

"You Don't Make a Torpedo Gunner Out of a Drunkard:" Agnes Weston, Temperance, and the British Navy

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Public interest in the naval seaman grew dramatically during the second half of the nineteenth century in Britain. Images of the British bluejacket entered the popular imagination through such diverse means as advertising, entertainment, newspapers, politics and philanthropy. Yet these images were hardly consistent. While some representations portrayed naval seamen as dutiful patriotic servants of the Empire, other popular imagery presented them as irresponsible, drunken, gallivanting tars who became social dangers once ashore. The commodification of the sailor is scarcely a substantive reflection upon the real lives of British naval men during this period but rather offers access to the attitudes and anxieties that existed within British society. From the 1870s the Royal Naval Temperance Society (RNTS), under the direction of Agnes Weston, relied upon the recognizable image of the drunken sailor, as well as stories of naval teetotallers, to publicize the cause of naval temperance among subscribers and naval men. This article is an examination of the strategies of Agnes Weston to achieve a dry British navy. For Weston, temperance was an issue of salvation – of saving drunken souls. Despite her religious motives, Weston justified naval temperance by employing a variety of different arguments in order to garner the attention of both the navy and the public. In particular, Weston appealed to both naval men and subscribers through strategies that evoked duty to family, God, and nation. By categorizing naval temperance as a national, social, and religious imperative, Weston expected to increase the range of its appeal.

Although Weston became famous among the British public for her efforts to reform the navy morally, she was never able to gain widespread support among naval men for her teetotalism. In fact, her Christian temperance mission often elicited scorn from naval men who, by the early twentieth century, criticized the maternalism of her naval charity. Naval men, fully aware of their responsibilities as husbands, Christians, and soldiers, disdained her benevolence because it reduced them to children who required constant guidance and protection instead of treating them as autonomous individuals. Although naval seamen had few avenues for self-representation, especially given that Article 12 of the Queen's Regulations forbade naval personnel to speak publicly about naval affairs, naval men did comment on Weston's stereotypic representations. Through an examination of published

letters of naval men in the lower-deck paper, *The Bluejacket*, this essay will also analyze their objections to temperance and Agnes Weston's naval philanthropy.

Much has been written on the Royal Navy in the Victorian period and the years preceding and during the First World War. To be sure, there has been more written about tactical and materiel considerations than there has been about the condition of British naval personnel. But during the past thirty years naval historians have begun to explore social aspects of British naval culture.' Although more is now known about life aboard a man-of-war, there has been scant scholarship that integrates the history of naval seamen afloat with that of landsmen ashore, and fewer studies that connect these histories to larger debates in British history.' The history of naval temperance offers the opportunity to examine the connections between national and naval temperance movements. A study of naval temperance also illustrates how imagery, like that of the drunken sailor, was employed to prove the urgency of naval temperance and to gain the financial support of the British public. The work of historians of maritime philanthropy and temperance offers the foundation to approach naval temperance.' Surprisingly, there has been little scholarship to date on the activities of Agnes Weston, considered the "Mother of the Navy" by many of her contemporaries and the main agent in organizing a naval temperance movement.' Agnes Weston's autobiography, and the biography written by her close friend and co-worker, Sophia Wintz, have provided the thin foundation from which all subsequent descriptions are derived. Historical work on the British national temperance movement also offers important insights into understanding the character of naval temperance; the contributions of Brian Harrison, Lilian Shiman, and J. Christopher Soper have been particularly helpful.'

The goals of this naval temperance movement, guided by a Christian mission, endeavored to spread teetotalism throughout the lower deck and to remove the grog ration. The promotion of abstinence, rather than moderation, by the RNTS reflected the redefinition of temperance within the national movement where it became synonymous with teetotalism and total prohibition during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the RNTS was sponsored by the larger National Temperance League, naval temperance campaigns were distinct from national prohibition movements. Naval temperance faced particular challenges because of the institutionalized status of alcohol within the Navy through the distribution of the rum ration and because of the navy's reputed penchant for drink. Yet like the leaders of the national movement, naval temperance advocates like Weston used a variety of different arguments that had the unintended consequence of confusing the actual mission.' Was temperance the attribute that saved souls, strengthened families, or won wars? Within the scope of Weston's mission, it did not really matter how the naval teetotaler was converted. Once temperance was secured, salvation was at least possible.

The naval temperance movement took place during the late nineteenth century, just as a campaign for naval expansion and efficiency, in terms of both materiel and personnel, was underway.' Despite the introduction of a permanent standing navy with the adoption of continuous service in the 1850s, the Admiralty still confronted a manning problem two decades later. In response to inadequate manning levels and public pressure, the Admiralty began to introduce social reforms in an effort to recruit and retain more men.' While these personnel reforms led to improved living conditions for seamen through higher pay, regularized discipline, a better diet, and more recreation time, these changes also sought to

transform large numbers of recruits into a uniform well-trained and well-disciplined military force. In addition, the British naval man was also more literate and better educated by the late Victorian period as a result of reforms like the Education Act of 1870.⁹ Personnel changes and social reforms, in addition to new technical skills required to maintain the sophisticated naval materiel of an iron man-of-war, contributed to the better trained and treated British bluejacket of the late nineteenth century. In a period that witnessed the technological revolution of materiel and the professional development of personnel, a drunken sailor had no place aboard a modern man of war.

Public imagery of the naval seaman, however, did not reflect these new realities and popular representations of naval men during this period continued to depict the brave but bawdy sailor as heralded by Charles Dibdin, Douglas Jerrold and Frederick Marryat, and reinforced later by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. The most familiar popular representation of the merchant or naval man was that of the drunken sailor. Heralded in song, fiction and nautical drama, the nineteenth-century seaman was envisioned as a "Jolly Jack tar" who spent his money shamelessly on drink and women. To the British public, the naval man's reputation as "drunken sailor" was perhaps confirmed by his assumed attachment to grog and by the notoriety of port towns as centres of debauchery. One popular sea ballad, "The Homeward Bound," recalled the sailors' drunken sprees ashore,

And when we arrive in Malabar,
Or any port not quite so far,
The purser he will tip us the chink,
And then like fishes we will drink.¹⁰

When in port on leave, the sailor could spend his money quickly on drink, women, other diversions and expensive room and board, or else have it taken by crimps."

Afloat, it appeared that the Admiralty gave tacit approval to drunkenness through the daily issue of the rum ration. Rum had been issued daily to the ship's crew since 1687.¹² But by the eighteenth century an admiral's concern over "the swinish vice of drunkenness" had led to the dilution of rum with water, a mix that became known as "grog," after the admiral's nickname of "Old Grogram." Temperance activists were dismayed by Queen Victoria's apparent fondness for naval grog when she tried it during an inspection of the British fleet in 1842.¹⁴ Although the daily ration of grog had rooted itself as a firm naval tradition by the mid-nineteenth century, the Admiralty did have reservations about promoting drinking aboard ships.

By mid-nineteenth century the Admiralty had gradually reduced the rum ration by further watering down grog in an attempt to decrease incidents of drunkenness onboard and the accompanying social problems.¹⁵ The Admiralty encouraged naval temperance, not so much for its virtuousness, but to ensure that disciplined sober bodies were attentive to their duties. Naval discipline and the maintenance of efficiency afloat, rather than religious motivations, were the main incentives for Admiralty reforms that promoted sobriety. The Admiralty also offered monetary compensation of 1.25 pence per ration for teetotallers and introduced tea, cocoa, coffee, and sugar as alternate rations.¹⁶ Although drunkenness aboard ship was relatively uncommon, the Admiralty hoped that halving the ration, stopping the

evening issue of rum, punishing excessive drunkenness and offering monetary compensation to teetotallers would foster discipline and efficiency."

