‘Sailorhoods’: Sailortown and Sailors in the Port of Portsmouth circa 1850 – 1900.

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The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Portsmouth.

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**Declaration**

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

Word Count: 70, 251 words (excluding ancillary material).
Abstract

This thesis is a detailed study of sailortown as an urban entity and sailors as urban inhabitants. Using the naval port-town of Portsmouth as a case study across the period circa 1850 – 1900, this thesis directly challenges the notion of sailors being ‘men apart’ and that sailortown districts simply existed to cater for sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore. It will achieve this by offering an analysis of Portsmouth’s sailortown as a socio-demographic entity and an exploration of the urban experiences of sailors, particularly naval sailors. This study thus aims to bring together the fragmented historiographical discussion relating to sailors and sailortowns and ameliorate historians’ understanding of them. It seeks to do this by readdressing the balance away from sea-based, merchant, economic and labour contexts that have hitherto dominated research. In doing so, this thesis fuses quantitative and qualitative approaches and sources, exploring the street-level interactions between sailors and port inhabitants and the socio-demography of Portsmouth’s sailortown district. Indeed, as an aid to identifying a sailortown area in port, this thesis proposes a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model.’

By spatially mapping Portsmouth’s sailortown district using over fifty thousand census records, this thesis argues sailortown was built on interrelated and interconnected networks of sailor neighbourhoods, or ‘sailorhoods,’ formed on their occupational, familial and local ties. In turn, this facilitated a street-orientated sailortown culture to be fashioned that helped to ensure Portsmouth’s sailortown remained a sailor’s town. Moreover, this thesis argues sailors maintained ties to land, and more so than previous research has suggested. Indeed, despite popular assumptions to the contrary, this study demonstrates sailors possessed a street-wise sensibility. More widely, the thesis highlights the relativity of coastal living in sailortown areas and reveals there is not a monolithic socio-cultural experience of sailortowns or for sailors as urban inhabitants; they were multifaceted ones embracing differing temporal, social, cultural and spatial experiences for individuals and groups. Thus, the parameters and conclusions presented in thesis offers an original contribution to debates surrounding sailortowns, sailors and naval sailors’ lives ashore, enabling this thesis to make major contributions to urban, naval and maritime history, and to the emerging field of ‘New Coastal History.’
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List of Abbreviations

CDA          Contagious Diseases Act
CEB          Census Enumerators’ Notebook
HTSC         Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle
Met          Metropolitan Police
PLVA         Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers Association
PP           Parliamentary Papers
RSH          The Royal Sailors’ Home
RSR          The Royal Sailors’ Rest
TEN          The Evening News (Portsmouth)

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Introduction

This thesis will explore the urban experiences of sailors and their associated sailortown district in the naval port of Portsmouth circa 1850 – 1900. Sailors have traditionally been depicted as the archetypal roaming man, free of ties, living in a world isolated from land, and when ashore, sought out their own, effectively alienating themselves from port communities. Simultaneously, sailortown districts in ports, marked out by the perceived abundance of drinking establishments, brothels and lodging houses, further reinforced this and were popularly viewed to be ‘realms apart.’ Yet the above photograph taken on the streets of Portsmouth captures something historians have often overlooked and is marginalised in traditional popular culture. Whilst moulded by the sea-going world they forged their occupations on, sailors were also shaped by landed-urban experiences. Thus, this thesis directly challenges the notion sailors were ‘men apart’ by situating them as urban inhabitants and exploring their street-

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level experiences. This thesis also seeks to look beyond viewing sailortowns as ‘separate’ areas in ports and as areas simply existing to cater for sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore. It will achieve this by demographically mapping Portsmouth’s sailortown area and by demonstrating a distinct sailortown culture was present there.

Whilst debates have remained largely fragmented, this thesis is situated at a dynamic point in the studies of sailors, sailortowns and ports. Previous historiographical debates have focussed heavily on sea-based contexts, exploring sailors’ working lives ashore and sailortown areas in ports as extensions of the sea. Concurrently, when sailors’ lives ashore have been considered it has been primarily by maritime historians, with precedence given to their working lives, arrangements and conditions. This has resulted in merchant-related contexts dominating debates with naval ones overlooked. Simultaneously, naval historians have largely neglected explorations of naval sailors ashore and their socio-cultural experiences beyond the ship-based world of the Royal Navy, and urban historians have hitherto mostly ignored sailors, sailortown areas and ports, particularly naval ones. Thus, whilst sailortowns and sailors are coastal phenomena, the land-based contexts of them are comparably neglected to the sea-based ones. However, recent research is highlighting the extent to which sailors and sailortowns were cultivated in landed frameworks and experiences. This study therefore seeks to bring together the existing fragmented discussion whilst advancing historians' understanding of sailortowns and sailors’ lives ashore.


It will achieve this by offering an analysis of a naval port and sailortown area and sailors, particularly naval sailors, as urban inhabitants, readdressing the focus away from sea-based and merchant contexts. In doing so, this thesis fuses quantitative approaches with qualitative socio-cultural explorations to reconstruct and map the demographic basis of Portsmouth's sailortown area, and to assess its socio-cultural projections and representations. This thesis will demonstrate, by shifting focus away from merchant ports to naval ports, the long held assertion based on merchant studies that sailortown areas expired as distinct districts in ports in the mid-late nineteenth century can be challenged. Indeed, this thesis proposes a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model.’ This model provides an aid to researchers in identifying sailortown districts in ports and advances historians’ understanding of them by focussing on the urban, communal and street-level foundations of these areas. This study also offers an assessment of the socio-demographic connections sailors had on land using quantitative data, alongside qualitative socio-cultural sources to survey facets of sailors’ urban experiences in Portsmouth.

This thesis thus advances historians’ understanding of sailors’ lives ashore by exploring the under-examined street-level interplay and navigation of urban living between sailors and port inhabitants in a naval sailortown district. More widely, the thesis highlights the relativity of coastal living in sailortown areas and reveals there is not a monolithic socio-cultural experience of sailortown or for sailors as urban inhabitants; they were multifaceted ones embracing differing temporal, social, cultural and spatial experiences for individuals and groups in often diametrically opposing ways. Thus, the parameters and conclusions offered in this thesis will allow for debates surrounding sailortowns, sailors and naval sailors’ lives ashore to be progressed, enabling this thesis to make major contributions to urban, naval and maritime history, and to the emerging field of

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‘New Coastal History.’

Mid-to-late nineteenth century Portsmouth is a fruitful period and place in which to undertake a case study relating to sailors and sailortowns, as it was a premier sea and land base for the Royal Navy, with the large naval presence situated alongside a well-established working-class one. The period considered in this thesis was also a time of rising concern over the effects of urban living, immorality of the working classes and sailors’ public-facing behaviour ashore, with civilizing influences more forcibly instilled on the streets than ever before. This is also reflected in the drive by civic authorities, church leaders, missionaries and philanthropists to attend to the more lurid aspects of sailortown life. Moreover, the mid-to-late nineteenth century was a time of relative peace. Thus, sailors often spent more time ashore in homeports like Portsmouth. Indeed, whilst shore leave was curtailed in wartime, in peacetime, naval sailors could rotate from ship to shore in relatively large numbers and with higher frequency, thus arguably becoming more landed and urban in their experiences than ever before. Following the introduction of continuous service in 1853, shore leave became increasingly standardized and regulated by the Admiralty implementing rules that obliged officers to give lower-deck sailors regular leave, with the aim of offering an incentive for good discipline and conduct on ship. Across the period of this thesis, shore leave centred on a three-level system of entitlement of ‘general,’ ‘privilege’ and ‘special’ leave. Lower-deck sailors, on standard home-based service, were granted regular monthly general leave of between forty-eight hours to four days leave at the discretion of individual ships’ Captains. Moreover, after a period of Foreign Service, Petty Officers, ratings and sailor boys were also granted a month to six

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weeks’ leave upon their return to England. However, as a reward for good discipline and conduct on ship, a system of privilege leave was also established, thus a sailor could gain a higher amount of shore leave if his conduct on ship was satisfactory. Moreover, in homeports like Portsmouth, only a portion of a ship’s crew needed to remain abroad and on the duty at the end of a ship’s normal workday and over the weekend. Thus, large numbers of sailors, including those with a residency in Portsmouth, were able to leave the ship for the shore at the end of the working day and over the weekend, increasing the amount of leisure time naval sailors could have. Special leave was granted to individual sailors when, for example, they needed to return home due to a family member’s illness or death. Furthermore, as Oliver Walton notes, this three-tier system of leave meant individual Captains could make use of this system in a way that would best manage their crews. This also meant shore leave entitlements differed between ships in port and differed for individual sailors at any given time in the period of this thesis.

Indeed, as this thesis seeks to situate sailortown and sailors in urban contexts, it does not aim to offer a comprehensive account of their working lives, arrangements or conditions ashore, and thus much of the primary source material is necessarily ‘urban’ in focus. This thesis is therefore largely based on archival socio-cultural sources, shaped by identities, attitudes and cultures of Victorian contemporaries, particularly of those found in Portsmouth. One of the key sources for this study is newspapers. A range of national newspapers has been utilized in this study, accessed through the Nineteenth-Century British

11 Christopher McKee, Sober Men and True: Sailor Lives in the Royal Navy, 1900 – 1945, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 165. Although those intending to leave the limits of the port (or the immediate neighbourhood of the place where a ship may be anchored) had to obtain a pass to do so, and were granted no more than four days’ leave at any one time to do so without a senior officer’s permission. Indeed, large numbers of sailors were not permitted to obtain these passes without the sanction of the Admiralty, as this may interfere with the efficiency of the ships’ running in the event of sailors’ service suddenly being needed, “The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Navy,” 134.
12 The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Navy,” 131 – 134.
13 Walton, “New Kinds of Discipline,” 149. This became more standardized in further naval regulation changes in the early-twentieth century.
Library Newspapers Collection, alongside an in-depth study of Portsmouth’s local newspapers in this collection and at local archives. Whilst newspapers are notorious for inaccuracies and the presentation of biased information, making them a problematic historical source, as many historians have discussed elsewhere, they do provide a uniquely accessible summary of news, events and contemporary opinions often not existing elsewhere.\(^\text{15}\) Portsmouth was home to two broadsheet style newspapers, the weekly Liberal Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle established in 1802, and Portsmouth’s daily (excluding Sundays) The Evening News printed from 1877, with the first directed at a more middle-class readership, and the latter, more populist, aimed at a broader working-class audiences.\(^\text{16}\) Portsmouth’s role as a naval base meant news, events and commentaries on the Navy and naval sailors abroad and ashore featured heavily in both newspapers.\(^\text{17}\) Thus, an in-depth study of these two newspapers in particular has been undertaken across the mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whilst keyword searching in the online databases has been used to explore specific themes and people, entire readings of all the available copies of the two Portsmouth newspapers (discussed above) from 1845 to 1905 has also been undertaken. This has been done to explore the themes, organisations and institutions considered in this thesis, and to survey the police reports they contained. These reports not only underpin this thesis’ study of sailors as urban inhabitants, the newspapers provide the most comprehensive record of Portsmouth’s police reports since only a limited number survive in local archives.\(^\text{18}\)

The extensive newspaper research is augmented by the use of contemporary


\(^{18}\) As identified in the archival holdings of Portsmouth History Centre whilst undertaking research on this thesis.
periodicals, magazines and printed literary and autobiographical works across the mid-to-late nineteenth century and early twentieth century period. A wide exploration of Parliamentary Papers has also been undertaken over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, accessible through the House of Commons Online Sessional Papers collection. Alongside this, government-statistical reports relating to the decadal censuses, yearly Register General Births, Deaths and Marriages and Judicial Statistics reports have also been studied to situate the case study of Portsmouth in wider contexts, frame the socio-demographic investigation of sailortown and assess the landed connections sailors had. The other key sources for the thesis are demographic ones, particularly Census Enumerators’ Notebooks and Trade Directories across the period circa 1850 – 1900. Indeed, the analysis embodied in this thesis is based on the study over fifty thousand census records and over two thousand Trade Directory entries. Whilst both sources are inherent with problems, as discussed later in this thesis, the value they have in determining socio-demographic trends and patterns is important. Indeed, their use has value in advancing historians’ understanding of sailors and sailortowns. Their use also shows that the painstaking economic and labour data reconstructions undertaken by maritime historians is equally useful and viable to wider socio-cultural histories of sailors and sailortowns and to naval-orientated studies.

A Note on Terminology and Definitions

Whilst often relegated to footnotes in previous research, an issue of academic contention in regards to terminology is worth clarifying here in this introduction. Maritime historians, working predominantly on merchant ports, argue the correct term to use when referring to those who made a living on the sea is ‘seafarer.’ Seafarer is a generic term that can be applied to all sea-going workers under steam or sail and does not necessarily indicate that a seafarer is male. Whilst there is much agreement as to this usage, some, for example, Valerie Burton, choose to reserve the term ‘sailors’ for those working under sail since they are

the subject of seafaring mythology. Likewise, for others such as Marcus Rediker, the term 'merchant seamen' is used to represent the deep-sea sailors of trading ships and vessels.\textsuperscript{20} By contrast, naval historians make a clearer distinction as to the term sailor, which also fits more closely to contemporary Victorian popular understandings of sailors. During the period of this study, the introduction of continuous service in the Royal Navy from 1853 not only improved retention of qualified and experienced sailors, it also made a naval sailor career separate from that of seafaring in general. Furthermore, the separation was heightened from 1857 with the introduction of standardized uniform for naval sailors making them more culturally distinctive.\textsuperscript{21} This, combined with the shift from sail to steam, saw a ‘new type’ of naval sailor created and one that was wholly different to a merchant seaman.\textsuperscript{22} Naval historians thus apply the popular label of ‘Jack Tar’ to sailors belonging to the lower deck, not ranked sailors, whilst historians working in merchant contexts frequently adopt the label of ‘Jack Tar’ to represent merchant seamen or seafarers more generally.\textsuperscript{23}

However, in official nineteenth-century terminology ‘seamen’ meant all sea-going personnel excluding masters, mates and apprentices, with a clear distinction made in regards to rank and as to whether an individual’s sea-going occupation was a merchant or naval one. For example, in census records, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is generally well-defined as to whether a sailor was a naval one or not, with terms such as ‘R.N. sailor’ used to denote naval sailors, and ‘merchant sailor’ or ‘merchant seaman’ to indicate those involved in merchant shipping. The term ‘seafarer’ is rarely used.\textsuperscript{24} Thus, following the lead


\textsuperscript{23} Lan\textsuperscript{d}, \textit{War, Nationalism,} 17 – 18, 30.

\textsuperscript{24} See, “Census Enumerators' Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851 – 1901); “Shipping Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901); “Naval Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901); The Open University, \textit{A Guide to Nineteenth Century Enumerators Books}, Second Series, (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1984, [First Series 1982]), Appendix. A difference is also noted in regards to Royal Marines and
of naval historians and nineteenth-century official and contemporary understandings, the term ‘sailor’ is used in this thesis in two ways. Firstly, it is used to discuss all occupational sea-going people, and secondly, as this work primarily concerns naval sailors, the term ‘sailor’ is also used to denote those belonging to the lower deck of the Royal Navy. However, when rank is relevant to this study it is highlighted, and when those involved with merchant shipping are discussed they are referred to as ‘merchant seamen,’ in keeping with the popular contemporary distinction made between the two sea-going occupational types and structure of official records.

The term ‘sailortown’ is perhaps easier to define based on how contemporary social commentators and writers saw it to be. Sailortowns were popularly viewed to be areas in ports that sailors frequented, visited, patronized and often lived in, marked out by their seeming abundance of drinking establishments, brothels and lodging houses, with the businesses found there catering to a nautical market. However, sailortowns can also be defined as a localised district, distinct in its inhabitants’ close kinship, friendship and societal ties, whose culture is tied to the history, economic activity and streets of the area, as Astrid Wonneberger advances in her study of twentieth-century Dublin Docklands. However, unlike other distinct neighbourhoods found in urban centres such as ghettos, sailortowns are not necessarily defined by ‘race’ or ethnicity alone, as the proposed ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ in this thesis indicates. This study uses both definitions outlined above; the first to assess

contemporary sources make a clear distinction between a Royal Navy sailor or officer and Marines. As a ‘hybrid’ between a sailor and soldier, Marines were classified as an occupational group in their own right and this thesis follows the contemporary distinction made by not including them as ‘sailors’ within the results presented in this thesis, save where it is relevant. For the distinction in contemporary sources, see, “Naval Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901); “Census Reports,” Command Papers, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1851 – 1901). It is also common for naval historians to make a distinction between the two types of occupations, see, for example, Lavery, Able Seamen, 11.

25 As described in, for example, Hugill, Sailortown, xviii, 4 - 5; Fox Smith, Sailortown Days, 1 – 5.


27 For ghettos in urban spaces and their descriptive indicators, see, Louis Wirth, The Ghetto, (Chicago: Transaction Press, 1928); Ray Hutchinson and Bruce Haynes, eds., The Ghetto:
the socio-demographics of Portsmouth’s sailortown, and the second, to facilitate the exploration of sailors’ lives ashore whilst advancing a more nuanced definition of sailortown than Wonneberger offers. Indeed, this thesis makes frequent reference to a sailortown community being present in Portsmouth. The thesis takes this community to be composed of sailors themselves, their families, business owners and traders (both legitimate and illegitimate) and the predominantly working-class residents residing in the geographic areas under study. Furthermore, in exploring sailors’ urban experiences, the thesis uses the term ‘street-wise’ to show sailors possessed urban sensibilities and awareness. In this thesis, street-wise is defined as having the awareness, knowledge and experience necessary to deal with the potential dangers and difficulties in urban environments. Thus, being street-wise is a learned response gained from an awareness of the urban environment and its inherent dangers and based on the ability to react to different situations that occur on the streets.28

**Thesis Structure**

Following a chapter reviewing existing literature pertaining to sailortowns and sailors in three fields of historical study, the remainder of this thesis is divided into five chapters. Each explores a differing aspect of sailortown in Portsmouth and sailors’ urban experiences there. The first chapter looks to explore sailortown in Portsmouth as a socio-demographic entity. Using census records, the chapter maps the sailortown district in Portsmouth. In doing so, it will show sailors maintained ties to land, thus directly challenging the notion that sailors were ‘men apart’. Moreover, it challenges the assumption sailortowns are separated areas in ports, as well as the claim that sailortown districts ceased to exist in the mid-late nineteenth century. As this chapter will show, by shifting focus away from merchant contexts to naval ones, this claim is not one that applies to all sailortown areas. Thus, this chapter proposes a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ as an aid to identify sailortown districts in port across any

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period or port-type. Crucially, this chapter will argue sailortown was not a
demographically vast homogenous ‘other’ space, rather it was founded on
networks of interrelated and interconnected sailor-orientated neighbourhoods,
or ‘sailorhoods,’ fashioned on their occupational, familial and local ties.
Continuing the mapping of Portsmouth’s sailortown district, the next chapter
examines the businesses of sailortown and considers their contemporary socio-
cultural representations. By spatially mapping three central sailortown
businesses using census records and Trade Directories, this chapter will argue
drinking establishments, brothels and lodging houses provided much more than
just catering to sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore. The businesses provided
the ‘backbone’ to the sailorhoods, in turn, facilitating street-level socialization
between sailors and the wider port community. Thus, it will be argued that
sailortowns can be understood beyond simply being spaces of sex and excess
privileging men over women, or as places in which sailors were exploited and
they in turn manipulated. As this chapter will show, the relationships between
sailors and sailortown businesses and traders were also more multifaceted than
previous research has allowed for.

The third of these five chapters assesses the extent to which a sailortown
culture is evident in Portsmouth using the street-based activities of rioting, street
brawling, drunken and disorderly behaviour and prostitution to frame analysis.
Whilst these behaviours and activities were seen to epitomize the social and
moral chaos sailortown areas represented, the chapter will argue that it is in
these very activities and behaviours in which a fashioning of sailortown culture
can be found. This chapter, building upon the argument of sailortown being a
network of sailorhoods, will thus assert that a distinct sailortown culture was
fashioned upon the interdependent relationships between sailors and the
sailortown community. Moreover, defending, protecting and controlling the
streets of the sailorhoods was a shared vested interest between them and
therefore part of sailortown culture in Portsmouth. It will be demonstrated sailors
worked in conjunction with others to ensure sailortown remained a sailor’s town
and ‘outsiders’ understood this. This chapter also highlights the extent to which
other individuals and groups could adopt distinctive sailor traits to their
advantage, and alongside sailors, generated their own street-wise notion of values and behaviour. Developing conclusions raised in this chapter, the fourth chapter assesses sailors’ urban experiences through an exploration of sailors’ deployment of violence as individuals. Not only did violence play a central role in sailortown culture, as a common ‘everyday’ urban experience, it was also important for individual sailors when navigating the streets. Whilst previous research suggests violence was part of sailors’ ‘rowdiness’ ashore and reflective of their separation from land, this chapter asserts, based on a sample of two hundred sailor-related assault cases, that sailors’ use of violence is not necessarily reflective of their separation from landed ties and convention. Indeed, their deployment of violence is indicative of their close connections to land and those around them. Thus, this chapter will demonstrate, despite popular perceptions to the contrary, sailors possessed a street-wise sensibility. Moreover, sailors’ use of violence was not that different to other working-class men in urban environs, further challenging the notion that they were ‘men apart.’

The final chapter brings together many of the themes examined across the thesis via a study of the Sailors’ Homes in Portsmouth. Focus is given to the relationships between the Homes, sailors and the wider sailortown community rather than the history of the Homes themselves, as previous works in this area have done. Whilst established for the benefit of sailors’ social and moral conditions ashore, in the morally anomalous boundaries sailortown areas represented, it will be demonstrated the Homes effectively acted as agencies for social and moral reform in Portsmouth more widely. Indeed, it will be argued the Homes confronted and challenged the sailortown community, representing a direct threat to the businesses of sailortown and attempted to disrupt the sailortown culture found there. Furthermore, this chapter shows an ‘elite philanthropic ideology’ was prevalent among those involved with Homes, countering the merchant-capital ideology identified to be in place in merchant ports. It will also be argued that the Homes’ relationship with sailors could be both confrontational and compromising, and a sailor’s response to the Homes was based on an individual process of reasoning and choice when navigating their lives ashore. Thus, this thesis will ameliorate historians’ understanding of
sailortown and sailors’ lives ashore by examining demographic, social and cultural aspects of Portsmouth’s naval sailortown district during the mid-late nineteenth century, and by exploring street-based experiences of sailors to directly challenge the notion that they were ‘men apart.’ Reflective of their ties to land, not only were they living in urban-port communities, their relationships to others and their public-behaviour displays show that they did possess street-wise sensibilities. Indeed, as this thesis will show, the very things that made sailortown and sailors appear socially and morally unstable served a useful function in ensuring sailortown flourished as a sailor’s town. Thus, it will be demonstrated sailors, in conjunction with the wider sailortown community, fostered a street-based sailortown culture in Portsmouth, and so engrained was this culture, outsiders, civic authorities and philanthropists attempted to disrupt it.
Chapter 1 - ‘Per Mare, Per Terram’: Literature Review

Introduction

Any study of sailors and their associated sailortown districts in ports covers many historiographical fields. By their very nature, they are closely entwined to the history of both land and sea, bridging the maritime and urban realms as coastal phenomena. Simultaneously, as this thesis takes a naval port as its focus, it encroaches into the fields of port and naval history too. As a result of this, the historiography this thesis is situated within and builds upon is wide-ranging. Whilst there are key connections between the historiographical areas discussed, to navigate the disciplines this thesis crosses, the historiographical discussion is divided into three sections, analysing works relating to the study of sailortown and sailors in the fields of maritime, naval and urban history. These divisions are not designed to show that the fields are disconnected, yet reflect the way the history of sailors and their associated sailortown areas have largely been written. Mirroring the chapters and themes in this thesis, within each section, the historiographical discussion takes a two-pronged approach. In assessing existing literature, this review will explore how the converging disciplines and research within these fields have contributed to historians’ understanding of sailortowns thus far. Indeed, it will show whilst advances have been made in understanding sailortowns, gaps and limitations to this research still exist, particularly in regards to the urban, demographic and neighbourhood features of sailortowns, and in the nineteenth century. The review will also survey previous research in regards to sailors, their popularly constructed images and role within socio-cultural spheres. It will be demonstrated there are hitherto neglected facets of sailors’ lives ashore and their socio-cultural relationships with port and sailortown communities, particularly in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Ultimately, this review will show that whilst advances have been made in historians’ understandings of sailortown and sailors, debates are fragmented and evident gaps in the historiography remain. Primarily this is due to the relative ‘shore-blindness’ of sailors’, particularly naval sailors’ socio-cultural lives ashore in maritime and naval histories, and the ‘sea-blindness’ of
sailors as urban inhabitants and their associated sailortown districts in urban histories.

**Maritime History**

Maritime history, until relatively recently, has been dominated by economic approaches to the history of merchant shipping and seamen with a largely quantitative approach adopted within these histories. Thus, there is a tendency to overlook the socio-cultural contexts of such histories, which are also not necessarily dependent on economic approaches for their exploration, as frameworks of study in their own right.\(^{29}\) Whilst the predominate focus on seafaring labour in maritime history remains, at times, the sea is left behind to examine sailors’ lives ashore. However, this is centred on labour markets, industrial relations and the regulation and institutions related to seafarers’ working lives ashore, particularly on the intervention in shipping and welfare to improve their condition ashore and on Sailors’ Homes for merchant seamen.\(^ {30}\) However, whilst there is a move within the field “proclaiming that maritime events are tied more closely to events ashore than ever before,” and inlets are being made to entwine maritime histories to the shore, there is still some way to go.\(^ {31} \)

Two of the first works to place sailors ashore are products of maritime labour

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\(^{29}\) See the numerous articles contained in Hattendorf’s edited encyclopaedia which are reflective of these trends and approaches, John Hattendorf, ed., *Oxford Encyclopaedia of Maritime History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).


history, situating seamen’s working lives in the dockside environment. Martin Daunton’s work placed merchant seamen within a labour relations context as part of the unionisation movement in the merchant port of Cardiff in the nineteenth century, formed in reaction to control from those in positions of power and class. In the framework of Cardiff’s sailortown district, Daunton sees seamen as part of a conflict paradigm, in conflict with their organisers (in terms of union leaders), ship-owners and boarding-house keepers. Indeed, Daunton argues boarding-house keepers controlled seamen’s access to local labour markets, yet in doing so, privileges their role as crimps in sailortown and the business of crimping in sailortowns. Thus, Daunton concludes sailortown was formed as result of the economics of the waterfront, setting precedence for sailortowns to be studied within labour and economic frameworks that have hitherto dominated debates.

Similarly, Judith Fingard took the relationship between merchant seamen and crims as the mainstay of her analysis in her work on nineteenth-century sailortowns in Canadian seaports. Yet Fingard’s chief focus is given to the crims rather than the seamen, thus limiting the lives of seamen ashore to their relationship with crims and her focus to the crimping practices in sailortown areas. Indeed, for Fingard, “crimping is central to an understanding of the character of sailortown,” a view which has endured among those working on merchant ports, as evident in the works of Graeme Milne on Liverpool and Mark Strecker on the practice of shanghaiing in America. Such works therefore view

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33 Daunton, “Jack Ashore,” 176 – 203. Daunton’s focus was centred on *The National Amalgamated Union of Sailors and Fireman* in Cardiff, 202 – 203.
34 Daunton, “Jack Ashore,” 177, 179, 182. Daunton does identify that ethnicity was a factor in this conflict and influenced the nature of the business of boarding houses, yet does not give this aspect much attention, 190 - 195.
35 Daunton, “Jack Ashore,” 186. For the endurance of this precedence, see the discussion contained within this review.
boarding houses as the most central business within sailortown areas. Indeed, so central Fingard argues that whilst they provided accommodation, boarding houses also ‘policed’ sailors. Thus, the business of lodgings was beneficial to the whole port community, although she gives little evidence to support this claim.\(^{38}\) Furthermore, Fingard implies, and others such as Bruce Nelson concur, that there was some alliance between sailors and crimps as they shared similar social origins, occupied marginal roles in the waterfront economy and resisted middling class initiatives for reform, particularly in regards to Sailors’ Homes.\(^{39}\)

In this respect, Fingard laid the foundation for sailortown and its businesses to be viewed “as a challenge to the bourgeois notions of order and modernity,” harbouring deviance and misfits – something Daunton missed.\(^{40}\) However, there is little exploration in her work as to how sailortown businesses facilitated such a challenge, and whether this was the same in naval ports and sailortown areas – questions that largely remain unanswered. Moreover, whilst these early works aimed to “rescue” the sailor from obscurity as Fingard declared, in doing so they render sailors as ‘victims’ of others or of circumstance, arguing that the only way for sailors to react to authority was through rowdiness and violence.\(^{41}\) Thus, they reinforced sailors’ popular ‘Jack in Port’ image for making trouble when ashore, as they were more prone to troublemaking than landsmen. Indeed, Fingard states sailors’ rowdiness was the “best known feature of their port activity.”\(^{42}\) There is also little attempt in these early works to show how the wider sailortown community aided sailors’ relationships in working with or avoiding groups and individuals such as crimps. Thus, whilst highlighting the conflicting

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\(^{38}\) As Fingard argues, the boarding house master was a “time-honoured member of the dockside community,” yet offers little evidence to support her claim that they ‘policed’ sailors, Fingard, “Masters and Friends,” 23, 31.


\(^{40}\) Fingard, Jack in Port, 6, 68.

\(^{41}\) Daunton, “Jack Ashore,” 176 – 203; Fingard, Jack in Port, 3, 29, 88, 126

\(^{42}\) Fingard, Jack in Port, 3, 29, 88, 126.
interests between labour and capital in the market place of sailortown areas, these early works did little to ‘rescue’ the sailors themselves.\textsuperscript{43}

Fingard also takes a generational approach to the study of sailortown areas in her chosen Canadian ports. She argues as each new generation of seamen across the nineteenth century became more specialised in their sea-going roles, they also became more detached from the waterfront community as their skill specialization narrowed. Fingard provides no rationale for this generational approach, so concludes the only unifying factor among seamen in sailortown areas was youthfulness, a proletarian or agricultural background and individual dispositions of restlessness.\textsuperscript{44} Moreover, her generational approach, largely reliant on descriptive sources alone, leads her to declare sailortown dies as a distinct area in ports by the mid-to-late nineteenth century, with bonds between seamen, kin and community virtually eradicated by the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed, she claimed seamen of the steam age “had little human impact on these ports” becoming visitors rather than residents.\textsuperscript{45} Thus, as the age of the sail passed, so too did sailortown as it “ceased to exist,” and this view has endured as shown in works of Milne, Gordon Jackson and Neil Atkinson.\textsuperscript{46} Yet hitherto few researchers have attempted to show whether this was indeed the case, and the extent to which this claim is also applicable to sailortown areas in naval ports.

However, Fingard’s early observations about sailortowns make-up are important for three reasons. Firstly, whilst Fingard’s work on Canadian ports arrives at many of the same conclusions as Daunton, she observes sailortowns were


\textsuperscript{44} Fingard, \textit{Jack in Port}, 47.

\textsuperscript{45} Fingard, \textit{Jack in Port}, 159; Fingard, “Masters and Friends,” 46. Fingard identifies there were four types of sailors, the “career sailor,” who worked hard, did not drink or whore, the “causal scallywag,” the most common seafaring type, “the foreign seaman,” non-English-speaking sailors and “female sailors,” few in numbers yet shared characteristics with their male counterparts, Fingard, \textit{Jack in Port}, 48, 52 -55.

more nuanced in their formations than he allowed for, as they were created from a community that was “uniquely transient and multinational.”47 Secondly, as a work of labour history this is necessarily a form of class resistance to her, yet her throwaway observation that the “streets are the heart of sailortown” is fundamental to this study and a facet of sailortowns hitherto largely neglected.48 Thirdly, whilst she does not give it much attention, Fingard noted sailortowns flourished due to mutual dependency networks and identified that reforming impulses emanated from those outside of sailortowns. As such, she states the businesses of sailortown had a “vested interest in an unreformed sailortown.”49 However, these important observations have been largely ignored by those working on the study of sailortowns, particularly so as much focus has been given to the wider oceanic and sea-based contexts of sailors’ lives.

Following the path laid by Jesse Lemisch’s “Jack Tar in The Streets,” situating sailors in a ‘history from below’ analysis of the American Stamp Act Riot of 1765, those adopting Marxist approaches have sought to recover the experiences of the common seaman. Whilst such works give sailors a sense of agency they previously had not been credited with, they assert sailors only have this agency in their working lives. Thus, in many respects they too present sailors as ‘victims.’ By focussing on the proletarian role of sailors, they are positioned as victims of class and capital, with little power or influence beyond creating a network for ideas and protest impulses to circulate. Lemisch, for example, showed how seamen’s struggle against class authority contributed to broader political struggles against the state, thus implicating sailors in a political, radical class struggle which was seen as symptomatic of industrial capitalism.50 Undoubtedly, one of the most influential studies following in Lemisch’s wake comes for the Atlantic-based Marxist histories of Marcus Rediker. Examining life at sea on American and British merchant ships, Rediker identified that merchant

48 Fingard, Jack in Port, 93, 6, 68.
seamen were part of a wider social and historical movement in regards to political radicalism across the Atlantic region during the eighteenth century. Rediker, in conjunction with Peter Linebaugh, advanced the premise that sailors played a central role in harnessing a sea-based Atlantic-wide network of resistance to capitalist impositions. They argue this network was designed to circumnavigate what they term the “many-headed hydra;” the organisation of the maritime state from above – the “hydrarchy” and the self-organisation of sailors and other ‘oppressed’ peoples from below, fighting against it. As such, seamen, in confrontation to both the sea and man, collectively formed a maritime class-consciousness - a sub-culture of opposition, or “subaltern resistance” as Simon Layton found in his study of the ‘hydra’ in the Indian Ocean region.

Seamen were thus conduits for the exchange of information and political ideas, which moved laterally across the Atlantic world, holding a “central position in the international economy,” with the sea being a “wet nurse to democracy.” Linebaugh and Rediker argue that seamen were able to do this, as ships were not only the “engine of capitalism,” they were also a “prototype of the factory.” Thus, the sailing ship of the eighteenth century was “an early precursor of the factory” and like factory work, the labour system on ship was specialized, graded, disciplined and routine. Indeed, Rediker’s core argument is seamen, radicalized by their experience on ships in these ‘floating factories,’ separated

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56 Rediker, *Between the Devil*, 200, 206 and 83.
and isolated from landed values and conventions, acted as a catalyst ashore for the formation of a working-class consciousness, having built a 'crew collective' of "Brother Tars" aboard.\textsuperscript{57} This separation meant seamen had to create and foster their own norms and values, thus the only time seamen influenced landed communities was "in the spirit of rebellion.\textsuperscript{58} Therefore, a sailor's deployment of violence ashore was a reflection of their separated lives to landed people.\textsuperscript{59} This is indicative of the orthodoxy centred on the 'wooden world' idea in which sailors were 'men apart,' isolated from landed norms and conventions living in a 'total institution' restricting their contact with those outside of the ship.\textsuperscript{60} However, David Alexander and Eric Sager argue seamen "were not beyond the pale of the civilization that sent them to sea," they were "simply working men who got wet," directly challenging the assertion that seamen were severed of all ties to land simply because they worked at sea.\textsuperscript{61} Therefore, critical to this study is Rediker’s assertion that in order for a seaman to become part of this collective, all local and regional cultures had to be stripped so that this attachment to the ‘community apart’ took precedence over any other.\textsuperscript{62} This means sailors have to be dispossessed of all other identities and cultures in order to become part of

\textsuperscript{57} Rediker, \textit{Between the Devil}, 76, 110, 115, 117. Rediker does point out that he did not use the term floating factory, this was something dubbed by others after his work was published, Rediker, "The Common Seaman," 339. However, as Daniel Vickers observed, this was not necessarily capitalist-influenced, since naval ships were structured in a much more rigid fashion and discipline was both more engrained and enforced than on merchant vessels. Various, "Reviews of Marcus Rediker, Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700 – 1750," \textit{International Journal of Maritime History}, vol. 1, no. 2, (1989), 311.

\textsuperscript{58} Rediker, \textit{Between the Devil}, 4 - 5, 154 – 155, 173, 185; Linebaugh, \textit{The Many}, 47. See also, Lernisch, \textit{Jack Tar vs John Bull}, 58 – 59, 406.


\textsuperscript{62} Rediker, \textit{Between The Devil}, 76, 110, 115, 117, 162 – 164.
this collective. However, as Daniel Vickers and Isaac Land argued, for individual sailors this was simply not the case – it was situation dependent. As they evidence, many sailors retained strong regional identities connected to their families and community ashore and these could be heightened or reduced depending on whether a sailor was ashore or afloat.\(^{63}\)

Use of court records and Admiralty records in these Marxist histories slants the perspectives too. The desire to show how seamen reacted to the ‘hydrarchy’ misses the wider socio-cultural observations they raise in revealing how and why sailors reacted to those around them too. Thus, whilst a sense of agency is restored to them in these works, they are comparably little different to traditional naval historiographical perspectives. As Land observed, both view sailors as separate from land, thus the only time they come ashore is still in terms of manning problems, whether strategically or as part of a rebellious working class.\(^{64}\) Importantly, these works miss that rebellion and riot, thus by extension violence, could also be representative and reflective of a sailor’s connections to the shore and communal bonds with others. Thus, for sailors, violent behaviour or collective rioting was not necessarily enacted due to their treatment as workers, nor did it necessarily emanate from the separation and isolation they experienced in the course of their working lives. Similarly, the desire to advance the idea of a collective ‘community apart’ means little attention is paid to an individual sailor’s use of violence, thus nor is it considered that sailors could deploy violence for reasons other than as a class-based expression in class and capital struggles. Indeed, Rediker and Linebaugh work on the principle sailors were sailors for life and therefore spent more time afloat than ashore.\(^{65}\) Whilst this is applicable in the eighteenth century and in the occupations of deep-sea fishing and whaling, for other sea-going workers such as naval sailors, time ashore could be higher, particularly given the rising amount of shore leave.


\(^{65}\) Rediker, Between The Devil, 112, Linebaugh, The Many, 159, 241
granted to them across the mid-to-late nineteenth century.66

Thus, whilst these Marxist works claimed their impetus stems from the
dominance of previous histories presenting a romanticized vision of seafaring,
in many ways, they too accept and reinforce the traditional, romantic notion of
the sailor. They do this as they imply seamen simply had limited connections to
the lives, people or places they left behind whilst at sea or encountered ashore.
That the sailor was a “plain-dealer” rolling around Atlantic ports and “fond of
alehouse cheer,” further places them into the romanticized image, with the port
merely a place of ‘good times’ and devoid of any meaningful connections to
others.67 The port is thus simply shown to be a vehicle through which to
replicate, share and transmit information and experiences that enabled seamen
to create a maritime ‘underground’ network, furthering sailors’ advancement as
proletariat workers and within the capitalist system that took advantage of
them.68 Thus, seamen were only to be found ashore when “taking” to the streets
in rebellion and riot.69 Indeed, when sailors ventured ashore, Lemisch, Rediker
and Linebaugh argue it was in the form of lumpenproletariat ‘motley crews.’
These ‘crews’ moved from the sea onto the streets of the port transmitting
experiences, grievances and ideas of an alternative social order which later
stimulated the working waterfront community into creating a sense of class-
consciousness that was heightened at times of riots, rebellion and revolts.70

However, as Valerie Burton observed, there is little evidence to suggest sailors
transmitted radical ideas to port communities, and Sager contests the

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66 For deep sea fishing and whaling, see, for example, W. Jeffrey Bolster, The Mortal Sea:
Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail, (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press,
2012); Eric Dolin, Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co.,
2007); Kate Jordan, “The Captains and Crews of Liverpool’s Northern Whaling Trade,”
International Journal of Maritime History, vol. 22, no. 1, (2010), 185 – 204. For naval sailors and
shore leave, see, for example, Oliver Walton, “New Kinds of Discipline,” in eds., Richard
Harding and Helen Doe, Naval Leadership and Management, 1650 – 1950: Essays in Honour of

Rediker claims sources, or rather lack of written historical records for eighteenth century
communities, led to his study being one of seamen at sea rather than in port, Rediker, “The
Common Seaman,” 348.

68 Rediker, Between The Devil, 59, 82, 65; Linebaugh, The Many, 190.

69 Lemisch, “Jack Tar in the Streets,” 371 – 401; Rediker, Between The Devil, 205; Linebaugh,
The Many, Chapter 2.

70 Linebaugh, The Many, 172 – 179, 332; Rediker, Between The Devil, 147 – 168; Lemisch,
assumption they formed a lumpenproletariat and were culturally cut off from the shore. They were working men who just happened to work at sea.\textsuperscript{71}

Furthermore, the works of Rediker and Linebaugh view the businesses of the waterfront as places in which seamen simply exploited since they were only temporarily there.\textsuperscript{72} Yet as the work of Yrjö Kaukiainen on Finnish sailors in ports has shown, the relationship between sailors and the businesses of waterfront was a\textit{ mutually} exploitative one. Indeed, Michael Seltzer’s work on the anthropology of sailors’ taverns has demonstrated waterfront businesses provided more than entertainment alone.\textsuperscript{73} Thus, whilst Rediker claims “drinking occupied a central place in seafaring culture” and cemented the bonds between sailors, his argument is not suffixed with any other exploration as to how it was central to sailor culture ashore.\textsuperscript{74} Therefore, he neglects the roles drinking culture and drinking establishments played in sailors’ lives ashore and played as part of the waterfront economy and community. Therefore, sailors’ consumption of services and commodities is placed as part of the ‘pleasure of port’ rather than as an inherent communal framework reflecting the interdependency of sailors and port communities, particularly when many within these communities depended on nautical consumers and custom. Indeed, that Rediker implies sailors were only temporarily present in port due to his focus away from the shore, it would lead to the suggestion that a sailor’s tie to land only existed temporarily. Yet this is not always the case. As more recent research has shown, landed people tied to seamen had a greater influence on creating and maintaining a sailortown than first presumed. Thus, in defining the boundaries of sailors’ lives afloat and ashore so distinctly the contributions family, community and space had on sailors was largely ignored in these


\textsuperscript{74} Rediker, \textit{Between The Devil}, 191.
Atlantic sea-based works discussed above.  

Valerie Burton’s work did much to draw sailors’ working lives further ashore than earlier research had done. As Burton stated, “that historians are not better informed historically about seafarers’ sea and shore transitions is unfortunate,” a statement which still resonates today. Burton’s work showed that exploring the home and work lives of seafarers in conjunction, gives a more rounded understanding to their role within the labour process, waterfront economies and port social structures, and in examining the economic structure of merchant ports. As she highlighted in her study of the merchant port of Southampton from 1871 to 1921, sailors’ interaction with people on shore was more complicated and complex than the likes of Fingard and Rediker allowed, as they missed the “larger meanings in their comings and goings.” In particular, Burton observes that sailors entered port-areas shared with other working-class men and women, and this was ignored in earlier research on sailortowns and sailors. Burton showed seafarers not only had shore connections; they sustained them, as seafaring communities existed based on mutual support networks. However, her focus on these networks is only in terms of labour and class imperatives, not the communal or socio-cultural interdependence between sailors and port communities. Therefore, sailors were now not so much a proletariat in the making, but an egalitarian community in the making. Indeed, in contrast to Rediker et al, Burton does not see the common seaman as a “radical, working class hero” when ashore; as she contends, they only had the potential to alter social and economic arrangements on land. One of the central ways sailors demonstrated this potential was that “images and narratives of sea-going have afforded powerful ways of representing maleness,”

75 After all as Land points out, sailors came from families with mothers, fathers, siblings, children and many had marital partners, Land, “Tidal Waves”, 732 - 733
thus giving them the possibility of ‘rearranging’ things ashore. As Burton argues, sailors were able to socially and culturally construct seafarers to be rougher and tougher than men who remained on land – a construction which C.R. Pennell’s edited collection identified pirates also undertook.

Thus, much of Burton’s work looks to deconstruct the “myth of bachelor Jack,” yet in doing so, treats the mythology of the “whoring, drinking sailor” as but a layer of significance in comparison to the concepts of modernization and industrial capitalism in regards to seafarers’ images. Burton charts the seafarer’s image from feckless Jack Tar to devoted breadwinner, arguing this transformation is not separate to the inherent patriarchy of society or industrialization that “produced a crisis of masculinity originating in the separation of work and home.” Similarly, Ruth Herndon found in her study of the seafaring community in eighteenth-century Rhode Island, patriarchal notions underpinned the lives of sailors and their families ashore. As such, Herndon asserts manhood in shipboard culture was often rendered irrelevant on land, since the autonomy and fraternity hailed at sea had no place against dominant societal norms ashore that linked manliness to the role of being a breadwinner. However, as Burton notes, the “more the home and family became the site of an idealised manhood,” the more the sailor and his “mythological manhood” also appealed.


84 Burton, “Whoring, Drinking”, 85.


Indicative of her labour and gender approaches to seafarers’ lives, Burton, like Judith Fingard before her, argues sailortown businesses did not “exist outside of the class relations of the contemporary capitalistic marketplace.” This leads Burton to reject sailortown as being a physical place, as she argues the desire to control the working labour markets in ports meant sailortowns were symbolic spaces that represented a struggle over class contestation, with the “sailortown underclass” and businesses trading on the margins and borders of legality and respectability. Indeed, she asserts that sailortown was only symbolic of a physical place as it was a space in which distinctive gender and sexual related imagery was found. Thus, Burton states a “sailortown legend” was formed, which David Hopkin also attests. Indeed, Hopkin argues sailors’ reputations as storytellers helped to sustain such a legend. Thus, as Burton asserts, by creating the homo-social world afloat on shore in the drinking, brothel and lodging establishments, it enabled “the tale of Jack’s progress through sailortown [to be] told…the tale explained seafarers’ needs for sex and drink,” with sailortown thus reinforcing gender differences and stereotypes.

Therefore, to Burton, sailortown does not exist outside of the class relation system and gender hierarchies, as for her it is primarily a “heterosexist space” dominated by men, where women were present to serve male agency.

However, as Henry Trotter’s work on dockside prostitution in South African ports has shown, the role of women in sailortown areas is more complex than simply serving male agency and, as Daniel Vickers demonstrated, sailors were not the only consumers in waterfront communities. Moreover, limiting the view

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90 Valerie Burton, “As I wuz a-rolling down the Highway,” 149.
of sailortown as a space in which women were present to serve and further male agency, pays disservice to the agency of women in sailortown communities. Such an approach also misses the opportunity to explore how women navigated sailortown districts themselves, the interdependent nature of their relationships with sailors and the centrality they have in regards in sustaining sailortown areas. Thus, in privileging labour and gender, what Burton does not offer is an understanding of the relationship, or the degrees of interdependency, between sailors and the working class communities they were closely connected to at a neighbourhood level. While she identifies the wives and children of seafarers were “key reference points in the definition of masculinity,” she offers little analysis of this or the role families, and more widely sailortown communities, had in shaping a sailor’s masculine identities and ideals, particularly on the streets. Whilst for Burton “sailortown Jack spoke to the politics of men’s access to and control of resources,” she misses how those in sailortown helped them do this beyond labour and class contexts. Thus, how the communal nature of sailortown life and businesses found there reinforced and adjusted to demands for such access is also relatively unexplored. Indeed, whilst she notes mutual networks existed, beyond being class-based ones, she does not explore the wider social and cultural networks sailors created ashore. Thus, she overlooks the neighbourhood and street-level experiences of sailors ashore, and beyond a work-orientated sense of community, no other notion of community in sailortown areas is considered.

Following this, Vickers has suggested that a “greater willingness to learn from landward history” would go some way to furthering historians' understanding of sailors’ lives both at sea and ashore. As he stated,

until we can situate seamen within their shore communities, we cannot really make sense of the ultimate intentions of people who may have understood their seafaring careers to only be a stage of

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Vickers' work merges an understanding of sailors' lives at sea with an understanding of their port-based lives using the merchant port of Salem, Massachusetts in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. His work was a reaction to those preceding it that emphasized the rebel and predominantly young sailor. In contrast to the transnational Atlantic sea-based identity advanced by Rediker, Vickers showed local and regional attachments were not necessarily disregarded or forfeited by sailors. Vickers sees seafaring as an unexceptional occupation. It was, as he argues, a common one, thus he directly challenges the idea that sailors were 'men apart' from a port and sailortown community or seemingly 'exotic.' Reflective of the wider move towards exploring maritime families and communities ashore in maritime history through detailed local and merchant trading-related data reconstructions, epitomized by Reginald Byron’s work on maritime households in Northern Europe and Peter Fricke’s edited collection on seafarers’ and notions of community, Vickers showed sailors’ maritime acculturation began at home and at a young age. Sailors were thus situated between the influences of their lives ashore and at work, yet also by the family-orientated and communal influences they left on shore, since "the transition from ship to shore was rarely abrupt." As Vickers asserts, sailors’ "lives before mast did not sever many of them from their family roots," as works by Andrew Blaikie exploring fishing families in Scotland and Charles Foy’s on Scarborough’s maritime community have also demonstrated. Indeed, Foy’s study of eighteenth-century Scarborough reveals many sailors weaved a web of connections to others to ensure they

100 Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, 148 – 149.
cross between sea and land as easily as possible.¹⁰⁴

Moreover, Vickers states the sea “could never be a home.”¹⁰⁵ Those whom worked on the sea simply moved around the sea and between the shore and sea. Thus, sailors were only at sea for some of their time, the rest of which was spent ashore.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Vickers fostered a more developed comprehension of sailors’ place and role within a port and sailortown community, particularly the relationships they had to women, therefore, highlighting the significance of marriage and the family to and within sailors’ life experiences.¹⁰⁷ Crucially he showed the pivotal role women, particularly widows, in port and sailortown communities had in what he terms the “stark reality” of maritime society ashore, whereby women had to carve out roles for themselves, a burgeoning area of current port-related research.¹⁰⁸ Thus, Vickers demonstrated the extent to which women in port and sailortown communities were influenced and dependent on the wider economic and social patterns of maritime occupations and trades and male sailors’ working lives.¹⁰⁹ Yet he gives little focus to the trades of prostitution or the prostitute as a female actor and agent in sailortown communities, or the extent to which they fostered an interdependent community and culture with sailors and sailortown businesses.¹¹⁰ However, Vickers did highlight the interdependency of sailors and port communities in household and business contexts.¹¹¹ His work thus paved the way for maritime communities and experiences of individual sailors to be explored in relation to the places and communities they came from, lived in and returned to. He demonstrated maritime communities could be deeply parochial, and he identified that maritime

¹⁰⁷ Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, 111, 54 – 56.
¹⁰⁹ Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, Chapters 2 – 5.
¹¹⁰ Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, Chapter 5.
¹¹¹ Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, 146 -1 47.
historians often neglected the shoreline, sailors’ origins and familial settings.\textsuperscript{112}

Whilst this is important, his reasoning for the neglect is not one which would stand up today in light of the burgeoning field of ‘New Coastal History,’ as discussed towards the end of this review. Vickers argued that it is much easier to catch sailors “mid-ocean” than on land, except in the cases of small ports or fishing and whaling communities that saw sailors as more local and regional in their origins in any case.\textsuperscript{113} However, what he misses is that other types of sailors, for example naval sailors, were relatively local and regional in their origins as well. Thus, ‘catching’ other sailors on land is more plausible and feasible than he would imply. Moreover, whilst Vickers showed the value of reconstructing the seafaring community of an individual port using demographic, statistical and qualitative sources his work, much of his work remains within the economic and labour fields of maritime history.\textsuperscript{114} Thus, the central focus is restricted to economic contexts of the ports and how the family and community contributed to this, rather than the social and cultural connections and relationships between them. Indeed, as Vickers argues, family life, labour relations ashore and at sea, conditioned sailors to assume and accept the contractual nature of their working lives since all their economic and social frames at sea and ashore were distinctly hierarchical and patriarchal.\textsuperscript{115} Thus, as with other labour relation works, Vickers’ sailor was still, to an extent, a victim - a victim of stringent class structures, as he asserts sailors could not “penetrate” the “world of wealth and privilege.”\textsuperscript{116} Therefore, whilst his work does much to focus on the household and domestic contexts of sailors’ lives ashore, his primary focus is on reconstructing the economic framework for this. Thus, what is still missing is an assessment of the neighbourhood level of interaction between sailors, businesses and sailortown communities and the

\textsuperscript{112} Vickers, “Beyond Jack Tar,” 421.
\textsuperscript{113} Vickers, “Beyond Jack Tar,” 422.
\textsuperscript{115} Vickers, \textit{Young Men and the Sea}, 130, 160.
\textsuperscript{116} Vickers, “Young Men,” 37.
importance of this interaction in sustaining sailortown areas.\textsuperscript{117} This is important as it enables sailortown to be understood as a neighbourhood system and one in which allows the activities and behaviours of sailors to be understood as situational.

Thus, while maritime historians have made advances in historians’ understanding of sailors and sailortown, there is an inherent obstacle. The focus on economic and labour relations has seen precedence given to merchant ports and sailors, with naval sailors and ports largely neglected. Whilst a great deal is known about the working and economic lives of sailors at sea and ashore, the same cannot be said for their social and cultural lives. The work of Burton advanced historians’ understanding in regards to deconstructing sailors images, yet it remains set within determined economic and gender frameworks. Therefore, the wider social and cultural deconstruction of such images is overlooked, as are the relationships between sailors and working-class communities.\textsuperscript{118} Likewise, whilst Burton and Vickers did much to bring sailors ashore, the dominant economic and labour approaches used leads to the assumption that sailortown cannot be explored or understood outside of its relationship to production, consumption and reproduction. Similarly, sailor culture (or seafaring culture as Burton would prefer) is predominantly one of a sailor’s relationship to and with class and power.\textsuperscript{119} Therefore, as Robert Lee finds in his recent review of the literature on the seafarers’ urban world in maritime history, the urban realm of sailors has seldom been analysed within cultural, social and familial contexts. As Lee states, “insufficient attention has been paid to the location of seafarers within family, kin and community networks,” observing that there is a “continued absence of detailed case studies which locate seafarers within their communities” and other urban histories such as crime.\textsuperscript{120} Furthermore, whilst work at sea and sailors’ working lives ashore naturally lends to merchant trading and maritime merchant labour approaches, as Richard Gorski recently suggested, this research does not necessarily have

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{117} Vickers, \textit{Young Men and the Sea}, Chapter 5.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Lee, “The Seafarer’s Urban World,” 28 – 31.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Burton, “As I wuz,” 142.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Lee, “The Seafarer’s Urban World,” 27, 63 – 64.
\end{itemize}
to be limited to merchant seamen. Indeed, by extension, nor does it mean naval ports, sailortown areas or sailors should be excluded from ongoing debates and discussions about sailors' lives ashore more widely.

**Naval History**

It is evident from surveying previous research relating to the Royal Navy that there is a heavy historiographical focus on the periods before and after circa 1850 – 1900, with this period receiving little attention. This is mainly due to the assumption that the Navy and naval sailors have little to offer to naval historians as this period was a time of relative peace, not war, thus previous works tend to glide over the Victorian naval age. Matthew Seligmann has highlighted a recent increase in studies of the pre-First World War navy and great advances are being made in the nineteenth century study of, naval administration, Admiralty roles in high-politics, the Royal Navy as a geopolitical agent and the importance of navies in the role of shaping domestic politics. However, whilst important, these works show little divergence from the dominant strands within naval history which are reliant on “strategy-and-tactics,” and do not reflect the recent ‘cultural turn’ in naval history instigated by the works of Isaac Land, Mary Conley and Jan Rüger. Therefore, as Brian Lavery states in his recent work on lower-deck naval sailors, the mid-to-late nineteenth century period "is a clean sheet as far as the historian is concerned.”

