aug 13 : Fair weather and small winds between ye N and E we dried our sails and got down yare(d), unbent all small sayles and main sayles gott our boxsprit unrigged....
Aug 18 : ... we dried our sails and unbent & unrigd topmasts and yards.

Abstracts from: The Log of John Kellie master of the Eagle on its Voyage to West Indies, March 1698 - May 1699. (ADM 52/32)

1698

Apr 1 : ... reefed our topsail....
Apr 2 : ... hall our mainsail up....
Apr 6 : ... took our depart from Lizard in His Maj Advice Boat ye Eagle bound for the West Indies.
Apr 8 : ... a verie strong geall yt we handed our topsails we stood away WSW all night under our loe sails, At 6 this morning we sett our main topsail.
Apr 13 : Fresh gails with cloudy weather and showers of rain we have kaived (or kaired ??) our top gallin sails and studding sails.
Apr 14 : Fresh gails with cloudy weather and showers of rain we handed our top gallin sails and leykwise (likewise) our topmast studding sails.
Apr 16 : ... kaired our topgallin sails....
Apr 27 : ... kaired topgallin and main topmast studding sail.
Apr 29 : Fair weather with a fresh gail ... kaired our small sails....
May 2 : Squallie weather and showers of rain ... several times we handed our small sails.
May 13 : ... kaived our mainsail....

Appendix B

Extracts from: The Journal of Edward Winsor Captain of the Express Advice Boat, Jan 2, 1696 - Dec 31, 1698. (ADM 51/291)

1696

Feb 5 : ... but could not carry sayle to get in (to Falmouth), therefore forced to lay by under a mizn.
Feb 8 : ... shortened our foremast forefoot and unrigged our mn mast in order to shorten it.
Feb 10 : ... shortened our main mast and mizzen mast 3 foot each and sent our sails on shore to be attened.
Feb 28 : This 24 hours very hard gale of wind wee went with only our forsayle and mizn ... in the morning it being clear and asettled we reeft our mn sayle and set it.
Mar 2 : ... got up our top msts and set our tops....
Mar 3 : ... sprung our main topmast about 2 foot above the caps....
Mar 20 : ... a troubled sea this day having our spritt sayle a broade itt took full of water and broke the halliards soe yt (that) we lost both yard and sayle.
Mar 21 : (Captain recieves orders form the East India Co. to go to the Cape of Good Hope)
Mar 25 : ... we hoysd outt ye boat in ye afternoon....
Apr 19 : ... we have gone all night and most of ye morning with only our cources and mn topsl ... we lay by 4 hours to new parrell our yards and fix our standing rigging, received new fore topsail lifts and braces.
May 3 : ... under our own mainsayle with two reefs....
May 30 : ... kedg anchor and warp....
Jun 1 : ... anchored with our small bauer (in Tableland Bay) ... I immediately went ashore with the packet and got leave form the Governor for ye man of war long boate to water me. (Does this indicate that the Express' long boat was not sufficient in size to supply the vessel) ?
Jun 5 : ... scrubbed our ships bottom being very fowle.
Jun 6 : ... got up our yards and topmasts....
Jun 7 : ... fore topsayle....
Jun 14 : ... got up our topmasts and yards....
Jul 15 : ... sent boat to get salt off rocks....
Jul 18 : ... scraped ships side and paid them with rozzin tallow....
Jul 20 : ... scraped bottom....
Jul 28 : (Express went to check for messages in bottles).
Sep 22 : ... we did scudd away all night with a goose wing on our foresayle.
Oct 12 : ... we got our bowsprit and hawled into ye dockand unbent all our sails....

Abstracts from: The Log of Captain John Tonkin, Commander of the xpress Advice Boat, 1703-1709. (ADM 51/291).

1703

(November and December 1703 describe the attempts to save the Express after she was driven on to rocks).

1704

Mar 7 : ... got our mainmast and righted him and also our main topmast....
Jun 16 : ... fore topsayle....
Aug 13 : ... fore topsayle....

1705

Jan 9 : ... small bower....
Mar 11 : ... we handed both topsayles....
Mar 12 : ... best bower ... at 10 struck yeards and topmasts and bent ye shoot cable....
(March the Express was engaged in observing warships and escorting coastal traders. Brigantines also performing these functions).
Apr 25 : ... at 4 this morning we loosd our fore topsail and haled home ye shoots and home short (?).
May 1 : ... moored with our shroom anchor and hawser there being little wind and the Penzance anchored near.
May 25 : ... at 4 this morning came to sail and at 6 got clear of the harbour and espyd ye small privateer we had chased promicing little wind we gave chase with all our sails and oars.
Jun 19 : ... we weighed and came to sail with our low sails....
Jul 4 : ... we reefed both topsails....
Jul 19 : ... best bower....
Aug 13 : ... we got a scare and cleared our Larboard bildg and this afternoon shifted her.
Aug 15 : ... cleaned starboard bildge....

1709

Mar 9 : ... we bore away wth a reefed forecourse ... little wind and fair weather.
Apr 10 : ... we weighed and towed and rowed out over the barr.