

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of the Liberal Arts

**TRUE BORN COLUMBIANS: THE PROMISES AND
PERILS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY FOR AMERICAN
SEAFARERS OF THE EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD**

A Thesis in

History

by

Dan Hicks

© 2007 Dan Hicks

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2007

The thesis of Dan Hicks was reviewed and approved* by the following:

William Pencak
Professor of American History
Thesis Advisor
Chair of Committee

Daniel C. Beaver
Associate Professor of History

Amy S. Greenberg
Professor of American History and Women's Studies

Carla J. Mulford
Associate Professor of English

Sally A. McMurry
Professor of American History
Head of the Department of History and Religious Studies

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School.

Abstract

This work investigates national identity and masculinity among American sailors during the era of the War of 1812, drawing from a number of published and unpublished materials. It begins with a description of pertinent aspects of maritime culture: specifically, the ubiquitous adoption of false identities by common seamen, officers, and merchants, both in public and in private services. After establishing this context, the project investigates the ways in which individual men had their professed identities, be they true or false, accepted or rejected by other men; and it explains the hierarchies of status which added weight to the claims of some men over others (such as that of officers over that of men from the forecastle). This dissertation also examines American sailors' relationship with landed society. Although sailors consciously differentiated themselves from "landlubbers" they also shared many of the same concerns, beliefs, and assumptions—such as a conviction that a healthy community was founded on the well ordered sentiments of its members. These shared understandings allowed sailors, despite their idiosyncrasies, to serve as symbols of the American national community. Seamen did not accept this role passively; instead, they used it to articulate their own understanding of American nationality. Through their songs and their writings, they argued that the genius of the American nation lay in the interrelationships of its male members. Unlike men of other nations, sailors contended, American men joined together voluntarily in pursuit of the commonweal and the protection of individual members. The last chapter of the dissertation shows how sailors strove to embody the ideals of American national identity to which they subscribed, and depicts the self-destructive consequences that sometimes resulted from that attempt.

Table of Contents

Preface.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	x
Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter 2. THE CONFIDENCE AND THE SURPRISE: THE DECEITFUL PRACTICES OF MERCHANTS, NAVAL OFFICERS, AND SEAMEN, AND THEIR SHARED CHARACTERISTICS.....	35
Chapter 3. “WHO ARE HER SUBJECTS, AND WHO ARE OUR CITIZENS”: THE ROLES OF CONSENSUS AND STATUS IN THE DETERMINATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY.....	79
Chapter 4. “PIRATES AND SHARKS ARE FOUND ASHORE AS OFTEN AS AT SEA”: SAILORS AND SENTIMENTAL CRITIQUES OF DOMESTIC AMERICAN SOCIETY.....	111
Chapter 5. BROADSIDES ON SEA AND ON LAND: NAVAL BATTLES AS CONTESTED SYMBOLS OF AMERICAN NATIONAL IDENTITY.....	145
Chapter 6. “THEIR FOES WERE IN THE MASCULINE GENDER”: FRATERNAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY DURING THE WAR OF 1812.....	175
Chapter 7. “THEY MUSTN’T THINK THEY HAVE FRENCHMEN TO DEAL WITH”: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND RESISTANCE AMONG AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR.....	207

Chapter 8. CONCLUSION.....	255
Bibliography.....	260

Preface

Why should we care about the War of 1812? Though we are certain to be deluged with ever more works on the subject as its bicentennial nears, it will likely remain a subject about which most historians care little and most Americans care less. A war that ended with a restoration of the *status quo antebellum* seems on its face a triviality, especially when the war itself is regarded, as it so often is, as a series of humiliating blunders. When Theodore Roosevelt set down to write a history of the war, he decided that only the naval battles and the Battle of New Orleans deserved scrutiny; the other affairs on land were too ignominious to teach valuable lessons. Shortly thereafter, Alfred Thayer Mahan concluded that most of the naval battles, victories or not, were strategic mistakes. Since then the narrative of the war has been largely a tale of Andrew Jackson's rise to fame through his crushing defeat of a British army which had bested Napoleon. Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster and other lesser figures who will share the stage with Jackson also make their premiere appearances as figures of importance in the build-up to or during the war. The War of 1812 in this familiar telling represents a changing of the guard, from the cohort of the Age of Revolution to that of the Age of Jackson. Rather than a momentous event, it becomes merely a generational turnover.

Historians have interested themselves the causes of the war, but have shown relatively little concern for the motives of the common soldiers and sailors who enlisted to fight it. This dissertation will broach the subject by describing how American sailors understood both the war itself and their own participation in the war. It will do so in part by analyzing a little-known "battle"—a confrontation between armed British guards and

stone-wielding American prisoners of war at England's Dartmoor Depot of Prisons on April 6, 1815.

Throughout the duration of their confinement the American prisoners of war at Dartmoor Prison needed the authorities placed over them. The captives refused to recognize the legitimacy of their detention—all they had done, they claimed, was to fight for their homeland. While inmates of other nationalities who shared the prison with the Americans placidly accepted their lot, the American prisoners of war made their displeasure known. They raised American flags over the prison yard on patriotic holidays, shoved guards into the cold mud, and plotted their escape. Their discontent only grew after the war concluded and the men remained imprisoned, victims of the failure of the British and American governments to agree on who would foot the bill for their return. April, 1815, came with hundreds of prisoners unreleased. They rioted on April 4 when British authorities deprived them of fresh bread and attempted to unload stores of hardtack on them.

A moment of confusion two days later brought a large crowd of inmates into the courtyard of the depot, face-to-face with a line of British militiamen with their weapons at the ready. When commanded to disperse the Americans refused. They assaulted the riflemen before them with insults and whatever the ground at their feet offered to hand. After repeated warnings, the Britons let loose a volley over the prisoners' heads. Instead of cowing them, this act only angered the inmates further. The next volley went straight into the ranks of men. More would follow as the prisoners broke for the safety of their barracks. The altercation left at least six American prisoners dead and some sixty wounded, half that number gravely so.

The “Dartmoor Massacre,” as the event came to be known, remained in the American consciousness for several generations to follow. In its immediate aftermath several survivors recorded their memories of the event for publication. A new spate of narratives emerged in the 1840s and 1850s, as aging men told tales of their brief forays upon the ocean, using the Massacre to climax their story. Even in the 1870s, autobiographers for whom the Massacre was one event among many in a long life mentioned it on their title pages—presumably its notoriety remained a selling point. Around that time, newspaper obituaries began to carry a curious feature: when memorializing elderly men who had spent part of their youth at sea, eulogists would wonder, “Have we seen the passing of the last of the survivors of the Dartmoor Prison Massacre?” As late as 1926 a publishing company advertising its new edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Yarn of the Yankee Privateer* referenced the “famous Dartmoor massacre of American prisoners.” Clearly, what happened at Dartmoor that early spring day more than three months after the war had officially ended struck a resounding chord with the American nation.

I would argue that we can understand something about the importance of the War of 1812 by analyzing the events that led to the Dartmoor Massacre. At the beginning of the war, the United States held a low position in the ranks of nations. Stronger states like Britain and France, and even weaker ones like those of North Africa, abused it with seeming impunity. Americans boasted of their liberty yet they could not protect their sailors on the high seas or secure the rights of neutral trade which they believed they deserved. They declared war against Britain in the summer of 1812 partly to earn respect from the rest of the world, and to have their rights as an independent nation recognized.

Similarly, the American prisoners who provoked the Dartmoor Massacre seem to have felt compelled to defy their armed captors even at the risk of death. In defense of their actions, they explained that they were Americans; as Americans they were freemen; as freemen they could not bow to the will of an arbitrary tyrant. Their countrymen used much the same rhetoric in explaining the nation's recourse to war. The prisoners' patriotic truculence won them the admiration of their compatriots. For the historian, it offers an entrée into their understanding of their nation, themselves, and the war they waged.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who made this project possible including the many professors in seminar, colleagues at conferences, and fellow students in less formal surroundings whose advice has helped me shape different aspects of this dissertation. I owe special thanks to my committee members, Dan Beaver, Amy Greenberg, Sally McMurry, and Carla Mulford, not only for their guidance in bringing this work to its current state, but also for their suggestions on what to do next. Above all, I am indebted beyond my ability to repay to my advisor Bill Pencak, who from my first day in grad school has inspired, encouraged, and corrected me, while also allowing me to pursue my interests wherever they led me.

Several awards have helped to offset the costs of researching in archives in numerous different states. I am grateful for the financial support given me by the persons who have funded the Charles and Harriet Pencak Award, the Hill Fellowship for Study in History, and the Pennsylvania State Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists State History Award.

Emotionally I have been buoyed throughout my grad school years by the support of several good friends. There are many I could name, but Steele Nowlin, Tim Arner, Sasha Krivonosov, and Mary Faulkner have probably suffered from my antics the longest and most patiently.

Of course, none has done more for me than my fiancée Katherine Maas, whom I hope will let me spend the rest of our lives trying to repay her.

Introduction

National identity proved tricky for American seafarers in the early nineteenth century. Their relationship to it was complicated and full of contradictions. Sailors of the United States defined themselves as members of the American nation, and worked hard to prove their claims. Their fellow Americans held them up as virtuous symbols of the American nation; but they also dismissed them as profligate threats to the republic. At the same time, sailors on the high seas often found it convenient to renounce their American identity and assume that of another country, if only temporarily. When placed under duress, it was not always clear which path a seaman would pursue—would he call on his compatriots for support or would he turn his back on his country in pursuit of life, liberty, or happiness? Different men, of course, responded in different ways—and often one person responded differently as circumstances changed. Perhaps the one aspect of seafarers’ lived experience with nationality in the era of the War of 1812 that remained constant was its ambiguity. This quality makes the subject a difficult but also a fascinating one.

International conflicts can provide fertile ground for the self-definition of a nation, both by providing an “Other” against which members of a nation can define themselves and a cause around which those members can cohere.¹ The War of 1812

¹ Linda Colley, for example, contends that many of the subjects of Great Britain found a common Protestant identity in contrast to their perennial Catholic French nemesis. On a grander scale, Edward W. Said shows how a coterie of Western European intellectuals for several centuries (and into the present) has defined the people of its own region against a negative stereotype of the Muslim “Oriental.” Roy Harvey Pearce has provided an excellent overview of Euro-Americans varying constructions of American Indian identity from colonial times through the nineteenth century. Murray Pittock challenges the degree to which Protestantism actually united a British people divided into several competing sects; however, as Potter

occurred at a time when conceptions of the American nation were fresh, even inchoate.²

Several instruments for the construction and dissemination of national identity were in place already, particularly a federal government, a national press, and national political affiliations. The War for Independence, meanwhile, offered the memories, myths, legends, and even living veterans requisite to a sense of shared identity and purpose.³

points out in his seminal discussion of American sectionalism, nationalism can accommodate a multitude of loyalties. See Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1992); Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, rev. ed. (1953; repr., Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971); Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685–1789* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," *The American Historical Review* 67, no. 4 (July 1962): 924–950.

² General accounts of nationalism often depend on factors absent from the early-nineteenth-century American landscape, especially Romanticism, an influential and self-conscious bourgeoisie, and an industrialized or industrializing economy. For examples, see E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1790: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2d ed. (1990; Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983). In the historiography of the United States, intellectual analyses of American nationalism were in vogue in the middle of the twentieth century. These accounts usually derived from the premise that, in the absence of a strong national government, American national identity stemmed from an idea—liberty, individualism, democracy, and Union itself all being set forth as candidates. This trend of historiography has not fully died, as evidenced by John M. Murrin's description of the Early Republican Union as a "roof without walls" and Rogan Kersh's tracing of the shifting meanings of the term "union." In the last quarter of a century, historiography of American nationalism has taken a noticeably "postmodernist" bent, described below. See Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism: An Interpretative Essay* (New York: Macmillan, 1957); Paul C. Nagel, *One Nation Indivisible: The Union in American Thought, 1776–1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); Murrin, "A Roof without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity," in *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, ed. Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 333–348; Kersh, *Dreams of a More Perfect Union* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 2001). For a survey of scholarly approaches to nationalism since the late nineteenth century (with an emphasis on European history and historiography), see Paul Lawrence, *Nationalism: History and Theory* (Great Britain: Pearson, 2005).

³ The most important effort to explain the rise of nationalism before the mid-nineteenth century remains Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. Anderson identifies print culture as the source of nationalistic ideas. He argues, in short, that print media, newspapers especially, allowed members of far-flung localities to imagine themselves to be sharing a common, even simultaneous, experience, facilitating communal feelings with persons one had never met and quite probably never would. David Waldstreicher applied Anderson's thesis to the Revolutionary United States, and refined it with the addition of public performances—processions, parades, orations, and the like. Other scholars have analyzed specific performances or specific aspects of them, including Independence Day celebrations and depiction of the sacrifices and sufferings of Revolutionary veterans: Sarah J. Purcell's recent work on the centrality of military sacrifice to national identity is of particular importance to this study. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (1983, 1993; New York and London: Verso, 2000); Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Purcell, *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002);

However, divisions remained deep, exacerbated by domestic policies and international affairs.⁴

Len Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997); Simon Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Andrew W. Robertson, "'Look on This Picture . . . And This!': Nationalism, Localism, Partisan Images of Otherness in the: United States, 1787–1820," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 4 (October 2001): 1263–1281, <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/106.4/ah0401001263.html>.

⁴ During the Early Republican period, international affairs were arguably the most divisive issue in domestic politics. Federalists regarded Republicans as French puppets; Republicans perceived Federalists as a party enthralled by Great Britain. The polarization of politics threatened the permanency of the nation. Marshall Smelser has aptly named the 1790s as an "Age of Passion," a term which can be easily applied to the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century as well. For some time, it has been fashionable to examine the politics of this period in terms of classical republicanism. Although historians, especially Joyce Appleby, mounted important assaults on this paradigm, it prevailed from roughly 1960 to 1990. The scholars who worked within the paradigm sought to identify which of the two major parties was the "court" party and which was the "country" party; they also tried to identify when the classical republican period came to an end—whether it was the ratification of the Constitution, the Revolution of 1800, or the War of 1812. An important contention of several of these works is that the shared republicanism of the two parties exacerbated their hostility, as each saw itself as the only body that could preserve the republic. In a sense, then, republicanism was one of the ideas (along with Union, individualism, and liberty) around which historians have fixed American nationalism. Nonetheless, as James Roger Sharp reminds us in his *Politics of the Early Republic*, though partisan division may have resulted from shared commitments to republicanism, that did not lessen the virulence of political passions or weaken the destructive potential of partisanship. For works that view the politics of the early republic in the light of classical republicanism, and attempt to measure the influence of that ideology on political affairs and party ideologies, see Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, enlarged ed. (1967; Cambridge, Mass., and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992); Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic 1776–1787* (London and New York: Norton, 1969); Lance Banning, "Republican Ideology and the Triumph of the Constitution, 1789 to 1793," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 31, no. 2 (April 1974): 167–188; Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1978); Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For Joyce Appleby's arguments in favor of liberalism, rather than republicanism, as the defining ideology of the Jeffersonian period, see Appleby, "What Is Still American in the Political Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson?" *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 39, no. 2 (1982): 287–309, reprinted in *The New American Nation*, vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 229–251; Appleby, "Commercial Farming and the 'Agrarian Myth' in the Early Republic," *Journal of American History* 68, no. 4 (1982): 833–849, reprinted in *ibid.*, 211–227; Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1984). For a synthesis of these views, see Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1992); Banning, *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1995); Andrew Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism & Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004). For works that identify the antagonistic factions of the Federalist Era as being in equal measure proponents of republican values, see Smelser, "The Federalist Period as an Age of Passion," *American Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (1958): 391–419, reprinted in *The New American Nation*, vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 1–29; John R. Howe Jr., "Republican Thought and the Political Violence of the 1790s," *American Quarterly* 19, no. 2, part 1 (1967): 147–165, reprinted in *ibid.*, 31–49; and James M. Banner Jr., *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in*

The War of 1812 presented both opportunities for and obstacles to a developed sense of American national identity. On the one hand, the war was fought against a people with whom most Americans shared what were typically catalogued as essential national traits (and which historians continue to use today): language, ethnicity, manners, law, religion, literature, history, and so forth. Even the tools for defining the American nation had been largely adopted from Great Britain. Independence Day and other political festivals bore so many similarities to the celebrations of kings' birthdays in England that orators felt obligated to explicate the differences.⁵ Patriotic American songs were often inherited from British tunesmiths: American singers of the early nineteenth century extolled the virtues of the American character to the tune of "Rule Britannia." Even American chauvinism descended linearly from British prejudices, each nation identifying itself as uniquely possessed of liberty.⁶

On the other hand, the War of 1812 gave Americans the chance to break cleanly from the English nation (though the attempt was resisted by many Americans, especially

Massachusetts, 1789–1815 (New York: Knopf, 1970). For a critique of the contention that shared republican convictions united partisans in fact more than they realized, see Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1993). As a counterexample, Joseph J. Ellis contends that the defining feature of the early republic was the absence of violence, an almost unique condition in a postrevolutionary environment. See Ellis, *The Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* 2d ed. (2000; New York: Vintage Books, 2002). For political passions during the War of 1812 specifically, see Roger H. Brown, *The Republic in Peril: 1812* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964); Richard Buel Jr., *America on the Brink: How the Political Struggle over the War of 1812 Almost Destroyed the Young Republic* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Samuel Eliot Morison, "Dissent in the War of 1812," in *Dissent in Three American Wars*, by Samuel Eliot Morison, Frederick Merk, and Frank Freidel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), 1–31.

⁵ For the adoption of English ceremonies in the interest of constructing an American national identity, see Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*; and Waldstreicher, "Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism," *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 1 (1995): 37–61.

⁶ Indeed, one correspondent explained American naval victories in a racialist vein that would suit Theodore Roosevelt: "Our Frigates are constantly victorious:—are we not the Sons of Englishmen?—descended from the same stock?—a chip off the old block?—by americans alone have they been worsted on their favorite element." John F. Mifflin to Thomas Law, Philadelphia, 16 December 1812, Thomas Law Papers, Library of Congress (LOC), Manuscript Division, Washington D.C.

the Federalists of New England, who condemned war against Great Britain as a type of fratricide). Since Americans and Britons both laid claim to exclusive ownership over the concept of liberty, Americans, to differentiate themselves from Britons, had to gain liberty's sole possession. The victories of the U.S. Navy provided the grounds for doing so.

Contemporary Britons had long felt the sting of the contradiction inherent in their dependence on naval might and their self-identification as freemen. Put simply the Royal Navy could only flourish through impressment, a form of practical enslavement which even its supporters regarded as a grim necessity, a sacrifice of personal liberty, and “a hardship,” in the words of one eighteenth-century British sailor, “which nothing but absolute necessity can reconcile to our boasted freedom.”⁷ The comparatively tiny American navy, conversely, did not resort to impressment to fill its ranks.⁸ These different manning policies allowed Americans to use their navy—and even more, the men who served in it—to prove that they were freer than Britons, especially since British impressment directly affected American sailors. Once American sailors began to score victories over their British opponents, Americans could claim not only that their nation was freer, but also that it was consequently superior to the English nation. Nonetheless, national identity would remain an ambiguous and contested concept. Nowhere was this more evident than in the lived experiences of American sailors.

⁷ William Spavens, *The Narrative of William Spavens. A Chatham Pensioner*, ed. N. A. M. Rodger (London: Chatham, 1998), 20.

⁸ This fact should not be taken to mean that the United States Navy successfully filled its much fewer berths. Throughout the early republican period the institution suffered from a dearth of recruits. This drought lasted through the War of 1812. However, even at the height of its glory, the U.S. Navy was never as important to the American people as the Royal Navy was to Britons (for whom the institution symbolized national strength and national survival). The failure to man its navy adequately, simply put, was not the terrifying prospect for Americans that it was for Britons; therefore, they could avoid recourse to impressment.

Compared to their British counterparts in the Napoleonic wars, common American seafarers of the War of 1812 have received little attention from historians.⁹ Naval aspects of that conflict certainly have not been ignored: scholarly and popular books have been written about individual wars, battles, and commanders during this time period, usually focusing on political or military concerns.¹⁰ Social and cultural issues, by comparison, are neglected (though by no means entirely ignored).¹¹ Much of the best

⁹ For sailors in the Georgian Navy, see Christopher Lloyd, *The British Seaman 1200–1860: A Social Survey* (1968; repr., Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970), 194–266; N. A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London: Collins, 1986). For the Royal Navy's function as a symbol of the British nation, see Colley, *Britons*; and Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750–1815* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2002).

¹⁰ For the Navy generally during this period, see William M. Fowler Jr., *Jack Tar and Commodores: The American Navy, 1783–1815* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984); Nathan Miller, *The U.S. Navy: A History*, 3d ed. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 11–79. Christopher McKee provides an excellent history of the bureaucracy of the Navy Department and the character of the officer corps (though he chose not to probe the character of fore-castle men in this work) in his *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794–1815* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991). For the Navy's role in the Quasi War, see Michael A. Palmer, *Stoddert's War: Naval Operations During the Quasi-War with France, 1798–1801* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987). For its role in America's conflicts with the Barbary States, see Gardner W. Allen, *Our Navy and the Barbary Corsairs* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1965); Michael L. S. Kitzen, *Tripoli and the United States at War: A History of American Relations with the Barbary States, 1785–1808* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1993); and Richard B. Parker, *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004). Parker provides an important corrective to the bellicose jingoism that characterizes much work on that subject. The best survey of the naval aspect of the War of 1812 remains Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*, 2 vols., rev. ed. (1903–1904; Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1919); but see also Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812*, 2 vols., rev. ed. (1882; New York and London: Putnam, 1910); C. S. Forester, *The Age of Fighting Sail: The Story of the Naval War of 1812* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956); Robert Gardiner, ed., *The Naval War of 1812* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1998). For a good account of the war seen from the perspective of two commanders, one American and one British, who fought each other in the battle of the HMS *Pelican* versus the USS *Argus*, see Ira Dye, *The Fatal Cruise of the Argus: Two Captains in the War of 1812* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994).

¹¹ Ira Dye and Christopher McKee have both contributed to painting a statistical portrait of the common sailor in the U.S. Navy and American merchant services during the early republican period. See Dye, "Early American Merchant Seafarers," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, no. 5 (15 October 1976): 331–360; and McKee, "Foreign Seamen in the United States Navy: A Census of 1808," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 42, no. 3 (July 1985): 383–393. A good deal of work has been done about sailors as prisoners of war during the Revolution. Francis D. Cogliano argues from the experience of imprisoned privateersman William Russell that opportunities for economic advancement among the maritime poor were slight in the early republican period. Sheldon Cohen discovered the same traits of reckless rebelliousness in American prisoners during the Revolution that I have found among prisoners during the War of 1812 (see chapter six of this dissertation). However, he attributes this behavior to an innate characteristic of Americans acquired in the colonial environment, whereas I see it as a deliberate (and sometimes desperate) portrayal of the traits which the prisoners believed they were supposed to possess as Americans. See Cohen, *Yankee Sailors in British Gaols: Prisoners of War at Forton and Mill*,

work in American maritime history has been done on Early Republican seamen generally, with much of the focus on their role in non-military services such as shipping, fishing, and whaling. The scholars involved in this work have used maritime experiences to illuminate issues of race, gender, class, conceptions of freedom, and even the economic organization of American society.¹² But the nationalistic conceptions of

1777–1783 (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995); Cogliano, *American Maritime Prisoners in the Revolutionary War: The Captivity of William Russell* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2001); and Larry G. Bowman, *Captive Americans: Prisoners During the American Revolution* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976). Though it does not address maritime culture prominently, one should also consult the article “George Robert Twelves Hewes,” in which Alfred F. Young interprets the meaning of the American Revolution for one member of the working class (who served a brief stint on a privateer). See Young, “George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742–1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 38, no. 4 (October 1981): 561–623. For prisoners of war during the War of 1812, see Paul Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 175–191; W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 102–130; Robin F. A. Fabel, “Self-Help in Dartmoor: Black and White Prisoners in the War of 1812,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 9 (Summer 1989), 165–190; Reginald Horsman, “The Paradox of Dartmoor Prison.” *American Heritage* 26 (February 1975): 13–17, 85.

¹² Margaret Creighton showed that whaling provided young men with the means to escape from the maternal home and pursue manhood through the rough-and-tumble fraternity of the forecabin. For African American men, seafaring life before the antebellum era offered perhaps the most colorblind working environment, and hence one of the best means for African American men to acquire the traits of respectable manhood, as W. Jeffrey Bolster’s work has proved. Lisa Norling found from her investigation of whaling officers’ wives that those women formed an important pillar of the whaling industry by maintaining their homes in their husbands’ absences and using their influence to curb the worst behavior of officers. Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh have argued that sailors in the eighteenth century constituted part of an international proletariat that terrified the emerging commercial classes (though they admit that many sailors began to embrace nationalism early in the nineteenth century). In a similar (though more rigorous) vein, Jesse Lemisch and Paul Gilje have both analyzed sailors’ contributions to the rhetoric of practice of liberty in the revolutionary era of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In two works, Daniel Vickers has traced the connections between maritime labor and labor on land in Colonial and Early Republican America. See Creighton, *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830–1870* (Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Bolster, *Black Jacks*; Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women & the Whalefishery, 1720–1870* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000); Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700–1750* rev. ed. (1987; repr., Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Lemisch, *Jack Tar vs. John Bull: The Role of New York’s Seamen in Precipitating the Revolution* (New York and London: Garland, 1997); Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*; Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630–1850* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Vickers, with Vince Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2005). See also Myra C. Glenn, “The Naval Campaign Against Flogging: A Case Study in Changing Attitudes Toward Capital Punishment, 1830–1850,” *American Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (Autumn, 1983): 408–425; Allan A. Arnold, “‘All Hands Drunk and Rioting’: Disobedience in the Old Merchant Marine,” in *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, ed. Timothy J. Runyan (Detroit: Wayne State University Press,

American seafarers, engaged in a conflict fought largely in their name, has not received the attention it deserves.¹³

It is not too much to say, however, that the U.S. Navy was one of the few institutions that received nationwide approbation throughout the war years—indeed, perhaps the only one.¹⁴ Contrary to Republican expectations, the war did not unite the American people: Federalists denounced it as a war of the administration, not the nation. Federalists and “Old Republicans” such as John Randolph dripped contempt for regular soldiers and for the militiamen of the West. Republicans, meanwhile, threw up their hands at the refusal of New England and New York militiamen to cross over the borders of their own states. Even Independence Day celebrations, the most important pageants of American national unity, were divided along partisan lines.¹⁵ Only the navy was well

1987; Ruth Wallis Herndon, “The Domestic Cost of Seafaring: Town Leaders and Seamen’s Families in Eighteenth-Century Rhode Island,” in *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, ed. Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Linda M. Maloney, “Doxies at Dockside: Prostitution and American Maritime Society, 1800–1900,” in *Ships, Seafaring, and Society*; Gaddis Smith, “Black Seamen and the Federal Courts, 1789–1860,” in *ibid.*; Simon P. Newman, “Reading the Bodies of Early American Seafarers,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., LV, no. 1 (January, 1998): 59–82.

¹³ The work of Robert E. Cray Jr., is an important exception. In two recent articles, he has described the political exploitation of the “Jersey dead” (prisoners of war, largely sailors, who died in British prison hulks like the *Jersey* during the Revolution) by Republicans in an attempt to retain popular support during the Embargo; and the American response to the *Chesapeake v Leopard* affair, with particular attention to the relative indifference shown to the men impressed from the *Chesapeake* (as opposed to the one sailor who was killed by British fire and the insult to a public American ship generally). See Cray, “Commemorating the Prison Ship Dead: Revolutionary Memory and the Politics of Sepulture in the Early Republic, 1776–1808,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 56, no. 3. (July 1999): 565–590; and Cray, “Remembering the USS *Chesapeake*: The Politics of Maritime Death and Impressment,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (Fall 2005): 445–474. For popular reactions to the plight of sailors held in Barbary captivity between 1785 and 1820, see also Robert J. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World 1776–1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Because seafarers of the period slipped between the naval and commercial services, some scholars not primarily interested in the navy nonetheless discuss it in their works; this is particularly true of Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*; and Bolster, *Black Jacks*.

¹⁴ Samuel Eliot Morison has made this point already. In his essay on Federalists dissent in the War of 1812, he noted that, “A naval ball at the Exchange Coffee House on State Street in March 1813 was the only public function during the war when both parties got together.” This statement is not precisely true, as Republicans and Federalists congregated at several naval celebrations. Morison, “Dissent,” 7.

¹⁵ As Robertson has pointed out, if nations are imagined communities, than the different conceptions of the nation put forth by Federalists and Republicans would suggest that the two parties inhabited separate

and widely loved, for the first time in its history. More than any other institution, the navy embodied the nation, and the factions united in applause for it. As a contemporary observed, “Our navy has become the rallying point for the affections of the nation; and when men regard, esteem, and love the same great and meritorious object, from that moment they begin to regard, to esteem and to love one another.”¹⁶ The navy became during the War of 1812 the most important symbol of the American nation—under these conditions, American sailors also necessarily became symbols of the nation.

They became also symbols of American manhood. When congressmen and political orators spoke of the qualities of the American nation, they frequently analogized it to a masculine person. Each nation, they theorized, had a birth, a youth, a maturity, and a dotage. Consequently, relations among nations were analogous to relations among men (the international community was usually depicted as a masculine community). The same rules that applied to men in their interactions with each other applied to diplomatic affairs. If one man bowed to the kicks of another he lost all standing in the eyes of his peers; they would not respect him and might decide to contribute to his obloquy. Similarly, the nation that allowed another to insult it or injure it without a forceful response would become the sport and prey of more powerful nations. By dint of this logic, the American nation had to stand up to British insult in order to prove that America was a nation of men; otherwise it would sink into perpetual disgrace. The early victories of the U.S. Navy contrasted with the quick humiliation of the army made the former the

nations within the same country. See Robertson, “Look on This Picture.” For Independence Day celebrations during this period generally, see Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth*; Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*.

¹⁶ J. S. Richardson, *An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael’s Church, before the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina, on Monday the Fifth of July, 1813, (The Fourth Being Sunday,) in Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the ’76 Association, and Published at the Request of That Society* (Charleston: Young, 1813), 23.

default avatar of American manhood in its struggle for recognition from its “haughty” British foe.¹⁷

To put it another way, the War of 1812 was an affair of honor.¹⁸ Historians have offered various explanations for the War of 1812.¹⁹ Before the 1920s scholars took it for

¹⁷ Studying the connection between masculinity and nationality during the War of 1812 is a fruitful exercise. Analyses of men as gendered beings have increased in the past few years from the early pioneering work of such historians as Eliot Gorn and E. Anthony Rotundo. Often, manhood has been approached as a position of strength relative to persons deemed other than or less than true men. This approach is especially evident in discussions of gender as a motive for warfare. Gendered analyses of war usually show the proponent portraying itself as an exemplar of manliness which protects a feminized entity by chastening an effeminate, lecherous, or bestial foe. Recently scholars such as Myra Glenn, Toby Ditz, Mark Kann, and Dana Nelson have begun to focus more attention on the flipside of masculinity—the psychic costs of masculine rhetoric or the burden of the failure to live up to masculine ideals. This dissertation will build on this latter trend by showing that American men felt they had to prove themselves as men because they were placed in a position of weakness, not strength, in their relationship with the British nation. See Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1986); Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993); Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1989); Amy S. Greenberg, *Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-Century City* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998); Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1998); Nelson, *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men* (Durham, N.C., and London: Duke University Press, 1998); Ditz, “Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia,” *The Journal of American History* 81, no. 1 (June 1994): 51–80; Glenn, “Troubled Manhood in the Early Republic: The Life and Autobiography of Sailor Horace Lane,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 26 (Spring, 2000): 59–93; Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language, and Patriarchal Politics* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1998), esp. 52–78.

¹⁸ This dissertation follows Kenneth Greenberg’s understanding of honor. He wrote, “Many cultures concerned with honor highly value appearance. Their members project themselves through how they look and what they say. They are treated honorably when their projection is respected and accepted as true. The central issue of concern to men in such a culture is not the nature of some underlying reality but the acceptance of their projections.” As this dissertation will show (in its second chapter), an important impetus behind the War of 1812 was the discrepancy between the power of the word of a British man compared to that of an American one, especially with regards to the impressment controversy. In a real sense, Americans fought to have their claims to independent nationhood recognized by Great Britain. See Greenberg, “The Nose, the Lie, and the Duel in the Antebellum South,” *The American Historical Review* 95, no. 1 (February 1990): 57–74. For the importance of honor to early republican political culture, see Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2001). For a general discussion of antebellum Southern honor culture (which contends that the South was more traditional and the North exceptional with regards to views of honor) see Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

granted that the war was a justifiable response to haughty British measures which undermined America's national sovereignty; they faulted the weakness of the Jeffersonians for suffering insult for so long beyond the point when the need for war had become clear.²⁰ After Charles Beard initiated the attribution of sordid economic motives to American history's actors and events with his *Economic Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution*, historians of the War of 1812 sought pecuniary motives to explain the seeming predominance of Southerners and Westerners in calls for war.²¹ From the 1950s

¹⁹ For a summary of interpretations through 1970, see Warren H. Goodman, "The Origins of the War of 1812: A Survey of Changing Interpretations," *The Mississippi Historical Review* 28, no. 2 (September 1941): 171–186; Clifford L. Egan, "The Origins of the War of 1812: Three Decades of Historical Writing," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 2 (April 1974): 72–75. For a brief account of the latest work in the general field of the War of 1812 see also Donald R. Hickey, "The War of 1812: Still a Forgotten Conflict?" *The Journal of Military History* 65, no. 3 (July 2001): 741–769.

²⁰ Scholars of this vein include Theodore Roosevelt, Alfred Mahan, Henry Adams, and Kendrick Babcock. See Roosevelt, *Naval War*; Mahan, *Seapower*; Adams, *History of the United States of America*, 9 vols. (1909; repr., Ann Arbor, Mich.: Microfilm-Xerography by University Microfilms, Inc., 1965); and Babcock, *The Rise of American Nationality 1811–1819* rev. ed. (1906; repr., New York: Greenwood Press, 1969).

²¹ The most convincing arguments of this school contend that southern and western farmers felt the pinch of diminished markets in the years before the War of 1812, and placed the blame for their economic misfortune on British policies. For variations on this theme, see Margaret Kinard Latimer, "South Carolina—A Protagonist of the War of 1812," *American Historical Review* 61, no. 4 (1956): 914–929, reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820* vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 162–177; George R. Taylor, "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi Valley Preceding the War of 1812," *Journal of Political Economy* 39 (1931): 471–505, reprinted in *ibid.*, 105–139. The classic Progressive monograph in War of 1812 historiography is Julius W. Pratt's *Expansionists of 1812*. In it, the author hypothesized a tacit agreement between northwestern war hawks who hoped to annex Canada, and southern expansionists who coveted Spanish Florida. When the Florida adventure came to grief before the war properly began, the administration—dominated by southerners Madison and Monroe—only halfheartedly pursued the, for them, secondary goal of conquering Canada. Although few scholars today endorse his conspiratorial conjecture, Pratt's work has cast a long shadow over historiography. In the 1950s scholars reacted against the boldest claims of the Progressive school by rejecting expansionism as an important factor in the buildup to the war. In 1987, Reginald Horsman, a chief figure in this revisionism, acknowledged that he and his scholarly cohort, in reaction to the excesses of the expansionist school of interpretation, had underweighted the role of Canada in the coming of the war. Horsman still rejected the contention that a drive to acquire Canada fueled war fever, but he concluded that, "Oddly, although the desire for Canada did not cause the War of 1812, it is difficult to imagine the United States declaring war if Great Britain had not possessed that region. There would have been nowhere to attack." Ironically, Horsman's conclusion resembled a caveat Pratt offered in his 1925 work: "The exclusion from all but the briefest mention of the maritime grievances against Great Britain is with no wish to belittle them. Without them, it is safe to say, there would have been no war, just as the writer feels safe in saying that without the peculiar grievances and ambitions of the West there would have been no war." A lasting consequence of the rejection of Pratt's thesis is that the Patriot War (an officially renounced American invasion of East Florida early in 1812) has become a topic largely neglected in War of 1812 historiography, receiving no mention in the most recent

onward, scholars generally interpreted the war as resulting from maritime issues aggravated by diplomatic or political failures.²² Cultural explanations have been less fashionable; yet there is ample evidence to show that the United States went to war in 1812 largely to win self-respect and the respect of the world's main powers.²³ Many

scholarly survey of the conflict, Donald Hickey's *War of 1812*. Fortunately, James G. Cusick has recently produced a monograph about the affair in an attempt to restore it to scholarly attention. See Horsman, "On Canada: Manifest Destiny and the United States Strategy in the War of 1812," *Michigan Historical Review* 13, no. 2 (1987): 1–24, reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*, vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 81–104, 11; Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812* rev. ed. (1925; repr., Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1957), 14; Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Cusick, *The Other War of 1812: The Patriot War and the American Invasion of Spanish East Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

²² A central contention of both Horsman and Bradford Perkins is that Republicans misunderstood British actions. They erroneously interpreted measures aimed at the French Empire as deliberate attacks on their own rights. They failed to grasp the crucial truth that British policy was largely indifferent to the United States. Both J. C. A. Stagg and Roger Brown have suggested that Republicans declared war in 1812 at least partly to save their party, fearing that to back down or to implement to another indefinite embargo would have helped sweep the Federalists back into power. Stagg has also portrayed the war as a natural outgrowth of Jeffersonian economic policies: Believing that the development of agriculture in Canada undermined the potency of trade restrictions, Madison concluded that Canada must be conquered to restore West Indian reliance on American foodstuffs. See Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962); Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York: Knopf, 1969); Perkins, *Prologue to War: England and the United States 1805–1812* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963); Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983); Brown, *Republic in Peril*.

²³ More than other historians, Norman Risjord has identified honor as more important than material factors to the motivation behind the War of 1812 (which he labeled "the most uneconomic war the United States has ever fought.") (196) Stephen Millett attributed Ohioan support for the war to "bellicose nationalism." The western newspapers Millett analyzed paid more attention to maritime grievances than to frontier ones. Millett concludes from this that Ohioans worried about the impact on themselves if slights to American seamen on the ocean went unpunished. He writes, "British attacks on American sovereignty on the high seas raised serious anxieties to Ohio's first generation citizens. Impressment of sailors humiliated patriots who wanted to establish a firm basis in international law for American national identity. When sailors were denied their rights of American citizenship, their plight was shared by Ohioans. Perhaps they feared that a national government that abandoned the rights of seamen would also forsake the rights of pioneers." (234; 154) To put it another way, Ohioans feared that impressment undermined the honor of the American nation, with potentially adverse effects to American men generally. Both of these treatments share with the present dissertation the assumption that Americans fought the war to gain security by enhancing international respect for the American nation. Steven Watts has uncovered similar psychological forces behind support for the war; however, he identifies the primary impulse as a desire by the second generation of American men to prove themselves the equals (or at least the capable heirs) of their fathers, rather than of Americans to gain recognition of their honor (or manhood) from Britons. See Risjord, "1812: Conservatives, War Hawks and the Nation's Honor," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 18, no. 2 (April 1961): 196–210; Millett, "Bellicose Nationalism in Ohio: An Origin of the War of 1812," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 1, no. 2 (1974): 221–240, reprinted in *The New American Nation*, vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (New York and London: Garland, 1991), 141–160; Watts, *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790–1820*

persons in the United States felt that the conduct of foreign nations, Britain and France particularly, rejected their country's claim to independence and equality among the ranks of nations. These powers allegedly treated the United States as a contemptible inferior. If a man of honor found himself in such a predicament he might well have to resort to a meeting on the dueling field to restore his reputation. In effect, the United States did as much when it declared war against Great Britain.²⁴ The actions of American sailors became the central instrument of this endeavor.

Although often remembered as an unpopular and unsuccessful conflict, capped by the saving grace of Andrew Jackson's remarkable victory at New Orleans, the War of 1812 inspired numerous displays of patriotism throughout its duration. Americans across the country celebrated victories with ardor, particularly when those victories were won by the navy. Even in Federalist Boston, citizens lined docks to welcome incoming officers and crew.²⁵ Spectators cheered naval heroes along the streets down which they marched to splendid dinners laid out in their honor and paid for by public subscription. Men, women, and children toured the decks of victorious ships and prizes, imagining themselves as participants in the actions that had quickly earned the ships and their men

(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987). See also Patrick C. T. White, *A Nation on Trial: America and the War of 1812* (New York: Wiley, 1965); James Fulton Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen*, rev. ed. (1925; repr., Port Washington, N.Y.: 1966).

²⁴ Indeed, it might be profitable to look at the long and somewhat incompetent build-up to the war as analogous to the complicated maneuvering that preceded duels—public challenges, negotiations among seconds, and so forth. The problems that inspired duels were frequently resolved while these arrangements were being made. Perhaps Republican congressman hoped that merely by expressing their willingness to go to war, they could accomplish much the same goals as they would by actually going to war.

²⁵ For examples, see Amos Evans, *Journal Kept on Board the Frigate Constitution, 1812* (Lincoln, Mass.: Bankers Lithograph, 1967), reprinted from *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 159–160, 378; Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes in the Last War; or, Three Years on Board the Frigate Constitution, and the Adams; including the Capture of the Guerriere* (Boston: Gleason's, 1846), 37–38; *Free Trade and Sailor's Rights* (Philadelphia: Dennis Heartt, 1813), 42. "On these occasions, the Bostonians, notwithstanding British influence, feel themselves AMERICANS," according to one Republican newspapers. Quoted in *Free Trade and Sailor's Rights*, 42.

national renown.²⁶ State and national legislatures offered their respect to commanders both verbally and through inscribed plates and swords.²⁷ Parents advised their children to mimic the virtues of the nation's naval heroes and christened their newborn sons after Stephen Decatur and Oliver Hazard Perry.²⁸ Theatrical troupes performed hastily written plays based around the most recent victories and sometimes went so far as to reenact naval battles on stage.²⁹ Songs and poems by the score recounted the victories; some of their authors had literary pretensions, and newspaper editors offered awards of a hundred dollars for the best examples.³⁰ Pride in the navy became part of children's educations.

²⁶ Samuel Leech, a British sailor taken on board the *Macedonian*, earned a few dollars by guiding curious visitors through the captured frigate when it docked at New York. See Samuel Leech, *Thirty Years from Home, or, A Voice from the Main Deck*, 15th ed. (Boston: Tappan, Whitmore, & Mason, 1843), 153. For other examples of tours of vessels, see [Josiah Cobb], *A Green Hand's First Cruise, Roughed out from the Log-Book of Memory*, vol. 1 (Boston: Otis, Broaders, 1841), 17–18; Amos Evans, 379; and Josiah Quincy Guild Journal, Boston Athenaeum (BA), 2: 58–60.

²⁷ A compilation of such commemorations was published in 1813 under the title *Free Trade and Sailors Rights*.

²⁸ Lydia E. Hollingsworth of Baltimore recorded a rumor in her personal correspondence that “a Brother Sailor, who had once been in the same vessel with Perry, had a son soon after the victory on the Lakes; and called him Oliver Perry.” Reportedly, the commodore was pleased by the honor. Hollingsworth to Ruth Hollingsworth, Baltimore, 2 February 1814 [transcript], Hollingsworth Letters, MS 1849, Maryland Historical Society (MDHS). In January, 1813, newspapers throughout the nation reprinted an item about a woman lodged in New York's City Hotel when the building hosted a dinner to naval officers, including Stephen Decatur, Jr.; she “was delivered of a fine son, which was presented to the gallant commander in the course of the day, and named *Stephen Decatur*.” One of the many newspapers to print this excerpt is *The Farmers' Cabinet*, 25 January 1813. Noting that even a pirate could be brave, one woman advised her nephew, a midshipman in the navy, to “Look at the character of our heroes. a Hull, patriotic, modest, humane, dutiful and attentive to his aged Parents, affectionate to his relatives, charitable to the poor. Decatur—not only brave, and humane, but expresses a remarkable reverence for his Maker, never uttering a profane word—it is said also he has prayers on board his ship.” Anna Homer [?] to James Curtis, October, 1813, Curtis-Stevenson Family Papers, Box 8, Folder “Curtis Family Papers, 1809–1813,” MDHS.

²⁹ Entertainments of this sort were known as “naumachia,” and were popular in Great Britain in the 1790s, according to Margarett Lincoln. As early as December, 1812, a newspaper reported that “The Philadelphia and New-York stages are now living quite comfortably if not in splendor, upon the late victories of our gallant naval commanders. Hull, Jones, and Decatur, to whom the citizens offer dinners, furnish both meat and apparel for the players.” The quality of American naumachia is unclear. A veteran of the battle between the *Constitution* and the *Guerrrière* dismissed an afterpiece based on the engagement as a “very foolish, ridiculous thing” (his comments were printed in the newspaper *The Columbian*, 21 December 1812). Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy*, 6; Amos A. Evans, *Journal*, 385.

³⁰ The editors of the *Port Folio* awarded “two premiums, of one hundred dollars each, for the two best naval songs, which should be communicated to the editors of that gazette.” One winning contestant was published as *Ocean—A Naval Ode* (Philadelphia, 1813). The quote is from page 1 of that publication. For

An illustrated primer published during the war taught young readers that, as surely as the “donkey has long ears we know,” so, too, “Columbia’s frigate beats her foe.”³¹

Well before the war ended, Americans began consciously to work naval victories into a narrative of American history. A dinner for naval officers held in Savannah, Georgia, included the toast, “We have had three grand æras—The first was that of our settlement; the second was that of our independence, which made is a nation—Hail! to the third era; that of our naval renown, which makes us a glorious nation.”³² Noting that, “The achievements of ancient heroes owe their transmission to posterity more to the celebration of the Poet than to the Pen of the Historian,” Edward Gillespy compiled and published in 1813 examples of the naval doggerel that proliferated in the first year of the war; he hoped thereby to prolong the fame of the war’s heroes into later ages.³³

Certain instances and aspects of the naval war entered immediately into the national narrative: the USS *Constitution* humbling the HMS *Guerrière* after the British commander’s public challenge to meet any American frigate “*tête à tête*”; the concise eloquence of Oliver Hazard Perry’s announcement of victory at the Battle of Lake Erie, “We have met the enemy; and he is ours”; the dying command of James Lawrence during the *Chesapeake*’s conquest by the *Shannon*, “Don’t give up the ship.”³⁴ So quickly did

examples of doggerel with literary pretensions, see, *The Court of Neptune and the Curse of Liberty* (New York: Van Winkle, Wiley, 1817).

³¹ *The Columbian Primer, or, Ladder to Learning* (New York: Totten, 1813), 28.

³² *Baltimore Patriot*, 28 May 1814.

³³ Edward Gillespy, comp., *The Columbian Songster; Being a Collection of Original Songs, Odes, etc.* (New York: Gillespy, 1813), 3. In a similar vein, an aged American confessed that he was, “Too far advanced in years to take part in the battles of my country, [and so] all that I can do is to assist in recording them. The chronicler assumed that, whatever partisan disagreements divided the nation, “there is one point on which ALL WILL AGREE, and that is—that the cool deliberate, and heroic conduct of the victorious American Tars, manifested in five desperate engagements, ought to be handed down from generation to generation.” [John Winter], comp., *A Correct Statement of the Defeat and Capture of His Britannic Majesty’s Frigates* (Alexandria: Winter, 1813), 2.

³⁴ In 1814 Massachusetts Federalists adopted Lawrence’s words as a slogan of opposition. An illustrated Federalist ballot depicted a ship named *The Massachusetts* flying a pennant that read “CALEB STRONG

these and other emblems enter the American lexicon that three months after Lawrence's death, Perry's flagship on Lake Erie bore his name and flew a banner emblazoned with his dying words. Never mind that both of the ships were, in fact, given up; Americans during the War of 1812 wanted heroes, and they found them in the Navy.³⁵ To examine the U.S. Navy, then, is to examine the American nation.

It is, however, to study the nation through a particularistic lens—that of the experience of the American sailor. Seamen are apt subjects through which to analyze national identity because of their unique status in the national community. Even as they became nationalistic symbols, seafarers lived and worked, literally and figuratively, on the margins of American society. They plied the ocean, the world's largest and most disparately populated frontier. There, they came into close contact and intermingled with different peoples, different religions, and different nations. These conditions complicated seafarers' national identities by exposing sailors to foreign influences and forcing seamen constantly to prove that they were in fact members of the nation to which they claimed membership. As a result, the maritime world presents a laboratory in which the historian can investigate aspects of national identity which are more difficult to explore in a mainland environment—these include the degree to which national identities shaped individuals' behavior; the extent to which individuals clung to national identities against their best interests; and, conversely, their willingness to switch national allegiances—

[the state's Federalist governor] forever!" The well-furled ship bore flags with other slogans as well, including "The Washington Policy" and "Sailors' and Landsmen's Rights!" A flag flown upside down (in acknowledgment of defeat) read "Direct Taxes! Conscription! Embargo! War!" Emblazoned along the hull of *The Massachusetts* was the defiant boast, "We will not give up the ship!" This ballot is reprinted in Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783–1860*, rev. ed. (1921; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941), between pages 196 and 197.

³⁵ The *Lawrence* surrendered only briefly after Perry was rowed to the *Niagara*, over which he took command and from which he directed the ultimate victory of American forces on Lake Erie. He carried the banner with Lawrence's motto with him from the *Lawrence* to the *Niagara*. As a contemporary toast proclaimed, "He gave up his ship' in exchange for a Fleet." See *Federal Republican*, 17 December 1813.

temporarily or permanently, officially or informally—when favorable opportunities to do so arose.

In this dissertation I will argue that a unique culture developed on the ocean. It combined features from different landed cultures. As a result, maritime culture was a pidgin one, bearing elements of, yet distinct from, any specific national culture. Their job required mariners to master a complex jargon of terms for sails, knots, winds, vessels, directions, oaths, and obscenities. They developed a characteristic gait adapted to the rolling of a vessel at sea. They wore distinctive clothing. Their bodies bore the mark of their occupation: tattoos applied with India ink and gunpowder, hernias and mutilations from the drudgeries and sudden hazards of a life at sea.³⁶ In the early nineteenth century a seaman's body was more obvious for its occupational characteristics than for its national ones. An American seaman could scarcely be distinguished from a British one. This confusion transcended ethnic lines: the British and American navies and marines were both polyglot and both multiethnic—anyone, white or black, foreign or native-born, Anglophone or otherwise—who shipped on an American vessel could resemble the loose description of a deserted British sailor.

Hence the peculiarity of the sailor experience: He simultaneously served as the type of the American nation and demonstrated how permeable national identity was. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how sailors of the early republican period—a not inconsiderable portion of the population in an era when many settlements still clung to the eastern coast and the sea remained a path to manhood for large numbers of New England lads—handled this anomaly.

³⁶ For tattoos see Ira Dye, "The Tattoos of Early American Seafarers, 1796–1818," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 4 (December 1989): 520–554; Newman, "Reading the Bodies."

An important source for this dissertation is sailors' doggerel. These works, presented in songbooks, broadsides, and personal writings, can be treated as a distinctive literary genre, one indicative of sailors' views. Songs, music, and poetry played an important role in the lives of Anglo-American seafarers. Chanteys set the pace of their labor. Boastful, irreverent airs accompanied the sociable drinking that figured so prominently in their lives. Songs educated greenhorns on how they must react to danger, discomfort, or loss if they wished to become true seamen.³⁷ Comical ditties helped to while away the doldrums that beset men at sea, and to relieve the drudgery of hard work and hard usage. According to one sailor, without the release produced by singing or listening to songs, "life in a man of war, with severe officers, would be absolutely intolerable; mutiny or desertion would mark the voyages of every such ship."³⁸

³⁷ Songs offered instructions on seamanlike behavior as well as other advice to sailors. The ditty "Voyage of Wedlock," for instance, advised a seaman on how to treat his wife to ensure her fidelity, while cautioning him that, "If my precepts you scorn, and my maxims despise, / A brace of proud antlers, your brows may adorn." *A National Song-Book, Being a Collection of Patriotic, Martial, and Naval Songs and Odes, Principally of American Composition*, compiled by James J. Wilson (Trenton, N.J.: Wilson, 1813), 150. Edification of this sort played an important role in the ritualized transformation of landlubbers into seamen. Older salts educated tyros in what one might call the "sailor manner." This education could take the mild, personal form of avuncular advice from a weathered tar. More conspicuously, it took communal forms. Experienced seamen isolated butterfingers greenhands through ridicule until such hayseeds learned their lessons—one of the first of which being to join the laughter at their own expense. Sailors also combined to educate their fresh colleagues through the famous initiation ceremony, the Crossing of the Line. Though occasionally practiced at either of the Tropics, this ceremony usually occurred when a vessel crossed the equator. The specifics of the ceremony varied, but typically it involved the physical hazing of neophytes, either through repeated dunkings or through a shaving that replaced tar for lather and an iron hoop for a razor. This ceremony placed the neophyte's response to physical suffering on display, and could affect his standing among the crew for the rest of the voyage. For examples of the Crossing the Line Ceremony, see William T. Rodgers, "Private Journal, 1814–1817," *Papers of William T. Rodgers*, LOC; Benjamin F. Stevens, *A Cruise on the Constitution: Around the World on Old Ironsides 1844–1847* (New York: 1904), 20, 601–602, reprinted from *The United Service Magazine*; Spavens, 71–72; David Porter *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean, by Captain David Porter, in the United States Frigate Essex, in the Years 1812, 1813, and 1814* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1815), 1: 17–18; F. A. De Peyster, *Memoirs*, 132–136, Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum (PEM); John Child, *Journal*, 13, Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS); [Noah Jones], 83–86; William W. Feltus, *Midshipman, Journal Kept on Board the U. S. Essex on a Cruise, D. porter Esq'r Commander, 23 October 1812, entry from 23 November 1812*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). For scholarly interpretations, see Greg Denning, *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language*; Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 93–94; and Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 116–138.

³⁸ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 73.

Sailors embellished the funeral ceremonies of their lost comrades with mournful, if sometimes irreverent, doggerel: “Ashes, to ashes, dust to dust, if God won’t have you the devil must”; or “Brother sailors, shed a tear, / For by too much *licker* I lay here” (this latter being the headstone of a sailor who sought to cure the effects of a night’s debauchery with a pint of rum in the morning).³⁹ Songs served as an informal network which disseminated news to sailors within and among individual vessels.⁴⁰ In times of war, songs helped to justify the war effort, to report battles, to explain victories and losses, and to boost sailors’ morale.

The many songs and poems compiled alongside news of mundane events in the surviving journals of seamen attest to doggerel’s popularity and significance to their lives.⁴¹ Sailors recounted instances of both flashing interest and momentous occasion in verses that sometimes died instantly, sometimes lived just long enough to spread an understanding of a recent event to the immediate environs, and sometimes found their

³⁹ De Peyster, *Memoirs*, 14, Phillips Library, PEM; William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Tenedos*, Capt’n Hyde Parker, HSP.

⁴⁰ A good instance of songs being used to spread information can be found in the memoirs of British naval officer Charles Loftus. A plotted British amphibious assault in the Napoleonic War collapsed due to the hesitancy of either the commander of the sea force, or the commander of the land force, or both of the commanders. Immediately thereafter, the British sailors constructed their own explanation for the failure. As Loftus, a member of the sea force remembered, “The verses passing through the fleet at the time showed the feeling that was alive among the various crews. Everyone, for example, knows these lines: The Earl of Chatham, with his sword undrawn, / Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strachan; / Sir Richard, wishing to be at ‘em, / Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham.” See Loftus, *My Youth by Sea and Land from 1809 to 1816* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1876), 1:58.

⁴¹ The memoirs of Henry James Mercier, recording a voyage on the *Constitution*, included a large number of extended poems and snippets of songs. These poems dealt with such varied subjects as scrubbing the deck, the quality of provisions, the death of a pet dog, and the exhaustion of the frigate’s whiskey supply (a subsequent poem confessed that the sailors took to drinking *eau de cologne* as a substitute). Officers and seamen alike recorded their travails in doggerel. Jeduthun Upton, captain of the American privateer *Polly* captured by the British navy in December of 1812, added to his diary an extended poem lamenting the poor treatment he received from British commanders who refused to treat him as a fellow officer. Sailor John Foss, who endured several years of enslavement in Algiers, wrote an account of his captivity in both prose and verse form; both versions contain many of the same themes and details. See [Mercier], *Life in a Man-of-War, or Scenes in “Old Ironsides” during Her Cruise in the Pacific* rev. ed. (1841; Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1927); Upton, *Log of Jeduthun Upton* (n.p., n.d.), especially pages 8–9; John Foss, *A Journal, of the Captivity and Sufferings of John Foss* (Newburyport, Mass.: March, 1798), reprinted in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Captivity Narratives*, edited by Paul Baepler (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

way into print, fossilizing for the use of historians the perspectives of a group of men whose personal views otherwise rarely entered memorial literature.⁴²

Sailors' songs were sentimental works, and as such reflected prevailing literary and ideological trends of the early republican era. Sentiment was an important concept for Americans of the early nineteenth century. When defining the binds that united Americans as a single people, sentiment was one of a pair of concepts to which commentators almost invariably referred (the other being "interest").⁴³ For Americans of the time, sentiment was synonymous, as historian George Forgie has written, with "rationalized emotion."⁴⁴ Sentiment was the proper emotion to feel in response to given circumstances. A sentimental person was expected to ache at the sight of sorrow, smile

⁴² Sailors did not write all the songs in the genre of maritime doggerel, of course. British theater and, to a lesser degree, its American counterpart, staged a variety of nautically themed productions which popularized songs about sailors, frequently ones sung by sailor-characters. Such songs, however, found their way into songsters printed with sailors in mind, and thereby entered the seaman's repertoire, as it were. In a sense, this doggerel represented both a folk culture and a popular culture for sailors. On the one hand, they clearly wrote songs for themselves about their own experiences. On the other hand, they also served as audiences for songs written for them or about them by non-sailor scribes. Lawrence Levine has argued against the tendency to differentiate between a "pure" folklore and a manipulative popular culture, showing that audiences of popular culture approached vehicles of popular culture actively, interpreting them in the light of their own experiences, and manipulating the vehicles as much, and perhaps more, than the vehicles manipulated them. This dissertation will proceed on the assumption, following Jane Tompkins, that repeated tropes in a genre suggest the purpose of the genre; in which case recurrent themes in sailors' doggerel would presumably represent elements of sailors' worldview. See Levine, "The Folklore of Industrial Society: Popular Culture and Its Audiences," *American Historical Review* 97, no. 5 (December 1992): 1369–1399; and Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790–1860* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

⁴³ I have reached this conclusion after analyzing roughly 150 Independence Day orations delivered between 1812 and 1815 (the orations are listed in the bibliography). The assumption behind this analysis is that such orations constitute a unique genre, a primary purpose of which was to articulate the nature of the American nation to a mass audience. A recurring theme of this genre is that the American Revolution united a disparate people into a nation with a sudden burst of shared emotion; an explicit goal of Independence Day celebrations was to refresh and strengthen that emotional unity from year to year.

⁴⁴ "In the sense I use it," Forgie wrote, "sentiment is thought out. It is, never mind the paradox, rationalized emotion." A key text in studies of sentimentality is Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). In this work Smith argues that individuals cannot physically share in the emotions of others but must instead imagine their own reactions to the sufferings of an observed victim. Since his theory thus depends upon an outsider's imaginary powers, it has been frequently invoked in descriptions of sentimental literature of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Novels, it is assumed, were vehicles through which readers developed their acuity to the sufferings of others. See Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age* (New York: Norton, 1979), 5; Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759; reprinted Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2000).

in the face of a charitable deed, and seethe when exposed to the suffering of the innocent. (As such, sentiment was not identical to sympathy as that word was commonly used. The distinction is important. A sympathetic response to an impressed countryman was to feel the licks of the whips on one's own back, as well as the pangs of homesickness in one's heart; a sentimental response was to seek revenge on the villains who held him in captivity.)

Americans employed sentimental criteria to define communities. Persons who exhibited proper emotional responses were welcomed; those who did not were shunned. Consequently, sentimental language pervaded nationalistic discourse. The War for Independence, orators contended, "was a war, which came home to the bosom of every citizen. Each one felt himself immediately and vitally interested in its issue. One common sentiment, one common feeling, pervaded all classes of men."⁴⁵ It was this "union of sentiment that gave birth" to the American nation, patriotic speakers proclaimed.⁴⁶ Even after the ratification of the Constitution, Americans could pride themselves on living under a charter which gave "no power to the administration, independent of popular sentiment: That is the spring which gives to the government its motion, and the sword which gives to the laws their operative force."⁴⁷ In the absence of oppressive, overarching state power, sentimental unity created and maintained the American nation. Consequently, emotions were vital to the nation's preservation, but they had to be correct emotions. Political differences could be overlooked if they did not

⁴⁵ Benjamin Peirce, *An Oration, Delivered at Salem, on the Fourth of July, 1812* (Salem: Cushing, 1812), 8.

⁴⁶ Samuel H. Smith, *Oration Pronounced by Samuel H. Smith, Esquire, in the City of Washington, on Monday, the Fifth of July, by Request of a General Meeting of the Citizens, and Published at the Desire of the Committee of Arrangement* (Washington, D.C.: Weightman, 1813), 5.

⁴⁷ Philip Van Vechten, *Oration Prepared at the Request of the Committee of Arrangement, Appointed by the Common Council of the City of Albany, for Celebrating the 37th Anniversary of American Independence* (Albany, 1813), 9.

divide the emotional community; as long as each citizen exhibited “*American feelings*, we embrace him with the cordiality of a brother.”⁴⁸

Conversely, deranged sentimentality threatened a community. Orators agreed that, “A nation oftener loses her freedom and Independence from an inordinate love or attachment to one belligerent power, or from hatred and prejudice to another, than by foreign conquest.”⁴⁹ A corollary of this assumption was that, “whoever is found advocating the pretensions, or palliating the aggressions of any foreign power, at the expense of our government, has not the heart and feelings of an American.”⁵⁰

Partisanship itself was understood in sentimental terms. Party passion imperiled national unity, leading “even those who have drawn nourishment from the same maternal bosom, [to] divide in its fury, and forget the endearing sweets of that fraternal *unity* which is the bond of amity and the ligament of hearts.”⁵¹ Emotions bound a community together; but they also possessed the power to rip it apart. In this context it is not surprising to find that societal and political critiques were frequently sentimental in nature. As will be shown, this is as true of the tracts that sought to reform sailors’ “profligate” behaviors as it was of the sailor songs which celebrated that profligacy.⁵²

⁴⁸ Peleg Sprague, *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, July 4, 1815, the Thirty-Ninth Anniversary of American Independence* (Worcester: Rogers, 1815), 10.

⁴⁹ Chauncey Langdon, *An Address upon the Declaration of Independence* (Middlebury, Vt.: Timothy C. Strong, 1814), 6.

⁵⁰ Asa Aikens, *An Oration, Pronounced before the Republican Citizens of Windsor, on Their Celebration of the Thirty Sixth Anniversary of American Independence* (Windsor, Vt.: Office of the Vermont Republican, 1812), 4–5.

⁵¹ Moses Halls Jr., *Oration Pronounced at Saugus, July Fourth, 1815, the Anniversary of American Independence* (Boston: Wait, 1815), 12.

⁵² Scholars of literature have shown a greater willingness than historians to tackle emotions as a subject matter. They have shown that sentimentality pervades nineteenth-century written and visual works—and not just artistic ones. Accounts of criminal trials, for instance, and color plates from women’s periodicals, both bore the stamp of sentimentality. For scholarly discussions of sentiment in the nineteenth century, see Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Kristin Boudreau, *Sympathy in American Literature: American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002); Caleb Crain,

This dissertation begins with an account of several salient features of maritime culture. The first of its six chapters examines the maritime world as a frontier region within which the constant interaction of a multitude of nationalities served to trouble the stability of individuals' national identities. Men who worked on the ocean tried to take advantage of the resultant ambiguity (though it sometimes worked to their detriment). The assumption of a phony identity became a tacitly accepted maritime practice. Merchantmen carried false papers to enter prohibited ports; naval vessels flew false colors to ensnare their prey; common seamen acquired fraudulent protections in order to escape the service of one country's navy for that of another.

In this work I will refer to these practices as a "game." The word is not used here in the sense of diversion or play; instead, it is used with an alternative meaning which it has carried for several centuries—that of scheming, often with an element of illegality, though still bound by certain rules.⁵³ The contention behind this terminology is that a set

American Sympathy: Men, Friendship, and Literature in the New Nation (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2001; and the essays in *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Shirley Samuels (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Political writings other than Paine's *Common Sense* or Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* and similar canonical works have not been exposed to the same sentimental analysis that other literary artifacts have received. Historical treatments of the period which have addressed emotional or sentimental issues include Andrew Burstein, *Sentimental Democracy: The Evolution of America's Romantic Self-Image* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999); Gordon S. Wood, "The Trials and Tribulations of Thomas Jefferson," *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter Onuf (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); Nicole Eustace, "Vehement Movements: Debates on Emotion, Self, and Society during the Seven Years' War in Pennsylvania," *Explorations in Early American Culture* 5 (2001): 79–117; and Eustace, "'The Cornerstone of a Copious Work': Love and Power in Eighteenth-Century Courtship," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 3 (2001): 517–546. For a lucid and important distinction between the study of emotions (the feelings persons experienced) and emotionology (the feelings persons were instructed or trained to feel), see Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards," *American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (October 1985): 815–836. For a classic account of how emotionality has changed over time, see Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners*, vol. 1 of *The Civilizing Process*, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Hans zum Falker, Basel, 1939; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994). For a discussion of how this phenomenon played out in revolutionary era America, see Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

⁵³ The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers as definitions of the word, "A proceeding, scheme, intrigue, undertaking, followed up like a game" (such as in the phrase "two can play at that game"); "tricks"; "thieving; housebreaking"; and "prostitution." See OED, 2d ed., s.v. "Game."

of informal, though tacitly recognized, rules underlay interactions among seafarers of various national identities when they entered the maritime world. Nowhere were these rules written out explicitly or in detail; however, historical records document patterns of behavior which suggest what the rules of the game were. Perhaps the most important of these rules, and the heart of the discussion of the maritime game in this dissertation, was that persons and vessels quite commonly were not what they claimed.

Any person who worked on the ocean long enough learned the implicit rules of this maritime game of deception. Men of high and of low status both engaged in dissimulation, sometimes cooperating in a ruse and sometimes cheating each other.⁵⁴ The wary seafarer learned to work the ocean's ambiguity to his own advantage: he changed his identity when necessity dictated or opportunity knocked. As a result, sailors learned how to employ nationalism as a tool (even as they dodged the machinations of those who sought to use it as a tool against them).

The second chapter explains an important limitation to seamen's recourse to national identity as a "weapon of the weak."⁵⁵ The ambiguity of the ocean offered individuals the chance to claim a national identity that suited their present needs. For instance, sailors who enlisted in the U.S. Navy as American citizens and grew dissatisfied

⁵⁴ A chief benefit of approaching these practices as a "game" is that it provides a model with which to appreciate the complexity of maritime society. The historiography of the age of sail (especially in the British context) is dominated by two polar views. On the one hand, scholars such as N. A. M. Rodgers look at naval society as an organic continuum, marked by the prevalence of relative harmony within the ranks. At the other extreme, Rediker and Linebaugh have presented relations between officers and men largely as a class struggle between exploitation and resistance. As the first chapter of this dissertation will show, men and officers sometimes acted in concert and sometimes butted heads, depending on whether their respective interests at the moment were mutual or incompatible. See Rodgers, *Wooden World*; Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*; Rediker and Linebaugh, *Many-Headed Hydra*.

⁵⁵ James C. Scott introduced this phrase in his book of the same name. He used it to refer to the methods by which governed classes, particularly those with little or no access to the corridors of power, escaped total subordination to a ruling elite. My approach to national identity is influenced by this work. See Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1985).

with the service sometimes jumped ship and, claiming they were English subjects, sought the protection of a British consul or Royal Navy officer. However, there was no guarantee that that sailor's pretensions would be accepted by others. Identities were communal decisions.⁵⁶ Groups of persons combined to assess identity claims; after accepting or rejecting them, they enforced their decision on the scrutinized individuals. A sailor did not have the unchallenged power to determine his national identity; he had to convince others of it. If we accept that honor was largely a matter of having one's self-perception accepted by others, than this process of identification is a matter of honor. Being regarded as more honorable men, officers had more authority in this regard than did men of the forecabin. The lower an individual's status (the lesser his honor), the weaker was his or her ability to define his or her identity.

To the chagrin of American men, the impressment controversy suggested that their own nationals stood below Britons in this hierarchy of authority and honor. Indeed, Britain's impressment policy threatened to degrade American men on the high seas (white and black) to a status analogous to that of free black men within the United States: assumed to owe duty to an arbitrary power that commanded with a whip, and forced to carry papers to prove that they were free. At least in part the War of 1812 was an attempt to redress this inequality of standing between American and British men, a fight for American manhood, as it were.⁵⁷ For sailors, this dynamic suggested that, in order to use national identity as a tool, they needed to stake a strong claim to the identity to which

⁵⁶ In this regard nationality and masculinity were similar. An individual might claim to be a man, or an American, or both (and therefore to warrant the privileges of a man and of an American), but his assertion was worthless unless it was accepted by others.

⁵⁷ I have borrowed this phrase from Hoganson, who discusses the role that ideals of masculinity played in leading American politicians to push for war against Spain in 1898. Understandings of manliness had changed between 1812 and 1898, but it is clear that in the earlier conflict, too, stereotypes of proper manhood influenced the decision for war. See Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*.

they pretended. The second chapter charts this communal, hierarchical aspect of national identity, and explains how American sailors and American men more generally adapted to and reacted against it.

The third chapter investigates sailors' interactions with their countrymen. Scholars have long debated the nature of the relationship between sailors and landed society in the early decades of the American republic.⁵⁸ The safest conclusion about seafarers is probably also the most accurate: as Ira Dye suggested in his analysis of their tattoos, sailors had both strong connections to land and a sense of themselves as a distinct group of men.⁵⁹ Founded upon this assumption, the third chapter will show how sailors, critiqued by land-based would-be reformers for their sentimental deficiencies, critiqued landed society in turn on the basis of the same sentimental criteria.

Even though sailors entered into a unique maritime culture when they traveled the world by sea, they also had important ties to the landed culture of their native communities.⁶⁰ Just as they learned to use the ambiguity of the ocean to their advantage,

⁵⁸ Jesse Lemisch demonstrated the important, self-motivated, and self-interested role that sailors played in fomenting the imperial crisis that led to American independence. Robert Cray, Paul Gilje, and Simon Newman have furthered understandings of seamen's political functions in the Early Republican era, as symbols over whom partisans vied, as advocates of democratic liberty, and as participants in the politics of the street. While Rediker and Linebaugh have posited the existence of a transatlantic maritime proletariat, more commonly of late maritime scholars have emphasized the connections between the seagoing professions and the landed economy and society, with the works of Norling, Creighton, and Vickers especially important in this regard. See Lemisch, *Jack Tar*; Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*; Cray, "Commemorating the Prison Ship Dead" and "Remembering the USS *Chesapeake*"; Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street*; Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife*; Creighton, *Rites and Passages*; Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen*; and Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea*.

⁵⁹ Ira Dye, "Tattoos," 1989. See also Ira Dye, "American Maritime Prisoners of War, 1812–1815," in *Ships, Seafaring, and Society*; Ira Dye, "Early American," 1976.

⁶⁰ Statistical analyses of the backgrounds of sailors from this period have shown that seafaring was a young man's profession. The peak age for seamen was between their late teens and their early thirties. The grizzled salt who remained before the deck into his fifties was a rarity. As a result, sailing was a transitional occupation, not a lifelong career. Sailors may have consciously differentiated themselves from landmen, but few of them broke permanently from landed communities. This general conclusion is shared by Vickers, Dye, Gilje, Norling, Creighton, and Bolster (though black seamen, having fewer alternatives, remained in the business longer). Furthermore, as Vickers has recently stated, most sailors spent more time on land than they did at sea.

they also exploited the prevailing beliefs of landed elites to counter negative portrayals of seagoing men. An analysis of sailors' doggerel reveals important elements of their occupational identity.⁶¹ On the one hand, through their songs they assisted in the creation of the sailor stereotype—carefree, generous, fearless, and hard-drinking—which their critics used to demean them. (Moreover, sailors consciously performed these stereotypes to differentiate themselves from landmen.) On the other hand, sailors attacked landmen on the same grounds on which that group attacked them: their sentimental deficiencies. The would-be reformers of the seaman advised him to avoid the supposedly pernicious influence of his fellow sailors and clasp himself instead to the warm bosom of landed domesticity. In their doggerel sailors responded to this counsel by reminding their audience that “pirates and sharks were found ashore as often as at sea.” The landed community, seamen suggested, had no monopoly on virtue; indeed, the manly community of sailors sometimes seemed, to its members at least, to be the only community bound by sentiment rather than by greed. An analysis of maritime doggerel shows how sailors adopted the prevailing discourses of American society, and bent them to suit their own ends.

⁶¹ Scholars of American letters often date the emergence of working-class literature to the Jacksonian Era; they assume that it did not arise until improvements in printing and transportation technologies made publications cheaper and more readily dispersed. Be that as it may there clearly seems to have been a nascent working-class literature already in currency by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Rather than the working-class novels and periodicals that receive the most attention today, this early literature consisted primarily of broadsides, songsters, and captivity narratives. Based on internal evidence, sailors were a target audience for these works. My reading of sailors' doggerel as literature is influenced mainly by two approaches (and incidentally by many more): Michael Denning's search for the “mechanic accents” of working-class novels (the ways that working-class readers shaped the genre even though they rarely served as authors); and Jane Tompkins's elucidation of the importance of stereotypes and recurring tropes to explanations of the contemporary significance of popular literature. See Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (New York and London: Verso, 1987); Tompkins, *Sensational Designs*. Also see Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Levine, “Folklore.”

In the same way that sailors used societal norms to define their place in American society, they also used prevailing notions of American nationality to locate themselves within the American nation. The U.S. Navy's victories during the War of 1812 gave seamen the means to influence conceptions of their nation and their nationality. As the fourth chapter of the dissertation will explain, contemporaries understood naval battles as duels. Popular reports of engagements, and often official ones as well, interpreted victories or defeats as measures of the combatants' qualities. They showed less regard for the material factors of success or failure, or to the strategic consequences of individual actions, than to symbolic matters. As Americans commemorated the achievements of their navy they simultaneously attributed them to specific qualities of the U.S. Navy and, by extension, the American nation. However, although Americans broadly united to celebrate these victories, they disagreed over which traits were responsible for successful outcomes. Federalists and Republicans vied against each other to claim the navy's victories as proof of their respective political policies and nationalist conceptions. As frequent participants in naval celebrations, sailors, too, entered into the debate. They did not shy from elaborating their own understanding of the American nation.

The fifth chapter analyzes sailors' understanding of the war fought partly in their name. It uncovers their attitudes through an analysis of the doggerel composed during the war for and about sailors. A recurring theme of these verses was that American men were tied together by the bounds of fraternal interdependence. Sailors' songs described the nation as a fraternity, and charged each generation of brothers to preserve for itself and for its posterity the liberties which its forefathers had won. Insisting that only a

united people could maintain national independence, naval doggerel of the War of 1812 called American men to stand as one against the British threat. The figure of the impressed sailor emerged as a symbol of freedom's fragility: seamen's tunes portrayed these American men as helpless victims of foreign oppression, dependent upon their countrymen for their salvation. With this trope, sailors laid claim to the protection of their compatriots on terms which other Americans would have found hard to deny. Seafarers did not invent the slogan "united we stand, divided we fall," a timeworn American sentiment already by the outbreak of the War of 1812, but they did fashion its meaning to suit their needs.

Fortunately, sailors assured their fellow Americans through their lyrics, their nation had an advantage over any enemy it might happen to meet. Unified action was requisite but not sufficient for victory. The manner by which the men of a nation joined together mattered as much as the fact of their unity. The genius of the American nation was that its men combined voluntarily. By contrast, the bulk of Britons were degraded minions lashed to their stations by tyrannical officers. In a battle between slaves and freemen, the narrators of naval airs informed their audiences, the latter would always win; and Americans fought as freemen. From this perspective manliness was less the quality of an individual than it was the character of a corporate body. True manliness was measured by men's interrelations with each other, not by the personal qualities of an individual man. American manhood surpassed British manhood, according to the American tar, not necessarily because American men were braver, stronger, or smarter than their foe, but rather because they were freer and more equal in their relations among

themselves. As with national identities, masculine identities were significantly communal.

The dependence of identity on a community's judgment could have pernicious consequences for the individual. During the War of 1812 British forces swept thousands of captured American sailors into a war prison archipelago which spanned the globe. This trans-global complex of holding facilities evidenced the extent of the power of the British state (by contrast, American war prisons were contained within the consolidated boundaries of the United States). Paradoxically, these sites simultaneously displayed the impotence of the British state to exert control over foreign captives ensnared in its web.⁶² At every node of this network, British authorities performed rituals to transform their captives from enemy combatants to quiescent prisoners. As the sixth and final chapter shows, American prisoners of war throughout the war prison system resisted these attempts to subdue them.

As these prisoners understood it, the American nation consisted of stalwart freemen who would never bow to tyranny. To prove themselves "true born Columbians," the prisoners had to defy any move to impose an arbitrary command over them—

⁶² A series of articles in the *American Quarterly* examines the archipelagic extensions of imperial power by the U.S. government. Much of the discussion in this issue focuses on how the U.S. government has wrestled with the issue of sovereignty in noncontiguous territories or over residents excluded either from citizenship or nationhood or both. My work will focus instead on the process that Chalmers Johnson, borrowing from the lexicon of the CIA, terms "blowback": the unintended consequences of the (often little-recognized) exertion of influence outside the boundaries of a state. In this case, conditions within the British prison archipelago, though intended to fulfill the simple task of pacifying prisoners of war, succeeded instead in aggravating the prisoners' defiance. (This unintended consequence suggests that one response to the inevitable fluidity and permeability of contact zones was an exaggeration of purported differences; hence the most "American" of Americans might well have been the persons on the boundaries rather than those in the "heartland" of the nation.) As Johnson's model might lead one to expect, this failure resulted less from an absolute problem intrinsic to the archipelago itself than to a failure to understand the attitudes, and hence to anticipate the reactions, of the persons held within the system. See Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2004); *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005) Special Issue: Legal Borderlands: Law and the Construction of American Borders.

including the commands of their captors.⁶³ American prisoners of war warned their holders to treat them with respect or suffer the consequences. “They mustn’t think they have Frenchmen to deal with,” was a constant refrain.

When they felt slighted or abused, American captives lashed out against their guards in a variety of ways. Their rebelliousness aroused resentment in their captors. On several occasions, tempers flared into violence. The threat of reprisal did not stop Americans’ obstinacy. Even when faced by armed guards with rifles at the ready, the prisoners refused to back down. On April 5, 1815, at the Dartmoor Depot of Prisons in England, one such showdown cost seven American prisoners their lives and left thirty more dangerously wounded.