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126 Brian Lavery, *Able Seamen: The Lower Deck of the Royal Navy, 1850 – 1939*, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2010), 9. Interestingly his statement shows little has changed since the 1980s. As C.I. Hamilton observed in his survey on the Victorian Navy in 1982, the study of maritime populations was unfilled as “the details of this maritime world and its attitudes towards the Royal Navy, still mostly elude us” and called for more research on the connections between the Victorian Navy and British society, Hamilton, “The Victorian Navy,” 486 - 487.
Traditional naval historiography epitomized by Peter Kemp, Chris Lloyd, Henry Baynham and Michael Lewis defines sailors by *where* they were to tell us *who* they were. Thus, a sailor is male and one who belongs to the military, fighting force of the Royal Navy, remote from land, with their loyalty to the nation-state a given, as sailors of all ranks were paid state servants.\(^{127}\) Thus, the Navy is viewed as an extension of British power with its members’ Britishness assumed, with sailors’ central identity presumed to be a sea-based one, and for naval sailors, an institutional one centred on their military role within the Royal Navy.\(^{128}\) Thus, until recently, focus in naval histories was given to the ‘officer’ sailor as they have had more of an impact on national and political discourses than sailors of the lower deck, which collectively, are only considered in these works in terms of a manning problem.\(^{129}\) Earlier naval works which do consider lower-deck sailors, chart the rise in social consciousness within the Navy and wider society by focussing on lower-deck working conditions. Great emphasis is placed on the idea of progress, by demonstrating how the ‘sailor’s lot’ was improved during the nineteenth century “borne out of Victorian paternalism and national love for and pride in the Navy which helped build an empire”.\(^{130}\) Yet these works do little to recover the lower-deck voice. Thus, such works serve to reinforce the stereotyped Jack Tar image of sailors by focussing on their time in port simply as a release from their working lives.\(^{131}\)

However, with a shift to examining the cultural aspects of Britain’s relationship to the Royal Navy, and the Navy as a cultural agent and national asset, research here has shown the Navy is a viable way in which to examine socio-


\(^{130}\) Kemp, *The British Sailor*, xiii, 200 -214. This is evident when he states that the sailor’s lot reached its zenith in terms of progress during the nineteenth century and their “social standing was never higher.”

\(^{131}\) Kemp, *The British Sailor*, 209; Lloyd, *The British Seaman*, 273; Baynham, *Before the Mast*, 15 – 18. Baynham, for example, complains at the lack of source material relating to naval ratings during the mid-late nineteenth century and believes this is due to the lack of war.
cultural networks and identity processes. Such works show the Navy and naval sailors became a forum for reconciling differing identities and, depending on location, context and situation, offered multiple ways of ‘belonging.’ The first movement in this ‘cultural turn’ saw particular focus given to the Navy’s role in fostering Britishness and the notion of Britain as a “mental island” based on myths and symbols of seapower enacted through the Navy. The Navy thus provided the British state with a “cultural lynch pin” on which to shape national consciousness and identities via the role of navalism and the ‘cult of seapower.’ Here, the Navy is viewed not just as a military fighting force but also a socio-cultural force during the late nineteenth century, as a representation and shaper of British identity and socio-cultural values. This is most evident in Rüger’s research exploring the ‘cult of the navy,’ whereby the Navy is presented as a powerful cultural symbol in terms of the celebration and ritualization of the Navy within British society. Indeed, as Rüger shows, the navy became an important metaphor and symbol for Britishness that “celebrated monarchy, empire and the nation.” Crucially, Rüger’s work not only binds the Navy to both the nation and empire but also to localities, as this celebration and display of power saw the shoreline become a place “invested with national


136 Jan Rüger, Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empires, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1 – 4, 24 – 27, 144 – 166; Rüger, “Nation, Empire and Navy,” 160. As Rüger’s work shows, the role of naval celebrations and rituals such as Fleet Reviews and naming ceremonies, pervaded British society and culture and the real purpose of these exercises were not for the ships, men or fleet themselves, yet for a public, national and international, display of power making the Royal Navy a cultural tool, not just an instrument of war.
symbolism,” embraced both from ‘above’ and ‘below.’

Thus, the Navy offered a cultural link between a locality, the nation and the empire, creating a sense of closeness between the ship, its men, civilians and British society and culture. However, whilst the issue of localities is important, Rüger does not overly explore this, treating the Royal Navy as a homogenous force, with Britishness as the ‘trump’ identity. However, as Peter Mandler asserts, national identity does not mean all other identities are suppressed. Indeed, more recent research on sailors reflects a move towards applying Mandler’s assertion in practice.

Works by Land and Conley explore how sailors became Britons by situating them in a dialogue between British nationalism, the state and society. Whilst the sailor is assumed to be a ‘Briton’ it was by no means a given. Sailors first had to be received as British and in turn required to be so, meaning Britishness is not an identity created at one fixed event or time for naval sailors, rather one that ebbed and flowed over time to suit an individual sailor. What is different about this research is the sailor, who confronted and spoke with the British nation and society did so, not as a maritime working-class worker or as a manning problem of the Royal Navy, but as an individual in reaction to the terms of Britishness and Imperialism imposed on them. Critically, Land suggests sailors used, manipulated, framed and ‘cropped out’ differing and competing personal, regional, national and imperial identities to suit. Sailors “framed” their

137 Rüger, The Great Naval, 49, 71, 89. This can perhaps be viewed as manipulation ‘from above’ but as Rüger demonstrates, it was more embraced ‘from below’ thus enabling the Navy to be both embraced as cultural product of ‘above’ and ‘below.’ For further discussion of this, see, John Mackenzie, Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of the British Public Opinion 1880 – 1960, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); John Darwin, The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830 – 1970, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3.


141 Land, War, Nationalism, 10 – 19; 162 – 166.
responses to others to suit, as framing implies a positioning that can be fitted to suit the individual at different times and places. This ‘framing’ process also allows competing and differing identities to be included or ‘cropped out’ based on the individual. Crucially, as Land argues, the frame could be repositioned and moved to suit thus allowing sailors to be part of local, national and imperial communities simultaneously or to only belong to one community or the other.¹⁴² Thus, sailors’ responses were highly situational. This also suggests sailors were not only aware of the manipulation they experienced at the hands of the Navy, the nation-state and by differing groups within British society, they too manipulated and utilised identities and popular images constructed around them to suit.¹⁴³ Moreover, this advocates the idea that sailors chose to select identities, both collective and individual, to suit and at times exploit them.¹⁴⁴ However, as Donald Leggett points out, whilst providing some examples, Land does not fully assess how naval sailors undertook this framing or selecting process, the range of ways they used it or how they could do it.¹⁴⁵

Land distanced himself from the traditional naval approach undertaken by the likes of N.A.M. Rodger who “urges attention to the naval archives.”¹⁴⁶ In direct contrast, he used socio-cultural sources, particularly popular media sources, to explore naval sailors and ideas of Britishness. In doing so, Land’s research places naval sailors with the realms of domestic politics and starts from the assumption that sailors of the Royal Navy did impinge on society and cannot be seen as remote from everyday life in ports. Sailors’ lives were “penetrated and permeated by influences from the shore,” thus women and the family were part of this, with sailors retaining strong ties to land.¹⁴⁷ However, Land offers no demographic evidence to support his assertion in regards to sailors’ maintaining ties to land, as has been so prominent in maritime histories exploring sailors’ lives ashore.¹⁴⁸ However, what Land’s work importantly suggests is that sailors

¹⁴² Land, War, Nationalism, 162 – 166.
¹⁴⁴ Land, War, Nationalism, 162 – 166.
¹⁴⁵ Leggett, “Navy, the Nation,” 154.
¹⁴⁶ Land, War, Nationalism, 26 – 27; Land, “Tidal Waves,” 734.
¹⁴⁷ Land, “The Many-Tongued,” 413.
interacted with and respond to urban environments and experiences. As such, sailors remained bound to families, communities and regions in complex ways, and this provided cultural frames for sailors, meaning local identity could take precedence over national identity. Thus, locating sailors in a more land-based framework, Land disputes Rediker’s notion of the sailor’s community being one centred on ships and thus the creation of a maritime brotherhood based on class confrontation alone. As Land argues, it was in Rediker’s interest to focus on the ‘outlaw’ sailor due to his revolutionary premise, rather than to look at sailors as individuals with close ties to land, where it was more important to seek acceptance and foster support with those on land than not.149 Thus, as Land’s work shows, whilst a sailor’s identity formation is in part linked to sea-based exchanges, they were more aware of the closeness they could have to the nation-state and port communities. Indeed, the Atlantic identity that those such as Rediker place so much emphasis on did not mean sailors were stripped of all other identities.150

Conley’s gendered approach to naval sailors’ public-facing constructions situates them in British and Imperial domestic culture, establishing their prominence in discourses relating to the defence of empire and nation. Thus, like the Royal Navy in Rüger’s work, in Conley’s, sailors became symbolic of nation and empire through the creation of a naval manhood.151 Conley takes naval seamen as her central focus via a socio-cultural gender study of the representations of naval sailors’ masculinity and the reflections these representations had on wider narratives of British and imperial ideals from 1870 to 1914. Whilst earlier research by Olive Anderson and C.I. Hamilton, exploring the rise of Christian Militarism and the Victorian Navy and naval hagiography respectively demonstrated differing ranks of sailors represented facets of Britishness and Imperialism, Conley’s focus is on sailors of the lower deck.152 Centred in the reaction to the missed opportunities to examine how sailors’

151 Conley, From Jack Tar, 1 – 2, 66, 99, 125.
images could be re-casted, her work examines the representations of a “rugged naval manhood,” created by the middling class and imposed onto naval sailors. Thus, she argues this creation saw naval men being popularly transitioned from “Jack Tar to Union Jack,” a similar transition Burton earlier identified taking place for seafarers more widely across the nineteenth century.153 This transition, Conley argues, is the mid-to-late nineteenth century taming of the Jack Tar image to a ‘rugged naval manhood’ built upon self-restraint, bravery and respect, and encapsulated in the defining imperial image of the British Bluejacket. This image and label was a cultural creation shaped by the changing nature of imperialism, Christian militarism ideals and the rise of the Navy’s central role as defender and exemplar of nation and empire.154 As David Marcombe observed, the naval sailor, as a bluejacket, thus became “lionized.”155

Whilst Conley’s and Marcombe’s work would suggest such a transition was one that only sailors experienced, it was actually, as Steve Attridge identified, part of a wider movement in recasting the military as a whole in civilizing ideals.156 Moreover, Conley argues the construction of the bluejacket image helped create a sense of unity among naval seaman and importantly offered a sense of belonging to the nation and empire when ashore. Critically, Conley also identified that, to those around them, sailors were seen to leave behind the better qualities of this naval manhood when they transitioned from sea to shore.157 However, whilst she identifies this transition occurring, no work hitherto considers how naval manhood and the image of the bluejacket was

153 Lincoln, Representing, 6; Conley, From Jack Tar, 1 – 2, 11. For Burton, see earlier discussion in this review.
154 Conley, From Jack Tar, 3 – 5. Whilst Conley identifies the bluejacket predominates from the late 1870s, F.C. Armstrong’s three-part novel uses the term much earlier in 1866, F.C. Armstrong, Our Blue Jackets, Afloat and Ashore, (London: T. Cautley Newby, 1866); Earlier works by Hamilton have shown that naval hagiography, particularly ‘officer sailors’ portrayal, played a central role in influencing Victorian hero ideas which were heavily influenced by Christian militarism, Hamilton, “Naval Hagiography,” 381 - 396. For the rise of Christian Militarism more widely, see, Anderson, “The Growth of Christian Militarism,” 46 -72.
157 Conley, From Jack Tar, 1 -2, 125 – 128.
utilized, adapted or rejected by sailors when ashore.\textsuperscript{158} Indeed, whilst Land and Conley show sailors could stress their social and cultural ties to landed society by conforming to accepted social norms and values, rejecting their popular Jack Tar image or embracing their constructed Bluejacket image, the ways in which a sailor’s expressions of manhood were similar to other working-class males are overlooked.\textsuperscript{159} Therefore, in this respect, naval sailors are still held as ‘men apart’ rather than being integrated as part of wider Victorian masculine norms, identities and ideals and the quest for them.

However, in works reflective of the ‘cultural’ turn in naval history, sailors are awarded a much greater sense of agency as individuals. These works have shown sailors were aware of the discourses which surrounded them, could learn public-facing identities and images and perform them to meet these image expectations, making sailors “a skilled chameleon” when it came to their navigation of landed life, society and ideals.\textsuperscript{160} Yet whilst advances have been made in integrating naval sailors to the shoreline through national and imperial narratives, as Leggett surmises in his review of recent naval historiography, more research is still needed on the Royal Navy and its sailors. As he observes, what is sorely missing is research “particularly [in] an urban environment that complements the sea and the navy in research that highlights social and culture space, regional distinctions and sailors experiences.”\textsuperscript{161} Thus, the nineteenth-century naval sailor is still relatively unknown, particularly ashore. However, if as Conley states it is “worthwhile to uncover what it meant to be a sailor,” it is also as worthwhile to reveal what this meant ashore too by situating naval sailors as urban inhabitants.\textsuperscript{162} Moreover, it is only in very recent years that research in urban frameworks has begun to integrate sailors into urban histories. However, these works have had limited success in contributing to the field of urban history. Furthermore, statistical reconstructions, which feature

\textsuperscript{158} Conley, \textit{From Jack Tar}, 8 -9.
\textsuperscript{160} Land, \textit{War, Nationalism}, 30 - 38,162.
\textsuperscript{161} Leggett, “Navy, the Nation”, 157. He also suggests another way to do this is through the study of naval memorials and commemorations in terms of regionalism, nationalism and imperialism.
\textsuperscript{162} Conley, \textit{From Jack Tar}, 8.
prominently in economic and labour maritime histories, are yet to be applied in more urban frameworks.

**Urban History**

Whilst geographers and economists have long studied and accepted that a port, as a functional, economic site, is the interface between land and sea, ports, as a site of historical research have only recently become of interest to historians, due to what Sarah Palmer describes to have been a prevailing “inclination to look out to sea rather than inland.” However, as Lee states, ports “were a key feature of the nineteenth-century urban landscape.” Despite this, in reviewing literature on ports, Land recently observed that urban history – for all its sophisticated debates about the meaning of theatres, towers and temples – has offered surprisingly few insights into the forest of masts in the harbour.

Thus, historians frequently miss the opportunity to integrate the histories of sailors and the Royal Navy within urban experiences and within urban histories more widely. This stems from the widespread assumption that sailors, particularly naval sailors, are peripheral to urban experiences and therefore are not seen to be urban inhabitants, deterring work on their histories in this field. As encapsulated by Gordon Jackson, naval sailors’ influence on ports is seen

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as minimal since “sailors were only drafted into the navy during wartime there was no proportionally large band of them within dockyard populations.”\(^{167}\)

Furthermore, a review of previous works suggests this neglect is also due to naval ports’ overriding strategic and functional uses creating an assumption they have little to offer by way of social and cultural relations and human exchanges.\(^{168}\) As such, local histories of Portsmouth emphasize the town’s naval role in defence and the significance of the Royal Dockyard, ships and the Navy to local economic structures, yet not the men of the Navy in port and their social and cultural relationships with Portsmouth’s port community.\(^{169}\) Therefore, as Palmer suggests, more is known about merchant ports such as Southampton and London, and thus merchant seamen, than naval ports like Portsmouth and Plymouth and therefore naval sailors.\(^{170}\)

Moreover, part of the neglect of sailors and sailortowns in urban history, and of naval sailors and ports more widely, stems from early semi-historical folklore works by Stan Hugill and Cicely Fox Smith and their use in determining where studies of sailortowns should be focussed. Thus, whilst the works of Hugill and Fox Smith are not academic ones, they are nonetheless important in this review for three reasons. Firstly, some previous academic works on sailortowns cite these pieces without deconstructing the extent to which they promoted sailors in ways familiar to society, particularly as they represent them as tougher, rougher and more lustful than those whom stayed ashore to ensure that sailortown was held as a ‘realm apart.’ This thus tends towards an assumption that a generic sailortown existed the world over which can only be ‘discovered’ and not demographically located.\(^{171}\) Secondly, these works, particularly Hugill’s, dismiss naval ports as harbouring sailortown areas. Indeed, Hugill claims


sailortown districts in naval ports like Portsmouth were just a “built-up side of the way of wharf opposite the ships.” Thus, for Hugill, Britain’s ‘true’ sailortowns were only located in merchant ports, with Fox Smith’s focus on London’s sailortown reinforcing this, and many have tended to follow the lead given in these works in ignoring naval ports. Lastly, these works place sailortowns, and by extension sailors, as belonging to the sea and not urban settings, despite both being coastal phenomena.

Thus, as a way to integrate sailors’ histories with landed histories and narratives, Land suggests that

Maritime experience is best imagined, not as a blue-water phenomenon, but as a coastal one. Like the tide, it partakes of both worlds. For every push toward the ship, there is a pull from the shore.

Indeed, he persuasively argues,

historians who cast their nets on the coast will catch considerable numbers of people whose lives and experiences would be missed by a scholar who trawls the oceans. In the end, there is simply more history to be written about the coast than about the deep blue sea.
Moreover, as Glen O’Hara suggests, the merging of “green and blue histories” offers the historian a multifaceted concept in which to embrace and explore differing socio-cultural experiences and individuals between the ‘green and blue’ areas of study.\(^{177}\) However, Land’s suggestion that maritime experience is indeed a coastal one can go further. If maritime experience is understood to be ‘coastal,’ this also means that it can be a landed-urban one too, creating and manifesting a form of urbanism with a distinct maritime essence to it. Indeed, as David Lambert et al asserted, ports need to be integrated into urban histories and urban histories to be rethought of based on their maritime connections first, to see the shore and port as the start, not the end, of historical inquiries.\(^{178}\) This notion also applies more widely to the study of sailors and sailortown, and is becoming evident in recent research that represents a move towards urban-coastal frameworks of study starting at the shore or port rather than the sea.\(^{179}\)

Reflective of the recent ‘spatial turn’ within the field of urban history, there is movement towards seeing ports and sailortown areas as more urban in their development. The ‘spatial turn’ signified the move towards seeing spaces as multi-dimensional and an active element in identity formation, playing a central role in the socio-cultural experiences and constructions of everyday life.\(^{180}\) Therefore, more recent research on ports using ethnographic approaches, recognises ports as spaces of “imagination and projections, blending fantasies of freedom and faraway places with images of danger and moral decay,” offering what Waltraud Kokot states as insights into perceptions, coping


\(^{179}\) See, for example, the work of the Port Towns and Urban Cultures Research Group at the University of Portsmouth, [www.porttowns.port.ac.uk/about/](http://www.porttowns.port.ac.uk/about/) date last accessed 14\(^{th}\) September 2015.

strategies and actions of those immersed within such spaces.\textsuperscript{181} Thus, ports and sailortowns are full of fluid boundaries and can be experienced in multiple ways by differing individuals, groups and communities. Two of the ways in which this is beginning to be explored is by viewing sailortown as a sub-cultural form of urban space, and thus sailor and sailortown culture as a product of urban experiences rather than sea-based ones. Indeed, as Land declares, the time has come to see sailortowns as neighbourhood communities rather than sailors’ urban playgrounds or as districts of the sea branded on to land.\textsuperscript{182}

Thus, Land asserts, sailors’ behaviour on land is indicative of a sailor sub-culture, parallel to that of twentieth century youth movements, formed in resistance to civic authorities, and as a way for sailors to mark themselves out as different to others.\textsuperscript{183} Thus, Land and Peter Burke argue that this created a perception of a distinct sailor culture being concentrated in sailortown areas in ports, marked out by a sailor’s distinctive dress, gait, language and seemingly outlandish behaviour, which saw them isolated from mainstream popular culture and norms, not from land itself.\textsuperscript{184} Indeed, Land asserts sailors instigated a form of “street citizenship” to influence and refashion wider societal assumptions about their sense of being and belonging that adapted, rejected and shaped communal recognition of “who you are, where you belong, what is expected of you, and what you can expect in return.”\textsuperscript{185} However, he does not explore this concept in detail. Yet as this study will demonstrate the streets, its culture and

\begin{itemize}
\item Waltraud Kokot, “Port Cities as Areas of Transition – Comparative Ethnographic Research”, in eds., Waltraud Kokot, M. Gandelsman – Trier, Kathrin Wildner and Astrid Wonneberger, Port Cities as Areas of Transition: Ethnographic Perspectives on Urban Studies, (London: Transcript Velag, 2009), 15 - 17.
\item Land, “The Humours,” 326
\item Land, “The Humours”, 330 – 331.
\item Land, “Bread,” 89 – 90, 96 - 104. Land uses the example of Joseph Johnson, a veteran black sailor who wore a ship on his head in the streets of London and sung sailor songs. As Land argues, to stand out, sailors like Johnson, had to create a ‘gimmick’ which served as a statement of where they were from, belonged, had been, what they had done, and what they gave and received from the community. In doing so, sailors’ contextualised their experiences to others, made themselves relatable to others, and asserted their ‘Britishness’ and ties to the community around them. It is also worth noting that the idea of street citizenship is not necessarily a new one. It is particularly evident within research on ghettos by the likes of Elijah Anderson and his street-wise research and “code of the street” theory, Elijah Anderson, Streetwise: Race, Class and Change in an Urban Community, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990);Elijah Anderson, Code of the Street: Decency, Violence and The moral life of the Inner City, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1999).
\end{itemize}
sailors’ connections to them is more embracing and important than previously considered. Moreover, sailor culture is not necessarily a maritime one like Marcus Rediker and Paul Gilje in his recent work on American maritime culture would claim it was.\textsuperscript{186} Nor was it fostered in sailors’ isolation at sea or working conditions alone and it was not the preserve of merchant seamen alone as Bruce Nelson argued.\textsuperscript{187} It was cultivated in reaction to landed ideals and values, as well as being a culture that sailors, both merchant and naval, reproduced and taught others. Indeed, as Dianne Dugaw’s work on sea-going women has shown those in close proximity to sailors, on sea or land, could also adopt sailors’ distinctive traits.\textsuperscript{188}

Similarly, in response to their marginalisation within urban histories, Robert James, Karl Bell and Brad Beaven have explored sailortown and sailors’ lives ashore, adopting socio-cultural sources and approaches to situate both as part of urban narratives. In doing so, a sense of agency is being recovered for sailors as urban inhabitants, challenging the assumption that they were not urban dwellers. Indeed, with layers of socio-cultural productions, values and beliefs, their work has begun to suggest sailortown areas fostered a distinct culture in sailor-dominated districts of urban centres. James demonstrated how the large naval community found in Portsmouth dictated cinema-going habits and productions in local cinemas, with the majority of films shown reflective of naval life and a naval-centred custom base, which was not just the preserve of sailors alone.\textsuperscript{189} Likewise, Bell’s work has shown that the naval community in Portsmouth could foster their own alternative sense of culture through maritime superstitions and traditions that were independent of dominant civic cultures found there, and this bound sailors and their families together.\textsuperscript{190} Beaven has


\textsuperscript{187} Nelson, \textit{Workers on the Waterfront}, 9 – 19.


recently taken this further and demonstrated superstition and tradition also helped to foster a distinct sailortown culture in naval ports. He argues sailortown culture was a culture of ‘Otherness’ in naval ports that was resilient in the face of reforming initiatives and civic control. In this respect, sailortown culture was an urban-maritime one, based on maritime traditions yet equally formed in reaction to urban-civic controls, and shaped in conjunction with other working class people in sailortown districts of urban-ports. Critically, Bell’s and Beaven’s work reveals those connected to naval sailors, particularly in terms of economic dependency, societal and familial ties, replicated and sustained this culture.

However, whilst steps have been made to counteract the neglect of naval ports, sailortown areas and sailors in urban history, there remain important gaps to be filled, particularly since research on naval sailors has largely been left to naval historians and overlooked by urban historians. Moreover, whilst Land declares the time has come to see sailortown as a neighbourhood community, this is not something that has been overly explored or demographically assessed. Similarly, the extent to which members of the sailortown community aided sailors in fashioning resistance responses to authority has only tentatively been examined in naval sailortown areas. Indeed, as Beaven observed, “few historians have undertaken research on the sailor’s wider relationship with civilian society and charted the ebb and flow of sailortown culture within the context of a naval port town.” Thus, there is scope to develop and explore whether sailor and sailortown culture was an urban experience in which sailors and sailortown communities forged and formed common ground upon. Whilst Beaven has gone some way to start debate in this area with his examination of the resilience of sailortown culture in naval ports towns, there is still much to be done, particularly when it comes to assessing the neighbourhood and street-level experiences of sailortown communities and sailors, and the role violence played in sailor and sailortown culture. Moreover, despite the attempts to shift focus away from merchant ports and sailors to naval ones, the mutual assistance, survival networks and sense of community and common culture

between naval sailors and the port community is under-researched.\textsuperscript{195} Therefore, the field of study relating to sailortowns and sailors is ripe for a study centred in more urban contexts.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Thus, has this review has shown, whilst advances have been made in historians’ understanding of sailortown and sailors’ lives ashore, debate remains fragmented between the differing fields surveyed here and gaps in research are still present. In part, this stems from a relative ‘shore-blindness’ to sailors’ lives, particularly naval sailors, in maritime and naval histories, and ‘sea-blindness’ when it comes to sailors and sailortown areas in urban histories. Thus, urban history has offered little in terms of debates surrounding sailors and sailortown and, simultaneously, maritime history for all its advances in understanding seafarers’ working lives at sea and ashore, has paid little attention to their lives ashore in communal contexts.\textsuperscript{196} Concurrently, naval history, whilst experiencing a ‘cultural turn,’ still has some way to go to situating naval sailors within urban and landed discourses, with few histories connecting the Royal Navy with the histories of the shore and the Navy and its sailors with the landed experiences.\textsuperscript{197} This thesis therefore seeks to fill in some of the gaps identified in the historiography and present a more amalgamated approach to understanding sailors and sailortowns, whilst highlighting approaches for further study. As this thesis takes a naval port-town as its focus and situates naval sailors as urban inhabitants, it builds on wide-ranging fields of historical study and goes some way to turn to the tide against the dominance of merchant ports and seamen. Furthermore, whilst painstaking quantitative reconstructions of maritime labour markets, communities and households in merchant ports have been undertaken, this thesis shows the quantitative approach privileged for merchant seamen is also applicable to naval sailors, sailortown areas and ports. Indeed, it has value beyond economic and labour contexts, as it can be applied

\textsuperscript{195} Land, “The Humours”, 326.
to research on the socio-cultural world of sailors ashore too. It also contributes to historians’ understanding of sailortown as a demographic entity and patterns of sailors’ lives ashore.\textsuperscript{198} As the following chapters show, sailors were not peripheral sea-based peoples and debates surrounding sailortown and sailors, particularly naval sailors, can be progressed by situating them within landed, urban discourses. In doing so, it is evident sailortown areas offered more than simply catering to sailors’ entertainment whilst shore. Moreover, it is also clear that sailors were shaped by more than their life afloat, and for naval sailors, by much more than their role as a military member.

\textsuperscript{198} See, for example, Starkey, “Quantifying British Seafarers, 1789- 1828,” 83 – 104.
Chapter 2 - ‘Sailorhoods’: Enumerating Sailortown in Portsmouth

Introduction

Sailor Town the world over is a realm apart….you might always know when you have entered the borders of that queer, amphibious country which lies as it were between land and sea….in spirit it is the Kingdom of Neptune: a shore-going Neptune it is true.¹⁹⁹

When, in the 1920s, poet and writer Cicely Fox Smith described sailortown, she reaffirmed an enduring assumption that it was an area ‘set apart’ from the rest of a port, and that sailors were perceived to be the archetypal roaming man, removed from landed ties and conventions. This chapter sets out to explore the extent to which these assumptions are evident in the naval port of Portsmouth. This will be achieved via a detailed analysis of all the Census Enumerators’ Notebooks (CEBs) for Portsea and Portsmouth Town from 1851 to 1901.²⁰⁰ In studying over fifty thousand census records, this chapter will determine whether a sailortown area in Portsmouth can be demographically identified, to what degree it was spatially separate to the rest of the port and examine its composition. It will also explore sailors’ socio-demographic connections gleaned from the records, revealing the extent of their ties to land in the temporal ‘snapshots’ provided by the decadal CEBs. In undertaking the above, a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ has been developed to aid in identifying sailortown districts. The model, which has resonance for future research, also moves beyond defining them as areas that simply catered to sailors’ entertainment ashore.

In applying the prerequisite model, this chapter will demonstrate a sailortown area was present in Portsmouth during the mid-to-late nineteenth century, with an identifiable and demographic basis. Indeed, it will be argued that, demographically and spatially, sailortown was not a vast homogenous ‘other’ space separated from the port. Rather, sailortown was built on interconnected and interrelated networks of sailor neighbourhoods, or ‘sailorhoods,’ fostered on

²⁰⁰ For the geographic area that the CEBs cover, see, Appendix 2.
their occupational, familial and local ties. This expands and widens the spatial vision of sailortown areas whilst advancing research and debates surrounding the structure and nature of sailortown districts in ports. Indeed, as discussed below, many of the results from the CEB research challenge the popular stereotypical image of sailors as roaming men, free of ties. Thus, it will be argued sailors maintained more ties to land than previously suggested. Moreover, as advanced by Jan Rüger and Mary Conley, naval sailors can be seen beyond being just a socio-cultural symbol.201 As the CEB research conducted here will show, they are also a socio-cultural entity, intertwined with urban-port structures and communities, thus furthering discussion on the Royal Navy’s relationship with British society and culture from the mid-late nineteenth century. Whilst sailors have been selected and extracted from the CEB records, the intention is not to separate them their communal contexts, rather to highlight their socio-demographic composition and spatial clustering patterns which enables the results below to demonstrate they are not peripheral to urban-port structures and life. They are, as the Registrar General remarked in 1873, “an integral and determinable part of the population.”202

Hitherto research on ports has neglected naval ones like Portsmouth, despite consistent calls over time for more research into the demographic make-up of ports and sailortowns to be undertaken.203 This neglect primarily stems from singling out merchant seamen and trade relationships, often situated in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as the focus of analysis.204


Moreover, prior research has approached sailortown largely from economic and gender perspectives, thus missing the communal, street-level networks of sailortown areas. Whilst those such as Valerie Burton have used CEBs to explore sailors’ residential patterns, this is in a merchant context to support findings relating to their working lives, and does not cover a wide period charting changes and continuity over time. Concurrent to this, the relationship between sailors and the urban setting is often neglected, as outlined in Chapter 1. Indeed, the communal contexts of sailortown and sailors’ lives ashore are largely absent in previous research. The research for this chapter also takes the coastal-urban borderland as its geographic focus, an often-neglected area of space. This approach is particularly useful when studying sailors since they worked and lived in coastal areas, influenced and shaped by both sea-based and landed experiences. A similar method has been useful in maritime-family research applied to fishing communities and to merchant seamen’s household structures in Early Modern Europe and America. Furthermore, it is also claimed that sailortown, as a space and culture, died from the mid-late nineteenth century, in part, due to the more regular working patterns for sailors and increasing professionalization of navies and sailors. However, the mid-

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late nineteenth century was a time when the expanding port area emerges in terms of functionality and spatial growth. Indeed, naval ports like Portsmouth were growing due to the drive in shipbuilding, imperial expansion and huge increases in naval recruitment numbers.\textsuperscript{211} Moreover, the mid-to-late nineteenth century was a time of relative peace for Britain meaning naval sailors, with higher levels of regulated shore leave, spent more time in homeports like Portsmouth than previously so. Thus, as the CEB research below will show, they arguably became more landed and urban in their experiences than ever before.\textsuperscript{212}

\section*{Census Records and Methodology}

Previous research has successfully used CEBs to investigate historical problems within a defined geographic focus as undertaken here.\textsuperscript{213} CEBs provide the most viable way to conduct any census-based analysis as they list each individual person within a district, situated within their household, institution or ship, transcribed from the original schedules. These records provide evidence as to the social, spatial and demographic makeup and relationship of a defined area every ten years, thus allowing for changes and continuities in these relationships to be assessed over time. CEBs also allow

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\begin{itemize}
  \item For rationale to this argument and shore leave discussion, see Introduction. This idea also follows that suggested by Isaac Land, Land, "The Humours," 326.
\end{itemize}
the masses to be disaggregated to the individual. Thus, one can begin to see how, for example, the masses of sailors in places like Portsmouth are composed. Moreover, CEBs also allow historians to quantify relationships and reconstruct the social structure of defined areas for analysis. To this end, the data for this chapter has been organized into a database where it is possible to undertake a source-orientated approach - an approach to census data analysis, which captures the original hierarchy of the records, yet also allows the results to be used in a variety of ways.214 Whilst older studies still form the basis of any census-related investigation, census material and its use is experiencing something of a revival due to the boom of amateur researchers using CEBs for family and local history research, and also by historians in academic investigations.215 This is more so since the recent ‘spatial turn’ within urban history, examining the historical and geographical influences on socio-cultural processes, acknowledging that space and place are constructive to understanding socio-cultural life.216 However, CEBs as a historical source are not without their challenges, and those relevant to the purposes of this chapter will be explored below.

Edward Higgs and Susan Lumas have discussed the history of census taking and the processes of enumeration in detail.217 They, among others, have noted the limited value of the 1841 CEBs for the purposes of research due to the

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limited personal information collected in these returns. Therefore, the CEBs from 1851 onwards, with more detailed, comparable information collected, together with the crew of ships being included within the enumeration process, offer the most viable records for the CEB research undertaken here.\textsuperscript{218} From 1851, crews on ships in British ports were enumerated within the registration district in which the ship was anchored (or first returned to from overseas), and were recorded on special shipping schedules.\textsuperscript{219} For the Royal Navy, which completed fuller, more extensive census records than any of the other services, the Admiralty returned special naval schedules. However, ship and naval schedules from 1851 are incomplete or missing, so the schedules from 1861 to 1901 are utilized here to establish discernible patterns relating to sailors.\textsuperscript{220} Yet the capture of a ship’s crew in the enumeration process does present a problem. Their inclusion distorts the total population numbers for enumeration districts, over-inflating the population, in particular the single, male population.\textsuperscript{221} The data collection process undertaken here recognizes this distortion, thus those on ships and land are recorded and coded separately. Moreover, since the framework for the investigation is a coastal one, ships’ crew data have been incorporated within the results explored below, as they did not exist in isolation of sailors recorded residing on land. Therefore, analysis of all

\textsuperscript{218} Higgs, \textit{Making Sense of the Census}, 4 – 14. 1841 is viewed this way due to the limited information collected, the incomparable nature of the 1841 CEBs in terms of geographic focus, the omission of ships’ crew and the nature of the questions asked. Questions remain the same from 1851 – 1901, bar 1891 and 1901, whereby two more questions were added related to housing and employment status.

\textsuperscript{219} “Census of England and Wales, 1871, General Report”, \textit{PP}, x.

\textsuperscript{220} Higgs, \textit{Making Sense of the Census}, 47 – 48, 117. Classification was made between foreign, colonial or home based ships and crews. It should be noted that not all sailors serving or working abroad were captured in the enumeration process. The naval schedules include columns for full name, rank / rating, condition as to marriage, sex, age, (rounded to the nearest five years) and birthplace, plus those on board or not and passengers. From 1891, a column for relation to vessel was also included and age was recorded as that of last birthday. The criterion for inclusion within an enumeration district was based on the principle of distance from the closest shoreline in the event of death occurring on board. Thus, the enumeration district closest to where the death would be registered was the enumeration district for a ship or vessel, “Census of Great Britain, 1851, Tables of the Population and Houses in Divisions, Registration Counties and Districts of England and Wales,” 1339, Command Papers, \textit{Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online}, (1851), iii; “Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables 1,” \textit{PP}, xvi – xvii.

\textsuperscript{221} Higgs, \textit{Making Sense of the Census}, 19. This also applies to national totals. From 1861, Naval personnel are included in population totals even when based in ports abroad, “Census of Great Britain, 1861, Tables of the Population and Houses in England and Wales and in the Islands in the British Sea on 8th April 1861,” 2846, Command Papers, \textit{Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online}, (1861), Table VI, 9-10.
the returns for Portsea and Portsmouth Town from 1851 to 1901 has been undertaken, examining both the landed and ship-dwelling sailor population. However, due to the volume and size of this task, it is not feasible to examine ship and vessel data in detail beyond analysing the total numbers and types of sailors and vessels listed. Yet observations will be noted where relevant from these returns and, overall, the patterns evident from the landed CEBs mirrors that of the crews recorded on ships and vessels.

Coding of data for reporting results is an integral process due to the need to refine and standardize the information within the CEBs. There is little consensus on how to do this yet it is widely accepted as appropriate to modify coding to suit the particular conditions of the geographic and subject foci.\textsuperscript{222} This is more so with occupation classification and coding, due to the differing expression of language to describe occupation roles, where the need to standardize and create coding classifications to suit the historical subject in question is vital.\textsuperscript{223} In relation to this study, for example, the words “RN Sailor,” “RN Seaman,” “Sailor of H.M.S.,” or the rank of a sailor recorded, for example, “Able Seamen RN,” all being used to denote a sailor belonging to the Royal Navy. In turn, a sailor can also be listed as a “Mariner,” “Merchant Seaman,” “Merchant Sailor,” or “Mariner Seaman” when denoting a sailor involved within the transportation of goods and merchant trading, with “Fisherman,” “Inland Seaman” and “Pleasure Seaman/Sailor” used to enumerate other types of sailors. Due to the variations and the interchangeable terms, the main problem arises when an individual is listed as a “Seaman” or “Sailor.” Without cross-checking against shipping and naval personnel records, it is impossible to determine whether a “Seaman” or “Sailor” belongs to the Royal Navy or not. For the purposes of this

\textsuperscript{222}Allen, “A Railway Revolution,” 89 – 95.  
\textsuperscript{223}Higgs, \textit{Making Sense of the Census}, 97 – 113, The Open University, \textit{A Guide To Nineteenth Century Enumerators Books}, Second Series, (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1984, [First Series, 1982]), 17. Charles Booth’s 1880s classifications adapted from the official census reports and further adapted by W.A. Armstrong, in dividing socio-economic groups into classes is the standard convention used, The Open University, \textit{A Guide to Nineteenth Century Enumerators Books}, Appendix. Not only was there differing interpretations of occupational definitions yet, until 1891 it is not known whether an individual was an employee or employer. There is also no account for seasonal or casual jobs and its fluctuations, with women and children’s occupations not always logged correctly. There is also much debate on the relation between occupation and class, Allen, “A Railway Revolution,” 20; H.W. Dyos and A.B.M. Baker, “The Possibilities of Computerised Census Data,” in ed. H.W. Dyos, \textit{The Study of Urban History}, (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), 104.
project, these individuals are included in the results and are considered as merchant seamen not naval sailors. This is because naval sailors (both ranked and ratings) are largely denoted as belonging to the Royal Navy across the CEBs, as the occupational classification system in use by the Registrar General was clear that those working in military and defence occupations needed to be indicated as such. 224 Therefore, in respecting these official distinctions, the following occupational classifications are used; “RN Sailor” including the respective occupational role if recorded to denote a Royal Naval sailor, “Merchant Sailor/Seaman, Sailor/Seamen, Merchant Mariner/Mariner” for merchant sailors and “Fisherman” for fishing sailors. All other types of sailors have been included in an ‘Other’ category.

There are other relevant potential problems of note with CEBs. Individual age is not always listed correctly. This was due to rounding to the nearest five years in earlier censuses and a large amount of ages being unknown or guesstimated. 225 To enable effective comparison across the data, larger-category age groupings have been used which capture the five-yearly rounding issues and ensure consistency across the data. 226 Colin Pooley also identified similar problems with places of origin, with the added issue of misspelling and places recorded under incorrect counties. He also notes that proving cultural origins and ethnicity from this data is not achievable. 227 This is correct, yet a general pattern in identifying demographic trends relating to place of origins can be inferred. To overcome the problems above, a ‘cleaning’ of the data in relation to correcting spelling errors and allocating places to the correct county and country has been undertaken, following the accepted and recognized Chapman Codes for countries and counties adapted to suit the needs of this

224 “Census Enumerator’s Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town, Shipping and Naval Schedules,” (1861 – 1901); The Open University, A Guide to Nineteenth Century Enumerators Books, Appendix.


For example, to contribute to debates on sailors’ socio-cultural relationships further, sailors originating from Ireland are recorded as originating from counties in either Ireland or Northern Ireland, even though both formed the nation of Ireland during the period of this thesis.

Relations within a household are also problematic. Thus, there is a consensus amongst historians that rather than using the term ‘family’ to denote a household, the term ‘co-residing group’ is more relevant, because many households contained un-related individuals and do not necessarily reflect kinship relationships based on family names and living arrangements. Therefore, the term co-residing group will be used in this investigation. The data has thus been coded to denote differing forms of co-residing groups. This is so the nucleus family group can still be separately inferred but is not assumed to be so based solely on reading the ‘relation to head of household’ column in the CEBs. It should also be noted that the relationship to household terms “head,” “lodger,” “boarder” and “visitor” are open to interpretation. For the purposes of this study “head” is defined as being the head of a co-residing group not necessarily the head of a household. “Lodger” and “boarder” are taken to be the same term and thus are recorded as “lodger” since these individuals were not related to the head, or necessarily any family member, of the co-residing group. Moreover, the term is applicable to both, as how ever recorded, the individual paid to reside in the co-residing group’s household. “Visitor” is coded as such and recorded separately to those lodging, as there is

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no way of conclusively proving whether they were actually lodging or not based on CEB information alone.\textsuperscript{231}

The final relevant problem is the need for geographic comparability across place and time. This is difficult due to the constant changes in registration districts. However, previous research has shown that successful analysis can be achieved by selecting artificial areas that provide a constant geographic focus and are relevant to the subject under study.\textsuperscript{232} Therefore, Portsmouth Town and Portsea Town have been selected as one artificial area since they were located in a coastal borderland area on the water’s edge, as Image 2 captures, harbouring a small but distinct merchant and fishing trade, and sheltering the burgeoning naval fleet. Moreover, as indicated in Appendix 3, this area on the waterfront was enclosed within the fortifications of Portsmouth for much of the period studied here and thus, to some extent, “compelled [it] to be a

\textsuperscript{231} Some enumerators would record a person lodging for a brief period of time as a visitor since a visitor is denoted to be someone staying for more than one evening, Garrett, Reid, Schürer and Szreter, \textit{Changing Family Size in England and Wales}, 60.

This selection is also reflective of the impracticality of examining a whole population of a place such as Portsmouth across a fifty-year period. Thus, selecting an artificial area, in this case combining Portsea and Portsmouth Towns, allows an effective way to navigate such a large data set.

Coupled with the methodology outlined above, principles of ethnography are applied to the data. However, rather than looking for ethnic segregation in residential spatial relationships, this chapter will apply these principles to sailors as an occupational group to gauge the social and spatial interactions between them and the urban port-town community. Whilst, to an extent, this has been done before, it has been in the context of economic and class relations, not in terms of looking at the demographic patterns of sailors at a neighbourhood and street level.

Moreover, as CEBs were recorded at street level, it allows one to see the concentration and dissipation, along with the choice and constraint of the individual, in these spatial processes. Whilst one cannot assume the thoughts and decisions culminating in residential choices at an individual level, CEBs do show a pattern of clustering and this has, to some extent, be seen to be based on pre-existing conditions, origins and networks. As Pooley states, this pattern is borne from the “conflicting choices and constraints….a sorting mechanism operating in different strata of Victorian society.” 

Whilst errors and potential problems are present in the CEBs, when treated like any other historical source, the insights and illumination of the data contained within CEBs outweigh the challenges, as they remain the nineteenth century’s most comprehensive statistical source. Indeed, taken en masse, the CEBs provide a unique way to approach the features of an area with discernible patterns

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233 Anon, *Up to Date*, 24. This was also observed by contemporaries, see, for example, Walter Besant, *Autobiography of Sir Walter Besant*, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1902), 6 - 7.


evident in regards to the study of socio-cultural life, enabling a new facet of debate to be opened surrounding sailors and sailortowns.

**Demographic and Contextual Background**

Portsmouth, as a leading naval fortress and a place in which the “whole of the coast swarms with a seafaring population,”\(^\text{238}\) plays a central role in the history of Britain and dominates the history of the Southern region and county of Hampshire in the mid-late nineteenth century. The port-town of Portsmouth is situated on Portsea Island, separated from the mainland by sea; “within this water-girt boundary” lay the principal districts of Portsea, Southsea, Kingston and Landport, with outlying divisions, all of which are regarded “as the seaport called Portsmouth.”\(^\text{239}\) A travel guide describes the layout further, noting the coastal intersection.

The island, in fact, represents a series of Chinese rings, large open space form the centre ring; around these, the town extends until it borders on the water, which serves to act as the outer ring.\(^\text{240}\)

Colloquially Portsmouth was known as ‘the four towns,’ comprising the principal districts of; Portsea Town, perceived to be a sailor’s town, Portsmouth Town, (now commonly referred to as Old Portsmouth) viewed as a military one, Landport, predominantly housing Royal Dockyard workers and the seaside resort of Southsea, “Portsmouth’s breathing space,” home to the urban gentry, local elites and military officers.\(^\text{241}\) By the turn of twentieth century, the ‘four


\(^{239}\) Holbrook, Sunny Southsea, 5. The outlying divisions being, North End, Buckland, Fratton, Stamshaw, Copnor, Milton and Eastney. Up to 1881, Portsmouth was divided in to six wards, after which this became fourteen wards due to expanding population size.

\(^{240}\) Holbrook, Sunny Southsea, 5. This is particularly evident in the coastal map of Portsmouth, Appendix 1.

towns’ were not as distinct as they once were and the boundaries of the towns changed, merging into one another, and the development of civic institutions such as the Town Hall, were designed to unite the once seemingly socially and culturally disparate districts of Portsmouth. As part of this civic progress, Portsmouth, not Portsea Island, now became the official registration area. However, the two official registration areas are used interchangeably. Thus, whilst Portsea Island applied for the majority of the period considered here, for ease of clarity, Portsmouth, as this is more widely recognized, will be used when referring to the area as whole.

Collectively, Portsmouth’s distinctive features were its large working-class base, intensive urbanization with suburban differentiation, high military and naval presence and like other ports, it was seen as a “sink of iniquity.” Most urban development and settlement took place in the principal districts mentioned above, with the greatest urban spread into the suburbs of Southsea and Landport from the 1870s. Rapid urbanization was accompanied by rapid population growth and Portsmouth, like many port areas, experienced above average population development in relation to both national and regional growth. Thus, whilst Portsmouth followed the increasing growth trend of Hampshire as a whole, it represented, as evidenced in Figure 1, the fastest and largest population growth area within Hampshire. This is also evident when


244 Landport housed the bulk of the population as the nineteenth century progressed and into the twentieth century, Alfred Temple-Patterson, Portsmouth: A History, (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1976), 106, 126, Anon, Up to date, 83.

245 By the 1890s, the population of Portsmouth was greater than the rest of the country, being fifty per cent above the national average, see, “Census Reports,” Command Papers, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1851 – 1901) and in
compared to the population growth of the two other principal towns in Hampshire - Winchester and the merchant port of Southampton, across the period considered, as shown in Figure 2.²⁴⁶

Turning to the principal registration districts in Portsmouth, the overall growth pattern above is replicated in these districts with further interesting patterns particular, the Population Tables given in these reports. For discussion of socio-economic and demographic typologies of ports, Lee, “The Socio-economic,” 147 – 172.²⁴⁶ It is worth noting here, the Portsmouth town and district figures do not include outlying divisions such as Gosport, which was enumerated under the district of Alverstoke. Similarly, the district of Winchester covers the city only, and Southampton, as the principal town, refers only to the city of Southampton itself. Therefore, these figures do not include the more populous and predominantly working-class areas of Southampton, which housed many of those working within Southampton’s maritime trading businesses such as Bitterne, Shirley and Portswood. Such areas were enumerated under the district of South Stoneham until the 1901 census when they then became registration districts within their own right. Thus, for consistency and following the precedence set in the governmental reports the outlying districts have not been included, “Census Reports,” PP, (1851 – 1901).
emerging. As Figure 3 shows, overall, the population grows in each district across the nineteenth century, yet in Portsea and Portsmouth Town there is actually a decline in the total population numbers from 1861. This reflects the growing shift of the population into Landport and Southsea (and by extension Kingston), leading to faster and higher overall population growth in these areas. It is also apparent from the population charts that Portsmouth experienced a high-density in-population per square mile of area and consequently, like most ports, overcrowding was problematic well into the twentieth century. The typical port dependency on in-migrants from a wide migration zone, not only increased population numbers and exacerbated overcrowding, it also resulted in a broader ethnic and nationality mix of peoples than previously seen. Contemporaries were well aware of this, particularly so with the increases in shipbuilding, naval recruitment numbers from the 1870s and mass-movements of military personnel.


Indeed, that Portsmouth was a naval port and garrison town, naval and military personnel accounted for a large proportion of this rapid growth and this was not without its consequences to the port infrastructure, economy and community. Portsmouth, like other ports, experienced heightened exposure to diseases since many epidemics were a “coastal phenomena” with particularly high epidemic infection rates of smallpox, scarlatina, typhoid fever and measles recorded across the period.²⁴⁹ It is of note the peaks in these epidemics were ascertained to be related to movements of sailors, particularly those returning from abroad, making Portsmouth a place which was more susceptible to epidemics.²⁵⁰ Interestingly, despite the high epidemic rates, the mortality rate in Portsmouth, more so in Portsea and Portsmouth Town, is relatively low when compared to the national average and other ports, except for the period 1854 to


1856 due to the number of military causalities returning to these towns in the aftermath of the Crimean War. The Registrar General also noted the lower mortality rate was due to the number of military personnel and dockyard workers being of “selected healthy lives,” mothers who do not “neglect their offspring as they do in factory towns,” combined with the climate of Portsmouth being more equable and warm than elsewhere.

Despite this, Portsmouth, whilst above the national average, experienced lower birth rates than expected of a port area, with Portsea and Portsmouth Town recording the lowest number of births, both illegitimate and legitimate, within the principal districts. This is primarily due to lower population numbers in these towns and nuptiality constriction, owing to unbalanced sex ratios created largely by the naval and military demands for men. This meant naval ports record high numbers of young, single males, a dominance of one-parent families headed by females and an above average number of widows, and Portsmouth was no exception to this. Across the nineteenth century, as Figure 4 shows, the number of males is always higher than the number of females, particularly so in the period considered here.

Appendix 4.

Appendix 5. This is even the case when the boundaries change and are merged in 1898. For further discussion of this, see, Barry Stapleton, “The Admiralty Connection,” in eds., Richard Lawton and Robert Lee, Population and Society in Western European Port Cities c.1650 - 1939, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), 247.

This is evident across the CEBs in the period studied here. Much of the increases in the male population was due to the increasing numbers of military men in Portsmouth, both on land and in ships in harbour, since both were included in the enumeration process. It is also evident that the birth-rate of male children, legitimate and illegitimate, was higher than that of female children. "Census Reports," Command Papers, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1850 – 1901); Lee, “The Socio-economic,” 154 – 156, 162-163; Stapleton, “The Admiralty Connection,” 242 – 246; Lawton and Lee, “Port Development,” 17. It is important to note that CEBs do not show nuptiality rates, Armstrong, “The Interpretation,” 83.
When compared to the other principal towns in Hampshire, the male population is also higher in Portsmouth, experiencing the largest growth in all of Hampshire.\textsuperscript{255} However, as Figure 5 indicates, when male and female numbers are studied in the principal districts of Portsmouth, males outnumber females in all districts; yet the overall numbers are lower in Portsea and Portsmouth Town. This not only replicates the pattern of urban spread into areas such as Landport, yet also the peaks and troughs in the number of military and naval personnel located and recorded in the two towns across the period, impacting on the associated skewed sex ratios prevalent in naval ports. Thus, Portsmouth is both an area of transition and movement, yet also one which retains regional, local port features and functions.\textsuperscript{256} Moreover, the effect of naval and maritime influences are inherently embedded in the social structure and demography of Portsmouth reflecting and demonstrating the power and influences the Royal Navy, as an institution, had over the population and its demographic structure in the geographic area under study.

\textsuperscript{255} Appendix 6.

\textsuperscript{256} Palmer, “Ports,” 138 – 139; Stapleton, “The Admiralty Connection,” 249.
Figure 5 – Chart showing the total population numbers and growth for males and females in Portsmouth’s principal districts, “Census Reports,” PP, (1841 – 1901).

Portsea Town contained the largest Royal Dockyard and this created a special circumstance for adventitious importance and magnitude, yet also resulted in a port “with all its eggs in one basket.”257 The Dockyard’s role and influence is felt full-force in the period of this thesis, more so after the expansions which took place between 1864 to 1867 and 1867 to 1881, reflecting the Royal Navy’s drive for self-sufficiency.258 This expansion and drive also saw the Admiralty

257 Anon. Up to date, 18; “Results and Observations, Census of Great Britain, 1851,” xlvii; Temple-Patterson, Portsmouth, 10.
effectively ‘cut off’ the landings and approaches to merchant shipping in the waters around Portsea Town from the Portsmouth Town side of Gunwharf Barracks, to The Hard and around to Flathouse Quay from the mid-1860s, meaning merchant ships could no longer dock and unload their cargo in the waters around Portsea Town.\(^{259}\) Thus, the Royal Navy and Dockyard, as institutions, dominated the area enclosed within the fortifications, even after their removal in the 1880s. This, coupled with the limited spatial development in Portsea due to the size and location of the Dockyard, contributed to the problem of poor housing and overcrowding along the waterfront. Indeed, the Dockyard expansion made this area a “mecca” for unemployed agricultural workers, particularly from surrounding rural counties.\(^{260}\) The expansion and its consequences did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. As Arthur Holbrook remarked in his 1899 Portsmouth tour guidebook, some people were

appalled by [the] magnitude, so we lose sense of all that is historic and picturesque…. [when] face to face with what is eminently modern and practical, and greatness of our naval power.\(^{261}\)

Like any port, Portsmouth was dominated by its main port activity – defence - and therefore had a lesser manufacturing base than other urban areas, coupled with limited female working opportunities.\(^{262}\) There were burgeoning manufacturing industries in shipbuilding, metal works and engineering, dressmaking, baking and brewing, yet they were directly, or indirectly, linked to the Royal Navy, Dockyard and naval personnel. The relatively large clothing industry, with the distinctive industry of corset making, was established due to

\(^{259}\) “An Act to Authorize the Acquisition of Lands by the Admiralty with a View to the Extension of Portsmouth Dockyard,” Collection of the Public General Statutes Passed in the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Years of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, (London: George Edward Eyre & William Spottiswoodie, 1865), 514- 516; The Order in Council for the Regulation of the Naval Service, Vol. 2, (London: Harrison & Sons, 1864), 39-40; “Local Improvement,” Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 24\(^{th}\) November 1886. As part of this expansion, the Admiralty agreed to contribute towards the cost of a new pier (and landing) at The Hard accessible to the public, “Local Intelligence,” HTSC, 18\(^{th}\) September 1867.


\(^{261}\) Holbrook, Sunny Southsea, 29.

local market factors, namely the surplus of women dependent on extra income due to the absence of men in the services. Portmouth’s naval role also limited the capacity to conduct merchant trading, yet there was a maritime trade in goods such as wines, timber and fruit, and a distinct fishing trade, particularly oyster fishing, located in Portsmouth Town, both enduring despite the naval dominance of the port.

