

Terra Nova was to take on board a full year's supplies in case she should be detained in the Antarctic (*Grey River* (New Zealand) 1 November 1912). Twenty tons of expedition supplies, presumably ordered by Evans in England, were due to arrive at Lyttleton on 18 November aboard *Rotorua* (*Evening Post* (New Zealand) 18 November 1912). Additional stores were loaded aboard *Terra Nova* from the vessel *Ionic* of the Shaw, Savill and Albion Company (*Evening Post* (New Zealand) 11 December 1912). *Terra Nova's* departure for the Antarctic was initially planned for the end of December but was brought forward to 14 December (*Ashburton Guardian* (New Zealand) 5 November 1912). Contemporary evidence shows that the vessel indeed sailed 'from Christchurch' on 14 December (*The Montreal Gazette* (Canada) 18 December 1912).

Evans' naval records show that on 23 April 1913 he reported his arrival in England following his final return from the Antarctic (Anon. 2010a). It was during this journey home that his first wife, Hilda, née Russell, died of peritonitis and was buried at Toulon (Pound 1963). In 1914 Evans adopted the middle name 'Russell' in her honour (Pound 1963).

Reginald Skelton and HMS *Superb*

One confirmed link between HMS *Superb* and Antarctic exploration is Vice Admiral Sir Reginald William Skelton (1872–1956). Skelton was chief engineer and official photographer on the 1901–1904 *Discovery* expedition (Riffenburgh 2005), having first met Scott in 1900 aboard HMS *Majestic* (Barne 1957). Skelton hoped to be appointed second-in-command for the 1910–1913 *Terra Nova* expedition but was overlooked in favour of Evans to prevent the latter organising his own expedition and to absorb his funds (Anon. 2010).

It is known that Skelton served aboard HMS *Superb* between 1912 and 1914 (Anon. 1961). Can anyone verify his presence amongst the officers in this picture? Is it possible that Evans came to visit Skelton at Portsmouth aboard HMS *Superb* and was included in this picture?

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Further light on Franklin's men

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ABSTRACT. Earlier research (Lloyd-Jones 2004, 2005) based on Admiralty records in the National Archives (TNA) at Kew revealed much previously undiscovered history of the marines and ratings who sailed with Sir John Franklin on his disastrous 1845 northwest passage expedition. These records, mostly derived from muster and pay books, can often be followed up using other contemporary documents such as parish registers. Now that much more, notably 19th century census information, is available online, further interesting details of many of those men's lives have come to light.

Introduction

With the exception of the early medieval Domesday Book, the first British attempt at a nationwide census was made in 1801, its main reason being to assess what proportion of the male

population was available to fight in the war against France which was waged between 1790 and 1815. National censuses, with varying amounts of data gathered each time, have been held every ten years since. Records before 1841 only survive piecemeal in their original hard copies or on microfiche. All those recorded between 1841 and 1911 are now available online. The 1841 census, taken on 6 June, is not particularly detailed; but does list everyone at every address 'who abode therein the preceding night', starting with the householder, followed by his or her dependants, servants and guests. This was done by parish officials going from door to door with the printed form *Enumeration Schedule* books which, of course, they filled in longhand, writing what the inhabitants of each building told them when questioned. They recorded the name, followed by age and sex, with separate columns for males' and females' ages. There follows the most useful column to historians giving *Profession, Trade, Employment or of Independent Means*, after which (in England) there were two further columns under *Where Born*, respectively: *Whether Born in Same County* and *Whether Born in Scotland, Ireland or Foreign Parts*. This is less detailed than in later decades. Yet the 1841 census remains informative, giving a snapshot of the entire population 160 years ago, particularly useful to family history researchers. It was a time of massive social changes when, although many

working class people still toiled on the land, the industrial revolution was getting into its stride, and great numbers were also employed in manufacturing. Most lived in larger family units than today, often three generations under one roof. The better-off dwelt surrounded by servants, usually in big houses with many employees working indoors and out. Institutions appearing include some familiar to us, such as police stations, military barracks and schools; but there are others that reveal a very different society, notably the workhouses with their pauper inmates. All social strata were reflected amongst the officers and crews of Royal Navy ships, including *Erebus* and *Terror*.