In a sense, it would have cost the prisoners too much to yield. Their claims to national identity were besieged in the British prisons. Cartels were rare. The prisoners’ captivities continued month after month, seemingly interminably. It could be hard for them to avoid the fear that the American people had abandoned them to their fate. Meanwhile officers from the Royal Navy dangled the prospect of an early release before them if they would enlist in the service of their nation’s enemy. Some prisoners found the offer too tempting to refuse. Many more endured their plight; but they strengthened their claim to the protection and support of their American compatriots.

Recognizing that identities were communal matters, sailors backed their nationalistic claims by vigorously acting the role of Americans. As discussed in the third

⁶³ As mentioned in an earlier footnote, Sheldon Cohen has identified a similar recalcitrance on the part of American prisoners held in Great Britain during the War for Independence. Though Cohen and I describe the same phenomenon, we explain it differently. For him, Americans’ resistance stemmed from their culture, a response to the challenges of the frontier which became an organic part of the American nation. I on the other hand maintain that Americans consciously acted the part of rebels to live up to their ideal of an American. See Cohen, *Yankee Sailors in British Gaols*, 218–223.

chapter, sailors had experience in playing the role of sailors; it was well within their capabilities to play another stereotype—the freedom-loving American. By ostentatiously placing their resistance to authority above their personal safety, American prisoners of war hoped to remove all doubts as to their national identities. As the “Dartmoor Massacre” showed, the costs of such a gambit could be fatal.

This dissertation moves scholarly discussion of national identity away from the mechanisms that propagated nationalism to one group’s lived experience with nationality. Though sailors were consciously distinct from other Americans in certain regards, they were more like their compatriots than different from them; the way sailors understood the American nation had much in common with the understandings of other Americans of the time. For that reason, this work is not solely a study of seamen, but also Americans’ understanding of nationality more generally.

This study also adds nationality to the prevailing trinity of race, gender, and class as a category of analysis. It contends that, like those other categories, nationality helped to shape individuals’ identities and to locate them within a hierarchy. Not all nationalities were regarded as equals. From the American perspective, for instance, there were major powers (such as Britain and France) and degraded ones (such as the Barbary States); one did not interact with the one as one did with the other. Nor did one handle the subjects of a degraded power with the respect that one showed to the subjects of a major one. No less than class, race, and gender, nationality affected an individual’s status.

Foreign affairs are best understood when one recognizes the gendered and racialized conceptions that persons held about different nations, foreign ones as well as their own. Similarly, race, gender, and class had a role in determining who within a domestic population was recognized as a member of the nation, and hence who received the rights of full citizenship. Republican orators, for instance, depicted the nation as a masculine entity; in doing so, they laid an implicit rationale for denying political power to women. Federalists portrayed foreign-born sailors as a mobile underclass incapable of true patriotism; on this basis, they argued that the federal government did not owe seamen who naturalized as American citizens the same protections they owed to land-based natives. Jeffersonians excused slavery by depicting the black population as a foreign presence which could never assimilate into the American nation.⁶⁴ In short, nationality provides an important clue to understanding an individual's status both inside and out of his or her native or adopted country.

Finally, the chapters that follow are intended to demonstrate the benefits which individuals, even ones of a lowly status, could gain through nationalistic claims. Historians in the past have sometimes treated nationalism as a trick which a ruling elite used to exploit a lower class despite the latter's best interests. That the least powerful classes might have had the most to gain from nationalism is an idea less commonly entertained. Yet nationalism allowed the weak to call on the strong for support. At the same time, nationalism could place onerous demands on the weak in return for that gain. The pages that follow attempt to explain how one class of men sought to exploit

⁶⁴ This point is made by Peter Onuf in his *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

nationalism to their own ends, while striving, not always successfully, to avoid being exploited by others in the name of a nation.

Chapter Two

The Confidence and the Surprise: The Deceitful Practices of Merchants, Naval Officers, and Seamen, and Their Shared Characteristics

In 1806 the American sailor Joseph Hall shipped on board the merchantman *Ida*, bound from Baltimore to Trieste. Off the coast of Portugal the *Ida* was captured by the British man of war *Minorca*, which took on board several men from the merchant ship's crew. Hall was one of them. He carried a protection with him to prove that he was an American, an important document which would diminish, if not entirely remove, the risk that the *Minorca*'s officers would impress him into the Royal Navy. Unfortunately, when a storm wrecked the *Minorca* on the coast of Portugal, Hall lost all he possessed, including his papers.

Hall was taken on board another British naval vessel and ordered to work, which he refused to do. He was fortunate enough to be released onto an American vessel bound for Leghorn. Nonetheless, he still had to find a berth from Leghorn back to the United States. After one opportunity fell through, Hall secured passage on the Salem-owned *Wells*, a merchantman headed into the Mediterranean. The *Wells* proved as luckless as the *Ida* had been: a group of Spanish and French privateers working in conjunction seized the *Wells*, and sent it into Algiers for a prize court there to determine if it were a fair prize. Hall left Algiers as a hired hand on board the *Camilla* of Philadelphia, homeward bound, earning ten dollars a month for his labor. Out on the ocean, the same *Minorca* which had wrecked in Portugal, having returned to sea, seized the *Camilla* and brought it

to Gibraltar. Perhaps hoping to free himself of an extraneous hand the *Camilla*'s captain falsely accused Hall of stirring mutiny.

Alone and unemployed in Gibraltar, Hall found himself in a perilous state. The only berths to America he could find would have required him not only to pay for his passage with his labor, with no other recompense, but also would have charged him for his food. As Hall saw it, he had three options: slavery on an American vessel; starvation in a Gibraltar alley; or employment in the British transportation service. He chose the last option, remaining in the service for almost a year, from April 1808 to February 1809. When his stint ended he was discharged at Plymouth, England. Hall decided that he had no choice but to reenlist; he still had no protection, and the press was hot. His second stint in the transport service ended worse than his first: a tussle with some British sailors resulted in Hall's punitive impressment on board the HMS *Semiramis*, where Hall remained until September, 1813. At that time he was discharged into a prison camp at Cape Town as an American prisoner of war.⁶⁵

Hall's tortuous journey was not anomalous. It was a common fate for sailors to jump from one ship to another in pursuit of a passage home, and to serve under flags other than their own. Sometimes, as with Hall, sailors enlisted in a foreign service because they believed they had no other viable options. In other cases, sailors entered a foreign service voluntarily, hoping to earn higher wages or to escape the dangers of service in the navy of their native country. The maritime world of the Early National Era was a frontier zone. It housed a multitude of nationalities in perpetual contact. These encounters troubled the stability of national identities. From a broad perspective what marked the ocean was cacophony: jumbled peoples, foreign languages, and the proximity

⁶⁵ Hall's tale is recorded in his unpublished reminiscences, available at the Clarke Historical Society.

of strangers. This circumstance presented dangers as well as opportunities. Seafaring men learned to work the ambiguity of the oceanic world to their advantage. They dissimulated their identities and the identities of their vessels in an unending game in pursuit of advantage. Mariners learned that they could wield national identity for their own gain. In a sense, it became a tool which they exploited. Men of the forecandle learned the lesson as well as officers on the quarterdeck. Members of both groups were quick to benefit from it, sometimes in conjunction with members of the other, and sometimes in opposition to them.

In the early nineteenth century, the United States was a country crisscrossed with fissions. Boundaries between foreigners and American nationals were often intimate—places marked more by contact than by separation—and indeed were sometimes blurred—obscuring exactly where American territory ended, and British, French, Spanish, or Indian territory began. The United States contained hundreds of thousands of persons widely regarded as not belonging to the American nation. The “frontier” between white settlements and Indian lands rested inside, not outside, the territorial jurisdiction claimed by the United States government.⁶⁶ Many white Americans regarded black Americans as a foreign, inassimilable people; they held it as an axiom that slavery could only terminate peacefully with the simultaneous removal of these “aliens” to another land.⁶⁷ European immigrants, too, resided throughout the country, often without

⁶⁶ For the conflicts that ensued as a result, see Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Holt, 1998). Sugden treats both northwestern and southwestern frontiers in this work.

⁶⁷ See Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire*. Typical was this statement from James Riley, himself a one time slave in North Africa: “it is my earnest desire that such a plan should be devised, founded on the firm basis and the eternal principles of justice and humanity, and developed and enforced by the general government, as will gradually, but not less effectually, wither and extirpate the accursed tree of slavery, that has been suffered to take such deep root in our otherwise highly-favoured soil: while, at the same time, it shall put it out of

bothering to naturalize; their ranks included tens of thousands of Britons at the outbreak of the War of 1812.

During the war, the Republican administration used the Alien Enemies Act, a holdover from the Federalist era, to register these Britons and to remove them to places where they could have no contact with their blockading and invading countrymen. It is not clear how many persons were relocated; however, marshals throughout the country collected information about thousands of them. Letters from displaced aliens asking government officials to allow them to return to their home communities or to visit loved ones indicate that the policy was put into practical effect.⁶⁸

Isolating Americans from neighboring foreigners proved to be impossible. The southern and northern borders of the United States were porous, inspiring friendly, though sometimes illicit, interactions and also violent encounters. Between the Northeast and British Canada amiability predominated before the war; the line dividing the Southeast from Spanish Florida was increasingly hostile.⁶⁹ At all of these points loyalties

the power of either the bond or the released slaves, or their posterity, ever to endanger our present or future domestic peace or political tranquility.” James Riley, *An Authentic Narrative of the Loss of the American Brig Commerce, Wrecked on the Western Coast of Africa, in the Month of August, 1815*, 3d ed. (New York: Riley, 1818), 394–395.

⁶⁸ The official practice was to remove alien enemies forty miles from tidewaters, cities, and fortifications. The policy was overseen by the State Department through the Office of the Commissary General of Prisoners (OCGP) headed by John Mason. Responsibility for enforcement devolved upon the federal marshals of individual states. See U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook Volume One), Container 8, Reel One, LOC, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C.; and Thomas G. Thornton Papers (Mss 98), R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, New England Historical Genealogical Society (NEHGS). The Commissary’s letterbook contains several responses to persons appealing for relief from the provisions of the relocation policy. Kenneth Scott has compiled a list of the British “enemy aliens” registered during the war, and published it in a book over four hundred pages long. See Scott, *British Aliens in the United States during the War of 1812* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1979).

⁶⁹ See Pratt, *Expansionists*; Cusick, *Other War of 1812*; Reginald C. Stuart, “Special Interests and National Authority in Foreign Policy: American-British Provincial Links During the Embargo and the War of 1812.” *Diplomatic History* 8, no. 4 (1984): 311–328, reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820.*, vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, 179–196 (New York and London: Garland, 1991).

and identities were fluid and contested. Many of these fissions erupted into violence during the War of 1812; indeed, their presence helped to instigate that war.⁷⁰

The maritime world, too, was a site of contested loyalties and disputed identities. The ocean and the lands that rimmed it constituted the world's largest and most heavily and disparately populated frontier—a region of dubious jurisdiction where members of different nations interacted.⁷¹ The ambiguity of the sea bred an anonymity that in a sense denationalized everyone it touched; proofs of nationality exhibited on the ocean could not be taken at face value. Seafarers of all ranks and stations, naval and merchant, man and officer, recognized this condition and used it to their advantage. Globe-spanning sailors frequently slipped from the protection of one flag to another in the pursuit of their own interests, occasionally refashioning their nationality en route. Public and private officers in need of hands willingly accepted these freshly fashioned countrymen with a wink and a nudge. If officers' needs grew too pressing, of course, they might relieve them by refashioning a sailor's national identity against his will: some ten thousand American citizens suffered this fate during Britain's quarter-century conflict with France.⁷²

⁷⁰ During the war, savvy British officers deliberately assailed the United States at these fissions. The policy worked well for a time in the Chesapeake, but faltered in the Southwest. C. J. Bartlett and Gene A. Smith, "A 'Species of Milito-Nautico-Guerilla-Plundering Warfare': Admiral Alexander Cochrane's Naval Campaign against the United States, 1814–1815," in *Britain and America Go to War: The Impact of War and Warfare in Anglo-America, 1754–1815*, eds. Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway, 173–204 (Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2004); Thomas Sugden, "The Southern Indians in the War of 1812: The Closing Phase," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (1982): 273–312, reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820. Vol. 9: America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, 417–456 (New York and London: Garland, 1991); Frank A. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area and the War of 1812," *The Journal of Negro History* 57, no. 2 (April 1972): 144–155.

⁷¹ Elements of the ocean's ability to complicate and construct identities are discussed in Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); and Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*.

⁷² The authoritative work on the impressment controversy remains Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen*. Though some scholars have challenged the importance he placed on impressment as a primary cause of the war (while others have defended it qualifiedly), none has mounted serious challenges to his

Much as it blurred national distinctions, the ocean also blurred national laws. The maritime world was not lawless, per se. An embryonic international common law provided some guidance.⁷³ This international law was not strictly defined: it was based on accepted convention and was frequently adapted. The most effective adaptations were invoked by the most powerful states.⁷⁴ This fact highlights another feature of international common law: it was enforced by interested national agents. These agents included prize courts, consuls, admiralty judges, and naval officers.

Often, agents of different national polities held contradictory stances on specific points of law. Naturalization is a germane example. Regarding its own subjects, Great Britain maintained the principle of inalienable allegiance—once a British subject, always a British subject. The United States however claimed the power to transform British subjects into American citizens. (Americans disagreed as to whether naturalized citizens enjoyed all the rights of native-born ones; however, on a national level no formal category of second-class citizenship was ever delineated for foreign-born white citizens, other than the constitutional prohibition on their being elected to the presidency.)⁷⁵

calculations. For challenges to Zimmerman's thesis, see Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812* and Brown, *The Republic in Peril*; for later works that have reasserted the importance of impressment, see Perkins, *Prologue to War* and Horsman, *The War of 1812*. Christopher McKee has recently affirmed Zimmerman's estimate of roughly 10,000 American seamen impressed. See McKee, *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession*, 101. Many commentators have noted the difficulty in distinguishing seafarers of different nationalities, particularly Britons and Americans, but I am aware of none who have used this difficulty as a starting point for examining the contemporary nature of national identity. Indeed, recent works, even when exhibiting full cognizance of the polyglot nature of seafaring life, have nonetheless treated seafarers as Americans in an American national context. See Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*.

⁷³ For a discussion of the background of international law in that era, see Peter Onuf and Nicholas Onuf, *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions 1776–1814* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1993).

⁷⁴ A pertinent example of such an adaptation was the so-called Rule of 1756, a self-interested innovation of the British which held that in times of war imperial powers could not open their colonies to trade which was prohibited to them in times of peace. Other governments disputed the legitimacy of the doctrine, but risked substantial loss if they failed to abide by it.

⁷⁵ For American understandings of citizenship, and their fluctuations over time, see James H. Kettner, *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608–1870*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,

During the Napoleonic Wars, when Britain demanded the services of all its subjects, the distance between British and American understandings of the alienability of allegiance was bound to cause conflict, and it did.

Great Britain's insistence that its subjects could not, of their own will, divorce themselves from the British nation was a matter of policy, not principle. Britain welcomed foreigners to naturalize as British subjects, even though it refused to allow British subjects to naturalize as foreigners. British jurists sometimes openly acknowledged that naturalization was a legal fiction; they even admitted the corollary: that naturalization was only effective where a polity had the power to enforce it. Except for the rare impressment off the deck of a public American vessel (the *Chesapeake* affair was not the only such instance), Great Britain did not pretend that it could demand allegiance from subjects who had naturalized in the United States and settled within the borders of that country. They demanded it where British jurisdiction was clear (for instance, in British ports) or where jurisdiction was contestable (for instance, in neutral ports and on the high seas).⁷⁶ In short, British conceptions of naturalization prevailed where British force prevailed.

The United States avoided developing a conclusive stance on naturalization and on citizenship. Although the Constitution and the federal government provided some guidelines, many aspects of such matters were left to the states—an invitation to a myriad of responses. Officially the United States allowed for the naturalization of white foreigners. Some prominent Americans, however, argued that few foreigners could ever

1978); Marilyn C. Baseler, *"Asylum for Mankind": America, 1607-1800* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1998).

⁷⁶ For British ruling on naturalization, see Kettner, *Development of American Citizenship*, 13-61.

be fully integrated into American society.⁷⁷ They continued that the American people and the American government owed no obligation to a foreigner who, having naturalized as an American citizen, left the clear jurisdiction of the United States by embarking on an oceanic voyage.⁷⁸ The underbelly of the impressment debate in the United States was the contention that naturalized citizens did not deserve the same protection as native-born ones. In both the United States and Great Britain, in other words, naturalization was a messy concept, its messiness amplified when an individual case straddled the two systems.

Written laws, of course, did not always reflect the realities of behavior. Indeed, official rules and regulations did not directly affect individuals: they were always mediated by interpersonal contact. On the ocean officers, the ostensible agents of law,

⁷⁷ During the War of 1812 several Federalists laid out this argument; it allowed them to allege that the conflict had been started to protect reprobate British sailors from performing the duties they rightfully owed to their native country. Gouverneur Morris went so far as to equate the naturalized citizen to the pirate: “If the supposed right of expatriation exists, it must exist at one time and place as well as at another. If it belong to one, it must belong to many. If we have a right to abandon our native country and become subjects of another, we must have the right to abandon her without assuming a new allegiance. But if all this be so, any number of citizens, in the northern and western parts of our states, may lawfully cast off their allegiance, and either join Great Britain, or declare themselves neutral. In like manner, any gang of sailors may lawfully change their condition, declare themselves independent, and exercise hostility against the rest of mankind. According to this principle, there can be no piracy—no treason. True it is, that communities may be separated, and the political union between different parts of a nation be dissolved. Imperious circumstances may render this not only lawful, but laudable; not only justifiable, but indispensable. Of this truth, the day we celebrate is a splendid example [this speech was delivered on Independence Day]. But to assert that individuals have the same right, and may exercise it on no better ground than their own caprice, is pregnant with such absurdity, that I feel ashamed to have dwelt so long on the subject before intelligent men.” See Gouverneur Morris, *An Oration, Delivered July 5th, 1813, before the Washington Benevolent Society, of the City of New-York, in Commemoration of American Independence* (New York: Seymour, 1813), 19.

⁷⁸ Again, Federalists elaborated this argument to justify withdrawing the aegis of the national government from naturalized seamen impressed into the British Navy. As one Federalist bluntly stated, naturalized sailors were men “whom, remaining in our bosom, indeed, we would shield, but to whom, venturing upon the high seas and into foreign ports, we neither owe, nor will guarantee our protection.” A Republican dismissed this concept as an “amphibious character, of citizens on our shores, and foreigners in our ships.” Thomas Snell, *An Oration, Pronounced at Brookfield, July 5, 1813: At the Celebration of the Independence of the United States of America* (Brookfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1813), 13; John Rodman, *An Oration, Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, Tailor’s, Hibernian Provident, Columbian, Cordwainers, and George Clinton Societies, in the City of New-York, on the Fifth Day of July, 1813* (New York: Low, 1813), 21.

had leeway to interpret laws as they chose or to ignore them as they wished. Sailors noted the marked differences between the command of one vessel and the command of another, even within a naval service constrained by a uniform legal code.⁷⁹ Rules bent around personalities as often as otherwise. Loopholes allowed tyrannical captains to evade the spirit of the laws under which he commanded. Outside the authority of a court martial, for instance, an American commander could punish a crime with no more than a dozen lashes; but a single criminal act could be parsed into several crimes, for each of which a fresh dozen could be laid. (“Neglect of duty” was sufficiently broad and vague to be coupled with any other charge to increase a punishment.)⁸⁰ Conversely, individuals’ acts of mercy or charity could ameliorate the letter of the law. Men, in short, did not confront governments or systems of law; instead, they encountered other men.

Brute force had an important role in shaping how the ambiguity of the ocean would be resolved in particular instances. It becomes almost a metaphysical matter, for instance, that a sailor impressed into the British Navy believes he is an American, if he is trapped on board a British frigate and flogged until he follows his captain’s commands.

⁷⁹ Greg Denning develops this theme in *Mr Bligh’s Bad Language*. In this work, Denning argues that the mutiny on the *Bounty* did not result directly from Captain Bligh’s brutal command. Indeed, according to British standards, Bligh’s command could hardly be described as brutal; many commanders had behaved far worse. Rather, the mutiny resulted from Bligh’s inability to de-personalize his authority, and make the punishments he inflicted appear to be the result of an impartial adherence to law rather than to his own personal vindictiveness. Daniel Vickers has explored this topic as well, similarly concluding that personal interactions were of paramount importance. In his most recent work, Vickers argues that relations between shipmasters and seamen are more appropriately categorized as master-servant than as employer-employee, and in such a situation, personal factors often mattered more than rigid formulas of command. See Denning, *Mr. Bligh*; Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea*, 214-247.

⁸⁰ The following extract from a log book kept on board the USS *Constitution* while serving on the Mediterranean in 1803 exemplifies the art of subdividing infractions and lashing a wrongdoer the maximum twelve stripes for each crime: “In the course of the Afternoon We punished Edward Madden Marine with 48 lashes for refusing duty, contempt of a Commissioned Officer, Insolence to a non-commissioned Officer & attempting to desert This Marine is a very Notorious character & was received on Sunday last from the U. S. Brig *Argus* in Irons—Punished Thomas Jones Seamen Thirty Six lashes for Drunkenness Insolence to his superior Officer & Neglect of duty—Punished also James Butler seamen with 24 lashes for drunkenness & neglect of duty.” Dudley W. Knox, ed. *Naval Documents Related to the United States Wars with the Barbary Powers* (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1939–1944), 3:225. Hereafter, NDBP.

For all practicable purposes, the sailor is a British sailor, albeit a disgruntled one. The efficacy of brute force, however, can easily be overemphasized, as easily, indeed, as the efficacy of laws can be overemphasized. Focusing too intently on the role of force leads to a vision of the maritime world in which officers bearing the instruments of domination lord over hapless underlings; or, what amounts to the same thing, a vision in which irrepressible common sailors valiantly find the means to resist the tyrannical power of their officers.⁸¹ The evidence points to a more complicated picture, one in which both law and force have significant roles, but neither dominates, and neither functions exclusively in the interests of one class or another.

A close examination of a variety of sources related to the maritime world of the early nineteenth century reveals that that world is best understood not according to strict readings of maritime and international law, nor by accepting that blunt force held primacy, but by recognizing that interactions on the ocean were commonly guided by the rules of a sort of game. By “game” is meant a loose and informal, though widely recognized, set of rules which governed behavior in places where formal systems of law could not hold sway. The game was not above, beyond, or beneath the law; rather, it overlapped with the law. Practitioners of the game pretended to follow the law even as they worked around it. A merchantman, for instance, might sail with papers identifying its point of departure as Charleston, South Carolina, and its cargo as salt; never mind that the vessels actually departed from Brest loaded with gunpowder—the form of the law had been followed. Not only did the game’s practitioners hide behind the form of law,

⁸¹ Rediker and Linebaugh are the most notable examples of this view (which is not without merit). See both their collaborative *Many-Headed Hydra* and Rediker’s own *Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*.

they also claimed its protection when it suited their purposes. The game, in short, included much that was illicit, but it did not wholly abandon the law.

Persons who sought a livelihood on the ocean had to learn the unspoken rules of the game quickly or they would fall victim to other players. The game was not played solely by criminals or members of an underclass. It involved high-status players as well. In the maritime world that meant merchant captains, naval officers, and customs collectors, among others. The game was hierarchical; men and officers did not meet each other on an equal playing field. The game resembled chess rather than checkers in this sense. Officers had recourse to different instruments than men did; but the men had their own tools from which to choose.

One of the chief benefits of approaching the maritime world as a game is that such an approach helps to explain why officers and sailors were in league one minute and in conflict the next. It provides a perspective on class relations that does not depict them strictly as either a clash of two distant poles nor as a graduated spectrum that generally mediated conflict; instead, the approach allows for both views to hold true at different times. It also shows the similarities in the conduct of officers and men, especially as regards the practice of assuming false identities. Finally, the game provides a framework for analyzing illicit behavior. This approach assumes that even where formal legal systems do not hold sway, custom develops an informal set of rules. It is no new discovery that merchants, sailors, and officers bent or broke the law to advance their interests; but placing the maritime world in the context of a game reveals that the result of this widespread illegality was not anarchy but a fairly common series of tacitly acknowledged strategies. A close examination of the typical behavior of actors on the

maritime stage should lead to an understanding of the accepted, though rarely elaborated, rules that shaped their culture.⁸²

Dissimulation of national identity was at the heart of the maritime game. It was an accepted maritime practice adopted by men, officers, and entire vessels. For instance, American men of war would regularly sail under a British flag, hoping to lull potential English prizes into a false sense of security. For its practitioners, such imposture was commonplace. Naval literature contains countless instances of it. The general tone of these accounts is that victims of deceit deserved their fate; they should have known better than to have placed their faith in strangers.

It was impossible on the ocean to determine conclusively the identity of a strange vessel from a distance. An expert eye might be able to identify the region in which a vessel was built from the shape of its hull or the rigging of its sails: English merchantmen, for instance, learned to recognize and fear the “low slung, rakishly masted, and white sailed topsail” appearance that characterized the schooners of Baltimore’s

⁸² This approach is indebted in part to the work of historians of English social history in the eighteenth century such as E. P. Thompson and Douglas Hay. Two differences between my approach and theirs are worth emphasizing. First, somewhat against his will, Thompson’s view of custom has been popularized as a pre-capitalist “moral economy,” in which the value of goods and services was based on a moral absolute rather than the relativity of supply and demand. From what I have seen of the maritime game, however, moralistic poses could have been as common as nationalistic ones. That is, participants rarely held to moral absolutes, though they did employ moral arguments (not necessarily disingenuously) when things went against them. As examples: sailors assailed impressment as an immoral practice, even while claiming national identities to which they no legal claim when it suited their need; and, from the opposite end, naval officers bemoaned that their sailors deserted from their ships to join a foreign service, switching their proclaimed national identities in the process—but they jealously held those sailors who deserted from foreign services, and accepted their weak claims that they shared the officer’s national allegiance. Related to this is the second difference between my work and that of Thompson and Hays: Whereas they tend to emphasize class conflict, I argue rather that the game sometime brought men of different strata into conflict, but also frequently led them to cooperate among each other. See Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975); Douglas Hay et al., *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975); Thompson, *Customs in Common* (New York: The New Press, 1993).

privateering fleet during the War of 1812.⁸³ Though superficial marks could suggest a ship's nationality, however, they could not prove it, for a number of reasons. Many vessels ended their careers under different flags from the one under which they began it. Shipyards built vessels for foreign customers. Rickety ships were sold on the cheap in whatever port they landed. Navies brought into their services vessels captured from enemies—hence the distinctly un-English names of several British ships engaged by the U.S. Navy: the *Guerrière*, taken from the French, and the *Lille Belt* (commonly Anglicized as *Little Belt*), taken from the Danish.⁸⁴ Many vessels, in short, became expatriates.

Even distinctions between public and private vessels were not always clear. According to naval historian Michael A. Palmer, “The difference between war and merchant vessels in the machine age is clear and distinct, but variations in the age of sail did not prevent the speedy conversion of a cargo-carrier into a weapon of war. As a rule, merchant ships were cut to carry guns and were occasionally armed.” As a result, “converted” vessels played an important role in American naval activities during the Quasi-War.⁸⁵ The structural similarities between public and private vessels made the one readily confused with the other. Maritime lore contains numerous anecdotes of

⁸³ Jerome R. Garitee, *The Republic's Private Navy: The American Privateering Business as Practiced by Baltimore during the War of 1812* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1977), 148.

⁸⁴ The American navy followed the same practice. The HMS *Macedonian*, captured by the USS *United States* under Stephen Decatur Jr. during the War of 1812, was entered in to the American service. Before this action Decatur had already crowned himself with glory by boarding and firing the USS *Philadelphia*, captured by Tripolitans, before it could be re-nationalized. He did so off a ketch named the *Intrepid*, itself a re-nationalized ship. Originally named the *Mastico*, the ketch had been captured earlier in the war by the USS *Constitution* (which approached the ketch under British colors), entered into the American service, and renamed. According to some accounts, the *Mastico* had participated in the seizure of the *Philadelphia* after it foundered on a shoal off the coast of Tripoli. For details of the loss of the *Philadelphia* and its subsequent destruction, see NDBP, 3:169–194, 288, 300, 375–428. The *Mastico* is identified as a participant in the seizure of the *Mastico* in an affidavit reprinted on *ibid.*, 181.

⁸⁵ Palmer, *Stoddert's War*, 20–24 (quote on pages 20–21).

privateersmen captured after mistaking a British first-rate ship of the line for a homeward bound East Indiaman.

The difficulty of identifying the character of a ship from its outward appearance was a fact of the maritime world. Naval commanders made it part of the maritime game as well. In pursuit of prizes, naval officers disguised their ships to look like merchantmen.⁸⁶ They temporarily abandoned shipshape standards and cultivated instead the slovenly disarray of a commercial vessel. Some officers went so far as to weigh down their ships to approximate the sluggishness of a fully-loaded merchantman.⁸⁷

While crossing the Atlantic, one American letter-of-marque trader (that is, an armed trading vessel, licensed to capture prizes) encountered such machinations. It sighted a convoy of British merchantmen and targeted what appeared to be the dullest sailer of the group.⁸⁸ As it drew near its intended prize, the American discovered at the last second

⁸⁶ The opposite was also true, though presumably rarer. Edward Preble reported a rumor that “the Capts. & Officers of Armed Vessels from New York and other places forcing a trade to Hispaniola, wear the Uniform of the Navy and their ships the pendant of a Man of War, which often enables them to pass as public ships of the U States, and thereby bringing disgrace on our Navy.” Preble lamented “the want of a Law to prohibit Merchant Vessels from wearing pendants, and all persons not attach’d to the Navy from wearing the Uniform establish’d for that service.” NDBP, 4:363–364.

⁸⁷ The commander of the British naval sloop *Indian*, for instance, “dirtied one side of the vessel and painted the other black, placed his boats like a Merchantmen’s with some straw and stuff in them to look business like, struck his lofty masts, unsquared his yards, and contrived most cleverly to disguise his Majesty’s ship so as to look most Mercantile.” At the outset of his famous cruise against British whalers in the Pacific, Captain David Porter of the U.S. Navy employed his men in “disguising our ship, which was done by painting her in such a manner as to conceal her real force, and exhibiting in its stead the appearance of painted guns, &c.; also by giving her the appearance of having a poop, and otherwise so altering her, as to give her completely the appearance of a Spanish merchant vessel.” The men on the USS *Intrepid*, the ketch from which the USS *Philadelphia* was burned, reportedly “placed drags over the stern that prevented our progressing more than [one] or two Knots—This mode of conduct effectually lulled all suspicion, of our Real character and enabled us to approach the Frigate *Philadelphia* in their harbour without exciting alarm.” The commander of the USS *Syren*, which escorted the *Intrepid* part of the way to where the *Philadelphia* lay docked, was ordered to “disguise her [that is, the *Syren*] by changing the Color of your paint, sending Top Gall’t masts on deck, rigging in flying Jibb boom, Housing guns, Shutting in Ports, raising quarter cloths &ca to give the appearance of a Merchant Vessel.” John Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*, ed. Donald E. Graves (Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 1994), 69–70; Porter, *Journal*, 1:124; NDBP, 3:376; 4:512.

⁸⁸ Sometimes naval vessels were deliberately altered to make them dull sailers, and hence more easily confused for merchantmen.

that the dull sailer was, in fact, the “British gun brig convoying the fleet.” The American escaped, but for its officers, this “little incident served to produce some caution in giving chase to strange vessels.”⁸⁹ If the officers of the trader did not already know it, this event would have schooled them in an important rule of the game: false fronts were fair practice.

Another dissimulation allowed in the game was the flying of false colors. Naval vessels regularly carried an assortment of foreign flags.⁹⁰ Some vessels went so far as to carry replicas of enemy uniforms, so that officers visible on the quarterdeck would not give the game away.⁹¹ The annals of the early national period are rife with accounts of vessels hoisting false colors to gain a military advantage.⁹² Despite the emphasis both the British and American navies placed on honor, neither regarded the art of deception as dishonorable. Indeed, officer sometimes received orders to assume a false nationality for

⁸⁹ Mordecai M. Noah, *Travels in England, France, Spain, and the Barbary States, in the Years 1813–1814 and 15* (New York: Kirk and Mercein, 1819), 5.

⁹⁰ The USS *New York*, for instance, went to sea in 1803 carrying English, French, Spanish, and Dutch flags. Such flags had diplomatic as well as military uses. NDBP, 2:493.

⁹¹ In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, Captain Edward Preble, about to set cruise for the Mediterranean to join the war against Tripoli, suggested that he might purchase when he arrived there armed xebecs, to be manned by “about 50 or 60 petty Officers Seamen and Marines from the Squadron, Only a certain number to appear on deck at a time when near the coast, or in sight of any vessel, and those to be in the Tripoline Garb with the turban—This method would enable them to approach the Coast without suspicion for the purpose of reconnoitering and probably be the means of capturing some valuable prizes.” NDBP, 2:488.

⁹² The practice was so common as would not merit documentation, were it not that many scholars who have not studied naval history might not have learned of it (though it has left a lasting imprint on the English language in the form of the phrase “true colors” as a synonym for “actual character”). The following two examples are representative of hundreds of similar ones that might have been offered. Lieutenant Raymond Perry of the USS *President* recorded the use of false colors to capture the British packet *Swallow* on 16 October 1812: “At ½ past 4 the Chase hoisted Signals. we hoisted an English Ensign.” Shortly thereafter, the chase was captured. American privateersman captain Jeduthuin Upton used this tactic to capture a British prize: “All hands beat to quarters and cleared the decks for action (and hoisted the English ensign and pennant. She being to windward of us we hove round and stood for her.). When within musket shot of her fired a musket and hoisted American colors. She immediately struck.” See Journal of Raymond Perry, LOC; Upton, *Log*, 3.

their ships.⁹³ As long as a ship raised its true colors before it fired directly on another vessel, it acted within the rules of the game.⁹⁴

The journal of William Crawford provides a typical example. Crawford took passage to France on board the USS *Argus*. En route, the *Argus* spotted a schooner on its leeward bow. After gaining a favorable position, the *Argus* raised the flag of Portugal over its deck. The schooner responded by raising that of Great Britain. Crawford recorded the subsequent proceedings: “The *Argus* then hoisted British colors, the schooner did the same. A gun was then fired from the *Argus* ahead of the schooner, and another astern. American colors were then hoisted, and shot was fired directly at the schooner, and orders given to prepare a broad-side.”⁹⁵ At that point, the schooner surrendered. In other instances, guile allowed naval vessels to take prizes without firing a shot or even mounting a vigorous chase. Boarding parties masquerading as friendly visitors were allowed to climb onto an unsuspecting commander’s deck. To his chagrin, the host would discover, when the man of war looming nearby raised its true colors and revealed its hostile nature, that his guests were to become his captors.⁹⁶

⁹³ U.S. Secretary of the Navy William Jones, for instance, in his cruising orders to Master Commandant George Parker, advised him that “policy will lead you to pass for a British Cruiser.” William S. Dudley and Michael J. Crawford, eds., *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History* (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center Department of the Navy, 1985–2002), 2:295. Hereafter NW.

⁹⁴ This taboo is explicated in a letter from Captain Richard Dale to a subordinate in 1801: “you will make use of any colours as deception when necessary, but on no account to fire under any but your Owne.” For most officers, the convention seemed to be so common as not to merit comment. NDBP, 1:535.

⁹⁵ William H. Crawford, “The Journal of William H. Crawford,” ed. Daniel Chauncey Knowlton, *Smith College Studies in History* 11, no. 1 (October 1925), 20. During another chase the *Argus* “successively hoisted British, Portuguese and American” colors. *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹⁶ In the waning days of the War of 1812, the USS *Constitution*, under British colors, approached the British merchant ship *Susanna*. According to the *Constitution*’s chaplain, the captain of the *Susanna* wrongly trusted in “the integrity of the flag at our peak, which was British.” Similarly, the American privateer *Dolphin* captured an English letter-of-marque vessel in this manner: “The captain of the privateer went on board the ship, declared his vessel to be a British tender, invited the English captain on board the privateer, immediately ran along side and boarded her without losing a man.” Dissimulation was used not only the taking of prizes, but also in the gathering of intelligence. Captain David Porter, commander of the USS *Essex*, recorded in his journal that on 24 November 1812, he “spoke a Portuguese ship from Madeira bound to St. Bartholomews, the captain of which informed us, that an English frigate, bound to the Cape of

Even naval commanders could fall victim to such trickery. On Lake Huron, September 5, 1814, the USS *Scorpion* was taken without a fight by men who boarded it from its sister schooner, the USS *Tigress*. The two vessels had been parted for several days, and the crew of the *Scorpion* was unaware that, during that time, British forces had made a prize of the *Tigress*. When the schooners reunited, the men on the *Scorpion* confidently assumed that the *Tigress* was still an American, and made no effort to verify the fact. Confronted by British tars streaming unto their decks from what they had believed to be a fellow American, the crewmen of the *Scorpion* were too stunned to mount effective resistance. With a touch of *schadenfreude*, the British renamed the *Scorpion* and the *Tigress*, respectively, the *Confiance* and the *Surprise*.⁹⁷

Commanders who understood the game showed more discretion in their encounters on the main.⁹⁸ During the War of 1812 the US brig *Syren* lost a chance to capture an English merchantman due to what an observer on the *Syren* approvingly, and somewhat incongruously, termed “Yankee cunning.” The *Syren*, under an English flag, had drawn close to the merchantman, which it suspected, but did not surely know, was an Englishman. Unfortunately, “the officer in charge of the stranger was pretty well versed

Good Hope, had touched at Madeira, and brought intelligence of the war. As we were under English colours, I of course affected much surprise at the news, and questioned him accordingly.” Assheton Humphreys, *The USS Constitution’s Finest Fight, 1815: The Journal of Acting Chaplain Assheton Humphreys, US Navy*, ed. Tyrone G. Martin (Mount Pleasant, S.C.: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 2000), 23; [Noah Jones], *Journals of Two Cruises aboard the American Privateer Yankee*, intro. Admiral E. M. Eller (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967), 11; Porter, *Journal*, 1:18.

⁹⁷ The capture of the *Tigress* occurred during a five-day period during which it and the *Scorpion* were separated from each other. When they met again, with the *Tigress* now secretly under British command, the *Scorpion* did not raise private signals to ensure that the *Tigress* remained an American. NW, 3:605, 646.

⁹⁸ During the Quasi War, the wary captain of the American merchantman *Favorite*, nearing a stranger, raised American colors. The stranger responded in kind; but the captain of the *Favorite* concluded, “He lies. He is no American. He may hoist any colors that he pleases. It is a French privateer and we must be ready to receive him.” The captain’s suspicions were correct, and his foresight allowed his vessel to escape from the French privateer after a two-hour firefight. F. A. De Peyster, *Memoirs, 1858–1861*, Phillips Library, PEM, Salem, Massachusetts.

in the secrets of false colors, and in return he ran up the American flag. The bait took: supposing her to be American, we showed the stars and stripes. This was all the merchantman desired. It told him what we were, and he made all possible sail” for safety.⁹⁹

The inability to depend upon the kindness of strangers could bring compatriots into conflict with each other. Early in 1813, the American privateer *Anaconda*, commanded by George Burbank, confused the American naval schooner *Commodore Hull* for a wily British privateer active around the port. Burbank worried that the American flag atop the *Commodore Hull* might be a British trick. Burbank confronted the officers of the unidentified schooner. The commander of the *Commodore Hull*, Lieutenant Henry Newcomb, “refused to tell the name of the schooner or any thing about her except that her colours & his uniform ought to satisfy him that she was a United States vessel and he a United States officer.”¹⁰⁰ Not willing to trust to such superficial assurances, Burbank ordered his men to fire upon the stranger. The fusillade injured several men on board the *Commodore Hull*, including Newcomb. Newcomb shared part of the blame for his injuries because he failed to respect the game. Newcomb’s naval

⁹⁹ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 186–187. The fate of the American merchantman *Polly*, captured at sea in 1793, showed how treacherous vessels’ claims to national identity could be. On 25 October 1793, the crew of the *Polly* spotted a brig in the distance flying English colors. As the brig drew near, the men on the *Polly* “discerned by the cut of her sails, that she was not an English vessel, although she had still the English flag flying.” Eliminating “English” from the list of the stranger’s possible nationality, the crew “then supposed her to be a French Privateer, hoisting the English flag to deceive their enemy.” Under this supposition, the *Polly* allowed the stranger to draw near. A man on the stranger, “dressed in the Christian habit,” hailed the *Polly* in English. To their dismay, the men on the *Polly* learned that they had guessed the stranger’s identity incorrectly—the ship was a Barbary corsair, as revealed by the appearance of the remainder of the corsair’s crew. Their “dress and long beards” identified them as Algerines. Significantly, a captive from the *Polly* who wrote a narrative of this capture and of his subsequent captivity, though finding much cause to censure Algerines from the moment they seized his ship, did not explicitly condemn the deceitful process by which his ship was taken. He seemed to understand that such practices were part of the game. Foss, *Journal*, 9–10.

¹⁰⁰ Dudley 2:33.

colleagues' tacitly affirmed as much when they ended a court martial convened after the incident with a decision not to convict Burbank of any crime.¹⁰¹

To limit misunderstandings, public vessels communicated their allegiance to each other through coded combinations of banners called "private signals."¹⁰² These private signals provided the most reliable evidence of national identity on the ocean.¹⁰³ Hence the lament of the quartermaster of the captured US brig *Syren*, as he dumped the brig's weighted signal book overboard before British boarders could seize it: "Good-bye, brother Yankee."¹⁰⁴ That signal book alone had allowed *Syren*'s crew to communicate safely with compatriots. Even encoded announcements of national identity were not perfectly reliable. Occasionally, a combatant acquired an enemy's signal book.

Exploiting its secrets, the combatant could wheedle himself into the enemy's confidence and facilitate captures. The USS *Chesapeake* fell so suddenly to the HMS *Shannon* that its crew failed to dispose of its signal book. The US Navy Department responded by adding another step to the encryption beyond what was outlined in the book, one known only to commanding officers and referred to as a "mental key."¹⁰⁵

The narrow escape of the *Constitution* from a British squadron at the beginning of the War of 1812 involved a comical element of mistaken identity. Expecting to rendezvous with an American fleet, the *Constitution* under Isaac Hull spied a gathering of men-of-war in the distance. Hull sailed perilously close to this assembly, unable at a

¹⁰¹ Dudley, 2:31–34.

¹⁰² Signals were also used to communicate between private and public vessels of the same nation; or, between vessels of separate nations who agreed to a set of signals to avoid misunderstandings. The treaty between the United States and Morocco, for example, included a clause in Article Four that "A Signal or Pass shall be given to all Vessels belonging to both Parties, by which they are to be known when they meet at Sea." See NW, 2:681; NDBP, 1:7 (Quote).

¹⁰³ Naval correspondence on sensitive matters was often encoded as well, in case it fell into enemy hands. For an example, see NW, 2:699.

¹⁰⁴ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 195.

¹⁰⁵ See NW 2: 164–167.

glance to determine its true nature. Finally realizing that none of the vessels in the squadron could return his private signal, Hull ordered his frigate to turn tail, with what he now knew to be a British fleet close at his heels. At one point during the excruciatingly slow chase that followed, an American merchantman appeared on the horizon. One of the British ships, hungry for a prize, lifted the standard of the United States atop its mast, and sailed toward the merchantman. In order to warn the merchantman from danger, the *Constitution* raised the British standard.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps no incident better captures the ambiguity of the sea than this episode, in which an American frigate flying a British flag saved an American merchantman from a British ship flying an American flag.¹⁰⁷

Naval commanders were not the only persons on the ocean who routinely presented false fronts. The captains of privateers used the same tricks as their public counterparts.¹⁰⁸ Privateersmen flew false flags as frequently as naval vessels did.¹⁰⁹ As

¹⁰⁶ See Amos A. Evans, *Journal*, 155.

¹⁰⁷ The ambiguity of the sea often had comical results. The USS *Constitution* once tried to pass itself off as the HMS *Endymion* while meeting a Russian merchantman at sea. However the *Constitution's* boarding officer to his surprise was addressed by name by the commander of the [Russian ship, the *Josef*] and could not prevail upon him to believe that she was any other than the *Constitution*—the fact was, this ship had been lying in Boston within a cables length of the *Constitution* during the whole of last summer and as her appearance had in no respect undergone alteration 'twas not to be wondered at that her Captain should know her again, and perhaps anticipating an event like the present had made himself familiar with the persons of the officers to prevent imposition in case of being boarded.

In a separate incident, the USS *Argus* stopped a Bostonian merchantman named the *Ariadne* on the high seas. Because it carried a British license, the *Argus* claimed the *Ariadne* as a prize. Henry Denison, purser of the *Argus*, took command of the merchantman and headed it toward Philadelphia. En route, he spoke two British cruisers, to whom he presented the *Ariadne's* license and passed himself off as its captain. The ruse worked. The Britons allowed the *Ariadne* to proceed, and “even put on board of us nine American Seamen (prisoners) to assist in working the ship.” Not all duplicities were so successful. En route from North America to Great Britain, the HMS *Atalanta* spoke a brig which claimed to be a British merchantman from Liverpool. The stranger was “near passing free, but a boat was sent to board them, and on looking into their log-book, there was found entered that they had been spoke with by HMS *Atalanta* which had impressed two men out of her. This of course excited suspicion.” The brig, the crew of the *Atalanta* discovered, had been taken a prize by the USS *Essex*, which had sent it in for condemnation. Humphreys, *The USS Constitution*, 26–27; NW, 1:566; Augustus John Foster, *Jeffersonian America: Notes on the United States of America Collected in the Years 1805–6–7 and 11–12*, ed. Richard Beale Davis (San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1954), 340.

¹⁰⁸ During the War of 1812, for instance, the American privateer *Yankee* captured a British merchantman after an exchange of cannon fire that damaged the prize. The prize master “was instructed to assume the

one American privateersman approached a potential English prize, a participant remembered, “our officers had on English uniforms, and our marines were dressed in red coats.”¹¹⁰ Dissimulation, in other words, was not a practice exclusively reserved to public vessels.

Nor was dissimulation the sole provenance of armed vessels. Merchant captains, too, altered the character of their commands in pursuit of commercial gains.¹¹¹ Merchant vessels possessed nationalities which were conferred on them through their owners, and confirmed by their papers and their colors.¹¹² A vessel’s nationality circumscribed the ports it could enter, the goods it could carry, and, by extension, the profits it could accrue. Merchants therefore employed numerous stratagems to circumvent these restrictions and reap the greatest profits possible. Although hard data on the frequency of such illegal activity is impossible, anecdotal evidence suggests that it was widespread.

name of *Growley*, pass under the British papers and colours..., trade with the natives [at Gabon] as an Englishman, and pretend that his vessel had been injured by lightning.” [Noah Jones], *Journals*, 116.

¹⁰⁹ For examples, see Upton, *Log*, 3; Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed., *The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1926), 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Sometimes merchantmen were altered to make them appear to be armed vessels. The commander of the American merchantman *Concord*, for instance, at the time of the Quasi War, employed his carpenter “fixing the wooden guns to scare Frenchmen.” Log 1799C, Ship Concord, Phillips Library, PEM, Salem, Mass./Logbook acquired by the Essex Institute.

¹¹² Some sense of the complexity of vessels’ nationalities might be gleaned from former U.S. Attorney General William Pinkney’s “Opinion on British Ships Captured by American Privateers, May 13, 1815”: “I suppose that a British ship, captured during the late War by an American privateer, and regularly condemned in the United States, and sailing under an American Register, will be admitted in a British port on the same terms as if built in America. By the British Statutes Prize Ships taken by their own Cruizers, condemned, and purchased by their own subjects, have all the privileges of British Ships; and I am not aware that they have undertaken to deny to other Nations the Right to make the same Sort of Regulations or have proposed to impair or limit the Effect of it.” The opinion goes on to suppose that a British-built ship, taken by an American privateer, and purchased by a British subject, would have the same rights as other British-built ships. William Pinkney, Opinion on British Ships Captured by American Privateers, 13 May 1815. War of 1812 Collection, box 3, MS 1846, MDHS.

Commercial vessels sailed with caches of false papers, sewn inside the commander's sleeve, or secreted within a barrel.¹¹³ Manifests misidentified the character of ships' cargoes: saltpeter, for instance, might be shipped under the name "sugar."¹¹⁴ Merchants carried false flags along with false papers, and used them both.¹¹⁵ Few persons who visited port cities for extended periods failed to notice the frequency of the practice.¹¹⁶

The journal of carpenter William Mann exposes several of the fraudulent practices to which merchant commanders resorted. Mann signed onboard the *Swallow*, a

¹¹³ *The War*, a New York journal founded to serve as a newspaper of record during the War of 1812, included an account of a ship under Swedish colors bound from Boston, supposedly, to Fayal. A customs agent inspected the ship before its departure and found "sewed up in the sleeve of a passenger's coat, several papers; and also, secreted in a *jug*, inside a *keg of tripe*, another parcel of papers, many of which purported to be the necessary papers for a voyage to Fayal, but in fact destined to HALIFAX." *The War* (N.Y.), 9 March 1813. Some false identities resulted from accident. Danish privateers stopped the American merchantman *Nonsuch* off of Copenhagen. Unfortunately, the *Nonsuch* carried two sets of papers, its proper ones, and ones that identified both a different name and a different destination for the schooner. These false papers were not, however, evidence of fraudulent practices, though the Danish privateers took them as such. Rather, the captain had accidentally carried on board the *Nonsuch* papers from a previous voyage on a different command. He discovered the old papers in a parcel of clothes packed for him by his mother. Recognizing the bad light the old papers might cast on the schooner if apprehended at sea, the captain gave them to his cabin boy to toss into the sea. The boy failed to complete this task until they had reached Copenhagen, and the privateers found the "false" papers floating in the water. See Leonard Mathews to George Stiles, Copenhagen, 31 July 1810, "Nonsuch" Letterbook, MS 2508, MDHS.

¹¹⁴ This practice was recorded in the memoirs of F. A. De Peyster, PEM, 302.

¹¹⁵ During the American war with Tripoli, American officials received word that "a Tripoline Corsair has gone out of that port [i.e., Mahon] and that two others were preparing to sail, all of them having English Colours and Minorcan Crews, for the Purpose of avoiding, under that mark the searches of American Frigates...these three Corsairs are furnished with English Documents." NDBP, 1:602. Illegal slavers frequently sailed under American colors, even after the United States banned the international slave trade. The United States neither competently policed maritime activities off the coast of Africa, nor permitted British warships to search suspicious vessels sailing under the American flag. Hence American colors provided an unintentional cover to human traffic. See Peter G. Fish, "War on the Slave Trade: Changing Fortunes in Antebellum U.S. Courts of the Mid-Atlantic South," in *The Early Republic and the Sea: Essays on the Naval and Maritime History of the Early United States*, ed. William S. Dudley and Michael J. Crawford (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2001); Miller, *U.S. Navy*, 88–90.

¹¹⁶ An American in Mogadore, Morocco, for instance, met a recent arrival who "informed me that his brig belonged to Charleston, South-Carolina, and was built there, and that he was a citizen of the United States; but I soon found that he had never seen Charleston, and that his ship was not an American built one," but was in fact a European. Another American in the same city spotted an English merchantman "covered by the Russian flag, in order to avoid capture by the American cruisers." Shortly thereafter, the same person noted the arrival of "a Genoese vessel, [that] sailed under English colours, as the king of Sardinia was at war with all the Barbary powers, or at least they were at war with him." Judah Paddock, *A Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Ship Oswego, on the Coast of South Barbary, and of the Sufferings of the Master and the Crew while in Bondage among the Arabs* (New York: Riley, 1818), 175; Riley, *Narrative*, 383, 405.

London letter of marque, bound for the South Seas under Captain Daniel Smyth. Initially, the *Swallow* cruised for French whalers off the coast of Brazil; Smyth's fondness for seizing Portuguese ships as well, however, did not endear him to Brazilian authorities, who temporarily detained him. Once back out at sea, Smyth produced what Mann called "fresh" or "sham" articles, transforming the *Swallow* of London into the *Jefferson* of Boston, with American colors to match; Smyth subsequently changed the name once more, to the *Hero* of Boston. Intending to use the *Hero* as a slaver, Smyth sailed for East Africa. At Johanna Island near Mozambique, Smyth acquired "an Arabian Ensign as a protection for the ship in case of meeting with a French Man of War and a copy of a false Bill of Sale."¹¹⁷

Sometimes merchants changed their personal nationalities to increase their opportunities for trade. En route to his station at Tunis, an American diplomat met in Cadiz "a Mr. Richard R. Keene, of Maryland," who, the diplomat learned "had become a Spanish Citizen.—I did not enquire his motives, in transferring his allegiance, but presumed, it was intended to cover some commercial views."¹¹⁸ Early predecessors of the modern multinational further muddied the waters of international trade. Merchant houses had branches in several countries, and alternated the flags under which they sailed

¹¹⁷ Mann's portrayal of his commander might be slanted—according to the journal, Smyth abandoned Mann at Johanna Island, retaining Mann's wages, prize money, and tools. On the other hand, sailor Ned Myers recorded suffering similar abuse from an unscrupulous captain. Myers had enlisted on board a sailing voyage, the captain of which, once the ship was well out at sea, called together his crew and informed them that "he thought the season too far advanced for sealing, and that, if we would consent, he would run down to St. Domingo, and make an arrangement with some one there to cut mahogany on shares, with fustick and lignum-vitae. The Secret was now out; but what could we poor salts do? The work we were asked to do turned out to be extremely laborious; and I suppose we had been deceived on account of the difficulty of getting men, just at that time, for such a voyage. There we were, in the midst of the ocean, and we agreed to the proposal, pretty much as a matter of course." William Mann Journal, 1803–1805, American Antiquarian Society (AAS); Ned Myers, *Ned Myers; or A Life before the Mast*, ed. James Fenimore Cooper, introduction by William S. Dudley, rev. ed. (1843; repr., Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1989), 139.

¹¹⁸ Noah, *Travels*, 71.

their cargoes as circumstances required. George W. Erving, U.S. Consul at London, complained to James Madison in 1804 that “there is the best reason to believe that many Vessels under our Flag are partly owned by Merchants in this city.”¹¹⁹ The United States rejected an article in a proposed treaty with Tunis, which would have set duties on Tunisian imports to the United States at 3 percent. The U.S. government concluded that the article would cripple the United States, “While no advantage would arise to the Bey and his *proper subjects*; probably a few European and Jewish merchants settle[d] at Tunis would alone be benefitted.”¹²⁰

Merchantmen continued to play the game during times of war. Indeed, at such times merchantmen often had even greater cause to disguise themselves. War did not end trade between Americans and Britons. British naval officers blockading the United States in the war years received newspapers, the ink still wet, from coastal citizens eager to trade. Sometimes, to save face, a coaster cut holes in his sails after trading with the enemy in order to make their intercourse appear to have taken place against his will. Some merchants allegedly went farther, and arranged to let British blockaders “seize” their ships and escort them to Halifax, ostensibly as prizes but actually to sell their goods. At the same time, the number of Swedes and Danes on the streets of Halifax, Canada,

¹¹⁹ NDBP, 3:367. Erving then provided an example of the sort of ruse that sometimes took place: “The Owner of an American Vessel lying in this port left a Power of Attorney with a London Merchant enabling him to freight, charter, or sell her: The Merchant freighted her with Goods for the Coast of South America, and put a Supercargo on board who assumed the Character of an American Citizen, & who served an apprenticeship in Boston, but it happened to my knowledge was not a Citizen of the United States; they applied however for a Certificate which I refused of course; he probably obtained a Document of some sort, for the Merchant was satisfied that he would answer his purpose as an American; as I also knew that the Young Man had neither Property or Credit sufficient to procure this Cargo I questioned the Merchant upon this Subject, who candidly confessed that the Cargo belonged to himself and his friends.” Similarly, a British merchant in Mogadore, Morocco, reportedly had there “a large mercantile establishment. He has had for a considerable time, vessels, under the American and English colors.” NDBP, 3:368; Archibald Robbins, *A Journal, Comprising an Account of the Loss of the Brig Commerce* 4th ed. (Hartford, Conn.: Silas Andrus), 250.

¹²⁰ NDBP, 1:269.

who talked with the accent of a native Bostonian or New Yorker increased noticeably during the war.

Naval men prickled at merchants' success in playing the game in contravention to their country's laws. On January 25, 1815, the USS *Peacock* spoke the American schooner *Delight*. "This schooner we boarded under English colors she being under the same flag," a midshipman on the *Peacock* recorded; "on coming up with her she hailed from 'Liverpool Nova Scotia' supposing us an English Man of War, but changed his colors (& no doubt his papers) on ascertaining our real character."¹²¹ The *Peacock's* officers could only seethe at the imposition, unless they could offer more certain proofs of the schooner's duplicity. Sometimes, though, naval men outplayed merchants. Late in 1812, the *Constitution* tricked a brig from South Carolina, sailing with an illegal British license, into revealing itself. The *Constitution* approached the brig under British colors. With the British flag still flying, the frigate's officers boarded the merchant brig and threatened, in the guise of Britons, to send it to Halifax as a lawful prize. To save his ship the brig's captain produced a British license. To his chagrin, he learned he had been fooled; a prize crew took possession of the brig to sail it home for condemnation.¹²²

The impostures of merchantmen and naval vessels contributed to the dangerousness of the maritime world. The ubiquity of false flags made all flags suspect. Captain Hugh Campbell of the U.S. Navy complained to Spanish authorities at Malaga that its batteries had fired at his ship several times though Spain and the United States were then at peace. The Spaniards responded that they "regretted that it could not be otherwise for reason that the British had frequently deceived and insulted them under

¹²¹ William T. Rodgers, "Private Journal, 1814–1817," Papers of William T. Rodgers, LOC.

¹²² Evans, *Journal*, 472–473

American Colours, that the only satisfaction he could give me on that head was to Keep clear of Gun shot, or send a Boat and declare ourselves friends.”¹²³ Norwegian privateers seized several American ships in 1809 under the presumption that they were Britons in disguise. American officers stranded in Christiansand while they waited for their cases to reach a prize court formed a committee and wrote a letter to James Madison. They claimed to have heard that “latterly the english have built their ships as much as possible to resemble the americans and with them have been carrying on an extensive trade.”¹²⁴ To such shady practices, the men attributed their own confinement.

The maritime practice of assuming false identities could have significant diplomatic consequences. An American naval officer in Venice sent a warning to the Secretary of the Navy concerning the large numbers of European merchants supplied with American papers and the potential consequences. He wrote,

I have never been more hurt in my feelings as an American than since my arrival in the Adriatic, how egregiously sir, our Government is imposed on by some Consuls on the Continent of Europe, there is scarcely an Englishman here that has not in possession an American Passport, and most of them never saw America; these are Obtained by some rascally means for the purpose of passing through that part of Italy possess'd by the French, and a designing man might under the character [of an American] do infinite injury to a Belligerent [power] with whom we are at peace and perhaps on terms of warm friendship.¹²⁵

In 1808 Napoleon Bonaparte issued a decree that any merchantman sailing under American colors be seized “on the ostensible ground that, since the Embargo confined American ships to port, all ships flying the American flag must really be British ships in

¹²³ NDBP, 4:307

¹²⁴ “Journal of Joseph Foster Jr,” Joseph Foster Jr. Papers (Mss C 5078), R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, New England Genealogical Society (NEHGS) (Boston, Mass.).

¹²⁵ NDBP, 5:359. In hopes of establishing claims to American national identity on a firm basis among the Barbary States, the U.S. government printed “Mediterranean Passports.” These passports came in two halves, split by a staggered division, so that the tops and bottoms would fit together. Barbary cruisers received a batch of the tops; the bottoms were distributed among American merchantmen. Unfortunately, documents such as these were both easily forged and, apparently, wantonly circulated. For a description of these passports and their use, see NDBP, 1:260–261; 2:485.

disguise.”¹²⁶ This order was not as scurrilous as American historians have sometimes depicted it. Although it would be wrong to portray Napoleon as an exemplar of probity, it was nonetheless true that British ships did disguise themselves as Americans to enter ports which American ships could legally enter and they could not. Americans agitated for neutral rights, but they, and many subsequent historians, failed to realize or to acknowledge that any right guaranteed to a neutral could be stolen, cuckoo-like, by a belligerent.

The national identities of persons could be as ambiguous as those of vessels; and they too could instigate diplomatic turmoil. Such was true of the Anglo-American impressment controversy. This controversy resulted from the same ambiguity that allowed commanders to pass their vessels off as foreign ones. One could no more ascertain a sailor’s nationality at a glance than one could a ship’s. Sailors recognized this fact and used it to their advantage. They sought profit and protection under foreign flags. To disguise themselves they enlisted under phony names and carried counterfeit identifications. In short, they played the game with as much skill as their officers.

Like “ships, dollars and hogs,” sailors were “to be met with all over the globe.”¹²⁷ Maritime services were necessarily an international service. Whatever laws congresses and parliaments might enact, it was as impossible to keep foreign sailors out as it was to keep native sailors in. Indeed, some national services could hardly have survived without an infusion of foreign hands. During the period of the early republic, for instance, both the public and the private services of the United States shipped large numbers of Britons. Conversely, the British navy admitted to having thousands of native-born Americans in

¹²⁶ Perkins, *Prologue*, 71.

¹²⁷ Myers, *Ned Myers*, 254.

its ranks at the same time. Due to the oft-remarked similarities between the two nationalities, Britons and Americans could swap places easily.¹²⁸ However, the international character of the seafaring profession was not limited to an Anglo-American exchange. On board American ships one commonly found Portuguese, Dutch, Lascars, Frenchmen, Swedes, Danes, Africans, and others, while American seamen sailed on Dutch, French, Swedish, Danish, and Arab vessels.

Contemporaries well understood the international character of the maritime workforce. They knew that sailors did not confine their livelihood to vessels flying their own country's flag. Early national observers took for granted that sailors would chase job opportunities across national divides.¹²⁹ When posturing as the American seamen's protector, Federalists scorned the Republican hypocrite who deigned "to sigh over the misfortunes of our seamen, when by his commercial restrictions he had turned them naked into the world, and forced them to take refuge in the British Navy."¹³⁰ While Jeffersonian restrictive policies sent American sailors to Britain, a countercurrent sent British sailors to the United States. A commonplace of the historiography of the early national period is that British sailors escaped the dangers of the British services for the relative safety and high wages of the American ones.¹³¹

¹²⁸ When commentators spoke of the nations' similarities, they often had white Americans and Britons in mind. It should be borne in mind, however, that a crucial similarity of these nations was their heterogeneity. Africans and descendants of Africans constituted a significant portion of the American population as well as the British imperial one (and after 1803, both nations included a small Francophone population). The threat of impressment hung over the heads of African American sailors, liable to be mistaken for Afro-Britons, as surely as it did over the heads of white Americans.

¹²⁹ Secretary of the Navy William Jones, for instance, blamed the Navy's recruitment problems partly on the "seduction of foreign employment free from the perils of war and the horrors of a British prison," a statement which shows that the mobility of American sailors was not simply confined to the American and British services, but included other maritime nations as well. *NW*, 3:633.

¹³⁰ Festus Foster, *An Oration, Pronounced at Hardwick, July 4th, 1812 being the Thirty-Sixth Anniversary of American Independence* (Brookfield: Merriam, 1812), 11.

¹³¹ See Miller, *U.S. Navy*; 48–49; Hickey, *War of 1812*, 10–11; Roosevelt, *Naval War*, 1:3–4; Perkins, *Prologue*, 86; Fowler, *Jack Tar*, 130.

The forces that compelled sailors into foreign services were more complicated than this simple model suggests. The vagaries of the seafaring profession were such that seamen stood a good chance of ending their voyages on different vessels from those on which they began. Sometimes sailors switched vessels voluntarily, or semi-voluntarily. Sailors jumped ship in search of higher wages, better treatment, more pleasant company, or a quicker passage home.¹³² Busy ports offered implicit promises of improved conditions to disgruntled seamen. When there were “more ships than parish churches,” many sailors “felt no concern about finding a place in one.”¹³³ If they disliked their current circumstances, they abandoned them for the hope of something better.

Many sailors, however, had no choice but to seek new berths. A commander might sell his ship in a foreign port after unloading its cargo, leaving his men to find their ways home as best they could; or he might take to sea without awaiting the return of a grumbling or malingering crewman from shore leave. Less scrupulous captains might abandon hardworking, docile sailors of long and faithful service in order to avoid paying them their accumulated wages or lays. Other ships fell victim to shipwreck or to capture.¹³⁴ In the latter case, the crewmen might accept an offer to enlist with the force that captured them.¹³⁵ Sailors on American ships taken by the British navy routinely

¹³² Merchant seaman Daniel Saunders, for example, dissatisfied with the leadership style of his captain, arranged to have himself swapped, with his captain’s consent, for a crewman on the nearby *Commerce*. Saunders, *A Journal of the Travels and Sufferings of Daniel Saunders, Jun.* (Leominster, Mass.: Prentiss, 1797), 4.

¹³³ Myers, *Ned Myers*, 169.

¹³⁴ In a letter to William Jarvis, the American consul at Lisbon, sailor George Walker, on board the HMS *Avon*, claimed to have been impressed after losing his protection in a shipwreck. Walker alleged to have been castaway on the Isle of Guernsey, and identified himself as a “Native of Savana in the State of South George South Carolina in the Parrish of St. James’s.” See John Addison and George Walker to William Jarvis, H.M.B. Avon [n.d.], MHS.

¹³⁵ The crewmen of an American merchantman deserted en masse to the French privateer that seized their vessel. Josiah Quincy Guild Journal, BA.

alleged that their captors used strong-armed measures in attempts to coerce them into the English service.

Alone in a foreign port without the means either to pay their way home or to loiter in a foreign country, sailors did not have the luxury to await the arrival of a vessel sailing under their own country's flag.¹³⁶ The sailor who lost or abandoned his berth in a foreign port had either to settle in a strange country or discover another means home. Since such men typically had little cash on hand, they needed a new job not just for homeward passage, but also for subsistence. While awaiting oceangoing employment, a sailor might hold soul to flesh by lading and unlading vessels, working odd jobs along the docks, or, if he knew the secrets of a trade, selling his skills as a carpenter, cooper, etc.¹³⁷

Panhandling was a less savory alternative, but apparently the only one open to one American sailor stranded in England, who had "begged his way from Holyhead to London, for the purpose of obtaining, through the American Consul, a passage to his native country."¹³⁸

Stranded sailors could not count on the goodwill of their compatriots. Even if an American tar was lucky enough to discover a homeward bound American ship before his

¹³⁶ An American sailor's travails did not necessarily end with his arrival in an American port. At the end of a cruise from Boston to the South Seas, John Child was paid off in New York. En route home to Boston, he found he "could not buy a nights lodging or a meels vittls with New York money," which was all he had to his name. John Child, *Journal of a Voyage from Boston to the South Seas & Canton, China on board the Ship Hunter, MHS*. Glover Broughton of Marblehead was captured off a merchantman by a British sloop of war three days after the War of 1812 began. After a brief stint on a prison hulk at Newfoundland, Broughton was exchanged for a crewman of the HMS *Alert*, the first British man of war taken by the U.S. Navy. The cartel landed Broughton in New York, from whence he was taken to Providence, Rhode Island. Broughton trekked on foot from Providence to Boston where, refused lodging at the City Hotel, he slept "on the soft side of a plank in the market stall under Old Fanuel hall" before completing his journey to Marblehead via Salem. Glover Broughton to Timothy Davis, Member of Congress, Marblehead, 20 March 1856, Glover Broughton Papers, Marblehead Historical Society.

¹³⁷ For examples, see Saunders, *Journal*, 98–99.

¹³⁸ Arriving at London, Adams "passed several nights in the open streets amongst many other distressed seamen, with whom the metropolis was at that period unfortunately crowded." Robert Adams, *The Narrative of Robert Adams, an American Sailor* (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1817), x.

money ran out, his travails were not necessarily at an end. Few captains were so compassionate as to provide a lowly compatriot with free passage home; most insisted that the sailors be put to work. The fortunate seafarer received the going rate for his labor; others were offered nothing for their work except the passage itself. Faced with such terms, some sailors preferred to take their chances with foreign commanders rather than be skinned by their countrymen.

Necessity compelled many sailors to enter into foreign services. A petition sent by British sailors to their king in 1785 reveals some of the myriad ways in which tars found themselves under foreign flags. The sailors who signed the petition had been captured by Algerine corsairs from American merchantmen. They sought their majesty's protection while explaining "the separate Circumstances that Obliged them Unfortunately to serve under American Colours, in proof that they have Ever been your Majesty's Dutifull and Loyall Subjects." Peter Smith of Dublin was "cast away" on an island while employed on a Liverpool merchantman; he "was taken from thence by an American Vessel—where on his arrival in Philadelphia he was obliged to ship on board the [American] Ship Dauphin." Philip Sloan, a seaman from Liverpool, "was left sick in the hospital in Philadelphia and obliged to ship in American ships—having no money." John Robertson, a Scotsman, "was discharged [from a British vessel] in Kingston[, Jamaica] when after he shipped on a Brig belonging to Kingston and said Brig was sold in America and was obliged to ship in an American ship." Irishman James Garnett, working "the Newfoundland Trade," had "belonged to a small boat which by bad weather was obliged

to go to Salem and was condemned and was obliged to ship on board” an American vessel.¹³⁹

Under such conditions seamen could be as quick as captains to pretend to false identities either to improve their lot or merely to survive. Many a tar “from some secret reasons, . . .concealed the place of his birth, as well as his real name,” noted a British naval surgeon, who added that it was “a very common practice among men of war sailors.”¹⁴⁰ A sailor named Robert Adams sometimes presented himself as “Benjamin Rose.” Adams did not reveal why he used two names. However, acquaintances noted “the great apprehensions which he always discovered, lest he should fell in with, or be impressed by a British Man of War,” suggesting that he might have deserted that service earlier in his life.¹⁴¹ William Bowman, a native Briton serving in the British navy, awoke from a bender in New York City to find he had enlisted on the USS *Hornet*. He entered the rolls, however, under the name “William Elby,” perhaps to hide his true identity from

¹³⁹ This petition is printed in Richard Parker’s *Uncle Sam in Barbary*, and identified by Parker in these words: “This is the text from the Public Record Office at Kew (FO 3/6, pp. 172–173) of a petition to King George III sent by eleven of the American captives in Algiers claiming British nationality and begging the king to intervene on their behalf. The petition was dated 20 December 1785 by Consul Logie and was received in London on April 3, 1786.” See Parker, 220–222. Anecdotes about the hardships of returning home from foreign ports are common in sailors’ writings. The need to switch ships frequently and to accept berths on foreign vessels is a frequent theme of these anecdotes. For other instances, see Foss, *Journal*, 150–151, 156–158; James Durand, *James Durand, an Able Seaman of 1812: His Adventures on “Old Ironsides” and as an Impressed Sailor in the British Navy*, ed. George S. Brooks, 1820 (reprint, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1926), 43; Saunders, *Journal*, 98–103; Ezekiel Warner, NEHGS; Hall, “Reminiscence,” Clarke Historical Society.

¹⁴⁰ William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Tenedos*, Capt’n Hyde Parker, HSP. An accurate estimate of how many sailors shipped under false names is impossible. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the practice was discovered often enough to raise eyebrows and elicit comment. George Erving, who served as the “Agent for the United States for the Relief and Protection of Their Seamen” in 1803 and 1804 recorded a list of 1232 applications from “Impressed Seamen, Claiming to be Citizens of the United States”; at least 11 of these applications came from men with known aliases, a tiny percentage to be sure. Presumably, however, more, perhaps many more, only offered their given or their assumed name. *Letters from the Secretary of State, Accompanying Statements and Abstracts* [Washington, 1805].

¹⁴¹ It was also rumored that he had “ruined” a woman in New York, and then refused to marry her. Robert Adams, *Narrative*, xxi.

any British officials who might chance to find him on an American public vessel.¹⁴² In an exceptional case, John Ennalls Ayres, a “young man of respectable connexions,” apparently decided to get a taste of forecandle life, and joined the navy as a common seaman under the name “Henry Jones.”¹⁴³ The proportion of pseudonyms on the rolls that cloaked slumming gentlemen was undoubtedly vanishingly small. Presumably, most sailors who assumed false names did so to escape obligation, punishment, or service.

Merchant and naval captains backed their impostures with fake flags and fake papers; sailors backed theirs with fake protections. Protections were documents carried by some sailors; they identified their bearer’s birthplace and provided a physical description of him. Government officials in the United States provided them to sailors to prove the sailors’ identities as Americans, and to protect them from impressment into the British navy.¹⁴⁴ Foreign sailors easily acquired protections that identified them as Americans. They obtained them from gullible or complicit officials, or purchased them from their original holders. Boardinghouse keepers sometimes kept a stash of protections which they sold to needy sailors or handed out as a sort of lagniappe. They also stood

¹⁴² Bowman was not the only Briton to enlist in the U.S. Navy under a false name. Augustus J. Foster, Britain’s minister to the United States before the declaration of war, forwarded letters to Secretary of State James Monroe, complaining of the retention of several British subjects in the American service: Bowman himself; Charles Davis, serving under the name Thomas Holland; and William Smith, serving under the name John Taylor. See Augustus J. Foster to James Monroe, Washington, 1 June 1812, in *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, 1844–1845. For details of Bowman’s case, see Earl of Liverpool to Jonathan Russell, Foreign Office, 20 February 1812, in *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, 1761–1762; Roger Curtis to Sir Richard Bickerton, Portsmouth, 16 February 1812, Roger Curtis Papers, MsEng,133, Boston Public Library (BPL).

¹⁴³ When Ayres’s imposture was discovered, it was determined to “make him an Acting Midshipman and after a fair trial...determine whether to give him a warrant or not.” NDBP, 4:345.

¹⁴⁴ Various officials claimed the authority to issue protections. Sailors could acquire them from federal, state, or local officers. The proliferation of protections contributed to their worthlessness in the eyes of British authorities. See Zimmerman, *Impressment*, 68.

witness to foreign sailors who went before magistrates to swear themselves to be Americans.¹⁴⁵

As far as most British officers were concerned, protections were worth “nothing—anybody can have one for two dollars, in New York.”¹⁴⁶ Viewing protections as worthless, British officers involved in a press often ignored them.¹⁴⁷ Sailors frequently complained that their protections did them no good. They alleged that, when presented with protections, British officers seized them or destroyed them, then continued the press despite them.¹⁴⁸ As safeguards against impressment, protections frequently failed to live up to their names. One might ask then why British sailors invested in false papers that hardly guaranteed their safety from skeptical press gangs. Of course, protections, fake or real, did not fail all the time. Considering how easily they could be acquired, they were better to have than not to have. More importantly, American agents were not as ready as British ones to dismiss all protections out of hand. If he possessed a protection that identified him as an American citizen, a sailor could make claims on

¹⁴⁵ A committee of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, created to dispute Republican assertions of the frequency of impressments, compiled a series of affidavits from shipmasters, many of whom testified to the ease with which foreign sailors acquired protections, and of the culpability of boardinghouse masters in the practice. Massachusetts, General Court, House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, on the Subject of Impressed Seamen: with the Evidence and Documents Accompanying It* (Boston: Russell and Cutler, 1813).

¹⁴⁶ Myers, *Ned Myers*, 24–25

¹⁴⁷ When confronted about its refusal to honor American protections, the British Admiralty rejected the claims of individual sailors on such bases as “Being totally ignorant of the United States”; “Having erased protections”; and “Not answering descriptions given in their protections.” James Madison, *Message from the President of the United States ... Touching the Impressment of American Seamen ...* (Washington, D.C.: Weightman, 1810), 2, 5, 44.

¹⁴⁸ Between 11 March 1803, and 21 August 1804, George W. Erving, Agent of the United States for the Relief and Protection of Their Seamen, compiled a list of 1,232 seamen claiming to be American citizens impressed into the British Navy. The majority of these men claimed that they had had protections of some sort which British authorities considered insufficient. A significant minority of the claimants accused an officer involved in their impressment of having taken their protections from them. *Letter from the Secretary of State, Accompanying Statements and Abstracts*, 1805. According to Samuel Leech, a British-born sailor who defected to the American navy during the War of 1812, Americans were sometimes swept up in hot presses in foreign shores. These Americans were “taken without respect to their protections, which were often taken from them and destroyed.” Leech, *Thirty Years*, 80. See also, *Letter from the Secretary of State...*, Washington City: William Duane & Son, 1802.

American merchant commanders, naval officers, and consuls who could, to greater or lesser degrees, guard the sailor from the press or secure his release after the fact.

American agents were well aware that British sailors fraudulently appealed to them; but they were just as aware of the difficulties establishing who was an American and who was a Briton. Often they erred on the side of extending their protection too far rather than risking withholding it from legitimate citizens.¹⁴⁹

Commanders who enlisted men of dubious nationality on to their vessels did not do so out of a sense of largesse. Just as sailors whose commanders abandoned them in a foreign port might need to hire themselves out to a foreign commander, so, too, a commander whose men abandoned ship in a foreign port might need to hire foreign sailors as replacements. A ship could not sail without a crew; a crew could not always be completed without aliens.

The recruitment of foreign sailors was sometimes a straightforward affair. The American East India trader who employed Lascars to plug the holes in his lists seems not to have aroused any international difficulties by doing so; nor does any evidence suggest that the Lascars so hired disguised themselves first as Americans. The employment of non-Anglophone Europeans on American ships was more complicated. A native-born Frenchman might pass himself off as a Louisianan or a Danish subject might claim to

¹⁴⁹ For instance, in a letter to Evan Nepean of the British Admiralty Office dated 23 October 1801, David Lenox (the “Agent of the United States of America, residing in Great Britain, for the relief and protection of American Seamen”) appended a list of five hundred fifty-eight men who had applied to him for relief as American citizens, but who could not produce documents to verify their identity. “I will freely confess,” he wrote, “that I believe many of them are British subjects, but I presume that all of them were impressed from American vessels, and by far the greater proportion are American citizens, who from various causes have been deprived of their certificates of protection, and who from their peculiar situation have been unable to obtain proofs from America. Under this impression, I hope their Lordships were grant my request, rather than keep in the navy a number of men who will always be dissatisfied with their situation.” *Letter from the Secretary of State*, 1802, 12.

have naturalized as an American citizen.¹⁵⁰ Taking such men at their word might embroil a commander with representatives of foreign powers.

