

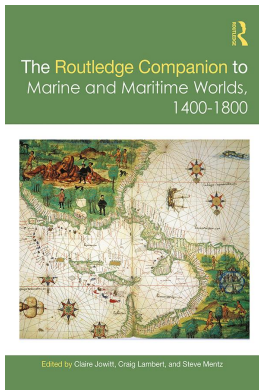
This article was downloaded by: 10.3.97.143

On: 08 Jul 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



## **The Routledge Companion to Marine and Maritime Worlds, 1400–1800**

Claire Jowitt, Craig Lambert, Steve Mentz

### **Sea music and shipboard performance culture**

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781003048503-24>

James Seth

**Published online on: 21 May 2020**

**How to cite :-** James Seth. 21 May 2020, *Sea music and shipboard performance culture from: The Routledge Companion to Marine and Maritime Worlds, 1400–1800* Routledge

Accessed on: 08 Jul 2023

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781003048503-24>

**PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT**

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

## Sea music and shipboard performance culture

*James Seth*

---

In his travel writings when sailing to Palestine on a Venetian galley in 1493, the Dominican friar, Felix Fabri (c.1441–1502) describes ‘mariners who sing when work is going on’ as a ‘concert between one who sings out orders and the laborers who sing in response’.<sup>1</sup> This act of call-and-response is also known as ‘shantying’, an activity that was an integral part of early modern maritime culture. The lead-singer of shanties, known as the ‘shantyman’, served as a conductor of sorts, leading the musical parts and calling out orders to the other sailors.<sup>2</sup> Fabri’s description of the mariners’ shanty as a concert emphasizes that maritime culture was, to an extent, one of collaborative performance. To achieve a task, there must be a unity of individual parts, like the harmonies of a chorus. Anchor songs, a variant of the shanty, were sung while sailors pulled on rope, and together they would heave in time with the rhythm of the song. The subject matter of these songs could relate to any number of maritime affairs: the labour of shipboard work, the exploits of a famous explorer or pirate, shipwrecks and tempests, true maids and false maids, and other myths passed down from experienced sailors or sea dogs.

During the early modern period (c.1450–1750), shipboard music and performance served three vital purposes for lengthy expeditions: diversion, discipline, and diplomacy. The anchor songs of the fifteenth century helped expedite the daily work aboard ship, while early seventeenth-century merchants often gave more elaborate performances, which served expressly political purposes, such as establishing diplomacy between guest and host. As an old saying reports, ‘When the men sing right, the ship goes right’.<sup>3</sup> Sea songs also document oceanic histories and reveal the turbulent lives of early modern seafarers. The first half of this chapter will discuss the types of early modern sea songs and their respective purposes aboard ship, and the latter section will analyse historical performances of music and drama by privateers, merchants, and pirates.

## Shanties and anchor songs

The word ‘shanty’ is likely a corruption of the French imperative, ‘*chantez*’ (‘sing’), as the OED notes, and the word has several variations that coincide with ‘*chantez*’, including ‘chanty’ and ‘chantey’.<sup>4</sup> However, Denys Thompson explains the more complex derivation of ‘shanty’ as a sailor’s song:

The best-known and the most numerous of British work songs are the sea shanties of the merchant ships. One of the collectors, Richard Runciman Terry, derived their name from Antigua. There the shanties of West Indians were movable wooden huts, and when a move was desired they hauled away on wheels pulled by two long ropes; the shantyman mounted the roof, and sung a song with a chorus, which is the exact musical parallel to the sailors’ pull-and-haul shanty.<sup>5</sup>

The shanty itself is inextricably – and literally – tied to work, so it is reasonable that the name would also come in part from an object being pulled. As a musical form, the shanty is known for its use of repetition and rhythm, which allow workers to repeat effectively the orders of the shantyman while applying their strength at the same time.<sup>6</sup> There are many variants on shanties based on different tasks. As the name implies, sailors pulling up the anchor would perform an ‘anchor song’; a ‘bowline shanty’ would be sung while pulling the bowline; a ‘hauling song’ is performed when hauling rope or other heavy cargo, and so on.

The number of shanties printed before 1800 is low, and certainly incomplete, but the surviving early shanties reveal the daily rituals aboard ship and the kinds of orders and phrases sung by shantyman. Many of these shanties do not contain music, though some printings indicate an accompanying tune. Stan Hugill explains that the ‘earliest source giving a series of work songs (without tunes) sung at sea’ comes from *The Complaynt of Scotland* (1549).<sup>7</sup> This anonymous propaganda book was written during the ‘Rough Wooing’ between England and Scotland (1543–51), referring to the war that ensued after English attempts to dissolve the alliance between Scotland and France failed, including the Treaty of Greenwich, which aimed, among other things, to secure the future marriage of Edward VI and Mary, Queen of Scots. In addition to Scottish legends, tales, and allegories, the *Complaynt* also contains two anchor songs, a bowline shanty, and three hauling songs for ‘hoisting the lower yard’.<sup>8</sup> Part of the simpler hauling song in the *Complaynt* goes:

Hail all ande ane.  
Hail all and ane.  
Hail hym vp til vs.  
Hail hym vp til vs.  
Hou hou.  
Pulpela pulpela.  
Boulena boulena.  
Darta darta.  
Hard out strif.<sup>9</sup>

The first verse contains the orders given by the shantyman and repeated by the sailors to haul up the anchor: 'Haul all and one. Haul all and one. Haul him to us. Haul him to us'. The latter verse, however, consists of a series of sailor's chants with less discernible meanings and derivations. An early note on these unusual chants in the *Complaynt* suggests that the word 'pulpela' could mean or derive from 'pull'.<sup>10</sup> The same source recommends that 'boulena' could be understood to mean 'the bowlines to be hauled', which would correspond with the last line, 'Hard out strif' (or its variant, 'Hard out steif').<sup>11</sup> If 'hou' is a form of 'how', with 'darta' being a variation of 'dart', or 'hurry', the call-and-response chant could translate to:

How? (How?)  
 Pull! (Pull!)  
 Bowline! (Bowline!)  
 Dart! (Dart!)  
 Hard out stiff! (Hard out stiff!)

It is equally possible, even with this interpretation, that the sailors' chants are corrupted versions of words mimicking Spanish or Portuguese words. The word 'pulpela', for instance, has an odd similarity to the more contemporary word '*pulpeta*', a Cuban meatloaf dish made from a sausage; therefore, 'pulpela' could have been inspired from Spanish or Portuguese dialect. Just as the word 'shanty' likely came from an amalgamation of the French '*chantez*' and the name for mobile West Indian shacks, it is also possible that the Scottish sailors' shouts are combinations of other words from the language of peoples they encountered.

Since the medieval era, sailors had become familiar with the language and customs of other countries, absorbing them into their own seaboard life. As Maryanne Kowaleski explains, 'The regularity with which medieval seamen crossed borders and encountered people, goods, and ideas from other regions and countries – whether abroad or in their home ports – also familiarized them with the customs and languages of others'.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, labour shortages 'heightened demand for sailors and required shipmasters to recruit widely, including foreigners', Kowalski states.<sup>13</sup> As crews that are more international operated on late medieval ships, seafaring culture became multilingual. It would thus make sense that shouts like 'Boulena!' and 'Darta!' derived from Spanish or Portuguese, since both countries, unmatched in oceanic navigation during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, possessed their own shanties, shouts, and sailor songs. These shouts and shanties might have been passed around to other European sailors in the sixteenth century.