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Admiralty also introduced improvements designed to limit the naval man's extravagance in port. A standardized system of allotting pay to wives and family and the appearance of Naval Savings Banks helped to budget naval men's finances and to minimize profligacy.¹⁸ For both officers and men, greater generosity in granting leave was rewarded by fewer drunken and promiscuous sprees ashore and fewer cases of leavebreaking and drunkenness upon return.¹⁹ By the early twentieth century, the Admiralty had organized yearly lectures throughout the fleet on the importance of health, hygiene, and temperance.²⁰ The Admiralty may have considered drunkenness a disciplinary problem and inconsistent with the demands of a modern navy, but it never seriously considered abolishing liquor.

Ashore, the seaman was on his own as long as he kept clear of crimps, prostitutes, constables, naval patrols and missionaries.²¹ As pubkeepers and crimps beckoned sailors to their services, maritime missionaries also enticed seamen to their ministrations. Agnes Weston's naval philanthropy was a later component of a larger sea apostolate movement which had begun in Britain and Europe in the late eighteenth century.²² As missionary zeal spread across the globe, missionaries realized that their services were required even closer to home by seamen who were often spiritually and physically destitute. Established in 1818, the Port of London Society, which later became the British and Foreign Sailors Society, was the oldest²³ maritime mission to seamen and was initially organized to serve sailors in the capital. The Religious Tract Society, much to the consternation of the British navy, frequently distributed its religious materials to naval men.²⁴ Similarly, the Naval Correspondence Mission, under the guidance of George C. Smith, provided pastoral care to seamen afloat and ashore through letters and counselling.²⁵ Yet the rise of maritime missions does not explain the development of a naval temperance movement because the early promotion of the sailor's spirituality did not necessarily condemn alcohol. Early maritime missionaries, like churchmen of the period, held mixed opinions on the sinfulness of alcohol.

To understand naval temperance, one must look first at its origins, which lay in the growth of the national temperance movement. As alcohol consumption in Britain and liquor licenses rose by the mid-nineteenth century, a teetotal campaign gained national attention in its battle against the liquor trade and its efforts to win over teetotallers.²⁶ Evangelical Christians portrayed drinking as a moral, social, and national problem that required total prohibition as the only solution to the destruction caused by the demon drink.²⁷ Yet while a national temperance movement garnered widespread popular support by mid-century, naval temperance by the 1860s was only of concern to a few officers and men.

Afloat much depended upon the initiative of the commanding officer or the popular support of the crew. The hagiography of the early naval temperance movement included the promise of Admiral Sir William King-Hall in the 1850s that he would join the ranks of abstainers once those naval men habitually on punishment lists for drunkenness signed the temperance pledge. HMS *Reindeer* was the site of the first temperance society, established in 1868 under the direction of Admiral James Sullivan.²⁸ Teetotallers on board a ship naturally sought the company of others, and the initiative of a few teetotallers led to the

formation of naval branches of the International Order of the Good Templars,²⁹ a pseudo-masonic mutual help society that was especially active in England in the 1870s. But apart from the sporadic efforts of a few temperance activists, a movement to spread temperance throughout the Royal Navy did not begin until the last third of the nineteenth century.

Localized efforts by a few naval abstainers to encourage temperance, and the Admiralty's attempts to ensure discipline by diluting grog or offering the men cocoa, may have achieved some minor success but were not enough to spark a fleet-wide movement. Only under the wing of the national temperance movement was an aggressive naval teetotal campaign launched. Naval men were targeted because of their reputation for drunkenness and licentiousness ashore.³⁰ As a moral crusade, temperance was easily adapted to the maritime mission, where the "thirst for souls" was great.³¹ Aside from the International Order of the Good Templars, the National Temperance League and the Band of Hope also saw the Royal Navy as a bounty of potential teetotallers.³² With the guidance and financial support of the National Temperance League, the RNTS was formed in 1873 with the grand object of creating a sober Christian navy.³³ Admiral Sir William King-Hall, an ardent teetotaler, was appointed president while Agnes Weston, who was already known as a naval philanthropist, was assigned the main role of superintending this society.³⁴

Agnes Weston was considered by contemporaries to be the navy's equivalent of Florence Nightingale. She did not innovate the idea of naval temperance or naval rests, yet she holds a prominent place in the history of missionary work among seamen. It was rare to find a woman in such authority within a philanthropy, but it was certainly more unusual that Weston attained such status through her service to an all-male navy.³⁵ One religious journal, drawing upon the stereotypic representations of sailors, commented about the potential dangers of her task: "In spite of twenty years' work among the uncouth Jack Tars, Miss Weston is still a woman, and displays the native delicacy of her sex."³⁶ Weston was able to manoeuvre in a man's world because she had promised that she "would speak to the lads just as if she were their mother."³⁷ By carefully crafting a maternalist nurturing image as "mother" of the navy, Agnes Weston enjoyed the autonomy to carry out her mission.

The historian's temptation to cast temperance as merely a middle-class movement intent on guiding working-class behaviour is alluring but unfortunately does not account for the wide spectrum of temperance activism.³⁸ Temperance had its roots in evangelicalism and non-conformity and was initially a movement with popular appeal and working-class leadership.³⁹ But with the emergence of large national temperance organizations like the National Temperance League by the late nineteenth century, middle-class activists eventually dominated organizational leadership and the direction of the national temperance movement.⁴⁰ This was similarly the case in the development of naval temperance. The autonomy of independent teetotal societies waned with the official establishment of the RNTS. The direction and trusteeship of the Society had been first selected from naval officers, rather than non-commissioned men, and the choice of Agnes Weston to manage the organization was decided by the National Temperance League rather than naval teetotallers. Weston was aware that her work lacked the consent of the men and often used her publications to highlight how sailors were eager for her help and guidance.⁴¹ She often described her role as fulfilling the wishes of naval men rather than carrying out her own

agenda. Yet the conduct of the RNTS was less an expression of the lower deck and more the personification of Agnes Weston.

Weston, a middle-class single woman, devoted the better part of her life, from the time she was twenty-eight in 1868 until her death in 1918, to the moral and physical welfare of naval seamen. Following in the tradition of earlier maritime missions, Weston's missionary efforts worked to better both the physical and spiritual condition of the sailor. Her work in naval temperance was also influenced by a larger evangelical Christian temperance movement that considered prohibition vital to the spiritual reclamation of sinners. Her missionary work combined practical reform, which stressed temperance, thrift and family responsibility, with spiritual reform that stressed religious conversion and earnest Christianity. Although Weston belonged to the Church of England, she boasted of the "broad and unsectarian basis" of her institutions and organizations.⁴² Her objective was "to bring personal influence to bear upon every seamen and marine in the Service."⁴³ Weston's missionary work with sailors began in 1868 as written correspondence with naval men overseas. By the early 1870s, she had established the RNT and the Royal Naval Christian Union and had set up branches of each aboard ships to help steer sailors towards the proper Christian and temperate path. Within about fifteen years, Weston could boast almost two hundred temperance branches and ten thousand pledged abstainers.⁴⁵ She was aided in her efforts by Sophia Wintz, a single middle-class woman who, like Weston, dedicated her life to the welfare of naval men.⁴⁶

Temperance was a prominent feature in all Weston's projects, from her afternoon *teas* with naval boys, her mothers' meetings with sailors' wives, or her purchase and closure of dockyard pubs. Like national temperance activists who blamed alcohol for a host of social problems, including poor health, crime, poverty, violence, and family disorders, Weston believed that getting rid of the scourge of drunkenness was a necessary prerequisite to dealing with other social problems.⁴⁷ For maritime missionaries and temperance activists, however, drinking was not merely a disciplinary and social problem – it was sinful and inexorably led to the sailor's moral ruin. Despite the structural problems of pay and the poor living standards for the British naval man in the late Victorian navy, temperance advocates, like Weston, continued to argue that drink was responsible for the sailor's distress.