The greatest complications for American commanders, of course, were caused by Anglophone sailors. British sailors passed as Americans and Americans passed as Britons. Commanders facilitated these impostures. American officers in both the private and public services enrolled men as Americans whom they knew or strongly suspected to be British subjects.¹⁵¹ The officers of the USS *John Adams*, for instance, “laughed heartily” at the inept attempt of a British tar to pass himself off as an American and join their ranks in the midst of the War of 1812. Nonetheless, they welcomed him aboard with the line, “Go below, my lad; you will make a pretty good Yankee.”¹⁵² Captain Edward Preble, USN, confessed before he shipped to the Mediterranean that out of his crew of several hundred seamen, “I do not believe that I have twenty native American Sailors on board.”¹⁵³ To the Secretary of the Navy, he frankly stated why he had so many aliens on board: “The certainty of War increases our Success in recruiting foreign Seamen, as they dare not trust to the protection the Merchant Service affords them, and are sure of being safe from impressment with us—I hope to be able to recruit the Crew at the wages prescribed.”¹⁵⁴ Lieutenant Charles Stewart reported a similar pattern of recruitment: “at one time I had a prospect of getting an excellent Crew, but the Merchants

¹⁵⁰ James Gunderson, a sailor on the American merchantman *Nonsuch*, carried a Danish protection acquired at some point in his earlier journeys. Sadly for Gunderson, a Danish privateer captured the *Nonsuch* and sent it to a prize court in Copenhagen. Because his protection identified him as a Dane, he was impressed into the Danish service. The *Nonsuch*'s supercargo, Leonard Mathews, petitioned the Danish Admiralty for Gunderson's release because, he wrote, the sailor was “a very good, decent man & married in Balt[imore].” Leonard Mathews to George Stiles, Copenhagen, 31 July 1810, *Nonsuch* Letterbook, MDHS. For a French consul's claims to Francophone sailors in the U.S. Navy, see NDBP, 3:228.

¹⁵¹ For foreign sailors in the American services, see McKee, “Foreign Seamen.”

¹⁵² Leech, *Thirty Years*, 169.

¹⁵³ NDBP, 2:494

¹⁵⁴ NDBP, 2:467

raising their pay to 20 dollars they have been induced to leave us & none but a few English Sailors (that are afraid of the press in their own country) can be got.”¹⁵⁵

The recruitment policies of merchant commanders were often just as cosmopolitan as their naval counterparts. In an attempt to debunk the allegation that the British Navy had impressed thousands of American sailors, the Federalist-dominated Massachusetts House of Representatives collected affidavits from American merchant commanders. These deponents affirmed that they had knowingly employed foreign sailors. Some admitted that foreigners constituted the overwhelming majority of their crewmen. Others confessed that alien sailors had approached them for employment, promising to obtain false papers to identify them as Americans if they were hired (they did not want to bother with the process unless assured of a job).¹⁵⁶

Commanders who recruited foreigners could find themselves in awkward situations thereby. Most obviously, the American commander who enlisted British seamen increased the likelihood of a tense encounter with an officer of the Royal Navy demanding the surrender of His Majesty’s subjects.¹⁵⁷ If a ship lost a portion of its crew

¹⁵⁵ NDBP, 2:465. American naval officers admitted that this protection was one of the reasons that the number of Britons in their service was so high. In a sense, such protection was a part of the British seaman’s wage. As Adam Smith suggested, monetary wages are not the only return workers receive from their occupations. Somewhat romantically, Smith posited that the thrill of the dangers to which seafaring exposed sailors compensated them for their low wages. One could as plausibly argue that British sailors joined the U.S. Navy not only because the cash wages were perhaps higher than in the British Navy, but also because the added bonus of protection made American naval rates nearly equivalent to American merchant rates, which were higher on paper. By the same token, since British sailors were more susceptible to impressment than American ones, British sailors received a higher return from American naval service than American sailors did, even if they received the same cash wages. See Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, (1776; repr. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), 115–117.

¹⁵⁶ Massachusetts House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee*, 24, 46, and *passim*. For similar instances, see Paddock, *Narrative*, 18; De Peyster, *Memoirs*, 297–301.

¹⁵⁷ A British naval officer explained his understanding of his government’s stance on Britons in foreign services in the following manner: “The Spirit of the British Constitution requires the Services of all our seafaring Men, for the general defence of the Country, whenever our fleets may stand in need of them, and altho’ in some instances Protections are granted, they are only given with the view to encourage our own Trade, and are only valid so long as those who possess them are serving their own Country *in some way or other*, consequently every British Sailor who enters into the Service of another Country when called upon to

to impressment in a foreign port little damage was usually done other than to delay the ship's departure until new men were found. Impressments on the high seas could result in more perilous conditions. John Adams fretted about "How many American ships and cargoes will be sunk in the sea, or driven on shore, wrecked and lost; how many masters and remaining sailors will be buried in the ocean for want of assistance of men thus kidnapped and stolen, no human foresight can calculate."¹⁵⁸ Adams's assertion that the "number must be very great" was surely an exaggeration; but the threat was real enough.

On the other hand, merchant commanders could use the threat of impressment to maintain discipline on board their vessels. An American captain might warn a malingering crewman that "he would be put on board the first British ship of war that we should fall with" if his behavior did not improve.¹⁵⁹ An abstract of applications for the release of alleged American citizens impressed into the British navy between October 1, 1807, and March 31, 1809, listed among the reasons given by British authorities for

serve His Majesty is guilty of a breach of Duty, and is in effect a *deserter* from his profession and the cause he is bound by allegiance to espouse." NDBP, 5:281. The British Navy went so far in search of deserters as to hire spies to reconnoiter American naval ships in English ports. Admiral Roger Curtis, the commander-in-chief of the British navy at Portsmouth, confessed in 1811 that he had "employed in a confidential manner an intelligent person to endeavour to discern, from any Man who has had communication with the American Frigate Constitution, whether any British subjects are on board that Ship." Roger Curtis to John W. Croker, Portsmouth, 19 November 1811, Roger Curtis Papers, Ms.Eng.133., BPL.

¹⁵⁸ Adams, *The Correspondence of John Adams, Esquire, Late President of the United States of America, Concerning the British Doctrine of Impressment, and Many Interesting Things which Occurred during His Administration* (Baltimore: G. Dobbin and Murphy for H. Niles, 1809), 13.

¹⁵⁹ Such was the threat Captain Judah Paddock of the American merchantman *Oswego* leveled at a crewman named Pat whom he shipped in England, and who performed poorly. Paddock, *Narrative*, 18. Paddock did not make good on his threat, but other captains did. The American merchantman *Gypsy*, for instance, shipped a crew in 1810 that consisted almost entirely of English sailors who had absconded from an English packet while it was docked at New York. When a British press gang boarded the *Gypsy* in South Africa, the English sailors tried to pass as native New Yorkers, but knew nothing more of the city's geography than Water Street, the site of a popular sailors' boardinghouse. The men were impressed into the British navy, though the captain of the *Gypsy* succeeded in securing their release. He did so only because he resented the haughtiness of the British, however, not out of any love for his sailors, whom he regarded as a pack of wastrels. The captain silently recruited a fresh crew of "Lascars." Once they had boarded, he welcomed the British officers back on board the ship to retrieve the men whose release he had earlier demanded. F. A. De Peyster, *Memoirs*, 297–301.

refusing release, the charge of, “Having been sent into his majesty’s service by the masters of the vessels to which they belong, for mutiny.”¹⁶⁰ There is reason to suspect that some American merchant commanders accepted the occasional impressment from their decks as a sort of unofficial tax paid to the British navy for protection on the high seas (when the United States and Great Britain were not at war, that is).¹⁶¹ The seamen who enlisted under a foreign flag depended on the credulity (or the collusion) of the commander who employed him. As long as their interests coincided, both parties to the imposture had cause to assist each other. When their interests diverged, the threat of impressment offered the commander the upper hand.

American naval officers typically held their ground when their British counterparts ordered them to release an alleged Briton from their command, but not invariably—the *Chesapeake* Affair of 1807 was not the only instance of a British officer impressing sailors from the deck of an American public vessel.¹⁶² Still, British seamen who enlisted in the U.S. Navy generally could rely on the protection of the American

¹⁶⁰ Madison, *Message from the President*, 2.

¹⁶¹ The logbook of the American brig *Susannah* provides an intriguing example. The *Susannah* sailed from Jamaica in the autumn of 1805. For protection, it joined an English convoy. Several days after the *Susannah* joined it, the convoy’s leader, His Majesty’s frigate *Diana*, bore down on the *Susannah*, firing a shot to bring it to. A party boated to the brig from the frigate and informed the commander of the *Susannah* that he had displeased the captain of the *Diana* “by going to windward of him.” In retaliation, the *Diana*’s captain seized the *Susannah*’s mate and one of its seamen, offering to release them only in return for any Englishmen on the *Susannah*’s lists. When the captain of the *Susannah* swore he had no such men on board, the captain of the *Diana* threatened to keep the mate as punishment for the *Susannah*’s disobedience of the convoy’s general orders. Eventually, the British commander released the mate of the *Susannah*, but demanded two men off the brig in return, an order with which the *Susannah*’s captain felt bound to comply. Despite this insult, the commander of the *Susannah* kept his ship in company with the British fleet for several more days, raising the interesting possibility that captains accepted the occasional impressment as the price for the protection of the British Navy. Log 1805S, Brig *Susannah*/Logbook acquired by the Essex Institute, Phillips Library, PEM.

¹⁶² During the Quasi War, a British fleet stopped an American convoy in the Caribbean headed by the USS *Baltimore*, a converted merchantman. The *Baltimore*’s commander, Isaac Philips, allowed British officers to impress several sailors from his command. For his acquiescence in this act, Philips was summarily dismissed from the service. In 1805, British officers removed three seamen from U.S. Gunboat No. 6 over the objections of their commander, James Lawrence. (The seamen went voluntarily—indeed, they had asked the British officers to claim them). See NDBP, 4:112–113; Palmer, *Stoddert’s War*, 62–63.

flag. The same American officers who informed the Navy Secretary about the paucity of American seamen on their rolls pretended that their crews consisted solely of Americans and continental Europeans with no Britons. Although Captain Edward Preble counted fewer than twenty Americans on board his own frigate when it left port, he later assured a British naval captain that, “I know of no such person as a *British Subject*, on board of any [of] the ships of the Squadron under my command [that is, the entire American fleet in the Mediterranean].”¹⁶³ Captain John Rodgers defended himself from charges of shipping British deserters from Lisbon by alleging that, he had “no Men, *to my knowledge*,” who were subjects of the British Crown: all “the Men which I have shipped in this Port, with a single exception, say that they are Danes, Swedes, Frenchmen & Americans.”¹⁶⁴ The careful wording of Rodgers’s exculpation is significant: his authority for his crewmen’s national identities was their word, with which he was inclined to find favor, as long as they did not claim themselves to be Britons.

When refusing to return British deserters on their lists to their native service American commanders pretended to place faith in the oaths of loyalty which sailors swore on entering the American service. Edward Preble, who, by his own admission, shipped a crew composed overwhelmingly of foreigners, insisted of his crewmen that, “I know them only as *Citizens* of the United States, who have taken the Oath of Allegiance to our Government, and have volunteered their Services.”¹⁶⁵ John Rodgers, who had frequent problems with deserters, explained to Captain Boyle of the Royal Navy that a

¹⁶³ NDBP, 3:143–144. Less than two months later, following the stranding of the *Philadelphia*, Captain William Bainbridge, the *Philadelphia*’s commanding officer and a prisoner in Tripoli, offered the following suggestion to Preble: “The greater part of our crew consists of English subjects, not naturalized in America; Suppose Lord Nelson was to claim them, and to enforce his demand, would it not be policy in the United States to accede to such a measure?” NDBP, 3:253.

¹⁶⁴ NDBP, 5:282.

¹⁶⁵ NDBP, 3:143–144. Preble argued repeatedly that men who enlisted as Americans and signed an oath of allegiance to the American government were Americans. See NDBP, 3:156, 158.

man whose nationality the two officers disputed, “was at the time of his entry in New-York a Citizen of the United States: and had taken the Oath of Allegiance to the Government.”¹⁶⁶ The phrase became something of a mantra for Rodgers in his dealings with French and British officers over sailors whose loyalty was claimed by multiple states.¹⁶⁷ Other American naval captains toed the same line.¹⁶⁸

American naval commanders clearly bent the truth about the makeup of their crews. They knew that they had foreigners on board their ships and it stretches credulity to its breaking point to hold that they did not know that they harbored a good number of Britons. These commanders’ stance was not a truthful one, nor, for that matter, a strong legal one. John Adams railed against impressment partly on the grounds that it violated the contracts arranged between shipmasters and seamen; American naval officers, on the other hand, commonly staked out the less tenable ground that swearing an oath to the United States alone sufficed to make a sailor an American. Not even American courts would recognize the validity of such a position, let alone British ones.¹⁶⁹

The stance maintained by American naval officers was based less on law than on the game. They *knew* they harbored British deserters. They also knew that they needed men to handle their ships. Finally, they knew that, though their actions went beyond the law, they could shield themselves behind the law. They could refuse to return suspected

¹⁶⁶ NDBP, 5:109.

¹⁶⁷ Rodgers demanded two deserters of the USS *Philadelphia* of the French official at Tripoli, to whom they had turned for protection, because “they had Sworn allegiance to the U. States of America.” *Ibid.*, 4:128.

¹⁶⁸ Alexander Murray, deflecting the demand of a French consul for a Francophone serving under him, whom the consul claimed as a French citizen, insisted, first, that the man was a “Switzer”; second, that the Switzer had been taken off a French pirate; and, finally, that the Switzer had entered the U.S. service “with his own free will, & had made himself a Citizen of the U. States, as such we have since known him, & as such we intend to discharge him in due time.” Presumably, the Switzer had “made himself a Citizen” by swearing an oath of allegiance upon enlisting. Captain Richard Dale pledged to retain a sailor requested of him by a British officer, because the sailor “shipped himself with his own free will, as an American Citizen.” NDBP, 1:606–607; 2:292.

¹⁶⁹ For American views on naturalization, see Kettner, *Development*; Baseler, “*Asylum for Mankind*.”

British seamen on the grounds, stated by Lieutenant James Lawrence, that they “had taken the oath of Allegiance to the U States, and that it was more than my Commission was worth to give them up.”¹⁷⁰

Unfortunately for American naval commanders, they were not the only players versed in the rules of the game. British officers returned tit for tat. They liberally extended protection to any American deserters who escaped to their ships and claimed to be Englishmen. American naval officer Charles Stewart boarded the English naval frigate *Narcissus* to demand the release of three men taken onto that vessel off Stewart’s ship. Stewart’s request “was peremptorily refused—The reason [the captain of the *Narcissus*] assigned was that they called themselves Englishmen, and had applied to him to take them out of the Ship.” When Stewart remonstrated that “they were not Englishmen, but Americans—[the British captain] said they called themselves Englishmen that they had placed themselves under his protection and that it was more than his Commission was Worth to give them up”—the same phrase behind which Lawrence hid his own actions.¹⁷¹ Similarly, Edward Preble recorded in his diary in 1804 that, “About 4 weeks since a seaman departed from the [USS] *Enterprize*, and was enticed on Board a French privateer boat by her Officers, who promised him protection, in consequence of which he did not conceal, from us, the knowledge of his being there.”¹⁷² In other words, the seaman had outplayed Preble. This sailor might have been an American or a Briton or a Frenchman—the fact of it did not matter. He had found a safe berth where Preble could not reach him. The game sometimes allowed common sailors to outwit commanders.

¹⁷⁰ NDBP, 4:112–113.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 4:136

¹⁷² Ibid., 4:52–53

And that was one of the commanders' great fears. The correspondence of American naval officers in the early years of the nineteenth century echoed the concern that sailors would use the game to subvert discipline. During that time, English and American sailors flowed from one navy to the other, fleeing from an American cruiser to a British one and back again.¹⁷³ Some officers attributed this mobility to seamen's alleged "unconquerable desire of Change."¹⁷⁴ Other commanders recognized that sailors took advantage of the fact that the officers of each service would harbor deserters from the other in order to escape from unsatisfactory conditions or imminent punishment. A frequent victim of desertion, John Rodgers, complained that, "whenever Men in our Service infringe its Laws, to an extent to merit the severest punishment; that they will readily avail themselves of any protections; which presents to their view a possibility of rescuing them from the chastisement which their bad conduct merits."¹⁷⁵ Edward Preble similarly worried that, as long as British ships offered protection to all sailors who claimed to be British subjects, the U.S. Navy would hemorrhage men, as "every man who has conducted improperly on board [an American vessel], and has been treated according to his demerits and that may find an opportunity to desert" would do so.¹⁷⁶ In other words, sailors would escape punishment in one service by escaping to and claiming the

¹⁷³ In an attempt to curb "the detestable Crime of Desertion," John Rodgers approved a sentence in December, 1805, that a captured deserter be flogged through the fleet, a punishment that commonly killed its victims. *Ibid.*, 4:324. For examples of sailors skipping between services against the will of the officers under whom they had shipped, see *Ibid.*, 3:112–113, 121–122, 127, 154–155, 156–157, 216; 4:52–53, 510; 5:89–90, 281; 6: 331.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 4: 510.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 6: 188

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3:158. Preble made similar complaints on other occasions, as indicated by an excerpt from a letter he wrote the Secretary of the Navy in 1803: "...nothing material has taken place excepting the loss of 8 of our men by desertion at Gibraltar. Their having received 4 Months advance leaves them as yet in debt to the Ship; and every one who receives punishment for crimes, deserts if opportunity offers. This they would not dare to do if not encouraged by the declaration of some commanders of the British Men of War on the Gibraltar Station, particularly Captain Sutton of the *Amphion* & Captain Gore of the *Medusa* frigates; that they would protect every man who would claim their protection if he would say he was an Englishman. This of course every deserter will do to screen himself from punishment." *Ibid.*, 3:160–161.

protection of another. To the officers who lost men to this process, it seemed clear that the sailors were manipulating the ocean's ambiguity to their own advantage.¹⁷⁷

The consternation of the officers shows why conditions on the ocean of the early republican period are best understood as a game. Neither naval commanders, nor merchant commanders, nor common sailors attended fastidiously to the dictates of the law. Members of each group worked the law or ignored the law to their own advantage. They did so according to informally acknowledged means: naval commanders flew false flags before battles, sailors carried fraudulent protections on their persons, and merchantmen bore false papers to gain entry into closed ports. Knowledgeable commanders and sailors recognized these workings and planned for or around them as best they could. They also saw that they could never control the game. Commanders had the upper hand, but sailors retained their cards and occasionally played their way to victory. The ambiguity engendered by the ocean laid the basis for the game, washing away as it did the markers of national identity. In this situation men made and broke allegiances and altered fronts as the circumstances demanded in the pursuit of their best interests.

¹⁷⁷ Several American officers reached this conclusion. Alexander Murray, for instance, refused to release a Francophone sailor who claimed protection from a French consul, partly on the basis of “the dangerous consequences that might ensue, upon a Sailor or a Marine, belonging to any Government refusing to do his duty, (which this man hath done) to be suffered to pass with impunity.” John Rodgers recorded that, during a meeting between his gunboat and two British warships, “three of my men, who had been unruly during the passage, finding some of their old shipmates in the [British] boat declared themselves English subjects and demanded protection” from the British officers visiting Rodgers. *Ibid.*, 2:292; 4:112–113.

Chapter Three

“Who are Her Subjects, and Who are Our Citizens”: The Roles of Consensus and Status in the Determination of National Identity

In the maritime world the ambiguity of national identity made it a potential weapon for good or for ill. Different persons tried to wield it to their advantage, but they did not have equal recourse to it. It was one thing, after all, to lay claim to the rights of a certain national identity, and another to have that claim recognized. In order for national identity to function as a tool, one had to have one's claim to a specific national identity validated. Class (or status), race, and gender all played a role in determining the reception of an individual's claim. The higher one ranked on the hierarchies of power associated with those categories, the greater one's authority in judging the validity of claims to national identity (and having one's claims respected). Until the end of the War of 1812, the American nation was distinctly subordinate to the British in this regard. American political and naval leaders took this discrepancy to heart. They fought the War of 1812 partly to redress this national equality. Nonetheless they did not counter the general notion that hierarchies in the ability to determine identities should exist.

When word of the declaration of war against Britain reached New York City, in June, 1812, Captain David Porter assembled his men, the crew of the USS *Essex*, to deliver the news. Knowing that British sailors regularly enlisted in the U.S. Navy as Americans, he offered to discharge any man reluctant to fight. The men responded with three cheers. None asked for a release.

The next day certain crewmen slacked in their duties. Worrying that the crew's patriotism might be less fervent than they had claimed, Porter called the men together once more. He repeated his earlier offer. Once more the men responded with hurrahs. They would stand behind him and do their duty. When it came time to take the oath of allegiance, however, one sailor faltered. John Erving, a sailmaker, refused to swear the oath.¹⁷⁸ He was, he said, a British subject. He could not fight against his country, and he feared he would be hanged were he caught doing so.

Erving's assertion contradicted other evidence. He carried a protection that identified his birthplace as Salem, Massachusetts. With that protection, he had enlisted on board the *Essex* as an American citizen. Upon enlistment he had sworn an oath of allegiance to the United States government. Finally, he had neglected two opportunities to request a discharge before refusing to take the oath Porter administered to the other members of the crew.

Erving later explained that his birthplace was Tyne, England. Since 1800 he had resided in the United States. He had never naturalized as an American citizen. "He says he had a protection," explained one newspaper correspondent, who claimed to have spoken with Erving personally, "which he bought of a man in Salem, of the name and description with himself, for 4 shillings and 6 pence, which he got renewed at the Custom House at Norfolk."¹⁷⁹ Published versions of Erving's protection show that it was provided by the collector of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Larkin Smith, based on unspecified "proof," which might have been an earlier protection. In 1811 Erving enlisted on board the USS *Essex* at Norfolk. To a friendly observer, his version of the facts had merit.

¹⁷⁸ Several accounts give Erving's name as Irvin; but printed copies of his protection read "Erving."

¹⁷⁹ *Northern Whig*, 29 June 1812.

Unfortunately for Erving, his companions on the *Essex* were not friendly observers. They did not regard his claim to Englishness as the revelation of a hidden truth. They regarded it as a renunciation of his proven American identity. In their eyes, Erving lied about being a Briton, not about being an American. The men on the *Essex* rejected his claim that he was an Englishman. They provided Erving and anyone else who happened to witness it physical evidence of their stance on the issue of Erving's identity.

The *Essex's* petty officers had Erving stripped to his waist. They slathered him with tar and bedecked him with feathers, then forced him off the *Essex* onto the streets of New York City. Erving's comrades intended more than to hurt him, humiliate him, and dismiss him disdainfully from their company. They wanted a broader community of Americans to participate in Erving's judgment. They hoped to make a spectacle of him, and succeeded at it. Crowds of New Yorkers mulled around Erving, until a concerned citizen escorted him to the protection of a local jail.

Word of Erving's treatment spread. Newspapers throughout the United States recorded the incident. Partisanship colored the coverage. Republican journals wondered what else Erving expected, having enlisted as an American. He had received his just desserts, a tar-and-feather "coat of old fashioned yankee manufacture."¹⁸⁰ Republican editors echoed the sailors' contention that Erving was an American; he was, they declared, the apprentice of a Mr. Lane, master sailmaker, of Salem. He was therefore a traitor. Federalist newspapers saw the matter differently. Erving's punishment was nothing more than "disgraceful and lawless violence."¹⁸¹ They asked readers to

¹⁸⁰ *Otsego Herald*, 4 July 1812.

¹⁸¹ *Salem Gazette*, 3 July 1812.

“Suppose the captain of an English frigate should suffer his men to tar and feather an American sailor in the port of London, because he would not join in a cruise to fight against his own country,—what would you think and say of such an action?”¹⁸² British naval officers who heard of the affair denounced Porter as a villain for allowing it to proceed.¹⁸³

Before casting Erving off their ship, the *Essex*'s men adorned him with what most accounts referred to obliquely as “appropriate labels.” The labels announced Erving's crime and rationalized his punishment. They invited spectators to weigh the offense and approve the crime.¹⁸⁴ Few reports stooped to publicize the specifics of these labels, not even those that sided against Erving; but one correspondent eschewed his colleague's delicacy. “If it will help the refractory sailor,” noted a contributor to *The Columbian*, “we will mention to the public, that his shipmates put labels of *tory* and *traitor* upon him.”¹⁸⁵ The author of this account joined the crewman in making the punishment a

¹⁸² *Northern Whig*, 29 June 1812.

¹⁸³ In a letter dated 17 July 1814, Rear Admiral George Cockburn wrote, in reference to Porter's capture by Captain Hillyar of the *Phoebe* that, “I cannot conceive what could induce Captain Hillyar to allow of that Vagabond Porter returning immediately to America on Parole—at least if the Story be true of his encouraging his People to Tar & Feather an English Sailor, because he declared he was an Englishman and did not wish to fight against his Country—and I have never heard this Report against Captain Porter contradicted.” NW, 3:137

¹⁸⁴ Erving's punishment was in line with the practice of communal punishments known variously by historians as Skimmingtons, rough music, and charivari. These practices all entail representatives of a community subjecting an offender against communal norms to elaborate shaming rituals. See Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1975), 97–123; David Underdown, *Revel, Riot & Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603–1660* (New York: Oxford UP, 1985), 102–111; William Pencak, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman, eds., *Riot and Revelry in Early America* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

¹⁸⁵ *The Columbian*, 29 June 1812. The style of Erving's punishment—a mixture of corporal punishment and degrading labels—was not unknown in the U.S. Navy. Eight years before, almost to the day, an American sailor in the Mediterranean charged with mutiny was sentenced by court martial to “have his Head & Eye brows shaved, branded n the forehead with the Word MUTINUS—to receive Three hundred & twenty lashes, equally apportion'd along side of the different ships of the Squadron with the Label MUTINEY in large capital Letters inserted on its front, & to be Drum'd on shore under a Gallows in a Boat tow'd stern foremost by a boat from each ship in the Squadron, as unworthy of serving under the Flag of the United States.” On the same date, John Kirkpatrick, a sailor on the same ship, was sentenced to receive

communal one. If readers could not participate directly in chastening Erving, they could quietly approve the principles behind it. Potential turncoats, then, would have to take heed of the warning his case presented: “Refractory sailors” could know what to expect. Americans, announced the men of the *Essex* and the person behind *The Columbian* piece, would not tolerate traitors in their midst.

Of course, Erving could only be a traitor if he were an American first. No one disputed that Erving asked to be released from the USS *Essex* on the outbreak of the War of 1812 on the grounds that he was an English subject. Sides formed over the question of whether such a request constituted a crime. Were Erving a Briton his request was reasonable and his handling unjustified. Were he an American shunning his patriotic duty through imposture, then he was a scoundrel. His comrades on the *Essex* announced their decision on the matter through tar, feathers, and labels reading “tory” and “traitor.” Their verdict of “traitor,” however, was a secondary matter to the chief concern. The charge of treachery followed from the men’s most important decision, that Erving was an American. The presumption of the men of the *Essex* was not in their declaring that Erving was disloyal to the American nation; Erving himself proclaimed that he owed it no loyalty. Their presumption rather was in their judgment of his nationality.

Nationality was an ambiguous trait in the early-nineteenth-century maritime world. Language, accent, physiognomy, skin color, and mannerism could not conclusively establish a person’s identity. Place of birth could rarely be proven and was often faked. Legal definitions of nationality could not suffice. Different polities held to different principles of national allegiance and naturalization. Moreover, states could

150 lashes for desertion, to be received while wearing “a white Cap with a Label in Front, in Capital Letters—THE REWARD OF DERSERTION.” NDBP, 4:219; 226–227.

only fully enforce their national policies in regions where their jurisdiction was clear, and no country dominated the high seas. Though Britain was predominant on it, its claims to authority were contested by other powers.¹⁸⁶ On the ocean, as with other frontier regions, the standard means of ascertaining national identity could not suffice.

The Erving affair suggests another way to consider national identity—as claims put forth by an individual, claims closely scrutinized by the men the individual encountered. An individual’s national identity was a communal decision. The often violent negotiations between individual men and the communities of men in which they lived and worked must be taken into equal account with the pretensions of governments and the accidents of birthplace in discussions of early-nineteenth-century national identity.

The abilities to claim a nationality and to pass judgment on others’ claims to nationality both depended on status. The higher an individual’s status, the greater the individual’s weight in these matters. In the Anglo-American maritime world, officers had higher status than seamen, whites had higher status than blacks, and men had higher status than women. To respect or to reject an individual’s claims to self-identity or to the identity of others was therefore to pass judgment in the individual’s status; implicitly, such respect or rejection also racialized and gendered the individual.

From a broader perspective, the ability of one sovereign state to enforce its interpretations of nationality on another reluctant state compromised the latter state’s

¹⁸⁶ John Adams, for instance, opined on the subject of impressment that, “It is in vain for the Britons to say, these men are the king’s subjects. How are they the king’s subjects? By British laws. And what are the British laws to us, on the high seas? No more than the laws of Otaheite [i.e., Tahiti]. We Americans must say they are our fellow citizens by our laws. They have sworn allegiance to the United States. We have admitted them to all the rights and privileges of American citizens, and by this admission have contracted with them to support and defend them in the enjoyment of all such rights.” John Adams, *Correspondence*, 7.

claims to equal standing. Even the latter state's claims to independence might come into question. Throughout much of the period of the early republic, Americans found themselves subordinated to Britons: their claims to nationality less heeded; their voice in the negotiations of such claims less respected. Not until the end of the War of 1812 could Americans plausibly assert that they stood as equals to Englishmen in such regards.

Individuals as well as governments participated in the determination of other individuals' nationalities. Common seamen sometimes assumed the power to assess the national identities of their peers. When two sailors from the USS *Constitution* deserted from the frigate to the streets of Portsmouth, England, during a stay there in 1811, the remaining crewmen "made up our minds that they could not be American born."¹⁸⁷ The crewmen of the USS *United States* effectively Americanized the British sailor Samuel Leech. Leech was a native-born British sailor serving on the HMS *Macedonian* when it fell to the *United States*. After the victor and its prize docked at New York City, Leech fled the *Macedonian* rather than remain a prisoner and wait for a cartel to return him to the British service. He returned to the *Macedonian* several days after his escape to retrieve his belongings. The American sailors manning the prize greeted Leech warmly, and invited him to a dinner in their honor held at the City Hotel. Leech accepted their offer, and was feted alongside the Americans for the bravery and skill they had shown in capturing the *Macedonian*.¹⁸⁸ Shortly thereafter, Leech enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Significantly, the process by which he became recognized as an American began with the common sailors of the *United States*, not with officers or any recognized legal authorities.

¹⁸⁷ Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 17.

¹⁸⁸ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 147–161. According to Leech, several of his fellow Macedonians escaped from confinement and took up residence in the United States, some even joining the army.

Common seamen not only assumed the power to welcome men into a nation; they also assumed the power to punish men who betrayed their national allegiance. An American prisoner of war held on board the British prison hulk *Nassau* used an Independence Day oration to warn any wavering patriots among his fellow captives of the consequences of disloyalty:

...all you who feel the tide of true American blood flow through your hearts, I hope never will attempt to flee from the allegiance of your country. It is cowardice, it is felony; and for all those who have done it, we may pray that the departed spirits of their fathers, who so nobly fought, bled, and fell in the conflict to gain them their liberty, will haunt them in their midnight slumbers, and that they may feel the horrors of conscience and the dread of a gallows! also, that they may have no rest, but like the dove that Noah sent out of the ark, be restless until they return to the allegiance of their country.¹⁸⁹

The orator's threat was not a hollow one; the prisoners of war on the hulk "drew up a resolve that if any American sailor should volunteer into the British ships or attempt to, he should be severely punished."¹⁹⁰

Similarly, the American prisoners of war at England's Dartmoor Depot of Prisons forcibly detained those compatriots who showed signs of accepting a standing offer to enlist in the Royal Navy. Two prisoners did so nonetheless. They later returned to the prison bearing tales of their exploits in the British service. One of the men boasted that he had served on the HMS *Pelican* when it engaged and captured the U.S. brig *Argus*. He claimed that he was the first man to board the *Argus*, and bragged of having killed its carpenter. The other prisoners tried these men for their treachery and sentenced them to be hanged. The British authorities at the prison barred the prisoners from enacting the

¹⁸⁹ [An American Seaman, Prisoner of War], *An Oration, Delivered by Permission, on Board the Nassau Prison-Ship, at Chatham, England; on the Fourth of July, 1814* (Boston: 1815), 6–7.

¹⁹⁰ Upton, *Log*, 17.

punishment. Instead, the prisoners branded the defectors on their cheeks to mark them as traitors.¹⁹¹

Officers in the merchant and naval services made judgments about men's nationalities as well, especially in the hiring process. Many officers had no compunctions against enlisting a foreigner; even naval officers filled their rolls with the citizens and subjects of foreign powers. However, officers did not always know how many foreigners they carried. American officers, for example, employed thousands of British sailors who claimed to be Americans. Many of these Britons carried documentation that ostensibly proved that they were Americans. Aware of such duplicitous practices, American officers had to decide whether or not to trust the word and papers of a stranger. Their decisions were as likely to be based on their own interests as on a cool evaluation of the man's credentials.

Impressment, too, was a process by which men adjudged the national claims of one another. Although other factors were sometimes involved, the primary justification for impressment was natural allegiance.¹⁹² When British naval officers boarded American merchant vessels, they generally carried away only men whom they believed to be British subjects. However, abuses did occur. Some officers in the Royal Navy impressed seamen from foreign vessels in retaliation for a perceived slight or simply on a

¹⁹¹ Benjamin F. Palmer, *The Diary of Benjamin F. Palmer While A Prisoner On Board English Warships at Sea, In the Prison at Melville Island And at Dartmoor* (Acorn Club, 1914), 127; Waterhouse, 18; Nathaniel Pierce, "Journal of Nathaniel Pierce of Newburyport, Kept at Dartmoor Prison, 1814–1815," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 73 (January 1937), 27; Charles Andrews, *The Prisoners' Memoirs* (New York: 1815) 141–142; Francis G. Selman, "Extracts from the Journal of a Marblehead Privateersman Confined on Board British Prison Ships, 1813, 1814, 1815," in *The Marblehead Manual*, ed. Samuel Roads Jr. (Marblehead: Statesman, 1883), 71; Dye, *Fatal Cruise*, 295–296.

¹⁹² Foreigners became susceptible to the impressment after a period of residency in England. Also, when impressed seamen were enlisted, they were typically offered a "bounty"—essentially, a signing bonus. Since the impressed sailor would be forced to work for an indefinite period anyway, it made some sense to accept the extra pay. Accepting the bounty, however, created the legal fiction that the sailor had entered the service voluntarily; it therefore became a justification for holding men in the service, regardless of evidence of foreign citizenship.

lark.¹⁹³ Knowledgeable observers noticed that many British officers equated “Englishness” with “strong, fit, and healthy”; they targeted the man who would make the finest sailor and not necessarily the one who was most clearly a Briton.¹⁹⁴ These excesses notwithstanding, impressment was fundamentally an assessment of a man’s nationality. Just as Erving’s punishment was premised on his presumed American identity, so too was impressment into the British service typically premised on a presumption of British identity.

Impressment from off of ships on the sea or in port frequently involved negotiations between officers—the pressing officers on one side and the commanders of

¹⁹³ In his memoirs, one British naval officer admitted (“*entre nous*”) that a “youthful commander” under whom he sailed in the Caribbean was “fond” of stopping American merchantmen in that sea and impressing their “prime seamen.” In 1807 Isaac Chauncey, an American naval officer engaged in mercantile pursuits during a furlough, reported that officers from the HMS *Lyon* boarded his ship, the *Beaver*, and “demanded my papers which I refused to deliver or even shew him he then threatened to impress every man out of the ship that was worth takeing if I did not submit to have my papers and men’s protections examine’d.” Chauncey successfully resisted the British demand, but had other stories to tell about his encounters with the Royal Navy. “The Carpenter of a ship belonging to Philadelphia,” he reported, “was impressed onboard the [HMS] *Phaeton*—Captain Wood acknowledged that he knew to be an american but would keep him untill he was ready for sea to punish some other americans that he was *Vexed* with.” See G. S. Parsons, *Nelsonian Reminiscences: Leaves from Memory’s Log*, ed. W. H. Long. (1843, reprint, London: Chatham, 1998), 66; NDBP, 6:532–533.

¹⁹⁴ Ned Myers, a Canadian sailor who assumed an American identity, alleged that British officers claimed sailors as Englishmen based on the degree to which they were “fresh, clean, fed, and tolerably clad.” According to Myers, British authorities used these criteria to cull supposed Britons from the ranks of captured American sailors, and force them into the British Navy. Myers witnessed eight men, including himself, compelled to join the British Navy on those grounds. Myers himself was in fact a native-born Canadian; he described the other seven men thusly: “five were native Americans, one was from Mozambique, one I suppose to have been a English subject born.” The eight men gained their revenge, and their release into the war prison camp at Norfolk Island, not by proving to be Americans, but by pretending to be green horns. “We refused to do duty, however, to a man; most of our fellows being bold, as native Americans,” Myers elaborated. “We were a fortnight in this situation, the greater part of the time playing green, with out tin pots slung round our necks. We did so much of this, that the people began to laugh at us, as real Johnny Raws, though the old salts knew better.” Similarly, American sailor James Durand reported an instance when the merchantman upon which he served was boarded by British officers looking for deserters. Durand, who was ill at the time, remembered that, “All had protections but myself and my sickness was my protection (as they would not impress a sick person for their service).” British naval surgeon William Begg admitted that the ship on which he served stopped a Canadian brig and impressed a “young man” from it, replacing him with “a man subject to epilepsy.” Myers, *Ned Myers*, 105–106, 111; Durand, *James Durand*, 6; William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Tenedos*, Capt’n Hyde Parker, HSP.

the potentially impressed men on the other.¹⁹⁵ Sometimes, American merchant officers put up no resistance to impressment from off their decks. If they suspected that the men in question were in fact British subjects, they might find it both practical and principled to surrender them. They complained more stridently when they believed the men in question were native-born American citizens.¹⁹⁶ On numerous occasions British boarding parties dropped their demands or returned recently impressed men in response to a merchant officer's assurances. Conversely, merchant commanders occasionally punished seamen whom they had every reason to believe were Americans by delivering them to British officers and pledging that the seamen were in truth Britons.¹⁹⁷ Either way, the merchant officer's position on a crewman's nationality was given more credence on the matter than the crewman's own statements.

Many British officers recognized that national identity was not an objective fact but a communal decision. As a result they sequestered impressed seamen from contact

¹⁹⁵ Impressment from a foreign public ship was rare (although the *Chesapeake v Leopard* affair was not the only instance of it in the history of the U.S. Navy; several like occasions took place, though without fatalities). British naval officers knew that any given American naval vessel might have dozens of Britons on its lists. Conversely, American officers believed knew that the labor of thousands of American men helped keep the British navy afloat. The officers of the respective services sometimes engaged in recriminatory communications. One would demand the release of a citizen or subject serving on the ships of the other; the other would reject the demand and counter with a demand that his own citizen or subject be released. Generally, these arguments resulted in nothing but angry missives.

¹⁹⁶ Two experiences by the same American merchant captain are illustrative in this regard. In an affidavit Joseph Mudge reported that he had lost a sailor to British impressment in 1807. Mudge had shipped the man in Madeira; the man had no protection. After the man was taken, Mudge admitted that he "never looked after him, supposing him to be an Englishman." Presumably Mudge would have done more for the man had he believed him to be an American. A year earlier, he claimed, he had successfully appealed for the release of one George Atwell whom a press gang had swept up off the streets of Liverpool. Atwell was a crewman on Mudge's ship *Bickford* and Mudge knew him to be a native of Lynn, Massachusetts. As a result, Mudge took more interest in Atwell case than he would in the similar case of the following year. Massachusetts House of Representatives, *Report of the Committee*, 32.

¹⁹⁷ Such a fate allegedly befell William Parker of Boston. Parker testified that he had embarked on board the *Charles Carter* in Norfolk, Virginia, bound to London under Captain John Tompkins. Upset with Tompkins's conduct, Parker and the rest of the crew deserted the ship in London. Tompkins retained Parker's protection, which Parker replaced through the services of the American consul in London. However, Tompkins gave his word to a press gang that Parker was in truth an Irishman. As a result, the gang impressed Parker, who served against his will in the British Navy for five and a half years before effecting his escape. *Ibid.*, 59.

with visiting American officials.¹⁹⁸ An American consul or naval officer might add his weight to an impressed seaman's claims to American identity, undermining the British officers' claims to his service. When the HMS *Lyon* docked at Lisbon, a sailor on that ship, John Addison, managed to send a note to William Jarvis, the American consul to the city. Insisting that he was a native-born American, Addison pleaded with Jarvis for assistance. In the note, Addison admitted that he had appealed to Jarvis on a former occasion. Unfortunately, before Jarvis had visited the *Avon* to investigate Addison's initial claim, the *Avon*'s captain had ordered a subordinate to clap the sailor in chains and confine him below deck. The captain's rationale, according to Addison, was to "not allow me to See or to See any one that came to See me."¹⁹⁹

The policy of the *Avon*'s commander was a simple one: to retain Addison as a British subject, the captain blocked him from contact with anyone who might accept the sailor's claim to be an American. British officers had a vested interest in retaining the services of their men, and in various ways they obstructed seamen from contacting American agents, or American agents from contacting seamen.²⁰⁰ (Like Addison, however, many seamen in the British Navy found ways to transmit their claims to

¹⁹⁸ The United States government has adopted this same principle with regards to detainees in its "Global War on Terror." Defining these detainees as "enemy combatants," the government denies them the rights they could claim were they prisoners of war or criminals. At Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and in other locations throughout the world, American authorities isolate detainees from almost all contact, even with representatives of the U.S. court system, at least in part in order to retain the sole power of definition of their identities.

¹⁹⁹ John Addison and George Walker to William Jarvis, H.M.B. *Avon* [n.d.]. MHS

²⁰⁰ In 1813 the HMS *Plantagenet* captured an American merchantman, the *Lady Washington*. Two sailors on board the *Plantagenet*, James Killigan and Joseph Parker, contrived to slip a letter to an American gentleman taken off the *Lady Washington*. In this letter, the sailors claimed to be Americans held against their will. They added that, "We, your petitioners, are not allowed to speak or hold conversation with any Americans, who are at times on board, from coasters and small craft that the above ship [i.e., the *Plantagenet*] at times detains." *The War* (N.Y.), 16 December 1813.

American identity to the sympathetic ears of American naval officers.)²⁰¹ To Republicans, the procedure in the Royal Navy seemed to be to conceal American sailors “on board her ships of war like stolen property, instead of affording an opportunity to them and their friends to prove them Americans.”²⁰² As this orator implied, to lay claim to a national identity, one needed the assistance of friends.

American naval officers, too, understood that individuals needed allies to enforce their claims to national identity. Therefore the tactics which they employed to maintain control over their own crewmen resembled those used by their British counterparts. In 1804 Tobias Lear, U. S. Consul General to the Barbary States, wrote to Secretary of State James Madison that America’s naval forces in the Mediterranean would use Syracuse as a rendezvous point, partly because at Malta, the most viable alternative, there was “continually some dispute regarding deserters, or men who leave our Ships and go on board the British declaring themselves to be British subjects [and] make it a less eligible place for our Ships than Syracuse, where the Americans are in fact commanders of the town.”²⁰³ In other words, to keep the crewmen American, it was necessary to place them somewhere that Americans effectively controlled. In Syracuse, sailors had too many opportunities to enlist the support of British officers behind their claims to national identity.

²⁰¹ Samuel Leech, a British sailor who joined the U.S. Navy during the course of the War of 1812, reported that the British press gangs in foreign ports typically snatched American sailors at night, “To prevent the recovery of these men by their consul...so that before they were missed they were beyond his protection.” Leech, *Thirty Years*, 80fn. Hiram Thayer, a sailor in the British navy during the War of 1812, wrote a letter to John Mitchell, agent for American prisoners of war, insisting that he was an American held against his will. He added that his captain, in an attempt to deflect his pleas for dismissal, “tells me that Admiral Warren will not Discharge Americans which I know to be False.” Hiram Thayer to John Mitchell, HMS [?], 22 November 1812, John Mitchell Papers, Mrs. Wilcox Mss. Correspondence, Reports, etc. Concerning American Prisoners of War, 1812–1814, HSP. See also NDBP, 6:187–188, 437, 470.

²⁰² Timothy Fuller, *An Oration Pronounced at Lexington, Massachusetts, on the Fourth of July, A.D. 1814, by Request of the Republican Citizens of Middlesex County, Being the Thirty-Eighth Anniversary of American Independence* (Boston: Rowe & Hooper, 1814), 8.

²⁰³ NDBP, 5:116

The processes by which maritime communities evaluated claims to national identity implicitly acknowledged hierarchies of respect. Seamen turned to officers and consuls to support their claims; officers and consuls did not turn to seamen. International relations added another wrinkle to the system. British maritime predominance on the ocean assured that all English speakers were presumed to be Englishmen. In a telling instance, the Moroccan nomads who captured the shipwrecked American seaman Archibald Robbins in 1815 stared dumbly at Robbins when he identified himself as an American. Robbins “therefore told him I was *Inglesis*, which they understood.”²⁰⁴ Most people of the Atlantic world had a stronger familiarity with the concept of America, of course. Nonetheless, Englishness was the default national identity of all Anglophones. A sailor was an Englishman until proven an American.²⁰⁵

This disparity in national prominence rankled many Americans deeply. They resented the fact that most solutions offered to curb the abuses of impressment required American sailors to carry proof of their national identity rather than requiring British sailors to carry proof of theirs. “What would be said if our Ships of War were to take by force even Americans out of English Merch’t Ships?” Captain Edward Preble wondered to the Secretary of the Navy;

it would make a bustle in America as well as England! and why have we not as good a right even to impress from their Ships English Men when destitute of Protections, as they have Americans from Ours? They certainly have no more right to presume every man without a protection on board our Merchant Ships to be English than we have to consider every Englishman in the same situation on board their Vessels an American.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Robbins, *Journal*, 158.

²⁰⁵ Robbins and other American sailors who shipwrecked on the Barbary coast exploited this fact. They commonly presented themselves as Englishmen to take advantage of Britain’s stronger diplomatic presence in the region.

²⁰⁶ NDBP, 3:210.

Preble's complaint cut to the heart of the matter. It was not just that American men were seized without due process but that American sailors received less protection than English ones. (Indeed, as Republicans were quick to point out, they had fewer rights on the ocean than contraband goods. Before a prizemaster could sell the cargo of a captured ship, he had first to prove in court that the ship had been a fair prize. No regular process of any sort existed for adjudicating claims related to impressment. Judgment was effectively rested entirely in the hands of the impressing officer.) As much as anything, Americans resented the greater weight that Britons carried in negotiations over the national identities of impressed sailors. The whim of a single British officer could offset the protestations of the entirety of an American merchantman's officers and crew, and his decision could force an innocent man into prolonged involuntary servitude for a foreign power. The American nation was, in this very real sense, still subordinate to that of Great Britain.

The oft-cited similarities between members of the British and American nations made distinctions difficult. Republicans seethed under an inescapable fact of the matter, incident to Britain's maritime superiority: an Anglophone on the ocean was by default a Briton, not an American. Upon American sailors fell the burden of proving that they were not Britons. Republicans attacked it as an "outrage" and an "indignity" that "a free born American must be made to prove his nativity to those who have previously violated his liberty, else he is to be held forever as a slave!"²⁰⁷ They resented that an American sailor must submit to carrying protections, "setting forth in odious detail his size, his age, the shape of his frame, whether his hair is long or cropt—his marks, like an ox or a horse

²⁰⁷ Richard Rush, *An Oration, Delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives, at the Capitol, Washington, July 4, 1812* (Concord, N.H.: Hill, 1812), 13.

of the manger.”²⁰⁸ James Madison insisted that it was “obvious and just” that if “British subjects should be taken out of American vessels on the high seas, it might at least be required that the proof of allegiance should lie on the British side.” As it was, “every seaman on board, though going from an American port, and sailing under the American flag, and sometimes even speaking an idiom proving him not to be a British subject, is presumed to be such, unless shewn to be an American citizen.”²⁰⁹ Indeed, in 1797 a British officer admitted that he had orders “to press every man calling himself an American, unless he can produce a protection countersigned by the British Minister or British Consuls in America.”²¹⁰

From the Republican point of view, impressment degraded not just the sailor but the entire American nation. “Establish the fact that Great-Britain knowingly, and wilfully detains in her service *one single American*,” one Republican insisted, “and it constitutes an injury which we must resist, or relinquish our claim to independence.”²¹¹ Impressment was such “a gross invasion of the personal liberty of an American seamen; [that] if the loss of some thousands of our bravest and most useful brethren are not to be resented, let us no longer boast of our independence, but at once subscribe to whatever

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹[James Madison], *All Impressments Unlawful and Inadmissible* (Boston: Munroe & Francis, for William Pelham, [1808], 3–4. Madison’s predecessor, Thomas Jefferson, objected to the policy of issuing protections not only because of the burden it placed on sailors (who “would never have the precaution of comply”), but also because it would admit to Britain’s “legal authority” to impress all men without protections. See United States Department of State, *Copies and Extracts of Documents on the Subject of British Impressments of American Seamen* (New York: 1813), 4.

²¹⁰ NDBP, 1:205.

²¹¹ William Slade Jr., *An Oration, Pronounced at Middlebury, (Vt) on the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1814* (Middlebury, Vt.: Slade & Ferguson, 1814), 26–27.

conditions of servitude Great-Britain in right of her superiority over us may dictate.”²¹²

Republicans’ denunciations of impressment bled with indignity.

Proponents of war against Britain took to task those who thought “impressment of little consequence, and a *contemptible* cause of war”:

I invite such, for God’s sake, to ponder the list of excuses again. Will you suffer yourselves to be insultingly told, when you demand the liberty of your countrymen, that they have not the evidence of their citizenship in their pockets, or that this evidence is *informal*? That they had *attempted* to flee from the most illegal and cruel bondage, and therefore must continue under the scourge? That having been lashed like dogs through a British fleet, they had fainted and fallen in a ship, that did not happen to be the particular one stated to contain them?²¹³

This orator railed against the numerous niggling ways in which British officers dismissed sailors’ claims to American identity. At the root of his complaint was that self-proclaimed Americans were not taken at their word. No matter what evidence they presented, Britons found cause to disregard it; worse, Britons were sufficiently strong to enforce their own interpretation of the truth of a seaman’s claims. As James Madison observed, with regards to determining between the possible national identities of an individual sailor, impressment left “the question whether he belongs to the one or the other, to an arbitrary decision on the spot, by an interested and irresponsible officer.”²¹⁴

Republicans recognized that they were not equal partners with Great Britain in discussions that impacted their nation’s very sovereignty. Britain claimed for itself, as one Republican orator noted, “in all cases, the sole power to decide, who are her subjects,

²¹² Edwin A. White, *Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, Massachusetts; July 4, 1814, in Commemoration of American Independence* (Worcester, Mass.: Rogers, 1814), 12.

²¹³ John Champlin Thompson, *An Oration, Pronounced at Windsor, before a Numerous Collection of Republicans, on Their Celebration of the Thirty Eighth Anniversary of American Independence* (Windsor, Vt.: Cochran, 1814), 15–16.

²¹⁴ [Madison], *All Impressments*, 6. John Adams made the same point: “The lieutenant is to be the judge, possessed of greater authority than the chief justice of any of our states, or even than the chief justice of the United States.” Adams, *Correspondence*, 12.

and who are our citizens.”²¹⁵ Republicans demanded parity in the making of such decisions. Their feelings accorded with those of John Adams, who noted that impressment threatened to place the American nation in gendered subordination to the British one: “If the right of impressment is conceded by us, in theory or in practice...every British seaman will say to every American seaman...‘*we have put petticoats on you.*’”²¹⁶ As long as every American “sailor must hold his life and liberty at the discretion of a British officer,” Adams believed, the American nation was emasculated and American manhood denied.²¹⁷

The British and American governments never agreed on a mutual policy to temper or abnegate impressment from American vessels. The problem of ascertaining men’s national identities survived into the War of 1812. At the onset of the war, the armed forces of each side included significant numbers of the subjects or citizens of the other. Thousands of American sailors serving in the Royal Navy when the war began requested their release. Most of them were confined as prisoners of war. An untold number had their requests denied; for instance, the HMS *Guerrière* and the HMS *Macedonian* both had American seamen on their lists when they fell to the U.S. Navy (the captain of the former allowed them to go below deck before the battle; the captain of the latter forced them to man the guns under threat of death).²¹⁸ The officers of the USS *Constitution* and

²¹⁵ Cornelius P. Van Ness, *An Oration Delivered at Williston, July 4th, 1812, to a General and Very Numerous Meeting of the Republicans of Chittenden County*. (Burlington, Vt.: Mills, 1812), 43.

²¹⁶ John Adams, *Correspondence*, 1809, 14.

²¹⁷ Richardson, *Oration*, 16.

²¹⁸ *Free Trade and Sailor’s Rights*, 12. Samuel Leech, who served on board the *Macedonian*, reported that an American named John Card asked the frigate’s captain, Carden, to accept him as a prisoner of war rather than force him to fight. According to Leech, Carden, “very ungenerously, ordered him to his quarters, threatening to shoot him if he made the request again. Poor fellow! He obeyed the unjust command, and was killed by a shot from his own countrymen.” In his fictionalized memoir of life on the USS *United States* (or *Neversink*, to use the alias he gave it), Herman Melville recorded the tale of an old African American sailor known as “Tawney.” Tawney had been impressed into the *Macedonian* from an American

the USS *United States* respectively accepted these seamen's assertion that they were Americans held against their will. British sailors found on board the decks of captured American ships made similar claims. Often in such instances, officers interpreted the presence of their countrymen on enemy decks as evidence of the enemy's depraved willingness to force unwilling men to fight against their homeland.

Sometimes, however, officers concluded that those countrymen had willfully engaged in treachery.²¹⁹ Any such decision would be controversial. Treason was a capital offense in both the United States and Britain. British subjects bearing arms for the United States government against His Majesty's forces risked the gallows if captured. The American government, however, pledged itself to protect the men who fought for it. It erred on the side of assuming that all of its sailors and soldiers were Americans (or at least not Britons), either by birth or naturalization. To punish John Erving for treason, the crewmen of the *Essex* had first to decree him an American; so, too, any captive to British forces became a prisoner of war or a traitor depending on British authorities' assessment of his national identity. The United States government refused to relinquish to the British crown the sole power to make such decisions. American defiance pushed both powers to abuse their prisoners of war, and elicited threats of mass executions.

merchantman, and served on it during its engagement against the *United States*. According to Tawney's account, he and the other Americans improperly loaded the guns to sabotage the British side. Melville may have created this story out of thin air. On the other hand, Melville is known to have poached tales from other sailors' narratives to embellish his own. If he had met a Tawney, he would have been quick to record his story; and if he read Tawney's tale in an obscure text, he very well may have adopted it just as quickly as if he had heard it with his own ears. There may, therefore, be truth to Tawney's tale. Leech, *Thirty Years*, 128; Melville, *White Jacket, or The World in a Man-of-War* (1850, repr., New York: Grove Press, 1956), 295–297.

²¹⁹ For instance, when the men on the USS *Peacock* discovered an American citizen on board the HMS *Nautilus*, the American "was brought on board to be taken to America for trial" for "fighting against his country." Conversely, earlier in its cruise the *Peacock* had discovered an American seaman on a British merchantman, the *Bellona*; instead of being punished, the seaman was allowed to join the *Peacock*'s crew. William T. Rodgers, "Private Journal, 1814–1817," Papers of William T. Rodgers, LOC.

On repeated occasions, the United States government pledged itself to retaliate against any mistreatment of American prisoners of war. In the spring of 1813, following the British capture of the USS *Vixen*, two sailors from the *Vixen* were taken from a cartel by a British officer and retained as British subjects. Having been captured under American arms, these two supposed Britons faced trial for treason. Madison responded by selecting four British subjects by lot from among British prisoners of war held by American authorities.²²⁰ Madison threatened to replicate any punishment which befell the two sailors from the *Vixen* on these four British prisoners.²²¹

Later in the year, British authorities at Halifax placed sixteen American prisoners of war in close confinement. The United States Government acquired a precise description of their cells: five or six men crammed inside cells measuring “nine feet by seven, having each a single grated light of about 24 by 10 Inches.” American officials took care with the dimensions, because they intended to confine a like number of British prisoners in cells as exactly similar as possible.²²² After British authorities at Halifax shipped fifty-nine captured American soldiers to England, American authorities closely confined fifty-nine British prisoners of war.²²³

²²⁰ Correspondence related to this matter can be found in U.S. Congress, *Report on the Spirit and Manner in which the War Has Been Waged by the Enemy, 1813* (Washington, D.C.: A & G Wag, 1813; repr., New York & London: Garland, 1978), 25–27; 34–35.

²²¹ John Mason transmitted Madison’s directive to James Prince, the marshal of Massachusetts. See John Mason to James Prince, Marshal of Massachusetts, OCGP, Washington, 28 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. OCGP, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

²²² One government official admitted that, “It is to be lamented that [redress for British wrongs] can only be had by causing the cruelty of the Enemy to be felt also by their own subjects, individually innocent.” John Mason to James Prince (Marshal of Massachusetts), OCGP, Washington, 28 September 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC. The original seems to be held at the AAS as part of their War of 1812 Papers, 1812–1815, folder one.

²²³ John Mason to Thomas Steel (Deputy Marshal of Ohio), OCGP, Washington, 12 October 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

In effect the retaliation controversy was an extension of the earlier controversy over impressment. In both instances, British authorities claimed that men taken under the American flag owed their allegiance to the British crown. Similarly, the American government insisted on its rights to determine who its own citizens were, and demanded that Britain respect its decisions. However, the U.S. government handled the retaliation controversy more aggressively than it did the impressment one. Partly it assumed a sterner front during the war because the men in question had served in a public American service rather than on a private American vessel: the rights and obligations of the U.S. government were much more evident in the former instance. Partly, too, it stemmed from the disparity in degree between the threat of impressment and the threat of execution. Whatever the differences in the American government's handling of the two controversies, the heart of each was the same: commanding recognition of its power to define its own nationality.

Fortunately, neither power acted on its direst threats of reprisal: The controversy resulted in no deaths. In this dispute, the United States managed to insist on at least a degree of recognition of its rights to claim which men belonged under its aegis. Nonetheless, the handling of prisoners of war became a contentious, nearly bloody issue. It also became a crucial test of America's ability to demand that Britain respect its sovereignty and independence.²²⁴ Such respect was absent unless the two sides held equal power in disputes over persons' national identities.

²²⁴ That the threats to retaliate against British prisoners of war for any harm done to American ones was done to coerce respect for the American nation, as opposed to merely a desperate measure to save the lives of several American sailors and soldiers, is evidenced by the U.S. government's prickly reaction to lesser offenses regarding prisoners of war. When Thomas Barclay, the British official in charge of the handling of American prisoners of war, notified his American counterpart, John Mason, that the British navy, lacking sufficient provisions to do so, could no longer provide larger rations for prisoners of higher ranks, Mason, in turn, ordered his subordinates to implement a like leveling policy over British prisoners of war in

At the same time that the United States government tangled with Britain over the national identities of prisoners of war, it also worked to bar British influence from swaying the loyalties of persons within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States. The country's borders encompassed hundreds of thousands of persons whose fidelity to the national government, or the American nation, was open to question. The list included slaves, free blacks, "Indians not taxed" (in the parlance of the time), resident aliens (including Britons), the residents of coastal and border regions, and, from the administration's point of view, Federalists. For many Americans, the countryside seemed to teem with traitors and spies. British blockading forces rarely went unfeared or uninformed; American citizens supplied them with provisions and intelligence, often quite freely.²²⁵ Captain Stephen Decatur alleged that citizens in Connecticut burned blue

their care. See Mason to Joseph H. Dill, Commanding US Cartel *Perseverance*, OCGP, Washington, 10 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

²²⁵ Some Americans did engage in treachery during the course of the war. Charles Loftus, a British naval officer, wrote that, "We had in America...people employed to give information when anything of importance was likely to occur—and well paid for their services.... We had friends in the United States who were much averse to the war and there were many descendants of old English families who had still much love for the Old Country." Henry Napier, a lieutenant in the British navy, cynically recorded the participation his service had received from New England Federalists: "Received vegetables and stock of all kinds from Boston, green peas for the first time. Newspapers, and in short anything we choose to send for, is brought by these rascals. No occasion to use force, a hint quite sufficient and frequently even that is not wanting. Federalists pretend to be friendly to the English. They hate the war on their own account, hate the War because it prevents their making money, and like the English as a spendthrift loves an old rich wife; the sooner we are gone the better." From the HMS *Bulwark* on the Penobscot River in the autumn of 1814, British Admiral Sir David Milne wrote that Americans "would be glad to place themselves again under the British Government. They detest their own government and they have no trust in one another, and the people of property in the town and the coast are more afraid of their own people in the country than they are of our troops." Milne's observation might not have been too far from the truth. According to another Briton who served off Maine, naval surgeon William Begg, "the spirit of murmuring seems to run so high amongst the rabble of America, that some of the fishermen, (perhaps urged by necessity) said, we would do well to burn the houses of their wealthy neighbours, or at least lay them under contributions." Henry Edward Napier, *New England Blockaded in 1814: The Journal of Henry Edward Napier*, ed. Walter Muir Whitehill (Salem, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1939), 23; Milne, *Letters Written During the War of 1812 by the British Naval Commander in American Waters* (Admiral Sir David Milne), ed. Major Edgar Eskine Hume, NEGHS, 16; William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty's Ship Tenedos*, Capt'n Hyde Parker, HSP; Loftus, *My Youth*, I:309–310.

lights to alert British forces to his plans.²²⁶ Prominent Federalists openly expressed their desire to see the United States lose the war.²²⁷ The governor of Massachusetts, Caleb Strong, sent an unofficial agent to Canada to broach the subject of a separate peace between his state and Great Britain.²²⁸

One governmental response was to segregate persons of questionable loyalty from sensitive locations and enemy agents. After the war broke out, federal marshals registered thousands of British subjects and removed numbers of them inland, forty miles away from major cities and waterways. In the northern theater, frustrated U.S. Army officers sought to end smuggling between Americans and Canadians by issuing orders “to make prisoners every British subject detected within the limits of the U. States, and to apprehend and deliver to the civil authority, for trial and punishment, every American citizen found in Canada.”²²⁹ In other words, Canadians would be kept in Canada, Americans in America. Each nationality would be made separate and distinct. As Major-General Wade Hampton wrote to War Secretary John Armstrong in defense of the new policy, “it is really time each individual should take his side, and traitors to either should meet their due reward.”²³⁰

Perhaps most troubling, especially in the South, was the enslaved portion of the American population. Many free Americans questioned the loyalty of the country’s

²²⁶ Decatur to Navy Secretary Jones, New London, 20 December 1813, printed in *The War* (N.Y.), 4 January 1814.

²²⁷ Especially before the fall of Napoleon, some Federalists contended that the country would suffer worse from victory than from defeat.

²²⁸ J. S. Martell, “A Side Light on Federalist Strategy During the War of 1812,” *The American Historical Review* 43, no. 3 (April 1938): 553–566.

²²⁹ *The War* (N.Y.), 22 March 1814.

²³⁰ Hampton to Armstrong, Chateaugy, New York, 14 October 1814, printed in *The War* (N.Y.), 5 April 1814.

slaves.²³¹ Rumors of insurrections kept communities on edge. Nineteenth-century historian Benson Lossing recorded that, in Charleston, South Carolina, during the war, “All along the coast, and far into the interior, secret organizations existed among the negroes for united efforts to obtain their freedom; and, in anticipation of the coming of a British army of liberation, they were prepared to rise in large numbers, at a given signal, and strike for freedom.” Unfortunately, Lossing identified his source for this report only as an “accomplished American scholar and professor in one of our colleges.”²³²

Whatever the truth of Lossing’s claim, white Americans who lived surrounded by slavery slept uneasily in their beds throughout the war. Even before the British navy invested the Chesapeake, white inhabitants recorded tales of blacks assembled for sinister purposes.²³³

Marylanders in St. Mary’s and Chaptico handled their slaves the same way the State Department handled British aliens: they sent them to “the interior for safety.”²³⁴ In North

²³¹ For the view embraced by some slaveholders, that enslaved Americans were hostile members of a foreign nation, see Onuf, *Jefferson’s Empire*. Some slaveholders, of course, trusted implicitly to the loyalty of their slaves. The *Norfolk Herald*, for instance, printed the observation, “There are negroes in Virginia, and we believe in all southern states, who have their interests and affections as strongly engrafted in their hearts, as the whites, and who feel the sacred ties of filial, parental and conjugal affection, equally strong, and who are warmly attached to their owners and the scenes of their nativity.” The truth seems to fall somewhere between the two views. On the one hand, slaves in the United States acquired sufficient stake in their communities to leave them generally quiescent (which is not to say content). On the other hand, slaves did rise up to claim their freedom when presented with a feasible chance at it, even if that meant allying with a foreign power. Seen properly, the three largest slave insurrections in American history took place, in order of magnitude, 1812–1814, 1775–1783, 1861–1865. See Cassell, “Slaves”; Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution* (New York: Ecco, 2006).

²³² Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812* (New York: Harper, 1869), 690. Lossing also reprinted what he alleged to be a hymn, supposedly sung at these secret meetings, in which the conspirators pledge themselves to liberty in phrases not at all unlike the doggerel of sailors, and even composed to the tune of “Hail Columbia.” It is to be regretted that Lossing’s evidence for these meetings is of a manner that denies confirmation.

²³³ After the Baltimore Riot, for example, the Washington D.C. area was abuzz with “a rumour of a combination of Negroes in Georgetown—it is said that forty have been arrested.” White citizens were left to pray that “God grant that the horrid scenes of the French Revolution, & of St. Domingo may not be acted over in this country.” Richard Cranch Norton, *Journal E*, 30, MHS.

²³⁴ *The War* (N.Y.), 9 August 1814

Carolina, a British subject, accused of exhibiting suspicious conduct, was confined by a U.S. Marshal to “prevent communication between him and the Negroes.”²³⁵

Slaveholders’ fears of an uprising or an alliance with the enemy were not without foundation. Blacks in the Chesapeake region provided intelligence to the British navy.²³⁶ The British navy encouraged enslaved Americans to escape from their masters.²³⁷ British admiral Alexander Cochrane issued a proclamation dated April 2, 1814, from Bermuda offering slaves transportation to a British colony where they could live as free persons; joining the British military forces was not a prerequisite, though that option, too, was open. A thousand copies of the proclamation were printed for distribution, and black men were landed on the American shore to spread the news by word of mouth.²³⁸ Plans were also made to reward slaves for carrying their masters’ horses off to British forces, and to enlist escaped slaves as a cavalry force.²³⁹

²³⁵ John Mason to Beverly Daniel (Marshal of North Carolina), OCGP, Washington, 29 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

²³⁶ So, too, of course, did whites in the Chesapeake, as exemplified in an illuminating excerpt from the correspondence of two British naval officers: “from information obtained by two Blacks, who came on board the St. Lawrence it appears that the Enemy are mustering a very strong force on both banks of the Patuxent, and a number of Tobacco Stores are already emptied. The Flotilla remains in the same situation as when Captain Barrie quitted, but I am given to understand from an American who came on board this Ship last night, that their Military force is daily increasing.” Presumably, the “American” referred to was white, in which case Virginians discovered some unwonted racial harmony in mutually supporting the enemy. NW, 3:122 In reference to a proposed invasion of the Chesapeake, Rear Admiral George Cockburn claimed that, “American Guides will not be difficult to obtain in this Country when we have Force to protect them and Money to pay them.” As evidence, he admitted that he already had a disgruntled American in his service who had performed several tasks for him. See NW, 3:139.

²³⁷ The response of some white Southerners to this practice demonstrates that dissimulation of identity was an art not confined to the oceans. There are several reports of whites blackening their skin and standing by a shore to lure British boats into an ambush. See NW, 3:161.

²³⁸ It is unclear whether these men were Afro-Britons or African Americans. NW, 3:60–61; 65.

²³⁹ NW, 3:130, 131. For similar cooperation between Britons and black Americans during the Revolutionary War, see Schama’s *Rough Crossings*. As Schama explains, the fate of the women, men, and children who escaped slavery during the Revolutionary War was not always happy, and they certainly never stood at the center of mainstream British concern. Nor, however, were they betrayed en masse back into slavery.

White Americans regarded Cochrane's proclamation as a sham. They accused the British of "stealing" slaves from Virginia planters to sell them to West Indian ones.²⁴⁰ If such abuses in fact occurred, they defied official British policy, which was "in no case to take slaves away as slaves, but as free persons not subject to any restriction incompatible with the state of free persons."²⁴¹ Presumably, black Americans harbored suspicions of British motives; nonetheless, hundreds of them gambled their futures on their good faith.²⁴² Many of them joined British forces and took up arms against their former masters. Rear Admiral George Cockburn overcame his initial prejudice against black persons, and sang praises of their abilities as marines and soldiers. He favored them not only for their courage and determination, but also for their loyalty. Compared to white Britons, "they are stronger Men and more trust worthy for we are sure they will not desert whereas I am sorry to say we have Many Instances of our Marines walking over to the Enemy."²⁴³

One result of slaveholders' fears was that Afro-British prisoners were treated differently from their white compatriots. For a time, Georgia housed a small number of Afro-British prisoners. John Mason, the commissary general of prisoners for the United States government, ordered John Epping, the marshal of Georgia, to "confine them [i.e., the black prisoners] closely and guard them well, and...on the first suspicion of improper

²⁴⁰ American newspapers frequently carried headlines that read "Negro Stealing" or the like. The diary of one white American citizen noted laconically of the proclamation, "Many negroes stolen from the Rappahannock were sold at exorbitant prices." Against this conviction that lost slaves had been taken by force and had not departed voluntarily one must weigh the constant dread of a slave uprising. Journal of John Lewis Thomson, LOC, Manuscripts Division, Washington D.C.

²⁴¹ This phrase appears in a letter from the British Secretary of War and the Colonies Earl Bathurst to Major General Edward Barnes, 20 May 1814. NW, 3:73-74.

²⁴² British Rear Admiral George Cockburn, stationed off the Chesapeake, announced in April, 1814, that he had "above an Hundred Negroes, Men, Women and Children" under his care. NW, 3:50. An observer in Baltimore informed her cousin in the autumn of 1814 that, "Many persons are ruined almost by the desertion of their negroes." Charlotte Haynie to Leah B. Haynie, Wicomico, 17 September 1814, transcript, Haynie Family Papers, MS 1815, MDHS.

²⁴³ NW, 3:116. See also NW, 3:64-66, 113-114.

communication [between the prisoners and slaves], you will iron and seclude entirely all of them concerned.” The rationale behind the measure was to prevent “any operation of them on the minds of the Slaves.” The measure was explicitly enacted to satisfy “the wishes of the citizens of Savannah.”²⁴⁴ It was also a preemptive measure. It was based on a judgment of the prisoners’ identities, not a reaction to any known conspiracy. Mason and the white citizens of Georgia took it for granted that Afro-Britons were primarily African, not British; their loyalty was to the black race, not the British nation. Mason assured Savannah’s mayor that the black prisoners would be removed as quickly as possible, confined closely until that time, and that, from thenceforth, the government would “prevent the introduction of persons of the description...in future to your quarter of the country.”²⁴⁵ In the meantime, the government worked to devise a policy on the handling of “Blacks, and mullattoes, Captured in the service of the Enemy.”²⁴⁶ To maintain the safety of the slave system, in other words, it was felt necessary to prevent contact between enslaved Americans and persons who might challenge their identities as slaves.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ John Mason to John Epping, Marshal of Georgia, OCGP, Washington, 6 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC. See also the memorandum of John Dolbeare, in which he records that “11 British prisoners of war confined in this city were sent down to the Cartel ship Magnet, Coverdale, master... We understand those of colour (27 in number) have been detained by the Marshal, in consequence of orders to that effect from the government.” John Dolbeare, Memorandum Book, 1810–1820, Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Library.

²⁴⁵ The district attorney of Louisiana pursued his own policy regarding Afro-British prisoners. He authorized the auction of enslaved crewmen found on board enemy vessels brought in as prizes, alongside the rest of the vessels’ cargo. The Commissary General of Prisoners ordered him to halt this practice. John Mason to George Jones, Mayor of Savannah, OCGP, Washington, 6 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury and John Mason to Pete L. B. Duplissis [?] (Marshal of Louisiana), OCGP, Washington, 28 September 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

²⁴⁶ John Mason to John Epping, Marshal of Georgia, OCGP, 30 July 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

²⁴⁷ David Walker, the noted abolitionist, recognized that a similar motive underlay the postwar colonization movement. He reviled the scheme as a slaveholders’ “plan to get those of our brethren whom they unjustly

As far north as Connecticut, Afro-British prisoners were isolated from their compatriots though local fear was not the chief motive in all cases: The U.S. Government also held black prisoners as hostages for enslaved Americans who fled to or were seized by British forces. John Mason instructed Robert Fairchild, the marshal of Connecticut, “to hold the Blacks in close confinement to prevent escape, and to ascertain by the best means you can, what is the character of each individual of them, if Slaves, or otherwise.” In a later letter to Fairchild, Mason stipulated to keep out an eye for slaves among the British prisoners who “have belonged, to any part of the United States, from which they may have made their escape, and entered into the British service.”²⁴⁸ Put another way, Mason insisted that slaves could not unilaterally renounce their allegiance to their masters and enter into a new relationship with a different authority. The U.S. government’s stance on the status of American slaves, that is, mirrored the British crown’s stance on the status of British subjects. (As a corollary, American government officials did not object to the principle of perpetual allegiance, merely to its application to white men.)

Mason explicated the rationale behind the separation of alleged slaves from other prisoners of war in a letter to the British diplomat Anthony S. John Baker, explaining why, five months after the war, the United States still held several Afro-British prisoners in confinement. The letter is worth quoting at length for its revelation of a little recognized incident of the War of 1812.

hold in bondage, so that they may be enabled to keep them the more secure in ignorance and wretchedness, to support them and their children, and consequently they would have the more obedient slaves. For if the free are allowed to stay among the slaves, they will have intercourse together, and of course, the free will learn the slaves *bad habits*, by teaching them that they are MEN, as well as other people, and certainly *ought* and *must* be FREE.” David Walker, *David Walker’s Appeal*, rev. ed. by Sean Wilentz (1829; repr. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 47.

²⁴⁸ John Mason to Robert Fairchild, Marshal of Connecticut, OCGP, Washington, 18 May 1813 and 22 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

You state that you have been informed that several Black and coloured People captured during the war have not been released with other prisoners, and are yet held in confinement, by the Marshals, and you request to be made acquainted with the cause of their detention, and with such directions as may have been given to the Marshals respecting them.

It is believed that there remain unrestored no Blacks or People of colour captured during the war, other than Slaves, orders having been always given to exchange and restore as ordinary prisoners of war all free persons of that description.

Early in the year 1813 it was ascertained here that the British Officers in command at Halifax had separated from other prisoners, and refused to give up or exchange as Prisoners of War, Slaves captured on the high seas in one of our vessels;--and it was before notorious that those Commanding on our coasts and within our waters, were in the constant habit of receiving the Slaves of our citizens on board British ships of war; of refusing when applied for, to send them back to their owners; and of either employing them in their service, or transporting them to British Territories. Orders were given to the Marshals to withhold from exchange as prisoners of war, all persons of colour captured at Sea, and ascertained to be Slaves;--of this determination Col. Barclay then Agent for Prisoners on the part of Great Britain, in this country was apprised, in the month of July of the same year.

At the conclusion of the war, it being known that many thousands of the Slaves of our citizens taken from our shores had been carried off by British Ships of war, and other cases of captures at sea having occurred and no restoration having been made, as far as the Government was informed—the Marshals, when instructed generally as to the restoration of prisoners, were directed to retain such as were Slaves; and, to dispose of them in the employment of respectable persons in such manner as that they should be relieved from confinement, be forthcoming when occasion should require, and that their labour should be equivalent to their subsistence and clothing.

I am instructed to inform you Sir, that if you are authorized to make any proposition on the part of the British Government for the restoration of these slaves on terms of reciprocity, in relation to the slaves of our citizens withheld by the British authorities, it will be received with pleasure, and considered with a view to do equal justice to the claims of the Citizens and subjects of the two nations.²⁴⁹

How many Afro-British subjects the United States Government retained after the war is unclear, but as early as August, 1813, it had reportedly collected “two Privateers Crews of Blacks in different Jails, which we have refused to release until some explanation is

²⁴⁹ John Mason to Anthony S. John Baker, Chargés d’Affaires, OCGP, 18 July 1815, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volumes Two and Three), container 9–10, reel 1, LOC.

made as to a number of negroes the British have, to say the least received, and now hold belonging to our Citizens.”²⁵⁰

The Afro-British subjects described in Mason’s epistle to Baker suffered from the same predicament as American citizens impressed into the British service. In both instances, the individual man’s status (as freeman or slave, as American or Briton) was determined by an arbitrary authority with a vested interest in the outcome. In both instances, individuals’ identities were not determined solely by the facts of their case, but also by the power of their captors. Just as an Anglophone on the ocean was assumed to be a Briton, so too was a dark-skinned person in the United States assumed to be a slave. Although Mason’s correspondence does not clarify the manner by which he and his subordinates distinguished freemen from slaves (whether they required proof of freedom to cull freemen from a mass of slaves or whether they required proof of slavery to select slaves from out of a body of freemen) it is clear that they distinguished black Britons from white ones. Further, this distinction was tied to a conflation of blackness with servility. If enslaved, black Britons were a form of contraband; if free, they were a dangerous anomaly. In either case, they were not equal to white men.

The treatment of Afro-British prisoners of war lifts the veil off the particularistic claims which nineteenth-century white Americans hid behind the rhetoric of universal rights. Americans railed against the arbitrary authority of the British naval officer even as most of them countenanced (and indeed, many of them exercised) the arbitrary authority of the slaveholder. Americans were not unaware of the irony. After all, they explicitly conflated impressment and enslavement. They called themselves freemen and

²⁵⁰ John Mason to John S. Skinner (US Agent at Annapolis), OCGP, Washington, 3 August 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook, Volume One), container 8, reel 1, LOC.

pledged to act the part. For many white Americans, the problem was not the existence of coercive, hierarchical systems—such were an integral part of their lives. Instead, the problem was with a situation that threatened to subordinate white American men to the lower rung of a coercive, hierarchical system. Impressment posed just such a threat. The menace required white men to carry documents to establish themselves as freemen.²⁵¹ Unless they carried such documents (and often even if they did), white men might find themselves whipped, chained, and ordered about by the agent of a foreign power. Their predicament was therefore almost precisely analogous to the condition of a free black in the slaveholding south. From this perspective, it is far from strange that the loudest support for war would come from the “*republican* slave-drivers of the South” and the West, as Federalists of the time acidly observed.²⁵²

Impressment, in effect, was a racial issue. It placed American nationals on the high seas in the same position as black Americans in the United States. In both instances, the burden of proving their freedom devolved upon individuals even as their claims to being freemen carried less weight than those of the persons who confined them. Negotiations over identity involved and revealed the different statuses of the participants. As practiced at the beginning of the nineteenth century, impressment degraded the status of Americans. It elevated the claims of British officers above those of any Americans. As a result it fixed the power of identification primarily, though not completely, in the hands of Britons. American sailors on the high seas were like free blacks: they could not

²⁵¹ In January, 1802, Congress narrowly rejected a bill that would have required free blacks throughout the country to carry proof of their independence. See Adams, *History of the United States*, I:300.