1841 was four years before Franklin's last expedition sailed, so there is a reasonable chance of finding records relating to men who died in the Arctic. The proviso is that many of them were serving overseas at census time, so they will not appear. Nevertheless, several have been positively identified, including the significant Hartnell brothers, Thomas and John, the latter of whose body and clothes were preserved by the Arctic permafrost and exhumed in 1984 and 1986 (Beattie and Geiger 1987). In that case alone the census can now enormously embellish archaeological evidence which remained inaccurate without any proper documentary research having been carried out to support the forensic record.

The Hartnell brothers

It has already been established that Thomas Hartnell joined the Royal Navy in 1838 when he was about 17 (Lloyd-Jones 2005: 315). He then sailed with HMS *Volage* to the Indian Ocean until May 1841. By September that year he was back in England serving on the store lighter, HMS *Tortoise*. A month after his return, on the night of the census, however, he is found at home with his 45 year old widowed mother Sarah, in Nelson Street, Gillingham, Kent. This is probably the current Nelson Road (the A231), very near the historic dockyard on the Medway. Most of their male neighbours' jobs are associated with the sea: 'shipwright, caulker, rigger, excise[man], rope m[aker]', etc. It is interesting that Thomas' employment is recorded as 'Seaman' because someone else in the same street, George Muterer, 33, gives 'Navy' as his work's description. Also in the Hartnell house was Thomas' brother John who is now buried on Beechey Island. We already knew that 'Most unusually amongst the men who sailed to the Arctic, John had been brought up to the land-based trade of shoemaker' (Lloyd-Jones 2005: 316). This is confirmed by the census, which helpfully notes his trade in 1841 as 'Shoe M'. The ages of both brothers in that year are given as '20', suggesting that they were twins born in 1821, although no significance should be read into round numbers of years like '45' and '20' which were only approximations. The Admiralty registered John more precisely as being two years older than Thomas. Their younger siblings, Mary, Charles and Betsy, however, have specific census ages of 15, 13 and 9. We further learn from the 1851 census that Sarah was a 'Shipwright's Widow' and by that year, when what had happened to his older brothers remained a mystery, young Charles, now 22, had also become a shipwright. He married the following year and in 1855 he and his wife Hannah had a son christened Thomas, no doubt after his missing uncle. Charles died in 1900 aged 71 (BMD), having avoided the tuberculosis (TB) which killed at least one of his close relatives. Admiralty records also showed that the other uncle he never met, John, gave up shoemaking and joined the navy, going to the same HMS *Volage* on which his brother Thomas had served, in September 1841. He did not have far to travel since that ship was then at Chatham. Four years later

both brothers joined HMS *Erebus*, John succumbing to TB on 4 January 1846. Thanks to their being at home on the night of the census, we now have a remarkable amount of biographical detail on the Hartnells and their relatives, and are even able to locate their house with some accuracy. Since John Hartnell's well-preserved remains were revealed to the world by Owen Beattie (Beattie and Geiger 1987), it is fitting that we can supplement his frozen body with proper documentary biographical details.

A Scottish whaler

It is now established that the majority of ratings came from southeast England, the counties of Middlesex, Surrey and Kent (Lloyd-Jones 2005). The largest nationality after the English were fifteen Scots (amongst the sailors and marines), two being Orkneymen, one from the Shetlands. There were also two Welsh seamen, and two marines and one sailor from Ireland. Those countries held separate national censuses the same day, 6 June 1841. When the expedition anchored at Stromness, Orkney, Commander Fitzjames of HMS *Erebus* allowed the two Orcadians to row ashore and visit their families in Kirkwall, 14 miles away. Unfortunately the Orkneymen both had names which are common in the area. They were Robert Sinclair, in 1845 27 year old captain of the foretop, and the 41 year old able bodied seaman Thomas Work. Since Fitzjames mentioned that Sinclair went to 'his mother whom he had not seen for seventeen [years]' (Fitzjames 1852 : 161), he must have first gone to sea aged 10 in 1828, and clearly was not in Kirkwall at the time of the 1841 census. Thomas Work, known to have been a first entry man in 1845, seemed more promising. The 1841 census does indeed feature a *circa* '35' year old with his name, a fisherman with a large family on the nearby island of Shapinsay; but the censuses of 1851 and 1861 prove that that particular Thomas Work gave up fishing, turned instead to farming, and never joined the Royal Navy.