In the Portuguese epic poem, *Os Lusíadas* (1572), Luís Vaz de Camões explains that sailors aboard Vasco da Gama's fleet, then en route to India, would perform a chant, or chanting song, when raising their anchors and making sail. The first mention of sea chants appears in Book II, Stanza 18:

*As ancoras tenaces vão levando  
 Com a nautica grita costumada,  
 Da proa as velas só ao vento dando,  
 Inclinam para a barra abalizada.*<sup>14</sup>

(The clinging anchors now are forthwith weighed/With the well-known accustomed sailor's shout,/Fore-sails alone are to the wind displayed,/To make the bar, as by the course marked out.) In this passage, Camões presents one of the first mentions of the anchor song. The phrase '*nautica grita costumada*' ('accustomed sailor's shout') refers to the sound of the men's rhythmic chants as they perform their work. Camões includes variations of the phrase, including '*celeuma medonha*' in Canto 2, Stanza 25, which J. J. Aubertin translates as 'alarming sea-shout'.<sup>15</sup> However, '*celeuma*' generally has the same meaning as 'shanty' or 'work song', specific to maritime work. But, is a 'sea-shout' the same thing as a 'shanty' or a 'sea song'? Though the terms are often used interchangeably, giving a 'sea-shout' sounds connotatively less musical and more purposeful than the latter two terms. Though the difference is slight, it matters in the decisions that translators make when interpreting seafarers' actions.

Sea songs, like oral seafaring tales, were mutable and constantly changing. They often drew upon other popular songs, not only in their musical composition but also in the themes, language, and plot. Sometimes, a 'song' originated from a rhythmic chant or a shouted command. The ways that sea songs are translated and retold significantly affects their transmission. For example, there are many irregular translations of Camões's phrase, '*nautica grita costumada*', and his corresponding word in Canto 2, Stanza 25: '*celeuma*' ('work song'). The variations chosen by translators offer historiographical insights on how shipboard singing (or chanting, or shouting) has been reinterpreted over the course of history. Hugill, for example, translates '*nautica grita costumada*' to mean 'sing songs and catches to lighten their work'.<sup>16</sup> However, in the translation by J. J. Aubertin, the phrase is rendered as 'accustomed sailor's shout', which presents a different connotation than a 'catch' or a multi-voiced song.

A 'catch' in this context refers to a musical work for three or more voices (similar to a 'round') where singers performed in alternate parts; the second singer begins the first line as the first singer begins the second line, and so forth.<sup>17</sup> Those who begin a catch would be a 'catch-maker', and singers can be part of a 'catch-club', which in this case was the ship itself.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps Hugill used 'catch' not only because of the fact that sailors would chant in succession to complete their tasks, but also because of the word's multiple ties to the maritime world. A 'catch' could also refer to a vessel, a supply of fish, or an anchor.<sup>19</sup> The musical work of a catch also compares favourably to sailor's work. Just as sailors hand off their musical parts to the other, so too do they hand off rope, net, or tool to their shipmate.

## Sea ballads

In one of his collected volumes of shanties, Hugill discusses what he deems the 'earliest inkling of sailors singing at work', which comes from a manuscript from the time of Henry VI (1421–71), currently in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. 'This is a sea ballad – perhaps the oldest in Europe – describing a ship loaded with pilgrims, bound from Sandwyche, Wynchelsea, and Bristow (Bristol) toward the shrine of St. James (Santiago) in Compostella [*sic*], Spain'.<sup>20</sup> Hugill describes the ballad in the following way:

In quaint Chaucerian English the ballad covers the sailing day, the type of food and sleeping quarters allotted to the pilgrims, their sea-sickness, a description

of the schipp-hlaford (master) and his men, the orders given when getting their anchors and setting sail, and, for the first time, and mention of the wild yell – the ‘hitch’ – sailors have used from earliest times when hauling on a rope.<sup>21</sup>

In this early ballad, the writer describes shipboard culture in its most comprehensive way: there are the ‘hitches’ or ‘sea-shouts’, as well as descriptions of the ship and the day-to-day goings-on. Other sea songs, like ‘The Praise of Sailors’ (c.1610–46), also explain the workings of the ship, the roles of its players (boatswain, pilot, captain, sailors), and direct the listener/reader to various parts of the ship. ‘Praise of Sailors’ and the quaint ballad in Trinity College about the pilgrimage to Compostela give the listener a guided tour of a ship. The intended audience of such a ballad, however, is more ambiguous than it is for the shanty. While the pilgrimage ballad performs an act of describing the voyage, it could be intended for landlubbers as well as seafarers, as it presumes the listener does not have a full knowledge of the toils of seafaring.

Sea ballads, generally speaking, differ from the shanty and the anchor song not only in subject matter but also in their musicality. Often, an anchor ‘song’ could be, in reality, a series of chants that rhythmically correspond to shipboard work. A ballad, on the other hand, could travel from sea to land and be utilized for more than a work song. The OED defines the ‘ballad’ as ‘A light, simple song of any kind’, making the ‘sea ballad’ its marine form.<sup>22</sup> Though some sea ballads rely on repetition, especially in their choruses, they generally do not have as much repetition, or as many imperatives, as the call-and-response hauling song.

‘A-Roving’ is a prominent example of a sea ballad used for practical and entertaining purposes, as the song’s popularity also inspired many variations and adaptations throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As Roy Palmer explains, ‘A-Roving’ was ‘popular at the time and was presumably taken on board by sailors and used as a capstan or heaving shanty’.<sup>23</sup> Palmer also notes that a tune ‘unmistakably akin to that of “A-Roving”’ appears in Thomas Heywood’s *The Rape of Lucrece*, performed in London around 1630.<sup>24</sup> In the case of ‘A-Roving’, the ballad was popular enough to have been adapted in anchor songs as well as theatrical productions, demonstrating the malleability of ‘light, simple song[s]’ for different purposes.<sup>25</sup> Like many sea ballads during this time, ‘A-Roving’ is repetitive and minimal in its message and structure, repeating the phrase, ‘In Plymouth Town there lived a maid’ every other line in the first verse. The sailor laments:

In Plymouth Town there lived a maid,  
 And she was mistress of her trade.  
 I’ll go no more a-roving with you, false maid.  
 Chorus: A-roving, a-roving,  
 Since roving’s been my ruin,  
 I’ll go no more a-roving with you, false maid.

This version of the song visits the common tropes associated with false maids, who were ‘mistress of [their] trade’. This song is likely a variant or early version of ‘The Maid of Amsterdam’, which has a near-identical chorus, with the addition of the line, ‘I’ll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid’ at the beginning of the chorus.<sup>26</sup>

The change from ‘false maid’ to ‘fair maid’ is also a striking change in the variant, the former emphasizing the maid’s betrayal of trust. ‘The Maid of Amsterdam’ is notably much longer than its predecessor, adding a more detailed description of the maid’s falseness by including bawdy puns, such as a description of a ‘great big Dutchman’ who ‘rammed [his] bow’ after the singer steals a kiss from the maid.<sup>27</sup> ‘The Maid of Amsterdam’ ends with a warning to male seafarers about the intentions of seemingly virtuous maids, but its low humour makes the song more of an entertaining jest than an earnest piece of advice.