²⁵² Timothy Flint, *An Oration, Delivered at Leominster, July 4, 1815, before the Washington Benevolent Societies of Lancaster and Sterling and of Leominster and Fitchburg* (Worcester, MA: Manning, 1815), 17.

wander freely without fear that their status as freemen would be summarily stripped from them regardless of their protests.

For historians, basing men's national identity on their birthplace or their legal citizenship is inadequate. National identity was a claim, not a substance, though it was a claim that acceptance or rejection effected substantial results. Distinguishing between individuals based on their birth or legal status serves to bolster the claims of governments over the claims of individuals, and to do so in an environment in which those competing claims often met more or less equally. Indeed, the ambiguity of the sea reveals the impotence of governmental claims on nationality; the historian should not retroactively validate them. Historians must recognize national identity not only as an inheritance or a legal status, but also as a relationship; one sometimes mediated through violence; one that existed among human beings who accepted or contested different labels for their own ends, who fell more or less under the seductive sway of national labels, and whose individual actions helped not only to establish their own national identities within certain limits, but also to impose those limits on their peers.

Chapter Four

“Pirates and Sharks are Found Ashore as Often as at Sea”: Sailors and Sentimental Critiques of Domestic American Society

Maritime culture bled imperfectly into the culture of the land. In some matters seafarers’ actions and attitudes stood in sharp contrast to those of landed persons; in other they represented an element in a continuum; in still others they were indistinguishable. The root of these different conditions was simple: maritime culture was part of the culture of the land. Sons-of-guns aside, sailors were not born on seagoing vessels; they reached them from other means. Few men spent more than a small but influential fraction of their lives at sea. Seagoing men stressed the differences which they purported distinguished their occupation from others. At the same time their accents were part sea and part land. The manner in which sailors’ *mentalité* resembled that of members of landed society becomes obvious through an examination of the critiques each leveled at the other. Both found fault with the other; but each reached its conclusion by the same means: through the rhetoric of sentimentality.

Many Americans of the Early National period regarded sentiment as a crucial cement to society.²⁵³ For them the word “sentiment” evoked the concept of correct

²⁵³ When speaking of the ties that bound the nation, orators of the time generally invoked simultaneously two concepts: interests and sentiments. In his seminal article, “The Historians’ Use of History,” David Potter made the astute observation that distinct interests within an otherwise homogeneous people could serve as the basis of separate nationalities. I believe Stephen Minocucci stretches this point too far in his recent article “Cement of Interest.” Minocucci explicitly downplays the importance of sentiment in the formation of the American nation, arguing that without the tangible bonds created especially through internal improvements, the nation would not have been able to endure. The problem with Minocucci’s contention is that the American nation did endure for eighty odd years even in the face of diverging interests. Minocucci partly addresses this problem by stating that the term “union,” prevalent throughout the antebellum era, implicitly referred to a collection of unique groups rather than a single homogeneous one. However, as Nagel has shown, “union” was a multivalent term, that could be used in an “Absolute”

feeling. Ideally, each member of a community would respond to the same stimuli with the same emotion. Socially, decent persons were supposed to recoil in disgust from roués and “abandoned” women. Similarly, in politics partisans defined “true Americans” as those who cringed in horror at the policies of the partisans’ political opponents. “Those events that thrill the nerves of one party with pleasure,” it was noted, “is to the other a source of pain and lamentation.”²⁵⁴ Since communality required sentimental unity, divergent emotions threatened to tear a community apart.

A primary concern of Early National writing therefore was American society’s potential to lapse into sentimental disorder. Much attention focused on the laboring, transient, or hardscrabble members of the population, such as wage workers, soldiers, waggoners, and frontiersmen, not to mention prostitutes, free blacks, and sundry criminals. To more affluent and settled persons, these groups posed a threat to the stability of society, with their allegedly easy recourse to violent solutions to interpersonal conflicts, their voracious appetites for sex and liquor, and their congregation in taverns, brothels, and makeshift gaming sites, where they indulged their desires and created an alternative, and degenerate community.²⁵⁵

sense to indicate that atomization was impossible. That being said, this chapter’s focus on interest should not be taken to imply that I do not recognize the equal importance of interest. See Potter, “Historian’s Use of Nationalism”; Nagel, *One Nation*, 104-144; Minocucci, “The ‘Cement of Interest’: Interest-Based Models of Nation-Building in the Early Republic,” *Social Science History* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2001).

²⁵⁴ Philip Mathews, *An Oration, Delivered on the 5th July, 1813, in the Episcopal Church of Saint Helena* (Charleston, S.C.: Manclay, 1813), 22.

²⁵⁵ Studies concerning societal fears about these “lower” classes are more advanced for the Jacksonian Era, when class distinctions grew sharper, aggravated, as Rothman has indicated, by increased immigration from Ireland especially, which made the poor more recognizably different from the generality of the middling and well-to-do. See Kann, *Republic of Men*; Bolster, *Black Jacks*; Way, “Evil Humors and Ardent Spirits: The Rough Culture of Canal Construction Laborers,” *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (March 1993): 1397–1428; Gorn, *Manly Art*; David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (1971, rev. ed., New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2002). For the ways middle-class Americans used varieties of sentimental critiques to denigrate lower classes, even as they either held to the existence of a classless society, or earnestly sought to uplift the lower classes, see Karen Haltunnen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-class Culture in America*,

However, the sentimental critique of society did not limit itself to attacks on the “lower sorts.” An assault on aristocratic privilege had made the upper classes targets of disdain as well, be they Revolutionary officers in the Order of Cincinnati, creditors hounding their debtors, naval officers lording over their men, or slaveholders, whose rearing in an iniquitous system, as Thomas Jefferson admitted, perverted their passions at an early age.²⁵⁶ Nor did the middling classes emerge unscathed. The shopkeeper who denied credit to the bedraggled stranger, the blackcoated zealot who denounced the pleasures of the street, and the sewing bee circle that enlivened their chores with oral excerpts from the latest novel, each, in its own way, opened itself to sentimental rebuke.²⁵⁷

For many Americans, however, seafaring laborers, through their allegedly profligate behavior, particularly evidenced society’s entropic potential. In many ways, however, sailor behavior did not differ substantially from that of other workers (or planters or backcountry farmers).²⁵⁸ This should not be a shock, as few sailors plied the main their entire careers.²⁵⁹ Furthermore, a number of sailors stepped on deck with a background in artisan labor: coopers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and so forth. The rowdiness, drunkenness, and clannishness of seamen had their counterparts elsewhere in society, despite sailors’ own desire to portray themselves as unique.

1830–1870 (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1982); Bushman, *Refinement*; Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986).

²⁵⁶ See Query XVIII (“Manners”) in Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* (pp. 214–215 in *The Portable Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson, New York: Penguin Books, 1977).

²⁵⁷ Concerns over the sentimental fitness of young women have received especial attention from scholars, especially those concerned with the history of early novels. See Davidson, Tompkins, Boudreau.

²⁵⁸ Indeed, artisans apparently sang songs about sailors who scoffed at life’s troubles, while sailors adopted songs narrated by gouty planters who idled away their days in drink. Ric Northrup Caric, of instance, has employed a variation on a sailor song as an integral part of his discussion of artisans’ culture. See Caric, “Blustering Brags, Dueling Inventors, and Corn-Square Geniuses: Artisan Leisure in Philadelphia, 1785–1825,” *The American Journal of Semiotics* 12 (Summer 1995): 323–341.

²⁵⁹ Seafaring was a young man’s profession, best suited for men in their twenties, as indicated by the findings of Ira Dye and Daniel Vickers. See Dye, “Early Merchant”; and Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea*.

Nonetheless, there was perhaps more widespread concern with the excesses of seamen than those of other groups in the first decades of the nineteenth century. This concern may have resulted partly from the intensity and visibility of sailors' excesses. The daily frustrations which landed workers might release in the evening hours or on Sundays, sailors collected for weeks at sea and expended in spectacular bursts on shore. The bacchanalias with which sailors honored the end of a voyage, moreover, may not have differed much from the "frolics" with which workers on land celebrated the completion of a major task such as the launching of a newly built vessel; but landsmen, who might witness both, rarely saw the sailor except in his debauchery. A sailor worked out of sight, and played in full view. Finally, though individual sailors might alternate between port and sea, a port city would always have sailors in its midst, often accommodated by an infrastructure of boardinghouses, slop-shops, and taverns, that could lend credence to fears that sailors inhabited a separate, underworld community.

The maritime nature of American society as late as the early nineteenth century also contributed to the scrutiny under which sailors found themselves. The bulk of American settlements at the time still clung to waterways. The inward and westward perspective of the antebellum era, though not unknown, did not yet predominate. Atlantic affairs were of primary concern. Foreign depredations on American commerce and American seamen aroused perpetual diplomatic crises and several armed conflicts: the Quasi War, the Tripolitan War, the War of 1812, and the Algerine War. In such a climate, sailors could not help but become matters of national interest as victims and heroes. But their admirable qualities failed to overshadow completely their alleged deficiencies.

Throughout the Early Republican period sailors represented a class of men around whom discussions of proper sentiments revolved. Both Federalists and Republicans referenced sailors to evoke sentimental support for their policies. Federalists depicted sailors as victims of Jeffersonian economic restrictions; Republicans depicted sailors as victims of impressment.²⁶⁰ Yet sailors were also regarded suspiciously by their compatriots, who regarded them as spendthrifts, wastrels, brawlers, and whorehouse habitués.

Many landed persons, therefore, eyed sailors warily. They worried that sailors' unregulated passions threatened the sentimental order of society. Some addressed the threat through attempts to reform sailors. These reformers imagined that sailors belonged to an underworld of wanton men who congregated in seamy boardinghouses and noisy taverns, where the older tars trained the younger ones in lessons of vice. Although they cloaked it in religion, the self-improvement program which reformers suggested to sailors was a sentimental one. Specifically, they instructed sailors to form friendships with upstanding comrades, and to create or strengthen familial ties with the landed community. Reformers offered sailors as an ideal goal the reintegration into the salubrious emotional community of landed, and settled, society.

Much like their would-be reformers, sailors too dreamed of a perfect society in which sentiment bound the members of the community together, and the virtue of individuals received just reward and acknowledgement. Sailors did not believe they inhabited such a Utopian society, however. Nor did they blame themselves for the failure of their society to live up to its ideal; sailors, instead, viewed themselves as the victims of this failure. Sailors recognized that they could not trust that strangers or even associates

²⁶⁰ See Cray, "Commemorating the Prison Ship Dead."

would meet sentimental ideals of generosity and justice. As a result, sailors constructed societal views aptly suited to their own circumstances, though also reflective of trends apparent in mainstream society.

In their doggerel, sailors evidenced a conception of society in which men encountered each other as atomized individuals, rather than as heads of family. Sailors grudgingly replaced cash exchange for social or emotional relations as the basis of a community. They stressed the inability of men to control their destinies completely, thereby excusing occasional indulgences. And they shifted the emphasis of social relations away from heterosocial families headed by fathers to individual men in union with other men. In doing so, sailors evidenced their belief in the value of sentimentality even as they criticized society for its sentimental failures.

In 1812 a group of ship captains and religious leaders formed the Boston Society for the Religious and Moral Improvement of Sailors to counter sailors' supposedly antisocial tendencies.²⁶¹ The expressed goal of the Society was to extend "to a large, and long-neglected part of our fellow-citizens, the most inestimable blessings, the means of religion and virtue, and eternal happiness."²⁶² To this end, it published in 1812 two thousand copies of four separate tracts, aimed both at seamen themselves and at their commanders. The Society expressed faith in the ability of literary works to serve as reforming agents. "Many sailors, we are happy to know," noted a pamphlet issued by the Society, "have their Bibles and books of prayer; and the leisure of the Sabbath

²⁶¹ No detailed history of this society exists, though it is discussed briefly by both Roald Kverndal and Gilje, both of whom treat it primarily as a forerunner of later reform societies. See Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1986), 407–412; Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 195–227.

²⁶² *The First Annual Report of the Executive Committee of "the Boston Society, for the Religious and Moral Improvement of Sailors"* (Boston, 1813).

appropriated to useful reading, in which they were countenanced by their officers, must, we think, gradually produce the best effects on their moral sentiments, affections, and conduct.”²⁶³ With this in mind, the society devoted itself to providing sailors with instructional and salubrious reading material to supplement Bibles and prayer-books.

The Society distributed its own tracts free of charge at slop-shops and bookstores, and supplied eleven hundred of them to four separate vessels of the US Navy during the War of 1812.²⁶⁴ Although the war hindered the Society’s progress towards its goal, its members nonetheless confidently noted that its membership had more than doubled in the space of a year. They had also heard “from another of our sea-board towns, that our tracts have been received there by the sailors with great pleasure, and that there is reason to believe, that they are conducive to the purposes of the Society.”²⁶⁵ The Society died an early death shortly thereafter, and has received only cursory attention from scholars, who tend to regard it as a transient experiment and a failure, a harbinger of things to come at best. Nonetheless, careful attention to the several tracts which the Society issued during its brief existence identifies both the problem which landed critics believed sailors presented, and the solution the critics proposed for it.

The Society’s worldview depended upon an attitude toward American society in which the family, not the individual, was the atom of the community. Individuals divorced from familial ties evoked fear and disdain in the hearts of members of the Society. The Society’s publications dripped with contempt for women who did not

²⁶³ *An Address to Masters of Vessels on the Objects of the Boston Society for the Moral and Religious Improvement of Seamen* (Boston: Eliot, 1812), 7.

²⁶⁴ There was not the only attempt at sailors’ reformation at this time, though probably the best organized. Andrew Hunter, a naval chaplain, advised the Secretary of the Navy to distribute Bibles among the service’s seamen. Hunter theorized that they “would be more attached to their government and their country if they found themselves regarded as rational beings, independent of the services which we demand and expect from them in defence of our country and its precious rights.” See NW, 2:82.

²⁶⁵ *First Annual Report*.

belong to a fixed family, conflating them with prostitutes. “If *disgust* may ever be felt towards a fellow creature,” one of the Society’s tracts noted, “it may be towards a licentious, an abandoned female. There is no vice so low, and so gross, of which she does not appear to be capable.”²⁶⁶ The Society’s dominant concern, however, was with men, sailors specifically, who had escaped from the binds of their families and the landed community. Mark Kann has classified such men as “Bachelors.” According to Mark Kann,

The founders [of the Republic] used the stock figure of the Bachelor to identify the lowest rung of manhood. The Bachelor symbolized the dangers of democracy and the corruption of patriarchy. He was the male who failed to invest liberty in responsibility, only to foster disorder in the ranks of men. He refused to assume the family obligations of the traditional patriarch or participate in the benevolent governance of women and other dependents, as required by republican manhood.²⁶⁷

Unsettled men seemed to belong to a dangerous underworld in which they mingled freely with their compatriots and licentious women, and scoffed at laws and moral strictures—such, certainly, seemed to be the Society’s view.²⁶⁸

The goal of the Society was to convince wayward sailors to settle into a virtuous, heterosocial landed community. Several of the Society’s tracts offered collections of prayers that the members considered to be especially fitting for the lives of seafarers; others contained short, didactic tales. These tales offered variations on a common theme: a young sailor, separated from his loving relations, falls under the sway of a worldlier, and a far more reprobate, shipmate who promises to introduce him to a variety of unnatural vices. Fortunately, the young sailor befriends a virtuous colleague who restores

²⁶⁶ *The Seaman’s Friend*, (Boston: Eliot, 1817), 11.

²⁶⁷ Kann, *A Republic of Men*, 52.

²⁶⁸ This sentiment appeared in private correspondence as well as didactic literature. Midshipman James F. Curtis, held a prisoner of war at Halifax, received a letter from his aunt advising him that, “The society of loose young creatures of either sex, is more deadly than the Pestilence—Fly from it my dear Nephew....” Anne Homer [?] to James Curtis, October, 1813, Curtis-Stevenson Family Papers, Box 8, Folder “Curtis Family Papers, 1809–1813,” MHS.

him to the bosom of his family or introduces him to the company of virtuous women. In the end, the wayward sailor reforms, marries, and saves enough money to purchase a homestead, allowing him to retire from a life at sea. Significantly, these narratives affirmed the redemptive power of family and community more than they did the power of religion.²⁶⁹

One of the society's tracts, *True Friendship, Distinguished from That Which Is False*, exemplifies the genre. This pamphlet related the story of a seaman named Jack Saunders. After shipping to sea, Saunders fell into the company of a dissipated tar named Norrison. Norrison introduced Saunders to drinking, gambling, and "revels with lewd and vile creatures."²⁷⁰ Under the sway of this wretch, Saunders lost touch with his family. Though he missed them, he was too shamed by his degradation to face them. Fortunately, Ben Seymour, a fellow sailor and an acquaintance of Saunders's family, took it upon himself to redeem Saunders. This savior slowly weaned Saunders from Norrison's villainous clutches, and convinced him to return to his family. (Later they passed a chapman hawking tales of Norrison's death on the gallows.) Before Saunders could reach home, his father had wasted away and died from grief. His mother and sisters, nevertheless, forgave him and embraced him.

Reintroduced to the pleasures of family life, Saunders vowed to mend his ways. He courted a former playmate, the young daughter of a retired sailor. Hoping that his friend Seymour, "whom he loved above all others, should be united to him by every tie,

²⁶⁹ In his article "Religious Tracts," Mark Schantz noted that sailors were a popular subject of antebellum religious tracts. Based on Schantz's description, an important difference between those tracts and the earlier ones analyzed in this chapter is that antebellum narratives were often set in idealized workspaces, including ship decks, whereas the Early National narratives focused instead on sailors ashore. See Schantz, "Religious Tracts, Evangelical Reform, and the Market Revolution in Antebellum America," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 17:3 (1997), 425–466

²⁷⁰ *True Friendship, Distinguished from That Which Is False, in a Short Narrative of the Life of Jack Saunders* (Boston: Eliot, 1812), 4.

which could bind them together,” Saunders successfully connived to get Seymour to marry Saunders’s sister.²⁷¹ Seymour and his friend shipped together frequently over the next ten years, after which the “two sailors settled on their farms, which they had considerably enlarged, and were exemplary and happy members of society.”²⁷² In this narrative, familial and interpersonal connections, not religious virtue, played the most important role in the profligate sailor’s reformation. As Saunders abandoned licentiousness, he developed stronger connections with virtuous persons, to the point that the bonds of friendship had to be supplanted by a more familial bond through the marriage of his sister and his closest friend. Once this happened, Saunders became a more virtuous citizen, awaiting only the acquisition of landed property to complete his personal redemption.

Through stories like this one, the Society hoped to provide lessons to those wayward sailors who had no shipmates like Seymour to guide them toward truly moral behavior. As an exemplar of proper conduct, the Society offered readers Jack Frankly, the eponymous hero of the tract *Handsome Jack, or An Example for Sailors*. “Jack, although in other respects, he was a complete tar, and had a sincere regard and friendship for his brother sailors and shipmates,” the tract stated,

yet as he hated grog, hated swearing, detested riots and wrangling, and never could be brought to mingle in midnight scenes of dissipation and debauchery [a good summary of the vices which the Society considered endemic to seafaring], he did not continue long with these shipmates, after getting into port. As soon as he was discharged from a ship he either went immediately home, or wisely sought a retired, peaceable, and quiet family to board with, whilst his more thoughtless, and dissolute comrades, with a false idea of fun and frolic, thronged about low drinking shops, lodging amidst tumult and noisy mirth, spent their money without profit, and their time without pleasure.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Ibid., 18.

²⁷² Ibid., 23.

²⁷³ *Handsome Jack, or An Example for Sailors* (Boston: Eliot, 1813), 5.

The root of Jack's virtue, in other words, was in large part his disassociation from the manly company of other sailors and his continual reintegration into a stable, landed society, represented by respectable families, whenever he returned to shore.

The narrative elaborated on this theme further by having Jack rescue his colleague Tom from vice. Jack did so by removing Tom from a boardinghouse crowded by other sailors to a more staid lodging maintained by a pious mother and her daughter. After spending time in these women's company, the prodigal Tom returned to the sailors' boardinghouse in which he had originally taken a room. Upon his return, Tom realized that, "The house was filled with noise, and the air teemed with the smell of liquor. This used to be Tom's element; but after the peaceful and happy scene he had just left, it disgusted him."²⁷⁴ The introduction to domestic tranquility eventually led to Tom's spiritual salvation.

For the members of the Society reform meant incorporating sailors into a pious community built around the family and the home.²⁷⁵ In pursuing this reform, the Society was not disinterested. Its members believed that the well-being of their communities depended on the proper sentimental comportment of its seafaring population. The contents of the tracts that the Society aimed at officers (rather than at seamen themselves) explicated the crucial role that the social control of sailors played in its agenda.

In *An Address to a Master of a Vessel*, the members of the Society urged sea captains to lead their crewmen in religious services.²⁷⁶ Baldly endorsing patriarchal

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 11.

²⁷⁵ Unlike later reform movements, the Society evidenced little concern about flogging, the exploitative practices of boardinghouse keepers and crimps, or even, surprisingly, the consumption of alcohol. The era of the "dry ship" experiment would arrive in force in the years following the War of 1812. See Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 195–227; Glenn, "Naval Reform"; Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*.

²⁷⁶ Outside of large naval ships, most vessels would not have had a chaplain on their rolls. Hence, religious instruction at sea would have to come either from the officers or from the initiative of a devout sailor.

discipline and hierarchy, the tract argued that, “The crew of a ship may be considered as *one family*, and the captain should feel, in a manner, as their parent.”²⁷⁷ Part of the duty of the captain as father of the ship was to teach his wards to fear God; but the benefits of such teaching extended beyond merely the saving of lost souls. “We believe that in this way you will promote a spirit of *subordination* and *obedience*. In proportion as men are brought to regard God, they are inclined to perform their duties to one another. Let them learn to respect the authority of a Master in heaven, and they will cheerfully yield obedience to their earthly superiors.”²⁷⁸ Religious instruction, in short, would instill sailors with the deferential attitudes and respect for authority upon which good order depended.²⁷⁹

More important than the discipline of sailors at sea, however, was the discipline of sailors on shore. If their captains properly instructed their seamen to accept a subordinate position, then seamen would “not feel when they leave your ship, that they have escaped from all authority, that they are their own masters, that they may follow blindly every passion and desire.”²⁸⁰ Providing sailors with sentimental instruction, that is, was an important duty of the sea-captain, less for the sake of the ship or a voyage than for the preservation of landed society. “This influence of religious consideration on the conduct of sailors on shore,” the pamphlet concluded, “is particularly to be desired by

²⁷⁷ *Address to a Master of a Vessel, Intended to Accompany a Book of Prayers Prepared for the Use of Seamen* (Boston: Eliot, 1815), 4. It is worth noting in passing that the Society presented arguments to officers, and stories to seamen, offering thereby implicit judgments on the intellectual capacities of both.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

²⁷⁹ The Society’s understanding of the relationship between captain and crew supports Daniel Vickers’ recent thesis that a master-servant dynamic lingered on ships longer than it did on land, at least in the Northeast, where an employer-employee dynamic rose to prominence early in the nineteenth century. See Vickers, *Young Men*, 214–217.

²⁸⁰ *Address to a Master of a Vessel*, 12, 13.

every master of a vessel.”²⁸¹ Members of the Society clearly believed that sailors acted too independently on shore, scoffing at subordination and, significantly, obeying their own unruly emotions rather than the strictures of their social superiors. The chief reform required of sailors was to submit to the authority of these superiors, rather than to the authority of their passions.

The goal of subordinating sailors and their passions led the Society to adopt as one tactic the paying of low wages.²⁸² High wages, members of the Society believed, offered sailors too much temptation to act according to their own whims. In one of the Society’s pamphlets, Tom, a “typical” sailor, heard about the Society and questioned its methods. “Give me good high wages, plenty of grog, and a pretty girl in every port you know,” he joked, “and I never quarrel about religion, and morals, and so.”²⁸³ In a more serious vein, he added that if the Society were to “set up a slop shop, where we might have jackets and trowsers...gratis, that would be doing good worthwhile.” “But if they show us how to live, so as to have more comfort and more pleasure for less money than we now spend,” his virtuous friend Jack responded, “we shall never want jackets nor trowsers; for we shall always have *bit* enough to buy them ourselves; and you know Tom, every good sailor had rather see to his own chest and bedding, than be dependent on any body.”²⁸⁴ Later in the narrative, Jack’s father offered a maxim that presumably reflected the views of many members of the Society: “more young men are ruined by having too much, than too little money at their command.”²⁸⁵ In short, the Society regarded low

²⁸¹ *Address to a Master of a Vessel*, 13.

²⁸² Kristin Boudreau has hypothesized that charitable acts often function to buttress existing social hierarchies by making them more palatable, rather than to replace them with something more equitable. The Society’s tactic supports this hypothesis. Boudreau, *Sympathy in American Literature*, 139–166.

²⁸³ *Handsome Jack*, 4.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

wages as a way to steer sailors toward the freedom and manliness of frugality and restraint—and deference.

Ultimately, members of the Boston Society for the Moral and Religious Improvement of Sailors sought the religious reform of sailors in large part because that reform promised to quiet a riotous segment of society, and to render them more tractable and subordinate. Through their tracts, members of the Society praised what they considered the salubrious society of a landed community built around the family and familial relations, one in which virtuous women and men curbed each other's potential excesses. They regarded society as organic, properly built upon inequalities, in which the lower sorts deferred to the judgment of their superiors, while each class contributed to the good of the whole. With this model in mind, they feared the fate of seamen who fell into profligate connections with an underground society of harlots and scofflaws. They especially disparaged the power of seafarers' homosocial communities to lead virtuous young men astray. Only properly cultivated emotional relationships, they contended, could preserve citizens in their proper places within American society.

The Society's negative stereotypes of sailors were not without foundation. Sailors' activities at home and in foreign ports earned them their reputations as drunkards, fornicators, and rioters. Nor did sailors always shirk from these stereotypes. Indeed, in their songs they often proudly attributed to themselves many of the same vices which their would-be reformers ascribed to them.

Licentiousness was a common element of sailors' doggerel.²⁸⁶ The narrator of the song "Jack in His Element," for instance, bragged that he had,

²⁸⁶ Sailors' actions commonly proved that their penchant for licentiousness was no idle boast. Early in the War of 1812, naval surgeon Edward Cutbush complained to the Secretary of the Navy about the

...a spanking wife at Portsmouth gate,
A pygmy at Goree,
An orange tawny up the Straights,
A black at Saint Lucie.

The genius of sailors' lives, the narrator maintained, was that, "In every mess we find a friend, / At every port a wife."²⁸⁷ A derisive account of a ship carpenter in another song noted that, despite his sweetheart at home, the carpenter,

scarce had join'd brave Perry's crew,
Ere he another fair-one saw,
And down he laid in a bed of straw,
Beside a great big, flat-nos'd squaw.²⁸⁸

Based on their songs, sailors regarded sexual adventuring as both a meet topic for jest and a grounds for boasting (not to mention a site of interracial mingling).²⁸⁹

debilitating effect among gunboat crews of "a very prevalent disease which Seamen call the 'Ladies' fever.'" Cutbush advised that the afflicted sailors "ought to pay something to the Hospital fund, as it is not contracted in the line of their *public* duty." In the ports of England, prostitutes were oftentimes boated out to incoming vessels to greet the seamen. Sailor Samuel Leech reported that, when his ship was anchored off Plymouth, England, "boat-loads of defiled and defiling women are permitted to come alongside; the men, looking over the side, select whoever best pleases his lustful fancy, and by paying her fare, he is allowed to take her and keep her on board as his paramour, until the ship is once more ordered to sea." A contemporary of Leech recorded similar proceedings at Spithead. Even sailors held as prisoners of war aboard enemy ships had some opportunity to consort with what one such prisoner called "Cyprian dames." This prisoner, an American sailor held in England during the War of 1812, attested that, "every man who paid the waterman half a crown had a wife, so that the ship, belonging to the bulwark of our religion, exhibited such a scene as is described by narrators, who have visited the South-Sea Islands." NW, 1:213; Leech, *Thirty Years*, 112–113; William Robinson, *Jack Nastyface: Memoirs of a Seaman* (1836, repr., London: Wayland, 1973), 87–92; Benjamin Waterhouse, ed., *A Journal of a Young Man of Massachusetts* (Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1816), 142.

²⁸⁷ *Nautical Songster, or Seamens Companion* (Baltimore, 1798), 28. The song "A Sailor's Reflections" offered a similar moral

I've just returned from a foreign station
Where I remained almost three years;
And when I left, the girls all around me,
Black, white, and brown shed many tears.
Says they, my dear, why will you leave us?
Once more upon the seas to roam:
Why hold your tongue said I, you're foolish,
You know I've got a wife at home.

See Mercier, *Life in a Man-of-War*, 127.

²⁸⁸ [An American Tar], *The Cabin-Boy and Fortunate Sailor's Delight* (New York: Hardcastle, 1817), 6.

²⁸⁹ The islands of the South Seas, and the women who inhabited them, became symbolic in maritime lore both for sexual promiscuity and for sailors' weakness for the same. Captain David Porter of the USS *Essex*, for instance, successfully bolstered the spirits of his men for a rough passage to the Pacific by

Sailors also clearly prided themselves on their prodigious drinking, for which they gained lasting notoriety.²⁹⁰ In their songs sailors raised their glasses to Bacchus and celebrated the mollifying effects of liquor. “Let the farmer praise his grounds, and the huntsmen praise his hounds,” scoffed the narrator of one air,

And the parson praise the world that’s to come;
Yet I more blest than they, spend each night and happy day,
With my smiling little bottle of rum.²⁹¹

promising them that “the girls of the Sandwich islands, shall reward you for your sufferings during the passage around Cape Horn.” Porter was true to his word, and both his crewmen and his officers enjoyed the sexual favors of the women of Nuka Hiva (or Madison’s Island, as Porter rechristened it). The officers of the *Essex* “each confined himself to one object, and she of the best family and rank. This was as much perhaps, as the most zealous celibate would have required from men all healthy, youthful and amorous, who had scarcely seen a female for more than a year.” The seamen of the *Essex*’s forecabin, on the other hand, “from time to time took such as suited his fancy and convenience, and no one among them formed a connection which was likely to produce tears at the moment of separation.” Porter underestimated the devotion of his men to their new partners. If the separations ended without tears they did not end without mutinous grumblings, which Porter quelled by stranding one malcontent on the island and assuring the rest of his crew that he would blow up the ship with all of them on it before surrendering it to them. Porter had discovered that, in the South Pacific, sailors’ lust and the presence of available women could explode shipboard discipline. William Bligh had drawn the same conclusion after his disastrous expedition to Tahiti. “It will naturally be asked, what could be the reason for such a revolt?” Bligh concluded with regards to the mutiny on the *Bounty*, that, “I can only conjecture, that the mutineers had flattered themselves with the hopes of a more happy life among the Otaheiteans, than they could possibly enjoy in England; and this, joined to some female connexions, most probably occasioned the whole transaction.”²⁸⁹ Sailors’ ribaldry, in other words, allegedly contributed to perhaps the most famous mutiny in the history of the Age of Sail. Porter, *Journal*, 1:69; 2:16, 63, 141–142; William Bligh, *The Mutiny on Board H. M. S. Bounty* (New York: New American Library, 1961 [1792]), 140.

²⁹⁰ Considering the amount of alcohol the average American consumed at this time, seamen’s binges must have been spectacular indeed to garner so much notice. Although a good number of Americans despised the use of alcohol, and many more despised its abuse, a significant portion of the American population associated drinking with freedom. Sailors by and large fell into this latter group. Looking back in the 1830s and 1840s, retired seamen lamented the ill effects of alcohol and praised the spread of temperance as a salubrious form of moral enlightenment; but in the Early Republican period they drank with few reservations. After lamenting that his first taste of alcohol as a young boy had not been his last, veteran sailor Ned Myers described the manner in which seamen of the early nineteenth century arrived on shipboard, “bearing about them the signs of the excesses of which they had been guilty while on shore; some listless and stupid, others still labouring under the effects of liquor, and some in that fearful condition which seamen themselves term having the ‘horrors.’” Moses Smith put it this way: “Temperance had not then shed its light upon us, and the liquor that was usually so freely dealt out to us, was doubtless one great cause of our frequent difficulties. Thanks to the benevolent operations of the day, seamen are coming to free themselves in a great measure, from this dreadful curse.” Ned Myers, *Ned Myers*, 23; Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 14. For the high rate of per capita consumption during this period, and speculation as to its causes, see W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

²⁹¹ *The Neptune* (Boston: Fleet, 1806), 10.

Specimens of maritime doggerel invited their audiences to raise their glasses and drink a toast to any number of miscellany: sweethearts, commanders, country, companions, heroes, freedom, commerce, and so forth. Of course, any analysis of such songs must recognize that many of these songs were “drinking songs,” for which calls to toss back a bumper were *de rigueur*. On the other hand, one should also acknowledge that so many sailors’ songs were “drinking songs.” Sailors seemed to have a thirst for such tunes, at least in the minds of publishers who churned out songsters filled with them, and often identified sailors as their intended audience.²⁹²

So much did seafarers celebrate alcohol that its consumption became a part of their occupational identity. Not only did they demand their grog at sea to lift their spirits or to alleviate their often-dismal working conditions; they also binged on shore at least in part because that is what sailors were expected to do. “If a sailor would not like a lubber appear,” instructed one song,

He must very well know how to hand, reef, and steer
But a better manœuvre ‘mongst seamen are found,
‘Tis the tight little maxim to know how to sound;
Which a sailor should learn, from a bay to a shoal,

²⁹² Anecdotal evidence suggests that publishers knew their audiences well. Sailors smuggled illicit liquor on board their ships from bumboats and from shore in hollowed coconuts and bladders hidden in “a fine, tempting roasting pig, or plump turkey,” on in straw baskets. So well did seamen love their liquor, according to a sailor who served on the Great Lakes during the War of 1812, that they even drank from a barrel of rum in which the corpse of a British officer had been preserved. Extremes of alcoholism could be found among the ranks of sailors, and there are several accounts of sailors who died from withdrawal after their grog rations ended. One sailor was restored to health, as it were, by a resumption of his grog: “Ben Bailey who has labored under delirium for several days was today restored to perfect collectedness of mind by drinking his usual allowance of whiskey.” In his memoirs, sailor Henry Mercier blamed watered-down grog for the spread of *delirium tremens*, which could have been prevented by the same means used as a cure: a “regular allowance of whiskey taken three times a day in its *original state*” (that is, served neat, rather than first weakened with water). A British naval surgeon recorded in his journal the death of a ship’s cook who died after remedying the effects of a night of heavy drinking at a Halifax tavern with a pint of rum in the morning. Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, 167; Myers, *Ned Myers*, 65; Usher Parsons, *Surgeon of the Lakes: The Diary of Usher Parsons 1812–1814*, ed. John C. Fredrickson (Erie, Pa.: Erie County Historical Society, 2000), 14; Mercier, 1; William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Tenedos*, Capt’n Hyde Parker, HSP.

But the best kind of sounding is sounding the bowl
—that is, reaching the bottom of a cup of liquor.²⁹³ According to these lyrics, drinking
was among the skills of the seagoing profession.²⁹⁴ This view of seamen was so
prevalent that even some sailors expressed surprise to find a sober shipmate.²⁹⁵ In the
minds of sailors as well as concerned observers, “drunk” and “like a sailor” could indeed
be considered to be synonymous terms.

Sailors both accepted the truthfulness of their stereotypes and disputed the notion
that those stereotypical traits were necessarily pernicious. The archives of the Boston
Public Library contain a weathered notebook from the War of 1812 into which several
prisoners of war, almost certainly seamen, composed or transcribed doggerel about life
on the ocean and within the confines of England’s Dartmoor Depot of Prisons. The
prisoners themselves authored some of the lyrics in the notebook; others had appeared
earlier in broadsides and songsters. The contents of the notebook nicely capture the
complex relationship of sailors to doggerel, combining their roles as authors, audience,
and subjects.

Since the prisoners wrote or copied the words in the notebook themselves, one
might reasonably presume that the worldview presented in the notebook matched the
sailors’ own. In this light, one of the songs is significant for explicating what might be

²⁹³ *Nautical Songster*, 11.

²⁹⁴ Noting that “liquor is a sailor’s idol,” one sailor recorded in his memoirs the following doggerel:
 ...grog is our starboard, our larboard,
 Our mainmast, our mizzen, our log—
 At sea, or ashore, or when harbour’d,
 The mariner’s compass is grog.

Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, 58.

²⁹⁵ When one temperate seaman returning from leave recalled, lieutenant “appeared surprised to see me on
board so perfectly sober, and jocosely asked me why I did not get drunk and be like a sailor.” Leech,
Thirty Years, 110.

considered American sailors' sentimental self-image. "Come all you jolly sailors who to columbia do belong," the song began,

Concerning of ourselves brave boys, I'll sing to you a Song
Concerning Yankes Sailors, when they are on the shore
Day and Nights its our delight to make the Taverns roar
We are all friendly to each other, and true hearted we'll be
We spend our money freely which we do earn at Sea
We love the girls most deadly [dearly?] no mortals love them more
Then away Kiss and Play with the girls that we love
And when our money is all goun for that we never Grieve
But for to get a fresh supply, go on the raging Sea.²⁹⁶

The themes of this sing are hackneyed: sailors are lusty, open-hearted and open-handed, somewhat rowdy, and none too stingy with their cash. This depiction was a stereotype to be found in dozens of similar songs about sailors and their ways. The inclusion of this depiction in a song of sailors' own choosing in their own notebook suggests that they took this stereotype to heart. The image of the carefree sailor, however, is not a thoughtless one. It contains a sustained, sentimental critique of landed society, as a close analysis of sailors' doggerel reveals.

Sailors did not deny the benefits of a well-ordered emotional community. Indeed, seamen could be quite sentimental. Sailors' songs indicated that sentimental connections with loved ones on shore provided a core component of sailors' identity.²⁹⁷ As one sailor insisted, "The sons of the ocean have not unfeeling hearts; and though they sometimes appear rude and harsh, they have bosoms which sometimes heave with the most tender

²⁹⁶ [A collection of American poems and songs], BPL.

²⁹⁷ Further evidence of the importance of sentimental ties to shore can be found in sailors' tattoos which, according to Ira Dye, often reflected ties to persons the sailors had left behind. See Dye, "Tattoos."

emotions.”²⁹⁸ At ease on a Saturday night, sailors customarily passed around a bowl of liquor “To toast their sweethearts and their spouses,” as one song remarked.²⁹⁹ Songsters aimed at seafarers overflowed with sentimental ditties about “sweethearts” at home.³⁰⁰ Songs with titles like “The Lovely Brunette,” “Sweet William,” “Mary’s Dream,” and “The Sailor’s Farewell” featured sailors pining for women ashore or women pining for sailors at sea.³⁰¹ The song “Sweet William” offered an example of the importance emotional connections on land played in the lives of sailors. “Believe not what the landmen say / Who tempt with doubt thy constant mind,” its narrator advised his beloved,

They’ll tell thee, sailors, when away,
 In ev’ry port a mistress find.
 Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
 For thou art present whereso’er I go.³⁰²

The women of home, and home itself, played an important role in the sailors’ conception of themselves as sailors.³⁰³

²⁹⁸ Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 10.

²⁹⁹ *Neptune*, 4. See also *Nautical Songster*, 53–55, 61–62.

³⁰⁰ Sailors’ sentimental connections could serve practical purposes. Wives sent their husbands gifts of food and clothing. Communal ties constrained the authority of captains who hailed from the same community as their crewmen. See Norling, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife*, 165–261 Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 162–194.

³⁰¹ As the song “The Wandering Sailor” noted,

The wand’ring sailor ploughs the main,
 A competence in life to gain;
 Undaunted braves the stormy seas,
 To find at last content and ease;
 In hopes when toils and danger’s o’er,
 To anchor on his native shore.

Nautical Songster, 33.

³⁰² *Neptune*, 27. The suspicion of landmen is also significant, as sailors frequently explicitly identified themselves against such layabouts.

³⁰³ In this regard, sailors’ doggerel confirms other sources indicating the importance of ties to people and places on land to seafarers’ lives. Seamen frequently kept up a patchy correspondence with friends and family back home. They recorded in their journals as well as their songs their longings to return to familiar country.

The centrality of sentimentalism to sailors' doggerel appears most clearly in depictions of impressment.³⁰⁴ Sailors might have adopted any number of approaches toward vilifying the practice; the tack their doggerel adopted was a sentimental one. Sailor songs attacked impressment on the grounds that it severed men from their natural emotional connections, and forced them to serve within an emotionally deranged system in which a cruel or apathetic tyrant oppressed them. The song "Kidnapped Seaman" identified the seaman's suffering in his being "From his kindred borne away."³⁰⁵ Impressment, according to another song, "snapped the chord of tender ties" in which "Wives and children did enfold" the seaman.³⁰⁶

Despite sailors' fondness for sentimentality, however, they did not accept it without reservation. They realized and resented that "sweethearts" at home did not always remain faithful; and their songs admitted the tensions they felt themselves between loneliness and temptation on the one hand and constancy on the other. Constancy, indeed, in any regard, was not a conception in which sailors trusted overmuch. Their songs accented instead the world's capriciousness.

³⁰⁴ Though scholars still debate the extent to which British naval officers impressed native-born and naturalized American seamen from American vessels (as opposed to British seamen in American services), impressment was certainly a threat which all Americans faced. "Protections" could not protect them, nor could the "stars and stripes" flapping over them. The primary authority for deciding the legitimacy of an act of impressment was the officer who initiated the proceedings, and, once effected, his decision was difficult to countermand. Ostensibly, an impressed American had recourse to his country's consuls; but Britain's labyrinthine policies and the constant shuffling of sailors from ship to ship in the Royal Navy serve to diminish the recourse open to a wrongfully impressed sailor in deed. Despite the protestations of Britons and Federalists alike, in short, once impressed American sailors faced cumbersome, sometimes insurmountable, obstacles barring them from release. See Zimmerman, *Impressment*.

³⁰⁵ Gillespie, *Columbian Songster*, 1813, 20.

³⁰⁶ *The Columbian Naval Melody; A Collection of Songs and Odes, Composed on the Late Naval Victories and Other Occasions* (Boston: Lund, 1813), 79. Another song lamented that "Thousands doom'd to base subjection,"

Spend in chains their hopeless lives
Torn from all that claim affection,
Parents, children, friends, and wives.

The American Patriotic Song-Book (Philadelphia: McCulloch, 1813), 33.

Seamen's songs expressed resignation to the vagaries of fate. Songs like "Sam Splic'em" depicted a sailor's life as full of vicissitudes which the sailor could not control: Sam's sweetheart left him for another man; he lost all his wages when pressed into naval service at the end of one voyage; he accidentally tossed his wages into the ocean in the pocket of a ragged and discarded pair of pants at the end of another. To each misfortune, Sam responded philosophically:

Let her go, if she will, tis but folly to sorrow,
If a storm comes today, why a calm comes tomorrow

* * *

Yet it cost honest Ben [sic] little more than a sigh,
For says he, "all this here will rub out when its dry"

* * *

Some folks would have cry'd, but Sam had more sense,
For says he, 'twill be all one a hundred years since.'

In the end Sam inherited a fortune with which he found contentment:

With his grog and his girl he floats easy through life,
And laughs at the troubles he formerly knew:
For says Sam, 'on this maxim you may safe depend,
When things come to the worse why they're sartin to mend.'³⁰⁷

The sailor who resigned himself to hardship, this song suggested, would receive his ultimate reward. Numerous songs mirrored the sentiment found in "Sam Splic'em."³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ *Cabin Boy*, 11–12.

³⁰⁸ The narrator of "Jack at the Windlass" mused that, "...if death should not trick us,
Perhaps we may come back again.
With a will ho, then pull away, jolly boys,
At the mercy of fortune we go,
We're in for't then dam me, what folly boys,
For to be down-hearted, yo-ho!

Nautical Songster, 12. The song "Sailor's Consolation" began with several verses relating the deaths of seafarers. Despite the loss of so many friends, the song's narrator preach resolution and cheerfulness:

But what of it all, lads, shall we be down-hearted,
Because that may-hap we now take our last sup;

Seamen prided themselves on their stoicism. They contended that their fortitude in the face of danger distinguished them from other men. “When we sail with a fresh’ning breeze,” boasted the narrator of “A Sailor’s Life at Sea,”

And landsmen all grow sick, sir,
The sailor lolls with his mind at ease,
And the song and can go quick, sir.³⁰⁹

Other songs made sailors’ hardships a metaphor for the hardships all persons must face.

In toil and peril, he his part takes,
Stands fire, and hurricane and shot,
He has his qualms, his head-aches, heart-aches,
And where’s the lubber that has not?³¹⁰

Boastingly comfortable with the inescapable vagaries of fortune, the seafarer probably had little patience for the counsel of reforming ideologues who advised him to save his money frugally or to deny himself sensual pleasures when they offered themselves to him.

Life’s cable must one day or other be parted,
And death in fast mooring will bring us all up.
But ‘tis always the way on’t, one scarce finds a brother
Fond as pitch, honest, hearty, and true to the core,
But by battle, or storm, or some damn’d thing or other,
He’s pop’d off the hooks, and we ne’er see him more.

The narrator’s consolation explicated the connection between sailors’ resignation to fate and their boisterousness in port: he argued that, “grieving’s a folly, come let us be jolly; If we’ve troubles at sea boys, we’ve pleasures ashore.” Ibid, 37–38. Several sailors’ memoirs support the notion that sailors prided themselves on their resignation to inescapable adversity. Looking back on a plague that spread through his ship and killed several of his crewmates, Moses Smith admitted that, “dreadful as were those scenes, we soon became hardened to them, and laughed almost at the fell destroyer. Though perfectly aware that no one was secure of life for a day, the peals of merriment and the outbreaks of profanity still broke many a lip. So hardened does the neglected heart become to all moral considerations.” In a more lighthearted manner, William Robinson echoed the exact wording “Sailor’s Consolation,” contending that “A sailor’s mind is not to be overcome by accidents or disappointments; he meets them as he would an enemy, by facing them, and merrily sings, ‘grieving’s a folly, boys!’” See Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 14–15; Robinson, *Jack Nastyface*, 85.

³⁰⁹ *Nautical Songster*, 48. Captain David Porter, USN, recorded the grumblings of experienced sailors during a pleasant leg early in a cruise on board the USS *Essex*. They felt that the ship’s greenhands were receiving a false impression of seafaring, one which belittled the fortitude the occupation required. The older tars “felicitated themselves that it was not always the case at sea, ‘or all the old women of the country (as they expressed themselves) would have been sailors.’” Porter, *Journal*, 1:28.

³¹⁰ *Cabin Boy*, 17.

Cash in hand, indeed, was one means by which a sailor could control his lot. An abundant purse allowed seamen in port to upend normal class relations and play the role of grandees for a while. Tellingly, the song “The Sailor’s Glory” painted a seafarer’s binge in regal terms. The sailor was, the song avowed,

To share his stock full well content,
Jovial, tho’ short his reign,
He’ll stay till every shiner’s spent,
And then to sea again.³¹¹

The song “Sailor’s Money” elegized the times ashore when sea fare gave way to finer food:

Burgu, it was our oldest diet,
But now that’s all forgot;
It was pidgeon and game, sir, every day,
Well cooked as I thought.
It was pidgeon and game, sir, every day,
And all to trifle my money away;
Ten pounds would scarce last me one night and a day.³¹²

In the pursuit of the pleasures of sex, food, and drink, sailors’ money “flie[d] like the dust of a summer’s day.”³¹³

Some historians of artisans in the early nineteenth century have noted the reluctance of those workers to replace a “traditional moral economy” with an impersonal

³¹¹ *Neptune*, 17. The memoirs of sailor Henry James Mercier echoed the sentiments of this song, noting that sailors at liberty on shore were “their own lords and masters, and at their own command for twenty-four hours.” Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, 87.

³¹² *Cabin Boy*, 19.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 18. When it came to Epicurean indulgences, sailors’ actions sometimes matched the lyrics of their songs. Samuel Leech, climbing aboard a frigate the crew of which had recently acquired its wages, “found her crew in a complete Elysium of sensual enjoyment.” With their prize money, the crew had bought itself fresh meat and soft bread to replace their salted pork and hard tack. In six weeks Ned Myers squandered five hundred dollars he had earned from back wages and shares in a recent voyage. His expenses included several glasses of rum each morning to chase away “the horrors,” as he called a hangover; a steady flow of grog throughout the rest of the day; coaches that he rented to ride through the city (and frequently smashed); and frequent visits to the theater. Leech, *Thirty Years*, 173; Myers, *Ned Myers*, 141–142.

capitalist one, at least in certain situations.³¹⁴ Many sailors may have shared this reluctance, particularly those with families to support whose reliance on wages prevented them from fulfilling the expected masculine role of fathers and integral members of the community.³¹⁵ For other sailors, however, participation in an impersonal capitalist economy had its benefits. Specifically, the occasional abundance of cash provided seamen with the means to assert their masculinity and their sense of their own self-worth in an exaggerated manner that bystanders could not ignore. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, as Daniel Vickers has recently shown, cash played a more central role in seafaring occupations than it did in most landed ones, where labor was still largely paid through a mixture of notes, goods, and long-term obligations.³¹⁶ Sailors were among the first American workers for whom cash wages were an integral fact of life, and they seem to have accommodated themselves to them. Treating friends without regards to the cost, feasting and drinking as if a purse could never empty, conspicuously consuming the fruits of their labors in quick but glorious bursts—such actions allowed sailors, from time to time, to exert their manhood in ways that passersby had to acknowledge.

Nevertheless, seafarers recognized and resented the limits of cash exchanges. They knew that though money in their pockets made them welcomed and loved, its absence made them despised. During the War of 1812, when the USS frigate *United*

³¹⁴ See Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 3–103; Charles G. Steffen, *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and Politics in the Age of Revolution 1763–1812* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984); and Ronald Schultz, *The Republic of Labor: Philadelphia Artisans and the Politics of Class, 1720–1830* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For a more critical view that emphasizes the factionalism and self-destructiveness of the emerging working class, see Peter Way, “Rough Culture.”

³¹⁵ The plight of such sailors is described by Ruth Wallis Herndon in “The Domestic Cost of Seafaring: Town Leaders and Seamen’s Families in Eighteenth-Century Rhode Island,” in *Iron Men, Wooden Women*.

³¹⁶ Vickers, *Young Men*, 80–81.

States entered the port of New York after a victorious voyage, New Yorkers greeted its crewmen with open arms. “Never had men more friends than the crew of the United States at this period,” recalled a contemporary observer,

Every boarding-house was open to them; every merchant would trust them; every one was willing to lend them money. What was it that gained them such public favor? “O, their victory, of course,” replies the reader. Stop; I will reveal the secret. They had some *prize money* coming to them in a few weeks! That was the key that unlocked coffers; the warmth that melted the heart; the spirit that clothed the face with smiles. But for that—THE PRIZE MONEY—poor Jack’s credit and favor would, as usual, have been below *par*.³¹⁷

The memoirs of another sailor noted the change in his reception from shore to shipboard, for, “though I was looked upon when on shore somewhat slightly as my pockets became light, I now found amongst these warm-hearted tars the most disinterested friendship.”³¹⁸ Many songs echoed this theme of the lavish attention paid to sailors with cash, and the derision heaped upon them without. Sentimentality and virtue did not always result in happy endings in the worldview constructed by sailors’ doggerel.

Indeed, sailors contended that the opposite was true: virtuous actions, though they might receive some reward from Providence or fate, were rarely honored by the landsmen whom sailors encountered. Landed society should certainly not boast of its virtue, according to the narrator of the song “The Voyage of Life.” The narrator began by noting that

A voyage at sea and all its strife,
Its pleasures and its pain,
At every point resembles life;
Hard work for little gain.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 161–162.

³¹⁸ Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, xxiii

³¹⁹ *A National Song-Book, Being a Collection of Patriotic, Martial, and Naval Songs and Odes, Principally of American Composition*, comp. James J. Wilson (Trenton, N.J.: Wilson, 1813), 147.

Developing that pessimistic tone further, the narrator sighed over the “impervious dangers we explore, / False friends, some faithless she.” The moral was clear: “Pirates and sharks are found ashore / As often as at sea.”³²⁰

The best of men, sailors’ doggerel noted, were commonly reviled. The popular tale of Tom Tackle proved as much. The eponymous song related that Tom was “noble, was true to his word, / If Merit brought titles, Tom might be my lord.” Despite these virtues,

...Tom had a failing, if ever man had,
That good as he was, made him all that was bad:
He was paltry, and pitiful, scurvy, and mean,
And the sniv’lingest scoundrel that ever was seen,
For so said the girls and the landlords long score,
Would you know what his fault was, Tom Tackle was poor.³²¹

The song’s narrator wished to know whether in truth “the same honour concern poor and rich,” for such a statement certainly did not match his experiences.³²²

Despite the pretensions of their social betters, sailors quickly discerned that honor did affect men differently according to the weight of their purse. The song “The Disconsolate Sailor” mirrored Tom Tackle’s tale in its report of the coldness shown to poor sailors, whatever their achievements at sea. “When my money was gone that I gain’d in the wars,” related the song’s narrator,

³²⁰ Ibid., 148. The song was not without reprieve, noting the healing effects of “sweet domestic duty, / Some manly imp or infant beauty, / Clings round his neck, or climbs his ease.”

³²¹ *The National Songster* (Philadelphia: Thomas Desilver, 1808), 91.

³²² Ibid., 92. Ric Caric analyzed a variation of this song in the context of artisans’ leisure during the Early Republican period. Caric concluded that the song evidenced a significant trend in artisans’ culture—a simultaneous desire for recognition as individuals and as members of a group, especially in the omnipresent face of death. Caric identified competition as an important element of artisans’ response, as related in daily instances of one-up-man-ship. Sailors’ doggerel, however, more consistently stressed themes of mutuality: individuals found recognition as individuals not by subscribing to competitions within the group, but by providing for the group. See Caric, “Blustering Brags.”

The world then did frown on my fate;
What matters my zeal or my honour'd scars,
When indifference stood at each gate:
The face that did smile when my purse was well lin'd,
Shew'd a different aspect on me;
And when I could not but ingratitude find,
I hied me again to sea.³²³

Upon returning to sea, the “disconsolate sailor” found the sentiments of his troubled heart matched by the turbulence of the sea. He concluded with the wish that he could make his “ungrateful” countrymen see, “That the turbulent winds and the billows could show / More kindness than they did to me.”³²⁴ For the impoverished and unconnected sailor, the American landscape could be quite a heartless place.

As indicated in their songs, sailors recognized that on shore money, for good or ill, was the measure of man. Regardless of their recognition of money’s vital importance, however, few sailors evidenced a propensity to hoard it. Considering their view towards fortune expressed in songs like “Sam Slic’em,” saving money would have been a losing prospect anyway. The song “Dull Cares” explicated the links that sailors made between fatalism, profligacy, and egalitarianism. “Why should we at our lot repine,” asked the song’s narrator,

Or grieve at our distress;
Some think if they should riches gain,
They’d gain true happiness;
Alas, how vain is all their gain,
Since life will soon decay—
And since we’re here with friends so dear,

³²³ *Neptune*, 12.

³²⁴ Robbins, *Journal*, 24; *National Song-Book*, 157.

Let's drive dull cares away.³²⁵

The narrator followed this command with a pointed question:

Why should the rich despise the poor!—

Why should the poor repine?

A little time will make us all

In equal friendship join;

We're much to blame—we're all the same,

Alike we're made of clay...³²⁶

Their fatalistic streak resigned sailors to the world while allowing them to laugh at it with a wink and a nudge. Sailors, in their songs at least, simultaneously reconciled themselves to poverty while insisting that poverty did not reflect poorly on a person's character.

Riches gained would be surely lost, if not by the vicissitudes of life, then certainly by its termination.³²⁷ Better to throw cash away on pleasures when the opportunities arose than to lose both the cash and the opportunities by an unwise love of money.

Instead of saving their wages, sailors spread them around. They did so not only in the advancement of their own sensual gratification, however, but also to help other distressed sailors. Even hostile observers admitted seamen's characteristic generosity. In part this generosity resulted from an awareness of life's vicissitudes. In part, however, it may have signified a conscious design for the future. A momentarily wealthy sailor assisted another sailor in financial distress in the hopes that one day, when that first sailor

³²⁵ *The Sky Lark: Containing a Collection of New and Approved Songs* (Hudson: Ashbel Stoddard, 1814), 36.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ This ethos, it should be noted, is an individualistic one. It depended on a worldview based on the atomized person rather than the dynastic family, which could benefit from carefully shepherded earnings. Ned Myers explained his fatalism (and subsequent profligacy) in individualistic terms: "‘If I tumbled overboard,’ I said to myself, ‘there is none to cry over me;’ therefore let things jog on their own course." Myers, *Ned Myers*, 206.

hit hard times, somebody else would help him—such at least is the implicit moral of sailors’ doggerel. The song “Tom Tackle” expressed the sailors’ monetary ideal:

His pittance is daily, and yet Tom imparts
What he can to his friends and may all honest hearts,
Like Tom Tackle, have what keeps the wolf from the door,
Just enough to be gen’rous, too much to be poor.³²⁸

“Our prizes fold, the chink we share,” boasted another song,

And gladly we receive it;
And when we meet a brother Tar,
That wants, we freely give it:
No free-born sailor yet had store,
But cheerfully would lend it,
And when ‘tis gone—to sea for more,
We earn it but to spend it.³²⁹

In the sailor’s worldview, as expressed in their doggerel, profligacy and generosity combined: tossing about one’s money with abandon not only brought personal gratification, but also strengthened the bonds of friendship, and, potentially at least, provided insurance of reciprocal support in times of need.³³⁰ Through such actions,

³²⁸ *Neptune*, 10.

³²⁹ *Nautical Songster*, 6. Sailor Ned Myers had, by his mid-thirties, adopted this credo as his own: “As for money, my rule had come to be, to spend it as I got it, and go to sea for more.” Myers, *Ned Myers*, 206. The sentiment appears frequently in sailors’ doggerel. Noting that “we’re born for pleasure and for trouble,” the song “Life’s Weather Gage” valorized a seaman’s tendency to spend his money recklessly:

The gold he gets does good to others,
Though he at random lets it fly:
For, as mankind are all his brothers,
He keeps it in the family.

See *Cabin Boy*, 17. Another song insisted that a sailor “if he by chance shou’d know,”

Of brother tar distress,
He’ll instant fly, relieve his woe,
For Jack’s supremely blest,
His store to lend to aid his friend.

Neptune, 17.

³³⁰ This emphasis on generosity does not seem to have been mere rhetoric or idle self-congratulation. Based on the historical evidence it contained more than a kernel of truth. One sailor, for instance, had used his wages to buy a Christmas meal of turkey and apples for his colleagues. The next time he saw them,

sailors simultaneously acknowledged a fraternal obligation to each other, and tightened the bonds of that fraternity.

Sailors' alcoholic binges similarly served both as a response to the vagaries of fortune and as a means of tightening the social bond among men. Although contemporaries attributed sailors' drunkenness to their thoughtlessness or degradation, their doggerel reveals a philosophical underpinning to their inebriation. Many songs featured a bowl of grog as a fit reward for a tragedy averted or an arduous voyage completed, as well as a source and cement of companionship. The narrator of "The Tempest" called for a cup of grog after a storm, saying,

Fill it up, about ship wheel it;
Close to th' lips a bumper join,
Where's the tempest now? Who feels it?
None! Our danger's drown'd in wine.³³¹

According to the song "The Honest Tar," seafarers would gladly face any danger in return for "grog aboard and girl ashore."³³² Sailors traditionally met inescapable disaster

they "repaid me fourfold, so that when I went ashore that night my purse was as heavy as on the afternoon when I quitted the ship." While confined in a British prison during the War of 1812, Nathaniel Pierce of Newburyport, Massachusetts, noted in his diary that, "a great stroke of Gambling was carried on in No. 4 [i.e., one of the seven prison buildings at the particular depot] last night one man a Black viz, Thos Catler formerly of Newburyport won 16£ 19s & in the morning came to our birth & and made all the Mess a present of a two penny loaf & a pint of Cocoa, which was very good of him." When a crewman died at sea, officers auctioned off his possessions to the other men on the vessel. The money gained thereby went to the deceased's surviving relatives. Seamen in these instances often overpaid for goods they did not necessarily need. "If sailors paid high prices for items they could not use," asserted historian Margaret Creighton, "they must have been purchasing something other than worn clothing. What they bought, it seems, were at least three things. First, they acquired a physical reminder of the drowned man, something that might mitigate the loss of his tangible self. Second, they made a contribution to the sailor's shore family, which would receive the auction proceeds from the captain. And third, they reinforced their own fraternity." Newspapers throughout the War of 1812 reported incidents of the "Generosity of American Tars." Sailors in the U. S. Navy, sometimes encouraged by their commander, sometimes apparently on their own initiative, pooled together hundreds of dollars from their past and future earnings to help relieve the suffering of the surviving orphans, wives, and dependent parents of their dead brother sailors, of comrades crippled in battle, and even of their conquered foes. Leech, *Thirty Years*, 173; Pierce, "Journal," 53; Creighton, *Rites and Passages*, 137.

³³¹ *Neptune*, 30.

³³² *Nautical Songster*, 55.

in a besotted state. When stranded aboard a ship sinking to the bottom of the sea or captured by an enemy vessel, they invaded their ship's store of liquor and downed as much of it as they could.³³³ Unable to steer their destiny they at least could affect their sobriety.

Drinking also brought sailors together in fellowship. Since they often necessarily found themselves strangers in strange lands, where only money could curry favor for them, sailors necessarily recognized individuals, as opposed to families, as a basic societal unit.³³⁴ Nonetheless, sailors' doggerel put a high value on fellow feeling. The song "Morality in the Foretop" contained a sailor who defined his creed as

Let storms of life upon me press,
Misfortunes make me reel,
Why, what's my own distress?—
For others let me feel.³³⁵

Noting that "A tear is a pleasure, d'ye see, in its way," a sailor in another song put the matter even more succinctly: "they that ha'nt pity, why I pities they."³³⁶ Sailors relied on their fellow seafarers for their comfort and their security. Seamen combined against landmen, their country's enemies, the elements, and even their officers.³³⁷ As historian Ira Dye noted, sailors "needed the strength and solidarity of friends and shipmates: '—a

³³³ For instances of sailors raiding liquor stores in the face of disaster, see Robbins, *Journal*, 26–27; Myers, *Ned Myers*, 99; Leech, *Thirty Years*, 144; Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, edited by Vincent Carretta (1789; repr. New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 150–151.

³³⁴ Seaman Henry James Mercier explained sailors' revels in part because "he is in all places, and upon all occasions, *at home*; as long as he is in possession of the glittering dross, Jack little cares on what soil or in what climate his liberty is granted him; he is the same light-hearted, careless individual still, whatever corner of the globe he may be performing his peregrinations in." Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, 86.

³³⁵ *National Song-Book*, 158.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 159–160.

³³⁷ One sailor stated as a truism that, "A sailor never informs against his shipmate." To prove his words, he and his messmates all "took a flogging for our supper," rather than identify a malingerer among them to their lieutenant. Sailor Henry James Mercier made a similar point in his memoir, reviling "some two-faced rascal—I can't call him sailor," who revealed to the captain the hiding place of fellow seaman's hidden stash of liquor. Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 13; Mercier, *Life on a Man-of-War*, 169.

messmate before a shipmate, a shipmate before a sailor, a sailor before a stranger,” was the sailors’ creed.³³⁸ Passing around a bowl, treating companions, joining voice in song—these actions allowed sailors to create a miniature society governed by bonhomie that eased the pains of the impersonal worlds through which they traveled.

Faced with an impersonal society that espoused sentimental values without adhering to them, seamen responded as best they could. In their doggerel, sailors grudgingly accepted a society in which men and money were the measure of all things, and acted up to that measurement when possible. Although many sailors retained strong emotional and practical attachments with family members on shore, their doggerel expressed a conviction of the centrality to their views of society of atomized men and men’s relations to each other. Critiqued themselves for their deranged sentiments, sailors responded with a jaundiced critique of the deranged sentimentality of American society.

Meanwhile, sailors announced their manhood in raucous displays which observers could not ignore. In contrast to the professional urban youth of the next generation who cultivated a restrained and improving manhood marked by such traits as library membership and elegant handwriting, sailors made their manliness known by living large, if only in spurts.³³⁹ When they had money they spent it, and not only on themselves; they treated their companions and offered relief to the needy. Such sprees could not last long, but for their duration sailors could show that they were as carefree

³³⁸ Ira Dye, “Tattoos,” 553.

³³⁹ For the manhood of young urban professionals of the Jacksonian Era, see Thomas Augst, *The Clerk’s Tale: Young Men and Moral Life in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), 2003. The manhood described in this chapter was not the exclusive preserve of sailors. Rik Caric has identified a similar element of bluster in the general working-class culture of early republican Philadelphia. Gorn’s study of urban working-class men in the antebellum era similarly emphasizes the degree to which such men strutted before each other to demonstrate their manliness. See Caric, “Blustering Brags”; Elliott J. Gorn, “‘Good-Bye Boys, I Die a True American’: Homicide, Nativism, and Working-Class Culture in Antebellum New York City,” *The Journal of American History* 74:2 (1987), 388–410.

and generous as any other person; indeed, their antics seemed designed to make that fact known. When they had only lint left in their pockets, sailors returned to sea to get more “rhino,” as cash was called.

Sailors did not regard manliness as an internal trait of character; it required an audience. A man was not a man until other men accepted him as such.³⁴⁰ Mostly young and not yet settled in life, engaged in a suspect profession through which few men made themselves rich, seamen could not perform the roles of self-mastered men or of dependable heads of household. Instead, they relied on bluster. They staked ostentatious claims to manhood in the face of a society which held their manhood in doubt. After the Battle of Plattsburg on September 11, 1814, American sailors made a hero of a gamecock brought on board the USS *Saratoga* by several sailors who had stolen it from a nearby New Yorker. In the heat of the fray British shot demolished the rooster’s pen. Undaunted, the bird mounted the topmast and crowed defiantly at the foe. The sailors took the cock’s bravery as a symbol of their own. They too proudly and loudly proclaimed for all to hear that they must be acknowledged as men.

Manliness, like nationality, required validation. It was a communal state, not an individual one. As individuals, sailors sought such validation from other members of American society, even if they had to resort to raucous behavior to achieve it. A similar desire on the part of many American men to receive the validation of their British counterparts would play an important role in bringing about the War of 1812. It would also shape how American men understood the events that occurred in that conflict.

³⁴⁰ This dynamic of manliness would take an institutionalized form at the end of the nineteenth century through the popular fraternal organizations which guided young men from adolescence into a community of men. See Carnes, *Secret Ritual*.

Chapter Five

Broadsides on Sea and on Land: Naval Battles as Contested Symbols of American Nationality

During the War of 1812 the U.S. Navy emerged as the most prominent symbol of American national identity. From north to south and across party lines the American people feted its achievements. The public reacted jubilantly to news of victories, produced excuses for losses, and celebrated sailors and officers in large ways and small. As naval successes brought the American nation together, however, they also accented the issues that divided them. Different Americans understood their Navy's victories in different ways. Republicans and Federalists wrestled each other through newspaper accounts, formal toasts, lavish dinners, and printed broadsides over what the victories meant. But the battle over the meaning of the battles was not a contest fought solely between active partisans and the political elite. Common sailors stepped on stage to receive the plaudits of their grateful countrymen. Such occasions offered seamen unique opportunities to advance their idiosyncratic understanding of the meaning of their naval achievements and of the American nation. It was an opportunity which they did not ignore.

The War of 1812 on land began disastrously for the United States with the surrender of William Hull's forces on August 16, 1812, less than two months after war was declared. Although the military situation improved over the course of the war, American landed forces scored few signal victories before Andrew Jackson's trouncing

of British invaders at the Battle of New Orleans. The main goal of the U.S. Army, moreover, the controversial attempt to conquer Canada, ensured that a large body of Americans would withhold their applause for soldiers on the scattered occasions of success—particularly “Old Republicans” (conservatives like John Randolph who had broken with the administration) and Federalists. Americans did, however, have one nearly unanimous source of martial pride during the conflict—naval actions, particularly single-ship engagements, that seemed to demonstrate American maritime superiority over the British.

Naval battles must be approached, in a manner of speaking, as texts. They have no intrinsic meaning, but instead require interpretation. Nor did Early Republican observers interpret these battles in a monolithic manner. There are several ways of “reading” these sea battles as cultural artifacts. First, they represented affairs of honor peculiar to the era of the early republic. Second, ship-to-ship engagements helped to define a nascent American nationalism. Third, celebrations of victories were used to push partisan agendas. And finally, the feting of the common seamen after the battles accentuated class divisions and highlighted the problematic role of sailors in the new American nation.³⁴¹

To borrow a phrase about the origins of a more recent conflict, the War of 1812 was “the *Rashomon* of wars”: numerous explanations have been offered as to why it began.³⁴² In 1974 Stephen Millett suggested that, “Perhaps no other aspect of early American diplomatic historiography has been argued about as much as the causes of the

³⁴¹ In this paragraph particularly, and throughout the text, I am indebted to Paul Gilje who, as editor of a published version of this chapter, provided helpful comments and, in spots, the words to articulate my ideas.

³⁴² George Packer used this phrase in reference to the second U.S.-Iraq conflict in his *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 46.

War of 1812.”³⁴³ Since he wrote several new theories about the causes have emerged, along with some revisions of longstanding views.³⁴⁴ Historians have attributed the war to American resistance to Britain’s neo-imperial Orders-in-Council and its practice of impressment; to western and southern agrarians’ desire for more land or better markets; to resentment over British maritime dominance; to an urge to prove that the sons retained the virtues of the Founding Fathers; and to Madisonians’ fear of losing the government either to Federalists or to disgruntled Mid-Atlantic Republicans, or to some fusion of the two.³⁴⁵ But whatever the relative importance of factors identified by later historians, the war was indubitably understood by many Americans of the time to be an affair of honor.³⁴⁶

Honor was integral to early American politics, and was of central concern to leading political figures in the Early Republican period. Violent codes of honor guided the conduct of American men during the time of the War of 1812. Prominent men from

³⁴³ Millett, “Bellicose Nationalism,” 222. For major interpretations that predated Millett’s article, see Mahan, *Seapower and Its Relation to the War of 1812*; Zimmerman, *Impressment*; Pratt, *Expansionists*; Latimer, “South Carolina”; Taylor, “Agrarian Discontent”; Perkins, *Prologue to War*; Horsman, *The War of 1812*; Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812*; Brown, *Republic in Peril*.

³⁴⁴ The most important interpretations to postdate Millett are Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War*; Watts, *Republic Reborn*; and Ronald L. Hatzenbuehler and Robert L. Ivie, *Congress Declares War: Rhetoric, Leadership, and Partisanship in the Early Republic* (Kent, Ohio: Kent University Press, 1983).

³⁴⁵ Mahan compared British policies to a revocation of American independence. Zimmerman placed the most emphasis on impressment. His work was immediately superseded by works influenced in equal degrees Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontierism and the economic emphases of the Progressive school; particularly significant in this regard were Pratt, Latimer, and Taylor. Concern for maritime depredations, and a generally more internationalist perspective, appeared in the fifties and sixties, led by Perkins and Horsman. Steven Watts has identified the anxieties of the post-Revolutionary generation (as had Forgie before, though his work focused on the antebellum era). Political causes are given most weight by Brown and Stagg. See titles above and Forgie, *Patricide*.

³⁴⁶ The most prominent scholarly proponent of honor’s central role to the decision to declare war is Norman Risjord. American historians have been slow to investigate honor in the Early Republic, especially in the North. Honor has usually been approached as a Southern phenomenon, prominently by historians such as Greenberg and Wyatt-Brown. (It should be noted that, though Wyatt-Brown regarded the South as unique from the North in an American context, he considered the South typical and the North anomalous in a transatlantic context.) An important exception is Joanne Freeman, who has examined the role which honor played among the ruling elite in the Early Republic. Nonetheless, the importance of honor has yet to be fully appreciated, even though the revolt against dueling might well represent the single most successful reform movement of the early nineteenth century. See Risjord, “1812”; Greenberg, “The Nose”; Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*; Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*.

the South and the West especially subscribed to the tenets of the *code duello*.³⁴⁷ Officers in the army or navy also obsessed over honor.³⁴⁸ American officers serving on the Lakes sometimes acted as if they were more intent on thinning their own ranks through duels than in confronting the nearby British foe.³⁴⁹ Men of high status professed that dueling, “however reprehensible,” was inefaceable: “It is one of those Evils which is consequent upon Society...Before it can be stopped, the State of Society itself must change, and till then, human Laws, and human Punishments will be vain.”³⁵⁰

Adherents of the *code duello* applied it international relations, not just interpersonal ones. At the time governments were commonly described anthropomorphically. “Nations, like men, have their birth, youth, manhood, decrepitude of years, diseases and dissolution,” ran a typical example.³⁵¹ Independence Day orations depicted American history a progress from “infantile weakness” of the colonies to “the

³⁴⁷ A Kentucky congressman, for instance, allegedly proclaimed that, “nobody could be a thorough gentleman who had not fought a duel and wounded his man or been wounded himself.” The congressman is quoted in Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 189–190.

³⁴⁸ Dueling, though declining in parts of the United States, remained a common occurrence among naval and military officers throughout the early republican period, even when those officers were engaged in hostile activities against enemy forces. Stephen Decatur Jr. would lose his life in a duel with a brother officer, James Barron, in 1820. For examples of duels involving American naval officers during this period, see NDBP, 2:293–294, 300, 311, 362; 5:376, 562. For the duel between Barron and Decatur, see Robert J. Allison, *Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779–1820* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 201–216.

³⁴⁹ For challenges and duels on the Lakes, see Parsons, *Surgeon of the Lakes*, 20, 60, 85, 107.

³⁵⁰ The author of these words was Congressman Joseph Hooper Nicholson of Maryland. He addressed them to the Secretary of the Navy, asking for leniency for Diehart, a naval officer who killed a brother officer in a duel in the Mediterranean. The murdered officer was a relation of Nicholson, but, having confirmed that the duel was fought fairly, Nicholson concluded his plea by stating, “As a member therefore of the same family, as one attached to the deceased by the warmest Affections, I venture respectfully to ask that Mr. Diehart may be forgiven, and that hereafter he may be considered as though this unfortunate Event had never happened. In making this request I do no more for this young Gentleman, whose Person and connections are entirely unknown to me, than I should have expected from his Friends, had my Relation been the survivor.” See NDBP, 5:376.

³⁵¹ Chauncey Langdon, *Address*, 3–4. A contemporary of Langdon put it thusly: “Whatever be the cause, experience amply evinces, that as in the animal, so in the body politic, there is a regular progression from infancy to manhood, and thence to decay.” Andrew Bigelow, *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society at Cambridge, July 4, 1815* (Cambridge, Mass.: Hilliard and Metcalf), 1815, 4.

powers of muscular manhood” that ensured independence.³⁵² As a result of the similarities between men and nations, commentators insisted that the conduct of nations should follow the same guidelines as the conduct of men. “The principles that are wrong between individuals, can not hold good between nations,” according to one such assessment, “for they [i.e., nations] are only a congregation of individuals.”³⁵³ Conversely, the codes that directed the lives of men should also direct the course of nations.

Accordingly, nations no less than men had to watch over their honor.³⁵⁴ A nation that ignored its honor did so at its own peril. Once a state allowed another to trespass on its rights, it would lose the respect of the international community. After that, few powers would hesitate to bully the weakling state unless it rose up in force to regain its dignity.³⁵⁵ Republicans on the floor of Congress explained foreign affairs in such terms. New York Representative Peter Porter asserted that his country’s “situation was not unlike that of a young man just entering into life, and who, if he tamely submitted to one cool, deliberate, intentional indignity, might safely calculate to be kicked and cuffed for

³⁵² Daniel Austin Jr., *An Oration Pronounced July 4, 1814...at the Request of the Republican Citizens of Portsmouth* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Beck & Foster, 1814), 7.

³⁵³ John G. Jackson, *An Oration Pronounced in Clarksburg, on the Fourth Day of July, 1812, and Thirty-Seventh Year of American Independence* (Clarksburg, Va.: Britton, 1812), 5.

³⁵⁴ As one political orator explained, “nations are to each other as individuals in a state of nature; their peace always depends on their reputation; and for their existence they oftentimes are indebted to the opinion which others entertain of their ability to defend themselves. They must then for their own preservation, be fastidiously jealous of their honor; for the insult leads to contempt, and contempt to injury, aggression and ruin.” Peleg Sprague, *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, July 4, 1815, the Thirty-Ninth Anniversary of American Independence* (Worcester: Rogers, 1815), 8.

³⁵⁵ “As in private life no one respects a person who has no respect for himself, so a nation which suffers another nation to infringe its rights, induces other nations to make similar encroachments,” according to one speaker. Joseph E. Sprague, *An Oration, Delivered in Salem, on the Fifth of July, 1813, in Commemoration of Our Naval Victories, and National Independence* (Salem: Palfrey, 1813), 7.

the whole of the remainder of his life.”³⁵⁶ According to this calculation, the American nation could not enter manhood unless, so to speak, it faced down the schoolyard bully which Britain represented. To disgruntled Federalists it seemed that Republicans acted more like “the representatives of a nation of duelists” than like reasonable statesmen.³⁵⁷

Ultimately the rhetoric of honor allowed Republicans to salvage a victory from the War of 1812 despite their failure either to secure official redress for the nation’s original grievances or to conquer Canada (both of which they had vowed not to end the war without gaining). Emerging from the war with neither goal accomplished, they took the offensive against Federalist criticism. Republicans mocked the “calculating gentry” who demanded, “Pray what have you *gained* by the war?” For Republicans, the clear answer was “*national honor*.” Thanks to the war (they contended), “to be known as an *American*, is to command respect.”³⁵⁸ They added that, “The disgrace of her [i.e., Britain’s] navy” would serve as a better guarantor of Britain’s future good behavior, “than the most fair and definite promises on *parchment*.”³⁵⁹ Britain, in short, could not be trusted to uphold its treaty obligations; but it would not lightly insult the nation which

³⁵⁶ *Annals of Congress*, 12th Cong., 1st sess., 415. Similarly, Henry Clay of Kentucky disdained Federalists’ questions about what war against England might cost the country, and listed instead what it might lose through peace: “commerce, character, a nation’s best treasure, honor!” *Ibid.*, 599.

³⁵⁷ Foster, *An Oration*, 14. In his personal correspondence Federalist Congressman Abijah Bigelow railed against the Republican view of honor. Bigelow wrote to his wife that he admired only “that honor and glory, which has virtue and justice for its basis, and which is connected with public faith and good credit.” The national glory which he could not abide was “the glory of an Alexander, a Julius Caesar, or a Napoleon. I desire not that American glory which is to be acquired on the plains of Abraham, or at the walls of Quebec.” Bigelow to Hannah Bigelow, Washington, D.C., 17 January 1813, Letters of Abijah Bigelow Member of Congress to His Wife, 1810–1815, AAS.