Apart from recruiting individual men to temperance, Weston and the Naval Temperance Society pushed for an increase in the monetary allotment for foregoing the ration and lobbied for the complete abolition of the rum ration. Temperance advocates pressed the Admiralty for increases in the monetary compensation given to teetotallers, arguing that the meager 1.25 pence allowance was hardly an inducement for men to give up their grog. Their main goal was the abolition of the rum ration, which had initiated many naval men into the dangerous ritual of drinking. According to the poem the "Indignant Templar Tar," published in Weston's temperance periodical *Ashore and Afloat*,

Tis drink, and drink alone, that lays the British Navy low,
If you would raise our British tars, not need for you to flog;
Remove temptation from their path – in one word, banish grog."

But grog was not banished in Weston's lifetime. And although she pressed the Admiralty to increase compensation for not taking the ration, it was not until 1919 that the allowance was increased to three pence a day. Considered a traditional right of the naval man, grog was not finally ended as a ration until 1970.

While the RNTS was the official naval temperance organization, Weston's sailors' rests acted as the headquarters for her temperance movement. The sailors' rests, which were homes for naval seamen ashore, were organized on temperance and Christian principles and established in the main naval ports of Devonport in 1876 and Portsmouth in 1882.⁴⁹ Their purpose was "to assure the men of personal friendship, and to seek to bring them, by the power of God's spirit, into living union with the Lord Jesus Christ."⁵⁰ Weston intended that her rests would be safe havens for sailors away from the temptations which surrounded naval men ashore and were important resources to gain her the attention of naval men. By first getting the sailor off the street and away from drink and "lewd women," Weston could then work upon the religious and spiritual well-being of the sailor "where he can be kept free from all that could harm him."⁵¹ As temperance homes, her rests featured coffee canteens, which Weston attested "have been found, where tried, to do so much for the men physically and morally."⁵² Although her rests were free of drink, Weston's policy was to welcome even the most drunken sailors in hopes that they would eventually realize God's grace and take the pledge. Her goal was not merely to provide beds at a low cost, but to provide "a real harbour of refuge" where drunken bluejackets could be sent at all hours for a sobering night of sleep.⁵³ They were generally popular places to stay, although their popularity most likely did not reflect a growing adherence to temperance principles among the men of the lower deck but rather the seamen's appreciation for inexpensive clean lodgings.⁵⁴

The rests also accommodated meetings of the RNTS. As a concerned "mother," Weston instructed her "boys" to keep away from the demon drink. Similar to the British national temperance campaign, Weston's group was obsessed with pledges and with converting men to the teetotaler flock. The temperance pledge taken by naval men was similar to the one offered by other temperance groups, but with one exception – the naval man pledged to forego his daily grog. The naval temperance pledge card was an elaborately ornamental certificate that noted the seaman's "word and honour; God helping me to abstain from all intoxicating drinks and from taking up rum as a ration."⁵⁵ The militant imagery of the card's illustration featured England's virtuous defender Saint George slaying the wicked dragon, which in this context symbolized the sinful excesses of alcohol (see figure 1).⁵⁶ By signing the temperance pledge, the naval man, like the heroic St. George, was chivalrously battling against his own personal demon. With such emotional religious and militant imagery and such significance placed on the ritual of abstinence, taking the pledge was the symbolic conversion of the sinning drinker becoming the virtuous teetotaler. One temperance historian has compared the moment of signing the pledge to the rite of baptism.⁵⁷ By bettering men's bodies, Weston hoped to save their souls.

As a colourful addition to any man's ditty box, the card also served as a physical reminder every time the box was opened of the sailor's promise to stay clear of drink.⁵⁸ Membership offered additional rewards and the card was to be "carefully retained in view of future applications for honours" that were earned with seniority. Weston's success in

garnering pledges was most noticeable among the boys in the naval training ships. From the beginning of her work with sailors, Weston visited boys in training ships and invited them for afternoon teas. It was on these occasions that Weston recruited boys to take the teetotal pledge. By the turn of the century, thousands of boys had taken the pledge, which in practice meant little since the Admiralty disallowed liquor to boy ratings. Still, Weston realized that this was an opportunity to inspire a future generation of sober Christian naval men.⁵⁹



Figure 1: Royal Naval Temperance Society Membership Card.

Source: Courtesy of the Royal Naval Museum, 1988/45 (25).

Her writings and publications were also an integral component of her temperance campaign. Weston's missionary work followed sailors to sea with the free delivery of "Blue Backs," her monthly letters to naval men, and her monthly temperance periodical, *A Shore and Afloat*.⁶⁰ Through her various publications, Weston was able to use different strategies to recruit both the naval man to temperance and the subscriber to support her cause financially. Clearly, Weston was primarily interested in the spiritual regeneration of the sailor but she was more than willing to use social, political, and naval arguments to appeal to both naval men and potential subscribers. As a result, her strategies for recruiting both sailor and subscriber to the temperance cause invoked their devotion to family, God, and nation. Even the temperance pledge invoked the rhetoric of Christian militarism by

proclaiming that foregoing one's grog was both "For the Glory of God and the Good of the Service." And through allegorical temperance stories, ballads, and naval yarns which highlighted proper and improper behaviour for naval men, Weston hoped to impart moral instruction to naval seamen by contrasting the virtues of the abstainer with the vices of the drunken sailor. Only a naval abstainer could fulfill his duties as husband, father, Christian, and British sailor. And those men who took their grog were invariably drunken sailors who not only impoverished their family but were also poor fathers, poor Christians, and poor patriots. But the outlook for these drifting souls was not so bleak because Weston believed that naval ratings were generally decent men who were led astray and could be shown the right path through proper guidance and sobriety. These representations, reproduced repeatedly in her publications, intended not only to instruct sailors in moral lives but also to gain admiration and financial support from subscribers for her missionary efforts. The conflicting representations of drunken and temperate seamen were thus equally important in the conversion of both sailor and subscriber.

Weston appealed to the naval man's self-respect as a British bluejacket and his national loyalty in order to win him over to temperance. In Weston's literature, naval seamen were portrayed as patriotic, manly, and dutiful men who were "ready at any time to sacrifice their lives for their country."⁶² In her pamphlet, "A True Blue! What is He?" the bluejacket "taken at his best" was "a very fine fellow. Bright, cheery, and sunny faced, picturesque and stalwart, he stands true to his old friends as he stands to his country. Brave to a fault, he is ready to do or dare anything – the greater the danger the more eager he is to face it."⁶³ Naval seamen were kind and generous to the fault of being too trusting. Although Jack in her estimation was noble and kind-hearted, he was as "easily led to the right and to the wrong."⁶⁴ For Weston, the traditional grog ration encouraged drinking and with it delinquency. She wrote that "Drink has always been the seamen's snare – the cause...of nearly all the crime in the Service."⁶⁵ Aside from punishments, drinking disgraced the naval man's noble character. She was compelled to help these brave men to live honourably because "to see the fine, manly, stalwart form of a man-o'-war's man reeling up the street, all his manliness gone, and the kindly, pleasant-spoken fellow turned either into a drivelling⁶⁶ idiot or a rough swearing bully, is a spectacle sad enough to make men and angels weep. It was drunkenness which transformed the admirable character of the British bluejacket into a degenerate state.

