

Born to Rule the Seas

The Navy During Andrew Jackson's Presidency and the Genesis of American Naval Power

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‘No man is an island unto himself.’ These words by John Donne can be applied to all doctoral candidates, who, committed as they may be in their pursuit of a final degree, are not alone in their pursuit of specific scholarship. Along the way people enter and exit their lives, contributing a suggestion, offering advice, commiserating over shared trials, or consoling with a whisky at the local pub. The author recognizes that there are too many individuals who fall in those categories to name here, but a few deserve mention.

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As a naval officer, I also dedicate it to the memory of Lieutenant Daniel H. Mackay who was lost with the rest of the crew of USS *Hornet*, 10 September 1829. What might have been?

I had also another idea in my mind which would of course require some time to mature; was to write an article on the Naval Policy of the States.

—Lieutenant Daniel Mackay, 1 January 1829

Abstract

The 1830s is an overlooked period in American naval history, overshadowed by the more popular and active War of 1812 and Civil War. Nevertheless, the personnel, operations, technologies, policies, and vision of the Navy of that era, which was emerging from the Age of Sail, are important components of its evolution, setting it on the long path to its status as a global maritime power. The decade also dispels any notion that Andrew Jackson was ambivalent toward the Navy.

By Andrew Jackson's inauguration in 1829, the Navy had engaged with two major powers, defended American shipping, conducted anti-piracy operations, and provided long-term, overseas presence. It had not, however, changed much since it had first engaged with a European power in the Quasi-War. The Navy began to transform during Jackson's administration due in part to the president's activist role and in part to the emerging officer corps, which sought to professionalize its own ranks, modernize the platforms on which it sailed, and define its own role within national policy and in the broader global maritime commons.

Jackson had built his reputation as a soldier, but he quickly recognized as president the necessity for a navy that could foster his policies. To expand American commerce, he needed a navy that could defend shipping as well as conduct punitive raids or deterrence missions. Jackson developed a clear, concise naval strategy that policymakers and officers alike could seize and execute. Jackson provided a vision for the Navy, interceded to resolve naval disciplinary challenges, and directed naval operations.

The junior officers were emboldened by the populist era to challenge traditional, conservative thinking. They identified contemporary challenges, foresaw future opportunities for the Navy, and made recommendations for change, primarily in magazines. They developed a collective vision that coincided with the national literary movement that recognized America's great national destiny would rely upon the Navy.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iv
List of Figures.....	vi
List of Tables.....	vi
Introduction: A Journey toward Maritime Destiny	1
Chapter 1: Naval Inheritance.....	25
Chapter 2: The Intellectual Awakening of the Navy.....	48
Chapter 3: Governing the Navy.....	83
Chapter 4: Force Structure and Modernization	118
Chapter 5: Maritime Destiny—A Global Strategy and Naval Operations...	168
Chapter 6: An Actualized Naval Culture	216
Conclusion: The Awakening of the U.S. Navy	264
List of Sources and Bibliography.....	272

Appendices

Appendix A Commissioned Ships, 1798-1838
Appendix B1 Captain Assignments, 1817-1835
Appendix B2 Captains by Time in Service, 1817-1835
Appendix B3 Captains by Time in Grade, 1817-1835
Appendix C Ship Deployment Rate, 1825-1835
Appendix D Federal Spending

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Articles mentioning ‘Navy’ in American Journal of Science.....	49
Figure 2.2 Members of the Naval Lyceum 1833-1839, by Rank	80
Figure 3.1 First political cartoon of Andrew Jackson.....	84
Figure 3.2 The Rodgers Plan.	103
Figure 4.1 U.S. Navy Ship Construction, 1798-1837	121
Figure 4.2 Average Age of Ships in U.S. Navy, 1822-1836	124
Figure 4.3 Number of Courts-Martial by Ship, 1828-1839.....	133
Figure 4.4 Deployment Rates, 1825-1835	144
Figure 4.5 Launching of the USS Pennsylvania.....	151
Figure 6.1 Naval Officer Courts-Martial by Years in Service	224
Figure 6.2 Number of Navy and Marine Courts-Martial by Station.....	226
Figure 6.3 Captains (1817-1836), Average Time in Service	229
Figure 6.4 Captains (1817-1836), Average Time in Grade	229
Figure 6.5 Number of Courts-Martial, Annually 1829-38.....	261

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Political Affiliation of Members of Congress	108
Table 3.2 Naval Budgets, 1829-37	115
Table 4.1 U.S. Navy Ship Production, 1798-1837	123
Table 6.1 Navy Courts-Martial, 1798-1860: Actions by Presidents and Secretaries of the Navy	219

Introduction: A Journey toward Maritime Destiny

On 3 December 1828, the Electoral College met to cast their official votes on the presidential election. The incumbent president, John Quincy Adams, earned the support of most northeastern states and Maryland with a total of eighty-three electoral votes. His opponent, Andrew Jackson, secured the remainder of the states in the west and south with one hundred seventy-eight electoral votes. With that vote, Jackson and his supporters achieved the victory denied them in the 1824 election. One historian noted, 'When the Democrats captured the government in 1829, they described their victory as the defeat of an elitist, aristocratic rule and the triumph of democracy.'¹ It is ironic, therefore, that Jackson had autocratic tendencies and would find himself characterized as a 'king' by anti-Jackson newspapers. A dramatic decrease in the price of a newspaper and an increase in the literacy rate among Americans during this decade combined to give politicians a greater, more immediate national reach. Newspapers grew, in part, as the extension of political candidates and organizations, and had a particular viewpoint they expressed either subtly or overtly.

Jackson's wife Rachel, who had been the target of the anti-Jackson media as well as of political opponents in two consecutive national elections, was less enthusiastic about the electoral victory. The charges of adultery that had been levelled at her for so long took their toll on her physical health throughout the campaign. They would later impact Jackson's administration and the U.S. Navy. On 22 December, less than three weeks after the electoral victory, she succumbed to a heart ailment. Jackson blamed his political opponents for Rachel's suffering. 'I can and do forgive all my enemies', he said, 'but those vile wretches who have slandered her must look to God for mercy.'² Those who held power in the nation's capital had reason to be

1 Robert Remini, *The House: The History of the House of Representatives*, (New York: Collins, 2007), p. 123

2 See James Parton as quoted in Carlton Jackson, *Bittersweet Journey: Andrew Jackson's 1829 Inaugural Trip*, Morley Missouri, Acclaim Press, 2011), p. 28.

concerned about Jackson's disposition and intended actions upon taking office. The tension was palpable throughout Washington in the months leading up to the inauguration. One of the most prominent senators, Daniel Webster, remarked, 'Nobody knows what he will do when he does come [...] My opinion is that when he comes he will bring a breeze with him. Which way it will play, I cannot tell [...] My fear is stronger than my hope.'³

On 19 January 1829, Andrew Jackson began his trek from Nashville to Washington by boarding the 80-ton stern-wheel steamboat *Fairy*, which conveyed him along the Cumberland River to Smithland, Kentucky. In doing so, he became the first elected president to travel on this relatively new invention. The trip was not his first experience with a steamboat, however. Fifteen years earlier, during the Battle of New Orleans, he had confiscated a commercial steamboat, the *Enterprise*, to carry supplies between his units.

The decision to travel most of the way to Washington by steamboat was a pragmatic one. In the middle of winter, carriage travel in the backcountry was challenging. Roads were often simply underdeveloped dirt paths that were difficult to traverse even in warm conditions. Travelling by carriage or horseback also would have required finding appropriate lodging – a rarity west of the Appalachian mountain range. By contrast, the steamboat offered Jackson the luxury of space, comfort, and complete protection from the elements. Steamboat travel was also cost-effective. In 1815, the cost of transporting one ton of cargo thirty miles to a port city by wagon was nine dollars; for the same nine dollars, one ton of cargo could be transported three thousand miles by ship.⁴ Steamboat travel was not without risks, however. Between 1825 and 1830, for example, 273 people died because of exploding steam boilers.⁵

Jackson's presidency witnessed the construction of hundreds of steamboats at riverside dockyards in Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Louisville, attesting to the need to support the rapid expansion westward – an expansion

3 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson*, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co, 1945), p. 4.

4 Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 40.

5 Daniel Walker Howe, p. 214.

facilitated by this new platform. It was ironic that the man who was elected largely due to his service as an Army general made most of the trip to the White House by steamboat. In the public's perception, this embrace of naval technology was uncharacteristic for him, but it was to serve as a symbol for his relationship with the Navy over the next decade.

Jackson was joined on the journey to Washington by his late wife's nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson, Donelson's wife Emily (who would serve as Jackson's unofficial first lady), and their son. Donelson had graduated second in the West Point Class of 1820 and had served as Jackson's aide during the First Seminole War. Also aboard were Jackson's niece Mary Eastin, a Mrs. Love and her daughter, Henry Lee (brother of later Confederate General Robert E. Lee) and Lee's wife, William Lewis, and Jackson's nephew and adopted son, Andrew Jackson, Jr.⁶ Lewis had served as Jackson's quartermaster during the War of 1812, was related to John Eaton by marriage, and would become the Second Auditor of the Treasury. Although historians disagree about whether Lee or Lewis served as Jackson's speechwriter, the fact remains that his inaugural address was written while on the steamboat. The journey casts a new light in interpreting his discussion of the Navy as well as nominations for government positions.

By the time of Jackson's election, steamboats had been in existence and slowly evolving for nearly forty years. John Fitch built the first steamboat in the United States in 1787 and sailed it on the Delaware River during the Constitutional Convention. As with most technologies, the first versions brought with them great hope for the future, but the realities of technological limitations reined in their utility. This pattern would be repeated in Jackson's Navy when some officers and designers attempted to harness steam power onto warships. It was not until Robert Fulton, inspired by his time in London, debuted the *Clermont* in 1807 that the reality of the steamship began to take hold. Though it would be decades before steamboats were efficient and robust enough for trans-oceanic voyages, the United States was well suited for

⁶ Pauline Wilcox Burke, *Emily Donelson of Tennessee*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), p. 123.

the shallow-draft platform of steamboats to ply the extensive riverine network west of the Appalachians.

Falls along the Cumberland River prevented the *Fairy* from continuing past Smithland, so Jackson and his party disembarked and travelled overland to Louisville, Kentucky. There, on 23 January, Jackson boarded the 133-ton side-wheel steamboat *Pennsylvania* for the remainder of the journey to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with brief stops in Cincinnati, Ohio and Wheeling, Virginia. As the *Pennsylvania* approached Cincinnati, two other steamers, the *Robert Fulton* and the *Hercules*, joined her. All three boats were lashed together. The ships were adorned with hickory brooms mounted on their bows, making a clear and intentional statement that Jackson was on his way to sweep up the previous administration's filth, harkening back to Dutch Admiral Maarten Tromp's attaching a broom to the top of his mast to sweep the English Channel clear of British ships in the 17th century.

At Cincinnati, British author and novelist Francis Trollope had the opportunity to witness Jackson's entourage. The *Pennsylvania* was flanked on each side by a steamboat. Many men stood on the roofs of the two side boats as cannons ashore saluted Jackson's boat. A quarter-mile above the town, she reported, the boats came about and made their way to the landing. 'When they arrived [...] the side vessels, separating themselves from the centre, fell a few feet back, permitting her to approach before them with her honoured freight. All this manoeuvring was extremely well executed, and really beautiful.'⁷

Trollope's perception of a steamboat as a beautiful thing was not universal. Less than a decade later, Secretary of the Navy James Kirke Paulding described the smoke-producing, noisy steamboats as 'monsters'. Around the same time, British artist J.M.W. Turner painted 'The Fighting *Temeraire*', which portrayed the inelegant and dirty blackness of the steamboat. In this work, the *Temeraire*, one of the ships-of-the-line that fought at Trafalgar, has her sails unfurled, while the light of the sun on the horizon

⁷ Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, (London: Whittaker, Teacher & Co, 1832), See Chapter 13 as no page numbers are provided. Online text available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10345/pg10345.html> [accessed 13 December 2015.]

glimmers off her gilding. She is being towed up the Thames by a small, blackened side-wheel steamboat whose burning coal has darkened the immediate surroundings. The steamboat is towing *Temeraire* not to guide her into or out of port, but to deliver her to the breakers and the ignominious death that awaited the ships of the Age of Sail.

Though the steamboat era was beginning for the Navy, a conservative sentiment for the traditional ships remained. Gloriously gilded ships such as the *Temeraire* represented the honour, boldness, seamanship and resiliency of the Romantic era. This loyalty to tradition was one of the reasons that, during Jackson's second administration, the U.S. would build the *USS Pennsylvania*, the largest ship-of-the-line ever built.

Unlike Paulding and the Romantics, Jackson was a pragmatist who was adept at recognizing trends and identifying their potential impact on the nation. Steam-powered vessels were no exception. His journey to the inauguration represented a future for the country in which its vast riverine system could be exploited to conduct commerce. The power of steam boats would enable farmers and merchants to increase their production, reduce their costs, and expand their markets by decreasing the time and effort needed to transport goods and people.

On 29 January, Jackson disembarked at Pittsburgh and continued to Washington by carriage. His two steamship voyages totalled 1128 miles – more than eighty percent of his eventual journey to Washington. He arrived there ready to apply the principles of convenience and efficiency he had experienced on his voyage to his leadership of the Navy.

Reportedly 20,000 people attended Jackson's inauguration on 4 March. Few could hear Chief Justice John Marshal administer the oath of office to the new president on the East Portico of the Capitol. Francis Scott Key, author of 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' observed '[this inauguration] is beautiful; it is sublime'.⁸ The crowd strained to hear President Jackson's low voice – likely heard by only a few hundred people - deliver the comparatively short inaugural address in which he spoke about his Constitutional duties and acknowledged

⁸ Mark Leepson, *What So Proudly We Hail: Francis Scott Key, A Life*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2014) p. 113.

the limitations of his authority under Article II of the Constitution. He explained that his priority was the elimination of the national debt, a feat never achieved before (nor since). He also proclaimed a desire to 'observe toward the Indian tribes [...] a just and liberal policy, and to give human and considerate attention to their rights'.⁹ He devoted eighty-three words of his 1100-word speech to his views on the Navy:

The gradual increase of our Navy, whose flag has displayed in distant climes our skill in navigation and our fame in arms; the preservation of our forts, arsenals, and dockyards, and the introduction of progressive improvements in the discipline and science of both branches of our military service are so plainly prescribed by prudence that I should be excused for omitting their mention sooner than for enlarging on their importance.¹⁰

He ended by stating the bulwark of the nation's defence was the national militia, a concept deeply embedded by his experiences.

During his presidency, Jackson's views on the Navy and the militia evolved. At the time of his inauguration, however, he recognized that waterborne commerce was the core of America's economy, and he understood that the Navy would protect America's commerce. Jackson epitomized the 1830s or perhaps the decade epitomized him, a decade during which democratic populism, a growing adoption of technology, and visions of both maritime destiny and westward expansion dominated many aspects of society but none more so than the Navy.

The Jacksonian Era was more than just the man after whom it was named. Certainly, Jackson was the dominant figure of the period, but no single individual could have implemented such pervasive changes in America. During the Jacksonian Era, economics, societal trends, and intellectual movements permeated the country. Many of the changes, such as improvements in literacy rates, public education, and medicine, were positive, though the period also saw regressive policies that threatened Native American Indians and continued to permit slavery in half of the country. Both

9 Andrew Jackson, First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1829
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jackson1.asp [accessed 1 March 2016.]

10 Andrew Jackson, First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1829
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jackson1.asp [accessed 1 March 2016.]

the period and Jackson himself could be contradictory, advancing broader, noble ideas while simultaneously making significant mistakes in judgment or vision.

In general, however, the Navy of the 1830s did not suffer from the same shortfalls as American society. The Navy was imperfect, but it reflected a burst of enlightenment that would culminate with the creation of the United States Naval Academy. The professionalization of its officers set the Navy on the path to innovative and successful operations in the Mexican-American and Civil Wars. It also laid the groundwork for the most significant period of naval thought in the post-Civil War period with the founding of the U.S. Naval Institute, the education reforms of Admiral William B. Luce, and the navalism proposed by such luminaries as Alfred Thayer Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt.

Dissertation

This is the first doctoral dissertation – or indeed any historical monograph – that takes a comprehensive approach to studying the Navy during Andrew Jackson’s presidency. This is not to say that no work has been done on the period. To the contrary, a great deal has been written about Jackson, though the work has focused primarily on his political life, his military exploits, and his wars against Native American tribes. Discussion about the Navy during his presidency has been absent. Naval histories touch upon key events during the eight years of his presidency, such as the USS *Potomac* being sent to Sumatra, but many fail to provide context for those events. This dissertation will compensate for the paucity of historical analysis by providing an inclusive study of the political, intellectual, strategic, operational, and social aspects of the Navy in the 1830s. During Jackson’s presidency, these factors merged for the first time in the Navy’s brief fifty-year history.¹¹ This dissertation reveals an emerging naval culture that became self-aware as officers,

¹¹ The ‘brief’ history can be considered as either 50 years or 30 years. In the case of the former, the Second Continental Congress built a navy during the American Revolution in the 1770s but the navy was disbanded after the war. A better argument is the case of the latter since the Department of the Navy was not established until 1798.

policymakers, and influential writers alike were drawn into advancing the maritime component of national policies.

Chapter 1, 'Naval Inheritance', provides an assessment of the events and philosophies on the American landscape and seascape that influenced the Navy of the 1830s. This chapter establishes the framework of the domestic and international issues facing the Jacksonian Era and the conditions in which the birth of navalism occurred. The chapter discusses the purpose of the Navy as well as some of the philosophical and organizational changes during the 1830s that contributed to the Navy as a non-parochial, emerging power. It also identifies and clarifies the fundamental philosophical differences between Army and Navy missions leading up to and including the Jacksonian Era. The chapter fills out the picture by describing the officers who led this new intellectual movement.

Chapter 2, 'The Intellectual Awakening of the Navy,' evaluates the intellectual framework of the Jacksonian Era. It illuminates how a new generation of naval officers and naval supporters, in the atmosphere of populism generated by the president, challenged conventional wisdom of the conservative, governing elites. If the new officers were agents of change, then what common element did they share that was unique to their generation? How did the senior naval officers differ from the junior officers? The Navy reflected the Jacksonian Era's often-contradictory beliefs and actions; Jackson and the Navy fought the elites, yet adopted their goals. This chapter examines the naval school system in the 1830s and the real cause for an eventual naval academy. The first part of the movement was the establishment of the Naval Lyceum whose members would be part of the reform movement within the Navy. The second part of the movement was the integration of reformist thought with the newly expanded medium of affordable publications. Previously sporadic with simple accounts of naval actions and hagiographic biographical essays, the naval publications of the 1830s offered junior officers the first opportunity to engage with senior officers and citizens on topics ranging from new ranking structures to steam warfare to education in a very public forum. This chapter also includes a broader study of public arts and literature that demonstrate a growing national self-identity with the ocean and the Navy.

Chapter 3, 'Governing the Navy,' provides a new interpretation of Jackson's presidency, specifically with respect to naval governance. How did Jackson's imperial presidency impact the Navy? Jackson was a president of executive action, as opposed to many presidents of the nineteenth century who demurred to the legislative branch or simply chose not to exert executive authority.¹² High turnover in congressional elections resulted in a lack of subject expertise on Capitol Hill. As a result, Congress largely deferred to the experience of the senior naval officers and to Jackson's desires. Jackson drove the factions of government and, consequently, played a more activist role in the Navy. Jackson's point man was the Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, Amos Kendall, who became one of the major figures in both presidential terms. Chapter 3 also presents a review of the papers and correspondence of the Secretaries of the Navy and of the Board of Navy Commissioners as well as of congressional records, which amply fill holes in understanding naval governance and policy during this era.

Chapter 4, 'Force Structure and Modernization,' assesses the Navy's force structure and modernization during Jackson's presidency. The decisions a president makes on funding ships are vital to understanding how he views imminent and long-term threats. Those decisions also reflect the realities of both political expediency and composition of a nation's industrial base. The president, Congress, and the Navy all contributed to a fleet that reflected the understood value of numerous highly-utilized small ships, of the shipyard jobs provided by large ships-of-the-line, and of investment in the emerging steam engine industry. This chapter demonstrates the Navy's resurgence during the Jackson administration in the diversity of platforms as well as investments in navy yards and the first dry docks.

Chapter 5, 'Maritime Destiny,' explores the geostrategic realities of a small but emerging nation. The chapter establishes how the Navy firmly affirmed its missions through extended operations on distant stations, punitive raids throughout the globe, pursuit of the *South Seas Exploring Expedition*, conduct of riverine operations in the Second Seminole War, defence of vital

¹² Ivan Eland, *Recarving Rushmore: Ranking the Presidents on Peace, Prosperity, and Liberty* (Washington: The Independent Institute, 2009).

live oak reserves for its ships, and stabilization of America's maritime borders. Naval operations are an understudied aspect of nineteenth century naval history in the United States.¹³ The Monroe Doctrine provided an important shield by the Royal Navy for the growing American Navy. This chapter, therefore, sheds new light on how Jackson used the navy in support of global necessities, challenges, and opportunities.

Chapter 6, 'An Actualized Naval Culture,' illuminates another little-studied aspect of the antebellum era, the social and professional construct of the Navy. The chapter discusses the professionalization of the officer corps, the status of race relations within the Navy, and the imposition of accountability via the court-martial system. This chapter also assesses the legislation, administration policies, and military operations that provided the foundation for a modern Marine Corps.

The conclusion demonstrates that the Navy's role in the 1830s was more active and activist than prior works suggest.

Literature Review

Primary sources on the Early Republic era (roughly 1789-1839) are plentiful, with most of them located at a few key repositories in the greater Washington DC area. The National Archives and Records Administration in Washington holds all United States Navy records prior to the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁴ The repository holds ships logs, officer journals, court-martial records, and letters between the officers and secretaries of the Navy. The Library of Congress contains private papers of significant period officers, including David Conner, John Dahlgren, David Porter, and of public figures such as Amos Kendall. The Naval Academy Museum in Annapolis, Maryland, has several journals and ship logs of the period. Most importantly, it also houses all the records of the Naval Lyceum. The Naval Academy Library is one of the national repositories with the full complement of *Annual Reports of*

13 One notable exception in recent literature is James C. Rentfrow, *Home Squadron: The U.S. Navy on the North Atlantic Station* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2014.)

14 Navy records beginning with the First World War and later are held at the National Archives facility in College Park, Maryland.

the Secretary of the Navy, American State Papers, and the Register of Debates, which reported the daily proceedings and debates of Congress.¹⁵

The University of North Carolina's Southern Historical Collection holds the papers of Samuel Humphreys and John Branch. Winterthur Library in Delaware contains the letters of Samuel DuPont, whose extensive correspondence outpaced any other nineteenth or twentieth century naval officer. DuPont's papers are a vital source for understanding the communications of naval officers in the 19th century, particularly with regard to both society in general and naval operations in particular. Other repositories, including the New Jersey Historical Society (Mahlon Dickerson Papers), the New York Historical Society (Gustavus Vasa Fox Papers), and Princeton University Library (Samuel P. Lee Papers), yield little information of substance on the topic of interest.

Period magazines provide unique insight into the Navy during the Jacksonian Era. During the 1830s, junior officers publicly voiced their ideas, albeit largely under pseudonyms, in magazines such as: *Army and Navy Chronicle* (1835-1844); *Knickerbocker Magazine* (1833-1865); *Naval Magazine* (1836-1837); *Southern Literary Messenger* (1834-1864); *The Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal* (1837); and *United Service Magazine* (1829).¹⁶ They comprise one of two or three significant periods of intellectual movement in United States naval history prior to the twenty-first century. This period's events spawned the second movement, which began in 1873 with the founding of the U.S. Naval Institute and, later, the Naval War College.

Literature about the Jacksonian Era is plentiful, but secondary sources about the Navy during the period are scarce. Because American historians tend to cover naval history as it relates to wars, this scarcity is not unexpected. Daniel Walker Howe, in his major work *What Hath God Wrought: The*

15 Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861). See also *Volume IV: Naval Affairs. Register of Debates in Congress, Vol VII*, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1831) as well as the *Congressional Globe* and *Congressional Record*.

16 Benjamin Homans, *The Army and Navy Chronicle* (Washington: B. Homans, 1837), Lewis Gaylord Clark, *Knickerbocker Magazine* (New York: Samuel Hueston, 1837), Charles S. Stewart, *Naval Magazine* (New York: Naval Lyceum, 1835), *Southern Literary Messenger* (Richmond: T.W. White, 1834), *The Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal* (New York: J. Seymour, 1837), *The United Service Magazine* (London: H. Colburn) 1829

Transformation of America, 1815-1848,¹⁷ has no reference to naval operations. A few historians have touched upon individual aspects of the Navy during this era, but until this dissertation, no one has provided a comprehensive study thereof.

Chapter 1 on naval inheritance provides the context for America's governing philosophy as it relates to the Navy in the years leading up to Jackson's presidency. Three sources are fundamental to understanding this issue. The first is a little-studied 1992 article in the *Naval War College Review* by John Rohr. His 'Constitutional Foundations of the United States Navy'¹⁸ is unique in assessing the Navy within the broader debate over the U.S. Constitution in the 1780s. The second is Craig Symonds' 1980 *Navalists and Antinavalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States, 1785-1827* (the book version of his doctoral dissertation).¹⁹ Whereas Rohr focuses on the conflict between federalists and anti-federalists, Symonds focuses on the conflict between the two factions he named in the title. The third source is unparalleled in its perspective on American culture and philosophy at the time: Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, written while the author travelled the country during Jackson's first term.

The story of how the nation and the Navy developed during the country's first decade would be incomplete without a broader historical context on navies in general, but a proper discussion of this topic was out of the real scope of this dissertation and, consequently, was excluded from the final version. Nevertheless, it is important for the examiners to understand that a literature review of the topic was conducted primarily on Great Britain and Dutch perspectives. To that end, this dissertation incorporates works from the British and Dutch perspectives. N.A.M. Rodger's edited volume *Navies and Armies: The Anglo-Dutch Relationship in War and Peace, 1688-1988* and his series *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Britain, 660—1649* and *The Command of the Ocean (1649-1815)*, as well as his other relevant works,

17 Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

18 John Rohr, 'Constitutional Foundations of the United States Navy,' *Naval War College Review* 45 (Winter 1992)

19 Craig Symonds, *Navalists and Anti-Navalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States 1785-1827* (Wilmington: University of Delaware Press, 1980)

serve as a rich source of historical detail. Norbert Elias' *The Genesis of the Naval Profession* provides unique insights from a sociological, rather than strictly historical, perspective. Roger Morriss' *Naval Power and British Culture, 1760-1850 Public Trust and Government Ideology* and Michael Lewis' *England's Sea Officers: The Story of the Naval Profession* likewise help readers of American naval history understand arguably the most significant influence on the Navy – the history and example of the Royal Navy.

Chapter 2 asserts that the 1830s witnessed the first age of naval enlightenment.²⁰ What factors contributed to a fundamental change in naval thought? Letters between junior officers provide one set of testimony to this republic of ideas, particularly given that this new generation of naval officers led to the creation of the Naval Lyceum and its publication, *The Naval Magazine*. John Schroeder's biographies of Commodore John Rodgers (*Paragon of the Early American Navy*) and Matthew Perry (*Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat*) describe two men who played significant roles in mentoring the new generation of naval officers and creating the Naval Lyceum. Leonard F. Guttridge's *The Commodores* is important in understanding the men who were the Navy's senior officers by the 1830s.²¹

If there is a strength in the naval works about the decade, then it is found in the impressive quantity of biographies of naval officers. Most early naval historians have contributed to the field by writing at least one biography. These include Charles Lewis (*Matthew Fontaine Maury: The Pathfinder of the Seas*), John Brockmann (*Commodore Robert F. Stockton*), Gene Smith (*Thomas ap Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny*), David Curtis Skaggs (*Thomas Macdonough: Master of Command in the Early U.S. Navy*), and Spencer Tucker (*Andrew Foote: Civil War Admiral on Western Waters*). Samuel Eliot Morison's *Old Bruin: Commodore Matthew C. Perry, 1794-1858* provides the basics on the subject but is a bit dated and hagiographic. James

20 This author has discussed on radio interviews and at naval history symposia that this was the first of three eras of American naval enlightenment. One article is Claude Berube 'The Crucible of Naval Enlightenment' *Naval History* (October 2014).

21 John Schroeder, *Commodore John Rodgers: Paragon of the Early American Navy* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2006) and *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), Leonard Guttridge, *The Commodores* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1984).

Fenimore Cooper's *Lives of Distinguished American Naval Officers* is too complimentary due to the author's personal relationship with most of his subjects. In contrast, Henry A. DuPont had the benefit of graduating from a military academy and serving during the Civil War before penning a biography of his uncle, Rear Admiral Samuel Francis DuPont. Kevin Weddle, however, wrote a more scholarly work on the same subject.²²

The nascent American literary community played a significant role in articulating and promoting the Navy to a wider public during the 1830s. Although the works of Washington Irving and other writers from the Knickerbocker Group contributed, James Fenimore Cooper dominated the decade through his naval histories, articles, maritime fiction, and correspondence. Thomas Philbrick's *James Fenimore Cooper and the Development of American Sea Fiction* remains the standard for understanding America's first literary giant. Philbrick's articles 'Cooper and the Literary Discovery of the Sea' in the *Canadian Review of American Studies* and 'Cooper's Naval Friend in Paris' in *American Literature* give a more complete measure of Cooper's role in the development of the Navy. James Clagett's 'The Maritime Words of James Fenimore Cooper as Sources for Sea Lore, Sea Legend, and Sea Idiom' in *Southern Folklore Quarterly* and Robert D. Madison's 'Cooper's Place in American Naval Writing' presentation at a symposium reinforce the need to study Cooper to better understand the decade.²³

22 Charles Lee Lewis, *Matthew Fontaine Maury: Pathfinder of the Seas* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1927), John Brockmann *Commodore Robert F. Stockton: Protean Man for a Protean Nation* (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2009), Gene A. Smith *Thomas ap Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000), David Curtiss Skaggs, *Thomas MacDonough: Master of Command in the Early U.S. Navy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2002), Spencer Tucker, *Andrew Foote: Civil War Admiral on Western Waters* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2002), Samuel Eliot Morison, *Old Bruin: Commodore Matthew C. Perry* (Boston: Little Brown, 1967), James Fenimore Cooper, *Lives of Distinguished Naval Officers* (Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1847), Kevin Weddle, *Lincoln's Tragic Admiral: The Life of Samuel Francis DuPont* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005).

23 Thomas Philbrick, *James Fenimore Cooper and the Development of American Sea Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950); _____, 'Cooper and the Literary Discovery of the Sea', *Canadian Review of American Studies*, external.oneonta.edu/cooper/articles/suny/1989suny-philbrick.html [accessed 29 December 2017]; _____ 'Cooper's Naval Friend in Paris', *American Literature* (vol 52, no.4, 1980).

Chapter 3 focuses on naval governance with an emphasis on Jackson's presidency. Many historians, Dan Feller and Harry Watson among them, have written about Jackson's presidency, but the most critical to this dissertation is Robert Remini.²⁴ No American historian has written more books about Jackson (ten) or biographies of the period's notable figures (Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Martin van Buren, and others.) Notably, Remini does not discuss the Navy in any of his works. This omission may have been the result of his underlying assumptions about Jackson. In an interview conducted by this dissertation's author, Remini stated that Jackson did not like, understand, or use the Navy. Given that Remini cited no naval sources, it is likely that he did not realize the true scope of naval activities that occurred under Jackson's administration.

John Schroeder addressed this gap with a short monograph for a naval history symposium in 1985 titled 'Jacksonian Naval Policy 1829-37'. He also discussed the period in his book *Shaping a Maritime Empire: The Commercial and Diplomatic Role of the American Navy, 1829-61*. Schroeder contends that Jackson used the Navy aggressively, but that no serious debate over the Navy's peacetime role took place in the cabinet, in the Board of Navy Commissioners, or in Congress. He is partially correct in those assertions, but records of the Board of Navy Commissioners prove a robust discussion occurred on a variety of naval issues.

The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918 by Harold and Margaret Sprout remains a standard in providing an overview of the Navy's role prior to the First World War.²⁵ The 1830s again receive only scant attention in this work, but the Sprouts leave open the possibility that Jackson had some concept of the strategic doctrine known as 'command of the sea'. Robert Albion's *Makers of Naval Policy, 1798-1947* argues that in the 1830s and

24 Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815-1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006), Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson* (New York: Harper, 1999) among others.

25 Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1939).

1840s, there were new alignments in policy interplay and that innovation came from both civilian policy-makers and junior officers.²⁶

Donald Cole's *A Jackson Man: Amos Kendall and the Rise of American Democracy* is important in understanding one of the key intermediaries between Jackson and the Department of the Navy. Full biographies of Navy secretaries are rare, with one of the few exceptions being Marshall Haywood's *John Branch, Secretary of the Navy in the Cabinet of President Jackson*. Jackson's second secretary of the Navy, Levi Woodbury, is the subject of a 1966 doctoral dissertation by Vincent Capowski (*The Making of a Jacksonian Democrat: Levi Woodbury, 1789-1851*) and of Ari Hoogenboom's 'Levi Woodbury's Intimate Memoranda of the Jackson Administration' in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Other biographical studies of Woodbury tend to focus on his tenure as a Supreme Court justice.²⁷

As with the Navy, historians have written biographies of notable congressional luminaries of the period, such as Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, but rarely have they written a comprehensive study of Congress itself. One exception is Richard L. Watson's 'Congressional Attitudes Toward Military Preparedness, 1829-1835', in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. The same is true of the Board of Navy Commissioners, which finally received a treatment in 1976 by Edwin B. Hooper with his piece 'Developing Naval Concepts: The Early Years and the Board of Naval Commissioners' in *Defense Management Journal*. Although some historians have read through the *Congressional Globe* and other records of congressional debates, no one has pulled the committee records located at the Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, as confirmed by its director to the author.²⁸

26 Robert Albion, *Makers of Naval Policy, 1798-1947* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980).

27 Donald P. Cole, *A Jackson Man: Amos Kendall and the Rise of American Democracy* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2004), Marshall Haywood, *John Branch* (Raleigh: Commercial Printing, 1915), Vincent Capowski, *The Making of a Jacksonian Democrat: Levi Woodbury, 1789-1851* (Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1966), Ari Hoogenboom and Herbert Erschowitz, 'Levi Woodbury's Intimate Memoranda of the Jackson Administration', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, October (1968), pp.507-515.

28 Richard L. Watson's 'Congressional Attitudes Toward Military Preparedness, 1829-1835', *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, March (1948), pp.611-636. Edwin B. Hooper,

Chapter 4 evaluates the Navy's platforms and infrastructure as steam technology was slowly being adopted. During the 1830s, sailing ships were predominant, but few works address the ships' designs themselves. Howard I. Chapelle's *The History of the American Sailing Navy: The Ships and Their Development* remains the standard for early republic ships and is, in fact, often consulted by the few naval museums that build their own ship models. Three other works - this author's 'Budget Battles, Interest Groups, and Relevancy in a New Era: The ship of the line USS *Pennsylvania*' in *Naval Institute Proceedings*, David K. Brown's *Before the Ironclad: Warship Design and Development, 1815-1860*, and Mark Lardas' *American Light and Medium Frigates, 1794-1836* – comprise the remainder of the publications about the sailing ships of the period.²⁹

Historians have expressed more interest in the advent of steam technology and, consequently, the literature features a wider array of secondary sources about this platform. Donald Canney's *The Old Steam Navy* and Frank M. Bennett's *The Steam Navy of the United States, a History of the Growth of the Steam Vessel* both provide superior overviews. George Dyson's article 'Charles H. Haswell and the Steam Navy' in *Naval Institute Proceedings* conveys the importance of the engineers and designers to the Navy's steam program. American engineers also supported the development of the Ottoman Empire's program, as noted in Bernard Langensiepen's *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1823-1923*.³⁰

Because a navy is more than the sum of its ships, the Navy's infrastructure is crucial to its ability to increase maintenance and operational

'Developing Naval Concepts: The Early Years and the Board of Naval Commissioners', *Defense Management Journal*, January (1976)

29 Howard I. Chapelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy: The Ships and Their Development* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1949), Claude Berube 'Budget Battles, Interest Groups, and Relevancy in a New Era: The ship of the line USS *Pennsylvania*', *Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 2008, David K. Brown, *Before the Ironclad: Warship Design and Development, 1815-1860* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015), Mark Lardas *American Light and Medium Frigates, 1794-1836* (Oxford: Osprey Press, 2008)

30 Donald L. Canney, *The Old Steam Navy: Frigates, Sloops and Gunboats, 1815-1885* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990), Frank M. Bennett, *The Steam Navy of the United States, a History of the Growth of the Steam Vessel* (Pittsburgh: W.T. Nicholson, 1896), George Dyson, 'Charles H. Haswell and the Steam Navy', *Naval Institute Proceedings*, Volume 65, February 1939, Bernard Langensiepen, *The Ottoman Steam Navy, 1823-1923* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995.)

capabilities. William Thiessen, author of *Industrializing American Shipbuilding: The Transformation of Ship Design & Construction, 1820-1920*, and Steven J. Dick, author of 'Centralizing Navigational Technology in America: The U.S. Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments, 1830-1842' in *Technology & Culture*, help illustrate the Navy's changing infrastructure during Jackson's administration.³¹

An understanding of international developments in steam power is key to providing comparative context for the developments in the U.S. The books of Andrew Lambert, specifically *Battleships in Transition: The Creation of the Steam Battlefleet, 1815-1860*; *Steam, Steel & Shellfire: The Steam Warship, 1815-1905*; *The Last Sailing Battlefleet: Maintaining Naval Mastery, 1815-1830*; and *War at Sea in the Age of Sail* provide the necessary context.³²

Chapter 5 evaluates global naval operations. In his 1948 volume, *A History of the United States Navy*, Dudley Knox writes that the Jacksonian Era was notable for expanding naval efforts towards both protecting and promoting sea trade. During that decade, the Navy deployed several permanent squadrons to the Mediterranean, the West Indies, the Pacific, and Brazil. Jackson also created the East Indies Squadron during his second term. First-hand accounts by officers, especially chaplains who had more time to keep journals and write letters, deliver the operational patterns and views of life on distant stations, such as Francis Warriner's *Cruise of the U.S. Frigate Potomac Round the World, 1831-34*. Several secondary sources also provide more comprehensive accounts of squadron activities or individual ship activities. Mark Russell Shulman's *The Emergence of American Sea Power: Politics and*

31 William Thiessen, *Industrializing American Shipbuilding: The Transformation of Ship Design & Construction, 1820-1920* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2006), Steven J. Dick, 'Centralizing Navigational Technology in America: The U.S. Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments, 1830-1842' *Technology & Culture*, July (1992), pp. 467-509.

32 Andrew Lambert, *Battleships in Transition: The Creation of the Steam Battlefleet, 1815-1860* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1985); _____ and Robert Gardiner, *Steam, Steel & Shellfire: The Steam Warship, 1815-1905* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1992); _____, *The Last Sailing Battlefleet: Maintaining Naval Mastery, 1815-1830* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1991); _____, *War at Sea in the Age of Sail* (London: Cassell Publishing, 2000).

the Creation of US Naval Strategy provides a cursory explanation of the activity of the 1830s.³³

Naval operations cannot occur without a logistics system. The old adage 'amateurs talk about tactics, but professionals study logistics' is apt in this case, and Stanley J. Adamiak's *The Development of American Naval Logistics* addresses this issue.³⁴

The most important book on global naval operations remains David F. Long's *Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of US Naval Officers, 1798-1883*. Brazil Station is an understudied operational area, but a few historians have addressed it. Craig Kalfter published 'United States Involvement in the Falklands Crisis of 1831-1833' in the *Journal of the Early Republic*, Donald Giffin published 'The American Navy at Work on the Brazil Station, 1826-1860' in *American Neptune*, and B.M. Gough published 'American Sealers, the United States Navy, and the Falklands, 1830-32' in the *Polar Record*.³⁵

The Second Seminole War was the longest and most costly war in terms of money and lives than any other in American history until Afghanistan post-9/11. This war, which was limited in scope to Florida, has not received much attention from historians (John K. Mahon's *The Second Seminole War* is an exception), but from the naval perspective, it is significant for two reasons. First, the Second Seminole War marked the real beginning of Manifest Destiny and strategically secured America's southern coast. In *The U.S. Navy in Pensacola: From Sailing Ships to Naval Aviation, 1835-1930*, George F. Pearce highlights the strategic importance of a key base in Florida and access

33 Dudley Knox, *A History of the United States Navy* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1936), Francis Warriner, *Cruise of the U.S. Frigate Potomac Round the World, 1831-34* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co, 1835), Mark Russell Shulman, *The Emergence of American Sea Power: Politics and the Creation of US Naval Strategy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

34 Stanley J. Adamiak, *The Development of American Naval Logistics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994)

35 David F. Long, *Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of US Naval Officers, 1798-1883* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988), Craig Kalfter, 'United States Involvement in the Falklands Crisis of 1831-1833' *Journal of the Early Republic*, Winter (1984), pp. 395-420. Donald Giffin 'The American Navy at Work on the Brazil Station, 1826-1860' *American Neptune*, (1959), pp. 239-256. B.M. Gough, 'American Sealers, the United States Navy, and the Falklands, 1830-32', *Polar Record*, 166 (1992), pp. 219-228.

to the all-important live oak reserves in the region. Second, the Navy played an important role in the war, with sloops and schooners intercepting possible foreign support vessels. These activities introduced riverine operations that continue through the twenty-first century. George Buker's *Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades, 1835-1842* is one of the few full-length books on this aspect of the war. Just as important are biographical studies of the junior officers who created the first riverine squadrons, such as Buker's monograph 'Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, U.S.N., Pioneer of Riverine Warfare' in *The Florida Historical Quarterly*.³⁶

The western Pacific is another theatre whose commercial interests had implications for America's future. Jackson understood this importance and expanded treaties and trade in the region as well as established a squadron in the region. Gerald S. Graham's *The China Station: War and Diplomacy, 1830-1860*, Curtis Henson's *Commissioners and Commodores: The East India Squadron and American Diplomacy in China*, and Robert Erwin Johnson's *Far China Station: The US Navy in Asian Waters, 1800-1898* and *Thence Round Cape Horn: The Story of the United States Naval Forces on Pacific Station* illustrate the developments in this area of the globe. A more recent work, Andrew Jampoler's *Embassy to the Eastern Courts: America's Secret First Pivot Toward Asia, 1832-37*, lacks the academic rigor to provide much incremental value over the prior books. Additional monographs such as David Gedealecia's 'Letters from the Middle Kingdom: The Origins of America's China Policy' in *Prologue* and James M. Merrill's 'The Asiatic Squadron, 1835-1907' in *American Neptune* support the concept of the squadron's role in American commercial and military expansion.³⁷

36 John Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War, 1835-1842* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991), George F. Pearce, *The U.S. Navy in Pensacola: From Sailing Ships to Naval Aviation, 1835-1930* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1980), George Buker, *Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades, 1835-1842* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1975); _____, 'Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, U.S.N., Pioneer of Riverine Warfare' *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, January (1969), pp. 253-275.

37 Gerald S. Graham, *The China Station: War and Diplomacy, 1830-1860* (London: Clarendon Press, 1978), Curtis Henson, *Commissioners and Commodores: The East India Squadron and American Diplomacy in China* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1982), Robert Erwin Johnson, *Far China Station: The US Navy in Asian Waters, 1800-1898* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1979) and *Thence Round Cape Horn: The Story of the United States Naval Forces on Pacific Station* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1963), Andrew Jampoler, *Embassy to the Eastern Courts: America's Secret First Pivot Toward Asia, 1832-37* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015), David Gedalecia, 'Letters

Because the United States Navy was admittedly one of the smaller naval powers, this dissertation must discuss some comparative foreign operations as well. Britain's domination of the high seas during the nineteenth century demands the most attention, and indeed, has received a massive degree of attention from historians. From the almost inexhaustible collection of writings on British naval mastery, the author selected for this dissertation Bernard Semmel's *Liberalism and Naval Strategy: Ideology, Interest, and Sea Power During the Pax Britannica*, Lawrence Sondhaus' *Naval Warfare, 1815-1914 and Navies of Europe: 1815-2002*, Bernard Vale's *A War Betwixt Englishmen: Brazil against Argentina, 1825-1830*, and Peter Padfield's *Maritime Power & the Struggle for Freedom: Naval Campaigns, 1788-1851*, as well as two monographs: John Beeler's 'Maritime Policing and the Pax Britannica: The Royal Navy's Anti-Slavery Patrol in the Caribbean, 1828-1848' in *Northern Mariner* and Andrew D. Lambert's 'Preparing for the long peace: the Reconstruction of the Royal Navy, 1815-1830' in *Mariner's Mirror*, for this dissertation.³⁸

Chapter 6 analyses the professionalization of the Navy. Christopher McKee's *A Gentlemanly and Honourable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794-1815* is the standard for understanding the commanding officers during the first two decades of the Navy's existence. No equivalent for the Jacksonian Era exists, with the possible exception of Donald Chisholm's *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941* which expands McKee's focus from largely commanding officers to all officers. This chapter builds upon Chisholm's work by assessing the progress made during Jackson's

from the Middle Kingdom: The Origins of America's China Policy' Prologue, Winter (2002), [archives.gov/publication/prologue/2002/winter/gedalecia.htm] [accessed 29 December 2017], James M. Merrill, 'The Asiatic Squadron, 1835-1907' *American Neptune*, April (1969), pp. 106-17.

38 Bernard Semmel, *Liberalism and Naval Strategy: Ideology, Interest, and Sea Power During the Pax Britannica* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986); Lawrence Sondhaus, *Naval Warfare, 1815-1914 and Navies of Europe: 1815-2002* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001); and *Navies of Europe: 1815-2002* (London: Longman, 2002), Bernard Vale, *A War Betwixt Englishmen: Brazil against Argentina, 1825-1830* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000), Peter Padfield, *Maritime Power & the Struggle for Freedom: Naval Campaigns, 1788-1851*, (New York: Overlook Press, 2006), John Beeler, 'Maritime Policing and the Pax Britannica: The Royal Navy's Anti-Slavery Patrol in the Caribbean, 1828-1848' *Northern Mariner*, 16 (2006), pp. 1-20. Andrew D. Lambert, 'Preparing for the long peace: The Reconstruction of the Royal Navy, 1815-1830' *Mariner's Mirror*, February (1996), pp. 41-54.

presidency. Uniquely, the assessment in this dissertation gives special attention to the supporting professionals such as the medical corps and the chaplain corps.³⁹

Literature about the chaplain corps is sparse and has been so for at least a century. Dom Aidan Henry Germain, writing his unpublished doctoral dissertation *Catholic Military and Naval Chaplains, 1776-1917* in 1929, lamented, 'The contribution made by Catholic priests toward the welfare of the military and the naval service of the United States has never been told from the official records of our government, due, in large measure, to the inaccessibility of the files, the disorderly arrangement of papers from frequent moving of archives from one building to another.'⁴⁰

The literature includes a variety of works address changing social aspects of the officer corps, though the academic rigor of those works varies widely. Harold Langley's *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1708-1862* and Myra C. Glenn's 'The Naval Reform Campaign Against Flogging, 1830-1850' in *American Quarterly* correctly identify and explain the issues. There are, unfortunately, other works that do a disservice to the period. The most egregious example is James Valle's *Rocks & Shoals: Order and Discipline in the Old Navy, 1800-1861*. Valle provides no quantitative approach to courts-martial during this era and instead cherry-picks the very few cases of murder and sodomy and attempts to extrapolate from those isolated cases. By contrast, this dissertation distills more than 16,000 pages of court-martial records and more than 300 courts-martial during Jackson's presidency. The qualitative and quantitative assessment of those records and Jackson's own record compared to other presidents (John Adams to James Buchanan, 1798-1860) is the first of its kind.⁴¹

39 Christopher McKee, *A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794-1815* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), Donald Chisholm, *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

40 Dom Aidan Henry Germain, 'Catholic Military and Naval Chaplains, 1776-1917,' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Catholic University of America, 1929), Preface (no page attributed)

41 Harold Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1708-1862* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967), Myra C. Glenn, 'The Naval Reform Campaign Against Flogging, 1830-1850' *American Quarterly*, Autumn (1983), pp. 408-425. James Valle, *Rocks &*

Foreign Influence on US Naval Culture

This dissertation would have been incomplete without an assessment of the impact of European powers on the U.S. Navy. The American Navy did not emerge out of a vacuum. Initially, this dissertation included brief discussions about direct and indirect influences by the British, French, Dutch and Spanish navies, particularly regarding the naval profession. No nation had more direct, contemporary influence on American naval culture than the British Empire. Regardless, the relationship was outside of the primary scope of this dissertation, though it is important to note a few of the works that were consulted. These works include: Norbert Elias' *The Genesis of the Naval Profession* (Dublin: University College of Dublin Press, 2007,) Michael Lewis' *England's Sea-Officers: The Story of the Naval Profession* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1930,) N.A.M. Rodger's *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Britain, 660-1649* (New York: WW. Norton, 1997,) and Roger Morriss' *Naval Power and British Culture, 1760-1850: Public Trust and Government Ideology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004.)

Conclusion

Andrew Jackson remains a pivotal figure in American history and is relevant to the modern era, especially considering the current administration's association of itself with Jackson's presidency and legacy. To date, no historian has conducted a comprehensive study of the Navy during the Jackson presidency or delved into records beyond the official records found at the National Archives and Records Administration. This dissertation fills a much-needed gap in the historical record by illuminating how the Navy developed during the 1830s and the significance of those developments. An appreciation for the evolution of the Navy during this time sheds new light on the role of the Navy on the eve of the Mexican-American War and the Civil War. The author also relied on his experience as a naval officer, serving at sea and in the naval intelligence, research & development, education, and acquisition communities, as well as his experience on political campaigns, in

Shoals: Order and Discipline in the Old Navy, 1800-1861 (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996).

the service of two U.S. Senators, and in thirteen years of teaching naval history and other courses at the U.S. Naval Academy, to research and conduct an analysis of this period in U.S. naval history.

Chapter 1: Naval Inheritance

The study of American naval history lacks a comprehensive approach to naval identity during the antebellum era, specifically the Age of Jackson. The era begins with Andrew Jackson's first presidential campaign in 1824 and concludes with the end of his protégé James Knox Polk's presidency in 1849.⁴² The gap in historical study during this period is particularly curious because Jackson is the only American president after whom an age or era is named. Because Jackson was the central political figure during the 1830s, an understanding of the experiences that shaped his international, domestic, and military views is key to understanding the era. Political, economic, and army histories of the period are commonplace; histories of the navy (largely with the exception of biographies) during the Jackson presidency, are non-existent.

When Andrew Jackson concluded his two terms as President of the United States in 1837, his farewell address was more than a simple reflection on his tenure and the accomplishments he hoped would define his legacy. Jackson's farewell address was also a recognition of maritime circumstances, opportunities for increased activity, and vision that he had not fully recognized when he was first elected. It represented robust, mature insight about the role of the Navy in the country's economic development and defence. It demonstrated a more attentive and mature reflection of the world and the Navy and was more clearly in line with the navalists – those who believed that a peacetime navy served as a permanent deterrent to aggression and focused on national image, prestige, diplomatic clout, and national greatness.⁴³ Jackson's farewell address includes a comparatively lengthy treatise on the Navy's purpose and roles. In 1836, with peace reigning and revenue overflowing, he believed that the United States could, year after year, add to the navy's strength without burdening the people. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 with its goal of closing the Western Hemisphere to further European

⁴² Daniel Feller, 'Politics and Society: Toward a Jacksonian Synthesis,' *Journal of the Early Republic*, 10. 2 (Summer, 1990), 135.

⁴³ Craig Symonds, *Navalists and Antinavalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the U.S., 1785-1827*, (Wilmington: University of Delaware Press, 1980).

colonization was unenforceable given the relatively small size of the American navy compared to its European counterparts. That task fell to the British Royal Navy, acting on Foreign Secretary George Canning's policies, which had a shared goal to minimize other European involvement in the Western Hemisphere.

The philosophical evolution of Jackson's views occurred in tandem with the emergence of naval self-identity and culture that became the basis of American naval power. In order to become a global maritime power by the end of the nineteenth century, and a superpower in the twentieth century, the United States required more than simply a large fleet. The navy needed a culture that recognized and embraced modern technology and education. It needed organized specialists who improved the lives of sailors and officers through the standards of physical health as well as some who tended to their spiritual strength.⁴⁴ It needed a rising core of officers and like-minded influential civilians who had the capacity for self-reflection, vision, and advocacy.

Changing global and domestic circumstances, as well as an enhanced recognition of the Navy's role in advancing American commerce, intervention, and deterrence, resulted in naval visionaries advocating a non-parochial, internationalist view. This chapter examines the international, domestic and naval forces that contributed to the Navy of 1828. It also discusses the personal leadership factors, namely the integral and respective career developments of John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, that affected the trajectory of the Navy. An Army general, Jackson had little experience with the Navy outside of the Battle of New Orleans. He was shaped by his years of military action during the War of 1812 and the Seminole War and by his years of service as a politician and a judge. Upon his inauguration in March 1829, Jackson inherited a navy only three decades old. Yet that Navy was culturally, operationally and strategically quite different from his more familiar Army. It also lacked experience, as unlike the Army, the Navy had not seen military

⁴⁴ Gayle Penner, 'Historic Notes and Documents: The Mix Diaries', *The Florida Historical Society*, Fall (2003), pp. 191-218.

action in more than a decade, other than engagements against pirates in the West Indies.

This chapter provides an assessment of the events and philosophies on the American landscape and seascape that influenced the 1830s Navy. First, it establishes the framework of the domestic and international issues facing the Jacksonian Era and the conditions under which navalism was born. Second, it discusses the purpose of the Navy and highlights some of the philosophical and organizational changes during the 1830s that contributed to the Navy as an emerging power. Third, it identifies and clarifies the fundamental philosophical differences between the missions of the Army and Navy in the years leading up to and including the Jacksonian Era.

Philosophical Influence on the Republic and the Navy

In 1829, the United States was barely four decades old. In that short period, it had fought two wars against Britain, a naval war against France, and one lengthier maritime struggle with Barbary powers. The U.S. capital, Washington DC, resembled a swamp with few buildings - the Capitol building itself would not be finished in its modern form until the Civil War. Because Congress met for only a few months each year, its members found temporary housing in the city, mostly in scattered boarding houses, and departed when Congress was not in session. Congress would not create the civil service until after the Civil War, meaning that, in the early nineteenth century, most department secretaries had few assistants and clerks. These understaffed departments were barely able to address domestic issues, much less engage with other nations. The Department of the Navy, for example, had no Assistant Secretary and only a few clerks to manage operations and correspondence. Even the president himself had minimal administrative staff. If a citizen wanted to speak with the president and was willing to risk travelling on roads that were barely cart-paths, he simply waited outside the chief executive's office. By this mechanism, for example, Captains William Bainbridge and Charles Stewart met with President James Madison at the beginning of the War of 1812 and asked him not to bottle up the fleet in New York, contrary to the desire of Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin. Instead, they convinced him to send the ships to sea to conduct single-ship

combat against the Royal Navy and to attack Britain's commerce, thereby forcing the Royal Navy to patrol far from the American coastline.⁴⁵

By the start of the 1830s, the United States had established its egalitarian credentials. 'No novelty in the United States struck me more vividly during my stay there than the equality of conditions,' Alexis de Tocqueville remarked in his magisterial 1835 work *Democracy in America*. By and large American wealth and position were earned rather than inherited – at least not in the aristocratic sense of Europe. Certainly, comparatively small merchant houses of the North and the plantations of the South dotted the economic landscape, but equality of conditions meant that practically any free man willing to work or exploit an idea could benefit from a free and capitalistic society. This ability to improve one's social and economic status, to become the equal of those who had inherited land wealth, was a unique feature of the U.S, one that contemporaries in Europe could never hope to achieve. The United States, as Tocqueville noted, was, 'eminently democratic'.⁴⁶ Such a democratic mentality imbued its citizens and the Navy with a sense of empowerment. This mentality was also reflected in the young nation's militia, which voted for its military leaders rather than have them appointed. Andrew Jackson, elected in the 1790s, was one such leader.

Jacksonian America was, in many ways, the culmination of the democratic republic first conceptualized by Greek philosophers. The concepts of individual freedom and the right to challenge authority had evolved from documents such as the Magna Carta through the Mayflower Compact and English Bill of Rights. The U.S. concept of individual freedom was also derived from the writings of Plato, Augustine, Aquinas, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and perhaps most importantly Hobbes and Locke. In 1829, most Americans, excluding the founders, would not know the names of these intellectuals, but they would have been familiar with their ideas, which were intensely debated in the Federalist and Anti-Federalist papers during the battle for ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

⁴⁵ Claude Berube, *A Call to the Sea: Captain Charles Stewart of the USS Constitution*, (Dulles: Potomac Books, 2005) p. 61.

⁴⁶ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 22.

American naval culture reflected national culture, but in some ways, it progressed more quickly and differently. The Navy and its meritocracy was a microcosm of a country that had grown more comfortable in its democratic garb. America of the 1830s sought to move beyond the geographical boundaries set by the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River. In expanding westward toward the Rocky Mountains, the U.S. took on the role of conqueror. The Navy, on the other hand, reflected the more commercial and enlightened side of the country's identity. But the young democratic government, whose powers resided largely with the states, found a change with the more heavy-handed Jackson, who was intent on expanding the power of the national government's executive branch. In response to more authoritarian leadership in the White House, the Navy developed its own unique culture, a culture that gave it an outward-facing, global focus. The Navy believed it had a destiny, and though it took decades to be realized, the concept was born in the Age of Jackson.

Army v. Navy

To understand this change in American naval culture, we must first identify the factors that were uniquely American, and then distinguish between the country's two military branches in the nineteenth century – the Army and the Navy. Just as the new republic's political parties reflected competing philosophies, so too did the Army and Navy. The Navy became the embodiment of security over occupation. It enabled the pursuit of private commercial enterprise rather than the conquering of territory in the interests of the state. The Navy – by its nature - promoted the rising expectations of the individual in both performance and accountability and served as a catalyst for innovation and enlightenment. In the 1830s, the Navy developed a unifying philosophy that would define it for the next five decades, summed up by Jackson in his farewell address, that the Navy was both the best means of defence and the best means of preventative offense, attacking the nation's enemies in distant waters before they reach America.

During the Jacksonian Era, no two entities better mirrored the stark differences between the Lockean and Hobbesian philosophies than the Navy and Army, respectively. Though they shared similar beginnings, they had

quickly diverged once the states ratified the Constitution. The military forces of the American Revolution (1775-1781)⁴⁷ were a combination of sometimes non-cooperating, and occasionally even competing, organizations. Land forces comprised the small Continental Army led by George Washington and the militias raised by the various state regiments, some of whom required state legislative authority to cross state lines.⁴⁸

The maritime forces found themselves likewise divided into three categories. The first was the small Continental Navy with leadership ranging from experienced to incompetent, timid to bold. The second was the state naval militias in the states – or, more appropriately, cities – that could afford to build warships. The third comprised the privateers, which outnumbered both the Continental Navy and state naval militias in terms of both ships and guns and which captured more enemy merchant ships than the other two combined.

After the Revolutionary War, both the Army and Navy largely disbanded. The Army was the victim of the newly freed colonists' fear of a standing peacetime army. The Navy, on the other hand, fell victim to finances - under the Articles of Confederation, the country lacked the capability to raise sufficient revenue to support costly warships.⁴⁹ The new Constitution addressed both issues. Article I, Section 8 made an important distinction between the two forces: Congress was given the prerogative and power to raise and support armies for a period of up to two years, but it was required to provide and maintain a navy. It forbade individual states from establishing distinctive navies unless authorized by Congress. Americans continued to be wary of a standing army, but, by contrast, they perceived little direct threat from a permanent navy since, by their nature, ships and their sailors are restricted to a few ports and pose no danger to most parts of the country.

⁴⁷ The revolution's battles concluded with the French-American defeat of the British General Cornwallis, but the Treaty of Paris concluding the war would not be signed until 1783.

⁴⁸ One case would be then-Colonel John Stark who led the 2nd New Hampshire Regiment into Vermont where he defeated a Hessian force on its way to support British General John Burgoyne at Saratoga.

⁴⁹ Several of the inherent problems of the Articles of Confederation were manifested by the lack of the national ability to effectively respond to Daniel Shay's Rebellion in 1787. The inability to raise revenue or an army largely motivated delegates from most of the states to either restructure the Articles or create a new Constitution in Philadelphia later that year.

Even so, another decade passed before American leaders formally established the Department of the Navy and authorized the first six frigates.

