

‘He swam very strong’: Cowper’s ‘The Castaway’ and the Voyage Account Tradition of Maritime Suffering

Zoë Kinsley

The doubling at work in William Cowper’s shorter poems, through which he projects elements of his own emotional and indeed authorial self onto the characters (sometimes human, sometimes animal) of his verse, has long been noted. For example, Vincent Newey has pointed us to the way in which this doubling is at play in the poet’s final original poem ‘The Castaway’ (begun in 1799, only published posthumously in *The Life and Posthumous Writings*, 1803-4). Newey argues that the suffering mariner of the poem serves as a ‘dark double’ for Cowper’s own ‘feelings of lifelong affliction and approaching death’, whilst simultaneously offering him a form of ‘immortality’.¹ He also reminds us that ‘The Castaway’ is a culmination of multiple experimentations with ideas about identification and semblance, some of which – for example ‘On the Loss of The Royal George’ (1782) – reveal an earlier interest in tales of maritime suffering and misadventure.² This essay will consider the relationship between Cowper’s exploration of his own life as an ordeal in which he has suffered the rejection of God as elaborated in ‘The Castaway’, and the story of a mariner’s drowning at sea, told in *A Voyage Round the World [...] by George Anson* (1748), which inspired it. In doing so I aim to highlight another form of doubling at work in the poem, between Cowper’s verse and the tradition of voyage literature that serves as its catalyst and inter-text.

Shipwreck narratives and related accounts of maritime suffering and disaster were popular and commercially successful by the late eighteenth century.³ This textual tradition has been studied in detail by Carl Thompson, who argues that ‘Romantic-era readers [...] encountered a degree of consistency and coherence in the way these situations are rendered’, with certain *topoi* and rhetorical conventions becoming commonplace in the genre. However, Thompson also draws attention to the fact that these volumes brought diverse contemporary discourses together, sometimes uneasily. Readers were encouraged to understand the suffering of mariners and shipwreck victims through the framework

of providentialism, but also, variously and sometimes simultaneously, through rationalism, scepticism, and sentimentalism.⁴ Cowper's 'The Castaway', itself inspired by a prose voyage narrative, both draws upon and complicates the familiar elements of this tradition; Cowper employs rhythms and patterns of poetic language and imagery to elaborate and subvert the narrative structures found elsewhere.

As Charles Ryskamp argues, 'The image of the castaway is the most persistent metaphor in Cowper's work', and Cowper's first interest in it 'must have come originally from the Authorized Version of the Bible'.⁵ Cowper's final and most powerful exploration of this subject was 'The Castaway', one of the poems in the 'Norfolk MSS',⁶ the details of which are prompted not by the Bible, but by a passage in *A Voyage Round the World by George Anson* (1748), which was read to him by his friend John Johnson.⁷ Generally attributed to Richard Walter, who was the chaplain on the *Centurion*, the flagship of Anson's fleet and the ship from which the castaway fell, the work was actually written by Benjamin Robins 'who never sailed on the voyage' but who, Glyndwr Williams argues, essentially 'ghosted' Anson's account.⁸ As the careful archival work of Williams has demonstrated, *A Voyage Round the World by George Anson* was the most successful of a number of textual responses to, and imaginings of, the voyage of Anson and his squadron:

Descriptions of the voyage appeared in newspapers and periodicals; doggerel verses and popular ballads were composed in Anson's honour; unofficial accounts of the voyage were published soon after the expedition's return; and in 1748 an authorised narrative appeared under the name of the *Centurion's* chaplain, Richard Walter. *A Voyage Round the World by George Anson* was a best-seller; it ran through five editions within a year, fifteen by 1776, and appeared in countless versions in the great eighteenth-century collections of voyages and travels.⁹

When, a little over a year before his death, Cowper meditated upon the last hour in the life of a drowning and wretched seaman who was both like and unlike himself, he therefore contributed to what had become one of the best-known stories of maritime misadventure during Britain's war with Spain, already over half a century in the telling. As a number of commentators have demonstrated, by employing the story of the mariner swept overboard, borrowed from Anson's account,