Temperance was not only an individual strength but also a national asset which was undertaken for the nation as well as for one's own sake.⁶⁷ Whereas drunkenness represented deviancy, weakness and a loss of masculinity, temperance for Weston symbolized strength, conviction, and duty. The naval abstainer was Weston's ideal sailor who was uniformly brave, resolute, and manly.⁶⁸ Her abstainers realized that they could not be "brave and faithful" naval men without giving up drink and "leading a Christian life."⁶⁹ Abstaining sailors could also be heralded in song. Consider, for instance, "The True Blue," a naval song dedicated to the teetotaller bluejackets who:

At home, abroad, in foreign lands, wherever they may be,
May they spread the cause of temperance and true sobriety.
When duty calls our gallant tars to take up arms and fight,

May they be as in days of yore, and "God defend the right."
 May all our ships of war be manned with those who've spurned the drink.⁷⁰

Several accounts featured in *Ashore and Afloat* focussed on the courageous heroism of the abstaining sailor who withstood the jeers of his drunken messmates. All these images imparted the message that military success, which depended upon bravery and duty, could only be attained through constant sobriety.

The health of both nation and navy depended upon the moral and physical health of the British bluejacket. In the 1880s, Weston also took advantage of increasing naval estimates and recent naval scares to argue that temperance was a logical national policy if the British public valued its navy and nation:

with the increase of men and machinery, and everything else in our ships, and all the intricacies of modern warfare, if our blujackets and marines are not, at the least, sober men, I would tremble for the safety of these great ships, worth their mills of money, and for the safety of my country too.⁷¹

In the pamphlet *England Home and Duty*, Weston remarked that "All know that a `sober navy is a national insurance.'" ⁷² Such a strategy of categorizing temperance as naval efficiency targeted both the professional seaman and the concerned patriotic subscriber. In the early twentieth century, one naval official echoed Weston's demands for a Christian temperate fleet when speaking at the Portsmouth rest: "without men of high moral stamp, our modern intricate ships can never be manned or manoeuvred. True, moral men we must have; Christian men are best of all." In describing the requirements to become a torpedo gunner in the pamphlet *A Handful of Yarns*, Weston highlighted the technological imperative for naval temperance. The gunner would have "downright good brains, well-exercised, and kept bright and clear from drink. You don't make a torpedo gunner out of a drunkard. A man must be calm, cool, best of all if he trusts in God, and must do his duty at whatever risk."⁷⁴ In this way, Weston widened the appeal for naval temperance by portraying it as a necessity for the highly-trained, dutiful bluejacket in the modern Royal Navy. In a pamphlet especially directed at subscribers and invoking navalist rhetoric, Weston proclaimed the patriotic imperative of her naval charity:

The great Navy of England, is under God the best asset that the nation has, and the supremacy of the seas is our vital point. To keep that Navy efficient as to ships, guns, and men, is the duty of every patriotic Briton, and ... even from a selfish point of view we should try to make Jack's life as bright and happy as possible.⁷⁵

After all, as she pointed out in another pamphlet, "our naval seamen protect our commerce, act as police all over the world, and guard our hearths and homes. They are ready at any time to sacrifice their lives for their country, as they have shown again and again."⁷⁶ Since these "deservedly popular" men "would shed the last drop of their blood, if need be, for the defence of their country," it was imperative for the British public to help naval men in need.

Weston also encouraged temperance among sailors through an appeal to their personal salvation. Like other religious prohibitionists of this era, Weston cast drunkenness as a sin which impeded the sailor's road to salvation. She attested that "the deep religious life of seamen is a true and abiding fact, and when, with all the energy of their characters, they turn from a sinful to a Christian life, they are as potent for good as they were for evil."⁷⁷ And like the sinner who found forgiveness in Christ, the drunkard could also be reclaimed. She often shared stories of sailors who, after leading lives of drink and near death, would confess to Weston that they wished their lives different, bless her for her work, and finally ask for God's mercy. This image of the drunken sailor instructed her naval readership to give up alcohol and also informed subscribers of her worthy mission. During a visit to a naval hospital in the late 1870s, she described her conversation with a naval patient dying from consumption. They discussed Weston's efforts to purchase the three Devonport pubs which she had intended to convert into a sailors' rest. As Weston described it:

With his skeleton finger he beckoned me to his bedside, and between his gasps he whispered in my ear, "Have you got the `Dock Gates Inn'?" "Not yet," I said, "but I believe we shall; we are praying for it." "And so am I," he said earnestly, laying his bony hand on my arm; "I am praying to God night an day on my bed, to give you that place; there I learned to drink, and the drink has brought me here." Poor fellow, like a sinking boat he was going down; whether he was resting for salvation on Christ was not very clear, but his one desire was that the public house that had worked his ruin, might be done away with.⁷⁸

This image of the ruined sailor who in his final hour embraced Weston's temperance work became an allegory of redemption. For naval men who wanted to avert such a fate, the choice was clear: to sign the temperance pledge. For subscribers, the message was also unmistakable: to pledge money to ensure that those pubs were closed down for good.

Similarly, *A Shore and Afloat* presented temperance as a key step to spiritual regeneration. In the temperance ballad "A Forecastle Yarn," the sailor revealed that:

Tho' he had been in darkness once, and fallen as others low,
And tho' he'd steeped his life in sin, and drowned each thought in drink,
God, in His love, had saved his soul and caused his heart to think.

Not only did the sailor become a better Christian, he also became a teetotaler who urged others "to cast the cursed drink away."⁷⁹ In order to overcome the overwhelming temptation to drink, the naval abstainer needed to realize the "absolute necessity of looking to God for strength to keep such a resolution."⁸⁰

Weston also implored naval men to give up drinking for the sake of their families. One of her chief worries was that a sailor's drunken sprees in port helped to impoverish the family who depended upon his wage. In her publications, she employed the images of both temperate and intemperate sailors to proclaim the advantages of a sober life and to warn of drinking's disastrous effects. The poem "Jack's Come Home from Sea," published in

A shore and Afloat in 1893, features teetotaler Jack, a caring and thrifty husband, who comes home with wages to buy his wife "some wholesome things" and puts the extra money into the bank. Temperance and respectability are linked because it is Jack's abstinence from liquor that enables him to be a responsible husband whose first priority is his family's welfare. If others are to learn from his success, he advises "Don't let the ale-house tempt you in, But throw the glass away."⁸¹ For Weston, promoting temperance was one component of social reform in port towns. Sobriety was the foundation for the maintenance of a content, stable, and healthy naval home.



Figure 2: "A Sad Hobby"

Source: *Ashore and Afloat*, XXV, No. 2 (February 1901), 25.