Between the War of 1812 and the Civil War, the military primarily meant the Army. The Army became an expression of 'Manifest Destiny' - the sense that the U.S. must push westward to the Pacific Coast - as company after company and fort after fort emerged on the frontier, deterring and denying Native American tribes the opportunity to oppose American expansion. But if the Army was the entity of conquest, it was the Navy that spoke to the public's dreams of the world, much as the European Age of Discovery had provided to the British, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch in earlier centuries.

By the time that Jackson won his first term as president in 1828, the Army, in which he had served as a general during the War of 1812, was the pillar on which American security from foreign invaders and Indian tribes rested. Although the Navy had provided support during the war, particularly during the Battle of New Orleans, the Army had served as a tangible and immediate tool of war and defence. The Navy, on the other hand, had engaged in far-off, single-ship engagements that had little to do with the defence of America's territory.

The Army and the Navy represented the competing philosophies of Hobbes and Locke. In the wake of the brutal English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell's seizure of power, Thomas Hobbes came to believe that without an imposing and domineering sovereign, the lives of all men would confront man's existence in a state of nature: 'nasty, brutish, and short'. John Locke, by contrast, saw the primary purpose of government as the protection of private property.

The Army demonstrated a Hobbesian outlook on the land to the west – and the natives who inhabited it. Its organization and culture were top down and centralized. Though the expression 'Manifest Destiny' was still a decade away from articulation during the administration of President James Knox Polk (Jackson's protégé), the concept was already a factor in Jackson's administration. As the country expanded westward beyond the Mississippi River and eventually south through Florida, the Army served as the only force in the former and the dominant force in the latter case. The Army represented

a constabulary force Jackson would use against the American Indians, with whom he felt no obligation to adhere to treaties. De Tocqueville foresaw that 'all the great wartime leaders who may arise in the major democratic nations will find it easier to conquer with the aid of their armies than to make their armies live at peace after conquest'.⁵⁰ Jackson's policies embodied de Tocqueville's comment.

The Navy, by contrast, served to protect commerce when able and to carry out minor punitive actions as needed. Unlike the Army, the Navy had neither the ability nor the intent to carry out expansive engagements during this period. It established no naval outposts other than agents whose purpose was to provide a conduit with the local governing authorities in foreign ports. It neither conquered nor occupied foreign lands. Interestingly, de Tocqueville devoted five chapters to the nature of armies, but only one sentence on the destiny of America's navy. Certainly he would have been familiar with the Navy during his extensive journeys along the coastline. His brevity on the subject suggests that he viewed the U.S. Navy as a benign organization tasked with protecting American commerce, rather than as a potentially occupying, aggressive force.

Beyond philosophical underpinnings, the Army and Navy differed in other ways. As one historian notes, 'the specific factors that will inevitably affect the formulation and execution of a grand strategy are easy to describe. Geographical position is perhaps the most obvious and important.'⁵¹ The Army found itself constrained by the realities of American geography, while the Navy was unconstrained by the opportunities the oceans presented. With no ability to transport its troops overseas, the United States Army of the 1830s remained restricted to the North American continent by four controlling interests: British-controlled Canada to the north; Texas and Mexico to the southwest; Florida (where Native American tribes, primarily Seminoles, remained a dominant force after Spain ceded the region to the United States in 1821) to the south;

⁵⁰ De Tocqueville, p. 350.

⁵¹ Williamson Murray, *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy and War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 11.

and the tribal lands that lay beyond Illinois and the Mississippi River to the west.

Between 1830 and 1838, most U.S Army forts were situated in these unorganized territories, serving as the nation's barrier between its own civilization and a swath of land it viewed as riddled with a godless people. Posts quickly emerged in the Kansas Territory, such as Fort Leavenworth (1827), and in the Oklahoma Territory, such as Fort Gibson and Fort Towson (both 1824) and Camp Washita (1834). These posts served as conduits for the great Indian migration from Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi that began in 1830. Army posts, by their nature, encroached upon and held land. 'As the military emerged as an agent of American nationalism, it did so in an egalitarian society that rejected privilege and preferred equality of condition and the unfettered pursuit of liberty.'⁵²

By contrast, during the same period, the U.S. Navy, which was served by long-established yards in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Charleston, held no foreign ground with the exception of Pensacola in the panhandle of Florida. This presence in Pensacola was established to protect the reserves of live oaks in the southwest, a key feature of U.S. warships since the designs of Joshua Humphreys in the 1790s. With neither the ability nor the need to hold territory, the Navy's experience was that of near-continuous duty on foreign stations. Foreign ports required and fostered cooperation among naval powers. They also served as havens for merchant ships. Militant action against established ports would have disrupted the flow of commerce, in direct opposition to the purpose for which the Navy existed in the first place. Such action also threatened the ability of naval ships to operate and remain on distant stations, reliant as they were on local food, water, and goods.

Geography also favoured the Army in terms of communication with the Secretary of War or the president. The Army could conduct few military operations or negotiations without direction from Washington, because its senior officers were days or at most a few weeks away by horse. U.S. Navy ships operating in the Mediterranean, Pacific, or elsewhere were months from

⁵² Robert P. Wettemann, Jr., *Privilege vs. Equality: Civil-Military Relations in the Jacksonian Era, 1815-1845*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2009), p. 20.

communication with Washington, which provided naval commanders greater latitude and responsibility in representing their country. The complexity of communication with ships and squadrons was, in fact, exponentially greater, because they were not always tied to any one port nor were their routes as predictable as those of army troops marching on a predetermined path from one post to another. Communication with the Mediterranean was easier than other distant stations since the Navy based its squadron at Port Mahon through which all correspondence passed. With several ships in the squadron, at least one ship was always available for dispatches to the United States. In contrast, the Pacific Squadron, comprising only two ships, was forced to rely on passing merchant ships to exchange information, or to take the drastic step chosen by its Commodore, Charles Stewart, who used his personal funds to finance the construction of his own dispatch boats to keep in communication with Washington.

Deployed naval squadrons were partly immune from the political machinations of Washington as political fortunes rose and fell. The simple factor of distance from policy-makers tempered debates about action or inaction. Squadron commodores were free to engage in more fruitful diplomatic relations with their counterparts or heads of state. Left alone to their deliberations, the squadron commodores demonstrated remarkable restraint in the absence of clear and near-continuous direction, though the impetuous actions of some individuals, such as Captain David Porter during the Fajardo Affair (1824) and Captain John Downes in the attack on Quallah Battoo (1832), deviated from those of the more cautious commodores. This freedom with which many navy commanders operated effectively came to a halt at the end of the Jacksonian Era - the introduction of the telegraph in the 1840s made communication much easier.

The Navy's reliance on diplomacy resulted not only from geography but also from simple necessity: naval ships were more reliant on other nations to conduct operations than was the Army, which was largely self-reliant in North America. Companies of soldiers had wagon trains of supplies for ammunition, clothing, and food. Also, food and water were generally available throughout the areas in which the Army operated during the 1830s. Horses could graze during rest. Shelter in the form of tents was cheap to procure and easy to set

up. By contrast, the Navy was encumbered with ships requiring constant attention and maintenance – a leaking hull was a threat to their survival, and masts and sails were their only means of propulsion and stability. The crew likewise required support and maintenance. The basic necessities of life – food and water – were always in finite supply on board a ship. When those stores were depleted, the crew had to rely on the closest port for replenishment. The availability of supplies depended on that port's willingness to do business with the U.S. Navy and, of course, on the Navy's ability to pay for them.

The two branches were also different in the selection of their leaders. Most Army officers received their commissions through the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. By contrast, no naval officer was commissioned via an established school until after the establishment of the Naval Academy in 1845. Many contemporaries regarded West Point, the main conduit for commissions, as an institution of 'privilege' and considered its alumni a military aristocracy.⁵³ Prior to the establishment of the Naval Academy, the Navy had certainly experienced the phenomenon of multiple generations of family service (the Decatur, Perry, and Rodgers families, for example), but the nature of seamanship and leadership of a warship conditioned by years on the water required that the Navy be a meritocracy.

During the Jacksonian Era, West Point graduated approximately forty cadets annually, though not all of them went on to a career as an Army officer. Naval officers, by contrast, began serving and training on their first day in the Navy. Nearly all officers entered the service at the rank of Midshipman, most of them only in their mid-teens. The midshipmen received a sparse education, with the chaplain on each ship responsible for conducting classes, while the remainder their time was focused on learning the fundamentals of ship handling, navigation, and gunnery. Rare was the naval officer who entered as a lieutenant, although several Jacksonian Era captains had entered at this rank because they already possessed significant maritime experience. Commodore Charles Stewart, for example, who received a commission as a

⁵³ Robert P. Wettemann, Jr., *Privilege vs. Equality: Civil-Military Relations in the Jacksonian Era, 1815-1845*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2009), p. 15.

lieutenant at the age of nineteen in 1798, had first gone to sea as a cabin boy on a merchant ship at the age of twelve and had risen through the ranks to command his own merchant ship out of Philadelphia before entering the Navy.

Unlike the Army, the Navy never became a political engine. Several presidents from Washington to Jackson served in the military but exclusively in the Army. Presidential family members also served in the Army, such as Martin van Buren's son Abraham, who was aide-de-camp to Major General Macomb during Jackson's presidency. Both Washington and Jackson, for example, had achieved considerable victories at the end of their wars (the American Revolution and War of 1812 respectively.) Americans failed to understand or significantly appreciate that the victories at Yorktown and New Orleans would not have been possible without naval support (achieved by the French in the case of the former). While one naval engagement could be romanticized, there were no civilian journalists on board war ships to observe, interview, and report on the actual actions. One reason Army officers had an advantage in politics was because their actions were more immediately available to the media. The other, and more likely, reason was that the ranks of 'general' and 'captain' seemed far different in the public's mind. 'Generals' commanded an army of the people and militias, whereas 'Captains' commanded only a ship. Squadron commodores were a rarity. The War of 1812 had seen only one commodore, because the Navy was too small to put more than a squadron to sea, and even that squadron saw temporary service. Generals led strategic campaigns and won wars; captains engaged single ships. This disparity was not lost on the Navy, which would rigorously debate the need for an admiral-level rank during this decade.

Jackson's familiarity with the Army was therefore understandable. He was a product of that institution, and he had helped shape it in the first decades of the American Republic. On 16 December 1814, in declaring martial law in New Orleans prior to the final battle of the War of 1812, he had challenged basic constitutional rights. During his presidency, Jackson surrounded himself with former Army officers. John Eaton, for example, served as his first Secretary of War. Jackson's secretary, and closest confidante, was his nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson, who had been

expelled from West Point in 1818. Not surprisingly, naval officers or civilians sympathetic to naval interests did not enter president's inner circle.

Between 1821 and the Civil War (excluding the Mexican-American War), the size of the Army ranged from five thousand to fifteen thousand men, though Jackson authorized the creation of two new regiments – the First Dragoons in 1833 and the Second Dragoons in 1836.⁵⁴ His action suggested a need for the professionalization of the armed forces after the abrupt resignation of forty-seven Army officers in 1835 and double that in 1836, as the Second Seminole War began. One of the era's greatest legislators – and political adversary of Jackson – Henry Clay heard from his own son, Henry Clay Jr., a cadet in 1830, that 'The army in itself provides no attraction whatever, other than of a certain and independent support'.⁵⁵ Jackson, with little tolerance for those who eschewed military service, took a more imperial approach than his predecessors. His views carried over into the van Buren administration as well. To stem the tide of officers leaving their service early, officers were held accountable and sent back to their units to complete their obligation. This was especially enforced with West Point graduates.⁵⁶

Although the Army had been a significant part of his life and captivated his attention – especially with the Second Seminole War – he was not ignorant of what the Navy offered. Although the foremost Jacksonian historian argued that Jackson had little understanding or use for the Navy, evidence in this dissertation suggests otherwise.⁵⁷ Jackson was a product of the Army and a promoter of presidential power. The Navy was less familiar to him, but he understood that it had the capability for divergent missions. Unlike the Army, the Navy's purpose was to achieve influence and security, not conquest and domination.

The Navy of 1829

⁵⁴ Robert P. Wettemann, Jr., p. 68.

⁵⁵ Henry Clay Jr. to Henry Clay, 16 September 1830, Robert Seager II, editor, *The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. 8 (1829-1836)*, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1984), p. 265

⁵⁶ Robert P. Wettemann, Jr., pp. 68-69.

⁵⁷ Interview with the author in the House of Representatives, Office of the Historian. 24 June 2009.

The Navy Jackson inherited in March 1829⁵⁸ faced multiple challenges. Arguably, the Navy lacked a central, justifiable mission that would engender comprehensive support from both the public and Congress. This lack of support manifested itself in numerous ways. In 1829, the Navy found itself still in the early years of permanent global presence on distance stations. The duties and logistics complications associated with establishing new stations were compounded by a rudimentary industrial base, struggles for resources, disparate education, lack of available manpower, and stagnation in innovation.

Prior appropriations supported construction of a new naval hospital (in addition to that at New Orleans), but there was as yet no system in place for the management of sick and disabled seamen. The Navy had also failed to respond to 1828 legislation providing for a better organization of the medical department. The law required a change in how assistant surgeons were admitted to the service and time in grade before being promoted to surgeon. Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard reported to Congress that, despite its required measures, none had been put into place.⁵⁹ Most of Southard's report consisted of concerns with pension funds from both former active duty naval personnel and privateer seamen. In most navies – even in the twenty-first century – the most significant cost is not platforms and weapons, but personnel, including their training, food, medical care, and other benefits such as retirement.

As it had for most of the 1820s, discussion continued in Congress and in the Navy on the merits of an exploring expedition to the Pacific and South Sea to survey coasts, islands, and reefs. In subsequent reports to Congress, but prior to Jackson's inauguration in March, the Secretary of the Navy provided amplifying information on the costs associated with an expedition.⁶⁰ Southard and others recognized that the American nautical charts were demonstrably deficient. With an estimated two hundred or more islands, reefs

⁵⁸ The status of the navy in 1828 can be found in the 'Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy,' *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs*, November 27, 1828 and delivered to Congress on 2 December 1828.

⁵⁹ Southard to Quincy Adams 9 February 1829, US Navy Department, Letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the President and Executive Agencies, 1821-1886

⁶⁰ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 2 December 1828. (see fn 58)

and shoals that did not appear on any chart, such an expedition was necessary to protect the lives and seafaring property of American whalers in the region. Nevertheless, it would be nearly another decade before the multi-ship expedition would get underway.

The character of officers and sailors suggested that naval discipline had been generally commendable in 1828, but infractions nonetheless required responses. Some suggested a criminal code, a naval school, and a revised body of Navy rules and regulations. All three potential remedies had been suggested to Congress via separate reports.

Conspicuously absent from Southard's 1828 report to Congress was significant mention of global naval operations, despite squadrons operating in the West Indies, Pacific, Mediterranean and elsewhere. Southard used only one sentence to mention piracy operations by the Mediterranean squadron. Otherwise, an appendix noted only a list of vessels and their locations. Two-thirds of the Navy (twenty-three ships) were deployed that year, including one 74-gun ship-of-the-line.

Southard estimated that the Navy's 1829 budget would be more than 3.6 million dollars. The total budget for the U.S. government that year was 17 million dollars. For a young republic with few resources, devoting twenty percent of its budget was out of proportion to its limited ability. Army and Navy expenditures comprised more than half of the federal budget. Interest on the national debt was another fifteen percent. Barely thirty percent remained to run the rest of the government, including the postal service, which was the largest organization outside of the military.

More than one third of the Navy's budget was for the pay and subsistence of its personnel. Less than \$800,000 was estimated for provisions and repairs of vessels, and another \$400,000 was for repairs and improvements of navy yards. The budget allocated no money for new construction.

The Navy Jackson inherited in 1829 was also a reflection, in part, of the man who had preceded him as president. John Quincy Adams was not only Jackson's predecessor. To Jackson and his followers, Adams was the man who had usurped the presidency itself during one of the most contentions

elections in American history. The rivalry extended to how the Navy was managed.

Adams, unlike Jackson, was one of the early American elites. The son of the president who had created the Department of the Navy in 1798, Adams benefitted from his father's political prominence. From an early age, Adams served as his father's secretary during assignments in Europe. Adams became the Minister to Holland in Washington's second administration at the youthful age of twenty-seven. He served as Minister to Russia from 1809 to 1814 and the next three years as the Minister to the Court of St. James. When he returned to the United States in 1817, he was nominated for and confirmed as Secretary of State under President James Monroe. By the time he ran for president in 1824, he was one of the most well-travelled Americans. Jackson, by contrast, never visited a foreign country. That such a dichotomy of international experiences between the two successive presidents existed underscores the inherent necessity of a Navy and its usefulness. Adams recognized this from the outset of his administration, while Jackson learned it quickly.

Adams had been at his father's side during the undeclared Quasi-War with France, primarily fought in naval engagements throughout the Caribbean. But it was a later engagement that had more impact. 'The really important period of my life,' he wrote in his diary on 31 May 1820, 'began with the British attack upon our Chesapeake frigate, in the summer of 1807.' The USS *Chesapeake*, one of America's first six frigates built in the 1790s, had gotten underway under Captain James Barron. Only a few hours out of Norfolk, Virginia, her decks packed with crates of supplies, she was completely unprepared for any engagement. HMS *Leopard* awaited her with the understanding that several British seamen were aboard. *Leopard* emptied a broadside into *Chesapeake*. Barron ordered one cannon fired so that he would not have to say that he had surrendered the ship without firing a shot. The *Leopard's* captain impressed several seamen but rejected Barron's offer to surrender the ship, which might have escalated into an act of war.

The U.S. eventually declared war five years later, while Adams served as Minister to Russia. Adams found a sympathetic ear for the cause of neutral

trade, even though Russia, through 1812 at least, was nominally allied with France. Sensing this, Adams managed to convince Czar Alexander to open Russian ports to American goods. This 'diplomatic coup', one historian argues, 'illuminates the strategic importance Adams attached to ports as hubs of commercial activity'.⁶¹ By the time Adams became Secretary of State, his views of the importance of the Navy and the nation's merchant fleet in growing the nation had matured, articulated in his first strategic document.

As Secretary of State, Adams recognized the limitations of the nation's small fleet compared to the global dominance of the Royal Navy. Still, he knew, the nation could either learn from, in some way influence, or exert commercial power regionally. Despite the British Empire's unchallenged role, there were considerable conflicts that involved navies. In the Mediterranean, for example, war raged between the Greeks and Ottoman Empire. A recent study of Quincy Adams' foreign policy suggests: 'inspired by the democracies of ancient Greece, thrilled by the republican rhetoric of the Greek rebels, and horrified by Turkish authorizes, Americans [like Adams] took the Greek cause to heart.'⁶² Despite this, within a decade the Navy was helping to rebuild the Ottoman fleet under Jackson and van Buren. Elsewhere, revolutions in South America under Simon Bolivar, Jose de San Martin, and Bernardo O'Higgins challenged the faltering Spanish Empire. Understanding the consequences of strategic overreach, Adams believed the young Navy could have a significant impact closer to home. It was, he and Monroe agreed, the destiny of the country to grow.

Adams was already familiar with America's challenges to the south. Shortly after the War of 1812, Adams was the primary negotiator with Spain on establishing a secure border with the empire's Florida territory. With Jackson's victory over the British at the Battle of New Orleans still fresh in the minds of Americans, he was sent to the Georgia-Florida border in 1817. The radically anti-Indian Jackson sought to settle the issue of security once and for all thus preventing any potential Indian incursions into Georgia. While Adams played

⁶¹ Charles N. Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 97.

⁶² Edel, p. 129

diplomat, Jackson sentenced two merchants – Englishman Robert Armbrister and Scot Alexander Arbuthnot – to death for ‘agitating war with the Indians’. Severely criticized by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun (later to serve as Jackson’s Vice President during his first term,) Adams defended Jackson’s actions for four reasons. Jackson’s Army neutralized the Indian threat along the Florida border. Second, it stabilized US borders. Third, ‘it secured the US against a weakening Spain’. Finally, ‘it swiftly and decisively project[ed] American force against Seminole, Spanish, and British threats’.⁶³ Such action risked much. Adams, already a seasoned diplomat would have known the risks, but he also saw opportunity for the country. In a letter to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, Andrew Jackson wrote of the incident: ‘I hope the execution of these Two [sic] unprincipled villains will prove an awful [sic] example to the world and convince [Britain] [...] that certain, if slow retribution awaits those unchristian wretches who by false promises delude & excite a Indian tribe to all the horrid deed of savage war’.⁶⁴ The Spanish and British governments both expressed their concerns to the U.S. Secretary of State.

Monroe was less forgiving of Jackson, informing the general that he had exceeded his orders and risked war. Privately he admonished Jackson. Publicly, however, Monroe had to tread lightly with a man who was more popular than the president himself. On 12 January 1819, the House Committee on Military Affairs condemned the executions and debated a formal censure. House Speaker Clay supported censure but in the end Jackson’s popularity and rising nationalistic fervour won out with one hundred seven members of Congress voting against censure and one hundred voting in favour of it.

For Adams, the only way for the Navy to grow was to increase operations closer to home. In the near term, that meant the Florida territory. In the longer term it meant the Caribbean and the Spanish territories in Central and South America. The policy he articulated would be attributed to the president under whom he served. Announced in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine

⁶³ Edel, p. 149

⁶⁴ 5 May 1818 as cited in Andrew Burstein, *The Passions of Andrew Jackson*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), p.131.

declared that the Western Hemisphere was no longer open to European colonization and that any interference would be met with American intervention. While bold and audacious, this policy had no practical method of being implemented. The US Navy had insufficient force to conduct a blockade or engage in any squadron, much less fleet, action with the Royal Navy. In addition, it would not have the capability to project forces over water until the invasion of Mexico in 1847 when thirteen thousand American troops landed at Veracruz, which remained the largest modern amphibious operation until Gallipoli in World War I. It is also possible that, by underwriting the Monroe Doctrine, the Royal Navy blunted the U.S. Navy, reducing its need to grow to defend itself and thus slowing subsequent development until the 1880s.

Adams entered the presidential election of 1824 as a political favourite primarily because of name recognition. In addition in the early nineteenth century the preferred method of attaining the presidency was to serve as Secretary of State as had Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. Although other politicians like Treasury Secretary William Crawford and Speaker of the House of Representatives were contenders, the populist mantle fell to the victor of New Orleans, Andrew Jackson. In one of the most contentious presidential elections in American history, Adams became president only by what became popularly referred to by the Jacksonians as the 'corrupt bargain'. A victor required one hundred thirty-one electoral votes. Jackson won ninety-nine, Adams eighty-four, Crawford forty-one, and Clay thirty-seven. (Jackson won the popular vote 152,901 to Adams' 114,023.) As stated in the Constitution's Twelfth Amendment, if no one candidate achieved a majority of electoral votes, only the top three candidates would serve on the slate before the House of Representatives, consequently Clay dropped from the ballot in the House in which he served as speaker. Clay, an ardent opponent of Jackson, threw his support to Adams thus permitting Adams to win the presidency under House rules. Though Adams' supporters claimed that no bargain was reached, Adams did meet privately with Clay before the vote and, when he became president, nominated Clay to serve as Secretary of State and, thus, his successor. The election divided the nation and emboldened a bitter Jackson to claim what he felt Congress denied.

As president, Adams became an advocate for the Navy, proposing increases in the size of the fleet as well as the establishment of a naval academy.⁶⁵ But most of his efforts came to naught. The same populist tide that had overwhelmingly voted for Jackson swept in a new wave of congressmen who referred to themselves not as Democratic-Republicans, but formally as Jacksonians. With four years of a determined opposition, Adams managed to increase the size of the Navy but was unable to accomplish much else. Every patronage position and process received close scrutiny from a hostile Congress. The same was true after the 1828 presidential election when memories of the corrupt bargain had festered enough to grant Jackson his outright victory and claim the prize denied to him four years earlier.

At just a few days shy of his sixty-eighth birthday, Jackson was inaugurated as the oldest president to first assume the office, a record that would stand until Ronald Reagan's inauguration in 1981. His administration inherited international issues, a nation formed by differing political philosophies, and a navy shaped by several wars and only having recently formed permanent squadrons around the globe. But if Jackson inherited issues that formed the country, then the country likewise inherited a president formed by his experiences. Both fuelled each other for the next eight years; nowhere was this more evident than with the U.S. Navy.

Jackson was the last president to vividly recall the American Revolution, a formative experience in his boyhood. Two years after his Scots-Irish parents emigrated from Ireland, Jackson's father died in an accident just a few weeks before he was born in 1767. At the age of thirteen, Jackson served as a courier for the local South Carolina militia against the British. His oldest brother Hugh died of heat exhaustion in one battle. Later both Andrew and his older brother Robert were taken prisoner.

An often-told Jackson story, likely apocryphal, features a young Jackson being ordered to clean a British officer's boots. Refusing to do so, Jackson raised his arm as a Major Coffin drew his sword and slashed Jackson, resulting in large gashes on his arm and forehead. There is no evidence of

⁶⁵ John Quincy Adams, First Annual Message to Congress, 6 December 1825
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29467> [accessed 20 May 2018]

this incident, but it is repeated in elementary school textbooks and has become so ingrained in the Jackson myth that it is accepted as fact in biographies. It is possible that Jackson himself espoused the story as a young adult to build a reputation as someone who would challenge stronger authorities.

Robert died of fever shortly after leaving prison. Jackson's mother Elizabeth offered to treat American prisoners aboard one of the British prison ships in Charleston harbour. She too contracted a disease and died. By thirteen, Jackson was an orphan, mostly at the hands of an imperial power, thus cementing his pro-democratic vision for the United States. His involvement with the military only grew the next twenty years as he was voted into positions of command and leadership time and again. The method of voting for one's militia hierarchy substantiated his belief in a democratic military organization and his belief that he was a rightful claimant to lead his men against the enemy.

The second factor that shaped Jackson was the law – a law that dispensed frontier justice. Though minimally qualified to practice law, Jackson moved to Tennessee after the Revolutionary War, where he hoped to civilize what he perceived as a savage land. In 1790, William Blount, the new governor from whom he learned the power of political patronage, appointed him a prosecutor in the western district of Tennessee. Jackson was elected as Tennessee's first congressman and then to the U.S. Senate in 1800, serving only briefly before accepting an appointment as a judge on the Tennessee Supreme Court. His roots in personally dispensing the law heavily influenced his interest with Navy courts-martial as president.

It was during his time in Tennessee that Jackson met Rachel Donelson Robards, a young married woman. The Robards separated, with Jackson removing her from her town. A dispute resulted over when she had been or if she was divorced. One author argues that Jackson and Rachel were indeed adulterers and that Jackson married Rachel when she was still married. The issue arose throughout Jackson's career, particularly during his presidential races. During the 1828 election, newspaper editors favourable to Jackson suggested that the so-called bigamy issue was simply an honest mistake of misplaced paperwork. Still the charges gnawed at Jackson. He would fly into

rages in defence of his wife's honour, a trait that did not change when on 22 December 1828, just a few weeks after his election, Rachel died. The adultery charges re-emerged early in Jackson's administration with the Petticoat Affair, also called the Eaton Affair, in which rumours of adultery surrounded his Secretary of War, John Eaton, leading to several Cabinet resignations.

With all his experiences, perhaps no one issue shaped Jackson as president as that of his experiences with Native Americans. One Jackson historian writes that 'To him Indians were "savages," and mixed bloods were "half-breeds". And he always treated them like children [...] whose barbarism knew no deterrent save the gun'.⁶⁶ One of Jackson's first experiences with native tribes was in 1788 after completing his law studies in Tennessee. En route to Nashville, Tennessee, then located in the midst of Cherokee tribes, he encamped but, hearing odd owl calls in the middle of the night, quickly left. Soon afterward, the campsite was the site of a massacre of American hunters by Cherokee warriors. The local and state militias, and soon the American military, became Jackson's sword – the ability to secure the then-western frontier from Indians and for expansionist Americans.

During the War of 1812, Jackson conducted most of his operations in the south, particularly in Florida, since both the British and Americans used Florida tribes as pawns of guerrilla warfare. Like the loss of his mother and brother to the British during the American Revolution, the War of 1812 cost him his nephew and personal Aide, Major Alexander Donelson, who was killed while in pursuit of Red Sticks (a faction of Cherokees) in 1814. A few years later, Jackson returned to the Georgia-Florida border in the First Seminole War to drive more Indians farther south and farther west. During this conflict, Jackson was censured for exceeding his orders. During the Seminole War, Jackson gained a reputation of savage warfare unrivalled until General Tecumseh Sherman's march through Georgia during the Civil War. Jackson felt justified as he viewed himself the saviour of the lands to be populated by defenceless Americans. Peace talks with native tribes were inconsequential to Jackson. As Jackson later noted, 'Treaties answer No other Purpose than opening an Easy door for the Indians to pass through to Butcher our

⁶⁶ Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson & His Indian Wars*, (New York: Viking, 2001), p. 26.

Citizens.⁶⁷ At the conclusion of the war and the ratification of the Adams-Onís Treaty transferring control of Florida from Spain to the United States, Jackson was called upon to serve as governor of the territory he had effectively conquered.

Conclusion

As Jackson took office, the country offered his administration a realized sense of democratic style of government. The American culture was on the precipice of new ways of education as well as a moral imperative from a new religious revival movement. The American economy was only beginning its surge forward in maritime commerce that would spur wealth and development. And there was Jackson, arguably the most popular American since Washington, who was ready to assume leadership over it all. His sense of justice, of populist democracy and of governmental accountability began a new era for the Navy.

The Navy, battle tested by three wars, was a beneficiary of this era of activism and democratization. The mood of the country and administration encouraged and enabled the Navy to advance beyond a simple battle force of wooden hulls and iron cannons. The 1830s offered the Navy opportunities for global presence and influence. A new generation of naval officers embarked on missions that fostered a new way of thinking. The Navy was ready for a change. It was ready for an era of intellectual awakening.

⁶⁷ Remini, p. 33

Chapter 2: The Intellectual Awakening of the Navy

A Republic of Ideas

Two factors dramatically changed the ability of officers to disseminate their ideas publicly by the 1830s, both based on the wave of American democratization: cost and education. In the 1830s, the price of newspapers declined from six cents to a penny; books that sold in 1830 for two dollars were only twenty-five cents a decade later. As a result of the dramatic price decrease, newspapers, books and journals became more affordable to the general population and the number of publications rose during Jackson's presidency. The second factor was the impact on the common schools to literacy rates among American. In 1830, sixty-one percent of all American white males and fifty-four percent of white females were literate. Although literacy rates for white males and females had been fifty-eight and fifty percent respectively in 1820, a small percentage increase, the total literate population exploded from 2.8 million to 4.3 million. By 1840, literacy rates had risen to seventy-five percent for white men and seventy percent for white women.

The medium of print and the ability of more Americans to read meant that writers – and specifically naval officers – could reach a wide audience for the first time. Lieutenant Charles Wilkes requested the purchase of a lithographic press for the Navy in 1833 for each navy yard. He estimated that the Navy would save money from rollers, ink and printer labour. Moreover, at the time since the Navy had to buy French and British charts, it could make its own and correct them immediately.

American scientific journals made their advent in the post-war period and the 1830s and also related to naval issues. The *American Journal of Science*, founded in 1817 by Yale University chemistry professor Benjamin Silliman, included articles on the safety of steamboats and studies on the various bodies of water the Navy was exploring. Figure 2.1 shows the number of Navy-related articles in the *American Journal of Science* from 1818 to 1841. The increase in the 1830s is due to the growing use of steamboats and their application for the Navy and articles on exploration, such as the U.S. was scheduled to undertake that decade. The increased interest in the Navy may also be a result of Silliman, who on at least one occasion visited the Naval

Lyceum in 1834 with Lieutenant James Glynn.⁶⁸ Four years later, Glynn would serve with the South Seas Exploring Expedition.

These and the literary and scientific journals like them were an integral component of advancing the Navy's learning and, in turn, of the broader academic, literary and generally American audiences in the 1830s. They shared a common goal with the junior officers – to share ideas and information in a new era of advancing thought and exploration.

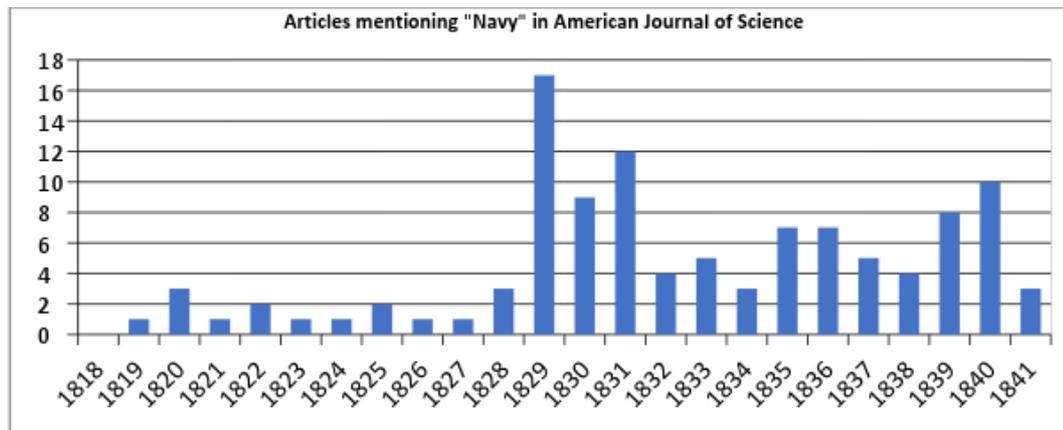


Figure 2.1 Articles mentioning 'Navy' in *American Journal of Science*.

Source: Author compilation from hard copies of the *American Journal of Science*

The Navy during Jackson's administration was not simply one of reform and professionalization. The new generation of officers in the 1830s led an intellectual reformation through concepts articulated in publications and organizations. They challenged conventional thinking in the Navy and confronted their own superiors in print, albeit through the relative anonymity of pseudonyms. Their ideas set the Navy on its eventual path of professionalism that shaped the officers who would command the ships and squadrons of the Mexican-American War and Civil War.

One British historian writes that the Enlightenment's 'direct impact on the navies of the day, as opposed to its indirect, long-term influence on the societies which sustained them, seems in truth to have been rather limited'.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ The records of the Naval Lyceum are held at the U.S. Naval Academy Museum, where the author has served as Director since 2012.

⁶⁹ N.A.M. Rodger, 'Navies and the Enlightenment,' *Essays in Naval History*, p. xiv.

While that may have been true of European navies, it was not applicable to the U.S. Navy. During Jackson's presidency, the Navy experienced its own age of enlightenment. Intellectually curious junior officers, along with like-minded and supportive literary figures, were learning about the world, a world that was only beginning to realize the nation's potential as a future power. Their curiosity was stimulated by the changing nature of the young republic's naval operations.

The Navy, from its establishment in 1798 through 1815, experienced three wars, and its officers and Secretaries of the Navy could do little more than react to short term threats and objectives. The post-war environment at first brought breathing room for the Navy and, as it built up its fleet beginning in 1816, it finally had the opportunity to think about the world and its emerging role. The post-War of 1812 environment enabled the junior officers sufficient time, resources, and opportunities to grow a robust correspondence network about naval policies and new ideas. Naval officers shared their experiences with one another and collectively stimulated their knowledge and views. They articulated their thoughts through new publications. In reviewing Lieutenant Matthew Maury's *Treatise on Navigation*, editor Edgar Allan Poe observed:

The spirit of literary improvement has been awakened among the officers of our gallant navy...Hitherto how little have they improved the golden opportunity of knowledge which their distant voyages held forth, and how little have they enjoyed the rich banquet which nature spreads for them in every clime they visit! But the time is coming when, imbued with a taste for science and spirit of research, they will become ardent explorers of the regions in which they sojourn.⁷⁰

This was the first period of robust naval thought in the United States. New technologies emerged and new lands were explored. The Navy debated and developed new, better-structured schools. Conceptual changes to the Navy would not have been possible without appropriate and effective dissemination within and beyond the Navy. During the Age of Jackson, this dissemination included unofficial correspondence between officers, articles in new professional journals, like-minded popular literary figures, education to sow the seeds of learning, and organizations whose role was to share ideas

⁷⁰ Edgar Allan Poe, 'Critical Notices: Maury's Navigation,' *Southern Literary Messenger*, 2.7 (1836), 454-455.

among a commonly-interested population. This was the Navy's version of the French Enlightenment philosopher Peter Bayle's (1647-1706) concept of a Republic of Letters, the long-distance communication among intellectuals who shared ideas and then discussed them in academies and salons.

Prior to the Age of Jackson, sharing news and information was difficult at best. From the establishing of the Department of the Navy in 1798 through to the end of the War of 1812, the Navy's size was inconsistent, its role was ad hoc, and for most of the period, it suffered from the instability caused by perpetual war, either with France, the Barbary states, or England. Except for a brief time after 1805, the officers, particularly the junior officers, had little opportunity or need to communicate with one another except on official matters. This began to change in the 1820s. Larger ships (like the new ships-of-the-line) on longer overseas deployments meant that midshipmen would become more familiar with one another. In such close quarters, long-term deployments offered the next generation of midshipmen aboard frigates and large ships-of-the-line the opportunity to form professional and personal relationships.

These relationships also included the growth of American-born literary figures whose uniquely American work, such as James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, appeared in the 1820s and 1830s. This new cadre of authors possessed close ties to the nascent Navy. Some, like Cooper, had served as midshipmen prior to the War of 1812, while others had brothers in the service. Authors like Washington Irving found themselves exposed to the Navy when they wrote about its adventures in the War of 1812 in journals and newspapers. In the 1830s, these same authors wrote fictional tales of the sea as well as non-fiction works. Their popular works reached a hungry American audience beyond what the officers themselves could accomplish.

The combination of internally-generated ideas among naval officers, their dissemination in professional organizations, and the popular interest generated led to exploration, such as the South Seas Exploring Expedition, and education with the establishment in 1845 of a naval school later. Highly literate and better educated than the preceding generation of naval officers, these lieutenants and midshipmen immersed themselves in the culture, history

and geography of foreign ports. They witnessed the instability of other governments. As they grew, their ideas took seed and formed the basis of a new outlook for themselves as professional officers, for the Navy, and for the country as a whole.

The first exposure of many midshipmen to the world as they got underway was through books. The first ship's library was on the ship-of-the-line *Franklin*, which left the United States in 1817 for a three-year Mediterranean deployment. Its library included 1500 volumes purchased by Commodore Charles Stewart and a charitable mariner's society. In 1828, Secretary of the Navy Southard issued a circular for all ships to have a library with thirty-seven specific books, including those on trigonometry, algebra, gunnery, the history of Greece, Rome and England, the laws of nations, and maritime laws, among others. Correspondence, journals and diaries in later years often provided the officers an opportunity to reflect on each of their ships, the men who commanded them, and the men who served aboard. Writing to a fellow officer in 1835, and reflecting on his service on a ship just two years prior, Lieutenant Samuel Francis DuPont noted, 'I have always looked upon my cruise in the [USS] *Ontario* as the brightest period of my professional life – it was performed after the [...] thoughtlessness of youth had fortunately yielded a little to the stability of manhood.'⁷¹ By the time of his service aboard *Ontario*, DuPont had been in the Navy for sixteen years with several overseas deployments.

The topics of the officers' correspondence varied during the Age of Jackson, with the location of their friends of primary concern. But the correspondence was not simply idle chatter. Many thoughts or questions were relevant to the Navy, particularly as they involved what other officers might encounter. Lieutenant Garrett J. Pendergrast worried about his fellow officers deployed to hazardous regions. 'I have read with much regret the accounts given of the fatal consequences produced by the yellow fever in our W. India Squadron'. Pendergrast thought that DuPont had been 'numbered with these

⁷¹ Samuel F. DuPont to Charles Davis, 23 April 1835, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE. The DuPont collection provides the richest single source of junior officer correspondence during this period.

gallant fellows who have sacrificed themselves for their ungrateful country's good'.⁷²

Relationships were integral to forming later correspondence. The later Rear Admiral Benjamin F. Sands recalled meeting Midshipman Joshua Sands on their first ship in 1828, 'We used to while away many hours endeavouring to trace out a relationship'.⁷³ Correspondence also allowed them to share unfavourable news about their former messmates.

News of courts-martials also reached across the fleet, albeit slowly. In May 1829, Lieutenant Daniel Mackay awaited news of one particular trial involving Lieutenant Irving Shubrick.⁷⁴ Shubrick had brought Marine Lieutenant Joseph Hale of the *Java* on charges of quarrelling and scandalous conduct including 'a challenge to personal combat'. Found guilty, Hale received a sentence of suspension for twelve months.⁷⁵ That the trial occurred in the Mediterranean meant that it could be weeks to months before the other officers learned of the results. In Mackay's case, it is unlikely he learned of it while in the Gulf of Mexico before the loss of the *Hornet*, but that did not prevent him from rendering a judgment. 'I take the Marine will be taught a lesson. The officers of that Corps seemed fated to bring about their own destruction and that of the corps. They are idle and of course doing mischief.'

Deployments around the globe allowed officers the opportunity to compare notes about the differences of each port, country and region and the challenges each offered. This, of course, also included interactions with characters. DuPont, for example, met with Edward John Trelawny at Napoli de Romania – then the capital of the Greeks at the head of the Gulf of Argos – in September 1825; Trelawny had, the year prior, accompanied Lord Byron to

⁷² Garrett J. Pendergrast to Samuel F. DuPont, 5 January 1824, Louisville, Kentucky. Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Group 9, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE. Pendergrast was the nephew of Commodore James Barron, the senior most officer in the navy until his death. Pendergrast also commanded USS Cumberland at the outset of the Civil War.

⁷³ Benjamin F. Sands, 'From Reefer to Rear-Admiral: Reminiscences and Journal Jottings of Nearly Half a Century of Naval Life,' (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1899), p. 11.

⁷⁴ Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel F. DuPont 26 May 1829, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

⁷⁵ Case #480, Records of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867, Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840.

Greece during its war for independence. Surgeon's Mate John Wiley in 1831 wrote of the 'novel and beautiful appearance' of Constantinople and admired everything from the minarets to the white buildings of Lesopho Point in a grove of cypresses. 'If I had but one city to see, that city should be Constantinople [...] European cities always have something in common. Here everything is distinct and peculiar'.⁷⁶ For Chaplain Thomas Lambert, awe of regions manifested itself in the frigate *United States*' visit to the Holy Land in 1836. From the hill where St. Paul had preached, Lambert 'succeeded in breaking off a piece of the rock which I took away with me'.⁷⁷ But like Wiley who was enamoured of Constantinople, Lambert found himself drawn to Rio de Janeiro, which he believed was 'unrivalled in beauty and grandeur'.⁷⁸

Descriptions of these regions were not universally positive, especially with regard to the West Indies Station and Gulf of Mexico. Lieutenant Mackay dreaded his assignment to the region immediately upon receiving orders to USS *Hornet*. 'I must begin to pack up,' he wrote, 'and make my little arrangements, not I confess without some foreboding, not exactly of death and yellow fever, but it's a climate I do not like'.⁷⁹ Lieutenant Pendergrast was also aware of the region's hazards having read with much regret 'the accounts of the fatal consequences of yellow fever in the West India Squadron'.⁸⁰ Other officers observed the man-made dangers, such as piracy in the Caribbean and the atrocities committed by non-state actors. Others recognized the instability of Mexico and that the Mexican Army was 'exceedingly anxious for a melee'. Nevertheless, officers did not only have an external view of what was a comparatively new world for them; they also took an interest in domestic policy.

⁷⁶ John S. Wiley to Samuel DuPont, 23 January 1831, USS Ontario, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

⁷⁷ Thomas Lambert to John Hale, 26 August 1835, Thomas Lambert Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society.

⁷⁸ Thomas Lambert to John Hale, 30 July 1834, Thomas Lambert Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society.

⁷⁹ Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel F. DuPont, Philadelphia 5 December 1828, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library.

⁸⁰ Garrett A. Pendegrast to Samuel F. DuPont, [n.d.]. Pendegrast was the son-in-law of Commodore James Barron. During the 1830s, Barron was the senior-most officer in the U.S. Navy.

Junior officers were also curious about naval policies and broader American politics at first engaging with one another and then through periodicals. A few months before his untimely death aboard *Hornet*, Mackay announced that he planned to write an article on naval policy using reports, documents, and state papers and asked his friends still in the United States to send anything of interest in papers and magazines to him for reference.⁸¹

Instead of simply commenting on naval policies, some officers directly inserted themselves into the process by soliciting members of Congress or those close to them. Thomas Lambert, for example, wrote at the request of the officers of the frigate *Brandywine* about the bill on equalizing the pay of naval officers. Members clearly listened to their concerns as evidenced by the chairman of the committee of naval affairs in 1835 informing a junior officer on the status of a bill.⁸² DuPont and his peers found themselves especially attuned to the administration commenting that 'Jackson has done everything in his power to assist us'. They were even aware of the appointment of officials like Amos Kendall, who was not part of the Navy but rather served as Fourth Auditor of the Treasury Department, which held key accounting responsibilities for the Navy.

At no time in American naval history was the practice of individual officers attempting to influence legislation acceptable – that did mean that it did not occur, simply that the military was supposed to defer to the civilian leadership and junior officers were supposed to obey senior officers on this issue. Yet in the 1830s – as in other eras – junior officers sometimes found issues so compelling that they were willing to risk retribution from commanding officer or commander-in-chief. Senior officers attempted to stem this either through court-martial proceedings or direct orders. This was the case when Commodore George W. Rodgers, while commanding the Brazil Squadron in 1831-32, issued an order to all his officers that they were 'positively forbidden communication either directly or thro' [sic] their friends to the Public Prints in

⁸¹ Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel F. DuPont, 1 January 1829, Samuel F. DuPont Papers.

⁸² Arnold [Mandain?] to Samuel F. DuPont, 21 February 1835, Samuel F. DuPont Papers.

the United States or elsewhere, the movements or transactions that may occur in the Squadron'.⁸³

Correspondence is also informative regarding the personal relationships of the officers. Many naval officers married into political families such as with the daughters of congressmen. Some, like DuPont, married their cousins, a not altogether unrealistic expectation since naval officers were often at sea providing them few opportunities to court a potential spouse. Therefore, they relied on whom they already knew. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and other port cities with established American blue-blood families from which naval officers could identify potential spouses. Stewart, for example, met and married his wife Delia Tudor – the Belle of Boston – in a period of a few weeks prior to deploying with *Constellation* in 1812. Of the following decades, Steedman recounted that 'Norfolk was the Garden of Eden for naval officers', given that so many had married there.⁸⁴

The diversity and depth of topics in the correspondence of the naval officers during the 1830s suggests what was a growing naval intellectual community. Fortunately, this awareness did not remain isolated to private correspondence between the officers, but evolved as very public debates in the new medium of naval and other journals. In the 1830s, the country experienced the widespread use of publications to promote and share ideas. Naval and other publications were integral to the reform movement among the officers. Until this time, articles about the Navy in journals – particularly by serving officers – were sporadic, and were usually simple accounts of naval actions and hagiographic biographical essays of early naval heroes. New military-specific publications emerged such as the *Naval Magazine*, *The Sailors Magazine*, and *The Army & Navy Chronicle*, all of which preceded the Naval Institute *Proceedings*, the independent forum of the sea services since 1873, by five decades. Secular journals also included a growing number of articles about the Navy or by the officers themselves. The naval publications of the 1830s offered junior officers the first opportunity (under pseudonyms) to

⁸³ George W. Rodgers, Order of 16 March 1832, Letter books of U.S. Naval Officers, March 1778-July 1908, Letters Sent by Captain George W. Rodgers, commanding the Warren, Dec. 1831-May 1832, 1 Volume.

⁸⁴ Steedman, p. 25.

engage publicly with senior officers and citizens on topics they had begun to write about in their own private correspondence and journals.

Periodicals

Whether in non-naval or navy-specific journals, officers often wrote under pen names. The practice was not strictly confined to naval officers. The British colonies and eventually the United States witnessed three generations of pseudonymous authors prior to the 1830s. Perhaps the most recognizable was a young Benjamin Franklin's use of 'Poor Richard'. Later, during the debates surrounding the ratification of the Constitution in 1787 and 1788, the Federalist Papers had a collection of authors writing under the pen name 'Publius' and 'Aristedes'. 'Cato', 'Centinel', and 'Brutus' wrote the Anti-Federalist Papers. The contentious nature of the constitutional debates warranted the use of pen names, which protected the authors' privacy but also focused the debates on the messages rather than the messengers.

The same was true of the public naval debates of the 1830s. In a variety of journals, essays appeared by authors using only a letter: 'C,' 'D,' 'M,' and 'X'. Others chose names or phrases such as 'Coquille,' 'Neptune,' 'Candor,' and 'A Friend of the Navy'. Publishing under their own names would have proven detrimental to their careers, and the public would have dismissed their concepts as those of inexperienced, junior officers who lacked the maturity of the elder captains. As nameless, faceless entities, the public focused on the content and the messages, and they could gain a wider audience. Pseudonyms were an effective means of challenging conventional thinking but not all officers agreed with the method. One officer wrote of the 'odious system of anonymous communications. Fear of power originated it; fear of detection has continued it...In the warfare of anonymous communications, we pierce the masque, without thought of the wound we inflict on him whom it conceals, but shelters not'.⁸⁵ By contrast, it took until 1912 before the Royal Navy found an anonymous forum for debate with the *Naval Review*.

⁸⁵ Unknown author, *The Naval and Military Magazine*, September 1834, p. 177.

Like the British *United Service Journal* (1829-1841), navy professional magazines emerged in the 1830s to provide a greater awareness for both military services with one focusing strictly on the navy. All played a role in initially advancing naval thought – the first Superintendent of the Naval Academy, Franklin Buchanan, thought *The Military and Naval Magazine* so important that he recommended to Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft that it should become part of the naval school's library. Its editor, Benjamin Homans, must have known that officers were keeping private journals and issued a call for stories and anecdotes of their 'piquant adventures'. In the inaugural issue, one officer wrote of the brotherhood of the two services and hoped that officers would help make the magazine 'the repository of American talent, and the altar on which all our literary oblations shall be offered'.⁸⁶ The magazine survived only two years. Homans attempted a similar format, but as a weekly periodical, in 1835 that completed its run in 1842. It was, as he wrote in the inaugural issue, a 'means of obtaining information that will be highly valuable to the officer and to the citizen'.⁸⁷ *The Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal* primarily found a civil maritime audience; it too recognized the growing abundance of materials for such a periodical. 'The mine,' wrote the editor in August 1829, 'has, in fact, but just begun to be opened.'

Of the new periodicals, the most important was *The Naval Magazine*, the publication of the Naval Lyceum whose purpose was to solicit from all fellow officers 'such original papers [...] on all subjects, directly or collaterally, connected with the elucidation and diffusion of Nautical and General Science, and professional knowledge'.⁸⁸ *The Naval Magazine* found the perfect editor with The Reverend Charles S. Stewart. Stewart was a navy chaplain, missionary, and well-known diarist had published his journals about his round-the-world travels aboard navy ships. Although it was a short-lived periodical, *The Naval Magazine* 'served as a catalyst for a budding movement seeking to

⁸⁶ 'Coquille', 'To the Officers of the Two Services', *The Naval and Military Magazine*, pp. 303-304.

⁸⁷ Benjamin Homans, *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Volume 1, No. 1, p. 1. 3 January 1835. Washington DC

⁸⁸ Rev. Charles S. Stewart, editor, *Naval Magazine*, January 1836, p. 4.

institute a number of reforms and technological advances in the Navy'.⁸⁹ The Naval Lyceum specifically aimed at stimulating its members intellectually and exciting the esprit du corps of the service. Its journal was a natural extension of that intent. It provided the public forum for the next generation of naval officers. The pseudonymous 'Sinclair' wrote: 'The spirit of the times and the necessities of the navy loudly declare that change is requisite. We cannot remain as we are; for things are fast tending to that point, when the prospects of a vast majority of the officers of our navy, will be desperate in the extreme.'⁹⁰ Junior officers saw opportunities for naval evolution in terms of personnel reform, platform innovation, and policy changes. The journals provided them the outlet for their frustration and desperation to ensure that conventional thinking did not impede that change.

The periodicals offered a variety of essays. These included biographical essays, articles on emerging technologies, travel notes about the ports and countries the officers visited, assessments of foreign naval capabilities, naval policies, and ideas about how to improve the navy. Some of topics were extremely contentious, particularly when senior officers began to weigh in on the debate. These debates were not confined to the pages of the military periodicals. The newspaper *Baltimore American*, for example, noted the on-going discussion in the *Army and Navy Chronicle* about the creation of the grade of admiral in the navy.⁹¹ The most common themes involved steam power, naval ranks, a naval school, and other navies and countries.

Just as with their letters, junior officers wrote articles for the journals, sharing their experiences and outward looking views on other countries and navies. Although the preceding generation of naval officers had travelled the globe, they published few articles especially since the various media were minimal. The *Analectic Magazine* (1813-1820) was the only relevant medium; this magazine included some American stories and biographies of naval officers, but most essays were reprints from British periodicals. The articles in

⁸⁹ John H. Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001), p. 72.

⁹⁰ Sinclair, 'The Navy', *Naval Magazine*, October 1834, pp. 113-114.

⁹¹ Untitled article, *Baltimore American*, reprinted in *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. 2, No. 14, 17 April 1836, p. 223.

the 1830s, by contrast, offer a view into the maturity of the junior officers because of how they observed the world and the trends and challenges they offered.

Officers began to think strategically. *The Military and Naval Magazine*, for example, included a selection of Carl von Clausewitz's "On War." Young officers were developing a more nuanced and progressive understanding of naval strategy and war fighting. Author 'D' wrote, "In peace, prepare for war" is the principle upon which our navy has been sustained.⁹² One journal reprinted Charles Dupin's 'Naval Force of Great Britain' in which he wrote, 'the absolute force of navies ought not to be measured by the number killed and wounded, in combats between [the French and British] navies'.⁹³ Although the United States had been at peace with Britain for more than a decade, young officers continued to view the empire as the greatest threat, but also as one from which they could continue to learn. The same was true of the French. Other issues included a translation of an article 'Naval Tactics for the French Navy, an article about the size, composition, and strength of the French and other navies, and 'Improvements in Shipbuilding' about British ships. In a different case, an anonymous lieutenant discussed the conflict he saw in Ecuador, its causes, and the failures of its leadership.⁹⁴

Officers in the 1830s began to discuss options for naval schooling. One anonymous junior officer admitted that this subject had been on his mind throughout his naval service and offered his essay with the specific intent that the Department of the Navy consider it for petty officers. Petty officers had served on U.S. Navy ships but they did not have a uniform or insignia until 1841. In addition, their ship's captain appointed them and, thus, they served only while the captain was on board.⁹⁵ A school on a ship would educate apprentices aged thirteen to fifteen years. 'The navy,' he argued, 'will soon become popular with that class of the community we must always depend

⁹² D, 'Thoughts on the Present Condition of the Navy, and Suggestions for its Improvement', *Military and Naval Magazine*, January 1834, p. 263.

⁹³ Charles Dupin, 'Naval Force of Great Britain', reprinted in *The Military and Naval Magazine*, September 1835, pp 28-32.

⁹⁴ 'A Lieutenant in the Navy,' 'Guyaquil,' *Naval Magazine*, January 1836, pp. 227-235.

⁹⁵ 'Navy Traditions and Customs, 'Naval History and Heritage Command, <http://www.history.navy.mil/trivia/triv4-4d.htm> [accessed 25 June 2013].

upon for seamen [...and] inducements should be held out to them to remain in the service after they have served their apprenticeship'.⁹⁶ This proposal represented a significant shift.

It was, however, the naval school for officers that captured the imagination of the authors. A naval school represented as an absolute necessity to properly teach science. Moreover, schools at sea were not conducive to learning. 'A place cannot well be found more unfavourable to habits of close application, than a man-of-war.'⁹⁷ In this new age, specialized professors of the sciences were a major requirement, and it would be costly to have one or more on ships; rather, they ought to be centrally located on shore at an academy. This concept was favoured by at least one newspaper editorial. The naval school should rest on the example of the experience of the Military Academy at West Point, 'if it be proper to fit men for military command at home, it is certainly not less so to prepare for the naval profession those who are to represent our country in distant climes.'⁹⁸ A naval academy could also serve to vet applicants and candidates. 'The first examination for admission,' wrote 'A.S.' – likely Alexander Slidell Mackenzie – 'would reject many applicants, and the subsequent years of probation would winnow away all the chaff, all the incorrigibly stupid, all the vicious, all the insubordinate'.⁹⁹ 'A.S.' also suggested a 'school ship' for midshipmen. By coincidence, just five years later Mackenzie command the *Somers*, the only ship in U.S. history to have a mutiny. His actions in responding to the mutiny unintentionally contributed to the creation of the permanent naval academy in 1845.

No issue was as contentious in the 1830s military journals as the creation of the rank of admiral. John Paul Jones had first proposed the rank of Admiral during the American Revolution, in the hope of being named so himself. Absent that opportunity, Jones pursued a flag officer billet and served in the Russian Navy. Fifty years later, the Navy was full of senior captains. By 1835, the average length of service of captains was 33.2 years; their average

⁹⁶ A Junior Officer in the Navy, 'Petty Officers of the Navy', *The Military and Naval Magazine*, Sept 1833 to Feb 1834, p. 114.

⁹⁷ An officer, 'Naval Education', *Naval Magazine*, May 1836, p. 219.

⁹⁸ Editorial, 'On Naval Schools', reprinted in *Army and Navy Chronicle*, 18 July 1839, p. 44.

⁹⁹ A.S., 'Thoughts on the Navy', *Naval Magazine*, January 1837, p. 22.

time in grade was 14.7 years.¹⁰⁰ Lieutenants faced a similar seniority problem. Without the retirement of captains, and with no rank between captain and lieutenant, lieutenants might wait decades for a promotion. Junior officers vocalized their objection to the current system through the military journals. They argued that the Navy ought to dismiss such officers from the service, if they could not perform their duties because of age or disability. Moreover, the Navy should terminate commissions based on political influence. Ship commands based only on years in service should now rest on intelligence, professional skills, and habits.¹⁰¹ Instead of admirals, they presciently suggested a new ranking structure of commanders, lieutenant commanders, lieutenants, second lieutenants and midshipmen – a structure that became the standard later in the nineteenth century and continues in the twenty-first century United States Navy.

The proponents of the rank of admiral were haphazard in their zeal. 'Let Congress create as many admirals,' they wrote, 'as in their wisdom they may deem necessary'.¹⁰² Alexander Slidell Mackenzie stated unequivocally that the Navy needed admirals, 'not merely as a stimulant and reward for faithful service, but as an all-important element of discipline'. He recommended one admiral, four vice admirals, and ten rear admirals - fifteen total for a Navy with barely double that number of ships. Proponents used the argument of discipline, but it was far more about prestige for themselves. Such a formidable navy required more than a captain to command it. 'C' lamented that if the ship-of-the-line *Pennsylvania* (which, at 120 guns, was one of the largest in the world) 'go abroad with a pendant at her mast-head [...] let her be the first to show the flag of an American Admiral.'¹⁰³ The editors of the *Army and Navy Chronicle* had to intervene when the responses became too passionate. The younger officers suggested that it inclined 'too much to

¹⁰⁰ Data compiled by the author based on reports of the Secretary of the Navy and the List of Officers of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. See Appendix B2 and B3.

¹⁰¹ D., 'Thoughts on the Present Conditions of the Navy, and Suggestions for its Improvement', *The Military and Naval Magazine*, January 1834, pp. 257-265

¹⁰² Sinclair, 'The Navy', *The Military and Naval Magazine*, October 1834, p. 114.

¹⁰³ C., 'Admirals', *The Army and Navy Chronicle*, 4 January 1838, p. 12. The author was likely Commodore Charles Stewart, the second longest-serving officer in 1838 and who commanded *Pennsylvania* out of the shipyard the year before.

ingratiate with the Captains, in the matter of Admirals, to which the interests of the younger officers are opposed, and the creation of them only advocated by the older Captains and their friends'.¹⁰⁴ It was not the last time in United States history that junior officers believed publications were the tools of the senior officers.

Concepts promoted by naval officers were insufficient to effect change. Other naval officers became aware of the ideas as well as policymakers; however, elected officials often required a greater inducement for action. That could only come from constituents, and constituents are influenced by popular culture. In the 1830s, ideas in popular culture were promulgated by the most common popular medium, literature. Literary figures from the period such as James Fenimore Cooper, Richard Henry Dana and the entire Knickerbocker Group (Washington Irving, James K. Paulding, etc.) shared a passion for the maritime and naval environments. They provided a unique tie between the Navy and its vision that was articulated and popularized among the broader, increasingly literate American public.