Portsmouth Harbour, bordering the towns examined here, was also home to the fleet of the Royal Navy, as it was a “splendid haven….which can afford welcome shelter to the whole of the British and half-a-dozen foreign navies,” and this meant it was “the second birthplace of every sailor.” Naval sailors thus formed the vast majority of the sea-going population of Portsmouth and had a determinable effect on its wider population. As an example, there was a notable increase in marriages after the end of the Crimean War in 1856, with the Registrar General noting this increase was directly linked to the return of “our gallant seamen from the Black Sea and Baltic.” There were also sizeable increases in numbers linked to shifts in national and global imperatives at key times throughout the period examined, with the Dockyard expansion drives, the initiation of the Naval Defence Act in 1889 and the naval arms race with Germany gaining momentum at the turn of the twentieth century. These moments led to an increase in the rise of single males in Portsmouth,

264 Temple-Patterson, Portsmouth, 103; “Shipping Schedules, Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901). Indeed, it was recorded in the year 1860 that there were 263 merchant vessels recorded in the Camber Docks, with a total tonnage of 16,222, and at the same period, 1,392 inwards coastwise vessels entering the Camber, 924 cleared outwards, and 279 inwards foreign vessels and 121 cleared outwards recorded, John King, The Channel Pilot, Part 1: South-West and South Coasts of England, Second Edition. (London: J.D.Potter, 1863), 179.
267 Margaret Hoad and Alfred Temple Patterson, Portsmouth and the Crimean War, The Portsmouth Papers, no. 19, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1973), 3; Riley and Chapman, “The Nineteenth Century,” 76.
particularly apparent in Portsea Town, as the Navy had no buildings or barracks in which to house sailors until the early twentieth century. Thus, many sailors remained on the hulks in harbour, stayed with kin and friends in port or resorted to the lodging houses and Sailors’ Homes.268

Indeed, once ashore, the areas sailors frequented became synonymous as spaces containing the worst, roughest streets, rife with prostitution and ‘harpies,’ drinking establishments, low lodging houses, slop-shops and brothels, representing an interrelated circle of vice, bearing all the hallmarks of a sailortown district.269 Portsmouth was a “world upon the water’s breast” and recognized by contemporaries as a sailortown in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century as it was, at the height of Georgian decadence, the “grand resort of the sons of Neptune,” evident in Thomas Rowlandson’s portrayal of Portsmouth Point.270 As Image 3 shows, Rowlandson preserves something of the appearance of Portsmouth’s sailortown and depicts the urban consequences of the navy and sailors’ presence in Portsmouth. As Land states, Rowlandson’s image captured the instance “where the city meets the navy and the city loses.”271 The city lost in terms of Portsmouth being a “hotbed of every species of vice and villainy, or rapacity and extortion.”272 Indeed, in 1860, the Chambers Journal labelled the waterfront area of Portsmouth as the “dirty sailortown of Portsmouth,” the only time Portsmouth is referred to as being a ‘sailortown’ in contemporary sources in the period of this thesis.273

However, as will be demonstrated below, whilst the label ‘sailortown’ may not be prevalent in contemporary depictions of Portsmouth, the descriptions and demographic make-up of Portsmouth was redolent of one, as “its atmosphere was charged with brine.”

Indeed, a sailortown area was observed by contemporaries to be located in Portsea Town, found in and around The Hard, with a remnant in Portsmouth Town, centred on The Point. As Henry Lucy, a Liverpudlian journalist, observed in 1874, sailortown in Portsmouth was past its heyday depicted by Rowlandson, but it was still there. He noted that a sailortown was present in the areas close to the water’s edge, places where sailors still clung to, as did the “naval air.” A visitor to Portsmouth observed a similar scene. The Hard and The Point were the “rendezvous of the fleet,” with the areas around these streets coming alive at nighttime due to sailors’ “irregular habits” which went against the grain of civilized, respectable and

274 “Our Ports and Harbours,” 73.
275 “Portsmouth and Its Dockyard,” 86 - 87.
acceptable behaviour. Sailors were seen to dominate these areas, even ruling it to some extent. As Charles Knight, publisher and author of the *Knights Excursions* series, advised his readers

Portsmouth and Portsea [are] anything but beautiful towns…not such as to induce one to linger amongst them….everything looks, and breathes, and smells of soldiers and sailors and docksmen – the three classes who rule the state of society there…one cannot fail to see how Jack-tar rules the taste of those regions.

Charles Dickens also observed this ‘ruling’ of sailors to his readers in his description of Portsea in *Household Words* in 1885. In his “A Yarn about Young Lions,” Dickens described The Hard as full of people swaying side-to-side akin to sailors on ship that fostered a catching “marine sympathy” around the area of Portsea, which he himself found hard to resist undertaking. For Dickens, this area was ‘different’ to the rest of Portsmouth due to the changes in languages, dress and appearances of people the closer one got to the “sea breeze.”

Thus, Portsea was seen to be a place that “thronged” with sailors, with The Hard being “a kind of inland quarter-deck” and The Point in Portsmouth Town known as “the Wapping of Portsmouth.” Together these areas were “flush with sailors,” a “devils acre,” with dens of prostitution, hives of poverty, a high number of drinking facilities, brothels and lodging houses, being the “most disgraceful” part of the town. Indeed, Portsmouth’s waterfront offered the hallmarks of a sailortown district as it was used to invoke the understanding and imagination of what a typical sailortown harboured and represented. Thus,

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277 “Scenes at Portsmouth,” 179.
279 Charles Dickens, “A Yarn about Young Lions,” *Household Words*, no. 11, (1885), 145.
282 For example, in a sermon written for the periodical *Leisure Hour*, Reverend Harry Jones, rector of St-George-in-the-East Church London, urged his readers to understand the need for religious peoples to enter the “wilderness” areas of the country by invoking Portsmouth’s sailortown as the frame for understanding this need, “think of him beholding, with a sad face,
Portsmouth was depicted in socio-cultural constructions and imagery as harbouring a sailortown area. However, as analysis of CEBs below corroborates, it was also a demographic entity. In studying the CEBs, a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ has been created which aids in identifying Portsmouth’s sailortown area, yet also allows for sailortown districts to be defined beyond places simply catering to sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore.

**Sailortown Prerequisite Model**

The term sailortown itself acknowledges the oceanic and the urban together, an oceanic sea-based space found on land. Whilst it is located on land, sailortown is seen as separate, set apart from the rest of the urban space, as it is perceived to be based on a transient, mainly male, seafaring population with tenuous links to land.\(^{283}\) This is perceived to be so as sailors lived in an isolated ‘wooden world’ which resulted in a distinct maritime culture, forged in isolation from the mainland and fostered in an all-male environment, thus, when ashore, sailors sought out their own, alienating themselves from shore communities.\(^{284}\) Moreover, Portsmouth, like Plymouth, fails to make the list of well-known sailortowns such as those in Liverpool, Wapping and Cardiff.\(^{285}\)

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As outlined in the introduction, the intention of this chapter is to show Portsmouth, as a naval port, did indeed contain a sailortown, and previous research has been too focused on merchant seamen and ports in defining sailortown areas. However, previous research is not dismissed as it has much to offer in terms of allowing a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ (Figure 6) to be established, aiding in the process of defining and locating sailortowns alongside the use of contemporary primary material. It should be noted that sailortown areas offer the differing elements of the model to varying extents, with some elements fulfilled in a greater extent by socio-cultural representations and to larger extents in differing port types. Yet the demographic framework, as this chapter sets out to do, needs to be analysed first to establish the physical and demographic foundations to a sailortown area which can then be compared to the moral geographical constructs of sailortowns and popular socio-cultural perceptions and representations of sailors.

Location is a key prerequisite. Sailortown must be lying somewhere between the land and sea in a coastal, dockland area, often located just behind the waterfront with ships in view forming the backdrop to it. A sailortown area

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must also have a large number of sailors, be it naval, merchant or fishing sailors. This number is overwhelming male, meaning sailortown is a space ashore predominantly for young men, with a specific spatial distribution evident in port. Following this, the number is, in the majority, youthful in age and single. Sailortown must have a so-called “Fiddlers Green” at its heart, being an area that has a main thoroughfare street through it, which is the hub of sailor activity, surrounded by streets and alleys with businesses and the local community supporting nautical peoples and activities. These distinct spaces and the businesses conducted there were, as Hermann Melville explains in *Billy Budd*, “that portion of the terraqueous globe providentially set apart for dance-houses, doxies and tapsters, in short, what sailors call a ‘fiddler’s green.’” Indeed, as folklorist Stan Hugill stated in his *Sailortown* book, every sailortown has “a Fiddlers Green of pubs, dance halls, groggeries and brothels…..to a sailor man, its main thoroughfare was usually some shit street and effluent maze of alleys.” Thus, sailortown centres on a Fiddler’s Green area, evident by the high concentration of associated sailortown businesses and trades, particularly drinking establishments, lodging houses and brothels. These places are the focal points within a sailortown area in terms of collaboration and maintaining networks, and as a point of collision with those outside of the sailortown area and its associated community.

Sailortown is also an area for distribution and barter, the giving, taking and making of goods and services, with its own marked characteristics, for example, having the same types of shops, where everything catered for the “nautical

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market” from slop-shops, outfitters to pawnbrokers. Sailortowns are also multi-national and ethnic in terms of social composition, and this is more prevalent in merchant ports and sailortown districts due to their more global trading connections. Women are involved in the provision of goods or services too, with their lives determined by the household and family arrangements in relation to male seafaring working patterns, thus a sailortown area often records a high number of one-parent families with women at its head and a high widow rate. Sailortown can also be identified due to the focus of reform and concern it receives from local elites, civic authorities, philanthropists, missionaries and social reformers, with sailortown areas often having homes, charities and missions located within them. As Lee notes, most ports show “an unusually high dependence on philanthropy and charity” often as social problems were more acute in port areas with the density and concentration of these problems marking them out for attention. Thus, the purpose of constructing this model is to add strength to the subsequent exploration of the CEBs, demonstrating the geographical area selected is the most likely place to locate a sailortown in the port of Portsmouth and, indeed, Portsmouth’s mid-late nineteenth century sailortown fulfilled many of these prerequisites.

Enumerating Portsmouth’s Sailortown

The first prerequisite to be examined demographically is the number of sailors recorded in the geographic area under study. As noted above, numbers are a central feature of sailortown, in particular, a high concentration of males who made a living on the sea. The geographic area examined shows a sailortown was present in Portsmouth from 1851 to 1901 numerically speaking, more so with a coastal interpretation placed on the results, since an urban approach alone identifies sailors in a town not a sailortown per se, as the numbers in

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293 This was noted by contemporaries in ports with a high proportion of sailors found there, Dolling, *Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum*, 38–61; Burton, “Boundaries and Identities,” 138; Stapleton, “The Admiralty Connection,” 242.
Figure 7 shows. Thus, the number of sailors identified as residing on land never reaches more than one thousand individuals, equating to only two to four per cent of the population of the geographic area examined at any one time.\textsuperscript{296} This in itself does not necessarily suggest a sailortown area in Portsmouth – more a town with sailors in it. However, when focus is shifted to a coastal borderland perspective and incorporates the crews enumerated on ships and vessels from 1861 to 1901, a numerically identifiable sailortown emerges, as evidenced in Figure 8.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart1.png}
\caption{Total Number of Sailors}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart2.png}
\caption{Total Number of Sailors Recorded Including Ships and Vessels}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{296} This calculation is based on the total population numbers enumerated in Portsea and Portsmouth Town, taken from “Census Reports,” \textit{PP}, (1851 – 1901).
Taken together the number of sailors becomes more significant, particularly from 1861 to 1891, as sailors represent between fourteen and nineteen per cent of the total population across the geographic area studied. The pattern which can be inferred from this is that sailors, mainly naval sailors, made up nearly one-fifth of the population; meaning approximately two in ten of the population in this area were sailors at any one time. Moreover, since this number is overwhelmingly male, it is evident a sailortown can be numerically identified as being located on the southwest coastal borderland area of Portsea Island, fulfilling the prerequisite of numbers and males as presented in the model (Figure 6).

However, when explored further, a more nuanced numeric basis to sailortown emerges. The number of males listed with a sea-going occupation is far higher in Portsea than Portsmouth Town across the period, with a notable increase from 1881 to 1891, as Figure 9 shows. There are two main reasons for this increase in Portsea. Firstly, the rise in naval recruitment numbers at this time is reflective of the increases in shipbuilding and imperial expansion and drives, and secondly, the opening of the Royal Sailors’ Home in Queen Street, Portsea, where a large number of single, male sailors were residing on census night meant numbers increased. The data also shows sailors were more concentrated in Portsea, and as their numbers increased here, they declined in Portsmouth Town. Yet this also works in the reverse. Thus, when the numbers are low in Portsea, they increase in Portsmouth Town. A study of the CEBs shows this is a coincidence since there is no evidence of a large number of sailors migrating from one town to the other.

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297 This calculation is based on the total population numbers enumerated in Portsea and Portsmouth Town, taken from “Census Reports,” PP, (1851 – 1901).
298 See Figure 3 for population in the towns increasing due to external factors and “Royal Sailors’ Home, Queen Street, Census Enumerators’ Notebooks, Portsea Town” HAMRG12/862–115–123, (1891).
299 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
Moreover, the concentration in Portsea is reflective of the wider shift from sail to steam taking place from the mid to late nineteenth century. With the increases in naval recruitment to man and power steam ships, the numbers of sailors into Portsmouth, specifically into Portsea, increased, as did the diversity in the origins and social make-up of sailors. With the Admiralty restricting trading movements in the waters around Portsea from the 1860s, this, in part, accounts for the decline in merchant sailors found there and the resultant dominance of naval sailors in the geographic area under examination. Furthermore, examining the types of sailors recorded residing in the towns, specific spatial residency patterns emerge and different types of sailors used areas in different ways, as indicated in Figure 10. Portsea Town, not unexpectedly, due to the Dockyard and stationing of naval ships on the Portsea side of Portsmouth Harbour, records a sailor population consisting of between fifty to ninety-five per cent naval sailors across the period, with the higher percentage realised in 1891 and 1901.

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300 Walton demonstrates this trend more widely, Walton, “A Great Improvement,” 27 – 57.
301 In 1891, naval sailors equated to ninety per cent of the recorded sailor population, rising to ninety-five per cent in 1901.
However, Portsmouth Town shows the opposite. The majority of sailors here are merchant or fishing sailors, representing between fifty-four to eighty-nine per cent of the sailor population in Portsmouth Town across the period, with a relatively significant number of fishermen found here, whereas only one is recorded in Portsea. 303 Also of note is the number of other sailor-types present. These sailors were based on pleasure boats, yachts and other ships not involved in trading or the navy, and even one declaring in a sailor-like fashion on the return that he was on board a ship “to find the world.” 304 When these results are merged, it is evident that naval sailors do indeed dominate the area examined, yet merchant seamen do represent between ten and twenty per cent of the type of sailors present in the coastal borderland area across the period studied here. Therefore, not just naval sailors fostered and influenced the demography and socio-cultural experience of sailortown in Portsmouth, and

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302 See discussion earlier in this chapter for the proportions these figures represented across the two towns.
303 Calculation based on the total number of sailors recorded in the CEBs, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” HAMRG11/1147, (1881); HAMRG12/861 – 862, (1891).
304 ‘Good News,’ “Shipping Schedules, Portsea Town,” HAMRG10/1134, (1871). Within this other category, women are included if they are recorded in ships and vessels in the returns, however they make-up less than two per cent of the total and this has been factored in when calculating the totals. It is also of note, whilst they are not included in this other group, Watermen formed a relatively large number in the area examined. Yet whilst not strictly sailors, they did work in a water-based occupation and interacted with the sailor population across the period see, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
maritime trade, despite Admiralty restrictions, still took place in the naval port of Portsmouth.  

Furthermore, these results show, demographically, as indicated Figure 11, there were two distinct sailortown areas in Portsmouth. One area which was naval in Portsea Town and one which was merchant in Portsmouth Town. Whilst this sailortown area supports previous research in claiming sailortowns declined in the nineteenth century, the results for Portsea show naval sailortown areas were growing, and in Portsmouth’s case, reaching its height in the 1890s. The type of vessels recorded in the shipping schedules also supports this. As the schedules show, from 1861 to 1881, merchant vessels were more numerous than naval ones, with naval ones only taking over from 1891. Thus, more widely, these results show previous research is based too heavily on merchant ports, as merchant-based sailortown areas were argued to be in decline from the mid-to-late nineteenth century, yet in contrast, naval ones were not. If anything, naval sailortowns took over from the declining merchant ones and became the ‘new’ form of sailortown in the mid-late nineteenth century.

Figure 11 – 1890s map showing the two sailortown areas located in Portsea and Portsmouth Town.

305 Appendix 7 and 8.
306 Rediker, Between the Devil, 27, 57; Burton, “The Work and Home Life,” see Chapter 7.
307 Appendix 8.
However, numbers and types of sailors are not the only requirement needed for an area to be identified as a sailortown; the area needs to have predominantly young and single sailors present. A study of the CEBs confirms this prerequisite was present in Portsmouth. Examination of the condition as to marriage data (evidenced in Figure 12), shows the majority of sailors residing in the area were indeed mostly single across the period studied. However, this was not always the case. As the results show, it is too simplistic to say this applied to all sailors. Indeed, data for Portsmouth Town shows, as indicated in Figure 12, marriage is the highest condition present among sailors along with an older age range existing.

![Figure 12](image_url)

Figure 12 – Charts showing the condition as to marriage of sailors in Portsmouth and Portsea Town, "Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town," (1851-1901).

Furthermore, in Portsea, nearly half of all sailors were married in 1851. When this is broken down further, an interesting correlation occurs. 1851 is the point where the lowest number of naval sailors and the highest number of merchant seamen are recorded. When the numbers of naval sailors increases, so too does the number of single sailors, peaking in 1891 at 577, representing a tripling in the number of single sailors from 1851. Whilst the data from Portsmouth Town shows marriage is the highest condition across the period, the peak in the number of single sailors occurs at the time when the highest
number of naval sailors is recorded here.\footnote{This peak was mainly due to sixteen Royal Navy Musicians lodging in Portsmouth Town, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsmouth Town,” HAMRG10/1137, (1871).} Therefore, it can be inferred from this data that merchant seamen and fishermen were more likely to be married than naval sailors were. Whilst individual thoughts and decisions cannot be ascertained in relation to marrying or not, the data does suggest merchant seamen and fishermen, in comparison to naval sailors as part of the military services, were perhaps in a more viable position to marry due to the nature of the work and trade they undertook in Portsmouth. Moreover, that sailors in Portsmouth Town were primarily recorded as originating from Hampshire and Portsmouth itself is also indicative of a more stable living pattern and of the businesses located, here being family-run ones. Furthermore, due to the volume of ship and naval schedules, a breakdown of condition as to marriage has not been undertaken, yet a distinct pattern is evident via an observation of the predominant conditions recorded. The majority of naval sailors were single, particularly naval ratings, and those on merchant or fishing vessels were more or less even in relation to being married or single.\footnote{“Shipping Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901); “Naval Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901). See also, Burton, “Whoring, Drinking,” 84 – 101; Lavery, Able Seamen, 88.} More widely, these results feed into the notion of the rise of the bachelor male which was becoming evident across Victorian society - a role that sailors fulfilled well in contemporary cultural representations.\footnote{Burton, “Boundaries and Identities,” 137 – 151; Burton, “Whoring, Drinking,” 94; Hugill, Sailortown, xix.}

Connected to condition as to marriage data, age data also confirms the majority of sailors were younger in both Portsea and Portsmouth Town, with nearly two-thirds of sailors recorded as being aged between fifteen and thirty, as displayed in \textit{Figure 13}. This is more apparent in Portsea, where naval sailors are concentrated. As the numbers of naval sailors increases, this age group equates to between fifty-four and seventy-six per cent of all sailors across the board with the majority of these, due to their younger age, being unmarried and predominantly residing in the Sailors’ Home, with many opting to reside in public houses and beerhouses too.\footnote{“Census Enumerator’s Notebooks for Portsea Town and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).} Those aged between thirty-one to fifty and fifty
to eighty, the majority of whom were married, remain constant across the period, showing older sailors were more integrated in the community than was seen to be the case by some contemporaries in Portsmouth. A similar pattern in all age group trends is observed in the naval hulk records too. However, Portsmouth Town represents a different pattern. Those aged fifteen to thirty generally decline across the period. This thus means that older sailors remain a constant factor in the make-up of the merchant sailortown area, except in 1871 when the highest number of naval sailors are recorded, as noted earlier. Taken together, the data shows that whilst the majority of sailors were indeed single, not all were. Those aged fifteen to thirty are the dominant age range of sailors across the period. Thus, sailortown in Portsmouth was largely youthful in age.\footnote{315}

![Figure 13 – Chart showing the age grouping of sailors in Portsea and Portsmouth Town, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).}

However, the number of married sailors and aged above thirty is significant.

\footnote{313}{This is also due to changes in naval recruitment patterns, in particular the setting up of schools and recruitment of boys to be trained by the Royal Navy such as St Vincent’s Hulk in Portsmouth Harbour. Lavery, \textit{Able Seamen}, 18-20, 89-91, 198 – 199, 255 -258.}

\footnote{314}{Figure 11. This is based on an observation by Reverend Dolling, Dolling, \textit{Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum}, 106. A study of naval and seamen pensioners in the area also suggests the majority were married, co-residing in family and extended family groups and followed similar spatial residency patterns to sailors based on occupation searches in, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).}

\footnote{315}{“Naval Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861 – 1901). Appendix 10. This is also reflective of the predominant age-range for Portsmouth as a whole, “Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population Tables,” vol.1, cxcix, 47; “Census of England and Wales, 1871, Population Abstracts,” vol. III, c.872, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1873), Table 5, 54; “Census of England and Wales, 1891,” c.7058, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1893 – 94), Table 2, 81.}
enough to show that generalisations about sailors being single, transient males need to be made with caution. Furthermore, that many sailors were married means a few observations about the role of women in sailortown areas can be advanced. The relatively high number of married sailors means women, and by extension the family and children, enabled sailors to retain a connection to land, with women, children and families helping to sustain these links.\textsuperscript{316} Women also formed a large part of the clothing industry discussed in the contextual section above, contributing to and maintaining family budgets and relationships when sailors were absent.\textsuperscript{317} This also meant there were many homes in which females directed the household and parented children, as Reverend Cyril Garbett, vicar of St Mary’s Church, Portsea, noted.\textsuperscript{318} This area also shows a relatively high number of widows. Whilst it cannot be determined if this number is specifically connected to sailors, it is of note many were in the position of running sailortown businesses, particularly drinking establishments and lodging houses.\textsuperscript{319} Whilst this role will be explored further in Chapter 3, what can be inferred from these general observations about the role of women, and by extension children and the family in Portsmouth’s sailortown, is that they performed a key role in maintaining and fostering sailortown areas, more so in the absence of male sailors’ as breadwinners, fathers and husbands.\textsuperscript{320} This is particularly evident when co-residing groups are examined, revealing mutual networks of assistance being established in sailortown areas.

As outlined in the methodology section, using co-residing groups offers a more meaningful interpretation of sailors’ living arrangements and patterns, than simply basing the interpretation on the standard relation to head groupings used in the CEBs. The co-residency patterns, as shown in Figure 14, indicate from 1851 to 1871 the dominant co-residing group is the family unit, and from 1881

\begin{enumerate}
\item Lavery, \textit{Able Seamen}, 86; Land, “The Many Tongued Hydra,” 143; Dolling, \textit{Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum}, 20.
\item Garbett, \textit{The Work of a Great Parish}, 147.
\item Burton, “The Work and Home,” 256.
\end{enumerate}
to 1901, when the overall numbers of sailors increases, lodging becomes the predominant form of co-residency. This is particularly evident in Portsea with lodging forming between fifty to seventy per cent of co-residing groups from 1881, reflecting Dockyard expansions, the rising number of naval recruits and higher frequency of more regulated shore leave for naval sailors.\textsuperscript{321} Whilst, overall, the family unit of co-residency declines across the period, in Portsea it still represents nearly a quarter of all co-residing groups. Portsmouth Town, as before, is opposite to Portsea Town. Here, the family unit is the most dominant co-residing group across the decades, representing between seventy to eighty per cent of all co-residing groups. This can be linked to the larger number of married sailors identified here, particularly those within the thirty-one to fifty age range.\textsuperscript{322} Two other key co-residing groups are also evident for sailors - those co-residing with parents and extended family members. When merged with the family unit data a telling pattern emerges. The number of sailors co-residing within a family group becomes quite significant, representing between thirty to sixty per cent at any one time based on the temporal 'snapshots' the CEBs provide. Moreover, across both areas, as the number of naval sailors increases, there is also significant rise in lodging as a co-residency group. However, in Portsmouth Town where the number of naval sailors is lower, family co-residency is at its height, coinciding with the increased number of married sailors identified earlier.\textsuperscript{323}

\textsuperscript{321} “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901). For external factors contributing to this rise, see the discussion earlier in this chapter, and for shore leave, the introduction to this thesis.

\textsuperscript{322} “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901). See also, Appendix 10.

\textsuperscript{323} See Appendix 9 for marriage figures.
When the two areas are merged, family co-residing groups actually form a significant number of all co-residing groups, as shown in Figure 15. These co-residency results are important as they begin to dispel the idea that sailors did not maintain ties to land, particularly so since the number of family co-residing groups shows from one third to a half of all sailors were residing with family members at any one time. This thus shows, not only did sailors have and maintain kinship ties to land; they were also influenced by socio-cultural experiences on land within a familial and communal setting. Moreover, the
numbers of lodging co-residency groups increases at times when sailors with limited familial ties to Portsmouth had somewhere to reside other than the ships. Many resided with those working in maritime-based occupations similar to the sailor’s own occupation or service. For example, with the increases in naval recruitment from the 1870s onwards, more naval sailors are recorded as lodging in the private dwellings of those also in the naval service, indeed; more often than not they were lodging with those of the same or similar rank. Thus, what can be inferred from this is that in the absence of familial ties, as previous research identified, the occupational tie prevails, transposing from the workplace to life ashore. These results show delving beyond sweeping generalisations about sailors is important as many were tied to landed networks and the urban experiences of port life. Furthermore, when the opportunity was present, many sailors chose to stay in lodging houses and Homes rather than remain on hulks. Demographically, this concentrated single, young sailors into Portsea. Thus, the opening of the Royal Sailors’ Home, rather than abating the perceived socio-cultural side-effects of sailortown and its consequences, actually helped it to grow and sustain itself by giving young, single sailors a stronger spatial identity and connection than before. A further pattern is also of note. In contrast to the majority of family co-residing sailors being located in dwellings further back from the waterfront streets, lodging sailors were concentrated in the streets on the water’s edge and in the main thoroughfare streets. This thus further exacerbated the perceived negative consequences the presence of sailors had on the social and moral condition of Portsmouth.

Co-residing patterns also have correlations with places of origin data. Whilst this data does not allow us to determine an individual’s cultural or ethnic origin, the patterns expressed are revealing. Whilst a prerequisite for identifying

324 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
325 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” (1851-1901). This is also, in part, reflective of the shore leave arrangements in place across the mid-late nineteenth century, particularly given that many crews could leave the ship at the end of working day or weekend, and that privilege leave was at the discretion of an individual ship’s captain, which therefore means it is likely sailors would come ashore with their shipmates and opt to reside with them, see discussion in the introduction of this thesis and “The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Navy and the Admiralty Instructions for the Government of Her Majesty's Naval Service,” (London: HMSO, 1862), 131 – 144.
326 See, for example, suggestions made by Rediker, Between the Devil; Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, Chapter 5; Burton, “The Work and Home Life,” Chapter 5 – 7.
sailortown, as suggested in previous research, is based on its multi-ethnic and national composition, naval sailortowns like Portsmouth do not represent this to the extent that merchant sailortowns do given their more global, trading connections. Moreover, whilst we cannot infer from census data whether the origins of sailors found in Portsmouth indicate there was a multi-ethnic composition present, the composition was, to an extent, multi-national in terms of places of origins, as Figure 16 shows. Whilst two-thirds of sailors are listed as originating from England across the period, the remaining third originated principally from Ireland (including Northern Ireland), Scotland and Wales. These results thus support previous research in demonstrating that naval sailors were chiefly recruited from the British Isles. Whilst this is not surprising given the Navy was a British military service, to leave the analysis there misses important nuances. For example, the number of naval sailors originating from England is high in Portsea Town. Yet the number of those originating from Ireland (and Northern Ireland), Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands and from abroad, all increase across the period. Thus, whilst England remains the principal place of origin, other places of origin do increase in real terms across the period. This reflects not only a microcosm of urbanisation and migration patterns in Victorian Britain, yet also changes in naval recruitment patterns. This becomes more evident when sailors’ places of origin are broken down to county and town level.

The data for Portsea also reflects the traditional recruitment patterns of the navy, in terms of sailors being recruited from naval dockyard and port areas, and agricultural places over industrial ones. Whilst this remains, when naval recruitment remits are widened to inland areas from the 1860s, a higher number


328 This is also evident in more general terms from the Census Reports, see “Census of Great Britain 1851, Population Tables,” PP, cvi; “Census of England and Wales, 1881, General Report,” c.3797, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1883), 52. For discussion of the Irish in Portsmouth, see Daly, “Crown, Empire and Home Rule.”


330 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).

331 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901); Lavery, Able Seamen, 49.
of sailors are recorded as originating from the industrial counties, with most of these being naval stokers and engineers, further reflecting the conversion from sail to steam from the mid-late nineteenth century.332

Figure 16 – Charts showing the places for origin of sailors in the geographic area examined as a comparative point 1851 – 1891. “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).

In 1851, the key counties and towns of origins are Hampshire – Portsmouth, Devonshire – Devonport, Kent – Woolwich, Dorset – Bridport, Middlesex and London. For Ireland, it is Cork – Queenstown and Dublin - Dublin City for Northern Island, Mid-Lothian – Edinburgh for Scotland and Pembrokeshire – Pembroke for Wales. As the nineteenth century progresses, there is a notable rise in the number drawn from Sussex - Chichester, Surrey - Greenwich, Yorkshire-Hull and Lancashire - Liverpool and Manchester.333 This pattern is reflective of the one observed on the naval hulks and training ships in port too, and further naval recruitment changes in 1890s whereby recruits were allocated to Portsmouth from the catchment area of the Southern Counties and London.334 It is of note that all of these places were either naval dockyards or ports, thus suggestive of some form of maritime and naval acculturation being

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333 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
334 “Naval Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861-1901). The rise in the number from Northern counties is also reflective of London being a catchment area for deployment to Portsmouth, with London being a recruitment ‘hub’ for those from the Northern counties and regions, Lavery, *Able Seamen*, 131 -132.
present in sailors before they arrived in Portsmouth. Portsmouth Town mirrors Portsea in that the vast majority of sailors originate from England; however, it is less multi-national than Portsea since those originating outside of England are never more than fourteen at any one time.\(^{335}\)

Another important trend is evident from this data. The majority of sailors across the area who originated from Hampshire were from Portsmouth itself. In 1851, ninety-six per cent of sailors from Hampshire originated from Portsmouth. This declines across the period to sixty-two per cent, more so in Portsea, as the number of naval sailors increases from a wider origination area.\(^{336}\) Yet in the merchant and fishing area of Portsmouth Town, across the period, nearly two-thirds of sailors were from Hampshire, with eighty-five per cent of sailors originating from Portsmouth itself.\(^{337}\) These results allow us to infer three things. Firstly, when the areas are merged, sailortown, whilst becoming multi-national, retains a distinct remnant of individuals localised in their origins and sailors in Portsmouth largely originate from England. Secondly, maritime acculturation, in relation to place of origin, coupled with co-residency patterns, does play some role in forming and sustaining sailortowns. Lastly, sailortown in Portsmouth was concurrent with an occupational identity but also local ones, thus suggesting local identities, networks and ties also played some part in sailors’ socio-cultural experiences and ties to land and each other. Furthermore, this indicates that connections to ‘location’ can be a key influence on sailors, not just in terms of cultural conditioning, yet also in influencing their spatial and residential choices and patterns. Indeed, this is evident when the street-level composition of Portsmouth’s sailortown is considered as a network of neighbourhoods.

\(^{335}\) “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
\(^{336}\) “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901).
\(^{337}\) “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901). Other notable areas for sailors in Portsmouth Town are Sussex-Shoreham and Chichester, and for fishermen, Hampshire-Portsmouth or the Isle of Wight-Cowes. Here, it useful to refer to the shipping schedules since they record the homeport of the ships in port. Whilst the crew may not necessarily be from the same place, this data enables one to see the type of maritime activity taking place and a pattern as to where sailors were arriving into Portsmouth from, with vessels from London, Goole, Sunderland, Whitby, and Cowes to Colchester recorded, with a small number from the Channel Islands and Northern Europe from Norway, Sweden and across the Channel from France also recorded. However, the vast majority of the vessels’ homeport were listed as Portsmouth for’ naval, merchant and fishing vessels, “Shipping Schedules for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1861-1901).
‘Sailorhoods’

As shown above, location is key to identifying any sailortown district. In Portsmouth, there is evidence of a general sailortown area existing, composed of two distinct occupational sailortown districts. However, a study of the CEBs reveals what is more apparent is the number of sailor-orientated neighbourhoods, or ‘sailorhoods.’ Across the period, as shown in Figure 17, there are three distinct sailorhoods in Portsmouth.

![Figure 17 – Map highlighting the three sailorhood areas](image)

The merchant sailortown area of Portsmouth Town has one distinct sailorhood area located near to The Point, with Broad Street, running off the High Street, as its main thoroughfare street, and the Fiddler’s Green area surrounding it.\(^{338}\) The naval district of Portsea has two sailorhood areas, located either side of Queen Street, as the main thoroughfare street of both these sailorhoods, acting as the joining point between the two sailorhood areas, with one sailorhood

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located behind The Hard, being the Fiddler’s Green area, and the other sailorhood surrounding the Dockyard. The evidence of these sailorhoods suggests, whilst culturally sailortown was perceived to be a vast ‘other’ space, demographically it was located in a few streets built upon occupational, familial and local ties. Moreover, as the ‘snapshots’ of the CEB research reveal, sailors did not occupy the whole space as one conglomerate mass. They were concentrated in and around several streets within the sailorhood areas, which were not only along the immediate waterfront space but also situated further back from the water’s edge, with a typical sailorhood street shown in Image 4. Thus, the streets sailors resided in extended back into the urban heart of Portsmouth. Crucially, their residential spatial patterns are indicative of clustering not segregation. Thus, in Portsmouth’s case, sailortown was not a maritime-ghetto on land. Therefore, what sailors’ spatial and residential patterns from the CEBs highlight is the interconnected and interrelated nature of coastal living in ports and between sailors and wider port communities. Charting the changes in the sailorhoods over time reveals interesting patterns as to the evolving nature of a sailortown district and the relationship between sailors and space.

Image 4 – Blossom Alley near to Hawke Street (c.1890), www.porttowns.port.ac.uk date last accessed 8th June 2015

339 As with Portsmouth Town, contemporary evidence also support this, Wayland, Wayland’s Guide, 125; Knight, Knight’s Excursions, 6.
In Portsea, as the maps in Figure 18 show, far from being located right on the waterfront where sailortown areas are assumed to be, the sailorhoods that made-up sailortown are located in the complex maze of streets behind the water front. In 1851, the highest concentrations of sailors are found in the two streets behind The Hard - Havant and Hawke Street. There are also two further high concentrations in Unicorn Street, to the side of the Dockyard and St Georges Square, located off The Hard and Ordnance Row, with smaller concentrations in and around the side streets and passages running off these streets. Whilst only a small number of streets contain a high number of sailors at this time, the beginnings of the sailorhoods do take shape. The sailorhoods become more distinctive into the 1870s, with a further expansion and concentration taking place. Havant Street, located just behind The Hard, remains a stronghold, as does The Hard itself and these streets now drew in more of the surrounding streets from Albion Street, Bishop Street to Orange Street. Unicorn Street also retains a relatively high-level concentration of sailors, with an expansion into the surrounding streets, notably Cumberland Street, Cross Street, King Street and Prince George’s Street. There is also an expansion besides the Dockyard in Marlborough Row and from Queen Street to York Place. Moreover, it is also of note that there is little evidence of clustering based on roles or ranks save for naval engineers, with their designated lodging accommodation located in Lion Terrace.\(^{340}\) Indeed, while a small number of naval officers are recorded in the CEBS as residing in these sailorhoods on census night, their residency patterns shows there is little spatial segregation from more junior ratings or the sailortown community more widely, in the geographic area under study.\(^{341}\)

\(^{340}\) This was originally a designated lodging house for naval engineer’s located close the Mill dam barracks, later becoming the Royal Naval Engineer’s Club, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town – Lion Terrace” (1851-1901).

\(^{341}\) “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town – Lion Terrace” (1851-1901). It was well-know that the majority of naval officers opted to reside or the lodge in the Southsea area of Portsmouth, Field, The Battle of Southsea, 3; Holbrook, Sunny Southsea, 3-7; Anon, Up to date Pleasure Guide, 68, 93 – 95
As identified earlier, with the increase in naval recruitment numbers, higher amounts of regulated shore leave granted, Dockyard expansions and rise in the number of single, young sailors without familial ties lodging in Portsmouth (namely utilizing the Royal Sailors’ Home and Sailors’ Welcome opened in 1866), Queen Street now held the highest concentration of sailors. This, in part, contributes to the numerical height of Portsmouth’s sailortown, as demonstrated earlier. Indeed, whilst this would suggest more sailors were ‘temporary’ residents in Portsmouth, many of those came from the local area or near-by counties, and there remained a high number of sailors residing with families. Thus, by 1891, when numerically sailortown was at its height, the spatial concentration hardens, with a higher concentration found in Cumberland Street, replacing Unicorn Street as a high-density sailor street in the sailorhood beside the Dockyard. All the streets surrounding Cumberland Street now contain

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342 “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” (1851-1901); For Sailors’ Homes and sailors’ origins, see, “Royal Sailors’ Homes, Census Enumerators’ Notebooks, Portsea Town,” (1861 – 1901);
sailors of various roles and ranks, reflecting the increasing expansion of this sailorhood area, with a rise in the number of naval stokers being evident due to the higher numbers recruited with the technological shifts from sail to steam and increase in shipbuilding in response to the Anglo-German arms race.\textsuperscript{343} The sailorhood area behind The Hard now extends back towards Landport, with Queen Street remaining the main thoroughfare street. The streets surrounding The Hard to the brothel street of White’s Row further contributes to the concentration and distinctiveness of this sailorhood area, with numbers increasing in Hawke Street, Butcher Street and Camden Alley, although the number in Havant Street declined from 1871 due to the Royal Sailors’ Home expansion into this street.\textsuperscript{344} There was also an overspill into the area located at the end of The Hard and Ordnance Row, with Britain Street and Cross Street now also containing a high number of sailors.

Whilst the Portsea sailorhoods concentrate and expand, in Portsmouth Town, as with other CEB data, a reversed pattern occurs, with only a single sailorhood evident, located on the waters-edge around Portsmouth Point to the Camber Docks, as Figure 19 indicates.

\textsuperscript{343} “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” (1851-1901). For rise in the recruitment if naval stokers, see, Lavery, \textit{Able Seamen}, 126 – 128.

\textsuperscript{344} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{Daily News}, 15\textsuperscript{th} September 1855; “Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle}, 15\textsuperscript{th} February 1890.
In 1851, a relatively large number of merchant seamen are evident in East and Tower Street, along with Seagers Court. By the 1870s, the spatial concentration hardens in the above streets, yet there is also an expansion down to the water’s edge to Bath Square and further back to Oyster Street and St Thomas’ Street. This becomes more evident by 1891. Thus, by 1891, East Street is now the prominent street, with Broad Street and Seagers Court only retaining a small number of merchant seamen, namely due to the concentration hardening around The Point. Oyster Street and St Thomas’ Street also remain as strongholds, yet there is no expansion beyond these streets. Indeed, that there is no further spatial expansion indicates this sailorhood area, based on its social and demographic make-up, remained a consistent and constant one. Moreover, these results also suggest, in comparison to naval sailors, merchant seamen and fishermen were less spatially integrated within the wider port community since they exhibit a closer spatial density pattern to one another. Crucially, the spatial mapping of sailors and their sailorhood areas reveals that single sailors are concentrated in the main thoroughfare streets, and sailors whom were married or residing with families were largely found in the maze of streets surrounding the thoroughfares, providing the ‘backbone’ to the sailorhoods and sailortown district more widely. Furthermore, as will be explored in Chapter 3, it
is here in the sailorhoods that the concentration of businesses dependent on sailor custom and commonly associated with sailortown areas are to be found, indicating they too supported the maintenance of the sailorhoods, providing more than simply catering to sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore. Indeed, this close spatial and communal relationship also helped to sustain sailortown life and culture, forming part of the backbone to sailortown’s existence in Portsmouth.\(^\text{345}\) To outsiders, the sailorhoods were engulfed by temptation for sailors, since they contained “diseased spots which fester and corrupt…..where our soldiers and sailors mostly spend their time.”\(^\text{346}\) The correlating spatial and communal relationships fostered, as one missionary noted, “overwhelming…local peculiarities so great, [with] the drinking interest was so strong,” that the presence of sailors was connected to

no less than a thousand drink-shops, with dancing-saloons and other nefarious premises [that] batted upon this wealth, the greater part of which was spent on drinking and debauchery.\(^\text{347}\)

This, thus ensured the sailortown district of Portsmouth, and the sailors found there, became a focal point for reform.\(^\text{348}\)

**Conclusion**

A study of the CEBs shows the sailortown area present in Portsmouth demographically fits many of the elements outlined in the prerequisite model and demonstrates naval ports did contain sailortown districts. Whilst Portsmouth’s sailortown may not have been as prominent when compared to the sailortown areas in Liverpool or London, it nonetheless existed beyond a mere imagined projection. Sailortown was a physical and social entity with a

\(^{345}\) See the type of businesses located in the two towns, from Naval Outfitters to Pawn-brokers. “Census Enumerators' Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1851-1901) and Chapter 3 on the businesses of sailortown in Portsmouth.

\(^{346}\) Dolling, *Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum*, 132 – 133; quote 134; “A Visit to the Sailors’ Home at Portsmouth,” *The Leisure Hours: A Family Journal of Instruction and Recreation*, no. 129, (1854), 382. The author of this work describes sailors as victims of the “artful and vicious [that] lie in wait for them.”

\(^{347}\) “Our Soldiers and Sailors At Home,” *Good Words*, no. 24, (1883), 171.

\(^{348}\) There was seen to be great need for this in ports such as Portsmouth, “Our Soldiers and Sailors At Home,” 174; “The Sailor’s Welcome, Portsea,” *The Sunday at Home: A Family Magazine for Sabbath Reading*, no. 1466, (1882), 346 – 348.
demographic basis, as analysis of the CEBs corroborates. Whilst the sailor is perceived as the archetypal roaming man, free of ties, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that this is a generalization not a given. The CEB research shows sailors maintained more ties to land than previously suggested and their lives and experiences were not necessarily divorced from coastal, urban communities. Indeed, as many sailors originated from areas close to the sea and resided in familial co-residing groups, it is fair to suggest maritime acculturation began at home.\(^{349}\) Moreover, by placing sailors in the temporal, spatial and social contexts of the CEBs, it is evident they were not randomly distributed, but clustered together.\(^{350}\) It is important to observe though that this clustering was not tantamount to segregation. Sailors, as the remainder of this thesis will show, were not the only people to found in these areas. Indeed, whilst culturally sailortown, sailors and its community residing within it were seen to be different by others, demographically and spatially sailortown was not a vast homogenous ‘other’ space, rather it was a network of integrated and interconnected sailorhoods. Whilst the CEBs only offer temporal ‘snapshots’ as to the composition of Portsmouth’s sailortown, the patterns and trends they reveal show, whilst sailors ebbed and flowed through the port over time, their presence, as an occupational group remained a continuous one. The CEB research also allows us to infer that whilst the sea influenced sailors’ socio-cultural frames, they were equally taken from landed experiences, showing sailors cannot just be understood as part of the sea or Navy alone. Moreover, naval sailors can be seen beyond being just a socio-cultural symbol, as previous research has advanced.\(^{351}\) As this chapter has shown, sailors were also a socio-cultural entity, and this offers another facet to historians’ understanding of the Royal Navy’s relationship with British society and culture from the mid-nineteenth century. This importantly reveals that sailors’ influences and experiences were multifaceted ones, embracing differing spatial realities at different points in their lives.

\(^{351}\) Donald Leggett, “Navy the Nation,” 151; Rüger, “Nation, Empire and Navy: Identity Politics in the United Kingdom 1887 – 1914,” 159 – 187; Conley, From Jack Tar.
This chapter also reveals wider points about port-areas. Portsmouth is not unlike other nineteenth century urban centres. Yet by using a port as its focus, the research here offers another dimension to urban history debates by providing an example of how urban centres developed, as well as reflecting many of the special demographic characteristics associated with ports.\textsuperscript{352}

Portsmouth is also reflective of the national urbanization process underway in mid-late nineteenth century Britain along with the shifting movements in global imperatives. In this respect, it is a dual port-area as the impact and effects of urbanization, and the impact and effects of being at the centre of the defence of realm and empire are evident. Therefore, the research here also represents the diversity of local contexts in wider debates within maritime history, urban history and port histories, as well discourses surrounding sailors and sailortowns. It demonstrates establishing the demography of sailortown is important for exploring its socio-cultural frameworks. This is because it offers a ‘bench-mark’ through which to test and explore how far the constructions of the ‘imagined’ and moral geography of sailortown areas relate to its physical and spatial foundations, as the remainder of this thesis will explore - starting with the business of the sailortown.

Chapter 3 - ‘A Devil’s Acre?’: The Business of Sailortown

Introduction

Always there is that same fringe of shops which in one way or another make their livelihood out of the seafaring community…the same saloons and bars…for the sea sets its sign-manual unmistakably upon its border kingdoms in many ways on its inhabitants, on its atmosphere and last, but by no means least, on the business that is done there.\(^\text{353}\)

Cicely Fox Smith’s depiction of the close relationship between sailors, sailortown and its businesses reaffirmed popular perceptions that sailortown was a “world of sordid pleasure, unlimited vice and lashings of booze.”\(^\text{354}\) Three primary businesses were seen to cater for this - drinking establishments, brothels and lodging houses. They formed the archetypical anchors of sailortown districts and their presence fulfils a prerequisite element in identifying a sailortown area, as outlined in the model proposed in Chapter 2. Thus, the focus of this chapter will be centred on these businesses and their associated trades of drink, prostitution and lodgings. These businesses have been selected to show, whilst they exacerbated sailortown districts being perceived as socially and morally unstable areas, they also served important roles and functions in maintaining sailortown areas and its associated culture. This exploration will be undertaken via a detailed analysis of all the Census Enumerators’ Notebooks (CEBs) for Portsea and Portsmouth Town 1851 to 1901, examination of a decadal range of Trade Directories from 1850 to 1911 and a survey of newspapers and governmental records. Whilst the businesses all have wide-ranging and important histories, it is not the intention of this chapter to offer these histories.

The aim of this chapter is to assess the extent to which these businesses were spatially evident in Portsmouth’s sailortown area, and explore the role these businesses played in the functioning of sailortown alongside their relationships.

with sailors and the wider port community. Moreover, this chapter seeks to look beyond the view that sailortown’s businesses simply catered to sailors’ entertainment ashore and merely epitomized the social and moral instability traditionally associated with sailortown districts. Thus, it will be argued that the core businesses under study here, whether owned by males or females, were central in supporting Portsmouth’s sailortown area as they were closely entwined with the nature and structure of the sailorhoods. They formed part of the ‘backbone’ of these neighbourhoods, shaping and sustaining these areas as sailor-orientated ones. In turn, they enabled a street-level socialization and culture to be fostered, facilitating the fashioning of a sailortown culture, as will be explored in Chapter 4. Thus, by spatially mapping the three businesses under study, this chapter will show that sailortowns can be understood beyond simply being spaces of sex and excess privileging men over women, or as spaces sailors manipulated or were exploited in. Indeed, the relationships between sailors and sailortown traders are more multi-faceted than previous research has allowed for.

As with wider research on ports and sailortowns, examination of sailortown’s businesses has largely focused on merchant contexts, particularly on the business and practice of crimping (or shanghaiing) and its close connections to those running lodging houses and drinking establishments. Whilst in merchant sailortowns, crimping was indeed a central business, in naval sailortowns, the practice of impressment (or press-ganging) was the predominant business connected to sailortown trades, particularly in Georgian

Britain. However, with the increasing professionalization of the Royal Navy in Victorian Britain, and introduction of continuous service from 1853, the trade of impressment in naval ports like Portsmouth was eradicated by the period of this study. Thus, the focus given to the trades of entrapment inculcates the traditional view of sailors’ experiences of the businesses of sailortown as being one of “distrust” and as victims. There is no doubt that many sailors did hold a level of distrust to, and were victims of, those running businesses in sailortowns. However, leaving the analysis of sailors as being merely victims of sailortown’s traders is too simplistic, as it misses the opportunity to examine the businesses’ roles in sustaining sailortown areas. For example, Marcus Rediker argues that seamen’s lives afloat and ashore were centred in proletarian reaction and resistance to capitalist exploitation. Thus, the businesses in sailortown areas, particularly public houses, are viewed as sites sailors used to establish resistance-information networks. Valerie Burton, in adopting a gendered approach to sailors’ lives ashore, argues sailortown businesses and the spaces they occupied served to further male agency over women. To her, sailortown was “invested with distinct notations of gender and sexuality related to an imagined construction of a transient, male seafaring population,” and sailors were a “privileged spender in the consumer relations of shore society.” Simply put, the world of the ship was “recreated on shore in the brothels,

358 Fox Smith, Sailortown Days, 9.
lodging houses and public houses of port towns,” catering for “sailortown binges...[and the] seafarers’ need for sex and drink.”\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^1\) Moreover, as Fingard before her, Burton argues sailortown businesses did not “exist outside of the class relations of the contemporary capitalistic marketplace.”\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^2\)

However, Daniel Vickers’ work on Salem’s sailortown challenges Burton’s conclusions. He argues sailors, their kinship ties, friendship networks and relationships to businesses found there, were bound by a tie of markets, creditors and debtors which reflected the “chains of personal dependency,” not class stratification per se.\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^3\) Crucially, Vickers argues women dominated these chains of dependency and were often at the hierarchical apex of them.\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^4\) As he identifies, drinking establishments and the provision of lodgings were a “common and lucrative business” for females, particularly widows.\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^5\) Indeed, in running such businesses they were able to carve out roles for themselves.\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^6\)

Moreover, as Yrjö Kaukiainen argued in his study of Finnish sailors in ports, sailors and the businesses of sailortown was a mutually exploitative relationship irrespective of gender divisions. As Kaukiainen argues, the exploitation occurred between sailors and those running businesses in sailortown, as “what mattered to him [a sailor] is the time he spent ashore...[and] this was also what


\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^4\) Vickers and Walsh, Young Men and the Sea, Chapter 5.

\(^3\)\(^6\)\(^5\) Vickers, Young Men and the Sea, 154 – 156.

mattered to the publicans and other purveyors of personal services in sailortown. Thus, debates on sailortown’s businesses are hitherto centred on them being socialization centres for resistance and sites which advanced male agency over women. Indeed, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the spatial interrelation of the trades of drink, prostitution and lodgings in sailortown districts, or the extent to which they sustained them. Whilst Vickers has shown women could create and shape business roles for themselves, he does not show how this influenced the street-orientated life and culture of sailortown areas. What is also missing is an assessment as to how the three businesses contributed to demographic foundations of sailortown areas. Thus, by spatially mapping the three businesses under study, this chapter progresses beyond sailortowns simply being seen as spaces of sex and excess, revealing the relationships between sailors, sailortown traders and the wider community was more multi-faceted than previous research has allowed for.

A Note on Methodology for Quantitative Sources Used

This chapter utilizes a mixture of quantitative and qualitative sources to explore the businesses of sailortown allowing a demographic and spatial exploration to be undertaken, as well as an assessment as to how sailors and the wider port community interacted with these businesses. However, the quantitative sources used to establish the demographic aspects of this study are not without their challenges. Thus, the rationale for using these sources needs to be outlined first. The two sources utilized here are the CEBs from 1851 to 1901 and local Trade Directories from 1850 to 1911, covering the same geographic area of focus in Chapter 2. The inherent problems with the CEBs were discussed in detail in the previous chapter so will not be repeated here. However, discussion about the specific problems in relation to recording and identifying drinking establishments, brothels and lodging houses is needed. It is also of note that many of the premises and places under examination here could operate as a drinking establishment and brothel, lodging house and a brothel, a lodging house and drinking establishment, or all three simultaneously. Therefore, where

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premises are identified or recorded as having more than one trade running from the premises they are counted under each of the three categories, as the numbers of each business type and spatial pattern of the businesses is of importance here. However, some fluidity in interpretation is needed when considering brothels and factoring in unlicensed drinking and lodging establishments as these were not recorded in the CEBs or Trade Directories.

In regards to drinking establishments, it is widely accepted by historians working with census records in this area that the CEBs underestimate the number and level of drinking places in a given locality. The CEBs also do not reveal the scale or size of a drinking establishment. Moreover, Portsmouth, like many port-town areas, had a large number of unlicensed beerhouses and these were unlikely to have been recorded in the CEBs.\(^{368}\) The other main issue with under-recording is that many keepers of such establishments held two occupations. For example, in 1871, William Rogers ran *The Antelope* beerhouse in Hanover Street, Portsea Town, as denoted in the address column of the CEB, yet his profession is listed in the occupation column as “cow keeper.”\(^{369}\) This issue, in part, can be overcome with a reading of both the occupation and address columns in tandem so there is no reliance on either column being used in isolation to record data into the database. However, whilst numerically the under-recording in CEBs presents a problem, much like the methodology outlined in Chapter 2, it is the overall spatial patterns charted over time that are important here. Thus, whilst an underestimated physical count may affect density-level analysis, it does not overly affect the spatial patterns identified, as Paul Jennings notes in his census study of drink retailers in Bradford.\(^{370}\)

The three main drinking establishments explored here follows the hierarchy found in the Victorian drinking establishment industry with distinctions made between ‘public houses,’ ‘hotels’ and ‘beerhouses.’ Between the first two types there is little distinction other than the label given to them in occupational and

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\(^{369}\) William Rogers recorded in “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks Portsea Town,” HAMRG10/1131-16-89, (1871).

trading classifications, as both could offer drinking facilities, accommodation and food. Moreover, the keepers of such establishments are listed interchangeably as “hotel keeper/manager,” “innkeepers,” “licensed victuallers,” “victuallers” or “publicans.” However, in keeping with the hierarchy of source recording, where a hotel is clearly identified in the CEBs they have been recorded as such to denote that they were not drinking establishments per se. Thus, the more obvious distinction was between public houses and beerhouses. Whilst all drinking establishments required a license to sell alcohol, from 1830 with the introduction of the Beerhouse Act, sale of beer was permitted with the purchase of a license from the justices allowing beerhouses or beershops to open and trade freely. This thus effectively created a two-tier drinking system. Public houses were subject to the 1828 Retail Brewers Act meaning local magistrates issued their licenses and police inspections could be undertaken at any time. However, beerhouse owners could simply buy a license to operate until the 1869 Wine and Beerhouse Act was introduced, after which local magistrates were given the authority to issue and renew licenses. Even after the introduction of this Act, beerhouses remained a distinct type of drinking establishment as, unlike public houses or hotels offering accommodation and food, they were limited to selling beer. Thus, for CEB purposes, the distinction was often clearly made in the recording of drinking establishments and their keeper’s occupations. Moreover, the hierarchy and distinctions between establishments can be maintained with closer accuracy by cross-

371 Whilst Wine, Beer and Spirit merchants were also recorded in the CEBs, they are excluded from this hierarchy as it is not clear from the CEBs whether they sold and served alcohol on their premises and therefore cannot be proved as a drinking establishment with a fixed location, Jennings, “Occupations in the Nineteenth Century Censuses,” 26 - 27


Brothels present an altogether different problem since the CEBs and Trade Directories do not record an address as a ‘brothel’ or an occupation as a ‘brothel-keeper.’ Thus, to be able to examine the locations and indication of numbers of brothels in Portsmouth’s sailortown, a keyword search using the term ‘brothel’ across the local newspapers for the period under study has been conducted, and the locations of brothels proven in the police courts recorded into a database. However, in some cases, census enumerators did record some women’s occupations as “prostitute,” with the descriptors of “harlots,” “unfortunate,” “seamstress,” “living on independent means,” or simply leaving a blank occupation classification often used as euphemisms by an enumerator to indicate that a female held the occupation of a prostitute. Moreover, many had ‘respectable’ jobs, for example, shop-girls or washerwomen, and therefore were not recorded in any official document as a ‘known’ prostitute. Whilst the above does not categorically indicate that a female was a prostitute, following the lead of studies by Patrick Dunae and Jane Emerson on Victorian sex-workers, census records and lodging houses, when taken with the address information being one located in well-known brothel areas, there is room for flexibility in interpreting such data. Thus, it can be inferred the address at which these persons were recorded as residing at are indicative of being brothels. Likewise, the euphemisms used in the occupation columns are suggestive of a female being a prostitute and thus both inferences have been

374 Jennings, “Occupations in the Nineteenth Century Censuses,” 27
included within the database of known brothels. Indeed, the above is further strengthened as many of the keyword searches returns marry to the indicative information contained in the CEBs.