Her publications also warned the sailor of the consequences of a life of drinking. The February 1901 issue of *A Shore and Afloat* featured a caricature of a drunken sailor entitled "A Sad Hobby," in which the sailor is depicted holding in one hand the reins of what first appears to be a hobby horse but which is really a keg of liquor and, in the other hand, an empty liquor bottle (see figure 2).⁸² Unlike most of the romanticized illustrations featured in her paper, the 1901 cartoon was a particularly rough design. In the corner is his wife grieving at the bare kitchen table, holding a baby, as her young daughter tugs at her dress. "A Sad Hobby" suggests that the drunken sailor pursued drink at the expense of his family. Like other temperance activists, Weston linked drunkenness with the breakdown of the family. By cautioning naval readers of the dangers of a life of drink, she hoped the allegorical illustration would prompt them to turn to teetotalism for the good of their families.

Much to Weston's surprise, instead of pledging themselves to temperance, naval men wrote to the lower-deck newspaper *The Bluejacket* to voice strong objections to Weston's portrayal of them. Between March and September 1901, *The Bluejacket*, under the editorship of lower-deck reformer Lionel Yexley, published letters from naval men resentful over Weston's caricature of them as drunkards.⁸³ In the months before "A Sad Hobby" was published, *The Bluejacket* had featured articles critical of sailors' rests like Weston's which were marked by religion, temperance, and paternalism. Yexley, who had served in the Navy and Coast Guard for over twenty years, spent as much time criticizing Weston as he did lobbying for reform from the Admiralty. He took advantage of the opportunity presented by "A Sad Hobby" to publish lower-deck resentment of Weston's methods and her philanthropy.

Naval seamen resented the cartoon for many reasons. First, there was the implication that all naval men were drunkards. One bluejacket argued that the cartoon disgraced naval men with its assumption that the navy was rife with drunken vagrants.⁸⁴ Not only did the sketch picture the sailor as a drunkard but it also emasculated him by portraying him as a dishonourable husband and irresponsible father. In the March issue of *The Bluejacket*, a serviceman rejected the cartoon's message and condemned Weston's accusations.

I have never seen the married man yet who could go so far as to forget himself and family in the way this pictures him...I can hardly conceive that she who poses as a sailor's friend should try to poison the minds of the British public by holding to ridicule the branch of the Empire who so lately have shown their value.⁸⁵

In June, a petty officer explained why sailors were outraged, "There is no qualifying phrase; the British bluejacket is pourtrayed [sic] as a drunken, dissolute scoundrel, who is willing to bring mother, wife, and children to the verge of beggary so that he may give full gratification to his unholy lust for drink."⁸⁶ Sailors were enraged because the cartoon threatened their newly acquired status as naval professionals by dishonouring and humiliating their roles in the navy and the family.

Sailors not only wrote to Yexley but also sent letters to Weston. Although none of their letters were published in *Ashore and Afloat*, Weston's reply to a naval seaman was published in *The Bluejacket*. There she defended the cartoon by explaining that:

the picture is intended as an object lesson, and is a perfect representation of scenes that I am sure that you must see every time general leave is given....I myself have relieved hundreds of such cases and grieved I am to see so many sad homes...but if he will give up the drink... he will quickly rise and his home become happy and bright.⁸⁷

For Weston, sobriety and bravery were compatible virtues; although the Navy may have been full of brave sober men, it was also full of drunken seamen who not only lacked bravery but also the responsibility to carry out familial duties. Her hopes that the cartoon would succeed in spreading temperance were dashed, as sailors' letters revealed that they objected to the condescending style of the cartoon, the temperance periodical, and Weston's naval mission.

By May, the cartoon prompted some naval men to reconsider the merits of naval philanthropy. Although many, including Yexley, praised Weston's good intentions, they argued that the cartoon undermined Weston's work on behalf of the sailors. Yexley and naval seamen contended that Weston domesticated naval seamen by treating them like children with her tract literature and constant preaching. Yexley wrote that:

We have protested over and over again about this addressing of present day fleetmen in words more fitted for infant school children than grown up men. The day of tracts...whose words are those of a mother addressing very young children, are gone....Everybody is too obviously trying to nurse a sailor to please him. They want to be talked to and treated to a higher quality of appeal to their intelligence; to be treated more like men.⁸⁸

Although it was perhaps instinctual for the "Mother of the Navy" to protect her boys, Yexley and others argued that naval men were no longer the boy ratings who had frequented her afternoon teas. According to them, the problem with her naval charity was that she failed to distinguish between the needs of boys and men.

The illustration also offered the opportunity for naval men to remark on their own social advances as naval professionals. In their responses, seamen worked to define their own identities in contrast to Weston's (and society's) representations of them. One seaman claimed that Weston had failed to recognize that the modern sailor "was a very different man" than the bluejacket of the 1870s.⁸⁹ According to naval men, the sailors' progress by the early twentieth century resulted not from naval charity but from educational improvements, Admiralty reforms, and the self-conscious professional advances of naval men. In their responses to the cartoon, naval servicemen had the opportunity to defend themselves against the mythic popular imagery of sailors. One writer argued that naval seamen were

not the ramping, roaring, godless individuals that some people appear to imagine and that great changes have taken place in this and all other respects since the time "Captain Marryat" was serving in the "Royal Navee." That there is serving in the Navy at present a thoughtful, deep thinking, intelligent class of men, that have the welfare of the Service and of their Country at heart.⁹⁰

By the end of this letter-writing frenzy, seamen had voiced their consternation. Naval seamen represented themselves as intelligent professionals who resented attempts to dishonour their character by accusations, however crudely designed, which impugned their roles as husbands, fathers, and seamen.⁹¹

As can be gauged by such invective, Weston's success in her temperance campaign was limited. Yet she claimed to have thousands of naval teetotallers in the RNTS.⁹² The difficulty in gauging these numbers is that they are only estimates and represent pledge-takers rather than verifiable abstainers. Committed abstainers who would have earned temperance medals for faithful membership represented only a fraction of pledgetakers.⁹³ Even if the movement to recruit earnest naval teetotallers failed, temperance remained an integral part of Weston's overall moral mission to ameliorate the naval man's physical and spiritual condition. To determine Weston's moral influence on naval men would be a more difficult task. She was well-admired by appreciative servicemen and the British public for establishing her rests, which provided inexpensive, clean, and safe board for all sailors. Her philanthropic work was certainly popular and financially successful, with over a million pounds raised on behalf of bluejackets. Such money contributed to her building projects, publications and organizations, as well as providing temporary relief for impoverished sailors' widows and children. In a period when philanthropies competed for patronage, Weston could boast the patronage of royalty, aristocracy, and admiralty. To her delight, her sailors' rests acquired the title "Royal" after the Naval Exhibition of 1892. Royal appreciation of her lifelong work on behalf of the naval man's welfare was demonstrated by her appointment as Dame of the British Empire just one year before her death.⁹⁴ Groups like the Navy League commended her efforts, "Nor can it be forgotten, in the face...of such an enterprise as that of Miss Weston, that the increased comfort, respectability and sobriety of our seafaring population result largely from the initiative and devoted work of a woman and her sister-helpers."⁹⁵ In addition, the Admiralty, realizing that her private philanthropy contributed to the stability and efficiency of the service, gave its tacit assent to her work and allowed Weston and fellow missionaries to board ships and speak to the crews about temperance. Although the Admiralty did not provide financial support to her mission, its representatives attended and spoke at the frequent ceremonies at her rests.⁹⁶ Vice Admiral Henry D. Grant, Superintendent of Devonport Dockyard, commended Weston's good work at one ground-breaking ceremony for a building extension to the Devonport rest in 1888, "we did not want to educate our young lads in drinking habits....Miss Weston had done a most patriotic work."⁹⁷ Commodore A.A.C. Galloway, the newly appointed superintendent of the Portsmouth naval barracks, as well as a teetotaler, even gave Weston and Wintz permission to found a temperance canteen in the barracks in mid-1907.⁹⁸ Set up in the wake of the Stokers' Riots, which had occurred in November 1906 and had been blamed by some

on drunken unruly stokers, the temperance canteen was intended to promote a healthy and quiet diversion for the men. But its unpopularity with sailors led to its quick demise. Although men appreciated the many services offered by the rests, Weston's naval temperance work continued to arouse bitter criticism from naval men who no longer cared to be "mothered."