Sea ballads also served as warnings against life’s unexpected misfortunes. Just as ‘A-Roving’ and ‘The Maid of Amsterdam’ warn sailors and suitors of maids’ falsity, sea ballads during this era also told of the capriciousness of fate. This is evidenced in the pair of sea ballads, ‘In Praise of Seafaring Men, in Hope of Good Fortune’, and its response, ‘Another of Seafarers, describing Evil Fortune’, both written after 1585 by the same writer.<sup>28</sup> These ballads speak to each other, like the catch or round, and present contradictory perspectives, as the titles suggest. ‘Good Fortune’ is a ballad about the virtues of sea service, and is seemingly hopeful in its outlook. However, the song was alternately titled, ‘Sir Richard Grenfilldes Farewell’, alluding to Grenville’s ‘discovery’ voyage to the island of Roanoke (in present day North Carolina) in 1585. This alternate title pointedly refers to Grenville’s abandonment of 15 people in Roanoke in 1586 after finding the island apparently deserted. Bidding ‘farewell’, Grenville left Ralph Lane, a soldier and colonist he knew well, and the other voyagers to go privateering at Bermuda, where he looted cargo worth thousands of pounds, though the exact amount is still imprecise.<sup>29</sup>

‘Good Fortune’ is sung from the perspective of an aspiring seaman, perhaps Grenville or any other ambitious explorer encouraged by the lucrative rewards of sea travel. The singer professes: ‘To purchase fame I will go roam’.<sup>30</sup> The song portrays the determined seafarer as one whose motivations to travel are self-serving, whether to achieve material fortune or recognition. If it refers to Grenville, the implications of this line are particularly double-edged, as his abandonment of Lane and the other colonists revealed his intentions to secure wealth only for himself.<sup>31</sup> Yet, the song also recognizes the seafarer’s sacrifices and sings about landlubbers’ trepidation for sea travel because of toil, separation, and grief. One verse in ‘Good Fortune’ reads:

To pass the seas some think a toil.  
Some think it strange abroad to roam;  
Some think it a grief to leave their soil,  
Their parents, kinfolks, and their home.  
Think so who list, I like it not:  
I must abroad to try my lot.<sup>32</sup>

The speaker addresses the complaints of his compatriots who fear a life at sea, and he thus portrays himself as a brave gallant ‘try[ing his] lott’ in the face of the ‘toylle’ and ‘greffe’. By contrast, the response poem, ‘Another of Seafarers, describing Evil Fortune’, presents a much more sombre view of seafaring life, warning the listener against the harsh weather and hazards aboard ship. As Palmer comments, ‘Evil Fortune’ serves

as a 'vivid counterblast to the seafaring philosophy' of 'Good Fortune'.<sup>33</sup> 'Evil Fortune' begins: 'What pen can well report the plight/Of those that travel on the seas? [...] Their poor estate is hard to show'.<sup>34</sup> The song asserts that the troubles of seafarers is 'hard to show', positing the same message that travel writings and sea literature have long expressed, that the truths and mysteries of seafaring life can only be truly understood through experience.

It is also possible that, like 'Good Fortune', the grave 'Evil Fortune' could refer to Grenville's life, or more precisely, his death while on the *Revenge* in 1591. Paired together, 'Good Fortune' and 'Evil Fortune' could depict Grenville's career as a seafarer. At the same time, both songs also depict more generally the life of every seaman, who must accept both the rewards and the toil of a life bound to the whims of an unpredictable sea. As 'Evil Fortune' puts it:

We wander still from luff to lee,  
And find no steadfast wind to blow;  
We still remain in jeopardy,  
Each perilous point is hard to show;  
In time we hope to find redress,  
That long have lived in heaviness.<sup>35</sup>

The balladeer once again uses the phrase 'hard to show' to stress that the song itself is not a powerful enough medium to illustrate the toils of seafaring. The speaker, perhaps Grenville from 'Good Fortune', will thus 'remain in jeopardy', his hope for fame dashed by Fortune. This song's 'perilous point' might refer to Grenville's final journey, a fabled story of recklessness and bravery. During his last voyage aboard the *Revenge*, Grenville raided the Azores while serving as vice-admiral under Lord Thomas Howard.<sup>36</sup> Though Howard aimed to intercept a fleet containing silver, the Spanish became aware of their presence and sent out a fleet to protect the treasure ships.<sup>37</sup> When Howard and the other English ships retreated, the *Revenge* stayed behind.<sup>38</sup> It is not clear exactly why Grenville decided to stay and face the Spanish fleets head on, but doing so jeopardized the safety of his crew and ensured their defeat. Thus, in alluding to being in constant 'jeopardy' with 'no steadfast wind', the poem 'Evil Fortune' could refer to Grenville's demise, if it was based on his maritime exploits.

### Sea dog songs

Sea songs were often calls to action: to pull the anchor, to set the sails, or to perform any other required task aboard ship. However, sea songs could also be calls to the sea. This was the case with a sea song recounting Francis Drake's return from his voyage around the world (1577–80). Drake served a central role in England's global expansion as one of Queen Elizabeth I's principal naval commanders and privateers.<sup>39</sup> There is a sea song about Drake's circumnavigation, titled, 'Upon Sir Francis Drake's Return from his Voyage about the World', which Palmer suggests was written around 1584.<sup>40</sup> In the third stanza, it makes a bold challenge: 'You gallants all o' the British blood,/ Why don't you sail o' the ocean flood?'.<sup>41</sup> Like many other shanties on the vocation



James Seth

of seafaring, the song takes delight in goading landlubbers to set sail while telling tales of the successes or failures of famous voyagers. With their successful circumnavigation and the considerable wealth accrued on the voyage, Drake and his men were regarded as national heroes for their navigational skill. The song first describes the return of Drake to England, opening with the repetitive line, 'Sir Francis, Sir Francis, Sir Francis is come', and then recounting how Drake and his train 'marched gallantly on the road' to claim their glory.<sup>42</sup> The jaunty tune presents Drake as a model for seafaring excellence, though at the expense of his unsuccessful predecessors.

In praising Drake's accomplishment, the song recounts the failures of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, cousin of Grenville and uterine half-brother of Walter Raleigh. Unlike Drake, Gilbert 'ne'er came home again' from an expedition, which began 11 June 1583, when he endeavoured to go to Newfoundland and travel south along the coast.<sup>43</sup> Gilbert's expedition was supported by the Southampton Company and included the ships the *Delight*, the *Bark Raleigh*, the *Swallow*, the *Squirrel*, and the *Golden Hind* (formerly the *Pelican*), which Drake had commanded during his famous circumnavigation.<sup>44</sup> One surviving account is a song by Edward Hayes, captain of the *Golden Hind*.<sup>45</sup> As the song goes, Gilbert:

went out on a rainy day,  
And to the new-found land found out his way,  
With many a gallant fresh and green,  
And he ne'er came home again. (Lines 11–16)

The sea song on Drake's return is ultimately a lament for Gilbert's failure to return, the latter being a foil for the former. The emphasis on the youth and vitality of Gilbert's sailors may attempt to suggest the reason for Gilbert's failure, as their inexperience could have proven disadvantageous. Drake and the other Elizabethan explorers, including Raleigh, continued raiding Spanish ships until, under James I and VI, the Treaty of London ended the Anglo-Spanish War in 1604.<sup>46</sup>

Like his contemporaries, Raleigh was also the subject of songs about his expeditions and exploits. 'Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing in the Lowlands' was a popular sailor's shanty and was likely written after Raleigh's execution in 1618 by James I.<sup>47</sup> John Ashton dates the song from 1635, though as Palmer explains, the earliest edition was published between 1682 and 1685.<sup>48</sup> The ballad, likely performed orally before its first printing, tells how Raleigh's ship, *The Sweet Trinity*, was 'taken by a false galley' and then retrieved by a 'little ship-boy'.<sup>49</sup> The song describes how the ship-boy successfully sinks the 'false galley' and frees the *Trinity*.<sup>50</sup> The boy bores 15 holes into the galley with an auger, leaving the men inside with saltwater up to their eyes while playing cards and dice.<sup>51</sup> After completing his task, the boy swims back to the *Sweet Trinity* and demands his reward.<sup>52</sup> The song reveals that Raleigh had agreed to pay the boy gold and the hand of his eldest daughter if he was successful. However, Raleigh takes back his word and proves to be a 'cozening lord', having deceived the boy into doing the work for nothing.<sup>53</sup>

'Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing in the Lowlands' was later adapted into the popular ballad, 'The Golden Vanity' (or 'Lowlands Low'). The songs share the description of

an assertive young ship-boy who endeavours to take down the threatening galley and free the English ship. ‘The Golden Vanity’, or ‘Lowlands Low’, was written around 1635 and tells the story of Barbary pirates who threaten the shipping and trading in the Mediterranean. The song describes the vulnerability of the titular ship, which, like Raleigh’s *Sweet Trinity*, is vulnerable to being captured by a false galley, or ‘by some Turkish galilee’ (galley) while sailing in the Lowlands:

- I. O I have a ship in the North Country,  
And she goes by the name of the Golden Vanity,  
And I fear she will be taken by some Turkish galilee  
As she sails along the Lowlands low.  
Chorus: Lowlands, Lowlands, as she sails along the Lowlands low.
- II. To the Captain then upspake the little cabin boy,  
He said: ‘What will you give me if the galley I destroy –  
The Turkish galilee, if no more it shall annoy,  
As we sail in the Lowlands low?’.<sup>54</sup>

The premise of the tale is a common seafaring yarn; pirates seek to commandeer a ship, and a cabin boy saves the day by destroying the pirate’s galley in exchange for a reward. Like the ship-boy in ‘Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing’, the cabin boy of ‘The Golden Vanity’ craftily bribes the captain to reward him in exchange for destroying the galley. As Palmer explains, there are many versions of the melody of the song, but the words have few variants.<sup>55</sup> Its popularity might also be due to its catchy, repetitive chorus: ‘Lowlands, Lowlands, as she sails along the Lowlands low’.

The sea song ‘The Praise of Sailors’, printed between 1610 and 1646, describes the hardships that sailors endure on their journeys. The song, as the title suggests, is a tribute to those who choose a life at sea, and the descriptions of sailor’s toil are often juxtaposed with the ease of landlubbers. While the singer ‘lay[s] musing’ in bed, ‘Full warm and well at ease’, the sailors have to endure ‘lodging hard’ on the turbulent seas.<sup>56</sup> Though the song’s general sentiment is unobtrusive, the writer gives a comprehensive layout of the ship and descriptions of its important crewmembers. The master, master’s mate, boatswain, pilot, captain, quartermaster and sailors all have stanzas about their role and character:

The boatswain he’s under the deck,  
A man of courage bold:  
‘To th’ top, to th’ top, my lively lads.  
Hold fast, my hearts of gold.’  
The pilot he stands on the chain,  
With a lead and line to sound,  
To see how far and near they are  
From any dangerous ground.<sup>57</sup>

The writer’s description of the pilot is especially revealing, as it states the essential tools that this vessel needed to navigate and determine the depth of the water: the lead and line. As David Waters explains, the pilot’s ‘most important instrument has

James Seth

always been, as it was in Drake's day, his lead and line for sounding the depth of water'.<sup>58</sup> The lead could also be 'armed' with tallow 'placed in a recess in its base, which could be used to bring up a sample of the seabed' to determine if the bottom was covered in sand, rock, shells, or other materials.<sup>59</sup> 'Praise of Sailors' could thus be a song to help familiarize seafarers with the responsibilities of each person aboard, as well as to highlight their worth during the voyage.

## Professional consorts and instrumental performers

Professional consorts were employed on expeditions to provide music, drama, and other entertainments aboard ship. These entertainments were often given during introductions with foreign dignitaries, though they were also given in the presence of representatives, traders, and indigenous peoples. Consort members, unlike the naval officers aboard ship, were civilians recruited as servants to the captain. Consorts were also close-knit and would regularly include the same members within the group, though not necessarily with the same captain on subsequent voyages. Francis Drake hired a consort of musicians and performers for his voyages, and many of these men were continually employed for sea travel, having been listed on the rosters of other voyages during this time. Voyagers with professional consorts during this period included Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Edward Fenton, John Davis, Richard Hawkins, Thomas Cavendish, and Richard Grenville, in addition to Drake.<sup>60</sup>

Maritime consorts would typically be comprised of about four to six musicians, though some voyages had two or three times this number of consorts. The 1595 voyage of Hawkins and Drake to the West Indies, for example, had an unprecedented 19-member consort. However, that particular fleet was also quite large, comprising of 27 ships and 2,500 men.<sup>61</sup> Most consorts would be comprised of several string musicians, with occasional lute and brass instruments. There would also be a trumpeter aboard the voyages, though this musician would generally not be considered part of the consort. Unlike the musicians in a consort, who were recruited civilians, the trumpeter would be considered a naval rank, with the possibility of promotion.<sup>62</sup> Often, consort musicians could be counted on to provide other types of performance, such as singing and dancing.

Records from voyages from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries reveal that instruments were brought aboard ship for musicians to entertain the captain and his guests. Musical performance often accompanied supper and became a seafaring tradition, as evidenced by the records of Drake's voyages. During his three-year circumnavigation, Drake ensured that music was a constant presence aboard the *Pelican*. A letter by Don Francisco de Zarate, allegedly on board the *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* (also known as the *Cacafuego* – literally meaning 'shit-fire' or 'fire-shitter') when it was captured on 1 March 1579, offers a unique perspective on the way that music was part of Drake's daily routine:

[Drake] has with him nine or ten gentlemen, the younger sons of great people in England. Some of them are in his counsels, but he has no favourite. These sit at his table, and he is served in silver place with a coat of arms engraved on the dishes; and music is played at his dinner and supper.<sup>63</sup>

As Zarate's passage reveals, Drake kept a train of people around him at all times, which also apparently included his professional consort. Of those 'nine or ten gentlemen', three or four of them could have been the consort, or perhaps just the string players. Another version of Zarate's letter published by N. M. Penzer includes an excerpt claiming that Drake 'dines and sups to the music of viols'.<sup>64</sup> If the claims in this version are correct, stringed (or 'still') music was frequently heard on board ship, played at multiple intervals during Drake's meals. Drake was always surrounded by others, partly for practical reasons but also for the performance of power. Having the consort perform at meals only reinforced the image he wanted to project, especially to Spanish captives. As the gentlemen accompanying Drake were often of higher social standing than himself, the privateer often demonstrated refinement, perhaps as a statement of conscious sophistication. Zarate also claims that Drake employed 'trained carpenters and artisans, so as to be able to careen the ship at any time'.<sup>65</sup> From these passages, we have a possible view into the expectations on board ship and the ways that Drake maintained aspects of English cultural practices in his daily routine.

There were several voyages contemporaneous with Drake's circumnavigation that included professional musicians. Gilbert recruited musicians for his Atlantic voyage, which was delayed in departing until November 1578. D. B. Quinn, in his edition of Gilbert's voyages, lists six 'musitians', one 'trumpiter', and one 'drume' aboard Gilbert's flagship, the *Anne Aucher*, in 1578.<sup>66</sup> Cavendish, like Drake, kept a consort of musicians aboard ship. Yet, as Woodfield also notes, 'Little is known of the musicians who accompanied Thomas Cavendish on the second English circumnavigation'.<sup>67</sup> On this circumnavigation, there could have been at least four musicians, and we know at least one of the musicians' first names. Unfortunately, this named member, recorded as 'Ambrose the musitian', drowned during a skirmish with the Spanish on 2 June 1587.<sup>68</sup>

Of course, music was played and enjoyed by more than professional consorts. In his diary, Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) describes playing instruments aboard ship while serving as secretary for Edward Montagu. Pepys, who eventually became an administrator for the Navy Board, recorded events from 1660 to 1669. His diary offers rare descriptions of the London theatre, as well as shipboard goings-on with Montagu. In his entry on 23 April 1660, for example, he writes about how he, along with his colleague William Howe, who also worked for Montagu, played music on board ship:

W. Howe and I went to play two trebles in the great cabin below; which my Lord hearing, after supper he called for our instruments and played a set of Lock's, two trebles and a bass. And that being done, he fell to singing of a song made upon the Rump [Parliament] [...] to the tune of 'The Blacksmith'.<sup>69</sup>

Pepys' writings reveal that shipboard recreation would not only regularly involve multiple musicians and instruments, but also that Montagu himself joined in the shipboard entertainment and sang alongside Howe and Pepys. It is interesting to imagine how Montagu's version of 'The Blacksmith', a traditional folk song, could be adapted into a riff on the Rump Parliament. It also raises the question of which, if any, original verses remained and which were modified. The original song tells of a maid courted

James Seth

by a blacksmith for nine months, only to find out that he was married.<sup>70</sup> The theme of short-lived romance seems an apt metaphor for the equally short-lived Rump Parliament in 1648, created after Colonel Thomas Pride forcibly removed 180 members in a coup ('Pride's Purge').