We are on much firmer ground with David MacDonald, a quartermaster on HMS *Terror*, 46 in 1845, who came from Peterhead in Aberdeenshire. Sure enough, he appears as 'David McDonald', living in Errol Street, his occupation 'Seaman'. Use of that particular word (rather than 'Fisherman'), plus the fact that he was not married at such an advanced age, suggests that he may have already served in the Royal Navy, but was back in his home town, 'between ships' like Thomas Hartnell, in 1841. Most likely, however, especially since he held his important non-commissioned rank, David MacDonald was an experienced whaler. Between 1788 and 1893 Peterhead was heavily involved in the whaling industry, many ships sailing from there to Arctic waters. Until 1835 hunting had been successfully conducted as far north as Davis Strait and Baffin Bay. In that year dozens of British whalers were caught in unusually severe weather; though Peterhead ships were lucky, none being destroyed by the ice. They may have been cautious about going so far north, since two Peterhead whalers, *Resolution* and *Hope* had been lost in Davis Strait in 1830; *James* in 1831. In the 1840s the Peterhead whaling fleet expanded, increasing from 10 ships in 1840 to 15 by 1851 (Milne 1943). The fact that no David MacDonald is to be found there in the 1851 Scotland census is further evidence that the seaman from Errol Street was the one who perished with Franklin. The other Scottish quartermaster on *Terror*, given as John Kenley aged 44 in the ship's muster roll, came from St Monance on the coast of Fife. This is a much less common surname, and we do find a John and Isabella Kenelly [sic] living there, at Fore Gate, in 1841. They were aged 68

and 72 respectively, almost certainly the parents of the younger John, especially as John Kenelly, the presumed father, is listed with the occupation of 'Fisherman P[ensioner]'.

Fishermen, mariners, a sailmaker and two ships' boys

Several crewmembers of *Erebus* and *Terror* who were not at sea at census time have been located, all living near the coast with relevant jobs. In the parish of St Mary, Dover, for example, we find Abraham Seeley, then aged 30, listed as 'Abraham Shelley' with the occupation 'Fisherman'. Most unusually it appears as 'Fisherman Labour[er]', showing that he was also prepared to work on land. Several men on that page are described simply as 'Mariner'. Previous research has shown that Seeley was a Congregationalist, born 9 November 1810 and baptised in Gravesend the following month (Lloyd-Jones 2005 : 313). Sad to relate he had a wife, Maria, about the same age as himself, a son, Robert aged 6, and two daughters, Mary and Sarah, 9 and 2 in 1841. None of them have been located in later censuses, and it is unlikely that Maria Seeley had remarried and changed her name by 1851 since there remained a diminishing hope that her husband might yet return. They may themselves have succumbed to cholera, still epidemic in Britain until at least 1849, though worst in major cities. It cannot have been easy for her to cope with three small children after his departure; though if they did survive they would have gone on receiving his pay until the expedition was officially declared lost in 1854.

Robert Johns, originally from Penryn in Cornwall, was a 24 year old AB on *Erebus*. He is probably the Robert Johns, fisherman, who was living in Saltash, a little further along the Cornish coast in 1841. Head of the household in Tamar Street was Mary Ann Shipway, 25, whose trade is described as 'Beer Retailer'. She had two children, but no husband is listed. Apart from Robert, there were three other single men there, all agricultural labourers; one of whom, John Johns, must be his brother. Both were given the approximate age '20'. Another fisherman, Edward Thomas, aged 30, was with his wife and daughter. Thus ten people were under the same roof, presumably an inn, bearing in mind that beer was sold from the premises. It may have been the Waterside Inn that still stands there, right on the riverfront, opposite Plymouth.