Throughout her fifty years of service to the navy, Agnes Weston remained committed to spreading temperance and Christianity throughout the fleet. Like other temperance activists, she believed that temperance offered the possibilities for converting the sinner to the Christian faith. Yet in order to attract naval men to take the pledge and to gain the financial support of subscribers, Weston had to employ a variety of different arguments, in addition to religious ones, to win over the flock. Her difficulties were not in her tactics, such as arguing for temperance on the grounds of naval efficiency, but in her portrayal of the problem. Throughout the years, she relied upon older traditional imagery of the disreputable drunken sailor to portray the urgency of missionary work among naval seamen and warrant the continued support for her charities. Yet the Royal Navy and British society had actually changed in those fifty years. The Admiralty had pursued a policy to reduce drunkenness on board ship in order to discipline bodies rather than to save souls. Laws like the Inebriate Act of 1899, which were small victories for the national temperance movement, had likened excessive public drunkenness to deviancy. By the turn of the century, drunkenness, rather than drink, was agreed to be the problem. Like the national British temperance movement, which was collapsing by the early twentieth century, Agnes Weston's movement to create a navy of teetotalers had also met with defeat because of its refusal to moderate its views on prohibition.

NOTES

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1. Michael Lewis, *The Navy in Transition, 1814-1864: A Social History* (London, 1965); Henry Baynham, *Men from the Dreadnoughts* (London, 1976); Eugene Rasor, *Reform in the Royal Navy: A Social History of the Lower Deck* (Hamden, CT, 1976); John Winton, *Hurrah for the Life of a Sailor: Life on the Lower-Deck of the Victorian Navy* (London, 1977); Anthony Carew, *The Lower Deck of the Royal Navy 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1981); John Wells, *The Royal Navy: An Illustrated Social History* (Phoenix Mill, UK, 1994); and most recently, J.R. Hill and Bryan Ranft (eds.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Royal Navy*

(Oxford, 1995).

2. But there has been progress within maritime history in general. See Valerie Burton, "The Myth of Bachelor Jack: Masculinity, Patriarchy and Seafaring Labor," in Colin Howell and Richard J. Twomey (eds.), *Jack Tar in History: Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour* (Fredericton, NB, 1991), 179-198. The series of articles in Margaret Creighton and Lisa Norling (eds.), *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920* (Baltimore, 1996), represent an important historical contribution that connects Anglo-American maritime histories to broader themes engaging their own home societies.

3. Peter Anson, *The Church and the Sailor* (London, 1948); Roald Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth* (Pasadena, 1986); and Alston Kennerley, "Seamen's Missions and Sailors' Homes: Spiritual and Social Welfare Provision for Seafarers in

British Ports in the Nineteenth Century, with some Reference to the South West," in Stephen Fisher (ed.), *Studies in British Privateering, Trading Enterprise and Seamen's Welfare, 1775-1900* (Exeter, 1987), 121-151. Kverndal's seminal book on maritime missions covers the period from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century and provides the groundwork for any study of naval philanthropy. Likewise, Kennerley's work on nineteenth-century sailors' homes for merchant seamen offers perspectives into evangelical maritime philanthropy and developing distinctions between merchant and naval missions.

4. Weston is often briefly mentioned in naval social histories. Unfortunately, the citations present little new information. Indeed, most secondary literature relies on three sources. Weston's first biography was written by Sophia Wintz, her companion in naval philanthropy, and was entitled *Our Blue Jackets: Miss Weston's Life and Work among our Sailors* (London, 1890). Weston wrote her own autobiography, *My Life Among the Bluejackets* (London, 1911), that traced the success of her life's work among seamen. In addition, Weston was also featured in many girls books of the early twentieth century which heralded the moral fortitude of religious and social reformers like her. For example, see Jennie Chappell, *Noble Work by Noble Women* (London, 1910). The most recent biography of Weston is Doris Gulliver, *Dame Agnes Weston* (London, 1971), a helpful, though sentimental, portrait. The difficulty in providing a balanced account of Weston's life and achievements is that many of her personal writings were lost in the bombings of Portsmouth and Devonport during the Second World War. Remaining accounts are held in the Portsmouth City Archives and the offices of the Royal Sailors Rests. A recent article on Weston is Trevor James, "For the Glory of God and the Good of the Service," *Navy News* (Portsmouth), January 1997.

5. Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England: 1815-1872* (London, 1971); Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusades against Drink in Victorian England* (London, 1986); and J. Christopher Soper, *Evangelical Christianity in the United States and Great Britain* (New York, 1994).

6. Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 68.

7. Jon Sumida, "British Naval Administration

and Policy in the Age of Fisher," *Journal of Military History*, LIV (January 1990), 1-26, esp. 9-14. By grappling with both materiel and personnel concerns, Sumida incorporates social history within mainstream naval historiography.

8. Razor, *Reform*, 7-9.

9. Gillian Sutherland, "Education," in F.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950* (Cambridge, 1993), III, 142. Education became a national provision and the Education Act of 1870 provided for compulsory elementary education.

10. G. Goodenough, *The Handy Man Afloat and Ashore* (London, 1901), 79.

11. See Judith Fingard, *Jack in Port: Sailortowns of Eastern Canada* (Toronto, 1982).

12. Peter Kemp (ed.), *Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (Oxford, 1994), 357. Rum was introduced after the conquest of Jamaica, along with beer, as a liquid alternative to fetid water.

13. Razor, *Reform*, 82; Winton, *Hurrah for the Life of a Sailor*, 24; and Lewis, *Navy in Transition*, 271. Until 1825, ratings received two gills (one-half pint) of grog, which was divided into two allotments served at midday and evening. Until 1825, grog was comprised of .25 pint of rum per man with an equal amount of water. In 1825, the grog ration was reduced to one gill per day. In 1831, the beer ration was abolished. By the Victorian era, water consumption had increased with improved methods of storing water in iron casks for longer periods on board ship.

14. Gulliver, *Weston*, 28.

15. Lewis, *Navy in Transition*, 269; Razor, *Reform*, 83; and Wells, *Royal Navy*, 13. The rum ration was halved in 1850 to a half gill (one-eighth pint) and the evening issue was cancelled. The Admiralty also increased the food ration. Monetary compensation was allotted in 1850. By 1870, the rum ration was reduced even further by diluting the grog with three parts water to one part rum.

16. Great Britain, Public Record Office (PRO), Admiralty (ADM) 7/938, "Spirit Ration and Substitutes for It," Circular No. 105, 19 November 1881. In 1881, the grog ration was discontinued for

officers of the wardroom.

17. Wells, *Royal Navy*, 29; and Charles Beresford, *The Memoirs of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford* (2 vols., 3rd ed., London, 1914), I, 17-18 and II, 567. In a more forceful attempt to end drunkenness, in 1863 the Admiralty made excessive drunkenness a punishable offence. The most significant disciplinary problem posed by drunkenness was the return of inebriated seamen from leave and increased incidents of leavebreaking.