## Intercultural performance

There are many documented examples of intercultural performance during the formative years of European sea travel. Providing entertainment was particularly common on the long voyages for English explorers and merchants during the era of 'discovery' and trade in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Often, musicians and performers were utilized to establish friendly relations and help build trade networks. There are many notable occasions recorded of when intercultural performance attempted to facilitate exchange and good relations between cultures. For example, accounts of John Davis' expedition in 1585 to find the so-called Northwest Passage mention multiple instances when music helped to make peace with Islanders.<sup>71</sup>

Another notable example of intercultural performance is mentioned in materials published from the East India Company's (EIC's) third voyage in 1607. One extract, apparently from the journal of General William Keeling, who commanded the third voyage, claims that the men aboard the *Red Dragon* flagship may have staged the first non-European performances of *Hamlet* and *Richard II* shortly after the Company arrived in Sierra Leone in September 1607.<sup>72</sup> Bernhard Klein and Richmond Barbour posit in their most recent reading of the event that if the Company did, in fact, perform the two plays, it was 'fortuitous and incidental, not essential to the episodic drama of voyaging at this early stage in Britain's bid for global access'.<sup>73</sup> Still, they confirm that journals surrounding this cross-cultural encounter 'command critical attention in their own right' by providing key testaments to the nature of England's cross-cultural encounters.<sup>74</sup> Barbour and Klein emphasize, as I have also argued, that the displays of power during these often elaborate encounters are a type of theatre; they define this type of maritime theatre as 'the shared viewing of symbolically charged persons and properties in orchestrated constellations'.<sup>75</sup> The 'orchestration' of performed introductions with foreign representatives depended on a number of factors specific to the occasion of their meeting, but they would also have depended on the abilities of crewmembers to provide the appropriate decorum.

There is also currently uncontested evidence that a play was performed during the EIC's sixth voyage on 18 June 1610, just a few months after the Company's ships left England in April. The journals of Captain Nicholas Downton of the *Peppercorn* and 'master mate' Thomas Love mention a play, or 'playing', aboard ship. If there was a play performed, it would have likely taken place on the *Trade's Increase*, since, as the flagship, it would have afforded more space to provide a stage for the Company to entertain. In addition, Love was transferred from the *Peppercorn* to the *Trade's Increase* on the day the Company played, suggesting the performance (dramatic or otherwise) was given on the ship to which he transferred. Love's journal records events of the voyage from 4 April 1610 to 4 December 1611 and only gives a short mention of the play,

indicating that it followed a ‘great feast’. Clements Markham includes the following entry from Love in his compilation of EIC journals and documents:

The *Trade's Increase*, on board of which was Sir Henry Middleton, General of the fleet, the Peppercorn, and the Darling, sailed from the Downs on the 4th of April 1610, and having on the passage put into ‘Saffee in Barbary’, arrived at the Cape de Verde Islands, from whence they departed on the 16th of May. On the 18th of June, Thomas Love was transferred from the Peppercorn to the *Trade's Increase*. On that day ‘we had a great feast and a play playd’.<sup>76</sup>

The reason for the occasion, other than to provide merriment, is unknown. However, what few details are recorded about the dinner and play seem consistent with other occasions of English maritime play-culture. On his circumnavigation, Drake would insist that music be played for every meal. During the EIC’s third voyage, the Company’s entertainment at Sierra Leone in September 1607 likely accompanied a fish dinner with African dignitary Lucas Fernandez. However, it is not known whether the play on 10 June was given for a foreign representative or a guest on board the ship; the performance could have been staged mainly for shipboard diversion, rather than a ‘shared viewing of symbolically charged persons and properties’.

The passage from Downton’s journal is much vaguer than Love’s, suggesting that the occasion for ‘playing’ could have been a shipboard drama, a musical performance, or engaging in another kind of ‘play’. Downton’s entry in Markham’s edition reads: ‘On the 18th June, Sir Henry Middleton invited Captain Downton ‘to dinner and to play’; on the same day Thomas Love a master mate was, by the General’s command, transferred from the Peppercorn to the *Trade's Increase*.’<sup>77</sup>

It seems a special occasion for Middleton to ask Downton to the flagship for a dinner and performance, but without knowing any other details, it is difficult to determine the type of ‘play’ that the Company gave. As Barbour and Klein emphasize, ‘in both cases the “play” in question has neither title nor author and could reference a variety of ludic practices ranging from background entertainment to mimed shows, staged readings, extempore retellings, even card-playing or perhaps dancing’.<sup>78</sup> So even with the knowledge that some sort of ‘play’ occurred, additional evidence is needed to clarify if ‘play’ even indicates a dramatic performance. However, regardless of the type of entertainment, such an endeavour would have likely taken place on the flagship, which would have accommodated a ‘great feast’ and provided enough space for either an elaborate or an intimate performance.

In addition to the play on 18 June 1610, there is at least one other unique document connected to play-acting obtained from the sixth voyage. Benjamin Greene, a factor with the EIC who accompanied Middleton on the journey from 1610–13 to Surat, kept a diary dated from 15 November 1610 to 22 December 1612, currently held in the India Office Marine Department Records. On the last leaf of this diary is a dramatic fragment, which includes dramatis personae, a stage direction, and two lines of dialogue.<sup>79</sup> William Foster first published the fragment in a *Notes and Queries* article, ‘Forged Shakespeariana’, as an addition to the central discussion of the EIC’s alleged performance of *Hamlet* on the *Dragon* in 1607.<sup>80</sup> Though unsure of whether

James Seth

Greene was the true author, Foster presents the fragment as proof of the EIC's continued interests in theatre and shipboard performance.

There were a number of performances given to and by the EIC at their trade factory in Japan. The factory, managed by Richard Cocks, was a short-term but nonetheless successful enterprise from 1613 to 1623. In 1613, John Saris, commander of the EIC's eighth voyage, reached Hirado, Japan, then under the rule of Tokugawa Hidetada. In his journal of the expedition, Saris describes Cocks' hospitality toward Japanese guests, detailing the extent to which he employed musicians and crewmembers to entertain dignitaries and Japanese customers. The EIC's trade factory (also called the 'English House') at Japan, as Games explains, was 'simultaneously a residence, a storehouse, and a showroom'.<sup>81</sup> The house also became, as a result, a performance space at which Cocks and Company members could charm their patrons, especially if there was considerable wealth to be made or crucial negotiations to be secured.