In contrast to brothels, lodging houses are more straightforward to identify, being listed in the CEBs and Trade Directories’ address columns as either “lodging house,” “common lodging house,” “boarding house” or “apartments,” with “lodging house keeper” or “boarding house keeper” recorded in the occupation column. As with the lodging and boarding terminology outlined in Chapter 2, for ease, the term lodging house and lodging-house keeper is used here to cover both, thus also being consistent with the way lodging sailors were recorded in Chapter 2. It is also worth noting here that unlicensed lodging houses would not be recorded in the CEBs or Trade Directories yet would still be operated as such, even after the 1851 Common Lodging House Act. Therefore, like drinking establishments, this would lead to an underestimation of the number of lodging houses. However, the indicative spatial patterns are of interest here and, as outlined above in relation to drinking establishments, an underestimation in numbers does not overly affect this pattern.

Many of the inherent problems with the CEBs can be overcome by using local Trade Directories in conjunction with the CEB records, particularly in relation to drinking establishments and lodging houses. To work in conjunction with the CEBs, local Trade Directories for each decade covered in this thesis, which are not census years, have been examined and drinking establishment and lodging house information extracted from them. The primary purpose of the Trade Directories was “overly commercial” aiding the “promotion of business activity,” thus they are useful for examining trades of drink and lodgings that relied on advertising and footfall trade. Trade Directories are particularly useful to this

380 The directories used were taken from White’s, Harrod’s and Kelly’s directory series for the years 1859, 1865, 1878, 1889, 1895 and 1911.
study as they contain business information and many offer street directories, which often include more detailed address information than the standard commercial lists provided.\footnote{Lewis, “Trade Directories,” 181 – 182.} Like many previous studies, consistency across the Directories is also a potential issue, with many publishers not producing titles across the whole of the period covered here. Therefore, a selection of the most reputable, complete and technically consistent directories - *White’s, Harrod’s and Kelly’s* - have been used, allowing for a more accurate picture of the businesses of sailortown to be established than relying solely on CEBs would permit.\footnote{Lewis, “Trade Directories,” 183; Pryce, “Using Written Sources,” 60-62; Lewis, “Trade Directories,” 183; Pryce, “Using Written Sources,” 60; Lewis, “Trade Directories,” 183-188.} Whilst there are inherent problems with the Trade Directories, and widespread evidence that localities covered in the directories were infrequently re-surveyed and contained address errors, much like the CEBs, if used with caution, they remain an invaluable source for establishing socio-demographic patterns as explored here.\footnote{Allen, “A Railway Revolution? A Census-based Analysis of the Economic, Social and Topographical Effects of the Coming of the Railway upon the City of Winchester c.1830 – c.1890”, PhD Thesis, King Alfred’s College of Higher Education, (1999), unpublished, 73.}

### “The Devils Acre”: Drinking Establishments

In 1861, the London journalist George Sala, writing for the popular *Welcome Guest* periodical, described Queen Street, Portsea, as one of the magazine’s “Streets of the World.” Why a street of the world? As the main thoroughfare street in Portsea Town, Queen Street was bustling with activity and trading, as the image (Image 5) accompanying Sala’s article depicts. It was also an important street as it led to the Royal Dockyard and the waters which were home to the Royal Naval Fleet. Yet what also made Queen Street a ‘world’


\footnote{It is also established by previous research that the accuracy and compilation processes of the commercial directories improve over the course of the nineteenth century, with fewer errors and omissions than earlier directories contain, Gareth Shaw, “The Content and Reliability of Nineteenth Century Trade Directories,” *Local Historian*, vol. 13, no. 4, (1978), 204- 209; Pryce, “Using Written Sources,” 60; Lewis, “Trade Directories,”183; David Hey, *Family History and Local History in England*, (London: Routledge, 2014), 250.}

Some of the known problems are; traders refusing to be included in the directories, smaller roads, villages and towns are merged into larger districts creating problems in regards to comparisons over time, part-time occupations were often not recorded, multiple entries made and dual occupations being recorded in the directory, Pryce, “Using Written Sources,” 60-62; Lewis, “Trade Directories,” 183-188. For the socio-demographic importance, Mark Allen, “A Railway Revolution? A Census-based Analysis of the Economic, Social and Topographical Effects of the Coming of the Railway upon the City of Winchester c.1830 – c.1890”, PhD Thesis, King Alfred’s College of Higher Education, (1999), unpublished, 73.

\footnote{“Drinking Facilities at Portsmouth,” *Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle*, 9th September 1894.}
street was its connections to Portsmouth’s sailortown. As Sala explained, as one walked through Portsmouth Town, off the High Street you plunge into a vile back street, full of soldiers, sailors, washerwomen, watermen and little hovels of shops.....[yet] you see little of Portsmouth’s real military, naval, dockyard and slop-selling life in the High Street. It is the Regent Street of the town.....but Portsea is the unadulterated Wapping, Rotherhithe, Limehouse and Ratcliff Highway all rolled into one, done up in navy blue.386

As one merged onto The Hard, Sala observed that the “place simply strikes you as being rather plentifully supplied with public-houses,” with sailors devouring the “thousand and one tippling shops on The Hard and in Queen Street, and all over Portsea woken up to noise and revelry.”387 What is particularly revealing about Sala’s observations is his somewhat licentious article and exaggeration of the number of ‘tippling’ shops encapsulated a very real contemporary fear held

386 He continues, “as Landport is its Whitechapel, Gosport its Lambeth….Southsea its Kensington,” George Sala, “The Streets of the World: Their Ins and Outs, Their Lights and Shadows, Their Houses and Their Inhabitants: Queen Street, Portsea,” The Welcome Guest: A Magazine of Recreative Reading for All, (1861), 240 - 241.
by civic authorities in Portsmouth. The noise and revelry was one thing, the characters found in these quarters another. What raised the most concern was the sheer number of drinking establishments found in Portsmouth, concentrated in the streets that formed the sailorhoods. This situation did not go unnoticed nationally either, for the number of drinking establishments in Portsmouth was well-known, particularly since many streets saw nearly two-thirds of its premises designated as drinking establishments. 388 Thus, one commissioner belonging to the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws referred to The Hard as being in a district “known as ‘the Devil’s acre,” due to the proliferation of drinking establishments to be found there. 389 Moreover, The Hard was a “Navy” area. 390 As the Portsmouth born novelist Walter Besant recalled, on The Hard

A wooden bench was placed along the iron railing near the beach on which sat every day and all day long old sailors in a row. It was their club, their daily rendezvous, the place where they discussed old battles, smoked pipes and lamented bygone days…they talked, these old grizzle-heads, of fights and convoys, and perilous times afloat. 391

Thus, it would appear from contemporary sources that Portsmouth’s sailortown area was teeming over with drinking establishments, with sailors dominating these drinking holes. However, a study of the CEBs and Trade Directories

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388 For contemporary concerns that refer to this issue across the period, see, for example, “Drinking Facilities at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 8th September 1894; “Letters to the Editors,” The Evening News, 1st May 1891. The sheer number of drinking establishments also prevented many obtaining new licenses in Portsea as evidenced in, for example, “Portsmouth Annual Licensing Session,” HTSC, 2nd September 1871. For national debates and Portsmouth’s inclusion in these, see, “Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws: Third Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws,” 8693, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1898), 255. For concentration in streets, William Gates, ed., City of Portsmouth: Records of the Corporation 1835 – 1927, (Portsmouth: Charpentier, 1928), 104, and 186 reporting on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir William Harcourt’s speech in 1894 during a House of Commons debate, whereby he referred to the large number of drinking establishments found along The Hard, with seventeen out of twenty-seven premises being drinking establishments.

389 “Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws,” PP, 80. As so labelled by local magistrate Mr. Emanuel, Mr Emanuel’s original comment was recorded in, “Drinking Facilities at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 9th September 1894. The periodical Fun commented “it hadn’t acre’d to them that fifty or so public houses round about a dockyard could be other than beneficial to the neighbourhood; so Mr Emanuel’s efforts in opposition to the licensing of them all proved to be much (E)manue(a)ll labour in vain.” “Hard Lines at Portsmouth,” Fun, no. 60, (1894), 128.

390 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 13th February 1858

reveals, whilst there was a relatively high number of drinking establishment per person of the population, the recorded number of establishments did not reach more than three hundred at any one time across the period studied here, and declined from the late nineteenth century, as Figure 20 highlights. As observed in Chapter 2, the decline in numbers across the period is reflective of the general population shift into Landport, with the location of drinking establishments also shifting in their concentration to Landport.\textsuperscript{392} The discrepancy between the perceived numbers and recorded numbers can, be explained, in part, by the poor recording of drinking establishments and occupations by enumerators in the CEBs, as discussed earlier. Furthermore, it is indicative of there being a relatively high number of unlicensed drinking establishments being run that would have not be recorded in government-CEBs or advertised in Trade Directories.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Graph showing the total number of drinking establishments across Portsmouth’s sailortown area recorded in the CEBs and Trade Directories.\textsuperscript{393}}
\end{figure}

However, even if the number of unlicensed premises were double that of licensed ones, Sala’s perception of a ‘thousand and one’ whilst more closely realised, is still not relative, more so as the numbers decline across the period.

\textsuperscript{392} This is evident by the increased numbers recorded in CEBs and Trade Directories examined across the period.

\textsuperscript{393} The totals for sources are recorded and displayed separately, since it is problematic to merge the two sets of results to produce an overall total list. This is because census enumerators were inconsistent across the areas and periods covered in this thesis in regards to listing public house and beerhouse names and recording secondary or part-time occupations. Thus, merging the two data sets would result in too many duplicated results being included, as well as under-reflecting the number recorded in either source type.
Yet when the numbers of drinking establishments for Portsmouth as a whole are examined the figure is realised. This is because Portsmouth had one of the highest concentrations of drinking establishments recorded nationally, with over eight hundred drinking establishments recorded in the Trade Directories and CEBs covering the 1890s combined. Thus, in driving home concerns about Portsmouth’s drinking trade more generally, contemporaries chose to focus on the area that displayed the effects of drinking more prominently than elsewhere and those seen to harbour deviancy, decay and degeneracy. Portsmouth’s sailortown district represented and reflected this, particularly at the time of rising concern in the welfare of naval sailors whilst ashore and their standing as civilizing exemplars of empire and nation. However, what the likes of Sala did capture was the location and concentration of drinking establishments found in Portsmouth’s sailortown area. Thus, spatially mapping the location of drinking establishments shows there was a relatively high concentration found in sailortown, specifically in the three sailorhoods identified in Chapter 2. Whilst the streets were all varying lengths, it is the spatial clustering of establishments that is of importance here, as this shows the clustering (as opposed to density per street) correlates to sailors’ residency patterns.

Indeed, Portsea, as the naval sailortown district in Portsmouth, was home to nearly two-thirds of all Portsmouth’s sailortown drinking establishments from 1850 to 1870, and by the turn of the century, it was home to over two-thirds of sailortown’s drinking establishments, even though total numbers were declining. At the start of this enquiry, the sailorhood behind The Hard had the highest concentration of public houses and beerhouses, clustered in and around the streets with the highest sailor residency numbers, as indicated in Figure 21. The sailorhood to side of the Dockyard had little concentration of

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394 “Correspondence,” TEN, 29th March 1903. In this letter, the writer, J. Cromwell offered calculations and radius measurements to prove his point, “between Hawke Street and The Hard, not one eighth part of a quarter of a mile in extent…there are no less than 34 licensed houses, as compared with 28 in areas of just under ten acres in Hartlepool. This is at the rate of over 2,720 licensed houses per square mile!” Others also observed this “The Portsea Problem,” TEN, 19th March 1903.


396 Figure calculated based on the total number of drinking establishments recorded in the Trade Directories examined.
drinking establishments at the time when the clustering of sailors in these streets was relatively low. However, by the 1870s, the spatial concentration hardens in the sailorhood behind The Hard as the clustering of sailors becomes more concentrated and spreads towards Landport. Importantly, the sailorhood to the side of the Dockyard also now reflected a growing clustering pattern of drinking establishments as the concentration of sailors expands here, as demonstrated in Figure 22. By 1891, when the number of sailors recorded on land was numerically at its height and Portsmouth, as a naval sailortown, was growing, the concentration of drinking establishments begins to thin out across the sailorhoods. This reflects the expanding clustering patterns of sailors’ residency records, with beerhouses pushed towards the back of the town and into the sailorhood to the side of the Dockyard. In contrast, public houses continued to cluster in the main thoroughfare street of Queen Street and to the front of the sailorhood behind The Hard, as shown in Figure 23.

Further examination reveals that over a quarter of the drinking establishments here were run by females, with widows representing over seventy per cent of the socio-demographic make-up, mirroring the pattern found in ports more widely, as outlined in Chapter 2.397 However, whilst it is indicative of women ‘carving’ out roles as Vickers suggests, across the period, men ran the majority of drinking establishments in Portsea. Yet an interesting pattern of female ownership is evident in the CEBs. Widowed females running drinking premises are found in the back streets of the sailorhoods, with single females running establishments more likely to be found in the main thoroughfare streets.398 This is important, as in the back streets of the sailorhoods was where the wives and families of sailors were also found, as identified in Chapter 2. Thus, whilst the numbers may be relatively small, that female widows were also found here further strengthens the notion women played a role in sustaining sailortown areas and businesses, contributing to the functioning of the sailorhoods and

397 Calculated from the number of widows recorded as owing drinking establishments in “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1881 – 1891).
398 Evident in the number recorded as widows or as single, read in connection with street address information in, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea and Portsmouth Town,” (1881 – 1891).
fashioning of a sailortown culture in Portsmouth.

1851

Figure 21 – Concentration of drinking establishments, Portsea Town 1851, Red = concentration of sailors, Yellow= 5 or more recorded public houses, Green= 5 or more recorded beerhouses.

1871

Figure 22 – Concentration of drinking establishments, Portsea Town 1871, Red = concentration of sailors, Yellow= 5 or more recorded public houses, Green= 5 or more recorded beerhouses.
Portsmouth Town reflects similar patterns in regards to female drinking establishment ownership. Yet the location of establishments indicates the decline of the merchant sailortown area, as identified in Chapter 2. Indeed, as the overall sailor numbers decline in the sailorhood around The Point, so the trades of drink move further back from it, clustering in the connecting streets between Portsmouth Town and Portsea. Thus, a dense clustering pattern near to The Point in the heart of the sailorhood is evident in the 1850s, with a relatively high number of establishments located in the streets running off the High Street leading back to Portsea, as shown in Figure 24. By 1891, with this area in decline, and reflective of merchant sailortowns more widely, the concentration of drinking establishments is now the preserve of the main thoroughfare street, Broad Street, with a hardening of concentration in the streets leading from the High Street and back towards Portsea, as demonstrated in Figure 25. However, whether in Portsmouth Town or Portsea, the drinking establishments found in the main thoroughfare streets of sailortown
were often made an example of by local magistrates when exercising their licensing powers in terms of renewing licenses or not and fining licensees higher amounts for licensing breaches, primarily due to the public-facing location of these premises and displays of drunkenness.  

Figure 24 – Concentration of drinking establishments, Portsmouth Town 1851. Red = concentration of sailors, Yellow= 5 or more recorded public houses, Green= 5 or more recorded beerhouses.

More widely, in both towns, that sailors were residing next to, and visiting the establishments found there, is indicative of some form on street-level
socialization occurring between sailors and those who ran such places, as captured in Image 6. This seemingly close relationship becomes more evident as one explores the battleground over the number, location and role of drinking establishments between the Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers Association (PLVA), civic authorities, church leaders, missionaries, philanthropic groups and unelected local magistrates, whose role it was to oversee the licensing of establishments and to regulate alcohol sale and consumption in Portsmouth.  

Indeed, it becomes apparent that for the PLVA in particular, maintaining the connection between drinking establishments, sailors and Portsmouth sailortown districts was of paramount importance, whilst for the other groups this was the very thing that they aimed to sever. The PLVA was a vocal collective in Portsmouth across the nineteenth century. Bringing together brewers, hoteliers, public house and beerhouse keepers, the association played a pivotal role in voicing, advocating and defending the drinking businesses in Portsmouth, specifically in its sailortown district, from outside attacks mounted by civic authorities, church leaders and missionaries.  

Revealingly, part of what brought the association closer together in the face of attacks from other groups was the very fact that Portsmouth was a seaport harbouring a sailortown area, which catered to the drinking needs and wants of sailors – their very core custom base.  

Thus, PLVA members saw themselves as offering an important service to the fluid and ever-changing nautical market in Portsmouth. The PLVA were also eager to highlight that Portsmouth was not as bad as other seaports, with one member stating to the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws, it was not “a seaport on the same lines as Hull. It is not at all on all fours.”  

Moreover,

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401 Previously the PLVA was known as the Licensed Victuallers Association and later the Borough of Portsmouth and Gosport Licensed Victuallers’ Protection and Benevolent Society. For the role of licensing magistrates, see, David Beckingham, “Gender, Space and Drunkenness: Liverpool’s Licensed Premises,” Annals of the Association of American Geographers, vol. 102, no. 3, (2012), 648.


403 “Licensed Victuallers Meeting at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 11th April 1896.  

PLVA members frequently argued at their meetings that Portsmouth had the lowest drunkenness offence rate than any other town of equal size and advocated that curfews on drinking establishments in Portsmouth “drove people into houses of low repute, where drinking was carried on…where vice and immorality abounded.”\footnote{See, for example, “Portsmouth Annual Licensing Session,” HTSC, 28th September 1871; “Portsmouth and Gosport Licensed Victualler’s Association: Annual Dinner,” HTSC, 5th June 1880; “The Public House Closing Act,” HTSC, August 15th 1866; “The Licensing Question,” HTSC, 23rd September 1871; “Portsmouth Licensing Session,” HTSC, 24th September 1873; “Closing of Public Houses on Sunday,” HTSC, 15th January 1876; Quote from, “Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance,” 271, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1877), 100.} More specifically, PLVA members argued this would leave sailors open to seeking refuge in the “abodes of vice and prostitution,” as many would seek out “some low brothel where they were freely supplied with the worst of the drink at the best prices.”\footnote{“Insult Offered to the Mayor of Portsmouth by the Chief Constable of Hants,” HTSC, 10th March 1855. These debates continue across the period studied here, “The Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers and the New Licensing Act,” HTSC, 28th August 1872; “Portsmouth Adjourner General Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 21st September 1872.} In this respect, the Admiralty offered their support to PLVA members as they at least regulated drink, trade and their establishments for the good of naval men.\footnote{“Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers Association,” HTSC, 3rd April 1879.}\footnote{“Editorial,” HTSC, 8th May 1867.} Whereas Portsmouth’s sailortown harboured a ‘devil’s acre,’ the PLVA were keen to point out their trade and services had communal advantages and were for the benefit of the whole town, as part of the civic drive in shifting the image of the town from that of a garrison and naval one, to a “fashionable watering-place.”\footnote{Gates, City of Portsmouth, 186. This is a point the PLVA repeatedly mention across the period, “Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers: Meeting at Portsea,” HTSC, 17th April 1897; “Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws: Third Report, PP, 258.} Not only did they allow people a place for recreational leisure activities, they were not needed “for the immediate neighbourhood but for the thousands of dockyard men, sailors, visitors and passengers to and from Gosport who used The Hard every day.”\footnote{Gates, City of Portsmouth, 186. This is a point the PLVA repeatedly mention across the period, “Portsmouth Licensed Victuallers: Meeting at Portsea,” HTSC, 17th April 1897; “Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws: Third Report, PP, 258.}

However, the nautical market-base and proliferation of drinking establishments catering to sailors was the very heart of the problem for others. Those such as Reverend Robert Dolling, an Anglican priest based in Portsmouth from 1885, observed that congregated “into one place [was] a large number of young, unmarried men, especially prone to temptation by the very manner of their
This meant Portsmouth and its sailortown district was “existing on soldiers and sailors and, therefore, the licensing justices have supposed the chief objective on our streets is to contain public houses.” Dolling knew removing soldiers and sailors from the area was impossible and thus focussed his attacks on the PLVA, in particular the breweries. For Dolling, the breweries applied so much pressure onto the publicans of Portsmouth to drive up profits, that alcohol consumption and its connections to crime and deviancy became a self-fulfilling prophecy. As he observed, publicans had to do all sorts and kinds of things to induce men to stay in his house and drink...if gambling and betting are allowed, men will congregate...if bad characters fill the bar, certain men will stay there....needs must when the devil drives; and certainly, in this case, the devil is the driver.

Similarly, members of the Town Council observed sailors fostered the drinking economy in Portsmouth, as

the presence of soldiers and sailors encourages beershops, saloons and other places of like character, which produce immorality, drunkenness and all their attendant ills. This has been peculiarly noticeable in the town of Portsea.

Thus, drinking establishments became focal points of police attention and ‘surveillance’ at the time of rising concern over crime and poverty, and its connections to low lodgings, prostitution and alcohol consumption. Victorian police forces in slum-ridden urban, industrial centres and ports like Portsmouth, spent much of their time surveying, investigating and reporting crimes related to

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412 Dolling, *Ten Years*, 133-134; “Portsmouth Magistrates and Public Houses: Mr Dolling’s Views,” *HTSC*, 11th August 1894. As Dolling stated in his August 1894 sermon, “public houses existed for the convenience of the people....they did not exist as means for brewers and publicans to make money.”

breaches of the licensing acts and crimes relating to alcohol consumption. The concern over the connection between alcohol, criminality and deviancy was further ingrained into the business of drinking in sailortown with the introduction of The Wine and Beerhouse Act Amendment Bill 1869 and the 1872 Licensing Act. Not only was the system of regulation strengthened, attention was now paid to the character of licensees, premises and, by extension, those frequenting them, particularly in beerhouses. The impetus for enforcing these Acts in Portsmouth with zeal was that they offered a new level of scrutiny of drinking establishments and those frequenting them, particularly as these drinking dens were closely associated with criminal offenders. Thus, the licensee now also depended upon the conduct and behaviour of those on their premises.

As concern mounted for the social and moral wellbeing of sailors ashore and of the slum dwellers in towns like Portsmouth, Dolling, along with other notable missionaries (including Agnes Weston and Sarah Robinson discussed in Chapter 6) formed a Social Purity Society in Portsmouth in the 1890s.

416 The 1869 Act meant any persons found in the premises where drink was served after hours could also be prosecuted alongside the licensee, Beckingham, “Gender, Space and Drunkenness,” 650 – 651; “Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 4th July 1868; “The New Beer Act,” HTSC, 24th July 1869; “The Publicans and The Magistrates,” HTSC, 9th September 1871. Members within both local and national government perceived a connection between these “beer dens” and crime, as they were often used by those in the ‘criminal classes’ to conspire together to commit crimes, “Intoxicating Liquors (Licenses),” PP, 19; “Report from the Select Committee on Public Houses,” 855, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1852-53), 409.
417 The Social Purity Society in Portsmouth (also known as the Portsmouth Social Purity Association) took inspiration from the wider Social Purity Movement prevalent in mid-late Victorian Britain, but was a separate initiative and society to the national movement and society-organisational structure. Thus, in Portsmouth the society’s other key members included leaders of religious faiths in Portsmouth, missionaries, doctors and solicitors working or residing in Portsmouth, “Social Purity in Portsmouth,” HTSC, 18th November 1893. Many of the church, scripture and missionary societies soon advocated and supported the Social Purity Movement in Portsmouth as a vehicle through which to further and enhance their own causes, see, for
Society was reflective of the national, social movement based on a Christian morality tradition seeking to abolish activities that were deemed immoral to Christian teachings.\(^{418}\) With Dolling as one of the Vice Presidents, the movement soon became a “Social Purity Crusade,” with Dolling and his associates taking a central role in licensing meetings held in Portsmouth. Action was needed since he declared, “it is not enough to [just] feel that the present state of our streets is disgraceful and unhealthy.”\(^{419}\) Indeed, only those within the Purity Society could save the sailor from the immoral and corruptible influences found on the streets of Portsmouth, particularly prostitution and drink.\(^{420}\) The Social Purity Society made the vices of sailors (though not limited to this group), drunkenness and social conduct in public their mission to overcome, along with campaigning for better pay, which would alleviate sailors’ social living conditions and thus improve their social and moral conduct.\(^{421}\) The Society in Portsmouth managed to bring to the local council a number of damning reports. The PLVA protested at such reports and repeatedly noted that since no individual charge was brought against a PLVA member, the reports were simply stating a collective problem of drunkenness and immorality in Portsmouth.\(^{422}\)

However, it is in the licensing reports and discussions that the role drinking establishments played in sailortown’s community and culture can be found, particularly as sailors were frequently implicated in licensing breaches. Indeed, after the introduction of 1869 Act, any persons found in the premises where

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\(^{421}\) “Social Purity Question,” \textit{HTSC}, 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) March 1894. Whilst the Society raised the issue of better pay to elevate sailors and soldiers living conditions, there was no discussion of improving or amending the mode of payment to them in the Society’s discussions printed in newspaper reports.

\(^{422}\) “Social Purity,” \textit{HTSC}, 17\(^{\text{th}}\) March 1894.
drink was served after hours could also be prosecuted alongside the licensee. Thus, sailors, along with the licensee, could be prosecuted if a licensing breach was detected.\(^{423}\) In this respect, it is perhaps not surprising one of the first cases brought before magistrates in Portsmouth involved a sailor. James Meades, a naval sailor, was prosecuted alongside William Bytheway, keeper of the *Lifeboat* beerhouse, Bath Square, Portsmouth Town, when police caught Bytheway serving beer after hours to Meades.\(^{424}\) Similarly, many of the licensees caught serving drink after hours or permitting drunkenness on their premises were brought to the police’s attention, as sailors, identified by police due to their distinctive uniform, were often the beneficiaries of such an act.\(^{425}\) For example, George Taylor, proprietor of the *Star*, Kent Street, Portsea, was seen giving sailors beer after hours by police having simply looked through the window and spotted men in sailor’s uniform.\(^{426}\) In other cases, even when in uniform, sailors would often give false names and addresses and the landlord would deny all knowledge of knowing them to avoid prosecution, such as the fifteen out of eighteen sailors found after hours inside the *Silver Tap*, Hanover Street, Portsea, whom the landlord denied knowing what their real names were to police.\(^{427}\) Thus, whilst it was in an individual sailor’s interest to navigate his way out of a prosecution or fine for being party to a licensing breach, a form of mutual assistance between sailors and licensees is also evident, as often sailors would work with publicans to help them avoid police attention, arrest or fines. In many cases across the police reports pertaining to licensing breaches, sailors appeared on behalf of local publicans to vouch for their good character, confirming they did not receive after hours drink or someone else, usually a

\(^{424}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 29\(^{\text{th}}\) December 1888.  
\(^{425}\) See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 25\(^{\text{th}}\) April 1891; “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) February 1877.  
\(^{426}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 12\(^{\text{th}}\) January 1870.  
\(^{427}\) See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 25\(^{\text{th}}\) April 1891; “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) February 1877.  

Likewise, when Benjamin Barnes, landlord of the *Crocodile’s Return* beerhouse in Havant Street was summoned for selling beer after hours to sailors, the police officer noted he found “in the bar a man stated to be a lodger and in the back-room three seamen of HMS Excellent and a civilian. The seamen were dressed in their Sunday uniform.” “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 29\(^{\text{th}}\) December 1888.  

Another example of false names being provided, see, for example, “Portsmouth Police Courts,” *TEN*, 11\(^{\text{th}}\) August 1886.
soldier, was to blame.428

The other tactic sailors used in conjunction with proprietors was to claim that they were lodgers when caught in after-hours drinking.429 For example, John Kitchener of The Vine, Clock Street, Portsea, was prosecuted for selling after hours. The sailors found there stated they were lodgers, vouching for Kitchener’s defence that they lived there and no beer had been sold. Yet the police reported that they had seen the sailors run out of the back door as soon as they arrived and this was odd behaviour for ‘lodgers.’430 Similarly, George Giles, landlord of the Victory beerhouse, Butcher Street, Portsea, was charged for afterhours selling when police found five sailors and three women, known to them as prostitutes, drunk at a table inside. Giles declared they were all lodgers, yet later admitted in court some were not.431 Others implied they were doing a good social service. When John Lawler of Bedford in Chase, The Hard, was caught selling alcohol after hours to a group of sailors, he claimed they were lodgers as the Royal Sailors’ Home (RSH) in Queen Street was full, thus the sailors had nowhere else to go so he let them in.432 Yet not all relationships between sailors and landlords were so amenable. For example, John Harrington, a naval sailor, did not take kindly to being ‘policed’ inside beerhouses. After being told to refrain from using foul language by the proprietor inside the Bell Tavern, Queen Street, Harrington smashed plates, swept everything of the counter and hit the owner before promptly leaving.433

Indeed, across the period, that sailors were frequently implicated in licensing breaches is reflective of sailors using drinking establishments as a rendezvous, places to socialise in, form bonds and networks with one another and with members of the sailortown community.434 One particular rendezvous run by

428 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 25th April 1891; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd July 1887; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 9th July 1887; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 13th October 1855.
430 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 26th August 1871.
431 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 2nd June 1849.
432 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 12th June 1872.
433 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 4th March 1874.
widow Louisa Wafer in various places around the sailorhood of The Hard, was infamous, indeed, “no person in the borough was better known than Mrs Wafer….there was scarcely a captain who entered the port of Portsmouth who did not know [her].”

Indeed, when Wafer died in 1870, she left her effects of £100 to a Superannuated Naval Gunner, Thomas Howells. Thus, the close relationship Wafer had formed with the Navy and its personnel highlights the way women were able to carve out roles in sailortown areas through the running of drinking establishments.

Wafer, born in nearby Wickham, ran the Three Crowns, St James’s Street and then the Earl St Vincent, The Hard, located towards the left of Image 7, with her Scottish born husband James from 1842. On James’ death, Wafer took over the license for the establishment and joined by her widowed sister sometime after his death. Wafer saw her role as a public house owner as one being in the interests of the welfare of sailors in Portsmouth, preventing them from falling into the “entrapments” ashore, offering a haven to them from ‘running the gauntlet’ between the ship in port to lodgings ashore. Wafer was effectively a one-woman sailor home, taking in sailors, providing lodgings and food with no payment and helping others secure lodgings in the RSH. Moreover, she offered something the Home could not – the ability to recruit men for the Royal Navy, something that the RSH failed to do. Her central role taken in the recruitment of sailors meant Wafer defended her premises and reputation as a naval rendezvous vehemently. She declared she would not allow prostitution to be undertaken in or near to her premises and “she never allowed women of a certain character to frequent her house.”

Her premises were thus “free from [such] characters,” as many naval officers could attest.

1894.
435 “The Adjourned Annual Licensing Session,” HTSC, 12th September 1868
436 “Entry for Louisa Wafer 5th May 1870,” England and Wales, National Probate Calendar, Index of Wills and Administration, (1870), 70.
439 “Local News,” HTSC, 19th December 1868.
440 “Local News,” HTSC, 19th December 1868.
Wafer’s establishment was located in the middle of the strip of establishments shown, [www.porttowns.port.ac.uk](http://www.porttowns.port.ac.uk), date last accessed 8th June 2015.

Wafer’s relationship with officers of the Royal Navy and sailors continued to flourish, so much so, in 1863 when she relocated her rendezvous to the Hole in the Wall near the Dockyard Gates, on the corner of Half-Moon Street, Wafer had a notice published in the Hampshire Telegraph thanking the officers, sailors and port community for their support. In her notice, Wafer hoped the close relationship would continue, as “she trusts by her continued zeal and perseverance for the welfare of the Navy, that she may receive a continuance of their exclusive patronage.”

When Wafer was subjected to an attack in a United Service Gazette letter accusing her of receiving payment for her role in recruiting sailors, Wafer could call on the support of several Naval Captains, Admirals and Lieutenants in vehemently denying receiving money for doing so, even though she claimed she had “raised for the Navy 88,000 men and boys.” Not only did Wafer have the confidence of officers and sailors, her patronage came from the Admiralty itself. In the 1859 Commission Inquiry as to The Best Means of Manning The Navy, Captain (later Admiral) Robert Harris stated Wafer’s services to the Navy were “worthy of notice.” Her notoriety even extended to Parliament. Indeed, Sir James Dalrymple-Horn-Elphinstone MP for Portsmouth declared to the House of Commons that Wafer was a

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443 “Notices,” HTSC, 12th December 1863.
444 “Local News,” HTSC, 19th December 1868.
“women who exercised an extraordinary influence over seamen, during a debate on Navy estimates.” Furthermore, despite rising concerns over the numbers of drinking places located on The Hard, Admiralty members advocated that licensing magistrates grant her license for a premises there, as Wafer was a most valuable person for getting men to join the navy….the instrument of getting a very large number of men to join the navy…..no less than 26,572…if a license were not granted her the interest of the navy would be injured considerably.

Whilst those like Wafer kept a ‘clean’ house and were licensed, the connection between drinking establishments, both licensed and unlicensed, brothel keeping and prostitution was ever-present in Portsmouth’s sailortown. Local authorities, missionaries and church leaders observed there was a direct correlation between lowly drinking holes, brothels and crime. Thus, many beerhouses, for example, the Bell Tavern, Queen Street, were refused licenses on the grounds that “when any business was done there it was amongst sailors and prostitutes.” In streets like Queen Street and in the areas of the sailorhoods, the drinking establishments, Dolling declared, “really are the diseased spots which fester and corrupt….the places where our soldiers and sailors mostly spend their time,” and the drinking establishment is “never by itself…close to it-perhaps on either side of it-are houses of shame and evil.

Dolling and his Social Purity Society counterparts, spurred to abolish prostitution and immoral sexual activities, were keen to highlight the connection between drinking establishment and brothels. This is particularly evident as the

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448 “Public Houses and Beer Shops,” HTSC, 22nd September 1849; “Portsmouth General Annual Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 28th August 1869; “Portsea Island Town Mission,” HTSC, 29th January 1870. This is also evident in the tables of known brothels and their location recorded in “Contagious Diseases Acts: Copy of the Annual Report of the Assistant Commissioner of the Police of Metropolis for the Year 1880,” 140, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1881), 15.
449 Quote from, “The Licensed Victuallers and the Shah of Persia,” HTSC, 21st June 1873. These cases are found across the period of this study, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd June 1849; “Portsmouth Annual Licensing Session,” HTSC, 2nd September 1871; “Social Purity Crusade,” HTSC, 2nd June 1894.
450 Dolling, Ten Years, 134-135. See also, “The Temperance Movement and The Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 18th August 1877.
majority of their reports put to licensing magistrates were centred on this connection. Indeed the Society’s reporting took on a zealous ‘crusade’ across Portsmouth in the mid-1890s, publically naming license holders harbouring prostitutes and seeking out the unlicensed premises which were also brothels. As the members of the Society Purity Society claimed they were the ones to ‘save’ sailors from the immoral and corruptible influences found on the streets of Portsmouth, it is perhaps no coincidence that sailors were often found in their reports. Sailors were implicated as being present in, or party to, the Society’s charges for brothel keeping against drinking establishment owners, as they had often been so before the Society’s inception. For example, in 1894, Henry Hards was charged with keeping a brothel at a beerhouse in Unicorn Street, Portsea. The house had been under observation after the Society alerted authorities to the suspected brothel business being conducted there. Constable Hemsley Jackman thus witnessed a sailor entering the premises with two well-known prostitutes and subsequently watched many a sailor enter the premises with the women, and the beerhouse’s license was revoked. Indeed, that the Social Purity Society chose to focus on this connection tapped into a wider concern among civic authorities that Portsmouth was made-up of “dens of infamy.” As the evangelical periodical *The Shield* declared, Portsmouth was, a frightfully immoral town. There are said to be about 1,000 beerhouses, a large proportion of which are brothels...these statements apply especially to Portsea and Portsmouth.

**Dens of Infamy: Brothels and Prostitution**

Contemporaries viewed Portsmouth, being a naval port, as “one of the worse

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dens of infamy,” with its sailortown district as the epicentre. Indeed, local magistrates were somewhat resigned to the fact that prostitution was inevitable in Portsmouth since it was a port. As a port and garrison town, Portsmouth’s population was not a stationary one, nor a principally civilian one. Thus, the flow of military men in and out of the port ensured the demand for the services of prostitution would always be present and venereal infections rates higher, thus, large numbers of “unfortunate women… [were] attracted thither by the presence of troops and sailors.” Moreover, women, often left as single-parent families, had to exploit “income-earning opportunities in the informal economy” from taking in washing or cleaning, to prostitution, with wives and widows of sailors often driven to the streets. This is borne out, as larger increases of prostitutes between the ages of twenty-one to thirty-six were recorded at the time the widow rate increased in the borough.


456 This attitude is evident in the case of Mark White, landlord of The Golden Bell in St Mary’s Street, who was charged with harbouring prostitutes, “Law and Police,” HTSC, 4th February 1865. More widely, in comparison to other ports, the commercial, merchant ports of Liverpool and London return much higher rates of known prostitutes than naval ports such as Portsmouth did continuously across the nineteenth century and into twentieth century, and more known prostitutes and brothels were found in Devonport than Portsmouth. “Return of Judicial Statistics, England and Wales,” Command Papers, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1856 – 1906).

457 Quote from, “Letters to Editors,” The Times, March 11th 1864. For port-related issues, “The Contagious Disease Acts and Their Operations in Portsmouth,” HTSC, June 1st 1870; “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 146 – 147, 344. It is of note that the home-station ships at Portsmouth, namely HMS Asia and HMS Duke of Wellington, had the highest rates of disease in comparison to other naval ships. It was argued by naval medical officers and civic leaders that this was due the turnover of several thousand sailors a year coming from all areas into Portsmouth, thus did not originate from Portsmouth, “Navy Contagious Diseases: Return Showing the Number of Cases of Venereal Diseases in Her Majesty’s Ships and Vessels,” 360, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1877), 5 – 7, 12. There were also instances of what would now be referred to as ‘sex-slave trafficking’ in Portsmouth with cases reported involving “imported” women, by some of Portsmouth’s brothel-keepers, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 25th September 1858.


459 See table in “Contagious Diseases Acts: Copy of the Annual Report of the Assistant Commissioner of the Police of Metropolis for the Year 1880,” 140, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1881), 15. For decline in
beer-selling and prostitution went hand in hand...operating with frightful consequences," with the "two great causes of vice.....drunkenness and prostitution" fuelling the other. 460 Sailors were seen to add extra kindling in fuelling this association as they were

a population not stationary....coming from the sea, returning from abroad and moving to and fro in very great numbers......such circumstances attract women of a particular class towards the points of embarkation and disembarkation. 461

Indeed, Reverend Reginald Shute argued sailors were the main contributors and purchasers of such "moral foulness". 462 Thus, as one local religious leader lamented, "if they could banish from the town the soldiers and sailors" these areas "would be cleared of the harlots who disgraced the borough." 463 In contrast, the Admiralty did not see a need for sailors to be banished from the town. As an Admiralty report printed in the Hampshire Telegraph in 1865 declared, the problem lay within the town itself as

one house in every 23 inhabited houses in Portsmouth is known to the police as a house for receiving stolen goods, or a house of resort for thieves and prostitutes, a brothel or a tramp’s lodging house. 464


462 “Moral in Portsmouth,” The Shield, 1st September 1874, 171.

463 “The Moral and Spiritual Condition of Portsmouth,” HTSC, 15th June 1867. A similar response is found in, “Today,” TEN, 18th May 1892; “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 13th February 1858; “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 376. Although those such as Alderman Scarrott, argued such claims were simply abounded to further the financial gain of missionaries and churches, “Social Purity Movement,” Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 7th April 1894. It was also perceived by Naval Medical Officers that the “ravages” of disease was rifer in the Army than the Navy, since soldiers were not subjected to examination as sailors were, “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxvii, 162; “The Contagious Diseases Acts and Their Operations in Portsmouth,” Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 1st June 1870.

464 The local press were outraged with such a statement having been made in the Admiralty
Sailors themselves were also aware of this close connection. For example, Edward Pullen, reminiscing about his time as a sailor in Portsmouth in the 1900s remarked, “pubs were always full of sailors and prostitutes.” Similarly, Reginald Ashley, a sailor based in Portsmouth around 1910 recalled, you had prostitutes in every pub in Portsmouth…..all the pubs in the vicinity of the Dockyard in Portsmouth were bad pubs…..because you couldn’t take a respectable girl in there…you have all these women sat in there waiting to pounce on the sailor when he’d had a few drinks….you had your choice of prostitutes, there was plenty of them around….they come to you like.

Legislatively, the concern surrounding brothel-keeping and prostitution was not a new one. Indeed, the 1847 *Towns Police Clauses Act* had allowed magistrates to charge publicans and beerhouse keepers for knowingly allowing prostitutes to assemble on their premises. Furthermore, over the period studied here, contemporaries, locally and nationally, saw a more direct correlation between drinking establishments and brothels being mutually utilised by groups such as sailors. This is reflected in the introduction of *The Contagious Diseases Acts* (CDAs) from 1864, recommending “every keeper of a public house harbouring prostitutes be deprived of his license.” Indeed, the 1872 *Licensing Act* stipulated that any license holder caught operating a brothel on their premises would have their license revoked. However, many continued with brothel keeping irrespective of the law. It was observed many brothel-keepers simply offered more ‘clandestine’ approaches to their services

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465 Oral Interview with Edward Pullen, “Imperial War Museum Sound Collection,” 692, (1975), Reel 15
466 Oral Interview with Reginald Claude Ashley, “Imperial War Museum Sound Collection,” 661, (1975), Reel 7
467 “The Parade of Vice,” *HTSC*, 9th February 1861. Although frequent objections are found in the local press that ‘attacking’ the brothel keepers was not dealing with the root cause of prostitution, “The Objections to the C.D. Acts,” *HTSC*, 21st October 1871.
468 This was also applied to harbouring persons of ‘bad’ character and Portsmouth was the first place *The Contagious Diseases Act* was introduced 1864, with amendments made in 1866 and 1869, finally being repealed in 1886, “The Ladies and the Contagious Diseases Act,” *HTSC*, 6th July 1870; “The Contagious Diseases Acts: Report of the Royal Commissioners,” *HTSC*, 22nd July 1871.
by running brothels under the guise of legitimate businesses. Indeed, the local press reported that many brothel-keepers simply complied with the law and the CDAs, continuing their business “as a grocer or baker would.”

Thus, for all the legal impetus to purge the “towns and encampments to which they have been applied of miserable creatures who were mere masses of rottenness and vehicles of disease,” the crackdown on brothel-keeping actually drove the business of brothels and trade of prostitution into drinking establishments and lodging houses.

One infamous example of this is the Blue Post, Broad Street, Portsmouth Town, shown in Image 8. There was “plenty of evidence that it was the resort of prostitute,” as the crackdown on brothel-keeping was under way in Portsmouth, with prostitutes taking lodgings there, it was also widely known to have a brothel

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operating in the premises among Portsmouth resident’s. At, with drinking establishments, the number of brothels found in Portsmouth’s sailortown area was a grave cause for concern turning “respectable streets in the town…. [into] resorts of the profligate.” At its height, police records record over three hundred known brothels in Portsmouth’s sailortown area, halving in numbers by the end of the nineteenth century, as Figure 26 indicates. It is of note that in a population of between 60,000 and 120,000, the number of known brothels does not represent a large proportion of persons or premises found in Portsmouth. However, much like drinking establishments, the concentration of their locations was of paramount concern for civic authorities and church leaders.

As Figure 27 indicates, the concentration of known brothels was principally located in the Portsmouth’s sailortown area, with seventy-five per cent of known brothels found there, forty-four per cent of which were in Portsea.

472 “Captain Marryat’s Portsmouth,” The Graphic, 28th March 1874. Blue Posts was destroyed by a fire in May 1870. “Total Destruction of the Old Blue Posts by Fire,” HTSC, 11th May 1870.
474 This correlated with the decline in prosecutions too, “Table of Indictable Offences: Classes of Persons in each Jurisdiction Charged with Crimes Proceeded against by Indictment,” in “Return of Judicial Statistics, England and Wales, PP, (1857-1907).
However, this data simply tells us the sailortown area contained more brothels than the rest of Portsmouth, whereas a street-level analysis of brothels reveals they were not only an important part of the business of sailortown; they were integral to the sailorhoods. In Portsea, as Figure 28 shows, known brothels were not located on the main thoroughfare streets. They were situated in the maze of streets sprawling back from the water’s edge in the sailorhood situated behind The Hard, resulting in “scenes far worse than on the Hard.” Here, no less than twenty streets contained brothels, resorted by the “worst class of prostitutes” leading Mr Punter, Portsmouth’s Navy and Army Scripture Reader, to furiously declare, “he knew of no such Sodom out of Hell as the place of Portsea.”

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476 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 13th February 1858. Indeed, for Reverend Reginald Shute, running the Mission of the Good Shepherd in White’s Row for Fallen Women there was “no town that can be called to mind – no not even the East end of London itself – does sun wear a more daring and shameless front than in this great garrison seaport…..there are whole streets given to nameless sin,” “Morality in Portsmouth,” The Shield, 1st September 1874, 171.

Whilst known brothels were recorded in areas indicated in Figure 28, to local residents it was The Hard, as part of the ‘devils acre,’ which was the most notable brothel location due to the public displays of prostitution witnessed there. As one local resident claimed, it was “a notorious fact” that The Hard was the resort of prostitutes, with displays of “ribaldry, blasphemy and obscenity…of the most revolting and brutal indecency.”\(^{478}\) Thus, The Hard and its adjoining streets were viewed as harbouring what one missionary described as a “sea brothel” district, as highlighted in Figure 29.\(^{479}\) Indeed, spatially mapping the known brothels reveals the majority of brothels were located in the backstreets of the sailorhoods. Moreover, they were largely located in the sailorhood behind The Hard, with the majority found in White’s Row, Southampton Row, Butcher Street and Kent Street, narrow, over-crowded alleys and streets, as Image 9 invokes.\(^{480}\)

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\(^{478}\) “Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 28\(^{\text{th}}\) September 1867; “Portsmouth: (From the Daily Telegraph),” The Stirling Observer, 30\(^{\text{th}}\) August 1860; “Inadequacy of the Borough Police Force,” HTSC, 30\(^{\text{th}}\) January 1858.


\(^{480}\) “Inadequacy of the Borough Police Force,” HTSC, 30\(^{\text{th}}\) January 1858; “Social Purity,” TEN, 5\(^{\text{th}}\) March 1894. See also, “The Bench and the Beerhouses,” HTSC, 11\(^{\text{th}}\) September 1869;
However, for all the focus on Portsea and The Hard, some local residents were quick to point out in letters to local newspapers that another area of Portsmouth harboured “unfortunate wretches who frequent their vile dens,” where brothel-keeping was seen to be far greater than in the ‘devil’s acre.’¹⁴⁸¹ This area was in

¹⁴⁸¹ Quote from, “Letters to the Editor: Response to Coffee Taverns and Public Houses,” HTSC, 22nd March 1884. For other correlating views, “Correspondence,” HTSC, 4th September 1869;
Portsmouth Town, in the streets which joined the town from the Gunwharf barracks through to Portsea, namely St Mary’s Street (later Highbury Street) where there were “numerous houses of ill fame” to be found.\textsuperscript{482} St Mary’s Street was renowned for its brothels even outside the borough, with a Gosport resident John Phillips writing to the Hampshire Telegraph to express his disgust at the “numerous houses of ill fame in the street,” and scathingly remarking, “that in no other borough town but Portsmouth would such a disgraceful public thoroughfare be allowed to exist.”\textsuperscript{483} Thus, in contrast to Portsea, the known recorded brothels in Portsmouth Town were primarily found along the main thoroughfare streets back from The Point sailorhood area, as indicated in Figure 30. Indeed, this concentration was the very thing that drew attention to the businesses of brothels in Portsmouth’s sailortown.

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\textsuperscript{482} Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 20\textsuperscript{th} December 1873; “Letters to the Editors,” TEN, 23\textsuperscript{rd} April 1891.

\textsuperscript{483} Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 30\textsuperscript{th} January 1875. This was so much so, that in May 1874, the Secretary of State for War issued an order that all pensioners keeping brothels must give them up or have their pensions taken from them. The local press hoped this would abate the nuisance arising from the “obnoxious” characters and behaviour found in St Marys Street, “Local and District News,” HTSC, 23\textsuperscript{rd} May 1874. For further evidence of St Mary’s being a brothel area, “The Beer Trade in St Marys Street,” HTSC, 4\textsuperscript{th} September 1869; “The Bench and the Beerhouses,” HTSC, 11\textsuperscript{th} September 1869; “Board of Guardians,” HTSC, 26\textsuperscript{th} September 1863. See also “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 376.

\textsuperscript{485} Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 30\textsuperscript{th} January 1875.
The Point and the sailorhood area there retained a number of known brothels and prostitution remained, as Admiral Charles Napier Robinson reported, “some have compared it with the Point at Jamaica, that was swallowed up by an earthquake, and think, if that was Sodom, this is Gomorrah.” However, the numbers were declining across the period. Yet, as with drinking establishments, the lesser number and concentration of sailortown businesses is not without significance since it is reflective of the shift of sailortown from Portsmouth Town to Portsea taking place across the nineteenth century. This, as Sala observed, meant “Poll of Portsmouth Point” had emigrated to Portsea since “Her Majesty’s navy can’t get on without Poll, nor Poll without Her Majesty’s navy.” Whilst ‘Poll’ may have migrated to a more lucrative nautical market base, St Mary’s Street drew much public attention due to the trades of drinking and lodgings found there. Many business owners residing here were frequently hauled into the police courts. For example, beerhouse keeper, William Germany, was often arrested for allowing prostitutes to assemble in his premises and for ‘harbouring’ known prostitutes. Consequently, many of the premises in St Mary’s Street like, for example, The Golden Bell, gained a local reputation as the “worst conducted house for prostitutes in Portsmouth.” Concerns intensified as the other core business of sailortown – lodgings - were seen to be closely connected to brothel-keeping and the trade of prostitution.

The Lowest of the Low: Lodging Houses

Lodging houses were private and commercial operations separate to and from Poor Law authority housing and shelters and homes run by philanthropic individuals or organisations. As Tom Crook suggests, lodging houses "overwhelmingly catered for those dubbed the ‘outcasts’ of society," and were,

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487 “Law and Police,” *HTSC*, 4th February 1865. This was something Town Councillors were quick to point out to the CDAs Commissioners, “Report from the Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts,” *PP*, 373.
as Chesney notes in London, a key institution of the “underworld.” In Portsmouth, those of low-skilled occupations such as street hawkers or peddlers, and those blighted by unemployment or ill health, frequented the lodging houses, as did “unfortunates” and known prostitutes. Indeed, since many lodging premises catered to ‘outcasts,’ many were home known prostitutes. Thus, the connection between lodgings, prostitution and sailors was to be an enduring one, as Image 10 embodies. In the caricature, the sign declares the house to be “Lodgings for Single Men and Their Wives,” and the woman declaring to the sailor, “Why Nam—this is the very birth we have been so long looking after.”


However, whilst the numbers of unlicensed premises were numerous, unlike drinking establishments and brothels, the numbers of officially recorded lodging houses located in Portsmouth’s sailortown were small, as Figure 31 indicates. Moreover, in contrast to Martin Daunton’s study of Cardiff’s sailortown, lodging houses in the naval sailortown of Portsmouth were not run along ethnic lines as he identified to be the case in merchant ports, enabling merchant seamen of similar nationalities and ethnic origins to reside together for safety whilst in an unfamiliar port.\textsuperscript{490} Furthermore, over the mid-to-late nineteenth century, many sailors, particularly those on short-term shore leave, chose to lodge in a familial domestic environment or in Sailors’ Homes rather than designated lodging houses. Thus, looking at the occupations of those recorded in lodging houses and enumerated in the CEBs (therefore more likely to be licensed than not) it is evident that they were predominantly the dwellings of the travelling workers and low-skilled manual workers and not sailors.\textsuperscript{491}

\textbf{Figure 31– Chart showing the total number of lodging houses recorded in the CEBs and Trade Directories.}

However, whilst \textit{The Common Lodging House Act} of 1851 sought to bring lodging houses under civic control, it is revealing the lodging house trade received comparatively less attention in Portsmouth than drinking establishments and brothels.\textsuperscript{492} In part, this was due to a flaw in the 1851 Act,


\textsuperscript{491} This is based on occupation columns for known recorded lodging houses, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsmouth and Portsea Town,” (1851 – 1891).

\textsuperscript{492} Quote from Chesney, \textit{The Victorian Underworld}, 81. This Act was further strengthened in 1853 and amended conditions in place with the \textit{Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890}, “Housing Problem: The Powers of the Corporation,” \textit{TEN}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} December 1903; “The Common
as it did not clearly define what a lodging house was. Moreover, one of main obstacles to controlling the lodging houses in Portsmouth was the fact inspectors had no say over who resided in them or where they were located. Inspectors were only able to control the environmental and health aspects of a lodging house. Thus, “the congregation of bad characters…..who now make the miserable hovels in the district their homes” remained an ongoing problem. Therefore, the very laws in place to control the lodging houses hindered civic authorities in their dealings with lowly, often unlicensed lodging houses, as they did not fall under the remit of the Act, thus, by extension, the law. However, over the period of this study, lodging houses did attract a growing level of concern in Portsmouth, particularly relating to the sailor-like inhabitation of ‘vagrants’ drifting in and out of the port. Indeed, the Town Council declared, “the people in Portsmouth were more annoyed by these people,” and the local press stated, “we have plenty of such [people] and need not import more.” This meant lodging houses, particularly the unlicensed ones, as harbours of vice and villainy, did come under scrutiny. Indeed, they were places seen to be the resorts of prostitutes, fuelling drunkenness and the trade of prostitution by driving men, particularly young, single men, into the local public houses and brothels. The rise in concern over the unlicensed houses and connections to the trades of alcohol and prostitutions centred in Portsmouth’s sailortown saw the Town Council enact and adopt a local bylaw which set out to clearly define what a lodging house was, encompassing all premises offering rooms to let. Thus, a lodging house in Portsmouth was defined as

any public lodging house (not being a licensed victualing house), in which persons are harboured or lodged for hire for a single night or less than a week at one time, or in which any room let for hire to be occupied by more than one family at one time and the word Keeper means a person keeping or managing or acting as a keeper or manager of a common lodging house.\textsuperscript{496}

This byelaw description was one that also applied to the RSH. Thus, the Home’s management were keen to mark out the distinction between the lodgings they offered to any other in the town. Indeed, all other lodging houses were declared by them to be as “lower in the social scale and to the moral degradation of the men,” and sailors were thus victims of “low lodging housekeepers of the blackest dye,” if they stayed anywhere else.\textsuperscript{497}

Moreover, as with drinking establishments, the concerns of brothel-keeping were further enacted into law with the 1871 \textit{Prevention of Crimes Act} which allowed the prosecution of any lodging-house keeper found to be brothel-keeping or harbouring prostitutes, just as any drinking establishment owner could be.\textsuperscript{498} Furthermore, the lodging-house keeper’s ability to make extra income from drink was often thwarted by local authorities and magistrates. Many lodging-house keepers in Portsmouth’s sailortown district frequently applied to the licensing committee to be able to sell alcohol on their premises. However, the majority were rejected as they were often situated close to existing drinking establishments and these were “sufficient to supply the demands of the neighbourhood.”\textsuperscript{499} This had a particularly detrimental effect on some women in Portsmouth’s sailortown area, since women, particularly widows, were the predominant owners of lodging houses in sailortown, responsible for owning over half of them at any one time across the period examined.\textsuperscript{500} Yet in practice, many of those refused a license did indeed purvey

\textsuperscript{496} “The Common Lodging Houses Act: As It Affects the Borough of Portsmouth,” \textit{HTSC}, 9\textsuperscript{th} August 1851; “Portsmouth Town Council,” \textit{HTSC}, 25\textsuperscript{th} October 1851.