Cowper sets himself adrift in a poetic space which powerfully conflates abandonment by the drowning mariner's crew with the poet's sense of being discarded by God. In this sense it is an intensely personal piece, dependent for its power on the sublime setting of the ocean in which the individual is absolutely alone, exploring his physical, emotional and also, importantly, intellectual response to imminent death. However, it should also be remembered that for many readers familiar with the historical circumstances that ultimately stimulated Cowper's work, there would also be other frameworks of understanding through which the poem might be processed: 'there were evidently many Romantic-era readers steeped in accounts of shipwreck, and well versed in the various situations and scenarios that these disasters could involve'.¹⁰ 'The Castaway' might be read through the 'master narratives' of the eighteenth-century shipwreck account tradition generally, but also, more particularly, via the tragic accounts of ill-fated circumstance and human loss on a mass scale which permeate the accounts of Anson's voyage told elsewhere.¹¹

The first and second stanzas of 'The Castaway' emphasise the plight of the overboard mariner by lamenting his irretrievable dislocation from home, nostalgically figured first as his ship (the *Centurion*) and second as his nation, 'Albion' (l. 7).¹² Newey, noting the periphrastic nature of 'floating home' (l. 6), has described it as a 'telling image of an existence, like Cowper's own, in which rest and stability were always more apparent than real'.¹³ It is worth noting the contrast here with Book I of *The Task*, in which the 'hoary head' of Britain's coastline signals safety to the mariner 'Bound homeward, and in hope already there' (in turn juxtaposed with the very different fate of the sailor mourned by 'craz'd' Kate, who 'went to sea and died') (ll. 520, 522, 556 and 538).¹⁴ The early reference in 'The Castaway' to the embarkation of the *Centurion* from the British coast would be particularly poignant for a reader familiar with the authorised account of Anson's voyage. The moment of departure, which is framed in terms of love and warm wishes in the poem, had, in the official account of the voyage that John Johnson read aloud to Cowper, been marked out as the 'fatal source of all the misfortunes we afterwards encountered'.¹⁵ Severe delays had meant a 'too late departure from England',¹⁶ with the consequence that

Anson's fleet lost the military advantage of surprise and had to try to round Cape Horn in 'the improper season' – the 'southern hemisphere Autumn' when 'equinoctial gales were at their fiercest'.¹⁷ Cowper untethers the individual mariner's experiences from those practical realities that were seen to have had such fateful consequences for Anson's entire fleet. This is but one example of the general impulse in the poem to subsume the individual and historical particularities of the mariner's tale for the purpose of a wider narrative trajectory that reads his plight metonymically for the suffering of the poet/speaker. There are a number of similarities between the authorised prose account and the poem, however. Like the poem, the *Voyage* does not name the drowned mariner and, as in Cowper's verse, the account of his demise is powerful because of the fact that it serves to reveal another and supposedly more significant narrative. In the *Voyage*, the drowning of the castaway sailor is just one of a litany of disasters to befall the *Centurion* and the wider fleet, which included diseases such as dysentery, typhus, malaria and scurvy.¹⁸ In the text's first mention of the mariner who falls overboard, generally overlooked by critics who make reference to Cowper's source text, the castaway himself is presented as just one of many men injured or killed in the height of the storms:

many of our people were forced from their hold; some of whom were killed, and others greatly injured; in particular, one of our best seamen was canted over-board and drowned, another dislocated his neck, a third was thrown into the main-hold and broke his thigh, and one of our Boatswain's Mates broke his collar bone twice; not to mention many accidents of the same kind.¹⁹

The individual castaway who ultimately sparked the suffering imagination of Cowper is, in *A Voyage Round the World*, just one briefly acknowledged victim of an experience of maritime suffering that is communal. His plight is not individualised; many experienced the 'same'. His story forms part of a wider narrative patterning that can be aligned with what Thompson describes as 'Providentialist frameworks of explication',²⁰ which trace the experiences of the crew of Anson's fleet through suffering, despair and hope, towards a fragile notion of salvation.

'The Castaway' is permeated by oxymorons and contraries. The confluence between the metre of the poem and the implied motion of the