John Sullivan, aged 28 in 1845, held an important post, captain of the maintop, on HMS *Erebus*. In June 1841 he was at home in Gillingham, Kent, with his wife Ann and their nine month old daughter Margaret. His employment is given as 'Sea-Man'. They lived in a place called Manor Court where many of the inhabitants, including Ann, were Irish (they have 'I' by their names in the *Where born* column). Ten years later, with a slim hope that her husband might yet return, Ann Sullivan, now employed as a laundress, remained at the same address, but with her parents, William and Margaret Barry, aged 71 and 65 respectively. 10 year old Margaret was still there too, now joined by a sister Hellen [*sic*: Helen or Ellen?]. Apparently she was conceived just before her father sailed exactly six years earlier. Grandfather William's profession is, somewhat unusually, 'Musician'. None of them can be traced in English censuses beyond 1851.

A particularly interesting first entry sailor on HMS *Terror* was William Wentzall, aged 33 in 1845. Earlier research (Lloyd-Jones 2005: 312) established that he was born illegitimate to a German mother in Gray's Inn workhouse, May 1812. By 1841 he was described as 'Fisherman', married and living in Greenwich, with his wife

Hannah and their 2 year old son. Tragically this first child, William Thomas Augustus, died on 13 December the following year and was buried on Christmas Eve (London Metropolitan Archives, Saint Alphege, Greenwich, Register of burials, P78/ALF, Item 073, P78/ALF/073). But before her husband sailed for the Arctic, Hannah had conceived two more sons, Charles (b.1843) and a second William Augustus (b.25 May 1845, a few days after the expedition had sailed on 19th). She was living at the same address, 14 Little Thames Street, with these boys in 1851 when the census defined her as 'Wife of a Seaman'. Ten years later she was still at the same house, alone and redefined 'Wid[ow]' in the *Condition* column, though now also with the profession 'Nurse Greenwich Hospital'. By 1871, aged 58, still working as a carer, she had moved to board at 17 Hickley Terrace, Bridge Street. She was still alive, now recorded as being blind, aged 89 in the 1901 census, living with her second son Charles (himself 59) who had the profession 'Engineer Seagoing'. She died aged 94 in 1906, never having remarried (BMD).

Another AB on *Terror* was 28 year old John Handford from Sunderland, Co Durham. Although he does not appear in the 1841 census, probably then being at sea, there are Handfords recorded in Sunderland. Head of the household was 80 year old John, still a 'Mariner', possibly grandfather of the one we are interested in. Next in the list of this large family living in Hodgkin Street is 48 year old James, also a mariner. This may be his uncle since, according to the almost universal rule that eldest sons were given their father's Christian name, John was most likely a son and grandson of other Johns. The youngest child listed, aged 1, is yet another John, possibly fourth generation son of the absent Arctic one. Beneath him appears a 44 year old Ann Handford, logically wife of James and aunt by marriage to our John. She should really have been listed directly below her husband. Some of this is speculative. More detailed censuses in later decades ironed out earlier ambiguities; but these are definitely close relations of the sailor from HMS *Terror*.

In the cases of William Jerry, 29 in 1845, and Alexander Wilson, 27, also both on *Terror*, there are possibilities in 1841. Jerry came from Pembroke and a 'Wm Jerry' is recorded at Saint David's in that part of Wales, though his age was already given as 30 and his occupation 'Ag[ricultural] lab[ourer]'. Although the surname is unusual, he is unlikely to be our man. There is an Alexander Wilson, 20 in 1841, living in the right place, Holy Island, Lindisfarne. This is now Northumberland, but was controlled by the Prince Bishop of Durham and, like Handford's home Sunderland, considered part of his County Palatine until 1844. Wilson is also described as agricultural labourer, so unlikely to have become the carpenter's mate on *Terror*; though he was unmarried and living with his widowed mother, sisters and 9 year old brother. Most of the men in that community at that time are listed with the occupation 'Fisherman'.