\textsuperscript{497} “The Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{TEN}, 20\textsuperscript{th} November 1879.

\textsuperscript{498} Portsmouth Quarter Sessions,” \textit{HTSC}, 14\textsuperscript{th} October 1871.

\textsuperscript{499} “Portsmouth Annual Licensing Session,” \textit{HTSC}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} September 1870. See also, “Common Lodging House Act,” \textit{HTSC}, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1852. Here, for example, in the list of those refused, it includes over half whereby the owners were already running public houses or beerhouses in Portsmouth and Portsea Town.

\textsuperscript{500} As evident in the CEBs when reading the sex and condition as to marriage columns in
alcohol and those refused lodging licenses being, “in a state of ruin and filthy dilapidation….altogether unfit for human habitation” continued to trade.\textsuperscript{501} As with selling alcohol illegally, these keepers simply did not advertise their businesses and continued to run a lodging business or sell alcohol just without the official name or guise of a drinking establishment or lodging house.\textsuperscript{502} Thus, many lodging houses remained undetected by authorities. The various Acts and the byelaw were easy to evade for those offering lodgings of a lesser character. By 1880, it was thus apparent to local authorities that all the Acts in relation to lodging houses had “been almost universally infringed,” to maximise profits and flout the rules for the benefit of all, bar the image of the borough.\textsuperscript{503} Thus, many keepers simply did not declare, advertise or offer themselves up as lodging-house keepers, or, indeed, their premises as being lodging houses, to officials or in official sources. Indeed, those such as William Bright, a general labourer according to official sources, ran what was known locally as a lodging house in the brothel district of sailorhood behind The Hard in Southampton Row, where over seven women between the ages of twenty and thirty were recorded in the CEBs as “unfortunates,” living with other itinerant workers.\textsuperscript{504} Likewise, beerhouse keeper, William Holden, effectively ran a lodging house from his drinking establishment which recorded “10 nieces,” listed as “prostitutes,” residing in his beerhouse.\textsuperscript{505} Similarly, it was not unknown for brothel-keepers like James Richards of Southampton Row, to openly conduct their businesses under the guise of a lodging house. Thus, the lodging houses sailors could frequent or rent rooms in were also places of lodging for known prostitutes, Therefore, it was these that borough police focussed their limited resources on as it meant they could often gather enough evidence for multiple prosecutions for multiple crimes charged to one person or premises.\textsuperscript{506}

\textsuperscript{501} “Common Lodging House Act,” HTSC, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1852.
\textsuperscript{502} “Common Lodging House Act,” HTSC, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1852.
\textsuperscript{503} “The Health of Portsmouth,” HTSC, 25\textsuperscript{th} February 1874.
\textsuperscript{505} “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsmouth Town,” HAMHO107/1658-25-669, (1851).
\textsuperscript{506} “The Health of the Navy,” HTSC, 5\textsuperscript{th} November 1870; “The Beer Trade in St Marys Street,” HTSC, 4\textsuperscript{th} September 1869. For police focus, “Serious Charge against a Refreshment House Keeper,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} July 1872; “Brothel Keeping at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 31\textsuperscript{st} October 1891;
Whilst a larger number of sailors lodged away from a lodging house setting, for some sailors, lodging houses afforded them a sense of freedom preferring to have “the freedom of a life on the road,” as one local journalist noted.\footnote{307} However, for others, residing in a place where prostitution was present was a problem. For example, the 1880 Forbes vs. Botley case saw Forbes, a lodging-house keeper, sue Botley, a naval sailor from HMS Shah, for unpaid lodgings and board. Botley alleged in his defence that he had refused to pay as the “house was a place of ill-fame to which sailors were decoyed and robbed,” and thus he refused to pay for being subjected to such a place. After a lengthy hearing, judgement was given in Botley’s favour.\footnote{308} It is revealing the court found in Botley’s favour based on his being subjected to such poor and immoral lodgings, as, for Botley, the lodgings did not reflect the more elevated social and moral position of naval sailors as ‘respectable’ men.\footnote{309} Moreover, much like the businesses of drinking establishments and brothels, it was the location of lodging houses which stirred concern amongst civic authorities and church leaders in Portsmouth, namely due to their proximity with these businesses and their spatial concentration in Portsmouth’s sailortown. As Figure 32 shows, the majority of lodging houses in Portsea were located here, at the far end of the sailorhood, back towards the main town, on the outskirt streets, particularly St Georges’ Square, where more drinking establishments were found as opposed to brothels.

\footnote{307} “Portsmouth County Court,” HTSC, 15\textsuperscript{th} August 1863.
\footnote{308} “A Night in a Common Lodging House,” HTSC, 12\textsuperscript{th} February 1876.
\footnote{309} “Local & District News,” HTSC, 10\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.

As identified by Mary Conley, Mary Conley, \textit{From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Naval Manhood in the British Empire, 1870 – 1918}, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 87 – 90. This is also reflected in other sailors’ thoughts in regards to lodgings reflecting their more elevated social and moral position in the mid-late nineteenth century, see, for example, “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 15\textsuperscript{th} November 1873: “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880. See also discussion in Chapter 6 of this thesis.
However, it was locally known that many of the unlicensed lodging houses "were situated in the lowest parts of the town" principally in the sailorhood behind The Hard, where the highest concentration of brothels was also located, as demonstrated in Figure 33.510

In Portsmouth Town, as with other data and spatial patterns, the opposite applies. Here, lodging houses were concentrated into the main thoroughfare streets adjoining the town to Portsea, particularly St Mary’s Street, where the majority of known recorded brothels were found, as indicated in Figure 34. Thus, the spatial patterns of lodgings in both towns further reflect the shift from Portsmouth Town to Portsea as naval sailortown areas grew. Furthermore, lodging houses in Portsmouth’s sailortown and their environs were caught in debates surrounding street and civic improvements as the nineteenth century progressed. A zealous drive was initiated to clean the ‘dirty’ streets, physically, socially and morally. This included reforming the business of sailortown and reforming the trade conducted there and the respectability and conduct of those who frequented the area, as they fostered the slum environs of Portsmouth, immorality and deviance. By the turn of the twentieth century, sailortown and its associated businesses were spreading further back from the waterfront into the adjoining district of Landport, with Commercial Road soon becoming an extension of Queen Street as the main thoroughfare street of Portsea’s sailortown area. This meant sailortown came into direct confrontation with the

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Conclusion

This chapter has explored the three core businesses of Portsmouth’s sailortown and their relationships with sailors and the wider port community. In doing so, it has shown the businesses were not only central to the local economy of Portsmouth, but also in sustaining and maintaining the sailortown district, whether they were owned by males or females. Whilst trading fluctuated relative to the movements of sailors (and military personnel) in and out of the port and with the basic rhythms of shore leave rotations, the three businesses remained as anchors of sailortown districts, and nor were they there to just cater to sailors’ entertainment when ashore. Thus, it can be inferred the businesses were fundamental to the maintenance and fostering of sailortown as a spatial entity and distinct sailortown culture, as explored in the following chapter. Moreover, spatially mapping the three businesses has demonstrated they formed part of the demographic foundation of sailortown areas. Whilst the businesses represented, to church leaders and civic and military authorities, a ‘devil’s acre’ and exacerbated the unstable social and moral perception of sailortown districts in the port, they performed roles beyond this. As this chapter has shown, they were also closely entwined with the nature and structure of the sailorhoods. This further demonstrates that viewing sailortown as a network of interrelated neighbourhood areas rather than as one homogenous space is important, as spatially, they formed part of the ‘backbone’ of these neighbourhoods, shaping and sustaining these areas as sailor-orientated ones.

Crucially, the exploration of Portsmouth’s sailortown businesses conducted here allows for sailortowns to be understood beyond simply being spaces of sex and excess privileging men over women, or spaces sailors manipulated or were exploited in. As this chapter has demonstrated, the relationships between sailors and sailortown traders are more multi-faceted than previous research has allowed for. Whilst many sailors used these businesses as places in which

512 “Sunday Night in Commercial Road,” HTSC, 6th April 1895.
to socialise and exchange information, it was not limited to organising resistance networks as Rediker argues.\textsuperscript{513} Likewise, whilst Burton argues sailortown businesses privileged males as consumers and spenders over women,\textsuperscript{514} this chapter has shown both men and women ran, used and participated in these businesses. Moreover, as Vickers found, these businesses offered a viable way for women to carve out roles for themselves, as Louisa Wafer did in Portsmouth’s sailortown district.\textsuperscript{515} Indeed, that many women were able to do this, also suggests women played a pivotal role in maintaining sailortown areas. More widely, this chapter has shown the location of these businesses and their trades enabled a street-level socialization and sailortown culture to be fostered. This therefore facilitated a sense of familiarity, commonality and power to be created which contested and challenged outsider “assumptions about who people are and who belongs where,” as the next chapter on sailortown culture will explore.\textsuperscript{516}

\textsuperscript{514} Burton, “As I wuz a-rolling down the Highway,” 151; Gunn and Morris, “Contesting Public Space,” 134.
Chapter 4 – ‘Sailors on the Streets’: Sailortown Culture

Introduction

Parts of the town have peculiarities which seem to sanction the celebrity the place has acquired…..crowded with a class of low and abandoned beings, who seem to have declared open war against every habit of common decency and decorum…..the riotous, drunken and immoral scenes of this place, perhaps, exceeds all others.  

When Doctor George Pinckard passed through Portsmouth’s sailortown, the description of the scenes he witnessed reflected an enduring popular perception, that sailortown was a space of social and moral chaos, harbouring decay, degeneracy and degradation. Like the physical nature of the sea, sailors and their associated sailortown district was unknown, undomesticated and untamed. A perception which was compounded by the public displays of riotous, drunken and immoral conduct by sailors, and of those closely associated to sailortown’s ‘underworld’ society such as prostitutes. This chapter will assess the extent to which a sailortown culture was evident in Portsmouth via the themes of riots, disorderly and drunken behaviour and prostitution. By taking the very activities and behaviours seen to define the moral and social conditions of sailortown areas and sailors’ public behaviour ashore, this chapter will demonstrate how these activities and behaviours are also reflective of sailors and the sailortown community fashioning a sailortown culture. Moreover, by assessing the above in the environment of sailortown and its streets, this chapter advances the burgeoning area of debate related to sailor and sailortown culture in maritime and urban history. This will be achieved by utilizing a range of national newspapers, in-depth analysis of local newspapers, their police reports and Parliamentary Papers, across the mid-to-late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Approaching sailortown from a street-level analysis it will be demonstrated that

a sailortown culture was present in Portsmouth and it was one which was shared by sailors and the sailortown community. In demonstrating this, the chapter will show whilst portrayed as imperial icons at sea, sailors ashore were not seen to be ideal social citizens. Indeed, their behaviour ashore was often constructed to be a deviant social and moral influence in direct contrast to Mary Conley’s British bluejacket image. Moreover, it will be argued the seemingly deviant public displays served an important purpose in fostering relationships between sailors and others within the sailortown community which is reflective of a sailortown culture being present – distinctive by its interdependent nature - and it remained, like the businesses of sailortown, whether sailors were present in port or not. It will also be asserted the network of sailorhoods facilitated this culture. Indeed, control and influence of these neighbourhoods was a vested shared interest between sailors and local inhabitants to protect and defend against outsider influence and to ensure that sailortown remained a sailor’s town that worked for them. In reaction and resistance to outsider interference, sailors were instrumental in fashioning a street-based sailortown culture, which challenged, defied and mocked the very practices in place to control and reform Portsmouth’s sailortown district. Furthermore, this chapter will show, for sailors, the openness of the streets was a readily available form of landed culture that they could participate in, contesting the idea of who ‘owned’ and therefore controlled the streets. Thus, sailors were not ‘men apart.’ They were inherently bound to the street-based fabric of sailortown and its culture, possessing a street-wise sensibility that they were popularly assumed not to own.

As with other areas explored in this thesis, merchant sailors have provided the basis for research into a distinct seafaring culture ashore. Indeed, among others, Bruce Nelson and Evan Lampe identify a distinct merchant seaman subculture was created, in part, due to seamen’s isolation from the shore and their working conditions and lives. Moreover, for Marxist historians like

Marcus Rediker, this distinctive subculture was closely bound to resisting class-based, capitalist oppression, with rioting “the only weapon available to the unrepresented and suppressed.”\(^{520}\) Therefore, when sailors were found in the streets it was under the banner of protest, rebellion and riot in the form of ‘motley crews.’\(^{521}\) In contrast, Peter Burke argues a sailor culture was identifiable based on shared and easily recognizable traits like language, dress and beliefs, which signified their isolation from mainstream popular culture, not from land itself.\(^{522}\) However, Valerie Burton asserts sailor culture is distinct from land. She argues that the seemingly, transgressive and outlandish behaviour of sailors, whilst on the spectrum of being a working-class culture, was distinct from those on land due to the connections sailor culture had with debauchery and drink.\(^{523}\) More recently, Isaac Land advances the notion that sailor culture is not necessarily a maritime culture as those like Paul Gilje exploring America’s waterfront-maritime culture would imply.\(^{524}\) It is a subculture fashioned in urban environments exhibited through sailors’ distinctive dress, language, gait and seemingly outlandish behaviours, which they could flaunt or ‘play up’ to if


suited. In viewing sailor culture as an urban subculture, Land and Dianne Dugaw have shown sailor culture is not the preserve of sailors alone. Women and others in sailortown communities could adopt and adapt sailors’ distinctive traits too.

Thus, sailor culture was accessible, open to interpretation and adaptation in sailortown districts. Brad Beaven has recently taken this debate further by exploring the resilience of sailortown culture in naval ports. Beaven argues sailortown culture was an urban-maritime one by nature, a culture of ‘Otherness’ in naval ports, which was resilient in the face of reforming initiatives and civic control. Beaven asserts sailortown culture displayed “carnivalesque features,” ebbing and flowing with the tide of ships docking and leaving port. He also argues that the businesses of sailortown facilitated this interdependent culture, and those within the sailortown community were bound together by maritime superstitions and traditions, as Karl Bell earlier observed within naval sailor-families. However, what is absent from existing research is a street-orientated exploration of sailor and sailortown cultures in action. In particular, the roles public displays of violence, rowdy, outlandish and seemingly immoral behaviour played in making this culture resilient to outside influences and interference have hitherto been overlooked. Moreover, whilst it is known that others could adopt elements of sailors’ cultural displays, the manner in which women and others did this in a sailortown community is also relatively unexplored.

**Policing the Port**

A brief note about the role of the police is needed here, as it is in resistance and

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reaction to the police forces of Portsmouth that sailor and sailortown culture comes to the fore. As an urban-naval port, Portsmouth saw the introduction of three police forces, the local borough police, the Dockyard Police and the Metropolitan Police (Met). Alongside this, there was a contingent of military police and shore patrols governing the behaviour of soldiers, sailors and marines in barracks, on ships and ashore. The borough police’s remit was the maintenance of law and order on the streets of Portsmouth. The Dockyard Police’s primary role (as part of the Met) taking orders from the Admiralty, was to protect government stores and property, and the contingent of Met officers were brought in specifically to implement the *Contagious Diseases Acts* (CDAs) from 1864. Unlike the borough police, the members of the Dockyard Police and Met were separated in barracks away from the community and thus “not mixed up with the inhabitants at all” as the local police were, and Met officers all came from outside the borough, recruited for being respectable family men. The Met, unlike the Dockyard Police or borough force, had no official authority in or outside the Dockyard other than to exercise the powers granted by the CDAs and enforcing known female prostitutes to submit for medical examination. Thus, their remit stopped at the entrances to private property and they had no powers to inspect disorderly public houses or known and suspected brothels. Nor did they have the power to detain disorderly prostitutes on the streets of Portsmouth. They could only detain women when information had been received that they were diseased and to “take care that these women are registered and go periodically to see whether they are diseased or not,” as the Met Superintendent declared.  

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529 “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” *PP*, 353, xxix. The Met would not act in detaining a prostitute in Portsmouth based on supplied information either. They only acted once proven in their own mind that a woman was a prostitute. As one officer stated, “if I saw a woman meet different men at night several times, and found she was living in a brothel, I should conclude that she was a prostitute,” 380. However, the Met did interfere with borough policing when needed, particularly
Thus, alongside the Met implementing the CDAs, the streets remained the borough police’s remit, with clauses from the 1824 *Vagrancy Act* applied by them to apprehend “common prostitutes soliciting or otherwise [being] disorderly in the streets.” Thus, disorderly behaviour on the streets by female prostitutes and sailors alike came under the remit of the borough police and transgressive behaviour inside the Dockyard or against Admiralty orders was dealt with by the Dockyard Police. However, in practice, the Dockyard Police’s and Met’s exercising of authority, extended fifteen miles from the Royal Dockyard gates in any given direction over persons subject to military and naval discipline. This thus created a complex network of policing procedures and strategies in dealing with sailors in Portsmouth, with sailors’ disorderly behaviour and associated vices such as prostitution, caught between the remits of differing police forces and their roles in ‘surveying’ and controlling criminal, immoral acts and behaviour on the streets of Portsmouth.

Indeed, that the focus of the borough police was directed at Portsmouth’s sailortown district and community as the nineteenth century progressed was no coincidence. This was a time when civilizing influences were more forcibly instilled on public-street behaviour and police forces, particularly borough police, undertook the regulation of civilizing behaviour, with their primary role becoming one of ‘securing’ public spaces against unrespectable, disorderly behaviour and imposing new, refined standards of behaviour. Thus, the traditional view of nineteenth-century policing is based on a conflict-model of

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531 “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 344. Although *The Vagrancy Act* did not define, what a common prostitute was, other than female and in a class associated with tramps and vagabonds, “Vagrancy: Reports on Vagrancy made to the President of the Poor Law Board by Poor Law Inspectors,” 3698, Command Papers: Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1866).
society, with middle class control imposed on the working classes and enacted via the police being deployed as a form of social control “enforcing respectable codes of behaviour on ‘rough’ society.” 534 Any resistance thus “came to be interpreted as evidence of anti-social tendencies…thereby justifying further protection legislation.” 535 More recently, John Carter-Wood argues that resistance to police and forms of social control was an attempt at an “assertion of independence from state authority and civilized or respectable standards of behaviour” by ordinary people, with the streets being the “preferred” site for resistance displays. 536 Furthermore, notions of public respectability bound sailors to concerns over the rise of juvenile delinquents and street gang violence, spurring contemporary efforts to civilize male working-class youths and to negate the threat they posed to the civility of public spaces. Thus, historians working on Victorian street-gangs note there was already an existing tradition of “resistance to the police.” 537 Indeed, sailors contributed to the rise in fear of new, daunting forms of street peoples, compounded with the rise in the fear of hooliganism and street gangs, and thus became a target of police attention and control, particularly after dark. With the night-time economy awakening as darkness set in, police braced themselves for the moment sailors were seemingly released onto the streets to unleash drinking, debauchery, violence with a penchant for rioting. However, as will be argued below, it is in these very activities and behaviours that sailors’ street-wise sensibilities become evident. Indeed, these activities actually played a central role in fostering a sailortown culture, and provided opportunities for others to access and adopt elements of sailor culture in the face of outsider interferences.

Riots and Street Brawls

On the evening of Monday 26th August 1850, a dispute erupted between a naval sailor belonging to HMS Fox and a soldier stationed in Portsmouth belonging to the 50th Regiment, a regiment consisting primarily of men originating from outside Portsmouth. Both were drunk and began fighting in the main thoroughfare of Queen Street over a disagreement that had started outside a brothel in the notorious brothel-street of White’s Row. That evening this incident was of little significance, with both men separated and detained by police. Yet the following evening, Portsea descended into a state of riot, when a “general battle” took place in the sailorhood areas of Portsea, with Queen Street as the centre-stage, resulting in the streets being in “great turmoil and riot.” A “strong muster” of around seventy seamen from the Fox, took to Queen Street that evening against a “more powerful muster” of soldiers from the 50th regiment, resulting in what the Hampshire Telegraph described as the “exhibition of a most vindictive feeling” being exercised on the streets. The borough police were unable to control the riot and could do little to quell the “belligerents.” It was reported that up to three hundred soldiers, armed with leg frames and iron bedsteads, gathered outside Lion Gate, on the corner of Queen Street, awaiting the arrival of the sailors from the Fox. Thus, over the next twenty-four hours, the streets of sailortown became a soldier’s town, as they “got possession of the town, attacking every sailor they met, and beating them most cruelly.”

Whilst sailors of the Fox had by now, on orders of the Admiralty, been detained on ship, soldiers of the 50th were able to slip the confines of their barrack

539 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 31st August 1850. Beaven also identifies this riot as symptomatic of the resilient nature of sailortown culture, Brad Beaven, “The Resilience of Sailortown Culture,” 23.
540 “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” HTSC, 31st August 1850
541 “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” HTSC, 31st August 1850
542 “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” The York Herald & General Advertiser, 7th September 1850.
detention and “paraded the streets,” delivering indiscriminate attacks on sailors in port.\textsuperscript{544} As the local press reported, “the soldiers lay in wait for single seamen and indiscriminately attacked every person with a blue jacket on whether waterman, dockman or civilian.” Thus, when the group of soldiers found a sailor they took for belonging to the Fox, “they beat him most severely with their belts and also attacked other inoffensive persons.”\textsuperscript{545} Still not satisfied, the soldiers marched to The Hard and smashed the \textit{Row Barge Inn} beerhouse’s windows believing this is where the sailors of Fox were hiding out. They were not, having been detained on ship, as all sailors on ships docked in Portsmouth were by now at the request of local authorities to the Admiralty.\textsuperscript{546} Thus, the local authorities’ request to prevent sailors coming ashore was granted, and with soldiers now dominating the town, another consequence to this became apparent. With the streets engulfed in chaos and violence, many of the local sailortown businesses were forced to close for public safety and the night-time economy of sailortown closed down. Trades, which kept the sailorhoods alive, were brought to a standstill, as sailors, being their primary consumers, were now detained on ships until further notice.\textsuperscript{547} However, sailors arriving into Portsmouth that day soon heard of the soldiers’ attacks, presumably through locals. Thus, as the \textit{Stirling Observer} reported, “the feud is now extended to all the sailors in port” with a “strong feeling of enmity exist[ing] in the minds of nearly all the seamen in port against the 50\textsuperscript{th} Regiment.”\textsuperscript{548}

\textsuperscript{544} Quotes from, “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850. See also, “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850; “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” \textit{The York Herald & General Advertiser}, 7\textsuperscript{th} September 1850.
\textsuperscript{545} “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850; “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” \textit{The York Herald & General Advertiser}, 7\textsuperscript{th} September 1850.
\textsuperscript{546} The petition to the Admiralty was sent by local-civic authorities belonging to the Town Council and other members belonging to local institutions and organisations, “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850. “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850; “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” \textit{The York Herald & General Advertiser}, 7\textsuperscript{th} September 1850. As reported here, to prevent further incidents the Admiralty confined the Fox’s sailors to ship and ordered the ship to depart to Plymouth on the coming Sunday. Likewise, the 50\textsuperscript{th} regiment were required to be relocated to Winchester on the following Monday. However, as all sailors were later confined to ships, this resulted in “mutinous conduct” on other ships in Portsmouth Harbour such as on the \textit{Sprightly}, where sailors on board hoisted the mutiny flag in protest. The Admiralty had to send a company of Royal Marines on board to quell the disturbance and restore order.
\textsuperscript{547} The press reports indicate that the closing down of local businesses was undertaken for public safety reasons as the riot was brought under control. “Affray between the Seamen and Military,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850; “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} August 1850.
\textsuperscript{548} “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” \textit{The York Herald & General
With enmity at its height, on the evening of the 30th August, over two hundred sailors amassed in Portsea to avenge the soldier attacks and to take back the town as a sailor’s one. Armed with heavy bludgeons, this collective of sailors methodically searched public houses and beerhouses for soldiers, and when found "very seriously ill-used" them whether they belonged to the 50th or not.549 Thus, it was now the turn of the sailors to parade the streets, as the borough police once again tried to regain control of the area. However, these sailors, unlike the soldiers, had an extra weapon. Having been seen by locals as the unjust recipients of outside soldier attacks and in the face of the increasing police presence attempting to quell the avenging sailors in claiming back the streets, sailors amassed a crowd of over two thousand civilians in Queen Street, composed of both ‘respectable’ and ‘non-respectable’ inhabitants, as the local press described.550 What had started as a dispute between a sailor and a soldier, led to a riot involving several hundred men of both services and thousands of civilians, played out on the streets for all to see, and the riot now descended into seeming chaos. With one soldier killed and numbers on all sides sustaining injuries, the borough police were overwhelmed. Civic and military authorities had little choice to intervene to pacify the display of emotion on the street. However, what spurred them into action to stamp out the riot was not the fighting between sailors and soldiers *per se*; it was the fact that the sailors amassed and overtook the streets with a large crowd. This was something civic authorities could no longer tolerate as sailors, in conjunction with local residents, were now challenging the very idea of who owned and controlled the streets, posing a serious threat to the rule of law and order. With the Riot Act read, all sailors in port confined to ships on Admiralty orders, soldiers confined to barracks and a contingent of Royal Marines brought in to restore order, the rioting ceased.551 Yet crucially this was not before sailors and

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551 "Serious Riot in Portsmouth," *The Stirling Observer*, 5th September 1850. Only five sailors were arrested for this incident along with three inhabitants who joined them, one was “respectable,” and the other two were “labouring men,” “Riots between the Seamen and the Military at Portsmouth,” *The York Herald & General Advertiser*, 7th September 1850. Another sailor was arrested later when found wandering the town, armed and swearing revenge against
residents of the sailortown community had restored the streets back to a sailor’s town and businesses reopened to trade as usual on the Friday morning, with the economy of sailortown functioning once again.

Whilst the immediate danger of the riot was now quelled, it is revealing that riot re-enactments by young, local boys in the streets of Portsea’s sailorhoods lasted until the end of September 1850. At their height, it was reported that between forty and sixty boys armed with sticks had been parading at Portsea for several nights past, acting soldiers against sailors in imitation of the late riots and attacking boys who would not join them.552

It was further reported the boys on one street set against boys of another to re-enact the riot, with one side being sailors and the other soldiers, and both sides went round the streets of the sailorhoods collecting boys to strengthen their respective groups, just as they had witnessed the sailors and soldiers do.553 Moreover, the borough police could not catch any of these boys; they ducked and dived in and out of the alleys of the sailorhoods to slip the police’s grasp. However, this was not before creating much noise as they disappeared into the maze of streets, thus mocking police as they attempted to catch them.554 Whilst it is not clear from the police or newspaper reports as to whether these boys were the children of sailors, it can be reasoned from the reports that they lived in the sailorhood areas of Portsea where the sailor presence was strong. Indeed, they had evidently witnessed the 1850 riot first-hand, and in the escaping the police, these boys seemingly knew the maze of alleys and backstreets of Portsea’s sailorhoods well.

Whilst a riot of this magnitude involving sailors did not occur again in Victorian Portsmouth, the 1850 riot and its aftermath is indicative of a sailortown culture being fashioned on the streets for three reasons. Firstly, violence was a

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552 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 31st August 1850.
553 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 21st September 1850.
554 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 21st September 1850.
common way for sailors and other working-class people to settle grievances and disputes. Its deployment was important in maintaining control of the streets against outsider attacks and a mainstay in displaying strength on the streets as violence was central to maintaining an outward projection of honour and prestige for sailors when one of their own was wronged. Moreover, violence was also something to be imitated by younger boys, who, learning from those around them, seemingly knew how to avoid the grasps of the police and to mock them as they went. Secondly, sailors and local residents could join together when sailortown life and business was under threat and attack from outsiders or against authorities attempting to control the order of the streets. Thus, having not only a collective sailor-code to call on but also a wider sailortown one, was important when it came to defending honour and avenging perceived wrongs occurring in the streets that sailors’ saw as their own.

Creating a spectacle, a display of power and emotion on the streets, was a way to strengthen socio-cultural bonds within the sailortown community, which not only challenged outsider attacks but also defied authorities. Lastly, the ability to amass a crowd, which was not pre-arranged or ordered, suggests that there was a form of common interest and culture present when sailortown or sailors were under threat. This meant sailors and the residents of sailortown would come to the rescue of one another when needed, creating a sense of commonality, community and solidarity against a perceived wrong, when under threat of outsider attacks or when defying and police authority. These inferences and presence of a sailortown community and culture are strengthened when other riots, or street brawls that the local press were keen to describe as riots, are explored. This is more so when the threat was the symbol of state authority – the police – deploying what was perceived as an over-excessive use of force on the streets. Here, it is evident sailors and the wider sailortown community would save one another when on the streets and

556 Spectacle is defined here using the definition by John Gold and George Revill, being something “that produce displays that draw a powerful emotional response from spectators, whose participation is part of the experience of spectacle.....a means by which social bonds of commonality, community and solidarity are performed in the face of perceived or actual fears and threats,” John Gold and George Revill, “Exploring landscapes of fear: marginality, spectacle and surveillance,” Capital & Class, vol. 27, (2003), 38.
gravitate to one of their own in danger.

In a riot that broke out in Commercial Road on 1st July 1887 “being the worst during the last twelve months,” it was reported that a large group of sailors collected in the streets to surround police as they were attempting to arrest a sailor for disorderly behaviour. What turned this incident into a riot was the police using their staves to strike the sailor not on the arm, but in the face, and knocking him to the ground. The large group of sailors saw this as unjust and set about rescuing the sailor from the police. In doing so, the sailors turned on the police and beat them.557 Such rescue attempts reveal sailors could rely on other sailors on the streets, even if they did not know one another, as shown in The Evening News report on the “riotous proceedings in Queen Street” in May 1883. A group of sailors were attempting to rescue a sailor from police after being apprehended for being drunk and disorderly.558 Police threatened to use their staves and the “sailors called for their knives,” and scores of sailors filled the street from the nearby drinking establishments and a riot between sailors and the police ensued.559 Other examples reinforce this. In August 1895 a “bluejackets v. police” incident took place in Commercial Road. What started with a group of sailors drunkenly street brawling soon turned riotous when police arrived to stop them. All the sailors then turned on the police and were joined by a large number of other sailors in the vicinity.560 Moreover, in the course of these rescue attempts, sailors could not only rely on the aid of other sailors but also on local sailortown residents. The Hampshire Telegraph reported on a “Sailor’s Riot at Portsea” in Queen Street in 1894, describing how a crowd of sailors surrounded police whilst they were apprehending a sailor for disorderly behaviour. This incident soon turned into “disorderly chaos” when the crowd of sailors was swelled with local inhabitants aiding the group in their

557 “Police Intelligence,” HTSC, 2nd July 1887. Incidents such as this occur again, “Serious Riot at Landport,” HTSC, 27th October 1888. There are numerous accounts of sailors reacting to police being heavy-handed in their use of staves, see, for example, the case of Samuel Pike, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 17th July 1872. Merchant seamen defended one another against the police in these situations too, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 1st September 1894.
558 “Portsmouth Police Court,” The Evening News, 28th May 1883.
559 “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 28th May 1883. There are numerous other examples of this type of incident occurring, see for example, the case of Ernest Bartlett, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 28th May 1892 and others, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 27th November 1878.
560 “Disorder in Landport,” HTSC, 31st August 1895
attempt to rescue the apprehended sailor. It was reported that locals soon
joined with the sailors in physically fighting off the police.\textsuperscript{561} Scenes such as
these occur frequently. For example, a group of drunken sailors began fighting
outside the Albany Hotel in Commercial Road in August 1895, making for a
“lively night.” As soon as the police arrived, the street brawl descended into
chaos as the police presence served only to draw more and more sailors and
local residents to the street.\textsuperscript{562}

Thus, the idea of rescuing one’s own from danger is something which
seemingly permeated through sailortown culture; it was not uncommon
therefore for sailors to gravitate to one of their own being arrested or surround
police to save one of their own. Moreover, sailors’ ability to call upon a collective
code on the streets, quickly and without organisation, suggests some form of
shared interest and common culture was present. This meant sailors were also
able to draw in local residents to help fight their causes on the streets and to
defy authority. Furthermore, as with the 1850 riot, violence deployed by a group,
was evidently central to sailortown culture in terms of offering restorative justice
on the streets. However, on the streets, to civic authorities, sailors posed
another more serious problem. That they could also call on local residents
meant they seemingly had the ability to turn a minor dispute into a riot, and in
the process, they were able to amass crowds. This crowd-gathering ability
heralded sailors’ presence on the streets to be constructed by civic authorities
and the local press as a social danger.\textsuperscript{563} This is particularly evident as many of
the riots and street brawls took place in the public, main thoroughfare streets of
Portsmouth, as evidenced in the police reports and local press.\textsuperscript{564} Thus, the
location of riots reveals some further observations, with the first indicated in
\textit{Figure 35}.

\textsuperscript{561} “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 23\textsuperscript{rd} June 1894.
\textsuperscript{562} “Disorder at Landport,” \textit{TEN}, 26\textsuperscript{th} August 1895. The problem with crowds gathering when
police apprehended sailors is common, see, for example, comments in the case of Isaac Moon,
“Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 26\textsuperscript{th} September. See also, “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{TEN}, 11\textsuperscript{th}
November 1895.
\textsuperscript{563} “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 27\textsuperscript{th} November 1878.
\textsuperscript{564} Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 27\textsuperscript{th} November 1878. For heightened reporting in public
thoroughfares, see, for example, the case of John Burns, “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{TEN}, 17\textsuperscript{th}
December 1894.
That the majority of these riots and street brawls took place in the towns of Portsea (and later Landport) is of significance, as it highlights that not only are these streets in the vicinity of the sailortown’s businesses and close to sailors’ residences, these streets also represented the heart of the sailorhoods. Thus, defending one’s honour in these streets, rescuing your own and calling on others was also, in part, about dominating and controlling these streets. Moreover, that relatively more riots and streets brawls occurred in Commercial Road, Landport, from the late nineteenth century onwards, is reflective of the shift of sailortown into the civic heart of Portsmouth, as identified in Chapter 2. Furthermore, as the nineteenth century progressed, the number of riots doubles in the 1890s, peaking from 1891 to 1895, as Figure 36 indicates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Number of Riots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850s</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860s</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870s</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880s</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890s</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900s</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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This is primarily due to the increase in drunken behaviour and disorder recorded by the borough police that, in turn, contributed to more frequent street disturbances being reported. The increase, to an extent, can also be linked to the rising number of naval sailors having been recruited into the service and a higher amount of regulated shore leave granted to sailors, which meant many

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were able to spend more of their leisure time ashore in Portsmouth. However, it is revealing that the contemporary sources used here give little suggestion that a sailor's restriction to life on ship and then 'release' ashore was a factor in the increased number of riots. Thus, the increase in the number of riots is not only due to the recording practices of police improving, it is also reflective of the heightened press reporting and civic authorities' increasing anxiety over the conduct of sailors on the streets. Indeed, what would once have been described as street brawls were now depicted as all out riots. As such, a distinct shift in language takes place in the press reports of sailor-related disorderly behaviour at the very time Conley identifies sailors were constructed to be the exemplars of empire under the civilizing, dutiful, British bluejacket image. However, with the shift from sail to steam, sailors on the streets were not the idealized hero of empire, yet nor were they the harmless, hapless Jolly Jack Tar of old. Sailors were seen as part of the spectrum of dangerous street peoples that so dominated Victorian discourse of urban life. They were a social peril, with their behaviour on the streets seen as disruptive and deviant, particularly so when drunk.

**Drunk and Disorderly Behaviour**

With a prevailing contemporary perception that sailors were ‘addicted’ to drink and one “drank himself insensible at every opportunity,” drunken behaviour was of great concern to civic authorities. Indeed, one local magistrate was perplexed to ask, “that it was very strange that sailors could not come ashore in Portsmouth without getting drunk?” Thus, in Portsmouth’s police reports it was commonly noted that police officers found “Jack tipsy” in the streets or

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566 From the 1860s, shore leave for sailors became a requirement implemented by the Admiralty based on a three-tier of leave (granted, privilege and special) based on good character and conduct and at the discretion of the senior officers, as outlined in the introduction of this thesis, “The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Navy and the Admiralty Instructions for the Government of Her Majesty's Naval Service,” (London: HMSO, 1862), 110 – 111. 567 See, for example, the case of Cornelius Sullivan, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 12th June 1867; Conley, From Jack Tar, Chapters 1 to 3. 568 “Our Convict System (From The Times),” HTSC, 21st August 1858. Quote from, Henry Baynham, Before the Mast: Naval Ratings of the Nineteenth Century, (London: Hutchinson, 1971), 110. Early naval historians also identify this trend, see, for example, Chris Lloyd, The British Seaman, 1200 – 1860: a Social Survey, (London: Collins, 1968), 273 – 274. 569 “Portsmouth Police Courts,” HTSC, 5th June 1867.
“found sitting comfortably drunk in the gutter,” as “sailors [were] often thirsty,” with one local magistrate observing it was “common practice with sailors when they went out into the town to indulge.” The visibility of drink and its effects drew heightened civic concern to the issue of drunken sailors in the streets. Moreover, the high level of alcohol consumption reflected wider concerns by civic authorities that drunkenness was a “way of life in Portsmouth.” As in the urban slums of London and the industrial North, drink was viewed by civic authorities and church leaders in Portsmouth as the seed of all crime and vice. For sailors in particular, drink caused them to be led astray, getting among the “sharks” at houses of poor conduct and ill repute. However, it is in the issue of drink and sailors’ drunken and disorderly behaviour that a sailortown community and culture can also be identified. Indeed, many residents within the sailortown community pointed out at local meetings that sailors “were not so bad as they were painted in some portions of the press.” For some local residents it was the police, or rather lack of them, that was the problem, not sailors. As a Mr Hill described at a licensing meeting, there was frequent drunkenness and fighting among sailors, and “sailors had a character for being a noisy race, but he had no objection to sailors.” What he objected to was the lack of policing in dealing with such events, as the police, according to Hill, “were never to be found when there was a disturbance.” Thus, those like Hill did not object to sailors on the streets of Portsmouth. If sailors’

570 “Hampshire Spring Assizes,” HTSC, 3rd March 1866; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 25th June 1853; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 29th July 1848; “Annual Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 12th September 1863. This sentiment is seen elsewhere when sailors were charged with being drunk and disorderly, see, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 11th February 1891.
574 “Local Intelligence,” HTSC, 30th December 1893.
575 “Annual Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 5th December 1863.
576 “Annual Licensing Meeting,” HTSC, 5th December 1863. The local press often voiced the same objections. When a beerhouse in Oyster Street was the frequent scene of disorderly behaviour in July 1858, the local newspaper had but one question, “Where are the police?” “Where Are the Police,” HTSC, 24th July 1858.
behaviour got out of control, it was down to the lack of sufficient policing. Likewise, civic authorities, members of the local elite and industry groups also bemoaned the lack of policing. Here, it was the ‘Devil’s Acre’ which drew the most attention, as the drink-ridden Hard “was now as the back of the Point used to be….pandemonium….where offences against propriety were committed every day and every hour,” with soldiers and sailors “permitted to infest the Hard at all hours.”

Reflective of this concern, as early as 1858, petitions about the state of The Hard were submitted to the Town Council in an attempt to galvanize and increase policing of this public area. However, those who signed this petition were not from inside the sailortown community. They predominantly came from individuals within the brewing industry in Portsmouth, merchant class, the clergy, the military, bankers and local magistrates. This very petition-base propelled the Town Council to act as “the social position” of these signatories meant that

their opinion was to be taken, not only as inhabitants of the town, who were witnesses of what they all saw, but, from their official connection with the crime and impropriety in the borough….[that] offend the eye and the ear of every person in his walks through the town.

As the petition reveals

they complained that drunken and disorderly soldiers, sailors, marines and prostitutes were permitted without molestation to infest the place and at all hours of the day…the scenes which are to be witnessed here are of the most revolting description….such a state of things has reached a height barely endurable when a ship happens to be paid off in the ports, these evils are increased tenfold.

577 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 13th February 1858. This image continues into the later nineteenth century, “Letters to the Editors,” TEN, 7th March 1889. This petition also reflects wider calls from 1858 to increase the numbers of the police in Portsmouth, since one officer per 1,500 inhabitants was not as a sufficient ratio, “Inadequacy of the Borough Police Force,” HTSC, 30th January 1858.
578 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 13th February 1858.
Moreover, the impression this image gave to Portsmouth’s visitors spurred the Town Council into dealing with policing The Hard otherwise visitors would leave with not a “very high estimate” of Portsmouth should its police service be inefficient in abating immorality and drunkenness in public. The Hard was thus frequently used as an example to highlight this point by the local press, with an editorial in the *Hampshire Telegraph* stating that The Hard is the principal thoroughfare to the great object of attraction to persons visiting Portsmouth; and where ribaldry, blasphemy and obscenity are heard throughout the day and are followed at night by scenes of the most revolting and brutal indecency….blocked up with sailors, watermen, prostitutes and loiterers of every description… fights are of no unfrequent [sic] occurrence and ladies are frequently compelled to quit the pavement if they would avoid coming into collision with drunken men and filthy women.

The attention The Hard drew and subsequent action in dealing with the scenes found there marked a watershed in the police’s role in Portsmouth’s sailortown area. Not only was the force increased in size, its primary role was not detecting crime after it had been committed. Its primary role was now to prevent crime occurring in the first place and maintaining public order on the streets was central to this role. This also meant attention was turned to the main thoroughfare streets of Portsmouth’s sailortown. Thus, Queen Street, like The Hard, due to the “disorderly” street behaviour and “excessive drinking” to be found there, was a constant source of tension for civic authorities. Moreover, drink was also viewed as the primary cause for “bluejackets disgracing themselves” on the streets. Civic authorities could not allow the streets to be “disturbed” by drunken and disorderly sailors. As one local magistrate

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580 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” *HTSC*, 13th February 1858.
584 See, for example, the drunken disturbance caused by sailors in Commercial Road, “Local & District Police,” *HTSC*, 3rd October 1885.
585 “Portsmouth Police Courts,” *HTSC*, 7th September 1881; “Portsmouth Police Court” *TEN*, 5th September 1881. As above, whilst this could be reflective in the rising amount of shore leave granted to sailors, the primary sources used here do not state that shore leave *per se* was a factor in the seeming increase of sailors’ drunk and disorderly behaviour.
lamented

young sailors caused more trouble than any set of people in the borough, and it was the same wherever they went. Nearly all the cases of disorder were caused by young sailors.586

Others went further suggesting the behaviour of the naval sailors on the streets was a “discreditable prostitution of the naval uniform.”587 Thus, whilst sailors could be brave and sober at sea, civil and obedient, when they hit the shores of Portsmouth and consumed drink, they turned riotous, savage, disorderly and degenerative. This transition of sailors crossing the coastal borderland, from sea to shore, is evident in the distinct shift in language used by the local press when conveying news of sailors’ drunken and disorderly behaviour to its readers.588 The language and imagery in the reports were designed to show that the behaviour of sailors ashore was in direct contrast to their national and imperial bluejacket image construction. Whilst the majority of sailors’ drunken and disorderly behaviour ashore was part of the experience of shore leave, with most acquiring between forty-eight hours to four days leave, it is revealing the sources used here, again, rarely state that a sailor was on shore leave unless it was deemed relevant to the case. The primary concern of magistrates, and indeed the local press, was to ensure their behaviour was observed to be born from drink and its detrimental, corrupting effects and influence.589 Indeed, drink had the potential to regress sailors to the times of sailor’s old. Yet these were not portrayed as harmless, hapless Jolly Jack Tars. The drunk, imperial, Victorian sailor became a dangerous street character.590 For example, a “Violent Jack Tar” and “Jack’s Violence Ashore” headlined in The Evening News when a naval sailor, Silver Christian, was found drunk and disorderly in

586 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 9th June 1880.
588 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 16th April 1873; “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 23rd March 1885; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 21st February 1891.
589 Cases such as those of John Hughes, a naval sailor, arrested for street brawling, also reveal that magistrates viewed their behaviour to be born from drink and its detrimental effects, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 30th December 1871.
590 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 5th May 1866; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 6th April 1861; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 12th January 1861; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 27th January 1875; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 1st January 1887.
Paradise Row, Landport, “fighting everybody he could get at” including soldiers and the police.\textsuperscript{591} Not only were sailors such as Christian depicted as violent, they were frequently labelled in the press as “freaks” or going on “drunken freaks” through Portsmouth, in direct contrast to the civil and sane behaviour sailors were seen to display at sea.\textsuperscript{592} In what was described as a “serious fracas with the police,” eight sailors on shore leave caused a “disgraceful scene” on The Hard, when police attempted to arrest them for not returning to ship. When the police gathered and detained them on The Hard, all the sailors “struck out right and left,” and attempted to escape. Dockyard Police were dispatched. The sailors, realising their position was futile then behaved “like infuriated madmen” lashing out at police, with one biting a police officer’s “finger to the bone.”\textsuperscript{593} The central premise of this report was not about the sailors being on shore leave and drink being a part of this experience, it was about ensuring alcohol and the effects of drunkenness were highlighted and thus, by extension, the corrupting influence it had on sailors’ behaviour ashore should they drink, as it could make them ‘madmen.’ Indeed, others were represented as degenerative and destructive sailors like Charles Coombes, who when drunk, threw a mug at the Royal Sailors’ Home (RSH) window, breaking it. The degenerate undertone of Coombes’ bordering on pirate-like behaviour was heightened and his punishment harsher, as he drunkenly ‘attacked’ the very heart of reform in sailortown.\textsuperscript{594} However, other sailors were not only dangerous – they were savages.

Like the savage depictions found in the works of those like Henry Stanley’s infamous \textit{In Darkest Africa}, drunk and disorderly sailors were stripped of any resemblance to the civilizing ideals of their popularly constructed bluejacket

\textsuperscript{591} “Jack’s Violence Ashore,” \textit{TEN}, 8\textsuperscript{th} November 1894. A collective of sailors were also charged for inciting Christian in his violence and for being drunk and disorderly. Merchant Seaman also attracted similar headlines, “Violent Merchant Seamen,” \textit{TEN}, 23\textsuperscript{rd} June 1894.

\textsuperscript{592} See, for example, “Police Intelligence,” \textit{HTSC}, 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1884; “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{TEN}, 5\textsuperscript{th} July 1894; “A Sailor’s Freak,” \textit{TEN}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 1900. It was not just British sailors either, see, for example, Russian Sailors in January 1892, were recorded as going on a “drunken spree” around The Hard, “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 9\textsuperscript{th} January 1892.

\textsuperscript{593} “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} March 1888.

\textsuperscript{594} “Police Intelligence,” \textit{HTSC}, 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1884. Others such as James Seammell and Thomas Osborne also caused damage to the Royal Sailors’ Home by smashing windows, “Portsmouth Police,” \textit{HTSC}, 19\textsuperscript{th} January 1856.
When, for example, a young sailor, Hugh McPherson “savagely” attacked police, the headline in the local press labelled him “A Savage Sailor” for his behaviour was viewed as that of a primitive being. Yet this savage degenerative construction and reporting of sailors, like incidents of rioting, is also reflective of a sailortown culture. Reinforced by sailors’ ability to call on a collective code even when drunk, conflicts between sailors and the police came to be portrayed as ‘savage’ struggles on the streets, particularly when they were able to garner the support of local residents. In 1898, when a group of drunken naval sailors turned on police when one of their number was arrested for being drunk and disorderly, what followed was described in the local press as a “savage struggle.” This struggle became a contest for control of the streets with police battling to restore order and sailors, joined by scores of local residents, attempting to overrun them. Thus, these ‘savage struggles’ turned into all out conflicts on the streets when crowds congregated in support of sailors. For example, when Able Seaman Farmilo, a sailor the worse for drink, assaulted a Dockyard Policeman whilst apprehended for being absent from ship, his apprehension turned in to a conflict when a crowd of local inhabitants had gathered to protect him. What turned this struggle into an all-out conflict was the crowd witnessing the officer strike Farmilo whilst on the ground. The crowd then descended on the officer and the streets into chaos. Whilst incidents like this could turn the streets into a battleground, sailors and drink also presented civic authorities with a moral combat zone to police due to the direct correlation between sailors, drink and the vice of prostitution. Drink and women were seen as “the downfall of every sailor,” and it was observed, “prostitutes all drink…. [since] women who have once given themselves up to a

595 Henry Stanley, *In Darkest Africa*, vol. 1, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891). The language is also reflective in ‘man and beast’ contemporary commentaries and discourse, see, for example, “Police Courts,” *HTSC*, 3rd August 1870.
596 “A Savage Sailor,” *TEN*, 22nd July 1895. Beyond sailors, others were also referred to as ‘savages’ in the police reports and in contemporary commentaries, see, for example, the case of William Parkitt and Kate O’ Connell assaulting Eileen Collins headlining as “Alleged Savage Assault,” *PEN*, 11th April 1893.
597 “Naval Stokers and the Police,” *HTSC*, 5th November 1898.
598 “Naval Stokers and the Police,” *HTSC*, 5th November 1898.
life of open and avowed prostitution….always indulge in drink.”

Prostitution and “Sea Brothels”

It is well documented that prostitution was a staple of both the business and social life of sailortown areas, as in “all sea-ports the females of a certain class” exist. The trade of prostitution and the brothels it ran from were, to civic authorities, very much part of a sailor’s town. Indeed, it was observed that when a woman of low standing had “gone astray,” they “follow some soldier or sailor” to Portsmouth and “go and live in brothels.” As shown in Chapter 3, the sailorhood area behind The Hard was one viewed as brimming over with “sea brothels” and “harlots who disgraced the borough.” Like sailortown more widely, this area seemingly had the uncontrollable, undomesticated physical nature of the seas permeating through it, marking out for civic authorities the social and moral chaos sailortown represented. Indeed, that it represented this, it ensured prostitution was a focus for reform in Portsmouth, particularly to lessen the trade’s close connection to sailors as they were seen “more prone to

601 “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 133. Moreover, there are numerous cases whereby sailors are blamed for ‘corrupting’ young girls in Portsmouth, buying them drinks and encouraging them to engage in disorderly conduct in public. A typical example is the case of Phoebe Ann Bounty aged fifteen, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd June 1888; “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxxii, 337, 417.


604 “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxix. Likewise, it was argued that diseased prostitutes did not belong to Portsmouth. They came from other ports and nearby towns and villages not subjected to the CDAs. Moreover, civic leaders claimed that prostitutes came to Portsmouth to get treatment as Portsmouth, being a port subject to the CDAs, offered many a chance to be removed of disease, “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 386, 47. Those involved with the Lock Hospital were also keen to point out that the majority of diseased women in Portsmouth were not from Portsmouth too, “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxx, 343, 404; “The Contagious Diseases Acts and Their Operations in Portsmouth,” Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 16 June 1870.

fall into sexual excesses than other men.”

Thus, the implementation of the *Contagious Diseases Acts* (*CDAs*) from 1864 would not only improve venereal disease rates but also the presentation and public behaviour of prostitutes and sailors alike. Moreover, controlling prostitution and abating its close connection to sailors was seen to help ensure that the town of Portsmouth was part of the over-arching Victorian ideal and belief in maintaining Britain “as the first maritime nation in the world,” of which the “great port of Portsmouth” was at its heart. As the Earl Thomas Brassey M.P. stated, that prostitutes were a “corrupting influence upon our seamen is one of the dark blots of our civilisation.” Thus, via the police forces of Portsmouth, civic authorities saw it as their duty to prevent “outrages on the moral susceptibilities” on the people in Portsmouth and “the exhibition of prostitution.”

Consequently, with the introduction of the CDAs from 1864, the trade of prostitution became a battleground over acceptable public behaviour and control of the streets. The CDAs were seen by Portsmouth’s civic authorities as a way to reverse the “degraded state of the borough” and remove “wretched objects” from the streets. The trade of prostitution thus became part of the

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610 “Adjourned Meeting of the Portsmouth Town Council,” *HTSC*, 13th February 1858.

611 The first act was passed in 1864, although initially only partially implemented, with further amendments in 1866 and 1869, enabling the Met Police to send suspected prostitutes for medical inspection, and if found to be infected with venereal disease, compulsorily committed to the Lock Ward of the local hospital. With the 1864 Act, women prostitutes were referred back to magistrate if they did not attend hospital. This element was repealed. Thus, in the new law of 1866, (with alterations in 1869), women prostitutes were forcibly detained in hospital, “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” *PP*, 9; “The Contagious Diseases Acts and Their Operations in Portsmouth,” *HTSC*, 1st June 1870.

612 “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” *PP*, 340; “Open Air Portsmouth Gospel Mission,” 479. Although some articles in the local press were quick to point out to their readers that Portsmouth, unlike other ports, had less prostitution even with a lower number of police constables on the streets, “Inadequacy of the Borough Police Force,” *Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle*, January 30th 1858. This was also noted by the Royal Commissioners during the course of their inquiry into the operation
increased surveillance of ‘undesirables’. However, it is in the implementation of the CDAs through which it is evident elements of sailor culture were not just the preserve of sailors alone. Indeed, the issues of prostitution and the CDAs further strengthen the notion of a sailortown culture being present in Portsmouth.

The close relationship and alliances between sailors and prostitutes are well documented in ports the world over, and Portsmouth is no different. Those able to observe prostitutes and sailors noted how close the relationship was. As Reverend Joseph Gregson, Baptist Chapel Minister of Kent Street, Portsea, reported to the *Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts*, it was “remarkable that sailors marry these women willingly” and thus formed lasting alliances with them. To the same commission, Reverend Alexander Lowry of St Simon’s Church in Southsea concurred. Lowry stated many sailors married prostitutes as they “prefer it,” because “sailors do not think anything worse of them; they say, ‘We know you cannot be worse, and you may be better.’” Others also observed this. When Reverend Robert Dolling first entered Portsmouth in 1885 to begin work at the St Agatha’s Mission based in Landport, he established a missionary centre there for young sailors. Being in close quarters to them, Dolling witnessed the relationship first-hand. In his reflections of his time in Portsmouth he recalled, sometimes I have known sailors to marry those whom they knew had been bad characters. And if you ask him the reason, “Oh! the girl was unhappy; I thought I would make a home for her”; or, “I was afraid she might go wrong,” or even, “I wanted someone to leave my half-

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The close relationship is also evident on the streets, particularly in the sailorhood area of the notorious ‘sea-brothel.’ In White’s Row in July 1887, a sailor was seen arguing with a suspected prostitute. A passer-by, who the sailor knew, stopped and spoke with them. A police officer on hearing shouting and seeing an aggressive confrontation intervened to restrain the sailor. When the officer did so, the prostitute and the passer-by turned on him “letting out right and left,” so the sailor was able to slip the police officer’s grasp. As the sailor slipped his grip, he punched the officer stating, “he did not care” that he was a policeman. All ran off, laughing and mocking the officer as they went.