This was the first period of truly unique American writing that appealed not only to a domestic audience but a foreign market clamouring for anything new from the former colonies. The new American literary collective had its genesis during the War of 1812 with the *Analectic Magazine*, published from 1813 to 1820. Comprised mostly of other newspaper articles from the United States and Britain, Irving edited it during the war. Two decades later, he became one of the most popular literary figures in America and served in the Jackson administration. He was editor when Francis Scott Key published 'The Defense of Fort McHenry' which was later set to music as 'The Star-Spangled Banner', America's national anthem. Irving's personal friendships with naval officers like Stephen Decatur influenced his own biographical sketches of war heroes James Lawrence, Oliver Hazard Perry, and David Porter and produced the 'most sophisticated naval writing of the war'.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Anonymous letter, *The Army and Navy Chronicle*, 12 September 1839, p. 168.

¹⁰⁵ Robert D. Madison, 'Cooper's Place in American Naval Writing', Presented at the 4th Cooper Seminar, *James Fenimore Cooper: His Country and His Art*, State University of New York College at Oneonta, July 1982. External.oneonta.edu/cooper/articles/suny/1982sunny-madison1.html [accessed 29 December 2017.]

Author James Kirke Paulding thought the essays in the *Analectic* so important for officers that he recommended to Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard that he include them in the library of every ship.¹⁰⁶

Journals that were not Navy-centric were just as important as their maritime counterparts since they broadened the potential readership from those who were in or cared about the Navy to those who should care about it. These journals were part literary and part news with some biographical sketches. Just as the American art world experienced its own distinctiveness with the Hudson River School in the 1820s and 1830s, a similar group emerged from Tarrytown, New York. The Knickerbocker Group had ties to the Navy and advocated its role, even subtly, in national security as well as the importance of maritime component of American society. *The Knickerbocker Magazine*, founded in 1833, included some of the most prominent literary figures of the period. James Kirke Paulding later served as Secretary of the Navy under Martin van Buren. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's namesake was a naval officer killed at Tripoli. Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem 'Old Ironsides' would later save the USS *Constitution* from being broken up. James Fenimore Cooper had served as midshipman prior to his literary career. In addition to penning the first history of the Navy, he also wrote a series of articles on naval policies in the 1830s. The *Knickerbocker* published a piece by Jeremiah Reynolds titled 'Mocha Dick: The White Whale of the Pacific', which became the foundation for Herman Melville's more famous 'Moby Dick'. As mentioned previously, the *Southern Literary Messenger*, founded in 1834 in Richmond, Virginia and edited by Edgar Allan Poe, provided a favourable review of Lieutenant Matthew Maury's book on navigation. Within a few years, subscriptions had risen from seven hundred to more than five thousand. It included essays about the Navy's first round-the-world voyages and an extensive series on naval policies by junior officers. The relationships between naval officers and literary figures continued through the next decade, such as

¹⁰⁶ James Kirke Paulding to Samuel Southard, 5 May 1828, *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding*, ed. Ralph M. Aderman, (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), pp. 95-97.

the growing connections between James Fenimore Cooper and Matthew C. Perry.¹⁰⁷

Another member, Washington Irving, was the son of a Royal Navy petty officer. In 1828 he published the *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* and followed it up with a volume in 1831 on the *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus*. Irving was an early critic of the militia and volunteer units as 'miserable military quacks' during the War of 1812, but recognized the value of the Navy. 'We are all live, at present,' he wrote in late 1812, 'in consequence of our naval victories. God knows they were well-timed to save the national spirit from being depressed'.¹⁰⁸ While travelling in England in the 1830s, he maintained his relationships with naval officers (his nephew Edgar Irving, for example, – a former midshipman and later marine corps officer – was a member of the Naval Lyceum), trying to help Alexander Slidell Mackenzie publish one of his own works.

When Irving left the United States for Europe after the War of 1812, the country was largely rural with a capitol burned by the British. He returned seventeen years later to a nation of railroads, steamboats, and a populist president. Writing to his friend Alexander Hill Everett in 1829, Irving averred that he had no political ambition¹⁰⁹ after being offered the position of secretary of legation in London. He planned on being as clear as possible of party politics. Whether it was the eventual allure of politics or the need for steady income, he finally accepted the position as secretary of legation.¹¹⁰ He was soon criticizing the cabinet and the media in support of Jackson, his benefactor. When he was in Washington, the president received him in the White House.¹¹¹ It was the first of several recorded meetings between the author and the president.

¹⁰⁷ Perry organized a dinner in New York City in 1824 for his fellow officers and Cooper.

¹⁰⁸ Washington Irving to Peter Irving, 30 December 1812, *Complete Works of Washington Irving*, Letters II, 1823-1838. pp. 350-351.

¹⁰⁹ Washington Irving to Alexander Hill Everett, 22 July 1829. Wayne R. Kime, editor, *The Complete Works of Washington Irving, 1803-1859* (Boston: Twayne, 1981), p. 449.

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Ibid, Washington Irving to Peter Irving, 3 December 1830, p. 565.

James Kirke Paulding and Congressman Gouverneur Kemble later recommended Irving for the position of Secretary of the Navy, but Irving refused. 'I shrink from the harsh cares and turmoils [sic] of public and political life,' he wrote, 'and feel that I am too restive to endure the bitter hostility, and the slanders and misrepresentations of the press, which beset high station in this country.'¹¹²

Other members of the Knickerbockers were less involved but nevertheless had ties to the Navy and to maritime industry. William Cullen Bryant, for example, a poet and editor-in-chief of the *New York Evening Post* (1828-1878), was a close friend of Richard Henry Dana, author of *Two Years Before the Mast*. Others had similar ties to Dana, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Paulding was already an established figure in the Navy as well as for his literary work. The son of a ship captain, he served as secretary for the Navy's Board of Navy Commissioners (1815-1823) and as a Navy agent in New York City (1824-1838). In the latter capacity, he identified shortcomings in the libraries of Navy ships. Most of the books he recommended were published within the previous three years; they covered naval gunnery, naval architecture, atlases and other practical books. Included in his recommendations was Irving's *Life and Voyages of Columbus* because he knew of no work more worthy of being placed in the hands of navy officers, 'or one more calculated to inspire them with noble ambition'.¹¹³

Throughout his tenure in New York, Paulding wrote in private and public of his views on the concepts of self-government, monopolies, and the works of other authors like the first volume of United States history by George Bancroft who, like Paulding, later served as Secretary of the Navy. Heavy on the minds of these literary figures was the threat of war with either France or Britain. 'Everybody here is talking of war,' he wrote to Martin van Buren, 'and my old

¹¹² Washington Irving to Martin van Buren, 30 April 1838, Library of Congress. See also S.T. Williams, *The Life of Washington Irving*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935,) p. 67.

¹¹³ James Kirke Paulding to Samuel Southard, 5 May 1828, *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding*, ed Ralph M. Aderman, (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), p. 95-97. Some of the recommended works were: : [Nathaniel] Bowditch's *Naval Gunnery*, [Sir Howard] Douglas on *Marine Artillery*, [James] Marshall on the *Equipment of Guns* [A Description of Commander Marshall's *New Mode of Mounting and Working Ship's Guns*], [John] Charnock's *Naval Architecture*, [George] Vancouver's *Voyage* [A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean], *Analectic Magazine*, [Francois Michaux] *North American Sylva*, *On the Preservation of Timber*.'

friend Fennimore [sic] Cooper is in a most belligerent attitude every day in Wall Street'.¹¹⁴ Paulding recognized in France's case that it was not seizing ships and impressing seamen as with the British two decades before.

In 1838, President Martin van Buren named Paulding Secretary of the Navy. Irving often wrote him for favours – recommending the son of a New York politician for the position of artist for the Exploring Expedition, suggesting officers for promotion, and requesting a commission for his brother. Paulding's frustrations with the administrative and political components of the position could not have been clearer when he wrote to Irving, 'The members of congress too, have got a habit of eternally interfering with appointments and destinations.'¹¹⁵ Yet Paulding was not averse to supporting his fellow Knickerbockers. As Secretary of the Navy, 'as a brother Scribe,' he directed James Fenimore Cooper's naval fiction and history books 'to be added to the Libraries of the Public Ships, for I know not where our young officers can find better practical illustrations of Seamanship than they contain'.¹¹⁶

Although Paulding became a navy secretary, no Knickerbocker had as much knowledge or impact on the Navy as James Fenimore Cooper. A midshipman before the War of 1812, Cooper formed life-long relationships with the naval officers with whom he had served such as William Shubrick, Isaac Chauncey and Richard Dale. In the pages of the *Naval Magazine*, Cooper expressed his thoughts on ranks, manning and ships. He favoured increasing taxes to increase the size of the Navy by fifty percent. His personal correspondence with Shubrick specifically about the ship-of-the-line *Pennsylvania* under construction in 1836-37 demonstrates an intimate knowledge of its lines and potential uses.

While he continued to write fiction, including maritime-themed works, Cooper set out to write the first major history of the Navy. Long-time chief clerk to the Department of the Navy, Charles W. Goldsborough, wrote the

¹¹⁴ James Kirke Paulding to Martin van Buren, 6 December 1834, *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding*, ed Ralph M. Aderman, (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), p.153-5.

¹¹⁵ James Kirke Paulding to Washington Irving, 30 July 1838, *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding*, ed Ralph M. Aderman, (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), p. 220-22.

¹¹⁶ James Kirke Paulding to James Fenimore Cooper, 20 May 1839, *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding*, ed Ralph M. Aderman, (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), p.256-57.

United States Naval Chronicle (1824), a brief history through 1801.¹¹⁷

Cooper's two-volume work, by contrast, was the first American naval history book to have a unifying theme – the high character of the American naval officer.¹¹⁸ The book received mixed reviews, primarily because of his treatment of Oliver Hazard Perry and Jesse Duncan Elliott during the Battle of Lake Erie. The *Army and Navy Chronicle* wrote that it was a much-needed history and had never surpassed Cooper's 'power of nautical description'.¹¹⁹ A British review criticized him for 'detracting from the fame of the British Navy,' a task, it argued, that was clearly beyond his powers based only on loose generalities.¹²⁰ Whether or not he was correct in his assessments or writings, Cooper's body of work – both fiction and non-fiction - was a major contribution to the public's awareness of the Navy at a period of major change.

Nor was literature the only medium that enabled the public to learn about the sea services. The 1830s was a period of boom for American theatre, with the first 'stars' whose names were recognized appearing on stage (including the father of John Wilkes Booth). America also recognized its naval heritage through sculptures. The Tripoli Monument, dedicated to the dead naval personnel during the Barbary War, was erected at the Navy Yard and moved to the Capitol in 1831 and then moved to the new naval school in Annapolis a decade later. The intent of the Tripoli Monument was to memorialize the sacrifice of the Barbary War sailors and inspire the public; the mission then changed to that of inspiring the students of a new school.¹²¹

Education: Creating Noblemen in the Defence of the Republic

By 1840, more than two million American youth had enrolled in schools, including in the growing number of colleges. Education was part of the wave

¹¹⁷ By virtue of Goldsborough's position, he was able to secure a commission for his son Louis M. Goldsborough who became the youngest midshipman at the age of seven but only reported for duty when he was eleven.

¹¹⁸ Robert D. Madison, 'Cooper's Place in American Naval Writing', Presented at the 4th Cooper Seminar *James Fenimore Cooper: His Country and His Art*, State University of New York College at Oneonta, July 1982.

¹¹⁹ Pennsylvanian, 'Book Review', *The Army and Navy Chronicle*, 16 May 1839, p. 317.

¹²⁰ Anonymous, No article title, *United Service Gazette*, June (1839), p. 37.

¹²¹ Tripoli Monument Accession Folder, U.S. Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, MD.

of democratization with the election of populist Andrew Jackson in 1828. It also reflected the first wave of immigration by injecting previously unschooled youth, the second revival period for American religion, and the introduction of new technologies that spurred the Industrial Revolution. These forces led to the shift in the country's approach in how to develop its youth. The same debates in the civilian sector applied to how the Navy modified its own education of officers.

Education in the early Republic varied because of federalism, geography, and population. The nature of the federalist government separated powers between national, state and local governments; the Constitution did not include education. Therefore, it fell to state and local governments. Diversity within each state also challenged how policymakers treated education. In New York, for example, only a quarter of the state's youth were enrolled in schools. Some states required towns to build elementary schools based on population. The United States only had 5.3 million residents (including 900,000 slaves) in 1801, but its population would quadruple by 1850. Britain, by comparison, had a population of nine million in 1801 that would double by 1850. In 1800, only six U.S. cities had a population of ten thousand or more; by 1830, twenty-three cities had ten thousand or more. Urbanized areas, especially in the northeast, had the population and tax base to support school systems; most midshipmen were from urban environments and consequently already had some exposure to school by the time they were commissioned.

The lack of national or state standards did not prevent inconsistency. One historian notes that 'after 1830 a new generation of educational reformers appeared, and the tide began to turn.'¹²² Massachusetts reformer Horace Mann, brother-in-law of literary figure Nathaniel Hawthorne, became the father of the common school movement and founded *The Common School Journal* in 1838.¹²³ Mann and other reformers believed education provided the appropriate discipline in creating responsible citizens for the Republic.

¹²² Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), p. 63.

¹²³ See Mark Groen, 'The Whig Party and the Rise of Common Schools, 1837-1854,' *American Educational History Journal*, Spring/Summer 2008, Vol. 35 Issue ½, pp 251-260. Mann's own seminal speech at Brown University, 'The Progressive Character of the Human Race' was, unfortunately, never preserved.

The Prussian model influenced American education and its reformers more than British education despite the latter's Anglican school establishment. The Prussian system emphasized discipline and, more importantly, certified and trained teachers. Reports on Prussian education began to reach the reformers including Mann and his fellow Massachusetts educator, George Bancroft before he served as the Secretary of the Navy who founded the United States Naval Academy. Like its Prussian model, American education found itself also driven by nationalism. Common school books began to appear in the 1830s. Noah Webster, for example, designed textbooks 'to promote a consistent American language and a common knowledge of geography across regional boundaries'.¹²⁴

A map of the United States, often copied, dominates another common school book, *Rudiments of National Knowledge, Presented to the Youth of the United States, and to Enquiring Foreigners*.¹²⁵ Superimposed on the map is an eagle in full flight, its head dominating New England, its wings effortlessly spreading across the mid-west and beyond the established borders, and its talons firmly planted in the region of Florida, still controlled by Spain and populated by native American tribes. The eagle's eyes fix on the Atlantic and beyond. This image was no accident. It was an indication that the publishers wanted American youth to recognize that the country would continue to move west, that conflict in Florida was likely, and that it would defend its territory from European powers, though it conveniently omitted the global presence of the Royal Navy. American naval education may have adopted the nationalization, discipline, and educator training, as well as one aspect of democratization, but it was more philosophically aligned with the Royal Navy.

In contrast, British naval education rested on the needs of empire and the Platonic belief that only a select few – primarily from the aristocratic class – would lead their ships and protect their civilization. By 1700 there were three methods of becoming a commissioned officer – as an apprentice to a senior

¹²⁴ Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), p. 99.

¹²⁵ Joseph and James Churchman, *Rudiments of National Knowledge, Presented to the Youth of the United States, and to Enquiring Foreigners by a Citizen of Pennsylvania*, E.L. Cary & A. Hart: Philadelphia, 1833

officer with each officer allotted a certain number; as a nominee of the Admiralty; and third as a rating.¹²⁶ Like the early U.S. Navy, instructors at sea were mostly clergymen. Eventually the British instituted schoolmasters, with ninety-eight appointed between 1806 and 1824 but only twenty serving regularly in the fleet.¹²⁷ By the 1830s, the Royal Navy had abolished schoolmasters.

European powers established naval schools as the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries developed (France, 1682; Denmark, 1701; Russia, 1715.) The French established the *Ecole Navale* in 1830 on the ship *Orion*, the first of the formal naval academies. Britain had established the Portsmouth Naval Academy in 1733, but few entered it because it threatened the patronage system of the senior ranks. Arguably, the patronage system in the Royal Navy largely worked; no senior officer wanted to gain a reputation for advancing less capable officers. The Academy closed in 1806. Two years later the British founded the Royal Naval College while a Royal Naval Academy opened from 1833 to 1837. The British would not create a formal naval training school until 1850 on board HMS *Britannia*. The admiralty's sentiment was no different than that of its American peers. There was a dependency on tradition and resistance to cultural and, therefore, naval educational change.¹²⁸ King William IV, the 'Sailor King,' articulated this resistance in his comment that: 'there was no place superior to the quarterdeck of a British man of war for the education of a gentleman'. This was eerily similar to Commodore Stewart's quote about American naval education, that the best school for the instruction of youth in the [naval] profession is the deck of a ship.

However, the Age of Enlightenment introduced new disciplines and applications of scientific theory, particularly with the advent of steam warships and new ordnance. The United States Navy needed a new generation whose curiosity could harness new technologies. More importantly, the Navy needed

¹²⁶ H.W. Dickinson, *Educating the Royal Navy: Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Education for Officers*, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 10.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹²⁸ A review of this topic can be found in David McLean, *Education and Empire: Naval Tradition and England's Elite Schooling*, (London: British American Press, 1999).

to properly educate them to employ these technologies. Creation of West Point, for example, beginning at the turn of the century, aimed to meet the needs of a nation desperate to defend itself from foreign incursion; part of that need was to train engineers on warfare such as the use of artillery or the construction of fortifications.¹²⁹ The unique nature of the sea required that midshipmen learn their trade on the oceans during the Age of Sail, but as warfare and platforms evolved, the Navy and the nation required a more formal school.

Books became the junior officer's primary opportunity to learn about theory and history on ships. What they read provides a glimpse into their awareness of naval history, science and nature, and politics around the world. By 1839, the Navy was furnishing a variety of books to ships' libraries – histories of Greece, Rome and England; Vattel's *Law of Nations* and Jacobson's *Sea Laws*; treaties with foreign powers; descriptions of the voyages of Columbus, Drake, Magellen, Cavendish, and the USS *Potomac*; and others. Midshipman Thomas Dornin wrote about some of the books available on the *Falmouth*:

I have been lately engaged in perusing the lives of Collingwood and Nelson; what a different feeling you experience from reading these two works. The spirit nobly displays unshaken valour, keen diplomatical[sic] knowledge and a mild Christian like benevolence and a wonderfully just estimate of human character. It should be perused by every Naval Officer and would be no contemptible addition to the library of any statesman. But I felt a deep and sensible pain on reading Southey's life of Nelson, which cannot be deemed otherwise than impartial and just.¹³⁰

At this time, biographies of American naval officers were rare; hence the reliance on books about British officers. James Kirke Paulding made books for adoption fleet-wide in 1838. Four years later, a formal printed list of books for ships appeared in Navy regulations. Midshipmen, however, still needed education.

¹²⁹ Stephen Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country. A History of West Point*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), p. 22.

¹³⁰ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin, U.S. Navy, (1826-1855)' [diary], National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm Publication M981, Roll #1, 4 August 1831.

Shipboard schools were a natural but inconsistent means of educating midshipmen. In 1813, schoolmasters served on ships with at least twelve midshipmen. Until 1815 this meant only frigates, since the Navy's first ships-of-the-line were not completed until after the war. On smaller ships, such as brigs, sloops, and schooners, the schoolmaster role was collateral duty for chaplains. By the 1820s, the Navy required basic qualifications for schoolmasters, but individual captains, not the Navy, selected the clergy that served on their ships. Consequently, their ability to teach scientific subjects remained limited or at best inconsistent from ship to ship. In the 1830, the Navy made an attempt to resolve this discrepancy.

The Navy recognized that during a peacetime environment, shore-based schools could educate midshipmen more efficiently before they deployed on their ships. The Navy hired qualified instructors and based them at the three major navy yards in Boston, New York, and Norfolk. Midshipman Charles Steedman reported to the naval school at the New York Navy Yard in 1828 under the command of Commodore Isaac Chauncey and Captain Francis Gregory. The school included thirty to forty midshipmen where Edward C. Ward served as Professor of Mathematics and Professor Moulle taught Spanish and French. By Steedman's calculation, before the establishment of the Naval Academy, nearly half the midshipmen came from appointments by politicians from Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.¹³¹

In some cases, the Navy and the private sector attempted innovative and collaborative measures. For example, in 1830 the Columbia College's (later University) new president William Duer¹³² offered to Commodore Isaac Chauncey schooling for the local young officers.¹³³ Duer had been a midshipman at the turn of the century but had found himself nearly court-martialled when he threatened the life of another officer. Fortunately for Duer,

¹³¹ Charles Steedman, *Memoir and Correspondence of Charles Steedman*, Rear Admiral, United States Navy, with His Autobiography and Private Journals, 1811-1890. Ed. Amos Lawrence Mason, (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1912), p. 121.

¹³² Duer served as President of Columbia from 1829 to 1842.

¹³³ William Duer to Isaac Chauncey, 3 February 1830, letter found in House Committee on Naval Affairs, HR21A-D17.5, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration.

his father was prominent in New York and appealed directly to President John Adams, who pardoned Duer before the court-martial. On 16 January 1830, Duer established a 'scientific and literary course' open to both matriculated and non-matriculated students. The course was like those already offered by Columbia with the exception of replacing Greek and Latin languages with modern languages.

Chauncey was cautiously intrigued by the offer and wrote to Secretary of the Navy Branch: 'This proposal is a liberal one, not more expensive than the navy yard schools [...] I certainly should prefer a Naval School, if Congress would authorize one.' Although, for unknown reasons, he found it impracticable at that time, he was amenable to the possibility. Until that could happen, Duer also recommended attaching a naval officer to the college for 'superintending the young officers and enforcing discipline'. Within a month, Chauncey identified the challenges and approved a plan for the education of naval officers.¹³⁴ It is unknown if this collaboration between the Navy and Columbia resulted in any Navy students or graduates, although there is some evidence of at least one participant.¹³⁵

Few institutions – with the exception of lyceums – were better manifestations of the Age of Enlightenment than schools, representing as they did the progress of human knowledge and mind. The lyceum movement in the United States offered adults an opportunity to learn through public lectures as noted figures travelled the country from lyceum to lyceum. The first lyceum was established in 1826 in Massachusetts.¹³⁶ The Brooklyn Navy Yard lyceum would serve as a lecture hall, museum, library, and post office for naval officers. In the absence of a formal, national naval school, one junior officer

¹³⁴ Isaac Chauncey to William Duer, 3 March 1830, 3 February 1830, letter found in House Committee on Naval Affairs, HR21A-D17.5, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration.

¹³⁵ This information is based on email communications of 1 June 2011 between the author and the Columbia University archivist. By her admission, Columbia has minimal correspondence from the early 19th century. On 3 September 1833, Edward Livingston aboard the *Delaware* wrote to Duer thanking him for his diploma, although Livingston is not listed among Columbia alumni, nor is he in the 1830-33 matriculation book. Neither is he the recipient of an honorary degree.

¹³⁶ Angela G. Ray, *The Lyceum and Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century United States*. (E. Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005.)

asked in 1834, 'Are we always to remain stationary, while the arts, sciences, and a general knowledge are in a course of rapid progression and diffusion?'¹³⁷ The Navy traversed the globe requiring, by its nature, cooperation with foreign entities for supplies. Its officers interacted with other navies, government officials, and, just as importantly, individuals with commercial interests. Thus, the Navy needed educated gentlemen to carry out the affairs of state and industry. Common schools and the naval schools were insufficient to meet that need, particularly in the areas of developing moral character. The Naval Academy, while proposed for nearly fifty years, could not have come into existence without a fundamental change in platforms and technologies and junior officers who recognized and advocated for this change.

As early as the American Revolution, John Paul Jones had recommended the foundation of a naval academy – or rather a series of academies at various bases. In 1806, Captain Thomas Truxtun 'lamented the lack of naval education [...] especially when it came to the more theoretical aspects of the profession'.¹³⁸ Truxtun also bemoaned the lack of naval pride at the time, even in the wake of the First Barbary War, though this national attitude changed with the War of 1812. In 1815, the Board of Navy Commissioners report also supported the creation of a naval academy. Secretary of the Navy Southard suggested that a naval academy would 'improve discipline and reduce the number of courts-martial'.¹³⁹ His assertion proved unfounded, though, as courts-martial did not decrease after the establishment of the naval academy in the antebellum period.

Supporters and opponents both invoked naval history to support their case for a naval academy. One congressman argued that it would 'give to all the young men in our Navy the means of becoming Decatur and Perrys'.¹⁴⁰ What the congressman failed to recognize was that neither Decatur nor Perry

¹³⁷ Preble, 'The Navy', *Military and Naval Magazine*, November 1834, p. 163

¹³⁸ William P. Leeman, *The Long Road to Annapolis: The Founding of the Naval Academy and the Emerging American Republic*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), p. 48. Cited in Eugene S. Ferguson, *Truxtun of the Constellation: The Life of Commodore Thomas Truxtun, US Navy, 1755-1822*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956,) p. 128.

¹³⁹ Leeman, p. 84

¹⁴⁰ Congressman Robert Hayne, US Congress Register of Debates, cited in Leeman, p. 90

were products of a naval school, a case made by one anonymous essayist who asked 'Could a Rodney, Nelson, or a Collingwood, have been made in such a school? If this system is continued shall we not in vain look for future Decatur, Lawrences, Perrys, and MacDonoughs?'¹⁴¹

The Crucible of Enlightenment: The Naval Lyceum

The nature of a navy is that the entire fleet is rarely, if ever, at shore simultaneously. Some ships are deployed, while some are in their home nation undergoing maintenance and repairs. Even ships that are ashore are scattered across different ports, assuming a nation has more than one port. During the 1830s, for example, the navy had seven homeports.¹⁴² At any given time, one-third to one-half of its ships was deployed around the globe. Thus, in the Republic of Ideas, correspondence and publications in various periodicals had to be important components in disseminating original and evolving concepts. These provided a valuable link among the new generation of naval officers at home and in foreign lands, but they lacked a critical element to unite them for a common cause – a home. In this case, the home became a structure and accompanying organization that enabled open-minded senior officers to encourage ideas of the junior officers. The Naval Lyceum provided that home, a crucible for naval reformers that provided legitimacy through a permanent, professional organization that could advance new concepts.

The Naval Lyceum was not the first attempt at a professional military organization. As the nation concluded the First Barbary War, returning officers established the United States Military Philosophical Society. Its purpose was to collect and preserve the military science from veterans of the American Revolution and share scientific knowledge about warfare. During its existence

¹⁴¹ A.B., 'The Navy', *The Military and Naval Magazine*, April 1835, p. 83.

¹⁴² Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk were the four primary homeports. To a lesser degree Portsmouth New Hampshire, Baltimore, and Washington DC serviced at least one ship for one or more years. Pensacola was established later in the decade.

from 1806 to 1813, the society's members included the sitting President and Secretary of War, elected officials, and Army and Navy officers.¹⁴³

Another organization emerged as part of a civilian movement. The lyceum movement of the early nineteenth century sought to inform and educate adults through lectures and other public events. Massachusetts established the first lyceum in 1826. Other lyceums quickly followed in New England and then the Mid-Atlantic States and eventually some southern metropolitan areas.

In December 1833, officers stationed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard made a public announcement about the founding of the association, the purpose of which was to:

Elevate and adorn the character of our Navy, by placing within the grasp of its officers the means of acquiring professional and general information [...] to stimulate the members of the profession, by a creating a common interest in the result, to new energy in the steady and zealous pursuit of knowledge, as the grand source of moral power, and to bind yet more closely the ties which unite them, but erecting a National Society.¹⁴⁴

The officers advised the Board of Naval Commissioners on the establishment of the organization in which they proposed a cabinet of natural and artificial curiosities and specimens, as well as the creation of a library, to be built with funds from membership fees. They sought to stimulate the zeal, talents and enterprise of officers to collect and furnish specimens collected from abroad.¹⁴⁵ Soon officers and other members began donating works. Josiah Tattnall, later a flag officer in the Confederate Navy, provided a copy of a *History of Naval Architecture*; James Fenimore Cooper donated some of his own work. By 1835, the library consisted of eleven hundred thirty-four volumes, one hundred forty-one European periodicals, one hundred forty-eight American periodicals, and fourteen books of charts and maps.

¹⁴³ 'United States Military Philosophical Society', *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser*, 4 August 1806, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Uncredited, 'U.S. Naval Lyceum', *The Naval Magazine*, January 1836, p. 5.

¹⁴⁵ Letter from M.C. Perry, C.O. Handy, and J. Haslett to Board of Naval Commissioners, 10 December 1833. Letterbook of the U.S. Naval Lyceum, 1834-1871, Box 37. Collection in the U.S. Naval Academy Museum.

The Lyceum published its own period, the *Naval Magazine* for two years, but other periodicals echoed this curiosity about the world. The *Military and Naval Magazine* issued a call to its readership: 'we must look for collections of antiques – of nautical surveys – for descriptions of foreign people and countries; their manners, commerce, and institutions; their climate, soil and productions'.¹⁴⁶ One Mediterranean-based officer in 1836 noted as he passed Ithaca that it was 'the birthplace of Telemachus of which Ulysses was King,' and cited Lord Byron's works as his squadron formed north of the Peloponnese before visiting the Acropolis. Byron had, in fact, visited the USS *Constitution* when it was in the Mediterranean.¹⁴⁷ Artifacts from around the globe soon filled the Naval Lyceum. These included antiquities from Egypt and Greece, wood sculptures and weapons from the South America and the Pacific Islands, and items from East Asia. As a result, the Lyceum became one of the first repositories in the United States a decade before the Smithsonian Institution.

This inquisitiveness was an indication that the Navy and the nation were not insular. The Navy's officers were outward looking and were forming an understanding of foreign cultures, histories, and geography. This was of use for increasing commerce. It was also an indication that the Navy must evolve and take an increasing role in world affairs. The Naval Lyceum was the foundation organization for the officers to learn about that world. One historian states that Matthew Perry was the 'driving force behind [the Lyceum's] organization and activities'.¹⁴⁸ While this is largely true, Perry also needed support from the new generation of naval officers eager to challenge conventional thinking and embrace new concepts through an institution of professional learning like the Lyceum. Perry served as the First Vice-President with Commodore Charles Ridgely serving as the organization's first President. The Second Vice-President was Tunis Craven, a naval storekeeper and son-in-law of Captain Thomas Tingey who had been the long-time

¹⁴⁶ Writer, 'To the Officers of the Army and Navy', *The Military and Naval Magazine*, September 1834 to February 1835, p. 177

¹⁴⁷ This event is captured in a painting by William Edward West (1788-1857).

¹⁴⁸ John Schroeder, *Matthew Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), p. 70.

commander of the Washington Navy Yard. Tingey was also a member of the Washington-based Columbian Institute for Promotion of the Arts & Sciences.¹⁴⁹ The Institute was responsible for the creation of the U.S. Botanical Gardens on Capitol Hill, which remains to this day. It is possible that Perry and the other officers drew from the mission of the Institute for the Lyceum. Lieutenant William C. Hudson served as the Lyceum's Corresponding Secretary. In 1838, he received command of *Peacock* and placed second in overall command of the South Seas Exploring Expedition. In 1857, he was the first commanding officer to attempt to lay a transatlantic telegraph cable in cooperation with HMS *Agamemnon*, a feat they accomplished the following year.

The meetings began in Perry's office at noon every Monday. The first year, the Lyceum had eighty-eight New York resident members, eighty-three non-resident members, and fifty-two corresponding members including four British Captains, Prince Charles Bonaparte, and ship designer Samuel Humphreys, son of Joshua Humphreys who designed the first six frigates of the Navy. Honorary members included President Jackson, Vice President Martin van Buren, former Presidents Madison and Quincy Adams, Joseph Bonaparte, and literary figures such as Cooper and Irving. Conspicuous by their absence were some of the senior-most captains in the Navy, including Commodores James Barron and Charles Stewart.

Its membership reflected the interest of the new generation of naval officers. Of the twenty-eight officers of the *Franklin* in 1817 still on active duty in the 1830s, all were members of the Lyceum. Of the two hundred sixty-seven members during its initial six years, the near majority were junior officers – one hundred seventeen were lieutenants and another forty-eight were passed midshipmen. Less than half of the serving captains were members (see Figure 2.2.) Members also included twenty-nine Navy surgeons. Non-members were welcomed as well. Ships' wardrooms were invited to meet at the Lyceum when they pulled into New York.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Andrew Jackson was a member of the Columbian Institute.

¹⁵⁰ Henry Willett to Jesse D. Elliott, 13 March 1835, Naval Lyceum Records, U.S. Naval Academy Museum. The Lyceum offered the use of rooms, the library and papers during the visit of the USS *Constitution* and the USS *Peacock*.

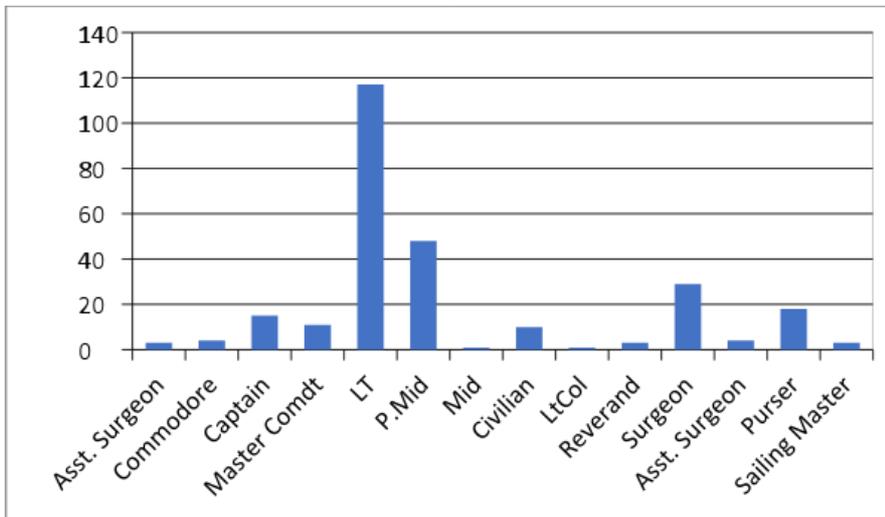


Figure 2.2 Members of the Naval Lyceum 1833-1839, by Rank

Equally important were the numerous guests who visited the museum. The Lyceum's guestbook reveals a telling story about those whom the Lyceum's events attracted or whom it sought guidance from or, in some cases, whom to influence. One of the first guests was Richard Russell Waldron who a few years later served as purser and navy agent with the Exploring Expedition. The Lyceum attracted academics like Spanish professor Miguel Cabrera, mathematics professor George W. Benedict of the University of Vermont who later helped build a telegraph company, and Professor Benjamin Silliman, the first chemistry professor at Yale University. Guests included politicians like Congressman Robert Livingston and Senator Nathaniel Tallmadge as well as British, German, Mexican, and French military officers. Naval constructor John Lenthall frequented the Lyceum and was largely responsible for the ship designs used through the Civil War.¹⁵¹

The Naval Lyceum's existence helped to bond the officers and interested civilians during the 1830s with regard to naval issues. First, this afforded the first opportunity for naval officers to gather and communicate ideas with one another – a study of correspondence has revealed several references to the Naval Lyceum as a conduit for correspondence. Second, it provided a venue to meet others such as foreign military dignitaries, domestic

¹⁵¹ Lists compiled from Record Book: List of Visitors, U.S. Navy Lyceum, 1834-1843, Box 24, Naval Lyceum Records, U.S. Naval Academy Museum.

navy, army, and revenue cutter officers, legislators, and academicians. Third, its existence led to other publications. Some of the junior officers and their sons eventually founded the United States Naval Institute in 1873 and the resulting concepts of American sea power advocated by Alfred Thayer Mahan and William B. Luce, both of whom had been members of the Lyceum and Naval Institute.

Conclusion

The 1830s was the crucible of American naval enlightenment. The same democratic wave that swept Jackson into power empowered a new generation of naval officers to challenge conventional naval authority. They were awoken by a new spirit and united by their ability to communicate with one another. In twenty-first century parlance, they crowd-sourced their ideas such as investigating how new technologies could be used to advance the fleet (which will be covered in Chapter 4), how they might achieve a common naval education, and the United States Navy's expanding role for the nation.

While the officers were able to disseminate their ideas among each other and in publications, another factor played a significant and necessary role in advancing their ideas. This was the first decade in which the officers could share those ideas with like-minded public figures. The nation's early literary figures were instrumental in propagating their concepts. Luminaries such as James Fenimore Cooper and others sought to appeal to and convince the nation that it had a maritime destiny. Although they wrote non-fiction, their sea-based fiction were more popular and helped ingrain a sense of America's role on the high seas. These literary figures were able to move the issues and the romance of the sea and the Navy beyond the confines and echo chamber of the Department of the Navy. They engaged the American public by conveying ideas through naval-oriented fiction such as Joseph C. Hart's 1834 *Miriam Coffin*, in which he wrote that the country was 'informed by a strident maritime nationalism. Supremacy on the ocean is America's great national destiny'.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Joseph C. Hart, *Miriam Coffin – or, The Whale Fisherman*, (New York: Harper, 1835), p. 196.

Thus, the officers and literary figures set into motion a navy that could eventually compete regionally and on the world stage, especially by the end of the century. Although they had the ideas, the functions had to be implemented by sympathetic policy-makers who had the authority to make changes. During a unique era, no one held more power ability to do so than the president himself and the administration he built to enable these changes.

Chapter 3: Governing the Navy

President Jackson

Andrew Jackson entered the White House in 1829 as one of the most experienced men in the nation – a general, a senator, a judge. He also enjoyed a wave of popularity. Jackson's reputation had been cemented by his famous victory over the British in New Orleans during the War of 1812, but he gained fame in the First Seminole War and as a U.S. Senator. More importantly, the majority of Americans viewed him as having been cheated out of the presidency in 1824. From his own perception and that of his supporters, he was the rightful heir to the presidency denied him by entrenched political forces four years earlier.

Jackson's inaugural address only briefly mentioned the Navy, yet it demonstrated an understanding and respect for the Navy and its proper role for the nation. As with the other departments under his executive branch, the Navy immediately fell under financial scrutiny. He assigned one of his loyalists, Amos Kendall, to investigate its accounts, not to punish the Navy he had inherited from his predecessor but better finance it in future years.

To administer his Navy, he selected three secretaries over the course of his administration, all of whom had served their states as governors and senators. Jackson had been elected to replace the elitist establishment, which sheds light on Jackson's real intent when it came to the ability to govern. Though they each lacked naval experience, their combination of executive experience and legislative work on Capitol Hill voting on Navy budgets made Jackson's choices wise ones.

Jackson's governance of the Navy benefitted from his personal expectations of justice, demands for accountability, and preparation for what he envisioned as future operations. He believed the Navy was a vital arm of American commerce and its growing influence. Yet, his administration of the Navy – and of the whole of his government – was narrowed by his excessive misplaced sense of honour and justice, as well as his belief that his law ought never to be challenged. His volatility sometimes overshadowed the stability of national – and naval – governance.



Figure 3.1 The first political cartoon of Andrew Jackson (Library of Congress).

The debate on the size and form of the Navy had diminished compared to the Constitutional debate in 1787. However, the ideas about the purpose, size and composition of the Navy continued – indeed, it is still an ongoing discussion in national security circles even in the twenty-first century. The navalists – those who proposed a standing navy operating at various global stations – dominated in the post War of 1812 environment. Anti-navalists were in the minority but were not silent during Jackson’s administration. The anti-navalists supported a more state-based structure for a navy that would empower individual states to compete on ship designs and needs. The southern states, advocates of a smaller government and decreased federal budgets, were especially aware of the cost of maintaining a navy, which was the largest portion of the federal budget at that time. This would play out during the debate on whether or not to build the ship-of-the-line USS *Pennsylvania* in 1835.

Despite the brevity of attention paid to the Navy during his inaugural address, Jackson began his presidency with a basic but essential understanding of a need for the Navy. This understanding and vision for the

Navy was evidenced most strongly in four ways. First, Jackson called for a gradual increase in the Navy, a decidedly navalist approach. No anti-navalist would have suggested during peacetime that the Navy remain as large as it was, much less suggest that it grow. What did Jackson foresee that required this gradual increase? Of paramount importance was the protection of America's commerce, whose needs grew with the rapid rise in population. In the 1830s, for example, America had supplanted England as the largest whaling nation. In 1828, the gross tonnage of American merchant ships engaged in whaling was 54,000 gross tons (whalers were generally a few hundred tons). By 1837, that had increased to 129,000 gross tons. It would finally peak in 1857 when the gross tonnage was 195,000.¹⁵³ The total tonnage of U.S. vessels cleared to leave port in 1828 was 897,000 (six times the number of cleared foreign vessels). In 1836, more than 1.3 million tons of U.S. vessels were cleared to leave port (twice the number of foreign vessels).¹⁵⁴

America's economy also grew with new markets such as with China. Although the first U.S. merchant ship left for China in 1785, American commercial activity in the region demanded the establishment of the last permanent squadron by the end of Jackson's administration. In the 1830s, the American merchant fleet was second in size only to that of England.¹⁵⁵ One indicator of the growth of the merchant fleet during this decade was the total gross tons of documented vessels. In 1830, the merchant fleet totalled 1.2 million gross tons; by 1837, that number had risen to 1.8 million gross tons. In reality, the growth was much higher since the 1830s had seen the advent of smaller, more efficient steamships. In 1828, steamships totalled 39,418 tons; by the end of Jackson's second term, that number had grown to 154,765 gross tons. With more ships plying American trade came the standard threats the country had always faced, such as piracy. The potential for conflict with other

¹⁵³ Series K 94-104, 'Documented Merchant Vessels – Composition of the Merchant Marine: 1789 to 1945,' *Historical Statistics of the United States*, Department of Commerce (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), p. 207.

¹⁵⁴ Series Q 506-517. 'Net Tonnage Capacity of Vessels Entered and Cleared: 1789 to 1970,' *Historical Statistics of the United States*, Department of Commerce (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), p. 760.

¹⁵⁵ Malina Johar Schueller, *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, Gender and Literature, 1780-1890*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), p. 27.

powers, particularly the British whom he had fought against twice, required a standing and growing Navy.

Second, Jackson recognized that the Navy should be more than a coastal defensive force. It needed to display the flag in foreign waters, if not as a global power then as a force with a global mission and an imperative to patrol distant waters. Jackson continued the naval expectations of his predecessors Madison, Monroe and Adams, who had supported permanent overseas squadrons in the Caribbean, Pacific, Mediterranean, and elsewhere in the post-War of 1812 environment. A true anti-navalist would have believed that these squadrons might ignite an unnecessary conflict. Jackson's words made it clear that the Navy was on distant stations to stay.

Third, Jackson knew the power of the rising tide of national patriotic fervour within the young republic. His casual mention of the Navy's 'fame in arms' recognized the role the small Navy had played in the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary Wars, and the War of 1812. Though the Navy had lost ships, its single-ship victories against superior powers had been unexpected and gave hope to the nation. On the chance that the country was to engage in naval operations during his presidency, he committed himself to ensuring the fleet was ready for action and so would avoid a reversal of maritime fortune.

Fourth, Jackson proposed 'the introduction of progressive improvements in the discipline and science'.¹⁵⁶ Along with the other factors previously mentioned, this term would underscore yet another unexpected aspect of Andrew Jackson's Navy that was shaped by the previously-mentioned new era of naval enlightenment - a professionalization of personnel, and a liberal acceptance of the era's burst of scientific activity.

If the inauguration ceremony was a measured and dignified approach to his new duties, its celebration reflected the populist fervour that had supported him. Jackson opened the White House and the people responded with unabashed anarchy, destroying furniture and dishes in an uncontrolled mob-rule revelry. Fistfights ensued. Jackson escaped through a second-floor window and stayed in Gadsby's Hotel where he had stayed the night before.

¹⁵⁶ Andrew Jackson, Inaugural Address. 4 March 1829
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/jackson1.asp [accessed 1 March 2016.]

The executive mansion's staff eventually cajoled the hoards outside by setting up tubs of alcohol on the lawn. Jackson had invited the people in, and in doing so he had opened the doors for the empowered masses that sought a new order that fought elites and traditions.

Jackson immediately formed his government and submitted names to the Senate for confirmation. This was his official 'cabinet'; newspapers would later coin the term 'kitchen cabinet' for those official and unofficial advisors closest to him. His Secretary of State was Martin van Buren, a former Crawford supporter in 1824, who had organized the Democrats for Jackson in the 1828 campaign. His appointee for Secretary of War was his protégé, John Eaton, who served with Jackson when both were U.S. senators from Tennessee.

Jackson had a history of protecting women, including his wife. Attorney and marksman Charles Dickinson had made intemperate remarks about Rachel Jackson. This led to a duel in 1806, in which Jackson killed Dickinson. In Jackson's worldview, a wife's honour ought always to be defended. In many ways, it was the same as his position on national security – 'he sees an offence...and he takes action'.¹⁵⁷ So it was with Peggy Eaton, the wife of Jackson's Secretary of War and protégé. The then Peggy O'Neal worked in her father's hotel, the Franklin House, a few blocks from the White House. She was popular and warranted the attention of many sons and nephews of Washington's elites, a fact she fully offered later in life – 'I had the attention of men, young and old, enough to turn a girl's head'.¹⁵⁸ At the age of seventeen, she married navy purser John Timberlake, a man twenty years her senior. The following year, when he was sworn in as a Senator, John Eaton began lodging at Franklin House. Eaton and Timberlake developed a friendship, and when the latter needed help to resolve a financial issue arising from his losses when the British captured the USS *President* in 1815, Eaton sponsored a bill to relieve him. The relief bill failed. Timberlake then served with Matthew Perry on the USS *Shark*.

¹⁵⁷ Robert Remini, Interview with the author, Washington DC: House of Representatives, 24 June 2009.

¹⁵⁸ Jon Meacham, *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House*, (New York: Random House, 2009), p. 67.

In 1824, Purser Timberlake boarded the USS *Constitution* for duty in the Mediterranean and gave Eaton power of attorney for the purchase and transfer of Franklin House.¹⁵⁹ Timberlake died on board on 2 April 1828, but accounts differ on the cause. Some suggested it was pulmonary disease, while others suggested he had committed suicide. In either case, John Eaton took the widowed Peggy O'Neal Timberlake as his bride on 1 January 1829, two months before Jackson was inaugurated. As Eaton was nominated and confirmed as Secretary of War, rumours about the couple were already swirling in Washington. Cabinet members, the wives of Cabinet members, and Washington's social elites shunned Peggy Eaton, whom they believed was an adulteress. Members of Jackson's own family, Andrew and Emily Donelson, ostracized her. As a result, Emily no longer served as First Lady and was replaced by Jackson's daughter-in-law, Sarah Yorke Jackson.

Coincidentally, Jackson's request for an overall accounting of the Navy naturally included an investigation into Timberlake's finances while aboard the USS *Constitution*. That the investigation coincided with the spurning of Peggy Eaton created a perfect storm for Jackson. He referred to opponents of Eaton as an 'unholy wicked & unjust conspiracy' and 'political combinations of Slanderers'.¹⁶⁰ Jackson's rage over the affair seeps into his correspondence throughout 1830 and 1831. Jackson's first step in response to this perceived injustice was to replace the Cabinet. On 18 April 1831, Martin van Buren and John Eaton submitted their resignations. The following day, Jackson resolved to reorganize his Cabinet, 'this being the only course, looking to justice to all'¹⁶¹ and asked Secretary of the Navy Branch to resign. In responding to Branch's resignation, Jackson made it appear that he was not asking for his resignation because of the Eaton Affair. Van Buren offered himself as a sacrificial lamb to help Jackson make the case that Branch's resignation was simply part of a cabinet reshuffling. Jackson was justified in his anger for the Secretary of the

¹⁵⁹ John F. Marszalek, *The Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, and Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House*, (New York: The Free Press, 1997), p. 40.

¹⁶⁰ Andrew Jackson to Mary Ann Eastin, 24 October 1830 *The Papers of Andrew Jackson Volume III, 1830*, ed. by Daniel Feller, (Knoxville: University of Knoxville Press, 2010), p. 579.

¹⁶¹ Andrew Jackson to Andrew Jackson Donelson, 19 April 1831, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson Volume III, 1830*, ed. by Daniel Feller, (Knoxville: University of Knoxville Press, 2010) p. 192.

Navy. Branch had written to a friend, and the letters were published in several newspapers in North Carolina and Washington. The letters suggested that the reasons for the cabinet reorganization were in part based on the discord caused by the Eaton Affair.

Branch resigned effective 12 May 1831. Secretary of State Martin van Buren left 23 May. Secretary of the Treasury Samuel Ingham, Secretary of War Eaton¹⁶², and Attorney General John Berrien all left their positions in the middle of June. Only Postmaster General William Barry remained. Edward Livingston replaced van Buren as Secretary of State. Louis McLane was recalled from his post as Minister to England to serve as Secretary of the Treasury. Lewis Cass, governor of the Michigan Territory since 1813, replaced Eaton. Roger Brook Taney became Attorney General. For Secretary of the Navy, Jackson selected the former New Hampshire governor Levi Woodbury. As Jackson wrote to General John Coffee (who had served under Jackson during the War of 1812), 'all my old friends must be abandoned by me'.¹⁶³ Included in that list of friends was Branch. A few weeks after the resignations became effective, Jackson again wrote to Coffee:

The conduct of Branch has been dishonourable in the extreme, he ran away, or at least left me, in apparent friendship, the very day before the Publication reached here of his letter, shook me by the hand in friendship...I hate a hypocrite.¹⁶⁴

Unlike the first cabinet, none of the replacements, except for Livingston, were sitting senators. This suggests that Jackson wanted a cabinet unaffiliated with the Washington social life, one that might show impartiality to Eaton and his wife should they return. The Timberlake issue and Eaton affair might not suggest an important role for Jackson and his Navy but quite the opposite is true. In addition to the change in the chief administrator of the

¹⁶² Eaton and van Buren resigned largely in protest of the social situation and in support of Jackson.

¹⁶³ John Coffee to Andrew Jackson, 13 May 1831, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson Volume IX, 1831*, ed. by Daniel Feller, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013), p. 244.

¹⁶⁴ Andrew Jackson Donelson to Andrew Jackson, 19 June 1831, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson Volume IX, 1831*, ed. by Daniel Feller, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013), p. 315.

Navy – Branch - the affair significantly changed another aspect of Jackson's role with the Navy.

A month after the election of the new Congress, Jackson delivered the president's constitutionally mandated annual message on the state of the union. Jackson was cognizant of the relative peace with European powers and the benefit that the Atlantic Ocean provided in a natural national defence. 'We have nothing to apprehend from attempts at conquest,' he wrote.¹⁶⁵ Arguably, Jackson understood the reality of 'attempts at conquest' and potential threats to America's sovereignty by European powers. He also understood that the United States had no means of conquering territories overseas. Marines remained bound to the ships on which they served and only intermittently in the country's history had landed ashore. As a member of the American Military & Philosophical Society after the First Barbary War, Jackson was familiar with Eaton's expedition in North Africa that had included a few marines among the far more numerous Arab and Greek mercenary forces intended to overthrow the Bashaw of Tripoli. Aside from a few incursions since the American Revolution, the size of the Corps did not support conquering foreign territory and holding it. The Army was larger but focused on the westward expansion of the nation. In addition, the nation had no transport ships to carry sufficient troops to any distant shore. The only countries with smaller populations that the Army could theoretically conquer were in the Western Hemisphere. Mexico was the obvious choice and less than a decade after Jackson left office, the country would mount one of the largest amphibious operations in history prior to Gallipoli.

The anti-Federalist faction of the early republic led by Thomas Jefferson remained entrenched during Jackson's presidency. Inherent in that political faction was the overly cautious anti-navalism that warned that a large permanent navy might be used for overseas conquest. Jackson's evolution from anti-navalist to navalist was not yet complete. Therefore, any thought of overseas conquest was neither pragmatic nor politically viable. Jackson had no pretensions of landing troops across the ocean and sought only amicable

¹⁶⁵ Message of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress, 7 December 1830, *Register of Debates in Congress, Vol VII*, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1831), Appendix p. xii.

commercial relations. Although Jackson only briefly mentioned the Navy in his address in 1831, little changed regarding peace with European powers. In the case of Britain – the greatest naval power at the time, for example – Jackson wrote of ‘renewing our endeavours to provide against the recurrence of causes of irritation’.¹⁶⁶

Jackson fully understood the need for a navy that was adequate to protect the coast, always afloat rather than in port, and sufficiently resourced to build it up quickly in case of war. He stated that it was not the Army that would protect the country but the Navy, which furnished ‘the power by which all such aggressions may be prevented or repelled’.¹⁶⁷ Jackson had clearly stated his practical vision for the Navy – one he would direct more funds to preserve warships already built, and provide materials for future ships.

Despite the Cabinet crisis in which Jackson demanded the resignations of several officials, his first term was largely successful. The Department of the Navy’s finances were in a better state than in 1829. Ships benefitted from additional maintenance, squadrons conducted diplomatic missions and guarded against threats to American commerce. Jackson won the presidential election of 1832 with fifty-four percent of the popular vote and 219 electoral votes against Henry Clay’s forty-nine. Despite this, Jackson’s party lost control of the Senate as he faced a constitutional crisis in which he would call upon the Navy.

The election of 1832 was in some ways easier for Jackson. It was his third consecutive presidential campaign and the first without the charges of unfairness or personal invectives against his wife. Although he had the power of incumbency, Jackson also faced significant challenges. He had inherited the Tariff Act (passed in May 1828), which protected northern industries and cost southern states by significantly increasing taxes on most southern goods. The South expected Jackson to address what they called the ‘Tariff of Abominations’. Jackson signed the Tariff Act of 1832 on 14 July to reduce the

¹⁶⁶ Message of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress, 6 December 1831, *Register of Debates in Congress, Vol VII*, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1831), Appendix p 2.

¹⁶⁷ Message of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress, 7 December 1830, *Register of Debates in Congress, Vol VII*, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1831), Appendix p. xii.

impact on the South but it was not enough. South Carolina determined both acts were unconstitutional and therefore it would nullify them. Jackson was able to win the presidency but lost the state of South Carolina because of a third party candidate, John Flood of Virginia. The Nullifiers, however, won nine seats in the House of Representatives and two in the Senate. A few weeks later, senator-elect Robert Hayne of South Carolina decided to run for governor. This allowed John Calhoun, who had three months left in office, to resign as vice president on 28 December and gain election to the Senate. In one of his first acts as governor, Hayne raised a state militia to oppose nullification.

Nullification meant secession from the union, a threat Jackson would not tolerate. He equated South Carolina's defiance with treason. Jackson sent troops to reinforce the forts in Charleston harbour. In addition, he ordered two revenue cutters to Charleston to enforce his position. Revenue cutters were not part of the Department of the Navy. Instead, the Revenue Cutter service fell under the authority of the Department of the Treasury. This is an important distinction, since sending Navy ships to quell the proto-rebellion would have elevated the conflict to one of nation-on-nation, thus implicitly recognizing South Carolina's sovereignty.

Jackson determined to end the crisis and openly stated he would hang anyone associated with secession – a fact supported by his earlier career in invading Florida and executing the two alleged British agents. Charleston had experienced war, having been taken by the British in the American Revolution and threatened in the War of 1812. It was during the Revolution that British warships in Charleston harbour held American prisoners when Jackson's mother was nursing them.

During the escalation of strength on both sides, Congress enacted the 'Force Bill' on 2 March 1833, which provided additional power to Jackson to compel South Carolina to comply with the tariffs. The bill passed with a vote of twenty-nine to one in the Senate (only Virginia Senator and later President John Tyler opposed it) and 119 - 85 in the House. As the likelihood of an armed showdown grew, Henry Clay crafted the Compromise Tariff Act, which reduced the rates of the previous tariff bills over the course of the next decade.

One ought not to underestimate Jackson's understanding of the Navy and his restraint in deploying warships – even for the simple visual of power it offered to local citizens. Since South Carolina delegates had effectively revised Thomas Jefferson's first draft of the Declaration of Independence to remove language about slavery, the state, and Charleston specifically, had been the epicentre of anti-federalist sentiment and suspicion of the centralized government.

The act of sending warships would have coalesced anti-federal sentiment likely to the point of open rebellion. This quite possibly could have resulted in the outbreak of the Civil War occurring in 1832 instead of 1861. Positioning troops to reinforce U.S. fortifications was understandable; sending warships would send another message to South Carolina that war was inevitable. Sending the revenue cutters and not Navy ships, therefore, is indicative of Jackson's wisdom in maritime consequences. Jackson's decision-making averted a bloody conflict for the time being.

Jackson began his second term only two days after the Nullification Crisis had ended. In assessing his first four years during his second inaugural address, Jackson noted his foreign policy successes that had elevated the country's position. No doubt he was thinking of the Falklands and Sumatra incidents in which his orders to the Navy resulted in decisive actions (which are discussed in depth in Chapter 5.) He spoke of his justice to all – a recurring theme in his life, whether that justice was legal or not. Having just mitigated the Nullification Crisis, he vowed to preserve the rights of States as well as the integrity of the Union, which he expounded on for several paragraphs. He wrote that the eyes of all nations remained fixed on the Republic. This was less a statement of narcissistic self-righteousness than an acknowledgement of self-awareness, that a young nation in the latter stages of its birthing pangs would be judged by how it responded to crises both foreign and domestic.

Just as Jackson had escalated the Petticoat Affair in which his Cabinet and their wives ostracized the wife of Secretary of War John Eaton leading to several dismissals, he began his second term with a war on the Second Bank of the United States. Although Jackson was strongly opposed to a federally

owned bank, Congress supported it and denied the President an opportunity to let the Bank's charter expire. Although he could not close it, he used his constitutional authority as head of the executive branch to remove all funds used in operating the government and transferred them to state banks. This again led to a cabinet shakeup. On 28 May 1833, Louis McLane, who had been recalled as Minister to Britain to serve as Secretary of the Treasury, resigned from Treasury and became Secretary of State. William Duane succeeded McLane as Secretary of the Treasury, but he refused Jackson's orders to transfer the funds. Duane then resigned on 23 September. In his place, Jackson appointed Roger Brook Taney, a loyalist and later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The appointment was unusual in that it was a recess appointment. A president has, under Constitutional authority, the ability to appoint rather than simply nominate an individual to fill a post while Congress is in recess. That individual may serve up to one year in the position, at which time he or she must be confirmed by the Senate. On 24 June 1834, the Senate refused to confirm Taney over the issue of the bank – the first cabinet level position in American history to fail to be confirmed. On 26 December, Clay led a series of resolutions to censure Jackson for removing funds from the Bank of the United States and for dismissing Duane.

Jackson entered office with goodwill, grand expectations from the citizenry, and strong support as evidenced by the 1828 election as well as the 'stolen election' of 1824. He had a clear sense of governance that was imbued with a sense of justice, honour, and fiscal accountability and responsibility. All those factors played important roles in how he managed his Navy. But Jackson chose his domestic political battles poorly whether it was the Eaton Affair or failing to work with Congress on the Second Bank of the United States. These personal shortcomings filtered down to the Navy in a government that was unable to devote more time to the sea service. However, despite the often-chaotic machinations in the capital or his personal failings, Jackson managed to adapt and evolve the Navy, professionalizing its ranks and preparing its ships in the eventuality of a conflict.

Secretaries of the Navy

One Jackson-era naval historian takes a rather jaundiced view of the president's three Secretaries of the Navy: 'Each was selected for political reasons, and each played an unimaginative and bureaucratic role as head of the department.'¹⁶⁸ This is not entirely true. They were politicians, but so have been most Navy secretaries, in a tradition that carries through into the twenty-first century. All three had executive experience that would be useful as the head of the department. As senators, they would have been familiar with some policy issues and especially budgets and appropriations. In selecting his secretaries, therefore, Jackson was methodical and conscious of their requisite knowledge and organizational stability.

None of Jackson's choices for Navy Secretary had military service at sea. The Navy was so small that comparatively few had Americans had the opportunity to serve in it; even fewer public officials had experience with it. Nevertheless, this should not have prevented Jackson from identifying someone qualified. The first Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin Stoddert, for example, had been in the tobacco trade and understood trade routes, ship logistics, costs of materials, etc. William Jones, the fourth Secretary of the Navy (1813-1814) had apprenticed in a Philadelphia shipyard during the American Revolution and went to sea. However, Jackson seemingly chose political patronage instead of naval qualifications. Nevertheless, each of his three secretaries had served as governors and senators, thus bringing executive and legislative experience with them to the position.

Jackson's first choice for Secretary of the Navy was John McLean, a New Jersey native who, like Jackson, had moved west to Virginia, Kentucky, and then Ohio. A former member of Congress, he served on the Ohio Supreme Court and as Postmaster General under Presidents Monroe and Adams. During the election of 1828, he threw his support behind Jackson and received the offers of both Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of War.