There were several important occasions when entertainment at the English House helped secure friendly relations in Japan. The first example comes from Saris' journal, wherein he describes the entertainment given by the Japanese following the EIC's arrival. Saris records on 12 June 1613 that he and the residents of the English House were welcomed with Japanese entertainers who 'sang divers songs and played upon certain Instruments (where of one did much resemble our Lute) being bellyed like it, but longer in the neck, and fretted like ours, but had only foure gut-strings'.<sup>82</sup> The 'bellyed' instrument with 'foure gut-strings' was likely a biwa or a shamisen, resembling the European cittern in its design. This performance would be the first of a series of shared greetings between the English and the Japanese, and, during this time, Saris and the rest of the Company were gaining cultural knowledge and becoming integrated into the community.

In Saris' entry on 21 June, he describes another performance given by Matura Hoin in yet another demonstration of courtesy:

The 21st the ould King came aboard and brought with him his women to be frolyke. (These women were Actors of Comedies, which passe there from Iland to Iland to play, as our Players doe here from Towne to Towne, having severall shifts of apparel for the better grace of the matter acted; which for the most part are of Warre, Love, and such like.)<sup>83</sup>

Saris describes a troupe of kabuki performers, which in Cocks' journal is given as 'caboque', or a dancing girl.<sup>84</sup> The description of the kabuki dancers in Saris' journal is valuable for several reasons. First, his description confirms that there were travelling female performers who went 'from Iland to Iland' just as England's travelling all-male actors performed 'from Towne to Towne'. Second, Saris' word, 'Comedies', indicates how English audiences interpreted international performance by way of their own understanding of theatrical conventions and genres. These performers may have presented a narrative through their performance that resembled a comedic play to Saris.<sup>85</sup> It is also possible that Saris used the word 'Comedies' to distinguish the tone of the performance as being light or playful, which corresponds with his description of

their 'frollyke'. Saris' musicians attended, as his journal also indicates that there was reciprocal entertainment given by the English. Saris' journal reads: 'I intreated them kindly with musicke and a bankett of Conserves of divers sorts, which the King tooke verve well'.<sup>86</sup> The EIC's mode of operation was to trade with the Japanese, and this trade included all aspects of cultural life, rather than focusing solely on commodities. Returning the gesture of the kabuki performers, Saris had his own musicians perform during the same banquet.

Intercultural performances between travellers occurred well into the nineteenth century. In 1884, while on the return voyage from Queensland, the schooner *Roderick Dhu* met with the Royal Navy schooner yacht *Undine* at Havannah Harbour, Efate, Vanuatu. During their encounter, the men of the *Roderick Dhu* were invited aboard the crew of 35 'blue jackets' and were treated to an 'enjoyable evening' with the navy and their performers.<sup>87</sup> Among those invited from the *Roderick Dhu* was a journalist, who used the nom de plume 'Traveller', whose account of the event was published in *Brisbane Courier*. The following excerpt appears in the journalist's article:

After dinner Lieutenant Martin had all hands piped for a sing-sing, and I must say it has seldom fallen to my lot to spend a more enjoyable evening anywhere. The songs were well rendered, and the stepdancing did great credit to the performers.<sup>88</sup>

Rather than employ a consort of musicians for a private performance with the captain and officers, the lieutenant had everyone on board ship participate in the 'sing-sing' for their guests, as well as join in the 'stepdancing'. This was one of several recorded 'sing-sings' during the *Roderick Dhu*'s journey, and 'Traveller' even participated in one of these performances not long after their encounter with the Royal Navy. Michael Webb and Camellia Webb-Gannon note that 'Twelve days later on the same voyage, in response to an invitation by villagers on the island of Epi in Vanuatu, Traveller took part in an actual sing-sing, which he lampooned in person and ridiculed in writing'.<sup>89</sup>

### Pirate performers

One notable example of play-acting at sea appears in *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* (1724), which might possibly have been written by Daniel Defoe.<sup>90</sup> *A General History* describes a disastrous performance of a play called *The Royal Pyrate*, allegedly staged on the *Whidaw* under the command of Captain Samuel Bellamy (1689–1717). During the performance, an actor playing Alexander the Great examined a pirate brought to him, telling him 'Know'st thou that Death attends thy mighty Crimes, And thou shall't hang to Morrow Morn betimes'.<sup>91</sup> However, 'The Gunner, who was drunk, took this to be in earnest', and after swearing that he would avenge the pirate-actor Jack Spinckes, took 'a Grenado with a lighted Match, followed by his Comrades with their Cutlash', and 'set Fire to the Fuze and threw it among the Actors'.<sup>92</sup> This led to an eruption of violence on the *Whidaw* stage, resulting in a number of limbs lost and other injuries. When the chaos calmed, the gunner was praised for his zeal.<sup>93</sup>



James Seth

This account of a raucous pirate-produced play was likely a fictitious sea story, but its survival and reappearance in *A General History* demonstrates the popularity of shipboard performance as both a folk tale and a potential reality. The account of *The Royal Pyrate* also presents an interesting case where performance and reality blurred on stage, causing confusion for the gunner, who became an accidental audience member. In this case, we could ask, were the actors so good that they could influence an audience on board ship just as well as they could at a theatre? Were the *Whidaw* actors performing *The Royal Pyrate* perhaps too convincing?

## Conclusion

Whether to entertain, complete tasks, or bridge cultural barriers, sea music and performance provided essential functions for captain and crew. The early shanties and sea ballads were often adapted and reproduced for whatever occasion suited the song, and these changes often reveal important historical or cultural shifts. The transformation of ‘Sir Walter Raleigh Sailing in the Lowlands’ to ‘The Golden Vanity’ shows how sea songs can be universalized when taken out of their historical moment, turning figures like the captain and the cabin boy into archetypes. The varying translations of Camões’s *Os Lusíadas* highlight the differing definitions of the shipboard shanty, whether as a ‘shout’ or a ‘song’. Montagu’s transformation of ‘The Blacksmith’ into a new tune about the Rump Parliament reveals how shipboard diversion could also be a form of political commentary. As the staging of *The Royal Pyrate* transformed from lively piratical play to real-life catastrophe, the ship became a space that blurred the lines of stagecraft and subversion. What is certain about early modern sea songs and shipboard performances is their unpredictability; maritime music and drama were constantly changing and evolving, like the sea itself.

## Notes

- 1 From Felix Fabri’s, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem* (1494), which appears in translation in S. Hugill, *Songs of the Sea: The Tales and Tunes of Sailors and Sailing Ships*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977, p. 10.
- 2 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
- 3 S. Hugill, *Sea Shanties*, London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1977, p. 2.
- 4 ‘shanty | chant(e)y, n.2’, *OED Online*.
- 5 D. Thompson, *The Uses of Poetry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 30.
- 6 Thompson, *The Uses of Poetry*, p. 31.
- 7 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
- 8 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
- 9 J. A. H. Murray (ed.), *The Complaynt of Scotlande, with ane Exortatione to the Thre Estaits to be Vigilante in the Deffens of their Pulic Veil. 1549. With an Appendix of Contemporary English tracts, viz. The Just Declaration of Henry VIII (1542), The Exhortacion of James Harrysone, Scottishe man (1547), The Epistle of the Lord Protector Somerset (1548), The Epitome of Nicholas Bodrugan alias Adams (1548)*, London: N. Trübner and Co., 1872–3, p. 40.
- 10 D. Doran, *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Intercommunication for Literary Men, General Readers, Etc.*, vol. 4, London: John Francis, 1875, pp. 122–3.
- 11 *Notes and Queries*, p. 123.
- 12 M. Kowaleski, ‘“Alien” Encounters in the Maritime World of Medieval England’, *Medieval Encounters* 13/1, 2007, p. 99. For additional information on languages within European