18. PRO, ADM 7/892, "Memorandum No. 5: Naval Savings Banks," November 1867; ADM 7/893, "Circular No. 3: Payment of Full Wages to Seamen and Others Who do not Allot: and Retention for Reduced amounts from Men Making Allotments," 2 February 1872; ADM 7/895, "Circular No. 18: Naval Savings Banks," 25 November 1878; and ADM 7/896, "Circular No. 70: Naval Savings Banks," 9 April 1881.

19. Henry D. Capper, *Aft from the Hawsehole: Sixty-two Years of Sailors' Evolution* (London, 1927), xi, contended that the outlandish behaviour of some naval men on leave was caused by "the stupid system under which wages were withheld throughout long commissions, and then, secondly, liberating the men, who had been serving for years in the thrall of discipline savage and cruel in its severity, to sudden freedom, with pockets full of money, thus to be the ready prey of landsharks of both sexes." See also Beresford, *Memoirs*, II, 567: "Trouble with regard to breaking leave and drunkenness is generally brought about by want of discretion on the part of the commanding officer in giving leave. Keeping men on board for long periods, and then letting them go ashore with a great deal of money, involves the temptation to some to break leave, and to others to drink more than is good for them."

20. PRO, ADM 116/1060, Medical Director-General to Board of Admiralty, 6 May 1908, contains a recommendation to offer a series of lectures in Portsmouth, Chatham and Plymouth on personal hygiene, the "evils of intemperance," and the "danger of venereal disease." See also ADM 7/910, "Nore Confidential Memorandum No. 3: Lectures on Personal hygiene, etc.," 20 July 1910.

21. PRO, ADM 7/908, "Circular Letter: Discipline," November 1912. A further Admiralty disincentive to overindulgence ashore was to take

away a seaman's good conduct badge, "a reward for sobriety, activity, and attention," if a naval man were convicted of drunkenness by a civil power. The purpose of such "checks upon the behaviour of naval ratings ashore are to continue in order to uphold the honour of the naval uniform, which would almost certainly suffer in the event of any considerable increase in the number of offences committed by men on leave." Excessive drunkenness had become a civil felony with the Inebriates' Act of 1899.

22. Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, part II; and Harry R. Skallerup, *Books Afloat and Ashore: A History of Books, Libraries, and Reading Among Seamen during the Age of Sail* (Hamden, CT, 1974), 21. Missionaries awakened to the spiritual plight of seaman despite "centuries of near ostracism and neglect by landsmen." In addition, Peter Anson, *Church and the Sailor*; Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, part I; and Skallerup, *Books*, have all pointed out the sailor's symbolic position within Christianity and the missionary's attempts to return him to the light.

Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, 279; and Anson, *Church and the Sailor*, 40.

Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, 102-103.

Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, chap. 5; and Richard Rowe, *Jack Afloat and Ashore* (London, 1875), 131.

26. Harrison, *Drink*, chapter 3; and Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 63.

27. Harrison, *Drink*, 182; and Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 67. But as Soper notes, this religious and moral understanding of society's problems neglected structural problems endemic in industrializing Britain.

28. Agnes Weston, *Temperance Work in the Royal Navy* (London, 1879).

29. Capper, *Aft from the Hawsehole*, 24. See also David M. Fahey, *Temperance and Racism: John Bull, Johnny Reb, and the Good Templars* (Lexington, KY, 1996). One benefit of the Templars was that they bridged social gaps by allowing relationships between abstaining sailors and civilian teetotalers of often higher social rank.

30. The naval seaman was also easily recognizable due to the introduction of a naval uniform in the 1850s. Sailor towns also had reputations as dens of iniquity. Even by the 1890s one naval abstainer complained that there was still "plenty of drunkenness and other disgraceful doings" in port towns. See Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, 216/92 (151), W.T. Grainger.
31. Brian Harrison, "Philanthropy and the Victorians," *Victorian Studies*, IX, No. 4 (June 1966), 359.
32. PRO, ADM 1/7627, "Band of Hope and Dangers of Alcohol Lectures in Royal Navy," 18 August 1903. In 1903 the Band of Hope, a children's temperance league, approached the Admiralty for permission to speak to naval men on the dangers of alcohol. See Lilian Shiman, "The Band of Hope Movement: Respectable Recreation for Working-Class Children," *Victorian Studies*, XVIII, No. 1 (September 1973), 49-74.
33. Wintz, *Our Blue Jackets*, 57. At a meeting in Devonport on 28 April 1873, the National Temperance League took control of the Royal Naval Temperance Society (RNTS).
34. Weston, *Temperance Work in the Royal Navy*, 9. She accepted the position because as "a total abstainer myself, I knew very well that the sailor's spiritual interests were closely bound up with the temperance question."
35. Jane Lewis, *Women in England, 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change* (Brighton, 1984), 93.
36. *Ashore and Afloat* (July 1887), 66.
37. Weston, *Temperance Work*, 8.
38. Victor Bailey, "'In Darkest England and the Way Out:' The Salvation Army, Social Reform and the Labour Movement, 1885-1910," *International Review of Social History*, XXIX, No. 2 (1984), 133-171; Fahey, *Temperance and Racism*; Gerald Wayne Olsen, "From Parish to Palace: Working-Class Influences on Anglican Temperance Movements, 1835-1914," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XV, No. 2 (April 1989), 239-252. Bailey, Fahey and Olsen all point to the grass roots activism for moral reform that existed within the Salvation Army, the Templars, and among working-class Anglicans.
39. Harrison, *Drink*, 378. Working-class, rather than middle-class, activism shaped the early temperance movement.
40. Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 93, blames the failure of the British temperance campaign to win prohibition on the inability of group activism to overcome the legislative hurdles of increasing state authority by the late nineteenth century.
41. Agnes Weston, *Shaking out a Reef* (London, 1895), 8. In her writings, Weston stressed that the impetus to start a sailors' home in a home port came from the naval men with whom she corresponded. After a Sunday gathering in Devonport, one seaman told Weston that "What we want is a place here, close to the dockyard gates - a nice little place where we could be safe when we paid off from the land sharks and alligators, where there would be no drink; we talked about it before we paid off and we said, 'Wonder whether Miss Weston will be outside the dockyard gates to keep us from going wrong.'"
42. Weston, *Temperance Work*, 11. "Unsectarian" here implies non-discrimination among the various Christian faiths.
43. Agnes Weston, *Safe Moorings* (London, nd), 4.
44. Agnes Weston, *My Life Among the Blue-jackets* (London, 1911), 73.
45. *Ashore and Afloat* (April 1887), 39. Her numbers represented all pledges, even those that would have been broken.
46. Weston met Sophia Wintz in Devonport in 1873 after Weston was invited by a ladies club to speak about her philanthropic naval work. Wintz was the daughter of a middle-class Anglo-Swiss family that had settled in Devonport after many years abroad. She came from a naval family, and her brother Lewis attained the rank of Admiral.
47. Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 65.
48. *Ashore and Afloat* (November 1890), 102, reprinted from *Good Templar's Watchword*.
49. Wintz, *Our Blue Jackets*, chapter five. Smaller

rests were also to be established in Keyham, Sheerness and Portland as demand arose.