¹⁶⁸ John H. Schroeder, 'Jacksonian Naval Policy 1829-37,' in *New Aspects of Naval History: Selected Papers from the 5th Naval History Symposium*, ed. by the Department of History, U.S. Naval Academy (Baltimore, MD: Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1985), pp. 121-127 (p. 122).

Declining both, he received Jackson's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court just two days after the inauguration and was confirmed on the following day.

John Branch served as the first of Jackson's three successive Secretaries of the Navy. A North Carolinian, he served in that state's legislature and as its Speaker of the House (1815-17) before serving a three-year term as governor. Branch then served in the Senate until assuming his office in the administration on 9 March 1829. Branch was a planter and lawyer with neither naval experience nor merchant experience with the shipping industry. He lived inland and had no known familiarity with the sea. Arguably, Jackson's choice for Secretary of the Navy was uninspired. Branch was a political appointee and someone Jackson could trust. As a North Carolinian, he was from a state that lacked the maritime tradition of other colonies or states. He served as Speaker of the House and governor of that state before becoming a federal judge and then found himself elected to the Senate in 1822. Within days of assuming the office, he and Jackson would be called upon to deploy ships.

Branch found a less than ideal situation at the department when he assumed his duties. Despite his inexperience, he recognized the need for changes. First, his clerks were holdovers from the previous administration. Second, he shared Jackson's intent for fiscal reform. He 'fully believes that great abuses exist in the disbursement of public money under the rules or customs,' recalled Amos Kendal from a meeting on 27 March 1829.¹⁶⁹ Branch called the situation a 'derangements in finances'.¹⁷⁰

Rounding out Jackson's cabinet were former Congressman Samuel Delucenna Ingham as secretary of the treasury, Senator John McPherson Berrien as attorney general, and Kentucky politician William Taylor Barry as postmaster general. Ingham, from Pennsylvania, served in the state House of Representatives and a five-term congressman. Berrien had been a judge and militia veteran of the War of 1812 before becoming elected as a Jacksonian to the Senate in 1825. A lawyer, Barry was speaker of the House of

¹⁶⁹ Amos Kendal to his wife, 27 March 1829, *Autobiography of Amos Kendall*, ed. by William Stickney, (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1872), [n.p.].

¹⁷⁰ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861), p. 351.

Representatives in Kentucky and served in the militia during the War of 1812, later elected as a congressman and senator.

Despite being elected as an anti-elitist populist representing a democratic wave, Jackson relied only on long-time politicians for the top administration positions. More specifically, most were senators. It is possible that these were the individuals whom he knew and trusted since he served in that chamber. It is also possible that since their home-state legislators elected all senators, Jackson attempted to shore up political support. None were businessmen who might have dealt with merchant ships conducting regional or global commerce. Surrounding himself with politicians who had no practical naval experience ensured that Jackson alone would determine naval policy for the next eight years.

Jackson's second Secretary of the Navy, Levi Woodbury, was sworn in 23 May 1831. The New Hampshire native had served as the state's speaker of the House, governor, and then in the U.S. Senate until nominated by Jackson to serve as Secretary of the Navy until 30 June 1834, when he became Secretary of the Treasury. Jackson's third Secretary of the Navy was Mahlon Dickerson of New Jersey where, like his two predecessors, he had served as both Governor and U.S. Senator. Jackson - the anti-establishment candidate - ultimately selected mostly insiders for this position, none of whom had experience with the Navy. With only a staff of ten civilians including the secretary and clerks, officers of naval stations largely responsible for daily management of the Navy. Navy Secretary Woodbury, however, recognized the structural role of others who were employed by the Navy but held no rank. This class included naval agents, storekeepers, builders, schoolmasters, engineers, live oak superintendents, and others. The Navy hired all these categories on an ad hoc basis. Woodbury suggested that they instead be subject to congressional regulation and compensation. What he referred to as the 'civil list' would eventually become the formal civil service program in the federal government, including the Navy.

The Jackson secretaries were knowledgeable, had some vision, and were amenable to the suggestions of their officers. Each made important progress unique to their tenure. Branch, for example, provided with Amos

Kendall the fiscal accountability to restore the department's name and to prepare it for the coming decade. Woodbury used the budget to advance needed fleet repairs. His effort to create a civil service recognized challenges and anticipated future needs. In addition, he foresaw the creation of a Navy comptroller, taken from the duties of the Department of Treasury's Fourth Auditor. From a geostrategic perspective, he recommended the construction of two supply ships for Pacific Station, thus reducing freight and storage costs and recognizing the permanency of the squadron. Moreover, the secretaries professionalized the officer corps.

Dickerson then inherited a fleet that was ready for battle but he also saw the advantage of steam warships. In his first annual report to Congress, six months after confirmation, he wrote, 'It can hardly be doubted that the power of steam is soon to produce as great a revolution in the defence of rivers, bays, coasts, and harbours, as it has already done in the commerce, intercourse, and business.'¹⁷¹ He recognized that the ability to have steam warships as a means of defence would diminish costly coastal fortifications. If Dickerson was wrong, it was in his prediction that, because steam warships were too cumbersome to transport overseas for offensive operations, they would 'diminish the frequency' of war. The fact that steamships capable of transoceanic voyage were not possible at that time discounted that such a capability might be possible in the future. In his 1835 report, he also recognized geostrategic threats such as those posed by Mexico and several South American nations and recommended increasing the Navy by two frigates, three sloops-of-war, and four steam vessels. By 1836, he thought the Navy could have twenty-five ships at sea. He later recognized the need for a foundry to cast iron cannons as well as a national observatory – fundamental for navigation. Certainly, each secretary had limitations due to the uncertainty of the sometimes-volatile president or their lack of naval experience, but they did each contribute to the Navy's evolution during the Jackson administration.

¹⁷¹ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, *American State Papers, Volume IV: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861), p. 590.

The Board of Navy Commissioners

The Department of the Navy in the early republic had very few full-time employees. The Secretary of the Navy remained responsible for personnel, operations and some administration. To assist him, a Board of Navy Commissioners had been established at the end of the War of 1812. The board comprised three senior officers nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate, much like cabinet-level positions. Their duties included 'procurement of naval stores and materials; construction, armament, equipment, repair and preservation of naval vessels; establishment of regulations; preparation of estimates of expenditures; and supervision of navy yards, naval stations, and navy agents'.¹⁷² A president governed the board. For most of the board's existence (it was disestablished in 1842), the president was Commodore John Rodgers who presided from 1815-24 and again from 1827-37. A veteran of the Quasi-War with France, the Barbary Wars, and the War of 1812, Rodgers likely had become personally acquainted with Jackson when both were members of the Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences. Founded by naval surgeon Dr Edward Cutbush in 1816 it was to evolve into the U.S. Botanic Gardens at the foot of the Capitol by 1838.

The board faced a challenge to its charter early in Jackson's first term. A Senate resolution sought to modify the Board of Navy Commissioners to make the Secretary of the Navy the presiding officer of the board and limit the tenures of the members.¹⁷³ This would have been a radical change in governance had it succeeded. It likely represented an effort by Jackson or his party in the Senate to consolidate and assert civilian control over the Navy by diminishing – but not eliminating - the role of the senior officers.

The Committee on Naval Affairs considered the resolution as well as a report issued by Senator Nathaniel Silsbee of Massachusetts. Silsbee was a rarity on the committee – or the Senate as a whole – as he had gone to sea rising to ship's captain, ship owner, and merchant from Salem. He had served

¹⁷² National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 45, Records of Boards and Commissions. Index to the records.

¹⁷³ John Rodgers to John Branch, 33 November 1829, *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861), pp. 396-402.

two terms in the House and been elected to the Senate in 1826 to fill a vacancy as a Federalist (later Whig.) In addition to his sea service, he was the son-in-law of Benjamin Crowninshield who had served as the Secretary of the Navy from 1815 to 1818 and under whom the Board of Navy Commissioners was created. Crowninshield later served two terms in Congress and lived in the same boarding House in Georgetown as Jackson.

The committee did not perceive it necessary to make the proposed changes. Central to the committee's argument was that the resolution failed to specify whether the secretary would have superintendence over proceedings of the board or whether he would simply cast a vote. Regarding limiting the tenure of the officers, the committee recognized that officers of the board needed to understand a variety of subjects – construction, tactics, budgets, personnel, contracts, etc. Implementing a rotation of officers would preclude choice among expertise instead of securing the accumulating experience of the officers. Rotations might replace expertise with officers who were less informed. Therefore, the committee argued, it would be inexpedient to modify the board as created.

The secretary waited until November 1829 to act. This was unusual but could have been caused by one or more of three factors. First, other issues of higher importance might have distracted the administration. Second, the Navy itself or its supporters might have quietly made their objections known. Third, Jackson and his supporters in the Senate might have preferred not to expend political capital on this subject.

Branch's letter on 13 November was not to the Senate committee, but rather to the Board of Navy Commissioners itself to provide guidance. He wrote that the Navy organization was 'susceptible of improvement, particularly in its fiscal branch, its forms of administration, and the distribution of its duties'.¹⁷⁴ It is possible that Branch recognized that he was in an untenable position on this issue regarding the Senate and sought to ameliorate the Navy's supporters in the upper chamber. It is also possible that Branch recognized his own deficiencies in naval issues and sought out the true

¹⁷⁴ John Branch to Board of Navy Commissioners 13 November 1829, *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861), p. 396.

experts before presenting a plan to Congress. Again, this might suggest Branch (and possibly Jackson) was far more accommodating in how he approached the Navy than many historians have suggested.

Branch also invoked Jackson's position when he advised the commissioners that he would have to submit any ideas to the president first. Such a statement empowered the commissioners. This was not unprecedented. Secretaries of the Navy during and after the War of 1812 often consulted senior officers on issues such as force structure, but those had all been Federalist administrations. Branch's outreach, therefore, suggests that the administration would at least remain consistent with how it consulted with the officers. But such power was not unlimited. In one case, a senior naval officer was admonished. Branch wrote to Jackson: 'I herewith transmit you a letter I have just received from Commo[dore] Chauncey. He seems to be prematurely anticipating views of the Executive.'¹⁷⁵

Taking advantage of the interest in their work, or perhaps quickly responding to ensure its ideas and not others were first proposed to the secretary, the commissioners provided a comprehensive reply only ten days later. The commissioners, like the secretary, appear to have recognized their own limitations as well. The duties of the Department of the Navy, they argued, were various and complicated. They stated that no one individual, however gifted, would be competent even to manage their general superintendence.

Rodgers suggested a revision to the department's organization based on three clear categories. Administrative functions included the traditional duties of the secretary - the execution of regulations, orders for the fleet, and convening courts-martial. Ministerial functions focused on provisioning the fleet and ensuring an appropriate infrastructure at navy yards. Financial duties required a particular expertise in accounts and laws affecting expenditures. Since the position was created in 1798, the Secretary of the Navy had responsible for administrative and ministerial duties. Financial duties,

¹⁷⁵ John Branch to Andrew Jackson, 17 October 1829. US Navy Department, 'Letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the President and Executive Agencies, 1821-1886', Microfilm VB255.1.U72 Roll 1, July 21, 1821 – September 30, 1836.

however, fell to an accountant for the Navy who was under the charge of the Secretary of the Treasury. Rodgers recognized inherent financial inefficiencies in the Navy. He noted, for example, that it was a regular occurrence for ships costing hundreds of thousands of dollars to require expenditures up to forty thousand to correct an error in the structure and internal arrangements of a ship. It was, he wrote, an error arising solely from the absence of professional knowledge.

Regarding improvement to the organization, he was entirely pragmatic in his analysis. He believed the duties of the Secretary of the Navy might improve through the addition of books in his office on a variety of topics, so that he might consult them. Rodgers meant not only books on history and geography, but books on the state and condition of the Navy so that he could answer any call from the President, or from Congress, without delay. Rodgers also recognized the limitations of the Board of Naval Commissioners. Its duties, he believed, were too extensive for any one individual. This was a reasonable assessment in 1829 compared to its establishment in 1815. In the short fourteen-year period, new ships-of-the-line had been constructed, several squadrons were now permanently stationed globally, and steam technology was showing signs of being the future of the Navy.

He suggested instead that the board develop specialties so that each officer held defined fields of expertise, a notion previously not considered in the Navy. One member would be responsible for the building, repair, and equipping of warships. A second would supervise the construction of docks, arsenals, storehouses, and other shore-based facilities. The third member would oversee the provisioning of food, supplies and clothing for the Navy. Clearly the proposal had an impact on Branch.

On 21 January 1830, Branch transmitted a plan to the chair of the Committee on Naval Affairs of the House for the reorganization of the Board of Naval Commissioners (navy and naval were used interchangeably when referring to the board).¹⁷⁶ The draft legislation echoed Rodgers' recommendations about dividing responsibilities of the members: one to build,

¹⁷⁶ The Navy Department to Michael Hoffman, *New American State Papers, Volume 6 – Administration*, ed. by K. Jack Bauer, (Washington: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1981. p. 18.

equip, arm and repair vessels-of-war; a second connected with the establishment and construction of facilities on shore; and a third for naval supplies. The impact of this legislation should not be underestimated – this was the first time anyone had envisioned such a division. It set the Navy down the path a decade later to abolish the Board of Navy Commissioners and establish the bureau system¹⁷⁷ that was in place from 1842 through 1966, eventually giving way to the systems commands that still administer the Navy in the twenty-first century.

Figure 3.2 The Rodgers Plan.



There was logic to having the accountant of the Navy not actually serve under the Department of the Navy and the Secretary. Undue influence could occur from the Secretary in cases of financial discrepancies. Instead, the law required that the individual serve in the Treasury Department as the Fourth Auditor. As noted earlier, Rodgers argued the necessity for an expert who understood finances and federal laws governing the budget. For this position, Jackson selected Amos Kendall who had no experience in the topic.

A forty-one-year-old native New Englander, Kendall had graduated at the top of his Dartmouth class in 1811. He briefly moved to Washington before

¹⁷⁷ From 1842 to 1862, this system included: Bureau of Naval Yards and Docks; Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repairs; Bureau of Provisions and Clothing; Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography; and Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

settling in Kentucky where he was tutor to the children of Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Henry Clay during the War of 1812. He then became a journalist and editor of a Democratic-Republican Kentucky newspaper and then part owner and editor of the *Argus of Western America*, a pro-Jackson newspaper. Newspapers had become increasingly important in national elections as their popularity grew. In 1790 less than one hundred papers were published nationally; by 1830 they had multiplied eight-fold.¹⁷⁸ Kendall helped carry the state of Kentucky for Jackson in 1828. In his articles, Kendall and others defended Jackson from adultery charges. The editor came to Washington seeking a position so he could help Jackson reform the government. Kendall sought a job – any job.

By the time he moved to Washington after the election Kendall sought a clerkship or auditorship. In a private interview with Jackson on 14 February, the president assured him of a position as the head of a department. Kendall understood that to mean an auditorship, which would pay three thousand dollars per year.¹⁷⁹ His nomination was held back several weeks along with other controversial appointees to ‘avoid the hostility that would have arisen had he sent them immediately to the Senate, then in special session’.¹⁸⁰ Half of the federal positions at the time were in the Treasury Department; therefore, it made sense that Kendall would find an assignment there. He received his commission as Fourth Auditor overseeing Navy accounts on 21 March and began work two days later. In his autobiography, Kendall later admitted that he was totally ignorant of the process by which the Navy settled accounts. Nevertheless, Kendall possessed a sharp, inquisitive mind that quickly adapted to the accounting system. His efforts made an immediate impact on the Navy.

The decision to select Kendall for the position is curious given his lack of experience, but Jackson had ushered in a new era of government

¹⁷⁸ Donald B. Cole, *A Jackson Man: Amos Kendall and the Rise of American Democracy*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004) p. 58.

¹⁷⁹ Letters from Amos Kendall to his wife Jane dated in 1829: 4 January, 14 February, 25 February, *Autobiography of Amos Kendall*, ed. by William Stickney, (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1872), pp. 277-78 and pp. 285-286 respectively.

¹⁸⁰ Donald B. Cole, *A Jackson Man: Amos Kendall & the Rise of American Democracy*, (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2004), p. 123.

patronage. Party loyalists were rewarded for their work in the election and Kendall was in the top tier. But Jackson apparently had faith in Kendall, and perhaps that is the reason he selected him to oversee the accounts of the Navy, which had had discrepancies in the previous administration. Correcting those discrepancies was a priority for the new President, particularly since the last Fourth Auditor, Tobias Watkins, would soon find himself charged for fraud in April.

Two weeks after assuming his duties, Kendall referred to his work and Watkins in a letter to his wife: 'I have been so busily employed for some days in ferreting out some of the villainous transactions of my predecessor and others formerly in office here, that I have had little time for anything else.'¹⁸¹

Kendall later recalled:

A few individuals of doubtful integrity or dissolute habits were removed from office, and their places supplied with political friends. It was soon rumoured that frauds and corruptions had been detected in the late incumbents, verifying the worst suspicions of those who had opposed the last administration.¹⁸²

Watkins was fined three thousand dollars and would serve nine months in jail for failing to pay. By the end of his first year in the position, Kendall estimated he had saved \$800,000 in the Navy Department, a sum representing two-thirds of the total savings of the government.¹⁸³ In November 1829, Secretary Branch asked Kendall to assess the causes of the financial mismanagement and the current laws and regulations to determine if they needed modification. Kendall replied:

Money is the sinews of power and the source of corruption. English liberty has been considered safe only so long as the power of granting supplies to the King resides in the Representatives of the people. Our institutions have gone further. Here the Representatives of the people not only grant supplies, but prescribe the objects to which they shall be applied, and the manner in which the accounts shall be kept.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Amos Kendall to Jane Kendall, 22 April 1829, p. 290.

¹⁸² Amos Kendall to Jane Kendall, *Autobiography of Amos Kendall*, ed. by William Stickney, (Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1872), p. 297.

¹⁸³ Cole, pp. 129-130.

¹⁸⁴ Amos Kendall to John Branch, 10 November 1829. *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1861), p. 377.

There were, in short, limitations to what the president – or, in fact, the entire executive branch – could do to address the situation except for pay for officers. More importantly, the financial accounting system was inefficient. No one, Kendall argued, could provide accurate information. ‘I am satisfied,’ he wrote, ‘that to obtain correct information on the state of appropriations is now wholly impracticable.’ Nevertheless, Kendall did offer possibilities for reform. First, he recommended a change in the law to provide officer pay to the legislative, not the executive, branch while making the pay between Navy and Army officers equal (at the time, Navy officers were paid less than their Army counterparts.) Second, he recommended specific line item accounting for all congressional appropriations. This would be done by placing the onus for specific spending on Congress.

Kendall proved his worth to Jackson not only in regard to Navy reform but throughout the two administrations as one of his closest and most loyal advisers. According to a biographer, Jackson trusted and expected only a few individuals to report to him directly – one of those was Kendall.¹⁸⁵ The efficiency with which he carried out his work may have led to the administration’s effort to review the position and how the Navy administered its own finances. By late 1833, the Secretary of the Navy suggested in his annual report to Congress that the duties of the Fourth Auditor be transferred to the Department of the Navy, given its close alignment. Although it was not adopted at that time, it set the stage for the later creation of the position of Navy Comptroller. According to the United States Constitution, however, power over the Navy was supposed to reside in Congress.

Congress

Though Jackson dominated the era, he could not have done so as effectively without a largely compliant Congress – at least for most of his administration. If it did not share his interests, at least it did not oppose him regarding the Navy. However, in contrast to the House, the Senate was more likely to assert itself as a legislative body against the executive branch – as

¹⁸⁵ Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), p. 185.

was the case with the reorganization of the Board of Navy Commissioners. Although Jackson was denied the presidency in the election of 1824, like-minded supporters flooded the new Congress, and their number continued to grow when he was finally inaugurated four years later. The situation that followed was without precedent in American political history. For a decade, members of Congress affiliated themselves not necessarily by a political party nomenclature but by the president or candidate whom they supported. That meant largely Jackson or Adams.

Until 1917, states elected senators every six years through their respective state Houses, not through direct popular election like the House of Representatives. In the Senate, where one-third was elected every two years by the legislatures of their home states, the members were more reflective of the traditional moderation of that body given that a senator represented the whole state. According to the *Federalist Papers*, which had supported ratification of the Constitution four decades before, the Senate was supposed to be the cooling saucer compared to the more hotly contested House of Representatives. After French essayist Alexis de Tocqueville visited Congress in 1831, he wrote, 'On entering the House of Representatives at Washington one is struck by the vulgar demeanour of that great assembly. Often there is not a distinguished man in the whole number. Its members are almost all obscure individuals, whose names bring no associations to mind'.¹⁸⁶

During his first two years in office, Jackson could count on the barest of majorities in the Senate. Twenty senators considered themselves 'Jacksonians' in 1827-28. This represented a plurality, since nineteen were 'Adams,' two were 'Crawford Republicans,' one an 'Adams-Clay Republican,' one a 'Jackson Republican,' and one an 'Anti-Jacksonian' (see Table 3.1). In 1829-30, the Senate fell along a more bifurcated line with twenty-five affiliating as 'Jacksonians' and twenty-three as 'Anti-Jacksonians'. This was particularly important giving his administration's partiality to the Senate over members of the House, governors, or others. Senators, by tradition, had a comparatively collegial relation with their fellow members. The House reflected Jackson's

¹⁸⁶ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/detoc/1_ch13.htm [accessed 3 March 2016.]

popular public support. This may have been one of the reasons Jackson sought out so many senators for his Cabinet.

Table 3.1 Political Affiliation of Members of Congress

Congress:	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th
Term:	1827-28	1829-30	1831-32	1833-34	1835-36	1837-38	1839-40	1841-42
Senate:								
Jacksonian	25	25	24	20	26	---	---	---
Adams	19	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Jackson Republican	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Crawford Republican	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Adams-Clay Republican	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Anti-Jacksonian	1	23	22	26	24	---	---	---
Nullifier	---	---	2	2	2	---	---	---
Democrat	---	---	---	---	---	35	30	22
Whig	---	---	---	---	---	17	22	29
Democratic Republican	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Senate Total:	51	48	48	48	52	52	52	51
House of Representatives:								
Jacksonian	110	136	126	143	143	---	---	---
Adams	79	---	66	63	75	---	---	---
Anti-Jacksonian	2	72	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nullifier	---	---	4	9	8	6	---	---
Democrat	---	---	---	---	---	128	109	98
Whig	9	---	---	---	---	100	125	142
Democratic Republican	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Anti-Masonic	1	5	17	25	16	7	6	---
Republican	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---
Independent Democrat	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1
No Party	24	---	---	---	---	1	---	1
House Total:	227	213	213	240	242	242	242	242

Data compiled by the author from *Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress, 1787-1987* (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1988.)

The House was more clearly divided with Jackson's election. Before his inauguration, in 1827-28, one hundred ten members affiliated as 'Jacksonians' and seventy-nine as 'Adams', while two were 'Anti-Jacksonian,' two were 'Democratic-Republican', nine were of the new Whig Party, one was 'Anti-Masonic', and another twenty-four had no party affiliation. The election of 1828 saw a wave of Jacksonian support. In the House, the number of 'Jacksonians' grew to one hundred thirty-nine members; another seventy-two were 'Anti-Jacksonians', and five were 'Anti-Masonics'. The nomenclature associating members with individual groups would continue until Jackson left office. Jackson symbolized an age 'in which the common man intruded more

aggressively into the political scene. Party loyalty became more pronounced, and the question of slavery began to tear apart the bonds of the Union'.¹⁸⁷

With a majority in the House and a slight edge over the opposition party in the Senate, Jackson could, therefore, enact any legislation to which he lent his imprimatur. This freedom to operate was further enabled by the fact that members of Congress, with few exceptions, were not careerists. The early republic's Congress consisted largely of businessmen and farmers who could not afford more than a few years away in Washington. In addition, congressional sessions were short – just a few months out of every year – as opposed to the nearly year-round sessions of the modern era. Members therefore gained little experience on issues, much less on the rules that governed that body. Nevertheless, members were familiar with the local militia system that had been in place since the Revolution. Consequently, most members primarily focused on the Army, which offered the immediacy of protection as the American population advanced toward the Mississippi River and south through Florida. The size of the country's standing Army was only six thousand during Jackson's first administration. In the absence of war, its greatest challenge was desertion. The Army experienced more than eight thousand desertions between 1823 and 1831. In 1831 alone, 1450 soldiers deserted.¹⁸⁸ Thus Jackson and Congress understood that the Army had more immediate needs than the Navy. In 1830, for example, a report to Congress suggested that a force of 12,500 was required for a permanent peacetime Army. That same year, Congress eliminated the death penalty for desertion in time of peace.

Congressional activity on naval issues was, however, minimal during Jackson's first term. A review of the *Register of Debates in Congress* for 1829-30 indicates that the Senate did not discuss any naval issues. The House debated only a few issues, such as an exploring expedition. Like the previously mentioned attempt to modify the Board of Navy Commissioners,

¹⁸⁷ Robert Remini, *The House: The History of the House of Representatives*, (New York: Harper-Collins, 2006), p. 112.

¹⁸⁸ Richard L. Watson, Jr., 'Congressional Attitudes Toward Military Preparedness, 1829-1835,' *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 34, 4 (1948), 613-17.

discussions appeared only in the committee process and never culminated in a vote on the floor of the House or Senate.

Congressional committees also inhibited understanding the Navy. Committees were the gatekeepers who reviewed every legislative proposal and gave it their approval or disapproval. Although the nation had established a Navy in 1798, a navy that had acquitted itself well during the Quasi-War, Barbary War, and War of 1812, Congress did not establish committees on naval affairs until 1816 in the Senate and 1822 in the House. Key committees could not establish expertise in naval affairs given their comparatively short tenures in office. Chairs of the Naval Affairs Committee had similarly abbreviated periods of service. Prior to 1846, chairmen of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee served on average only six months on the committee prior to assuming the chairmanship; in the House, it was 1.3 years.¹⁸⁹ This compares to 8.9 years and 6.9 years in the Senate and House respectively between 1875 and 1945. In the twenty-first century, members might be in the Senate for decades before becoming chair, and then another decade in committee leadership. Once they had become Chair in the early Republic, however, a member would only spend little over two years in the position. Despite the lack of political experience, members knew to listen to constituents. One such example was a South Seas Exploring Expedition.

When Jackson was on his journey to his 1829 inauguration, the Senate continued considering sending an expedition to the Pacific. The proposal had been the brainchild of an Ohio publisher and explorer, Jeremiah Reynolds.¹⁹⁰ The purpose, as it evolved, was to survey the northwest coast of the United States territories and the Pacific. Such an endeavour would support the American whaling fleet with navigational information and eventually expand trade with the Orient. On 22 January 1829, Senator Robert Young Hayne (R-SC)¹⁹¹ wrote to Adams' Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard requested

¹⁸⁹ Albion, Robert, *Makers of Naval Policy, 1798-1847*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980) p. 631 Table 5.

¹⁹⁰ Reynolds' 1839 short story 'Mocha Dick' directly influenced Herman Melville's tome 'Moby Dick.'

¹⁹¹ (R-SC) is Republican of South Carolina. In the United States, a politician's political affiliation and state or district is abbreviated.

additional information.¹⁹² Hayne, chairman of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs and had just been re-elected after serving a term as a Jacksonian. Like many cabinet members, Hayne had served in the War of 1812 and held a variety of elected positions including speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives and state attorney general. Like the cabinet, he had no experience with the Navy. His tenure in the Senate would be abbreviated in 1832 when he became governor.

On behalf of the committee, Hayne asked for clarification on several issues regarding the proposed expedition.¹⁹³ First was the issue of expenses already incurred preparing for the expedition as well as estimates for future expenditures and personnel involved. Second, the committee worried about the extent of the expedition's goals and if it might take several expeditions. Southard referred to a resolution of the House of Representatives from 21 May 1828 stating that the expedition was to 'examine the coasts, islands, harbours, and reefs in those seas and ascertain the true situation'.

The country's nautical charts were extremely inaccurate, endangering the safe travel of both commercial and naval ships. Southard reported that whalers believed there were at least two hundred island reefs and shoals that were not noted on any American chart. The Navy proposed sending only one of its smallest ships – the sloop *Peacock* – for this assignment. Supernumeraries would include an astronomer, naturalists, draftsmen, surveyors, and someone to assess the state of commerce in the Pacific.

The Navy intended to enlist experienced deckhands from the whaling centres of Nantucket and New Bedford and had already sent out recruiters. The Navy made repairs to the *Peacock*, contacted scientists and consulted Americans with experience in the Far East. In short, the Navy had laid the essential groundwork, should the expedition receive approval. The House of Representatives had already authorized fifty thousand dollars for the expedition, but the *Peacock* alone, the Navy knew, could not conduct the

¹⁹² Robert Y. Hayne to Secretary of the Navy of 22 January 1829, 'Register of Debates in Congress (1828-29)', Appendix Senate Chamber, p. 30.

¹⁹³ National Archives and Records Administration, Center for Legislative Archives, Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, 20th-26th Congresses, Committee Papers, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11), Thompson letter 23 February 1829, SEN 201A-D9

expedition in its entirety because of the extent of territory involved in this mission.

Less than two weeks before Jackson's inauguration, the House and Senate differed on the expedition. Hayne reported to the committee that the House had expected the Senate to concur with the House's resolution without due consideration. Hayne recommended delaying action on the resolution in favour of a future, much larger, and more expansive project. Hayne appears to have argued that the cost of rebuilding, repairing, and fitting out the expedition, in addition to expense of maintaining it for three years, was 'very considerable'.

More troubling to Hayne was the fact that the Navy had progressed so far with its preparations without Senate concurrence on spending. Constitutionally, the Navy was supposed to react to congressional guidance, not initiate it. He found further investigation was necessary. The committee could not support the proposal and suggested instead the country had too many 'unsettled and unexplored regions at home'. The country had to push westward and take the lands up to the Pacific coast before such a maritime endeavour could begin. Hayne and the committee recognized the opportunities an expedition offered, such as the possibility of discovering new islands that might serve as the foundation for an American colony. The report also referred to Washington's warning in his farewell address, that the country should avoid entangling alliances. It cautioned against a 'spirit of adventure, without an abandonment of the fundamental principles of policy, in a departure from those wise and prudent maxims which have hitherto restrained us from forming unnecessary connections abroad'.¹⁹⁴ Asserting senatorial privilege, Hayne proposed a resolution that Jackson provide a detailed statement on the preparations for an expedition.¹⁹⁵ However, Jackson had other concerns with the Navy and the country. The expedition would have to wait another eight years, when a six-ship force finally weighed anchor for a four-year cruise.

¹⁹⁴ George Washington, Farewell Address, 1796, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp> [accessed 19 April 2017]

¹⁹⁵ National Archives and Records Administration, Center for Legislative Archives, Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, 20th-26th Congresses, Committee Papers, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11), Thompson letter 23 February 1829, SEN 201A-D9

The mid-term election of 1830 had mixed results for Jackson. In the Senate, Jacksonians continued to hold a two-seat majority over the Anti-Jacksonians. In the House, however, Jacksonians lost ten seats. This loss was part of a general redistribution in the House, as the seventy-two members of the House who had described themselves as Anti-Jacksonians in 1829-30 found themselves replaced by several factions. Sixty-six members affiliated as 'Adams' party members. Four described themselves as 'Nullifiers,' a new concept that would play a significant role during the Nullification Crisis of 1832, a struggle between states' rights and federal powers. Anti-Masonics increased from five to seventeen members. In response to the Freemasons, an organization of which Jackson was a member, the Anti-Masonics grew throughout the decade, capturing states and congressional seats, fielding presidential candidates, and laying the foundation for modern political parties in their use of conventions and party platforms. What these numbers meant was that, as would often happen in American history, the populist wave that swept in a president found itself receding or self-correcting during the mid-term election.

Like the Congress of 1829-30, the new Congress spent little time debating naval issues. Instead it focused on domestic and fiscal issues, such as the post office or tariffs. When Congress did raise naval issues, it tended to focus on pay. Jacksonians supported increasing the pay of masters commandant, but not of lieutenants, thereby further distinguishing between the two ranks.¹⁹⁶ This was the first indication of a clear separation of those ranks, particularly since master commandant would formerly evolve into the rank of commander by 1838. As part of the administration's expectation for accountability in the Navy, regulations were proposed that governed prices for necessary articles on board ships, thereby providing consistency and professionalizing the role of purser.¹⁹⁷

This conflict gave rise to a new party, the Whigs, comprised of former Adams and Anti-Masonic candidates and others in the election of 1836.

¹⁹⁶ Congressman Daniel Barnard, 9 February 1831, *Register of Debates in Congress Vol VII*, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1831), p. 149.

¹⁹⁷ Senator Robert Hayne, 4 January 1832, *Register of Debates in Congress Vol VII* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1832), p. 45.

Beginning in 1837, members of Congress were no longer affiliated by name with a presidential candidate but by a formalized political party. Thus Jackson created the Democratic Party. Out of chaos amid personalities came the order of a two-party system that would shift, but never completely change, in American politics.

The Budget

One of the clearest pieces of evidence that show a presidential administration's priorities is the annual budget. This was no less true of Jackson. He inherited a naval budget in 1829 of three million dollars; his last budget of 1837 was more than five million dollars. A fiscally conservative president less inclined to support the Navy would not have increased the Navy's budget by 270 percent in only eight years. The spending categories within the budget were not consistently increased. They were subject to changing circumstances, such as the Second Seminole War late in his administration, the construction of new ships, particularly the costly ship-of-the-line USS *Pennsylvania* and improving pay for active duty personnel.

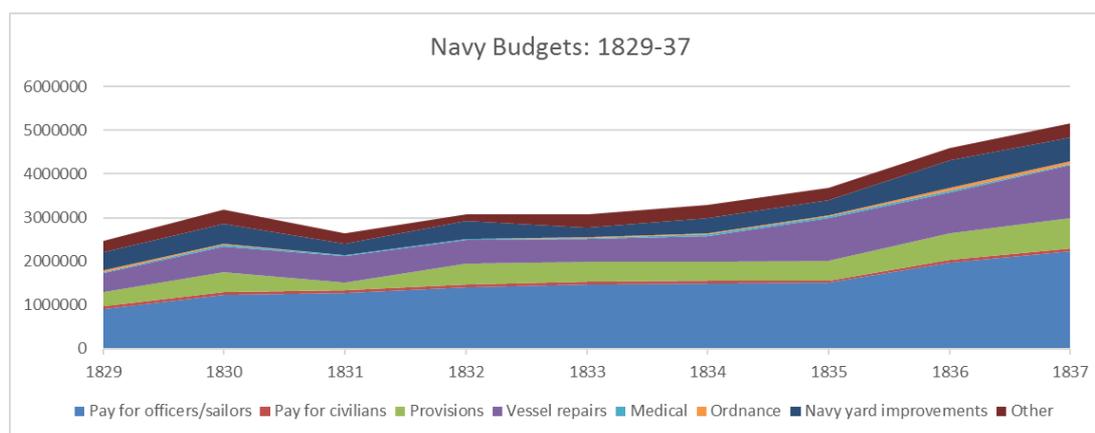


Figure 3.1 Navy Budgets: 1829-37

Statistics compiled by the author from Annual Reports of the Secretary of the Navy

Jackson entered his first term with the intent to hold the Navy Department fiscally accountable and adjust for perceived mismanagement. The full effect of a president's budget is felt approximately eighteen months after taking office, as the first budget is inherited from his predecessor and the second is relatively similar. Jackson, for example, modestly increased the

budget in 1830. However, after receiving reports from Fourth Auditor Kendall and having a full understanding of naval spending, Jackson responded at the first opportunity to impose austerity measures. From 1830 to 1831, the Navy budget decreased twenty-five percent (see Table 3.2). This was achieved by slashing the budget for repairs and improvements at the Navy yards by nearly fifty percent (but restored the following year) and for provisions by more than sixty percent and by nullifying ordnance procurements for one year. These cuts were accompanied by moderate increases in some categories, such as naval pay.

By December 1833, Jackson felt confident enough with federal spending that he could respond to an earlier Senate proposal to equalize the pay of officers of the Army and Navy. One method of achieving this was to decrease the pay of senior officers. It also standardized ranks for the effect of pay. The senior Army officer held the rank of Major General. While the Navy would not have the rank of Admiral until the Civil War, its senior captain while afloat would receive the same pay as the Major General, for example. Naval pay became a major component of his professionalization of the sea service, with an increase of 270 percent from 1829 to 1837.

Table 3.2 Naval Budgets, 1829-37

Major Expense Category	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837
Pay for officers/sailors	918,514	1,239,220	1,278,694	1,409,927	1,478,824	1,487,245	1,505,126	1,974,538	2,224,037
Pay for civilians	59,552	57,680	57,680	58,530	57,330	61,180	63,110	68,340	69,470
Provisions	324,301	457,537	173,463	478,241	460,000	450,000	450,000	590,000	70,482
Vessel repairs	431,250	590,000	615,419	536,682	506,750	590,000	974,000	950,000	1,200,000
Medical	20,250	30,500	25,000	25,000	35,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	35,000
Ordnance	50,000	30,000	-	15,000	10,000	10,000	15,000	50,000	65,000
Navy yard improvements	403,041	450,000	244,140	403,338	228,862	354,800	344,615	631,125	544,900
Other	255,000	320,000	250,000	140,000	295,000	295,000	295,000	295,000	321,000
Overall	3,006,277	3,556,547	2,649,397	3,485,867	3,176,766	3,292,224	3,689,851	4,602,003	5,163,689

By 1835, because of Jackson's economic policies (and those of the preceding administration), the president did what no other president in U.S. history achieved – he balanced the budget and eliminated the federal debt. This enabled Jackson to then focus on new budget priorities, such as those for the Navy. In addition to naval pay, Jackson reinvested in improvements at navy yards, spending nearly 1.2 million dollars in 1836 and 1837 alone. He also invested in the repair and construction of ships as well as in a return to pre-1830 levels for ordnance. Admittedly, ordnance would be a higher budget

item in 1836 and 1837 because of the Second Seminole War. The benefits of these investments and adjustment of priorities are discussed in the following chapters.

Conclusion

For eight years, Jackson served as president, but he influenced the years preceding his terms and those afterward. No other period in American history is referred to by the name of the president. His governance was guided by a clear sense of where America should go – to the sea, to engage in global commerce to spur the economy. He understood that the Navy was required not only to protect U.S. merchant ships but also to conduct reprisals if necessary. It is clear from inauguration speeches and his annual addresses to Congress that he believed the Navy must advance technologically and increase in size. To do so, he first had to address budget issues, which he accomplished.

Due to his sense of justice, he held the Navy accountable for transgressions by sailors and officers. He was more involved in court-martial reviews than any president before him or after him through the presidency of James Buchanan. But, as with the Randolph court-martial (discussed later), Jackson's personal emotions could cloud a more logical and fair approach to an issue.

Jackson did much during his two terms, especially for and with the Navy. Nevertheless, some of his efforts were marred or stunted by his self-inflicted political wounds based on a poor temperament. These included reactions to the Eaton Affair, Nullification, or the Bank of the United States. It would be simply speculative to suggest what he might have accomplished with the Navy without these distractions to his governance.

One historian contends that 'there is no evidence that Jackson and his supporters devoted a substantial amount of time, reflection, or discussion to naval policy'.¹⁹⁸ At face value, this statement is correct. There are no

¹⁹⁸ John H. Schroeder, 'Jacksonian Naval Policy 1829-37,' in *New Aspects of Naval History: Selected Papers from the 5th Naval History Symposium*, ed. by the Department of History, U.S. Naval Academy (Baltimore, MD: Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1985), pp. 121-127 (p. 126).

recorded discussions of policy, nor are there substantive letters from Jackson to his Secretaries of the Navy on issues. But despite the paucity of direct correspondence, it should not be taken there were no discussions or no thought. Public statements like annual addresses and reports point to the contrary and subsequent chapters on platforms, operations, and personnel will show how much was achieved. Those issues are addressed in the next three chapters.

Chapter 4: Force Structure and Modernization

Jackson oversaw the restructuring and modernization of the Navy during his presidency. His predecessor, John Quincy Adams, had surged ship construction and employed squadrons worldwide. Rather than steer a different course, Jackson continued to expand the Navy and its squadrons. To do so, he first invested in the maintenance and repair of existing warships. He then continued the Adams-initiated construction of the first dry docks and other infrastructure. Jackson then authorized the construction and purchase of sloops and schooners, which enabled him to continue high deployment rates. Despite the utility of these ships, he permitted construction for prestige purposes of the second largest ship-of-the-line in the world. Finally, the Jackson administration endorsed the advancement of steam technology for warships to modernize the Navy.

Several of Jackson's predecessors – John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and John Quincy Adams – had served as ambassadors to European courts. Consequently, they had at least some first-hand understanding of merchant and navy ships. More than five thousand kilometres of ocean separated the United States from Great Britain. These men had stood on the decks of warships. They had seen American sailors climb the rigging and eat food for sustenance rather than taste. They spoke to the officers who commanded the men. When they arrived in European ports, they saw before them the might of maritime powers and the navies built to defend merchant fleets and deploy forces. It is not surprising, therefore, that the establishment, construction, and use of a navy for the United States would be significant during their presidential administrations.

Unlike those predecessors, Jackson had no such grand experience or worldview to help him shape his Navy. Instead, he had to rely on three incidents to form the core of his approach to the Navy. The first stemmed from the British siege of Charleston, South Carolina in 1780, which surrounded American land and naval forces, while ships made their way up-river to be scuttled to prevent their capture. The British force included three ships-of-the-line, four frigates, sloops and galleys, and approximately ninety transports.

The eventual capitulation of the American force would be the largest of the Revolution and the third greatest in American history. American soldiers were held on prison ships in the harbour. Thirteen-year-old Jackson, already fighting the British alongside his brothers, saw his mother off as she boarded one of the ships to nurse the prisoners. In November 1781, Elizabeth Jackson succumbed to the same cholera outbreak that affected those in her care. She left her son an orphan. At his young age, Jackson would not likely have distinguished between the classes of ships present in Charleston. Instead, the Royal Navy represented an unstoppable force. It prevented American ships from escaping through an effective blockade and it brought supplies and soldiers ashore.

The second incident took place in the waning days of the War of 1812, as now-General Jackson was again fighting the British. Jackson awaited British Admiral Alexander Cochrane, who had recently failed to take Fort McHenry and Baltimore, Maryland. Cochrane was unable to convey his deep-draft ships through the shallow waters of Lake Borgne, defended by Lieutenant Thomas Catesby Jones' five Jefferson-era gunboats. Cochrane deployed forty-two longboats with carronades, which eventually overwhelmed Jones' force. Lake Borgne was a tactical victory for the British, but a strategic loss, much like the Battle of Valcour Island during the American Revolution.¹⁹⁹ During that battle, Benedict Arnold also lost. Nevertheless, he had fought a successful delaying action that cost the British invasion force from Canada valuable time. The British lost the Battle of Saratoga - arguably the most important victory for the colonies given that it provided the impetus for France to enter the war. Similarly, Jones' action provided Jackson time to assemble his own forces and prepare defences against General Sir Edward Pakenham's army of fourteen thousand men. Lake Borgne and New Orleans represented to Jackson the value of the Army and Navy working jointly in combat operations, a view that would re-emerge during the Jackson-initiated Second Seminole War.

¹⁹⁹ Craig Symonds, *Historical Atlas of the U.S. Navy*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995), p. 54.

The third influence on Jackson's maritime view was his journey to his inauguration. As mentioned earlier, most of his trip from Tennessee to Washington was on America's extensive river system aboard steam ships. This trip imparted on Jackson the vital role riverine and other waterborne commerce was already playing in the country's economy. International commerce was vulnerable to pirates as well as competing navies also threatened the lifeblood of America's economy. Consequently, a standing navy during peacetime was a necessity. In addition, he observed the value of the nascent technology of steam power for ships. Jackson recognized that they were so far insufficient for transoceanic travel but in the near term could be useful for coastal or harbour defence.

The Evolving Navalist

One historian's precedent-setting work defined the navalists and anti-navalists.²⁰⁰ A major distinguishing factor between the two philosophies was the number of ships authorized or constructed. However, the authorization and construction of Navy ships was irregular during the early Republic from the founding of the Navy under President John Adams through the end of Jackson's presidency. An analysis of the shipbuilding program during that period reveals that presidential administrations – regardless of party – were mostly navalists especially John Adams and John Quincy Adams. Closer investigation demonstrates that Jackson should be included among the navalists.

The U.S. Navy built a total of eighty-six warships from 1798 to 1837.²⁰¹ Conventional wisdom suggests that most shipbuilding occurred during armed conflicts. During the forty-year period, there were four spikes in ship construction that reached their apex with a ten-ship build. The first spike was a result of the Naval Act of 1794 and the creation of the Department of the

²⁰⁰ Craig Symonds, *Navalists and Antinavalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States, 1787-1827* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1980.)

²⁰¹ Only ocean-going ships or those that could protect the coastline are included in this study. During the War of 1812, a small fleet was constructed to counter the British invasion from Canada. Despite their moderate successes, they were built only for operations in the Great Lakes and not intended for long-term, post-war use. Jeffersonian gunboats are also not included since they were not commissioned warships.

Navy under John Adams. The bill was passed under threat of Algerine piracy and authorized the construction of the first six frigates designed by Joshua Humphreys, but it prepared the country for a maritime conflict with France.

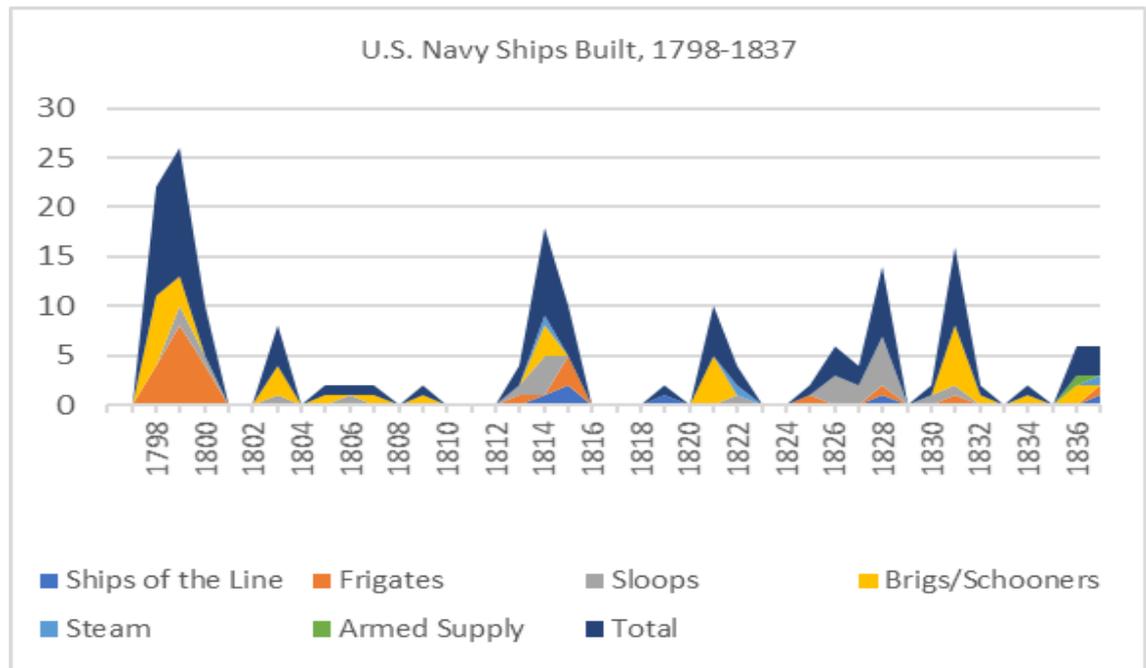


Figure 4.1 U.S. Navy Ship Construction, 1798-1837

Data compiled by the author from K. Jack Bauer and Stephen S. Roberts, *Register of Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1775-1990*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

The second spike occurred during the second war with the British. The small U.S. Navy was still reliant, given the immediacy of military operations, upon privateers until the construction of more ships. Due to a lack of resources and the length of construction, the Navy would commission ships-of-the-line only after the war's completion. Congress thus passed 'An Act for the Gradual Increase of the Navy' in 1816. This legislation authorized the construction of nine 74-gun ships-of-the-line and twelve 44-gun frigates. Under the Constitution, funding requires authorization and appropriation. Authorizing legislation provides policy guidance and determines that Congress may fund a program. Nevertheless, Congress may authorize a program, but it remains unfunded, if a separate committee refuses to appropriate the funds in a designated fiscal year. Congress did not fully fund the authorizing legislation, instead only providing sufficient funds to purchase materials and store them in shipyards for most of the ships, while fully funding a few ships-of-

the-line and frigates. Enough, however, were commissioned by 1821 to result in the third spike. The fourth spike came under the presidential term of John Quincy Adams. Adams commissioned thirteen warships – no small feat given that he was only in office for four years whereas his three immediate predecessors had each served for eight years. Adams's construction program, thus, is the largest peacetime increase of warships during this period.

A lull followed each construction spike. This is not unusual in United States or for other nations in post-war environments. Military budgets increase exponentially during war and, when the war is over, those expenses are no longer required during peacetime. After the Quasi-War and First Barbary War, Jefferson in 1805, for example, decommissioned several larger ships in order to reduce government expenditures. Again, the Navy represented a significant portion (from twenty to thirty percent) of the federal budget, so any decrease in the Navy meant a president could be more fiscally responsible in peacetime. Only the navalists supported an expansion of the Navy in peacetime. Consequently, Monroe's administration advocated an increase to establish more distant squadrons to protect American commerce. This squadron system also enabled a faster response time to overseas threats.

The number of ships built also sheds light on the views of the presidents as well as the country's priorities. Of the ninety-one ocean-going warships in the Navy from 1798 to 1837, American shipyards built fifty-one ships during periods of wartime operations and forty during peacetime. That forty-four percent of America's warship construction occurred during peacetime is remarkable. This suggests not only a necessity for peacetime ships, but a commitment to build and maintain them. America was, therefore, largely a maritime-oriented nation, willing to spend the money to defend its commerce. The depredations committed on U.S. shipping by the Barbary States in the 1780s and 1790s and threats from greater powers were not lost on the American public. Washington paid tribute to the Barbary States out of the federal budget. The average American, however, was uninformed about government policies and budgets. Normally, they might have ignored it. In this case, the American public was very aware of the reality given that the local level directly felt the ransoms paid for seized crews.

The navalist peacetime Adams administration had sufficiently increased the size of the Navy that one might have been expected an anti-navalist successor to decrease. Jackson, if he were a anti-navalist, would neither have been predisposed nor committed to maintain the level Adams had established much less increase it further producing a fifth spike. Jackson’s administration confirms that he was a navalist based on three quantifiable criteria of ship production. The first data point is the average number of ships built annually (see Table 4.1.) From 1798 to 1837, an average of 2.3 ships were built annually. During war years the annual number of ships built was 4.6 and during the peacetime years the number was 1.4. Jackson built 2.1 ships per year, significantly higher than the overall comparable peacetime average. If one removes Jackson’s eight years, the average of the remaining peacetime years’ average is 1.2 ships built per year thus widening the construction gap compared to Jackson’s 2.1.

Table 4.1 U.S. Navy Ship Production, 1798-1837

	1798	1799	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	Total	
Ship-of-the-Line	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
Frigate	4	8	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	24
Sloop	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	5	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
Brig/Schooner	7	3	-	-	3	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	1	-	2	-	34	
Steam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Armed Supply	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	11	13	5	-	-	4	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	9	5	-	-	-	1	5	2	-	-	1	3	2	7	-	1	8	1	-	1	-	3	3	91		
	Adams			Jefferson				Madison				Monroe				Adams		Jackson																								

Years in gold are wartime periods. Data compiled by the author from from K. Jack Bauer and Stephen S. Roberts, *Register of Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1775-1990*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

The second way of viewing the data is by the total number of ships built by administration. Remarkably, John Adams built twenty-nine ships during the creation of the Department of the Navy, a period which also coincided with the Quasi-War with France. Adding to this impressive achievement was that he served for only four years and only his last three years are included in this study. Madison (who had three years of war during his eight-year administration) built seventeen ships – the same as Jackson. Behind them was John Quincy Adams whose four years produced thirteen ships with the other presidents (Jefferson and Monroe) in single-digits.

The third set of data is the average number built annually by each of the period administrations. Again, Adams led them all with 9.7 built on average

per year. Distantly behind him was his son John Quincy Adams (3.3). Madison and Jackson each built, on average, 2.1 ships annually. Seen from each perspective, the data demonstrates that Jackson had a deep commitment to the Navy and its mission that was equal to the navalists and exceeded that of the anti-navalist presidents.

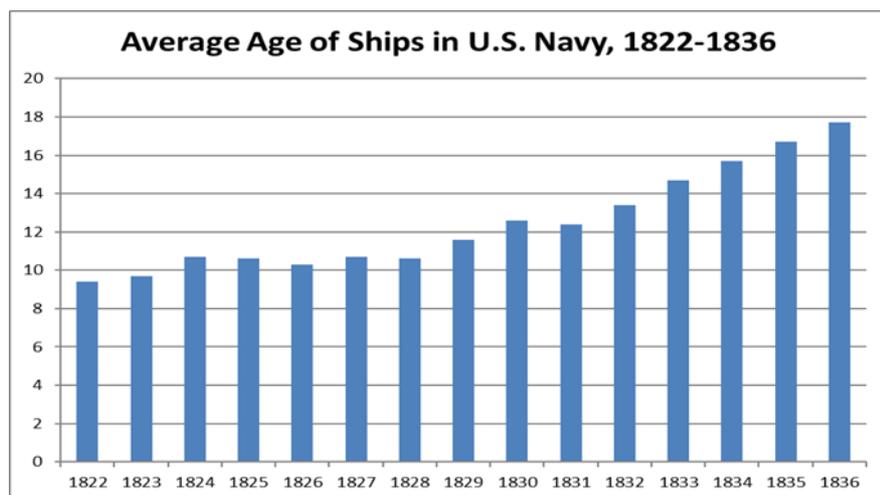


Figure 4.2 Average Age of Ships in U.S. Navy, 1822-1836

Data compiled by the author from Secretary of the Navy reports and lists of commissioned ships in the U.S. Navy.

Setting Priorities: Maintain and Repair

When he became president, Jackson did not immediately embark on a shipbuilding program. Instead, he wisely chose to invest in the maintenance and repair of the existing, aging fleet (see Figure 4.2). For example, four of the Navy's original six frigates – *Constitution*, *Constellation*, *Congress*, and *United States* – were still considered operational after thirty years and three wars. Of the fleet's ten operational frigates, only three were less than a decade old when Jackson assumed office. In 1822, the average ship age was 9.4 years. When Jackson became president in 1829, the average was 11.6 years. In the final year of his administration it was 17.7 years. Moreover, after the War of 1812, the Navy was maintaining distant stations for longer periods of time. It was not unusual for ships to deploy for two to three years on patrol. In one case the ship-of-the-line USS *Franklin*, deployed as the flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron from 1817 to 1820. It returned to the United States

for a refit only long enough to prepare it for another three-year deployment from 1821 to 1824 as the flagship of the Pacific Squadron.

Jackson arrived in Washington intent on bringing fiscal responsibility to the U.S. government. In his first annual report to Congress, Branch articulated the administration's position that ship construction would discontinue unless in the case of an immediate emergency. In 1829 the total Navy budget was three million dollars – approximately twenty percent of the entire federal budget. Of that three million, \$430,000 was directed for 'Repairs of ships in ordinary and wear and tear for ships in commission' (hereafter 'maintenance and repair'). The following year, maintenance and repair increased to \$590,000, as the Navy budget rose to \$3.5 million.

Jackson's austerity measures and resolution of financial discrepancies by Fourth Auditor Amos Kendall allowed the president to reduce the Navy budget to \$2.6 million. Remarkably, maintenance and repair funding increased to \$615,000. By the final year of his administration in 1837, the maintenance and repair budget increased to \$1.2 million. Why is this important? Jackson was in fact enabling the Navy to provide a far larger force, if called upon. This would be accomplished by building new ships, while ensuring aging ships or ships that remained in ordinary received adequate attention.

When Jackson assumed the presidency, he had at his disposal nearly three dozen commissioned ships. Many were deployed. Each year the Secretary of the Navy, based on assessments from the chief naval constructor, reported to Congress on the state of commissioned ships. The assessment also included ships in ordinary – those authorized but not fully funded vessels that lay in various states in shipyards on the eastern seaboard. Some ships had their keel laid; others had partially constructed hulls. Some materials remained the victims of weather, as they were stored in the open air given the limited availability of storage sheds.

The most expensive ships in terms of cost and manpower were the 74-gun ships-of-the-line. Of the six *Delaware*-class ships-of-the-line, all had been laid down. Due to excessive cost, two were commissioned in the 1820s, two were only commissioned in the 1860s during the Civil War, and two were never launched or commissioned. Construction was not the only significant

cost. So too was the price of operating the ship in distant waters. In 1829, for example, the USS *Delaware* in the Mediterranean required more than three hundred barrels of flour, nearly three thousand barrels of bread, twelve hundred barrels of beef and pork, more than two thousand gallons of vinegar, one thousand gallons of molasses, and more than twenty-four thousand gallons of whiskey for a three-month period.²⁰²

In his 1829 report, Secretary Branch assessed the *Alabama* could be ready in three months, if needed. Navy constructors assessed her hull to be in good order. In Boston, the ships-of-the-line *Virginia* and *Vermont* were both four months from completion. *Columbus* could be ready in seventy-five days, while the *Independence* required entirely new decks, planking and coppering. In Gosport (near Norfolk,) the ship-of-the-line *New York* could be launched in three months, but the *North Carolina* had had all her oakum removed and had no estimated time for completion.

At the New York Navy Yard, the commissioned and operational ships-of-the-line *Franklin*, *Ohio*, and *Washington* all needed extensive repairs.²⁰³ The coppering of the *Ohio* alone required six months. Far different was the ship-of-the-line at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. She was the 120-gun ship *Pennsylvania*, also authorized in 1816. For more than a decade, she was in pieces, awaiting funding for construction and preparation for sea. In the 1829 and 1830 annual reports, she was assessed to be ready in six months. She would have to wait until later in Jackson's administration for determination as to her fate.²⁰⁴ The entire class, however, failed to evolve under constructor Samuel Humphreys. The situation with the state of American frigates was different than the large ships-of-the-line. All eight *Potomac*-class frigates

²⁰² 'Quarterly Return of Receipts of United States Stores and Provisions at Port Mahon in Charge of Theodore Ludico', National Archives and Records Administration, RG 45, *Reports, Returns, and Estimates Received from Navy Agents*, September. 1814-April. 1834.

²⁰³ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, Showing the Condition of the Navy in the Year 1829. Reported to Congress 8 December 1829. <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/a/secnav-reports/annual-report-secretary-navy-1829.html> [accessed 20 May 2018].

²⁰⁴ In addition to Annual Secretary of the Navy Reports, see RG45: Records and Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Record of Boards and Commissions, 1812-1890; Board of Naval Commissioners: Reports of Chief Naval Constructor Samuel Humphreys Concerning the Condition of Naval Vessels, Mar. 7, 1827-Apr.22, 1834; vol. 1 of 1.

authorized in 1816 were eventually commissioned, although only one was commissioned prior to Jackson's presidency and one in 1831. Across the shipyards, the *Santee*, *Cumberland*, *Constitution*, *Raritan*, *Sabine*, *Savannah*, *Potomac*, *St. Lawrence*, and *Constellation* were all in varied states of construction or repair.

Assessments differ on the quality of shipbuilding, maintenance and approaches in the Jacksonian Era. One example was the frigate USS *Macedonian* in Gosport Naval Shipyard in 1829. One historian has argued that the *Macedonian* had been unserviceable for years, but she remained on the registers to obtain annual maintenance funds from the Navy.²⁰⁵ According to the February 1829 assessment, the ship was in a state of decay especially the white oak – the timber used specifically for navy ships since the Humphreys frigates. Chappelle, however, did not consider that the *Macedonian* had only recently returned from deployment in 1828 and that the USS *Constellation* and USS *John Adams* had already been planned for refurbishment.²⁰⁶ Funds were available but the docks at which the work would be performed were not available. In an unpublished manuscript, another academic researcher challenged the earlier work. Secretary of the Navy John Branch apparently opposed work on the ship to streamline the Navy itself. Reducing the number of ships meant a reduction in annual maintenance costs. Nevertheless, Secretary Woodbury added a request for more than \$200,000 to rebuild, repair, and equip the *Macedonian* in 1831. The key term in that direction was 'rebuild'. Branch's interpretation was that rebuilding meant simply new construction, which required a supplementary budget request to Congress.²⁰⁷ A few years later the *Macedonian's* keel would find use in the construction of a new ship with the same name.

