

## HOME SWEET HOME or LIFE AT SEA?

Boys joined the navy at a very early age, some as young as eleven years old! In 1761 Collingwood was only thirteen years old when he left home for a life at sea. Much of that time was spent in fighting the French. Thirty years later he got married to Sarah Blackett and they had two daughters; Sarah and Mary. He died in 1810 while sailing back to England, desperately ill. In all that time he was only at home for seven years!

Did he like to be at sea? Did he love the adventure? Was his life at home too boring?

I am sure I have great cause for thankfulness for such a family, a wife that is goodness itself, and two healthy children that with her care and her example can scarce fail to be like her. All my troubles here seem light when I look towards home and consider how well I am rewarded for them.

Collingwood to Sir Edward Blackett, his father-in-law (December 1793)



A scene from Horatio Nelson's famous victory, the Battle of the Nile 1798

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

I flew to the inn in Portsmouth where I had hoped my wife would come, and found her and little Sarah as well after their journey as if it had lasted only for the day. No greater happiness was mine that evening; but at dawn we parted, and I went to sea.

Collingwood to J.E. Blackett Esq. (February 1801)