³⁵⁸ John Holmes, *An Oration, Pronounced at Alfred, on the 4th of July, 1815, being the Thirty Ninth Anniversary of American Independence* (Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815), 16–17.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 17. Typical of the Republican defenses of the war’s peace terms is the following: “Although the terms of our treaty may be general, can a peace be dishonorable under these circumstances? The history of the Constitution, United States, President, Essex, Wasp, Hornet, Peacock and Enterprise, and the recollection of Erie, Niagara, Plattsburgh, Champlain, Baltimore, and New Orleans, will be a better security against future encroachments, than any treaty could give.” Sherman Leland, *An Oration, Pronounced at Dorchester, July 4, 1815, in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America* (Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815), 13.

had called it to account for its insults, and had cuffed it smartly on the battlefield. These postwar defenses might sound like special pleading; but Republicans had consistently espoused as one of their goals to stand toe-to-toe with John Bull and bloody his nose.³⁶⁰ That end, they could reasonably claim, had been achieved.

Naval battles, especially single-ship engagements, were particularly well suited to the pursuit of a goal such as honor. They were commonly depicted as duels: two combatants met as equals (sometimes after one of the sides had issued a written challenge to the other), and they fought according to accepted rules of equal combat.³⁶¹ In theory, the combatant with “superior” qualities of character would claim the laurels. Successes depended less on the strength of the ship or the number of its guns (though these factors assumed considerable importance in explaining defeats) than on intangible factors.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ Augustus J. Foster, the British minister to the United States at the eve of the war, reported that, “in the opinion of the Speaker, Mr. Clay, and his friends [the war] was as necessary to America as a duel is to a young officer to prevent his being bullied and elbowed in society”; Clay added further that the “duel” between Britain and the United States “would probably leave them both better friends than they had ever before been.” Though insisting that the war had been “productive of much ill-blood between England and America,” Foster admitted too that, “the Americans have had the satisfaction of proving their courage—they have brought us to speak of them with respect.” See Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 4–5, 90.

³⁶¹ Not all Americans subscribed to the rules of “fair play.” Robert Fulton proposed that the government should support the development of technologies such as torpedoes, mines, and submarines, all of which depended upon an element of surprise. “It may be Said,” he admitted, “Such is not honorable war. But is war confined within the limits of honor?” Fulton concluded that, “every thing in these times to weaken the enemy and defeat them on our coast is Right, and for War sufficiently Honorable.” Some Americans took Fulton’s theory of war to heart, resulting in the murder of eleven British sailors. While blockading New London, these Britons hoisted on board their ship a schooner full of supplies. Americans had planted a bomb underneath the supplies in such a way as to detonate when the supplies were removed. The saboteurs hoped to destroy the entire British frigate, but the bomb detonated prematurely. Philip Freneau lauded Fulton’s devices in one of his poems, mocking a British officer’s consternation at the transgression of the code of equal combat. Fulton was not the only American to experiment with novel naval weaponry: Former Secretary of War William Eustis received a presumably unsolicited letter from one Joseph Young outlining a plan to incinerate any British fleets that might invest Boston Harbor with a concoction consisting of fish oil, tar, and turpentine. See NW, 1:147; 2:160–164; Crawford, “Journal,” 13; Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 68; “The Terrific Torpedoes,” in Robert W. Neeser, ed., *American Naval Songs & Ballads* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1938), 256–263, quote on page 258; Joseph Young to William Eustis, New York, 31 March 1813, Eustis-Langdon Papers, 1803–1876, MHS.

³⁶² While Americans explained their victories as resultant from their national superiority, Britons ascribed them to their enemy’s material superiority—larger frigates, more guns, and more men. A typical American response to such assertions by pro-British writers is offered in the song “The Hornet and the Peacock”: “Let them say we’re *superior*—a matter of course; / For the *bravest*, though *least*, are superior in force.” The

“Equal combat” and “fair play” were crucial terms in narratives of naval battles.³⁶³ During the war, both British and American commanders challenged their opponents to ship-to-ship fights in order to “try the fortune of our respective flags.”³⁶⁴ In the interest of fair play, challengers promised that their escorts would stand off and not interfere—in effect, playing the role of seconds in a duel between individuals. Naval officers gained glory only through victories over near-equals or superiors. A commander added no luster to his name by defeating a weaker opponent.³⁶⁵ An officer who

wittiest American response was the extended poem *British Glory*, which mocked the attempts by British commanders, officials, and newspapers to “spin” British defeats by blaming them on green crews, rotten masts, and so forth. In fact, scholars such as Roosevelt and Mahan agree that in most cases, victory fell to the force with superior weight in metal, measured by the number and size of operable guns. In frigate-to-frigate actions, the American vessel was usually the superior, and hence the victor. For British assessments of American material superiority, see Loftus, *My Youth*, 1:278–279, 308; Le Couteur, *Merry Hearts*, 68; Napier, *New England Blockaded*, 13; Noah, *Travels*, 9. Americans’ verse responses to these charges can be found in *Columbian Naval Melody*, 1813, 45; [An English Cossack], *British Glory, or Naval and Military Exploits from Original Documents* (Philadelphia, 1814). For scholarly assessments, see Mahan, *Sea Power*; Roosevelt, *Naval War*.

³⁶³ These phrases appeared in both popular speech and official naval correspondence. At an Independence Day celebration in 1814, for example, orator Patrick Boies offered a dare to the British navy: “Let him challenge an equal combat on the water, and the youthful Perry does not cower to the British Lion.” Patrick Boies, *An Oration, Pronounced at Blandford, on the 4th of July, 1814, before the Blandford and Granville Branches of the “Washington Benevolent Society of the County of Hampden” in Commemoration of American Independence* (Springfield, Mass.: Dickman, 1814), 13. For instances of uses of the phrases in naval correspondence, see NW 1:49, NW 2:292.

³⁶⁴ The wording is from a challenge that Captain Philip Broke of the HMS *Shannon* sent to Captain James Lawrence of the USS *Chesapeake*. Lawrence never received the challenge; he had already determined to sail out to meet the *Shannon*. Earlier in the war, Lawrence himself had issued a challenge to the captain of the HMS *Bonne Citoyenne*. Safely ensconced in a neutral harbor, the British captain refused. Perhaps the most famous challenge was that issued by Captain Dacres of the HMS *Guerrière*. Dacres named Captain James Rodgers of the USS *President* specifically (Rodgers having the year before engaged the *Little Belt* while in pursuit of the *Guerrière*). However, Dacres announced himself willing to meet any frigate “tête-à-tête.” The phrase became a staple of American naval doggerel after Dacres’s surrender to Isaac Hull of the *Constitution*. For Broke’s challenge, see NW, 2:126.

³⁶⁵ When Commodore John Rodgers of the USS *President* mauled the much smaller HMS *Little Belt* in 1811, he sighed that the affair “has given me much pain, as well on account of the injury she sustained; as that I should have been compelled to the measure that produced it, by a vessel of her inferior force.” Similarly, Captain David Porter of the USS *Essex*, after capturing the out-sized HMS *Alert* (which was pursuing the more equally matched USS *Hornet*) wrote his Secretary of Navy that “it is a source of regret to me that she did not fall in with that vessel instead of the *Essex*, as the forces would then have been more equal.” The same disregard for victories over weaker opponents seemed to have been true in Britain as well. American diplomat Mordecai Noah was detained in Britain for some time during the war. While he was there, the battle between the USS *Argus* and the HMS *Pelican* took place near British waters. The American ship was captured and brought to port, where Noah had the opportunity to examine both vessels. “I subsequently saw the *Argus* and *Pelican* laying together, and at once ascertained that there was a great

eschewed equal combat for the safety of more favorable odds, moreover, opened himself to the bitter recrimination of his peers.³⁶⁶

The widespread desire among officers to win honor through ship-to-ship victories undermined the war effort. Captain David Porter of the USS *Essex* and Lieutenant William Henry Allen of the USS *Argus* did as much damage to Great Britain as any American naval officers, the one by devastating its Pacific whaling fleet, the other by attacking its commerce in its own seas. Unfortunately, after striking hard blows to British trade, both commanders succumbed to the desire, as Porter phrased it, “to signalize my cruise by something more splendid before leaving that sea.”³⁶⁷ Both commanders pursued naval engagements which they might have avoided, and both lost their ships as a result: the HMS *Pelican* captured the *Argus*, and the HMS *Phoebe* and HMS *Cherub* combined to take the *Essex*.³⁶⁸

Porter’s desire “to signalize” his cruise was a common one. Secretary of the Navy William Jones repeatedly had to order his commanders to refrain from “giving or receiving a Challenge, to, or from an Enemy’s Vessel.” The navy’s strategy was to attack

disparity of force; indeed this was admitted, and the British, by common consent, said little about the victory.” NW, 1:44. NW, 1:444; Noah, *Travels*, 26.

³⁶⁶ Captain David Porter of the USS *Essex* denounced Captain James Hillyar of the HMS *Phoebe* for this reason. “For six weeks I daily offered him fair and honorable combat on terms greatly to his advantage,” Porter growled. Yet Hillyar had refused his offer, postponing his attack until joined by his consort, the HMS *Cherub*. What made Hillyar’s character worse, in Porter’s assessment, was that he attacked the USS *Essex* as it lay within Chile’s neutral waters. The crippled *Essex* mounted a valiant defense, but ultimately surrendered, with scores of its men lying dead or wounded. Because of Hillyar’s dishonorable conduct, Porter concluded, “the blood of the slain must be on his head, and he has yet to reconcile his conduct to heaven, his conscience and to the world.” NW, 3:737.

³⁶⁷ Porter, *Journal*, 2:150.

³⁶⁸ Porter’s defenders might object to this assessment because he lost the *Essex* while trying unsuccessfully to escape from two British ships, the *Phoebe* and the *Cherub*. However, before the *Cherub*’s arrival, he had repeatedly sought to fight the *Phoebe* alone, though its captain, James Hillyar, consistently refused the challenge (the two ships were docked in the neutral port of Valparaiso, Chile, which is why Porter could not instigate hostilities without Hillyar’s consent). Nonetheless, as Porter’s own account reveals, he had gone looking for a fight. Porter recounts his adventures in the Pacific in his published narrative. For the battle between the *Argus* and the *Peacock*, and the role of honor in compelling Allen to accept battle, see Dye, *Fatal Cruise*, 276–290.

Britain's shipping, Jones admonished, "for there he is indeed vulnerable." Jones reminded his officers that, "it is not even good policy to meet an equal, unless, under special circumstances, where a great object is to be gained, without a great sacrifice."³⁶⁹ As for the glory to be won by single-ship victories, Secretary Jones insisted that, "The Character of the American Navy does not require those feats of Chivalry."³⁷⁰ Even victorious engagements might subvert strategic goals by forcing a triumphant vessel to abandon its mission and return to port for repairs. By the spring of 1813, American ships that docked at home ports faced long odds at evading the Royal Navy's blockade and returning to sea.³⁷¹

Excepting the Battles of Lake Erie and Plattsburg (which respectively helped to restore American control of the Northwest and halted a British invasion into New York), the most widely celebrated naval victories—*Constitution v Guerrière*, *United States v Macedonian*, *Constitution v Java*, &c.—had little impact on the course or outcome of the war.³⁷² Single-ship engagements were simply not strategically beneficial; they risked more than they could return; they undermined the Navy's designs; and they brought the

³⁶⁹ The strategic aspect of naval warfare is most skillfully discussed in Alfred Thayer Mahan's two-volume account of *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*. Mahan emphasized the overall failure of the US Navy during the war. The single-ship engagements remembered so fondly, he insisted, whatever their impact on morale, usually did nothing to further the country's strategic goals, and as frequently subverted them. Even victories could undermine strategic goals, as the triumphant vessel typically had to abandon its station and return to port for repairs. Moreover, by the spring of 1813, American ships that found their way into home ports rarely found their way out, as the Royal Navy tightened its blockade. For a discussion of the navalist approaches to the War of 1812 before Mahan, see Mark Russell Shulman, "The Influence of History upon Sea Power: The Navalist Reinterpretation of the War of 1812," *The Journal of Military History* 56, no. 2 (April 1992): 183–206. Mahan, *Sea Power*; Roosevelt, *Naval War*.

³⁷⁰ NW, 2:296. For similar advice from the Secretary, see NW, 3: 7, 29. To the delight of Americans, the British Admiralty, having suffered three defeats in single-frigate engagements, similarly ordered its commanders in the summer of 1813 not to "attempt to engage, single handed, the larger Class of American Ships; which though they may be called Frigates, are of a size, Complement and weight of metal much beyond that Class, and more resembling Line of Battle Ships." See NW, 2:183.

³⁷¹ For an assessment of the Navy's strategic failures, see Mahan, *Sea Power*.

³⁷² The Battle of Lake Erie helped the United States regain control of the Northwestern territories which General William Hull had surrendered at the outset of the war, and also contributed to the defeat of Tecumseh's Confederacy at the Battle of the Thames. The Battle of Plattsburgh (also called the Battle of Lake Champlain) halted Britain's northern invasion of the United States in the early fall of 1814.

country no closer to an end to the war. Yet Americans celebrated them enthusiastically. When commemorating these victories, therefore, Americans were necessarily celebrating something other than what the victories effected.

Although the strategic significance of many naval battles was negligible, the symbolic significance could be of great importance; and that is what Americans commemorated.³⁷³ The symbolic importance of naval battles can be well gauged by Americans' reactions to their worst maritime failure: the USS *Chesapeake* v HMS *Shannon*. An unmitigated defeat for the American navy in terms of strategy (not only did the *Chesapeake* fail to complete its mission, it was also captured by the enemy), Americans nonetheless managed to transform it into proof of American superiority. Tellingly, they did so not only through their own commemorations of the battle but also through references to British ones.

The battle took place on June 1, 1813, off the shore of Massachusetts. The *Chesapeake* had been bottled within the port of Boston by a British frigate, the HMS *Shannon*. The *Shannon* stood off from the port, either to accept a challenge from the *Chesapeake* or to force it into a fight if it attempted to slip past. The recently transferred commander of the *Chesapeake*, James Lawrence, gambled that he could lead the ship to victory despite his unfamiliar and somewhat disgruntled crew. The *Chesapeake* sailed out to meet the *Shannon*, which was manned by a well-seasoned crew under Captain Philip Broke. The *Chesapeake* suffered a series of accidents early in the encounter, not

³⁷³ In emphasizing the symbolic importance of battles, I do not mean to diminish the brutal effects of those battles on the participants. Naval warfare, despite its chivalric code, was hardly a bloodless affair, and contemporary depictions of the wounded and the dead could be quite horrific. For an understanding of the effect of naval battles on human bodies, see James Inderwick, *Cruise of the U.S. Brig Argus in 1813: Journal of Surgeon James Inderwick*, ed. Victor Hugo Paltsits (New York: The New York Public Library, 1917), 21; Joshua Davis, *Narrative*, 41–44; G. S. Parsons, *Nelsonian Reminiscences*, 19, 22; Noah Jones, *Journals*, 112–114; Leech, *Thirty Years*, 130–136, 141–144; Notebook of Commodore George N. Hollins, Winder Family Papers, MS 2310, MDHS.

least of which was the fatal wounding of Captain Lawrence. Fifteen minutes after the battle began, boarders from the *Shannon* took control of the American ship, and sailed it to Canada alongside the victor.³⁷⁴

The defeat was a spectacular one for Americans—quite literally, as the battle occurred near enough to the shore that the residents of several Massachusetts towns were able to witness it from rooftops and hillsides.³⁷⁵ Americans were shocked by the event. They cast about for explanations for their loss. Lawrence’s leadership was not open to question.³⁷⁶ The young captain was already a hero to the American people before the battle, thanks to an earlier victory.³⁷⁷ The loss of the *Chesapeake* only enhanced his reputation, making him a martyr.³⁷⁸ An alternative explanation was needed. Some commentators blamed a treacherous Portuguese boatswain in the *Chesapeake*’s crew who helped the English boarders take the ship; some blamed a black bugler who hid in a boat

³⁷⁴ For details of the battle, see Gardiner, *Naval War*, 57–61; Mahan, *Sea Power*, 2:132–147; Roosevelt, *Naval War*, 220–236.

³⁷⁵ In her diary, Abigail Livermore Williams described the men huddled on top of their roofs, watching the event through telescopes. Some heights were “black like the swarm of bees,” as another diarist described it, with persons anxious to witness “a fight at sea, the issue of which was hardly in doubt.” See Williams Diary 1809–1813, MHS; William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D. D., Pastor of the East Church, Salem, Massachusetts* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1962), 4:172–173.

³⁷⁶ In this regard he fared better than James Barron, an earlier commander of the ship who stood at the helm when the *Chesapeake* met the *Leopard* in 1807. Barron received the brunt of the blame for that disgrace. His struggle to redeem his tarnished honor resulted ultimately in his fatal meeting with Stephen Decatur.

³⁷⁷ As a lieutenant, Lawrence had commanded the USS *Hornet* to victory over the HMS *Peacock*, a widely celebrated victory. See for instance *The Peacock Stung by the Hornet* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, 1814). This victory was a favorite one for cartoonists, several of whom offered the public depictions of a large hornet assailing a British officer, and sometimes piercing its stinger through the officer’s corpulent belly.

³⁷⁸ Numerous pieces of doggerel were written to mourn his passing. One such piece, “Elegy, In Remembrance of James Lawrence, Esquire: (Late Commander of the United States Frigate Chesapeake),” reached bold new heights of hyperbole: “Low in the dust now lies that godlike form; / Cold is the hand, which in the battle storm, / With dauntless Courage held the faithful blade, / And deeds of Spartan Valour there display’d.” From the beginning of the war, Americans seemed intent on discovering a martyr—Pike, an army officer who died in Canada, and William Bush, a marine lieutenant killed during the battle of *Constitution v Guerrière*, were both enlisted for that purpose following their deaths. Paeans to Lawrence’s martyrdom quickly surpassed all others. See [Cody Regent], *A Masonic Oration on the Death of Brother William S. Bush* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1812); *Free Trade and Sailors Rights*, 6–7.

when the battle began rather than call the men to action with his horn.³⁷⁹ Another popular theory was that someone on the *Shannon* had “cheated.” Witnesses swore they saw an explosion on the *Chesapeake* early in the encounter, which they attributed to a grenade (or “stink pot”) tossed by someone on the *Shannon* in violation of the codes of honorable conduct: “Though a frigate we’ve lost, it was not by fair play, / And in spite of their ‘*Stink Pots*’ we’ll lather away,” as one song avowed.³⁸⁰

Whatever the particular explanation, Americans insisted that the character of their nation had not been compromised by the defeat.³⁸¹ Americans could not transform the battle into a strategic accomplishment, but they could, and did, interpret it in a light favorable to their national character. They did so partly by claiming that the battle somehow had not been fair and that naval battles were only valid insofar as they were fair (as opposed to strategically efficacious). However, Americans found their greatest solace in England’s jubilant reaction to *Chesapeake v Shannon*.³⁸² Americans in England

³⁷⁹ In the courts martial that followed the loss, the bugler, George Brown, suffered the worst punishment of all personnel tried: 300 lashes and the mulcting of his future wages. In effect, the bugler’s service ended as slavery: he would continue to serve, but without compensation. Seventy years after the battle, one survivor of the affair, Benjamin Trefethen, continued to blame the bugler for the *Chesapeake*’s defeat (he also noted a rumor that the bugler lived to be 101 years old). See Benjamin Trefethen, [Accounts concerning the frigate *Chesapeake*, 1878, 1881], Mss C 66, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, NEHGS.

³⁸⁰ *Offset of the Chesapeake* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverley, 1814). “Stink pots” were hand-tossed combustibles designed to sow confusion among enemy ranks. Bentley of Salem, Massachusetts, recorded the rumor of an explosion in his diary on 3 June 1813, two days after the battle. See Bentley, *Diary*, 4:173.

³⁸¹ After learning the particulars of the loss, an American prisoner of war in Ashburton, England, grinned and declared, “I knew the *Chesapeake* must have been taken by surprize, not by a fair fight, yard arm and yard arm, broadside and broadside. We have lost no honour.” An Independence Day oration of 1813 asserted that the Americans on the *Chesapeake* “were overpowered, but not subdued, accident baffled our skill, and slaughtered our officers, and at the moment when victory was almost within our grasp, an act of foul play by a desperate foe, aided by an extraordinary complement of men, overpowered the brave remnant of our countrymen.” Noah, *Travels*, 27; Louis M’Lane, *Oration Delivered before the Artillery Company of Wilmington, Commanded by Captain Rodney, on the 5th of July, A.D. 1813* (Wilmington, Del.: Porter, 1813), 22.

³⁸² American interest in the British reaction to *Chesapeake v Shannon* was not unique. The satirical American piece *British Glory* illustrates the close attention contemporaries paid to interpretations of naval victories. This extended poem parodied the exculpatory accounts of their defeats that appeared in British commanders’ official correspondence, newspapers, and Parliamentary proceedings. Throughout the poem, Britons scrounge for the most plausible lie to cover the ignominy of their repeated defeats without having

reported effusive accolades in Captain Broke's honor.³⁸³ At home Americans received word of the commemorations. They noted proudly that England, a nation that hardly blinked at the receipt of news of the capture of a French fleet, had erupted into paroxysms of joy for the capture of a single American frigate.³⁸⁴ To Americans, British elation for the *Shannon's* victory proved that Britain had come to respect (some said to fear) the U.S. Navy. One ship may have fallen, but the country's esteem had ascended to new heights. As Brother Jonathan chided John Bull in a widely reprinted dialogue, "In the very excesses which you are indulging, you bow to our ascendancy."³⁸⁵

Naval victories gave Americans an opportunity to celebrate their national character. As Admiral E. M. Eller wrote of them, "Here lies the real importance of the unexpected naval victories against the mighty ruler of the sea. The nation that had expected little of its infant navy against the overwhelming power of the British fleets now joined in widespread exultation over the victories. The diverse states were suddenly

to acknowledge American superiority. They begin to despond, however, as more and more American victories ensue. Concluding that Englishmen could not successfully fight the American Navy at sea, the Englishmen become resigned to "*write against them in the papers.*" *British Glory.*

³⁸³ In England when news of the *Shannon's* victory arrived there, Mordecai Noah recalled that, "The loyal inhabitants of Plymouth, had just illuminated with much splendour, for the joint victories of Vittoria and the Chesapeake, and the names of Wellington and Brock [i.e., Broke, commander of the *Shannon*] were entwined together in one wreath." To Noah's mind, this dual commemoration "bestow[ed] upon us the highest honour they possibly could bestow, by comparing the accidental capture of one American frigate, to a splendid victory, which in effect, drove the French from the peninsula, and paved the way for those extraordinary events which have since occurred in Europe [i.e., the initial abdication of Napoleon]." Noah, *Travels*, 26.

³⁸⁴ One newspaper editor asserted that, "The great exultation of the British, both in and out of parliament, upon receiving the news of the capture of the Chesapeake, may be considered the greatest compliment that has yet been paid to our gallant navy." Newspapers throughout the nation agreed that British celebrations were inadvertent admissions of American superiority: "what an encomium did those guns pay to our tars! what a peal of joy did the bells ring in the ears of Americans! Yes, the bravery of our tars is such, that we have compelled the enemy to proclaim it themselves: so difficult was it to gain a single victory or a single ship from us, that when gained, as much was done to celebrate it, as used to be done after a battle in which twenty ships of the line were taken." *The Columbian*, 21 September 1813; *Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser*, 9 September 1813.

³⁸⁵ The comical dialogue depicts John Bull hailing the victory of the *Shannon* as "certainly the greatest achievement which the world ever saw." In reply, Jonathon asks, "Are you proud of conquering a man whom you despise? No, it is because you were afraid of us, & envy our superiority, that you croak so much at this victory." *New-Hampshire Patriot*, 12 October 1813.

wielded with a unifying national interest.”³⁸⁶ Praise for the navy was indeed one of the few sentiments upon which Americans across party lines could agree.³⁸⁷ The avidity with which so many Americans throughout the country feted naval heroes and cherished their achievements would seem to prove that celebrations of naval victories were instruments of unification and nationalization.

The superficial unanimity with which Americans celebrated naval victories during the War of 1812, however, obscures the important truth that those celebrations were often vehicles of partisan dispute and other forms of disagreement. Naval commemorations were complicated phenomena. They contained a multiplicity of meanings. To say that Republicans and Federalists celebrated the victories of the US Navy together is true, but to suggest that they were united by those victories is not. Americans understood naval victories symbolically. They interpreted them as resulting from superior qualities in the character of the American Navy, American men, or American institutions. Identifying which qualities had secured these victories was the project of naval celebrations. Not surprisingly, different Americans drew differing conclusions.

The different meanings which different Americans derived from the same event emerge clearly, if inadvertently, at the dinners hosted throughout the war in honor of victorious naval officers and crewmen. These dinners were sentimental affairs, designed

³⁸⁶ Admiral E. M. Eller, “Introduction” to [Noah Jones], *Journals*, xiii–xiv.

³⁸⁷ The navy had become, growled Major General Jacob Brown, “the Idol that all sects & parties in this country, have agreed to worship.” More sympathetic observers concurred. “The deeds of our naval heroes have... created one universal feeling of admiration and delight, from Maine to Georgia,” affirmed an orator at an Independence Day celebration. John Adams, a stalwart supporter of the navy, contended that the victories would “ferment in the Minds of this People till they generate a national Self respect, a Spirit of Independence and a national Pride which has never before been felt in America.” Habituated by long practice to cantankerousness, Adams added that he wished “the Republican Papers would do Something more than they have done to make these Splendid Atchievements more popular, and give full Scope to The national Joy.” NW, 3:525; David L. Parmelee, *An Address, Delivered at Goshen, at the Anniversary Celebration of the 4th of July, 1814; at the Desire of the Young Men of the Town* (Hartford: Peter B. Gleason and Co., 1814), 7; Adams to Waterhouse, Quincy, 23 March 1813, Adams-Waterhouse Letters, 1784–1837, typescripts, MHS.

to show that the nation properly honored its heroes and that its heroes were worthy of admiration.³⁸⁸ They would put the lie to the canard that republics did not reward their champions. Furthermore, the dinners would allow Federalists and Republicans to meet in a single space for a shared purpose, proving that a common sentiment still united the American people. Finally, they tested whether seamen had the sentimental capacities to participate in the republic: Would they embrace the accolades of their fellow citizens as an opportunity for licentious riot? Or would they recognize that the foundation of a republic was rational liberty, and subordinate their selfish passions for the greater good, under the tutelage of their social superiors?

The organizers of celebratory naval dinners favored lavish spectacle over republican simplicity. Thousands of persons participated in the largest dinners, from the onlookers who crowded the streets “thick as a hive of bees before swarming” to cheer the sailors from their docked ship to the dinner hall, to the several hundreds of gentlemen awaiting them at their destination.³⁸⁹ The dining halls were elaborately decorated. Paintings of naval officers and battles, hundreds of feet wide, festooned the walls, alongside banners that read, “Don’t Give up the Ship” and “We Have Met the Enemy, and He Is Ours.” Centerpieces in the shape of frigates adorned the tables. The celebrants feasted on “every dainty the season affords,” accompanied by “the best of liquors and the choicest wines.”³⁹⁰ A miniature frigate, an exact replica of the *Constitution* or the *Essex*, floated over an artificial lake twenty feet wide at the front of the room (sometimes filled with water, sometimes with grog). Model frigates dangled from the ceiling. An eagle

³⁸⁸ They were intended, “To reward, by every possible demonstration of respect and gratitude, those gallant men who had so nobly supported their country’s honor,” and to evince “the grateful feeling of our citizens to our gallant countrymen.” *The Yankee*, 14 May 1813.

³⁸⁹ *The Evening Post*, 8 January 1813.

³⁹⁰ *Alexandria Daily Gazette Commercial & Political*, 4 January 1813.

with its wings outspread hovered behind the guests of honor, painted on a backdrop; when the toasts began an offstage hand furled the canvas up to reveal an illumination of the battle chiefly celebrated behind it.³⁹¹

The dinners ostensibly promoted an uncomplicated sense of patriotism and unity which transcended party divisions. The attendants were regularly reported as being “gentlemen of every denomination of party.”³⁹² Despite the mingling of partisan antagonists at the dinners, observers assured that “the greatest harmony and unanimity prevailed throughout.”³⁹³ Participants at the dinners regarded the affairs as models of unity for the rest of the American people to follow, an idea worded in one toast as, “*Union of sentiment*—May it ever prevail as now, on the present occasion.”³⁹⁴ The

³⁹¹ These details have been culled and compiled from a number of different dinners reported in various newspapers, memoirs, journals, and other sources. These sources include Amos Evans, *Journal*, 378–379; Leech, *Thirty Years*, 160–161; William T. Rodgers, “Private Journal, 1814–1817,” Papers of William T. Rodgers, LOC, *Free Trade and Sailors Rights*. Notices of the larger dinners appeared in newspapers throughout the country, not infrequently with detailed accounts of the proceedings. As was common practice at the time, newspapers cannibalized each other for these accounts. Major naval dinners (there were numerous smaller ones) included ones for Isaac Hull, Boston, 5 September 1812; Jacob Jones, Philadelphia, 11 December 1812; Stephen Decatur, Isaac Hull, and Jacob Jones (the latter *in absentia*), New York City, 21 December 1812; the crew of the USS *United States*, New York City, 7 January 1813; Stephen Decatur Jr., Philadelphia, 4 February 1813; William Bainbridge and the other officers of the USS *Constitution*, Boston, 2 March 1813; James Lawrence and the crew of the USS *Hornet*, New York City, 4 May 1813; miscellaneous naval victories, 1 June 1813 (this dinner included no naval guests of honor, but received wide coverage because of the high-ranking government officials in attendance); William Bainbridge, Portland, Massachusetts, 30 August 1813; the surviving officers of the USS *Enterprize*, Portland, Massachusetts (now Portland, Maine), 15 September 1813; the crew of the USS *Enterprize*, Portland, Massachusetts (now Portland, Maine), 20 September; Oliver Hazard Perry, Albany, New York, 8 November 1813; Oliver Hazard Perry (and William Henry Harrison), Buffalo, New York, 12 November 1813; William Bainbridge, Georgetown, 23 November 1813; William Bainbridge, Philadelphia, 2 December 1813; William Bainbridge, New York City, 8 December 1813; John Rodgers, New York City, 7 March 1814; Oliver Hazard Perry, Washington, D.C., 25 January 1814, and Boston, 10 May 1814; Stewart and his officers, Salem, March, 1814; Lewis Warrington and his officers, Savannah, May, 1814; Thomas Macdonough and the officers of his fleet, Burlington, 27 September 1814; This list compiles the larger and more widely reported dinners. Small towns sometimes threw dinners for local heroes. Elkton, Maryland, for instance, feted naval surgeon Amos Evans, who served on board the *Constitution*, on 15 June 1813. *Baltimore Patriot*, 24 June 1813.

³⁹² *American Advocate*, 29 January 1814. Echoing Jefferson’s First Inaugural, one account noted of a dinner’s attendees that, “All were republicans; all federalists... an American sentiment was universal.” *Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser*, 8 September 1813.

³⁹³ *Northern Post*, 1 December 1814.

³⁹⁴ *Columbian Centinel*, 4 September 1813.

conviviality of the occasions reminded some of an earlier, idyllic time when the American nation had not been so cleft by faction.³⁹⁵

Still, even seemingly innocuous toasts carried partisan undertones in those factious times. At a dinner in his honor in Boston, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry offered the sentiment, “*The Town of Boston*—The birth-place of American Liberty; from whence, should she ever leave the country, she will take her departure.”³⁹⁶ A correspondent of Perry’s, presumably a Republican, assailed him for this comment, which the correspondent seemed to believe reeked too much of Federalism.³⁹⁷ Perry defended himself by stating that, while he could “see some good beyond the mists of party on both sides,” his correspondent was “warped by party feelings,” and hence had misconstrued the gracious sentiment behind Perry’s toast.³⁹⁸

Perry’s plight must have been a common one, as “warped party feelings” were hardly a rarity, and surely tintured the way most persons who heard or read toasts understood them. Many toasts offered some room for interpretation. A toast to “The President of the United States” was different from a toast to “James Madison,” especially when the former ended without qualification, and the latter continued, “Guiding the helm of our *National Ship* thro’ a turbulent sea, he has evinced a skill, prudence and magnanimity, that has even called forth the admiration of his political opponents.”³⁹⁹ Indeed, an unqualified toast to the office of the president became a mere matter of form

³⁹⁵ At one dinner, a Revolutionary War veteran turned to another guest, and said, “This looks like old times—The curse is removed from the town—May the country at large follow this good example: and God send us a happy and speedy deliverance from party spirit, the sorest of all evils that ever afflicted our country.” *The Yankee*, 11 September 1812.

³⁹⁶ *The Yankee*, 13 May 1814.

³⁹⁷ I have not found the correspondent’s initial letter, only Perry’s response, from which the contents of that first letter are deduced.

³⁹⁸ Oliver Hazard Perry to Samuel L. Anderson, Newport, 22 June 1814, War of 1812 Collection, box 1, MS 1846, MDHS.

³⁹⁹ *The Telegraph*, 22 March 1813.

when followed by, for instance, a toast to Federalist Governor Caleb Strong of Massachusetts, whose “*name indicates his character—Strong in intellect—Strong in principles—and Strong in the affections of the people.*”⁴⁰⁰ Similarly, a toast to “The United States” became a partisan statement with the simple addition of the line, “Engaged in a just and necessary war.”⁴⁰¹ Less controversial statements, such as, “*The Union of the States—May it never be endangered by foreign attachments, or by internal dissensions,*” were bipartisan insofar as stalwarts of either party could launch them against its rivals.⁴⁰²

Many toasts were ambiguous or sly with regards to their political leanings. They couched sentiments in terms that avoided explicit partisan attack, yet revealed an insidious intent to persons who listened closely. Few during the war would fail to see the Federalist apologia in the toast, “The founders of our Navy.—Honor to whom honor is due”—but the partisan point is delivered subtly.⁴⁰³ Another toast, “The Constitution—When properly manned and managed, she did wonders” (offered to William Bainbridge, formerly the commander of the USS *Constitution*) likely also voiced a Federalist longing for the Washingtonian era, when the U.S. Constitution had been “properly manned and managed.”⁴⁰⁴ (Sometimes, of course, celebrants expressed their partisan sentiments baldly. Republicans at Tammany Hall, for instance, toasted, “*Our Eastern Brethren—*

⁴⁰⁰ *The Evening Post*, 6 March 1813.

⁴⁰¹ *The Telegraph*, 22 March 1813.

⁴⁰² The same might be said of the toast, “Party Spirit—It can never be extinct in a free nation, may it in ours always be unmixt by foreign partiality.” *The Columbian*, 2 January 1813; *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, 5 February 1814.

⁴⁰³ *Boston Gazette*, 12 May 1814.

⁴⁰⁴ *The Columbian*, 10 December 1813. The past tense gives the game away: the USS *Constitution* was still active. Puns on the nationalistic names of naval vessels, meanwhile, were ubiquitous—one reason, perhaps, that Republicans seemed anxious for John Rodgers to do more with the USS *President* than capture a handful of merchantmen.

Strayed Sheep from the American Flock—may they soon be sensible of their wandering, and return, with gladness, to the fold of their country.”⁴⁰⁵

Newspaper accounts of dinners similarly put the lie to the contention (trumpeted by the newspapers) that the affairs transcended party politics. Editors of different slants found ways to trumpet their own party’s cause. Toasts that might offend a particular journal’s audience might disappear from an otherwise faithful account of the proceedings, or they might receive critical commentary.⁴⁰⁶ Sometimes editors impugned the motives behind their political opponents’ participation in naval celebrations; they also denigrated their rivals’ behavior.⁴⁰⁷ Perhaps the most widespread attack on character was the Federalist rumor that at one naval ball “Queen Dolly” Madison had been presented with and haughtily trampled upon the colors of the captured HMS *Macedonian*.⁴⁰⁸

Attacked by Federalists with having committed breaches of decorum, Republicans hurled allegations of inconsistency. They painted Federalists as hypocrites for

⁴⁰⁵ *Baltimore Patriot*, 12 March 1814.

⁴⁰⁶ The Republican *Columbian*, for instance, footnoted an anti-Jeffersonian sentiment—“The Navy of the United States—Washington its founder; dry Dock projects its destroyer”—with the not entirely relevant observation that “*The law for selling or ‘destroying’ the navy, was passed by a federal congress and signed by John Adams.*” *The Columbian*, 2 January 1813. One of the primary reasons that Republicans opposed an established navy was the cost of maintaining it. Jefferson proposed the solution, much ridiculed by Federalists, of creating docks that would, through a lock-like contrivance, raise vessels out of the water, removing them from its corrosive effects, until they were needed for service. His proposal was not implemented. The Adams administration *had* decreased the size of the navy, as one of its “midnight” actions. The intent was to undercut what Federalists feared would be even more drastic cuts to the service once Jefferson took office. See Miller, *U.S. Navy*, 44-45.

⁴⁰⁷ The Federalist *Boston Daily Advertiser* compared a predominantly Republican celebratory naval feast to “the *Saturnalia* of the Romans, feasts, where all distinctions, civil and honorary were suspended, and every guest was at liberty to make himself as drunk and as ridiculous as he pleased.” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 24 December 1814.

⁴⁰⁸ The ball was in honor of American victories over the *Guerrière* and the *Frolic* (and the unconfirmed reports of the Decatur’s victory on the *United States*). The participants were surprised and elated when an officer of the *United States* arrived with news of the *Macedonian*’s defeat, confirmed by the standard he carried with him. Samuel Taggart to John Taylor, Washington, D.C., 21 December 1812, Samuel Taggart Letterbook, 1803–1815, AAS. Taggart admitted that he could not confirm the rumor because “I go to none of these entertainments.” Although Madison may not have stomped on the colors, they were placed at her feet, an act distasteful to some observers. See Dye, *Fatal Cruise*, 92–93; Allison, *Stephen Decatur*, 121–128.

celebrating victories won in a war which they so loudly opposed. (Josiah Quincy exposed his party to such charges when he shepherded through the Massachusetts Senate a resolution proclaiming it “not becoming a moral and religious people to express approbation of military or national exploits” in a war as unjustifiable as James Madison’s.)⁴⁰⁹ How, Republicans wondered, could Federalists bemoan that whatever weakened Great Britain accelerated the Union’s doom by strengthening the hand of Bonaparte—while simultaneously applauding the heroes who hurt Britain the most? One or the other must not be sincere: Federalists’ opposition to the war or their pleasure with American victories. Many Republicans had no trouble divining the answer. “There were two public dinners lately given at Washington,” one noted laconically: “one to celebrate the victories of our country over its enemy; the other to celebrate the victories of the ally of that enemy over a power with which we are at peace [that is, an Allied victory over France, several of which Federalists ostentatiously celebrated during the War of 1812]. This requires no comment.”⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁹ *Niles Weekly Register*, 4:287; quoted in Buel, *America on the Brink*, 176. The resolution, coupled with Strong’s description of Britain as “the bulwark of our religion,” gave Republicans ammunition to attack Federalists with their own words. Quincy’s phrases, one Republican editor announced, should be “echoed from one end of the continent to the other, as the leading sentiment, as the *morality* and *religion* of the leaders of a faction who would sell their country that they might enjoy the loaves and fishes of office.” Although many Federalists continued to celebrate naval victories publicly, others took Quincy’s resolution to heart: In early October, 1813, Newburyport Federalists broke the windows of houses illuminated in celebration of the Battle of Lake Erie. *New-Hampshire Patriot*, 21 September 1813; Bentley, *Diary*, 4:205; *Essex Register*, 16 October 1813.

⁴¹⁰ *New Jersey Journal*, 29 June 1813. Such charges were common. “Can it be possible that such men are the *real, cordial* friends of the *American Navy*, its officers and seamen?” demanded a Republican editor, after comparing the involvement of Federalists Harrison G. Otis and Christopher Strong at naval celebrations against their refusal to openly support the US Navy in its conflicts with Great Britain. Similarly, the Republican *Enquirer* imagined Federalist Oliver Wolcott, a prominent guest at a dinner in honor of Hull, Decatur, and Jones, attempting to justify his opposition to the war to one of the officers, before finally admitting, “*entre nous*, I mean to cry down this war, to get my friends into power. Indeed, sir, I love the *Seamen* a great deal, but I love the *loaves and fishes* much better.” (This attack was unfair. Wolcott distanced himself from mainstream Federalism by backing the War of 1812.) *The Pittsfield Sun or Republican Monitor*, 11 March 1813; *The Enquirer*, 31 December 1812.

It is safe to say that celebrations of naval victories only superficially quieted partisan bickering. Again, most of the victories celebrated during the War of 1812 were significant only for their symbolic meaning. Indeed, it is because the significance of naval battles was understood primarily in symbolic terms that Federalists could claim as their own victories in a war which they believed would be disastrous to their nation. Many Federalists earnestly thought that the success of American arms paradoxically endangered America's survival as an independent republic because such victories tipped the international balance in favor of the "arch-fiend" Napoleon Bonaparte. Federalists could embrace naval victories *because* they were strategically insignificant, and mattered only in terms of what they symbolized. The U.S. Navy could sting the British Navy, but it could not hope to cripple it. Federalists, therefore, could commemorate the victories with a clear conscience, and could attempt to foist their own interpretations of the victories' meanings on the American populace.

Federalists insisted that the victories the navy won proved the validity of their own political principles. They claimed the navy as their "pet project," the last remnant of Washingtonian policy not dismantled by Republicans' visionary imbecility.⁴¹¹ The

⁴¹¹ Although the idea that Thomas Jefferson was a staunch opponent of the Navy who put all his faith in gunboats has recently been challenged by such scholars as Craig Symonds, nonetheless many Republicans in Congress, with significant exceptions, did view the Navy as an unnecessary expense, a source of corrupt patronage, and an impetus for war. (Indeed, Hatzenbuehler and Ivie have suggested that the earnestness of Republicans' desires for war only became visible late in 1811, as the War Hawks started to vote for measures to enhance the navy. See their *Congress Declares War*, 138-139) Though Republicans per force adopted the Navy during the War of 1812, when it alone shed luster on their cause, they had to that time established a record of anti-navalism that lent credence to Federalists' assertions. The Republican poem "Freedom and Peace," for instance, written before the war in support of the Embargo, charged, "Away! with the vultures of War and Ambition, who headlong to rearing of navies would rune, / Those cancers of nations—those pits of perdition— / Where Britain and France will alike be undone." As late as 4 July 1812, Republican orator Asa Aikens could assert that "A majority of the people of the United States...know the evils to be apprehended from a *great navy* and are determined to avoid them." Aikens, *Oration*, 7. Even as the war progressed, and as naval victories began to compile, some Republicans resisted the Navy's siren song. The "Soldiers of Columbia," taking a swipe at Massachusetts Governor Caleb Strong, contended that, "COLUMBIA needs no navies, / No bulwark but the sea; / Her strength is in

navy's accomplishments, according to Federalist lights, redounded honor on the war's opponents, and enhanced the ignominy of its instigators, who had never supported the institution.⁴¹² Federalists seethed at Republicans who "arrogate to themselves all the honor, which the federal frigates have reflected on the country, and more impudent than the harlot before the tribunal of Solomon, claim for their own, that child they would have strangled in its cradle."⁴¹³ They comforted themselves in the belief that the navy's officers were Federalists to a man.⁴¹⁴ Furthermore, naval society was hierarchical, with a

a million hearts, / Determined to be free." *National Song-Book*, 135. A Republican-leaning songbook (which leaned so far as to include a song calling for "Yankees" to "Drag every traitor from his cell; / [and] Silence with death their factious clamour"—a reference, perhaps, to the infamous proceedings in Baltimore in 1812), included the poem "Freedom and Peace" alongside a trove of songs in praise of recent naval exploits. Nonetheless, Federalists failed to convince the electorate of what should have been obvious—their naval policies had brought the country much of the fame it would acquire during the war. The quotes are from *American Patriotic Song-Book*, pages 99 and 42, respectively. See also *Freedom and Peace* (n.p., n.d.), Rare Book and Special Collections Division, LOC. For recent reevaluations of Jefferson's attitude toward the navy, see Gene A. Smith, "*For the Purposes of Defense*": *The Politics of the Jeffersonian Gunboat Program* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995); Craig Symonds, *Navalists and Antinavalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States, 1795–1827* (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1980).

⁴¹² "Thank Heaven!" exalted a speaker before the Pennsylvania chapter of the Federalist Washington Benevolent Society, with regard to the navy, "that source of joy, politically speaking, is peculiarly our own. To us and our associates, the disciples of Washington, does it exclusively belong." Charles Caldwell, *An Oration, Commemorative of American Independence, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Office of the United States Gazette, 1814), 62.

⁴¹³ A strong navy had long been snubbed by Jeffersonians who, Federalists claimed, "were journeying to the moon, instead of traversing the ocean," and who preferred in its place "a *Lilliputian* cordon of gunboats and torpedos." Another Federalist orator railed that, "The Navy of the United States [was] the first born of Federalism; but *now* claimed as the favorite of democracy; may its laurels survive the blighting fondness of its step mother." William Ladd, *An Oration, Pronounced at Minot, Maine, on the Fourth Day of July, 1814* (Portland, Maine: Arthur Shirley, 1814), 10–11; Francis Blake, *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, (Mass.) on the Thirty-Sixth Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1812* (Worcester: Isaac Sturtevant, 1812), 21.

⁴¹⁴ Federalist Congressman Abijah Bigelow wrote to his wife about the celebrations in the capital in response to the taking of the *Macedonian* by the *United States*: "I kept, however, in my room minding my own business, and feeling a little satisfaction that even democracy is reluctantly compelled to do honor to federalism, for the Navy is not only of federal origin, but nearly all the officers are federal" Abijah Bigelow to Hannah Bigelow, Letters of Abijah Bigelow Member of Congress to His Wife, 1810–1815, AAS. Bigelow's assessment of the Federal-mindedness of the naval officer corps is not entirely correct, both because the Jefferson and Madison administrations had found numerous Republicans worthy of commissions between 1801 and 1812, and because officers tended to overlook partisan concerns in the interest of their service and their country. According to Christopher McKee, whose expertise in the Early Republican naval officer corps is unequaled, "Certain officers can be identified as members of one or the other of the two major parties, but the doctrine that 'the cloth has no politics' provided a philosophical basis that enabled Republicans to pursue naval commissions vigorously during the Quasi-War with France and Federalists to fight the British with undisguised enthusiasm during the War of 1812. What the doctrine

spectrum of ranks capped by the divorcement of forecastle men from quarterdeck officers, and the unquestioning obedience of the latter to the former: a blueprint many Federalists considered suitable to society as a whole.⁴¹⁵ The navy's successes in the War of 1812, therefore, proved the correctness of Federalists' ideology. They verified a contention Federalists had put forth since falling from power—that only their return to power could preserve the nation in prosperity.

Republicans counterclaimed that these victories evidenced the justness of the war, and the correctness of Republican policies. Republicans had not misplaced their faith when they called for American men to defend their rights by an appeal to arms. They had not erred in their belief that, no matter how weak its military, America could nonetheless restore its honor in equal combat against a supposedly unconquerable opponent.

Republicans sarcastically granted Federalists “our undissembled approbation, for the employment of *ingenious carpenters*, and the use of *most excellent timber*” by which Federalists had created the navy; but they added, “To a republican administration, belongs the splendid honor of conducting her flag to immortality. She has become the proud avenger of our wrongs.”⁴¹⁶

implied was that the officer's primary ideological commitment had shifted from the political party and its program to the navy and its interests, which interests he identified with those of the national government.” McKee, *Gentlemanly and Honorable*, 108.

⁴¹⁵ Abigail Adams, who along with her husband remained Federalist in social philosophy even after the latter's political apostasy, noted in explanation of the contrasting fortunes of the navy and the army in the War of 1812 that, “in our ships there is correct discipline and perfect subordination, no officer dare force his commander to any impertinent action all is order regularity and decision, in the Army the reverse of this is the true picture, accordingly disgrace and defeat follow the lives of officers and soldiers are wantonly sacrificed.” Sailors themselves agreed to a degree in the need for deference. A song titled “The Sailor's Allegory” warned its listeners to “Trust not too much your own opinion, While your vessel's under weigh; Let good example bare dominion; That's a compass will not stray.” Such appeals to good discipline in naval doggerel, however, were rare. See Adams to Colonel William S. Smith (Hamilton, N.Y.), Quincy, 18 February 1813, BPL; and *Columbian Naval Melody*, 86.

⁴¹⁶ Rollin Carolus Mallary, *An Oration, Addressed to Republicans, Assembled at Poultney, Vermont, July 4, 1814* (Rutland: Fay & Davison, 1814), 18.

Federalists and Republicans, in short, aggravated their differences through their naval commemorations, and only by glossing over these ceremonies and swallowing uncritically their participants' pretensions to harmony can they be painted retrospectively as unifying events. Through parades and speeches, ballads and poems, and various printed ephemera, partisans laid claim to partisan interpretations of naval victories. As the roar of broadsides subsided a new battle began, fought with a different type of broadside, over the battle's meaning.

Status arguably cleft the celebrations more distinctly than partisanship.⁴¹⁷ Some dinners honored commissioned officers exclusively; others segregated the officers and the men into separate rooms, or held one dinner for officers, and a later one for the men.

⁴¹⁷ Gender was another important divider. All the honorees at naval dinners were men, and so too apparently were most of the other participants. The only reference I have found to female guests is in attendance at balls separate from or subsequent to celebratory dinners. See Hollingsworth to Ruth Tobin, Baltimore, 2 February 1814 [transcript], and Hollingsworth to Tobin, Baltimore, 14 February 1814 [transcript], Hollingsworth Letters, MS 1849, MDHS; *Mercantile Advertiser*, 4 January 1813; *Boston Gazette*, 7 January 1813. References to women at dinners were limited mostly to an obligatory nod to the "American fair" at the conclusion of a round of toasts. An exception worth mentioning is a painting displayed at a citywide naval celebration in Charleston, South Carolina. The picture depicted an Indian warrior scalping "a man in the last agonies of death." The Indian was "muscular and gigantic." "At the feet of the savage is a beautiful and interesting female, the wife of the unfortunate victim, on her knees, imploring the life of her husband, while the Indian regards her with a countenance which flashes only savage triumph and scornful rage. At the feet of the mother lies a little infant, and one of the savages who has been killed in the affray. Directly behind is a female, clasping to her breast another babe, and with the highest expression of horror and despair, is flying from another infuriated Indian, who, pursuing, grasps at her with one hand, and wielding a tomahawk in the other, is about to strike it into her head." Among the significant aspects of this painting is the deliberate conflation of the naval war and the Indian wars, both blamed on the British, although, in fact, they were largely unique and only tangentially related events. Also significant is the depiction of threatened womanhood, a theme absent from the bulk of naval commemorations. Finally, the death of the husband, supposedly the protector of the women, indicates the prevalence of a theme this dissertation will consider in more detail in the next chapter—the need for manly combination in the interests of mutual defense. It is also worth noting that the description of this picture bears a striking resemblance to a painting based on the murder of Jane McCrea that hung on the wall of the brothel where Helen Jewett worked and was murdered. Patricia Cline Cohen hypothesized that the misogynistic violence of the painting bolstered the sagging confidence of timid young male patrons; perhaps the gruesome exhibit at South Carolina served a similar purpose. The account of the painting is from *The Telegraph*, 22 March 1813. The Jane McCrea painting (John Vanderlyn's *Murder of Jane McCrea* [1804]) is described in Cohen, *The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in Nineteenth Century New York* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 122–124. For an account of the War of 1812 that explains the idiosyncratic concerns that brought Native American groups in the Northwest and the Southwest to war against the United States, see John Sugden, *Tecumseh: A Life* (New York: Holt, 1998).

Officers' dinners were both splendid and dignified affairs. As pageants, they explicitly endorsed the moral that republics were not stingy in honoring their heroes. Implicitly, they provided a miniature of the American political ideal. Each dinner was a gathering of men. These men, honorees and attendees alike, were of solid social standing: Local "gentlemen," sometimes numbering several hundred, attended dinners for naval officers.⁴¹⁸ Although partisan slips and nods insinuated themselves into the proceedings, the celebrants maintained overall a veneer of unity. At officers' dinners, the participants consciously worked hard to embody the republican ideals of order and harmony.

Seamen's dinners were different affairs. At their dinners, crewmen typically dined with few men other than themselves and their hosts; even their officers appeared only briefly to drink a single toast and receive the men's applause. Accounts of crewmen's behavior at these dinners are worth investigation. They reveal an anxiety on the part of both organizers and correspondents that seamen will not play their roles in the celebration properly. Newspapers evidenced an implicit fear that sailors would run riot, their judgment clouded by alcohol, exaltations, or, perhaps, egalitarianism.

Sailors were scrutinized even as they were honored. Sailors' excesses occasionally threatened the purpose of the festivities.⁴¹⁹ "Every body seemed desirous to see how such a body of sailors, coming directly from a jolly dinner would behave," one observer admitted.⁴²⁰ When seamen exhibited orderly demeanors, correspondents

⁴¹⁸ The appellation of "gentlemen" to the diners seems to have been more than mere courtesy. A notice alerting New Yorker to the availability of tickets for a dinner in honor of Hull, Decatur, and Jones, asked the attendees "not to bring their servants with them, as a sufficient number will be provided by" the host. *The Columbian*, 28 December 1812.

⁴¹⁹ For instance, a dinner in Boston in honor of William Bainbridge, was marred by "a song sung by one of the light Infantry company—said to be inodecont" [presumably, "indecent"]. See William Freeman, *Journal*, February–June 1813, Mss C 5141, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, NEHGS.

⁴²⁰ *The Evening Post*, 8 January 1813.

reported it with an almost audible sigh.⁴²¹ That sailors attended their fetes with “healthy, hardy and cleanly appearance and correct deportment” was considered worthy of comment.⁴²² (The gentlemanly deportment of officers at similar occasions was taken for granted.) With sailors, there was always a potential for mischief, for rowdiness.

At naval celebrations, Americans celebrated their ideal of their nation, and whether that ideal was Federalist or Republican, it was not purely egalitarian. Sailors should accept their place, not blaze their own paths, and if Federalists were more explicit about their preference for hierarchies, neither did Republicans want to see sailors commit the sort of unruly deeds for which they were well known, deeds which raised questions about their fitness for self-government. “Rational liberty” was the watchword. Marks of deference from the crewmen, therefore, were especially applauded, and correspondents delighted in reporting the spontaneous cheers with which the “jolly tars” greeted the appearance of their commanders.

However much the “better sort” might hope that seamen would perform a proper role in the ceremonies, such an outcome could not be guaranteed. The City Hotel in New York City hosted separate dinners for the officers and the crewmen of the *United States*, each dinner being identical in its ornamentation.⁴²³ Clearly, the two celebrations were intended to follow the same spirit. Yet despite superficial similarities, the dinners were not and could not be the same; the sailors did not comport themselves with the same

⁴²¹ Referencing a dinner in honor of the crew of the USS *Hornet*, an observer noted that “though the bottle, the song and the toast passed in jocund glee, yet the most perfect order and decorum were observed.” An account of a different dinner noted that the sailors participated in the fete “without having been guilty of unseaman-like conduct or a single excess.” *The Yankee*, 14 May 1813; *Salem Gazette*, 12 January 1813.

⁴²² *Eastern Argus*, 23 September 1813.

⁴²³ A possible exception was the artificial lake at the front of the hall, twenty feet wide, upon which floated a miniature frigate. The lake was filled with water at the officers’ dinner but, allegedly, with grog at the sailors’ dinner. See *Commercial Advertiser*, 8 January 1813. According to other reports, a later dinner for the crewmen of the USS *Essex* adopted the same conceit. See *American Advocate*, 13 August 1814.

refinement as their officers. When seamen ate, they “commenced their attack upon an excellent dinner, which was soon demolished”; officers’ table manners were never described in such an animalistic fashion.⁴²⁴ Sailors’ own memories of the celebrations suggest that contemporary accounts sanitized the rowdiness of the events.⁴²⁵

Ceremonial dinners were meant in part to demonstrate national unity; such unity required at least a superficial consensus on the meaning of the victories celebrated. At some dinners for common sailors a distinguished speaker lectured the honorees on that topic—a condescending act of instruction absent from dinners in honor of officers, who presumably could discern the significance of their accomplishments for themselves.⁴²⁶ However, sailors did not regard the meaning of their victories in exactly the same way as their social superiors did. Sailors’ toasts reveal that they formulated their own understandings of their victories and of the war as a whole. For seamen, service was not only about patriotism but also about cash.⁴²⁷ Clearly, sailors believed they had more due

⁴²⁴ *Salem Gazette*, 12 January 1813.

⁴²⁵ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 160–161. This sailor’s memory was perhaps tempered by the temperance theme that ran throughout his narrative. Still, the insistent assertions of contemporaries that nothing had gone wrong and sailors had acted exemplarily has an air of protesting too much. One contemporary account, meanwhile, implicitly lends weight at least to Leech’s assertion that drunkenness was more common than often acknowledged. A Federalist newspaper reported of the dinner that, “In the evening, most of the guests went to the Theatre—some, however, we are informed were determined to stick to it ‘as long as there was a shot in the locker.’” See *Poulson’s Daily Advertiser*, 11 January 1813.

⁴²⁶ “The mistress of the ocean boasting of her power, challenging to single combat, and confident of her superiority, has thrice been vanquished,” Mr. Alderman Vanderbilt explained to the crewmen of the *United States* learned at a dinner in their honor; “You have taught him a lesson, that coming in contact with the *Hearts of Yankee Oak*, they were not encountering the vassals of an European tyrant.” For those crewmen who did not know the source of their success, Vanderbilt informed them that it was “that you have been rocked in *Freedom’s Cradle*, enlisted voluntarily under your country’s banners—not torn by a merciless press-gang from your wives and children and dear connexions.” The presumptiveness of the speech is highlighted by the similarities it shared with sailors’ own doggerel (discussed in the next chapter)—the sailors already knew the lessons Vanderbilt appointed himself to teach them. See *The Columbian*, 8 January 1813.

⁴²⁷ Pay was a topic of numerous sailor toasts: “Officers and men, may each American hero receive his pay when he has earned it”; “Success to the frigate *United States* and plenty of prize money”; and “plenty of *rhino* [that is, cash] and hearts to spend it.” *Salem Gazette*, 12 January 1813; *Eastern Argus*, 23 September 1813. Tardy or paltry wages was a concern for the US Navy and its sailors during the war. Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton advised that Congress should divide among the officers and the crew of the

to them than an elaborate dinner; their countrymen would need to do more to express their appreciation.

If dinner organizers believed that sailors needed instruction, sailors did not hesitate to instruct their compatriots in return. They did not shrink from partisan statements. At one occasion they charged, “*The Citizens of the United States—May they never celebrate the downfall of our own government as they have that of Bonaparte; and may the downfall of Great Britain be like Lucifer, never to rise again*”—hardly a sentiment of which a Federalist would approve.⁴²⁸ Indeed, some toasts aimed violent threats at the war’s dissenters: “*Sailor’s Rights and Free Trade—The knot of Jack Ketch [that is, the hangman] and a yard arm [that is, the naval equivalent of a gibbet] to the lubber that would not support them.*”⁴²⁹

Furthermore, sailors’ toasts expressed animosity towards the British that transcended the contentions over abstractions that characterized the toasts of officer and gentlemen. A dinner for the officers of the USS *Enterprize* gallantly toasted their defeated counterparts in the HMS *Boxer* as “*Enemies by Law; but in gallantry & worth we pronounce them Brothers.*”⁴³⁰ The less magnanimous tars of the *Enterprize* offered

Constitution \$100,000 for the destruction of the *Guerrière*, both to reward their patriotic disinterest (for destroying the frigate instead of attempting to drag it home for the prize money) and because “if such a provision were made, the difficulties of manning our frigates, at present experienced, would vanish.” Congress did offer the *Constitution*’s personnel a substantial reward; but manning difficulties persisted. So did sailors’ difficulties in receiving the money due to them. Joshua Barney wrote to the Secretary of the Navy that his flotilla was hemorrhaging men because they were not receiving their wages. He noted that many sailors “have no pay, and the landlords are in fact selling them to the highest bidder” from among the merchantmen and privateersmen vying for their service. Paul Hamilton, *Letters from the Secretary of the Navy, Relative to What Compensation Ought to be Made to Captain Hull, the Officers and Crew of the Frigate Constitution* (Washington City: Weightman, 1812), 3; NW, 3:351.

⁴²⁸ *The Yankee*, 12 August 1814.

⁴²⁹ *Eastern Argus*, 23 September 1813. Sailors also offered nine cheers to the toast, “Withered be the arm—palsied be the hand, that will not defend the rights of his country.” *Baltimore Patriot*, 11 January 1813.

⁴³⁰ *Essex Register*, 22 September 1813.

instead “*Yankee Humanity*—Always ready to give the enemy a *WARM FIRE-SIDE*.”⁴³¹

Such sentiments demonstrate that sailors freely interpreted battles according to their own concerns, and that those concerns did not necessarily square with the ones expressed by their officers and other members of the American elite.

The different behaviors exhibited by crewmen and officers changed the meaning of the celebration. The “better sort” hoped for sentimental effusions from sailors that evidenced their patriotism in an orderly fashion; they expressed some discomfort when forced to admit that sailors might have other priorities besides republican unity. If sailors did not actively undermine the celebrations in their honor, nor did their behavior at such occasions meet the ideals of deference and subordination which newspaper commentators hoped to read back into the events.

Contrasted to the disinterested rhetoric affected by officers and gentlemen, sailors personalized their confrontation with Great Britain. In the process, they confirmed their ties to the American nation: sailors’ victories belonged to the nation, and the nation’s victories belonged to sailors. Sailors’ commemorations of naval victories, therefore, offer clues as to how they saw not only their place in the nation, but the nature of the nation itself. Through their doggerel, sailors expressed a distinctive view of the war’s meaning and their role in it. At the same time, they also expressed their unique understandings of American manhood and American nationhood.

⁴³¹ *Eastern Argus*, 23 September 1813. This bloodthirstiness appeared in other media as well. According to a British naval surgeon who toured the USS *Chesapeake* after its capture, the American sailors had posted such names above their guns as “Wilful Murder” and “Death or Liberty.” (Another gun was marked “Seamen’s Rights.”) The surgeon claimed that such nomenclature was not practiced in his own service. William Begg, *Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Tenedos Capt’n Hyde Parker*, HSP.

Chapter Six

“Their Foes were in the Masculine Gender”: Fraternal Interdependence and National Identity during the War of 1812

The victories which sailors won during the War of 1812 made them national icons. Their achievements reflected glory on the entire nation. These accomplishments had helped to prove that the American nation was exceptional. As a result, sailors became icons of the nation, a status that gave them influence over the definitions of American national identity. Sailors (and representations of sailors) harked upon one point more than any other: Americans had won their naval victories through the voluntary cooperation of American men. According to sailors' doggerel, American men conquered British ones because the former were freer. Specifically, American were free to decide whether they would join together willingly in the cooperative defense of their liberties, rather than (as Americans told it) having the mass of men fight under the arbitrary command of the few. In the process, sailors (all of whom, saving the rare picturesque exception, were men) defined the American nation as a community of men. Their doggerel defined the concerns of men (specifically free men, if not specifically white men) as the concerns of the nation.

During the War of 1812 dozens of verses were composed to commemorate American victories at sea. Much of the doggerel was printed in newspapers and songsters or recorded in personal diaries. There are several reasons for approaching this resource as evidence of sailors' own mentality. Many of the commemorative lyrics included the tunes to which the lyrics were composed, indicating that the lyrics were

meant to be transmitted orally. Variations in lyrics exist, indicating that oral transmission occurred.⁴³² That sailors composed some of these songs themselves is probable, considering their proclivity to versify.⁴³³ That sailors transmitted such songs among themselves is more certain. They embellished both personal writings and published works with songs or snippets of verse.

Although it was always an important element of maritime culture, doggerel took on new significance during times of war. National airs provided ammunition to naval combatants, who taunted their foes with patriotic lyrics.⁴³⁴ The respective crews of the USS *Essex* and the HMS *Phoebe*, for instance, bided a tense standoff within the neutral

⁴³² Different songsters printed variations of single songs, which, because the changes hardly affected meaning, rhythm or rhyme, indicate accidental alterations rather than conscious emendation. The *Columbian Songster*, for instance, offered a variation of the song “Hull’s Victory” with the following verse: “Our second told so well, that the fore and main mast fell, / Which made this lofty vessel look quite bandy, O! / Now Dacres cried we’re done, so he fir’d his lee gun, / And our drummer struck up Yankee doodle dandy, O!” (51) Another songster recorded the same stanza as “Our second told so well, / That his fore and mainmast fell, / And we doused the British ensign so handy O! / By George! says he we’re done, / And so he fir’d his lee gun, / And our drummer struck up Yankee doodle dandy O.” See *The Columbian Songster: A Collection of the Most Approved Patriotic and Other Songs* (Pittsburgh: Eichbaum and Johnston, 1818), 51; and *The Naval Songster* (Frederick Town, MD: Bartgis, 1814), 63.

⁴³³ A description of a dinner in honor of the seamen of the USS *Enterprize* noted that the celebration rang with “Songs of merit composed by individuals of the crew, of fine sentiment and sound.” The journal of the imprisoned American sailor Joseph Valpey, held at Dartmoor Prison, included numerous pieces of verse which he apparently wrote himself. Captured privateer commander Jeduthun Upton recorded a long poem in his journal which recounted the details of his capture, his denial of a parole, the meager rations he was served, and his loneliness and resentment. A broadside published during the War of 1812 advertised one of its two lyrics as having been composed by a prisoner of war at Dartmoor (“A New Song, Written in Dartmoor Prison”). Another broadside featured two poems purportedly by the boatswain of the USS *Constitution* during its encounter with the HMS *Java*. The BPL contains in its collections a notebook kept at Dartmoor with several dozen songs and poems, some found in published songsters and some unique to the Prison. See *Eastern Argus*, 23 September 1813; Joseph Valpey Jr., *Journal of Joseph Valpey, Jr. of Salem November 1813 – April, 1815, with Other Papers Relating to His Experience in Dartmoor Prison* (Michigan Society of Colonial Wars, 1922); Upton, *Log; The Constitution & Guerriere* (N.p., n.d.), Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Printed Ephemera Collection, Portfolio 228, Folder 25, LOC, Digital ID: rbpe 22802500 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/rbc/rbpe.22802500>; James Campbell, *Glorious Naval Victory* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverley Jr. [1814]); and [A collection of American poems and songs without music, mostly patriotic, copied in a blank-book by Thomas Rand, dated Dartmoor, 1815], BPL. See also the third chapter of this dissertation for the importance of song and verse in maritime culture.

⁴³⁴ According to rumor, Stephen Decatur, on board the *United States*, lately victorious over the HMS *Macedonian*, followed a captured British captain’s request for the tune “God Save the King” by calling, “with a good deal of sang froid,” and not without a sharp edge of malicious, if subdued, glee, for an implicitly sardonic rendition of “Britannia Rules the Waves.” *The Columbian*, 31 December 1813.

port of Valparaiso, Chile, by chiding each other with banners, songs, and poems.⁴³⁵

David Farragut, a midshipman on the *Essex* (and later a naval hero of the Civil War), recalled that “There had been so much bantering of each other, with letters and songs,” that the men of the *Essex* “almost to a man” were more willing “to die at their guns rather than surrender.”⁴³⁶ The contemporary song “Sons of Freedom Rise” advised its listeners to find inspiration in doggerel: “Let us unite, let martial songs / Wake us to feel our country’s wrongs.”⁴³⁷ Farragut’s memories attested to the truth that “martial songs” could have such power.

American sailors captured by British forces during the War of 1812 found themselves the targets of musical insults that contributed to their symbolic transformation from freemen to prisoners. A band of Canadian musicians greeted a procession of American sailors captured on the Great Lakes with a medley of “Yankee Doodle” and “The Rogue’s March.”⁴³⁸ Conversely, American prisoners of war used music to antagonize their captors.⁴³⁹ When “some English officers came up to see the prisoners,”

⁴³⁵ In answer to the *Essex*’s motto, “Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights,” the men of the *Phoebe* raised a banner that read, “God and our country—British sailor’s best rights—Traitors offend both.” The men of the *Essex* raised their retort: “God, our country and liberty—Tyrant’s offend them.” Tired of banners, the “sons of liberty” on the *Essex* wrote directly to their British counterparts, offering “their compliments to their oppressed brother tars, on board the ship whose motto is too tedious to mention, and hope they will put an end to all this nonsense of singing, sporting, hunting and writing, which we know less about than the use of our guns.” Instead of a test of arms, the Americans’ letter provoked a midshipman on the *Phoebe* to respond with an extended poem. See NW, 3:720–723.

⁴³⁶ NW, 3:750.

⁴³⁷ *National Song-Book*, 176.

⁴³⁸ The prisoners retaliated by charging the band, puncturing its drum with a stone, and stealing its fife, passing it down the procession from hand to hand, and then flinging it off a bridge. The “Rogue’s March” was an air used in military contexts to aggravate humiliation. A Pennsylvania militiaman serving in Canada, for instance, recorded in his diary, “This day 4 men that had Deserted were Drummed round the Camp with their half rations of meat tied round their necks, with roughs march played after them.” See Myers, *Ned Myers*, 103; John Witherow Jr., Journal, 1 March–6 September 1814, Pennsylvania State Archives.

⁴³⁹ When American prisoners in Jamaican prison hulks received word of the victory of the *United States* over the HMS *Macedonian* they illuminated their confines, and “each man sang as an exemplification— ‘And Decatur soon taught them with peels of Yankee thunder, / To the flag of Columbia it was their duty to

wrote an American sailor confined in England's Dartmoor Depot of Prisons, "the band of [Prison] No. 4 played up Yankee doodle dandy.

"O It galls them," he added gleefully.⁴⁴⁰

"Yankee Doodle," indeed, was the consummate air of American defiance to British authority or supposed haughtiness, and an unofficial national anthem.⁴⁴¹ As a young privateer noted, "We all have felt and witnessed the animating effects of the simple national tune of *Yankee Doodle*. Our New England boys cannot stand still when it is played."⁴⁴² Appropriately enough, a version of the song titled "New Yankee Doodle," composed during the War of 1812 to commemorate the victories of Hull, Jones, and Decatur, remarked on the symbolic importance of doggerel:

The British long have rul'd the seas,
With haughty gasconading,
And chaunting songs, their feats to praise
While others they're degrading.

+ + +

Now we can sing, and chaunt likewise,

knock under." While imprisoned on a British man of war during the American Revolution, Joshua Davis entertained his fellow captives with an anti-British song containing such lines as

Vain Britain, boast no longer with proud indignity—
By land your conq'ring legions, your matchless strength by sea;
Since we your braver sons incens'd, our swords have girded on,
Huzza, huzza, huzza, huzza, for *war* and *Washington*.

The lyrics reached the ears of the British master-at-arms, who exploded, "you d---d rascal, how dare you sing such a rebel song on board of his majesty's ship? if I hear you sing that song again, I will gag you." Other prisoners used songs more mournfully. After being captured by an English man of war, a sailor on board an American letter of marque made his opinion on his fate known; he "in a surly melancholy tone chaunted a stave from the old ballad of Captain Kyd, the pirate:—'And taken was at last, when we sail'd, when we sail'd.'" *A Narrative of the Capture of the United States' Brig Vixen* (New York: Office of "The War," 1813), 27; Joshua Davis, *A Narrative of Joshua Davis, an American Citizen, Who was Pressed and Served on board Six Ships of the British Navy* (Baltimore: Edes, 1811), 35–37; Noah, *Travels*, 6.

⁴⁴⁰ Palmer, *Diary*, 126-127.

⁴⁴¹ For a history of the song, see J. A. Leo Lemay, "The American Origins of 'Yankee Doodle,'" *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 33, no. 3 (July 1976): 435–464.

⁴⁴² Waterhouse, *Journal*, 119.

Of Yankee skill in fighting.⁴⁴³

According to this verse, bragging rights were synonymous with singing rights. Sailors used such songs to deflate their foes' pretensions to greatness and to make such pretensions on their own behalf. In times of war, songs helped to justify the war effort, to report battles and explain victories and losses, and to boost sailors' morale.⁴⁴⁴

As a genre, naval doggerel of the War of 1812 elaborated a theme of communalism. It invited all Americans both to celebrate the country's victories, and to join in them imaginatively. Many songs narrated battles in first person plural: "we" were the fighters in the country's naval engagements. "O freemen," as one broadside began, "rise a joyous strain, / Aloft the Eagle towers, 'We've met the enemy' again— / Again have made them 'OURS!'"⁴⁴⁵ Even when a battle was described in the third person, the victory was collective, won by "our tars." This pluralized language painted combat as a corporate endeavor. It also encouraged the audience to picture itself as an active combatant. The navy's victories thus became those of the nation.⁴⁴⁶ Celebratory doggerel allowed all American citizens to place themselves in the midst of the fray.

Female Americans, however, to participate fully in this experience, would have had to imagine themselves as men—and not only because the Navy admitted no women

⁴⁴³ *Free Trade and Sailors' Rights*, 53.

⁴⁴⁴ During the War of 1812 the dissemination of songs about naval incidents in that conflict helped to keep American seafarers abreast of recent developments. It is worth noting here that the songs often recorded events in colorful, and often accurate, detail, and seem to have been regarded by some Americans as a type of historical annals. The compiler of one collection of naval songs, for instance, noted that, "The achievements of ancient heroes owe their transmission to posterity more to the celebration of the Poet than to the Pen of the Historian." See Gillespy, *Columbian*, 3.

⁴⁴⁵ Another song related the victory of the *Constitution* over the *Guerrière* with the lines, "We play'd them so hotly with judgment and skill, / That no doubt the poor souls tho't we treated them ill." The song "Glorious Naval Victory," purportedly by the boatswain of the *Constitution*, narrated the frigate's battle against the HMS *Java* in similarly corporate language: "We gave to them three cheers, and then the fray begun, / Each loyal hearted seamen then serving at his gun." *Commodore MacDonough's Victory* (Windsor, Vt.: 1816); *Columbian Naval Melody*, 18; Campbell, *Glorious Naval Victory*.

⁴⁴⁶ This tendency appeared in other genre as well. A gathering of Republicans during the war toasted, "The army and navy of the United States—Their triumphs are ours, and we hold them as distinguished brethren of the truly American family." See *Baltimore Patriot & Evening Advertiser*, 29 October 1813.

into its service.⁴⁴⁷ With scarce exceptions, the songs and poems commemorating naval victories during the War of 1812 were highly gendered works. They explicitly identified not only their protagonists but also their audiences as men: “Columbia’s sons”; “true sons of freedom”; “Brothers, sons, and fathers hoary”; “Ye sons of Columbia.”⁴⁴⁸ Moreover, naval songs commonly ascribed Americans’ successes to the superiority of American manhood. The piece “Yankee Perry, better than old English Cyder” expressed this concept most baldly, encapsulating victory with the lines,

We gave ‘em such tight yankee blows,
That soon they thought fit to surrender;
That day made ‘em feel that their foes,
Were in the masculine gender.⁴⁴⁹

Although most doggerel was not so explicit, the celebration of American manliness was a recurrent trope of the genre. If the pluralized language of the songs rendered naval

⁴⁴⁷ Female readers could imagine themselves *pretending* to be men in order to participate in naval victories. They might also have read a narrative that revolved around such a scenario, that of Lucy Brewer, a presumably fictional woman who dressed as a man and shipped aboard the *Constitution* during the War of 1812. See Daniel A. Cohen, ed. *The Female Marine and Related Works: Narratives of Cross-Dressing and Urban Vice in America’s Early Republic* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997). Female relatives of crewmen were present on some US naval vessels during the Barbary Wars: one gave birth to a baby at sea. Women also performed “domestic” duties, such as cooking and scrubbing, in larger British men of war during the War of 1812. But women seem to have been absent from the decks of American men of war during that conflict. At least one woman, however, did serve temporarily in the US Navy. In his diary, naval surgeon Usher Parsons recorded early in the war that, “We this day discovered among the crew a female clad in sailor’s apparel.” Regrettably, he wrote nothing more on the subject. See NDBP, 2:387; Suzanne J. Stark, *Female Tars: Women Aboard Ship in the Age of Sail* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996); Noah, *Travels*, 12; Parsons, *Surgeon of the Lakes*, 5.

⁴⁴⁸ *American Patriotic Song-Book*, 32. *Columbian Naval Melody*, 15, 36; James Campbell, *In Behalf of the Brave Capt. James Lawrence and Lieut. C. Ludlow* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, [1814?]). Although it was conventional to address such works to “boys,” “lads,” or “sons,” the bounds of the convention were not insurmountable. A piece of doggerel about the Battle of New Orleans called “The Hunters of Kentucky,” for instance, addressed “Ye gentlemen and ladies fair.” The absence of such heterosocial greetings in naval doggerel is therefore significant. See [Samuel Woodworth], *The Hunters of Kentucky; of, The Battle of New Orleans* [New York: Brown, ca. 1820].

⁴⁴⁹ *Naval Songster, or Columbian Naval Melody. Being a Choice Collection of the Most Approved Naval Songs* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, Jun., [1816?]), 9. These lines are particularly interesting as they present a quite early usage of both the terms “masculine” and “gender” in ways more familiar with an audience today than they presumably would have been to an audience in the first decade of the nineteenth century, at which time neither word had yet gained the currency and connotation they currently wield.

activities corporate and national, then their masculinized language restrictively rendered the nation a corporation of men.

The doggerel's language was not merely corporate and masculine, but familial. Songs stressed fraternity. This fraternity stemmed from common descent from an abstract concept, perhaps implicitly feminine, though not necessarily so. Americans were "sons of Columbia" or "sons of freedom." American men were thus more than compatriots; they were brothers.⁴⁵⁰ Equally importantly, the songs emphasized a shared paternity, not from a single father, but from fathers who shared a common characteristic—their devotion to liberty—and who had bestowed a common patrimony on their sons—their independence. In case contemporary American men mistook their obligation to the Revolutionary generation, the song "Yankee Chronology, or Huzza for the American Navy!" asked that, "Ye sons of Columbia, with an honest pride remember,

⁴⁵⁰ The significance of this emphasis on fraternity can easily be overlooked. A crucial element of it is that brotherhood and fatherhood appeared as generational conceits, rather than social ones. The distinction is perhaps clearer in light of the poems written by a "Soldier in the U.S. Army." This poet apostrophized,

My officers and soldiers brave,
Your whole attention now I crave,
While we unite our land to save,
From foreign violation.
Let us in martial order stand,
Like fathers, brothers, in one band—
All unite in heart and hand.

Throughout his work, this anonymous author made clear that he saw the role of officers as similar to that of fathers, including, in the author's mind, maintaining order among potentially unruly enlisted men:

Come now brother soldiers if you wish to prosper,
And have good commanders kind hearted and free?
Leave off your blasphemy and every disorder,
And live kind brothers in sweet unity.
Most noble commanders, if you want soldiers,
I pray be like fathers kind-hearted and free;
Directed in wisdom and we'll follow after.