waves has been described elsewhere,²¹ and the ambiguities throughout the poem extend that sense of flux and mutability. The mariner has ‘waged with Death a lasting strife / Supported by despair of life’ (ll. 17-18), which endows despair with a strange buoyancy that anticipates the description of the drowning man’s courage and strength of spirit three stanzas later. Resignation to Death supplies the strength to fight it. The enjambment in these lines extends their potential meaning beyond this moment of extreme strife in the water, however; the term ‘lasting’ suggests that the protagonist’s battle with Death is enduring. We are reminded of the way in which these moments of crisis in the ocean might seem like hours, a reference to the trickery and elasticity of time, which recurs later in the poem. The ambiguity here also leaves room for the reader to map the moments of distress experienced by Anson’s crewman onto the long historic struggles with despair of the poem’s speaker. Similarly open to interpretation are the lines which narrate the actions of the crew who watch yet cannot save their friend. The notion of abandonment seems implicit in the lines ‘They left their outcast mate behind, / And scudded still before the wind’ (ll. 23-4). Yet the poem as a whole poses questions about the relationship of those sailors to their drowning shipmate, and about their capacity for action. The phrase ‘scudded still’ suggests action without motion, and implies the effort required by the men just to maintain their position in the face of the storm. The ultimate stillness of that image contrasts with the later association of the crew with ‘haste’ and ‘flight’ from the scene of crisis. The actions of the other crew members are cast as self-preservation – ‘flight in such a sea / Alone could rescue *them*’ (ll. 33-4). However, despite the fact that the drowning mariner cannot ‘condemn’ their behaviour, this stanza’s emphasis on the idea of abandonment – underscored through the primacy of the term ‘Deserted’ at the beginning of the last line – passes its own judgement. The awful irony here is again achieved through the coupling of contraries – the closeness of the friends who are ‘so nigh’ yet leave the man in the water feeling ‘bitter’ and utterly alone (ll. 35-6).

The ambiguous world of Cowper’s castaway can be aligned with voyage narratives discussed by Carl Thompson, such as those by George Shelvocke and John Byron, which disrupt the providential patterns in accounts found elsewhere, by authors including Cowper’s friend John

Newton.²² Such texts, Thompson argues, take on the uncertainty of the location and circumstances narrated:

The world of these misadventurers thus starts to seem doubly untrustworthy. Not only does the narrative evoke the experience of moving through a strange, indecipherable environment, but it becomes itself such an environment, full of indeterminacies: the reader too can feel at sea in the texts.²³

In Cowper's case, the indeterminate world of the poem offers what seems a deliberate reconceptualization of the account of events narrated in the source text. Whereas the poem's opening stanza suggests that the unfortunate 'wretch' has been 'Wash'd headlong from on board' as a result of the tumultuous weather (ll. 3-4), the prose text suggests his fate is a direct consequence of decisions made on ship to ride out the storm:

[...] as we dared not venture any sail abroad, we were obliged to make use of an expedient, which answered our purpose; this was putting the helm a weather, and manning the fore-shrouds: But though this method proved successful for the end intended, yet in the execution of it, one of our ablest sea-man [*sic*] was canted over-board; we perceived that notwithstanding the prodigious agitation of the waves, he swam very strong, and it was with the utmost concern that we found ourselves incapable of assisting him ...²⁴

Cowper seems unwilling to acknowledge that the mariner's fate might be the result of human decisions and actions. Instead he is cast as the victim of greater and more arbitrary forces. The prose voyage account, like Cowper's later poem, emphasises the strength of the mariner. However, whereas Anson's account suggests that the crew were 'incapable of assisting' their overboard friend, Cowper in fact imagines a more active role for the men; they throw 'The cask, the coop, the floated cord' (l. 27) into the water in an effort to offer 'succour' (l. 25). This is an important recalibration of events, which shifts attention from the castaway's fellow shipmates' culpability in his demise, and turns instead to consider whether they do all they can in order to save him. As such, Cowper's poem contributes to wider contemporary discussions about what it means to witness disaster, as, for example exemplified by Cowper's contemporary William Gilpin. In *Observations on the Western Parts of England*, published in 1798, the year before Cowper began work on 'The Castaway', Gilpin describes coastal communities who carry the burden of having to observe shipwrecks in circumstances

in which assistance is futile. Discussing wrecks off the Isle of Wight coast, he writes that ‘Signals can be of no use; yet they [the inhabitants of the coastline] make what signals they can to point out the danger’.²⁵ As in Cowper’s poem, where the objects thrown out to the drowning mariner merely delay his inevitable death, the actions of the observers are redundant ones, and merely emphasise their powerlessness.