- Atlantic voyages, see the chapter, 'Conceptualizing the Atlantic World', in D. R. Egerton, A. Games, J. G. Landers, K. Lane, and D. R. Wright, *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400–1888*, Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2007, pp. 21–2.
- 13 Egerton et al., *The Atlantic World*, p. 99.
  - 14 L. de Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, trans. J. J. Aubertin, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1884, p. 64.
  - 15 Camões, *Os Lusíadas*, p. 69.
  - 16 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
  - 17 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
  - 18 Hugill, *Songs*, p. 10.
  - 19 'catch, n.1', *OED Online*.
  - 20 Hugill, *Songs*, pp. 9–10.
  - 21 Hugill, *Songs*, pp. 9–10.
  - 22 'ballad, n', *OED Online*.
  - 23 R. Palmer (ed.), *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 159.
  - 24 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 159.
  - 25 As Palmer also notes, 'The words have been rewritten several thousand times by those with an eye for sobriety rather than authenticity. But somehow the original intentions of those ancient singers is never quite sublimated'. Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 159.
  - 26 D. Ingram (ed.), *A Song Book: Musical Phantasies Fitting for Soldiers, City and Country Humours*, 4th edition, Edinburgh: Prince Maurice's Regiment of the Sealed Knot Society Ltd, 2016, pp. 125–6.
  - 27 Ingram, *A Song Book*, pp. 125–6.
  - 28 C. N. Robinson, *The British Tar in Fact and Fiction: The Poetry, Pathos and Humour of the Sailor's Life*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1909, p. 378.
  - 29 D. Loades, 'Grenville, Sir Richard (1542–1591), naval commander', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter *ODNB*], Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 ([www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-11493](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-11493), accessed February 2019). Loades explains that Grenville estimated the worth of his hoard at Bermuda to be £12,000–15,000, but other evidence 'suggests it may have been worth as much as £50,000'.
  - 30 This modern spelling appears in Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 5.
  - 31 As Loades notes in Grenville's *ODNB* entry (see note 29), Grenville did return to Roanoke, but he arrived several weeks after Lane and the surviving men abandoned the project and departed Virginia.
  - 32 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 5.
  - 33 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 7.
  - 34 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 6.
  - 35 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 6.
  - 36 Loades, 'Grenville', *ODNB*.
  - 37 Loades, 'Grenville', *ODNB*.
  - 38 Loades, 'Grenville', *ODNB*.
  - 39 See E. J. Dolin, *Black Flags, Blue Waters: The Epic History of America's Most Notorious Pirates*, New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018, p. 9; C. A. Fury, 'The Elizabethan Maritime Community', in C. A. Fury (ed.), *The Social History of English Seamen, 1485–1649*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012, pp. 117–39.
  - 40 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 4.
  - 41 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 4.
  - 42 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 4.
  - 43 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 4. For more information on Gilbert and his travels, see R. Rapple, 'Gilbert, Sir Humphrey (1537–1583), explorer and soldier', *ODNB* ([www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10690?rskey=r2KqEm&result=1](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10690?rskey=r2KqEm&result=1), accessed 12 July 2018).

- 44 Rapple, 'Gilbert', *ODNB*.
- 45 For the account of Gilbert's voyage and more information about the expedition, see D. B. Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, vol. 1, London: Hakluyt Society, 1940, pp. 83–4.
- 46 J. H. Clifford (ed.), *The Standard History of the World by Great Historians: A Narrative of Political Events and a Survey of Civilization, Forming a Comprehensive Record of Human Progress and Achievement*, vol. 5, New York: The University Society Inc., 1914, pp. 2693–700.
- 47 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, pp. 47–50.
- 48 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 50.
- 49 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 47.
- 50 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 49.
- 51 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 48.
- 52 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 48.
- 53 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 48.
- 54 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 48.
- 55 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 50.
- 56 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 21.
- 57 Palmer, *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, p. 22.
- 58 D. W. Waters, 'Elizabethan Navigation', in N. J. W. Thrower (ed.), *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577–1580: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of Drake's Circumnavigation of the Earth*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984, p. 15.
- 59 Waters, 'Elizabethan Navigation', p. 15.
- 60 A full table of consorts and navigators from 1567 to 1595 is listed in I. Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*, Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995, p. 15.
- 61 Woodfield, *English Musicians*, p. 13.
- 62 Woodfield, *English Musicians*, p. 33.
- 63 N. M. Penzer (ed.), *The World Encompassed and Analogous Contemporary Documents Concerning Sir Francis Drake's Circumnavigation of the World*, New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1969, p. 219. Though it was a coastal transport ship, the *Cacafuego* was laden with treasure and became Drake's primary target. Its contents constituted a 'king's ransom', Eric Dolin notes, as there were 'so many tons of silver bullion that they were used as ballast instead of the cobblestones usually employed for that purpose' (Dolin, *Black Flags*, pp. 8–9).
- 64 Penzer, *The World Encompassed*, p. 219.
- 65 Penzer, *The World Encompassed*, p. 219.
- 66 Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises*, vol. 1, p. 211.
- 67 Woodfield, *English Musicians*, p. 10.
- 68 R. Hakluyt (ed.), *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vol. 3, London: George Bishop, Ralph Newberie, and Robert Barker, 1599, p. 813.
- 69 R. Latham (ed.), *The Illustrated Pepys: Extracts from the Diary*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978, p. 20.
- 70 Also referred to by the first line: 'A Blacksmith courted me for nine months or better'. There is currently an edition of 'The Blacksmith' published on Broadside Ballads Online from the Bodleian Libraries. See <http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/search/roud/816>
- 71 The sister ships *Sunshine* and *Moonshine* left Dartmouth on 7 June 1585, and included four musicians: James Cole, Francis Ridley, John Russel, and Robert Cornish. For more information, see John Jane's account of the voyage in P. F. Alexander (ed.), *The North-West and North-East Passages 1576–1611*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915, p. 49.
- 72 This mystery has confounded scholars since the nineteenth century. However, the documents that allege these performances, which include reprinted extracts supposedly from the journal of General William Keeling, are notoriously problematic in their authorship. See B. Kliman, 'At Sea about *Hamlet* at Sea: A Detective Story', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62/2, 2011, pp. 180–204, and S. Race, 'J. P. Collier's Fabrications', *Notes and Queries* 195, 1950, pp. 345–6.
- 73 R. Barbour and B. Klein, 'Drama at Sea: A New Look at Shakespeare on the *Dragon*, 1607–08', in C. Jowitt and D. McInnis (eds), *Travel and Drama in Early Modern England: The Journeying Play*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 163.