Thus brotherhood and fatherhood were categories not of generation but of rank; and thus the familial language of nationhood was used to bolster social deference. I do not recall any similar distinctions between fathers and brothers based on status in any of the naval doggerel I have read. See [A Soldier of the U. S. Army], *Six Poems, on Different Subjects Relative to Events of the Late War* (N.p., n.d.), 18–19.

/ That the blessings then bought, now depend upon you.”⁴⁵¹ For the American nation to remain free, the sons must display the same qualities which had allowed an earlier generation to resist the encroachment of British tyranny. What the fathers had earlier accomplished, the sons now had to preserve.⁴⁵² American liberty was in this sense a masculine preserve and communal affair.

The familial language which these songs employed served to link the constituents of the American nation in homosocial and masculine terms, as sons of an earlier generation, as brothers of the present one. This fraternal relationship obliged American men to fight for each other. They could not stand idly by as the British navy threatened their brethren with slavery or death. “Sons of freeman, arm for battle,” demanded one verse, “And avenge your brother’s cause!”⁴⁵³ American men had to band together to protect each other from injury. Men were both the champions and the endangered victims of sailor’s narrative of the War of 1812. The image around which Americans rallied was the seaman, not the damsel, in distress.

Surprisingly the verses that ascribed a degree of effeminacy to American men (as helpless victims of foreign oppression who required the intervention of their fellow man

⁴⁵¹ A similar verse called on the

sons of free Columbia,
Whose fathers dar’d the waves,
The battle and the wilderness,
To shun the fate of slaves;
Those rights they bled for, now maintain.

See *The Naval Songster, or The Sailor’s Pocket Companion* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr., 1813), 5; Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 59–60.

⁴⁵² The psychological burden which the post-Revolutionary generation faced in its attempts to prove themselves equal to the Founding Fathers is described in Watts, *Republic Reborn*, and Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided*.

⁴⁵³ The song “Union and Liberty” similarly urged “all ye sons of Columbia” to fight against Britain for “enslav[ing] with her navy our tars on the ocean.” An American sailor held in Dartmoor Prison wrote or copied lines that explained the war as being fought by “sons of Columbia who seek on the main / Redress for the wrongs which your brother sustains.” Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 21; *The Eagle and Harp; A Collection of Patriotic and Humorous Songs and Odes* (Dobbin & Murphy, 1812), 3; [A collection of American poems and songs], BPL.

to rescue them) rarely ascribed feminine characteristics to their British counterparts. Some pieces did refer to the Royal Navy as the “Mistress of the Ocean” or “the Queen of the Sea”; but their narrators typically took exception to the haughty claim to regency without drawing attention to the gendered qualities of the title. The occasional song feminized the British navy, especially in reference to vessels with feminine names such as the *Guerrière*, the *Phoebe*, and the *Queen Charlotte*.⁴⁵⁴ For instance, the song “A Happy New-Year to Commodore Rodgers” gloried in the demise of “That proud saucy hussey, the pert Miss Guerriere.”⁴⁵⁵ Such emasculation of the British navy, however, was rare in naval doggerel.⁴⁵⁶

One curious piece did denigrate a British naval officer for his supposed inability to function as a man. This song portrayed James Yeo, the commander of Britain’s Lake Ontario forces, reacting to the seductions of a temptress, identified in the song as “The Lady of the Lake.” The Lady called to Yeo, assuring him that “my passion I cannot control.” At first, Yeo requited the Lady’s attentions, and promised to return her fervent advances, as his heart “burns with like amorous fire.” Yet as Yeo drew near his feet grew cold, and he “from a fair Lady, unmanlike turn[ed] tail.” Despite the Lady’s “oglings and

⁴⁵⁴ One song scorned the HMS *Java* as a “brazen-fac’d hussy,” and boasted lewdly that “we tore her fine rigging, and cut up her dress,” leaving her “not a spar standing her carcase to bless.” The same song bragged that the USS *Constitution* under Hull had sent “to Davy proud Madame Guerriere.” Punning on the regal name of a vessel in Britain’s defeated Lake Erie fleet, another song noted bawdily that, Oliver Hazard Perry’s “cannon makes Queen Charlotte crack, / And lays her prostrate on her back.” A different song on the same subject satisfied itself with depicting “old queen Charlotte” as “a worthless old varlet” whom “Our brave naval forces were scorning.” *Naval Songster* (1813), 13–14; *Eighth Naval Victory* (N.p., n.d.); *Sky Lark*, 6.

⁴⁵⁵ Another song called the HMS *Phoebe* “Miss PHEBE,” and a “coward hag.” The cowardice resulted from the refusal of the commander of the *Phoebe*, James Hillyar, to engage the *Essex* in single-ship combat, waiting instead to meet it with the *Phoebe*’s consort, *Cherub*. See *A Happy New Year to Commodore Rodgers, or, Huzza for the President and Congress* [Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr., 1813?]; *National Songster* (1814), 24.

⁴⁵⁶ The numerous examples provided in this paragraph might seem to contradict the assertion that this trope was rarely used. It should be pointed out that this paragraph contains nearly every example of this trope which I have found.

glancings,” Yeo fled from her embrace. “He fidgetted, ran, and tack’d in and out; / He feared to embrace her—he’d promised to woo.”⁴⁵⁷ If one regards the Lady as a symbol of supremacy over the Lakes, the song might seem a fairly straightforward assault on Yeo’s manliness, ascribing to him a timidity, impotence, and cowardice that prevented him from functioning sexually as a man, and therefore of an inability to conquer his foe.⁴⁵⁸ However, *The Lady of the Lake* was an American man of war active on Lake Ontario. The assault on Yeo’s manhood still functions, of course (even if Yeo’s manhood did not); yet for it to work, the American audience must allow itself to be conceived as the same sort of “proud saucy hussey” that it had denigrated the *Guerrière* for being. Regardless, for the most part naval doggerel portrayed the navy’s opponents as masculine.

There is a simple reason why doggerel rarely portrayed Britons as effeminate: The conquest of feminine men would have brought no glory to American seamen.⁴⁵⁹ According to the logic of doggerel, the importance of naval battles was not their strategic outcome but the opportunities they presented to test the worthiness of two evenly matched contestants. “Fair play” was an essential ingredient to any contest. As long the two sides met on an even plane, Americans insisted, their own country’s forces would win. In equal combat the superior virtue of the American nation would win its navy laurels and fame. Americans would “reap from every equal fight, / Success as glorious as

⁴⁵⁷ *Sky Lark*, 7–8.

⁴⁵⁸ Throughout much of the war, little action occurred on Lake Ontario. Both Yeo and his American adversary, Chauncey, seemed to prefer a “carpenters’ war” of shipbuilding in a quixotic pursuit of superiority over active engagements. This song accuses Yeo of seeking a battle, and then fleeing from it.

⁴⁵⁹ In this regard, the doggerel of the War of 1812 differs substantially from popular accounts of American military encounters with Latinos in the 1840s and 1850s. According to Greenberg and Streeby, these accounts portrayed white Americans as possessing masculine qualities clearly superior to those of their foes. See Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; Streeby, *American Sensations*.

our cause is right.”⁴⁶⁰ The U.S. Navy would not win because of its superior armaments, larger crews, or stronger frigates; it would win because American manhood was better than British.

Popular verse depicted naval combat as a series of duels. Duels measured the manliness of participants. Only men fought duels, and only certain men at that. A white southern gentleman, for instance, would not duel a slave or a hardscrabble farmer—to do so would be to place the latter on an equal footing with him. Similarly, America’s wars with the Barbary States were not depicted as duels but as corrective actions: Insolent “barbarians” were chastised by the disciplinary rod of American naval might.⁴⁶¹ By representing the naval battles of the War of 1812 as duels, Americans implicitly made the claim that they were men of equal standing with the mighty British. With each victory, they gained grounds for arguing not only their equality but their superiority. The manliness of the British opponent was therefore crucial to naval doggerel—it was confirmation of American men’s own.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶⁰ “*John Bull* is a swagg’ring dog, / As ever trod a deck, sir;” according to the narrator of “Yankee Liquors,” “But gun to gun, and man to man, / We’ll make him soon a wreck, sir.” One song contended that, “In the contest for Rights, / British boys know our force, / That when equally match’d, we triumph of course.” Noting that “British tars think that they can, / Whip Yankees one to two, sirs,” a variant of “Yankee Doodle” averred that if the British “only give us man for man, / They’ll see what we can do, sirs.” *National Song-Book*, 169; *National Songster* (1814), 23; *Naval Songster* (1814), 15; *Naval Songster*, (1814), 15.

⁴⁶¹ As Richard B. Parker has pointed out, the trope that “barbaric” nations are best handled through punitive force is current today and tinctures modern historians’ accounts of the Barbary Wars (which for a long time were wars against “pirates,” until the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, after which they became “America’s first hostage crisis”; today they are “America’s first war on terror”) and continues to influence American relations with the “third world.” So, too, do conceptions of honor. A common refrain in the years following the events of 11 September 2001 is that “America’s enemies” (personified alternatively by Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein) were emboldened by the country’s weak responses to the 1982 bombing of a Marine barracks in Beirut and the withdrawal of American forces from Somalia in 1993, and to the lack of response to the bombing of the USS *Cole* in 2000. See Parker, *Uncle Sam in Barbary*, 158–172.

⁴⁶² One clever songsmith sniped at the manliness of the officers and crew of the *Macedonian* by playing on a famous legend about its namesake, Alexander the Great, who wept when he had no more lands to conquer: “he who had blubbered for worlds to subdue, / Soon found a new *world* that his business could do.” The contemporary word for the act of falling into tears, applied to men, was “unmanning.” See *The*

As a genre, sailors' doggerel repeated a theme: the humbling of the haughty British Navy by its superior American opponent. Embellishing on this theme, the genre constructed a standard narrative trope for depicting battles. Before the battle began, a strutting British commander, "as blithe and gay as going to a ball," assured his men of an easy victory against an unworthy opponent.⁴⁶³ Once combat ensued, however, the British commander discovered that he had "caught a tartar"; reluctantly he lowered his flag (or fired his lee gun, in the case of the dismantled *Guerrière*) and conceded the superiority of his enemy.⁴⁶⁴

At first glance, the important moment in this narrative convention might seem to be the conquest of the enemy; through it, the American sailors preserved their lives and defended their liberty, and, by extension, the liberty of their country. More crucial to the narrative, however, is the moment that followed the victory: the moment when the British commander acknowledged the superior qualities of his American enemy, and admitted that he has been bested. The narrators of doggerel delighted in mocking the bested Britons who "reluctantly owned we were bravest in fight."⁴⁶⁵ Song after song insisted that the US Navy had wrested from its British foe recognition of the former's standing. The end result of the victories, one song concluded, was that "the nations of Europe respect us at last."⁴⁶⁶ Victory was not complete until British men recognized American

Columbian Songster: A Collection of the Most Approved Patriotic and Other Songs (Pittsburgh: Eichbaum and Johnston, 1818), 67.

⁴⁶³ *Battle of Plattsburgh and Victory on Lake Champlain* (Windsor, Vt.: 1816). Dacres of the "proud frigate" *Guerrière*, who had offered to meet any American frigate tête-à-tête, was an especial target of scorn: "There was Dacres at vaunting and boasting, / His equal you'll seldom come near." *Yankee Frolics* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, Jr., 1814). See also *The American Patriotic Song-Book*, 6–9.

⁴⁶⁴ For examples of this trope, see *The Noble Lads of Canada* (Boston: Deming); *Battle of Plattsburgh*.

⁴⁶⁵ *Columbian Naval Melody*, 8. See also *Commodore MacDonough's Victory; Huzza! Old Iron Sides*, LOC.

⁴⁶⁶ *National Song-Book*, 94.

men as their equals; or, to put it another way, until British men treated American men *as* men.

Recurring through the doggerel of the War of 1812 is the conviction that, by dint of its victories, the American nation had *arrived*. It had crossed the threshold from adolescence to adulthood (manhood more properly) in the same way required of a midshipman or a gentleman on the frontier: it had fought a duel, comported itself bravely, and emerged victorious. Whatever single-ship engagements had failed to do strategically, Americans believed that they had symbolically enhanced the standing of the American people in the eyes of the rest of the world. America's naval heroes had proven themselves the equals of Britain's; and Britons themselves knew it—that was the moral of naval doggerel.⁴⁶⁷ At the same time that they demonstrated the vigor of the American people, these victories also proved the worth of American social and political organizations:

We've a new theme for story, and national glory;
Not the glory that glistens round tyrants and thrones,
But the glory of freemen, the valor of seamen.⁴⁶⁸

The “glory of freemen,” American doggerel proclaimed, opened a new chapter in the history of the world, demonstrating the fitness of the country's republican institutions and democratic ideals.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁷ Captain David Porter assured the Secretary of the Navy, “Be assured Sir, that Britons have either learnt to respect the courage of Americans or they are not so courageous themselves as they would wish us to believe.” His boast was not without merit. British naval officer Charles Loftus admitted in his memoirs that, “I look upon the American seamen as equal to our own in bravery and seamanship, and it is known they fought their guns with better effect than we did. We had lamentable proofs of this in more than one instance during the last war; and we had good cause to remember that they were in no way an enemy to be despised.” British diplomat Augustus J. Foster conceded that, “the Americans have had the satisfaction of proving their courage—they have brought us to speak of them with respect.” See NW, 2:696; Loftus, *My Youth*, 1:245; Augustus John Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 5.

⁴⁶⁸ Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 47.

Fame, both national and personal, was a recurring theme in naval doggerel. Americans' victories during the War of 1812, according to numerous songs, had given their nation a polish equal to or unmatched by any preceding histories. At worst, American sailors were equivalent to "the heroes of Rome, and of Carthage and Greece"; more optimistically, they should be regarded as "braver than Grecian or a Roman."⁴⁷⁰ "Old Homer!" apostrophized one song's narrator, before wondering,

but what have we with him to do?
What are Grecians or Trojans to me or to you?
Such heathenish heroes no more I'll invoke,
Choice spirits assist me, attend, hearts of oak.⁴⁷¹

The song "Perry's Victory" conceded that, "Great Britain may boast of her conquering heroes," but, its narrator insisted, "Rome, in her glory, ne'er told such a story, / Nor boasted such feats as Columbians do."⁴⁷² This repeated refrain suggests the importance of national recognition as a goal of the War of 1812. Americans fought to have their national rights respected by the international community.

Naval doggerel offered fame as a reward to heroes and martyrs, promising them they would live forever in the hearts of their countrymen.⁴⁷³ "Their deeds of proud valor," one poem predicted, regarding American sailors on Lake Ontario,

⁴⁶⁹ In this regard, sailors' doggerel matched the mood of many Americans, who looked to the performance of their military forces during the war as evidence of their republic's fitness. For this general sentiment, see Brown, *Republic in Peril*; Watts, *Republic Reborn*.

⁴⁷⁰ *Columbian Naval Melody*, 21; *The New American Songster; being a Collection of Naval, Martial, Patriotic Songs* (Philadelphia: Dickinson, 1817), 58.

⁴⁷¹ *American Patriotic Song-Book*, 30.

⁴⁷² *New American Songster*, 17.

⁴⁷³ Fame was a central concern of the elite of the Revolutionary generation according to Douglas Adair. Forgie has argued that the drive for fame of the succeeding generation conflicted with filio piety for the Founding Fathers. Naval doggerel of the War of 1812 suggests that fame was a concern for ordinary Americans as well, though the nature of the fame they could achieve was quite different from that offered to the elite. The fame available for the common sailor was corporate, not individual: he would be remembered as an anonymous member of a "band of brothers." Only officers were remembered by name.

...shall long stand enrolled,
On the bright shining page of our national glory,
And oft in the deep winter's night shall be told,
The exploits of the tars of American story.⁴⁷⁴

In answer to the question of a sailor's motivation, one poem replied that, "'Tis Fame that fires the noble tar, and valor prompts him to the war."⁴⁷⁵ American heroes received assurance that their names would be enrolled in the "archives of fame."⁴⁷⁶ Establishing such fame, indeed, seemed to be a primary purpose of much of the naval doggerel composed during the war.⁴⁷⁷

Many of the tropes employed in the doggerel of the War of 1812 had a long pedigree and echoed the songs and poems of the Revolutionary, Quasi, and Tripolitan Wars.⁴⁷⁸ The doggerel of the imperial crisis of the 1760s and 1770s shared numerous

See Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided*; Douglass Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays by Douglass Adair*, ed. Trevor Colbourn (New York: Norton, 1974).

⁴⁷⁴ *Capture of Little York* (Canandaigua, NY: 1813).

⁴⁷⁵ Similarly, the song "Yankee Tars" advised American sailors to "join the flag of glory, / Cheerly tread the deck of fame; / Earn a place in future story." The "tars of Columbia" who served under Perry at the Battle of Lake Erie, another song contended, had gained "immortal glory; / A fame that shall last till time is no more." *The Peacock Stung by the Hornet; American Patriotic Song-Book*, 79; *New American Songster*, 15.

⁴⁷⁶ The phrase is from the poem "America's Star," about the Battle of Lake Champlain. The poem is included on the broadside *Honor to the Brave. The Battle of Lake Champlain* (Middlebury, Vt.: Slade & Ferguson).

⁴⁷⁷ The song "The Navy" called on "Masters of verse" to "still proclaim,
In song sublime, their glorious fame,
Till time evolves the fated day,
That sweeps these Union-States away;
Or, verging from its sinking shore,
The rolling ocean foams no more!

An extended poem titled *Columbia's Naval Triumphs*, spanning several dozen pages, appears to have been largely an attempt by its author to memorialize in verse the names of every officer, seaman, and marine mentioned in official accounts. The recurring theme of the poem is the fame these sailors have won, and how that fame will endure. See *National Song-Book*, 194; [Benjamin Allen], *Columbia's Naval Triumphs* (New York: Inskip & Bradford, 1813).

⁴⁷⁸ In a transatlantic context, the pedigree extended even farther. Americans not only added patriotic lyrics to existing British songs (including "Rule Britannia"), they also borrowed lyrics and themes from those songs. Of course, sailors throughout the Revolutionary Era slipped frequently between the British and American services (and other nations' services as well). American doggerel was, therefore, not an autochthonous production so much as a parochial offshoot of a transatlantic culture. For examples of contemporary British sailors' doggerel, see *The Valiant Sailor: Sea Songs and Ballads and Prose Passages*

commonalities with that of the War of 1812 (including the use of the name “Burgoyne” as a verb).⁴⁷⁹ They both depicted liberty as a patrimonial gift.⁴⁸⁰ Both depicted enemy combatants as “ill-fated British slaves.”⁴⁸¹ Authors in both eras reminded their audiences of the importance of unity.⁴⁸² Revolutionary doggerel also contained a similar, though not identical, fixation on masculinity. It argued that Britons would soon have to recognize American manhood: “We’ll not give up our birthright, / Our foes shall find us men; / As good as they, in any shape.”⁴⁸³ Even Loyalist doggerel shared these themes.⁴⁸⁴ Post-Revolutionary doggerel continued these traditions, rousing “sons of freedom” to humble “haughty and proud” “tawny sons of Tripoli” and “sons of France” who are a

Illustrating Life on the Lower Deck in Nelson’s Navy, ed. Roy Palmer (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

⁴⁷⁹ A piece about the Battle of Plattsburgh has a British officer exclaim,

O! what bitter groans and sighing we heard on board the fleet,
While McDonough’s cocks are crowing, boys, I fear we shall get beat;
If we lose the cause by sea, my boys, we’ll make a quick return,
For as sure as hell is hell we shall all be Burgoyne’d.

Numerous Revolutionary war songs similarly employed the name of the loser of Saratoga as a verb meaning “to suffer defeat.” See *The Noble Lads of Canada*.

⁴⁸⁰

As our fathers have fought, and our grandfathers bled,
And many a hero now sleeps with the dead;
Let us nobly defend, what they bravely maintain’d,
Nor suffer our sons to be fetter’d and chain’d.

Frank Moore, ed., *Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution* (1856, repr., New York: New York Times and Arno Press, 1969), 110. See also *ibid.*, 9–10, 22–23, 37–38.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁴⁸² “No party spite, no more, our measures will oppose, / For all unite against out insulting foes.” *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 91. An anonymous “Lady of Pennsylvania” penned a riposte aimed at the Loyalist men of the conveniently named county of Middlesex, Virginia. She wrote,

To manhood he makes a vain pretence,
Who wants both manly force and sense;
‘Tis but the form and not the matter,
According to the schoolmen’s clatter;
For such a creature, Heaven defend her!
Each lady cries, no *neuter gender*!
But when a number of such creatures,
With woman’s hearts and manly features,
Their country’s generous schemes perplex,
I own I hate this Middle-sex.

Ibid., 68fn.

⁴⁸⁴ A typical Loyalist piece, written after the colonies’ alliance with France, argued that, “if we are conquer’d we receive the Pope’s yoke; / But despising the counsels of Adams and Lee, / As loyal Americans, we’ll die or be free.” *Ibid.*, 290–291.

“pest to our Independent sailing” and who “Destroy our commerce and our trade.”⁴⁸⁵

The songsmiths who praised the navy’s accomplishment during the War of 1812 had already at hand a rich vocabulary of phrases and tropes which they did not hesitate to employ.⁴⁸⁶

Of course, this earlier doggerel had idiosyncratic concerns that distinguished it from that of the War of 1812. Revolutionary songs, for instance, evidenced a disdain for “the Scotch politicians” who had contaminated the British nation; a formula for freedom that depended on “abandon[ing] tea”; and a call for women to “wear none but your own country’s linen.”⁴⁸⁷ Also, the particulars of the War of 1812 gave the doggerel of that conflict a different lexicon of heroes and villains (though not without overlap). More importantly, the interdependence of American men did not emerge so consistently as a theme of Revolutionary War doggerel. During the War of 1812 impressment provided the surest grounds for contesting Britain’s claim to liberty, and claiming the concept as a uniquely American possession. The figure of the impressed seaman was the most novel aspects of War of 1812 doggerel. With that figure came a concomitant emphasis on the impotence of individual men and the interdependence of compatriots.

The importance of national unity is seen clearly in depictions of impressed seamen in sailors’ doggerel. Forced against his will into the British service, the impressed seaman represented a complicated ideal of manliness. On the one hand, he burned with defiance, and refused to bow to the torments inflicted upon him by his

⁴⁸⁵ These quotes are taken from “Siege of Tripoli” in *Columbian Naval Melody*, 84; and *Truxton’s Victory: or, Brave Yankee Boys* (Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr., 1814).

⁴⁸⁶ Indeed, old songs about naval victories in earlier conflicts received a new life during the War of 1812 in both patriotic songsters and in broadsides as well. The song “Truxton’s Victory,” for instance, a relic of the Quasi War, was published independently and as part of compilations.

⁴⁸⁷ Moore, *Songs and Ballads*, 104, 62, 49.

captors; on the other hand, he had no agency, no personal power, and he depended entirely upon the intervention of his fellow American men for his freedom.⁴⁸⁸ The image of the impressed seaman demands attention. Obscured beneath the lingo of “sailors’ rights,” it appears timid and abstract, a political issue and not a physical one. Thus, when a song referred to the United States Congress as “the Seaman’s protector,” an easy implication would be that the role of Congress was merely to preserve seamen’s intangible rights; however, the image of the impressed sailor in nineteenth-century doggerel emphasized the sailor’s corporality.⁴⁸⁹

The song “Kidnapped Seamen” illustrated this image well. The sentimental narrative of an impressed sailor, this piece pleaded at its outset, “Sons of freedom break your slumbers! / Hear a brother’s piercing cries.”⁴⁹⁰ Note that, even though the lyrics later described the sailor’s fortitude, the first glimpse provided of him was an auditory one, and one that evidenced his individual weakness and his susceptibility to suffering. The lines that followed focused on pain and defiance, and located both elements in the sailor’s body:

See his naked body streaming
Rills of blood beneath the lash!
See his eyes indignant beaming,
Sparkling vengeance as they flash!⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁸ One of the few naval songs to contain “damsels in distress,” a tune called “Impressment of Seamen,” which blamed Great Britain for atrocities against families on the Western frontier, used almost identical language when calling for the protection of seamen (“Arouse, assert the rights of freemen; / Rescue from their dens of woe; / Arouse, and save impressed seamen, / Rouse, to strike the faithless foe”) as when calling for the protection of women from Indian attacks (“Freemen, no longer bear such slaughters! / Avenge your country’s cruel foe; / Rouse, and save your wives and daughters, / Rouse—expel the faithless foe”). See *American Patriotic Song-Book*, 33.

⁴⁸⁹ Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 15.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

As the poem ends, the only potency allowed to the sailor was the voice with which he begged for help.⁴⁹² Although his rage may have flashed through his eyes, in the end he could only apostrophize his country, asking, “When, O when, the happy hour, / That the sailor saves from falling / In these demons’ lawless power.”⁴⁹³ The impressed sailor could not free himself or protect himself; he required the assistance of his fellow countrymen.

The condition of the impressed sailor was central, not anomalous, to American masculinity and nationality during the early nineteenth century. *Weakness* was central to American masculinity and nationality.⁴⁹⁴ As the song “Impressment of Seamen” asserted with regards to national unity, “Danger binds us all together.”⁴⁹⁵ The isolated man could

⁴⁹² The song “American Seamen’s Lamentations” similarly introduced the impressed narrator with an aural image: “From dungeons of Britain, which float on the main, / O hear the sad tale of our sorrowful moan.” The fate of captive seamen, the narrator insisted, was “but to sigh and to groan.” So, too, the song “Jersey Blue” called American men to action with the lines, “See how your brother lives impress’d; / In British dungeons sore distress’d; / His sighs and groans now strike my ear.” A musical “Invocation to Columbia” wondered,

Dost thou not hear thy tortured seaman’s cries,
 Poor hapless souls in British dungeons laid;
 Toward thee they turn their dim imploring eyes;
 Alas! they sink—and no kind hand to aid.

Again, these aural images emphasized the helplessness of the impressed sailor. The song “Conquer or Die,” more a martial song than a naval one, nonetheless reveals the weakness inherent in the aural image. “What sounds are these invade our ears?” asked the narrator; “The sailor’s groan, the infant’s cries!” The impressed seamen, like the infant, can do nothing more than raise its voice to call for help. The song “The Impressed American” simultaneously characterized the impressed sailor explicitly as weak, and went so far as to deprive him of his voice:

Oh, curse on those Fiends, having power to oppress,
 Who wolf-like can prey on the weak;
 Who deny the unfortunate Man a redress,
 And permit not the poor Man to speak.

The song “The Impressed Seaman” made this susceptibility to pain even more explicit, portraying the seaman wondering, “Oh! who can conceive how acute are my pains, / How my bosom with anguish is torn. See *American Patriotic Song-Book*, 40, 44; *National Song-Book*, 91, 114, 174.

⁴⁹³ Gillespie, *Columbian Songster*, 20.

⁴⁹⁴ Scholarly examinations of masculinity have proliferated in the past twenty years. Much of the work, however, has investigated how men exhibited their strength, so to speak, through boxing and filibustering, for instance, or how men differentiated themselves from women. The weakness at the core of masculinity—the inability to stand alone that required men to engage in communal activities such as firefighting, whaling, and fraternal rituals—has received less attention. See Gorn, *Manly Art*; Greenberg, *Cause for Alarm*; Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; Carnes, *Secret Ritual*; Creighton, *Rites and Passages*.

⁴⁹⁵ *American Patriotic Song-Book*, 34.

not withstand threats to his life or his liberty: he required the assistance of his fellow men, who just as surely required assistance from him. In the doggerel of the War of 1812, such assistance and combination were seen as the source of the national and personal independence of American men. Independence was impossible without fraternal interdependence.

This interdependence was also American men's greatest strength. Naval doggerel insisted that American men had a decisive advantage in combat against the representatives of any foreign power: the US Navy was "of freemen a band," whereas other navies consisted of tyrants and slaves.⁴⁹⁶ The War of 1812 would prove "the difference between the sons of freedom, fighting for their country's rights, and the base slaves of a cruel tyrant."⁴⁹⁷ That American sailors were freemen and British sailors were slaves was a commonplace of the genre. A related assumption was that this first condition guaranteed Americans' victory. The song "Our Naval Heroes" asserted this theme, noting that,

The frigates of England, the Queen of the seas,
When met by the Yankees are conquer'd with ease,
The reason is obvious—no press-gang we know;
'Tis as Freemen we fight, as such conquer our foe.⁴⁹⁸

Slaves and tyrants could not best freemen, and it was as freemen that Americans fought.

Patriotic verses asserted that the superiority of American over British manhood lay less in the qualities of individual American men than in their relationship to each

⁴⁹⁶ The quote "the Navy, of freemen a band" is from the song "Our Naval Hobbies," in *Columbian Naval Melody*, 71.

⁴⁹⁷ Another song asked incredulously whether the "slaves of wild despots [could] with freemen contend, / Who've such blessings to fight for—such rights to defend?" *National Songster*, 7; Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 44.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 87.

other. American men would sweep their British counterparts from the ocean because, whereas the British Navy resorted to enslavement to fill its ranks, the American navy recruited its sailors from the ranks of a free population. No one joined the American navy (according to doggerel) unless he wished to do so. American men combined voluntarily, to some degree equally, in defense of a shared goal, the preservation of their mutual rights.⁴⁹⁹ The root of freedom rested in this act of combination: not in the right to worship as one chose, not in the right to own property and dispose of it as one saw fit, not in the right to vote, to speak one's mind, not so much in any matter of individualism but rather in a manner of communalism. The song "The Departure" explicitly defined freedom in these terms. Its verses portray a crew of sailors whose "manly farewell" and "enraptured cheers, declare their actions free." As freemen, the sailors were "Self urged, self armed, to fight for liberty."⁵⁰⁰ Freedom, in short, was a man's right to unite or to refuse to unite with other men.

Paradoxically, the freedom to unite, or, perhaps one should say, the freedom not to unite, made unity imperative. As one sailor wrote in anticipation of war against Britain after the *Chesapeake v Leopard* affair,

Unite, and side by side
Meet vict'ry or your graves;
The moment we in War divide,

⁴⁹⁹ This idea appeared in non-naval sources as well. American consul Mordecai Noah attributed American naval victories to issues of "national character." He elaborated these issues: "Many of the British seamen are impressed and brought to their guns with repugnance, if not indifference, as to the result; they fight bravely, as a matter of duty, but carelessly as a matter of principle. Our seamen are voluntary combatants, and go into action as if liberty, country and victory, depended on their efforts, and each man stimulated by the common tie of citizenship, feels that he is defending his own rights in vindicating the rights of his country. Under such impressions, victory is seldom a problematical result." Noah, *Travels*, 23.

⁵⁰⁰ *National Song-Book*, 168.

That moment we are slaves.⁵⁰¹

The importance of unity was stressed repeatedly in depictions of and calls to military action.⁵⁰² The united action of American sailors provided a model for factious politicians to follow. “Let demagogues dispute,” chided one untitled song,

and discontents fomenting,
Strive to dissever the chains of unanimity:
Each true born Columbian, such party feud lamenting,
Swear only, he will perish or live free.⁵⁰³

The theme of American unity added a wrinkle to the trope of the humbled British officer.

In a poem about the British defeat at Plattsburg, a frustrated Prevost exclaimed that,

They told us that the Federalists were friendly to the crown,
They’d join our royal army, and the democrats pull down;
But they all unite together as a band of brothers join’d.⁵⁰⁴

Too frightened to contend against such a force, Prevost slunk back to Canada. What had cowed him had not been his foes’ martial skills or valor, but their unity. The manner in which American men combined against their enemies, more than the character or actions of individual men, ensured their ultimate victory.

The navy appeared in sailors’ doggerel as a symbol of American men combined to protect their mutual freedoms. Comparing the nation to a ship, one tune confessed

⁵⁰¹ William Ray, *Horrors of Slavery; or, The American Tars in Tripoli* (Troy, N.Y.: Oliver Lyon, 1808), 189.

⁵⁰² “Come, cheer up my lads, let’s together unite, / For our country, our laws and religion to fight,” was a typical line. Gillespy, *Columbian Songster*, 44.

⁵⁰³ A similar piece urged, “Let Feds, Quids, and Demo’s [sic] together unite, / For our country, our laws and our altars to fight.” Political disputes did allegedly impact naval recruitment. Joshua Barney contended that “men cannot be procured in the Eastern-shore for that both parties discourage enlistments, each wishing to keep the men, for the next Elections, as they are so equally divided, that the loss of a few Votes would throw the ballance into the hands of the other party.” Barney’s solution was to give “Assurances that all the Demos. shall be there on the 1st of Octr. next to Vote, which I hope will have some effect.” *Ibid.*, 42; *Eagle and Harp*, 5; NW, 3:54.

⁵⁰⁴ *Noble Lads of Canada*.

that, “among ourselves in peace, ‘tis true, / We quarrel and make a rout.” Its narrator insisted, however, that,

... once the enemy in view,
Shake hands, we soon are friends,
On the deck,
Till a wreck,
Each the common cause defends.⁵⁰⁵

As symbols of the nation, victorious ships evidenced the strength of American men united in “common cause.” The patriotic names given to naval vessels allowed verses to celebrate American institutions at the same time as they celebrated American victories: hence Captain Bainbridge, who led the USS *Constitution* against the HMS *Java*, “convinc’d all the world we’d a fine Constitution.”⁵⁰⁶ In this regard, it is worth noting that arguably the greatest naval hero to emerge from the War of 1812 was not a human being at all, neither Decatur, nor Hull, nor Bainbridge, nor even Perry, but “Old Ironsides,” the USS *Constitution*, a frigate praised even by a staunchly Federalist gazette as “so deservedly a favorite.”⁵⁰⁷ The naval ship offered a concrete image of American men acting in unison; while victories over the British Navy proved the superiority of American manhood.

The insistence on the need for unity appeared in non-naval doggerel as well, highlighting the significance of that trope in contemporary American discourse.⁵⁰⁸ Indeed, the poem “Patriotic Diggers,” an idealized depiction of American men uniting to

⁵⁰⁵ The song “Warrior’s Return” similarly argued that the “rough sons of Ocean” have “no party plea when a foe may assail. . . . one cause and one soul and one spirit, / Inspires all your sons who contend on the wave.” *Columbian Naval Songster*, 76; *Naval Songster*, (1813), 48.

⁵⁰⁶ *Naval Songster* (1816), 5.

⁵⁰⁷ “Old Ironsides,” *Boston Gazette*, 1 June 1815.

⁵⁰⁸ For a discussion of the widespread use of the word “union” in political discourse during the nineteenth century, and its changing meanings, see Kersh, *Dreams of a More Perfect Union*; Nagel, *One Nation Indivisible*. See also Murrin, “Roof without Walls.”

construct defensive fortifications, exhibited the trope of unity better than most sailors' songs:

Pick-axe, Shovel, spade, Crow-bar, hoe and barrow,
Better not invade, Yankees have the marrow,
To Protect our rights, 'gainst your flints and triggers,
See on yonder Heights our patriotic diggers,
Men of every age, colour, rank, profession,
Ardently engag'd, labour in succession.⁵⁰⁹

Though the theme of national unity was a common one, this verse is unique in one regard: it depicted a nation that is explicitly both egalitarian and multiracial. The nation in this poem was also pointedly masculine. It warned any Britons who happened to overhear, "Better not invade, recollect the spirit, / Which our dads displayed and their sons inherit." The role of women in the nation, however, was left ambiguous by the poem. The narrator was strident, however, that all "*Men* of every age, colour, rank, profession" would unite together to defend their mutual freedom [emphasis added].

The author of "The Patriotic Diggers" specifically included African Americans within the American nation. The degree to which most authors and audiences of naval doggerel consciously celebrated African American sailors, however, is unclear. Even though the navy and other maritime services were multiracial, markers of race are absent from published doggerel about the navy.⁵¹⁰ African Americans served in the American

⁵⁰⁹ *Naval Triumph, and Patriotic Diggers* (Boston: L. Deming). Rare Book and Special Collections Division, LOC. Digital ID: as 109380.

⁵¹⁰ I have encountered only two exceptions to this silence regarding race in all the doggerel I have examined. One is "The Siege of Plattsburgh," rendered in "black" dialect and first performed on stage by a white man in blackface. According to Benson Lossing, the song was "one of the most popular songs written and sung during the war. It was written by Micajah Hawkins for the proprietor of a theatre in Albany, and sung by him in the character of a negro sailor. Governor Tompkins was present when it was first sung. Hawkins gained great applause and a prize by his performance." This piece has little explicit to say about race (though it does acknowledge the presence of blacks in the Navy): the use of dialect seems more an affectation than a pointed comment. The other exception is a poem by an author identified as a

Navy during the War of 1812 era in large numbers, although they suffered restrictions on enrollment and advancement.⁵¹¹ Since race is not addressed explicitly in naval doggerel, nothing on the face of that doggerel would have prevented African American men from applying its principles to themselves. Moreover, to assume that the songs and poems axiomatically referred only to white sailors requires certain conceptual leaps, not least of which is the insupportable assumption that none of these songs originated from, or were altered by, African American sailors.⁵¹² A racial element to the War of 1812 doggerel, therefore, needs to be proven and cannot be assumed.

Several factors mitigate this assertion. For one thing, most Americans *did* have a stereotypical image of sailors. Alternatively flattering and derogative, it might have been also overwhelmingly white. Restrictions on African American naval service show that the national government at least attempted to maintain a white face for its navy.⁵¹³ Yet conditions in the maritime service as a whole—and far more Americans served on non-

petty officer in the navy; he insisted that racial slavery in the United States was as wretched a crime as impressment, and was incompatible with the nation's struggle against tyranny. This sailor wrote, "How can you who have felt the oppressor's hard hand, / Who for freedom all perils did brave; / How can you enjoy ease, while one foot of your soil / Is disgrac'd by the toil of a slave. / O rouse then in spite of a merciless few, / And pronounce this immortal decree, / That what e'er be man's tenets, his fortune, his hue, / He is a man, and shall therefore be free." None of the doggerel I reviewed mentioned "white" as a racial characteristic and, consequently, none of them explicitly ascribed "whiteness" to the American nation. See "The Siege of Plattsburgh," in *Columbian Songster*; Lossing, *Pictorial History*, 876fn; Campbell, *In Behalf*.

⁵¹¹ The best account of the experiences of African American sailors during this time period is Bolster, *Black Jacks*.

⁵¹² At the Dartmoor Depot of Prisons, a place to which thousands of American prisoners of war, white and black, were consigned during the war, black sailors took as much delight in taunting their captors as did their white compatriots, and were just as quick to needle the British with renditions of "Yankee Doodle."

⁵¹³ Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton, for instance, instructed John Cassin to "Give the recruiting officer orders to enter none but white able bodied Citizens." Before the war, Captain Edward Preble had ordered a lieutenant "not to Ship Black Men." These restrictions presumably meant more to administration officials than they did to most officers, especially on the high seas, where extra hands whatever the hue were usually clasped warmly. The officers of the USS *Peacock* welcomed to their lists "one Man an american negro" who had been serving on board a British brig captured by the American vessel. Neither his ethnicity nor his prior employment in an enemy merchantman seemed to work against this man's enlistment. A crewman on the USS *Syren* recorded three instances of black seamen enlisting in the brig's service from off prizes, including an "African prince, who had acquired a tolerable education in England, and who was remarkably polite and sensible." See NW, 1:611; NDBP, 2:470; William T. Rodgers, "Private Journal, 1814–1817," Papers of William T. Rodgers, LOC; Leech, *Thirty Years*, 189–190.

racially-restricted privateers and letters of marque than in the navy—meant that race, if salient, would have been difficult to ignore.⁵¹⁴ Naval restrictions, moreover, were ineffective, and black sailors participated conspicuously in naval victories, including the Battle of Lake Erie.⁵¹⁵ I have encountered no evidence to suggest that black sailors were excluded from the celebrations of the victories they helped to obtain.⁵¹⁶

When the federal government passed an act to restrict the access of foreign seamen to American services, it maintained unqualified access to both “citizens of the United States” and “native-born persons of color.” The exclusion of African Americans from the category of American citizen is certainly a significant element of this act; but so, too, is the implicit recognition that black sailors were an indispensable segment of the country’s seafaring population.⁵¹⁷ The absence of racial terminology in sailors’ doggerel

⁵¹⁴ On the other hand, it is difficult to overstate the ability white Americans have historically demonstrated to forget the presence of African Americans in the making of American history. Theodore Roosevelt’s history of the War of 1812 offers a stunning example of this blatant, but seemingly unconscious, forgetfulness. After admitting that Perry’s fleet on Lake Erie contained “quite a number of negroes,” Roosevelt describes, a single page later, the makeup of the British and American fleets on the lake in this manner: “The only un-English element in the contest was the presence among the Canadian English of some of the descendants of the Latin race from which they had conquered the country.” For Roosevelt, “English” was a racial term, not merely a cultural one, and he would not have applied it to African Americans. Somehow, within a few paragraphs, he had forgotten that “quite a number” of African Americans participated in the battle. Roosevelt, *Naval War*, 1:338–339.

⁵¹⁵ Six weeks before the battle Oliver Hazard Perry had complained to Isaac Chauncey for sending him as reinforcements “a motley set, blacks, Soldiers and boys.” Chauncey replied, in part, that “I have yet to learn that the Colour of the skin, or cut and trimmings of the coat, can affect a man’s qualifications or usefulness—I have nearly 50 Blacks on board of this ship [the USS *General Pike*] and many of them are amongst my best men.” African Americans worked the vessels of the other Lakes as well. Ned Myers, serving on Lake Ontario, identified his gun crew as “five negroes, strapping fellows, and as strong as jackasses.” See NW, 2:530; Myers, *Ned Myers*, 60.

⁵¹⁶ On the other hand, Robert Cray has suggested that the plight of the four men impressed from the USS *Chesapeake* by officers of the HMS *Leopard* was largely ignored by most Americans perhaps because two of the men were described as being persons of color. Cray’s point is not that Americans ignored the *Chesapeake v. Leopard* affair entirely, of course, but rather that they showed more concern for the loss of honor and the one man who died than they did for the men who were impressed. Cray, “Remembering,” 467–468.

⁵¹⁷ An anecdote from a sailor’s memoirs of his experience in the US Navy, though it was perhaps apocryphal, nonetheless highlights the ambiguous nature of African American national identity. The sailor reported a story he had heard about the USS *John Adams*. The *John Adams* was visiting an English port before the war when a black American sailor, impressed into the royal service, fled to its deck. After English officers boarded the *John Adams* to retrieve him, the fugitive grabbed an axe and “cut off the

must be approached in this ambiguous context. Whether silence on racial matters indicated a white chauvinism or a relative indifference to racial distinctions is impossible to state conclusively, and most likely changed according to particular listeners, singers, and situations.

Nonetheless, sailors' doggerel contained strong, if implicit, statements about the presence of racial slavery in the United States. The patrimonial nature of freedom espoused in the doggerel tacitly justified enslavement for those peoples who could not resist it. Whether freedom was defined as a gift bestowed or as a gift protected by the Revolutionary generation, it was a state that required constant defense. Men (and freedom, in this regard, was imagined largely as a masculine preserve) might be born free, but their freedom was under persistent assault. Liberty might be inalienable as a legal fiction, but practically it could disappear at any moment.⁵¹⁸

The present generation, doggerel insisted, had to defend manfully the gift of the previous generation. As a central caveat, any group that lost its liberty had not deserved it. This conception could take a national cast. American men believed that they owed their liberty to each other. It could be more decisively lost as a collective than as individuals—an impressed sailor might be freed by his comrades, but, once enslaved, a nation rarely regained its freedom. Shifting from national to racial considerations (a less disruptive shift in the early nineteenth century than it is today), if black men in America were deprived of their freedom, syllogistic though it might be, it was because of their

fingers of his right hand at a single blow," crying, "Now let the English take me, if they want me." "However," the author concluded ruefully, "disabled as he was, they took him back, our officers having no power to interfere. If patriotism be anything but a name, then surely this noble African deserved a better fate." The author's wording is significant: the black sailor was both an exemplar of American patriotism and, at one and the same time, a stranger, an "African," rather than an "American." See Moses Smith, *Naval Scenes*, 7.

⁵¹⁸ The importance of this concept to early national political history is explained most famously in Bailyn's *Ideological Origins*.

own lack of specific manly virtues, and a similar lack in their fathers. If freedom is understood in patrimonial terms, racial slavery logically follows, as long as race is considered a pertinent category.

If freedom is understood in patrimonial terms, moreover, it must necessarily apply differently for women than it did for men. A striking feature of sailors' doggerel is the absence of women. This absence was not absolute. Sailors were frequently identified as sons of a common feminine entity—Columbia, Fredonia, or Liberty—though the traits which sailors inherited and defended were typically described as paternal gifts, not maternal ones.⁵¹⁹ Women appeared in lines of verse to add their approbation to the acclaim which triumphant sailors enjoyed. Some songs promised “wealth, fame, and beauty” to triumphant tars, while others reminded them of the “sweethearts” and wives who awaited them at home. Conversely, songsmiths warned cowardly men that women would forbear to smile on him who would not defend his country. Nonetheless, women were generally ancillary characters in naval songs, one of the several subjects to which a masculine audience were asked to raise a glass; rarely did women or feminine attributes play a crucial role in such doggerel.

Indeed, the evidence presented by naval doggerel suggests that many Americans could imagine their nation as a masculine entity, a corporation of men, imaginatively

⁵¹⁹ I have discovered one piece of doggerel that attributed a significant role to women in obtaining and preserving American liberty. The song “Columbia's Hardy Seamen” included the line, “Love of country, love of glory, / From our mothers' breast we drew.” The rest of the song, however, employed more typical masculine images:

Our forefathers famed in story,
Gave the bright examples too...
Faithful to ourselves as Freemen,
Not the world can make us slaves...
Let us live a band of brothers,
Whether on the land or sea;
'Tis our strength and not another's,
That would make or keep us free.

National Song-Book, 166.

related through a shared commitment to liberty, rather than as an extended family in which men and women both had their places and their parts.⁵²⁰ This is not to suggest that women did not perceive themselves as Americans, or that they did not follow the course of the war with interest, or that they did not act patriotically and bravely when offered the opportunity. In her diary, Eliza Susan Quincy followed the progress of the war; and if she tended to record the opinions of her male acquaintances on such matters rather than to form her own, the same cannot be said about her acquaintance, Abigail Adams.⁵²¹ The female members of the Haynie family of Maryland exchanged letters throughout the war, Leah Haynie praising the navy's victories and hoping for an "honourable peace," while her cousin Charlotte responded with epistles dripping with contempt for James Madison.⁵²²

Women were neither ignorant to the war raging about them, nor divorced from its effects. The enemy soldiers who invaded the Chesapeake assaulted and raped American women. Women also played roles other than observers and victims. Eighteen-year-old Rebecca Bates and her fourteen-year-old sister Abigail reportedly frightened away a band

⁵²⁰ When a male orator attempted to explain to his audience the contradictory feelings aroused in him by the War of 1812, fought between his adopted country, the United States, and his native country, Great Britain, he likened himself to a woman whose husband and brother had fallen into a quarrel. The orator, David Sutherland, requested that his audience, "Figure to yourselves two men at variance. They declare open hostility to one another, and study, on each side, who shall do the other most harm. What think you, would be the feelings of that woman, who is wife to the one and sister to the other? If you can realize the feelings of a female, so situated, you can realize the feelings of your preacher to day, in reference to the unhappy dispute now begun between Great Britain, and the United States of America." Nationhood, in this analogy, was masculine, whereas femininity was associated with the inability to lay firm claim to nationhood. Sutherland, *Christian Benevolence: A Sermon, Delivered at Newbury, VT, before the Washington Benevolent Society, at the Celebration of the Anniversary of the National Independence, July 4, 1812* (Windsor, Vt.: Thomas M. Pomroy, 1812), 3–4.

⁵²¹ Eliza Susan Quincy Diary, esp. pages 4, 7, Quincy Family Papers, MHS. For expressions of Adams's opinions on war matters, see Adams to Colonel William S. Smith (Hamilton, N.Y.), Quincy, 18 February 1813, BPL (quoted above).

⁵²² See Haynie Family Papers, MS 1815, MDHS, especially Leah B. Haynie to Henrietta Haynie, Natchez, 11 July 1813 [transcript]; Leah B. Haynie to Henrietta B. Haynie, Natchez, 21 November 1813 [transcript]; and Charlotte Haynie to Leah B. Haynie, Wicomico, 17 September 1814 [transcript].

of British marauders from the HMS *Le Havre*; from a concealed spot, the sisters struck up the tune “Yankee Doodle” on a fife and drum to create the impression of approaching troops.⁵²³ If the author of “Patriotic Diggers” did not include women in the ranks of the persons erecting defenses, the editor of a collection of patriotic songs did, praising, “The ladies of Charleston, S.C. [who] wrought on the fortifications with their own hands.”⁵²⁴ The history of women’s participation in and reaction to the War of 1812 has yet to be written; when it is, the story of the war will surely appear in a more complex and nuanced light.⁵²⁵

Nonetheless, the story of the war reported at the time had little to say explicitly about women’s roles. Numerous media, not naval doggerel alone, depicted the war as a manly affair. The nation’s enemies were men; its champions were men; and its purpose in going to war was to receive recognition as men. At the beginning of the war state marshals began to compile lists of British subjects resident in the United States, in order to register their names and remove them from military posts, towns, and major waterways. The marshals recorded the names of men but not their female relations, who were simply enumerated.⁵²⁶ In the spring of 1813, the marshals received a circular

⁵²³ Rebecca W. Bates Folder, MHS.

⁵²⁴ The editor remarked further that, “The ladies of our country, in many instances, manifested a truly patriotic spirit during the war.” The expression of this spirit, however, was largely confined to exhibits of appreciation of men’s accomplishments: “At Chillicothe, they presented an elegant sword to Col. Crogham, the gallant defender of Sandusky.... and while our troops were marching though the streets of New-Orleans, the windows were crowded with females, who waved their handkerchiefs, and cheered the soldiers on to battle.” See *Court of Neptune*, 85–86fn.

⁵²⁵ The work of Catherine Allgor is the most prominent step in this direction, but her *Parlor Politics*, though focused on the early national period, has little to say about the war specifically. Her biography of Dolley Madison might address this subject; but it was published too late to be consulted for this dissertation. See Allgor, *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000); Allgor, *A Perfect Union: Dolley Madison and the Creation of the American Nation* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006).

⁵²⁶ Adult sons were sometimes named, but not daughters or wives. For examples, see the Thomas G. Thornton Papers, Mss 98, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, NEHGS.

specifying that “females” were exempt from relocation.⁵²⁷ When Congress voted medals to honor fallen heroes, it stipulated that the medals be delivered to the martyrs’ “nearest male relative.”⁵²⁸ War hawks argued that a nation had honor, and that its honor was analogous to the honor of men, not that of women.⁵²⁹

For both men and nations, honor was maintained through rituals of violence from which women were excluded. Wars, like duels, were public trials of manliness. In both affairs the judges were other men. Just as murder was not the primary impulse behind a duel, neither was the destruction of Great Britain nor the acquisition of its territories the primary impulse behind the War of 1812—at least not according to sailors’ doggerel. Rather the goal was recognition—specifically Britons’ recognition that “its foes were in the masculine gender.” Many Americans believed that the haughty British nation treated them as if they could be insulted with impunity. To allow such a conception to pass unchallenged was to confirm it; further degradation would necessarily follow. For the American nation to maintain (or regain) its honor, it was of paramount importance that American men unite together in its defense. Only through their combined exertions could American men force their British counterparts to acknowledge the manliness of the American nation. Once they did unite, however, since they could only unite voluntarily,

⁵²⁷ John Mason to State Marshals (Circular), OCGP, Washington, 31 May 1813, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Office of the Fifth Auditor (U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook Volume One), Container 8, Reel One, LOC, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C.

⁵²⁸ Such a resolution was passed to honor lieutenants William Bush and Funk. See *Free Trade and Sailors Rights*, 34.

⁵²⁹ Interestingly, in this regard, Hatzenbuehler and Ivie argue that Congressional Federalists who pushed for an outright declaration of war against France in 1798 were unsuccessful partly because of their rhetorical choices: “Unlike Twelfth Congress prowar speakers, who characterized the British by using metaphors of force, Fifth Congress Federalists projected an image of the ‘seductive’ French, a threat which required only that America remain alert and militarily prepared while keeping open the channels of diplomacy.” Ivie and Hatzenbuehler, *Congress Declares War*, 68.

and freemen could not lose a fair fight, the preservation of America's honor was guaranteed.

Chapter Seven

“They Mustn’t Think They Have Frenchmen to Deal with”: National Identity and Resistance among American Prisoners of War

British authorities captured and confined thousands of American prisoners of war over the course of the War of 1812. The captors practiced rituals to transform their captives from hostile combatants to quiescent prisoners of war. Although held at various places throughout the world, the American captives exhibited consistent behavior. At every site in Britain’s global war-prison archipelago, they undermined their keepers’ rituals. Instead of sinking into docility, the prisoners repeatedly tussled with their guards. Each time they emerged from another struggle with authorities, the captives explained their recalcitrance the same way: They were Americans. As such they could not placidly accept the imposition of arbitrary power over themselves. To prove their claims to American identity, and hence to the benefits of membership in the American nation, the prisoners had to act like Americans. Indeed, in their efforts to prove that they were Americans, the prisoners sometimes lapsed into an almost parodic performance of American nationality. Their conceptions of their national identity compelled the prisoners to ostentatious displays of resistance. The growing intensity of the confrontations between American prisoners and British guards would result in a tragedy that demonstrated the potential dangers of national identity to its individual claimants.

During the course of the Napoleonic Wars the British Empire developed a far-flung war-prison archipelago to confine captured enemies. This archipelago spanned the globe and included sites at Halifax, Barbados, Jamaica, England, Malta, Cape Town, and

Calcutta. (The most infamous location, from the American perspective, was the depot of prisons built on the cragged, mist-shrouded barrens of Dartmoor, England.) The archipelago was an amphibious system which combined camps and prison buildings on land and the holds of de-masted hulks and active warships in ports and at sea. It held persons of a variety of ethnicities and nationalities: French, of course, Americans between 1812 and 1815, Norwegians, Spaniards, Dutch, Danes, and others, depending on the specifics of Britain's ever-changing roster of foes.

Prisoners entered this network through several routes and were frequently shifted from one node to another. Dartmoor Prison was a common terminus. At its height, Dartmoor housed approximately six thousand American inmates. Though the system contained hundreds of American prisoners captured on the battlefield, seamen constituted the majority of the American population in the British war archipelago. Outside of Canada the preponderance was overwhelming. A large proportion of the American population entered the prison system directly from service in the British Navy. When the war began roughly 1,500 sailors in His Majesty's Service requested their discharge on the grounds that they were American citizens (most claiming to have been impressed into the Royal Navy against their will).⁵³⁰ Instead of freeing them, British authorities confined them as prisoners of war. This policy incurred the wrath of the imprisoned sailors and their compatriots.

The majority of prisoners were taken at sea from the decks of American ships. Relatively few came from public vessels. The U.S. Navy performed surprisingly well in

⁵³⁰ After the war the Secretary of State compiled a list of roughly 1,350 American sailors entered into Dartmoor Prison from British public vessels (plus another 160 such men imprisoned in the West Indies). *Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting a Report...of the Number of Impressed American Seamen Confined in Dartmoor Prison* (Washington City: William A. Davis, 1816).

the war, and suffered the loss of only a handful of ships. Naval crewmen unfortunate enough to enter the prison system, moreover, had the best luck at exiting it. Cartels occurred infrequently; when they did, authorities prioritized captives from public vessels over those from private ones, regardless of duration of confinement. Thus a seaman removed from a captured merchantman at the beginning of the war might pass the entire conflict in captivity while sailors from the USS *Argus* or the USS *Chesapeake* arrived later and left sooner.

Not all prisoners taken from a ship's deck were weathered tars. A large number of them were taken from privateers, vessels on which in general seamanship was not always the primary factor in employment. The lure of quick wealth drew to privateers men with little or no experience on the ocean. Some such novices remained at sea long enough to learn the ropes; others began their seafaring careers on unlucky vessels whose cruises ended within hours of leaving shore. On the other hand, the siren's song of easy riches enticed seasoned hands as well as green ones. Though the war did not end American commerce (at least not before the extension of the British blockade to New England in 1814) it did curtail it. Seamen had few employment options other than privateers (and the U.S. Navy; but the bitter reports of frustrated naval recruiting agents indicate that sailors generally preferred the former). Maritime veterans entered the war-prison archipelago in numbers sufficient to give its American population a distinctly salty air.

The purpose of Britain's war-prison archipelago was to detain captives, not to reform them; the administrators thus granted prisoners extensive liberties within the physical confines of the detention centers. In larger facilities such as Dartmoor Prison,

this freedom allowed for the development of a complex, if rudimentary society and economy. Because of the large maritime population, the society created by American prisoners was an offshoot of the culture of American seamen.⁵³¹

Scholars have recently begun to examine archipelagic extensions of power with regards to its implications for national identity and sovereignty.⁵³² Leaving aside the question of British sovereignty and jurisdiction implicit in the Empire's maintenance of such a far-flung prison system, the dynamics of the Empire's Napoleonic-era archipelago presented important challenges to the national identity of the American captives held therein. In brief, captivity within the archipelago threatened to undermine the captives' claims to be Americans.

The archipelago troubled American captives' identities for several reasons. First, the prisoners were captured by an enemy in a war explicitly fought on the ground of preserving the rights and freedom of American sailors from imposition by Britons. Pro-war propaganda depicted British naval officers as tyrants determined to impose their arbitrary will upon American citizens. To acquiesce to that imposition, proponents of the

⁵³¹ This indeed is how many historians have approached the subject, especially with regards to the prisoners at the Dartmoor Depot of Prisons. See especially Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 175–191; Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 102–130. Because of the infamous “Dartmoor Massacre” discussed later in this chapter more evidence is available for prisoners' conduct and sentiments at that site than at any other node of the archipelago. (Along with accounts of the massacre itself, contemporary printers also published survivors' memoirs within the year. Based on titles and frontispiece references, the massacre remained a selling point for sailor narratives for the rest of the nineteenth century. In the 1870s and 1880s, obituaries of grizzled seamen wondered if this most recent death marked the passing of the last witness of the Dartmoor Massacre.) Evidence from other prison sites, however, indicates that the Americans' behavior at Dartmoor was typical of their behavior elsewhere in the archipelago (as one would expect as prisoners often passed through other sites en route to Dartmoor).

⁵³² These concerns are addressed by several essays in the 2005 issue of *American Quarterly*. See especially Linda Kerber, “Toward a History of Statelessness in America,” 727–749; Amy Kaplan, “Where is Guantánamo?” 831–858; and Christina Duffy Burnett, “The Edges of Empire and the Limits of Sovereignty: American Guano Islands” 779–803. These authors are mainly concerned with the dynamics of American imperialism expressed through the ambiguous sovereignty of such sites as Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, and other places beyond the jurisdiction of the U.S. Constitution yet effectively controlled by the United States. The purpose of this essay, conversely, will be to examine the dynamics of national identity on American citizens trapped in a similar, foreign, archipelago in the early nineteenth century.

war proclaimed, was to sacrifice the patrimony of the founding fathers: independence from Britain. Moreover, freedom was a gift which, though difficult to preserve, was much harder to regain. Once lost it was lost forever (a sobering lesson to be learned from the state of black Americans). As a corollary, American men were supposedly imbued from an earlier age with a fervent attachment to their liberty. Far more than other civilized peoples, Americans believed, their nation resented and resisted the merest hint of tyranny's encroachment. During the War of 1812, the haughty Briton was the type of the tyrant.

The logic of the war thus presented American prisoners with a dilemma.⁵³³ They had been imprisoned in a struggle against British tyranny. Over a thousand of them, indeed, had been imprisoned directly from the decks of British warships. The plight of these impressed sailors especially demonstrated British despotism: Britons first had forced them into the “floating hells” of the British Navy and then discarded them into “worse than Algerine captivity” when they refused to serve against their own country.

⁵³³ From hereon the term “prisoners” will refer primarily to American prisoners of war rather than to the entire prison population. It should be noted, too, that the term American will apply equally to both the majority of white prisoners and the significant minority (of roughly 1,000 individuals) of black prisoners. The experiences of black and white Americans in the archipelago differed (at Dartmoor, for instance, a critical mass of white prisoners successfully demanded that the two groups be lodged in segregated buildings); and almost all of the available writings about the prison appear to have been written by whites. Nonetheless, the recorded actions of black prisoners—not to mention their mere presence in the archipelago—testify to their belief in their American identity. (A possible exception to the lack of writing by blacks is a letter contained in box two of the War of 1812 Papers at the MDHS. Written by a John Baker Jr. to his parents in Baltimore the letter advises its recipients to return post to Dartmoor Prison No. 4—the building that came to be the sole residence of African American prisoners early in 1814. However, the letter was written only two months after the white prisoners’ applied for separate residences and, though no blacks seemed to have lived outside of No. 4, some whites did reside with them there. If the author was black, his letter supports an underlying assumption of this essay—that black and white prisoners both subscribed to and enacted an American national identity: In the letter, the author refers to the U.S. federal government as “our Government” and writes of his longing to return “Home” to America and “to remain there and never leave it without a great accident.” See John Baker Jr. to his parents, Dartmoor Prison, 4 May 1814, War of 1812 Collection, MS 1846, Box Two, MDHS.

Although most Americans entered the archipelago through other routes, they generally adopted the peculiar resentment of these impressed prisoners as their own.

The prisoners' dilemma was that they were subjected to the will, as they saw it, of arbitrary British authority. While the American nation contested its independence against British might, how could American citizens peaceably submit to British confinement? The prisoners' understanding of the war drove them to regard their captivity as a form of tyranny. They did not interpret their condition as a legitimate accident of the fortunes of war. Instead they disputed Britain's authority to imprison them for no other crime than fighting in defense of their nation. Concurrently, the prisoners' understanding of their national identity required them to resist the tyrant's chains. These factors combined to compel the prisoners to assert their national identity through manifold forms of resistance to British authority.

A battle of wills ensued between the prisoners and their keepers over the legitimacy of the latter's authority. The prisoners consistently portrayed this struggle in nationalistic terms. A refrain throughout prisoners' writings, reiterated in their doggerel, was the warning that, "These d-m Englishmen must not think they have got Frenchmen to deal with."⁵³⁴ A stock figure in prisoners' writings was the exasperated British guard who confessed that, given his choice between tending ten Americans or a hundred men from any other nationality, he would always chose the latter as more conducive to his ease and peace of mind. If they expected docility from their prisoners the Britons would

⁵³⁴ Palmer, *Diary*, 13. Variations of the phrase were also common in sailors' doggerel: "*Jones* treated them all in the *Frolic* with *honey*, / Till *Whinyates* cri'd out—this I find is not *Bony* [that is, Bonaparte]"; "Our Tripoli Hero [that is, Stephen Decatur], now next had a chance, / To show to Britannia—he wasn't from France"; "They'll find they've not Monsieur to meet, / But Yankee boys of mettle: / Who will their measures all defeat, / Unless they shortly settle." *Columbian Naval Melody*, 56, 71; *Naval Songster* (1814), 32.

be sorely disappointed. “I often heard the English say,” an erstwhile prisoner of war remembered of his days in the archipelago, “not only at this prison [that is, Cape Town], but on board prison ships, and subsequently at Dartmoor, that Americans were the most difficult to govern of all the nations they had held prisoners. The secret was, and is, that Americans are free, and feel it everywhere, and always.”⁵³⁵ Again and again prisoners reiterated the point: they resisted because they were Americans.⁵³⁶

The British government placed few demands on the thousands of foreign prisoners of war held within its worldwide archipelago (although many prisoners alleged that they were pressured into entering the British Navy). The sites did place inherent limits on prisoners’ freedom, some more than others; hulks, for instance, afforded captives little in the way of spatial mobility. Other locations provided more opportunities for movement and association. Despite its nefarious reputation, Dartmoor Prison gave captives the means to construct a vibrant society that depended on frequent interactions among prisoners and between them and Dartmoor locals. Though Dartmoor was divided into five functioning prison buildings (out of a total of seven, two of which remained dormant), its prisoners usually had free access to all of the prisons. Most of the white prisoners also seem to have had the power to choose the prison building in which they

⁵³⁵ “An Old Sailor’s True Story,” *Emerson’s Magazine and Putnam’s Monthly* (1857–1858); 5, no. 6 (December 1857), <http://www.proquest.com/>.

⁵³⁶ Their recalcitrance (and other elements of their behavior) resembled that of American sailors held in British prisons during the Revolutionary War. One captive during that earlier conflict, for instance, saw his name listed in a prison register marked with the label “rebel.” The prisoner scratched it out and replaced it with “American,” simultaneously supplanting the latter with the former, and conflating them both (that his act entailed the defacement of the register proved the aptness of his elision). See Charles Herbert, *A Relic of the Revolution*, *Eyewitness Accounts of the American Revolution* (Boston: Pierce, 1847; repr. New York: The New York Times & Arno Press, 1968), 34. For accounts of American prisoners in the Revolution, see Bowman, *Captive Americans*; Cogliano, *American Maritime Prisoners*; and Cohen, *Yankee Sailors*. For the way partisans manipulated the suffering of those prisoners during the time of Jefferson’s Embargo, see also Cray, “Commemorating the Prison Ship Dead.”

resided. (Black prisoners, however, were relegated, to Prison No. 4, a building that also housed a few whites; though white prisoners retained the option of cohabiting with their black compatriots, the converse option seems to have been denied.)

Their relative autonomy allowed the men held at Dartmoor to create a vibrant culture. The prisoners' society at Dartmoor included self-government, a market economy (in which some prisoners hired themselves out to others), inmate-taught educational and instructional courses, and inmate-run religious services (after the prisoners dragged a local representative of the Anglican Church into a privy when the contents of his sermon displeased them).⁵³⁷ Evidence for other prison sites is scant but suggestive of similar developments.⁵³⁸ Melville Island, for instance, housed a market economy (fueled in part by the prisoners' enterprises in manufacturing and counterfeiting). Even on hulks inmates found outlets for their creative energies (including a newspaper on one of them). Seemingly at every place of prolonged confinement, American captives established some form of self-government, often called committees.⁵³⁹ Though not always effective instruments, committees did indicate the prisoners' commitment to republicanism and elective government as an important element of their national identity.

The war prisons should not be imagined as meager barracks, dungeons, of tightly watched cellblocks. At many sites prisoners had the means and the ingenuity to contrive

⁵³⁷ For historical accounts of prison society at Dartmoor, see Horsman, "Paradox of Dartmoor Prison"; Fabel, "Self-Help in Dartmoor"; Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 102–130; Dye, *Fatal Cruise*, 291–296; Dye, "American Maritime Prisoners of War, 1812–1815," in *Ships, Seafaring and Society*; Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront*, 175–191.

⁵³⁸ Scholars have paid far less attention to sites other than Dartmoor. The evidence for prisoners' behavior at such places analyzed in this essay is culled from scattered published and archival accounts.

⁵³⁹ The black American prisoners at Dartmoor's Prison No. 4 are an important exception. A single executive known as King Dick governed there. The accounts of white prisoners generally depict King Dick as a tyrant who lorded over his weaker inmates with brute strength and a cudgel. In his seminal study of African American seafarers, W. Jeffrey Bolster offers a more nuanced view. Bolster suggests that King Dick's authority, though certainly autocratic, was also perhaps popular. He compares it to the role played by certain men in black American communities in the United States at the same time. See Bolster, *Black Jacks*, 102–130.

various entertainments and employments. Gambling tables were the favorite contrivance but the prisoners also formed musical bands, staged theatrical performances, fought mock battles with clods of turf, or composed songs about hunting the lice that preyed on them.

Usually, British keepers opted against meddling in prisoners' affairs beyond day-to-day administrative procedures such as roll-calls. Guards did interfere in certain situations; boisterous patriotic displays on the Fourth of July, for instance, aroused annual conflict between prisoners and keepers. Such intrusions were rare. Generally the prisoners were left to their own devices to while away their confinement. British authorities countenanced and worked with inmates' committees. At Dartmoor committeemen were even allowed (tacitly, perhaps) to flog prisoners who broke the committees' laws. (Authorities intervened, however, to prevent the execution of prisoners convicted by their compatriots of treason.)⁵⁴⁰ Throughout the archipelago, inmates enjoyed a good deal of autonomy, bounded more by spatial than ideological constraints.

The main concern of British authorities was not to transform their captives but to contain them.⁵⁴¹ More than anything else, what they wanted from their prisoners was

⁵⁴⁰ The incident stemmed from the battle between the USS *Argus* and the HMS *Pelican* in August, 1813. The *Pelican* included at least six American sailors on its lists at the time of the battle. For an unknown reason, these six Americans waited until after the battle to surrender themselves as prisoners of war. Even more inexplicably, after the six men entered Dartmoor Prison, one of the six bragged that he had been on the boarding party that had taken the *Argus* and had killed a fellow American in the melee. Though the British authorities prevented the execution of these men, they could not stop them from receiving brands on their face to mark them as traitors. See Palmer, *Diary*, 127; Waterhouse, *Journal*, 18; Pierce, "Journal," 27; Andrews, *Prisoners' Memoirs*, 141–142; Selman, *Extracts*, 71; Dye, *Fatal Cruise*, 295–296.

⁵⁴¹ Interestingly, the architecture of Dartmoor Prison mimicked—one might even say anticipated—the designs of nineteenth-century penitentiaries, even though Dartmoor was completed in 1809 and was originally intended to house war prisoners from the French conflicts. Despite its function, the form of the prison bears a panoptical stamp. The depot as a whole is contained within a circular wall. One half of the circle contained administrative buildings, the other prison buildings. The seven prison buildings (five original and two built within a few years) radiate from the center of the depot like spokes on a wheel. With few alterations to the overall layout of the prison (though with the substitution of personal cells for an expansive barracks-style layout) the depot became a penitentiary in 1851, and remains one today.

quiescence. To this end, captors practiced an array of rituals designed both to transform their captives from free combatants into prisoners of war, and to elicit their acquiescence in their condition. These rituals began as soon as the captivity did, and they recurred, in various forms, until the captivity ended. The intention behind these rituals was both to mark the captives as prisoners, visibly and tangibly, and simultaneously to demonstrate the captors' power over them.⁵⁴²

One of the more common rituals was the procession. When transporting large numbers of prisoners over land British captors worked to keep them in tight lines in order, as one prisoner noted, "to make as grand a show as possible" for any observers.⁵⁴³ Rather than allowing the captives to ramble freely to their destination, their handlers coerced them into maintaining a steady pace in a fixed line. Mechanistic movements replaced natural ones; the marchers obeyed the shouted commands of their keepers instead of the whispered ones of their own bodies. Stripped of their self-mastery the prisoners lost also their manhood. A captive to the HMS *Tenedos* bitterly recalled "being driven...up in a corner like hogs, and then marched about the deck, for the strutting

Although the architecture of the prison might have copied the burgeoning form of the penitentiary because its constructors hoped that the building would serve that function in the postwar years, it nonetheless seems significant that the architecture of a war prison could so easily replicate that of a penitentiary. This similitude raises some questions about assertions that the layout of penitentiary served an ideological function; it also raises questions about whether the construction of penitentiaries was an inherent part of modern nationalism. That is, were criminals and foreigners imagined in much the same way by members of the mainstream—so that incarceration became a form of nationalization or assimilation?

⁵⁴² My interpretation of these events as rituals is influenced by Patricia Seed's *Ceremonies of Possession*. In that work Seed demonstrates the divergent ritualistic methods by which different European states claimed mastery over lands in the Americas. The rituals described below, I argue, were similarly ritualistic attempts by which captors imposed mastery over captors. Some of these rituals—such as replacing names with numbers and imposing a standard uniform on prisoners—resemble rituals employed in modern-day total institutions as described by Erving Goffman. The purpose of the archipelago, however, as already discussed, was much different from that of total institutions in its indifference to the inmates' transformation. See Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World* (Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1961; repr., Chicago: Aldine, 1968).

⁵⁴³ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 10.

captain of the frigate to view and review us like cattle in a market before the drover or butcher.”⁵⁴⁴ For this participant, the effect of the procession was degradation to a bestial state. If the commander could succeed in forcing the men into lockstep then he had proven his ability to control them. The rigidity of their movements was a gauge of the extent to which they accepted their transformation into prisoners.

British officers took especial pains to regulate their captives’ movements when they marched through civilian communities. The participation of civilians was important, and it took several forms. Merely by witnessing the lines of captives passing by they helped to transform the men into prisoners. The act of observation publicized the captives’ confinement, and made it an indisputable fact. As the men marched they felt the eyes of a foreign community upon them. They could not shield themselves from the gaze of spectators, no matter what feelings it evoked. During a procession through Halifax, one American prisoner of war observed that, “our march drew to the doors and windows the enchanting sights of fair ladies; compared to our dirty selves, they looked like angels peeping out of Heaven.”⁵⁴⁵ Although the man seemed to take some pleasure in the sight of the women, the contrast between their comely appearances and his own slovenly one, which he had no power to remedy, was apparent and embarrassing.

Often, the witness borne by the community elicited hostility among the observed men. “It is not merely the bodily inconvenience of being transported here and there, that we dread,” one captive admitted, “as the exposure to insult and sarcasm of our enemies.”⁵⁴⁶ Captives were especially peeved when civilians added their own flourishes to the ritual. An American prisoner of war in Barbados voiced a deep distaste for his own

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 114.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., 112.

brush with the island's inhabitants. As soon as he and his fellow captives set foot on the island he noticed "a large number of negroes [who] awaited our landing, to testify to us, in their own way, their welcome of us to their beautiful island. Nor did their hospitable reception of us cease, till we were all snugly inured within the dominions of Mr. Briggs, the worthy keeper of the prison." This "hospitable reception" consisted of "antic gambols," "shouts and grimaces," and the "hurling at us [of] sticks and stones."⁵⁴⁷

The captive recalled the lyrics of one of islanders' songs—"Man a war buckra, man a war buckra, / He de boy for me; / He catch 'em Yankee, he catch 'em Yankee, / De good prize for he. / ... We catch 'em Yankee for good." Through these lyrics, the Barbadian community applauded the capture of the Americans by the Royal Navy and informally legitimated their imprisonment (as a "good prize"). None too perspicacious, the American prisoner regarded them instead as the absurd lyrics of "wild negro songs" rather than as incantations of possession, and attributed his treatment generally to the "simplicity" of the island's Afro-Caribbean population.⁵⁴⁸

Another common ritual was a variation on the procession: Instead of being forced to march beneath a steady hostile gaze, prisoners were compelled to stand passively while the bearer of the gaze processed before them. This ritual rankled captives deeply. It drove home their impotence. To abide without complaint or resistance a stare of condescension was almost too much for some men to bear. Forty years after the fact, prisoners still remembered the humiliation of being huddled "together in an old stagnated, contracted hulk, like sheep in a fold, subject to the taunts of Great Britain's

⁵⁴⁷ Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 78.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 78–79.

Petty Officers.”⁵⁴⁹ “We have been, and still dread to be again placed in rows,” confessed another sailor, “on board of a ship, or in a prison yard, to be stared at by the British vulgar, just as if we were Guinea negroes, exposed to the examination of some scoundrel negro merchants, commissioned to re-stock a plantation with black cattle, capable of thinking, talking, laughing and weeping.”⁵⁵⁰

Although this statement is condemnatory of traffic in human beings generally, the thrust of its outrage is against the racialization of American prisoners of war. Though the speaker denounces the slave trade, he also overemphasizes the connection between slavery and race: “Guinea negroes,” “negro merchants,” and “black cattle,” all in one sentence. Whatever his feelings about African and African American slavery, the prisoner clearly objected not merely to being treated like a slave but also to being associated conceptually with enslaved “negroes.”

This humiliating practice of standing in a line before a hostile gaze recurred regularly throughout a captive’s confinement. As prisoners arrived at Dartmoor Prison, for instance, their bodies were scanned and their names, birthplaces, heights, distinguishing marks, complexions, ships, and ranks were recorded.⁵⁵¹ Each inmate received a number to identify him and to transform him nominally into a prisoner. Daily roll calls reminded prisoners of their status. Mornings at Dartmoor Prison and other places regularly commenced with guards calling the prisoners out to be counted. These roll calls usually lasted an hour at Dartmoor. As the weather there was constantly damp

⁵⁴⁹ “Memorial from the Privateersmen of Marblehead in the War with Great Britain to the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives of United States of America,” Glover Broughton Papers, Marblehead Historical Society.

⁵⁵⁰ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 112.

⁵⁵¹ See Dye, “American Maritime Prisoners.”

and frequently cold, the Americans resented this procedure immensely. That they had not choice but to participate reinforced their identity as prisoners.

British authorities also demarcated Americans as prisoners through the use of symbolic articles of clothing. One American sailor captured from a privateer and taken to Barbados was released on his parole, provided he maintain a strict curfew and wear a black cockade in his hat. He realized, and resented, the purpose of the cockade: “it marked us out, plainer than letters could, as prisoners.” Prisoners entering Dartmoor received a jacket, trousers, and a conical cap. All three articles were yellow, the jackets and the trousers emblazoned with the royal arrow and the letters “T. O.,” for “Transport Office” (the branch of the Royal Navy that administered the prison system).⁵⁵² The inmates despised these slops. They lodged numerous complaints with their agent in London, Reuben Beasley. He provided relief in May, 1814, distributing new outfits consisting of shoes, a shirt, trousers and a jacket, all colored blue instead of yellow. Although the fabric of their new clothes was coarser than their prison issue had been, the prisoners preferred their new outfits to the old. Casting away their withered yellow rags, one prisoner noted, he and his comrades

felt an independence, which had before been smothered in the wretchedness of our situation; we could now converse with ease, and without that restraint, that a mean and dirty habit will ever give a man in presence of those in a clean and genteel one; that old, dirty, tawny dress depressed us with a sense of inferiority; but now we could vindicate our country’s rights, in argument with any visitor; we came out boldly, and demanded restitution for any injury or fraud that heretofore had been practised upon us.⁵⁵³

⁵⁵² Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 230. According to one account, prisoners at Norfolk [This must be Melville] Island were expected to wear a “prison dress, with one leg of the trowsers yellow and the other blue, &c.; but we [that is, the Americans] would not stand that. Our agent managed the matter so that we got regular jackets and trowsers of the true old colour. The poor Frenchmen looked like peacocks in their dress, but we did not envy them their finery.” Ned Myers, *Ned Myers*, 118.

⁵⁵³ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 84.

The men at Dartmoor fared better in this regard than the prisoners at Melville Island, who, from the winter of 1812 through the spring of 1813, sent letters to their agent pleading for clothes to shield them from the weather.⁵⁵⁴

Other prisoners shared the conviction that a shabby appearance contributed to a servile attitude. One inmate accused his captors of deliberately fostering a ragged, dirty appearance among the imprisoned sailors. To his dismay, he saw his own countrymen “covered with rags, dirt, and vermin.” “Was there any design in this?” he wondered. “Did our enemies wish to impress their countrymen with an abhorrence of a yankee? How else can we account for a treatment which our people never experienced when prisoners of the Indians?”⁵⁵⁵ As a result of the prisoners’ appearance, he assumed, British onlookers regarded them disdainfully, as a “cowardly, low spirited race of men, much inferior to the British.”⁵⁵⁶ Like processions, prisoners’ tattered habiliments exposed them to contempt. Both were intended to break the prisoners’ spirits and force them to accept their condition.