In Gilpin’s account of shipwreck, imagined through the observation of mainland inhabitants, the painful clarity with which the onlookers understand the tragedy about to unfold before them is contrasted with the ignorance of the seamen who do not know the danger they are in. A similar sense of distance and difference is established in ‘The Castaway’, between the individual mariner and wider society. That distance is established through the loss of sensory understanding and connection. He will never *see* Anson or Albion again (l. 12), and the final moment in which the castaway is overwhelmed by the waves is distinguished by the fact that his voice can no longer be heard by his friends: ‘His comrades [...] Could catch the sound no more’ (ll. 44 and 46). In the critical discourse of travel, Cowper has in many ways become synonymous with visual supremacy, via another castaway narrative, the ‘Verses, Supposed to be Written by Alexander Selkirk’ (1782).²⁶ The opening line of the poem in which Selkirk declares himself to be the ‘monarch of all I survey’ has become a term used to identify a set-piece scene in travel description, in which a European traveller describes the place they have travelled to as observed from a high viewing point. The declaration of absolute visual cognition made in such pieces of prospect description are frequently found to serve a colonial agenda which assumes the traveller’s social and moral superiority over the landscape, and by implication the people, they ‘survey’.²⁷ Yet, Selkirk’s imagined declaration in Cowper’s poem is, of course, poignantly ironic: ‘Better dwell in the midst of alarms, / Than reign in this horrible place’ (ll. 7-8). There is significant ‘refiguring of authority’ here in relation to the politics of vision, which Tim Fulford notes is also present in Cowper’s ‘undercutting’ of the ‘assumption of authority’ prevalent in the prospect view as developed by James Thomson.²⁸ And in ‘The Castaway’, the poet subverts the authority of vision further, which is correlative with a shift in narrative agency as Cowper moves from the castaway as speaker

in his Selkirk poem, to the castaway as narrated by another in his final original work. The mariner at the centre of the narrative is sinking rather than elevated, and he is wrapped in ‘Obscurest night’ (l. 1). He is in many ways defined by what he will never see again.

Loss of sensory perception and understanding is central to the development of the theme of absolute isolation – physical, social, spiritual – which reverberates through the stanzas of ‘The Castaway’. The language of negation which is used repeatedly and persistently through the poem reinforces that sense of an individual life being incrementally delimited and denied. Together, there are sixteen instances of ‘no’, ‘nor’ or ‘not’ in the poem. In some cases their use serves to emphasise what is irretrievably lost to the mariner in his final moments: ‘But He, they knew, nor ship nor shore, / Whate’er they gave, should visit more’ (ll. 29-30). In others, the use of negators obscures positive action, and casts the mariner in ambiguous and strange terms:

Not long beneath the whelming brine
Expert to swim, he lay,
Nor soon he felt his strength decline
Or courage die away ... (ll. 13-16)

The physical strength and courage of the seaman is here defamiliarised through the use of ‘not’ and ‘nor’ which gain emphasis through their start-of-line placing, and through the connection of the ‘brine’/‘decline’ rhyme. Whilst the reader is reassured that the castaway is *not* overwhelmed by the waves, his (temporary) survival is nevertheless expressed in terms that demand us to imagine an alternative version of events in which he is. This duality creates tension and anxiety: whilst reading of the courageous man’s battle to survive we are already painfully aware of that other possibility, that he is subsumed, which in turn would be a narrative theme familiar to those readers accustomed to the popular prose voyage account tradition. The persistence of such negators into the final stanzas of the poem, which turn to consider the supposedly superior suffering of the speaker/poet, underscores the doubling of the unnamed sailor and Cowper himself. In the final stanza the absence of God is expressed in terms of a lack of sensory cognition: ‘No voice divine the storm allay’d, / No light propitious shone’ (ll. 61-2). The reader knows those negations

by this point: they echo back across the poem's seascape. The lack of 'divine' voice (l. 61) reminds us of the castaway's voice being lost to his 'comrades' (ll. 44-46). The absence of light takes us all the way back to the first line of the poem which situates the action of the poem in 'Obscurest night'. Those rhythms in the poem justify the claim to 'semblance' made by the speaker. Providential frameworks of narrative might be absent here, but in their place are alternative patterns: of loss and limitation.

The poem traces the slow death of the castaway in terms of severed social and personal connections, and a physical environment which closes in upon and finally subsumes him. Yet 'The Castaway' also offers a counter-narrative to that language of limitation and denial, elaborated through the complex temporal movements of the poem. Taken as a whole, 'The Castaway' broadly follows a chronological progression, tracing the demise of Anson's crewman. That trajectory is cut through in a number of ways, however. The poem opens with the moment when the mariner is washed overboard in the Atlantic, yet in the second stanza reflects back upon his embarkation, with Anson's fleet, from the British coast. It also lays the present-time of Cowper's speaker (which it is tempting to align with the poet's own temporal moment of writing in 1799) on top of the events of March 1741. Elsewhere, time both expands and contracts within the space of a single stanza:

He long survives who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld;
And so long he with unspent pow'r
His destiny repell'd,
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried, Adieu! (ll. 37-42)