Indeed, sailors and prostitutes could take the opportunity to defy authority to another level. The reforming ‘beacon of light’ which was the Royal Sailors’ Home in Queen Street, was a site used to defy and subvert the very thing and relationship the Home’s opening was designed to deter – the meeting of prostitutes and sailors. It was frequently noted by magistrates in the local police courts that the presence of the Home in the heart of sailortown exacerbated the disorderly conduct of sailors and their known associates on the streets. With a large number of sailors returning there from an evening on the town, trawling through the drinking holes, the effects of their alcohol consumption meant, “disturbances by the seamen in Queen Street, near the Sailors’ Home, were very frequent.” As the magistrates observed, this was more so as prostitutes gathered outside the Home, congregating around its entrance with sailors, using obscene language and disturbing the flow of traffic on the pavement. Thus, it was deemed “in the neighbourhood of the Sailors’ Home, that there is greatest necessity for police supervision.” Complaints about noise at night in and around the Home were also frequent. ‘Respectable’ inhabitants complained about sailors crowding the streets around the Home, “assailing all passers-by,

618 The sailor was later caught and apprehended for assault, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 9th April 1887.
620 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 26th May 1855; Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 24th May 1856.
filling the air with blasphemy and obscenity” obstructing the thoroughfare. To pacify such complaints the Home’s management took the decision to extend the entranceway back from Queen Street and surround the Home with iron palisades. However, despite the railings around the building to keep sailors out of the reach of prostitutes, the railings simply served to move the meetings of sailors and prostitutes onto the street as the police reports frequently noted. Prostitutes gathered and waited outside the gates of the Home for sailors since they were now guaranteed a ‘footfall’ of custom rather than having to compete for their custom on streets, and sailors seemingly encouraged them to be there by using it as meeting point. Thus, in this respect, sailors and prostitutes were subverting and defying the very social situation and interaction the Home was designed to prevent.

This defying and mocking activity is further evidenced in the implementation of the CDAs and their repeal. In the face of outsider interference, relationships between sailors, prostitutes and the wider sailortown community were strengthened. Civic authorities, missionary groups, the Admiralty and the local press strongly supported the CDAs and worked together to persuade the local community that they were needed. These groups argued, as military and naval recruits came from civilian realms, the “health of the masses, the physique of the classes” would deteriorate to the levels it once was should the Acts be repealed in Portsmouth. The Acts, it was claimed, represented moral and societal progression and Portsmouth was a progressive place. Thus, as The Evening News declared, a repeal of the Acts would unleash prostitution on the streets, increase the trade of brothel-keeping in the town and result in a

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624 “Correspondence,” HTSC, 28th September 1867; “Letters to the Editors,” HTSC, 26th June 1869; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 10th March 1869.
625 “The Ladies and the Contagious Diseases Act,” HTSC, 6th July 1870.
626 “The C.D. Agitation,” HTSC, 26th June 1875. Of note here is that those looking to keep the Acts whom petitioned the Admiralty were chiefly Town Council members, clergymen and magistrates, yet their petition only constitutes a half-page in size, whereas the petition from those in Devonport, Plymouth was over two pages long, “Contagious Diseases Acts: Copy of Memorial Recently Forward to the Board of Admiralty from Inhabitants of Portsmouth and Devonport Respecting the Working of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” 356, Command Papers, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1882).
resurgence of the “painful recollections” of Portsmouth in the past.\textsuperscript{627} If the Acts were repealed, inhabitants of Portsmouth would

find disease, filth, open profligacy and juvenile debauchery once more rampant in their streets…we say that the civilians of this place, be they moral or immoral, have an absolute right to insist upon the adoption of such precautions as [it] will protect them from being poisoned by an unhealthy soldiery.\textsuperscript{628}

Moreover, Alderman Barnard Miller declared to the Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts whilst “you could get up an agitation in Portsmouth against anything…there are people who would be willing almost to dethrone the Queen if they were asked,” there was, to him, no agitation for repeal to be found in Portsmouth.\textsuperscript{629} Thus, those agitating for repeal were labelled as “strangers” to Portsmouth, stirring trouble, as there was no desire for repeal in Portsmouth according to officials.\textsuperscript{630} As such, on 7\textsuperscript{th} July 1870, when the prominent repeal campaigner, Josephine Butler, held her first talk in Portsmouth, the Hampshire Telegraph editors set about dismissing Butler as spouting “clap-trap.”\textsuperscript{631} The paper was also keen to show its readers the meeting at the Beneficial Society’s Hall in Kent Street, Portsea, was only attended by brothel-keepers and

half filled with ‘women’ many of whom were evidently of the class who would have believed the danger of a collision between the earth and a moon of in [sic] green cheese, had it been seriously propounded from the platform.\textsuperscript{632}

\begin{footnotes}
\item 627 “The Suspension of the C.D. Acts,” TEN, 7\textsuperscript{th} November 1883.
\item 628 “The Contagious Diseases Acts,” TEN, 10\textsuperscript{th} May and 11\textsuperscript{th} May 1883.
\item 630 As the editorial details here, agitation for repeal “commenced in the Northern and Midland counties….the agitation spread in all directions,” “The Contagious Diseases Acts and Their Operation in Portsmouth,” HTSC, 1\textsuperscript{st} June 1870. See also, “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 338; “Report from the Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 380.
\item 632 “The Contagious Diseases Act,” HTSC, 9\textsuperscript{th} July 1870. Local authority figures also report this, “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxv.
\end{footnotes}
However, not everyone agreed the CDAs’ repeal would be damaging. Those within the sailortown community were to voice the strongest opposition to the Acts, chiefly directed to those outsiders seemingly interfering with the business and street-life of Portsmouth’s sailortown. In an open meeting held in Portsea to oppose the Acts in November 1870, the Hampshire Telegraph reported that a large audience of Portsea residents were present and attended, for the most part, by the “working class…composed almost exclusively of males…favourable to the repeal of the Acts.” It is not clear from the report, whether sailors were part of this audience. Yet what is clear is that a number of Portsea residents took exception to outside interference to their business, organization and self-management of sailortown life. Speakers at the meeting criticized the interference of civic authorities and the police in regards to the trade of prostitution in Portsmouth, particularly in what was a sailor’s town where the trade was a core business. Not only were the Acts disruptive to this, the Acts were an attack on the very liberty of those subjected to it. Speakers at the meeting argued the Acts lowered the morality of the nation and of Portsmouth, and thus, by extension, their place of residence. Many at the meeting believed the Acts sanctioned immorality, offering a ‘safe’ path of vice for sailors, soldiers and for everyone in the community, to which one lone female voice shouted “beginning at the Prince of Wales - (Loud laughter and repeated cheering).” The Acts lowered morality further as they were “contrary to every instinct of manliness…to trample underfoot the victims of vice….when the offenders of the other sex were allowed to pass off with impunity.”

Here, the morally offending issue for this group of sailortown residents was the exclusion of male prostitutes from the Acts, whom the police “dared not touch.” Thus, on the streets of sailortown not only was equality not provided for by the law, the social and moral threat to sailortown trading, life and culture lay with male not with female prostitutes. Moreover, when those outside of this community addressed the audience to speak in favour of the Acts, they were heckled for interfering, mocked for their lack of understanding of life in a sailor’s

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town. Thus, when a Mr Smith took the platform, it was reported in the
_Hampshire Telegraph_

Mr Smith said in his travels through the town - (Cries of “Sit Down,”
“Take the plum out of your mouth) he had been through some of the
darkest alleys of the town (a voice: “What for?”), and he believed
much of the prostitution of the town was connected to drink
(Cheers).^{637}

Whilst those like Smith were mocked, others received a warmer reception if
they demonstrated an understanding of sailortown life. For example, in June
1875, James Stansfeld, M.P. for Halifax, engaged in a crusade against the
CDAs, attended a large meeting in Portsmouth. Stansfeld declared one of the
failings of the Acts was that the law “degraded the services” to which he was
met with cheers from the audience, precisely as he appeared to understand
Portsmouth, its people and their close connection to the military and naval
services.\footnote{The Contagious Diseases Acts,” HTSC, 26th November 1870. Brad Beaven also argues that
this instance is reflective of Victorian class differences and issues too, Beaven, “The Resilience
of Sailortown Culture,” 18 – 20. This type of view is also evident in comments by local residents
such as one made to The Evening News stating, “the sin in Portsea is seen walking about with
large aprons and hatless. The sin in Southsea is hidden by furs, feathers and the up-to-date cut
of coat and frock,” “Condition of Portsea,” The Evening News, 20th March 1903.
} Moreover, the debate over repealing the Acts or keeping them
reveals something else. With all sides attempting to galvanize support, the
wealth of evidence and examples used to do this shows, on the streets, the
Acts served to make the trade of prostitution more daringly obvious. More so,
through the sailor culture like displays female prostitutes frequently exhibited,
marking out their distinctiveness and difference to others.

Previous research on prostitution and the CDAs mainly advanced by feminist
historians such as Judith Walkowitz, positions women as victims; caught in a
system of control and oppression between the police, hospitals and local
authorities or as victims of circumstance.\footnote{Judith Walkowitz, _Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and State_, (Cambridge:
For more feminist approaches to the topic, Sung-Sook Le, “Victorian Feminism and ‘Fallen’
Women: The Campaign to Repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts in Britain, 1869 -1886,” PhD
} Using the ports of Plymouth and
Southampton as case studies, Walkowitz argues many female prostitutes were simply trying to survive in ports where they had limited employment opportunities. Thus, their choice to enter prostitution and comply with the Acts was a rational, not deviant, decision.\(^{640}\) More recently, Catherine Lee’s study of Kent observes that prostitutes were drawn from the “labouring poor who lived on their wits, employing opportunistic and often self-directed strategies for self-preservation.”\(^{641}\) Here, Lee argues non-cooperation with the Acts was a survival strategy in itself, if as Walkowitz suggests it was a rational choice to enter into prostitution and comply with the Acts.\(^{642}\) Thus, both observe not all female prostitutes conformed to the image of a ‘defenceless’ prostitute in terms of rationally choosing to conform to the Acts or not. It is not the intention here to negate the harsh realities and effects the Acts had on women subjected to them – after all, this is well documented. However, progressing beyond seeing prostitutes in sailortowns as victims of oppression or circumstance with their choices limited to entering prostitution or not, misses the street-wise survival tactics female prostitutes could deploy. Many female prostitutes took advantage of the system designed to control them in ways that further cemented their close relationship with sailors. Their tactics in doing this also enhanced sailortown culture to withstand outside pressure for reform and ensured female prostitutes belonged to and survived in a sailor’s town. Thus on the streets, if anything, the Acts had made the trade of prostitution, and prostitutes themselves, more daringly obvious.

As Wesleyan Chaplain to the forces at Portsmouth, Reverend Joseph Webster declared to the Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts, the laws relating to prostitution were “violated every day and every five minutes of the day in every street in Portsmouth…violated before the faces of the police.”\(^{643}\) Likewise, Baptist Minster Gregson acquainted with the “worst parts of Portsmouth… resorted to by the worst class of

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\(^{640}\) Walkowitz and Walkowitz, “We Are Not Beasts,” 74.


\(^{642}\) Lee, “Prostitution and Victorian Society,” 301 and 313.

prostitutes” reported to the Commission that the introduction of the CDAs had decreased prostitution rates, particularly amongst young girls. However, he saw there was little difference as to the conduct or respectability of women on the streets whom associated with sailors.\(^{644}\) Borough police also acknowledged this to the Commission. Whilst there was great improvement in the detection of infection in prostitutes under the Act, the borough inspector conceded that there was no real change in the nature of prostitution, and “riotous” conduct by prostitutes remained.\(^{645}\) Admiralty members were also keen to stress that the public displays of prostitution in Portsmouth were no better than before. As the 1870 Health of the Navy report defiantly stated

> there is no decrease in the number of dirty drunken prostitutes who loiter about the Hard Kent Street, St Mary’s Street and other choice localities …the houses of [their] resort are nearly all public-houses.\(^{646}\)

In defiance to authority and flaunting difference, prostitutes in Portsmouth were regularly reported to violate the premise of the Acts on the streets. Thus, the CDAs served to expose the trade of prostitution on the streets in broad daylight, publicly “stamping” prostitutes as such, making the public displays of prostitutes worse.\(^{647}\) On numerous occasions prostitutes defiantly and riotously paraded through the streets against the Acts in so-termed “prostitutes’ parade” flying in the face of authorities and respectable local inhabitants.\(^{648}\) Indeed, they used civic and military events as time in which to parade around the town, particularly in the streets of Portsmouth’s sailortown. For example, in September 1867, when the funeral procession of a naval officer passed from the Dockyard

\(^{644}\) “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, xxiv, 330. The Visiting Lock Surgeon in Portsmouth also supported Gregson’s statement, xxvii. Portsmouth in particular had a problem with young-girl prostitution, a problem that also well known nationally, yet these were dismissed as being “little sly dolly mops” in Portsmouth, “The Royal Commission on the C.D. Acts: Local Evidence,” HTSC, November 18th 1871. See also, “Report from the Select Committee on Contagious Diseases Acts,” 340, Command Papers Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online (1882), 385.

\(^{645}\) The Borough Inspector also noted that soldiers were part of this riotous conduct, “Report of Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” PP, 417.

\(^{646}\) “The Health of the Navy,” HTSC, November 5th 1870.


\(^{648}\) Oral Interview with Reginald Claude Ashley, Imperial War Museum Sound Collection, 661, (1975), Reel 7.
through to main thoroughfare of The Hard, one local resident complained in a letter to the editors of the *Hampshire Telegraph* that

the presence of hords [sic] of prostitutes the most degraded and loathsome of their class, coupled with their gestures, language and conduct was most disgusting…respectable people are driven from the pavement and compelled to jostle against them.⁶⁴⁹

Yet in their desire to convey the dysfunctional and immoral behaviour of prostitutes in Portsmouth’s sailortown, civic and church leaders’ responses to the CDAs Commissioners reveals just how street-wise some female prostitutes were and how engrained an interdependent sailortown culture was. A number of female prostitutes saw the Acts, the medical treatments received and crucially the certificate of last forgoing (shown in *Image 11*), issued to them when discharged from the Lock Hospital, as a way to enhance their trade.

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(£)

*Certificate on last forgoing Notice or Copy.*

In pursuance of the within-mentioned Acts, I hereby certify that the within-named woman is now free from a contagious disease. 30

Dated this day of

(Signed) E.F.

Visiting Surgeon for [Portsmouth].

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In the competitive environment of the street, sailors would frequently choose prostitutes who could show them the ‘clean’ certificate as reported to the Commission by Reverend Gregson and Reverend Webster. Thus, if a prostitute did not have this “they should lose all their custom as men would be afraid to come to them.”⁶⁵⁰ As a way to attract custom on the waterfront, some

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⁶⁴⁹ “Correspondence,” *HTSC*, 28th September 1867.
prostitutes' used the certificates to their advantage on the street. A certificate of clean-health could be proudly displayed to potential customers, primarily sailors along The Hard, Queen Street and the sailorhood streets, to gain more custom and, indeed, they could charge more for being certified as 'clean.' It was even reported in *The Evening News* that some prostitutes advocated the continuation of the Acts so they could do this. For a number of prostitutes in Portsmouth, the certificates also made their trade more official as it effectively licensed them to undertake their trade, with many referring to themselves as the "Queen’s Woman" on the street. Mrs Lewis, a prominent repeal advocate, encapsulated this sentiment when she told the Commission of her visit to Portsmouth. In the High Street of Portsmouth Town, she observed a prostitute retorting to a soldier on sentry duty who had asked her to move on from the barrack entrance,

you have no right to interfere with me. I am as much a Queen’s woman as you are a Queen’s man, though you do wear a uniform. I have been up for examination and am free to pass anywhere.

Other prostitutes also found another use for belonging to this ‘certified’ Queen’s regiment. It was a means by which to fend off outside interference in their trade and lives from religious and missionary workers via a cultural expression of their ‘militarization’ of their work. Prostitutes could do this as the certificate effectively licensed them, thus others had no right to interfere with them. As Mrs Lewis told the Commission, one prostitute declared to her they “have as much right to ply their trade in the streets as a soldier to wear his uniform or a sailor his clothing,” and another shouting at her in the street saying, “Out of my way. I am a Queen’s woman. I want none of your invitations. I belong to the Queen’s regiment.” What is particularly revealing about these examples is they begin

1871.
651 “Portsea Island Society for the Cultivation of Science and Literature,” *TEN*, 30th March 1872.
654 “Report of Royal Commission upon the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts,” *PP*, 429. Some brothel-keepers were equally as defiant in the face of outside interference with their trade as evidenced in a case whereby a bible woman was “knocked down
to show many of the women subjected to the Acts’ requirements did so not simply as ‘victims’ being forced to do so, nor were they bound to it by circumstance as previous research suggests. Reading beyond this, it is evident female prostitutes were as identifiable on the streets as sailors were, made all the more distinctive for their sailor culture like displays of defiance and difference on the streets designed to challenge and mock the very authority in place to control them. Thus, in this respect, sailor culture was not one limited to sailors; others in the sailortown community were part of it too and could adopt elements of it to suit. Moreover, prostitutes in Portsmouth, like sailors, were able to impose their own sense of being and belonging, ensuring the streets of sailortown worked for them in ways which also helped to fashion a wider sailortown culture.

**Conclusion**

As this chapter has shown, controlling and regulating the maritime-landed space of sailortown was part of, not separate to, wider Victorian notions and anxieties surrounding degeneracy, urban decay and ‘slumdom.’ Yet whilst ‘slumdom’ was a hidden world, concealed from public gaze in rookeries and backstreets, sailortown was not. It was brazen, defiant and ever public, and sailors were not peripheral peoples excluded from these anxieties. Moreover, whilst sailortown culture is evident in ‘carnivalesque’ displays on the streets of sailortown as Beaven asserts, it was not something which ebbed and flowed *per se*. It remained, like the businesses of sailortown, whether sailors were present in port or not. Thus, for sailors and the wider sailortown community this meant the streets remained and endured as part of a sailor’s town. As this thesis argues, that sailortown was not a homogenous entity; rather it was a network of sailorhoods, is vital to assessing the maintenance and resilience of sailor and sailortown culture. Indeed, taking the very activates and public behaviour which were seen to epitomize sailortown areas and sailors’ behaviour ashore and assessing them within the environment of the street, shows control and

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655 Alan Mayne, “Representing the Slum,” *Urban History*, vol. 17, (1990), 71.
influence over these neighbourhoods, became a vested shared interest to protect and defend alongside economic interdependence and interests. This is further suggested as whilst sailors did largely move around with one another, they were also socialising with others within the sailortown community and were not necessarily isolating themselves whilst shore. This is also reflected in the fact that there is limited evidence of sailors going around in consciously-constructed or organised gangs or groups. When larger groups formed, they were spontaneous and situational, as sailors could not only rely on their own for assistance, they could also call on local inhabitants. Thus, as urban ethnographer Elijah Anderson identifies, “part of what protects a person is both how many people can be counted on to avenge his honour….and who these defenders are.” Indeed, sailors’ street-status displays were a way to ensure this ‘protection’ was in place. The intention of this chapter has not been to exaggerate the harmonious nature to life or culture in a sailortown community, yet to show that by placing sailors in urban contexts they were not ‘men apart.’

As the key themes explored here have shown, sailors shaped, affected and influenced the very state and life of the streets on sailortown, collaborating and colliding with groups and people to defend, challenge and mock outsiders whom threatened it. Moreover, the openness of the streets was a readily available form of landed culture that sailors, as urban peoples, could participate in. It was on the streets where sailors chose to invest, contest, challenge and reshape authority. In doing so, they challenged the very notion of who ‘owned’ and therefore controlled the streets.

Indeed, that many of the resistance displays took place on the streets further situates sailors as a determinable part of the urban fabric. Yet resistance in the form of rioting was not, as the likes of Jesse Lemisch and Rediker claim, the only weapon available, nor was it solely for political purposes as they suggest. As this chapter has shown, rioting was but one part of a sailor’s street-based resistance repertoire. Furthermore, whilst Rediker argues sailors

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“took to the street,” this chapter has shown they did not ‘take’ to the streets. They were already in them. Thus, by approaching sailortown from a street-level, our understanding of sailortown and its culture can be furthered. When placed on the receiving end of outside threats or under pressure from authorities, sailors and the sailortown community generated their own notion of values and behaviour. The responses displayed demonstrate that the individual, be it man or woman, were not simply ‘victims’ or people apart. They were proactive, opportunistic and they took control of their responses to outsider encroachment on their street-orientated sailortown lives and culture. As with most working-class communities, others often spoke for them and their voices are relatively silent in the historical records. However, by taking the activities and public behaviour which contemporaries saw as socially and morally unstable and placing them in a street-centred context, it reveals that both sailors and the sailortown community spoke back, not necessarily through words but through actions. More widely, sailors and the sailortown community contested authority in ways similar to other working-class people as their views of the legitimate uses of neighbourhood space and behaviour displays there, came into direct confrontation with police defending public order, from those deemed ‘outsiders’ and attempts to reform it. Whilst akin to broader working-class cultures, what gave sailortown culture its distinctiveness was the interdependent nature of it between sailors, residents and prostitutes – the very people who generated this culture. Indeed, a sailortown culture being present also reveals that, contrary to popular assumptions, sailors possessed a street-wise sensibility. This becomes more apparent when the role and function of violence in sailors’ lives ashore is considered, as the next chapter will explore.

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Rediker, *Between the Devil*, 205.
Chapter 5- ‘Street-wise Sons of Neptune’: Sailors and Violence

Introduction

The first hour I was in Portsmouth I recognised that the sailors would be our chief difficulty, our chief source of danger...sailors everywhere, sometimes fighting, sometimes courting, nearly always laughing and good-humoured....our chief joy alas! oftentimes our greatest danger.660

When Reverend Robert Dolling reflected on his arrival in Portsmouth in the 1880s, he encapsulated civic and church leaders’ anxieties relating to the presence of sailors ashore. Whilst they were seen as bringing a ‘carnivalesque’ feel to the streets, they also represented a social and moral danger. However, Dolling’s observation is also revealing for another reason, as rather than seeing sailors as peripheral to Portsmouth’s street-life, they were, as he observed, an intrinsic part of it. This is nowhere more evident than surveying sailors’ street-life experience of crime, particularly interpersonal violence in the form of common assault, as this chapter will explore. This will be undertaken by using police and court reports covering the period 1845 to 1905, a sample of two hundred sailor-related assault cases and detailed analysis of all the national government’s Judicial Statistics reports from their inception in 1856 and into the early twentieth century. Moreover, that this chapter uses the term ‘street-wise’ to explore sailors’ urban experiences through the theme of violence, a definition of its meaning is needed here. As outlined in the introduction, street-wise is defined as having the awareness, knowledge and experience necessary to deal with the potential dangers and difficulties in urban environments. Thus, being street-wise is a learned response gained from an awareness of the urban environment and its inherent dangers and based on the ability to react to different situations that occur on the streets.661

It will be argued here that not only was violence a central expression of a collective sailor and sailortown culture on the streets as discussed in Chapter 4, it was equally as central for individual sailors, enabling them to develop and maintain a street-wise sensibility and status. Indeed, by taking violence in the form of common assault as part of sailors’ rowdiness ashore that Fingard asserted was the “best known feature of their port activity,” it will be argued sailors were not merely victims of others preying on their presumed lack of urban sense and awareness when in port. Sailors like other working-class males, contested authority with violence and despite popular assumptions to the contrary, they possessed street-wise sensibilities, further challenging the notion that they were ‘men apart.’ It will be demonstrated sailors’ use of violence is reflective of this sensibility as its deployment, rather than simply being part of ‘rowdy’ behaviour ashore, had two central street-wise functions; retribution for perceived wrongs and as a display of nerve to enhance status, both of which hinged around the ability to ‘look after oneself’ on the street. Thus, violence had a high cultural value for sailors, and its deployment was not necessarily reflective of the stereotypical drunken ‘Jack in Port.’ Moreover, it will be argued the deployment of violence reveals sailors could also change their public-facing images to suit. In the process of doing so, many chose to adapt their publically-constructed images and make them their own by ‘hardening’ the images, playing up to them or rejecting them outright. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that much like expressions of sailortown culture, contemporaries did not necessarily see sailors’ violent behaviour on the streets as evidence of a street-wise sensibility. Civic authorities, church leaders and missionaries saw sailors’ behaviour in port as symptomatic of the degenerate, criminal influences urban life had on working-class males.

Naval crime and incidents of violence on ships and at sea are well documented by naval historians. Likewise, whilst crime in nineteenth-century British cities has received much attention in urban histories, they largely exclude sailors,

662 Fingard, Jack in Port, 3, 29, 88, 126.
particularly naval sailors, from their narratives. Concurrently, in Robert Lee’s recent review of the seafarers’ urban world in maritime history, he calls for the urban world of the seafarer to be assessed in relation to the history of urban crime more widely, and this chapter goes some way to answer his call. Moreover, naval ports and sailortown areas are overlooked in crime histories, with focus given to urban centres like London and Manchester, and to merchant ports such as Liverpool. Thus, precedence is given to crimes relating to the practice of crimping and the contractual elements of sailors’ working lives, with little attention paid to exploring crimes ashore like common assault. Due to this the orthodoxy stands that sailors were a ‘victim’ when in port, exploited by those who came across them. Therefore, they are given the stereotypical ‘Jack in Port’ labelling, portrayed as helpless and hapless, and when drunk, becoming the victims of others. Similarly, sailors are portrayed as antagonistic towards port communities and authorities due to their inability to settle grievances at sea given the discipline and restrictive life on ship. Furthermore, Judith Fingard and Valerie Burton, among others, argue sailors’ violence ashore was a reflection of their separated lives to landed people. Thus, the deployment of violence was used to display their ‘toughness’ created by life at sea, embodying masculine ideals in their “rawest sense.”


668 Rediker, Between the Devil, Chapters 4 and 5. See also, Lemisch, Jack Tar vs John Bull, 58 – 59, 406.

669 Judith Fingard, Jack in Port: Sailortowns of Eastern Canada, (Toronto: University of Toronto
takes this further and suggests sailors were popularly constructed in middle-class representations to embody a “rugged naval manhood” that refashioned their image away from the Jack Tar image of old, to that of the British Bluejacket based on ideals of Christian militarism.\(^{670}\) In this refashioning process, Conley argues many sailors exerted their masculinity by rejecting the Jack Tar image and conforming to the rugged masculine ideal of the Bluejacket.\(^{671}\) However, she does not extend her analysis to show how sailors undertook this conformation or adaptation ashore.

Indeed, as Isaac Land’s work has shown, sailors did enact and play up to the ‘Jack in Port’ image ashore when it suited, asserting their masculine virtues in sub-cultural ways when resisting and contesting authority in the face of urban ‘threats’ or for the benefit of ‘spectators’ watching them.\(^{672}\) However, he does not explore this premise in relation to violence or the extent to which the deployment of violence by sailors was similar to other working-class males in urban environments.\(^{673}\) As research on working-class masculine culture shows, working-class males were expected to settle differences in the moment and to defend one’s honour. Thus, violence, through physical combat, was often viewed as an acceptable “solving mechanism” on the streets, where popular belief in violent retribution was a mainstay of community imposed self-order, and perceived transgressions were dealt with through the ritualized nature of fighting.\(^{674}\) Displays of violence in public and in a neighbourhood setting thus

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\(^{673}\) Isaac Land, “The Humours,” 341.

embodied what crime historian Clive Emsley terms the “hard man” image, “oozing toughness and violence.”  

Hailed as an ideal type of masculinity for working-class males, toughness and the deployment of violence was considered a masculine virtue on the streets. Indeed, in his study of male youth gangs, Andrew Davies observed that fighting was a “necessary and legitimate means of self-assertion.”

Whilst drunkenness was often a prerequisite for violence, violence was also “rooted in local codes of toughness and manliness [and] appears to have been a recurring feature of local working-class life.”

However, as Davies notes, many males subscribed to the ‘hard man’ image depending on whether they were in public or private space. Moreover, violence is illustrative of hegemonic masculinity as defined by Raewyn Connell, and sub-cultural demands to reconfigure masculine identities and ideals.

Thus, being street-wise was closely bound to the notions of manliness and manly respect since, as Elijah Anderson argues, “physical safety is more likely to be jeopardized in public because manhood is associated with respect,” starting “where the influence of the police ends and personal responsibility for one’s safety is felt to begin.” Therefore, being street-wise was status driven for working-class males, with violence being a valuable action-oriented commodity on the streets, and sailors were little different to other working-class males in trading this commodity on the streets.

**A Note on Sources and Methodology**

The mid-to-late nineteenth century is a particularly fruitful time in which to

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explore sailors and violence from a criminal viewpoint. As a time of relative peace and increased amounts of regulated shore leave granted, and therefore more leisure time, naval sailors spent more time ashore in ports like Portsmouth and thus were to be found in the streets more often. Moreover, the period under study here bears invaluable sources for studying crime due to a high number of newspaper reports covering such activities and the advent of standardised Judicial Statistics from 1856. These sources are more valuable to this study as, whilst some sailors wrote of naval punishment and discipline and criminal, violent activities at sea and in foreign lands, rarely do they write about criminal, violent activity ashore. The statistical reports incorporated offences known to police, summary offences heard in local magistrate courts and indictable offences tried by a judge and a jury. There is extensive debate on the value of Judicial Statistics, in particular the issues of the so named ‘dark figure’ of unreported crime and violence, which have been discussed in-depth elsewhere. Whilst they may be, as Victor Gatrell asserts “merely action[s] which law-makers by passing a law...choose to categorise as crime,” this is precisely why they are valuable as they are a reflection of ruling groups and authorities’ perceptions surrounding criminal and violent activity. Moreover, much like census records discussed in Chapter 2, for all the inherent problems of the statistics’ collection and production, it is the patterns and trends, in terms of numbers, frequency and location that are of value, and enable this study to be set in wider contexts.

681 For shore leave, see discussion in the introduction of this thesis.
682 Land, War, Nationalism, 166.
Whilst any type of crime could be explored here, common assault has been selected as not only was it seen to be a common activity of sailors ashore, it also represents one of the most common urban crimes recorded nationally in the government-produced Judicial Statistics. Indeed, this pattern is replicated in Portsmouth, with over fifty per cent of all recorded crime being for assault and the similarly everyday crime of petty theft. As Figure 37 shows, common assault occurred frequently with, on average, 257 cases heard yearly by local magistrates as assault was determined summarily, heard and tried in local magistrates’ courts. Interpersonal violence was tried as assault under the 1861 Offences against the Person Act, which made a legal distinction between actual and grievous bodily harm, with the later 1885 Offences against the Persons Act, defining all interpersonal violence as a crime that was likely to cause physical harm or injury to a person. Moreover, whilst violence describes many types of situations, as John Carter Wood notes, the common denominator between the types is the interpersonal nature of the situation since it is “directly administered to one person by another,” with common assault the most frequent type which occurs. Indeed, as Shani D’Cruze observed, crimes such as common assault were “part of the ordinary, routine and mundane social interaction,” reflecting relations between “an individual and the state and individuals to themselves.” Moreover, as common assault was an ‘everyday’ crime it illuminates sailors’

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689 D’Cruze, “Introduction,” 1 – 2 and 12.
roles as urbanites in a given locality and within ‘everyday’ experiences.

The printed press was an “important medium for creating public awareness and perceptions” of crime across the nineteenth century, shaping attitudes towards crime and towards sailors.\textsuperscript{690} Indeed, the printed press, particularly in the form of newspapers, had the power to shift the focus from the actual crime to the interpretation and perception of crime.\textsuperscript{691} Whilst violence was a “persistent theme in popular culture,” this did not necessarily mean society was desensitized to violence. If anything there was a heightened “sensitization to violence….with public tolerance reducing” and this, in part, explains the focus given in the printed press to crimes of violence.\textsuperscript{692} Thus, newspapers are a valuable source of the study of crimes such as common assault, as they reflect both national discourses relating to crime more widely and the impact and affect

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Chart showing the total number of assaults committed and determined summarily in Portsmouth 1858 to 1898, “Tables of Summarily Offences, (Non-Indicatable Offences from 1893),” in “Return of Judicial Statistics, England and Wales,” Command Papers, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1856 – 1906).}
\end{figure}


such behaviours had on a locality, as the two central newspapers for Portsmouth reveal. *The Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle* and Portsmouth’s *The Evening News* are therefore invaluable to this study as they devote considerable space and time to the dissemination of police and court reports which covered crimes heard in the local magistrates’ court. Newspapers are even more valuable for any study of crime in Portsmouth since the Petty Session records (where summarily determined crimes like common assault would be recorded) do not survive, save for a handful of selected years. Whilst some cases may not have been reported if deemed to be of little relevance to the local community or highly common and routine, similar press-related studies of crime and violence assert this is a very small, negligible percent due to the violent nature of the crime committed.\(^693\)

Previous research on violence, particularly at a street-level, successfully uses newspaper reports and sampling techniques to investigate such phenomena, as they offer a manageable way to account for the activity that took place, but also provide a substantial enough basis from which to draw conclusions about socio-cultural attitudes towards such activities.\(^694\) Following the lead set by these studies it would be impractical to examine every example of common assault involving sailors. Therefore, like previous studies on working-class violence, a selection of reports has been utilized. Using a keyword search across both local newspapers’ police reports from circa 1850 – 1900 with the words, ‘sailor’ or ‘seaman’ combined with variations of the word ‘assault,’ a sample of two hundred assault cases were selected from the search results across the period under study. This sample represents one-third of the search results returned, with a higher proportion returned across the 1850s to 1870s than the 1870s to 1900s. Thus, the sample reflects this proportional slant since over sixty per cent of its cases are situated within the 1850 to 1869 period, with the remainder from the latter timeframe. The information from these cases was entered into a database identifying five key elements to the crime; who committed the act, who

\(^{693}\) For the percentage being negligible in using newspaper reports as argued here, see, Gooderson, “Noisy and Dangerous Boys,” 61.
was the victim, the act itself, the location of the crime and the outcome of the action. Alongside this, a full reading of each case has been undertaken to analyse the situation and motivation for the crime’s committal taking place. This reading has also allowed for the differing contemporary constructions and representations of sailors’ use of violence to be explored.

**Contemporaries, Criminality and Violence**

Crime in the nineteenth century became related to ideas of hereditary, criminal underclasses existing in urban centres. Criminal activity was viewed as an inherent and inherited characteristic of skilled and cunning craftsmen, rooted in genetical defects that people of these so-called ‘criminal underclasses’ exhibited, views which were exacerbated by the rise of Social Darwinism and eugenics. This belief in also born out in the *Judicial Statistics* reports as the manner in which inquiries by the police and the treatment of offenders were undertaken, especially of those known to police, paid close attention paid to the physical traits, location and ‘class’ of criminals. Portsmouth’s local press also reflected these swirling degenerate discourses. As one such editorial in the *Hampshire Telegraph* reveals, people belonging to the underclass were “marked by low physical and mental characteristics….with badly formed angular heads….are stupid…..deficient in vital energy and sometimes afflicted with epilepsy,” and often found in the dens of iniquity festering in urban centres like Portsmouth. This type of reporting was particularly heightened from the 1860s due to changes in the criminal justice system, with transportation and floggings ceasing to be punishments and the introduction of a ticket-of-leave-system. Such changes instigated ‘moral panics,’ as evident with the infamous 1862 London Garrotting Panic related to the form of stranger-on-stranger violent robbery that involved choking victims from behind. Panics such as these

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696 “Return of Judicial Statistics,” *PP*, (1856 – 1906) and columns included regarding “Character of Persons.”
698 “Garrotting and Burglaries,” *The Times*, November 28th 1862. The garrotting attack on a
served to feed fears of dangerous and criminal underclasses being present in urban areas. This was particularly so in districts which projected a sense of ‘otherness,’ for example, Irish immigrant enclaves or Jewish ghettos, that social investigators and the press observed to harbour and exhibit degenerate, deviant and transgressive social and moral characters and behaviours. These discourses were also transposed to ports and sailortown areas, renowned for being ‘rough’ places. Indeed, the liminal districts of sailortowns were seen as landed harbours of degenerate and deviant behaviour, with sailors perceived as “exotic [and] alien” to landed people.

Sailortowns thus came to be viewed as sites of social and moral dysfunction and confusion, as these areas were seen to depict disorderly and degenerate behaviours more visibly than elsewhere. In this respect, it is perhaps not surprising that there is an assumption that sailors were more likely to appear on charges of disorderly behaviour than land dwellers. Moreover, sailors in Portsmouth were not exempt from the trend towards reflections on crime being seen as degenerate and criminal. Many such as Robert George Welsby, having been indicted in 1888 for stealing from the Royal Sailors’ Home in Queen Street, were labelled as “a degenerate son of Neptune” for committing a crime against the very heart of reforming and civilizing instillers in Portsmouth. The novelist Walter Besant, reminiscing about his childhood in Portsmouth, described the sailors he saw as “a rough-hided ruffian, who could fight, had seen plenty of fighting….and ready to laugh at any kind of danger.”

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Emsley, Hard Men, 90 - 92


“Portsmouth Quarter Sessions,” HTSC, 7th July 1888.

young Besant sailors’ prowess and ability to laugh in the face of danger was something to be admired and remembered. However, to civic authorities and church leaders, sailors represented a social threat to the order of the streets, particularly as police reports claimed that, on average, twenty sailors an evening were apprehended for various crimes, the majority of which were for drunk and disorderly behaviour and common assault, bemoaned as “a great nuisance” by one local magistrate. Yet whilst sailors were no doubt frequently apprehended for various crimes, the police’s claim cannot be substantiated as apprehension figures, as opposed to the cases committed to magistrates’ courts and reported in the newspapers, are not available for study. Thus, whilst many sailors may have been apprehended, it would appear not all were indicted or tried for the crime they were apprehended for. Indeed, the Judicial Statistics for Portsmouth show, sailors (together with marines and soldiers) only accounted for, on average, twenty-five per cent of Portsmouth’s prison population between 1856 and 1906. Thus, as the editors of the Hampshire Telegraph declared

It is true that if we would look for a high tone of moral feeling and a strict conformity with the criminal laws of the state, a seaport would be the last place in the world where we should suppose that such a desirable state of things existed….so far as crime is concerned Portsmouth with all its dirt sustains a very favourable position in the records of criminal judicature.

The Evening News editorials also observed that Portsmouth was in a more favourable position to other large towns and ports, urging its readers to take pride in the fact Portsmouth has “enjoyed a remarkable immunity from the more serious crimes” than other ports had. The editors frequently drew attention to

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704 Quote from “The Naval “Straggler” and the Police,” HTSC, 19th July 1873; “Portsmouth Police Courts,” The Evening News, 5th September 1881; “Portsmouth Police Courts,” HTSC, 15th October 1883. See also, “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 11th November 1895. Whilst police reports and newspaper commentaries frequently note the high number of sailors being apprehended the Judicial Statistics indicate it fluctuates


706 “Inadequacy of the Borough Police Force,” HTSC, 30th January 1858.

the fact that, in comparison to other towns, Portsmouth saw fewer crimes being committed. When a spike in crimes, particularly assaults, did occur in 1883 (namely due to better reporting procedures) editors of The Evening News dismissed this as being the “practices of habitual criminals” from London and other towns. Some local residents were also at pains to express that Portsmouth was “not so black as it is painted.” For example, H. Peters, a resident in Portsmouth pointed out, other ports in Britain had a higher number of sailors and far higher rates of crime than Portsmouth. A study of the Judicial Statistic, in part, supports this, as commercial and pleasure ports recorded far higher total crime rates than naval ports such as Portsmouth.

Moreover, anxieties mounted in regards to working-class male youths whom were seemingly being corrupted by urban living and its degenerate influences. These anxieties turned to fear for military authorities as males, from urban backgrounds, characterised as places of criminality and degenerate influences, were seemingly physically and morally unfit to sustain naval and military forces. For the Admiralty in particular, the high percentages of recruits to ships in ports like Portsmouth were seen as mainly “young ruffians” from slums and large cities, and this resulted in an increase of what would now be termed ‘anti-social behaviour.’ This concern was reflected in the distinct shift in recruitment patterns implemented by the Admiralty to take the “cream of our country sides” not just the “sweepings of our slums.” Indeed, it is of note
that if a sailor was arrested or apprehended by civil police forces, they would be reported to senior officers of the ship they were serving on and any good conduct record or badges could be jeopardized.\textsuperscript{716} However, the Admiralty and senior officers rarely interfered with the findings or punishments given by local magistrates’ courts, deeming sailors’ crimes ashore to be a civil matter, not a naval one.\textsuperscript{717} Moreover, entrance into the Royal Navy (or Army) was seen as a way to counteract the degenerative influences of urban life, especially for male juvenile offenders. Indeed, the practice of sending young, male offenders to training ships, including those stationed at Portsmouth, was a frequent punishment implemented by magistrates’ courts.\textsuperscript{718} As local magistrates in Portsmouth observed, by implementing a punishment which forced juvenile offenders into the Royal Navy, they hoped the offender would become a more “useful member of society” and their criminal, violent ways could be tempered and corrected by military discipline.\textsuperscript{719}

Thus, crime and violence came under closer scrutiny and harsher sanctions than ever before in the nineteenth century, with what Wood describes as the “civilising offensive” being enacted, instilling new standards of acceptable public behaviour via police forces aiming to “pacify public spaces.”\textsuperscript{720} As part of this civilizing offensive, violence came to be seen by civic authorities, church leaders and the local press as a social problem with social causes and effects.

\textit{Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle}, 18\textsuperscript{th} May 1867. This was also present alongside concerns of overcrowding in the slums of Portsmouth and the degenerative influence this had, as reflected in the discussion held by the Portsmouth Literary and Scientific Society on the dwellings of the poor in Portsmouth, “Portsmouth Literary and Scientific Society,” \textit{HTSC}, 27\textsuperscript{th} January 1877.


\textsuperscript{717} “The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Navy,” \textit{110 – 111}.


\textsuperscript{719} See, for example, “Portsmouth Borough Quarter Sessions,” \textit{HTSC}, 12\textsuperscript{th} January 1876.

and became an act that was perceived to be unnecessary and avoidable. No longer was it deemed acceptable or respectable to settle disputes; assert and display one’s authority through physical confrontation, it was now a reflection of males’ lack of rationality, sensibility and self-restraint, particularly males of poorer, working-class areas. Thus, behaviour that countered this was heralded as degenerate. Indeed, the construction of the British Bluejacket image Conley charts, coincided with violence being linked with Victorian refashioning of masculine identity and ideals. Here, emphasis was shifting from being based on prowess and ability to enact violence, to a ‘rational,’ self-restraint approach, embodied in the ideal of the husband as breadwinner and provider, a ‘respectable’ man and father, exercising restraint, self-control with control over passions.

Violence was therefore a prism through which to express fears of the breakdown in society, especially a civil one, since displays of violence served to reflect the “moral damage” of those who committed such acts in the public arena of the streets. As Wood argues, social commentators redefined the ways in which interpersonal violence was legitimatised, criminalized and explained, propelling debates surrounding violence to become both a criminal and social problem. In this respect, violence took on a class conception via its use by the middling classes to categorise and differentiate themselves from working-class people and to determine what counted as respectable conduct and behaviour or not. Non-violent behaviour thus became bound to notions of civilization and civilizing behaviour, whereas violent behaviour to the contrary was often referred to as “savage,” with the working classes, particularly males, enlisted into this imagery, with urbanisation fostering a “depraved” moral

condition that fuelled crimes of violence. Thus, sailors as predominantly young, working-class males were caught between all these contemporary discourses that engulfed masculine ideals and acceptable and civic public behaviours. This comes to the fore when sailors and their involvement with street violence is explored. However, whilst sailors engaging in criminal and violent activities were constructed to be deviant Sons of Neptune ashore - they were also Neptunes with a street-wise sensibility.

**Sailors and Violence on the Streets of Portsmouth**

Mapping the location of the sample assault cases, when an exact location is recorded, reveals nearly half of all the cases occur in Portsmouth’s sailortown area, as *Figure 38* shows.

![Figure 38 - Chart showing the location of the sample assault cases involving sailors.](image)

Within Portsmouth’s sailortown district, eighty-one per cent of the assaults took place in Portsea. It is revealing that the majority of these assaults took place in the main thoroughfare streets of the sailorhoods, namely Queen Street and The

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728 This chart only shows the figures relating to the cases whereby an exact location was provided in the police report and does not include the sixty-two cases that have no location details, other than being recorded as taking place within the boundaries of Portsmouth. As outlined earlier, whilst the sample is based on numerically more cases from 1850 to 1869, (due to the higher number returned in this timeframe in the results) the location patterns still show more incidences of assault taking place in the sailorhood areas across the whole sample.
Hard, where a high concentration of drinking establishments was also located. Furthermore, it is also in the streets of the sailorhoods, notably the brothel streets of White’s Row and Southampton Row, where a high number of assault cases took place, as Figure 39 shows.\textsuperscript{729}

![Figure 39 – Map showing the concentration of assault cases in Portsea Town: Red = concentration of sailors, Yellow= 5 or more recorded public houses, Green= 5 or more recorded beerhouses, Purple dots= 4 or more known brothels, Blue=4 or more recorded lodging houses, Peach= Location of 10 or more assaults found in the sample.](image)

Assaults in Portsmouth Town are less frequent and the location of assaults shows an opposite pattern. Whilst a number of assaults took place in the sailorhood around The Point, the majority of assault cases took place in St Mary’s Street.\textsuperscript{730} As a street leading back towards Portsea, this is reflective of the wider shift of the heart of sailortown from Portsmouth Town to Portsea as outlined in Chapter 2, and as Figure 40 indicates. Furthermore, although a number of cases do not provide an exact location in which the assault took place, it can be reasoned, since near to half the sample cases took place in

\textsuperscript{729} Contemporary evidence also supports this predominance, see, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 28\textsuperscript{th} April 1855; “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 1\textsuperscript{st} August 1885; “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 23\textsuperscript{rd} December 1868.

\textsuperscript{730} Contemporary evidence also supports this, see, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 12\textsuperscript{th} April 1871; “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 9\textsuperscript{th} January 1864; “Portsmouth Police Court,” \textit{HTSC}, 24\textsuperscript{st} July 1854.
Portsmouth’s sailortown district, at least half of these cases did too. This would be indicative of nearly two-thirds of assault cases taking place in the sailortown area.

![Map showing the concentration of assault cases in Portsmouth Town](image)

*Figure 40 – Map showing the concentration of assault cases in Portsmouth Town: Red = concentration of sailors, Yellow = 5 or more recorded public houses, Green = 5 or more recorded beerhouses, Purple dots = 4 or more known brothels, Blue = 4 or more recorded lodging houses, Peach = Location of 10 or more assaults found in the sample.*

Other striking patterns are evident in the sample. When examining the types of sailor involved in the assault cases, it reveals naval sailors were more likely to be involved in these incidents than merchant sailors were, as *Figure 41* shows. This is also reflective of the rising numbers of naval sailors being recruited for national and imperial security and strength across the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Furthermore, only thirty-five per cent of the sample cases indicate drink was a contributing factor in the assault. Thus, whilst drink was a trigger factor in some cases, over seventy per cent in the sample used were not necessarily fuelled by alcohol. This begins to suggest sailors were, more often

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731 As discussed earlier in this thesis, with a higher amount of shore leave time granted to sailors this may, in part, explain the number and frequency of assault cases, yet the primary sources give little indication that shore leave *per se* was a factor in an assault case, except when drink was seen to be a factor and thus sailors, rather than the magistrates or local press, would use shore leave and drink as a reason to justify their behaviour, as discussed towards the end of this chapter.
than not, consciously aware of deploying violence. Whilst drink, as a catalyst stereotyped Victorian working-class male and sailor violence, the sample cases show drink was not necessarily the creator of it.\textsuperscript{732} Therefore, drink did not always fuel violence. However, it is arguable that drink may not have been reported in the cases as it was ‘common’ and thus a given. Yet the police reports are quite specific about the involvement of alcohol in a crime, given the rate of drunkenness was a preoccupation of their role, and the rates of drunkenness and crime had to be recorded and reported at both a local and a national level for the reproduction of the Judicial Statistics.\textsuperscript{733} Moreover, sailors were victims in only five per cent of the sample cases, with the majority of these cases being sailor-on-sailor violence, particularly when drink is recorded as a contributing factor. Thus, sailors were the perpetrators in ninety-five per cent of the sample cases, as Figure 42 shows, and the victims of assault in over half the sample cases were police officers.\textsuperscript{734}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Chart showing the types of sailor involved in the sample cases}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{732} Rowbotham, “Only When Drunk,” 156 – 164.
\textsuperscript{734} Figure based on the results found within the two hundred sample cases relating to the information provided in regards to the victim of an assault.
Another interesting pattern is evident. Naval sailors account for sixty-three per cent of the perpetrator rate. At a superficial level, these results are perhaps not unsurprising since Portsmouth, as a naval port, held a higher concentration of naval sailors, both in terms of those residing and visiting the port whilst on shore leave, and thus they were more likely to be involved with a violent incident. Similarly, as previous research has identified that sailors were prone to violence and sailortowns were ‘dangerous’ places, these results are not unsurprising. Nor is it that police officers represent over half of the victim group since previous research suggests sailors vented their frustrations onto authority groups in port. Indeed, as naval Lieutenant Cockcraft was reported to have remarked at a Portsmouth Police Dinner in April 1888, “no one perhaps saw so much of bluejackets at this port as borough police, (Laughter).” However, as will be argued here, it is too simplistic to leave the analysis there. As the exploration of sailors and violence conducted below reveals, a relatively large number of the sample cases do not support the notion that sailors and violence went hand-in-hand with the consumption of alcohol. If anything, these cases demonstrate sailors were more street-wise than previously suggested.

Figure 42: Chart showing the perpetrator of assaults from the sample cases

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735 As Daniel Vickers observes, “these were tough parts of town, where drink flowed freely and where young men cruised the streets looking for fun, trouble or work,” Daniel Vickers with Vince Walsh, Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 132.
736 “The Police Dinner,” HTSC, 14<sup>th</sup> April 1888.
Sailors, Violence and Street-wise Sense

The first and most prominent motivation for sailors’ use of violence on the streets is retribution and it came in two forms. Firstly, to re-adjust the balance when they are the recipients of a perceived wrong, and secondly, violence was a viable way in which to punish attacks on their honour or the honour of those close to them. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, sailors’ calling on others on the street, when seen as the unjust recipients of over-excessive force by the police, is also evident when it came to individual sailors on the streets. Many sailors claimed in court that a police officer had struck them first and they were responding, as a man would be expected to, had a person struck them. As such, police officers themselves were also the targets of retribution by sailors for perceived disrespect. A naval sailor, John Berry, approached a police officer in Queen Street after he had broken up a fight outside the Mill Dam barracks, to say he thought a woman had robbed him. Berry reported, “he (the officer) laughed at him” and he subsequently struck the officer. Like Berry, other sailors were prone to assaulting police officers for perceived wrongs or disrespect. One such sailor felt a police officer was “following” him and his friend as if they were to cause trouble. When the sailor told the officer to stop or tell him what he and his friend had done wrong, the officer replied that it was his duty to walk the streets and prevent trouble. The sailor, taking exception to this punched the officer in the face. Other sailors also took exception to the way police dealt with them. For example, it was reported that a naval sailor punched a police officer, as he had simply felt insulted by him, and another, as he felt he had received too rough a treatment by a police officer whilst being apprehended.

Individual sailors also used violence towards the police when it was perceived that they were overstepping their remit or not taking them seriously. For

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737 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11th September 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 5th December 1866.
738 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 4th September 1869.
739 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 4th September 1869.
740 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 23rd June 1885; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 9th May 1885; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd August 1873.
example, when a naval sailor, Thomas Leach, entered a house off Clock Street, Portsea, with a woman, a police officer noticed they had left the door open. As the police officer entered the premises, Leach took exception to the officer entering his premises when he had no need to do so and punched the officer for doing so. Police were also the victims of assault when they were attempting to prevent a sailor from enacting out retribution on to others. For example, in May 1858, a naval sailor was fighting with another sailor in a dispute over money in a Portsea beerhouse. The police were called and in the process of separating the sailors, one took exception to the fight being broken up and punched an officer for preventing them from ending their contest. Similarly, when another naval sailor was caught smashing the windows of a general dealer and threatening to punch him, as he believed the dealer had “swindled” him, a police officer apprehended him. He punched the police officer for preventing him from continuing to deliver his retribution. In these types of cases, sailors are recorded as having felt they had been ‘had’ in some way, from receiving an under measure of alcohol or when given incorrect change. Although in these instances not all sailors chose to deploy violence, sometimes retribution could be more subtle. When a naval sailor felt a local builder had been underhand in taking money from him, in retribution, the sailor went to the builder’s premises and stole a tree from his garden.

Defending honour was also a motivation for sailors deploying violence, be it one’s own honour or the honour of those close to them. In 1879, two naval sailors were walking down Pembroke Street, Portsmouth Town, one rather

741 In court, Leach also claimed the officer was drunk and had pushed the woman he was with down the stairs, but there was no evidence of this, “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 31st December 1864.
742 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 1st May 1858. There are other examples of this across the period such as, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 16th April 1873; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 29th December 1860.
743 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 28th April 1860.
744 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 20th February 1897; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 4th November 1854; “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 17th September 1866; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 5th January 1867.
745 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 15th December 1886.
746 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 8th April 1868; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 3rd March 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 6th August 1870; Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 14th September 1887; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 25th October 1871; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 22nd December 1860.
drunkenly shouting and using foul language. A police officer heard him and approached him, to ask him to quieten down and move on. When the sailor refused to do so, the officer proceeded to arrest him. As he did so, the other sailor punched and kicked the officer to the ground. Both were subsequently arrested. Upon questioning in court, the sailor who had committed the assault stated the only reason he did so was to prevent his friend being taken into custody for what he perceived to be a trivial reason and for the police singling out his friend.747 Others claimed to have assaulted police officers in defence of their partners or wives. Edwin Crouch, a naval sailor, had punched a police officer as he had pushed his wife out of the way causing her to fall whilst breaking up a fight in Hanover Street, Portsea.748 Other sailors also assaulted the police whilst seeking to protect their wives. In an attempt to prevent his wife being arrested for using foul language, one naval sailor tried to pull his wife away from an officer’s grasp. When the police officer struck him with his baton, the sailor punched him saying, “you ------- you had no business to strike me with your stick.”749 It is also revealing that punishments implemented by magistrates were harsher when a sailor assaulted a police officer, with more being imprisoned rather than fined, as was the more common punishment in assault cases. To magistrates, attacks on the police were attacks on the very community and rule of law itself. One magistrate recorded after a sailor-police assault case that a “sailor came on shore with the idea that they could do as they chose, and assault policemen with impunity,” and therefore the punishments inflicted had to be more severe to send the message that this would not be tolerated.750 In another sailor-police assault case, the magistrate bemoaned, “it was rather a pity” police officers could not strike sailors back when they assaulted them and expressed this type of behaviour was “cowardly.”751

However, it was not just police officers who were assaulted by sailors. Other

747 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 8th April 1876.
748 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 14th November 1866
749 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 25th March 1868.
750 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 26th September 1877. See also. “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd July 1870; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 19th October 1861; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 30th August 1884.
751 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 30th August 1884.
males were also the targets of sailors’ retributions. William Tarrant, a “common sailor,” assaulted Thomas Long, a surgeon, in August 1868. Tarrant was “in the habit of coming to the complainant’s house after his daughter,” and Long struck the sailor on the arm to make him leave the property. Tarrant felt insulted at his treatment by Long and for being referred to as ‘common,’ thus he punched Long in the face.752 Women, as the source of retributive acts, are also significant as it shows sailors could use violence to defend their honour. For example, in 1872, John Mayo, a naval sailor, assaulted dairyman, John Jeram, who had been sending “obscene” cards to Mayo’s girlfriend. When Mayo arrived back in Portsmouth from being at sea, the first thing he did was to march to Jeram’s residence and question him about the cards. The dairyman denied all knowledge of the cards and Mayo punched him. Jeram cried “murder,” and in court stated that Mayo had threatened to kill him after receiving “terrific blows” to the head. Mayo retorted that he did not threaten to kill him, yet did threaten to give him "a good hammering which he richly deserved for being a dirty blackguard," as he was “a liar, a villain and a dirty scoundrel at his heart.”753 What is particularly interesting about this case is the headline "The Sailor and His Sweetheart." In the press report of the court-hearing it was noted that the act of violence was justified in cases such as Mayo’s, as a sailor was simply defending the honour of his ‘sweetheart.’754 These cases are also revealing as they show sailors’ bonds to others, as in the desire to defend their honour, sailors’ responses to such situations show these were also street-wise displays of assuring respect on the street and readjusting the balance after perceived wrongs or disrespect. Indeed, other sailors openly declared they had committed assault as they were “jealous” of another male for being with a woman they desired, or where a woman spurned a sailor’s advances.755

However, other sailors were held as ‘savages,’ particularly if they took retributive violence to another level by biting others as well as assaulting them.