For many prisoners, the harsh conditions of confinement seemed an integral part of a deliberate process to demoralize them. Men interned in hulks perhaps suffered worst. Hulks were converted ships, usually large ships-of-the-line with their masts removed. They could house hundreds of prisoners. Much of the time the prisoners were confined below deck, crammed into holds with little ventilation and little light. The combined stenches of sweat, urine, and excrement suffused the holds. As one prisoner

⁵⁵⁴ Several letters to this effect can be found in John Mitchell Papers, Mrs. Wilcox Mss. Correspondence, Reports, etc, Concerning American Prisoners of War, 1812–1814, folder Mrs. Wilcox Manuscripts, HSP. Correspondence of John Mitchell, American Agent of Prisoners of War, at Halifax, 1812–1813, HSP. See also Joseph Starr et al. to J. Monroe, 30 August 1812, Milville [sic] Prison, printed in U.S. Congress, *Report on the Spirit and Manner*, 22–24.

⁵⁵⁵ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 137.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

remembered, “the hold, which was not remarkably odoriferous of sweets when we were put into it, very shortly became redolent of all manner of villainous effluvia.”⁵⁵⁷

Summing up his disgust with prison hulks, one British historian lamented that, “Man took one of the most beautiful objects of his handiwork and deformed it into a hideous monstrosity.” They were, he added, “hells upon water.”⁵⁵⁸

Dartmoor Prison struck many of its inmates as hellish in its own right. The architecture of the depot at Dartmoor did little to ameliorate the harsh weather to which the region was prone. Prisoners complained frequently of the coldness and dampness.⁵⁵⁹ Prisoners at Dartmoor invariably described the surrounding countryside as bleak, grim, and sterile. One prisoner called it “the most retched in this habbited world.”⁵⁶⁰ The prison was “situated on one of the highest hills in England and it either snows or rains the whole year round,” another complained.⁵⁶¹ Around the prison, “not a blade of grass, nor the remnants of one, not an object which appeared to be susceptible of civilization could be seen.”⁵⁶² To construct a proper mental image of the surroundings, one French author advised his readers to “think of the ocean waves changed into granite during a

⁵⁵⁷ Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 150.

⁵⁵⁸ Francis Abell, *Prisoners of War in Britain, 1756 to 1815: A Record of Their Lives, Their Romance and Their Sufferings* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), 37–38.

⁵⁵⁹ One prisoner wrote of Dartmoor that, “The distress that prevails is almost incomprehensible the bleak situation and ruinous state of the Prison obliges us to make use of our blankets, hamocs and other articles of covering to prevent the weather from beating upon us. the daily accounts of mortality from the Hospital is from six to eight which might be prevented were we more comfortably situated and proper attention given to us.” Richard Hamilton to Widdow of Joseph Hamilton [Rebecca Hamilton], Dartmoor, England, 26 November 1814, Letters of Richard Hamilton, photocopies, The Mariners’ Museum.

⁵⁶⁰ Perez Drinkwater to Sally Drinkwater, 12 October 1814, in Bruce Felknor, ed., *A Privateersman’s Letters Home from Prison*, 3 December 1999, <<http://www.usmm.org/felknor1812.html>> (5 June 2001).

⁵⁶¹ Perez Drinkwater to Elbridge Drinkwater, 20 May 1814, in *ibid.*

⁵⁶² Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 155. Wracking their brains for synonyms to express their disgust with the prison, one group of petitioners described the prison as “that Dismal Dreary—Doleful—Contemptable *Dartmoor* were within 3 miles a Rabbit cannot live, and termed by the Countrymen the Devils Land.” “Memorial from the Privateersmen of Marblehead in the War with Great Britain to the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives of United States of America,” Glover Broughton Papers, Marblehead Historical Society.

tempestuous storm.”⁵⁶³ Prisoners in Canada similarly complained bitterly of the cold, while those held in the Caribbean resented cohabiting with swarms of large insects (many white prisoners there also hated living under the eye of black guards).⁵⁶⁴

The scanty food allowance was another cause of complaint. As a rule, British authorities supplied captive seamen with two-thirds the rations supplied to active British sailors, justifying the practice in light of the captives’ idleness (the same proportion was fed to wounded Britons). This justification rested on the assumption that British sailors were themselves adequately fed, an assertion with which some historians have taken issue.⁵⁶⁵ Other historians have contended that the prisoners’ rations were indeed adequate, as long as they met the quality standards set by the British government.⁵⁶⁶ Unfortunately for the prisoners, the contractors who provided the food sometimes skimmed on quality to pocket a few extra pounds. If caught cheating the captives in this way, the contractors were liable to criminal prosecution, but corruption among prison officials could prevent such scams from coming to light. Despite grisly meat weighed

⁵⁶³ Jules Poulain, *Dartmoor; or, The Two Sisters*, quoted in A. J. Rhodes, *Dartmoor Prison: A Record of 126 Years of Prisoner of War and Convict Life, 1806–1932* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Limited, 1933), 26.

⁵⁶⁴ Privateer captain John Crowinshield, who suffered personal indignities while on parole at Halifax, kept a memorandum book titled “Materials for a letter to Capt John Couchet, of his Majesty’s Royal Navy.—agent for Prisoners at Halifax.” The book contains a series of recriminations intended as fodder for an angry letter to Couchet. Among many other things, Crowinshield alleged that, “The officers prisoners in Melville cook out of doors, viz. pots put in some old mason work or rather stones piled up against the pale [?] fence without the least covering—the last winter was severe in the extreem & you would not cover them nor would you suffer the officers to cover them themselves—& the boys cooks were often obliged the last winter in the worst weather to dig the pots out of the snow & ice one & two feet, in some of the mornings, before they could get the breakfast, & often times had their jackets around the fire to keep off the rain & sleet from putting out the fire.” (If Crowinshield did write the letter, it probably failed to match the vituperation of one sent by another prisoner to the same addressee, which proclaimed that Couchet was “a mean paltry coward & I would pinch your nose & kick you were I not a prisoner. Send me to England you catiff if you are not too great a coward, there is law, there is justice & equity, there there are no such lickspittle puppies as you are.”) See “Materials for a letter to Capt John Couchet” and T. D. [?] Nelson to Captain Couchet, Melville Prison, 30 December 1814, both in MH-15 Crowinshield Family Papers, B5, F3: John Crowinshield Letterbooks (1814–15, 1832). Library, PEM, Salem, Mass.

⁵⁶⁵ Bowman, *Captive Americans*, 18.

⁵⁶⁶ Patrick Crowhurst, *The French War On Trade: Privateering 1793–1815* (Brookfield, Vt.: Scholar Press, 1989), 184–188.

with the bone and weevily biscuit, prisoners in the British archipelago did not starve. Nonetheless, prisoners groused about the poor quality and small portions of their servings.

The prisoners considered the conditions of their imprisonment unduly harsh. The food, the cold, the disease, the vermin—at times they accepted these as inescapable features of confinement. Other times they attributed them to the indifference or hostility of their captors. (Numerous prisoners suggested that British authorities deliberately mistreated prisoners to compel them to accept service in the Royal Navy to escape their suffering.) One prisoner regarded lice, ubiquitous inhabitants of almost every site in the war-prison archipelago, as a “disgrace [to] the British government.” Their presence might, “in part, be owing to the nastiness and negligence of the prisoners themselves, but the great fault and the disgrace, remain with Britain.”⁵⁶⁷ Another prisoner averred that he could “bring no greater reproach on the British government for its treatment of the prisoners than this insufficient allowance of food, unless it be immuring men in such a horrid and unhealthy climate as Dartmoor.”⁵⁶⁸ After detailing the provisions his captors fed him, an inmate at Dartmoor charged, “British Humanity is here displayd in its most conspicuous collours.—let no one hereafter accuse the British of Humanity a name they detest and abhor so much that they have erased it from their minds and are now utter strangers to the word.”⁵⁶⁹ “O. Lord,” the prisoner continued, “relieve me once more from the thieving Irons of these Savage, inhuman, tyrannical, Britains.”⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁷ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 12.

⁵⁶⁸ Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 204.

⁵⁶⁹ Palmer, *Diary*, 13.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

Through such imagery, the American prisoners depicted their captors as tyrants. Britons evinced their tyrannical natures by forcing Americans into degrading situations, by reducing their attire to lousy rags, by feeding them food fit only for animals—in a sense, by placing them in a condition reserved in the United States for black slaves (a connection some prisoners explicitly recognized). Bestial images were a common trope in prisoners’ writings: “They now gave us bread not fitting for a pig to eat”; “The beef that came on board appeared as if it was not fit for a dog to eat”; “We were all put down the [HMS] *Diamede* forehold on the water casks, a place not fit for a dog.”⁵⁷¹ One prisoner resented his diet of oatmeal because Americans “consider ground oats as only fit for cattle, and it is never eaten by the human species in the United States.”⁵⁷² Prisoners also compared themselves and their captors to other peoples. The American prisoners were kept like “Guinea Negroes.”⁵⁷³ Their British keepers were worse than “Algerines,” worse than the Indians of North America, in their treatment of their captives.⁵⁷⁴ These analogies announced the prisoners’ conviction that their treatment, though perhaps suitable for other nations, was inappropriate for American men. Furthermore, it sharply distinguished the humanity of their own compatriots from the brutality of Britons—a nation with whom, superficially, they seemed to share so many commonalities.

The danger of “tyranny” was more than a physical threat. Suffering beneath tyranny threatened to deprive a man of his civility, manhood, and humanity; it might reduce him to a savage or a bestial state. The prisoners’ use of bestial imagery hints at

⁵⁷¹ Selman, *Extracts*, 46–47.

⁵⁷² Waterhouse, *Journal*, 31–32.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 14, 19, 29.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 69, 137.

this fear; at times they expressed it more overtly. The conditions at Dartmoor, prisoners alleged, made vice inevitable.⁵⁷⁵ One prisoner asserted that,

The Britains know, probably, that a long and lingering imprisonment weakens the body, and diminishes the energy of the mind; that it disposes to vice, to a looseness of thought, and a destruction of those moral principles inculcated by a careful and early education.⁵⁷⁶

“I can easily comprehend,” he continued, “how bad and scanty food, dirt, vermin, and a slow chronical disease, or low spirits, may change the temper and character of large bodies of men.”⁵⁷⁷ Another prisoner described the prisons as “an Excellent school for all those that have Led an Irregular Life” because it displayed all the disastrous effects of drinking and profligacy.⁵⁷⁸ Many young prisoners failed to heed this lesson, according to an inmate who had “frequently traced the sure and rapid progress of vice in many young men” at Dartmoor.⁵⁷⁹

As bad a fate as succumbing to the vices encouraged by the prison’s squalor was that of becoming inured to that squalor. “What we call delicacy is a refinement of civilization,” postulated one captive, “and of course a departure from nature. See how the brutes enjoy rolling and wallowing in what *we call* dirt; next to them we may observe the love of what *we call* filth in savages.”⁵⁸⁰ Disgust for dirt and sensitivity to pain and

⁵⁷⁵ Such fears were expressed by the relatives of prisoners as well. A midshipman held prisoner in Canada, for instance, received a letter from his aunt advising him to guard his virtue carefully. Significantly, the aunt feared the contaminating influence of common American seamen more than that of confinement in the abstract. Her concerns are echoed by unlucky officers denied parole. Their writings suggest that their primary grievance with British confinement was the dual act of having their status as gentlemen denied coupled with their forced association with their fore-castle compatriots. Rather than being lumped with Americans, in brief, these officers felt that they should be admitted into the company of gentlemen such as their British counterparts. Anne Homer [?] to James Curtis, October, 1813, Curtis-Stevenson Family Papers, Box 8, Folder “Curtis Family Papers, 1809–1813,” MHS.

⁵⁷⁶ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 100.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵⁷⁸ Valpey, *Journal*, 13.

⁵⁷⁹ Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 227.

⁵⁸⁰ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 171.

discomfort demonstrated civility.⁵⁸¹ The conditions at the prison threatened to overthrow prisoners' refinement, to return them to the natural state from which the civilizing process had removed them, by acclimating them to brutal conditions. "I suffered greatly, and so did many of my countrymen, on our first acquaintance with filth and vermin in this our British captivity," the inmate reflected. "I have gradually surmounted antipathies I once thought insurmountable." This diminished sensibility troubled the prisoner. He ranked it as one of the cruelties for which the British should be made to face retribution.⁵⁸²

More than the conditions of the prison rankled the Americans however: they also could not resign themselves to being imprisoned at all. As a counterpoint to their depiction of Britons as tyrants, Americans portrayed themselves as unjustly suffering sons of liberty. The sole purpose of prisons such as those at Dartmoor was to deprive men of their liberty. "Reform" played no part in their function. The disciplinary qualities ascribed to the emergent penitentiary systems of the early nineteenth century

⁵⁸¹ This sensitivity was perhaps more acute for prisoners with more refined and educated backgrounds—the sort of men who would also be more likely to keep diaries and publish memoirs. Certainly, imprisoned scribblers castigated the deportment of some of their fellow inmates. Officers were the worst in this regard; they tended to disdain common seamen en masse. Other prisoners recognized a gradation of degradation among their comrades. They complained, for instance, of the smell of some inmates and the rowdiness of others. Some committees felt it necessary to ban explicitly urination and defecation anywhere but the necessary. Presumably a weathered tar had greater tolerance for discomfort than the middle-class clerk or affluent country boy who took an unusual and unlucky gamble on a privateering voyage (such practiced callousness was a central feature of maritime culture and sailor identity). On the other hand, bearing pain is a far different thing from enjoying it or ignoring it. Similarly, the inevitable hardships of seafaring—wormy food, close quarters, inclement weather—were not necessarily regarded in the same light when they happened during the course of a voyage as when they did while held by a foreign power. The actions and words of common sailors captured in the writings of their (perhaps) more refined compatriots—accounts of bread riots, snippets of conversation, and so forth—indicate that sailors personalized their suffering in confinement. They perceived it as a sign of either British cruelty or callousness and resented it as such. For discussions of refinement, see Elias, *Civilizing Process*; Bushman, *Refinement of America*; Elizabeth B. Clark, "'The Sacred Rights of the Weak': Pain, Sympathy, and the Culture of Individual Rights in Antebellum America," *The Journal of American History*, Volume 82, Issue 2 (Sep., 1995), 463–493; Karen Halttunen, "Humanitarianism and the Pornography of Pain in Anglo-American Culture," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1995): 303–334.

⁵⁸² Waterhouse, *Journal*, 171.

were absent from Dartmoor.⁵⁸³ Prisoners there were isolated, in most cases, neither from each other nor completely from the outside world. They had regular access to markets to buy goods from English merchants. They were allowed to keep their money and to buy alcoholic beverages. Lodgings at Dartmoor were constructed like barracks, without cells. During the day the prisoners strolled freely through the prison yard or visited prisons other than their own. Their lives were hardly regimented (except for morning roll calls and the evening turning-in); they passed the time as they chose within the confines of the depot. The duration of their stay was undecided: it would last as long as the war lasted. The purpose of Dartmoor was simply to remove active men from the theater of war.

The prisoners associated their confinement with punishment, however, and they regarded this punishment as arbitrary and tyrannical. “Who can express the anguish felt by some of us,” wrote one prisoner, “here crowded together, like sheep, men who have broken no law of either country, but who have stood courageously forth in supporting the sacred cause of our country.”⁵⁸⁴ The rationale of this prisoner’s resentment is significant. It is based on his innocence of infraction against any law. The War of 1812 occurred at the beginning of the era in which close confinement became the primary penal instrument.⁵⁸⁵ Nonetheless, this prisoner already associated confinement with

⁵⁸³ This point requires qualification. The exterior architecture of the depot did resemble penitentiary designs which were only beginning to come to the fore. The depot consisted, eventually, of seven prisons contained within one half of a large enwalled circle (the other half contained administrative buildings). Each of the seven prison buildings pointed toward the center of the depot, splaying out like the spokes of a wheel. The arrangement gives the depot a panoptic quality that seems to have been accidental (or perhaps the most efficient use of space). The depot fell out of use at the end of the Napoleonic Wars but was reopened in the 1850s as penitentiary. The only substantial alteration in the prison’s architecture was the inclusion of cells in the prison buildings, where a barracks style had formerly predominated. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 231–256.

⁵⁸⁴ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 126.

⁵⁸⁵ Seminal works on this topic include Michael Igantieff, *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750–1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; and Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum*.

criminality. His own confinement, in this light, made a mockery of the purpose of prisons. “Is it not a shame and a disgrace to Christian natives,” he demanded, “that because a man has had the virtue to step forward in the cause of his country [he] should be plunged into such an horrid prison as this?”⁵⁸⁶ In other words, the war-prison archipelago perversely treated the best of men as the worst. (The sentiment is most understandable with regards to the hundreds of cases of American sailors impressed into the British navy, and then imprisoned when they refused to fight against their countrymen; but even men captured from privateers preying on British commerce, this prisoner being one, considered their confinement unjust.)

For American prisoners, the physical spaces of prison hulks, buildings, and depots became synonymous with tyranny and the lack of liberty; conversely, the concept of liberty took on its own physical aspect. Liberty was rooted in the coy smiles of young women, the hearths of home and the soil of the United States. “Sweet America,” one prisoner pined,

when will that happy time come when we shall inhail thy pure air. of Liberty and blest with the charming society of the fair sex. will spend our days. in uninterrupted felicity. amid pleasures unknown. But alas I fear far distant will be that happy Day that we shall hear the pleasing sound of welcome once more to the arms of thy Parrents thou unfortunate Child of Misfortune.⁵⁸⁷

For this inmate liberty was a concept that could not be expressed without contemplating the embrace of his parents on American land. Another prisoner concurred: “The American sailor has a home; he was born and brought up in a home that had a ‘fire place’ in it. Many of them here, in captivity, have wives and children, most of them have parents, and brothers and sisters.”⁵⁸⁸ The United States was, he believed, the

⁵⁸⁶ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 101.

⁵⁸⁷ Palmer, *Diary*, 7–8.

⁵⁸⁸ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 126.

...hope of future times!
[The] wonder of surrounding climes!
[The] last and only resting place
Of Freedom's persecuted race.⁵⁸⁹

British authority at Dartmoor was tyrannical in part because it confined men away from their homes, and away from the amenities and relations of home, substituting for them dehumanizing squalor.

These mental calculations offered the Americans an excuse to resist their captors' authority. Since resistance to tyranny was at the root of how American men constructed their self-image, Britons' attempts to impose their authority over the prisoners frequently resulted in verbal and physical conflict. Indeed, imagining themselves as "sons of liberty," jealous of their rights and insistent upon their freedom, was the primary means by which Americans could assure themselves that theirs was a distinct nation from the British. Whatever similarities appeared on the surface, the two peoples were not the same: Americans loved liberty; Britons reveled in arbitrary power. One prisoner made this point explicitly:

The God of nature has ordained that nations should be separated by a difference of language, religion, customs, and manners, for wise purposes; but where two great nations, like the English and American, have the same language, institutions and manners, he may possibly have allowed the devil to inspire one with his own infernal spirit of cruelty, in order to effect a separation, and keep apart two people, superficially resembling each other.⁵⁹⁰

Americans' steadfast resistance to British authority, from this perspective, stemmed from the independent spirit that distinguished them from their former countrymen, who, for their own part, were the type of tyranny.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 226.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 68.

Regarding themselves as stalwart freemen and their imprisonment as a tyrannical imposition, American captives consciously undermined the British rituals that codified their identity as prisoners. The American parolee in Barbados forced to wear a black cockade on his hat to mark him as a prisoner skirted the spirit of the rule by fixing the cockade on the inside of the hat where it could not be seen (but could be produced when confronted).⁵⁹¹ Prisoners robbed processions of their pomp and purpose by pretending to misapprehend their handlers' commands:⁵⁹²

We were then commanded to *halt* [one prisoner recalled of one such occasion]. As we have no such word of command on board of an American privateer, some crowded on, while a few stopped. The young officer tried again, and made us stand all in a row. Some of the crew told their comrades that when the captain sung out "*halt*," he meant "*avast*," and that then they should all stop. When we were all in order again, the scarlet-coated young gentleman, with a golden swash on his left shoulder, gave a second time the word of command—"march"—when we got into the like confusion, again, when he cried out in a swearing passion, "*halt*"—on which some stopped short, and some walked on, when the whole squad burst out laughing. I know not what would have been the consequence of his passion had not a navy officer standing by observed to him, that they were not soldiers but sailors, who knew nothing about military marching, or military words of command, when the young man told us to march in our own way; upon which our sailors stuck their fists in their pockets, and scabbled and reeled on as sailors always do; for a sailor does not know how to walk like a landsman.⁵⁹³

This incident is described carefully to reveal its purpose. Mention is made of the British officer's scarlet coat and the "golden swash on his left shoulder" to draw attention to his haughty bearing. The sailors' actions draw him into a "swearing passion" which reveals that the Briton cannot control himself, let alone his captives. Significantly, it is the prisoners themselves who instigate the officer's rage—his "unmanning," in the parlance of

⁵⁹¹ Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 90–91.

⁵⁹² Similar practices were employed by American sailors enslaved on the Barbary Coast. In imitation of American slaves in the American South (and in line with maritime tradition), these sailors feigned ignorance, broke tools, and even inflicted minor wounds on themselves to undermine their value to their owners. I am indebted to Lisa Norling for alerting me to the probably feigned ineptness of the sailors on such occasions.

⁵⁹³ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 10–11.

the time. In instances such as these, captives outwitted their captors; in the process they made clear that, though imprisoned, they were not prisoners.

Captured Americans held at Cape Town turned their guards' own rituals against them. When the prisoners felt a guard was too "tyrannical," they "plagued" him by having a few inmates absent themselves from roll call. Other prisoners would then be "sent to find the absentees; these, in turn would hide themselves, and require to be sought by others. This was excessively vexatious to the soldiers, and as it occurred only when a tyrannical sergeant was on guard, they soon understood its meaning."⁵⁹⁴ At Dartmoor Prison, inmates subverted roll calls by brute force. They expressed their anger at being made to stand for long periods in the cold by "making a keeno." This practice consisted of shouting, "Keeno!" and tackling the guards. One prisoner recorded a typical incident on January 29, 1815: "Brings forth pleasant weather on that account all the Prissoners counted out but it being wet underfoot and Cold the Prissoners as usual mad[e] keeno which is done by rushing in on the Soldiers and heaving them into the mud." Making keeno was not an unusual event; in fact, on one occasion keenos were made on two subsequent days—February 6 and 7, 1815.⁵⁹⁵

American prisoners did not simply subvert British rituals during their confinement; they also practiced rituals of their own. One type of ritual was raucous patriotic celebrations. The prisoners feted reports of American victories, dates such as George Washington's birthday, and, most spectacularly, the Fourth of July. On such occasions, the inmates insisted on their right to fly American flags over their prisons,

⁵⁹⁴ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 202–203. A different Cape Town detainee claimed that prisoners answered for absentees in order to fool the sentinel. The practice gave men a chance to escape the prison and wander the nearby town. "An Old Sailor's True Story."

⁵⁹⁵ Pierce, "Journal," 28–29.

emblazoned with patriotic mottoes such as “Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights.”⁵⁹⁶ The prisoners took pride in the annoyance these displays caused their captors. One New Year’s Eve the Americans at Dartmoor “hoisted our saucy flags on them are displayed Free trade and Sailors Rights, in large capital letters—It humbles the British pride to see this Motto on our flag.” That same day, “some English officers came up to see the prisoners & the band of [Prison] No. 4 played up Yankee doodle dandy O It galls them.”⁵⁹⁷

Often times these public displays of defiance escalated into physical confrontations between prisoners and guards. A prisoner at Dartmoor noted in the early fall of 1814 that “there was scarce a day but some dispute or strife took place, between the turnkeys or guards, and the prisoners.”⁵⁹⁸ As the first Fourth of July Americans celebrated at Dartmoor approached in the summer of 1813, the prisoners began to feel “that fire of patriotism, and that just pride and honor, which fills the bosom of every American, when that great day of jubilee arrives.” To express this aspect of their identities, the prisoners flew two Americans flags in their yard. Their British guards resented this action and the head of the prison demanded that the Americans pull the standards down. The prisoners responded, “that if he should persist in attempting to take that flag which we should ever respect, in whatever country we were, he must abide by the circumstances.”⁵⁹⁹ A battle ensued. The British conquered one of the standards, while the Americans defended the second successfully, and flew it throughout the remainder of the day. (A similar struggle ensued that same day at a British prison camp

⁵⁹⁶ Valpey, *Journal*, 17.

⁵⁹⁷ Palmer, *Diary*, 126–127.

⁵⁹⁸ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 122–123.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 33–34.

on Malta.)⁶⁰⁰ The next year, the prisoners raised a flag with the slogan, “All Canada or Dartmoor prison for life.”⁶⁰¹

American defiance sometimes expressed itself in juvenile pranks. For instance, a British crewman of the prison hulk *Crown Prince*, while on shore, stole a sheep from a farmer. His captain protected the sailor from prosecution by recompensing the farmer the cost of the sheep. Learning of the affair, the American prisoners bleated loudly at the captain one morning as he boated to shore with his wife.⁶⁰² On another occasion, the prisoners on the hulk *Bahama* declared a “potato war” against the commander of another hulk docked near their own. This commander upset the men by reporting to his counterpart on the *Bahama* “every little pickadillo of the American prisoners.” In retaliation, the Americans saved the potatoes from their rations as ammunition with which to pelt the meddling commander as he strolled the deck of his ship. The commander reacted precipitously:

He directly drew his marines up in battle array, on his quarter deck, when the captain of the *Bahama* seeing his folly, and knowing his disposition, exerted himself to make every American go below, and enjoined upon them a cessation of potatoes. We gained, however, more by this short war, than most of the nations of the world, for it entirely removed the cause for which we took up potatoes against one of his Britannick majesty’s officers, within ten leagues of the capital of his empire.⁶⁰³

Act of defiance could also be subtler. When several hundred British sailors and soldiers joined a chase after four Americans who had escaped from a hulk, imprisoned boys, pencils and slates in hand, pretended to practice their arithmetic by loudly figuring “how

⁶⁰⁰ According to a prisoner’s diary, “This Day [July 4, 1813] We Wish to Celebrate it Being our Independant Day We hoisted An American & French flag Which was Order’d to be haul’d down By the Agent But to no Purpose Untill 4 pm There Came An Extra Guard And A field officer Who Came And Asked us To haul our Colours down Which Was done By his Request. The day Being Celebrated Much to our Satisfaction.” Obadiah Stevens, *His Book—27 April 1813, Memorandum of the Time Kept in Prison in Malta*, Papers of Obadiah Stevens, LOC.

⁶⁰¹ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 96.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 95; Waterhouse, *Journal*, 103–104.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, 134–135.

many British marines it would take to catch ten thousand of us,” if it took three hundred fifty to catch four.⁶⁰⁴

Sometimes American defiance threatened to turn deadly. At Dartmoor on March 3, 1815, several prisoners escaped into the prison yard though all inmates had been ordered into their respective buildings. In the course of restoring order, a British soldier stabbed a prisoner five times. The Americans placed the blame for this attack squarely on the shoulders of the soldier and his comrades, for “they are a new recrew & have not learn’d how to treat American Prisoners.” The prisoners’ committeemen wrote to the head of the prison, Captain Thomas Shortland, threatening that “if he did not make them satisfaction for the Soldiers’ stabling that man, they would put to Death the first Soldier that enter’d the gates.” Surprisingly, Shortland conceded to the prisoners’ demand. He promised to punish the soldier responsible if the Americans identified him.⁶⁰⁵

Indeed, the Americans often emerged from such encounters with the upper-hand. At Dartmoor on 14 February 1815, the prisoners took control of the prison yard for several hours. Against the guards’ rifles the prisoners armed themselves with paving stones, and swore that the consequence if the guards fired would be “instant Death to every dam Son of a Bitch.”⁶⁰⁶ One prisoner wrote in his diary that, “we told them that we would not go in until Night they then ordered there Soldiers home and we Gave them three hearty cheers and kept the Liberty of the Yard until Sundown to the Great Mortification of the British officers and Soldier’s.”⁶⁰⁷ A similar incident occurred at Cape Town when prisoners refused to turn over two of their comrades to be placed into

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 109.

⁶⁰⁵ Pierce, “Journal,” 34–35.

⁶⁰⁶ Palmer, *Diary*, 150.

⁶⁰⁷ Valpey, *Journal*, 21.

solitary confinement. The guards aimed their guns at the prisoners, who yelled “Fire away! You will have but one fire, and then it will be our turn.” “At the same time,” as a participant remembered the event, “we picked up all the broken glass, sticks, stones, &c., which were within our reach, and stood waiting for their firing as a signal for a general melee. The sergeant, seeing our resolution, and wisely considering that our superiority in numbers, might secure us a victory over the handful composing his guard, ordered the soldiers to retire.”⁶⁰⁸

Attempted escapes were a common form of defiance. One prisoner listed sixteen prisoners who successfully escaped from Dartmoor between the first successful attempt in September 1814 and the middle of March 1815.⁶⁰⁹ From that point on, “many prisoners made their escape, the government appearing very careless; and it was supposed this negligence was intentional, that they might escape for the purpose of impressing, as the press was hot about this time.”⁶¹⁰ The war had ended by this point, of course, which may have made British soldiers more lax in their duties; in one brief period, they assisted at least eight prisoners in escaping.⁶¹¹ A Dartmoor prisoner considered taking advantage of their cooperation, but lamented that, “my stock of cash being expended & my cloaths being scant will not sell for sufficient to bribe a centinal.”⁶¹² This method had its dangers, however, as the guards could betray the prisoners. Even if the prisoners made it over the walls, they had to cover many miles before they reached a town populated enough in which to lose themselves. The villagers

⁶⁰⁸ Leech, *Thirty Years*, 210.

⁶⁰⁹ Andrews, *Prisoners' Memoirs*, 275–276.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 124. American prisoners of war remained in captivity long after the war ended for reasons discussed below.

⁶¹² Palmer, *Diary*, 131–132.

around the depot, meanwhile, kept their eyes open for escaped prisoners to return for a cash reward.

The prisoners at Dartmoor, therefore, pinned their hopes on a mass escape. To this end, they began digging several tunnels beneath their prisons. The men involved took an oath of secrecy, and were threatened with “immediate death in a private and secret manner” if they informed the guards.⁶¹³ In case his diary might fall into enemy hands, one prisoner recorded information about the plot to escape in code: “the prisoner fo No. 5 ewer gdigin tou dan sha nbee otw sweek no eth sbusines.”⁶¹⁴ It was not a remarkably sophisticated code, and one wishes that the prisoner who referenced the ciphred “poetry” with which his companions circulated their plans to each other to avoid arousing the suspicion of their keepers had offered his readers an example; nevertheless, the various ploys and oaths kept the Americans’ designs secret for several weeks. The prisoners showed remarkable ingenuity in removing piles of dirt from their excavations without alarming authorities and in providing oxygen to the diggers when they reached pockets of “dead air.” Several different tunnels were dug, in case one or two were discovered, and they extended for considerable distances beneath the prisons. Unfortunately for the Americans, a New Hampshire man named Bagley (or “Judas,” as his fellow prisoners styled him) revealed the plans to Captain Shortland. Shortland paroled Bagley before the prisoners could enact their revenge upon him.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹³ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 110.

⁶¹⁴ Palmer, *Diary*, 121: “the prisoner of No. 5 were digging out and has been two weeks on the business.” He added, “Should sthi tno eb dfoun tou I ma ni shope ot be rclea fo sthi mda npriso nsoo.”

⁶¹⁵ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 108–119.

Throughout the war-prison archipelago American inmates composed verse to voice their concerns.⁶¹⁶ The issues addressed in this doggerel varied widely: the pangs of homesickness, the charms of sweethearts, the dangers of gambling, and the vengeful thrill of hunting lice were all expressed; but patriotic sentiments were one of the most common themes, especially in the lyrics of songs that circulated through a broad audience. Simply through the identification of audience and narrator, the verses reaffirmed the prisoners' American identities: "Come all you yankey heroes"; "We Yankey Tars in Prison lay"; "Come all you jolly sailors who to columbia belong."⁶¹⁷ Their verses also announced their contention that their country owed them honor and reward for their patriotic service.

The inmates used their patriotic airs to nettle their captors (as when a band of African American musicians struck up "Yankee Doodle" to gall passing British officers). Their doggerel excoriated British tyranny. One song recounted the fate of American seamen in the British Navy at the beginning of the war who had asked for their release:

Some were put in Irons. and some were basely flog'd.

⁶¹⁶ Since many verses identify their narrators and audiences as sailors, it is reasonable to regard the doggerel of the prison system as an offshoot of maritime culture. Small collections of verse can be found in Palmer, *Diary*, 227–239 [a long poem of over 300 lines composed at Melville Island], 266–264; Valpey, *Journal*, 32–49; and Collection of American poems and songs, BPL. Several songs appear in two or more of these collections, with slight variations, suggesting oral transmission through the prison population. For instance, Valpey's published diary includes a song called "The Fruits of Gambling's," which begins,

Come fellow prisoner's one and all
To reason lend an ear
To keep up Gambling as you do
Your ruin'd men its Clear.

The manuscript collection held at the BPL contains the same song (titled, as with most verses in that collection, "Dartmoor Song"), but with minor changes in wording:

Come fellow prisoners one and all
To reason lend an ear
To keep up gambling as we do
You ruind it is clear.

Other songs included in both sources show similar, and sometimes more substantial, variations. Furthermore, the BPL collection includes songs written in different hands. Clearly, these songs were communal, not individual, possessions. (More personal verses can be found in the pages of many prisoners' diaries. For examples, see Upton, *Log*, 8–9; Diary of Zenas Doane Bassett, NEHGS.)

⁶¹⁷ These examples are taken from the opening lines of songs included in Collection of American poems and songs, BPL.

Others were call'd Mutiners and for the same were log'd.

Tried by a court marshal and through the fleet were sent.

While others fare more fortunate into vile prisons went.⁶¹⁸

This imprisoned songsmith dreamed of the day when “For the injuries we have received, we pay for one ten score-- / Against our former Prisons we'll make Yankee's cannons roar.”⁶¹⁹ Prisoners' songbooks also contained verses celebrating American naval victories over the British (as well as standards from the Quasi and Tripolitan Wars). Sometimes the handwritten songbooks contained the same songs published on broadsides and songsters—demonstrating that whoever initially composed such doggerel, sailors adopted it as their own.

American prisoners consciously identified themselves as Americans through defiant acts and songs.⁶²⁰ To confirm the uniquely American quality of their intransigence, they pointed to the demeanors of prisoners from other countries. One prisoner noted that Norwegians made more docile prisoners than Yankees because “they were a peaceable, subservient people, with no fun in their constitutions, nor any jovial cast in their composition.”⁶²¹ More commonly Americans contrasted themselves with the French.

American prisoners portrayed their French cohabitants as sycophants. A prisoner at Melville Island recalled that French prisoners “were every where favoured for their

⁶¹⁸ Palmer, *Diary*, 272.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁶²⁰ I should clarify here that I am not arguing that American prisoners *were* more defiant than other prisoners, nor that American society or culture made men more jealous of their liberties. With regard to the former point, scattered evidence suggests that American guards had their hands full with British prisoners of war who were also infamous for conspiring escape attempts. As for the latter point, I will only say that the prisoners *believed* that Americans were more defiant than other nationals and that they explained their defiance as resulting from their nationality. I am willing to go so far, that is, to say that prisoners nettled their guards because they thought that was how Americans should act in such a situation. but not so far as to say that their nationality itself propelled them to act in such a way.

⁶²¹ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 133.

complaisance, obedience and good humour. They had the character of behaving better towards the British officers, and inhabitants than the Americans.... A Frenchman always tried to please.”⁶²² A prisoner at Dartmoor also noted the more cheerful disposition of French prisoners: they were, “apparently, as happy as if they were not imprisoned.”⁶²³ The French, the prisoner continued, accepted their lot peacefully. In contrast, “the Americans are not so;--they long for that land of liberty, so dear to them, and sigh for their distant home.”⁶²⁴ The prisoner at Melville Island crowed that whereas “a Frenchmen always tried to please, many Americans seemed to take an equal delight in letting the Nova Scotians know that they longed to be at liberty to fight them again.” The Americans “seemed to take delight in plaguing, embarrassing and alarming those who were set over them.”⁶²⁵

This prisoner emphasized his point with an anecdote from his Canadian captivity: A rumor spread among the Nova Scotians that the American prisoners were hatching an elaborate scheme to escape their jails. The Canadians responded by bolstering their forces substantially. “When we saw these formidable preparations,” the inmate remembered,

and reflected on our own helpless condition, without any means of offense besides our teeth and nails, we could not but despise our enemies; and we did not omit to increase their ridiculous alarm, by whispering together, pointing our fingers sometimes E. and sometimes W. and sometimes N. and sometimes S. and rubbing our hands together and laughing and affecting to be in high spirits.⁶²⁶

The implicit moral of the anecdote was simple: Even when imprisoned in a foreign land, Americans’ love for freedom made them a dangerous threat to their captors; and their

⁶²² Ibid., 17.

⁶²³ Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 24.

⁶²⁴ Ibid.

⁶²⁵ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 17.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 25.

captors knew it. Unlike Frenchmen, Americans would strike out against the tyrants who held them unjustly. Defiant actions such as this contemptuous joke at the Canadians' expense differentiated the Americans not only from their captors but from their fellow prisoners as well. They proved (for the men who committed them) the exceptionality of the American nation.

Nonetheless, prisoners sometimes worried that their pretenses to American identity were being scorned. They harbored fears that the American people had abandoned them. They worried that they would return to their hometowns to find that the ones they loved had "forgot to love" them.⁶²⁷ More broadly, prisoners entertained the doubt that their government (and by extension their nation) had turned its backs to them. They suspected that their country had not exerted its full powers to relieve their sufferings. "My Country i fear has forgot me/ And i doubt if I see you again," they confessed, imploring, "Columbia awake from your Slumber's / We prisoner's are awaiting for thee."⁶²⁸ At Dartmoor, prisoners' targeted their resentment at Reuben Beasley, their federally appointed agent in London. On March 25, 1815, the prisoners "had the Effigy of Mr. Beasley hung and then Burnt for his kind attention to the American prisoners of war."⁶²⁹ An inmate who recorded the occurrence attested that, "This was not, like the plunder of the shop-keepers, the conduct of an infuriate mob; but it was begun and carried through by some of the steadiest men within the walls of Dartmoor prison."⁶³⁰

⁶²⁷ This fear is recorded in one of the many doggerel pieces written by prisoners. Valpey, *Journal*, 46.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁶³⁰ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 183.

The attack on Beasley's character perhaps helped to diffuse prisoners' potential anger towards their country as a whole. It allowed them to imagine their misery as resulting from the villainy of a single miscreant rather than the neglect of a nation. A song written at Dartmoor assured its audience that "if our Congress hear's the fact" of the agent's mismanagement, "they'll curse Beasly in a Clinch / And call him a dam'n Villen."⁶³¹ Another verse characterized Beasley sarcastically as a "powerfull Agent to be sure," adding, "Such negligence I cannot endure / My country slight me now adiu." Nonetheless, the author concluded, "But British standard not for you"—that is, he would not betray his nation by joining the Royal Navy.⁶³² Targeting Beasley as the source of their woes helped the men stay loyal to their country. Though admitting to bitterness about their seeming abandonment, they could lay the blame on Beasley's feet and assure themselves that their country stood beside them. In return, they pledged anew to stand behind it.

Prisoners got word to Americans back home of their continuing fidelity to the nation. The Library of Congress holds a copy of an undated broadside featuring two poems, one of which is titled "A New Song, Written in Dartmoor Prison." Versions of this song exist, too, in two prisoners' diaries, each different from the other, both different from the broadside version, yet all three clearly variations on a single source.⁶³³ This evidence indicates that the "New Song" was indeed composed at Dartmoor, and that a version of it somehow reached the hands of a publisher (who may have refined before it

⁶³¹ Valpey, *Journal*, 36.

⁶³² Collection of American poems and songs, BPL.

⁶³³ The three versions can be found in *The Constitution & Guerriere* (N.p., n.d.). Rare Book and Special Collections Division, LOC, Printed Ephemera Collection, Portfolio 228, Folder 25. Digital ID: rbpe 22802500 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/rbpe.22802500>; Palmer, *Diary*, 269–270; and Valpey, *Journal*, 43–44.

before printing it).⁶³⁴ The broadcasting of this “New Song” suggests the implicit purposes of the inmates’ patriotic doggerel. One purpose was to provoke the British foe (despite their differences, each version of the “New Song” ended by challenging England to admit it had “injur’d the American Tars”). A second purpose was to bolster the patriotism of the inmates—both to buck the spirits of the despondent and to serve warning to potential turncoats. Finally, the doggerel was meant to assure fellow Americans outside the prison system of the inmates’ loyalty, and to remind those compatriots of their obligations to the prisoners.

In this last endeavor the doggerel was not entirely without effect. Americans at home did express concern for their compatriots in British confinement. The U.S. Government responded to reports of abuses by threatening retaliation on British captives; ensuring that American and British prisoners suffered equal treatment was one way to place the American and British nations on an equal footing.⁶³⁵ Republicans included accounts of mistreated American prisoners of war in congressional reports of British atrocities issued to arouse support behind the war. Official American agents in London and Halifax distributed small amounts of money and clothing to destitute prisoners.

Still, the fate of the war prisoners exposed holes in the aegis supposedly provided by membership in a nation. The direct assistance they received from their government’s agents was limited. Sometimes the government’s approach to ameliorating their conditions without compromising the standing of the nation placed them at risk. Such

⁶³⁴ This scenario should not be regarded as far-fetched or even surprising. Newspapers of the time relied on personal correspondence for much of their material; they also commonly printed doggerel about topical subjects. Prisoners at Dartmoor wrote and received letters from loved ones in the United States. Letters generally included snippets of doggerel verse. In short, there are numerous ways in which the lyrics to a defiant song composed at Dartmoor Prison could cross the ocean and find themselves in the hands of a receptive printer.

⁶³⁵ The subject of retaliation for war prisoner abuse is discussed more fully in chapter two.

was certainly true of the cycle of escalating threats of retaliation against captives into which the American and British governments sank during the war. A less obviously dangerous, but ultimately more tragic, measure was the U.S. Government's insistence that, with the close of the war, each country should pay the costs of shipping home the enemy prisoners it still held in confinement. Since it held more captives than the United States did, Britain maintained that each country should pay for the return of its own nationals. This debate left many prisoners in limbo for months after the war's conclusion. Effectively, to augment the standing of the American nation required compromising the interests of thousands of Americans.

The national identities of inmates in the war-prison archipelago were precarious. The prisoners were separated from their homeland, their families, from the bulk of their compatriots. Worse, they could not always escape out of hand the dread that their country had forgotten them. All the while, their captors attempted to impose new identities on them—and not just by forcing them to acquiesce in their imprisonment. Prison authorities gave the inmates the option of becoming British sailors or becoming prisoners to the British; neither was compatible with the prisoners' understanding of themselves as Americans. Nonetheless, despite sometimes violent self-policing, some inmates did renounce their American identities and enter into the Royal Service.⁶³⁶ The

⁶³⁶ Other prisoners renounced their identities as Americans in a way that, paradoxically, confirmed their identities as Americans. Upon Napoleon's first abdication, the British government released its French prisoners. Several Francophone American prisoners, well-versed in the game of false colors, as it were, passed themselves off as Frenchmen in order to get their release. Similar frauds transpired when authorities released neutral nationals captured under American flags (at one point this amnesty extended to Nantucketers). Although in these instances the prisoners ostensibly shed their American nationality, the abandonment was presumably only temporary—analogue to sailing under an enemy flag to gain a military advantage. It was, in that sense, an extension of "the game" into the prison archipelago by a largely maritime population. Moreover, since it one-upped the prison authorities and demonstrated a willingness to grasp at freedom when opportunity arose, the ruse proved that its practitioners *were* Americans.

prisoners they left behind responded with vigorous displays of resistance to prove to all observers that they remained Americans.

To their minds the prisoners could not be both Americans and contented with their confinement. Their national identity compelled them to act defiantly. The prisoners insisted that their guards would have to accept the situation and accommodate themselves to American recalcitrance. Meanwhile, they hoped that their government and their nation would take notice of their plight and extend to them the relief owed to them as Americans. These factors combined to compel the prisoners towards rebellion against their keepers.

At Dartmoor Prison the situation worsened over the spring of 1815. The negotiations at Ghent had already concluded. The treaty ending the war had already been ratified. Yet six thousand American men remained confined in a dreary depot on a desolate moor.⁶³⁷ The two governments could not agree on a policy to release and return their respective prisoners of war. Meanwhile, the British Transport Office, which had jurisdiction over war prisoners, refused to release them without definite and official means of return to the Americas.⁶³⁸ Reuben Beasley attempted to hire vessels to carry the prisoners home; but with the resumption of trade between the United States and Britain most shipowners had their eyes on more profitable expeditions. Beasley managed to secure several ships, but not a fleet sufficient to transport the thousands of prisoners held in the British Isles. Nonetheless, he stopped paying prisoners their customary

⁶³⁷ Prisoners held at other sites along the archipelago grew similarly restless after news of peace arrived. Even prisoners in Canada had to wait longer than they thought just. As one such inmate, held at Norfolk Island, remembered, “one evening in March, 1815, we heard a great rejoicing in Halifax; and presently, a turnkey appeared on the walls, and called out that England and America had made peace! We gave three cheers, and passed the night happy enough. We had a bit of a row with the turnkeys about locking us in again, for we were fierce for liberty; but we were forced to submit for another night.” Myers, *Ned Myers*, 136.

⁶³⁸ Dye, “American Maritime Prisoners,” 293–313.

allowance when the war ended, even though their captivity stretched on (he contended that his instructions did not authorize him to make the payments with the war over).

Under these conditions, the prisoners grew increasingly rambunctious.⁶³⁹

On April 4th, 1815, the commissaries at Dartmoor Prison replaced the daily ration of soft bread with a smaller helping of biscuit.⁶⁴⁰ The prisoners at Dartmoor rejected the hardtack and swore to go hungry rather than eat it. That evening they refused to turn in to their prisons. Instead, they swarmed the market square, vowing to remain until they received their usual ration of fresh bread. If they did not receive it, they threatened, they would “burst open the store & take what they liked.”⁶⁴¹ The alarm bells rang, alerting the guards to the disturbance. “Fire away, fire away, we may as well die this way as with hunger,” the prisoners shouted at the hastily assembled force.⁶⁴² The prison’s commander, Captain Shortland, was away at the time; his proxy relented to the prisoners’ demands. After receiving their bread, the prisoners dispersed peacefully (except for the large number who had taken advantage of the confusion to escape).⁶⁴³

The nonviolent resolution of the bread riot on the fourth did not ensure in lasting peace at the compound. On the following day, April 5, one prisoner wrote in his diary that, “it is thought there will be no more Peace here untill we are removed. I have been

⁶³⁹ The prisoners made Beasley a scapegoat for much of their suffering. In his journal, one inmate added the marginal comment, “God Speed the Cartells & Old Bealsey for he is a Damn’d Delatory Rackell.” Nathaniel Pierce, *His Book*, 45, MHS.

⁶⁴⁰ Every winter, prison keepers would store biscuit as a safety measure in case inclement weather prevented the arrival of fresh provisions. When spring began the keepers would foist the remaining hardtack on their resentful wards. The commander of the prison hulk *Crown Prince* had tried it in the spring of 1814, and had faced a mutiny of the prisoners. Joseph Bates, *The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates; Embracing A Long Life On Shipboard* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-Day Adventist Publishing Association, 1868), 57–60.

⁶⁴¹ Pierce, “Journal,” 39.

⁶⁴² Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 266.

⁶⁴³ Bates, *Autobiography*, 76–79; Pierce, “Journal,” 39; Hawthorne, *Yarn*, 266–268; Palmer, *Diary*, 176, 177; Andrews, *Prisoners’ Memoirs*, 166–170; Waterhouse, *Journal*, 186.

roveing today to talk about keeno”—the rallying cry of mischief among the prisoners.⁶⁴⁴

On the sixth, the diarist noticed a group of prisoners “pestering the soldiers for some time[; the prisoners then] began to cheer being playfull & passing the word keeno.”⁶⁴⁵

That same morning, another inmate wrote, “The Prisoners are growing daily more and more discontented. they seem determined to make some bold attempt to escape from this dam Prison—and I believe should we remain here much longer they would attempt it.”⁶⁴⁶

A storm was brewing at Dartmoor between the inmates and the authorities—these authors could sense its approach. The riot on April 4 had not cleared the air; far worse was to come.

A minor altercation between prisoners and guards at Dartmoor on April 6, 1815, brought tensions to a head. To retrieve a ball that had flown (not for the first time) over a wall of the prison onto the grounds of a guards barracks, a number of inmates had attacked the wall with knives and bars. Over the pleas of a prison officer on the other side, they pried a hole in the wall large enough for a man to pass. (Presumably the prisoners did not know what the officer knew—that a cache of armaments lay on the other side of the wall.) The alarm bell rang out. Most prisoners had no knowledge of what was transpiring. Many of them congregated into the market square out of curiosity. There they encountered Captain Shortland and a body of guards with rifles in hand.

Shortland ordered the men to return to their prisons. Some prisoners refused; others could not overcome the press of bodies behind them to comply. Angry inmates cursed the guards and dared them to shoot. Some prisoners hurled stones along with insults. With or without a command from Shortland (the accounts disagree) the guards

⁶⁴⁴ Pierce, “Journal,” 39–40.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶⁴⁶ Palmer, *Diary*, 179.

opened fire. The shooting continued as the inmates scrambled through the yards to their prison buildings. As they ran they glimpsed guards atop the walls at different points, firing into the crowds. Most prisoners escaped from the open spaces of the yards where bullets continued to ring out; but they were not completely safe in the prison buildings. Some guards fired at the helpless men through windows and doorways.

When the affray ended, five inmates were killed; two more died from their wounds within the week. At least seven survivors lost limbs to the surgeon's saw in the days that followed. Sixty prisoners suffered significant injury, half of them characterized as "dangerously wounded."⁶⁴⁷ One prisoner posted a list of the dead and wounded on the prison walls under the heading "British Massacre."⁶⁴⁸ For over a century, Americans remembered the event as the "Dartmoor Massacre."⁶⁴⁹

Across the wire of prison gossip, the inmates constructed a history of the event within a few hours. Certain elements of the story became tenets of faith among survivors for decades to follow: Shortland had been drunk when the slaughter had taken place. The massacre had been no accident; Shortland had orchestrated it to avenge the humiliation of the prisoners' victorious defiance two days' earlier. Survivors swore they had heard the command to fire from Shortland's own voice. To swell the casualty lists, the captain had transformed the depot into a trap: he had planted sharpshooters along the walls, and had had the doors of the prison buildings locked (except for one door on each building) to

⁶⁴⁷ Andrews, *Prisoners' Memoirs*, 184–189.

⁶⁴⁸ Palmer, *Diary*, 185–186; Pierce, "Journal," 42.

⁶⁴⁹ First-hand narratives centered around the event appeared in print within months of its occurrence. For over a century, new accounts were published (when no more aged survivors remained to put their memories on paper, antiquarian and historical societies published the diaries of the dead). Late nineteenth-century newspapers kept the story alive in the popular consciousness. With the passing of each elderly seamen writers wondered, Was he the last living relic of the Dartmoor Massacre? Popular author Kenneth Roberts made the massacre the climax of his *Lively Lady*, a novel published in 1931. After that, the massacre seems to have fallen from the collective memory of the American nation.

leave the prisoners in the open as long as possible. Other elements of the prisoners' collective narrative spread widely but died quickly—for instance, the initial conviction that an untold number of victims, “being mangled in a most shocking manner, were privately taken away by Capt. Shortland, and buried.”⁶⁵⁰

The prisoners' narrative of the massacre affirmed the nationalist contention that British officers were tyrants.⁶⁵¹ The massacre demonstrated that Britons lacked all sense of humanity. It rendered ridiculous the motto etched into the gateway to the prison: “*Parcere subjectis*”—“Spare the vanquished.” “O! Britannia;” apostrophized one prisoner; “thy boast is gone, thy pride is lost, humanity is fled from thy degenerate sons, and a safer asylum in the bosom of the savage tribes, has found.”⁶⁵² The massacre was “sufficient proof of British Barbarity,” according to another inmate. “O God what Crimes are not the English Capable of Perpetrating,” he wondered, adding significantly, “(when they have the power).”⁶⁵³ “This is real British Bravery,” scoffed a third: “yard arm & yard arm in the real old english style.” It was even “worse than the massacree at

⁶⁵⁰ Andrews, *Prisoners' Memoirs*, 189.

⁶⁵¹ Significantly, this narrative required a revision of the prisoners' image of Shortland, a naval officer. The captain had earlier earned the praise of inmates when he pardoned several men caught attempting to escape. The prisoners composed doggerel in which they attributed Shortland's leniency to his history as a sailor:

Brave Shortland bread a seaman
No anger did he show
To those bold yankee heroes
For trying for to go
Although they was his enemies
He their spirit did approve
And say each bold sailor
That's valient still I love...
We laugh, get drink and sing
Long life to Captain Shortland
Although he serves the king

No survivor of the massacre spoke or wrote a kind word of Shortland. This earlier sentiment disappeared; prisoners' memoirs make no reference to it. The massacre showed that Shortland's identity as a British officer—a tyrant—trumped his identity as a sailor. It is probable that a similar transformation took place for the prisoners: Their identities as sailors gave way, at least for a time, to their identities as Americans. The doggerel can be found in Collection of American songs and poems, BPL.

⁶⁵² Andrews, *Prisoners' Memoirs*, 195.

⁶⁵³ Palmer, *Diary*, 179–180.

Boston in the year 70,” a conviction shared by other prisoners intent on demonstrating that the massacre at Dartmoor was a typical British act rather than an exceptional one.⁶⁵⁴

In his memoirs one survivor explained for his readers his comrades’ understanding of the nationalistic factors behind the Massacre:

the conduct of our countrymen, while on board the prison ships and at Dartmoor, was, at times, provoking to the British officers set over them, but never malignant, much less, bloody. It could be always traced to a spirit of *fun* and frolic, which our people indulge in beyond all others in the world; and this ought to be considered as one of the luxuriant shoots of our *tree of liberty*: for it is too harsh to call it an excrescence. It shows the strength, depth and extent of its roots, and the richness of its soil.⁶⁵⁵

This “spirit of fun and frolic” differentiated the Americans clearly from the British, whom the devil had inspired “with his own infernal spirit of cruelty.”⁶⁵⁶ But it also compelled the prisoners to emphasize their devotion to liberty even at the cost of provoking their captors to respond with deadly force.

The Latin motto on Dartmoor’s gate was lifted from Virgil’s “Charge to the Roman People.” The gate leaves off the admonishment that follows “*Parcere subjectis*”: “*deballare superbos*”—“debase the proud.”⁶⁵⁷ The British authorities at Dartmoor heeded both of Virgil’s charges. Generally speaking they treated their captives well; they required only that the prisoners accept their lot till the war ended or they were exchanged. But the Americans refused to recognize themselves as vanquished. They subverted British attempts to establish their identity as prisoners. The archipelagic prison system may have complicated their claims to American identity by confining them away from their homeland, family, and friends; but it also diffused their captors’ ability to quash their sense of nationality. In response, the prisoners performed their national identity

⁶⁵⁴ Pierce, “Journal,” 41. The parallels between the two events are striking. Most obviously, both resulted from unruly crowds of Americans who pelted and swore at armed British soldiers and dared them to shoot.

⁶⁵⁵ Waterhouse, *Journal*, 227–228.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁶⁵⁷ Rhodes, *Dartmoor Prison*, 17.

more vigorously. As “true-born Columbians,” they contended, they instinctively rebelled against arbitrary power whatever its source of cause (though being asked to submit to the yoke of a Briton was particularly galling). They painted their captors as tyrants, themselves as the only sons of liberty. Despite their confinement, they remained proud, and British attempts to debase them only provoked them to assert their freedom more boisterously.

The buildup to the Dartmoor Massacre reveals the inherent dangers of national identity in the early nineteenth century. Sailors operated in an environment that troubled the stability of national identity. As a result, mariners incorporated national identity as a tool. The quarterdeck and the forecastle both learned to make use of its ambiguities. At one extreme, impressment showed the potential of national identity to serve as a means by which an elite could exploit a weaker class. British seamen—anyone proclaimed to be a British seaman—owed an inalienable allegiance to the king. England expected that every man would do his duty, and the king’s officers wielded the backing of the state to compel him to it.

Seen from another perspective, the sailors who slipped from the service of one nation to another in pursuit of their own best interests revealed national identity’s potential as a weapon of the weak. Unhappy with their lot, sailors in the U.S. Navy sought release from the service by claiming to be Englishmen and seeking protection from British officers; sailors in the Royal Navy did the same in the opposite direction. As a weapon, national identity depended on strong alliances. Individuals lacked the

power to maintain it themselves. They could put forth claims, but those claims had to be validated by a broader community.

If broadly accepted, however, national identity conferred numerous advantages. First and foremost, it allowed an individual to call on a wider community for protection: To be an American was to warrant the protection of other Americans. Furthermore, by claiming a place in the American nation, sailors also gained the power to influence the definition of American identity. The ubiquitous maritime challenges faced by the United States throughout the early republican period enhanced their power in this regard. Each struggle—whether against Algerines, Frenchmen, Tripolitans, or Britons—required their participation. As they fought for the American nation (and, it should be noted, disproportionately succeeded in their battles), sailors became symbols of the American nation. As they became symbols for the American nation, they became reflective of it. Part of this process entailed sailors' accommodation to the values of landed society (adopting, for instance, the rhetorics of republicanism and sentimentalism); at the same time, sailors reinterpreted these values to suit their own needs and conceptions.

Still, to wield the might of the American nation in their interest, sailors had to prove that they were Americans. In the course of a war fought in large part over the difficulty inherent in distinguishing between British and American nationals, it did not suffice for sailors simply to proclaim their identity; it was incumbent upon them to enact it convincingly. The two nations shared language, ethnicity, custom, and manners. The one salient distinction seemed to be, as American sailors saw it, their compatriots' superior love of liberty.

This logic compelled American prisoners of war to resist their confinement in the British war-prison archipelago. Americans, they believed, would always struggle against the arbitrary authority of foreign agents, especially British ones. The American nation, after all, had taken form in resistance to British tyranny; the prisoners' countrymen remained locked in a second war to affirm the outcome of the Revolution. To obey willingly the orders of a British guard, captives seemed to think, was tantamount to renouncing their identity as Americans. If they lost that identity, they lost with it all claims to protection and assistance from their fellow Americans. As their captivity lingered beyond the end of the war, indefinitely and seemingly interminably, the prisoners had cause to wonder whether their countrymen had already abandoned them. This fear perhaps encouraged Americans to display the evidence of their national identity more forcibly and irascibly. The Dartmoor Massacre was in part a tragic consequence of the prisoners' boisterous claims to American nationhood.

Scholars who have studied national sovereignty in an archipelagic setting have tended to emphasize how the ambiguity of such a system enhances state power. The Guano Islands of the late nineteenth century, the American naval base "leased" from Cuba, and suchlike places allow the state to manipulate issues of citizenship, rights, and so forth to its own end. The behavior of American prisoners of war in Britain's early nineteenth-century prison system shows that a potential response to such ambiguity is forthright, even violent, affirmation of rights and identity. In the face of an undaunted captive population, the British war prison archipelago proved incapable of even the relatively simple task of keeping its inmates placid. The prisoners' response to the prison

system's ambiguities was to proclaim vigorously their own certainties of who they were and what they were owed.

Sailors' embrace of their national identity was not the result of a brainwashing that left them mere dupes to the manipulation of their country's elite; sailors benefited from their national identity. They also learned the art of manipulating it to their advantage under certain circumstances—circumstances that proliferated along the maritime frontier. However, national identity was not an unqualified boon. Its communal basis left sailors vulnerable to overriding claims to their national allegiance put forth by a superior power—even if those claims were technically illegitimate. An individual's claim to his own national identity, moreover, had to be presented not only in legal documentation but also in his personal behavior. The physical and psychic demands of such a claim could be daunting and exhausting. The thousands of American prisoners who resided at Dartmoor consciously chose to accept their confinement as the price they paid to be Americans (when they could have left the depot by entering into the British Navy). At the same time, their conception of what it meant to be an American drove them to insult and attack their keepers even in the face of the mounting threat, and eventual enactment, of physical retaliation. To be an American man was to fight for other American men and expect them to do the same in the cause of mutual liberty; it was also to reenact the Boston Massacre by jeering at armed Britons, pelting them with stones, and daring them to fire to prove that they were nothing better than the agents of a tyrant. Ultimately, nationality could prove a useful tool, but it had a sharp edge that cut both ways.

Conclusion

In a 1989 survey of the War of 1812 Donald Hickey termed it a “Forgotten Conflict.”⁶⁵⁸ That may be true, but it took a long time for Americans to forget. For half a century after the Treaty of Ghent, veterans’ narratives appeared regularly in memoirs, newspaper columns, and presidential campaign pamphlets. As that literary stream trickled to an end, the public received reminders of the war in the obituaries of elderly men who breathed their last in the 1870s and 1880s. The centenary thrust the war into the American consciousness once more.

Throughout the century after the war ended, Americans continued to commemorate the Navy’s victories, sometimes more elaborately than they had in the battles’ immediate wake. In 1813 and 1814, citizens had to imagine the Battle of Lake Erie through the still images of paintings and transparencies; in 1860 they could watch it reenacted on the lake by the Cleveland Artillery (“who displayed an aptitude for the aqueous element quite unusual in ‘land-lubbers’”).⁶⁵⁹ In 1883 New Yorkers in Plattsburg celebrated the anniversary of the battle fought there with “a firemen’s muster, a parade of engine and hose companies, and foot and boat races.”⁶⁶⁰ Reports indicate that the town commemorated the battle each year, climaxing with the centenary in 1914, when the battle was honored for having ended the war, and on terms relatively favorable to the United States.⁶⁶¹ Throughout the nineteenth century, the *Constitution* remained a

⁶⁵⁸ The term is the subtitle of his survey *War of 1812*.

⁶⁵⁹ “Anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie,” *New York Times*, 14 September 1860, <http://www.proquest.com/>.

⁶⁶⁰ “The Battle of Plattsburg,” *New York Times*, 13 September 1883, <http://www.proquest.com/>.

⁶⁶¹ “Negotiators for both nations were at work in Ghent; when the news of the American victory came, negotiations were brought to a speedy close with terms far more satisfactory to the United States than they otherwise would have been. The end of the battle of Plattsburg marks the beginning of the century of

sentimental favorite whose every change in status received coverage in the press—as when the rumored threat to scrap it inspired the pen of Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1830 or when the Navy retired it from active service fifty years later. Memories and memorials of the War of 1812 long provided the American people with material for local and national patriotic festivals—not to mention the nation’s official anthem.

While the battles and the officers who won them remained a point of pride for Americans, the men who fought the battles faced more complicated times. The sailor had always suffered a Janus-faced reputation: he was seen as both a virtuous hero and a destructive wastrel. Indeed, the image of Jack Tar is not too far-removed in some ways from that of the Noble Savage. Both are imagined as having admirable qualities which suit their natural environment—the wilds of the waters or the wooded wilderness; but in both instances these qualities leave them for unfit civilization.⁶⁶²

One wonders whether the conjunction of positive and negative traits in the seamen was more jarring in later decades than it had been in the early nineteenth century, a time when statesmen still compared their nation to an adolescent struggling to make its way in the world of men—instigating a duel, if need be, to prove his manhood. For such a nation, the now rambunctious, now dignified figure of Jack Tar was an apt representative. Yet the politicians who called for war on these grounds subsequently argued that the war had fulfilled that goal of lifting the country to a place of respect among the nations of the world. Childish things, therefore, would need to be left behind at the war’s close.

peace.” “To Celebrate Centenary of Battle of Plattsburg,” *New York Times*, 6 September 1914, <http://www.proquest.com/>.

⁶⁶² See Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*, for a general discussion of this topic.

The Navy received a new face as a result. Instead of itching for fights, the Navy would come to serve more peaceful diplomatic ends, engaging in the unfurled pomp, fancy dinners, and deckside balls that such a role demanded when making calls in foreign ports. In such circumstances the quarterdeck took precedence over the forecastle.

Whether as a result of this shift or not, the sailors' standing sank in the decades following the war, so that by the mid-nineteenth century Herman Melville would compare naval service to slavery. The brutal discipline of the navy, he charged, was anathema to the free-born citizen.⁶⁶³ Historians have discovered similar analogies between naval sailors and slaves during the Civil War.⁶⁶⁴ Once the epitome of freemen, mariners became the type of subjugation.

Beyond the horizon of this study, the reputation of sailors would improve in the twentieth century as their country turned to them again in times of war. But naval sailors never gained the center of attention that was their lot during the War of 1812.

The songs about their feats in the War of 1812 survived, however. Compilations of naval doggerel depend heavily on the songs and poems of the war. They fill one hundred and ninety of the three hundred and fifty pages in Robert W. Neeser's *American Naval Songs & Ballads*, published in 1938. Such anthologies kept sailors' songs accessible if not necessarily current. A smattering of evidence suggests that the songs continued to circulate among sailors well into the nineteenth century. Among the holdings of the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia, for instance, is a battered,

⁶⁶³ "And how is it," Melville asked in *White Jacket*, "that one arm of the national defences of a republic comes to be ruled by a Turkish code, whose every section almost, like each of the tubes of a revolving pistol, fires nothing short of death into the heart of an offender? How comes it that, by virtue of a law solemnly ratified by a Congress of freemen, the representatives of freemen, thousands of Americans are subjected to the most despotic usages, and, from the dockyards of a Republic, absolute monarchies are launched, with the 'glorious Stars and Stripes' for an ensign?" Melville, *White Jacket*, 282.

⁶⁶⁴ See, for instance, William J. Bennett, *Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 155–181.

palm-sized book titled *Jack's Kit: or, Saturday Night in the Forecastle*, published as late as the 1860s. Aimed at a seafaring audience, this collection of songs and jokes includes a number of old standards about the naval battles of the War of 1812. An 1881 review of Helen Kendrick Johnson's *Our Familiar Songs and Those Who Made Them* noted of the selection listed under "The Songs of the Sea" that, "Still you will hear old sailors occasionally, in a quite unconscious way, humming disjointed snatches of them, and 'The Constitution and Guerriere' are not quite forgotten."⁶⁶⁵ It is beyond the purview of this work to assess what uses, if any, seagoing men made of this music in the decades following the war; but the preservation of the songs provides historians with a glimpse of a forgotten perspective on a largely forgotten war.

For a century Americans drew practical lessons from the War of 1812. In foreign relations it was at first a sign of America's successful defiance of the mighty Great Britain; but as decade followed decade without a restoration of hostilities, the war became paradoxically a symbol of the English-speaking world's long peace. That the war showed the valor and strength of a united American nation was a commonplace (though during the Civil War, Confederates used it to denigrate the character of Northerners; "The war of 1812," noted one editor, "was odious to the groveling instincts of Northern stock jobbers, clock makers and tin pedlars, because it involved a point of honor, with no prospect of an opportunity for the exercise of their thieving propensities").⁶⁶⁶ For Theodore Roosevelt it showed the imbecility of reliance on untrained militiamen, and for Alfred Mahan it showed the need to approach naval warfare

⁶⁶⁵ "The Songs of Former Days," *New York Times*, 6 November 1881, <http://www.proquest.com/>.

⁶⁶⁶ From the *Norfolk Day Book*, 9 January 1862, quoted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 January 1862.

strategically. Their negative assessments have cast a long shadow over the memory of the war. For historians, however, strategy should not be their only concern.

In August, 1814, Americans mourned the burning of their capital. But the popular (indeed, the scholarly) conception that pervasive gloom resulted, unbroken but by the news of Jackson's victory at New Orleans, is wrong. Between the first event and the second, the United States won two significant victories—the battles of Baltimore and of Plattsburg. One provided the basis for the country's national anthem; the other evidenced what prominent naval historians consider the finest seamanship of the war. Neither went unnoticed by the American people of the time. Jumping from D.C.'s destruction to the banks of Louisiana enhances the stature of Old Hickory and the hunters of Kentucky, but at the expense of substituting myth and assumption for fact. Jackson's victory was not the first of the war to elicit outpourings of enthusiasm from the American people; indeed, newspapers reported Macdonough's capture of the British fleet at Lake Champlain on September 11, 1814, under the heading, "Tenth Naval Victory." As had become customary with other naval victories, dinners, parades, and doggerel were to follow in honor of the sailors' feat. If we overlook these celebrations we obscure the feelings and conceptions of the Americans who lived through the conflict. Until we come to appreciate what their naval victories meant to the people of the United States, we will not understand the War of 1812, nor its lasting hold on the American imagination for a century to follow.

Bibliography

A) Archival Sources

American Antiquarian Society (AAS)

Elijah Brigham. Papers. 1754–1877. Box 1. Folder 3. Correspondence, 1810–1816.

Ethan Allen Greenwood Papers. 1801–1839. Octavo Volume 21.

Letters of Abijah Bigelow, Member of Congress, to His Wife. 1810–1815.

Letters of Edward Dillingham Bangs. 1807–1820. Bangs Family Papers. 1760–1866.

Robert Barraud Taylor. Letter Book. 1813–1814.

Samuel Taggart Letterbook. 1803–1815.

War of 1812 Papers. 1812–1815.

William Mann Journal. 1803–1805.

Boston Athenaeum (BA)

Josiah Quincy Guild Journal. Volumes One and Two.

Boston Public Library (BPL)

Abigail Adams to Colonel William S. Smith (Hamilton, N.Y.), Quincy, 18 February 1813. Ch.A.4.47.

[A collection of American poems and songs without music, mostly patriotic, copied in a blank-book by Thomas Rand, dated Dartmoor, 1815]. Ms. 1270.

J. W. Clarke to Gardner Green, Montreal, 26 June 1812. Ch.M.2.3.1169.

Robert G. Harper to Charles Carroll, Washington, 7 March 1813. Ch.B.11.66.

Roger Curtis Papers. Ms.Eng.133.

Clarke Historical Society

Joseph Hall. "Reminiscence, 1815." Photocopy.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Library

John Dolbeare. Memorandum Book. 1810–1820. Manuscripts 17.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP)

John Mitchell Papers.

William Begg. Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesty's Ship *Tenedos*, Capt'n Hyde Parker.

William W. Feltus, Midshipman. Journal Kept on Board the U. S. Essex on a Cruise, D. Porter Esq'r Commander. 23 October 1812.

Library of Congress (LOC), Manuscript Division, Washington D.C.

Charles N. Bancker Papers.

Edward Brown Papers.

Journal of John Lewis Thomson.

Journal of Raymond Perry.

Letters of John Sevier.

Oliver Wolcott Papers, Microfilm (Mss. 19, 145).

The Papers of Joseph & John R. Desha.

Papers of Obadiah Stevens.

Papers of William T. Rodgers.

Thomas Law Papers.

U.S. Dept. of the Treasury. Office of the Fifth Auditor. U.S. Office of Commissary General of Prisoners, Letterbook Volumes One, Two, and Three. Container 8. Reel One. Containers 9–10. Reel One.

Marblehead Historical Society

Glover Broughton Papers

The Mariners' Museum

Gatewood, Richard. *Journal of a Most Singular and Extraordinary Voyage*. [N.p., n.d.].

Letters from Richard Hamilton to various members of his family, from France, England, and New Orleans, between 1811–1819. Photocopies of the original letters.

Maryland Historical Society (MDHS)

Haynie Family Papers. MS 1815.

Hollingsworth Letters. MS 1849.

“*Nonsuch*” Letterbook. MS 2508.

Notebook of Commodore George N. Hollins. Winder Family Papers. MS 2310.

Spafford Family Papers. MS 1788.

War of 1812 Collection. Boxes 1–3. MS 1846.

The Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS)

Abigail Livermore Williams Diary. 1809–1813.

Adams-Waterhouse Letters. 1784–1837. Typescripts.

Baury Family Papers. 1809–1862.

Curtis-Stevenson Family Papers.

Eliza Susan Quincy Diary. Quincy Family Papers.

Eustis-Langdon Papers. 1803–1876.

Hibbard-Seaver Papers. 1812–1938.

Joel Parker Papers. 1795–1875.

John Child, *Journal of a Voyage from Boston to the South Seas & Canton, China on board the Ship Hunter.*

John Haskins Ladd Papers. Ladd Family Papers. 1804–1818. Francis E. Lowell Collection.

Nathaniel Pierce. *His Book.*

Odes, Sung at the Dinner in Honour of the Russian Victories.

Rebecca W. Bates Folder.

Richard Cranch Norton notebooks & diaries, 1804, 1806, 1811–1821. Jacob Norton Papers.

Samuel Putnam Papers. 1775–1857.

William Jarvis Papers. 1799–1843.

William Swift Papers. 1794–1864.

**R. Stanton Avery Special Collections Department, New England
Historical Genealogical Society (NEHGS), Boston, Mass.**

Admiral Sir David Milne. *Letters Written During the War of 1812 by the British Naval Commander in American Waters (Admiral Sir David Milne).* Edited by Major Edgar Erskine Hume.

Albert P. Wadleigh. “The Privateer Decatur.” Mrs. Page 1. Tharpe Papers. 1813–1988. Mss 264

Bassett, Zenas Doane. *Diary of Zenas Doane Bassett, 1807–1816, commenced upon his 21st birthday (Oct. 14th 1807).* Mss A 258.

Dixey, John et. al. Letter, 1813 June 19, Asburton, to R. G. Beasley. Mss C 59.

Ezekiel Warner. *Narrative, 1783 January–June.* Preservation photocopy. MSS A 2064.

Joseph Foster Jr. Papers. Mss C 5078.

Thomas G. Thornton Papers. Mss 98.

Timothy Farrar Papers. Mss 188.

Trefethen, Benjamin. [Accounts concerning the frigate Chesapeake, 1878, 1881]. Mss C 66.

William Freeman. Journal. February–June 1813. Mss C 5141.

Williston, Josiah. Diary of Josiah Williston of Boston. 1808–1814. Mss A 1080.

Pennsylvania State Archives

John Witherow Jr. Journal. 1 March–6 September, 1814.

Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum (PEM), Salem, Mass.

De Peyster, F. A. Memoirs, 1858–1861.

Log 1799C, Ship Concord / Logbook acquired by the Essex Institute.

Log 1804P3 Ship Prudent / Logbook acquired by the Essex Institute.

Log 1805S, Brig Susannah / Logbook acquired by the Essex Institute.

MH-15 Crowinshield Family Papers, B5, F3: John Crowinshield Letterbooks, 1814–15, 1832.

B) Published Primary Sources

Barbary Captivity Narratives

Adams, Robert. *The Narrative of Robert Adams, an American Sailor*. Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1817.

Bradley, Eliza. *An Authentic Narrative of the Shipwreck and Sufferings of Mrs. Eliza Bradley*. Boston: James Walden, 1820. Reprinted in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Captivity Narratives*, edited by Paul Baepler. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

- Foss, John. *A Journal, of the Captivity and Sufferings of John Foss*. Newburyport, Mass.: March, 1798. Reprinted in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Captivity Narratives*, edited by Paul Baepler. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- . *A Journal of the Captivity and Sufferings of John Foss*. 2d ed. Newburyport, Mass.: Angier March, 1798.
- Humanity in Algiers: or, The Story of Azam, by an American, Late a Slave in Algiers*. Troy, N.Y.: Moffitt, 1801.
- Martin, Maria. *History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Maria Martin*. Boston: W. Crary, [1806].
- . *History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Maria Martin*. Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1809.
- Nicholson, Thomas. *An Affecting Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Thomas Nicholson*. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, 1818.
- Paddock, Judah. *A Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Ship Oswego, on the Coast of South Barbary, and of the Sufferings of the Master and the Crew while in Bondage among the Arabs*. New York: Riley, 1818.
- Pitts, Joseph. *Narrative of the Captivity of Joseph Pitts, among the Algerines, and of His Fortunate Escape from the Mahometans*. Frederick-Town, Md.: Hardt and Cross, 1815.
- Ray, William. *Horrors of Slavery; or, The American Tars in Tripoli*. Troy, N.Y.: Oliver Lyon, 1808.
- Riley, James. *An Authentic Narrative of the Loss of the American Brig Commerce, Wrecked on the Western Coast of Africa, in the Month of August, 1815*. 3d ed. New York: Riley, 1818.
- Robbins, Archibald. *A Journal, Comprising an Account of the Loss of the Brig Commerce*. 4th ed. Hartford, Conn.: Andrus, 1818.
- Saunders, Daniel. *A Journal of the Travels and Sufferings of Daniel Saunders, Jun.* Leominster, Mass.: Prentiss, 1797.
- Smith, Jonathan S. *The Siege of Algiers; or, The Downfall of Hadgi Ali Bashaw*. Philadelphia, 1823.

Tyler, Royall. *The Algerine Captive: or, The Life and Adventures of Doctor Updike Underhill, Six Years a Prisoner among the Algerines*. Hartford, Conn.: Gleason, 1816.

Commemorations of Allied Victories

The Celebration of the Russian Victories, in Georgetown, District of Columbia; on the 5th of June, 1813. Georgetown: James B. Carter, 1813.

Channing, William Ellery. *A Discourse, Delivered in Boston at the Solemn Festival in Commemoration of the Goodness of God in Delivering the Christian World from Military Despotism, June 15, 1814*. Cambridge, Mass.: Hilliard & Metcalf for Henry Channing, 1814.

Custis, George. *Oration of Mr. Custis, Delivered at the Celebration of the Russian Victories, June 5th, 1813, at Georgetown, District of Columbia*. [Washington? 1813].

Harper, Robert Goodloe. *Speech of Robert Goodloe Harper, Esq. at the Celebration of the Recent Triumphs of the Cause of Mankind, in Germany: Delivered at Annapolis, January 20, 1814*. Boston: Russell, Cutler & Co., 1814.

———. *Speech of Robert G. Harper, Esq. at the Celebration of the Russian Victories, at Georgetown, Columbia, on the 5th June, 1813*. Baltimore: Coale, 1813.

[Messala]. *Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Channing's Sermon, and the Religious Festival at Boston, in Commemoration of the Conquest of France by the Allies*. Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1814.

Morris, Gouverneur. *An Oration, Delivered July 5th, 1813, before the Washington Benevolent Society, of the City of New-York, in Commemoration of American Independence*. New York: Seymour, 1813.

Order of Church Solemnities in Commemoration of the Russian Successes. [Boston]: Munroe & Francis, [1813].

Solemn Festival, in Commemoration of the Goodness of God, in Delivering the Christian World from Military Despotism. [Boston, 1814].

Walsh, Robert, Jr., ed. *Correspondence Respecting Russia, between Robert Goodloe Harper and Robert Walsh, Jun.* Philadelphia: William Fry, 1813.