We are on safer historical ground in the case of James Elliott, 20 in 1845, sailmaker on *Terror*. He was born on 7 August 1825, his father Francis a shipwright living in Powis Street, Woolwich (London Metropolitan Archives, Saint Mary Magdalene, Woolwich, Register of baptisms, P97/MRY, Item 014). He is found in the 1841 census in the right place, Greenwich, the right age, 15, and with the trade of 'Sailmaker[']s] Ap[prentice]'; no longer living with his parents, but a 49 year old relation of independent means, Maria Elliott. He was lucky enough to return from the edge of the Arctic Circle with the supply ship *Baretto Junior* on 13 August 1845. After that one

can trace an uneven career for the fortunate survivor of the Franklin tragedy. Very probably at sea, he does not feature in the 1851 census. In 1861, aged 35, he appears as 'Timber Issuer' in Plumstead (still near Greenwich), married to Anne with four young daughters. By 1871, still married though his wife is not listed in the same household living with him and three of their daughters, he was working as a waiter in Portsea, Portsmouth. He died there, aged only 46, in the second quarter (April-May-June) of that year (BMD). Since the census was taken on 2 April, he only just managed to be recorded in it. One wonders if having had such a narrow escape from the fate of Franklin and the other Arctic victims affected him forever after?

As might be expected, half the four ships' boys who sailed with the expedition appear in the 1841 census since they were then too young to have started their naval careers. Yet, as in the case of Robert Sinclair above, it was still possible to go to sea in the 1840s as early as 10 years old. That may be why Robert Golding (*Terror*) and David Young (*Erebus*), have not been located in the census. But the other boy on *Erebus* was George Chambers from Woolwich, aged 18 in the 1845 Admiralty list. Sure enough there is George Chambers at Woolwich in the census, though his age is only given as '10'. Cross-referencing with parish registers, shows that George William Chambers was born on 5 September 1827 (London Metropolitan Archives, Saint Mary Magdalene, Woolwich, Register of baptisms, P97/MRY, Item 015). He had six brothers and sisters and his father, Thomas's, employment is entered as 'Navy'; more specifically 'Rigger' in the parish register. This makes it likely that he was the George Chambers who sailed on the expedition. That baptism register now confirms he was indeed 18 in May 1845. The other boy who has been traced was on *Terror*, Thomas Evans, also 18 in 1845 when his birthplace was given as Deptford, Kent. He appears in the 1841 census living in 'Flagon Row South Side from New Street', now McMillan Street, Deptford, very near the river and wharves. His age is more accurately put than that of George Chambers at '14'. He was with six siblings ranging in age from 22 to 3, but no parents. The householder was 65 year old labourer, Richard Steele, probably their maternal grandfather. Tracing the record of Thomas's baptism at St Nicholas' Deptford on 5 August 1827, shows that his mother was called Louisa and his father, also Thomas (he was their eldest boy) was, as might be expected, 'Seaman' (London Metropolitan Archives, Saint Nicholas, Deptford, Register of baptisms, P78/NIC, Item 01).

Conclusions

This is the third part of published research into the ships' companies and Royal Marines of *Erebus* and *Terror*. Until this work all of those men's names were known from lists which has frequently been reproduced in secondary sources, usually including a few errors. Skeletons were discovered down the years and some of those who were given a proper burial in the permafrost, including John Hartnell, have been disinterred and examined by forensic scientists (Beattie and Geiger 1987). Yet even as seminal a work as Richard Cyriax's *Sir John Franklin's last Arctic expedition* (Cyriax 1939) just gave lists of names and ranks, ignoring birthplace and age which were irrelevant to his otherwise comprehensive overview and analysis. My idea was to apply modern family history research methods to the working class members of both ships' companies (Cyriax only published brief biographical details of officers from secondary sources). With the appearance here of the final part of this research we now have a far fuller knowledge of what those men and their families were actually like, and of where they came from. One trusts that this work will not be overlooked by future Franklin writers since many inaccurate, ill-informed and indeed plain wrong 'facts' have already appeared in print from authors who should have known better.

References

- Almost all of this research has been conducted using primary sources (censuses and parish registers cited in the text) available online through sites like ancestry.com and the freebmd.org.uk (BMD: births, marriages and deaths). Other documents were consulted in archives such as TNA (The National Archives) and the Family Records Centre. The following published books and articles are also cited:
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