- 74 Barbour and Klein, 'Drama at Sea', p. 163.
- 75 Barbour and Klein, 'Drama at Sea', p. 163. See also J. Seth, 'Maritime Performance Culture and the Possible Staging of *Hamlet* in Sierra Leone', *Shakespeare en devenir – Les Cahiers de La Licorne* 12, 2017, <http://shakespeare.edel.univ-poitiers.fr/index.php?id=1091>
- 76 C. R. Markham, *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster, Kt., to the East Indies, with Abstracts of Journals of Voyages to the East Indies during the Seventeenth Century, Preserved in the India Office, and the Voyage of Captain John Knight (1606), to Seek the North-West Passage*, New York: Burt Franklin, 1877, p. 147.
- 77 Markham, *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster*, p. 153.
- 78 Barbour and Klein, 'Drama at Sea', p. 156.
- 79 'Fragment of a Play in the Journal of Benjamin Greene', (anon. 1610–1613), *Lost Plays Database* (eds), R. L. Knutson, D. McInnis, and M. Steggle ([https://lostplays.folger.edu/Fragment\\_of\\_a\\_play\\_in\\_the\\_Journal\\_of\\_Benjamin\\_Greene](https://lostplays.folger.edu/Fragment_of_a_play_in_the_Journal_of_Benjamin_Greene), accessed 1 September 2018).
- 80 W. Foster, 'Forged Shakespeariana', *Notes & Queries* 145, 1900, p. 42.
- 81 A. Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion 1560–1660*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 88–9.
- 82 E. M. Satow (ed.), *The Voyage of Captain John Saris to Japan, 1613*, London: Hakluyt Society, 1900, p. 84.
- 83 Satow, *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. 90.
- 84 A full list of Japanese words (as spelled by the English) and their definitions is listed in the Preface in E. M. Thompson (ed.), *Diary of Richard Cocks, Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan 1615–1622, with Correspondence*, vol. 1, London: Hakluyt Society, 1883, p. liii.
- 85 It could have, for instance, referenced a marriage or ritual at the end of the performance, which would have signified to early modern Englishers a comedy. See N. Frye, *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1965, pp. 72, 85.
- 86 Satow, *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. 91.
- 87 *Brisbane Courier*, 19 Feb. 1885, p. 6.
- 88 *Brisbane Courier*, 19 Feb. 1885, p. 6.
- 89 M. Webb and C. Webb–Gannon, 'Melanesians and Music on the Move: South Sea Island Shipboard and Plantation Performance in Queensland, 1860s–1906', *The Journal of Pacific History* 52/4, 2017, p. 433. The account appears in *Brisbane Courier*, 19 February 1885, p. 6.
- 90 This question of authorship is still an issue of debate among critics. See N. Rennie, *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. iii–xxx. As Rennie explains, the early critic '[John Robert Moore's] aim in the 1930s was to assign the *General History* to the canon of Defoe [...] His method of assigning this influential work to the author who was his major concern – Defoe – was, however, to weave a web of conjectures and then to show that Defoe's supposedly distinctive vocabulary and turns of phrase ... were used in the *General History*' (p. xxx).
- 91 D. Defoe, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, New York, Carroll and Graf Publishers, 1999, p. 588.
- 92 Defoe, *A General History*, p. 589.
- 93 Defoe, *A General History*, p. 589.

## Bibliography

- Alexander, P. F. (ed.) (1915) *The North-West and North-East Passages 1576–1611*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barbour, R. (2009) *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company, 1607–10*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Barbour, R., and Klein, B. (2018) 'Drama at Sea: A New Look at Shakespeare on the *Dragon*, 1607–08', in C. Jowitt and D. McInnis (eds), *Travel and Drama in Early Modern England: The Journeying Play*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 150–68.

- Camões, L. de. (1884) *Os Lusíadas*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, trans. J. J. Aubertin, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co.
- Clifford, J. H. (ed.) (1914) *The Standard History of the World by Great Historians: A Narrative of Political Events and a Survey of Civilization, Forming a Comprehensive Record of Human Progress and Achievement*, vol. 5, New York: The University Society Inc.
- Defoe, D. (1999) *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers.
- Dolin, E. J. (2018) *Black Flags, Blue Waters: The Epic History of America's Most Notorious Pirates*, New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation.
- Doran, D. (1875) *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Intercommunication for Literary Men, General Readers, Etc*, vol. 4, London: John Francis.
- Egerton, D. R., Games, A., Landers, J. G., Lane, K., and Wright, D. R. (2007) *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400–1888*, Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson.
- Foster, W. (1900) 'Forged Shakespeariana', *Notes & Queries* 145: 41–2.
- 'Fragment of a Play in the Journal of Benjamin Greene', (anon. 1610–1613), *Lost Plays Database* (eds), R. L. Knutson, D. McInnis, and M. Steggle ([https://lostplays.folger.edu/Fragment\\_of\\_a\\_play\\_in\\_the\\_Journal\\_of\\_Benjamin\\_Greene](https://lostplays.folger.edu/Fragment_of_a_play_in_the_Journal_of_Benjamin_Greene), accessed 1 September 2018).
- Frye, N. (1965) *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Fury, C. A. (2012) 'The Elizabethan Maritime Community', in C. A. Fury (ed.), *The Social History of English Seamen, 1485–1649*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, pp. 117–39.
- Games, A. (2008) *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion 1560–1660*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hakluyt, R. (ed.) (1599) *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vol. 3, London: George Bishop, Ralph Newberie, and Robert Barker.
- Hugill, S. (1977a) *Sea Shanties*, London: Barrie & Jenkins.
- Hugill, S. (1977b) *Songs of the Sea: The Tales and Tunes of Sailors and Sailing Ships*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ingram, D. (ed.) (2016) *A Song Book: Musical Phantasies Fitting for Soldiers, City and Country Humours*, 4th edition, Edinburgh: Prince Maurice's Regiment of the Sealed Knot Society Ltd.
- Kliman, B. (2011) 'At Sea about *Hamlet* at Sea: A Detective Story', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62/2: 180–204.
- Kowaleski, M. (2007) "'Alien" Encounters in the Maritime World of Medieval England', *Medieval Encounters* 13/1: 96–121.
- Latham, R. (ed.) (1978) *The Illustrated Pepys: Extracts from the Diary*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Markham, C. R. (1877) *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster, Kt., To the East Indies, with Abstracts of Journals of Voyages to the East Indies during the Seventeenth Century, Preserved in the India Office, and the Voyage of Captain John Knight (1606), to Seek the North-West Passage*, New York: Burt Franklin.
- Murray, J. A. H. (ed.) (1872–3) *The Complaynt of Scotlande, with Ane Exortatione to the Thre Estaits to Be Vigilante in the Deffens of Their Pulic Veil. 1549. With an Appendix of Contemporary English Tracts, Viz. The Just Declaration of Henry VIII (1542), the Exhortacion of James Harrysone, Scottishman (1547), the Epistle of the Lord Protector Somerset (1548), the Epitome of Nicholas Bodrugan Alias Adams (1548)*, London: N. Trübner and Co.
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [Online]. (2004) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Palmer, R. (ed.) (1986) *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Penzer, N. M. (ed.) (1969) *The World Encompassed and Analogous Contemporary Documents Concerning Sir Francis Drake's Circumnavigation of the World*, New York: Cooper Square Publishers.
- Quinn, D. B. (1940) *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, vol. 1, London: Hakluyt Society.

- Race, S. (1950) 'J. P. Collier's Fabrications', *Notes and Queries* 195: 345–6.
- Rennie, N. (2013) *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, C. N. (1909) *The British Tar in Fact and Fiction: The Poetry, Pathos and Humour of the Sailor's Life*, New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Satow, E. M. (ed.) (1900) *The Voyage of Captain John Saris to Japan, 1613*, London: Hakluyt Society.
- Seth, J. (2017) 'Maritime Performance Culture and the Possible Staging of *Hamlet* in Sierra Leone', *Shakespeare en devenir – Les Cahiers de La Licorne* 12 (<http://shakespeare.edel.univ-poitiers.fr/index.php?id=1091>, accessed 1 March 2018).
- 'The Blacksmith' (1863–5), London: H. Such; Broadside Ballads Online, Bodleian Libraries (<http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/search/roud/816>, accessed 9 September 2019).
- Thompson, D. (1978) *The Uses of Poetry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, E. M. (ed.) (1883) *Diary of Richard Cocks, Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan 1615–1622, with Correspondence*, vol. 1, London: Hakluyt Society.
- Vaughan Williams, R., and Lloyd, A. L. (eds) (1975) *The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, London: Penguin.
- Waters, D. W. (1984) 'Elizabethan Navigation', in N. J. W. Thrower (ed.), *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577–1580: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of Drake's Circumnavigation of the Earth*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 12–32.
- Webb, M., and Webb–Gannon, C. (2017) 'Melanesians and Music on the Move: South Sea Island Shipboard and Plantation Performance in Queensland, 1860s–1906', *The Journal of Pacific History* 52/4: 427–58.
- Woodfield, I. (1995) *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*, Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press.