Government Documents

- Dudley, William S. and Michael J. Crawford, eds. *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*. Vols. 1-3. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center Department of the Navy, 1985–2002.
- General Assembly of Vermont. *Mr. Nile's Resolution, Calling on the Governor for Evidence to Substantiate the Suggestion in His Excellency's Late Speech, Relative to Impressment; together with His Excellency's Answer*. Montpelier, Vt.: Walton and Goss, 1813.
- Hamilton, Paul. *Letters from the Secretary of the Navy, Relative to What Compensation Ought to be Made to Captain Hull, the Officers and Crew of the Frigate Constitution*. Washington City: Weightman, 1812.
- Knox, Dudley W., ed. *Naval Documents Related to the United States Wars with the Barbary Powers*. Vols. 1–4. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1939–1944.
- Letter from the Secretary of State, Transmitting Abstracts of the Returns Made by the Collectors of the Customs within the United States of Registered and Impressed American Seamen: also, A Report Exhibiting an Abstract of Communications Received from Agents of the United States, for the Relief and Protection of Said Seamen*. Washington City: William Duane & Son, 1802.
- Letters from the Secretary of State, Accompanying Statements and Abstracts....* [Washington, 1805].
- Madison, James. *Message from the President of the United States ... Touching the Impressment of American Seamen....* Washington, D.C.: Weightman, 1810.
- Massachusetts. General Court. House of Representatives. *Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, on the Subject of Impressed Seamen: with the Evidence and Documents Accompanying It*. Boston: Russell and Cutler, 1813.
- Message from the President of the United States, Communicating Copies of Letters which Have Passed between the Secretary of State and the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Britain, on the Subjects of the Orders in Council and Impressed Seamen*. Washington City: Weightman, 1812.
- Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting a Report of the Secretary of State, in Obedience to a Resolution of the House of Representatives, of the Twenty-Eighth of February Last, of the Number of Impressed American Seamen Confined in Dartmoor Prison; the Number Surrendered, Given up, or Taken on Board British Vessels Captured during the Late War: together with Their Places of Residence*. Washington City: William A. Davis, 1816.

United States Congress. *Report on the Spirit and Manner in which the War Has Been Waged by the Enemy, 1813*. Washington, D.C.: A & G Wag, 1813. Reprint, New York & London: Garland, 1978.

United States Department of State. *Copies and Extracts of Documents on the Subject of British Impressments of American Seamen*. New York: 1813.

Independence Day Orations

Aikens, Asa. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Republican Citizens of Windsor, on Their Celebration of the Thirty Sixth Anniversary of American Independence*. Windsor, Vt.: Office of the Vermont Republican, 1812.

Allen, Samuel C. *An Oration, Delivered at Greenfield, July 6, 1812: In Commemoration of American Independence; at the Request of the Washington Benevolent Societies, of the County of Franklin*. Greenfield, Mass.: Denio and Phelps, 1812.

[An American Seamen, Prisoner of War]. *An Oration, Delivered by Permission, on Board the Nassau Prison-Ship, at Chatham, England; on the Fourth of July, 1814*. Boston: 1815.

Anthon, John. *An Oration Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society and the Hamilton Society in the City of New-York, on the Fourth of July, 1812*. New York: Largin & Thompson, 1812.

Austin, Daniel, Jr. *An Oration Pronounced July 4, 1814...at the Request of the Republican Citizens of Portsmouth*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Beck & Foster, 1814.

Austin, James T. *An Oration, Pronounced at Lexington, Mass. in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America, and the Restoration of Peace. 4th July, 1815*. Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815.

Bache, Richard. *Oration, Delivered at Spring Garden, July 5, 1813, to a Very Numerous and Respectable Company of Democratic Republicans, of the City and County of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: Binns, 1813.

Bangs, Edward D. *An Oration, Pronounced at Sutton, Massachusetts, July 5th, 1813, in Commemoration of American Independence*. Boston: Belcher, 1813.

Barnet, John. *An Oration, Delivered at Amenia in Union Society, July 4, 1812, to an Assemblage of Citizens, Met to Celebrate the Birth-Day of our Republic*. Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: Adams, 1812.

- Barrows, William, Jr. *An Oration, Pronounced at Fryeburg, Maine, on the 4th Day of July, 1812; at the Request of the Federal Republicans of Fryeburg and the Adjacent Towns.* Portland, Maine: Arthur Shirley, 1812.
- Bates, Barnabas. *A Discourse, Delivered to the Inhabitants of Bristol, (R.I.) Assembled to Celebrate the Anniversary of American Independence, Tuesday, 4th July, 1815.* Warren, R.I.: Randall, 1815.
- Berrian, Samuel. *An Oration, Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, Hibernian Provident, Columbian, and Shipwright's Societies, in the City of New-York, on the Fourth Day of July, 1815.* New York: Low, 1815.
- Bigelow, Andrew. *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society at Cambridge, July 4, 1815.* Cambridge, Mass.: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1815.
- Bigelow, Lewis. *An Oration, Pronounced at Templeton, July 5, 1813, in Commemoration of the Thirty Seventh Anniversary of American Independence, before the Washington Benevolent Societies in the Northern Section of the County of Worcester, and Other Citizens.* Worcester, Mass.: Isaac Sturtevant, 1813.
- Blake, Francis. *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, (Mass.) on the Thirty-Sixth Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1812.* Worcester, Mass.: Isaac Sturtevant, 1812.
- Boies, Patrick. *An Oration, Pronounced at Blandford, on the 4th of July, 1814, before the Blandford and Granville Branches of the "Washington Benevolent Society of the County of Hampden" in Commemoration of American Independence.* Springfield, Mass.: Dickman, 1814.
- Bradley, Micah. *An Oration, Pronounced July 5th, 1813, at the Request of the Republicans of the Town of Portsmouth.* Portsmouth, N.H.: Weeks, 1813.
- Buell, William Samuel. *An Oration, Delivered at Montgomery, Orange County (N.Y.) on the Fourth of July, 1814, being the Thirty-ninth Anniversary of American Independence.* New York: Van Winkle and Wiley, 1814.
- Caldwell, Charles. *An Oration, Commemorative of American Independence, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society of Pennsylvania.* Philadelphia: Office of the United States Gazette, 1814.
- Chickering, Jabez. *An Oration Pronounced at Dedham, on the Anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence, July 4th, 1812.* Boston: Joshua Belcher, 1812.
- Clark, Daniel A. *Independence-Sermon, Delivered July 4, 1814, at Hanover, N. Jersey.* Newark, N.J.: Tuttle, 1814.

- Cooke, Phinehas. *An Oration, Delivered at Keene, N.H. before the Washington Benevolent Society, on the 5th Day of July, 1813, Being the Anniversary of American Independence.* Keene, N.H.: Prentiss, 1813.
- Cooley, James. *An Oration, Delivered at Granville, Massachusetts, July 5th, 1813, in Commemoration of American Independence.* Hartford, Conn.: Hale & Hosmer, 1813.
- Crafts, William, Jr. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, before the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina, on the Fourth of July, 1812, in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States; by Appointment of the American Revolution Society.* Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1812.
- Cushman, Joshua. *An Oration, Pronounced at Waterville, July 4, 1814; in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America.* Hallowell: Cheever, 1814.
- Dana, Daniel. *A Discourse Delivered in Newburyport, July 4, 1814, in Commemoration of American Independence, and the Deliverance of Europe.* Newburyport: Allen, 1814.
- Dana, Richard H. *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society at Cambridge.* Cambridge, Mass.: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1814.
- Dunham, Josiah. *An Oration Delivered at Hanover, in the Vicinity of Dartmouth College, before the Several Washington Benevolent Societies of Hanover, Lebanon, Lime, Norwich, and Hartford, on the Thirty Eighth Anniversary of American Independence; and in Commemoration of the Great Events in Europe, which have Terminated so Honorably to the Allied Arms, and so Triumphantly Glorious to the Cause of Humanity.* Hanover: Charles Speer, 1814.
- Durfee, Job. *An Oration, Pronounced at the Baptist Meeting-House, in Tiverton, on the Fifth Day of July, 1813; in Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence.* Newport, R.I.: William Simons, 1813.
- Elliot, Samuel. *An Oration, Pronounced at Brattleboro' Vt before the Washington Benevolent Societies of Windham County and the Public, July 6, 1813, in Commemoration of the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence.* Brattleborough, Vt.: William Fessenden, 1813.
- Evarts, Jeremiah. *An Oration, Delivered in Charlestown, (Mass.) on the Fourth of July, 1812, in Commemoration of American Independence.* Charlestown, Mass.: Samuel Etheridge, Jr., 1812.

- Fairchild, Jotham. *An Oration, Pronounced at Waterville, July 5, 1813*. Augusta, Maine: Edes, 1813.
- Flint, Timothy. *An Oration, Delivered at Leominster, July 4, 1815, before the Washington Benevolent Societies of Lancaster and Sterling and of Leominster and Fitchburg*. Worcester, Mass.: William Manning, 1815.
- Foster, Festus. *An Oration, Pronounced at Hardwick, July 4th, 1812 being the Thirty-Sixth Anniversary of American Independence*. Brookfield: Merriam, 1812.
- Frelinghuysen, Frederick. *An Oration, Delivered July Fourth, 1812, before the New-Jersey Washington Benevolent Society, in the City of New-Brunswick*. New Brunswick: Green, 1812.
- Frøeligh, Moses. *A Discourse, Delivered at Montgomery, in Commemoration of the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence, July 5th, 1813*. Montgomery, N.Y.: Pratt, 1813.
- Fuller, Timothy. *An Oration Pronounced at Lexington, Massachusetts, on the Fourth of July, A.D. 1814, by Request of the Republican Citizens of Middlesex County, Being the Thirty-Eighth Anniversary of American Independence*. Boston: Rowe & Hooper, 1814.
- Gates, Isaac. *An Oration, Pronounced Publicly, at Bedford, New Hampshire, before the Washington Benevolent Society in that Place, July 4th, 1814*. Concord, N.H.: Hough, 1814.
- Gleason, Benjamin. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Republican Citizens of Charlestown, on the Anniversary of Our National Independence, Monday, July 5, 1813*. Boston: True & Rowe, 1813.
- Greene, Christopher R. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South-Carolina; on Tuesday, the Fourth of July, 1815; in Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the South-Carolina State Society of Cincinnati, and Published at the Request of That Society; and Also of the American Revolution Society*. Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1815.
- Greene, Henry. *An Oration, Delivered at Shoreham, to a Numerous Collection of Citizens of Addison County, on the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1812*. Rutland, Vt.: Fay, 1812.
- Griswold, Stanley. *The Exploits of Our Fathers, or A Concise History of the Military Events of Our Revolutionary War. An Oration Delivered at Cincinnati (Ohio) July 3d, 1813 (the 4th being Sunday) in Celebration of the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence*. Cincinnati: Carpenter, [1813].

- Haines, Charles G. *An Oration, Delivered before the Republican Citizens of Gilmanton and the Adjacent Towns, on the Fourth of July, 1812.* Concord, N.H.: Hill, 1812.
- Hall, Moses, Jr. *Oration Pronounced at Saugus, July Fourth, 1815, the Anniversary of American Independence.* Boston: Wait, 1815.
- Haskell, Abraham. *Oration Pronounced at Fitchburg, before the Washington Benevolent Society of Leominster and Fitchburg, at Their Anniversary Celebration of Our National Birth Day, July 4, A. D. 1814.* Worcester, Mass.: Isaac Sturtevant, 1814.
- Hay, George. *An Oration, Delivered at the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence, at the Request of the 'Society of Friends of the Revolution,' in the Capitol in Richmond, and Published also at Their Request.* [Richmond]: Ritchie & Trueheart, 1813.
- An Heroic Address, for the Fourth of July, 1813. Inscribed to the New Jersey, Washington Benevolent Society in New-Brunswick.* [New Brunswick, N.J.]: Guardian Press, [1813].
- Hersey, Thomas. *Oration, Delivered at Cincinnati before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order.* Cincinnati: Pettit Printer, 1814.
- Holmes, John. *An Oration, Pronounced at Alfred, on the 4th of July, 1815, being the Thirty Ninth Anniversary of American Independence.* Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815.
- Humphrey, Hosea. *A Long Talk, Spoken at Seekhonk, on the Fourth of July, 1813, before the Tammany Society, Panther Tribe, Number 1—Massachusetts.* Newport, R.I.: Simons, 1813.
- Ingersoll, Charles. *An Oration, Delivered at Mr. Harvey's Spring Garden, before a Very Numerous Meeting of Democratic Citizens, July 4, 1812.* Philadelphia: Binns, 1812.
- Jackson, John G. *An Oration Pronounced in Clarksburg, on the Fourth Day of July, 1812, and Thirty-Seventh Year of American Independence.* Clarksburg, Va.: Britton, 1812.
- Jarvis, William C. *An Oration, Delivered at Pittsfield, (Mass.) before the Washington Benevolent Society of the County of Berkshire, on the 4th July 1812.* 2d ed. Stockbridge, Mass.: Willard, 1812.
- Johnson, William, Jr. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Philip's Church; before the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina, on Saturday the Fourth of July, 1812, in Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the '76*

- Association, and Published at the Request of that Society.* Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1813.
- Kean, Peter. *An Oration Delivered in the Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth-Town (N. J.) on Saturday, July 4, 1812.* Morris-Town, N.J.: Russell, 1812.
- Kennedy, Lionel Henry. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Philip's Church; before the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina. On Monday the Fifth of July, 1813. (The Fourth being Sunday,) in Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the South-Carolina State Society of Cincinnati, and Published at the Request of that Society, and also of the American Revolution Society.* Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1813.
- Kidder, David. *An Oration, Pronounced at Bloomfield, (Me.) July 4th, 1814.* Hallowell: Cheever, 1814.
- Ladd, William. *An Oration, Pronounced at Minot, Maine, on the Fourth Day of July, 1814.* Portland, Maine: Arthur Shirley, 1814.
- Langdon, Chauncey. *An Address upon the Declaration of Independence.* Middlebury, Vt.: Timothy C. Strong, 1814.
- . *An Oration, Delivered in Castleton at the Celebration of the Fourth of July, A. D. 1812.* Middlebury, Vt.: Strong, 1812.
- Leland, Sherman. *An Oration, Pronounced at Dorchester, July 4, 1815, in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America.* Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815.
- Lincoln, Enoch. *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, in Commemoration of American Independence, July 4th, 1812.* Worcester, Mass.: Rogers, 1812.
- Loring, Jerome. *An Oration, Pronounced at Hingham, July 4, 1815, in Commemoration of American Independence.* Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1815.
- Lyon, Asa. *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society of the County of Grand-Isle, at South-Hero, on the Sixth Day of July, 1812.* Plattsburgh, N.Y.: Flagg, 1812.
- Mack, Ebenezer. *An Oration, Delivered before the New-York Typographical Society, on the Fifth of July, 1813, in Celebration of the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence, and Fourth of the Society.* New York: Woodworth, 1813.
- Mallery, Rollin Carolus. *An Oration, Addressed to Republicans, Assembled at Poultney, Vermont, July 4, 1814.* Rutland: Fay & Davison, 1814.

- Mansfield, Jacob. *An Oration, Pronounced at Western, in Commemoration of American Independence, July 4th, 1812*. Worcester, Mass.: Rogers, 1812.
- Matthews, John. *Memorial of Independence: A Discourse Delivered in the Presbyterian Church, in Shepherds-Town, (VA.) on Tuesday, the Fourth of July, 1815*. Baltimore: Edes, 1815.
- Matthews, Philip. *An Oration, Delivered on the 5th July, 1813, in the Episcopal Church of Saint Helena*. Charleston, S.C.: Manclay, 1813.
- M'Donald, John. *Ebenezer: or Jehovah the Helper of America. A Sermon Delivered in the Capitol, July 4, 1814, Being the Anniversary of the Independence of America by the Order of the Corporation of the City of Albany, and Published at Their Request*. Albany: Schermerhorn, 1814.
- M'Lane, Louis. *Oration Delivered before the Artillery Company of Wilmington, Commanded by Captain Rodney, on the 5th of July, A.D. 1813*. Wilmington, Del.: Porter, 1813.
- Mills, Oliver. *An Oration, Delivered at Barkhamsted, at the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1815*. Hartford: Gleason, 1815.
- Morris, Gouverneur. *An Oration, Delivered July 5th, 1813, before the Washington Benevolent Society, of the City of New-York, in Commemoration of American Independence*. New York: Seymour, 1813.
- Newton, Rejoice. *An Oration, Delivered at Worcester, Mass., on the Fourth of July, 1814*. Worcester, Mass.: Sturtevant, 1814.
- Nicholson, Benjamin R. *An Oration, Delivered on the Fifth of July, 1813, in the North Church in Salem, in Commemoration of American Independence*. Salem: Cushing, 1813.
- Packard, Asa. *An Oration, on the Means of Perpetuating Independence, Delivered at East-Sudbury, July 4th, 1815*. Boston: Bowen, [1815?]
- Paine, Emerson. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Students of Brown University at the First Congregational Meeting-House in Providence, July 5, 1813; in Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence*. Portland, Maine: Shirley, 1813.
- Parmelee, David L. *An Address, Delivered at Goshen, at the Anniversary Celebration of the 4th of July, 1814; at the Desire of the Young Men of the Town*. Hartford: Gleason, 1814.

Peirce, Benjamin. *An Oration, Delivered at Salem, on the Fourth of July, 1812*. Salem: Cushing, 1812.

Perkins, Matthew. *An Oration, Delivered at the Meeting-House in Sandbornton, New-Hampshire, to the Washington Benevolent Society, on the Fifth Day of July 1813*. Concord, N.H.: Tuttle, 1813.

Pitman, John, Jr. *An Oration, Pronounced July 4th, 1812, at the Request of the Republicans of the Town of Salem, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence*. Salem: Warwick Palfray, Jr., 1812.

Powers, Grant. *An Oration, Pronounced in the Meeting House at Thetford, VT, upon the Thirty Sixth Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1812*. Montpelier, Vt.: Wright & Sibley, 1812.

Prentiss, Samuel, Jr. *An Oration, Pronounced at Plainfield, July 4, 1812, before the Washington Benevolent Societies of Montpelier, Calais, Plainfield and Barre, being the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence*. Montpelier, Vt.: Walton & Goss, 1812.

Proceedings and Address of the Second Convention of Delegates, Held at the City of Trenton, on the Fourth July, 1814, to the People of New-Jersey. N.p., n.d.

Richardson, J. S. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Michael's Church, before the Inhabitants of Charleston, South-Carolina, on Monday the Fifth of July, 1813, (The Fourth Being Sunday,) in Commemoration of American Independence; by Appointment of the '76 Association, and Published at the Request of That Society*. Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1813.

Richardson, Joseph. *An Oration, Pronounced July 4, 1812, before the Citizens of the County of Plymouth, on the Anniversary of American Independence*. Boston: True & Rowe, 1812.

Rodman, John. *An Oration, Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, Tailor's, Hibernian Provident, Columbian, Cordwainers, and George Clinton Societies, in the City of New-York, on the Fifth Day of July, 1813*. New York: Low, 1813.

Rogers, John. *An Address, Delivered at the Meeting House in Plymouth, New-Hampshire, to the Washington Benevolent Society of that and the Adjacent Towns, on the 4th Day of July, 1812*. Concord, N.H.: Hough, 1812.

Romaine, Samuel B. *An Oration Delivered before the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order; Tailor's, Hibernian Provident, Shipwright's, Columbian, Manhattan, and Cordwainer's Societies in the City of New-York, on the Fourth Day of July, 1812*. New York: Low, 1812.

- Rush, Richard. *An Oration, Delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives, at the Capitol, Washington, July 4, 1812.* Concord, N.H.: Hill, 1812.
- Russell, Jonathan. *An Oration, Pronounced in the Baptist Meeting House in Providence, on the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1800.* Baltimore: Dobbin and Murphy, 1814.
- Shaw, Lemuel. *An Oration, Delivered at Boston, July 4, 1815, before the Supreme Executive of the Commonwealth, and the Municipal Authority and Citizens of the Town, in Commemoration of American Independence.* Boston: Eliot, 1815.
- Shipherd, Zebulon Rudd. *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society at Poultney, on the 4th of July, 1814.* Middlebury, Vt.: Strong, 1814.
- Slack, John H. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Associated Disciples of Washington, Members of the Hopkington, Concord, and Dunbarton Societies, at Hopkington, New-Hampshire, July 5, 1813, Being the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of American Independence.* Concord, N.H.: Hough, 1813.
- Slade, William, Jr. *An Oration, Pronounced at Middlebury, (Vt) on the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1814.* Middlebury, Vt.: Slade & Ferguson, 1814.
- Smith, Edward Darrell. *An Oration, Delivered on the Fourth Day of July, 1812, to the Citizens of Pendleton District, and Published at Their Request.* Augusta, Ga.: Herald-Office, 1812.
- Smith, Samuel H. *Oration Pronounced by Samuel H. Smith, Esquire, in the City of Washington, on Monday, the Fifth of July, by Request of a General Meeting of the Citizens, and Published at the Desire of the Committee of Arrangement.* Washington, D.C.: Weightman, 1813.
- Snell, Thomas. *An Oration, Pronounced at Brookfield, July 5, 1813: At the Celebration of the Independence of the United States of America.* Brookfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1813.
- Sprague, Joseph E. *An Oration, Delivered in Salem, on the Fifth of July, 1813, in Commemoration of Our Naval Victories, and National Independence.* Salem: Palfray, 1813.
- Sprague, Peleg. *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, July 4, 1815, the Thirty-Ninth Anniversary of American Independence.* Worcester: Rogers, 1815.
- Streeter, Sebastian. *An Oration, Pronounced at Hampstead, New-Hampshire, July 4, 1814.* Concord, N.H.: Hill, 1814.

- Streeter, Squire. *An Oration, Delivered on Mount Independence in Goffstown, New-Hampshire, on the Thirty-sixth Anniversary of American Independence, July Fourth, 1812.* Concord, N.H.: Hill, 1812.
- Sutherland, David. *Christian Benevolence: A Sermon, Delivered at Newbury, VT before the Washington Benevolent Society, at the Celebration of the Anniversary of the National Independence, July 4, 1812.* Windsor, Vt.: Pomroy, 1812.
- Taylor, Oliver S. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Warren and Knox Branches of the Washington Benevolent Society, at Belchertown, on the Anniversary of the Independence of the United States, July 4, 1815.* Springfield, Mass.: T. Dickman, [1815].
- Telfair, Alexander. *An Oration Commemorative of American Independence.* Savannah, Ga.: Fell, 1813.
- Thompson, John Champlin. *An Oration, Pronounced at Windsor, before a Numerous Collection of Republicans, on Their Celebration of the Thirty Eighth Anniversary of American Independence.* Windsor, Vt.: Cochran, 1814.
- Tillinghast, Joseph L. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Citizens of Pawtuxet, on the Fourth of July, 1814.* Providence: Miller, Goddard & Mann, 1814.
- Toomer, Joshua W. *An Oration, Delivered in St. Michaels Church, Charleston, South-Carolina; on Monday, the Fourth of July, 1814; in Commemoration of American Independence, by Appointment of the American Revolution Society, and Published at the Request of That Society, and also of the South-Carolina State Society of the Cincinnati.* Charleston, S.C.: Young, 1814.
- Tufts, Jr., Joseph. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Federal Republicans of Charlestown, Massachusetts, July 4, 1814, being the Anniversary of American Independence.* Charlestown, Mass.: Samuel Etheridge, Jr., 1814.
- Van Ness, Cornelius P. *An Oration Delivered at Williston, July 4th, 1812, to a General and Very Numerous Meeting of the Republicans of Chittenden County.* Burlington, Vt.: Mills, 1812.
- Vanpelt, Peter I. *A Discourse, Delivered on the Fourth of July, in the North Brick Church.* New York, 1812.
- Van Vechten, Philip. *Oration Prepared at the Request of the Committee of Arrangement, Appointed by the Common Council of the City of Albany, for Celebrating the 37th Anniversary of American Independence.* Albany, 1813.
- Wallace, John. *An Oration, Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society in Newbury, Vermont, on the Fourth of July, 1812.* Windsor, Vt.: Pomroy, 1812.

- Webster, Daniel. *An Address Delivered before the Washington Benevolent Society at Portsmouth, July 4, 1812*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Oracle Press, [1812].
- Webster, Noah. *An Oration, Pronounced before the Knox and Warren Branches of the Washington Benevolent Society, at Amherst, on the Celebration of the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1814*. Northampton, Mass.: Butler, 1814.
- Wheaton, Henry. *An Oration, Delivered before the Different Republican Societies, at the Theatre, Anthony St. New York, on the Anniversary of American Independence, July 4, 1814*. New York: Goodrich, 1814.
- White, Edwin A. *An Oration, Pronounced at Worcester, Massachusetts; July 4, 1814, in Commemoration of American Independence*. Worcester, Mass.: Rogers, 1814.
- White, Phinehas. *Oration, Delivered at Dummerston, VT. July 4, 1815. In Commemoration of the 39th Anniversary of American Independence*. [Brattleboro?, 1815?].
- Whitwell, Benjamin. *An Oration Pronounced July 4, 1814, at the Request of the Selectmen of the Town of Boston, in Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence*. Boston: Callender, 1814.
- Willard, Jacob. *An Oration, Delivered on the Fourth of July, 1812, before the Inhabitants of Marblehead, in Commemoration of American Independence*. Salem: Warwick Palfray, Jr., 1812.
- Williams, Melancthon B. *An Oration, Delivered at Springfield, N.J. on the Fortieth Anniversary of American Independence*. New York: Tuttle, 1815.
- Wilmer, William H. *A Sermon: Delivered in St. Paul's Church, on the Fourth of July, 1813, to the Second Brigade of Alexandria Militia, at the Request of the Officers*. Alexandria, Va.: Stewart, 1813.
- Woodbury, Levi. *An Oration, Pronounced at Lyndeborough, N.H. in Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America July 4, 1815*. Amherst: Boylston, 1815.

Memoirs, Journals, etc.

- Andrews, Charles. *The Prisoners' Memoirs*. New York: 1815.

- Bates, Joseph. *The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates; Embracing A Long Life On Shipboard*. Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-Day Adventist Publishing Association, 1868.
- Bentley, William. *The Diary of William Bentley, D. D., Pastor of the East Church, Salem, Massachusetts*. Volume 4: January 1811–December 1819. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1962.
- Bligh, William. *The Mutiny on Board H. M. S. Bounty*. New York: New American Library, 1961. Originally published 1792.
- [Cobb, Josiah]. *A Green Hand's First Cruise*. Vols. 1, 2. Boston: Otis, Broaders, and Company, 1841.
- Cohen, Daniel A., ed. *The Female Marine and Related Works: Narratives of Cross-Dressing and Urban Vice in America's Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Crawford, William H. "The Journal of William H. Crawford." Edited by Daniel Chauncey Knowlton. *Smith College Studies in History* 11, no. 1 (October 1925): 5–64.
- Dana, Jr., Richard Henry. *Two Years Before the Mast: A Personal Narrative*. Houghton Mifflin, 1869; New York: Signet Classic, 1964. Originally published 1840.
- Davis, Joshua. *A Narrative of Joshua Davis, an American Citizen, Who Was Pressed and Served on Board Six Ships of the British Navy*. Baltimore: Edes, 1811.
- Durand, James. *James Durand, an Able Seaman of 1812: His Adventures on "Old Ironsides" and as an Impressed Sailor in the British Navy*. Edited by George S. Brooks. 1820. Reprint, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1926.
- Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*. Edited by Vincent Carretta. 1789. Reprinted New York: Penguin Books, 1995.
- Evans, Amos A. *Journal Kept on Board the Frigate Constitution, 1812*. Lincoln, Mass.: Bankers Lithograph Co, 1967. [Reprinted for William D. Sawtell from *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*].
- Felknor, Bruce, ed. *A Privateersman's Letters Home From Prison*. 3 December 1999. <<http://www.usmm.org/felknor1812.html>> (5 June 2001).
- Foster, Augustus John. *Jeffersonian America: Notes on the United States of America Collected in the Years 1805–6–7 and 11–12*. Edited by Richard Beale Davis. San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1954.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel, ed. *The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1926.
- Herbert, Charles. *A Relic of the Revolution*. Eyewitness Accounts of the American Revolution. New York: The New York Times & Arno Press, 1968. Originally published Boston: Pierce, 1847.
- Humphreys, Assheton. *The USS Constitution's Finest Fight, 1815: The Journal of Acting Chaplain Assheton Humphreys, US Navy*. Edited by Tyrone G. Martin. Mount Pleasant, S.C.: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 2000.
- Inderwick, James. *Cruise of the U.S. Brig Argus in 1813: Journal of Surgeon James Inderwick*. Edited by Victor Hugo Paltsits. New York: The New York Public Library, 1917.
- [Jones, Noah]. *Journals of Two Cruises aboard the American Privateer Yankee*. Introduction by Admiral E. M. Eller. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967.
- Le Couteur, John. *Merry Hearts Make Light Days: The War of 1812 Journal of Lieutenant John Le Couteur, 104th Foot*. Edited by Donald E. Graves. Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 1994.
- Leech, Samuel. *Thirty Years from Home, or, A Voice from the Main Deck*. 15th ed. Boston: Tappan, Whitmore & Mason, 1843.
- Little, George. *Life on the Ocean; or, Twenty Years at Sea*. 3d ed. Boston: Waite, Peirce, 1845.
- Loftus, Charles. *My Youth by Sea and Land, from 1809 to 1816*. Volumes 1 and 2. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1876.
- Melville, Herman. *White Jacket, or The World in a Man-of-War*. 1850. Reprint, New York: Grove Press, 1956.
- "Memoirs of Lewis P. Clover, A Prisoner of War." *The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review*, March 1859; 26, 141..
- [Mercier, Henry James]. *Life in a Man-of-War, or Scenes in 'Old Ironsides' During Her Cruise in the Pacific*. 1841. Reprint, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1927.
- Morrell, Jr., Benjamin. *A Narrative of Four Voyages*. New York: Harper, 1832. Reprint, Upper Saddle River, NJ: The Gregg Press, 1970.

- Myers, Ned. *Ned Myers; or, A Life before the Mast*. Edited by James Fenimore Cooper. Introduction by William S. Dudley. 1843. Reprint, Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1989.
- Napier, Henry Edward. *New England Blockaded in 1814: The Journal of Henry Edward Napier*. Edited by Walter Muir Whitehill. Salem, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1939.
- A Narrative of the Capture of the United States' Brig Vixen*. New York: Office of "The War," 1813.
- Noah, Mordecai M. *Travels in England, France, Spain, and the Barbary States, in the Years 1813–1814 and 15*. New York: Kirk and Mercein, 1819.
- "An Old Sailor's True Story." *Emerson's Magazine and Putnam's Monthly*; 5, no. 6, December 1857.
- Palmer, Benjamin F. *The Diary of Benjamin F. Palmer While A Prisoner On Board English Warships at Sea, In the Prison at Melville Island And at Dartmoor*. Acorn Club, 1914.
- Parsons, G. S. *Nelsonian Reminiscences: Leaves from Memory's Log*. Edited by W. H. Long. 1843. Reprint, London: Chatham, 1998.
- Parsons, Usher. *Surgeon of the Lakes: The Diary of Usher Parsons 1812–1814*. Edited by John C. Fredrickson. Erie, Pa.: Erie County Historical Society, 2000.
- Pierce, Nathaniel. "Journal of Nathaniel Pierce of Newburyport, Kept at Dartmoor Prison, 1814–1815." *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 73 (January 1937): 24–59.
- Porter, David. *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean, by Captain David Porter, in the United States Frigate Essex, in the Years 1812, 1813, and 1814*. Two vols. Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1815.
- Robinson, William. *Jack Nastyface: Memoirs of a Seaman*. 1836. Reprint, London: Wayland, 1973.
- Selman, Francis G. "Extracts from the Journal of a Marblehead Privateersman Confined on Board British Prison Ships, 1813, 1814, 1815." In *The Marblehead Manual*, ed Samuel Roads Jr. Marblehead: Statesman, 1883.
- Smith, Moses. *Naval Scenes in the Last War; or, Three Years on Board the Frigate Constitution, and the Adams; including the Capture of the Guerriere*. Boston: Gleason's, 1846.

- Spavens, Williams. *The Narrative of William Spavens. A Chatham Pensioner.* Introduction by N. A. M. Rodger. London: Chatham, 1998.
- Stevens, Benjamin F. *A Cruise on the Constitution: Around the World on Old Ironsides 1844–1847.* New York: 1904. Reprinted from *The United Service Magazine.*
- Upton, Jeduthun. *Log of Jeduthun Upton.* N.p., n.d.
- Valpey, Joseph, Jr. *Journal of Joseph Valpey, Jr. of Salem November 1813–April, 1815, with Other Papers Relating to His Experience in Dartmoor Prison.* Michigan Society of Colonial Wars, 1922.
- Waterhouse, Benjamin, ed. *A Journal of a Young Man of Massachusetts.* Boston: Rowe and Hooper, 1816.

Miscellaneous

- An Abstract of the Public Documents, Exhibiting the Measures Recommended by the Administration, and the Proceedings in Relation to Them in Congress, Tending to Subject the People of the United States to a Military Conscription, to Fill the Ranks of the Regular Army; and a Naval Impressment, to Supply Seamen for the Public Armed Vessels of the United States.* Georgetown: Robert Alleson, 1815.
- Adams, John. *The Correspondence of John Adams, Esquire, Late President of the United States of America, Concerning the British Doctrine of Impressment, and Many Interesting Things which Occurred during His Administration.* Baltimore: G. Dobbin and Murphy for H. Niles, 1809.
- The Carrier's Address to the Patrons of the Boston Patriot, Wishing Them a "Happy New-Year."* [Boston, 1814].
- A Citizen of Baltimore. *Observations on the Impressment of American Seamen by the Officers of Ships of War, and Vessels Commanded by, and Acting under the Authority of Great Britain....* Baltimore: G. Dobbin & Murphy, 1806.
- The Columbian Primer, or, Ladder to Learning.* New York: Totten, 1813.
- A Correct Statement of the Defeat and Capture of His Britannic Majesty's Frigates.* Compiled by [John Winter]. Alexandria: John Winter, 1813.
- A Cursory Glimpse of the State of the Nation, on the Twenty-Second of February, 1814, being the Eighty-first Anniversary of the Birth of Washington; or, A Physico-Politico-Theologico, Lucubration upon the Wonderful Properties of Nitrous*

- Oxide, or the Newly-Discovered Exhilarating Gas, in Its Effects upon the Human Mind, and Body; as They were Exhibited, by Actual Experiment, on the Evening of the Twenty-Third Instant.* 2d ed. Philadelphia: Moses Thomas, 1814.
- Foster, Hannah Webster. *The Coquette*. Edited by Carla Mulford. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Originally published 1797.
- Free Trade and Sailor's Rights*. Philadelphia: Dennis Heartt, 1813.
- Guthry, John, Sr. *Federalism Detected*. Philadelphia, 1815.
- Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Reprinted in *The Portable Thomas Jefferson*. Edited by Merrill D. Peterson. New York: Penguin Books, 1977. Originally published 1787.
- Lathrop, John. *A Discourse, Delivered in Boston, April 18, 1815, the Day of Thanksgiving Appointed by the President of the United States, in Consequence of the Peace*. Boston: Burditt, 1815.
- . *Oration, in Celebration of the Peace Happily Concluded between the United States of America, and Great Britain; Delivered at Boston, March 16, 1815, at the Request of St. John's Lodge; and Sanctioned by the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Massachusetts*. Boston: House, 1815.
- [Madison, James]. *All Impressments Unlawful and Inadmissible*. Boston: Munroe & Francis, for William Pelham, [1808].
- [Regent, Cody]. *A Masonic Oration on the Death of Brother William S. Bush*. Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1812.
- Rowson, Susanna. *Charlotte Temple and Lucy Temple*. Edited by Ann Douglas. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. Originally published 1794.
- Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. 1759. Reprint, Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2000.
- . *Wealth of Nations*. 1776. Reprint, Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1991.
- Strong, Titus. *Tears of Columbia: A Poem, to the Memory of American Heroes and Statesmen*. Dedham: Mann, 1812.
- Walker, Walker. *David Walker's Appeal*. Rev. ed. by Sean Wilentz. 1829. Reprinted New York: Hill and Wang, 1995.

Newspapers

Alexandria Daily Gazette, Commercial & Political

American Mercury (Connecticut)

American Watchman (Delaware)

Baltimore Patriot

Boston Daily Advertiser

Boston Gazette

Boston Patriot

City Gazette and Daily Advertiser (South Carolina)

Columbian (New York)

Columbian Centinel (Massachusetts)

Eastern Argus (Maine)

The Enquirer (Richmond)

Mercantile Advertiser (New York)

New-York Commercial Advertiser

New-York Gazette & General Advertiser

New York Times

Philadelphia Inquirer

Poulson's American Daily Advertiser (Pennsylvania)

Salem Gazette

Sentinel of Freedom (Newark, N.J.)

The Yankee (Massachusetts)

Religious Tracts

Address to a Master of a Vessel, Intended to Accompany a Book of Prayers Prepared for the Use of Seamen. Boston: John Eliot, 1815.

An Address to Masters of Vessels on the Objects of 'the Boston Society, for the Religious and Moral Improvement of Sailors. Boston: Eliot, 1812.

The First Annual Report of the Executive Committee of 'the Boston Society, for the Religious and Moral Improvement of Sailors. Boston, 1813.

Handsome Jack, or An Example for Sailors. Boston: Eliot, 1813.

The Seaman's Friend. Boston: Eliot, 1817.

True Friendship, Distinguished from That Which Is False, in a Short Narrative of the Life of Jack Saunders. Boston: Eliot, 1812.

Songsters and Broadides

An Account of the Remarkable Conversion of a Little Girl. Also, A Song for My Brother Sailor. Palmer, Mass.: Terry, 1814

[Allen, Benjamin]. *Columbia's Naval Triumphs.* New York: Inskip & Bradford, 1813.

The American Patriotic Song-Book. Philadelphia: McCulloch, 1813.

American Perry. Boston: Deming. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Digital ID: as100230.

[An American Sailor]. *New Songs.* Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr.

[An American Tar]. *The Cabin-Boy and Fortunate Sailor's Delight.* New York: Hardcastle, 1817.

Battle of Plattsburgh and Victory on Lake Champlain. Windsor, Vt.: 1816.

Campbell, James. *In Behalf of the Brave Capt. James Lawrence, and Lieut. C. Ludlow.* Boston: Coverly.

_____. *Glorious Naval Victory.* Boston: Coverly.

Capture of Little York. Canandaigua, N.Y.: 1813.

Cash in Hand. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr.

- The Columbian Naval Melody; A Collection of Songs and Odes, Composed on the Late Naval Victories and Other Occasions.* Boston: Lund, 1813.
- The Columbian Songster: A Collection of the Most Approved Patriotic and Other Songs.* Pittsburgh: Eichbaum and Johnston, 1818.
- Commodore MacDonough's Victory.* Windsor, Vt.: 1816.
- The Constitution & Guerriere.* [N.p., n.d.] Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Library of Congress. Printed Ephemera Collection; Portfolio 228, Folder 25. Digital ID: rbpe 22802500 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/rbpe.22802500>.
- The Court of Neptune and the Curse of Liberty, with Other Poems, on Subjects Connected with the Late War.* New York: Van Winkle, Wiley, 1817.
- Death of Mr. Job Hosington.* [N.p., n.d.]
- The Eagle and Harp; A Collection of Patriotic and Humorous Songs and Odes.* Dobbin & Murphy, 1812.
- Eighth Naval Victory.* [N.p., n.d.]
- [An English Cossack]. *British Glory, or Naval and Military Exploits from Original Documents.* Philadelphia, 1814.
- Freedom and Peace.* [N.p., n.d.] Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. American Song Sheet. Digital ID: as104120.
- Gillespy, Edward, comp. *The Columbian Songster.* New York: Gillespy, 1813.
- A Happy New-Year to Commodore Rodgers, or, Huzza for the President and Congress.* [Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, Jr., 1813?].
- Honor to the Brave. The Battle of Lake Champlain.* Middlebury, Vt.: Slade & Ferguson.
- Huzza! Old Iron Sides.* [N.p., n.d.] Rare Books and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Digital ID: as105680.
- Journal Carrier's Address.* [New Haven, Conn.], 1813.
- Lathrop, John. *Ode...for the Dinner in Honor of Commodore Perry.* 1814.
- Moore, Frank, ed. *Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution.* 1856. Reprint, New York: New York Times and Arno Press, 1969.

- A National Song-Book, Being a Collection of Patriotic, Martial, and Naval Songs and Odes, Principally of American Composition.* Compiled by James J. Wilson. Trenton, N.J.: Wilson, 1813.
- National Songster; or, A Collection of the Most Admired Patriotic Songs.* First Hager-Town Edition. Hagers-Town, Md.: John Gruber and Daniel May, 1814.
- The National Songster.* Philadelphia: Thomas Desilver, 1808.
- Nautical Songster, or Seamens Companion.* Baltimore, 1798.
- The Naval Songster.* Frederick Town, Md.: Bartgis, 1814.
- The Naval Songster, or Columbian Naval Melody.* Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr. [1816?]
- The Naval Songster, or The Sailor's Pocket Companion.* Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr., 1813.
- Naval Triumph, and Patriotic Diggers.* Boston: Dening. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress. Digital ID: as109380.
- Neeser, Robert W., ed. *American Naval Songs & Ballads.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1938.
- The Neptune.* Boston: Fleet, 1806.
- The New American Songster; being a Collection of Naval, Martial, Patriotic Songs.* Philadelphia: Dickinson, 1817.
- The Noble Lads of Canada.* Boston: Deming.
- Ocean—A Naval Ode.* [Philadelphia, 1813].
- Offset of the Chesapeake.* Boston: Coverley, 1814.
- The Peacock Stung by the Hornet.* Boston: Coverly, 1814.
- Sargent, L. M. *Ode, for the Dinner... Commodore Bainbridge, and the Officers of the United States Frigate, Constitution.* [N.p., n.d.]
- . *Ode, Written to be Sung at the Dinner, Given to the United States Frigate, Constitution, after the Victory over the British Frigate Guerrier.* [N.p., n.d.]
- Shaw, Thomas. *Peace between the United States of America and Great-Britain: Ratified by the President of the United States, February 17, 1815.* [Portland, Maine, 1815].

The Sky Lark: Containing a Collection of New and Approved Songs. Hudson: Ashbel Stoddard, 1814.

[A Soldier of the U.S. Army]. *Six Poems, on Different Subjects Relative to Events of the Late War.* [N.p., n.d.]

To the Memory of Captain Lawrence. Baltimore, 1814.

Torrey, Nathan. *Verses, on the Signal Victory Obtained over the British Troops at New Orleans.* [N.p., n.d.]

Truxton's Victory: or, Brave Yankee Boys. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr., 1814.

The Valiant Sailor: Sea Songs and Ballads and Prose Passages Illustrating Life on the Lower Deck in Nelson's Navy. Edited by Roy Palmer. Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

The War Hoop. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly Jr.

Ware, Jr., Henry. *A Poem Pronounced at Cambridge, February 23, 1815, at the Celebration of Peace between the United States and Great Britain.* Cambridge, Mass.: Hillard and Metcalf, 1815.

Whitman, Jr., Benjamin. *Heroes of the North, or The Battles of Lake Erie, and Lake Champlain.* Boston: Barber Badger, 1816.

[Woodworth, Samuel]. *The Hunters of Kentucky; or, The Battle of New Orleans.* [New York: Brown, ca. 1820].

Yankee Frolics. Boston: Nathaniel Coverly, Jun., 1814.

[A Young Gentleman of Philadelphia]. *The Victors.* Philadelphia, 1815.

C) Secondary Sources

Abell, Francis. *Prisoners of War in Britain, 1756 to 1815: A Record of Their Lives, Their Romance and Their Sufferings.* London: Oxford University Press, 1914.

Adair, Douglass. *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays by Douglass Adair.* Edited by Trevor Colbourn. New York: Norton, 1974.

- Adams, Henry. *History of the United States of America*. 9 vols. New York: Scribner, 1889. Reprint, Ann Arbor, Mich.: Microfilm-Xerography by University Microfilms, 1965.
- Allen, Gardner W. *Our Navy and the Barbary Corsairs*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1965.
- Allgor, Catherine. *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- . *A Perfect Union: Dolley Madison and the Creation of the American Nation*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006.
- Allison, Robert J. *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World 1776–1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- . *Stephen Decatur: American Naval Hero, 1779–1820*. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005.
- Altoff, Gerard T. *Amongst My Best Men: African-Americans and the War of 1812*. Put-in-Bay, Ohio: The Perry Group, 1996.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. 1983. London and New York: Verso, 2000.
- Appleby, Joyce. *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1984.
- . “Commercial Farming and the ‘Agrarian Myth’ in the Early Republic.” *Journal of American History* 68, no. 4 (1982): 833–849. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 211–227. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . “Jefferson and His Complex Legacy.” In *Jeffersonian Legacies*. Edited by Peter Onuf. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- . *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans*. Cambridge, Mass., and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000.
- . “What Is Still American in the Political Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson?” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 39, no. 2 (1982): 287–309. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 229–251. New York and London: Garland, 1991.

- Arnold, Allan A. “‘All Hands Drunk and Rioting’: Disobedience in the Old Merchant Marine.” In *Ships, Seafaring, and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, edited by Timothy J. Runyan. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- Ashworth, John. “The Jeffersonians: Classical Republicans or Liberal Capitalists?” *Journal of American Studies* 18, no. 3 (1984): 425–435. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 253–263. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1991.
- Augst, Thomas. *The Clerk’s Tale: Young Men and Moral Life in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Babcock, Kendrick Charles. *The Rise of American Nationality 1811–1819*. Harper: 1906. Reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1969.
- Baepler, Paul. “The Barbary Captivity Narrative in Early America.” *Early American Literature* 30, no. 2 (1995): 95–120.
http://gateway.proquest.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion-us&rft_id=xri:lion:rec:abell:R01532282 (31 January 2001).
- Bailyn, Bernard. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Enlarged ed. Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1992.
- Banner, James M., Jr. *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789–1815*. New York: Knopf, 1970.
- Banning, Lance. *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- . “Republican Ideology and the Triumph of the Constitution, 1789 to 1793.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 31, no. 2 (April 1974): 167–188.
- . *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Barnes, Elizabeth. *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Bartlett, C. J. and Gene A. Smith. “A ‘Species of Milito-Nautico-Guerilla-Plundering Warfare’: Admiral Alexander Cochrane’s Naval Campaign against the United States, 1814–1815.” In *Britain and America Go to War: The Impact of War and Warfare in Anglo-America, 1754–1815*, edited by Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway, pp. 173–204. Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2004.

- Baseler, Marilyn C. *“Asylum for Mankind”: America, 1607–1800*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1998.
- Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Bellesiles, Michael A. “Experiencing the War of 1812.” In *Britain and America Go to War: The Impact of War and Warfare in Anglo-America, 1754–1815*, edited by Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway, pp. 205–240. Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Ben-Atar, Doron. “Alexander Hamilton’s Alternative: Technology Piracy and the Report on Manufactures.” In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 41–60. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Bennett, William J. *Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Bloch, Ruth H. “The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 13, no. 1 (1987): 37–58.
- Bolster, W. Jeffrey. *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail*. Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- . “‘Every Inch a Man’: Gender in the Lives of African American Seamen, 1800–1860.” In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Borneman, Walter R. *1812: The War That Forged a Nation*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
- Boudreau, Kristin. *Sympathy in American Literature: American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002.
- Bowman, Larry G. *Captive Americans: Prisoners During the American Revolution*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976.
- Branson, Susan. *These Fiery Frenchified Dames: Women and Political Culture in Early National Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- Brown, Roger H. *The Republic in Peril: 1812*. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964.

- Buel, Richard, Jr. *America on the Brink: How the Political Struggle over the War of 1812 Almost Destroyed the Young Republic*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Burnett, Christina Duffy. "The Edges of Empire and the Limits of Sovereignty: American Guano Islands." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 779-803.
- Burstein, Andrew. *Sentimental Democracy: The Evolution of America's Romantic Self-Image*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1999.
- Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Carbado, Devon W. "Racial Naturalization." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 633-658.
- Caric, Ric Northrup. "Blustering Brags, Dueling Inventors, and Corn-Square Geniuses: Artisan Leisure in Philadelphia, 1785-1825." *The American Journal of Semiotics* 12 (Summer 1995): 323-341.
- Carnes, Mark. *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Cassell, Frank A. "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area and the War of 1812." *The Journal of Negro History* 57, no. 2 (April 1972): 144-155.
- Cayton, Andrew R. L. "Radicals in the 'Western World': The Federalist Conquest of Trans-Appalachian North America." In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 77-96. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Clark, Elizabeth B. "'The Sacred Rights of the Weak': Pain, Sympathy, and the Culture of Individual Rights in Antebellum America." *The Journal of American History*, Volume 82, Issue 2 (Sep., 1995), 463-493.
- Cogliano, Francis D. *American Maritime Prisoners in the Revolutionary War: The Captivity of William Russell*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2001.
- Cohen, Patricia Cline. *The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in Nineteenth-Century New York*. New York: Vintage Books, 1998.
- Cohen, Sheldon S. *Yankee Sailors in British Gaols: Prisoners of War at Forton and Mill, 1777-1783*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995.

- Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1992.
- . *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600–1850*. New York: Anchor Books, 2003.
- Conrad, Stephen A. “Putting Rights Talk in Its Place: *The Summary View* Revisited.” In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, p. 254–280. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Cornell, Saul. *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788–1828*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Cott, Nancy F. *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780–1835*. New Haven, Conn., and Yale: Yale University Press, 1977.
- Crackel, Theodore Joseph. “The Founding of West Point: Jefferson and the Politics of Security.” *Armed Forces and Society* 7, no. 4 (1981): 529–543. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 307–321. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Crain, Caleb. *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship, and Literature in the New Nation*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Cray, Robert E., Jr. “Commemorating the Prison Ship Dead: Revolutionary Memory and the Politics of Sepulture in the Early Republic, 1776–1808.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 56, no. 3. (July 1999): 565–590.
- . “Remembering the USS *Chesapeake*: The Politics of Maritime Death and Impressment.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (Fall 2005): 445–474.
- . “Major John André and the Three Captors: Class Dynamics and Revolutionary Memory Wars in the Early Republic, 1780–1831.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 17, no. 3. (Autumn 1997): 371–397.
- Creighton, Margaret S. “Davy Jones’ Locker Room: Gender and the American Whaleman, 1830–1870.” In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- . *Rites and Passages: The Experience of American Whaling, 1830–1870*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Cress, Lawrence Delbert. “‘Cool and Serious Reflection’: Federalist Attitudes Toward War in 1812.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 7 (1987): 123–145. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World*:

- Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 269–291. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Crowhurst, Patrick. *The French War On Trade: Privateering 1793–1815*. Brookfield, Vt.: Scolar Press, 1989.
- Cunningham, Noble E., Jr. *The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization, 1789–1801*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957.
- . *The Jeffersonian Republicans in Power: Party Operations, 1801–1809*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963.
- Cusick, James G. *The Other War of 1812: The Patriot War and the American Invasion of Spanish East Florida*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.
- Dangerfield, George. *The Awakening of American Nationalism, 1815–1828*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965.
- Davidson, Cathy N. *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Davies, Wallace Evans. “The Society of the Cincinnati in New England 1783–1800.” *William and Mary Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (1948): 3–25. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 73–95. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*. Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1975.
- Dening, Greg. *Mr Bligh’s Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Denning, Michael. *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America*. New York and London: Verso, 1987.
- Dickson, Charles Ellis. “Jeremiads in the New American Republic: The Case of National Fasts in the John Adams Administration.” *New England Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (1987): 187–207. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, ed. Peter S. Onuf, pp. 117–137. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Dillon, Elizabeth Maddock. “*Slaves in Algiers: Race, Republican Genealogies, and the Global Stage*.” *American Literary History* 16, no. 3 (2004): 407–436.

- Ditz, Toby. "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia." *The Journal of American History*, 81:1 (Jun., 1994), 51-80.
- Dorsey, Bruce. *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Dugaw, Dianne. "Female Sailors Bold: Transvestite Heroines and the Markers of Gender and Class." In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Durey, Michael. "Thomas Paine's Apostles: Radical Emigres and the Triumph of Jeffersonian Republicanism," *William and Mary Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (1987): 661–688. Reprinted in *The New American Nation. Vol. 8: Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 183–210. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Dye, Ira. "American Maritime Prisoners of War, 1812–1815." In *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, edited by Timothy J. Runyan. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- . "Early American Merchant Seafarers." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, no. 5 (15 October 1976): 331–360.
- . *The Fatal Cruise of the Argus: Two Captains in the War of 1812*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1994.
- . "The Tattoos of Early American Seafarers, 1796–1818." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 4 (December 1989): 520–554.
- Egan, Clifford L. "The Origins of the War of 1812: Three Decades of Historical Writing." *Military Affairs* 38, no. 2 (April 1974): 72–75.
- Elias, Norbert. *The History of Manners*. Vol. 1 of *The Civilizing Process*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Hans zum Falker, Basel, 1939. Reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994.
- Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Ellis, Joseph J. *The Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. 2d ed. New York: Vintage Books, 2002.
- Eustace, Nicole. "'The Cornerstone of a Copious Work': Love and Power in Eighteenth-Century Courtship." *Journal of Social History* 34 no. 3 (2001): 517–546.

- . “Vehement Movements: Debates on Emotion, Self, and Society during the Seven Years’ War in Pennsylvania.” *Explorations in Early American Culture* 5 (2001): 79–117.
- Fabel, Robin F. A. “Self-Help in Dartmoor: Black and White Prisoners in the War of 1812.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 9 (Summer 1989), 165-190.
- Fabian, Ann. “Unseemly Sentiments: The Cultural Problem of Gambling.” In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 143–156. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Faust, Drew Gilpin. “Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War.” *The Journal of American History* 76, no. 4. (March 1990): 1200–1228.
- Finkelman, Paul. “Jefferson and Slavery: ‘Treason Against the Hopes of the World.’” In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, p. 181–221. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- . “The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Federalism.” In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 135–156. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Fish, Peter G. “War on the Slave Trade: Changing Fortunes in Antebellum U.S. Courts of the Mid-Atlantic South.” In *The Early Republic and the Sea: Essays on the Naval and Maritime History of the Early United States*, edited by William S. Dudley and Michael J. Crawford. Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, 2001.
- Fliegelman, Jay. *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750–1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Forester, C. S. *The Naval War of 1812*. London: Joseph, 1957.
- Forgie, George B. *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age*. New York: Norton, 1979.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.
- Fowler, William M., Jr. *Jack Tar and Commodores: The American Navy, 1783–1815*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Freidel, Frank. "Dissent in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection." In *Dissent in Three American Wars*, edited by Samuel Eliot Morison, Frederick Merk, and Frank Freidel, pp. 65–95. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- French, Scot A., and Edward L. Ayers. "The Strange Career of Thomas Jefferson: Race and Slavery in American Memory, 1943–1993." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 418–456. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Gardiner, Robert, ed. *The Naval War of 1812*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1998.
- Garitee, Jerome R. *The Republic's Private Navy: The American Privateering Business as Practiced by Baltimore during the War of 1812*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1977.
- Gasson, Roy, ed. *A Vision of Dartmoor: Paintings by F.J. Widgery 1861–1942*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1988.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Gilbert, Felix. *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy*. 1961. Reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970.
- Gilje, Paul. "The Baltimore Riots of 1812 and the Breakdown of the Anglo-American Mob Tradition." *Journal of Social History* 13, no. 4 (1980): 547–564.
- . *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Commerce in the Age of Revolution*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- . "Loyalty and Liberty: The Ambiguous Patriotism of Jack Tar in the American Revolution." *Pennsylvania History* 67, no. 2 (2000): 165–193.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Glenn, Myra C. "The Naval Reform Campaign Against Flogging: A Case Study in Changing Attitudes Toward Corporal Punishment, 1830–1850." *American Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1983): 408–425.
- . "Troubled Manhood in the Early Republic: The Life and Autobiography of Sailor Horace Lane." *Journal of the Early Republic* 26 (Spring 2000): 59–93.

- Goffman, Erving. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1961. Reprint, Chicago: Aldine, 1968.
- Goodman, Warren H. "The Origins of the War of 1812: A Survey of Changing Interpretations." *The Mississippi Historical Review* 28, no. 2 (September 1941): 171–186.
- Gorn, Elliot J. "'Good-Bye Boys, I Die a True American': Homicide, Nativism, and Working-Class Culture in Antebellum New York City." *The Journal of American History* 74:2 (1987), 388-410.
- . *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1986.
- Gould, Eliga H. "The Making of an Atlantic State System: Britain and the United States, 1795–1825." In *Britain and America Go to War: The Impact of War and Warfare in Anglo-America, 1754–1815*, edited by Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway, pp. 241–265. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Greenberg, Amy S. *Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-Century City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- . *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Greenberg, Kenneth S. "The Nose, the Lie, and The Duel in the Antebellum South." *The American Historical Review* 95, no. 1 (February 1990): 57–74.
- Greene, Jack P. "The Intellectual Reconstruction of Virginia in the Age of Jefferson." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 225–253. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Gribben, William. *The Churches Militant: The War of 1812 and American Religion*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1973.
- Halttunen, Karen. "'Domestic Differences': Competing Narratives of Womanhood in the Murder Trial of Lucretia Chapman." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 39–57. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- . "Humanitarianism and the Pornography of Pain in Anglo-American Culture." *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1995): 303–334.

- . *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-class Culture in America, 1830-1870*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1982.
- Harrison, Joseph H., Jr. “*Sic Et Non: Thomas Jefferson and Internal Improvement.*” *Journal of the Early Republic* 7 (1987): 335–349. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 265–279. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Harvey, L. A., and D. St. Leger-Gordon. *Dartmoor. The New Naturalist: A Survey of British Natural History*. Edited by James Fisher et al. London: Collins, 1963.
- Haskell, Thomas L. “Capitalism and the Origins of Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1.” *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (April 1985): 339–361.
- . “Capitalism and the Origins of Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 2.” *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (June 1985): 547–566.
- Hatzenbuehler, Ronald L. “Party Unity and the Decision for War in the House of Representatives, 1812.” *William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (1972): 367–390. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 227–250. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Hatzenbuehler, Ronald L., and Robert L. Ivie. *Congress Declares War: Rhetoric, Leadership, and Partisanship in the Early Republic*. Kent, Ohio: Kent University Press, 1983.
- Hay, Douglas. “Poaching and the Game Laws on Cannock Chase.” In *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., pp. 189–253. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- . “Property, Authority and the Criminal Law.” In *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., pp. 17–63. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- Herndon, Ruth Wallis. “The Domestic Cost of Seafaring: Town Leaders and Seamen’s Families in Eighteenth-Century Rhode Island.” In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Hickey, Donald R. “American Trade Restrictions during the War of 1812.” *Journal of American History* 68, no. 3 (1981): 517–538. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and*

- War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 293–314. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . “Federalist Party Unity and the War of 1812.” *Journal of American Studies* 12, no. 1 (1978): 23–39. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 251–267. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . “The Monroe-Pinkney Treaty of 1806: A Reappraisal.” *William and Mary Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (1987): 65–88. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 1–29. New York & London: Garland, 1991.
- . *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- . “The War of 1812: Still a Forgotten Conflict?” *The Journal of Military History* 65, no. 3 (July 2001): 741–769.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism since 1790: Programme, Myth, Reality*. 2d ed. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Hoganson, Kristin L. *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Holder, Jean S. “The Sources of Presidential Power: John Adams and the Challenge of Executive Primacy.” *Political Science Quarterly* 101, no. 4 (1986–1987): 601–616. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 167–182. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Horsman, Reginald. *The Causes of the War of 1812*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962.
- . “On Canada: Manifest Destiny and the United States Strategy in the War of 1812.” *Michigan Historical Review* 13, no. 2 (1987): 1–24. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 81–104. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . “The Paradox of Dartmoor Prison.” *American Heritage* 26 (February 1975): 13–17, 85.
- . *The War of 1812*. New York: Knopf, 1969.

- Howe, John R., Jr. "Republican Thought and the Political Violence of the 1790s." *AQ*, 19, no. 2, part 1 (1967): 147–165. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Volume 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 31–49. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Hudson, Arthur Palmer. "Songs of the North Carolina Regulators." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 4, no. 4 (October 1947): 470–485.
- Hughes, Christine F. "Lewis Warrington and the USS *Peacock* in the Sunda Strait, June 1815." In *The Early Republic and the Sea: Essays on the Naval and Maritime History of the Early United States*, edited by William S. Dudley and Michael J. Crawford. Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2001.
- Ignatieff, Michael. *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Johnson, Chalmers. *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2004.
- Jung, Moon-Ho. "Outlawing 'Coolies': Race, Nation, and Empire in the Age of Emancipation." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 677–701.
- Kagin, Donald H. "Monetary Aspects of the Treasury Notes of the War of 1812." *Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 1 (1984): 69–88. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 315–334. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Kann, Mark. *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language, and Patriarchal Politics*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1998.
- Kaplan, Amy. "Where is Guantánamo?" *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 831–858.
- Kaplan, Lawrence S. "Jefferson, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Balance of Power." *WMQ* 14, no. 2 (1957): 196–217. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 2–23. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Karcher, Carolyn L. "Rape, Murder, and Revenge in 'Slavery's Pleasant Homes': Lydia Maria Child's Antislavery Fiction and the Limits of Genre." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 58–72. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

- Kasson, Joy S. "Narratives of the Female Body: *The Greek Slave*." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 172–190. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Kastor, Peter J. "Toward 'the Maritime War Only': The Question of Naval Mobilization, 1811–1812." *The Journal of Military History* 61, no. 3 (July 1997): 455–480.
- Kerber, Linda K. *Federalists in Dissent: Imagery and Ideology in Jeffersonian America*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1970.
- . "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment—An American Perspective." *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2, Special Issue: An American Enlightenment (Summer 1976): 187–205.
- . "Toward a History of Statelessness in America." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 727–749.
- . *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Kersh, Rogan. *Dreams of a More Perfect Union*. Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- Kert, Faye. "Cruising in Colonial Waters: The Organization of North American Privateering in the War of 1812." In *Pirates and Privateers: New Perspectives on the War on Trade in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* edited by David J. Starkey, E. S. van Eyck van Heslinga, and J. A. de Moor. Exeter, U.K.: University of Exeter Press, 1997.
- Kettner, James H. *The Development of American Citizenship, 1608–1870*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.
- Kimball, Jeffrey. "The Fog and Friction of Frontier War: The Role of Logistics in American Offensive Failure During the War of 1812." *Old Northwest* 5, no. 4 (1979–80): 323–343. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 395–415. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Kitzen, Michael L. S. *Tripoli and the United States at War: A History of American Relations with the Barbary States, 1785–1805*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1993.
- Kohn, Hans. *American Nationalism: An Interpretative Essay*. New York: Macmillan, 1957.

- Kverndal, Roald. *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth*. Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1986.
- Labaree, Benjamin W. *Patriots and Partisans: The Merchants of Newburyport 1764–1815*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- Lafeber, Walter. "Jefferson and an American Foreign Policy." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 370–394. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Lang, Amy Schrager. "Class and the Strategies of Sympathy." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 128–142. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Larson, John Lauritz. "'Bind the Republic Together': The National Union and the Struggle for a System of Internal Improvements." *Journal of American History* 74, no. 2 (1987): 363–387. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 281–305. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . "Jefferson's Union and the Problem of Internal Improvements." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 340–369. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Latimer, Margaret Kinard. "South Carolina—A Protagonist of the War of 1812." *American Historical Review* 61, no. 4 (1956): 914–929. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 162–177. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Lawrence, Paul. *Nationalism: History and Theory*. Harlowe, U.K., and New York: Pearson, 2005.
- Lehuu, Isabelle. "Sentimental Figures: Reading Godey's *Lady's Book* in Antebellum America." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 73–91. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Lemay, J. A. Leo. "The American Origins of 'Yankee Doodle.'" *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 33, no. 3 (July 1976): 435–464.
- Lemisch, Jesse. *Jack Tar vs. John Bull: The Role of New York's Seamen in Precipitating the Revolution*. New York and London: Garland, 1997.

- Lemmon, Sarah McCulloh. *Frustrated Patriots: North Carolina and the War of 1812*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.
- Levine, Lawrence. "The Folklore of Industrial Society: Popular Culture and Its Audiences." *The American Historical Review* 97, no. 5 (December 1992): 1369–1399.
- Lienesch, Michael. "The Role of Political Millennialism in Early American Nationalism." *Western Political Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1983): 445–465. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 51–71. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . "Thomas Jefferson and the American Democratic Experience: The Origins of the Partisan Press, Popular Political Parties, and Public Opinion." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 316–339. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Lincoln, Margarete. *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750–1815*. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2002.
- Linebaugh, Peter. "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons." In *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., pp. 65–117. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- Linebaugh, Peter, and Marcus Rediker. *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2000.
- Lossing, Benson J. *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*. New York: Harper, 1869.
- Lloyd, Christopher. *The British Seaman 1200–1860: A Social Survey*. London: Collins, 1968. Reprint, Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970.
- MacLeod, Duncan. "The Political Economy of John Taylor of Caroline." *Journal of American Studies* 14, no. 3 (1980): 387–405. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 365–383. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer. *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*. Vols. 1 and 2. 1903, 1904. Boston: Little, Brown, 1919.
- Maier, Pauline. "Popular Uprisings and Civil Authority in Eighteenth Century America." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 27, no. 1 (January 1970): 3–35.

- Maloney, Linda M. "Doxies at Dockside: Prostitution and American Maritime Society, 1800–1900." In *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, edited by Timothy J. Runyan. Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- Martell, J. S. "A Side Light on Federalist Strategy During the War of 1812." *The American Historical Review* 43, no. 3 (April 1938): 553–566.
- McCoy, Drew R. *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1980.
- McCurry, Stephanie. "The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina." *The Journal of American History* 78, no. 4 (March 1992): 1245–1264.
- McKee, Christopher. "Foreign Seamen in the United States Navy: A Census of 1808." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 42, no. 3 (July 1985): 383–393.
- . *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794–1815*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991.
- Merk, Frederick. "Dissent in the Mexican War." In *Dissent in Three American Wars*, Samuel Eliot Morison, Frederick Merk, and Frank Freidel, pp. 33–63. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Miller, Nathan. *The U.S. Navy: A History*. 3d ed. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997.
- Millett, Stephen M. "Bellicose Nationalism in Ohio: An Origin of the War of 1812." *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 1, no. 2 (1974): 221–240. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 141–160. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Minicucci, Stephen. "The 'Cement of Interest': Interest-Based Models of Nation-Building in the Early Republic." *Social Science History* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2001).
- Moll, Kenneth L. "A. T. Mahan, American Historian." *Military Affairs* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 1963): 131–140.
- Morison, Samuel Eliot. "Dissent in the War of 1812." In *Dissent in Three American Wars*, Samuel Eliot Morison, Frederick Merk, and Frank Freidel, pp. 1–31. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- . *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783–1860*. 1921. Reprint, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941.

- Murrin, John M. "A Roof without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity." In *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, eds. Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987, 333-348.
- Nagel, Paul C. *One Nation Indivisible: The Union in American Thought, 1776–1861*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Nash, Gary B. "The American Clergy and the French Revolution." *William and Mary Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1965): 392–412. Reprinted in *The New American Nation, Vol. 8: Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 96–116. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Nelson, Dana D. *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men*. Durham, N.C., and London: Duke University Press, 1998.
- Newman, Simon. *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- . "Reading the Bodies of Early American Seafarers." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 55, no. 1 (January 1998): 59–82.
- Norling, Lisa. "Ahab's Wife: Women and the American Whaling Industry, 1820–1870." In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- . *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women & the Whalefishery, 1720–1870*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Norton, Mary Beth. *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800*. 1980. 2d ed., Ithaca, N.Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1996.
- Onuf, Peter S. *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- . *The Origins of the Federal Republic: Jurisdictional Controversies in the United States 1775–1787*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.
- Onuf, Peter, and Nicholas Onuf. *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions 1776–1814*. Madison, Wisc.: Madison House, 1993.
- Packer, George. *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

- Palmer, Michael A. *Stoddert's War: Naval Operations During the Quasi-War with France, 1798–1801*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987.
- Pancake, John S. "The 'Invisibles': A Chapter in the Opposition to President Madison." *The Journal of Southern History* 21, no. 1 (February 1995): 17–37.
- Parker, Richard B. *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Pearce, Roy Harvey. *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*. Rev. ed. 1953. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971.
- Pencak, William, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman, eds. *Riot and Revelry in Early America*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.
- Perkins, Bradford. *Prologue to War: England and the United States 1805–1812*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963.
- Peterson, Merrill D. "Afterword." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 457–464. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- . *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Pittock, Murray. *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685–1789*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Potter, David M. "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa." *The American Historical Review* 67, no. 4 (July 1962): 924–950.
- Pratt, Julius W. *Expansionists of 1812*. The Macmillan Company, 1925. Reprint, Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1957.
- Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Putney, Martha S. *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalemen Prior to the Civil War*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1987.
- Ramold, Steven J. *Slaves, Sailors, Citizens: African Americans in the Union Navy*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002.
- Rediker, Marcus. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700–1750*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

- . “Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger: The Lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, Pirates.” In *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700–1920*, edited by Margaret S. Creighton and Lisa Norling. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Resch, John. *Suffering Soldiers: Revolutionary War Veterans, Moral Sentiment, and Political Culture in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999.
- Rhodes, A. J. *Dartmoor Prison: A Record of 126 Years of Prisoner of War and Convict Life, 1806–1932*. London: John Lane the Bodley Head Limited, 1933.
- Risjord, Norman. “1812: Conservatives, War Hawks and the Nation’s Honor.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 18, no. 2 (April 1961): 196–210.
- Robertson, Andrew W. “‘Look on This Picture . . . And This!’ Nationalism, Localism, Partisan Images of Otherness in the: United States, 1787–1820.” *The American Historical Review* (October 2001).
<<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/106.4/ah0401001263.html>> (5 April 2006).
- Robinson, Ralph. “Retaliation for the Treatment of Prisoners in the War of 1812.” *The American Historical Review* 49, no. 1 (October 1943): 65–70.
- Rodger, N. A. M. *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain 1649–1815*. London: Allen Lane, 2004.
- . *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy*. London: Collins, 1986.
- Romero, Lora. “Vanishing Americans: Gender, Empire, and New Historicism.” In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 115–127. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Naval War of 1812*. Vols. 1 and 2. 1882. New York and London: Putnam, 1910.
- Rorabaugh, W. J. *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Rothman, David J. *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*. 1971. Rev. ed., New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2002.
- Rotundo, E. Anthony. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

- Rule, John G. "Wrecking and Coastal Plunder." In *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., 167–188. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Samuels, Shirley. "The Identity of Slavery." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 157–171. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- . "Introduction." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 3–8. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Sánchez-Eppler, Karen. "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition." In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 92–114. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Sarat, Austin. "At the Boundaries of Law: Executive Clemency, Sovereign Prerogative, and the Dilemma of American Legality." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 611–631.
- Schama, Simon. *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution*. New York: Ecco, 2006.
- Schantz, Mark S. "Religious Tracts, Evangelical Reform, and the Market Revolution in Antebellum America." *Journal of the Early Republic*, 17:3 (1997), 425-466.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. "A Note on Songs as Patriot Propaganda 1765–1776." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 11, no. 1 (January 1954): 78–88.
- Schlosser, Pauline. *The Fair Sex: White Women and Racial Patriarchy in the Early American Republic*. New York: New York University Press, 2002.
- Schultz, Ronald. *The Republic of Labor: Philadelphia Artisans and the Politics of Class, 1720–1830*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Schulz, Constance B. "'Of Bigotry in Politics and Religion': Jefferson's Religion, the Federalist Press, and the Syllabus." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 91, no. 1 (1983): 73–91. Reprinted in *The New American Nation*. Vol. 8: *Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 345–363. New York and London: Garland, 1991.

- Scott, James C. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Scott, Kenneth. *British Aliens in the United States during the War of 1812*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1979.
- Seed, Patricia. *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World*. Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Shah, Nayan. "Between 'Oriental Depravity' and 'Natural Degenerates': Spatial Borderlands and the Making of Ordinary Americans." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 703–725.
- Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism & Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.
- Sharp, James Roger. *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Shulman, Mark Russell. "The Influence of History upon Sea Power: The Navalist Reinterpretation of the War of 1812." *The Journal of Military History* 56, no. 2 (April 1992): 183–206.
- Skeen, C. Edward. *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999.
- . *1816: America Rising*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2003.
- Slaughter, Thomas P. *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Sloan, Hebert. "The Earth Belongs in Usufruct to the Living." In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf, pp. 281–315. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- . "Hamilton's Second Thoughts: Federalist Finance Revisited." In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 61–76. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Smelser, Marshall. "The Federalist Period as an Age of Passion." *AQ* 10, no. 4 (1958): 391–419. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 8: Federalists and Republicans, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 1–29. New York and London: Garland, 1991.

- Smith, Gaddis. "Black Seamen and the Federal Courts, 1789–1860." In *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime History*, edited by Timothy J. Runyan. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.
- Smith, Gene A. *"For the Purposes of Defense": The Politics of the Jeffersonian Gunboat Program*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995.
- Smith, Rogers M. "Constructing American National Identity: Strategies of Federalists." In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 19–40. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- Somerville, Siobhan. "Notes toward a Queer History of Naturalization." *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 659–675.
- Stagg, J. C. A. "Enlisted Men in the United States Army, 1812–1815: A Preliminary Survey." *William and Mary Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (1986): 615–645. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 335–365. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . "James Madison and the Coercion of Great Britain: Canada, the West Indies, and the War of 1812." *William and Mary Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (1981): 3–34. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 49–80. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . "James Madison and the 'Malcontents': The Political Origins of the War of 1812." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 33, no. 4 (1976): 557–585. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 197–225. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- Stansell, Christine. *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.
- Stark, Suzanne J. *Female Tars: Women Aboard Ship in the Age of Sail*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996.
- Stearns, Peter N and Carol Z. Stearns. "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards." *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (October 1985): 815–836.

- Steel, Anthony. "Anthony Merry and the Anglo-American Dispute about Impressment, 1803–6." *Cambridge Historical Journal* 9, no. 3 (1949): 331–351.
- . "Impressment in the Monroe-Pinkney Negotiation, 1806–1807." *The American Historical Review* 57, no. 2 (January 1952): 352–369.
- Steffen, Charles G. *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and Politics in the Age of Revolution 1763–1812*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984.
- Stinchcombe, William. "The Diplomacy of the WXYZ Affair." *William and Mary Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1977): 590–617. Reprinted in *The New American Nation, Vol. 8: Federalists and Republicans*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 138–165. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Streeby, Shelley. *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Stuart, Reginald C. "Special Interests and National Authority in Foreign Policy: American-British Provincial Links During the Embargo and the War of 1812." *Diplomatic History* 8, no. 4 (1984): 311–328. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820. Vol. 9: America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 179–196. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Sugden, John. "The Southern Indians in the War of 1812: The Closing Phase." *Florida Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (1982): 273–312. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820. Vol. 9: America and the World: Diplomacy, Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 417–456. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- . *Tecumseh: A Life*. New York: Holt, 1998.
- Symonds, Craig L. *Navalists and Antinavalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States, 1785–1827*. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1980.
- Tallmadge, John E. "Georgia's Federalist Press and the War of 1812." *The Journal of Southern History* 19, no. 4 (November 1953): 488–500.
- Taylor, Alan. *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.
- Taylor, George R. "Agrarian Discontent in the Mississippi Valley Preceding the War of 1812." *Journal of Political Economy* 39 (1931): 471–505. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820. Vol. 9: America and the World: Diplomacy,*

- Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 105–139. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Taylor, William R. *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character*. New York: Braziller, 1961.
- Thompson, E. P. “The Crime of Anonymity.” In *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., pp. 255–308. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- . *Customs in Common*. New York: The New Press, 1993.
- . *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790–1860*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Underdown, David. *Revel, Riot & Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603–1660*. New York: Oxford UP, 1985.
- Vickers, Daniel. *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630–1850*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.
- Vickers, Daniel, with Vince Walsh. *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Waldstreicher, David. “Federalism, the Styles of Politics, and the Politics of Style.” In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 99–117. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.
- . *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- . “Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism.” *The Journal of American History*, 82:1 (1995), 37–61.
- Wallace, Lee A., Jr. “The Petersburg Volunteers, 1812–1813.” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 82, no. 4 (1974): 458–485. Reprinted in *The New American Nation 1775–1820*. Vol. 9: *America and the World: Diplomacy*,

- Politics, and War*, edited by Peter S. Onuf, pp. 336–393. New York and London: Garland, 1991.
- Watts, Steven. *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790–1820*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Way, Peter. “Evil Humors and Ardent Spirits: The Rough Culture of Canal Construction Laborers.” *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (March 1993): 1397–1428.
- Wexler, Laura. “Tender Violence: Literary Eavesdropping, Domestic Fiction, and Educational Reform.” In *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Shirley Samuels, pp. 9–38. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- White, Patrick C. T. *A Nation on Trial: America and the War of 1812*. New York: Wiley, 1965.
- Wilentz, Sean. *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Winslow, Cal. “Sussex Smugglers.” In *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, Douglas Hay et al., pp. 119–166. New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.
- Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic 1776–1787*. London and New York: Norton, 1969.
- . *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1992.
- . “The Trials and Tribulations of Thomas Jefferson.” In *Jeffersonian Legacies*, edited by Peter Onuf. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993.
- Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. “Andrew Jackson’s Honor.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 1–36.
- . *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Young, Alfred F. “George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742–1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution.” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 38, no. 4 (October 1981): 561–623.
- Zaggari, Rosemarie. “Gender and the First Party System.” In *Federalists Reconsidered*, edited by Doron Ben-Atar and Barbara B. Oberg, pp. 118–134. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1998.

Zimmerman, James Fulton. *Impressment of American Seamen*. 1925. Reprint, Port Washington, N.Y.: 1966.

Vita

Dan Hicks

Department of History
Pennsylvania State University
108 Weaver Building
University Park, PA 16802
dah229@psu.edu
814-360-0753

DISSERTATION:

“True Born Columbians”: The Promises and Perils of National Identity for American Seafarers of the Early Republican Era

EDUCATION

Ph.D. History, Pennsylvania State University, May 2007
M.A. History, Pennsylvania State University, August 2001
B.A. English, College of William and Mary, May 1996
B.A. History, College of William and Mary, May 1996

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Instructor: History 001, The Western Heritage to 1500, Penn State University, Spring 2007
History 130, The Civil War Era, Penn State University, Summer 2006
History 020, American Civilization to 1877, Penn State University, Fall 2003; Spring 2004; Summer 2004; Spring 2006; Fall 2006; Spring 2007
History 021, American Civilization from 1877, Penn State University, Fall 2004; Summer 2005; Fall 2005
English 015, Rhetoric and Composition, Penn State University, Fall 2000; Spring 2001

Research Assistant: National Endowment of the Humanities Summer Institute, “Space and Society in the Past: Landscape, Power, and Identity in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” Summer, 2002