This confusion over rebuilding was not isolated to this event. Two decades later, for example, the USS *Constellation* had most of the planks and ribs replaced and retained only the keel. The ship consequently had a far

²⁰⁵ Howard Chappelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy; the Ships and Their Development*. (New York: Norton, 1949) p. 8.

²⁰⁶ Brina J. Agranat, 'Thorough and Efficient Repair: Rebuilding in the American Sailing Navy' (Master's Thesis, East Carolina University, 1993), p. 235.

²⁰⁷ Agranat, p. 238.

different design, particularly with her new rounded stern indicative of mid-nineteenth century British-inspired alterations, rather than early nineteenth century standards. Historians have also failed to adequately consider the impact of patriotism behind the support of shipbuilding. In 1832, Woodbury asked for funds for more live oak to rebuild the 22-gun USS *Cyane* and for additional funds for the frigate USS *Java*. The British-built *Cyane* and *Java* had been taken as war prizes by *Constitution* during the War of 1812. *Macedonian* was also a Royal Navy ship captured in 1812 by *United States* under command of Stephen Decatur. *Constellation*, though better known for her service during the Quasi-War, had also fought in the War of 1812.

Thus, despite their various states of disrepair, their names alone conjured up patriotic sentiment. Proponents of the funds appealed to the patriotism of other congressional members. The War of 1812 represented the most recent conflict during which American frigates largely bested Royal Navy ships in single-ship actions. Support for older ships continued through Jackson's administration. In 1834, for example, Congress approved another special appropriation of nearly \$200,000 to rebuild *Congress* – another Humphreys frigate. Despite this initial support, the ship proved too unstable and was broken up that year.

Early in the administration, Branch recommended to Congress that it should take a two-fold approach: first, consolidate the ships that could be completed, and second, delay the construction of new ships. Branch used one ship in particular to make his case for delaying construction, so that he could focus on maintenance. The 44-gun frigate USS *Hudson* was the only ship in her class. Originally named the *Liberator*, she had been constructed in 1826 for the Greek government for Greece's war of independence. When that government failed to pay for the ship, the Navy retained and renamed her. She was fitted out in 1828 for a cruise to Brazil Station. The estimate for fitting her out was \$51,770. This included \$15,000 for labour and materials, \$1,800 for the boatswain's department, \$15,000 for deficiencies in cables, anchors,

hawsers, etc., \$12,400 for the gunner's department, \$5,400 for the sail maker's department, and \$1,900 for the cooper's department.²⁰⁸

On the ship's first cruise Captain Stephen Cassin, one of the navy's most experienced officers and veteran of three wars, was already reporting the ship constantly required repairs of some kind.²⁰⁹ 'I regret to state', he wrote to Branch, 'that the ship throughout is in a very rapid state of decay, and in my opinion, cannot be kept out longer than May or June next with safety.' In addition, although food was rarely optimal on Navy ships, Cassin also reported that he would not be asking for the staples such as molasses, rice, cheese, and beans. 'From experience,' he added, 'it has been found that some of these articles are of so perishable a nature, that heretofore [...] most instances unfit to be served.'²¹⁰

The *Hudson* was a troubled ship structurally. Ships with significant structural and maintenance problems also manifest their problems in the morale of their crews – an occurrence as familiar to the twenty-first century Navy as it was two hundred years ago. Therefore, it is important to assess shipboard life during its cruise. One method of assessing morale is through courts-martial. This is both an effective quantitative and qualitative means. The reasons for the courts-martial and the text of the records illustrate the qualitative element. One can establish with the quantitative element comparative number of courts-martial throughout the fleet. Courts-martial abounded aboard the *Hudson*. Rank did not protect anyone and behaviour was not indicative of rank. Sailors and officers alike found themselves pulled into this vortex of personal irresponsibility, professional negligence, and internecine irresponsibility. Sometimes these courts-martial were about Jackson himself. For example, Sailing Master Lieutenant Thomas Hamersley was charged in a case of political disagreement with a British officer in Rio de

²⁰⁸ 'Legislative and Executive, of the Congress of the United States. Second session.' *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs*, (Gales & Seaton: Washington, DC, 1860), Document No. 348 'Cost of Fitting a Frigate for Sea, and Annual Expense of Such Vessel', Letter from Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard to Samuel Smith, Chairman of the Senate Committee of Finance, 22 January 1828. P. 134.

²⁰⁹ Stephen Cassin to John Branch, 24 June 1830, *Letters Received from Naval Officers*, Sept. 5, 1814-July 5, 1842, 25 volumes. Microfilm.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Janeiro and using disrespectful language about his own Commodore, John Creighton. Hamersley appealed to the Secretary of the Navy arguing that the root cause was due to his political sentiments, namely that the junior officer supported Jackson in the election. When challenged by the slanderous British officer, Hamersley had simply attempted to vindicate Jackson, whose reputation he considered 'a National property'.²¹¹ In his defence, Branch wrote to Jackson that there was no improper trial and that the argument with the British officer did not stem from improper motives 'but was rather prompted by feelings of national pride'. Jackson approved Branch's recommendation to retain the lieutenant.

Given the number of courts-martial for such a small ship, it is difficult to trace the extent of charges by crewmembers against other ship's personnel. Surgeon Andrew Cooke charged Marine Second Lieutenant Francis Neville for conduct unbecoming an officer, gross falsehoods, and scandalous conduct, specifically for calling Commodore John Creighton 'a damned scoundrel' and a villain.²¹² Neville was found guilty and dismissed from the squadron.²¹³ Midshipman William Moore placed similar charges against Midshipmen Ferdinand Smith for striking another midshipman. Found guilty, he was sentenced to be cashiered. Only three individuals could approve, modify, or nullify a court-martial – the commodore of the squadron, the Secretary of the Navy, or the president of the United States. Creighton deemed it a harsh sentence. Jackson eventually concurred and ordered the midshipman returned to duty.²¹⁴

Lieutenant Tom Freelon was charged with disrespect toward Commodore Creighton and sentenced to dismissal from the squadron. Again, Jackson interceded questioning the validity of the court as it served as both

²¹¹ Thomas Hamersley to John Branch, 4 March 1830, Navy courts-martial, Case 525. See also *Letters Received from Naval Officers*, Sept. 5, 1814- July 5, 1842, Microfilm.

²¹² Records of General Courts Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867,

Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840, National Archives and Records Administration, RG 125, M273, Case 479.

²¹³ *ibid.*

²¹⁴ Navy courts-martial, Case 483.

accuser and witness and Freelon was ordered back to duty.²¹⁵ Lieutenant Joshua Sands was tried for neglecting to enforce regulation of the ship and using menacing words against the Surgeon.²¹⁶ Surgeon Henry Bassett was charged with falsehoods and conduct unbecoming an officer.²¹⁷

The results of each court-martial quickly spread as junior officers in particular wrote to one another. Such was the case of Surgeon John Wiley writing to Lieutenant Samuel du Pont:

You have heard doubtless of the quarrels and court-martials on board the *Hudson*, but you will be surprised to learn that Capt Creighton's particular supporter and judge advocate on all the trials has himself been dismissed from the navy by the President for personal abuse of the chief magistrate.²¹⁸

Unusually troubled ships did not escape the attention of officers. Surgeon John Wiley wrote to another officer of the quarrels and courts-martial aboard the *Hudson*.²¹⁹ Wiley likely referred to at least two trials, both held in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. The first was the aforementioned trial of Marine Second Lieutenant Francis Neville. The second was the trial of Midshipman William Moore for provoking and reproachful language calling another midshipman a liar and a 'son of a bitch'.²²⁰ Moore was sentenced to be cashiered. Although Jackson reduced the sentence, Moore resigned in 1832. Wiley was correct to be concerned about the *Hudson*. While on Brazil Station, no fewer than seven courts-martial were held involving its officers. Another eight courts-martial involving its officers and crew were held when the ship returned to New York.

One cannot discount that the ship suffered from a lack of leadership. One historian suggests that Creighton had the 'reputation of being the greatest

²¹⁵ Navy courts-martial, Case 484.

²¹⁶ Navy courts-martial, Case 511.

²¹⁷ Navy courts-martial, Case 521.

²¹⁸ John Wily to Samuel du Pont, 29 September 1829, Hagley Museum and Library, Group 9 Samuel Du Pont, Series B (In File), Box 15 (1814-1837).

²¹⁹ John S. Wiley to Samuel F. DuPont, 29 September 1829, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

²²⁰ Case #483, Records of General Courts-Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867, Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840.

martinet in the navy'²²¹ but one who held the importance of appearances and drilling. While commander of the ship-of-the-line *Washington* in the Mediterranean, Creighton struck Midshipman John Marston. Marston brought charges against Creighton, which were dismissed as 'malicious, frivolous and vexatious'.²²² After a similar incident with Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry striking a midshipman, fifty-one midshipmen wrote to Congress asking it to investigate. Navy captains responded by demanding the readjustment of midshipmen. The Senate Naval Affairs Committee largely ignored the issue, instead suggesting that the Navy handle its own affairs of justice.

In the decade from 1828 to 1839, the Navy held 309 courts-martial. Nearly twenty of those were on the *Hudson* alone, which was the second highest number of any ship in service during that period. The only other ship with more courts-martial was the USS *Java* with more than twenty-five. In 1832, Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury asked Congress for additional funds for the *Java* – a request specifically because of its own significant problems. The *Java* had been built in haste as a 44-gun frigate during the War of 1812. When it returned from a cruise in 1831, it was made into a receiving ship in Norfolk and was unable to put to sea again. Built of inferior materials, the ship was assessed as defective in all respects.

Another source on officers also communicated about the state of the ships and their captains. Mackay lamented the fact that the *Hornet's* government of the ship was 'weak and imbecile to a degree of which you can form no conception – the premier [...] is totally incompetent and disqualified in every point of view'.²²³ Of the USS *Warren* in 1836, one officer wrote that it had gone to sea without a proper overhaul – the spar deck leaked, parts of the ship were rotted, and the trucks of the guns were untrustworthy.²²⁴ While it could be argued that every sailor before or since has complained about their

²²¹ Gene A. Smith, *Thomas ap Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000), pp. 34. Other assessments of Creighton continue on pp. 35-37.

²²² Court-martial of John Creighton, *Congressional Serial Set* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1817), p. 88.

²²³ Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel F. DuPont, 31 January 1829, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

²²⁴ Samuel DuPont to George Pendergrast, 23 January 1836. Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

ship in some way, the high deployment rate of sloops immediately before and during Jackson’s presidency meant significant maintenance issues that were reflected in the observations of the junior officers.

By 1836, the only two ships deemed unfit for service by the Board of Navy Commissioners were the *Hudson* and the *Java*.²²⁵ Two key assessments can be derived by this fact. First, there was a causal relationship between significant maintenance and repair issues with crew morale. Second, Jackson’s early emphasis on maintenance and repair investments – especially in the first three years of his administration – yielded positive results in the fleet. Had he not done so, it is likely that additional ships would have been deemed unfit for service by the end of his second term. Instead, Jackson left office with a Navy better prepared to conduct peacetime and potential wartime operations. Maintenance and repair of Navy ships was only one factor in ensuring the fleet was ready for long-term deployments or at domestic bases awaiting orders. The Navy required better facilities.

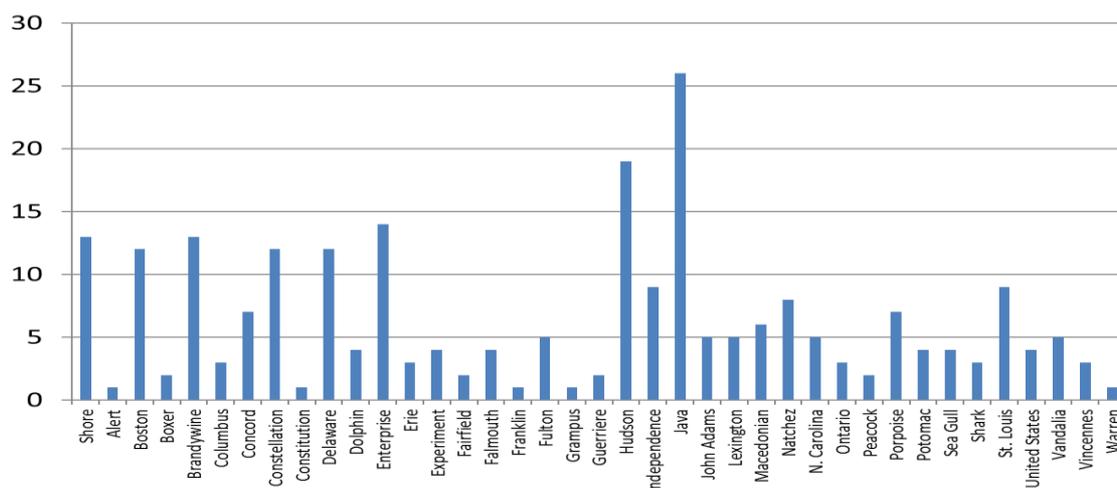


Figure 4.3 Number of Courts-Martial by Ship, 1828-1839

²²⁵ RG45 Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Records of Boards and Commissions, 1812-90; Board of Naval Commissioners: Estimates and Reports of Expenses of the Navy, 1815-1837, 3 vols. Volume I, Exhibit H.

Dry Docks and Navy Yards

To better prepare the Navy for long-term operations, Jackson supported the continued construction of the first dry docks and increasing the efficiency of the Navy Yards. This enabled ships to be serviced more quickly and cheaply. Based on input from the Board of Navy Commissioners in 1829, Branch found that the Navy was cutting the best timber in the country for authorized ships that were not being constructed and thus the timber was being exposed to the elements. According to the Board, the resulting decomposition was ruinously wasteful. Branch conceded that Jackson's intervention was required. The administration had to make a decision.

Most of the navy yards were nearly three decades old. Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, was built in 1800; Boston and New York were established in 1801. Norfolk had only recently been established in 1827 with a new dry dock in the early phases of construction. The Washington Navy Yard was the oldest shore establishment, built in 1799, and commanded by Commodore Thomas Tingey from its opening until a month before Jackson's inauguration. Even the shipyards were not immune from political machinations and debates. In 1829, there was at least one incident reported to Branch from the Philadelphia Navy Yard levelling charges against a senior civilian worker regarding 'improper influence at the last election' and of 'abusing General Jackson and his deceased Lady'.²²⁶

In his first year as Secretary, Branch pursued cost-savings measures with the navy yards recognizing their existence as one of the costliest functions in the Navy. He again turned to the Board of Navy Commissioners to investigate, asking if the budget could be materially diminished by a reduction of their number.²²⁷ The Board took a strategic approach to the study based on geographic threats and technologies. Based on geographical positioning and historical experiences from the Revolution and War of 1812, the Chesapeake Bay and Narragansett Bay (off Rhode Island) were the most vulnerable to

²²⁶ James Keenz to John Branch, 7 April 1829, Miscellaneous Letters to the Secretary of the Navy, Roll 118.

²²⁷ This proposal is the first example of what became known as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) in which several post-Cold War commissions sought to save money by closing bases in the U.S. and globally.

foreign incursion in what its members called 'our maritime frontier'. The board envisioned a spirited defence of those frontiers with both ships-of-the-line and steam batteries. It deemed Portsmouth as the least defensible. New York, Philadelphia and Pensacola were assessed as not accessible enough. Washington had larger ships but they could be moved by steamboats. The board's report recommended the Navy retain the navy yards at Boston, Washington, and Norfolk as well as create another near the Gulf of Mexico, an oddly ambiguous locale in the latter case since only Pensacola had some provisions for the Navy.²²⁸ Despite its small size, Pensacola was vitally important to the Navy since it was best positioned to protect the Navy's strategic asset – the wide swath of live oak trees which had given the Navy a significant advantage over its earlier French and British opponents. Live oak, the board noted, was the object of pillage by unprincipled nations. It was one of the densest woods in the world and its incorporation into the USS *Constitution's* hull, for example, led to its moniker 'Old Ironsides' when British cannonballs simply bounced off. With regard to live oak, the majority of funds spent between 1827 and 1830 were on the purchase of the live oak cut to moulds. Other costs included purchasing land, agents' salaries, and examinations and surveys.

In addition, the board could justify a navy yard in the Gulf of Mexico for economic security. Colonial and early republic era U.S. trade depended heavily on maritime routes to the West Indies. This was one reason why Jackson expanded that squadron. By 1829, the Mississippi River system accounted for half of all U.S. exports.²²⁹ As Jackson learned during the Battle of New Orleans and the journey to his inauguration, the river system had become the lifeblood of the economy and ought to be viewed from a strategic standpoint. This viewpoint was not unique to Jackson and the Democrats. One of its strongest supporters in the senate was Samuel Southard. The former Secretary of the Navy under the second Adams now served on the

²²⁸ John Rodgers to John Branch, 19 October 1829. Miscellaneous Letters to the Secretary of the Navy, Roll 118.

²²⁹ Worthy Putnam Sterns, "The Foreign Trade of the United States from 1820 to 1840", *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 8, No. 4 (September 1900), pp. 452-490

committee of naval affairs. Like his colleagues, he supported deepening Pensacola Bay, constructing a dry dock there, and building a marine railway for the repair of warships.

As was and is standard in military funding discussions by presidents or members of Congress, local politicians and interests advocated for their communities. Jackson's presidency was no different. For example, in 1836 the mayor and city council of Baltimore appealed to the president to establish a navy yard there.²³⁰ Similarly, two years earlier, community business and political leaders in Charleston advocated a naval depot and dry dock in that key South Carolinian city. Senator William J. Grayson, also serving on the Committee on Naval Affairs argued on behalf of the capacity of Charleston's harbour, the security it provided, and the harbour's depth. He also added it had access to the best timber for shipbuilding, given that it was closer than any other major yard to the live oak plantations. Various advantages would result from establishing a navy yard in that city for the building of smaller vessels-of-war as well as frigates, a process now rendered easier with the assistance of steam.²³¹ To support his argument regarding the depth of the harbour for large, deep-draft ships, Grayson argued that during the Revolutionary War, two British 52-gun ships-of-the-line had passed over its bar safely. It is unknown how Jackson, who had lost his mother due to those ships, received Grayson's appeal, but the Navy would not establish a yard in Charleston until decades later.

As part of his focus on navy yard facilities, Jackson was intent on continuing the previous administration's policies constructing dry docks. The first dry dock was built in Norfolk and was considered 'one of the most important feats of engineering to be undertaken in America during the pre-railroad era'.²³² Its construction had begun in 1827 and was completed in 1834 at a cost of \$950,000. A second dry dock was constructed in Boston. The cost of dry docks, like ships, was largely a function of material and labour.

²³⁰ 'Relative to the Establishment of a Naval Depot *American State Papers*, Naval Affairs IV

²³¹ 'On the Expediency of Establishing a Navy Yard and Depot at Charleston, South Carolina,' 24 June 1834, *American State Papers*, Naval Affairs IV, pp 565-566. See also p. 631.

²³² Christopher Tomlins, 'In Nat Turner's Shadow: Reflections on the Norfolk Dry Dock Affair of 1830-1831', *Labor History*, 33 (1992), 498.

Dry docks were constructed of granite, but the cost of the Norfolk project would cost \$300,000 more. Not surprisingly, Jackson took clear, direct interest in the Norfolk dry dock. In December 1830 Jackson, writing in the third person, made his intent known to Branch: 'The President desires that you should make known his solicitude to have this Dock compleated[sic] as early as possible, that our large vessels of war may be got in them for repair & prevented from that ruin that must ensure from their present condition.'²³³

Two of Jackson's phrases in this order shed unexpected light on his policies regarding the Navy. The first was for the rapid completion of the dry dock. The dry dock was unprecedented in the American republic and was a significant investment, which proves again Jackson's support for the Navy. The second phrase is that it be completed 'as early as possible'. A more conservative and political approach would have been to extend the work on the dry dock, thus providing jobs for the community for a longer timeframe. Instead, Jackson's desire for speed demonstrates a desire for financial efficiency and a desire that older ships would not be broken up or serve as receiving ships. Jackson meant to prepare the fleet fully for war should the need arise. By 1831, the dry docks were nearly complete. According to Secretary Woodbury, they 'present[ed] to the eye specimens of stone masonry seldom rivalled in beauty and solidarity'.²³⁴

The chief engineer of the projects, Loemmi Baldwin, Jr. could do little with the cost of granite due transportation. The only option available to him was to review the labour cost in Norfolk. Specifically, he intended to use local slave labour in the south. Opposition to Baldwin's plans was swift. The president of the Board of Navy Commissioners, Commodore Rodgers, wrote to Baldwin that he had received complaints from stonemasons who were being replaced by using slave labour. Slaves did not work for free. Blacks earned

²³³ Andrew Jackson to John Branch, 24 December 1830, ed by Daniel Feller et al, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, Volume VIII, 1830*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), p. 705.

²³⁴ *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1831), Annex E p. 7.

seventy-two cents per day and kept ten cents (the remainder went to their masters), while whites earned \$1.50 to \$2.00.²³⁵

The first Board of Navy Commissioners in 1817 had prohibited shipyard commandants from employing enslaved blacks, a prohibition that remained unchanged until the Gosport Dry Dock. Admittedly, most of the shipyards were in the north. Two years later, the Norfolk commander urged the necessity of employing black labour as a result of the increase in naval construction, but the Board declined the request because it would not abandon the principle laid down in the Board's circular. The Board, however, only temporarily acquiesced to the request. The Board also authorized Captain Lewis Warrington of the Gosport Navy Yard to employ forty blacks temporarily and increase their daily rate from sixty-two cents to seventy-five cents, but the Jackson administration denied this. This also posed a market problem. As noted by Captain James Barron, then in command of the Norfolk Naval Station, black labourers near the shipyard and base earned more in the local economy than in the shipyard. Consequently, the shipyard could not obtain a sufficient number to attend the ordinary duty. The disparity in pay caused Captain Warrington to state the obvious: white labourers did not perform more labour on a daily basis than blacks, therefore they should not be entitled to more pay. In addition, he argued, in the extreme environment of the south, black labourers performed most of the work.

Preceding the Nat Turner slave rebellion of 1831, the Board assessed that blacks were not difficult to govern, and that no insurrection, disorderly, or refractory spirited has been exhibited by them. Baldwin himself observed on 27 September 1831 that when he first went to Norfolk, he had strong prejudices against blacks as labourers and would not employ them. But as he observed all the labourers, he noticed that blacks worked harder than their white counterparts. Rodgers and the other two officers of the Board advised Woodbury that they could not guarantee employment to only white labourers because the high cost of labour would conflict with the public interest. Abandoning the practice of employing black labourers, they argued, would mean that there would be no way of equalizing wages at different yards.

²³⁵ Tomlins, p. 500.

Discharging black labourers would simply be too expensive.²³⁶ The decision reached by the Board, therefore, was not one from an abolitionist standpoint but from the cold, bureaucratic raw numbers associated with construction. This is not to say, however, that the abolition movement or its more violent aspects were not part of the Norfolk Dry Dock construction.

One of the major factors that precipitated the American Anti-Slavery Society and abolitionist causes during Jackson's presidency was the Nat Turner slave rebellion. This event was the most violent of the hundreds of slave uprisings in the antebellum period, which saw the death of fifty-five whites in southeastern Virginia on 22 August 1831. The situation was dire enough that Jackson ordered Marine Commandant Archibald Henderson to hold his entire force in readiness for the protection of the headquarters barracks, arsenals, and other public property that Turner and the rest of the rebelling slaves might attack. In addition, Jackson ordered Henderson to remain silent about the preparations 'that no alarm may be created among the Citizens'.²³⁷ Turner and his followers were captured and executed, and more than 120 blacks were killed in retaliation.²³⁸ The rebellion amplified a growing debate about the use of slaves over artisans, particularly in the construction of a Navy dry dock in Gosport.

Following the Turner rebellion, Secretary Woodbury directed a study to assess the use of black labour over white artisans. The Board of Naval Commissioners completed its study only a few months later. The Board had an uncharacteristically lengthy response in their 15 October 1831 letter to Woodbury. In it, the board provided historical background on the subject as well as contemporary arguments and evidence. Despite the publication of the report, Congress found no reason to debate it given the pro-slavery environment of half of the country. It is possible that labour issues in the south

²³⁶ John Rodgers to Levi Woodbury, 8 February 1833. Records of Boards and Commissions, Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy, April 25, 1815-August 26, 1842, Volume 4 of 7.

²³⁷ Acting Secretary John Boyle to Archibald Henderson, 17 September 1831. RG80 General Records of the Department of the Navy; Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886.

²³⁸ Christopher Tomlins, 'In Nat Turner's Shadow: Reflections on the Norfolk Dry Dock Affair of 1830-1831,' Labor History. For further reference, see Loammi Baldwin Papers (Boxes 8, 17-23, Baker Library, Harvard Business School).

led to the Navy considering its third dry dock elsewhere. In 1835, Woodbury recommended a third dry dock for the Navy, this one to be constructed in New York. The Brooklyn Dry Dock, however, would not reach completion until 1851. Two dry docks seemed sufficient for the Navy's size.

By 1831, Jackson had effectively assessed the immediate and long-term needs of the Navy. Ships that required maintenance and not deemed unfit received an infusion of funds. Partially completed ships at various stages of construction likewise received funding to ensure they did not rot in the shipyards. Just a year after investigating the issue of yard consolidation, the administration reconsidered its initial view. Branch reported to Congress that it should leave open the possibility of more, not fewer, navy yards. It is possible that this was done for political expediency. For example, the proposal for a Charleston navy yard came a year after the Nullification Crisis²³⁹ and could well have been promulgated to curry favour with the local politicians and citizenry. Moreover, given his own statements on the future of the Navy, Jackson foresaw a real need for expansion. Most likely, the recommendation was based on both factors. Regardless, his administration argued early in his first term that additional yards would be helpful for repairs, if smaller ships were built to increase the size of the Navy. That increase would occur in the middle of his first term. Having the infrastructure in place enabled Jackson to repair, maintain, and construct his Navy.

Return of the Schooners

As U.S. trade expanded and international threats grew, Jackson authorized the most significant built-up of the Navy since the height of the War of 1812. In 1831, his administration built or acquired eight ships, more than in any other single year since 1814, when Madison built nine.²⁴⁰ Jackson also understood the value of smaller ships. They were less expensive to build, less costly to man, and deployed at a higher rate than ships-of-the-line or

²³⁹ During Jackson's presidency, South Carolina reacted to the impact of various tariffs by ignoring federal law and threatening secession.

²⁴⁰ The number of ships built under Madison was far greater if platforms in the Great Lakes are considered, however those were only regional ships for the duration of the war. Their lack of long-term, oceanic capability is therefore the reason they are not included in this study.

frigates. Aside from the War of 1812, no class of ship would play a more dominant and needed role than the unrated ships – sloops and especially schooners.

An Act of Congress on 3 February 1831 authorized three new schooners: *Experiment* in Washington, *Enterprise* in New York, and *Boxer* in Charlestown. This division of labour continued a long-standing expectation from members of Congress. The Navy Act of 1794 had authorized six frigates to be designed by Joshua Humphreys. Humphreys rightfully preferred the same shipyard build them. Doing so would ensure that he could supervise the construction of the super-frigates that he had designed and that the shipwrights and construction workers would become more experienced with every warship they built. In addition, it would have resulted in more cost efficiencies since there would be a direct line from the resources to only one manufacturer (the selected shipyard.) Distribution would be cheaper, for example, because it only required one route to the shipyard rather than multiple routes to multiple shipyards thereby reducing the need for extra personnel. Unfortunately, that was not what occurred in the 1790s, 1830s or even in the early twenty-first century.

Since the construction of the nation's first six frigates, the work was distributed to as many congressional districts as possible. This was regardless of the overall cost of the program. When government funds were at stake, it was advantageous to gain the support of as many members of Congress as possible. Such support could only be enabled by distributing funds – and thereby providing jobs – among several congressional districts. For Humphreys and his successors in the 1830s, this meant that ships were built to different standards and that some would simply be better constructed than others.

Of the eight ships authorized, built, or acquired in 1831, only one was a frigate and another a sloop. On 3 February, Congress authorized the building of the ships. Sister ships *Boxer* and *Enterprise* were 10-gun, 194-ton ships with a length of 88-feet. Both designs by Samuel Humphreys were launched by the end of the year and commissioned the following year. *Experiment*, the only ship of her class, also mounted ten guns but was slightly smaller at 176-

tons. The William Annesley-designed schooner was launched and commissioned the following year.

These ships represented both the reality of deployment rates as well as dangers associated with seafaring. In the case of the latter, between 1798 and 1860, twenty U.S. Navy warships were either wrecked or disappeared. Two ships were wrecked in 1823 alone – the *Enterprise* and the *Alligator*. On 11 September 1829, the famed War of 1812 sloop *Hornet* was lost with all hands in a gale off Tampico, Mexico. Among her officers was Lieutenant Daniel H. Mackay, who had a lengthy correspondence with Lieutenant Samuel DuPont. Their former shipmate, Surgeon John S. Wiley recounted to DuPont:

Our inestimable friend Mackay's bright career is closed forever, as all hopes of the safety of the *Hornet* have died away [...] I feel the loss of our friend more sensibly than I expected or rather my uneasiness has been kept up day by day for several weeks until by meditating on the subject my imagination has painted him in all the dreadful agonies of the death struggle, and my flesh creeps at the horrid image.²⁴¹

DuPont's own recognition and acceptance of Mackay's death was sufficient to be entered in his private journal:

I have been somewhat prepared while in Mahon to hear the confirmation of a most melancholy piece of intelligence – the loss of the Sloop of War *Hornet*. By the papers received here, the most sanguine must abandon all hope...I have experience inward and deep sorrow for one in particular who has gone down with that decorated Ship.²⁴²

This may have had more of an impact on DuPont and the rest of the Navy, given other incidents that year. In June, the USS *Demologos* – the first steam warship – exploded in New York due to an accident. On 8 September, DuPont's own sloop, *Ontario*, was in route to the Mediterranean when the weather that morning had a threatening appearance. The clouds banked up and a fresh wind on the quarter drove the sloop at nine miles per hour. By mid-afternoon, a gale rapidly approached the ship.²⁴³ According to

²⁴¹ John S. Wiley to Samuel F. DuPont, 9 December 1829, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

²⁴² Extract from a private journal, February 1830. Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

²⁴³ Samuel DuPont, Group 9, Series C General Files, Box 46 Undated, Journals of Trips, 1828-1829, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

eyewitnesses, the ship was nearly lost. Had that been the case, in a period of three months the U.S. Navy would have lost three of its thirty-eight commissioned warships.

All the ships lost were either sloops or schooners. This is not to say that larger ships were not at risk. While rounding Cape Horn in a storm on its return from a two-year deployment in 1824, the ship-of-the-line USS *Franklin* came within two hundred yards of hitting rocks. Only the captain's quick actions saved the seven hundred lives aboard. Still, it was the sloops and schooners that bore the brunt of the dangers as Jackson learned again in 1831 with the disappearance of the *Sylph* and in 1833 the wreck of the *Porpoise*. One might argue that smaller ships were more likely to be lost in a storm simply because of their size. Another cause might be the ship's leadership. As unrated ships, they did not have captains in command, but rather lieutenants or masters commandant who had less experience. There is also a third possibility and that is the level of deployment.

Sloops and schooners were the backbone of the fleet performing duties throughout the world. They were the ships that could most quickly be ready for overseas deployments including assembling crews. Ships-of-the-line represented diplomatic authority and perceived national strength, since few countries could build or maintain them. Frigates likewise performed these roles, particularly the ships like *United States*, *Constellation*, and *Constitution*. Both classes served admirably as flagships but were too few and too manpower-intensive to deploy extensively. Consequently, the average annual deployment rate for ships-of-the-line from 1825 to 1835 was less than ten percent; in the first term of Jackson's presidency no ship-of-the-line deployed. The average annual deployment rate of frigates during that period was thirty-seven percent. More telling was that the deployment rate under the second Adams' administration was 47.2 percent; during Jackson's presidency, that rate fell to 28.7 percent. By contrast, sloops had an average annual deployment rate of 68.2 percent; schooners, 76.6 percent. Consequently, the greatest need was for the smaller ships.

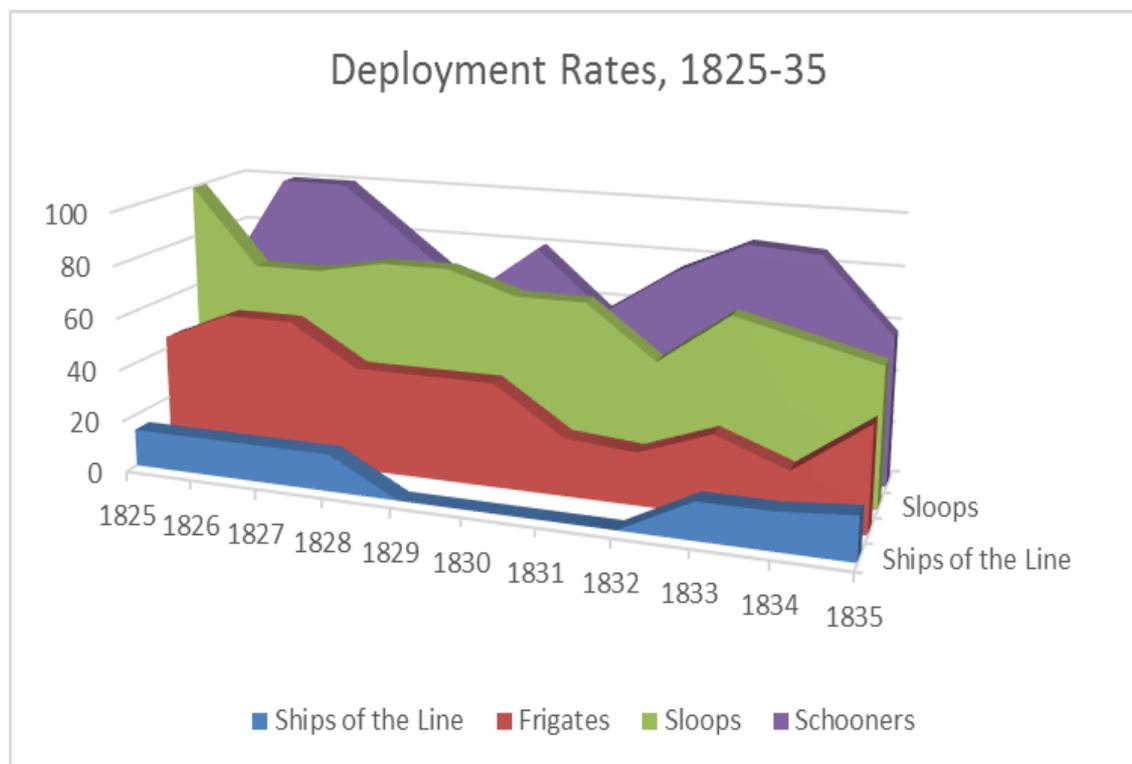


Figure 4.4 Deployment Rates, 1825-1835

Data compiled by author from individual ship locations in the annual reports of the Secretary of the Navy.

Jackson also understood that the unrated ships served an important role in maritime security along the United States coastline. The U.S. shipyards were at capacity in 1831 with the construction of five ships. Jackson also had a need to protect the strategic resource of live oak plantations in the Gulf of Mexico. Reports of European smuggling through intermediaries the trees for their own shipbuilding programs reached Jackson, who took immediate action. He ordered the purchase of three schooners in Baltimore, the *Spark*, *Ariel*, and *Sylph* for immediate deployment to the Gulf. These were lightly armed (reportedly one-gun), fifty-ton ships.

It is unlikely that any of these ships had a real impact to protecting the wood from poachers. Within a year, the *Sylph* had disappeared, and both the *Spark* and *Ariel* returned and were sold. Regardless of the losses, Jackson's support of a growing Navy in 1831 is yet another piece of evidence that suggests his navalist leanings. To secure his position in that camp, however, required more than just building more, smaller vessels. Navalists supported ships-of-the-line. Jackson fulfilled that in his second term with one of the

largest ships-of-the-line built by any country, the USS *Pennsylvania*. To do so, the Navy needed a designer capable of doing so.

The Designers

Upon first reflection, Jackson's naval policy was strictly in line with the anti-navalists, but it was far more pragmatic than ideological. It simply made no sense to the administration to continue drawing from the strategic reserve of live oak only to leave them to the elements in the shipyards. Temporarily stopping new authorizations of ships would allow the administration and the yards to complete construction of the already-authorized ships. For this, Branch relied on a select few designers and shipbuilders like the British system. Ship designers and even naval officers went to England to overtly or covertly study British ship designs, though the American Navy was just as likely not to adopt them. This was the case in the 1830s when the Americans could have learned from Sir Robert Seppings.

Seppings served as England's Surveyor of the Navy from 1813 until 1832. Although Joshua Humphreys had radically improved the U.S. frigates prior to the turn of the century, American ship innovation was largely stagnant unlike the British. Seppings made three major contributions to ship design that the U.S. failed to discover or adopt. First, he modified the bow from a beak-head bulkhead to rounded bow. The former proved a costly design. Though acceptable during traditional lines of battle in which fleets fired broadsides in parallel to each other, the Battle of Trafalgar proved that the beak-head bulkheads were too thin and weak to sustain heavy fire. This was especially true of Nelson's flagship, HMS *Victory*, whose gun crews in the fo'c'sle suffered the greatest casualties as it sailed directly toward the Franco-Spanish line.

Seppings second contribution was similar to the first as he created the curved stern bringing the frame timbers to the upper deck. The stern was traditionally the weakest part of the ship since the quarter galleys for the commanding officer and admiral were tacked on to the hull and supported by a single horizontal crossbeam. Seppings offered the curved stern, which mitigated the stress but also enabled a ship to mount more guns especially on

the stern and port quarter, always the most vulnerable locations on the ship. Despite the improvement, Seppings' design faced significant resistance from the Admiralty and other shipbuilders as they deemed the design unattractive. Seppings wrote to the Royal Academy of Science to defend his position.

His third contribution was to support the ship from the interior with diagonal frames instead of the ninety-degree riders in the American frigates. Again, speaking to the Royal Academy, he demonstrated the strength of a triangle compared to square and how that would impact the interior of a ship. The impact of these three innovations suggests that the British models by 1830 were superior to those of the out-dated American ships-of-the-line. Despite this, the Reform Government relieved Seppings in 1832. It deemed the Navy Board an antiquated and inherently corrupt organization and it replaced civilians with flag officers. The surveyor was the only position to survive, but King William IV favoured William Symonds, a former naval officer and yacht designer interested more in ship's speed than durability and firepower.

American ship architects and builders were too few to form a formal school like England's School of Naval Architecture that served under Seppings and instead relied on the traditional mentor system.²⁴⁴ The father of American naval architecture was Joshua Humphreys whose uniquely designed 'super-frigates' enabled the U.S. to gain single-ship action victories against the French and British in the Quasi-War and War of 1812 respectively.

The role of chief naval constructor, based in Philadelphia, fell to his son Samuel Humphreys who served in that position from 1826 for the next twenty years. Captain William Bainbridge, at that time serving as president of the Board of Naval Commissioners, officially endorsed Humphreys. Bainbridge commended Humphreys as advantageously known to the public and particularly to the Commissioners. The captain considered him one of the

²⁴⁴ David K. Brown, *Before the Ironclad: Warship Design and Development, 1815-1860*, (Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2015), p. 21.

most distinguished naval architects in the country and eminently suitable for the position.²⁴⁵

Along with Humphreys, the Navy hired John Lenthall the following year to serve as Humphreys' apprentice. By 1828, Lenthall became an assistant naval constructor at the Philadelphia Navy Yard and continued in increasing positions of responsibility through 1871. Jackson's first term also included the services of veteran shipbuilder Henry Eckford. Eckford's construction of ships in the Great Lakes had significantly contributed to halting Britain's advance from Canada during the War of 1812. He may also have had more influence with the administration than even Humphreys himself.

In June 1829, Eckford provided extensive recommendations to Branch on changes to the Department of the Navy. He proposed more control over the Navy by civilians instead of naval officers (such as the Board of Navy Commissioners.) Eckford complained that naval officers criticized the labours of the civilians 'who are not always competent to decide'. A peacetime navy, he argued, demanded strict economy but each constructor could improve the quality of ships. The present organization of the Department of the Navy was too defective to serve that purpose. Overall, he made a dozen recommendations including decreasing the ranks of naval officers and increasing civilian control of the shipyards.²⁴⁶ Eckford had not initiated these recommendations but only in response to Branch who had already surveyed the opinions of senior naval officers. Eckford returned to the private sector and in 1830 built the sloop *Kensington* for the Imperial Russian Navy, but when it reneged on payment the ship was sold to Mexico.

When Congress funded the construction of the largest wooden warship built in the nation, it again turned to Humphreys. 'I was aware of the great responsibility incurred,' he later wrote, 'and I was also aware that if any accident that happened in launching that ship, whatever professional

²⁴⁵ William Bainbridge to Samuel Southard, 18 November 1826. Records of Boards and Commissions, *Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy*, 25 April 1815-26 August 1842, Volume 3. National Archives and Records Administration.

²⁴⁶ Henry Eckford to John Branch, undated June 1829. Miscellaneous Letters received by the Secretary of the Navy, 1801-1884, Roll 117. VB 255.1.M5

reputation I might have had, would depart from me forever'.²⁴⁷ It was not just Humphreys' reputation at stake but the ability of the nation to construct its first line of battle ship in nearly a decade. Jackson's authorization to construct the *Pennsylvania* meant an increase in national prestige when it would pull in to foreign ports. There was also a domestic reality in that it created jobs.

The *Pennsylvania* was not a creation of the Jackson administration. The ship had been part of the 1816 authorization bill. What set her apart was she was the only first-rate ship-of-the-line proposed. The design was for a 120-gun ship as opposed to the third-rate 74-gun ships-of-the-line authorized that year. Her keel was laid six years later, but then work on it stopped. She would be ignored until Congress took up the 1837 naval appropriations bill just a few weeks before Jackson left office. The bill included a provision to fund completion of the *Pennsylvania*. When the provision was struck from the bill, Philadelphia Congressman Joel Barlow Sutherland rose to defend the funding. The ship, he argued, needed to be built rather than left rotting under a roof.²⁴⁸ He challenged the Chair of the Naval Affairs Committee, Leonard Jarvis, as 'having expressed preference for small sloops and schooners'.²⁴⁹ One of the reasons for this line of argument was the fear that if a ship-of-the-line were lost, it would take hundreds of American sailors down with it. Sutherland proposed that the *Pennsylvania* ought to be fitted out and launched and sent to foreign ports, that it might there be seen what American naval architecture was, what the seamen were, and what force the country could command in war.

Congressman Jarvis counter-argued that the ship was so large that only yards in the north could build it, so its construction unfairly favoured northern states. Other members of Congress opposed the program because of its cost. Representative John Reed, who had served in Congress for twenty years - alternately as a Federalist, Anti-Masonic, Anti-Jacksonian, and Whig - proposed the money for the *Pennsylvania* be shifted to domestic programs. Annual maintenance costs for the ship were estimated at seventy thousand

²⁴⁷ Samuel Humphreys to Isaac Chauncey, 18 February 1838, *Letters Received from Naval Constructors and Engineers*, National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm.

²⁴⁸ Joel Sutherland, *Debates in Congress*, 22 February 1837, Vol. XIII. pp. 1898-99.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

dollars. According to Reed, this was wasteful, given that five ships-of-the-line were at yards. Reed made a valid case. From 1825 to 1835, ships-of-the-line had a deployment rate of seventeen percent, and for three years the Jackson administration had deployed no ship-of-the-line. If the *Pennsylvania* were built, then its fate was likely to be found at American wharves rather than in serving overseas. Reed was ultimately proven correct.

The Committee on Naval Affairs denied funding for the *Pennsylvania* in committee. Rather, it supported funding more sloops and schooners. The \$400,000 earmarked for *Pennsylvania* could instead construct eighteen sloops and schooners. This would have accomplished several goals. First, it would immediately expand the Navy. Second, doing so would increase the number of ships available for deployment. Third, it would have eased the burden on ships that were deployed for long periods, since sloops tended to have the highest rate of deployments. Fourth, sloops usually had a lieutenant or master commandant in command rather than a captain. This was important since advancement was slow due to the fact that captains did not retire. Some captains had held the rank since before the War of 1812. More smaller ships meant more early command opportunities for those lieutenants or masters commandant who already had the maturity to lead and to prepare them for greater assignments. Fifth, having additional smaller ships meant more opportunities for midshipmen to learn their profession. Serving as one midshipman among two dozen on a ship-of-the-line took longer to learn the intricacies of sailing a man-of-war. Serving on a sloop meant one midshipman among a few had comparatively more responsibilities and an abbreviated learning curve.

A time factor also intensified the *Pennsylvania* debate. Silt deposits were quickly increasing in the Delaware River. The ship, at a projected 3200 tonnes, would be fifty percent larger than any other American ship-of-the-line with a draft that would make it impossible to launch in the future. In addition, new street construction in Philadelphia near the shipyard would further complicate and potentially delay construction. When the full house voted, it supported the committee's recommendation by a vote of 125-55. Of those voting for it was John Quincy Adams who had been elected to the House after

his defeat for the presidency in 1828.²⁵⁰ Given the overwhelming rejection of the ship by the House, the *Pennsylvania* should not have been constructed. Instead, the Senate quickly revived it. Records do not reflect the reason for this reversal. The Chair of the Senate's Committee on Naval Affairs, William C. Rives, offered an amendment for \$100,000 for launching the ship. After passing in the Senate, it went to the House, where it passed ninety-one to eighty-seven.²⁵¹ Only two days remained in Jackson's administration. There is no record of Jackson's official position, but given that he did not veto the bill, he was giving its construction at least his tacit support. Supplemental appropriations were passed to complete the construction.

The ship launched in July 1837. An estimated 200,000 Americans attended the ceremony.²⁵² Attending the launch was James Fenimore Cooper, who wrote to his wife, 'She is, altogether, the best-looking three-decker I have ever seen.'²⁵³ In November, the *Pennsylvania* sailed to Norfolk. At the outset of the Civil War she was burned to avoid capture by the Confederates. In her twenty-four-year life, she never made it to the open ocean.

²⁵⁰ Register of Debates in Congress, Vol. 13, Parts 1 and 2, 24th Congress, 2nd Session, 1836-37, (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1837), 23 February 1837. See also Claude Berube, 'Budget Battles, Interest Groups and Relevancy in a New Era: The Ship-of-the-Line USS Pennsylvania', Proceedings, 134 (Annapolis: Naval Institute, 2008), pp. 62-68.

²⁵¹ Register of Debates in Congress, Vol. 13, Parts 1 and 2, 24th Congress, 2nd Session, 1836-37, (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1837), 2 March 1837.

²⁵² Various accounts of the launch can be found in The Naval Magazine, July 1837 Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 509-513 and Daily National Gazette as recorded in Niles Weekly Register, 22 July 1837 p. 322.

²⁵³ Letter of from James Fenimore Cooper to Susan Cooper, 19 September 1837 ed. by James Franklin Beard, *The Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 293.

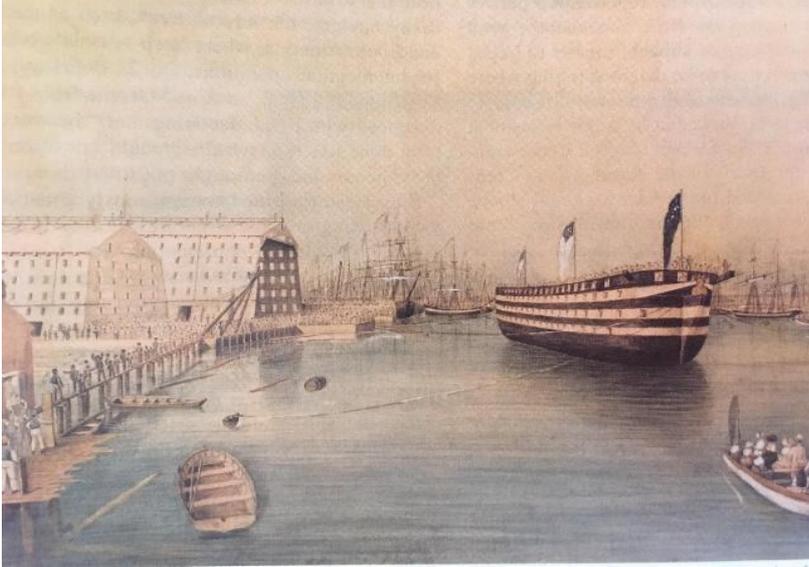


Figure 4.5 Launching of the USS Pennsylvania (Independence Seaport Museum)

There was no real need for the construction of the *Pennsylvania*. From an operational standpoint, Reed's evaluation was the most accurate. Sufficient ships-of-the-line were already available for deployment if needed. The *Pennsylvania* contributed nothing to the deployments of American squadrons. Technologically, this class of ship was already fading from the world's oceans. To make the class relevant, the Royal Navy's last sailing ship-of-the-line HMS *Queen* was launched two years later and eventually configured with a steam engine. In fact, all Royal Navy ships-of-the-line after 1839 were designed to include steam power. The last of the Royal Navy's mechanised wooden ships of the line was HMS *Victoria* launched in 1859 and followed immediately by the iron-clad HMS *Warrior*.

The ship reflected a divided nation political and strategically. It divided north from south, the latter suspicious of any federal funds for large projects in northern states. It divided the navalists between those who sought the prestige of large ships and those who saw the benefits of building more, smaller ships that were more practical. In Congress, the naval theorists were cast aside in the perennial fight for federal funds for districts. The ship represented a half-year worth of hundreds of jobs in Philadelphia. Jobs meant votes for whatever member of Congress secured those funds. In the end, an

expanded Navy was undermined by the need for re-election by members of Congress.

This factor may have also played a role in presidential elections. Jackson's second vice-president, Martin van Buren, had won Pennsylvania in the 1836 election with only fifty-one percent of the vote. Work finished on the ship by mid-1837 just as the Economic Panic was underway. Had the administration and the members supported the construction of eighteen sloops and schooners – as originally proposed – that work would have extended through at least two years and several states. Van Buren would lose to William Henry Harrison in 1840; in Pennsylvania, van Buren lost by the scantest of margins – 50 percent to 49.9 percent – thus diminishing Jackson's immediate naval legacy with the transfer of power from his party to another. Nevertheless, it would be the last ship-of-the-line built by the country as sail gave way to steam.

Steam Comes to the Navy

The transition of sail to steam was gradual for several decades. It then grew rapidly both commercially and militarily in the 1840s. The most prominent Jackson biographer argues 'Jackson did not have any sense of what was coming, but it was coming. I don't think he had that kind of vision. He didn't bother to think about it.'²⁵⁴ However, Jackson was not only open to the use of steam technology for the Navy, he actively advanced it. Neither of his two predecessors built a steam warship and only one purchased a commercial steamship for military operations. Jackson's administration ordered naval officers to gather intelligence on steam warship technology to inform domestic decision-making on naval policy. He pursued the incorporation of steamships into the Navy's force structure and was the first president to use steamships in joint Army-Navy actions. Perhaps this was the most enduring of shipbuilding values in the American Navy as it was in other navies. Historian Bernard Brodie writes:

Of the several great naval revolutions of the nineteenth century, the introduction of the steam warship was in its tactical, strategic, and ultimate political consequences far the most important. No other

²⁵⁴ Interview, Dr. Robert Remini, House of Representatives, Washington DC 24 June 2009.

invention influenced so profoundly the conditions of naval warfare and the factors contributing to naval power. Yet in the two decades that followed its first appearance, the steam warship gained but scant attention. Its introduction was stubbornly resisted by naval officers and largely ignored by statesmen.²⁵⁵

This is only partially accurate. There is no question about the impact of steam power in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Americans had had some exposure to steam engines, but there had been little opportunity to fully exploit its widespread applications. Steam power was becoming more common by Jackson's administration, but was still in its infancy, as the United States did not yet have significant industrial capacity. Steam ferries, such as one first built by John Stevens in 1802, were inefficient but slowly improving. Despite this, officers saw the future. The prescient but doomed Lieutenant Daniel Mackay, who died with all hands aboard *Hornet* in 1829, foresaw steam ships as the means of war at sea in the coming decades. Reviewing a book on steam defence and vulnerable points of Britain, he relayed to his friend Lieutenant du Pont of the 'absolute necessity and great facility of protecting our Coast by Steamers...this now universal mover to the purposes of Naval War'.²⁵⁶

The U.S. Navy's inventory at the beginning of 1829 included two steamships. Neither was operational. The Navy in 1822 purchased the *Sea Gull*, built in 1818 as a commercial vessel in New England. David Porter, fighting pirates in the West Indies, required shallower-draft vessels. The *Sea Gull* offered that as well as windless manoeuvrability in the littorals. In addition, the ship could make round-trips back to the United States faster than most sailing vessels. In a two-year period, she made three deployments to serve with the West Indies Squadron. By 1825, the ship was considered unfit for further deployments and converted as a receiving ship in Philadelphia until 1840. *Sea Gull* was the first operational steam warship, but it was not the first steam warship in the Navy. *Sea Gull* was preceded by Robert Fulton's

²⁵⁵ Bernard Brodie, *Seapower in the Machine Age*, (Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 17.

²⁵⁶ Daniel Mackay to Samuel Du Pont of 1 January 1829. Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Group 9, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE.

Demologos was the first steam-propelled warship in the world but it never saw action.

Robert Fulton had built the *Demologos* in 1815. Although it was not completed in time to fight in the War of 1812, it still drew interest among officers who knew they had barely escaped a broader war loss and disaster at the hands of the British. It was the only steam powered warship built for the next twenty years and even its accidentally destruction in 1829 did not deter technology's advocates. Articles in the naval journals recognized that 'the whole naval system of this and every other maritime country is about in a few years to be overturned by the superior powers and advantages of steam frigates, steam, fortifications, and steam guns'.²⁵⁷ The change, they saw, was inevitable and U.S. warships should be built or retrofitted with steam propulsion.

The *Demologos* was recognized as a crude vessel since it was the first. Even proponents suggested it was 'clumsy, cumbersome, and very slow in her movements'.²⁵⁸ Still, they viewed that the formidable character of the vessel was never actually tested. One or a few steam warships might be used in the West Indies for piracy suppression, but a few would not be enough in a confrontation with a greater power. With England's twenty-one steam warships in 1836 and France's twenty-three, a few American steam warships could quickly alter the disparity in naval capabilities between the two powers. If that could happen, then the U.S. itself could compete with larger countries by investing in its own steam warships. They could also be used in stabilizing the Gulf of Mexico, given the belligerence of both Texas and Mexico and the potential growth of piracy.

That honour fell to Robert Fulton's *Demologos* upon which the Navy had been experimenting for more than a decade. She was, in fact, the first steam warship built by any navy. The shallow-draft, twin-hulled ship constructed during the War of 1812 was intended to support coastal, riverine, and harbour defence rather than blue water operations. Primitively - but

²⁵⁷ Untitled article, *The Military and Naval Magazine of the United States*, March-August 1833, p. 48.

²⁵⁸ X, 'On Steamers of War', *Naval Magazine*, July 1836, p. 347.

understandably - fuelled by burning wood, the ship was still an important genesis for the eventual coal-powered steamships of the later 1830s and throughout the nineteenth century.

By the time Jackson became president, *Demologos* had been kept at the Brooklyn Navy Yard with a full crew including a captain and crew of more than thirty. Primarily serving as a receiving ship, she was moored head and stern opposite the navy yard. According to the commanding officer in 1829, Captain John T. Newton, the ship was in such a decayed state that the decks leaked.²⁵⁹ The guns were used sparingly out of fear they would go through the deck. Mounting sixteen guns, she had five hundred pounds of gunpowder partly in casks in the magazine located along the starboard bow. A standard door stood between the magazine and the light room.

On 4 June 1829, in addition to the crew, the ship had prisoners awaiting adjudication and more than seventy recruits. Newton was escorting Commodore Isaac Chauncey on board for an inspection that lasted until mid-afternoon. Chauncey and the captain left minutes before an explosion destroyed the ship, killing approximately thirty officers and sailors and wounding another twenty-nine. Any opponents of the comparatively new steam technology might have used it as an excuse to slow down the pursuit of this radically new type of ship. Branch constituted a court of inquiry to determine the cause. For three weeks, the court heard testimony from the surviving crew. The captain testified that his orders, especially regarding the magazine, were particular and verbal to all officers on the ship. The ship always had a sentinel placed at the hatch so as not to permit any improper intrusion. 'Every precaution was taken at all times to prevent accidents.'²⁶⁰ Clearly, the captain was wrong in this case since the event had been the result of an accident.

²⁵⁹ Records of General Courts Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867 Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840, National Archives I, RG 125, M273, Cabinet 53A-drawer 5 and Cabinet 54, Rolls 18-35. Case number 502.

²⁶⁰ Records of General Courts Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867 Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840, National Archives I, RG 125, M273, Cabinet 53A-drawer 5 and Cabinet 54, Rolls 18-35. Case number 502.

Commodore Chauncey had no knowledge of the cause but stated that it could not have been the result of the design. It had to be, he stated, accidental. He speculated that either the gunner's mate entered the magazine with his lantern or he entered the passage to the light room where the atmospheric state – without ventilation - produced combustion by coming in contact with the lighted candle. According to Marine Second Lieutenant Alexander Mull, Acting Gunner's Mate Thomas Williams had come to the officer of the deck, Lieutenant Breckenridge, to enter the magazine. Breckenridge, later killed in the explosion, ordered him to have the fire and lights put out and a sentinel put over the hatch leading to the passage to the magazine. Mull was in the wardroom when the explosion took place and it was, therefore, impossible for him to state the cause. If the fault rested with Gunner's Mate Williams, it did not change the opinion of the witnesses. Chauncey and others noted his lengthy service and unblemished record. Sailing Master John Clough testified that a few days before the explosion, the former gunner and he conversed about his successor. Both recommended Williams.

Even though Williams appeared to have caused the explosion, the inquiry explored another culprit. Midshipman David McDougal noted that he saw Seaman Hannan go into the hatch at some point and the sentry did not resist. The court asked if he knew that Hannan was 'a person under charge of Stealing and a Bad Man'. Though there several questions about Hannan, all that was certain was that his mangled body and broken legs were found after a week in the water. The body was not bruised or lacerated and the hair was not singed. This suggested that Hannan was not in proximity to the explosion.

The court's opinion was that the explosion resulted from an accident and not due to the design of the ship. It concluded that Williams probably had a lighted candle in his hand and that there was no error on the part of Captain Newton or the officers. One should not underestimate court of public opinion because the process and result could have been far different. In American naval history, naval accidents have often spiralled into a media feeding frenzy based on assumptions, preconceptions and political desires. The most glaring example of this was the explosion of the USS *Maine* that was caused by a design flaw. The media immediately claimed Spain had caused the explosion.

The first two American investigations supported this theory.²⁶¹ While there was no similar effort to lay blame on a foreign power, any opponents of steam power might have used the incident to delay the development of this new technology.

In 1830, engineer John Stevens found that it was time to reassess his views on future naval tactics using steam vessels. He wrote to Jackson that the Board of Navy Commissioners was doing nothing to advance steam technology or how it might be employed in naval operations. The conservative board at the writing of his letter in March 1830 was comprised of its long-term president, Rodgers, Captain Lewis Warrington, and Captain Daniel Patterson (Commodore Charles Stewart would replace Warrington later that year.) Stevens held the entire board in little regard. He suggested they all ought to be promoted to admiral – a rank that did not exist until 1862 – and moved out of the way so that they would not be an impediment to progress.

Stevens challenged their ‘violent and inveterate’²⁶² prejudices. Naval reform was vital but the commissioners opposed any measures. Steam would be integral to the next naval conflict, Stevens argued. ‘Wo[e] be to that naval power who shall then remain unprepared to meet it.’²⁶³ Finally, he shared with Jackson the report of a naval officer sent to France and England to evaluate their naval establishments.²⁶⁴ This was nothing short of an intelligence mission. Both European countries were making significant progress on their own steam engines and would be introducing steam warships into their naval inventories.

It is unknown how Jackson reacted to the letter. But it is evident that early in his administration, Jackson was made aware of the steam power issue

²⁶¹ The 1898 Sampson Board Court of Inquiry concluded the ship was sunk by a mine. The 1911 Vreeland Board Court of Inquiry concluded that an external explosion detonated the magazines. In 1974, Admiral Hyman Rickover’s investigation correctly determined that the explosion was caused by combustion from a coal bunker located next to a magazine.

²⁶² John Stevens to Andrew Jackson, 22 March 1830, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, Volume VIII, 1830*, ed. by Daniel Feller et al., (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), pp. 144-145.