752 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 1st August 1868.
753 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 20th April 1872. There are other examples like this such as, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 1st September 1869.
754 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 20th April 1872. There are other examples for this such as, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 1st September 1869.
755 See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11th May 1872; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 3rd November 1855.
Here, sailors were depicted as uncivilized savages capable of “cannibalism.”\textsuperscript{756} For example, when John Shergold went to the home of William Clements to collect property belonging to a young woman Shergold was now living with, Clements refused to hand it over as the young woman had a ring belonging to him. Shergold assaulted Clements having “seized him, and bit him in the face.”\textsuperscript{757} As with males, sailors deployed violence on to women in retribution for perceived wrongs, particularly when they stole from them.\textsuperscript{758} For example, there are numerous cases within the sample of sailors assaulting women, when a sailor believes a woman had robbed him or when a woman had used foul language towards him. What is particularly significant about these cases is rather than punching, kicking and hair-pulling was the most frequent form of violence used by sailors.\textsuperscript{759} Moreover, some sailors made little distinction between sexes when deploying violence on the street as means of retribution. For example, in 1869, in Havant Street, Portsea, Frank Shaldon, a naval sailor assaulted a female, Sarah Childs, after confronting her about allegedly poisoning his mother. Childs spat in his face, and Shaldon “abused her and struck her three times….and dragged her up the street by the hair of her head.”\textsuperscript{760} This was street justice at its most powerful. The very fact Shaldon dragged the woman into the street was to publically name and shame her for seemingly attempting to ‘poison’ his mother in some way. Once in the street, Shaldon’s mother also assaulted Childs, where a crowd had now gathered to witness Shaldon’s retributive action.\textsuperscript{761} In other cases, the threat of violent retribution was also as powerful, as the case of naval sailor, Alfred Stanton, shows. After being apprehended for smashing the windows of a property in Kent Street belonging to a Mrs Dredge, Stanton declared, “next time he would smash her head in.” Although no reason is given in the police report for Stanton’s behaviour towards Mrs Dredge, he was punished for smashing the

\textsuperscript{756} “Portsmouth Court,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} May 1884.
\textsuperscript{757} “Portsmouth Court,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} May 1884.
\textsuperscript{758} See for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11\textsuperscript{th} December 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 28\textsuperscript{th} April 1888; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 18\textsuperscript{th} August 1888. See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11\textsuperscript{th} December 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 28\textsuperscript{th} April 1888; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 18\textsuperscript{th} August 1888.
\textsuperscript{760} “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} April 1869.
\textsuperscript{761} “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} April 1869.
window and for making violent threats.\(^{762}\)

Other cases show sailors deployed violence as form of authority over women or to ‘correct’ behaviour. In Queen Street in 1871, a naval sailor punched and kicked his wife because she had flirted with another man in front of him in the public house. When asked in court why he had attacked her so violently in the street, the sailor stated, "if that wasn't enough to make a man knock her down," he did not know what was.\(^{763}\) In the cases involving violence towards women, magistrates often implemented harsher punishments and expressed dismay that so well-regulated men as naval sailors should appear before them, with the local press running headlines of, for example, “A Bluejacket in Disgrace.”\(^{764}\) What is interesting about these cases is the headlines’ use the word ‘Bluejacket.’ This is used as a way to construct the sailor as a ‘failed’ bluejacket as their behaviour was the opposite to that expected of a naval sailor as a defender of nation and empire. Thus, sailors who had committed assaults on women were described as “violent,” “savage,” “brutal and unmanly,”\(^{765}\) with one magistrate commenting it is a sorry state when a “British sailor should so disgrace himself” in such ways.\(^{766}\) Here, these sailors were not only described as “unsailorlike,” they were also “unmanly” and no better than vagabonds and criminals.\(^{767}\) However, for all the differences in the interpretation of violence, the cases all show violence was deployed as a solving mechanism on the streets in situations where the influence of the police ends and the ability to ‘look after one’s self’ begins. Moreover, as part of the mechanism, sailors created an association that meant being a Bluejacket on the street also meant defending and instilling street-orientated notions of honour, respect and manliness. Through this association, to some extent, they ‘hardened’ the bluejacket image by attaching the ability to deploy violence as part of this image construction. Not only was a ‘hard man’ image a valuable asset on the streets, a hardened image

\(^{762}\) “Police Intelligence,” HTSC, 6\(^{th}\) November 1886.

\(^{763}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 15\(^{th}\) April 1871.

\(^{764}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 16\(^{th}\) November 1867. There are other examples of this such as, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 5\(^{th}\) November 1892; “Portsmouth Police Court,” T\(E\)N, 22\(^{nd}\) July 1895.

\(^{765}\) See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11\(^{th}\) December 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 29\(^{th}\) November 1888.

\(^{766}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 5\(^{th}\) February 1848.

\(^{767}\) “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 10\(^{th}\) June 1874.
connected to ideas of status gleaned from being in naval service was prized. Thus, part of being a bluejacket was to not only look after and protect nation and empire; it was also to ‘look after one’s self.’ To do this status on the streets had to be increased and this often took a display of nerve.

Whilst retributive violence was the main motivation for using violence, the second most common motivation was as a display of nerve to enhance street status and enact masculine ideals of being able to ‘look after oneself’ thus gaining credibility for fitting such ideals. Whilst it seems the police bore the brunt of violent behaviour by sailors, a closer analysis shows sailors often deployed violence against those in authority as a way to develop, maintain and shape a sense of street-wise status. Confrontation with a symbol of state-controlled power on the streets was a way to ensure this instantaneously by testing one’s display of nerve against the police. As John Archer suggests, “violence was to some extent fun; it was a sport with which to display one’s toughness.”

Thus, for example, when police were called to a small disturbance in Portsea on the 4th December 1866, William Casey, a seaman on board the Asia, refused to leave the scene of the disturbance. With a small group of onlookers present, Casey was refusing to move on as “he meant to “prop” some of the policemen.” Casey struck an officer on the side of head “telling him that was how they meant to prop him,” and was promptly arrested and later fined by the courts for assaulting the officer. Thus, in cases like these, what seemingly prompted the use of the violence was that sailors could use it as an opportunity to display their nerve in the face of authority and to gain or ensure an enhanced street status. One such example is George Black, a twenty-one year old naval sailor, who assaulted a police officer in the street, after the officer had dispersed a crowd watching a fight, for no reason other than he could. With the small crowd looking on, Black took the opportunity to try to enhance his status by simply dismissing his action as not a ‘big deal,’ and was reported as saying, “if you are a b------- policeman, I don’t care.” Another case from 1871 shows a similar display. In Queen Street, two young sailors were removed from the White Bear.

769 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 5th December 1866.
770 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd February 1899.
public house. As police wrestled them into the streets, a sailor, James Stevens, approached an officer and asked, “are you a b----- policeman?” The officer replied he was and Stevens promptly punched him, to which his friend Edward Lawrence followed suit and copied Stevens’ actions. There are other examples of this display of nerve too. In June 1885, for example, a sailor assaulted a police officer as he asked a group of sailors to move on from the streets. One seized the opportunity in front of his fellow sailors to take exception to this calling the officer a “b----- bobby….a b-----thing like that,” before punching him.

Other situations displayed nerve through a more ritualized nature of street fighting, particularly when in front of a crowd. In May 1889 inside the *Bull’s Head* public house in Queen Street, George Hunston, “a bluejacket,” was charged with assaulting William Colleson and for kicking and breaking his leg. A quarrel had broken out between the two and the proprietor, Sarah Weeks, described that she had walked into the crowded backroom where they both “had their clothes off, and were proceeding to fight.” Both were asked to leave. Hunston declared, “that he would do a Lancashire” on Colleson and proceeded to “violently” assault him, breaking his leg in the process. For Hunston and Colleson the stripping of clothes highlights the ritualized nature of this fight, whilst in the ‘arena’ of the backroom with a crowd looking on. Hunston’s display of nerve was heightened and the threat of ‘doing a Lancashire’ was seemingly a way in which to further this. However, some were more daring in their display of nerve. In 1889, outside a public house on The Hard, a police officer walked passed a group of sailors who were stood outside, when one from the group stood in his way and punched him, the others stood jeering as the assault took place, with the offending sailor quoted as saying “take that you -----. I’ll have some fun with you now.” Others would take the opportunity to

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771 “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 27th May 1871.
772 “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 13th June 1885; “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 1st June 1870.
774 “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 18th May 1889. There is no contemporary evidence to indicate what “doing a Lancashire” may mean in the context of a fight.
775 “Portsmouth Police Court,” *HTSC*, 19th August 1899.
not only confront the police, but also enter the very places that symbolised authority in Portsmouth. John MacMan, a naval sailor broke away from his friends as they were walking past the police station and entered the station, grabbed an officer, wrestled him to the floor and said “Now you ------, I will have satisfaction; I'll cut your throat.” Cases like these show sailors implemented violence as a form of bravado on the streets, particularly when they were in the company of others. Thus, ensuring a level of respect and status on the streets in front of others from the same friendship or occupational group was also part of the motivation for displaying nerve.

Some instances of violent or threatening behaviour also highlight the power of the street-based stereotyping and the role this played in sailors having a street-wise sensibility or not. Sailors such as William Ward could be too street-wise for their own good, even when drunk. Ward was approached by a police officer in plain clothes and apprehended for being drunk and disorderly, he lashed out at the officer. Ward’s reaction was based on the premise that the officer did not fit his expectation of what a police officer should be as he was in plain clothes and thought he “was taking him for a walk.” Thus, for Ward the decision to lash out was to prevent him from becoming a victim of what he took for a suspected prank, yet in this instance it was not. In turn, a police officer's street-wise sensibilities could be the very thing that brought a sailor to their attention. For example, when a group of sailors were loitering outside the Theatre Royal in Commercial Road in September 1901, using “disgusting” language and threatening behaviour, the police officer’s attention was not drawn by the language or threats. It was drawn by one of the sailors carrying an umbrella whilst in uniform and, to the officer, this was more “unusual” for a sailor, and this thus drew his attention. At times, even sailors themselves were perplexed when their behaviour seemingly fitted the stereotype of ‘Jack in Port.’ For example, George Mansfield, a naval sailor, was ‘riotously’ making his way through the street whilst drunk and on his way stole a chicken. When sentenced, Mansfield stated, “he had got into trouble through the drink. He

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776 MacMan later claimed he was drunk although the officer disputed this, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 19th October 1861.
777 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 3rd December 1892.
778 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 9th September 1901.
worked hard for his money as a sailor but had not expected to get into trouble through a chicken, (Laughter).”

The cases involving drink are revealing as they show sailors, particularly those on shore leave, could consciously switch and adapt their popularly constructed images to suit, thus displaying street-wise sense when they transitioned from ship to shore as a way to navigate themselves out of trouble. Indeed, as a way to mock those around them by playing up to their ‘Jack in Port’ image, many explained their disorderly or violent behaviour as being due to drink, thus enacting the popular behaviour commonly expected of a sailor in port in the hope of escaping conviction. For example, when four sailors were charged with being drunk and disorderly in Queen Street in October 1860, they “interfered” with shops along the street, displaying “riotous behaviour” threatening passers-by, stealing an oyster and breaking a pane of glass. Their defence was “a true sailors’ defence and stated that they had not been on shore for six months” yet denied they were being “righteous (riotous) – (Laughter).” Others excused their violence based on excessive drinking having got “among the sharks at a house of ill fame.” Indeed, naval sailors like Dennis Callaghan, played up to the archetypal ‘Jack in Port’ image that being away at sea for a long time explained his drunken and riotous behaviour. These cases are interesting for two reasons. Firstly, they reinforce Land’s assertion that sailors were self-aware and conscious of this deployment, enacting it as a form of response to authority and part performance to play up their popular ‘Jack in Port’ image. Secondly, even with their popularly constructed bluejacket image in place, sailors could rebuke this, and instead, adopt and ‘play up’ to their popular image of old when it suited, particularly when drink had contributed to their disorderly or violent. However, this image deployment...

779 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 14th November 1885. There are other cases like this, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd August 1865; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 16th May 1861.

780 “Portsmouth Police Court,” TEN, 31st May 1892.

781 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 13th October 1860.

782 “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 17th June 1848.

783 “Portsmouth Police Courts,” HTSC, 18th June 1864; “Portsmouth Police Courts,” HTSC, 24th October 1866.

process is also in itself street-wise as it shows sailors understood how to behave in uncertain public places based on their proximity to danger - in these cases the danger of being imprisoned - with their public-facing images tailored to suit.

Moreover, drink also impaired a sailor’s ability to be street-wise and this determined whether they fell victim to the opportunistic tactics of others, and consciously or not, played the part of ‘Jack in Port.’ Drink reduced the sailors’ street responses to that of a misguided, hapless character, taken advantage of by ‘unfortunates’ and being “enticed” into the dens of iniquity that Portsmouth harboured.\footnote{See, for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 25th November 1871; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 17th May 1873; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 13th October 1860; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 2nd July 1888; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 31st October 1868.} In this respect, drink made a sailor an easy target in the streets, particularly as many took the opportunity to steal from them. For example, in 1856, an ‘unfortunate’ Ellen Welch, robbed Adam Stewart, a naval sailor, of his neckerchief after they returned to her lodgings in North Street, Portsea, having met in a local public house. The sailor confessed he was “dead drunk” and passed out, thus giving Welch the opportunity to steal from him.\footnote{“Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 24th May 1856. See also, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 11th October 1876; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 17th December 1870.} Whilst the number of sailor-on-sailor assaults is relatively small in the sample, they are revealing as the majority of these occurred when drink was noted as a triggering factor for the assault.\footnote{See for example, “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 21st January 1861; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 10th May 1869; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 21st April 1872; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 23rd November 1870; “Portsmouth Police Court,” HTSC, 9th August 1848.} Moreover, in these cases, merchant seamen in Portsmouth were also not excluded from contemporary debates about degenerate and ‘unmanly’ behaviour, particularly as these cases make-up the majority of sailor-on-sailor assault cases in the sample, often occurring after a drinking session. James Hunter and Henry Styan, merchant seamen belonging to a timber ship, where drinking together down The Point, both were rather drunk and “there was some chaffing going on.” Hunter took exception to Styan’s ‘chaffing’ and knocked him to the floor, and “put his finger in his eye and endeavoured to force it out.” That Hunter, “A Gouger” as the headline ran, committed “one of the worst cases ever brought to this court,” the presiding
magistrate described Hunter as “un-English, disgraceful and unmanly.”

Merchant sailors and naval sailors, whilst being popularly and culturally viewed as very different, were seemingly not so different once on the streets to civic authorities and magistrates. Nor were they exempt from the discourses of degenerate and unmanly behaviour.

**Conclusion**

What all these cases explored above show is that the deployment of violence offers insights into sailors’ experiences as urban inhabitants. Sailors were not merely victims of others preying on their presumed lack of urban sense and awareness when in port. They possessed a street-wise sensibility that they were popularly assumed not to own as peripheral sea-based men, Thus, this further challenges the notion that sailors were ‘men apart.’ Indeed, by placing them in urban environments and exploring their behaviour on the street through the theme of violence, this chapter has shown such behaviour was not simply part of the popularly perceived ‘rowdiness’ of sailors ashore. Many sailors created a street-wise status for themselves through which to navigate the streets of Portsmouth. As this chapter has shown, a sailor’s deployment of violence had two central street-wise functions; retribution for perceived wrongs and as a display of nerve to enhance status, both of which hinged around the ability to ‘look after oneself’ on the streets, particularly in the sailorhoods. The very point that accounts of sailors involved in violence reoccurs time and again suggests they were very much part of the landed, everyday life in Portsmouth, challenging the notion that they were ‘men apart’. Sailors were not detached from urban, port life. They were deeply implicated in it, as the frequency and nature of the crime of common assault shows. They shaped and had a tangible effect on the streets of Portsmouth creating a street-orientated dialogue whereby sailors and the port community visibly, verbally and physically affected one another. Furthermore, the deployment of violence reveals sailors could and did change their public-facing images to suit, playing up to them or rejecting them outright, as Land identifies. Indeed, despite popular perceptions, drink was

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788 “Portsmouth Police,” *HTSC*, 19th August 1848
not precursor to violence, as the majority of sample cases explored here have highlighted. Thus, sailors actively and *consciously* switched their public-facing images between ‘Jack Tar’ and ‘Bluejacket’ to suit the situation they found themselves in. In the process of doing so, many chose to adapt their publically-constructed images and make them their own, by embellishing their popular bluejacket image with connotations of ‘hardness’ or, as the cases involving drink reveal, some sailors were keen to exploit their ‘Jack in Port’ image as a way to navigate themselves out of trouble.

It is important to remember that sailors discussed here only spent a very small percentage of their time partaking in violent activity and behaviour - activities and behaviour found across the social spectrum, and nor did their occupational role, or potential harm to a good conduct record, prevent them from deploying violence when the situation was seen to warrant it. Thus, what the instances of violent deployment and interactions also shows is within the competitive nature of the streets, contesting authority and enhancing street-wise status was as important for sailors as it was for other working-class males, and they were not violent necessarily because they were sailors and nor is it simply evidence of their ‘rowdiness’ whilst ashore. Violence was part of their individual responses as people reacting, countering and adapting to situations that presented themselves in urban arenas. It is in their committal of violence that sailors, as individuals, chose to invest and contest their individualism, authority and publically held images. However, whilst there were common motivations for using violence, there is little uniformity in sailors’ responses to the urban world around them. Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 4, not only was violence a central expression of a collective sailor and sailortown culture on the streets, it was equally as central for individual sailors, enabling them to develop and maintain a street-wise sensibility and status. Therefore, violence held a high cultural value for sailors, as it did for other working-class males. However, some contemporaries did not necessarily see sailors’ violent behaviour as indicative of being street-wise. Civic authorities, missionaries and church leaders saw their violent behaviour in port as symptomatic of the degenerate, criminal influences of urban life. Thus, violence and its deployment were open to
differing interpretations depending on who deemed what acceptable, manly public-behaviour could be or not. Indeed, when Simon Gunn stated, “the city centre was portrayed as an island surrounded by a sea of crime and immorality,” his observation could equally be applied to Portsmouth’s sailortown district in the eyes of civic authorities and members of religious and church institutions and organisations. Thus, it is this and the attempts to save sailors from the ‘sea of crime and immorality’ seemingly flooding through Portsmouth that the final chapter will explore via a study of the Sailors’ Homes opened in the port.

Chapter 6- ‘For Our Sailor Lads’: Reforming Sailortown and Sailors

Introduction

The instant he sets foot on dry land he is embraced….instantly, dragged….to a bagnio, or some filthy pot-house, where he is kept drinking, smoking, singing, dancing, swearing and rioting, amidst one continued scene of debauchery, all day and night...daring objects reel about the streets, lie in wait at the corners, or, like the devouring kite, hover over every landing-place, eager to pounce upon their prey.790

As Doctor George Pinckard continued on his travels through Portsmouth, he depicted the moral abyss awaiting sailors ashore. To missionaries and philanthropists, sailors lacked an understanding of the urban environment, rendering them vulnerable to the purveyors of degradation ashore.791 Thus, using newspapers, census records and archival records across the mid-to-late nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, this chapter will explore the desire among those who sought to ‘save’ sailors from the perils of life ashore. The chapter will focus on the Sailors’ Homes opened in Portsmouth, the purpose of which was to “protect the seamen from extortion and temptation while ashore and to elevate him in the social scale.”792 Whilst there is no work that provides a comprehensive account of naval Sailors’ Homes, the intention of this chapter is not to provide this history, for this deserves research in its own right. Of focus here is the relationship between the Homes, sailors and the sailortown community, thus placing sailor welfare provision within wider civic improvement discourses more so than previous research has done. Indeed, the Homes’ purposes offer a window into the perceptions of those on the outside of the sailortown community and of those who did not see sailors’ behaviour ashore as street-wise or as part of fashioning a sailortown culture. Moreover, the Homes are also an important element in identifying a sailortown area, as

outlined in the prerequisite model in Chapter 2, since such areas attracted a high-level of attention and concern from civic authorities, philanthropists and missionaries.

Thus, it will be argued the Sailors’ Homes in Portsmouth originated to elevate the social and moral positions of sailors primarily belonging to the Royal Navy. Yet in doing so, the Homes also effectively acted as agencies for social and moral reform in Portsmouth more widely. As such, a Home management’s choice of location was part of ensuring that they were focal points in sailortown districts and were seen to be civilizing influences in sailors’ lives ashore. Indeed, the Homes’ contributions were there to be recognised as visible evidence of a stabilising influence in the socially and morally anomalous boundaries sailortown areas represented in ports. The Homes thus became part of a wider civic project, enabling civic authorities to claim that the port of Portsmouth was a place fit for sailors belonging to the Royal Navy. In doing so, the Homes confronted and challenged the sailortown community, representing a direct threat to the businesses of sailortown and attempted to disrupt the interdependent sailortown culture discussed in Chapter 4. Moreover, whilst Robert Lee (in conjunction with Richard Lawton) asserts that a merchant-capital ideology in regards to reform was present in merchant ports, it will be argued here that in naval ports like Portsmouth, an elite-philanthropic ideology was prevalent. It was imperial and national prestige of the Royal Navy which sparked philanthropic initiatives in regards to sailors’ welfare provision, initiated by those in elite positions of class, military rank and religious institutions. It will also be argued that the Homes’ relationship to sailors could be both confrontational and compromising. Those run by naval and ex-naval officers preferred an approach of compromise rather than confrontation. In contrast, Homes run by missionaries were often more confrontational in their dealings with sailors. Furthermore, when it came to navigating their lives ashore, it was an individual process of reasoning and choice which determined whether a sailor rejected or disliked the Homes and their messages.

A survey of previous research on sailors’ philanthropic institutions in Britain and Europe shows this is often the leading exploration of sailors’ lives ashore, chiefly centred on merchant seamen and ports, with little investigation concerning naval sailors’ welfare provision ashore. In part, this is due to merchant seamen being the predominant users of welfare organisations ashore due to their more itinerant, complex employment and working life arrangements. Indeed, Roald Kverndal, Jon Press, David Williams and Alston Kennerley have undertaken extensive work on the welfare provisions and organisations for merchant seamen in ports. Kennerley’s longitudinal study of merchant Sailors’ Homes concludes that Homes “were developed as the main answer to the social needs of seafarers in port.” In doing so, he argues the opening of Homes was “a direct challenge” to the existing sailor service providers in port, for example, the public house and the lodging house, yet offers little discussion as to how this challenge took place. Thus, whilst previous research explores sailors’ lives ashore in regards to welfare provision in sailortown districts, the two histories are not necessarily entwined, with the relationship between the urban setting of sailortown and the maritime focus of the Homes remaining relatively separate. Indeed, the development of sailor welfare provision has only tentatively been linked to wider civic improvements in

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797 Kennerley, “British Merchant Seafarers and Their Homes,” 256.

a locality in which they were based.

However, both Press and Kennerley do identify that the Homes were part of the “enormous upsurge in private philanthropy” prevalent in Victorian Britain driving to improve conditions of the working classes. Thus, those involved in seamen’s missions and Homes came from a range of backgrounds, and their involvement was spurred by differing motivations to impose morality, discipline and respectability on sailors’ transient, licentious way of life. Moreover, both observe that whilst many Victorian women belonging to the middling and upper classes were involved in philanthropy, they were notably absent in sailor organisations and charities, with Agnes Weston and her chain of Sailors’ Rests being an exception to the rule. Recently, works by Richard Blake examining religion in the Royal Navy and Mary Conley’s on naval manhood, have begun to shift focus away from merchant welfare provision, yet they remain institutional and sea-based in their outlook. However, both observe the close connection between religion and the sea which missionaries and philanthropists were able to exploit in advancing naval welfare provision. As Conley suggests, by asserting naval manhood images, philanthropists aimed to help sailors’ public image by celebrating their duty and devotion to nation and empire. However, this came at a price. It frequently reduced sailors to a child-like status serving to enhance the stereotype of the Jack Tar of old. Thus, many sailors disdained this reductionism and, in turn, rejected the principles of Homes like Weston’s with their teetotalism-evangelical slants, as Conley observes.

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803 Conley, From Jack Tar, 3- 4. Dennis identifies a similar trend in relation to German merchant seamen and their Homes, Dennis, “Seduction on the Waterfront,” 189 – 199.
Similarly, both Press and Kennerley observed that the drive to improve sailors’ moral and spiritual welfare often took precedence over the provision of their physical needs. Thus, Press argues sailors did not want what the Homes and missions had to offer. Sailors’ concern was survival, the meeting of their physical needs over their souls being saved, thus they often mocked and vehemently rejected missions and Homes. However, Press does suggest that if a Home’s management had gone to sea they were better able to ameliorate sailors’ experience of Homes. Likewise, Williams asserts naval Sailors’ Homes took a “protective paternalism” approach, with focus on self-help and self-improvement whilst attending to sailors’ physical needs. Indeed, he suggests, when focus was given to meeting their physical needs, Homes were more successful, although he offers no comprehensive study of naval Sailors’ Homes in his work to support this. Moreover, Robert Lee (in conjunction with Richard Lawton) argues a merchant-capital ideology was present in the focus of philanthropic, charitable and missionary work found in merchant ports. As these ports were centred in trade and commerce, it was this that drove local authorities to cater for sailors’ welfare needs ashore, characterized by “a belief in the concept of the ‘night-watchman’ state, an adherence to laissez-faire and liberal economic principles…and an underlying commitment to avoid any unnecessary disruption to trade and commerce.” Yet this relationship is not one which applies to all ports. Naval ports like Portsmouth had restricted merchant trading, thus Lee’s merchant-capital ideology is not found and he offers no parallel ideology for naval ports. More recently, Lee argues Sailors’ Homes in merchant ports did have some impact on improving the public

807 Williams, “Mid-Victorian Attitudes to Seamen and Maritime Reform,” 126.
808 Williams, “Mid-Victorian Attitudes to Seamen and Maritime Reform,” 126.
perception of sailors, and were able to influence their behaviour whilst ashore.\textsuperscript{811} Thus, in contrast to Press’ earlier observations, Lee suggests there was demand from seafarers for institutional accommodation and welfare support, and this is evidence that “many sailors did not necessarily prioritize a life of undiluted pleasure and entertainment” whilst ashore.\textsuperscript{812} Similarly, as David Dennis identified in his recent work on German merchant Sailors’ Homes, the Homes aimed to foster a vision and version of the familial home and many sailors chose to be a part of this.\textsuperscript{813} Therefore, while advances have been made in the study of sailors’ welfare provision ashore, naval ports and sailors are overlooked and there remain gaps to be filled.

\textbf{Sailors’ Welfare Ashore}

Moral elements of sailors’ accommodation ashore came to the fore due to the widely held belief by those with an interest in sailors’ welfare that a lack of suitable housing made sailors vulnerable to exploitation. After all, to them, there was little for sailors to do in Portsmouth “beyond getting drunk and ravaging the peculiarly infamous back streets of Portsmouth and Portsea.”\textsuperscript{814} Not only were the homes of sailors viewed to be those of the public house and ones of ill-fame, it was popularly assumed that sailors’ isolation from the world ashore meant they saw “nothing of the craft and cunning of trade” found there.\textsuperscript{815} Thus, as soon as a sailor crossed the threshold of sea to shore, he underwent a dramatic change, as an article in the evangelical magazine \textit{The Leisure Hour} observed,

\textsuperscript{812} Lee, “The Seafarers’ Urban World,” 50.
\textsuperscript{813} Dennis, “Seduction on the Waterfront,” 177.
\textsuperscript{814} “Portsmouth: (From the \textit{Daily Telegraph}),” \textit{The Stirling Observer}, 30\textsuperscript{th} August 1860.
No sooner does Jack set foot on land…he undergoes a sudden change; he is no longer something to be admired and applauded but something to be robbed and plundered; from a hero…he is suddenly transformed into a property.  

In the desire to save sailors from the ‘crafts and cunnings’ found ashore it is evident the impetus for opening Sailors’ Homes was founded on a sympathy for sailors’ vices over their virtues, as an article in *Chambers Edinburgh Journal* encapsulates

Sailors, as a class, are little better than children when ashore and require to be providently cared for, to save them from imposition and misery…..their virtues are exhibited at sea, and their vices are exhibited on shore. The community is benefited by the former, and they, the sailors, are the victims of the latter. It is therefore more incumbent….to prevent their falling into those vices which unhappily so many of them are addicted.

However, whilst social consciousness of sailors’ welfare increased across the nineteenth century, the great focus of reform was centred on merchant seamen, whose unstable job patterns, erratic, unsafe working and living conditions were of primary focus. Similar attention for naval sailors in naval ports was much slower to develop. With the introduction of continuous service in the Royal Navy from 1853, a greater distinction between merchant and naval sailors occurred which saw naval seamen afforded similar welfare attentions. This attention gathered momentum as the nineteenth century progressed, namely due to heightened imperialism and the Navy and it sailors constructed to be symbols of empire, who needed protection and ‘saving’ when ashore at home and abroad. Indeed, as Conley charts, Victorian imperialism was not just about ruling but also redemption, and sailors were held to be the pinnacle of this imperial, civilizing and redemption process. More widely, the advent of Homes

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816 “Sailors’ Homes,” 516.
818 Williams, “Mid-Victorian Attitudes,” 101 – 126.
reflected the rising concern across the Victorian era in regards to working-class male leisure activities and drives to stave off their degenerative influences and to ensure that recreational activities remained rational and wholesome. Therefore, it was argued, “if sailors can be drawn away from low public-houses and induced to spend their leisure hours rationally the effect will be that drunkenness will be subdued.” In particular, this was directed towards younger, single sailors, in naval ports, especially those on short-term shore leave and those without kinship ties in port. To keep them ‘civilized’ they needed the influence of a Home to domesticate them and prevent them from the perils of port life in the infamous sailortown districts. In America, where Sailors Homes’ were already established, it was clear to contemporaries that Homes had some influence on steering sailors away from the streets. As Portsmouth’s Alderman Pinkerton observed, a sailor’s “pay is spent in the sailors’ homes, clothier shops and the savings banks” in America, “whilst the British seaman’s goes to the rum-shop, the gin-shop and the brothel.”

The connection between sailors and drink, as discussed throughout this thesis, was a grave concern for church leaders and members and missionaries, many of whom advocated temperance for sailors, reflective of the radical teetotalism movement emerging in the 1830s, instigated by the 1830 Beerhouse Act. Alcohol was a temptation that triggered immoral and criminal behaviour in its users and was seen to be symptomatic of urban living and its degenerative influences. Drink was a particular problem for sailors to temperance advocates as it poorly reflected on the ability of Britain, as a nation-state, to manage and control its exemplars of civilization and empire. Thus, temperance was necessary since “sailors were the representative men of this
country in foreign parts,” and if they “were seen drunk the remark would be that the people of England were drunkards.” As temperance advocate Reverend J.R. Webb reminded civic authorities, the numerous drinking establishments found in Portsmouth was indeed “the devil’s town mission.” Moreover, evangelical impetuses were seen in the temperance movement, with the revival in evangelicalism from the late 1850s and in missionary work undertaken by women of the middling and upper classes. ‘Disorderly’ behaviour, particularly among service personnel, was contrasted with the sober, Christian, family-life image. Thus, instilling ‘respectable behaviour’ was viewed as the antidote to disorder, along with controlling access to “social evils” for working-class men, and more so soldiers and sailors, with responsibilities to family, nation, empire and God. As such, for the local temperance collective in Portsmouth, drinking establishments were viewed as the “greatest obstacle” in overcoming and removing social evil in the town, in steering sailors towards sobriety and reforming the slums of Portsmouth. Therefore, not only were Sailors’ Homes required, sailors also needed religious guidance ashore as much as they did at sea, since as “a body of men [they are] most useful and important to the state.” Indeed, as well as improving the efficiency of sailors as workers through sober, disciplined and respectable social and moral behaviour, Christianizing sailors was seen as a moral and national duty, fortifying them in their confrontation with temptations, and Homes were viewed as a viable way to achieve both.

Captain (later Admiral) William Hall, a pioneer in the establishment of naval

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827 John Turner Rae, “The Temperance Record,” Temperance, (1871), 282. See also, “Temperance Meeting on Board the Himalaya,” HTSC, 1st April 1871.
828 “Portsea Island Town Mission,” HTSC, 4th April 1868
830 “Lectures on Temperance at Landport Hall,” HTSC, 12th August 1871.
832 “Royal Naval Scripture Readers’ Society,” HTSC, 5th May 1866.
833 “Royal Naval Scripture Readers’ Society,” HTSC, 5th May 1866; “Naval Scripture Readers,” HTSC, 29th May 1897. This was reflective of a national feeling too, “Correspondence,” John Bull, 21st July 1877. For experiences in empire and for quote, “Royal Navy Scripture Readers’ Society,” HTSC, 28th August 1869.
Sailors’ Homes in Britain and of the Royal Sailors’ Home (RSH) in Portsmouth, believed the sailor’s life at sea and the “open-heartedness” it created, presented money-laden naval sailors with a problem. Lacking urban sense, they were effortlessly “decoyed” as an “easy victim to the sharks that infest our sea ports…..whose vocation it is to prey upon the hard-earned pay of the sailor.”

Naval sailors therefore needed a place to go to compensate for them “having thrown their money to the prostitute and publicans” and to “prevent them falling into danger,” or worse, wandering the streets, drunk and penniless for all to see. Hall was not alone in his concern for naval sailors’ wellbeing ashore. Sir Henry Stracey, Conservative M.P. for Great Yarmouth, concurred by bringing a motion on Sailors’ Homes to the House of Commons. Hall saw it his duty to champion the opening of naval Sailors’ Homes having seen the difference Homes made for merchant seamen in London, with the opening of one in Well Street, in the heart of London’s sailortown district in 1829. Moreover, Hall argued naval sailors would profit from homes more so than merchant seamen, as they often had more money in their pockets on entering port and were thus more vulnerable to the ‘sharks’ ashore. Homes for naval sailors would also be of benefit to the country at large since they would enable naval sailors to keep their money in their pocket for the benefit of their families. Thus, Hall argued the government owed naval sailors places to go to for refuge and shelter, and places which were under public authority and administration and not reliant on private and charitable monies. Yet for all Hall’s efforts, government-run homes


836 As Stracey stated the “sailor, although in every respect a man bold and enduring when at sea, is nevertheless weak and yielding on land,” Sir Henry Stracey, *Speech on Sailors’ Homes*, (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1861), 11.


never materialized. Hall changed tack, calling on philanthropic individuals with local power and interests to take up the cause themselves, as he was to do in Portsmouth. To provide stimulus for philanthropic individuals, Hall provided guidelines based on the London Home as to what was needed in Sailors’ Homes. Hall advocated that Homes should be committee run and have two fundamental remits; to provide facilities and recreational activities which kept sailors off the streets, and refreshment rooms to help with funds of the Homes, and to control the flow of liquor to sailors when ashore, along with the provision of reading rooms and saving banks. Therefore, Homes should not only cater for the sailor’s physical needs, they should satisfy sailors’ recreational and amusement needs too. Hall and his associates also saw a need to save sailors from themselves since a sailor, as Hall observed, “earns his money like a horse and spends it like an ass.”

However, sailors not only had to be lifted out of their supposed physical and moral degradation and saved from ‘spending like an ass’, the very streets they walked also had to be improved to prevent their degradation in the first place. Naval Chaplains were at pains to point out to Portsmouth’s civic authorities that the morality of sailors ashore could not be improved until there was an entire change in the morality of the town and of the people sailors associated with. Thus, in keeping with the prevailing Victorian assumption that physical, mental, spiritual improvements were not separate elements that needed attention, a more wholesome approach was needed. Therefore, the increased awareness of naval sailors’ lives ashore coincided with the rise in concern over the living

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841 Hall, Sailors’ Homes, 19 – 22.
842 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian, 12th November 1859. Indeed, it was popularly viewed that a sailor “lives for the day and the Morrow….his money has a tendency to slip through his fingers, or, if it reaches his pockets, burns a hole in it,” in, “Sailors’ Homes,” The Ladys Newspaper, 28th March 1863. See also, “Letters to the Editor,” Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle, 29th May 1847.
843 “Correspondence,” HTSC, 29th July 1860. Some sailors also suggested this, with one sailor writing to the British Messenger stating, “There is indeed no life in which men are exposed to stronger temptations than the sailors,” quoted in, “Religion in the Navy,” HTSC, 17th August 1867.
conditions of the working classes, which the majority of naval ratings were
drawn from, and this was unnoticed by contemporary social commentators and
Admiralty members. Moreover, in Portsmouth, the sailortown area was a
focus for reform by philanthropists, church leaders and missionaries, a
reforming process closely connected to the levels of ‘slumdom’ evident in the
port. The opening of the Homes, in the heart of Portsmouth’s sailortown district,
thus served as a physical symbol of civic respectability in a space perceived to
be the antithesis of such notions. In the breeding grounds for degeneracy and
deviance, the Homes were hailed as ‘beacon of light’ governing ‘unruly’ spaces
and deviant practices of a perceived peripheral group of people. However,
this was not without its problems to the sailortown community and sailors
themselves.

A Beacon of Light?: The Royal Sailors’ Home

In conjunction with Hall, Sir W. Edward Parry, a retired Rear Admiral, and
Admiral Robert Gambier spurred the cause for a Sailors’ Home in Portsmouth.
Shamed at the ease with which sailors were drained of their money in
Portsmouth, they found a property in Queen Street, near to The Hard, in which
to offer sailors a place ashore as a “safe retreat from the perils of the streets.”
The Sailors’ Home opened on 23rd April 1851 in Queen Street, Portsea, the first
of its kind in Portsmouth and for naval sailors in Britain, later becoming the
Royal Sailors’ Home (RSH) having received royal patronage from Prince Albert.
The RSH was hailed as promoting “a great social revolution in the Navy through
the physical wants of the seamen” and a “progressive improvement in
Portsmouth.” The principal objective of the Home was “to give all seamen

845 “Naval Notes & News,” HTSC, 6th November 1897.
846 Indeed, an article in The Times declared, out of all of the “institutions that had been set going
for the benefit of British seamen…..not a more valuable [one] than the Sailors’ Home.” “Sailors’
Homes,” The Times, 19th November 1870.
847 Idea adapted from that suggested by Miles Ogborn and Chris Philo regarding ‘moral
locations’ in, Miles Ogborn and Chris Philo, “Soldiers, Sailors and Moral Locations in
848 Reverend Edward Parry, Memoirs of Rear-Admiral Sir W. Edward Parry, (New York:
Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, (1857), 329; Peter
849 “The Sailors’ Home Meeting,” HTSC, 18th November 1871; “Progressive Improvement in the
Portsea Parish,” HTSC, 22nd January 1852.
and marines a safe, respectable, comfortable and inexpensive place of resort while on shore in this locality,” with a distinct focus on order and discipline akin to life on board which their users were well acquainted with. Interestingly, in contrast to merchant-port Sailors’ Homes, the naval-based RSH declared they had no objective that aimed to morally improve the character or social conditions of sailors, nor was there an objective to provide religious instruction to improve sailors “habits.” Whilst the Home was open to all types of sailor, the very fact of it being in a naval port meant its principle users were naval sailors. This gave the RSH management board, composed of ex-naval officers, serving officers and local church leaders, a stronger reason not to offer sailors moral or religious instruction in their Home. As board members argued, seamen in merchant ports were primarily foreign in their origins, thus Sailors’ Homes in merchant ports had to focus on improving the character of ‘foreign’ seamen, unlike Homes catering to British (i.e. non-foreign in their origin) naval sailors in naval ports like theirs. Indeed, RSH board members argued that naval sailors belonged to the Royal Navy - a military fighting force, thus naval service enhanced their character in any case.

There was also another difference. The RSH received grants from the Admiralty, higher grant figures than other naval homes, as the Admiralty found the RSH increased the “comforts” of sailors and “induce[d] habits of steadiness and regularity.” Thus, the RSH board and the Admiralty itself, as evidenced

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852 As evidenced in census records where it shows naval sailors equated to between ninety and ninety-five per cent of the Home’s users at any one time, “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” HAMRG9/636, (1861); “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” HAMRG10/1131, (1871); “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” HAMRG11/1146, (1881); “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town,” HAMRG12/862, (1891); ‘Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town and Landport,’” HAMRG13/999, (1901); “Census Enumerators’ Notebooks for Portsea Town and Landport,” HAMRG14/Enumeration District 32, (1911). See also, “The Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 25th February 1899.
854 The RSH received a higher grant than other naval homes until 1873, “Copies of A
throughout this thesis, did not necessarily take the view that naval sailors in Portsmouth were in need of moral improvement. Portsmouth itself was, for the port town “was worse than India for immorality.” Therefore, the RSH had another objective, to “rescue numbers of our gallant seamen from the clutches of their worst enemies,” as the character of the town necessarily presented certain dangers and temptations to the sailor.

In this respect, it was no coincidence that the site for the Home was selected in the heart of Portsmouth’s sailortown district, as shown in Figure 43, to shield sailors from the near-by temptations “thrown in their paths,” saving them from those “who live and fatten upon his degradation and his shame.” Not only

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**Figure 43** – Map of Portsea showing the position of the Royal Sailors’ Homes in relation to the core businesses of sailortown and sailors’ residency patterns.

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Correspondence Between the Board of Treasury and The Board of Admiralty in the Subject of the Manning of the Royal Navy,” 1628, Command Papers Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1852-53), 24; “Sailors’ Homes: Abstract of Return of All Sailors’ Homes Erected,” PP, 14. Other Homes such as the Cork Sailors’ Home objected to Portsmouth receiving a higher grant, “Portsmouth’s Sailors’ Home & The Admiralty,” HTSC, 5th February 1870; “Portsea and Cork Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 19th February 1870.


857 W.H. Charpentier, Charpentier Illustrated Guide, (Portsmouth: Charpentier, 1892), 67; “Royal
was the Home in the heart of sailortown, it was opened in a prominent place within the sailorhood area located behind The Hard. On the corner, where the main thoroughfare of Queen Street joined The Hard, the RSH was visible from The Dockyard Gate in the midst of the numerous drinking establishments found there and the notorious sea-brothel vicinity harboured just a few streets away. The placing of a Sailors’ Home in Portsea was seen to be needed in close proximity to the Dockyard and The Hard so sailors arriving off ships would not have to ‘run the gauntlet’ through the sea of temptation that awaited them in Portsmouth.\(^{858}\) Whilst this sailorhood area was awash with seeming vice and sin, the RSH was proclaimed by board members to be “but a single beacon-light to guide the mariner through these quicksands, shoals and sunken rocks to the harbour of rest” with its grand, imposing structure and flagpole signalling its presence in sailortown, as Image 12 depicts.\(^{859}\) Moreover, the location of the Home sent an important message to visitors outside of Portsmouth. The naval port of Portsmouth was looking after and providing for sailors, and in turn, preserving and protecting the very men who defended the nation and safeguarded empire.\(^{860}\)

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\(^{859}\) Quote from, “Portsmouth Sailors’ Home,” *HTSC*, 20\(^{th}\) August 1852.

The physical enclosure of sailors from the sea of immorality ashore in Portsmouth went further, with the RSH board erecting iron palisades around the building and extending the entranceway back from the main thoroughfare of Queen Street. \(^{861}\) Whilst this was done to prevent ‘sharks’ harassing sailors on the street, sailors and others in the sailortown community found ways to circumvent the RSH’s attempts to sever their relationships, as discussed in Chapter 4. Indeed, as the rise in recruitment gathered pace, the RSH had to extend its premises to cater for the larger number of sailors in port. In doing so, the Home made its physical presence felt in sailortown by extending the Home further back into the sailorhood streets of Hawke and Havant Street from the 1860s. Following this, in the 1890s, the Home’s management bought the next-door *Cairo Coffee Tavern* building to extend the Home sideways along Queen Street. \(^{862}\) The Home’s management also bought up many of the surrounding


\(^{862}\) “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” *Daily News*, 15\(^{th}\) September 1855; “Royal Sailors’ Home,”
beerhouses in order to remove the perceived blight they made on the area around the Home and to break the interdependent nature of sailortown culture in Portsmouth. Indeed, the Home's management's greatest coup was purchasing the renowned public house, *The Fighting Cocks*, located next door to the Home in 1881, a site of frequent drunkenness and fighting “which has hitherto inserted itself, like a wedge” between the Home and its aim of improving the lives of sailors ashore. In doing so, the presence of the RSH was also designed to ensure that visitors to Portsmouth were able to see that the port-town of Portsmouth was leading the way in facilitating and attending to the needs of sailors. Indeed, an invited visitor to the RSH was keen to convey the sanctity of the Home in contrast to the “horrible locality” that was The Hard, with “dirty drunken sailors staggering out of taverns.” The Home was a tranquil setting where clean, respectable sailors resided, as illustrated in Image 13.


HTSC, 15th February 1890.


However, the management of the RSH went further in imposing their presence in sailortown. As Kennerley observed, Sailors’ Homes represented a direct challenge to the business of sailortown and the RSH did this through its decision to sell alcohol on its premises, angering local publicans and beerhouse keepers within the sailortown community. Some residents even objected to the Home opening in the drinking quarter of Portsmouth, as evidenced in the number of applications made to have the Home removed to another locality. It was argued by some that the opening of the Home actually further grounded sailors in a life of deprivation and debauchery rather than saving them from it. For example, Captain John Gourley objected to the Home being opened in Portsmouth, particularly in such close proximity to the trades of temptation and seduction. As Gourley argued, the close proximity simply made it more likely that sailors would succumb to vice and sin as the Home’s location clearly endorsed these “abominable practices.” Many in the sailortown community reacted more vehemently towards the Sailors’ Home as it represented a direct threat to their livelihoods. Indeed, the fiercest objections to the Home came from those involved in the drinking trades as the RSH was seen to be directly challenging their trade and businesses, particularly with the RSH board’s decision to sell alcohol in the Home even though sailors had not asked for it. The RSH board sought the introduction of alcohol in the Home not necessarily due to the quantity of drink sailors could consume elsewhere, but over concerns relating to the quality of alcohol sailors were supplied with in the local drinking establishments. Thus, the RSH board’s decision was one targeted at the sailortown community, not sailors per se, as it would deal the “greatest blow to the publicans.”

This stemmed, in part, from the RSH board’s anger that no less than four publicans set up business around the Home since it opened, as they had a captive audience and frequently accosted and enticed sailors away from the

866 “On A Sailors’ Home at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 10th August 1850.
867 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 17th November 1860.
869 “Correspondence,” HTSC, 16th November 1861.
Home to their drinking dens. However, the opening of these drinking establishments also shows, in defiance to the RSH’s management attempting to deal the drinking trade a blow, some publicans chose to set up their establishments in close proximity to the Home, effectively engulfing the ‘beacon of the light.’ What also angered local traders is that the RSH could sell beer at any hour, as the Home was not restricted to specific opening hours or to closing at 11pm as local drinking establishments were. In this respect, the RSH represented a direct threat to their business and trade since after traders had to close at 11pm, sailors could walk into the Home and be served alcohol. Whilst the RSH management insisted they stopped service at 11pm when the doors to the Home closed, local residents such as Mr Barber, attested to sailors being served after this time. As his premises backed on to the Home, he could see it for himself. For Barber and others in the sailortown community, the Sailors’ Home was now effectively a club, not a Home, and they petitioned local magistrates that it should not therefore receive any special treatment.

Moreover, some local residents argued, since the RSH received grants from the Admiralty, the sale of alcohol in the Home was tantamount to government endorsement of non-desirable drinking habits, particularly as the Home sold alcohol whether sailors sought it out or not. Local magistrates refused to intervene in the matter since the RSH was a private property and not open to the public for the purposes of consuming alcohol; they had no jurisdiction in the respect of the Home’s running and left local tradesmen to battle the Home’s threat to their trade on their own. This also meant the RSH was left to run its sale of alcohol entirely independent of outside influences and constraints. Interestingly, overall, sailors did not object to the sale of alcohol at the RSH. Those who did were teetotal sailors, who felt that having temperance rooms available at a premises where alcohol was sold was at odds and thus left the

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871 “Correspondence,” TEN, 25th February 1903. Other local residents could see no reason to sell alcohol at the Home when the district surrounding it had so many premises selling alcohol anyway.
872 Quote from, William Braham Robinson, Chief Constructor at the HM Dockyard, and Vice-President of the Royal Naval Temperance Society as reported in, “Second Report from The Select Committee of The House of Lords on Intemperance,” 271, Command Papers Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1877), 114.
Home or simply did not enter it in protest. The majority of sailors were thus indifferent to it and many, particularly those on shore-term shore leave, simply used the Home as a base from which to drink their way around the town, with a guaranteed bed for the night and safe storage of their possessions. Thus, the RSH simply enabled some sailors to move more freely and safely around Portsmouth’s sailortown than before.

However, the threat to the sailortown community from the RSH did not end there. Many saw the Home as a direct challenge to their businesses, “injuring” the trade of the borough. For example, Captain R.N. Johnston, manager of the RSH, recalled that in the early days of the Home’s opening, he and his staff had great difficulty in getting sailors to the Home without being accosted. In response, the Admiralty laid on specific transport for sailors going to the Home from the ships in port. In reaction to this threat to their trade, local watermen and porters, once the only means of transporting sailors from ship to land, had to think tactically. As Johnston recalled, there were a number of incidents whereby watermen would place a sailor’s baggage into their own boats, without permission, effectively ‘stealing’ them from the boats used by the Admiralty to directly transport sailors to the RSH. The Home also caused uproar among the local outfitting tradesmen in Queen Street who depended on sailors for their livelihoods. When the RSH board made the decision to open a tailoring outfitter next door to the home, with a private passage between the two, local outfitters vehemently complained to the Town Council. They argued the RSH was preventing sailors from spending any money in the local businesses and shops and were thus taking all the sailors’ money for themselves; after all, they were not even cheaper than the local outfitters.

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875 As shown in Police Reports, for example, “Portsmouth Police: The Extensive Robbery at Portsmouth” HTSC, 22nd August 1868; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 15th May 1867; “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 9th May 1868.
876 “Local and District News,” HTSC, 29th September 1875.
877 Not only were sailors transported to land by watermen contracted by the Navy, they were also escorted by military personnel from The Hard to the RSH, “Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire Into The Best Means of Manning The Navy,” PP, 271.
878 The outfitting establishment was opened in 1876. See, for example, “Letters to the Editor,” HTSC, 2nd October 1875; “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 18th November 1876;
Indeed, some local residents did not see the Home as a ‘beacon of light.’ As one local resident and tradesman, Mr Turner, declared to civic authorities during a court hearing about the levels of noise around the RSH, the Home was “merely a receptacle for the outcasts of the public houses,” as respectable sailors he knew personally would not go there, preferring to reside with their families or friends.979 Interestingly, some sailors concurred with Turner’s differentiation of sailors’ responses to the Home. Thus, for some, Sailors’ Homes were not a resort for sailors seeking respectability. For sailors such as George Clarkson, being able to stay with friends or family, or when married with a wife, meant a sailor had become “respectable,” and this was not so if a single sailor stayed in a Home.880 Thus, for sailors like Clarkson, the image of being a breadwinner, a husband and a father was evidence of a sailor having become ‘respectable.’ However, in cases like Clarkson’s, this had little to do with sailors’ role in naval service as defenders of nation and empire as this is not mentioned as being a factor in determining whether a ‘respectable’ sailor used the Home or not. Whilst some within the sailortown community saw the Home’s presence as damaging, the RSH board unsurprisingly did not. Not only did they offer sailors a choice in terms of opting to look after their own interests in using the Home and its facilities, the RSH also had an added benefit. As Johnston noted, the public houses surrounding the Home also improved their lodgings and provisions for sailors, done simply “in order to take the men from the Home.”881 Thus, whilst this was done in reaction to the RSH, the board used this to their advantage. They claimed they directly contributed to improving the morality of Portsmouth, particularly as the trades of prostitution and drink in the area were tempered by the Home’s presence, and other premises thus improved their conditions.882

As an article in the Hampshire Telegraph declared in October 1868 there was,
with the opening of the RSH, a
great moral change to which our streets bear witness in the conduct
of men-of-war’s men. Not many years ago barefooted, unkempt and
untidy seamen in various stages of intoxication were common
enough specimens of naval morality at all hours of the day and
night.\textsuperscript{883}

As Reverend J. Knapp (also a Director of the RSH) pointed out, the Home was
“one of those places which were helping the sailors morally, physically and
spiritually.”\textsuperscript{884} As such, the Home was of great benefit in reducing disorderly
conduct in the streets. Moreover, as the RSH sold alcohol they were able to
demonstrate to civic authorities that removing drink from a sailor was not the
way to deal with their tendency to drunkenness. Moderation was better than
cure when it came to sailors. Indeed, unlike local drinking establishments, it was
claimed that “not a single case of drunkenness had taken place” in the Home
which regulated and controlled the flow of alcohol to sailors.\textsuperscript{885} Indeed, church
leaders on the RSH board publically declared the Home’s regulation and control
of alcohol actually promoted temperance among sailors, as they were not
tempted to drink in the manner that they were in lowly beerhouses.\textsuperscript{886} In fact,
the RSH board claimed to have done something better than regulate, control
and promote temperance by selling alcohol. By keeping sailors within the
confines of the Home, they had saved “hundreds from the dangers and
pollutions of the companionships only too intimately connected with many of the
low beer shops of the locality” since, as Hall declared, sailors would rather sleep
on the floor of the home than “go to their former haunts.”\textsuperscript{887} Indeed, it was
claimed sailors no longer slept in brothels due to the fear of being caught
because police supervision of brothels was higher. Thus, they resorted to the

\textsuperscript{883} “Moral Improvement in the Navy,” \textit{HTSC}, 17\textsuperscript{th} October 1868
\textsuperscript{884} “Presentation to the Rev J. Knapp,” \textit{HTSC}, 23\textsuperscript{rd} March 1881.
\textsuperscript{885} “The Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 13\textsuperscript{th} November 1867; “Portsmouth Royal
Sailors Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1871; “Local and District News,” \textit{HTSC}, 25\textsuperscript{th} September
1872; “A Seamen’s Opinion of the Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 28\textsuperscript{th} November 1868. See also,
“Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 19\textsuperscript{th} February 1887; “Local and District News,”
\textit{HTSC}, 25\textsuperscript{th} September 1872.
\textsuperscript{886} “Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 15\textsuperscript{th} February 1890; “Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 28\textsuperscript{th}
August 1897; “Naval News and Notes,” \textit{HTSC}, 15\textsuperscript{th} February 1896.
\textsuperscript{887} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1876; Hall, \textit{Sailors’ Homes}, 14.
See also, “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{TEN}, 25\textsuperscript{th} November 1881.
RSH instead, particularly after the Home increased the number of beds available in response to the rising number of sailors recruited as national and imperial imperatives took hold across the mid-to-late nineteenth century.888

Thus, the Home’s presence was enough for civic authorities and Naval Medical Officers to declare to The Royal Commission upon The Administration and Operation of The Contagious Diseases Acts that the sailor’s lot in Portsmouth was much improved, as “they avail themselves very largely” of the RSH and no longer resorted to brothels.889 The RSH board frequently pointed out at local council meetings that it was ‘doing its bit’ in reforming Portsmouth and thus civic authorities should be doing theirs.890 Not only was the Home a ‘beacon of light’ paving the way for reforming sailortown, sailors residing at the Home were deployed by the management as exemplars of respectability and instillers of civilizing influences on the streets. For example, when a soldier, in a “helpless state of drunkenness,” was found in Hanover Street, Johnston, as the RSH Manager, deployed six uniformed sailors from the Home to collect the soldier and bring him to the RSH to sober up, even though the “institution was only intended for seamen and marines.”891 By deploying sailors from the Home in this way, Johnston was able to create a visible spectacle for local residents that ensured sailors were, in comparison to soldiers, more civilized and respectable. Johnston and his sailors were not only upholding law and order on the streets; they projected a sense of public duty and respectability contrary to that displayed by members of the Army. Therefore, the RSH board were able to claim they not only ‘policed’ the behaviour of sailors by removing them from the street and regulated the flow of alcohol to them in the Home, the Home and its

888 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” TEN, 25th November 1881; Captain Thomas Stuart, Extract from A Nautical Essay on Sailors’ Homes and The Crimpage System, (London: Cawthorn and Hutt, 1866), 25-26; William White, History, Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Hampshire, (Hampshire: William White, 1878), 398; “Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 15th February 1890; “Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 28th August 1897. Indeed, the increase in the number of beds available at the Home enabled more sailors to avoid their ‘former haunts’ as it started with only thirty beds in 1851. Yet the Home’s capacity rose quickly to 275 by 1875 and to over 300 by the 1890s which meant more and more sailors could opt to stay in the Home rather than elsewhere.