50. Agnes Weston, *Personal Work among Our Blue Jackets Ashore and Afloat, From 1879-1880: Annual Report of Sailors' Rest and Institute* (Devonport, 1880), 4. Weston understood that the naval man's life was transient: "Often when Jack is on leave he is homeless mid a thousand homes. To provide a happy home for him, and lead him into a sober, clean, godly life, is the object of our Sailors' Rests, and the letters that we receive from mothers all over the country cheer our hearts by telling us of the good that their sons have gained by coming to the Sailors' Rest." Agnes Weston, *Signals of Distress!* (Portsmouth, 1905), 2.

51. Weston, *Signals of Distress*, 2.

52. Weston, *Temperance Work*, v.

53. Weston, *Safe Moorings*, 7.

54. Capper, *Aft from the Hawsehole*, 42. According to Capper, Weston's "plan was first to bring them into touch with the decent conveniences of life...To men accustomed to eat from tables covered with tarpaulin cloths, their own knives, and never even a two-pronged fork in the mess, and only basins and plates when these were purchased by themselves, the change was startling indeed." Naval men remembered Weston's rests more fondly than her religious mission. For such remembrances, see Imperial War Museum, Department of Sound Records, "Oral History Recordings: Lower Deck, 1910-1922." The rests also provided needed accommodation in overcrowded port towns, especially before the introduction of the barrack system.

55. Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, 1988/45 (25) 6.16, RNTS membership card, 1913, Leonard Tozer, RN.

56. R.C. Riley and Philip Eley, *Public Houses and Beerhouses in Nineteenth Century Portsmouth* (Portsmouth, 1983), 15. In Portsmouth, there was also a bar called The George and Dragon. In the late Victorian period, St. George was a popular figure who personified chivalry, Christian militarism and the righteousness of empire.

57. Shiman, *Crusade against Drink*, 19; and Soper, *Evangelical Christianity*, 70.

58. The card could also be sent home to reassure parents that a son had found the moral path even in the navy. As a reminder of why one stays away from the demon drink, the pledge card cautions the seaman that the pledge "should be a *Course Indicator*, and a safeguard to me from the social temptations which lead to drinking and danger...To help others in anger is my responsibility."

59. Agnes Weston, *Jottings from my Log* (Portsmouth, 1889), 22-23. See also Weston, *Temperance Work*. In describing Weston, retired naval men remembered the afternoon teas at her rests when they were boy ratings. See Imperial War Museum, Department of Sound Records, "Oral History Recordings: Lower Deck, 1910-1922."

60. Weston's temperance periodical was first called *Naval Brigade News* but was changed to *Miss Weston's Ashore and Afloat* in 1887. Sophia Wintz edited both papers, which were sent to sailors, their families, and subscribers. For such a diverse audience, *Ashore and Afloat* had to cater to a variety of interests. One aim was to recruit the naval seaman to take the pledge; another was to instruct sailors' families on useful domestic respectability; and a third was to convince the subscriber of the worthiness of Miss Weston's mission.

61. While her rests were mostly self-supporting, Weston relied upon subscriptions to finance her publications, organizations, and relief work for sailors and their families.

62. Weston, *Shaking out a Reef*, 34.

63. Agnes Weston, *A True Blue! What is He?* (Portsmouth, 1904), 3.

64. Wintz, *Our Blue Jackets*, 56.

65. Weston, *Temperance Work*, 3.

66. Wintz, *Our Blue Jackets*, 56.

67. Weston, *Temperance Work*, 36.

68. *Ibid.*, 3.

69. Weston, *Shaking out a Reef* 43. This song was to be sung to the tune "There's nae luck."

70. *Naval Brigade News* (September 1886), 86.

71. *Ashore and Afloat* (June 1887), 53.
72. Agnes Weston, *England Home and Duty* (NP, 1910), 13.
73. Weston, *Shaking out a Reef* 34.
74. Agnes Weston, *A Handful of Yarns* (London, 1898), 1.
75. Agnes Weston, *One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne* (NP, 1902), 5.
76. Weston, *Shaking out a Reef*, 34.
77. Weston, *Safe Moorings*, 4.
78. Weston, *Shaking out a Reef* 24-26.
79. *Naval Brigade News* (January 1886), 6.
80. Weston, *Temperance Work*, 27. Weston continued, "and that, so far from its being the sign of a weak mind, it shows the greatest strength of character - for the bravest man is ever the humblest, and the wisest always feels that he knows the least."
81. *Ashore and Afloat* (February 1893), 16.
82. *Ibid.* (February 1901), 25.
83. *The Bluejacket* protected the confidentiality of naval men by allowing them to air their grievances anonymously. Admiralty regulations regarding speech and combination of naval personnel had made it especially difficult for men to organize and lobby for reform. See Carew, *Lower Deck*, 5.
84. *The Bluejacket* (April 1901), 85.
85. *Ibid.* (March 1901), 58.
86. *Ibid.* (June 1901), 122.
87. *Ibid.* (April 1901), 85. Weston also mentioned that "I am quite sure that my opinion of the Navy as a whole, is well known, which is, that it leads the van in the Navies of the world, for sobriety, bravery, and all that constitutes a grand Service, but alas there is a great deal of drunkenness remaining."
88. *Ibid.* (May 1901), 101.
89. *Ibid.* (July 1901), 147.
90. *Ibid.* (February 1902), 321. Another sailor claimed that before he read Weston's reply he "always pictured her a noble woman trying to do good to our navy...but if she persists in holding an opinion about the picture as she does, she will prove herself to be narrow minded and prejudiced, and will do an irreparable injury to the cause which she has undertaken for the British Navy."
91. Yexley left the editorship of *The Bluejacket* in 1904 to start a new naval paper, *The Fleet*, in which he continued to lobby for sailor reforms and to rail against the type of naval charity practiced by Weston. In contrast, *The Bluejacket*, now edited by Thomas Holman, a temperance man and Weston supporter, no longer published such diatribes.
92. *Ashore and Afloat* (April 1887), 39; *Onward: Subscription List, 1908-1900* (Portsmouth, 1909), 4; *From One Generation to Another, Balance Sheets and Subscription Lists, 1912-1913* (Portsmouth, 1913), 25; *What the Wild Waves are Saying* (Portsmouth, 1914[?]), 6; *Ashore and Afloat* (March 1917), 47. Naval teetotalers were estimated to be 10,000 in 1887; 20,000 in 1908; 25,000 in 1912; 27,000 in 1914; and around 47,000 in 1917. Although the numbers of pledgetakers increased, the proportion of total RN seamen actually reflects a decrease in the percentage signing the pledge. For most of period, Weston was able to secure pledges from fifteen percent of the lower deck. A better way to gauge her success would be to check Admiralty records and calculate the number of men who abstained from their grog ration.
93. *From One Generation to Another*, 25. The RNTS awarded nearly 1400 medals for faithful membership in 1912, when membership stood at around 25,000. There were also possibly some men who gave up their grog or were teetotalers without belonging to a temperance club.
94. She received Dame Grand Cross of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by King George V in 1917, the highest national honour bestowed upon a woman at that time. She continued to preside over her various organizations until her death at the age of seventy-eight on 23 October 1918. She received a final reward after her death, when the Admiralty honoured her with a naval funeral in Devonport.

95. *Navy League Journal*, XXIX (November 1897), 6.

96. Her admirers in the navy included the King-Hall family, Admiral Edmund Fremantle, Admiral Charles Beresford, and Admiral John Jellicoe.

97. *Ashore and Afloat* (June 1888), 60; and *Western Morning News*, 19 April 1888.

98. Weston, *My Life among the Bluejackets*, 285; and Lionel Yexley, *Charity and the Navy* (London, 1911), 34.