²⁶³ *ibid.*, John Stevens to Andrew Jackson, 22 March 1830, pp. 144-145.

²⁶⁴ Alexander Slidell to John Rodgers, ___ March 1835, RG45 Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Records of Boards and Commissions, 1812-90; Board of Naval Commissioners: Estimates and Reports of Expenses of the Navy, 1815-1837.

through one of the few men in the country who had authority on the matter. Stevens was the inventor and engineer who had built the first domestic steam boat in 1802 and the first steam locomotive capable of towing passenger cars in 1825. In addition, Stevens carried with him the gravitas of the one of the most pedigreed families in America. His wife was the sister of Robert Livingston, one of America's Founders, and Senator Edward Livingston who would soon serve as Jackson's secretary of state and minister to France. Jackson had seen the practical use of steamboats prior to the Battle of New Orleans and his inaugural journey, but Stevens now provided the commercial impetus for exploring this technology for the Navy.

Nevertheless, it is possible that Stevens overstepped his bounds among the naval establishment. A few weeks after he sent the scathing letter to Jackson, Stevens wrote to him again, promising 'to be more guarded in my expressions on the present occasion'.²⁶⁵ If the Board of Navy Commissioners became aware of Stevens' scathing remarks, they could have made him a pariah in naval development. But Stevens was one of the few people in the country who could evaluate proposals for steam engines or bid on future contracts himself. The Board also had to be careful of Stevens' family ties; having a powerful senator in the family tempered their response. Regardless, Stevens recognized the need to be more cautious in his approach on the issue.

Stevens' own history presaged the national industrial revolution that began to take hold in the 1830s in the United States. Before the American Revolution, the British had prohibited colonial production of weapons, such as muskets. It would take decades for the Americans to develop the ability to tool up and produce quality metals. The extraction of rich ores and other resources met rising indigenous manufacturing capability. This convergence immediately impacted the Navy. For example, in 1831 the Navy ordered the addition of iron tanks in ships-of-the-line and frigates for both ballast and improved quality of water storage. This represented a departure from the norm as well an indication that the Navy and the country were finally able to produce the tanks.

²⁶⁵ Stevens to Jackson, 7 April 1830, page 179.

The availability of basic resources, increased manufacturing capability, the creative vision by Stevens and others offered the Navy the first real opportunity to pursue a new generation of ships. While cultural resistance from some senior officers continued, the new possibilities had taken a firm hold in the officer corps. Master Commandant Alexander Slidell Mackenzie was part of the next generation to acknowledge the application of steam to warfare with specific respect to coastal steam batteries: 'While such astonishing improvements are making in the application of steam, it would be improvident to overlook its probable importance hereafter in maritime warfare, or fail to keep pace with other naval nations in any new means of attack or defence.'²⁶⁶

Secretary Woodbury would advocate for such three steam batteries in his 1833 report to Congress. Slidell Mackenzie noted the experiment of the *Demologos*. He recommended that Congress appropriate funds to the Department of the Navy to replace the *Demologos* or at least to purchase new and more appropriate machinery for test. Slidell Mackenzie's advocacy was not a meaningless entreaty from one of the many officers in the Navy. He was, instead, part of the Navy's royalty - the Perry-Rodgers clan that had dominated the Navy for decades. Mackenzie's brother-in-law was Matthew Perry (the younger brother War of 1812 hero Oliver Hazard Perry.) Slidell Mackenzie's own extensive authorship in the 1820s and 1830s and his membership of a naval dynasty were more likely to make members of Congress and Jackson listen. It also demonstrated a possible early split in the family given that the president of the Board of Navy Commissioners was Rodgers.

The resistance of senior naval officers to steam power was not universal. One of the most senior officers during Jackson's administration was Commodore Barron. He had had a checkered career. He was dismissed in 1807 from the Navy for five years for having surrendered the USS *Chesapeake* to the HMS *Leopard*. Prevented from fighting the British during the War of 1812, he was persuaded to settle a long-standing conflict with Stephen Decatur by duel in 1820 in which he killed the latter. Barron

²⁶⁶ *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1831), Annex L, p. 8.

consequently served in command of several shore stations and shipyards including the Philadelphia Navy Yard – the centre of American Navy shipbuilding. It was here that Barron would propose one of the Navy's most unique and innovative warships.

While commander of the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Barron had submitted several navy-related inventions to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Some of his patents included a floating dry dock gun, a gun carriage and a ship ventilation system. His most significant proposal, however, was for a steam-driven ram ship.²⁶⁷ In December 1833, Barron reported to Woodbury that his proposed ship could be fundamental to the defence of America's inland waterways and coastline. He had discussed his design with other officers, none of whom dissuaded him from pursuing this concept.²⁶⁸ Woodbury not only endorsed the proposal, he encouraged Barron to meet with members of Congress to advance the idea.²⁶⁹

Barron's ship had no guns; its sole offensive weapon would be its ram prow, much like ancient Greek and Roman galleys. He appealed to fellow Virginian Andrew Stevenson, at that time serving as speaker of the House of Representatives. At Barron's urging, Stevenson had a model in the House Naval Affairs Committee room for display to help explain the concept to the members. Throughout 1834, Barron secured the support of more officers who saw the value in such a warship. The proposed ship would be capable of eight knots of speed, more than sufficient to pierce an enemy's hull.²⁷⁰

At the beginning of the next congressional session in 1835, the House Naval Affairs Committee supported construction of such a ship.²⁷¹ The committee noted the ship's simplicity and capability that went well beyond just being an experimental project. Already it envisioned a fleet of cost-effective,

²⁶⁷ John D. Craig to James Barron, 12 November 1833, *James Barron Collection*, Special Collections Research Centre, Swem Library, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

²⁶⁸ James Barron to Levi Woodbury, 30 December 1833. Barron Collection.

²⁶⁹ Levi Woodbury to James Barron, 31 December 1833. Barron Collection.

²⁷⁰ Charles Stewart to James Barron, 25 October 1834. Barron Collection.

²⁷¹ 'House of Representatives, Documents, Legislative and Executive of the United States, 23rd Congress, 2nd Session', *American State Papers*, Naval Affairs, (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1837) p. 704.

small crew-size ram ships protecting America's coastline. With a proposed length of 250 feet, the ship was also unusual that it would have three hulls. Between the hulls were steam-powered paddle wheels to protect them from enemy fire.

The Board of Naval Commissioners scrutinized the steamship. It had Samuel Humphreys and John Lenthall visit businesses that built steam vessels and engines in order to assess the Barron model. When the naval designer and constructor reported, the Board concurred that the vessel 'ought to be mainly constructed for harbour defence'²⁷² travel at 10 miles per hour, and carry two heavy pivot guns able to throw eight- or ten-inch shells and four 32-pounder carronades. Humphreys and Lenthall also recommended the ship be about fifty feet shorter than proposed by Barron.

Despite the endorsement of the committee, the House failed to authorize funding. The lack of debate on the issue fails to shed light on the reason behind this but there are three possibilities. First, Congress was concurrently considering the expensive ship-of-the-line *Pennsylvania*. The House may have simply chosen to support one over the other, and since the *Pennsylvania* would result in more immediate jobs, that tended to be the politically expedient choice. Second, Barron's advocate in the House, Speaker Stevenson, had left office in the middle of his term in 1834, having been nominated by Jackson to serve as Minister to England. Before Stevenson resigned, however, he was accused of having set into motion several of Jackson's policies, thus leading to accusations of a *quid pro quo*. This was ironic given Jackson's denunciation of the so-called 'corrupt bargain' of the 1824 election. Jackson's opponents denied Stevenson his appointment. Therefore, it is possible the steam ram ship was simply wrapped up in this controversy. Third, it is also possible that Barron himself confronted a populist and hostile House which still remembered the death of America's greatest naval hero by Barron's hand, something he suspected when he approached Jackson himself.²⁷³

²⁷² Charles Morris to Mahlon Dickerson, 29 July 1835, Letters Received by Naval Constructors and Engineers, *Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy*, April 25, 1815-August 26, 1842, Records of Boards and Commissions, National Archives and Records Administration.

²⁷³ James Barron to Andrew Jackson, 5 January 1836, Barron Collection.

Whatever the reason, the Naval Affairs Committee and Barron were prescient. The development of these ships in the 1830s would have had an important role twenty-five years later at the outbreak of the Civil War. Ramming of enemy ships came back into style and the riverine systems were filled with makeshift steam ram ships. Barron's novel design benefitting from another generational development might have shortened the war. Regardless, the House did not abandon steam warships. A fourth and more likely possibility is that they chose to invest in a different steamship under consideration at the same time as the ram ship.

Fulton II

If Jackson seemed undecided about Barron's ram ship, he appeared to have endorsed another steam warship, which became known as the *Fulton II*.²⁷⁴ The proponents of this ship had several advantages over the competing Barron design. The Board of Naval Commissioners invested more time inquiring about it, suggesting an openness that was not evident with the Barron design. It benefited from an intelligence-gathering mission by a member of the Rodgers family, while Rodgers served as the Board's president. Finally, civilians experienced with steam engines were under consideration for contracts in a way that was absent in Barron's proposal.

In November 1833, the Navy sent Master Commandant Alexander Slidell Mackenzie to Britain.²⁷⁵ Mackenzie later published a two-volume book in 1835 about his time in Britain as if he were a common traveller observing architecture, people, and events, much like Alexis de Toqueville did with *Democracy in America*. Absent from the book, however, was much mention of the Royal Navy for good reason.²⁷⁶ Mackenzie had sent a full report on the Royal Navy's steam warship program directly to the Board of Naval

²⁷⁴ The first *Fulton* was more commonly known as the *Demologos*, the ship that exploded in 1829.

²⁷⁵ Until 1837 his name was Alexander Mackenzie Slidell. He legally inverted his middle and surname to comply with the will of his uncle. For the purposes of this dissertation, he will be referred with his later legal name except with regard to specific correspondence prior to 1837.

²⁷⁶ *The American in England*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1835) Author's note: the 1835 book does not list Slidell as the author, referring to him on the title page as 'The Author of "A Year in Spain"'.

Commissioners. Rodgers had ordered Mackenzie to go to England with a clear mission, to 'procure as accurate information as possible relative to the construction of steam vessels of War in the British Navy'.²⁷⁷ When he reached England in early 1834, he visited the principal dockyards where he observed the latest steamships and made acquaintances with Royal Navy officers. Whether this was spying or intelligence-gathering, it was not unprecedented by other countries. One historian notes:

Two [French navy] officers were sent to the United States in 1820 to report upon the properties of the steam vessels there, and this event was followed by the purchase and addition to the Navy List of a few unarmed steamships. But in the spring of 1830, six armed steamers were available as auxiliary warships and dispatch vessels in the expedition against Algeria.²⁷⁸

Mackenzie reported that the British Navy had two types of steamships. The first was a smaller vessel for use as mail packets and as ship tenders. These ranged from one hundred to three hundred tons. The second class included offensive warfare ships at six to nine hundred tons and one hundred seventy-four feet long. Mackenzie assessed that their bows were sharp and could make ten to eleven knots. He also gave specific assessments on individual British ships.

A broader value to the Mackenzie report was its intelligence on opinions of Royal Navy leadership and the inherent inability to get accurate information. Captain Sir William Symonds had been appointed Surveyor of the Navy three years before Mackenzie's arrival. Symonds had proposed new modes of naval construction that enabled construction of larger ships, which met with opposition from traditional shipwrights and the School of Naval Architecture that had closed in 1832. Symonds' larger designs quickly became obsolete as steam power emerged.

Nevertheless, the two camps within the Royal Navy (the 'old and new schools' as Mackenzie called them) were not reliable sources for the capabilities of the new steamships. Each side presented its own facts that

²⁷⁷ Alexander Slidell to John Rodgers, undated March 1835, Records of Boards and Commissions, 1812-1890, *Board of Naval Commissioners, Estimates and Reports of Expenses of the Navy, 1815-1837*.

²⁷⁸ Bernard Brodie, *Seapower in the Machine Age*, (Princeton University Press, 1941) p. 17.

best supported their case. For example, the new school tended to inflate ship speed and performance to gain the support of Parliament. The same was true of the sailing navy who wanted to justify their own shipbuilding vision.

Mackenzie's report was not solely focused on steam warships. Given the number of ships of sail that comprised the majority of the Royal Navy, Mackenzie also reported on newer ships such as the 50-gun HMS *Vernon*. Perhaps his most important observation regarding the traditional sailing navy was how the Royal Navy was cutting down some of their smaller ships-of-the-line into frigates such as HMS *Barham*. There was a direct correlation between British policies and American shipbuilding. It is no coincidence that the U.S. Navy pursued the same with the ship-of-the-line USS *Independence*, which was razeed²⁷⁹ and became a 54-gun frigate in 1836.

In 1835, the Secretary of the Navy requested \$150,000 for the completion of the *Fulton II*. This was more evidence that Barron had little senior support for his design. Nevertheless, the Board of Naval Commissioners continued to be cautious about any option citing a lack of construction experience and untested cost estimates. The hull itself was already under construction but with no decision made on the steam plant, the board advertised in major newspapers in the hope of contracting out for the more complex technology. The Board was still unsure it could find any appropriate individual or firm, noting:

From [the board's] ignorance upon the subject of Steam Engines, they are in doubt whether the advertisement gives the necessary information to enable persons to make proper offers, and they are satisfied that they are incompetent themselves, and have no person under their direction which could furnish them with the necessary information to form a contract for Steam Engines [...] should the lowest offers happen to be made by persons whose general character and responsibility would not offer great security for their completing the Engines in the best manner.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ A razeed ship was one which had an entire deck removed. For example, a razeed frigate was one that was formerly a ship-of-the-line.

²⁸⁰ John Rodgers to Mahlon Dickerson, 30 December 1835, Letters Received from Naval Constructors and Engineers, Records of Boards and Commissions, *Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy*, April 25, 1815-August 26, 1842.

By 27 January 1836, the Board had received only two offers. Gouverneur Kemble of the West Point Foundry proposed constructing the engine and boilers, while Daniel Large proposed manufacturing only the boilers. The design of *Fulton II* was changing and adapting to the latest improvements in technology. The Board paying generous attention to the subject, the members recognized that they lacked the expertise in the construction and management of steamships. Between the contractors, the Board selected Kemble's West Point Foundry on 17 February. Kemble had a long history with the Navy, having served as a navy agent in Spain during the Second Barbary War where he learned about casting iron. He also was also involved in Democratic politics in New York. After gaining the contract in 1836, he was elected to Congress.

One of Kemble's employees was Charles Haynes Haswell, a twenty-eight-year-old marine engineer who had first worked on Robert Fulton's commercial steamship *Clermont*. Haswell was also connected with the Navy's reformers as one of the few civilians to hold a membership in the Naval Lyceum. Still, the board reserved full support for Haswell. Several firms and individuals sent letters of recommendation that concurred on his intelligence and familiarity with construction of engines. Nevertheless, the board remained concerned that he had no practical experience on ships. Despite this, Haswell was appointed first Chief Engineer of the Navy two days later.

By August, Rodgers reported to Acting Navy Secretary John Boyle that work on the *Fulton II* had been long delayed and that several more months were required to build the engines. Delays in ship construction, particularly of a new class, have been common in U.S naval history. It took another year, but the *Fulton* was finally launched in 1837 after Jackson left office. Even had there been a national security crisis or a sense of national urgency, it is unlikely that the ship could have been constructed more quickly. The industrial capacity of the country and the navy were not yet mature and, with this ships, the navy could not get it wrong.

Captain Isaac Chauncey, having assumed the presidency of the board after Rodgers fell gravely ill, reported to Secretary Dickerson that the *Fulton* would probably be ready to accompany the ship-of-the-line *Pennsylvania* if

deemed necessary. Had that happened, it would have been an impressive sight, the new escorting the old. That might have been America's moment similar to what British artist JMW Turner had captured with his *The Fighting Temeraire*.

Support for new steam warships was not universal – some older, conservative officers and later Secretary of the Navy James Kirke Paulding had reservations. However, they failed to collectively articulate their concerns in the pages of the journals whether by intent or necessity. One opponent did note:

As for steam, it will not do at sea, contending with ships of the line [...] this mode of warfare does not comport with the dignity of our nation. We have abundance of material for shipbuilding, skilful [sic] hands to construct, talents to direct, and bold hearts to use them.²⁸¹

Jackson would not have fallen into the category of the conservatives. While the *Fulton* was under construction, the president had drawn the military into the Second Seminole War. Six months after the war started, Jackson personally ordered the deployment of three steamboats for riverine operations in Florida.

Conclusion

Jackson's presidential term was more navalist than anti-navalist given the number of ships he authorized to be constructed. But Jackson wasn't only interested in raw ship numbers. His administration reflected a mature understanding of national needs for the fleet and the types of ships that best supported the various missions required. He displayed a remarkable balance of investing in the highly deployed sloops and schooners, the prestige offered by one of the world's largest ships-of-the-line, and the advancement associated with supporting new steam technology. In addition, he authorized the construction of the first armed supply ship, a radical departure from the first six presidents. While it was only one ship, it was a clear message that the U.S. Navy would be expected to sail to any distant station and support itself if necessary. In addition, he understood the importance of investing in shipyard

²⁸¹ C, Untitled letter, *The Army and Navy Chronicle*, 25 January 1838, p. 58.

infrastructure, an important albeit overlooked aspect of advancing a nation's navy. Because of Jackson's administration, the Navy could build upon fleet diversity and infrastructure support to conduct more global operations.

Chapter 5: Maritime Destiny—A Global Strategy and Naval Operations

The U.S. was not at war with any country during Jackson's administration. That did not, however, mean threats to the nation were dormant. And while it is true that the Second Seminole War began in 1835, it did not pose an international threat since the region was not an autonomous hegemonic state. It also posed no threat to the United States, since it was Jackson's administration that initiated the war. Nevertheless, civil wars, threats by non-state actors such as pirates, and suspicions about the great powers were always on the near horizon. Jackson himself recognized in his inaugural address and annual messages to Congress the various challenges the young republic faced internationally. Jackson understood that those global challenges threatened U.S. commerce and economic growth and developed a national maritime strategy that planned for and addressed them.

This chapter discusses the international maritime challenges posed to the United States during Jackson's administration and how he responded to them. Unlike many of his predecessors, Jackson had no experience in international travel or ministerial positions. Despite this, he understood that global maritime challenges threatened U.S. commerce and economic growth. He then developed a strategy to respond to these challenges. This chapter discusses his adjustment of squadrons to respond to changing threats, his judicious use of punitive naval actions, and his use of naval forces to support Army operations during the Second Seminole War.

The components of Jackson's strategy were more inspired than historians have generally contended and have been largely ignored in the historiography of the era of the Early Republic. Still, a few U.S. naval historians have expressed a belief that Jackson did reflect on the issue, but they failed to study his administration in depth. In their book on naval history, Harold and Margaret Sprout wrote, 'It is possible that [Jackson] had some conception of the strategic doctrine which is summed up in the phrase,

command of the sea. If so, he had clearly outstripped even the professional naval opinion of the day.²⁸²

Jackson's maritime strategy was comprised of three parts. The first was that he would create favourable trade conditions for U.S. merchant ships. Arguably, his opening of additional commercial markets in the 1830s was more valuable to the United States than Mahanian expansionism of the 1890s. In the case of the latter, Mahan, Theodore Roosevelt and others wanted territories in the Pacific in order to facilitate naval operations in future wars. It also demanded a large, costly fleet. But it was the peaceful pursuit of trade agreements by John Quincy Adams and Jackson that helped to fuel the industrial revolution that enabled the Mahanians to believe American dominance on the high seas was possible.

The second part of his maritime strategy was the continued provision and expansion of squadrons at key geographical locations to protect the merchant ships. The Navy, Jackson said, was the best standing security of the country against foreign aggression. It was also the only way to ensure that the lawful transaction of maritime commerce continued unabated. Without security, American merchant ships were a target of pirates and other interests. This meant insurance rates rose driving up the cost of conducting business. That increase in cost would then be passed on to the American consumer.

The third part of Jackson's maritime strategy required punitive strikes if necessary. Contrary to conventional historical assessments, Jackson did not use the Navy without significant thought on the options, approaches, and consequences. For Jackson, the third option was always a last resort and not the first choice, an important distinction to dispel the myths about Jackson's temperament with regard to international affairs. First strikes in naval matters were contrary to his philosophy. 'Our country,' he told Congress, 'is not in a situation to invite aggression, and it will be our fault if she ever becomes so.'²⁸³

²⁸² Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1966), p. 131.

²⁸³ Andrew Jackson, Second Annual Message to Congress, 6 December 1830
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3437t.html> [accessed 23 March 2017]

The Geostrategic Situation

Jackson understood the unique position of the United States. To the country's north was a largely peaceful border with Britain's territory of Canada, though the official boundary would be in dispute until a military build-up forced a settlement with the Webster-Ashburton Treaty in 1842. To the west lay lands nearly every American sought in the pursuit of growing the country. Mile by mile, Americans seized native tribal lands in pursuit of national boundaries that would eventually stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific. To the southwest lay the Gulf of Mexico, and to the east, the Atlantic. America's location separated the country with what Jackson often called 'wide seas'.²⁸⁴ The Atlantic in particular meant that America was far-removed from the major powers that could threaten its coast. This had been the case during the American Revolution and the War of 1812, with Britain experiencing difficulty in sustaining naval blockades or invading armies. The Navy, Jackson said, ought to be a cherished arm of national defence. An ever-ready navy could prevent or repel an attack. Absent large-scale invasions, the country had most to fear from attacks on its overseas commerce from abroad and harassment along the coastline.

Oceans protected the country. Conversely, American merchants found themselves threatened by the expansive oceans and the myriad of threats, both natural and man-made. Following the War of 1812, the United States began to establish squadrons in key regions of the world that would allow both protective operations and quicker punitive actions if necessary. The first squadron was deployed to the Mediterranean, largely to counter the Barbary States. Three different squadrons had been sent to Tripoli between 1800 and 1805 for the protection of American commerce and two more in 1815 to Algiers. The nation now invested in a permanent station rather than ad hoc squadrons.

Other squadrons followed in the Monroe and second Adams administrations. In 1821, the Pacific Station deployed to protect American

²⁸⁴ Two examples where he uses the phrase 'wide seas' are in his 1830 and 1834 messages to Congress. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29476> [accessed 23 March 2017]

whaling ships. The West Indies Squadron followed in 1822 to repel pirates and a Brazil Squadron in 1826 in the midst of destabilizing civil wars in South America. By the end of his second term, Jackson would establish the second to last of the overseas squadrons as he expanded trade in the Far East with the East India Squadron.²⁸⁵ In a matter of less than two decades, the United States had positioned itself globally.

The squadron system meant that America was a slowly emerging world power. Unable to conduct large fleet actions, like the Battle of Trafalgar, even its small squadrons represented a large investment for the country. But the squadrons offered immediate and long-term benefits. In the immediate term they offered protection for regional American commerce. In the long-term, it meant that the small U.S. Navy learned how to conduct extensive overseas deployments. This was no mean feat for any navy. It required not only money but also responsibility for the squadron and ship commanders who operated in a near vacuum of information given the length of time it took for messages from the president or the Secretary of the Navy to reach them. These squadrons were the basis for America's operational capability.²⁸⁶

Jackson had a history of belligerence throughout his military career against the British in wartime and against Indian in operations designed to expand American geographical boundaries. As president, he recognized that attacking Native Americans or pirates was more acceptable and less dangerous. This advanced the interests of his fellow countrymen who wanted to push westward for more land. Native Americans were recognized as savages and therefore received little legal protection. If a nation attacked individuals or groups that were deemed as uncivilized, international moral outrage was absent. The same reasoning allowed European empires to

²⁸⁵ The Home Squadron, based out of Norfolk, Virginia was established in 1841 and Africa Squadron in 1843 to counter illegal slave-trading.

²⁸⁶ The effect held true at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The Chinese Navy had not operated globally for five centuries – since the fleet of Zheng He. Modern Somali piracy off the Horn of Africa changed that. As Chinese-flagged ships were threatened, the PLA/N was sent to conduct patrols off the Horn. China has deployed twenty-six flotillas as of August 2017 thus providing it with rich experiences in operating for longer periods in oceans far from their home bases.

absorb wide swaths of Africa. Pirates were also easy fodder for nation states to attack since they were criminals.

It was quite different as president, however, for Jackson to attack another nation, particularly a major European power and, with it, the military forces they could bring to bear. Chaplain Thomas Lambert, aboard the frigate USS *United States* in 1836 found Malta to be a desirable place to visit and see catacombs or where St. Paul was reported shipwrecked. Leaving more of an impression, however, was seeing a British squadron at anchor – ten or twelve ships-of-the-line. That one British squadron had more ships-of-the-line than in the entire U.S. Navy.²⁸⁷ That fact was also not lost on Jackson who, throughout his administration, had the strength of European navies reported back to him.

If he wanted agreements with Indian tribes, he could always overpower them militarily. Dealing with a nation-state, however, meant engaging in real diplomacy. Jackson's public statements about other countries were quite different than those he had in private correspondence. In his first annual message to Congress in December 1829, he declared that the United States was 'at peace with all mankind'. He was laudatory toward most countries in his annual messages.

His worldview was sophisticated and his perspectives on the relations with each country rested on economic pragmatism – the flow of goods across oceans depended on the stability of international relations, goodwill between countries, and the ability to protect trade on the high seas. That trade required a navy. As one naval historian has noted:

The variety and wide scope of active naval service during this era of expansion in overseas trade had borne striking proof of the economic value of our growing Navy during intervals of peace. The pacific influence of naval force had been skilfully used to preserve our commercial interests and rights when as neutrals our trading ships were unduly hampered by hostilities between foreign countries and blockades incident thereto, to cultivate good relations which would promote commerce and to make treaties to the same end. When

²⁸⁷ Thomas Lambert to Lucy Hill Lambert, 14 December 1836, *Thomas Lambert Papers*, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH.

necessary, force had been effectively used to chastise backward peoples who had injured our property and taken American lives.²⁸⁸

In his brief inaugural address of 1829, Jackson said nothing about the international community, perhaps because he wished to wait until he was privy to communiqués between his administration and other nations. By the time of his first annual message to Congress on 8 December 1829, he was no longer the neophyte president. Events and conditions around the world shaped his international outlook. He was not an inward-looking executive only concerned with domestic policies. Admittedly, Jackson was prone to an emotionalism that overshadowed his domestic governance and politics, such as with the Eaton Affair and the Bank of the United States debate. He was a different person, however, when it came to international diplomacy. He was politically astute enough to know that, when it came to domestic affairs, his popular vote and position as chief executive of the nation allowed him some latitude in bullying political opponents. In dealing with Indian tribes, he knew that any agreement he signed with them was meaningless, as he did not believe they could effectively defend themselves against the US army.

His international approach, however, was one that rested on an understanding that he was negotiating with states, particularly European, that he could neither bully nor easily defeat. The Jackson as a head of state, therefore, was thoughtful and measured in his communiqués with other heads of state. In each of his eight messages to Congress and his second inaugural address, Jackson was largely laudatory and conciliatory toward the great powers of Europe. This is not to say, however, that he failed to address the differences with other nations, which required resolution. 'Our foreign relations [...] present subjects of differences between us and other powers of deep interest'.²⁸⁹ Nevertheless, his messages lacked the inflammatory language that he was more likely to use in domestic politics. But one historian would not forget that Jackson had a 'fierce desire to win global recognition for the independence, sovereignty, and rights of the United States [...] [and had a]

²⁸⁸ Dudley Knox, *A History of the United States Navy* (G.P. Putnam's Sons: New York, 1948), p. 158.

²⁸⁹ Andrew Jackson, First Annual Message to Congress, 8 December 1829
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29471> [accessed 23 March 2017]

conciliatory approach with a willingness to accept practical solutions to problems in foreign affairs'.²⁹⁰

Mediterranean

The young Republic's greatest naval experiences had been in the Mediterranean. Its first squadrons to deploy and fight deployed there at the turn of the century in response to piracy threats from the Barbary Coast. It was the First Barbary War that had established the Navy as a proven force capable of extended wartime operations thousands of miles from home. The conflict found junior commanding officers like Isaac Hull, David Porter, Charles Stewart and others who remembered it as they served as captains and commodores over the next two decades. The Second Barbary War resulted in a permanent Mediterranean Squadron established and based at Port Mahon on the Spanish island of Minorca.

At the time of Jackson's inauguration, Commodore William Crane commanded the Mediterranean Squadron. It consisted of the ship-of-the-line USS *Delaware* (74), the frigate USS *Java* (44), the sloops USS *Lexington* (18), USS *Warren* (18), USS *Fairfield* (18), and schooner USS *Porpoise* (12). By the end of the first year, the *Porpoise* had returned because it required repairs. Jackson's administration also recalled the massive *Delaware* because of his assessment of the political situation, which 'did not require the employment of a ship of this class in that sea'.²⁹¹ Frigates and smaller ships were deemed more efficient. To replace the *Delaware*, Jackson sent the frigates *Ontario* and *Constellation*, the latter more than thirty years old and a veteran of four wars.

Personnel problems permeated the squadron. Of the seventy-three courts-martial in the Navy in 1829 and 1830, thirty were because of incidents in the Mediterranean Squadron. Many were a result of drunkenness in one of the ports with the result that all the midshipmen involved were cashiered,²⁹² actions approved by Jackson. In another incident, a French lieutenant and an

²⁹⁰ Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 282-283.

²⁹¹ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1829. *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1860), 1 December 1829, p. 348.

²⁹² U.S. Navy Courts-martial, Case 471, 481 and Case 513 are a few examples.

American sailor were killed in Port Mahon. It may have been this case the French Minister of Foreign Affairs reference when he wrote to the American minister at Paris to 'call its attention to the necessity of establishing among the sailors on board of its vessels a rigid discipline, which may prevent the recurrence of such outrages as those of which Mahon has been the theatre'.²⁹³

Crane charged two of his midshipmen aboard USS *Java* for leaving the ship without permission and disobeying the lawful order of their superior officer, Captain John Downes. The court found the midshipmen guilty and dismissed them, but Crane had to take additional measures since their actions had disgraced not only the individuals, but all officers in foreign ports.²⁹⁴ The Mediterranean was arguably the Navy's most crucial squadron given its direct relations with the most powerful empires in the world.

Since the founding of the country, no powers held more importance in American policy than Britain, France and Spain. 'Of the unsettled matters between the US and other powers,' Jackson wrote in his first annual message to Congress, 'the most prominent are those with England, France and Spain. We have the best reason to hope for a satisfactory adjustment of existing differences'.²⁹⁵ Jackson's 'best reason to hope' was the language of diplomacy. America was, at the time, a second-rate or even third-rate power. Since Jackson had little ability to force or even enforce an agreement, all he could do was hope. The first challenge was the potential volatility of Europe.

Britain

If Jackson could hold animosity toward any nation, it should have been Britain. His mother had died on a British ship, he allegedly bore the long scar from a British officer's sword, and he had fought them in the War of 1812. Instead, he pronounced that Britain was 'alike distinguished in peace and

²⁹³ Count Portalis to James Brown, [n.d.], *Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Officers Below the Rank of Commander*, VB255.1 Roll No 54, 1 November-31 December 1828.

²⁹⁴ U.S. Navy Courts-martial, Case 475.

²⁹⁵ Andrew Jackson, First Annual Message to Congress, 8 December 1829
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29471> [accessed 23 March 2017]

war'.²⁹⁶ Further, he noted that both countries were deserving of mutual respect. During his administration, the United States and Britain did improve trade, specifically between the Empire's Caribbean and North American colonies. Jackson also pursued pragmatic cooperative projects with Britain such as the construction of lighthouses in the Bahamas and along the coast of Florida.

Perhaps for Jackson it was simpler to assess Britain's interests and develop a policy toward it. Britain did not suffer from the same revolutions, civil wars, and challenges of succession that befell other European nations. Although Britain alternatively had the Tories, Whigs, and Conservatives in power in the 1830s and had two different monarchs, the system of government was essentially unchanged in relation to American foreign policy needs. Consequently, Britain's stability and reliability meant that Jackson could turn his attention to other places, such as France.

France

Jackson's first public pronouncements lauded France as an ancient ally with 'a powerful, intelligent, and magnanimous people'.²⁹⁷ He intimated that France's former government's position led to 'unpleasant discussions and possible collision' between the two countries. At issue was the payment of reparations for U.S. property destroyed during the Napoleonic period. As a result of the July Revolution of 1830, France's government again changed hands from the Bourbon (King Charles X) to the House d'Orleans (Louis-Philippe.) The terms of a treaty signed between the two governments in 1831 remained unfulfilled by 1833. According to the terms of the treaty, France was to pay for depredations on American shipping during the Napoleonic War.²⁹⁸ 'Near a quarter of a century has been wasted in effectual negotiations to secure it,'²⁹⁹ Jackson said. In his most extensive treatment of a diplomatic

²⁹⁶ Andrew Jackson, 8 December 1829

²⁹⁷ Andrew Jackson, 8 December 1829]

²⁹⁸ Professor Daniel Feller, editor of The Jackson Papers at the University of Tennessee's Miller Center, briefly discussed this on the Center's website <https://millercenter.org/president/jackson/foreign-affairs> [accessed 11 September 2017]

²⁹⁹ Andrew Jackson, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, 1 December 1834 <http://www.thisnation.com/library/sotu/1834aj.html> [accessed 25 March 2017]

topic, Jackson also recognized the danger of escalating the precarious state of affairs in U.S.-French relations. Elements in Congress seeking to force France's hand considered a trade embargo. Jackson advised a more restrained approach. Cutting off trade with France likely would have meant retaliatory measures on U.S. exports.

Few Americans articulated the demand for forced justice better than one of the era's greatest literary figures, James Fenimore Cooper. Cooper had been a midshipman in the Navy prior to the War of 1812. Thus, he had the ear of many senior Navy officers who had once served with him. His novels had made him a well-known figure in the country, although from 1826 to 1833 he wrote them from Paris. When he returned to the United States, he warned that a crisis between the two countries had arrived. 'It is admitted on all hands,' he wrote, 'that America and France stand towards each other, at this moment, in warlike attitudes.'³⁰⁰ War with France would have to be fought vigorously on the offensive, that offence would be maritime in nature, and the Navy would have to seek a victory like Trafalgar. That Cooper would suggest the United States had a force of sufficient size to merit such a woefully unrealistic result underscores what Jackson faced in his opponents on this issue. Nevertheless, Cooper had the power of the pen: 'I know that the public mind is not yet prepared for a great demonstration of naval force; that opinion has not kept pace with facts...it is my aim to prove their error.'³⁰¹ Cooper was prodding the country into a war it neither wanted nor was prepared to fight.

Jackson's evaluation of the consequences of taking economic or military action against France was sophisticated, particularly given his lack of foreign policy experience prior to becoming president. He assessed that the United States was in the right on demanding reparations. But if any actions injured France, as some in Congress or supporters like Cooper desired, international opinion would change. The United States would no longer have an unblemished, righteous cause. Each injurious action the country might take would cloud and confuse its intentions on the world stage:

³⁰⁰ James Fenimore Cooper, 'Comparative Resources of the American Navy', *Naval Magazine*, January 1836, p. 21.

³⁰¹ Cooper, p. 23.

Besides, by every measure adopted by the Government of the United States with the view of injuring France the clear perception of right which will induce our own people and the rulers and people of all other nations, even of France herself, to pronounce our quarrel just will be obscured and the support rendered to us in a final resort to more decisive measures will be more limited and equivocal. There is but one point of controversy, and upon that the whole civilized world must pronounce France to be in the wrong. We insist that she shall pay us a sum of money which she has acknowledged to be due.³⁰²

Jackson's long-term approach to the crisis with France had abated the difficulties by 1836. Diplomatic relations between the two countries resumed and the two countries reached an agreement on reparations.

Turkey

The War for Greek Independence entered the halls of Congress in the 1820s. In 1824, Senator Daniel Webster joined Senator Henry Clay (two of the era's greatest statesmen) and President Monroe in supporting Greek independence from Turkey. Supporting the Sublime Porte were American merchants seeking new trade routes and 'northerners rebelling against the National Republican ascendancy and the representatives of the increasingly conservative South led by John Randolph'.³⁰³ The decisive naval Battle of Navarino between the great powers of Europe and the Ottoman Empire ended in the former's favour in 1827, but the land war continued into Jackson's presidency.

The Greek War for Independence had a secondary effect to American commerce. In the wake of no stable power to provide security on land and at sea, Greek pirates took to the Aegean and Adriatic to attack shipping from all nationalities. Despite the comparative pacification of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, depredations on American commerce continued in the 1820s but now with Greek pirates. Branch's predecessor, Samuel Southard reported to Congress that allied nations had diminished piracy largely through a convoy system.

³⁰² Andrew Jackson, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, 1 December 1834
<http://www.thisnation.com/library/sotu/1834aj.html> [accessed 25 March 2017]

³⁰³ Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 205.

Some islands were still a problem with their lawless inhabitants in the wake of the Battle of Navarino.³⁰⁴

Samuel Smith of Maryland, a Jacksonian serving as president pro tempore of the Senate, advised Southard that none of the smaller warships in the squadron were available for additional convoy or patrol duties. The Committee on Naval Affairs believed the current squadron had to be sufficient to convoy short distances given the financial circumstances of the government.³⁰⁵ Southard replied that 'there is, unquestionably, at this time, much danger to our commerce from piratical depredations. The continuance of the danger will depend very much on the course of the allied squadrons, and the diligence and energy of our own vessels.'³⁰⁶

Though Greek piracy had minimal impact to American commerce compared to the action of pirates in the West Indies, the threat served an important purpose to the Mediterranean Squadron. Just as the First Barbary War enabled the young Navy to coordinate with a European power (Sweden), the Greek threat enabled the United States to establish itself as a Navy among relative equals in the Mediterranean. The squadron commanders communicated with one another. For example, Commodore Daniel Patterson's flagship was in Smyrna only two weeks after the Battle of Navarino. The British provided a plan for the position of the ships during the battle, while the French squadron's commander at the battle – Rear-Admiral Henri de Rigny – discussed with Patterson operations against the pirates.³⁰⁷ The dominant British and French might not have shared this information, if they did not consider the American Navy a new ally.

After Navarino, only eight of Turkey's fleet of seventy-eight ships had survived. The defeated Ottoman Empire needed a friend and it found one in the young American republic. The Ottoman Empire needed to rebuild its fleet

³⁰⁴ Captain Daniel T. Patterson to the Secretary of the Navy, 12 November 1827, 'Account of Destruction of the Turkish Fleet by the English, French, and Russian Fleet at Navarino, and of Piracy by the Greeks in the Mediterranean', *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1860), Document No. 351, p. 139.

³⁰⁵ Samuel Smith to Samuel Southard, 17 March 1828, *Miscellaneous Letters received by the Secretary of the Navy, 1801-1884*, Roll 117 Jan 1-Mar 31, 1829 VB 255.1.M5.

³⁰⁶ *ibid* Samuel Smith to Samuel Southard, 17 March 1828.

³⁰⁷ *ibid* Patterson to the Secretary of the Navy, 12 November 1827

and on 12 September 1829, the secretary of state sent merchant Charles Rhind, U.S. Commercial Agent to Turkey David Offley, and Commodore of the Mediterranean Squadron James Biddle to negotiate a treaty. The result was the Ottoman-American Treaty of Commerce and Navigation concluded in May. Rhind included a 'secret article concerning naval assistance', but Biddle and Offley opposed such a commitment.³⁰⁸ The Senate, however, failed to approve a provision for direct naval assistance. A commercial treaty with the Ottoman Empire was important for access to wheat via the Black Sea and as a source of Turkish opium to sell in China.³⁰⁹

In 1830, shipbuilder Henry Eckford designed a new 26-gun corvette and, with references from Jackson, sailed for the Ottoman Empire where the Sultan purchased it. The Sultan was so impressed – and in so great need - that Eckford found himself hired as the Ottoman Empire's chief naval constructor. When the Sultan first became aware of Eckford's skills, he was reported by the American ambassador to have said, 'America must be a great nation if she could spare from her service such a man'.³¹⁰ Eckford died in 1832, leaving his duties to his protégé Foster Rhodes.

The Turks rewarded the Jackson administration for its support. By the end of his second year as president, Jackson had put forth a commercial treaty providing the United States equal access to European nations in trading in the Black Sea. By 1832, Jackson was able to tell Congress that the treaty had had its effect in opening new markets for American commodities. Two years later, Jackson stated that American 'relations with the Sublime Porte promise to be useful to our commerce and satisfactory in every respect' to the U.S. government.³¹¹

³⁰⁸ Senate Executive Journal, 28 December 1830, page 139.

³⁰⁹ Michael Ben Libenson, 'American Assistance to the Ottoman Navy in the 1830s and 1840s: A Thesis in History' (Master's Thesis, Pennsylvania State University, 1987), p. 14.

³¹⁰ John G. Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia and Poland* (Dublin: Curray and Company, 1839), p. 191.

³¹¹ Andrew Jackson, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, 1 December 1834 <http://www.thisnation.com/library/sotu/1834aj.html>, [accessed 25 March 2017]

Portugal

Other European powers, such as Portugal, also presented challenges to Jackson. The country was in a state of civil war from 1828 to 1834 between the competing Liberals and Miguelites. The Portuguese Miguelites (those who supported Prince Miguel as the legitimate heir of King John VI) blockaded the Liberal stronghold of Terceira Island in the Azores in 1830. A year later, the Portuguese colony of Brazil faced its own crisis of authority when King Pedro abdicated and went to Terceira. American commerce in the region was also attacked as a result of the hostilities. The United States demanded reparations for damage occurring to American merchants, while Jackson announced that he was preparing to dispatch a force to prevent further violence against Americans and ensure they could continue lawful commerce. With several European powers participating in the blockade, the Portuguese government did not need another naval force in the region. Portuguese representatives convinced Jackson they would honour reparations. Consequently, he cancelled his plans to send a squadron.

Jackson clearly understood that America was largely protected from European intervention due to the Atlantic Ocean. Still, he understood that he should respect the size and strength of those empires. In diplomatic overtures, he showered the European powers with public praise. For example, he called Russia 'a great power in the rank of nations'.³¹² He also knew that by endearing himself to these countries he stood a greater chance for beneficial agreements. By the end of his first term, a treaty of navigation and commerce had strengthened American relations with Russia. Such was the case with other countries, like Austria and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies. Jackson's successful expansion of trade agreements with European powers demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of international relations. It also demonstrates that he clearly understood the Navy's role in conducting diplomatic negotiations³¹³ and protecting that trade.

³¹² Andrew Jackson, 8 December 1829

³¹³ For more on naval officers conducting diplomacy, the seminal book on the issue is by David F. Long, *Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of U.S. Naval Officers, 1798-1883* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988).

Africa

When America's founders had drafted the Constitution in 1787, the issue of slavery had proven extremely contentious between southern and northern representatives. Abolitionists desired an immediate end to slavery, compromise legislation prevented Congress from taking legislative action until 1808 although it did not specifically mention slavery. As written, the language noted: 'The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight.'³¹⁴

This delaying tactic benefitted those in political office under the new Constitution. Most delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 might not be alive in 1808 and thus not accountable for the compromise legislation. Abolitionists wasted no time, and in 1807 passed the 'Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves', which took effect in 1808. The legislation intentionally omitted slaves born or future slaves born in the United States. This stood until the American Civil War.

As a consequence of the 1808 legislation, a new industry emerged: the illegal continuation of the importation of slaves. Nevertheless, the country either could not or would not enforce the new act. The Navy was unable to respond immediately, as most of its larger ships had been dry-docked after the First Barbary War. Its growing fleet during the War of 1812 was engaged with British warships. The post-war Navy had some initial success in operating against slavers, particularly those entering Florida - as it was not a U.S. territory - and generally the Gulf of Mexico where slavers were rampant. In 1819, Congress authorized the Navy to operate off the coast of west Africa.

Slaves had been imported for more than a century and no records of the slaves' birth areas existed. With little understanding of the locality in which the slaves originated, the United States founded a colony in Liberia named after Monroe, similar to Sierra Leone, founded by the British for the same purpose. In March 1830, ninety-one liberated Africans arrived in Liberia. Since 1819 approximately two hundred sixty had landed there at an expense

³¹⁴ Constitution of the United States, Article I, Section 9 <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript> [accessed 30 March 2017]

to the U.S. Government of \$250,000. Monrovia ultimately became the destination for thousands of freed slaves and a destination for Navy ships until the Civil War. Officers like Matthew Perry, who commanded *Shark* off West Africa in the 1820s, used the experience to improve health conditions for his and later crews.

During Jackson's administration, the Navy barely made annual visits. When the frigate *Java* arrived in 1831, Captain Edmund P. Kennedy found the colony in a flourishing and happy state. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, he optimistically assessed that he had no doubt that it was the foundation of a great empire. He also noted the schooner guarding the establishment was too small and recommended a ship of at least eighty to ninety tons with thirty men. The *Boxer*, under Lieutenant Benjamin Page, visited Monrovia in 1832 followed by the *Porpoise* and *John Adams* and the *Ontario* and *Erie* in 1835. The following year, in Jackson's last year in office, four Navy ships arrived on station.³¹⁵ Fourth Secretary of the Treasury Kendall deeply involved himself with the situation in Monrovia tracking the number of recaptured and liberated Africans from slave ships. The Navy provided a physician to liberated slaves. Equipment and supplies, however, were not provided. For example, when the *Boxer* arrived in 1832, Lieutenant Page was under the impression from the Secretary of the Navy's orders that the ship provide the freed slaves musket cartridges, priming powder, slow match rope, wine, and cannon powder. Secretary Woodbury apparently expected compensation for the supplies, but the *Boxer* had already left the area.³¹⁶

There is no doubt that Jackson considered Africans as inferior. This notion was not uncommon during his era. But Jackson valued the law above nearly all else in his life. In some cases, his overwrought sense of justice superseded the law, as it had in the Lieutenant Robert Randolph court of inquiry (see Chapter 6). Jackson was also present in Washington in 1816

³¹⁵ Donald L. Canney, *Africa Squadron: The U.S. Navy and the Slave Trade, 1842-61* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2006), pp. 22-23.

³¹⁶ Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers of the African Squadron, 1819-1861, Microfilm VB255.1S7A3, Roll 5 July 1832-April 1836. See 7 July 1832 from General P. Tossen [sp?] to Amos Kendall and 22 October 1832 from Lieutenant Benjamin Page to Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury. Nimitz Library, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD.

when the American Colonization Society was founded. Other founding members included Clay, Virginia statesman John Randolph, Monroe, Webster and Bushrod Washington, the nephew of George Washington.

Jackson reported to Congress in 1831 on the capture of the Spanish slave ship *Fenix*. Jackson recommended that 'suitable legislative provision be made...for the unfortunate captives'.³¹⁷ The 110-ton brig was built in Maine in 1802 as the *Antelope*. Sold to foreign interests in 1809, she served as a slave ship for the Spanish government in Cuba a decade later. American-built ships – particularly the later Baltimore clippers - were generally faster than their European counterparts or Navy ships and served the illicit trafficking trade extremely well.

On 5 June 1830, the *Grampus* under the command of Lieutenant Isaac Mayo (who two decades later commanded Africa Squadron) encountered the U.S. merchant ship *Kremlin* near Santo Domingo in the Caribbean. The *Kremlin* had been approached and attacked by a piratical vessel determined to be the *Fenix*. *Grampus* gave chase to the *Fenix*. Upon approaching it, the ship failed to comply with his order to lower sails. Mayo ordered a shot fired close to *Fenix's* hull successfully stopping the ship. The ship was carrying eighty-two slaves. In his letter to Secretary Branch, Mayo suggested the ship had also been involved in piratical acts and that it was his duty under law to bring to trial slavers. Mayo had the captured *Fenix* brought into the port of New Orleans. Attorney General John Berrien determined that the *Fenix* did not fall under the act of 1819 as it was a Spanish ship not captured within U.S. territorial waters, nor were the slaves destined for the United States. Berrien did inform Branch that the *Fenix* was also held for piracy and, as such, the owners had forfeit any property (including slaves.) 'The Africans,' he wrote, 'must be disposed of in some manner which will be consistent with their rights and with the principles of humanity'.³¹⁸

Berrien's statement is curious given his background. He was a slave owner from Georgia, at one point owning more than one hundred slaves. But

³¹⁷ Andrew Jackson to Congress, *American State Papers, Naval Affairs Volume III* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1860), p. 865.

³¹⁸ John Berrien to John Branch, *American State Papers, Naval Affairs Volume III* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1860), p. 870.

more germane to the issue was his experience with the *Fenix* when it was still the *Antelope*. As previously noted, the *Antelope* had a history as a slave trading ship. In 1820 it was stopped off the coast of Florida with 240 slaves. The eventual Supreme Court case had proved precedent setting in the United States on the legitimacy of the international slave trade. Berrien argued on behalf of the government to maintain the law at that time. The ruling ordered half the slaves to be liberated and sent to Monrovia. Serving on the Supreme Court was Bushrod Washington, a fellow founding member of the American Colonization Society.

The minimal naval activity off Africa might be considered atypical for Jackson's squadrons. Most squadrons were far more robust, the ships remained on station for years instead of a few months, and they would conduct diplomatic negotiations with the local governments. That, however, was not possible in Africa since it was largely devoid of nation states and its tribal organization were often subsumed or overshadowed by European colonial powers. Lacking both governments with whom to negotiate and markets for American goods, western Africa held little interest for the commercially focused Jackson.

Pacific

The Pacific Squadron's mission was far different than that of the Mediterranean Squadron but no less important. The squadron had been established in 1821 although it was comprised of only two ships – the ship-of-the-line *Franklin* and the sloop *Dolphin*, both under the overall command of Commodore Charles Stewart. At the time South America was in the throes of revolution as figures such as Jose de San Martin, Simon Bolivar, Bernardo O'Higgins, and Jose de Sucre who sought independence from the Spanish royalist governments. Stewart's orders, like those of his successors, were clear: maintain strict neutrality.

The American government's interest in the region was entirely about the protection and continuance of its growing commerce in the Pacific, specifically its whaling industry. American ships, especially its warships, could not have operated on extended cruises in the region without the support from foreign

ports. The *Franklin*, for example, was on station for two years. Consequently, interference in a conflict would have diminished the squadron's ability to resupply or make repairs.

By 1829 most of the revolutions had passed and a war between Peru and Chile would conclude the following year. The situation was such that Secretary Branch stated:

Peace has generally prevailed among the nations on the western coast of South America. Should this state of things continue, our vessels will have an opportunity to extend their cruises to those portions of the portions of the Pacific most occupied by our merchant ships, and be useful to them in their pursuits.³¹⁹

Still, this did not mean American merchant ships were immune from being victims of conflict. In one case, the American bark *Peru* had been forcibly taken and detained by Peruvian authorities to transport troops from Quayaquil to Payta.³²⁰

The Pacific Squadron in 1828 consisted of the flagship frigate USS *Brandywine* (44), sloop USS *Vincennes* (18), and sloop USS *Dolphin* (12). The following year the frigate *Guerriere* (44) and sloop *St. Louis* (18) relieved the *Brandywine* and *Vincennes*. The second Adams administration ordered the *Vincennes*, under Captain William Bolton Finch, to proceed to the Sandwich Islands and return via Cape of Good Hope.³²¹ Should she complete her assignment, she would become the first U.S. warship to circumnavigate the globe.

It was unusual for an administration to send a ship on such a mission during a lame duck session. On 15 January 1829, Southard wrote to Adams that he was about to issue orders for the *Vincennes*. Southard argued that it was extremely desirable that Finch present gifts to the local chiefs on behalf of the government as a sign of friendship. Southard hoped for preferential treatment for U.S. whaling and merchant ships that visited the Sandwich

³¹⁹ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1830, p. 753.

³²⁰ Captain John Sloat to Commodore Charles C. Thompson of 20 October 1829. National Archives and Records Administration, Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1010, M625, Area 9, Roll 282, April 1814-December 1845.

³²¹ Finch changed his name to William Compton Bolton in 1833. For continuity purposes, this work will only use his given name.

Islands. Such an approach, he noted, had been successful for the Russians and British. Southard proposed a pair of globes and map of the United States for the King, a silver bowl for the Queen, and a silver goblet for the princess.³²² This proposal came fully two months after the national election Adams had lost, a month after the electoral college had met to vote on the president, and seven weeks before Southard and Adams would both leave their positions to the new administration. This decision speaks to the needs of the country rather than the individual. Despite their political differences – indeed the animosity between the two - the Adams administration hoped the Jackson administration would continue policies necessary for American advancement in the world.

The cruise of the *Vincennes* was significant for the Jackson administration for three reasons. First, it is important to understand that Jackson could have rescinded the ship's orders originally given by Adams. Certainly there was a distance problem with regard to timely communication with the ship. *Vincennes* was in port Callao, Peru on 17 July 1829 when she got underway for the Sandwich Islands.³²³ New orders could have reached *Vincennes* there with the squadron or through other ships at the Sandwich Islands. An anti-navalist would have recalled the ship. That Jackson did not suggest a continuation of at least some of Adams' vision for the Navy was unusual since he had repudiated much of his political nemesis' policies.

Second, the *Vincennes* was to visit ports that could be valuable to American commerce in the Pacific. The Sandwich Islands offered a strategic commercial outpost for the American whaling fleet as well as warships that sought to proceed westward. The islands were critical for squadrons or fleets of merchant ships, since they could provide respite for crew health and were integral to resupplying ships. Good relations with the inhabitants were important to achieving those needs. A U.S. consul was present on the

³²² Samuel Southard to John Quincy Adams of 15 January 1829. US Navy Department, *Letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the President and Executive Agencies, 1821-1886*, Microfilm VB255.1.U72, Roll 1, July 21, 1821 – September 30, 1836.

³²³ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin, United States Navy, 1826-1855', National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm Publication M981, Roll 1.

Sandwich Islands and requested a sloop to be permanently based there 'to regulate all things, and secure our commerce'.³²⁴

Third, it demonstrated the unstated intent of the Jackson administration for national growth. As a general, Jackson had helped the United States push south to Florida and the expectation was that the nation – prior to a formal announcement of Manifest Destiny – would continue to advance western coast of the continent. The *Vincennes*, and later other ships following her, was meant to pronounce that the Pacific Ocean was as easily traversable by the U.S. Navy, to open important markets with the Far East, and demonstrate that a navy ship could operate globally.

Lieutenant Thomas Dornin, one of the *Vincenne*'s officers, maintained the best existing accounts of the journey.³²⁵ In addition to Master Commandant Finch, the wardroom included at least three future key officers. First Lieutenant Cornelius Stribling's experiences would help him to command his own ship to the Far East with the creation of the East India Squadron in 1835. Midshipman Matthew F. Maury would become one of the most prolific writers among the junior officers that decade and one of the most influential officers of the Navy in the mid-nineteenth century. Thomas Melville would recount his experiences to his brother of later noted author Herman Melville who based a number of his books on actual naval or merchantmen accounts including 'Moby Dick' and 'Typee'.

While in Valparaiso, Chile, the *Vincennes* welcomed the *Guerriere* and *St. Louis* on 19 June 1829. Finch read the orders to sail to the Sandwich Islands, then to Manilla in the Philippines, the Cape of Good Hope and westward to the United States. 'We all anticipated much pleasure and information from our intended cruise',³²⁶ Dornin wrote. Also joining the ship as a supernumerary was Reverend Charles S. Stewart (no relation to Commodore Charles Stewart) on his way as a missionary to the Sandwich

³²⁴ John C. Jones, Jr., U.S. Consul for the Sandwich Islands to Captain William B. Finch, 30 October 1829, *American State Papers, Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1860), p. 760.

³²⁵ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin, United States Navy, 1826-1855', National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm Publication M981, Roll #1

³²⁶ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin,', 19 June 1829.

Islands. Like Maury, Rev. Stewart would become one of the most well known writers of the decade and later serve as editor of the *Naval Magazine*, discussed in Chapter 2. According to Dornin, Rev. Stewart was 'well known as the indefatigable missionary of the South Sea Islands'.³²⁷

In late July, the ship pulled in to the Sandwich Islands. Finch and several of his officers paid their respects to the uncle and guardian to the infant King Kamehameha III. Intertribal rivalry was still prevalent, and the Tuaks hoped the U.S. would aid them against their alleged warlike neighbours the Typees. Upon viewing a French-caused incident, Dornin reflected, 'It is to be lamented that foreigners should be so thoughtless as to supply these people so abundantly with muskets and powder which stimulates them to be always in open war with themselves and extremely dangerous to the Merchant ships that visit them.'³²⁸

On 1 September, the *Vincennes* reached Tahiti. Its king told Finch that he was always pleased with the arrival of merchant ships. More importantly, they had never had any complaints or incidents with regard to American seamen. By January, the ship was off Macao in the Far East. Dornin noted that the Portuguese authority was nominal with a mandarin in real control over the colony. Throughout that winter, the ship travelled to Canton and Manilla. This was not the first Navy ship to visit the region. The frigate *Congress* under Captain John D. Henley arrived at Lintin Island in 1819 for a visit that was not entirely successful.³²⁹ American businessmen viewed it with suspicion as a threat to the existing order; China rejected foreign warships; and they viewed foreigners as '*fan kwei*' (foreign devils).³³⁰

When *Vincennes* made it back to the United States, Branch commended the ship and her captain for having 'returned in good condition, with its crew well-disciplined and in excellent health'. Finch had succeeded in his mission in securing the continuance of kindly treatment of his countrymen.

³²⁷ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin', 15 July 1829

³²⁸ 'The Journals of Thomas A. Dornin,' 26 July 1829.

³²⁹ The island is now known as Nei Lingding.

³³⁰ Curtis Talmon Henson, Jr., 'The United States Navy and China, 1839-1861' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Tulane University, 1965), pp. 1-2.

The peaceful cruise of the *Vincennes*, however, was not echoed by the mission of the frigate *Potomac*. On 7 February 1831, the Salem-based merchant ship *Friendship* under Captain Charles Endicott had anchored off Quallah Battoo on the west coast of Sumatra's Aceh Province. During Jackson's presidency, few American cities were as prosperous as Salem, Massachusetts or as maritime-oriented on an international market. Jackson's stated goals relied heavily on maritime cities like Salem. The city built the subscription frigate *Essex* during the Quasi-War and presented to the Navy.³³¹ Its visits plied the far East trade that including opium and valuable pepper. The city also gave birth to merchants like Elias Hasket Derby, the first American millionaire and one of the first to trade with China.

The *Friendship* had a crew of seventeen. Endicott went ashore with two officers and four crewmen to negotiate with the local raja for pepper. By the end of the day Endicott and the raja agreed to a price and local natives began to take the pepper back to the ship. Although instructed not to come aboard, the natives boarded the *Friendship* and killed three crewmembers, including the first mate, Charles Knight. The pirates quickly but thoroughly absconded with the ship's treasure. The financial damage to Endicott was just as costly - \$12,536 in specie, \$8,818 in opium, \$2,500 in stores and provisions, and \$17,000 in other losses.

Endicott and his men made for their small boat before the natives on land could take them. After being chased by three small local boats through the harbour, Endicott made for the trading village of Muckie, twenty-five miles away where they found three American merchant ships the following day. The ships made for Quallah Battoo and after a battle retook the *Friendship*.³³² Endicott was able to retake the ship and return to Salem empty-handed on 16 July 1831.

On 27 June 1831, Woodbury issued orders to Captain John Downes in Norfolk to proceed to New York to finish equipping the frigate USS *Potomac*.

³³¹ During the Quasi-War, the U.S. Navy had an insufficient number of ships to conduct operations. Several maritime cities and towns built warships at their own expense to contribute to the war effort. Most were named after the town or county in which they were built or after a notable figure. Salem is in Essex County, MA.

³³² Captain Endicott statement, *American State Papers: Naval Affairs, Volume IV* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1861), p. 154.

Woodbury's instructions to Downes were lengthy given the transit time to his eventual station and the circumstances that might develop, but there was no mention of the *Friendship* attack, as news had not yet reached the United States. The ship was to take aboard Martin van Buren as Minister to Britain before its eventual assignment in the Pacific. There, Downes would relieve Francis Gregory in command of that station and van Buren would join Gregory's ship *Falmouth* and Lieutenant John Long's schooner *Dolphin*. That force represented nearly ten percent of the Navy. Woodbury had determined to provide sufficient protection to US interests in the region.

To prepare Downes for his duties on station, Woodbury provided him with a volume on the treaties between the U.S. and foreign powers and a compilation of Navy laws. Other volumes included regulations on seamen in foreign ports, how to make quarterly reports on boarded vessels, and guidance for ship captains with consuls. 'Cases may arise,' Woodbury wrote, 'which it is impossible to foresee, and to meet which definite instructions cannot be given; should such occur [...] you must be left to the exercise of a sound discretion'.³³³ Contrary to historians' assessments questioning Woodbury's ability as secretary, this directive is yet another example that Woodbury understood the need to have well-informed officers who would have no immediate communication with their chain of command once they arrived on station.