The speaker of the poem demands that we acknowledge the alternative temporality of this dying man: an hour in the ocean is presented as a significant period of survival. The repetition of 'long', reinforced by the word's reoccurrence on rhyming lines (which are the longer, tetrameter, lines of the stanza), elaborates the idea of time being extended. This expansive temporality is curtailed in the rhyming couplet, however, as time gathers pace again – 'the minutes flew' (l. 41) – and the castaway's

cry brings an urgent close. These examples demonstrate the temporal fluctuations in the poem, which speak to the movements of the water within which the mariner flounders. Cowper's portrayal of the slow, drawn-out time of the 'proverbially eternal "hour" (l. 37) of the drowning man'²⁹ contrasts markedly with many prose voyage accounts in which drownings are narrated quickly, and often 'without explanation or reflection'.³⁰ *A Voyage Round the World* only offers a brief lament for the man washed overboard, before moving on to discuss the damage caused to the ship by the storm:

indeed we were the more grieved at his unhappy fate, as we lost sight of him struggling with the waves, and conceived from the manner in which he swam, that he might continue sensible for a considerable time longer, of the horror attending his irretrievable situation.³¹

The inspiration for many of the motifs in Cowper's poem is clear here, yet unlike 'The Castaway', the voyage account quickly loses sight of the man overboard, just as his crewmates lost sight of him in the darkness.

After the temporal fluctuations which have characterised the telling of the castaway's story, in the final stanzas of the poem the speaker denies any intention of extending the moment of the mariner's suffering:

I, therefore, purpose not or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date ... (ll. 55-8)

Yet again, however, the use of 'not' here reminds us of the possibility that extending the life and memory of this man through verse *might* have been *precisely* the intention of the poet. As Newey has argued, whilst claiming that he has not written an elegy that is 'of course, in a sense', exactly what Cowper has done.³² Patricia Meyer Spacks has noted that the analogy between the speaker and the sailor is introduced in line 3, but only picked up again in line 59. The space in between, she argues, creates sympathy for the victim of this maritime misadventure.³³ When the self-reflective turn in the poem's ending does come, ushered in by the suggestion of 'semblance' between the speaker and his subject, the connection between the two men is severed almost as soon as it is made:

When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
We perish'd, each, alone;
But I, beneath a rougher sea,
And whelm'd in deeper gulphs than he. (ll. 63-6)

Ultimately, it seems, the 'difference between himself and the mariner-castaway becomes more important than the similarity'.³⁴ It could also be said that the claim to superior suffering on the part of the poem's speaker (his sea is 'rougher' and the 'gulphs' 'deeper') echoes the conventions of maritime accounts in which the particular voyage being narrated is presented as more difficult or dangerous than any other. This is how the ordeal experienced by Anson and his crew is depicted in the Walter/Robins account: 'the distresses with which we struggled, during the three succeeding months, will not easily be paralleled in the relation of any former naval expedition'.³⁵

To read 'The Castaway' alongside the prose account in which it originates, and to consider Cowper's poetic rendering of maritime suffering alongside the popular voyage narrative tradition with which many readers would be familiar, is to recognise a complex relationship of both assimilation and rejection. Furthermore, reading it in those terms acknowledges and responds to the way in which the poem actively encourages readers to remember their own material encounter with earlier versions of the story. The closing stanzas of the poem present the mariner's fate as one that has been inscribed in other texts. They sentimentally evoke the emotional responses of readers, embodied in the figure of Anson himself, who weep at his demise as recorded on those other pages: 'but the page / Of narrative sincere / That tells his name, his worth, his age, / Is wet with Anson's tear,' (ll.49-52). The drowning sailor is an inevitably common *topos* of many accounts of shipwreck, or maritime misadventure more generally. However, by placing the individual, drowning man at the centre of his poem, rather than including him in a description of group catastrophe in which many men experience the 'same' suffering, Cowper offers a sustained individual perspective that is firmly denied to readers of those other texts. The poem also fundamentally questions what it means to be a survivor. Carl Thompson has explored the way in which voyage accounts, generally narrated by 'a figure who has survived the disasters and misadventures

described', ultimately offer readers an 'emblem of the enduring self', who ultimately 'gains from its trauma', often through the attainment of 'profound insight and knowledge'.³⁶ The authorised narrative of Anson's voyage was presented to readers as just such an account, supposedly authored by Richard Walter the chaplain of the Centurion, who unlike the castaway sailor safely returned home. The speaker of Cowper's poem is also a survivor of sorts. Despite the claim that he has experienced worse storms and more tumultuous seas than the eponymous mariner of his title, he lives on and writes the poem that remembers the other, unnamed, man. What sort of survival is this though? The speaker of 'The Castaway' has already 'perish'd' along with the sailor. If the voyage accounts discussed by Thompson are ultimately written in order to attest to survival, then this verse appears authored to confirm that death has already taken place, and has been welcomed.