891 “Correspondence,” HTSC, 11th December 1867.
sailors also ‘policed others,’ as they performed a “most effective police duty” which cost local taxpayers nothing.\footnote{892} However, whilst the RSH board’s relationship with the sailortown community and civic authorities was one based on confrontation and competition, the relationship with sailors was one of compromise.

Charting the numbers of sailor who used the Home shows, on a numerical basis, sailors in Portsmouth did largely avail themselves of the RSH, as the weekly returns for the Home shown in \textit{Figure 44} indicate. Similarly, as the nineteenth century progressed, use of the Home increased, with thousands of sailors passing through it, despite competition from the Sailors’ Welcome opening in 1879 and Agnes Weston’s Royal Sailors’ Rest opening in 1881, as \textit{Figure 45} indicates.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Weekly Numbers Entering The Royal Sailors' Home}
\end{figure}

\textit{Figure 44} - Chart showing the weekly returns for The Royal Sailors’ Home as reported in the \textit{Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle} and \textit{The Evening News}, 1851 – 1903.

\footnote{892} “The Sailors’ Home Meeting,” \textit{HTSC}, 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1871.
However, there were peaks and troughs in the numbers entering the Home, reflective of the movement of naval personnel in and out of Portsmouth. The increase into the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also reflects the rise in recruitment levels of naval men and times of Naval and Fleet Reviews, meaning the Home had large numbers of British and foreign naval sailors passing through its doors. Similarly, the Home recorded the lowest level of use in the period after The Crimean War, thus representative of there being no substantial fluctuation in the sailor population, until the drive in naval recruitment from the late 1870s and gathering momentum during the Anglo-German arms race. Likewise, the highest peaks in entrance numbers occur at times of Fleet Reviews, for example, in 1897 for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, or at the times when foreign-naval fleets visited Portsmouth. Furthermore, the increase in the number of sailors passing through the Home occurs at the time when sailortown was numerically at its height from 1891, as demonstrated in Chapter 2. Indeed, the official figures record that the average stay for a sailor at the RSH was seven days. This thus indicates sailors on short-term shore leave and those without kinship ties within the port primarily used it. Whilst this

represents a more itinerant nature in sailors’ movements around Portsmouth, the census records reveal that the majority of sailors using the Home were from locations near-by in Hampshire, particularly Portsmouth itself, Alverstoke and Southampton, or from Sussex, Kent and London. This is not only reflective of the naval recruitment patterns and catchment areas in place across the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but also the localised nature of sailors and sailortown more widely, as explored in Chapter 2.\footnote{As shown in the number of sailors recorded as originating from these areas in the Home’s census returns, “Royal Sailors’ Homes, Census Enumerators’ Notebooks, Portsea Town,” (1861 – 1901); “Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition,” PP, 334; Brian Lavery, Able Seamen: The Lower Deck of the Royal Navy, 1850 – 1939, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2011), 131 - 132.} However, with more young and single sailors residing in the Home, it did serve to concentrate sailors into Portsmouth, thus providing a stronger spatial identity for them.\footnote{See Chapter 2 for further discussion of this and for information relating to age and marital statuses of sailors.} Therefore, in this respect, the RSH exacerbated the very behaviours in sailortown that they were attempting to quell. Indeed, this did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. Despite the government recommending there should be a least two homes in naval ports, Alderman William Pink thought one, along with access to the Soldiers’ Institute in the High Street, Portsmouth Town, was sufficient in Portsmouth, should they overflow the borough.\footnote{“Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance,” 271, Nineteenth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers Online, (1877), 105 – 106.} However, that the weekly return numbers shown in Figure 44 were high, this attested to the claims made by the RSH board that this was evidence of sailors actively making a choice to elevate their social and moral condition ashore, as they did not wish “to be left in [a] degraded state” as their predecessors were.\footnote{“Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” Derby Mercury, 19th December 1855; “Portsmouth Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 24th April 1852.}

This active choice was also evident in the way civic authorities bemoaned those who did not choose to enter the Homes and look after his own interest. Civic leaders were keen to highlight this had consequences. For sailors such as Able Seaman Dennis Grogan, who were robbed on the streets, local magistrates were keen to stress that by not using the Home they were being irresponsible and not looking out for their wellbeing. As a local magistrate told Grogan, “you
neglected to do so, and in doing so you neglected your own interest.” The consequences for not using the Home could be worse. Indeed, when Able Seaman David Robinson was killed during a fight in the Wonder Beerhouse, Portsea, in 1852, one local magistrate lamented it was with regret that our sailors do not all avail themselves of the blessings and benefits the sailors’ home presents; had the unfortunate deceased done so, he would in all probability have been in life and health at this moment.

However, for sailors who did use the Home, the RSH management publically credited sailors for working alongside them in improving their condition ashore, and in turn, their public image in Portsmouth. As Hall surmised, a sailor entering a man-of-war sober and with money in his pocket was “a compliment to the naval service, to the men, and to the institution.” Moreover, the RSH’s management insisted that they had to do little to govern the behaviour of sailors inside the Home as the orderly conduct found there was due to sailors’ self-managing their behaviour. Furthermore, that the Home’s largest group of supporters and donors were sailors was a great source of pride for the RSH management as it meant the Home was directly supported by “contributions from the men themselves.” As one Master-at-Arms told the RSH board in a letter written to them, “he did not know a seaman who would not do his best to contribute to the success of the home. They were proud of it… [and] were glad that there was such a place.” Indeed, sailors like Boatswain’s Mate Joseph Martin, were keen to tell the RSH board that sailors “were better educated than any other class of working men” and had the ability to make educated, rational, sensible decisions in regards to their welfare whilst ashore in Portsmouth.

The RSH board took such comments, and the fact sailors willingly funded the

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899 “Portsmouth Police,” HTSC, 16th January 1864.
901 Hall, Sailors’ Homes, 15.
902 “Portsea Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 27th February 1897.
904 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14th November 1863.
905 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 15th November 1873.
to being treated as objects of charity…[they] consider themselves insulted by the efforts of well-meaning but injudicious persons to coddle them at the expense of charitably disposed civilians, while they are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves and paying for all they require.  

Indeed, the board declared that the “British bluejacket did not like the hat passed around on his behalf as though he were an object of charity.” Therefore, the RSH board achieved something valuable here. By crediting sailors with choosing to and being able to lift themselves into a more socially and morally elevated position, the RSH management were able to adopt an approach of compromise rather than confrontation. However, this did not always mean sailors chose to reciprocate the gestures of compromise, especially when they were afforded the chance to influence the running of the RSH. This is none more evident than the management crisis the Home experienced in the late 1870s until the early 1880s, with sailors challenging the running of Home and those in charge of it. Across the 1870s, the number of complaints from sailors about the RSH increased. The Home’s board and management came under attack for the order and disciplinarian style the Home was running. A growing number of sailors seemingly did not want the RSH simply to replicate life aboard for them. Whilst the RSH board prided itself on running the Home akin to the structures found on board ship, a number of sailors criticized the Home’s management for running it too “ship-like.” To stave off such criticisms and running the risk of the Home’s largest funding base – the sailors’ themselves being alienated, the RSH board gave sailors a greater say in the running of the Home. In contrast to the later Homes in Portsmouth, the RSH’s management invited a collective of Petty Officers to join the board from 1879. The board chose Petty Officers as their rank between junior ratings and commissioned officers was seen to be of benefit when gathering information about the Home.

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908 “Meeting of Non Commissioned Officers and Men of the Royal Navy,” HTSC, 28th October 1871.
from sailors in port. They were viewed as distinguished enough from junior ratings to advise the board, yet close enough to them in their working lives and socio-cultural origins to be able to understand their needs and speak on their behalf.\textsuperscript{910} This collective of Petty Officers were nominated by ballots undertaken on ships in port to act as the representatives of the sailors using the Home.\textsuperscript{911} Consequently, the sailors’ representatives were invited to provide a report to the board as to how the RSH could be improved based on sailors’ comments and views of the Home they gathered.\textsuperscript{912}

The Petty Officers acting on behalf of sailors on ships in port seized their opportunity to challenge the board, mainly composed of ex-naval officers, and influence the running of RSH by what they declared to be “our ways and means.”\textsuperscript{913} Thus, the report submitted by the Petty Officers made uncomfortable reading for the RSH board. One of biggest criticisms the board received was their decision to open the refreshment room housing the bar in a room preceding the dining room. Thus, sailors could not get to the dining room to eat without the temptation of alcohol being right in their path, meaning those who chose not to consume alcohol were not afforded the grace of being able to avoid the area where alcohol was sold and consumed.\textsuperscript{914} Moreover, the food provided was “far from being palatable” and serving times were restricted. As the report declared, this was not acceptable. Not only did sailors require a higher standard of substance, the restrictions on serving times were not agreeable - after all, the sailor had the right to be fed at any time.\textsuperscript{915} Similarly, after ‘unpalatable’ food, a sailor was faced with uncomfortable and poor surroundings, with “hard beds” and poor bedding quality and worse, they were not always clean.\textsuperscript{916} Thus, far from attending to sailors’ physical needs, the RSH

\textsuperscript{910} “Local Topics,” HTSC, 27\textsuperscript{th} February 1897. See also, “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” TEN, 17\textsuperscript{th} February 1885. This is also identified by naval historians as being the case, for the Petty Officers’ position in relation to senior officers and junior ratings, in the naval service more widely, Barry Gough, \textit{Pax Britannica: Ruling the Waves and Keeping the Peace before Armageddon}, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 28.

\textsuperscript{911} “Local Topics,” HTSC, 27\textsuperscript{th} February 1897. See also, “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” TEN, 17\textsuperscript{th} February 1885.

\textsuperscript{912} “Correspondence,” TEN, 21\textsuperscript{st} January 1880.

\textsuperscript{913} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.

\textsuperscript{914} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.

\textsuperscript{915} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.

\textsuperscript{916} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.
was falling short of the standard sailors expected as educated, working men. There was worse to come. The Petty Officers reported that a majority of sailors found the rules of the RSH at odds with their remit of ‘saving’ sailors from the streets. The Home often left sailors with no choice but to remain on the streets, as the RSH chose to shut the entrance doors to the Home at 11pm to prevent drunken and disorderly sailors from entering the Home.917 Thus, if a sailor was a little worse for the drink he had no place to go except to the ‘dens and dives’ where he could find shelter and rest. Moreover, the curfew also meant sober sailors were neglected. As the report detailed, for example, if a sailor arrived late due to travel problems, they were not allowed in despite having paid for a bed, and were thus left “to walk the streets all night in a town which boasts of a Sailors’ Home.”918 The report declared the RSH was therefore little more than an apology for a Home……at eleven o’clock its doors were shut…and then all the sailors in the streets had to stay there, or go to a beerhouse or somewhere worse.919

Furthermore, the report stated that sailors objected to the iron palisades erected around the RSH. The report asserted that this gave the Home a prison-like feel and the impression that sailors were under some form of incarceration.920 It also made the RSH cold and uninviting to sailors and visitors alike since it did not allow for much natural light to be let in.921 The Home was also no place for sailors to bring their wives, mothers and sisters. Not only did it have the feel of a prison, as sailors were allowed to drink and smoke in the day-room, it meant the use of foul language was prominent and no staff member controlled this.922 Indeed, it was to the staff the report saved its biggest criticisms for. This collective of Petty Officers stated that sailors felt betrayed at the fact that, without consultation, their monies were now being handled by the RSH directors, as James Thorne (by now the RSH Manager having replaced Johnston), heralded as the “sailors’ friend,” chose to hand over sailors’ monies

918 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14th January 1880.
919 “Is Portsmouth Very Wicked?” HTSC, 29th September 1894.
920 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14th January 1880.
921 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14th January 1880.
922 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 14th January 1880.
to the RSH directors to manage and bank rather than do it himself.\textsuperscript{923} There was more. The Home’s staff did not acknowledge the now more elevated social position of sailors. They were disrespectful to the fact that sailors paid for the service and privilege of using the RSH. Thus, it was alleged in the report that the Home’s stewards were not “obliging and respectful as it should be in paid servants.”\textsuperscript{924} Indeed, servants and stewards in the RSH should be in uniform to denote their servant-status within the Home and thus towards sailors paying to use the RSH.\textsuperscript{925}

As soon as news of these complaints hit the local press, this collective of officers were accused of “grossly exaggerating” their claims and for being “trivial.”\textsuperscript{926} Other sailors, particularly those within more junior positions, were keen to point out through letters to the RSH board and local press that they were grateful for the work of the Home and that the group of Petty Officers were not representative of them or their thoughts. It was simply “composed of those who grumbled about the Home,” abusing the goodwill of the Home and its staff.\textsuperscript{927} Thus the report, whilst presenting a poor view of the Home, is also revealing as it highlights the tension between the Petty Officers’ and more junior ratings’ views of the Home in regards to the ways in which their occupational and social position should be seen and elevated whilst ashore and within the Home. What this management crisis also reveals is that whilst sailors may have used the RSH, it did not necessarily mean they saw it as a ‘beacon of light’ ashore. Moreover, although the Home’s management continued to allow Petty Offices to sit on its board, this was in reality never more than in an advisory capacity and the RSH management were not fazed by the comments. For them, whatever the criticisms, the Home was successful as “it is what it pretends to be – a Sailors’ Home,” with no interference or preaching taking place.\textsuperscript{928} The RSH management left the interference and preaching to others, particularly since they observed sailors hardly used the Chapel opened in the Home from the

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\item \textsuperscript{923} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880. For comments about Thorne, see, “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1876.
\item \textsuperscript{924} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.
\item \textsuperscript{925} “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” \textit{HTSC}, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.
\item \textsuperscript{926} “The Sailors’ Home,” \textit{TEN}, 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.
\item \textsuperscript{927} “Correspondence,” \textit{TEN}, 17\textsuperscript{th} January 1880; “Letters to the Editor,” \textit{TEN}, 16\textsuperscript{th} January 1880.
\item \textsuperscript{928} “Digest of the Week,” \textit{HTSC}, 25\textsuperscript{th} February 1899.
\end{enumerate}
early 1860s, and thus took this as evidence that did not want to be preached to. After all, saving sailors souls ashore, as Reverend Knapp observed, was a difficult task as “the sailor was a very peculiar person and one characteristic of him was that (like some other people) he seemed to have a chronic dislike for parson.” Those who wanted to “crab the show” of the RSH were welcome to try to do by the Home’s board, as other Homes, it declared, were not wanted or needed and would not be used. Thus, whatever rival homes did, the RSH management “have the satisfaction of knowing they were the first” and ‘preachers’ had not been to sea, thus they had little comprehension of the sailor’s life aboard or ashore.

**For the Glory of God: The Sailors’ Welcome and The Royal Sailors’ Rest**

One of the first to take up the cause of ‘interfering and preaching’ in Portsmouth was Sarah Robinson, widely known for her work among soldiers in the Army. Robinson, a devout Presbyterian, lived in Guildford, a few miles from the military barracks and garrison town of Aldershot. Here, she found men of the British Army in need of social and moral reform and Christian influences. Her mission soon became one of saving the souls of soldiers and spreading the temperance message to men of the service, on par with her naval counterpart Agnes Weston. Her work with soldiers soon drew her to Portsmouth and she despaired at the social and moral conditions of service personnel she found there. By the mid-1860s, Robinson had found a natural home in the soldier-dominated area of Portsmouth Town, with a number of barracks located there and a large solider population to be saved from sin and informed of the temperance message. As she declared, with all the drinking establishments in

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929 “Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 17th November 1860; “Local Intelligence,” HTSC, 1st February 1862.
930 “Missions to Seamen,” HTSC, 4th July 1868.
931 Goodenough, The Handy Man Afloat and Ashore, 181.
932 “Portsmouth Sailors’ Home,” TEN, 23rd November 1881.
Portsmouth, surely a handful of temperate houses “are not too many!”\textsuperscript{936} Thus, Portsmouth was to be the designated Home for her work in saving soldiers, opening her Soldiers’ Institute on 10\textsuperscript{th} September 1874. Whilst the Institute was primarily utilised by soldiers, sailors and marines were welcome there and chose to avail themselves of the Institute.\textsuperscript{937} Robinson, like the RSH and Royal Sailors’ Rest to come, selected a main thoroughfare street for her Institute. Her choice of location in the High Street sat behind the Colewort Barracks, before the entrance down to The Point at the junction where the High Street merged into Broad Street, designed to ‘catch’ service men before they descended down to The Point. Moreover, the location of the Institute sent a clear message to those around. She bought and renovated a public house in the form of the once infamous \textit{Fountain Hotel} to house her Institute.\textsuperscript{938} The Institute stood in stark contrast to the buildings surrounding it, and her message, much like the high-standing flagpole of the RSH, was displayed across the rooftops for all to see, as shown in \textit{Image 14}. Much like the communal response to the RSH, Robinson was accused of injuring the trade of sailortown by opening her Institute. Thus, she was verbally abused, pelted with mud on the streets and bricks were thrown through the Institute’s windows. Robinson responded by extending the Institute, buying up two public houses in the process and soon turned her attention to sailors in Portsmouth.\textsuperscript{939} With the Institute located over a mile from The Dockyard, sailors were beset with temptation on route to the Institute, thus in many never made it through the task of ‘running the gauntlet.’


\textsuperscript{937} Hopkins, “Our Soldiers and Sailors at Home,” 170 – 178. Robinson opened a sailor’s boy room there in 1879. By the 1880s, the Soldiers’ Institute was more a Sailors’ Home than a soldiers’ one with more sailors than soldiers using the Institute, “Portsmouth Soldiers’ Institute,” \textit{TEN}, 8\textsuperscript{th} September 1886; “Portsmouth,” \textit{HTSC}, 15\textsuperscript{th} September 1880.

\textsuperscript{938} Sadden, \textit{The Portsmouth Book}, page June 19\textsuperscript{th}. Robinson opened the Home in conjunction with Ellice Hopkins, a social campaigner and reformer for moral purity. For further reading on Hopkins, Rose Barrett, \textit{Ellice Hopkins: A Memoir}, (Darton: Wells Gardner, 1907); Sue Morgan, \textit{A Passion for Purity: Ellice Hopkins and The Politics of Gender in the Late Victorian Church}, (Bristol: Centre for Comparative Studies in Religion and Gender, University of Bristol, 1999).

\textsuperscript{939} “Portsmouth Urban Sanitary Authority: The Attack upon Portsmouth by Miss Robinson,” \textit{HTSC}, 31\textsuperscript{st} October 1877.
In response to this, and calls from temperate sailors to have somewhere nearer to the Dockyard, Robinson looked to set up a refuge for sailors.\textsuperscript{940} In particular, Robinson was concerned for the welfare of sailor boys from the training ships based in port who she viewed as being too vulnerable to be placed in the RSH where alcohol was sold.\textsuperscript{941} Indeed, Robinson was entirely dismissive of the RSH. Upon opening the premises for sailors just off The Hard at her own expense, she declared she did so as no one else in Portsmouth took up the cause of the sailor’s welfare. Moreover, the location of her premises was chosen to directly challenge the RSH. Her dismissal of the RSH was seen by civic authorities and the RSH board to be simply because a Sailors’ Home selling alcohol in a controlled fashion was not part of her ‘teetotalism vision’ for Portsmouth.\textsuperscript{942} However, in a small property off The Hard, Robinson’s efforts were limited and hundreds of sailors, she claimed were turned away each night.\textsuperscript{943} It was not until an opportunity presented itself with the selling of a warehouse in Queen Street that Robinson could expand her home for sailors. Opening just doors away from the RSH, as Figure 46 shows, Robinson set up the Sailors’ Welcome in 1879 as a temperance Home for sailors in the centre of

\textsuperscript{941} “Letter to the Editors,” TEN, 26\textsuperscript{th} April 1890.
\textsuperscript{942} “Portsmouth Urban Sanitary Authority: The Attack upon Portsmouth by Miss Robinson,” HTSC, 31\textsuperscript{st} October 1877.
\textsuperscript{943} Hopkins, “Our Soldiers and Sailors at Home,” 175; “The Sailors’ Welcome, Portsea,” 346.
the sailorhood situated behind The Hard. The Welcome provided clean beds, hot meals and money deposit facilities for sailors whilst in port, based on the burgeoning Coffee Tavern Movement style prevalent from the 1870s.944

![Figure 46 – Map of Portsea showing the position of the Sailors' Welcome in relation to the RSH](image)

In direct contrast to, and in competition with the RSH, The Welcome was run as coffeehouse tavern affording temperate sailors a place to go, alongside bible classes and religious instruction.945 As her home was a temperate one, sailors who signed temperance pledges did so of their own accord, not hers. This was proof to Robinson that, unlike the RSH or the RSR to come, she did not have to "tout" for the business of sailors; they came voluntarily to her establishment. Although, the numbers passing through The Welcome were not high, as Figure 45 shows.946 In opening The Welcome in Portsea, not only did Robinson irritate the RSH board, she managed to anger many within the sailortown community too. Now a Home was also targeting the trade of coffeehouse tavern owners and a number of local prostitutes saw Robinson as interfering with their trade, reportedly "snarling and cursing" at her and accusing her of "taking the bread

944 See, “Proposed Coffee Taverns for Portsmouth,” HTSC, 29th August 1877; “Opening of the First Coffee Tavern,” TEN, 21st November 1878
945 Hopkins, “Our Soldiers and Sailors at Home,” 175.
out of other people’s mouths.” However, as with the Institute, Robinson responded by buying the infamous public house, the Sir John Falstaff, in Nobbs Lane, Portsmouth Town, establishing her Blue Ribbon Coffee Tavern in its place, with an associated Blue Ribbon Temperance Mission based there. Indeed, although both the RSH’s and The Welcome’s presence angered those within the sailortown community, their relationship with civic authorities was very different. Whilst the RSH board were keen to portray themselves as part of the civic and civilizing influences to be found on the streets, Robinson chose to directly confront civic authorities. Indeed, Robinson was accused by civic authorities of “libelling” the town of Portsmouth at a speech in Salisbury in October 1877. What angered civic authorities was that she chose to portray Portsmouth in a light that was unfavourable to the services, and civic authorities saw this as tantamount to libel. As such, her speech was deliberately provocative in drawing attention to the plight of service personnel whom she witnessed in Portsmouth. As she spoke of the depravity in Portsmouth, she declared it to be, “sometimes like a veritable hell upon earth” and a danger to soldiers and sailors, which was incomparable to those that they may encounter abroad, with thousands waiting to rob and prey upon the soldier and sailors. The outcry from civic authorities did not prevent Robinson ‘libelling’ the town again. At a talk in Guildford in 1889, she reiterated that Portsmouth was a place close to being “swallowed up by fire and brimstone.” Once again, civic authorities were in uproar and the RSH board seized the opportunity to show the people of Portsmouth that they knew better than most not to speak of the sailor’s situation in such a way, or to imply that the town of Portsmouth “was only just kept from being swallowed up by fire and brimstone.”

Following in the wake of Robinson’s missionary work among the services in

947 Sadden, The Portsmouth Book, page June 19th. A wider communal dislike to Robinson’s interference is also evident in reports of a ceremonial burning of an effigy of her on Southsea Common.
948 “Portsmouth,” HTSC, 12th September 1885; “Blue Ribbon Temperance Mission at Portsmouth,” HTSC, 2nd November 1881.
949 “Portsmouth Town Council,” HTSC, 28th November 1877; “Libelling a Town,” The Times, 3rd November 1877.
950 “Letters to the Editor,” HTSC, 31st October 1877.
951 “Our Sailors Ashore,” HTSC, 23rd February 1889
952 “Our Sailors Ashore,” HTSC, 23rd February 1889

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Portsmouth, Agnes Weston, heralded as the “mother of the Navy” was the next to take up the cause for sailors' welfare ashore in Portsmouth.\textsuperscript{953} Weston, as a Christian missionary and temperance advocate working for \textit{The National Temperance League}, was a frequent visitor to Robinson and her establishments in Portsmouth, having established a Sailors’ Rest in Devonport in the naval port of Plymouth in 1876.\textsuperscript{954} Weston’s involvement with the Royal Navy went further, having helped to establish the Royal Naval Temperance Society and the Royal Naval Christian Union, and working to open temperance branches on board naval ships run by sailors.\textsuperscript{955} Unlike the management of the RSH, Weston was concerned with the sailor’s life both afloat and ashore, and was propelled by an imperial, missionary zeal driven to improve the sailors’ lot in a wider sense than the RSH.\textsuperscript{956} Her time in Portsmouth led Weston to believe that “God opened the door at Portsmouth,” and being a “very large place,” it needed another home for sailors, as the existing ones were not sufficient in catering for sailors’ needs.\textsuperscript{957} Much like Robinson, Weston was dismissive of the RSH as it was not a temperate home and did little to ‘save’ sailor boys from the evils of drink.\textsuperscript{958} Weston, like her Social Purity Society counterpart, Reverend Dolling, was also keen to preach temperance to naval boys without the influence of home or religious guidance ashore, in the hope they would not be given to the temptation of drink when men. Weston’s Sailors’ Rest opened in 1881 in Portsmouth, later becoming the Royal Sailors’ Rest in 1893, modelled

\textsuperscript{954} They often hosted temperance events together in Portsmouth, “Local and District News,” \textit{HTSC}, 27\textsuperscript{th} October 1875.  
\textsuperscript{955} Out of the two hundred and twenty naval ships in the 1870s, one hundred and fifty had temperance branches on board which Weston directly helped to establish, “Naval & Military News,” \textit{HTSC}, 17\textsuperscript{th} November 1875. Interestingly Weston was not always a teetotaller. Her conversion came at a temperance pledge meeting when a “confirmed drunkard” asked her whether she was a teetotaller. Weston replied that she “occasionally took a glass of wine,” thereupon the man laid down the pen and walked away. To avoid another such occurrence, Weston signed the pledge that evening, “The Sailors’ Mother,” \textit{The London Journal}, vol. 29, no. 758, (1889), 567.  
\textsuperscript{956} “Local and District News,” \textit{HTSC}, 24\textsuperscript{th} December 1880. Alongside the Rests, Weston established the monthly magazine \textit{Ashore and Afloat} that contained a letter from “the Mother of the Navy to her sons,” which by 1902, had a circulation of 1, 266, 505 to “all ends of the world.” Constance Maud, “Dame Agnes Weston,” \textit{The Review of Reviews}, vol. 58, no. 348, (1918), 355; Agnes Weston, \textit{My Life among the Blue Jackets}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition, (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1909), 78 – 80. For circulation figures, see, “Miss Weston’s Naval Work,” \textit{TEN}, 7\textsuperscript{th} May 1902.  
\textsuperscript{957} “Temperance in the Royal Navy,” \textit{HTSC}, 26\textsuperscript{th} February 1887; Weston, \textit{My Life}, 85 – 87; Dolling, \textit{Ten Years}, 99 – 104. For views on The Welcome, see, “Local and District News,” \textit{HTSC}, 24\textsuperscript{th} December 1880.  
\textsuperscript{958} Goodenough, \textit{The Handy Man Ashore and Afloat}, 48.
on her Rest at Devonport. Her Rests were a “concept of original Christian outreach” measured with temperate words and notions of social purity, particularly when it came to sailors in an imperialistic age.\footnote{959} However, the RSR was not opened in the heart of Portsmouth’s sailortown as The Welcome or the RSH had been. The RSR had its foundations in a former music hall in the main thoroughfare street of Commercial Road, Landport. Similar to Robinson’s choice of location for The Welcome and the RSH board’s one, this location was not without reason. In buying a former music hall, a place used as entertainment for sailors and a scene of drunkenness and ‘loose’ morals, Weston, in conjunction with founder Sophia Wintz, was sending a clear message that this place was now to be used for the provision of temperate sailor care and welfare, as depicted in Image 15, not sailors’ entertainment whilst ashore.\footnote{960}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Image_15}
\caption{Image 15 - “The Sailors’ Rest at Portsmouth,” from, \textit{Illustrated London News}, 6\textsuperscript{th} September 1890.}
\end{figure}

\footnotetext{959}{\textit{Naval Notes and News,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} June 1893; “A Real Temperance Movement,” HTSC, 24\textsuperscript{th} September 1892; “The Royal Naval Temperance Society,” HTSC, 23\textsuperscript{rd} November 1872; Agnes E. Weston, “My Life Work,” \textit{Quiver}, (1898), 205.}

\footnotetext{960}{Weston, \textit{My Life}, 122 and 126.}
By Weston choosing Commercial Road, The RSH’s management saw Weston as little threat to their Home as, unlike Robinson’s Welcome, she did not “pitch her tent” so near to the RSH. The RSH management also deemed it right that Weston had named her home the Sailors Rest. Unlike the RSH, which was “exclusively an institution for sailors,” Weston allowed local residents to enter. Indeed, the RSH management suggested that ‘Rest’ was appropriate, as “it certainly was a place where a sailor could rest, as he could rest on a public seat, with the same right as other people.” Moreover, Weston’s decision to place her Rest in Commercial Road was also a signal of Portsmouth’s shifting sailortown district. Weston observed this was where a large number of sailors migrated to and it was “the most crowded thoroughfare in the south of England….a very Regent Street for the naval world.” As sailortown was encroaching further into the city of Portsmouth, Weston saw the opportunity to open a ‘beacon of light’ there, designed to ‘catch’ sailors passing out of Portsea through Queen Street, along Edinburgh Road to Commercial Road, as Figure 47 shows. Furthermore, like the RSH and The Welcome, Weston bought a near-by public house to further extend the Rest back from Commercial Road into Chandos Street in 1898, as a clear signal of her reforming intentions towards sailors and Portsmouth as a whole.

![Figure 47 – Map of Portsmouth showing the location of the Royal Sailors’ Rest.](image)

962 “Portsmouth Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 18th February 1888.
963 “Portsmouth Sailors’ Home,” HTSC, 18th February 1888.
964 Weston, My Life, 122.
965 Weston, My Life, 122 and 126.
Weston and Wintz believed sustaining sailors' bonds to the country was part of giving them self-respect, and it was by giving them a mothering, nurturing environment in a home ashore that this could be achieved. Thus, set in the context of Christian outreach principles and temperance frameworks, the RSR, like The Welcome, was based on the style of a coffee tavern, to act as a gauze and "counter attraction" to the flow of alcohol in Portsmouth, especially for sailors.\footnote{966} Moreover, for Weston, the very health of the Navy, and by extension nation and empire, depended upon the health, both physically and spiritually, of sailors. Therefore, the RSR, in contrast to the RSH, not only catered for sailors' physical needs, but also focussed on providing recreational activity befitting of Christian sailors.\footnote{967} The RSR offered recreational entertainment in the form of plays and music, with sporting events such as cricket and boxing, all underpinned by missionary work and a "temperance word."\footnote{968} As an advocate of temperance, Weston saw a cause and effect between sailors and drink, a relationship that she believed had to, and could only be cut by, sailors abstaining from drink. As she declared, a sailor ashore becomes "his own master…..he makes tracks for the nearest public house, and drinks until he has lost control of his reason. Then crime follows."\footnote{969} This was compounded by the spotlight on contagious diseases since, for Weston, drink was directly related to a sailor acquiring an infection, as they were often "half drunk when they go with women" and thus would "never stop to inquire whether a woman is infected or not."\footnote{970} For Weston, drink \textit{per se} was not the problem; it was drunkenness because it "transformed the admirable character of the British bluejacket into a degenerate state."\footnote{971} A state, she believed, the local drinking trades promoted,
worsening the lives of sailors ashore and damaging the image of Portsmouth as the flagship home of the Royal Navy. Thus, Weston attempted to sever the interdependent lives and culture of sailors to those in the sailortown community.972

Thus, like the RSH board members and Robinson before her, Weston confronted the sailortown community, representing a direct challenge to their trade and businesses. Weston fiercely objected to public houses in Portsmouth being so near the home of the Royal Navy and HM Dockyard. Weston thus became a vocal agitator at licensing meetings and within the Social Purity Society (alongside Reverend Robert Dolling) in closing a number of public houses in in Portsmouth, as explored in Chapter 3. Thus, like the RSH management, Weston was keen to secure places that were public houses and to shut them down. This was not only to prevent sailors using them for the purposes of alcohol consumption, but they also harmed her coffee trade at the RSR which relied on sailors and Portsmouth residents alike, as both were able to access her Rest’s coffee bar.973 Some local publicans saw her zeal in buying up public houses and opening a Rest in such a busy drinking district of Portsmouth as yet another place to take trade away from them. Local publicans proactively set about making sure sailors still went to their premises by standing outside the home and offering free drinks to “entice” sailors away from the Rest and into their establishments.974 Moreover, in keeping with the sailortown cultural practice of mocking outsider interference, one publican declared Weston and Wintz could not be the ‘angels’ they claimed to be, as “ladies coming to live in such a place, and to look after sailors, well, they could be no ladies, that was very certain.”975 As with The Welcome, Weston also angered local coffee tavern owners as her Rest’s tavern damaged their trade, particularly of those who relied on temperate sailors’ custom and income to sustain their businesses.976 Furthermore, since local residents could enter and use the

972 “Licensed Victuallers,” HTSC, 18th February 1899; Weston, My Life, 129.
974 “Licensed Victuallers,” HTSC, 18th February 1899; Weston, My Life, 129.
975 Weston, My Life, 128.
976 Weston, My Life, 128.
coffee taverns, the RSR was taking even more trade away from local traders.  

Thus, it was argued that all Weston achieved was effectively being a “public house without the drink.” However, contemporary accounts reveal Weston was not fazed by such attacks - her vision was bigger. For Weston, her Rest represented a “coffee pot vs. beer jug” duel in Portsmouth, and the coffee pot won in her eyes as sailors came to the RSR time after time. Indeed, as Figure 45 shows, the RSR regularly housed more sailors than the RSH from the late 1890s onwards, primarily due to the fact the RSR had a higher number of beds available. However, this did not prevent Weston from safely declaring that if her Rests “have done nothing else, they demonstrate clearly that the bluejacket…..does not need the attractions of strong drink.”

Moreover, her mission was an imperial one “exerting incalculable influence in our Navy,” and a mission that Weston herself saw as of “national importance” as her work among sailors was “for the glory of God and the good of the service.” Weston also took her imperial, national mission further. Following the fundamentals of Christian outreach work, unlike the RSH, Weston and her Rests also focussed on the care of sailors’ children, wives and families in trying “to make up in some way to the sailor’s wife for what she has to suffer for the nation’s good.” This had the added effect of ensuring the support for the RSR, when compared to the RSH, was more national in its reach. As The Evening News declared, since Weston considered her “self-imposed mission a national one……her taxation is imperial and not in the slightest degree local,” as unlike the RSH, no one in Portsmouth contributed to the opening of the RSR. That her mission to reform sailors was an imperial and national one, influenced by a temperance message, often ensured that in the process of promoting the

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978 Weston, My Life, 103.  
979 Weston, My Life, 326.  
980 “All About Sailors,” HTSC, 22nd November 1890; Maud, “Dame Agnes Weston,” 355; Weston, “My Life Work,” 204.  
981 Quote from, Weston, “My Life Work,” 211. See also, Press, “Philanthropy and the British Shipping Industry, 1815 – 1860,” 116 – 117; Weston, My Life, Chapter 20. For success in this area, see, for example, the aftermath of the Victoria Disaster, were families and wives of sailors praised Weston for the help and support she provided in their time of distress, “Letters to the Editors,” TEN, 18th November 1893.  
982 “Opening of a Sailors’ Rest and People’s Café at Landport,” HTSC, 17th June 1882.
message and the sailor’s cause, she reduced sailors to children, requiring the guidance of a mother-figure to steer them through the shores of Portsmouth.

Like any good mother, Weston declared her objective was “not so much to do the work for the sailors but to get them to do it for themselves.” However, whilst she hailed sailors to be “as brave as a lion,” they were “as simple as a child.” This simple child-likeness spurred her work on as it was “most necessary and valuable,” yet, as Conley observed, it meant she placed sailors in a position of inferiority and not all sailors agreed with her reduction of them to children.

That Weston is best-known as the mother of the Navy leads to a popular assumption that sailors held her in high regard and bought into her Christian and temperate principles. As Weston herself noted, “the boys often call me ‘Mother’ Weston and it makes my heart beat with thankfulness.” Many sailors did look to Weston as a mother. Indeed, one sailor wrote to her at the Rest asking her to introduce and select for him women of suitable attributes so he could settle with a wife and children. As a temperance advocate, it is not surprising that her greatest sailor admirers in Portsmouth came from those who had signed her temperance pledges. Resembling St George slaying a dragon on the pledge card, a sailor abstaining from alcohol was undertaking an equally important cause.

As a bluejacket, defender of nation and empire, abstention from alcohol was also representative of a Christian sailor, as an exemplar of empire and civilized ideals. In essence, Weston attempted to show that bluejackets were not worse sailors for being sober, better men. Temperance not only reduced crime and improved sailors’ health and moral and religious standing, it was something Weston believed, in contrast to those at the RSH, that sailors’ themselves desired. Indeed, according to her calculations at least

983 “Temperance in the Royal Navy,” HTSC, 26th February 1887.
984 “Miss Agnes Weston, The Sailors’ Friend,” Hearth and Home, 18th February, 1897.
985 “Miss Agnes Weston, The Sailors’ Friend,” Hearth and Home, 18th February, 1897.
986 This was particularly so since Dame Agnes Weston G.B.E was widely known as the, “Mother of the Navy as her bluejackets loved to call her,” with “her bluejackets,” interpreting the G.B.E. as “God bless ‘er,” Maud, “Dame Agnes Weston,” 355.
987 Weston, “My Life Work,” 615.
989 See Appendix 12 for image of the Royal Naval Temperance Society Pledge Card.
From those who had signed such pledges, Weston always had a band of bluejackets to testify to her good work as their mother in promoting temperance among naval sailors. Weston often took sailors from her Rests with her to talks and public lectures around Britain, deploying them at local events in Portsmouth to testify to and be demonstrative of her good work, and to show sailors in public as temperate ones. Weston and her RSR thus held a high presence at temperance demonstrations in Portsmouth, hosting talks, participating in fetes, deploying sailors from the Rest to these events to spread the temperance message and to symbolise sailors’ willingness to promote the temperance message.991 The RSR also frequently ran excursions for sailors to other parts of Hampshire and the South coast, often in unison with The Band of Good Hope, widening the number of contemporaries who could see her temperate bluejackets from Portsmouth in action.992 As contemporaries acknowledged, what Weston achieved through this was that it allowed for sailors to be judged on their conduct and actions rather than on how much ‘grog’ he could drink in comparison to others.993 Indeed, a number of sailors actively chose to sign her pledges and were great admirers of Weston, as sailor Edward Pullen declared, “I’d say about ninety per cent of all the Navy admired her a lot….she was a great mouthpiece.”994 Other sailors such as George Clarkson were grateful to Weston for giving those who had signed the pledge somewhere to go.995 As Clarkson stated, “I don’t know how we’d have got on without them as we didn’t have anything else.”996 Not only was the Rest in a convenient location, it was “a

990 Agnes Weston, My Life Among the Blue Jackets, see Chapter 8; “Breakers Ahead,” as advertised in HTSC, 9th January 1897. For Weston’s calculation, “Temperance in The Royal Navy,” HTSC, 26th February 1887.
991 See, for example, “Temperance Demonstration at North End,” HTSC, 19th July 1884; “Naval Notes and News,” HTSC, 6th May 1899; “Naval Notes and News,” HTSC, 16th May 1896.
992 See, for example, “Portsea Island,” HTSC, 10th August 1889; “Local and District News,” HTSC, 10th July 1880
993 “Teetotalism in the Navy and Army,” HTSC, 8th April 1871. See also, “Royal Sailors’ Home Portsea,” HTSC, 15th April 1876.
994 “Oral Interview with Edward Pullen,” Imperial War Museum Sound Collection, 692, (1975), Reel 14
995 “Oral Interview with George Michael Clarkson,” Imperial War Museum Sound Collection, 679, (1975), Reel 34 and start of Reel 35.
996 “Oral Interview with George Michael Clarkson,” Reel 34 and start of Reel 35.
Other sailors were more measured in their views of Weston and Rest. For Albert Masters, a sailor who frequently used the RSR, it was “an asset…but you always got those that ridiculed it….there’s always the opposition.”

Thus, whilst many a naval sailor had become her child, not all did. Moreover, this very mother-child relationship which Weston prided herself on, also caused friction with some naval sailors. Whilst appealing directly to their sense of self-respect and patriotism, she constantly and consistently kept ‘her’ sailors in the position of a child who thus, as Conley noted, “required constant guidance and protection instead of treating them as autonomous individuals.” This, in part, stemmed from her missionary and temperate beliefs and the way she constructed her message. As Conley observed, Weston regularly utilised the stereotypical drunken sailor image to enhance her temperance message to further her cause. A number, particularly sailors of the lower deck, reacted angrily to Weston’s portrayal of them and the image the RSR set up for them. These sailors saw themselves as very different to Weston’s projection. They were well-educated, respectable, military personnel safeguarding the nation and empire and capable of making their own decisions and were not lacking urban sensibilities. As one Royal Naval Gunner’s Mate pointed out, the RSR can yet never be a real home to us, because teetotalism removes from them [sailors] that social comfort and freedom of action which we as intelligent seamen have a right to expect.

Indeed, Captain P.H. Colomb declared, if people like Weston wanted to get hold of the British bluejacket they must remember that he was not different from other people and that the less the fact of his

997 “Oral Interview with George Michael Clarkson,” Reel 34 and start of Reel 35.
998 “Oral Interview with Albert William Masters,” Imperial War Museum Sound Collection, 720, (1975), Reel 16.
999 Conley, From Jack Tar, 82.
1000 Conley, “You Don’t Make a Torpedo Gunner,” 1.
1001 Conley, From Jack Tar, 87 – 90.
1002 “Letters to the Editor,” HTSC, 3rd January 1880.
For rating sailors like George Haigh, not only did they not appreciate the decision-making process being taken away from them whilst ashore, they objected to the interference and preaching found in the RSR from Weston and her staff. As Haigh declared, “I mean why stick it down people’s throats?”

For Haigh, the missionary and temperate ethos of the RSR created an added problem for sailors, as

you was never certain if you was under surveillance...there was always someone who was like what’s he up to, like you was gonna pinch something....there was always that atmosphere like someone was watching you the whole time.

Others too had a problem with the RSR being a home of temperance and the way it dealt with drunken sailors being at odds with caring for sailors’ welfare in Portsmouth. Reginald Ashley, a naval sailor in Portsmouth from 1910, disliked the RSR, as they turned away drunken sailors leaving them with nowhere else to go except wander the streets in an alcohol-induced state. Some, like Haigh, also objected to the RSR using its position as a Sailors’ Home to take advantage of sailors. Haigh recalled that the RSR charged too much for a bed and for their buns in the restaurant simply because sailors had a relatively good income, so much so, “that it stuck in your gills,” as Haigh declared.

Furthermore, not only did some sailors view the Sailors’ Homes as not ‘respectable,’ the RSR had an additional issue. As a home run by women, this was not somewhere a young, sprightly sailor who liked a drink would want to stay whilst ashore. As Haigh stated,

it was alright I s’pose if you were teetotal……and liked to muck about
with old women and that, but not if you were a full-blooded bloke…..it was alright for a bed and a bath but you wouldn’t spend the evening there.”

Importantly, a sailor’s response to Weston and the RSR also depended on whether a sailor lived in Portsmouth or not. As Edward Pullen recalled of his time in Portsmouth, “all the sailors liked her except the Portsmouth sailors as they had their homes to go to….but it was a Home from Home for us that weren’t.” Pullen’s comments begin to show that there was a two-tier system of residence for sailors in Portsmouth, with those who had homes there and those who did not. Pullen goes further in suggesting as to why Portsmouth sailors did not like Weston. As Pullen states, “it was prejudice….with the sailors talking about going to the Sailors' Rest see, perhaps some of them kept places where they could supply you with food.” Thus, sailors who had local or business interests saw the RSR as a direct threat to these interests and thus resisted Weston’s attempts to disrupt the interdependent nature of sailortown business and culture. After all, they would rather their occupational fellows spent their money locally than in the Rest. Therefore, in Portsmouth, as Conley’s work has shown, the responses Weston received from sailors were not always welcoming. Yet she was disliked for other reasons that were not just related to her teetotalism preaching or child-like reductionism, and nor was the dislike limited to lower-deck sailors alone. Whilst sailors’ responses to the Homes varied, and the Homes presented a threat to the sailortown community, civic authorities saw a direct correlation between the opening of the Homes and the role they had in improving the moral condition of sailors and Portsmouth as a whole. As Alderman Cornelius Sweeney declared, now the sailor has somewhere to go, “British sailors [are] for the most part a respectable and decorous citizen” and in the process, the Homes had done much to “promote the sobriety and the quietude of Portsea and, indeed, the whole of Portsmouth.”

1008 “Oral Interview with George Ernest Haigh,” Reel 14.
1012 “Annual Meeting of the Portsmouth Royal Sailors’ Home,” TEN, 25th November 1880; Letters to Editors,” TEN, 8th November 1893. Other similar sentiments are found in the local
Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, the Sailors’ Homes in Portsmouth originated to elevate the social and moral positions of sailors’ primarily belonging to the Royal Navy. Yet a merchant-capital ideology was not the driving force for Homes in naval ports. What was more prevalent was an elite-philanthropic ideology based on imperial and national prestige of the Royal Navy by those in elite positions of class, military rank and religious institutions. This also meant, in contrast to merchant Sailors' Homes, naval Homes did take a more a paternalistic approach in providing for and caring for sailors as Williams identified. Moreover, it is evident the Homes run by those who had been to sea were able to take an approach of compromise over confrontation with the sailors they desired to help. Like Lee’s observations, it is evident many sailors did want what the Home’s offered. Not all sailors wanted or chose to, participate in a life of hedonistic pleasure; many prioritised a bed, meal and bath over that. However, some sailors did reject the Homes’ offerings’ although this was not always a vehement rejection as Press argued sailors’ undertook. Often the rejection stemmed from reasons that were more to do with maintaining sailortown businesses and culture and whether a sailor resided in Portsmouth or not. The level of rejection or dislike was also reflective of an individual sailor’s belief as to what counted as being respectable or not, or the extent to which one felt their level of urban awareness or more elevated social position was being ignored. Indeed, many were keen to define their own identity and navigate life ashore in their own way, often in direct opposition to the definitions and paths the Homes in Portsmouth attempted to steer them in.

As Kennerley earlier argued, the Homes did represent a direct challenge to the business of sailortown. However, as this chapter shown, the Homes’ presence went further than he allows for. Those involved in the Homes were frequently confrontational to those within a sailortown community, yet, in the process, attempted to undermine sailortown culture too. As such, much like other outside

press, “Portsea Island Board of Guardians,” TEN, 17th May 1883.

1013 Williams, “Mid-Victorian Attitudes to Seamen and Maritime Reform,” 126.

interferences and attacks, sailors and the sailortown community would challenge, mock and defy the Homes as part of their broader resistance to reforming initiatives. However, irrespective of whether sailors liked or used the Homes, the very fact Homes were present in Portsmouth meant civic authorities could declare that it was a port fit for sailors. The Homes in Portsmouth offered a way in which to bind sailors, individually and collectively, to the locality, nation and empire, in part, by grounding them in the urban dialogue surrounding Portsmouth’s social and moral condition more widely. Moreover, the Homes’ contributions were not anonymous. They were there to be recognised. Indeed, this, in part, determined the location of the Sailors’ Homes by their management. They were designed to be tangible, visible evidence of a stabilising influence in sailors’ lives ashore. This also enabled the Homes in Portsmouth to become part of wider civic project, “attempt[ing] to order, civilize and rationalize the urban experience.”

The Homes thus fed into the notion that progress in urban areas was built on environmental factors, creating places and spaces in which to undertake a reforming drive for groups such as sailors, building a stronger relationship between buildings, environments and people. Sailors were thus part of this wider civilizing mission, frequently being singled out for inclusion within it, as The Homes were part of instilling civilizing influences in the morally and socially anomalous boundaries sailortown districts represented in ports. In doing so, the Homes effectively became agencies for civic and social reform blending naval and civic elements together.

Conclusion

Using Portsmouth as a case study, this thesis brought together, built upon and advanced historiographical debates related to sailortown and sailors by situating them in urban contexts rather than in the sea-based, merchant, economic and labour ones they are already understood to be located in. Indeed, this thesis represents a departure from the dominance of merchant contexts thus ameliorating historians’ understandings of sailortown areas and sailors’ lives ashore. As this thesis has demonstrated, naval ports did harbour sailortown areas and, importantly, these were not in decline in the mid-to-late nineteenth century as earlier research has suggested. This thesis has also proposed a ‘Sailortown Prerequisite Model’ as an aid to identifying sailortown districts in ports which seeks to look beyond defining such districts as ones simply catering to sailors’ entertainment ashore. Moreover, the thesis has demonstrated that the quantitative approach favoured in merchant-related research is also applicable to naval sailors and naval ports, and beyond economic and labour contexts prevalent in previous research. It is as constructive and valuable in studying the socio-cultural world of sailors ashore. Equally, by fusing quantitative demographical approaches and sources with socio-cultural ones, this thesis has further contributed to historians’ understandings of sailortown districts by showing they are also urban socio-demographic entities.

Whilst geographic and economic factors are important and will remain so, of equal importance is the socio-cultural relationships and networks shaped and fashioned in sailortown districts. By approaching sailortown as an urban entity and from a communal street-level, rather than as an economic, labour or gendered site of interaction and exchange, this thesis has argued sailortown was not a demographically homogenous vast ‘other’ space separated from the port. By spatially mapping Portsmouth’s sailortown using over fifty thousand

census records and two thousand Trade Directory entries, this thesis has argued it was built on interconnected and interrelated networks of sailorhoods, fostered by their occupational, familial and local ties. Moreover, moving beyond assessing sailortown’s businesses as resistance, economic and labour sites and spaces of gendered privileges, this thesis has also shown through spatial mapping that the businesses were fundamental to the maintenance of sailortowns as a network of sailorhoods. Indeed, whether owned by males of females, the businesses were closely entwined with the nature and structure of the sailorhoods, forming part of their ‘backbone,’ which enabled a street-orientated sailortown culture to be fashioned. As this thesis has established, sailors and those within Portsmouth’s sailortown community could generate their own street-wise notion of values and behaviour as the openness of the streets was a readily available form of landed culture all could participate in, including sailors. Indeed, so engrained was this interdependent sailortown culture, Sailors’ Homes represented a direct threat to it and attempted to disrupt it. Thus, by situating Sailors’ Homes within broader sailortown narratives and experiences than previous research has done, this thesis has shown the Homes also effectively acted as agents for social and moral reform in sailortown districts. They were part of the wider Victorian ‘civilizing mission’ of urban spaces and living, and sailors were not excluded from this process; they were inherently bound within it as landed, urban peoples, as were their associated sailortown districts.

Thus, this thesis has shown sailortowns can be defined based on its physical and demographic features, yet it can also be defined as a neighbourhood-system and a community with its own sailortown culture, which, whilst distinct, was also part of broader working-class culture. Indeed, control and influence over the sailor-orientated neighbourhoods and its streets, was a vested shared interest between sailors and local inhabitants to protect and defend to ensure

that sailortown remained primarily a sailor’s town. By showing how central the streets and the role of violence was in sailortown culture, this thesis has progressed on earlier research exploring sailor and sailortown culture by highlighting how important being seen as a ‘citizen’ of a locality and of the streets was to sailors.\textsuperscript{1020} Therefore, this thesis has also demonstrated sailors maintained ties to land, and more so than previously suggested. As this thesis has argued, they did not necessarily see themselves as ‘men apart’ or detached from landed values and conventions. They were innately bound to the street-based fabric of sailortown and did possess a street-wise sensibility that they were popularly assumed not to have. So much so, sailors had not only had one another to call upon when challenged by outsiders, they also had a wider sailortown communal collective to call on. This is particularly evident on the streets when it comes to a sailor’s use and deployment of violence as this was where many chose to invest, contest and reshape authority and challenge that of others. As urbanites, sailors navigated and negotiated the ‘give and take’ of street-life in ways similar to other working-class males, showing their behaviour was situational, relating and reacting to a diverse range of people in what Alan Mayne describes as the “social drama” of urban life.\textsuperscript{1021}

More widely, this thesis has highlighted the relativity of coastal living and revealed that there is not a monolithic socio-cultural experience of sailortown areas or for sailors as urban inhabitants. As the thesis has shown, they were multifaceted ones embracing differing temporal, socio-cultural and spatial experiences for different individuals and groups. Moreover, by placing sailors in urban contexts it reveals they were not ‘men apart and a sailor’s maritime placement was not the only framework for their lives or experiences.\textsuperscript{1022} Thus,


\textsuperscript{1021} Alan Mayne, \textit{Representing the Slum: Popular Journalism in a Late Nineteenth Century City}, (Parkville: University of Melbourne, 1991), 69.

for the likes of Marcus Rediker who argue the ships were the great leveller in sailors’ socio-cultural interactions, this is arguably only applicable to their working lives.\textsuperscript{1023} As this thesis has shown, when sailors are placed in a socio-cultural environment as urbanites, the street was the great leveller. Indeed, whilst historical sources can ‘catch’ sailors out at sea and along the coast, as Daniel Vickers and Isaac Land respectively suggest, they can also be ‘caught’ on land in urban environs as, indeed, this thesis has demonstrated.\textsuperscript{1024} Whilst there is still much work to be done in regards to sailors’ lives ashore, particularly naval sailors’ lives and experiences ashore, and in exploring the construction and make-up of sailortown districts, this thesis has gone some way to further existing debates. It has offered an original contribution to the historiography of sailortowns and sailors’ lives ashore by going beyond economic, maritime, labour and merchant frameworks of study. As this thesis has demonstrated, it is evident sailors were shaped by much more than their life afloat and working arrangements, and for naval sailors there was more to their experiences than being a sea-going military member. As the 2015 recruitment slogan for the Royal Navy states, sailors are “Made in the Royal Navy.”\textsuperscript{1025} Yet, as this thesis has shown, historically, they were also ‘made’ in the streets.

\textsuperscript{1023} Rediker, Between the Devil, Chapter 6; Peter Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker, The Many Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), Chapter 5, 7.


\textsuperscript{1025} www.royalnavy.mod.uk/madeintheroyalnavy date last accessed, 15th July 2015.
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