Jackson learned of the incident at Quallah Battoo on 19 July not through official channels but through newspaper reports. The merchants of Salem appealed to Jackson to demand retribution. Jackson immediately issued orders for the *Potomac* to seek redress for the outrage committed.³³⁴ Woodbury reissued orders to the *Potomac* on 9 August, when the *Potomac* reached New York. Gone was the general guidance and anticipation of a leisurely circumnavigation of the world. Expediency was now a priority. Woodbury directed Downes to proceed immediately by way of the Cape of Good Hope, going ashore only as necessitated by low supplies or other

³³³ Woodbury to Downes, 27 June 1831, *American State Papers: Naval Affairs, Volume IV* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1861), p. 150.

³³⁴ Woodbury to Silsbee et al, 25 July 1831, *American State Papers: Naval Affairs, Volume IV* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1861), p. 152.

immediate circumstances. As conveyed through Woodbury, Jackson ordered Downes to demand restitution from the raja or other authorities at Quallah Battoo and immediately punish anyone involved in the murder of First Mate Charles Knight and the two other crewman of the *Friendship*. Also included was direction to destroy boats of any kind engaged in local piracy and forts and dwellings near the incident used for shelter or defence. Finally, Downes received orders to inform the locals that if restitution would not be made, a greater American naval force would return 'to inflict more ample punishment'.³³⁵

Though this was a direct military response to an attack on a U.S. merchant ship, Jackson was also aware of the longer-term implications, notably a healthy commercial relationship with the native population. Jackson wanted it conveyed to the raja and local population that there were no hostile feelings toward the people of Quallah Battoo – only the plunderers and murderers. Woodbury wrote Downes must take great care with caution, forbearance and good faith towards the natives.

Downes was a thirty-year veteran of the Navy and had fought in the Pacific during the War of 1812 on David Porter's *Essex*. He was, thus, prepared nearly as well as any other captain, for this mission. After a lengthy voyage, *Potomac* arrived in Quallah Battoo on 5 February 1832 nearly a year to the day after the attack. Downes anchored off the shoreline some three miles to prevent detection as a ship of war; he had also taken other precautions to disguise the ship. It is here that Downes exceeded his orders. Despite being told to seek retribution, Downes attacked the town since he did not believe the locals would agree to any demand. Lieutenant William Shubrick, the *Potomac*'s forty-two-year-old first officer, took a contingent of midshipmen and marines ashore to assess the situation and returned to the ship. The following day Shubrick commanded 250 men aboard all the boats and rowed a mile and a half north of the town so as to meet with the least resistance. The force captured the northernmost fort after a two-hour battle. Two more forts awaited the raiding party, but they pushed on to the strongest

³³⁵ Woodbury to Downes, p. 153.

for at the southern end of the town. One sailor was killed and four more wounded in the attack.

Shubrick directed the fire from his mortar at the buildings close to the fort resulting in two magazines exploding. Downes moved close enough toward the shore to fire three broadsides into the fort. After the third broadside, the white flag rose in surrender. The American flag quickly replaced it as Shubrick's force entered the fort and spiked the guns. The final fort fell after another two and a half hours of fighting with one marine killed.

Shubrick noted in his report to Downes that the action had reduced the town to ashes. At least one hundred fifty of the enemy died including Po Mahomet, the primary culprit for plundering the *Friendship*. The attackers took no prisoners, but neither did they recover any property from the *Friendship* except for its medicine chest. Downes reported to Woodbury that he negotiated with a local leader for peace. Several rajas visited the ship and all agreed to be friendly with the Americans.

Potomac continued its mission to assume duties on Pacific Station off the west coast of South America. When the ship returned to the United States, it had completed the second American circumnavigation of the world. Downes did face public criticism for his action for not exercising judicious response and exceeding his orders. Nevertheless, Jackson largely supported him since there had been no further attacks on American ships.³³⁶ On 4 December 1832, Jackson delivered his fourth annual message to Congress and briefly mentioned the Sumatran expedition. The United States had met the original atrocity with an appropriate response to deter like-minded pirates. Jackson commended the operation arguing that it had the effect of an increased respect for the American flag security for commerce in those distant seas.

Two other lesser-known incidents occurred during Jackson's second term. The Nantucket whaler *William Penn* anchored off the island of Savai'i in the Samoan archipelago in 1834.³³⁷ The locals captured and killed the first

³³⁶ A second Sumatran punitive expedition was sent in 1838 in response to attacks but that falls out of the range of this dissertation.

³³⁷ Three works briefly mention the *William Penn* incident. David Long, *Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of U.S. Naval Officers, 1798-1883* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988); Nancy Shoemaker *Native American Whalers and the World: Indigenous Encounters and the Contingency of Race* (Raleigh: University of North

and second mates, but some of the crew survived. Another whaler saved them and took them to Tonga where the *Vincennes* was briefly visiting. Upon hearing of the attack, Captain John Aulick immediately sailed to the Samoan island. Basing his judgment on the precedent set by Downes, Aulick sent eighty men ashore. The villagers had already left but the sailors, on order from Aulick, burned the village.³³⁸

The second incident occurred in October 1835 when the New Bedford whaler *Awashonks* pulled in to Namarik Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Local villagers boarded the ship, attacked the crew, and killed five men, including the captain and two officers. The remaining crew reached the armory and were able to fend off the villagers. The Navy sent no ship on a punitive raid. Based on conventional assessments of Jackson's temperament, he should have sent a warship to Namarik. In the cases of the Falklands Crisis and Quallah Battoo, one Jackson biographer states: 'This is Andrew Jackson acting as Andrew Jackson. He sees an offense against his country and he's the president, commander in chief of the army and navy and he takes action.'³³⁹ But Jackson issued no order for the Savai'i or Namarik incidents.

Contrary to what Jacksonian historians have argued, Jackson did not indiscriminately use force with regard to the Navy. He weighed his options and considered the consequences within framework of his maritime strategy to expand trade and protect American commerce. Namarik was a very minor atoll in the middle of the Pacific where a few ships might stop to take on water but then only infrequently. There were not enough villagers with whom to trade, and no local resources that U.S. merchants desired. In other words, there was no commerce of any consequence. An attack on the island would have meant little except to the local villagers. It did not rise to the level of strategic economic trade as Sumatra or even the Falkands. It is doubtful that

Carolina Press, 2015); and Andrew C.A. Jampoler, *Embassy to the Eastern Courts: America's Secret First Pivot Toward Asia, 1832-37* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015.) Jampoler writes the incident occurred in July, Shoemaker writes it occurred in September. Long does not provide a month.

³³⁸ David Long (see fn 55) notes that no villagers were present. Nancy Shoemaker (see fn 55), however, writes that the villagers sued for peace.

³³⁹ Interview with the author, 24 June 2009.

Jackson would have even issued a punitive raid on Savai'i had not Aulick done it first.

Despite the fact that Namarik was comparatively insignificant to the United States, it and the hundreds of other Pacific islands and atolls needed to be surveyed, should any be of use for the servicing of merchant ships during their lengthy cruises. Newspaper editor Jeremiah Reynolds first proposed such a scientific expedition in the 1820s. Its objective would be to improve American commercial interests. The Navy would chart, survey, and explore the greater Pacific region. '[Reynolds] knew that the support of merchants and ship owners would greatly improve his prospects for winning government funding.'³⁴⁰

Just two weeks before Jackson was inaugurated, the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs considered legislation authorizing such an expedition. The Senate, controlled by Jacksonians, demurred when it learned that the Adams administration had made it appear the expedition was nearly ready to depart. In fact, no details had emerged about the make-up, provisioning, or cost of the expedition. Senator Robert Hayne made it clear in the committee report that he and his colleagues were supportive of the idea of an expedition, but that without more knowledge about how it might work, they could not endorse the legislation.³⁴¹ After directing the Secretary of the Navy to provide information, the Committee learned the expedition would cost approximately \$438,000, or one-seventh of the total naval budget for 1829. The Senate, therefore, killed the bill.

The project was cost-prohibitive to an incoming administration that intended scrutinize the Navy's budget. By 1834, the administration reduced the federal debt with the expectation it would be eliminated by 1835 producing a surplus. With a surplus, the administration could revisit projects like the exploring expedition. Merchants began appealing to Congress. In 1834, the East Indian Marine Society of Salem wrote that it was praying for an

³⁴⁰ Gene A. Smith, *Thomas ap Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny* (Annapolis: Naval Institute, 2000), p. 72.

³⁴¹ Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, 23 February 1829, 20th-26th Congresses, *Committee Papers*, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11)

expedition. It called maritime commerce the 'fountain from which unending streams of revenue our financial reservoir is supplied with the means of national existence'.³⁴² Groups of citizens and merchants from other, mostly northern, cities joined the cause. New York argued the case 'for the benefit of navigation, whale and seal fishery, commercial trade [and] science'.³⁴³ Citizens of Philadelphia echoed the appeal for navigation and exploration but also for 'commercial enterprize'.³⁴⁴

It would be two more years until Congress took up the Senate's legislation approving the South Seas Exploring Expedition.³⁴⁵ By a vote of ninety-two to sixty-eight, the House authorized the project and appropriated an additional \$150,000 for the purpose of fitting out a ship.³⁴⁶ Jackson signed the long-awaited project on 18 May 1836. The following month, he and Secretary Dickerson began interviewing possible commanders. Jackson's first choice was Captain Thomas ap Catesby Jones, whom Jackson had met after the Battle of New Orleans. Catesby Jones eventually declined due to poor health. Four other experienced captains also declined. Command of the 1838 to 1842 expedition eventually fell to a junior lieutenant, Charles Wilkes.³⁴⁷

³⁴² Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, Folder 23 February 1829. 20th-26th Congresses, *Committee Papers*, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11)

³⁴³ Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, Folders 22 December 1834 and 29 December 1834, 'New York Petition for Expedition to the South Seas'. 20th-26th Congresses, *Committee Papers*, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11)

³⁴⁴ Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, Folder 23 December 1834, Citizens of Philadelphia, Exploration Expedition to South Seas, 20th-26th Congresses, *Committee Papers*, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, SEN 20A-D8-D10 (10A-D11)

³⁴⁵ Senate Bill 175 <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsb&fileName=017/llsb017.db&recNum=359> [accessed 20 March 2017]

³⁴⁶ Debate on Exploring Expedition, 9 May 1836, *Congressional Globe*, p. 337 <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llcg&fileName=112/llcg112.db&recNum=346>, [accessed 20 March 2017]

³⁴⁷ One of the major sources on the expedition is Wilkes' own autobiography but a better modern account is by Nathaniel Philbrick's *Sea of Glory* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

Brazil

The Brazil Station consisted of the frigate *Macedonian* (36) and sloop *Boston* (18), relieved in 1829 by the newly constructed frigate *Hudson* (44) and sloop *Vandalia* (18). Commodore Stephen Cassin relieved Commodore John Order Creighton in 1829. Jackson increased the ships on station to respond to the threat to American commerce. A war between Brazil and Argentina had resulted in blockades by those nations. Even when the war ended in 1830, Jackson felt the nation needed a larger U.S. force because of increasing commercial relations with countries in South America. He, therefore, increased the number of ships. It was fortuitous that he did so given a new crisis that emerged in the South Atlantic.

Since the European discovery of the New World, different nations had laid claim to the Falkland Islands. But in 1831 the claim rested with the United Provinces of the River Plate (a predecessor of Argentina that included parts of modern Chile, Uruguay, and other states) whose capitol was Buenos Ayres. The commercial value of the Falkland Islands lay in its fishing industry and sealing. Buenos Ayres authorized the establishment of a colony at Puerto Soledad in 1828 under the Military and Civil Commander for the Falkland Island, Luis Vernet. The British government opposed this move, because it had its own claims on the territory. Buenos Ayres also expected its privateers to operate out of the Falklands in their conflict with Brazil. Vernet's deputy was the British-born Matthew Brisbane, an experienced explorer in the region.

Attacks on American merchant ships from that region were familiar to Jackson. One example occurred just two weeks before he assumed the presidency. The *Federal* under the flag of Buenos Ayres, allegedly a privateer, attacked the American merchant vessel *Nymph*. The *Federal* was captured by the *Erie* under Captain Daniel Turner off St. Bartholomew Island on 5 January 1829 and taken in to Pensacola.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁸ Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard to Secretary of State Henry Clay, 19 February 1829, U.S. Navy Department, *Letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the President and Executive Agencies, 1821-1826*, Microfilm VB255.1.U72. Roll 1, July 21, 1821-September 30, 1836.

Jackson had been advised of the United Provinces³⁴⁹ territorial claims as early as January 1831. In June, Woodbury ordered the 24-gun sloop *Lexington* to the Brazil Station to relieve *Vandalia*. Built in 1825, *Lexington* was comparatively new. With only one deployment to the Mediterranean, it was decommissioned in 1830 and recommissioned in May 1831 just two months before she deployed. Captain Silas Duncan, a veteran of the War of 1812 who served under Thomas Macdonough during the Battle of Lake Champlain, commanded *Lexington*.

Prior to deployment, Duncan objected to the assignment of a marine officer aboard since sloops only rated a sergeant overseeing the Marines. The only person who could have contradicted the Secretary of the Navy on this issue was the President. As one historian suggests:

It seems plausible, if not likely, that (1) Jackson personally decided to place a marine officer aboard the *Lexington*, and (2) he did so as a precaution against the possibility that a marine landing on the Falkland Islands might prove necessary in order to rescue Americans being held captive there. If true, Jackson's role in the dispatch of the *Lexington* was much greater than previously assumed.³⁵⁰

The Connecticut-based *Harriet*, under Captain Gilbert Davison had arrived in the Falklands in November for sealing and whaling. Vernet 'warned Davison not to take seals in any of the territory under his jurisdiction'.³⁵¹ Davison was doubtful of Vernet's authority given American ships had operated in the region for a century, there was no recognized claim by the United Provinces, and the German-born Vernet spoke with a heavy accent. The *Harriet* continued its operations and returned in February and again encountering Vernet. When *Harriet* again returned on 13 July 1831, a small armed force led by Brisbane approached Davison's crew. Vernet informed

³⁴⁹ The United Provinces de la Rio Plata consisted of Buenos Ayres and several adjacent provinces in later Argentina and Uruguay.

³⁵⁰ Craig Evan Klafter, 'United States Involvement in the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1831-33', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 4 (1984), 395-420 (p. 409).

³⁵¹ Gilbert R. Davison, 'Public Instrument of Protest', 23 November 1831, *Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State*, Buenos Aires as cited in Craig Evan Klafter, 'United States Involvement in the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1831-33', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 4 (1984), 395-420 (p. 402).

Davison that his operations were illegal and that he had the ship seized for adjudication in Buenos Ayres.

A second American whaler – the *Breakwater* – arrived on 17 August 1831 where the captain and several crew also found themselves under arrest. The first mate managed to retake the ship and return to Stonington, Connecticut and report to its owners. On 19 August, a third American ship – the *Superior* under Captain Stephen Congar – was seized and its crew, like the *Harriet's* was imprisoned. Vernet made an agreement with Congar to continue sealing if half of the skins went to Vernet. Based on Vernet's assessment, foreign whalers and sealers were depleting local resources. Arguably, Vernet sought a monopoly on the trade for the United Provinces. Vernet took the *Harriet* to Buenos Ayres and arrived on 20 November.

On 6 December, Jackson delivered his third annual message to Congress and noted the tense situation that awaited the Navy. The government in Buenos Ayres threatened legitimate, long-term commerce in the region. 'I submit the case to consideration of Congress,' he wrote, 'to the end that they may clothe the Executive with such authority and means as they may deem necessary'.³⁵² He had already ordered a Navy ship to the region to protect U.S. interests. But, as Klafter observes, it was not the *Lexington* that had been ordered to the Falkland Islands but the sloop USS *Enterprise* under Commander George W. Rodgers of the Perry-Rodgers line of naval officers.

Secretary of the Navy Woodbury ordered *Enterprise* to Brazil Station and then to proceed alone or with *Lexington* and *Warren* to provide 'complete protection'³⁵³ and to coordinate with local American officials. *Lexington* arrived in Buenos Aires on 27 November where Captain Duncan received news that American ships had been seized. In addition, he saw *Harriet* lying in the harbour between two Argentine sloops. To attend to the imprisoned Americans, he made for Puerto Soledad (also called Puerto Louis after Vernet)

³⁵² Jackson Annual Message, 6 December 1831. *Register of Debates in Congress, Vol VII* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1831), p. 4.

³⁵³ Levi Woodbury to John Rodgers, 29 November 1831, *Letters Sent by the Secretary of the Navy to Commandants and Navy Agents* as cited in Craig Evan Klafter, 'United States Involvement in the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1831-33', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 4 (1984), P. 411.

on 31 December 1831. Duncan arrived flying the French flag³⁵⁴ to confuse the colony's armed contingent. The following day, he landed the marines who rescued the American crews. Duncan proceeded to take the town and spiked the cannons. For the next two weeks, the *Lexington* took aboard Americans and settlers and made its way to Montevideo arriving 2 February 1832. The local government claimed Duncan had gone well beyond his mission by destroying private property. He arrested Brisbane for piracy and the others who had supported him for attacking a fourth American ship the *Elizabeth Lane*.

Rodgers arrived to relieve Duncan in command of the squadron.³⁵⁵ Rodgers immediately dealt with leaks to Washington. Officers had reported to the Navy and media on operations. On 16 March, he issued the order to the squadron that only the commodore could communicate with the Secretary of the Navy. Furthermore, he forbade all officers from communicating to the public through friends or others any movements of the squadrons. Rodgers was still trying to assess his mission two weeks after arriving. He summarized the situation in a letter to the American Vice-Consul in Buenos Ayres. He recognized the anti-American sentiment in the city, but he believed that the depredations against American commerce around the Falklands had ceased. He did not know if there would be any attempt to recolonize the Falklands.³⁵⁶ In an act of good faith, he released Brisbane and his compatriots.

The Jackson administration clearly articulated this crisis as a localized threat to legitimate commerce. In no correspondence did he lay the blame on Buenos Ayres, which would have given him cause to blockade their coast and demand reparations. The operation was mature in its assessment of the situation, measured in its response, and effective in resolving the crisis. This became typical of the Jacksonian approach to naval affairs.

³⁵⁴ 'Falkland Islands', *Daily National Intelligencer*, 1 May 1832, p. 2.

³⁵⁵ Rodgers to Downing, 23 December 1831, Letters Sent by Capt. George W. Rodgers, 1831-32. *Letter Books of US. Naval Officers, March 1778-July 1908*, National Archives and Records Administration.

³⁵⁶ Rodgers to Wright, 23 March 1832, Letters Sent by Capt. George W. Rodgers, 1831-32, *Letter Books of US. Naval Officers, March 1778-July 1908*, National Archives and Records Administration.

West Indies

The West Indies Squadron was the closest operational squadron to U.S. territorial waters. At the beginning of the Jackson administration, the squadron comprised the 18-gun sloops *Natchez*, *Erie*, *Hornet*, *Falmouth* and the 12-gun schooners *Grampus* and *Shark*. All were ships built for shallow waters. This was a result of the lessons in the previous decade by Commodore David Porter as he chased pirates around the Caribbean. He quickly learned that his ships had too much draft to chase smaller ships close to shore. But if the voyage of the *Vincennes* was an indicator of America's vision for naval operations in the next century, the Gulf of Mexico was the first step to its maritime destiny. In his end of year report to Congress in 1828, Secretary of the Navy Southard reported on the piracy situation. 'No piracies have been committed,' he pronounced. 'That scourge of our commerce has been entirely repressed.' He asserted that the reports of attacks were simply rumours founded on misrepresentation. He was wrong.

Acts of piracy in February 1829 required deployment of the *Natchez* to the West Indies after briefly returning to its homeport. On 16 March, Acting Secretary of State James Hamilton, son of Alexander Hamilton, advised Branch that the piratical atrocities had caused on the port of Malauras not to be visited by any armed vessel since the previous August. More attacks had occurred near Cuba. Hamilton requested additional ships available to counter the threat: 'It is due to humanity, the interest and honour of the country, immediately to take the most summary and efficacious means within our power to suppress and prevent the recurrence of these atrocities.'³⁵⁷ The consular office in Matanzas reported that the brig *New Priscilla* of Salem had been captured and the captain and crew of the brig *Attentive* of Boston murdered, among others such as the schooner *Charles* of Philadelphia, the entire crew of which were also murdered.

Less than two weeks after his inauguration, Jackson requested a status report on the U.S. Navy forces in the West Indies. Rodgers reported to Branch on 16 March 1829 that the current force (*Hornet*, *Falmouth*, *Erie*, *Shark* and

³⁵⁷ James Hamilton to John Branch, 16 March 1829, *Miscellaneous Letters received by the Secretary of the Navy, 1801-1884*, Roll 117 Jan 1-Mar 31, 1829 VB 255.1.M5

Grampus) was sufficient for the suppression of piracy around Cuba. 'There are none other of our small vessels,' he wrote, 'that could be speedily sent out except the *Peacock* at New York and the *Concord* at Portsmouth'. *Concord*, however, had never been to sea, and neither was capable of refitting for sea within a month. A day later, Jackson wrote to Branch to order Commodore Ridgely – the commanding officer of the West Indies Squadron – to keep one warship on the coast of Cuba. Pirate activity required vigilance and energy. Suppression of the pirates was necessary, Jackson wrote, for the honour of the U.S. flag and the dictates of humanity.

The letter conveyed specific orders for named warships demonstrating that Jackson had direct involvement in naval operations.³⁵⁸ Thus, Jackson's first order to use force as commander-in-chief was for naval operations, not Army movements. If he were not aware of the need for a Navy before he assumed office, then the pirates threatening U.S. merchant ships to the south made him painfully cognizant of the fact. It was not a lesson he would forget in his administration.

The piracy threat elicited responses from individuals as high as Jackson through the junior officer ranks, although the officers' opinions were not always welcome. For example, Lieutenant William F. Lynch proposed the Navy employ that decoy ships be employed to lull unwitting pirates in to close quarters. Branch shared the proposal with Rodgers. Rodgers still believed the squadron was 'amply sufficient for the suppression of piracy in that quarter'.³⁵⁹ He did admit that a decoy ship was initially adopted at the height of the piracy threat but effected nothing. 'Lieut. Lynch could not,' he noted, 'have been apprised of these circumstances'. In an admonishment, Rodgers concluded, 'he has manifested more zeal than judgement [sic]'.³⁶⁰

By 1830 Branch realized that nothing short of positive and continued force was necessary in the region. Branch recommended a change in the

³⁵⁸ Andrew Jackson to John Branch, 17 March 1829. *Miscellaneous Letters received by the Secretary of the Navy, 1801-1884*, Roll 117, Jan 1-Mar 31, 1829, VB 255.1.M5

³⁵⁹ John Rodgers to John Branch of 26 March 1829. Letters received by the Secretary of the Navy from Officers Below the Rank of Commander, VB255.1 Roll No. 54, Nov 1-Dec 31, 1828. See also Records of Boards and Commissions, Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy, April 25-1815-August 26, 1842.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

force composition with the Navy sending three schooners in lieu of a larger sloop. They were lighter in draft. More ships meant patrolling more area. Smaller ships meant access to more harbours during storms. It also meant that the Navy would now have to build them and propose it to Congress. In addition, the threats and the Navy demonstrated a need for a base in the Gulf of Mexico. The Navy identified Pensacola as a rendezvous harbour, but it required deepening the channel. It was a strategic necessity by Jackson if he wanted to exert American influence in the region. It represented the ability to address Caribbean piracy as well as the growing uncertainty in the western Gulf. On 23 January 1830, Jackson ordered Branch to increase naval presence in the region, particularly because – as he termed it – the revolutionary spirit there. ‘I consider we cannot place too soon in those seas the Frigate *Brandywine*, in order to guard our commercial interests, and keep down combinations for piratical objects.’³⁶¹ Jackson also ordered that the ship’s captain proceed to Tampico and Vera Cruz where it was important that the ship be seen in those places.

Sailors risked their lives engaging with pirates in the Caribbean or simply by being aboard a ship like the *Peacock*, whose crewmen were victims of tropical diseases. They were also susceptible to the elements, especially storms. The *Hornet* had been one of the champions of the War of 1812, defeating the HMS *Peacock* during the first engagement of the war. She went on to serve in the Mediterranean and finally throughout the 1820s in the West Indies. One of her senior officers, Lieutenant Daniel H. Mackay, had been assigned to her only a few weeks before she got underway for her latest assignment. ‘I must begin to pack up and make my little arrangements not I confess without some foreboding, not exactly of death and yellow fever, but it’s a climate I do not like’³⁶² Mackay did not expect assignment to the *Hornet*, and wrote to a fellow officer that ‘Sammy Southard’ was supposed to send him to the *Peacock*, believing that the recent election had something to do with the decision. ‘I was a Jackson man,’ he wrote. Mackay contended that Southard

³⁶¹ Daniel Feller and others, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, Volume VIII, 1830* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), p. 45.

³⁶² Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel Du Pont of 5 December 1828, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington DE, Group 9 Samuel Du Pont, Series B (In File), Box 15 (1814-1837.)

had had the 'arrogance and presumption to take some officers to task for voting for the General'. He suggested that two senior officers might have played a role in his orders as a result.³⁶³

Hornet's commander was Master Commandant Otho Norris. Mackay had strong views about his commanding officer within the first month, stating Norris to be weak and an imbecile:

When you go to sea, if there is choice left you by all means choose the knave and the tyrant, for tyranny if consistent & intelligent may be rendered tolerable but ignorance & imbecility are to my quick and impatient temper utterly insupportable absolute torture.³⁶⁴

Hornet was part of the West Indies Squadron patrolling the waters and deterring actions of pirates and was to receive new orders on 11 August 1829. *Hornet's* wardroom was aware of the situation, believing the Mexican Army was exceedingly anxious for a melee. Spanish forces and Mexican insurgents under General Santa Anna were engaged in military operations near Tampico by late summer. Norris' orders were to evacuate the American Consul, his family and other Americans. The ship anchored offshore when an unexpected gale rose up. Soon the gale had grown into one of the most powerful hurricanes in years. Norris had recalled all small boats ferrying people and got underway to escape it but was too late. One of the most noted ships in the Navy was lost with all hands. Ninety days after the ship had sailed from Tampico, there had been no word of survivors.

Congress responded to the loss of the *Hornet* with an act for the relief of the widows and orphans of her crew.³⁶⁵ The loss did not diminish the naturally contentious disposition of the House of Representatives. Congressman Nathaniel H. Claiborne of Virginia was elected as a Jacksonian in the wave of 1828, though he became an Anti-Jacksonian during the president's last term (1835-37.) Claiborne was opposed to the relief because the loss was a result of nature, not war. 'We have no right,' he argued, 'to be generous and

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Daniel H. Mackay to Samuel Du Pont of 31 January 1829, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington DE, Group 9, Samuel Du Pont, Series B (In File), Box 15 (1814-1837.)

³⁶⁵ Proceedings of the House of Representatives, 18 February 1830.

charitable with the money of other people'.³⁶⁶ Navy and Army officers, he said, were already the wealthiest men in the community.

Congressman Clement Dorsey, re-elected in 1828 as an Anti-Jacksonian, outlined a history of Navy ships lost to providence rather than battle such as the *Wasp*. Congress compensated widows and orphans of the crew in each case. His conclusion was that 'there is nothing in the history of this gallant ship and of her noble crew that can justify a nation in withholding the like expression of national regret for their loss with the same sympathy with the relatives of those who perished with the ship were expressed in the case of other ill-fated vessels'.³⁶⁷

Congressman Edward Everett of Massachusetts and an Anti-Jacksonian was considered one of the finest orators of the nineteenth century. He dramatically appealed to the House as it considered the vote. 'A battle has no terrors to the gallant seaman,' Everett said on the floor of the House. He continued:

It is full of hope, promise, glory, and even reward, if no higher motive operated. And cheer him in one of those tremendous tempests to enable him to bear the labour and brief the dangers that surround him? There was not one individual man on board the unfortunate *Hornet* whose muscles were not stiff with labour whose nerves were not strained with agony before he went down to his watery grave...what if they knew as they were going down the house was debating this provision?³⁶⁸

The bill passed one hundred thirty-eight to forty-two.

Jackson had to be concerned with the entire Gulf of Mexico. Mexico had secured its independence from Spain in 1824, but its territory included the province of Texas. The desire by U.S. citizens to settle in Texas and the subsequent move by settlers to secede from Mexico caused a rift between the two countries. Initially, the newly inaugurated Jackson had the benefit of having an American in command of the Mexican Navy. David Porter, a hero of the War of 1812, had been the target of an 1825 court-martial for actions taken

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

during the Foxardo Incident in the West Indies. Found guilty, he left the Navy and became the admiral of the Mexican Navy. While Jackson might have had a friend in command of the Mexican Navy, he faced a greater challenge by Mexico's response to America's diplomat, Joel Poinsett. Adams had appointed Poinsett to negotiate for the territories of Texas, New Mexico, and California. He failed and was recalled to the United States.

Mexico outlawed the immigration of American citizens into Texas in 1830, thus fuelling dissent not only from those already in Texas, but from those in the United States wishing to emigrate. In addition, the Mexican Navy was attacking U.S. merchant ships immediately following Porter's departure and return to the United States. The animosity between the United States and Mexico remained steady throughout Jackson's administration. In 1829, Mexico's General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna defeated a Spanish force of three thousand. By 1832, Texas was requesting statehood, thus fomenting revolution. In 1833 Santa Anna became president of Mexico. Complicating the Texan revolt was the fact that one of its leaders, Sam Houston, had served in Jackson's militia during the War of 1812.

During his term, Jackson had the opportunity but not the means to support Texas' secession overtly from Mexico and annexation by the United States during his term. The Army effectively engaged and managed Indians; it was not yet ready, however, to support Texas against the large Mexican force that had defeated the Spanish.

Jackson's own victories had come either from overwhelming native American tribes or in a well-prepared defensive posture against the British at New Orleans. If he sent an Army through Texas, the Americans would be on the offensive while the Mexicans would be in the more advantageous defensive position. Naval support for land operations would have been difficult at best. Texas had only two small ports in the 1830s – Anahuac and Copano – and neither were connected to the interior of the territory. There were no fully navigable rivers. Such a venture would have also been contrary to his stated position against inviting aggression against the nation. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a decisive defeat of the American Army in Mexico would have had a devastating effect on his presidency and himself. Jackson had

been propelled into office riding a national, populist wave for the man who had defeated the British invasion in the war. Losing to Mexico would have tarnished his image, perhaps irrevocably, particularly since his real focus was securing the southern territory of Florida.

The Second Seminole War

The Florida territory represented the great unfinished project for Jackson, who had led forces there after the War of 1812 during the First Seminole War. Jackson's obsession with the Seminoles led to one of the longest land wars in America's history with ten percent casualty rates. More than ten thousand soldiers, marines, and sailors would serve during the seven-year conflict. Spain had ceded control of the territory of Florida to the United States as a result of the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819. The native Seminole Indians had largely moved to a reservation in the middle of Florida. American settlers demanded that the government move the native tribes west. Southern slaves had also been escaping south across the border, since the days when Spain was in control, thus giving additional reason for the government to respond to southerners. Assisting the president was the Governor of the Florida Territory and Jackson's protégé, John Eaton.

In 1830, Congress passed, and Jackson signed into law, the Indian Removal Act. Officially, this authorized Jackson to enter treaties with Florida tribes. In reality, this resulted in a gradual, forced mass exodus of native tribes from Florida. According to Jackson, 'Treaties answer no other purpose than opening an easy door for the Indians to pass through to butcher our citizens.'³⁶⁹ The 1835 Treaty of New Echota authorized the removal of the Cherokee to western lands thus beginning the infamous 'Trail of Tears,' one of the most egregious acts against Native Americans in United States history. The Seminoles chose to resist. Rather than assume a defensive position, the Seminoles began to attack settlements and forts. On 28 December 1835, Seminoles ambushed and killed more than one hundred soldiers under Major Francis Dade. Propelled by the 'Dade Massacre' and other Seminole attacks,

³⁶⁹ Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 33.

the Jackson administration went to war. Jackson mobilized more troops and ordered additional ships to support the West Indies squadron.

Although this was largely a land war, the Navy and Marines participated in operations and often coordinated with their Army counterparts. The Navy conducted its first riverine operations and patrolled off the coast for weapons smugglers supporting the Seminoles. Naval orders preceded the Dade Massacre. One of the ships from the West Indies Squadron received orders to coordinate with Brigadier General Clinch – then commanding Army forces in Florida. Another ship would be ‘useful in cruising along the coast from Charlotte Harbor to Tampa Bay’.³⁷⁰ As warships deployed to the region, Dickerson informed Dallas that General Winfield Scott would be the overall commander of troops in Florida with Clinch serving as one of Scott’s three subordinate commanders. Dallas was to cooperate with General Scott ‘in the subjugation and removal of those hostile Indians in such way as you may think most conducive to the public interest’.³⁷¹

By January, the West Indies Squadron had been reinforced by the revenue cutters *Washington*, *Dexter*, and *Jefferson*. This was significant as revenue cutters fell under the authority of the Treasury Department. Secretary of the Treasury – and former Secretary of the Navy – Levi Woodbury authorized the transfer of revenue cutters to the Navy.³⁷² The cutters would ostensibly assist with coastal patrols. Eaton had reported to Washington that Spanish fishing vessels had been provisioning Seminoles,³⁷³ though this was never proven. By May, Washington had recalled the revenue cutters. No evidence suggests a reason.

Dallas was commended in January for protecting American settlers in Florida. Dallas asked the Navy for another ship. The *Vandalia* was thus ordered to proceed from Pensacola to Tampa Bay. A week later, the *Concord*,

³⁷⁰ Mahlon Dickerson to Alexander Dallas, 29 October 1835. *Press Copies of Reports Sent Concerning Navy and Marine Corps Service in the Second Seminole War, 1835-42, Part I: Instructions to Officers of the United States Navy Cooperating with the Land Forces of the US During the Florida War, 1835-42, RG 45, National Archives and Records Administration.*

³⁷¹ *Ibid*, 30 January 1836.

³⁷² *Ibid*, 9 January 1836.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, 21 January 1836.

Master Commandant Mervine Mix, received orders to join operations in Florida as well.³⁷⁴ By May, the sloop *Boston* had arrived in the region with the promise of another sloop to join Dallas soon. A few months earlier, Dallas recognized the geography was his worst enemy and asked for authorization from the Secretary of the Navy to charter additional vessels as he deemed appropriate.³⁷⁵

A steamboat was employed in support of military operations once before in 1822 under Porter's West Indies Squadron. Florida's extensive coastline, numerous inlets and bays, and extensive riverine system were a natural environment for the use of steamships. On 25 May, Jackson himself ordered that Dallas detach a large portion of his marines and seamen against the Seminoles and Creeks using three steamboats.³⁷⁶ The steamboats deployed to Pensacola. They then operated on the Chattahoochee River which traversed the Georgia and Alabama border through Florida before emptying out into the Gulf of Mexico, thus providing a key logistics line. The steamboats transported supplies, kept communication lines open, and operated against the native tribes.³⁷⁷ The steamboats' structures were to be reinforced to defend against enemy weapons and to be mounted with as many artillery pieces as necessary, per Jackson's order. The *Major Dade* joined the steamers *American*, *Southron*, and *Talla Busha* by June. Continuous operations sometimes impacted their ability to remain on station. In October, for example, the *American* broke its shaft and had to return to New Orleans. Nevertheless, it was back on duty less than two months later.³⁷⁸ A less

³⁷⁴ Official correspondence reports USS *Concord's* arrival on 8 April 1836. However, Captain Mix's diary states he arrived off Tampa Bay on 30 March. Source: Private journal of Captain Mix kept on board of the *Concord* sloop of war. Special Collections, University of South Florida Tampa Library

³⁷⁵ Alexander Dallas to Mahlon Dickerson, 15 January 1836. *Press Copies of Reports Sent Concerning Navy and Marine Corps Service in the Second Seminole War, 1835-42. Reports of Officers of the United States Navy Whilst Co-operating with the Land Forces of the United States During the Florida War.*

³⁷⁶ Jackson's order is incorporated in Dickerson's letter to Dallas (see fn 363)

³⁷⁷ Mahlon Dickerson to Alexander Dallas, 25 May 1836. *Press Copies of Reports Sent Concerning Navy and Marine Corps Service in the Second Seminole War, 1835-42, PART I: Instructions to Officers of the United States Navy Cooperating with the Land Forces of the US During the Florida War, 1835-42, RG 45, National Archives and Records Administration.*

³⁷⁸ Alexander Dallas to Mahlon Dickerson, 8 October 1836 and 19 January 1837. *Press Copies of Reports Sent Concerning Navy and Marine Corps Service in the Second*

advanced industrial base might have caused a delay in its return. Therefore, this quick turn-around suggests that by the Second Seminole War, the Navy had the capability of making quick repairs.

Small boats from the squadron commanded by junior officers deployed closer to the coastline and up the rivers. Lieutenant Levin Powell of the *Vandalia*, under the Command of Thomas T. Webb, took two boats up the Manatee River to search for a Seminole raiding party. With forty officers and sailors, he engaged with Seminoles and took prisoners. Powell operated against the Seminoles for more than six months. In the fall, he returned to Charleston to assemble a larger riverine force – fourteen boats, and fourteen canoes, transported by four chartered sloops to Florida.³⁷⁹ Powell would not be the only officer in charge of a riverine contingent. In the last four years of the war, Lieutenant John McLaughlin commanded more than one hundred fifty small boats, canoes, and barges along with more than six hundred men.³⁸⁰

This was the American Navy's first foray in extensive, long-term riverine operations – especially with steamships. That two junior officers were the key personnel for this mission represents a turning point. A new generation of naval officer charted a new and necessary course for the Navy. These technologies and operations separated them from the senior, conservative naval officers under whom they had previously served. The same cultural separation would occur with the Marine Corps.

Four days before the Dade Massacre, Marine Corps Commandant Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Henderson had written to Dickerson opposing the administration's proposal to integrate the Marine Corps and Army. Henderson won that fight, but the Second Seminole War presented a challenge. Jackson needed more ground forces in Florida; he found them with the marines. Jackson ordered Henderson to gather as many marines as possible and take them to Florida where they would report to Army General

Seminole War, 1835-42. Reports of Officers of the United States Navy Whilst Co-operating with the Land Forces of the United States During the Florida War

³⁷⁹ George E. Buker, 'Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, U.S.N., Pioneer of Riverine Warfare', *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (1969), 253-275 (p. 267).

³⁸⁰ Dudley Knox, *A History of the United States Navy* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1948), p. 158.

Thomas Jesup. It is unknown if Jackson was simply mobilizing more forces or if he were using this opportunity to try to integrate the two services as he had first hoped. Regardless, Henderson raised two battalions and conducted operations in Florida.

Two months after Jackson's farewell address, Henderson wrote to Dickerson about his assessment of joint operations but more so with regard to the integration of Navy and Marine commanders.

The naval officer is no soldier, and should not therefore command a branch of the Service of whose organization, drill and appropriate discipline they know nothing. It is in vain that they agree that because they command at sea, they should also command on shore [...] it is essential that the stations for its drill and discipline must be under military control and commanded by military officers. It is my firm belief formed from more than thirty years experiences, that the utility of the Corps as well as its military efficiency will be fatally affected should not this be the case.³⁸¹

Two weeks later, Henderson and other Marine Corps officers returned from their deployment by way of the steamer *Merchant*. Like their riverine counterparts, Henderson's new generation of marines operated in an environment and for a period of time that had been previously foreign to them. Marines were used on ships and for occasional shore parties under the leadership of naval officers. This issue is explored further in Chapter 6.

During the First Seminole War, Jackson completed military operations within a year (1817-1818.) It is possible that he thought that with the power of the presidency the result would be the same or that he could defeat the Seminoles in less time. As the war progressed late into 1836 with no end in sight, a new presidential election took place. On 5 December 1836, Jackson delivered his annual message to Congress. Much of it addressed the war in Florida. He noted the hostile aggressions of the Seminoles and Creeks required an overwhelming response by most of the Army, Marine Corps and militias. Early successes in defending coastal settlements had not sufficiently weakened the tribes. He argued that the executive branch required additional appropriations to continue the war he argued while touting the patriotism of the

³⁸¹ Archibald Henderson to Mahlon Dickerson, 11 May 1837. RG80 General Records of the Navy, Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, April 1804-Nov.1886, Volume 16.

soldier. He recommended funding for additional benefits for the soldiers as well as for private citizens whose properties the military had required.

Congress had little choice but to continue funding the war and the troops. Nevertheless, it did not fail to criticize the president or the generals. Members called for investigations into the war's delays and failures as well as its growing cost. Two generals were court-martialed as General Clinch declared that the blame lay instead at the feet of the War Department.³⁸² Massachusetts Congressman Caleb Cushing declared the war 'a blot, a shame on the national reputation [...] the blood of our people has been wasted and squandered in those arid sands'.³⁸³

Conclusion

What do naval operations during Jackson's administration demonstrate? Jackson gave clear direction to the Navy in what he sought to do globally. First, he would expand American trade opportunities throughout the world. He did so in Europe, South America, the Middle East and the Far East. Second, he assured merchants that he would protect them. By modifying the force structure of squadrons, he was able to respond to changing threats. Third, he promised a decisive response to any aggressors if American commerce was threatened. But it is important to understand that Jackson's assurance of punitive action was not his only choice. In the *Awashonks* and *William Penn* incidents, for example, American sailors may have been attacked and killed, but the incidents occurred in small, insignificant islands which bore no relation to American commerce. Other incidents, such as Falklands and Sumatra, however, had strategic or economic implications.

Two historical theories have emerged from Jackson's approach to the Falklands and Sumatra crises. The first theory suggests that Jackson was impetuous and punitive. One historian argues:

Old Hickory's impetuous and pugnacious diplomatic style made predictable his use of the navy to respond to outrages on American commerce. [...] In response to separate incidents at Quallah Batoo in

³⁸² Register of Debates in Congress Vol. 14, Pt. 1 25th Congress, 1st Session 1837 (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1860), p. 640.

³⁸³ Ibid, p. 642.

Sumatra and the Falkland Islands off the coast of Argentina, Jackson dispatched warships to retaliate promptly rather than seek diplomatic solutions to attacks on American trade.³⁸⁴

This dissertation, however, asserts the contrary with regard to Jackson's ability to handle a crisis. Another historian states that 'virtually all of the authors who touch upon [the Falkland Islands] crisis have ignored [Jackson's] involvement'.³⁸⁵ In the case of the Falkland Islands, Jackson was not reacting to a crisis. He had anticipated it. Based on newspaper reports, Jackson likely had knowledge of the Argentinian claims and reports of possible attacks. He sent a new charge d'affaires to Buenos Ayres specifically to deal with this situation, and he supported diplomacy with appropriate naval forces in the region. He also ceded control of the Falklands to the British rather than enforce the Monroe Doctrine. In his fourth annual message to Congress, Jackson refrained from providing too much information about negotiations with Buenos Ayres which would be inexpedient, thereby again avoiding the nationalist fervour that might have erupted and been exploited by another president.

In the case of Sumatra, Jackson's orders to Downes were clear. Downes simply did not follow them. Jackson wanted compensation and wanted the guilty Malays brought to justice, and he recommended the use of force only as a final option. Downes attacked as his first option. Despite the turmoil of his administration's resignations, Jackson demonstrated a thoughtful, reasoned, diplomatic and forceful approach to international crises. His vision went beyond his stated goals of enhance trade, protection of commerce, and responsive action. A decade before the term 'Manifest Destiny' became the rallying cry for Americans to colonize the west and push to the Pacific coast, Jackson was pursuing his own maritime destiny for the nation.

³⁸⁴ John H. Schroeder, 'Jacksonian Naval Policy 1829-37,' *New Aspects of Naval History: Selected Papers from the 5th Naval History Symposium*, ed. by the Department of History, U.S. Naval Academy, (Baltimore: N&A Publishing, 1986), 121-127 (p. 123).

³⁸⁵ Craig Evan Klaffer, 'United States Involvement in the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1831-33', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 4 (1984), 395-420 (p. 408).

Asia appealed to Jackson as part of his effort to expand American trade. The presence of Navy ships in the eastern Pacific would be insufficient to meet that goal. Consequently, Jackson established the East Indies Squadron under Commodore Edmund P. Kennedy. Comprised of the *Peacock* and the *Enterprise*, the squadron reached the Arabian peninsula in September 1835. Aboard *Peacock* was Jackson's first Envoy to the East, Edmund Roberts who reached trade agreements with Muscat, Oman and Thailand. Though tasked by Jackson to open trade with Japan, Roberts died of dysentery when the ships pulled into Macao. No previous president had envisioned the extent of naval service as Jackson did during his administration.

This was evident with the East Indies Squadron.³⁸⁶ American ships must traverse that ocean to Jackson's new Asian partners. Those ships had to understand their environment – the islands at which they could resupply or make repairs, the dangers of surrounding reefs and shoals, and the increased presence of American merchants, navy agents and consuls. This was why Jackson ultimately endorsed the exploring expedition. Like the merchants of the northeast, he understood that America's economic future lay not only with its traditional European trading partners but with new partners in the East. It is not known if Jackson read Alexis de Tocqueville's work, but Jackson would have been in full agreement that America was born to rule the seas. That vision of a naval future rested not only in Jackson's hands, but in the hands of a group of officers and literary figures who would articulate that vision and help Jackson carry it out.

Amid these operations, the Navy was gaining unprecedented experience in an abbreviated timeframe. The squadrons had seasoned commodores who had fought in three wars and now were vigilant in keeping the peace with other nations. Junior officers had a new technology, largely untested in combat, thrust upon them as they planned and coordinated riverine

³⁸⁶ The most extensive first-hand account of the squadron's first three years is William S.W. Ruschenberger, *A Voyage Round the World including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836, and 1837* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1838), Nimitz Library, U.S. Naval Academy, Special Collections G 440.R96. Some other records may be found at the National Archives and Records Administration, Area File of the Naval Records Collection, 1775-1910, M625, Area 10, Roll 345, 1798-1851.

squadrons. This would later prove invaluable during the Mexican-American and Civil War. But they also did this in a decade that changed the professional culture of the Navy.

Chapter 6: An Actualized Naval Culture

Introduction

The Jacksonian Era seemed to sweep up all aspects of American life. A system of naval personnel that had remained stagnant since the founding of the Republic was no different. Senior officers had remained in service for decades, often carrying conservative thinking through to the 1830s. This new wave of democratization, however, enlisted support from a new generation of naval officers, the presidential administration, and Congress. The Navy was developing its own unique culture, and a formalized structure to better develop expertise as a modern Navy.

Underlying this professionalization was accountability and that was evidenced by the courts-martial. This source of information is previously untapped. The sixteen thousand pages of records from more than three hundred courts-martial during Jackson's presidency provide unique insight into the challenges of discipline, in-fighting, and morale. Officers were held responsible for their actions. While this was true for any period, Jackson's personal intercession with so many proceedings reinforced a broader message to the Navy – the president expected discipline among the ranks to improve. Violation of naval regulations disrupted and diminished operational readiness.

The components of professionalization occurred concurrent to one another rather than independent and sequential. Junior officers resented senior officers collectively since their resistance to retire left few advancement opportunities, but nevertheless made some in-roads in changing the rank system. Naval schools were deemed insufficient with the introduction of new technologies and formalized secular schools established across the country. Therefore, the officers proposed a new, centralized shore-based academy. Advancements in medicine led to the establishment of a medical corps. The Second Great Awakening – a move to a more religious society – resulted in a formalized Chaplain Corps. The scourge of slavery continued to divide the nation, but the Navy was more immune to its causes and effects because of the nature of naval operations. Alcohol, such a vital component of shipboard life because of water purification challenges, was the cause of discipline problems, but the administration moved closer to limiting its use. Finally,

Jackson initially sought to incorporate the Marine Corps with the Army, but senior naval officers convinced the president of its utility and that it deserved a more enhanced role within the Department of the Navy. Taken in total, these components represented a fundamental shift toward naval professionalization.

Courts-Martial

Courts-martial records provide a wealth of information about the officer corps, operations, and the technical and social aspects of the Navy. The content in those records also tell a story of the president's own role in naval justice. The seminal naval court case of Jackson's administration was the inquiry into Lieutenant Robert B. Randolph for two reasons. First, Jackson's reviews of court cases up to that point had been measured, informed, and lenient. The Randolph case completely contradicted the aspect of Jackson's judicial background. Second, the case manifested Jackson's growing over-emotional and irrational reaction to the Petticoat Affair.

With Commodore Charles Morris presiding, the court of inquiry of Lieutenant Robert Beverley Randolph convened on 4 June 1832 at the Charlestown Navy Yard. The inquiry's findings were finally reported on 19 January 1833. Randolph, who had served in the Navy since 1810, found himself charged with financial irregularities while acting as purser aboard the USS *Constitution* in the Mediterranean. It was not the norm for an officer to serve as purser. In fact, Commodore Daniel T. Patterson had only temporarily placed Randolph in this collateral duty upon the death of the ship's purser, John Timberlake. Randolph's daughter later claimed that her father requested a court of inquiry to clear his name. For unknown reasons, Secretary Branch initially denied Randolph's request. Woodbury finally granted the request when he became Secretary of the Navy. However, the court of inquiry assessed that it was Kendall who requested the proceedings. In trying to defend himself, Randolph had sent Timberlake's steward to the office of Fourth Auditor Amos Kendall to examine the accounts. Timberlake had left approximately, eleven thousand dollars in cash (including gold and silver) at his death aboard the *Constitution*, and this had been transferred to Randolph as acting purser.

Complicating the issue was the question of vouchers claimed to be paid before and after Timberlake's death. These included a significant number of vouchers when the ship pulled in to resupply at Gibraltar before returning to the United States. Randolph then settled the *Constitution's* accounts in Boston upon her return in 1828. He travelled to Washington to meet with and deliver the account books to then-Fourth Auditor Tobias Watkins, who himself had been tried in 1829 for fiscal mismanagement. In his position, Kendall had copies of everything filed but denied both Timberlake's steward and Randolph access when Randolph first received notification of discrepancies in 1830. Denied access, Randolph said he would apply to friends in the Senate (specifically John Tyler and Littleton Tazewell) to obtain a fair accounting.

After an extensive investigation, the court criticized Randolph for making payments but not taking receipts. It found that he had not taken proper inventories, but acknowledged that he had received only verbal orders – not the normative written orders – which may have been misunderstood. There was no evidence that Randolph had deceived his commanding officer with regard to the money or supplies. The court found that it could not account for \$4,303. In the end, the court agreed that Randolph's irregularities in his manner of performing the duties of acting purser were not an intentional effort to defraud the government. That should have been the end of the case, particularly since it was a court of inquiry, designed to investigate the facts of an issue, rather than a court-martial, which carried with it the possibility of judicial punishment. After a three-year fight to clear his name, Randolph was clearly relieved to be exonerated, but that relief turned to disbelief when Jackson himself provided an additional ruling on the case.

Only three individuals could approve, modify, or reverse the proceedings of a court-martial – the commodore of the squadron, the Secretary of the Navy or the President. Table 6.1 shows the level of activity with regard to the number of cases that had additional rulings and, more specifically, how involved the Presidents from Adams to Buchanan were in administering justice. In most rulings, Jackson reduced the sentencing. His activist approach likely originated from his sense of frontier justice and his own experiences as a lawyer and jurist. Most presidential rulings found in the court-martial records are terse – usually a few sentences to state whether

Jackson approved, disapproved or modified the punishment. This was not the case with Randolph.

Table 6.1 Navy Courts-Martial, 1798-1860: Actions by Presidents and Secretaries of the Navy

Admin	Term	CMs #	Pres		SecNav		Pres+SecNav		Pres Overall
			#	%	#	%	#	%	
Adams	1797-1801	19	1	5%	0	0%	1	5%	0.4%
Jefferson	1801-1809	69	5	7%	0	0%	5	7%	1.9%
Madison	1809-1817	368	16	4%	25	7%	41	11%	6.2%
Monroe	1817-1825	391	31	8%	84	21%	115	29%	11.9%
Q. Adams	1825-1829	177	16	9%	4	2%	20	11%	6.2%
Jackson	1829-1837	271	65	24%	67	25%	132	49%	25.0%
Van Buren	1837-1841	169	20	12%	46	27%	66	39%	7.7%
Tyler	1841-1845	264	38	14%	91	34%	129	49%	14.6%
Polk	1845-1849	246	19	8%	8	3%	27	11%	7.3%
Taylor	1849-1850	99	7	7%	3	3%	10	10%	2.7%
Fillmore	1850-1853	256	11	4%	87	34%	98	38%	4.2%
Pierce	1853-1857	548	13	2%	68	12%	81	15%	5.0%
Buchanan	1857-1860	150	18	12%	13	9%	31	21%	6.9%
Total	1797-1860	3027	260	----	496	----	756	25%	----

Admin = Presidential Administration; CM = Court-Martial; Pres = President; SecNav = Secretary of the Navy

CMs # = Number of Courts-Martial during the Administration

Pres # = Number of CMs upon which the President ruled

Pres % = Percentage of CMs upon which the President ruled

SecNav # = Number of CMs # upon which the Secretary of the Navy ruled

SecNav % = Percentage of CMs # upon which the Secretary of the Navy ruled

Pres+SecNav # = Number of CMs upon which either the President or Secretary of the Navy ruled

Pres+SecNav % = Percentage of CMs upon which either the President or Secretary of the Navy ruled. (Courts-martial could receive final approval from the Commodore of the Squadron, the Secretary of the Navy, or the President. Most administrations left the vast majority of rulings to the authority of the Commodore.)

Pres Overall = Number of CMs upon which the President ruled compared to the total number of CMs upon which any president ruled during the period 1797-1860 (n=260), expressed as a percentage. Jackson was responsible for a full 25% of the presidential rulings during this sixty-three year period.

Stunningly, Jackson offered a detailed four-page reversal of the court of inquiry. Jackson pointed out that although the money was counted, no inventories of the stores were conducted. From the records and files of the Fourth Auditor's office, it also appeared that neither Randolph nor anyone else furnished that office with an account of the money or the stores. For this and other issues he discussed, Jackson wrote 'the President can not approve of so

much of the finding of the Court as declared'.³⁸⁷ Nor could he approve of the court's opinion that Randolph's irregularities were not intended to defraud the government. Jackson took an unfairly heavy-handed approach by stating that Randolph was 'unworthy of the naval service of this Republic, and an unfit associate for those sons of chivalry, integrity, and honour, who adorn our navy'.³⁸⁸ Jackson ordered the Secretary of the Navy to dismiss Randolph. Further, he wrote: 'The President trusts that the most efficient means will be resorted to by the Navy department to prevent in future the total neglect and disregard to deceased officers and their families which form striking characteristics in this case'.³⁸⁹

A few weeks later, Jackson, Donelson and others boarded the steamship *Sidney* in Alexandria bound for Fredericksburg where he would participate in a ceremony honouring Washington's mother. A company of marines was also on board. Jackson sat alone in the salon, smoking his pipe and reading a newspaper when Randolph entered. Jackson rose to extend his hand toward the stranger when the now-former naval officer announced himself as the naval officer whom Jackson had wronged and struck him. Randolph's action thus gets recorded as the first attack on a sitting U.S. president.

Several Jackson supporters tried to stop Randolph. He escaped to Richmond and the safety of his influential family. That evening, the prominent author Washington Irving spent the evening with Jackson and later recounted to Irving's brother: 'The old gentleman was still highly exasperated at the recent outrage offered him by Lieutenant Randolph [...] It's a brutal transaction, which I cannot think of without indignation, mingled with a feeling of almost despair that our national character should receive such crippling wounds from the hands of our own citizens.'³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ Records of General Courts Martial and Courts of Inquiry of the Navy Department, 1799-1867. Navy Courts-Martial, 1825-1840, Case 579.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ Washington Irving to Peter Irving, 17 May 1833, ed. by Wayne R. Kine, *The Complete Works of Washington Irving, 1803-1859* (Boston: Twayne, 1981), p. 762.

A warrant was issued for Robert Randolph's arrest. When he was found later that year, the circuit court heard the case under the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Marshall. The court found the warrant was unconstitutional under an 1820 law, and Randolph found himself a free man.

Within the context of naval justice, the Randolph case is important because of how Jackson followed this and overreacted. He had no authority to dismiss an officer based only on a court of inquiry. Jackson's motives in Randolph's dismissal are likely due to his obsession and the personnel involved rather than the procedures. Purser Timberlake's widow Peggy had married John Eaton, Jackson's Secretary of War, and become the most controversial individual associated with Jackson's administration. Like most issues in Jackson's first term, the president's judgment was clouded by the Eaton Affair and a naval officer simply became the target of one of the subjects of his anger. The Eaton Affair influenced Jackson's opinion. The Randolph case is significant from another perspective.

As Table 6.1 shows, Jackson involved himself with a quarter of all Navy courts-martial. His involvement was largely consistent and regular – except for a two-year period following Randolph's attack in which he commented on only two cases. The cause of this discrepancy cannot be determined through Jackson's correspondence or through other sources. In addition, no historian has weighed in with assessments, as none have delved into the court-martial records. It is possible that Jackson recognized he had overstepped his constitutional authority or even felt remorse over the decision, a trait not normally attributed to him by biographers. Perhaps he reflected that his decision had indeed been heavy-handed and unfair. If there is any evidence to support this, then it would be a later letter from Jackson to his successor, Martin van Buren, stating that if Randolph were ever found guilty to give him a presidential pardon.³⁹¹

³⁹¹ Most court-martial records are on microfilm at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington DC. However, this court of inquiry appears to be so important that it was printed in the American State Papers. House Document, No. 116, 21st Congress, 4 December 1838. The pardon is also discussed in Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy, 1833-1845*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 62.

Jackson appears to have viewed his role as a check on a service within his own branch of government as indicated through naval courts-martial. Courts-martial were presided over by several officers. Of the two hundred seventy-one courts-martial during his two terms in office, Jackson approved, mitigated, or overturned sixty-five of them; his Secretaries of the Navy overturned an additional sixty-seven (See Table 6.1). Compared to other presidents from John Quincy Adams through James Buchanan, Jackson directly involved himself in more than twice the number or percentage of cases than any other chief executive.

No aspect in the Navy was more important than discipline, especially at sea where precision, cohesion, and effort were necessary to survive the natural elements that might sink a ship and enemy engagements, which could do the same. Without strict naval discipline, anarchy and lethargy ship-wide might not reign supreme but it only required one weak link in the chain to diminish the fighting or sailing capability of the ship. The survey of U.S. naval courts-martial and courts of inquiry from 1829 to 1838 illuminates several issues during the Jacksonian Era. On average, thirty courts-martial or courts of inquiry occurred annually. While the number generally ranged from a low of ten proceedings in 1831 to thirty-eight in 1830, a spike occurs in 1835 with eighty-two courts-martial. Twenty-five of these proceedings were for sailors and officers; the remainder were for marines. Although marine officers and non-commissioned officers had been court-martialled prior to 1835, an act of Congress only recently included privates. Unlike the marines of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, the Marine Corps of the 1830s was often the military branch of last resort. Commodore Charles Stewart, who had served in the Quasi-War, the Barbary War, and the War of 1812, told his long-time friend and diplomat Richard Rush in 1817 that the marines were the dregs of society but necessary for ships.³⁹² Most of the marines charged for violations were court-martialled for desertion, drunkenness, and

³⁹² Charles Stewart to Secretary of the Navy John Branch, 8 March 1830, appendix to Secretary of the Navy John Branch to the U.S. Senate, 23 March 1830, 'On the Expediency of Dispensing with the Marine Corps as Part of the Armed Equipment of a Vessel- of- War', p. 565.

insubordination. The significant drop in prosecutions after 1835 suggests that an intensive effort to cull the worst violators had been largely successful.

Marines were also the greatest percentage of offenders in shore commands. In Charlestown, Massachusetts, and Norfolk (including Portsmouth and Gosport), marines accounted for forty-six percent and forty-two percent respectively of those officers and sailors charged with court-martial offenses. In Brooklyn, they accounted for over sixty-six percent. And in Philadelphia, marines accounted for an astounding ninety-two percent of all court-martial proceedings. Most Marine Corps courts-martial occurred in 1835, a reflection of the Marine Corps Reorganization Act of 1834, which subjected marines to Navy regulations.