Notes

- ¹ Vincent Newey, 'Cowper Prospects: Self, Nature, Society', in *Romanticism and Religion from William Cowper to Wallace Stevens*, ed. Gavin Hopps and Jane Stabler (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 41-56; 53.
- ² Newey, 'Cowper Prospects', 42-3.
- ³ See Carl Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 61-2.
- ⁴ Thompson, 62 and Chapter 2 more generally.
- ⁵ Charles Ryskamp, ed, William Cowper, *The Castaway: the Text of the Original Manuscript and the First Printing of Cowper's Latin Translation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Library, 1963), 9-10.
- ⁶ Ryskamp's edition of *The Castaway* reproduced the manuscript.
- ⁷ Vincent Newey, *Cowper's Poetry: A Critical Study and Reassessment* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), 276. John D. Baird and Charles Ryskamp suggest that 'it seems likely that he read it [*A Voyage*] before his breakdown in 1763', although there is no evidence to confirm this. See their note to William Cowper, 'The Cast-away', in *The Poems of William Cowper*, ed. Baird and Ryskamp, Vol. III: 1785-1800 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 358.
- ⁸ Glyndwr Williams, 'Preface' to *Documents Relating to Anson's Voyage Round the World, 1740-1744*, ed. Glyndwr Williams (London and Colchester: Navy Records Society, 1967), vii.

- ⁹ Williams, 'Preface' to *Documents Relating to Anson's Voyage*, vii.
- ¹⁰ Thompson, 62.
- ¹¹ This despite the fact that there was, ultimately, a success to be celebrated – the squadron's capture of the Acapulco treasure galleon. See Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea: English Voyages and Encounters, 1570-1750* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 242-5.
- ¹² William Cowper, 'The Castaway', in *The Poems of William Cowper*, ed. Baird and Ryskamp, III, 214-16.
- ¹³ Newey, *Cowper's Poetry*, 275.
- ¹⁴ Cowper, *The Task*, in Baird and Ryskamp, *Poems*, II. 130-31.
- ¹⁵ Richard Walter [Benjamin Robins], *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV, by George Anson, Esq.* (London, 1748), p.84. Due to the complications around the authorship of this text, subsequent references to the work will be by title only.
- ¹⁶ *A Voyage Round the World*, 84.
- ¹⁷ *A Voyage Round the World*, 84; and Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 223.
- ¹⁸ See Williams, *The Great South Sea*, 223-5.
- ¹⁹ *A Voyage Round the World*, 77.
- ²⁰ Thompson, 72.
- ²¹ For example see Newey, *Cowper's Poetry*, 305.
- ²² See Thompson, 76-8, for a discussion of Newton's *Authentic Narrative of Some Remarkable and Interesting Particulars in the Life of ****** (1764).
- ²³ Thompson, 93.
- ²⁴ *A Voyage Round the World*, 79-80.
- ²⁵ William Gilpin, *Observations on the Western Parts of England, Relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty. To which are added, a Few Remarks on the Picturesque Beauties of the Isle of Wight* (London, 1798), 342. For more detailed discussion of Gilpin's treatment of this topic, see Zoë Kinsley, 'William Gilpin at the Coast: A New Perspective on Picturesque Travel Writing', in *The Review of English Studies* 68: 284 (2017), 322-41.
- ²⁶ Cowper, 'Verses, Supposed to be Written by Alexander Selkirk, During his Solitary Abode in the Island of Juan Fernandez', in Baird and Ryskamp, *Poems*, I. 403-4.
- ²⁷ For the origins of this critical utilisation of the line from Cowper's poem, see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), 2nd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).
- ²⁸ Tim Fulford, *Landscape, Liberty and Authority: Poetry, Criticism and Politics from Thomson to Wordsworth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38-9.

- ²⁹ Newey, *Cowper's Poetry*, 271.
- ³⁰ Thompson, 92-3.
- ³¹ *A Voyage Round the World*, 79-80.
- ³² Newey, *Cowper's Poetry*, 310.
- ³³ Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Reading Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), 264.
- ³⁴ Newey, *Cowper's Poetry*, 310.
- ³⁵ *A Voyage Round the World*, 77.
- ³⁶ Thompson, 106.