This is supported by the number of naval officers court-martialled compared to their years in service (see Figure 6.1). Most courts-martial for officers between 1829 and 1838 occurred in the first six years of service. While enlisted sailors are not included in Figure 6.1, the ages and experience level of sailors and officers were similar. The number of charges by rank alone (exclusive of specific years in service) bears this out. Of the 106 courts-martial of naval officers between 1829 and 1838, fifty-one were of midshipmen. Of the eighty courts-martial of sailors, ordinary seamen were involved in fifty-four.

When officers and sailors were at sea on long deployments, the chances officers and sailors would commit an offense was minimal compared to when based on shore in the United States. In fact, nearly half of all courts-martial proceedings occurred in one of the four major established shore commands in Norfolk, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and Charlestown. Of the remaining incidents, the Mediterranean was the hotbed of activity, perhaps for the simple reason that the greatest number of sailors was based with that squadron.

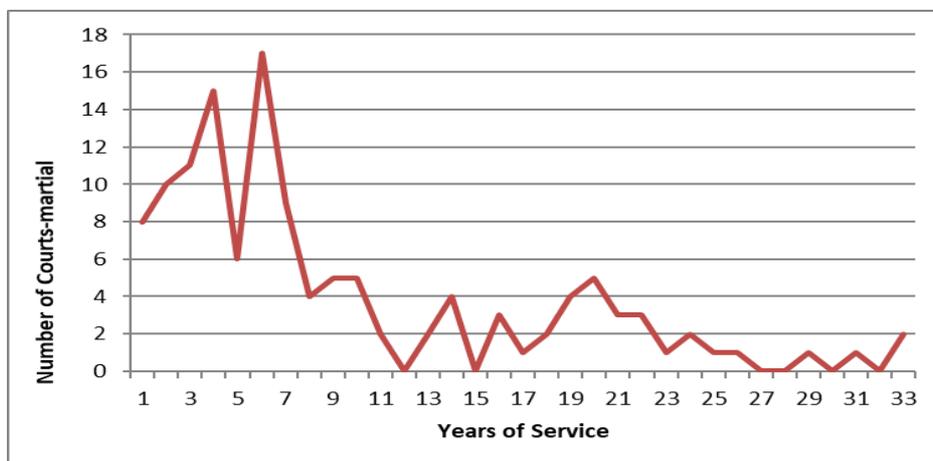


Figure 6.1 Naval Officer Courts-Martial by Years in Service, 1829-1838

Data compiled by the author from Naval Courts-Martial, National Archives & Records Administration

Since the promulgation of the Naval Regulations of 1802, little had changed in terms of expectations or consequences for violating required behaviour. Despite clear regulations, sailors and officers violated the rules. Between 1828 and 1838, three hundred ten Navy courts-martial of sailors and officers produced over sixteen thousand pages of documented proceedings. Not every sailor charged was given a court-martial – only infractions meriting twelve lashes or more resulted in a court-martial. Officers, unlike sailors, were subject only to courts-martial and any finding of guilt could not result in corporal punishment.

A curious inconsistency developed out of this atmosphere characterized by a code of iron discipline that imposed the strictest possible control over the enlisted men. Because officers often regarded them as the lowest class of humanity, their punishments were mainly flogging, confinement in irons, and the threat of capital punishment, on the grounds that that was all they could be expected to comprehend.³⁹³

Although corporal punishment through the cat-o-nines or irons were a common punishment for sailors, more draconian measures such as hanging a man by the yardarm largely occurred only in myth rather than the Navy. When

³⁹³ James E. Valle, *Rocks & Shoals: Naval Discipline in the Age of Fighting Sail* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980), p. 3.

Landsman Thomas Allen was charged and found guilty of murdering a seaman on the island of Minorca, the Court 'sought with anxiety to establish a plea of insanity in behalf of the Prisoner of some mitigating circumstance in his favour'. The court hoped the crime was committed because the accused was intoxicated. Finding no mitigating circumstance, it reluctantly sentenced him to hang. In another rare case of the death penalty, a sailor was charged with cutting the throat and causing the death of another sailor. He was found guilty and sentenced to be 'hung till he be dead at the yard from the *Boxer* at Sea'.

The first man executed in the Navy was a seaman who had been found guilty of cowardice on the USS *Constellation* during its 1799 engagement with the French *L'Insurgente*. According to one historian, between 1799 and 1862, only twenty-six sailors were sentenced to death, with eleven confirmed and six probable death sentences.³⁹⁴ Only one officer was put to death - Midshipman Philip Spencer, the son of the sitting Secretary of War, was summarily executed aboard USS *Somers* in 1842 for fomenting a mutiny. In 1831, Secretary Woodbury issued a circular recommending flogging as the last resort. While some Navy captains, like Charles Stewart who commanded ships from 1800 to 1841, sparingly flogged sailors,³⁹⁵ flogging continued until 1855. In 1846-47 alone, for example, there were 5936 cases of flogging.

Nevertheless, excessive use of the lash was rare. Between 1800 and 1851, only forty-nine cases were given sentences of a hundred lashes or more. In 1837, one seaman, John Herring, was found not guilty of murder but guilty of manslaughter. The seven-member court's sentence was four hundred lashes, the most meted out by any court. In this case, Commodore Jesse Duncan Elliott remitted the sentence to three hundred lashes, with one hundred lashes to be administered on each ship of the squadron – the USS *Constitution*, the USS *Shark*, and the USS *United States*.

Courts-martial were conducted by the officers themselves as prosecutors, jurors, and judge. Three or more officers sat on the 'jury'. No officer could be junior to the officer or sailor prosecuted lest they be intimidated

³⁹⁴ Valle, p. 91.

³⁹⁵ Claude Berube, *A Call to the Sea: Captain Charles Stewart of the USS Constitution* (Dulles: Potomac Books, 2005), p. 173.

by the defendant's rank, if senior enough. In addition, when the board publicly stated their vote on a case, the most junior officer on the board spoke first in order that the board would not change its vote upon hearing the decision of a more senior member of the board. One author argues that the justice dispensed by this system was often irregular and clearly incompatible with the system of civilian law. 'It had to deal with problems arising from cronyism, factionalism, grudges, and feuds that festered deeply because the participants could not escape one another in the enforced intimacy imposed by a small fleet with a limited number of berths.'³⁹⁶

The author further contends that 'since nearly every senior officer cultivated political contacts or at least could rely on the congressional delegation of his home state to back him, political pressure was quickly mustered to set aside either convictions or sentences'.³⁹⁷ While some of the proceedings were conducted at naval stations, the author makes this assertion with little documentation to support it. Courts-martial often took place on ships that were weeks, if not months, away from political support or interference.

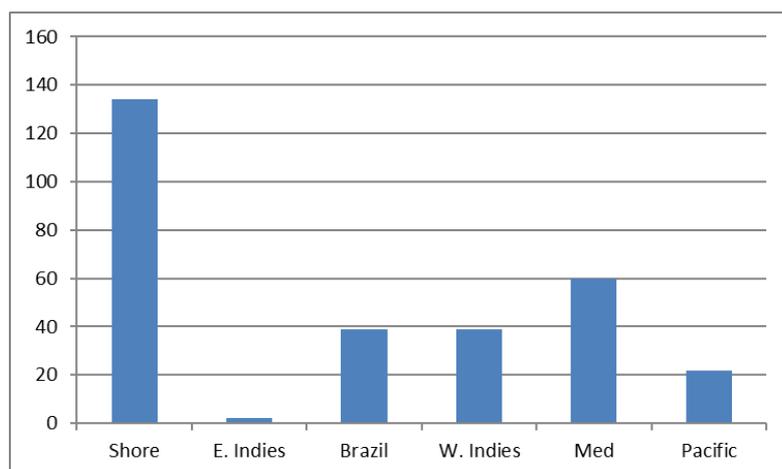


Figure 6.2 Number of Navy and Marine Courts-Martial by Station, 1829-1838

Data compiled by the author.

The last aspect of violations is categorized by ship. The 212 courts-martial occurring on ships resulted in an average 5.7 proceedings per ship; this

³⁹⁶ Valle, p. 91.

³⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 57.

meant that for the period of 1829-1838, each ship averaged less than one court-martial per year. Curiously ships-of-the-line, with over seven hundred crewmen, should have had a higher average of courts-martial simply because of the higher number of crew and opportunities for incidents. Instead, the five ships-of-the-line (USS *Independence* had not yet been converted to a razeed frigate), averaged 4.8 courts-martial per ship, or less than one every two years during this period. The most likely reason for this particularly anomaly was better discipline, since ships-of-the-line were commanded by or had on board the squadron commander, a captain who had probably first been commissioned during the Quasi-War (in actuality Captain Charles Stewart's commission dates a month prior to the creation of the Department of the Navy in April 1798) or the Barbary War. In either case, these captains and even lieutenants might have had several decades of experience each and simply possessed better leadership and management skills.

The Jackson administration's expectations for accountability and discipline were constant, but the number of courts-martial was not. With the exception of 1835 and the inclusion of marines in Navy regulations causing a spike of eighty-five courts-martial, the annual number of courts-martial ranged from twelve to thirty-six.

Personnel Reform

The administration could take immediate actions on personnel, although it failed to develop proposals fully in the first year. Instead it sought a judicious study within the department to identify the facts and options. Part of that reform involved reassessing personnel. This included issues such as the size of the force and professionalizing the officer corps. One historian argues that while Monroe and Adams were receptive to developing a professional standing navy, Jackson's 'proved lean at best for the navy, with economy as the principle constraint in officer personnel decisions, manifested in efforts to reduce the number of officers and alter the pay structure.'³⁹⁸ While this is true,

³⁹⁸ Donald Chisholm, *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy's Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

it fails to account for mishandled funds or efficiencies that the administration could identify. It also fails to recognize that important advances in the professionalization of the officer corps occurred during Jackson's administration.

Branch developed a peace establishment for the Navy plan and sent it to Senator Hayne of the Committee on Naval Affairs in February 1830.³⁹⁹ The proposal included a major reduction in the number of officers and recommended the discharge of eighteen percent of captains, twelve percent of masters' commandant, twenty-seven percent of lieutenants, and sixteen percent of midshipmen. Simultaneously with the department's review of a reduction in the number of ships, Branch suggested crowding the remaining lieutenants and midshipmen into ships-of-the-line to optimize the use of space. He also recommended that remaining officers receive a pay increase, in some cases doubling those for captains commanding a ship-of-the-line. He also suggested doubling or tripling the pay of pursers. His reasoning for this was based on the inexperienced pursers hired during prior administrations – they had received their appointment less for their expertise than out of patronage. Branch hoped to change that. According to Branch, such a personnel move was necessary in the greater interests of the Navy. Too many lieutenants and midshipmen, he argued, were without orders and spending too much time ashore and not at sea or preparing for sea duty. This situation contracted habits of idleness and debauchery at the navy yards. Sea duty, by its nature, minimized the time and opportunity for sailors – and officers – to get into trouble. In addition, sailors had to work together to ensure the ship could make it to port.⁴⁰⁰

There was sufficient cause for the reduction. Not all captains, for example, had commands at sea or ashore. Technically labelled 'without orders,' they were free to pursue their own business – some as merchants – but retaining them on duty meant that there was little room for the promotion of

399 Senate Document No. 58, 21st Congress, 1st Session, 'Secretary of the Navy to the Hon. R.Y. Hayne, Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs Covering a Plan for a Navy Peace Establishment, 18 February 1830.'

⁴⁰⁰ Donald Chisholm, *Waiting for Dead Men's Shoes: Origins and Development of the U.S. Navy's Officer Personnel System, 1793-1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 133-134.

junior officers. In 1830, nine of the Navy's thirty-six captains were either on a leave of absence or without orders. Moreover, there was real concern for an aging senior officer corps.⁴⁰¹

The first issue was time in service (see Figure 6.3). In 1817, the average years of total service for captains was eighteen, which coincides with the creation of the Department of the Navy in 1798. By 1830, the U.S. Navy's captains had an average of twenty-nine years in the service. Twelve had fought the French in the Quasi-War. The remaining captains had begun to serve during the First Barbary War. By 1835, the average time in service for captains was more than thirty-three years.

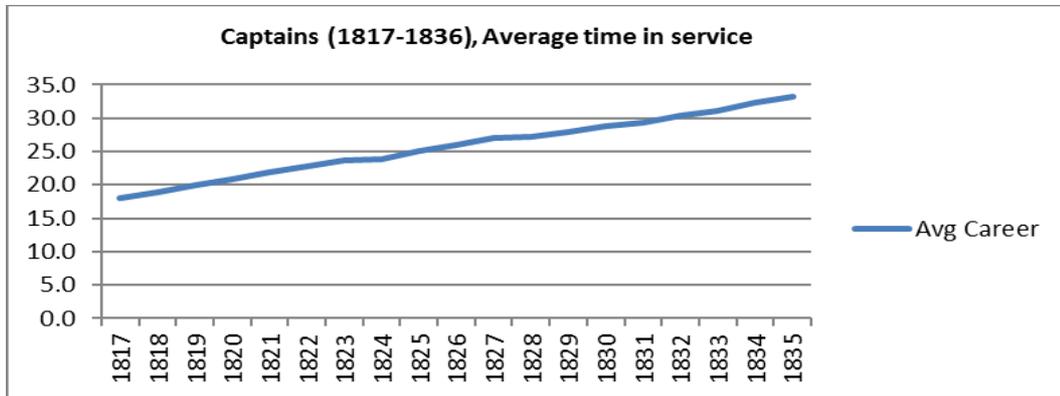


Figure 6.3 Captains (1817-1836), Average Time in Service

Data compiled by author from Hamersley's List of Officers of the U.S. Navy

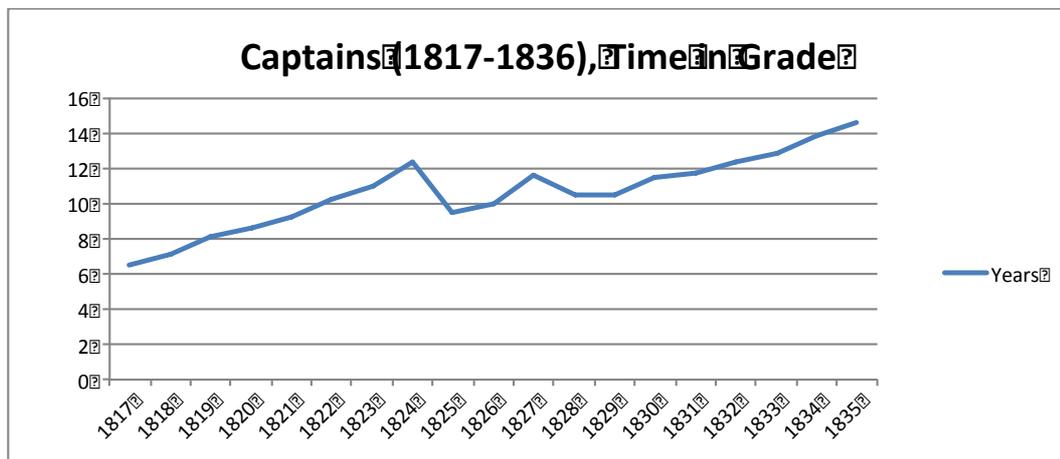


Figure 6.4 Captains (1817-1836), Average Time in Grade

Data compiled by author from Hamersley's List of Officers of the U.S. Navy

⁴⁰¹ Data compiled by the author based on annual Registers of the U.S. Navy, 1817-1835.

The second issue was time in grade at the rank of captain (see Figure 6.4). In 1817, the average length of time a captain had served at that rank was six and a half years, owing largely to the increase in number of ships and commands during the War of 1812. By 1830, the average was nearly twelve years, increasing to fourteen and a half by 1835. It was, therefore, understandable that junior officers sought reform, if they were to have comparable opportunities to their senior officers.

Education

Education was key to developing a professional officer corps as well as advancing the Navy technologically and strategically. Although the Navy did not establish a formal naval academy until 1845, the prior decade saw many incremental changes as well as wholesale proposals. One issue had to do with the selection of the midshipmen themselves. According to one historian, 'Many midshipmen were perceived as incompetent, reducing efficiency and increasing expense. Incompetence was attributed to appointments based on patronage requirements rather than ability, and inadequate opportunities to learn their profession.'⁴⁰² This is true – patronage was the primary source for commissions. Louis Goldsborough was only six years old when he received his warrant (his father had been the Navy's long-time chief clerk.) Others, like John C. Calhoun Jr., the Vice President's son, were from prominent political families. Charles Steedman received his warrant in 1828 because his father knew the President pro tempore of the Senate.⁴⁰³

In the last few months of his term in office, Southard asked Congress for an organization of the Navy and Marine Corps, a criminal code, an increase of ranks, a naval school, education of American seamen, and provisioning of naval hospitals. It was not the first time such a proposal had occurred, especially regarding education. In 1829 Branch reported that the subject of schools had often been recommended and failed to pass so often that elected

⁴⁰² Chisholm, p. 134.

⁴⁰³ The Vice President of the United States is the presiding officer of the U.S. Senate and can, in the case of a tie, break it with his or her vote. In their absence, the senior-most senator from the majority party presides as the president pro tempore

officials were reluctant to continually vote on it. Again, Jackson did not have to present this to Congress. That he did so suggests an intention to carry forward previous administrations' policies. Perhaps, like Branch, he recognized the need for an educated naval officer corps to conduct diplomatic negotiations globally. Part of that reflected Branch's belief that the Navy ignored foreign languages because they were viewed as a great inconvenience.

The Navy had two schools – in New York and Norfolk – that were for mathematics, since that was required for navigation. When the future Rear Admiral Charles Steedman became a midshipman, he reported in 1829 to the Naval School at the New York Navy Yard commanded by Commodore Isaac Chauncey. The head teacher was Mr Edward C. Ward, professor of mathematics in a school of thirty to forty midshipmen. According to Steedman, 'Before the establishment of the Naval Academy, nearly half the midshipmen were appointed by politicians from Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.'⁴⁰⁴

Perhaps recognizing the shortcomings of the naval school, William A. Duer, President of Columbia College, offered classes to local young officers.⁴⁰⁵ Chauncey considered it. 'This proposal,' he wrote to Branch, 'is a liberal one, not more expensive than the navy yard schools. I certainly should prefer a Naval School, if Congress would authorize one'.⁴⁰⁶ If the navy accepted, Chauncey believe that a naval officer could be attached to the college for 'superintending the young officers, and enforcing discipline'. However, there is no record at Columbia University of any midshipmen attending classes in the 1830s.⁴⁰⁷ It is possible that Duer made the offer because of his own experience. He had been a midshipman during the Quasi-War. The subject of

⁴⁰⁴ *Memoir and Correspondence of Charles Steedman, Rear Admiral, United States Navy, with His Autobiography and Private Journals, 1811-1890*, ed. by Amos Lawrence Mason (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1912), p. 21.

⁴⁰⁵ William A. Duer to Isaac Chauncey, 3 February 1830. Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, HR21A-D17.5.

⁴⁰⁶ Isaac Chauncey to John Branch, 4 February 1830. National Archives and Records Administration, Center for Legislative Archives, HR21A-D17.5.

⁴⁰⁷ Email exchange between the author and Jocelyn Wilk, Columbia University Special Collections, 10 June 2011.

charges, his family had used their considerable influence to allow him to quietly leave the Navy.

In his report to Congress in 1830, Branch noted that naval officers ought to study more than mathematics, including foreign languages and international laws. 'The sons of the wealthy,' he wrote, 'may obtain these advantages from the bounty of their parents; but without the aid of public instruction, how are the sons of the less affluent to become qualified to command in the naval service.'⁴⁰⁸ For more than two decades, Army officers had been educated at West Point. The only provision for the education of midshipmen was a schoolmaster and, even then, only on larger ships.

Although the Naval Academy was not established until 1845, the naval schools of the 1830s were an important step toward its creation. The fundamentals existed. Naval officers who travelled around the world understood the need for a standardized, shore-based curriculum by professional instructors, particularly in the sciences and engineering. It would, however, take an incident – the *Somers* Mutiny in 1842 – to convince Congress and the public of a need for a school that taught ethics and morals.

It is important to note that significant difference of the two streams of thought that finally led to the Naval Academy. Naval officers campaigned for a school out of a need for technological advancement in order to understand steamships and how they would be used operationally. By contrast, Congress was responding to a single incident with the emotionally driven call for a standard school. It was the officer corps that understood the cold, rational necessity of advancing the profession. While an academy was still a few years away, the professionalization of the staff corps was well underway in the 1830s.

In February 1837, just two weeks before Jackson's term expired, Samuel Southard introduced out of committee Senate Bill S. 64, 'A Bill to Establish a Naval Academy' based on 'the earnest recommendation of the Executive.'⁴⁰⁹ In 1836, naval officers – largely lieutenants, midshipmen,

⁴⁰⁸ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, December 1830, *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1860), p. 758.

⁴⁰⁹ Register of Debates, Senate, 24th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1453

chaplains and surgeons – petitioned Congress for a naval academy.⁴¹⁰ They pointed out that the school master system was ineffective, that school masters could rarely impart elementary or scientific knowledge or advance the education of naval officers. They argued for a naval school which could help them prosecute the profession to which [they were] devoted and perpetuate the commercial prosperity of the country entrusted to their safekeeping on the high seas. They asked that their petition be presented to the Secretary of the Navy.

This petition was significant. Each petitioner signed his name to the document, unlike the pseudonymous articles in the decade's magazines. They chanced retribution from senior officers and the Secretary of the Navy. None, however, appear in court-martial records. More notably, of the thirty-four lieutenants and midshipmen who signed the petition, all but five were promoted (one having died in the interim and the other four resigning later in the decade.)⁴¹¹ There was no retribution for addressing the issue to congress and challenging the schoolmaster system. Nevertheless, Southard's bill narrowly lost the vote on 3 March, one day before Jackson left office.

Medical Corps

Medicine and the establishment of a professional Medical Corps reflected scientific advance and the willingness of at least some officers to improve and modernize the Navy. While imperfect, the Medical Corps represented a new professionalism, uniformity in education and training, as well as recognition of the importance of the overall health and well-being of officers and sailors. Thus, the Navy recognized the need for qualified and quality surgeons and proper medical care. Two primary determinants influenced the role of medicine and the treatment of disease as a component of naval culture during the Jacksonian Era. The first were geographic and operational changes. The second had to do with the gradual professionalization of the medical profession. It was a pivotal decade for the

⁴¹⁰ *American State Papers Volume IV: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1860), p. 884.

⁴¹¹ Edward W. Callahan, *List of Officers of the Navy of the United States and of the Marine Corps, 1775 to 1900* (New York: L.R. Hamersly & Co, 1901)

naval medical profession, as the Navy founded naval hospitals throughout its major bases and commissioned more qualified surgeons, while Congress recognized this need by increasing the medical portion of the Navy's budget by fifty percent.

Surgeons in the antebellum Navy assumed the roles of physicians, psychologists, and coroners, during ship deployments, and quite often they failed to excel in any of those duties. Far more often, sea-based surgeons were a pale shadow of the capabilities of their counterparts on land. Medicine had yet to benefit as much as other sciences from the age of enlightenment. Blood-letting, for example, was still a common practice in the mistaken belief that it represented a reliable relief of symptoms and disease.

William Barton, like many Navy surgeons, was from Philadelphia, a centre of American education and affluence. He advocated the use of lemons and limes to fight scurvy, composed regulations for governing naval hospitals, and promoted the employment of female nurses. His arguments occurred in the late 1820s, decades before Clara Barton⁴¹² played her role in the Civil War. Many diseases resulted from the close proximity and tight living quarters on ships at sea. Unlike Army soldiers, who when not in barracks were more often than not in the field, Navy sailors and officers had nowhere else to go. Ventilation was not a problem with the Army, whereas on ships it was extremely poor and a contributory cause of disease. Captain James Barron attempted to rectify this in the early 1830s with his patent for bellows, which could ventilate the confined lower decks where the crew ate, slept, and fought.⁴¹³

Recent contemporary medical discoveries reduced deaths in the fleet. Two such examples were the vaccination for smallpox and, increasingly important to the Navy, the use of quinine to treat malaria (1820). By the 1830s, the Navy had established squadrons off West Africa, the West Indies, and the Gulf of Mexico, all of which exposed sailors to tropical diseases. This

⁴¹² There is no known relation between William and Clara Barton.

⁴¹³ Capt. Edmund P. Kennedy to Commodore John Rogers, Pres. Navy Board, Washington, 14 January 1824; James Barron to Captain Lewis Warrington, 25 March 1824; Edmund P. Kennedy to Comdr. James Barron 8 August 1827, James Barron Papers, Mss. 65 B27, Swemm Library, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

represented a dramatic operational shift that had direct implications on the ability of personnel to perform their duties and the costs associated with widespread disease. Some physicians and commanders recognized the need to adapt to these changing conditions. Matthew Perry, for example, commanded the *Shark* off West Africa and instituted the 'Rodgers system' to keep sailors healthy, keep them hard at work, and minimize shore leave.⁴¹⁴ This may have been the result of the *Peacock's* experience, which in June had found itself plagued by yellow fever that claimed the lives of four officers and several crewmen. That ship's experience clearly had an impact on the morale of at least some other officers. Lieutenant Garrett J. Pendergrast had concerns about his fellow officers deployed to hazardous regions. 'I have read with much regret the accounts given of the fatal consequences produced by the yellow fever in our W. India Squadron.' Pendergrast thought that fellow officer Samuel DuPont had been 'numbered with these gallant fellows who have sacrificed themselves for their ungrateful country's good'.⁴¹⁵

Prior to Jackson's administration, naval hospitals dispensed minimal medical care. Patients found themselves receiving tepid care and being ignored, at best, or being mal-treated at worst. Dr John Wiley of the naval hospital at Brooklyn was the cause of numerous egregious abuses and rampant misadministration. Seaman Charles Brooks died after another patient administered three tablespoons and one teaspoon full of laudanum to him. At the time of the seaman's death, no one was awake in the ward or knew of Brooks' death until another patient awoke in the morning. Seaman Samuel Brown was put in double irons on 13 November 1824 for nearly two weeks and then received one dozen lashes on his bare back by Wiley's order. Wiley then had Brown put in double irons again, this time with his hands behind his back for four more days.⁴¹⁶ After his lashes, Brown failed to receive any medical treatment. Seaman Ezekiel Whitney begged for someone to wipe his eyes

414 James Bradford, *Command Under Sail: Makers of the American Naval Tradition, 1775-1850*, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1985), p. 234.

415 Garrett J. Pendergrast to Samuel F. DuPont, 5 January 1824, Louisville, Kentucky, Samuel F. DuPont Papers, Group 9, Hagley Museum and Library, Brandywine, DE. Pendergrast was the nephew of Commodore James Barron, the senior most officer in the navy until his death. Pendergrast also commanded *Cumberland* at the outset of the Civil War.

416 Navy courts-martial, Case 426.

'that he might once more be enabled to behold light' before his death from smallpox. With no one appointed for that purpose, a marine corporal tended to him. Another sailor, in the service for over twenty years, found himself tied up and flogged while he begged Wiley for mercy. The same was true of another sailor punished with twelve lashes. These were just a few of the patients flogged or threatened with it. Marine corporal John W. Jones testified that when he was a patient from 16 July to 2 September 1824, 'no one was appointed to attend the sick as a nurse in any wards...one patient was obliged to wait on the others or have no attendance' and that 'the attending physician never visited the wards oftener than once'.⁴¹⁷ One of the surgeons, Dr Mordecai Morgan who was affiliated with the hospital for only two months, testified that he supported the concept of patients caring for themselves as well as lashing.

Moreover, in spite of the inadequate care, there was a general lack of discipline among Navy surgeons. Dr John Kearney, surgeon of the fleet in the Mediterranean, found himself charged in May 1829 with disobedience of the lawful order of his commanding officer, specifically staying overnight in the Port of Mahon on several occasions. Commodore William Crane had directed that no officer should remain away from the ship overnight. Kearney then wrote to Crane, if the order applied to him, since he had 'visiting the sick ward frequently enough...during the days' and had assistant surgeons observing the sick when he was not present. Crane was clear in his response: 'Your situation is not one of convenience but responsibility, and whether it is your duty personally to attend to the prescriptions or not, I believe it to be necessary and proper that you should see them administered.' Therefore, Kearney was not to sleep away from the ship especially since one crewmember had died without the presence of any medical officer present. The following day Kearney responded, oblivious to the implication of the crewman's death: 'But this will confine me to the sick ward most of the day and night.'⁴¹⁸

Kearney further expected Crane to offer him some of the same liberties offered to other wardroom officers ashore. Crane acquiesced only if the sick

⁴¹⁷ Navy courts-martial, Case 426.

⁴¹⁸ Navy courts-martial, Case 490.

were free from danger. Kearney saw his opening in defining 'danger'. On 15 May, Kearney noted that all sick personnel were free from danger and asked that he leave the ship. Crane rejected the request. Despite clear direction from the commodore, Kearney went ashore. After several days Crane ordered him to return. Kearney claimed that he was too ill to return, confined to his bed. Unfortunately for Kearney, he had encountered Lieutenant Edmund Byrne the evening before. Byrne testified at the following court-martial that the doctor had seemed healthy enough. 'He told me he was going to the Opera and that he had come out between the acts on account of the warmth.'⁴¹⁹ A court-martial found Kearney guilty, suspended him from duty for six months, and dismissed him from the Mediterranean squadron.

Laudanum was an opiate used to treat a variety of conditions. It was used as frequently as an analgesic as for treating alcoholics. Crane charged Lieutenant James Ramage of the *Delaware* with contempt of authority and scandalous conduct, primarily being intoxicated. While changing in the wardroom one evening, Lieutenant Edmund Byrne noted Ramage's bloody shirt. The latter dismissed it as a wound he had received in the United States before they got underway. 'He shewed [sic] me a large vial containing some liquor which he said he was about to take to alleviate the pain,'⁴²⁰ said Bryne, noting that it was laudanum.

The prior cases suggest a need for professionalization of the medical corps. Commodores and captains expected higher standards for surgeons by the 1830s. If not, then they at least demanded accountability from those who failed in their primary duty which was the health and well-being of the crew. The Secretary of the Navy reported to Congress in December 1830 that the Navy required special attention for the construction of appropriate facilities particularly in Pensacola. The Navy had already purchased land for hospitals at the New York and Boston yards. Pensacola's mild climate would help those suffering from maladies.

In 1830, Barton penned his book *Hints for Medical Officers, Cruising in the West Indies* before assuming his duties at the Norfolk naval hospital. This

⁴¹⁹ Navy courts-martial, Case 490.

⁴²⁰ Navy courts-martial, Case 490.

work was fortuitous as the Navy's presence in the West Indies and Gulf of Mexico would substantially grow throughout the decade, particularly during the Second Seminole War of 1835-42, although Army deaths from diseases far outpaced those resulting from combat. But, as disease like typhoid, scarlet fever, dysentery, and others struck ships in the West Indies, ship captains responded. When disease struck the frigate *Brandywine*, the captain ventilated the ship in Havana harbour. When Commodore Lewis Warrington reported the frigate *Java* had cholera aboard, the Department of the Navy directed him to stop unnecessary exposure and hard labour, keep the ship clean and dry, issue proper clothes, and distribute lime and soda.

The period after the War of 1812 meant fewer military engagements and, consequently, fewer opportunities for medical professionals to practice their craft in a battlefield environment of surgeries, amputations, and the dressing of battle wounds. There were exceptions. For example, during the murder trial of Seaman Benjamin Marsden, the Mediterranean squadron's fleet surgeon testified with great detail and accuracy on the victim's final hours, treatment, the weapon used, and post-mortem assessment.

Education specifically applied to naval surgery remained limited. The United States had few medical colleges and lagged far behind scientific education on the continent. The British had founded Greenwich Hospital in 1694 but it would take more than two hundred years before Britain established a school devoted to tropical medicine.⁴²¹ In 1823, however, Dr Thomas Harris proposed a refresher course for surgeon's mates for promotion. Harris recognized that American naval surgeons needed to practice on cadavers as in European medical hospitals. Absent an educational facility to specifically train naval surgeons, Harris also arranged for students to attend lectures at the University of Pennsylvania. Not surprisingly, there was a paucity of qualified surgeons. As Southard wrote just a few weeks before Jackson's inauguration, 'Our present list of medical officers is much too small and has for several years

⁴²¹ The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine was founded in 1898.

been too small to ensure proper attention to the health and comfort of our officers and seamen.⁴²²

For the first time in the Navy's history, the need for a more formalized hierarchy among medical officers emerged as Senator Robert Y. Hayne (D-SC) introduced legislation to create a surgeon general for the Navy on 16 February 1830. Upon seeing the bill's draft, Secretary Woodbury recommended that the senator water down the role to an occasional supervisor. Although the term 'Surgeon in Chief' was in the original bill submitted to the committee, members changed this to 'General' whose role it would be to 'supervise the manner in which [medicine had] been performed, to supervise the selection, purchase and putting up of all drugs, medicines, Surgical instruments, Hospital Stores and furniture'.⁴²³ The proposed legislation ultimately failed to become law.

Four years later, Woodbury reversed himself and asked Surgeon Thomas Harris to supervise the medical affairs of the Navy. Harris was an accomplished physician who had overseen the construction of the Philadelphia naval hospital, served as president of the naval board of medical examiners, and was an acquaintance of Jackson. In 1832, Harris operated on Jackson to extract a bullet from the president's body that had resulted from a duel two decades before. In 1844, Harris served as the second chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

One shift by the 1830s, due partly as a result of reforms in the previous decade, was the demand by naval doctors and surgeons for equality of rank and pay with line officers as well as their peers in the Army. Southard had, by 1824, established examinations for surgeon's mates in order to be promoted to surgeon. The board itself would consist of five surgeons. In 1828, Congress changed the rank from surgeon's mates to assistant surgeons that included a time in grade of two years and sea duty before an individual could become eligible before the board.

⁴²² Samuel Southard to John Quincy Adams, 9 February 1829, US Navy Department, *Letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy to the President and Executive Agencies, 1821-1886*, Microfilm VB255.1.U72, Roll 1, July 21-1821-September 30, 1836.

⁴²³ Robert Hayne, 16 February 1830, National Archives and Records Administration, Center for Legislative Archives, SEN 21A-D11 1830 Feb 16.

In February 1837, seven surgeons and twelve others – including Barton and Harris – wrote to President Jackson requesting more surgeons for the fleet. In addition to the request, they wrote it collectively as ‘the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy’. They had finally become an organized group within the Navy, a professionalized unit with standards and intellectual fervour. Shortly before he left office, Jackson approved the request. Three years later, the Navy included one hundred thirty-one surgeons, passed assistant surgeons, and assistant surgeons. The medical staff corps that had emerged in the Navy directly contributed to the Navy’s overall organization and professionalism of a more modern officer corps.

Religion and the Chaplain Corps

The United States experienced a revival of religious fervour in the 1830s, which seeped into naval culture and regulations. The issues of temperance in alcohol use, the abolition of slavery, and formalized religious services and institutions within the Navy reflected that broader national experience of the evangelical movement. The decade saw the emergence of the Baptists and the Methodists founding colleges and theological seminaries,⁴²⁴ and the organization of churches as immigrants began to pour into the country, bringing with them their religious faith and traditions. Cities and towns had, by this decade, become large enough to merit church structures, congregations, and clergy and, with them, regular services. Twice as many Americans were part of an organized religion as in 1776.⁴²⁵ ‘The religious awakenings of the early nineteenth century marshalled powerful energies in an age when few other social agencies in the United States had the capacity to do so.’⁴²⁶

Court-martial records of the era suggest that in many ways Navy sailors were no different than those of any era. When on shore they drank, often to excess, and when they drank they engaged in activity deemed inappropriate in

⁴²⁴ Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 180.

⁴²⁵ Howe, p. 186.

⁴²⁶ Howe, p. 194.

some cases and illegal in others that ranged from engaging with prostitutes, vocalizing their objections to their superior officers, or committing crimes.

Upon his return from the Mediterranean aboard USS *Java* in 1830, Chaplain Hervey Hayes spoke with New York City businessman Arthur Tappan in whom he found a willing ear about the immoral behaviour of the sailors and officers of the squadron. Tappan's brother Benjamin had deeply involved himself in the new Democratic Party and served as an elector during the presidential election of 1832.⁴²⁷ Another brother, Lewis, was an abolitionist. With Lewis and Samuel F.B. Morse, Arthur Tappan founded the New York Journal of Commerce and made it free of 'immoral advertisements'. Tappan later co-founded the American Anti-Slavery Society with William Lloyd Garrison, and it was Tappan who would serve as its president until 1840. After Hayes confided in Tappan, the latter sent a letter to Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen of New Jersey, known as the 'Christian Statesman' for his involvement in various religious societies. The letter soon found its way to Levi Woodbury.⁴²⁸

Hayes had told a tale of rampant immorality of admitting abandoned females onto the ships for two nights after ships arrived in port. No ship was 'free from this pollution'. He had said that 'it would shock every decent person in the nation who has not been familiar with such scenes to read a true account of the loathsome brutality that disgraces some of our public ships'. Hayes omitted no rank from responsibility for the deplorable state of affairs. He retained high praise for Commodore Rodgers whom, he averred, 'prohibited the admission of abandoned females into his own ship and forbade their being tolerated in any ships under his command'. Rodgers successor, however, had a far more permissive attitude – at least according to Hayes:

Night after night his ship was swarming with vileness & disease [...] A Broad Pennant, about twice the ordinary size, proudly fluttered over a squadron of licensed American brothels [...] we seem to have no shame for ourselves. More men were disabled from duty from [venereal disease] than all others put together on board the ship. For 8 or 9

⁴²⁷ Benjamin Tappan also later served as a United States Senator from 1839-45.

⁴²⁸ Clifford M. Drury, *The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, Vol. 1, 1778-1939* (Washington: Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1948), p. 51.

months together without raising anchor the daughters of pollution like so many Turkey Buzzards were feeding on her carcass.⁴²⁹

Those involved in the evangelization of America and the maritime industry sought to rectify that, or at least mitigate such actions. Enoch Cobb Wines, who served as a schoolmaster on the frigate USS *Constellation* during its cruise to the Mediterranean in 1829, noted 'the moral and religious culture of the seamen on board of our public vessels is too much neglected'.⁴³⁰ Like so many transformative measures, change came not from within the Navy but from beyond its strict confines. While officers on board ships read regular religious services such as funerals, the reason for instituting religious – or rather some semblance of moral guidance - in the Navy initially came from societies particularly through their literature. The Society for Promoting the Gospel Among Seamen published its first issue of 'The Mariner's Magazine' in 1825. Funded by U.S. and British religious societies, seamen's preachers possessed stations in key ports such as Kronstadt, Le Havre, Rio de Janeiro, and Cape Town.⁴³¹

Formally organized in 1828 in New York City and incorporated in April 1833, the American Seamen's Friend Society intended to 'improve the conditions of seamen and bring them into the enjoyment of the same domestic comforts and the same advantages for religious improvement that other men in other walks of life enjoyed'. The society would ensure standards for sailors to stay in boarding houses and would provide reading rooms, savings banks, schools, and frequent prayer meetings as well as the distribution of bibles. The society's magazine, *The Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal* became one of the primary conduits to its members and to a broader national audience. The society's chaplain, the Reverend Charles S. Stewart, became one of the best-known and most prolific authors in the Navy. In the magazine's inaugural issue, Stewart wrote that the whole Navy ought to focus on religion. The magazine itself was to relate the religious experience of pious mariners, the

⁴²⁹ Drury, p. 52.

⁴³⁰ Enoch Cobb Wines, *Two and a Half Years in the Navy: A Journal of a Cruise in the Mediterranean and Levant on board the U. S. frigate Constellation in the Years 1829, 1830, and 1831* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1832), p. 48.

⁴³¹ Harold D. Langley, *Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967), p. 61.

progress of seamen's meetings, churches, and worship at sea as well as the oppression of seamen from government and individuals. It raised awareness of the grievances with Navy hospital funds and advocated for 'the efficient introduction of the means of grace on board of our ships of war'.⁴³² Though primarily intended for merchant sailors, sailors on Navy warships were clearly part of this greater effort. In addition to Stewart, who had travelled widely on U.S. Navy ships including as a missionary to the Sandwich (later Hawaiian) Islands, at least one Navy officer - Lieutenant Benjamin Page - served as a director.

One service offered by the organization was the establishment of register offices where sailors could bring letters from their captain attesting to their good moral character. These registers provided two benefits: first, the sailors would secure recommendations for good boarding houses and second, ship masters would give the bearers first preference, when they sought billets at sea. This was the practical aspect of governing and abiding by moral standards. To some, it represented something far more wide reaching.

A writer in the *Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal* using the pseudonym 'American Spectator' opined on the Navy's moral character. The bearers of the national flag to other shores, he wrote, should be regarded as the representatives, not only of the heroic spirit, but also of the moral virtues of the country. 'American Spectator' noted that the bearing and conduct of American sailors received scrutiny from foreigners. But what were these national traits and virtues? 'American Spectator' is not explicit though one can surmise it was primarily the issue of alcohol use (temperance), based on other articles and efforts in the Navy. Chaplains suggested that the requirement for morals including forswearing cursing, blaspheming the name of God, and drunkenness. Alcohol abuse supposedly led to every other problematic issue – disrespectful behaviour with superior officers, slothful undertakings on the ship, engagement with prostitutes, theft, and in a few cases murder. 'Many of our national ships,' he wrote, 'while in foreign ports, instead of carrying with them that healthful moral influence which we might righteously expect, have

⁴³² Reverend Charles S. Stewart, *The Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal*, 1 (1829), iii.

been made the scenes of the most degrading and brutal vices...the present head of the navy department has taken decisive steps for an immediate and entire suppression of these evils'.⁴³³

Without some organized effort and dedicated personnel within the Navy, however, any discussion of morals and virtues would have been fruitless. Navy officers took a leadership role in organizations. The American Seaman's Friend Society in June 1833 included among its thirty directors, six navy officers, including future Commodores Andrew Foote and John D. Sloat. Several were captains. Conspicuous in his absence was one of the most senior officers, Commodore Charles Stewart, likely because his personal life in the 1830s, which included a failed marriage and children with another woman, would not have placed him in the category of the virtuous. To many, the provisioned bibles and readings from officers were insufficient to provide proper, organized moral guidance. The Navy needed a structural approach. This was achieved in a new Chaplain Corps. 'There is indeed an affinity between religion and the sea,'⁴³⁴ wrote one chaplain. It was only natural for military units to reflect their civilian counterparts and have their own spiritual advisors. The latter would provide moral guidance and explain the mysterious forces beyond human control. The Jacksonian Era represented a radical departure from the norm in terms of the professionalization of the chaplain corps.

The need for spiritual guidance during the broader age of sail was of particular interest for sailors. Only the weather or the actions of their fellow crewmembers would disturb the mysteries of the deep and the monotony of shipboard life. Any interruptions fed sailors' superstitions leading to 'lucky days' or 'unlucky days,' for example.⁴³⁵ Men still went to sea for months – in the case of whalers it could be years – with no access to family and friends, and little news from their town or country. What little they received could be months old. Nevertheless, being receptive to a deity did not necessarily translate into a specific request for religion or religious leaders. For that to

⁴³³ American Spectator, 'The Navy', *Sailors Magazine and Naval Journal*, 3 (1830), p. 90.

⁴³⁴ Drury, p. 1.

⁴³⁵ Charles Rockwell, *Sketches of Foreign Travel and Life at Sea: Including a Cruise Aboard a Man of War: Volume II* (New York: Tappan & Dennet, 1842), p. 392.

occur, sailors and the Navy had to be influenced by other parties. Rather than leave sailors to their own devices, chaplains offered a structured means of explaining events in addition to providing that moral guidance – particularly when they were in port.

Although chaplains had served military units in the United States since 1776, the Navy had no formalized structure for chaplains on warships. Gradually, with the evangelical movement in the United States and support from non-governmental organizations such as the American Seamen's Friends Society, the Navy created a professional chaplain corps that has continued in the early twenty-first century. Prior to the Jacksonian Era, religious services in the Navy suffered from a lack of structure and organization. While it authorized individuals to serve as chaplains, it had no selection process, no training pipeline, no formal guidance, and little control over their activity. The only accountability occurred through a court-martial, though this may have only been in theory. In the decade from 1828, the Navy proceeded with three hundred ten courts-martial. In no case was a chaplain prosecuted.⁴³⁶ If that were a function of the limited number of serving chaplains, the self-controlled role in which they saw themselves as moralizing forces, or a fear from sailors or other officers to make accusations may have been factors. The last possibility is the most unlikely since captains – the highest rank until the Civil War – often found themselves subjects of courts of inquiry and courts-martial.

Secretary Woodbury recognized that the Navy could not realize the moral and religious benefits from having chaplains on ship. This was due to their physical infirmities, their small numbers, and the inadequacy of their pay. In his annual report, he hoped that congress would remedy the situation.⁴³⁷ The need for chaplains increased with the requirement for prayers following Sunday morning muster on ships, and 'for all naval personnel attached to Navy Yards'.⁴³⁸ The first step in allowing chaplains on board was to grant authority to captains to select their own chaplain. Sometimes they chose the chaplain

⁴³⁶ Research on U.S. Navy courts-martial compiled by author. National Archives and Records Administration

⁴³⁷ Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, *American State Papers Vol. III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1831), p. 8.

⁴³⁸ Drury, p. 47.

from the ship's complement. The individuals applying for chaplain positions did not necessarily have to have the credentials to be a chaplain, never having served in the position on land or been trained in the ministry. Most simply sought a paid, active duty commission and would have just as gladly have accepted a position as ship's purser or captain's clerk. Some wanted the commission but refused to go to sea.

A chaplain's religious affiliation reflected the times – all were a Christian denomination. Nearly half selected during Jackson's administration were Episcopal with the remainder Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists. The Navy would not select a Catholic chaplain until 1888 when the long waves of Irish, French-Canadian, and other immigrants began to filter into the naval rank and file.

The captain might simply have spoken on behalf of an applicant to the Navy based on their good character, though this practice largely ended after Southard's reforms in 1823 which required all chaplains to be ordained clergymen. The practice of the captain selecting his own chaplain concluded with the appointment of John F. Girard who served on the frigate *Potomac* from 1840 to 1841.⁴³⁹ The captain could also, if provided a chaplain, reject him in favour of someone else. From 1778-1828, half of the chaplains (forty-three of eighty-five) were captain selectees from the ship's company. Between 1829 and 1840, only one of twelve chaplains received their appointment in that manner.

During any year between 1821 and 1840, the Navy had an average of only nine chaplains.⁴⁴⁰ With two-thirds of the fleet deployed at any time, this meant that fewer than half of the Navy's ships had chaplains. This factor was mitigated slightly by the fact that squadrons based in the Mediterranean, for example, might have only one chaplain, but that chaplain could service the several ships based mostly in Port Mahon. However, several chaplains served at navy yards – such as the Washington Navy Yard, Philadelphia Navy Yard, the Navy Asylum, etc. - further reducing the number available for sea duty. It

⁴³⁹ Drury, p. 43.

⁴⁴⁰ Data compiled from Secretary of the Navy annual reports, which listed personnel by rank and duty.

is also possible, though less likely, that the naval administration believed that fewer chaplain services required during peacetime than during an armed conflict with its higher casualties and, consequently, funeral services. Another reason that this was unlikely was because chaplains also educated midshipmen while on board. Many ships were without a chaplain. Consequently, an unqualified individual might hold the position only as a collateral duty. This meant that the individual was likely to have less education than the chaplain in terms of math, science, literature, history or languages.

Chaplains during the Jacksonian Era were significantly better educated than their predecessors. They were men of letters. In addition to teaching, Navy chaplains wrote some of the most complete perspectives on ship voyages from that era. Chaplain Walter Colton, a Yale graduate, taught moral philosophy at the Scientific and Naval Academy (later Norwich University) before moving to Washington DC where he became editor of the *American Spectator* and the *Washington City Chronicle*. He later authored *Deck and Port*, about his Navy voyages in the 1840s. Another Yale graduate, Chaplain George Jones, penned *Sketches of Naval Life with Notices of Men, Manners and Scenery on the Shores of the Mediterranean in a Series of Letters from the Brandywine and Constitution Frigates* as well as *Excursions to Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus and Balbec, from the United States Ship Delaware*. Reverend Charles S. Stewart (not to be confused with the Navy captain) wrote three books on his travels including *A Visit to the South Seas in the U.S. Ship Vincennes, during the years 1829 and 1830*. Stewart would also remain influential during the Jackson years as the editor of *The Naval Magazine*, the first regular publication devoted to the sea services and highly influential for allowing junior officers to propose their ideas for the first time in a mass medium.

Several chaplains also had unique access to presidents, particularly Jackson. Walter Colton preached at a Congregational church attended by Jackson (Jackson would not become a Presbyterian until 1838). Jackson offered Colton, a frequent visitor to the White House, a position either as a consul or Navy chaplain. Colton chose the latter and served as chaplain of the West Indies Squadron beginning in 1831, a curious selection by Jackson since Colton had been a vocal opponent of the president's Indian removal efforts.

This lasted, however, for only one year, when Colton proceeded to *Constitution* for its deployment to the Mediterranean and, later in the decade, chaplain of the Philadelphia Naval Station. Much closer to Jackson was William Ryland, a Methodist, who had served as chaplain of the Senate, while Jackson served in that body. Ryland⁴⁴¹ served as a chaplain in the Navy during Jackson's administration and became a confidant of the president.

Although chaplains were ostensibly men of God, they were not immune from more secular needs such as pay and rank. Chaplains had no rank, and many felt 'materially enfeebled' by the low pay as they received a monthly salary of forty dollars. This amount remained unaltered from 1794 to 1835. Several chaplains appealed directly to Congress in 1832 arguing that while the pay for other officers had increased since the introduction of the Navy, chaplain pay had remained constant. 'A chaplain,' they suggested, 'has no rank except what his pay gives him'.⁴⁴² But it was to their experience that they based their appeal namely in talent, learning and piety in order to command the respect of the other officers. They finally succeeded with 'An Act to Regulate the Pay of the Navy of the United States' in which chaplains would receive \$1,200 annually on active duty and \$800 if on a leave of absence or awaiting orders.⁴⁴³ Though their pay had substantially increased, it still remained lower than that received by lieutenants.

The 1830s were, therefore, a significant advancement in the creation of a Chaplain Corps. Chaplains were no longer chosen because they were favourites of the captain or educated individuals seeking a job. Instead, they were ministers actually trained in the faith. They coalesced around the issues of pay and rank thus recognizing that they were a collective group within the rapidly professional naval culture. They reflected their decade, a broader national move toward organized religion and the expectation that people – including sailors – should be held accountable to a higher standard beyond simple laws but rather morals. But even as the nation and the Navy moved to

⁴⁴¹ Both Colton and Ryland were active members of the United States Colonization Society which sought to repatriate freed slaves to Africa.

⁴⁴² 'Application of the Chaplains of the Navy for an Increase of Pay', 18 January 1832. *American State Papers Volume IV: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1861), p. 84-85.

⁴⁴³ Drury, p. 47.

matters of faith, it struggled with the greatest moral issue in its history – slavery.

Race

No issue divided the young republic more sharply or had a greater lingering impact on the future nation than slavery. It permeated nearly every facet of society. The southern economy rested on the cheap labour that slaves provided.⁴⁴⁴ Governance was dictated on the interpretation of slaves and free blacks. Naval operations would include enforcement and countering illegal slave trade. National discourse during the Jacksonian Era was reaching a crescendo that began to manifest into organization and action.

The founding fathers had embedded the issue of slavery in the Constitution. During the summer of 1787, as the framers drafted the document that would govern the nation, delegates faced slavery when considering proportional representation in Congress. Delegates from northern ‘free’ states confronted a contradiction. They were largely abolitionists but to count a slave as a person meant that southern states would have a marked advantage in the census and, consequently, have greater representation and influence in the House of Representatives. Southern delegates wanted the benefit of their large population, but to recognize a slave as a person had ramifications. The Great Compromise attempted to resolve this divide by counting a slave as two-thirds of an individual. And rather than address slavery directly, the framers agreed to defer any decision about slavery until at least 1807. In that year, the government formally banned the importation of slaves, though it encouraged black-market slavers.

Societal attempts to end slavery began to appear in newspapers, through literature as well as formal organizations. Oberlin College formally began to recruit free blacks as students in 1833. That same year, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and others – including Navy chaplains – founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia. The American

⁴⁴⁴ Slaves were not technically ‘free’ labor since there was a cost initially of acquiring them and then, if viewed in terms of a commodity as they were in the South, there were the operational and maintenance costs – housing, food, etc.

Colonization Society, founded two decades before, retained strong political support from such figures as Clay and Jackson, and would eventually send over ten thousand freed slaves to Monrovia in the future state of Liberia. Navy Lieutenant Robert Field Stockton had negotiated in 1821 the purchase of land for the Monrovia colony.

The Navy by its very nature had a greater multi-cultural tolerance, if not appreciation, than the Army, which only saw barbaric tribes threatening American citizens advancing on territory. Unlike the Army where Africans or those of African descent were largely absent until the Civil War by necessity, blacks were an integral part of the Navy because of the multi-cultural merchant fleet from which the Navy often found its sailors. While the precise number of blacks serving in the Navy is unknown, an article in the *Sailor's Magazine* notes that 'the Colored Seamen's Home in New York City, founded in 1839, averaged about 450 boarders a year from the naval and merchant service'.⁴⁴⁵ Navy sailors found themselves exposed to native cultures and Western European (primarily Spanish and Portuguese) influence in the Gulf of Mexico and South America, to tribes and civilizations in Africa, to the Middle East and Asia. To the Navy, blacks represented individual sailors as equivalent, but not necessarily equal, in stature, an important distinction to Southern whites who as a whole viewed blacks as nothing more than chattel.

Rear Admiral Charles Steedman recalled his years as a midshipman during the Jacksonian Era on his first cruise encountered non-whites in Havana: 'The slave-trade was also in full blast and no effort was made to check it; indeed the Governor-General had his coffers filled by shutting his eyes to this horrible traffic.'⁴⁴⁶ Shortly thereafter at Christmas in San Domingo, Steedman recounted:

None of us felt any hesitation in dancing and flirting with the St. Domingo ladies, although some of them were as black as the ace of spades. Notwithstanding the greater part of them were negroes, I must frankly say that the young women, in grace and lady-like manners, compared most favourably with young women in the best society [...]

⁴⁴⁵ Unknown author, 'Colored Sailors Home', *Sailor's Magazine* (1849), p. 253.

⁴⁴⁶ Charles Steedman, *Memoirs and Correspondence of Charles Steedman, Rear Admiral, United States Navy, with his Autobiography and Private Journals, 1811-1890* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1912), p. 27.

We passed some two months at Port au Prince and certainly, although among “niggers”, had a very pleasant and jolly time.⁴⁴⁷

Corporal punishment on a ship was also an indication that the Navy tried to address unjust inequalities ashore. Sailors found guilty of beating a coloured man received twelve lashes, while kicking a man on the quarterdeck only earned eight lashes. Steedman noted that ‘beating a colored man’ would merit a sailor the same number of lashes as if he had endangered the ship with fire. But like southern society as a whole, the Navy could make more dispassionate and pragmatic – and less humane – governance decisions about blacks. With several bases in the South, particularly the important Gosport Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Virginia, needed blacks as labourers. The Board of Navy Commissioners considered their use in 1833. Of every hundred labourers, the board recommended hiring five Negroes. Blacks, it argued, were less prone to sickness in warm climates and could bear the heat better than their white counterparts. To support this, they pointed to Navy warships, especially in the West Indies, where ‘the crews of the launches belonging to our ships of war have generally been composed of coloured men.’⁴⁴⁸

Race, therefore, was less of an issue with the Navy at the same time it was dividing the nation. Individuals were held accountable if they attacked a black because of their race. Blacks and whites served together ashore and at sea. Nevertheless, divisions manifested themselves as simple local economics emboldened workers threatened by cheaper labour offered using slave labour. Even with this, the Navy leadership treated the issue in terms of practicalities rather than of explicit contempt of another race.

Alcohol

Alcohol in the Navy during the 1830s was abused by sailors, opposed by the temperance movement, and reluctantly condoned by military leadership. In many cases, the use of ardent spirits, beer and wine was a necessity

⁴⁴⁷ Steedman, pp. 40-41.

⁴⁴⁸ John Rodgers to Levi Woodbury, 8 February 1833. Records of Boards and Commissions, *Letters Sent to the Secretary of the Navy, April 25, 1815-August 26, 1842*.

aboard ships on long cruises in the 1830s, as it had been for centuries of seafarers. The realities of contaminated potable water required an alternative or supplemental drink, whose alcohol content was healthier than some of the water brought aboard. But the reality of spirits in a confined space – or the ample availability in foreign ports after lengthy periods at sea – meant that sailors desperate for physical release from their otherwise mundane duties would consume vast quantities of alcohol.

As alcohol abuse in the Navy grew, as it did nationwide, a temperance movement emerged that argued either enforced moderation or simply its prohibition. That, combined with the second great awakening of religion in making, made for a powerful force. 'Making temperance a Christian cause constituted an innovation, for traditional Christianity had not discouraged drinking...temperance workers paid reformed alcoholics to go on speaking tours, published temperance tracts, put on temperance plays.'⁴⁴⁹ Not all alcohol was condemned, only distilled liquors. Beer and wine continued to be, if not accepted, at least tolerated. The American Temperance Society was founded in 1826. It was only a matter of time before the movement reached the military.

Alcohol was a perennial problem in both the Army and Navy. Most Navy courts-martial resulted, in part, from the abuse of alcohol leading to dereliction of duty, striking officers, and in rare instances murder. Major General Alexander Macomb, later Commander of the ground forces during the Second Seminole War, wrote: 'Nothing has tended so much to degrade the rank and file of the Army, as the excessive use of ardent spirit; nor has it been less destructive of their health and discipline.'⁴⁵⁰

Alcohol abuse was not endemic to military personnel. It was part of a larger societal problem first addressed by Dr Benjamin Rush, a prominent Philadelphia physician during the Revolutionary period. Rush served as surgeon of a Pennsylvania gunboat fleet and was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. In addition, his son Richard was as one of the most influential

⁴⁴⁹ Howe, p. 167.

⁴⁵⁰ Major General Alexander Macomb to Secretary of War John Eaton, House of Representatives, 21st Congress 1st Session, Document No. 22, 11 January 1830.

diplomats and civil servants of the Jacksonian Era.⁴⁵¹ The senior Rush served as physician general to the military hospitals of the United States and published an *Enquiry into the Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body and Mind* in 1784. His protégé, Dr Edward Cutbush, later published his own work *Observation on the Means of Preserving the Health of Soldiers and Sailors* (1808). Alcohol was an integral part of most Americans' life. 'In 1825, the average American over fifteen years of age consumed seven gallons of alcohol a year.'⁴⁵² The temperance movement evolved as a Christian cause and during the 1830s reduced the average consumption of alcohol to less than one-third it had been when Jackson became president. It was only natural, therefore, that temperance efforts would affect the military.

On 28 December 1829, the House of Representatives introduced legislation allowing the soldiers and seamen of the United States to forego their daily allotment of alcohol rations. Seamen received six cents in pay for each day they rejected spirits, thus providing a financial inducement to temper alcohol use.⁴⁵³ In January, Secretary of War John Eaton forwarded communications from Major General Macomb and the Commissary General of Subsistence, George Gibson, on their views. Eaton himself noted that the daily allowance did not produce a soldier or sailors 'intemperance' since the quantity was too small. Instead, he wrote, the fault rested with supplies received from citizens at various posts. The Army tested one plan to 'permit a free and unrestrained use of ardent spirits'.⁴⁵⁴ The theory behind this was that people were less responsible when they confronted more rules. 'Mankind,' Macomb wrote, 'when under too rigid restraint, are more disposed to restiveness, and a violation of rule, than when liberally placed under the guidance of their own sense of propriety'.⁴⁵⁵ Macomb suggested, instead, that

⁴⁵¹ Richard Rush also served as the Vice-Presidential nominee under John Quincy Adams during the 1828 election in which they were defeated by Andrew Jackson. Several years later, Jackson would appoint Rush as a Commissioner to England for funds creating the Smithsonian Institution. He would later be appointed Minister to France by James K. Polk, Jackson's protégé.

⁴⁵² Howe, p. 167.

⁴⁵³ House of Representatives, 21st Congress 1st Session, Document No. 22, War Department Letter on 'Ardent Spirits – Army and Navy'.

⁴⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁵ *ibid.*

rations of spirits be discontinued and replaced by rice and molasses. The proposed inducement suggested that the sailor or trooper would receive the money accrued at the end of their enlistment contingent upon a certificate from the commanding officer confirming 'total abstinence and orderly behaviour'.⁴⁵⁶ It had occurred previously. In 1820, Secretary of War Calhoun made the same proposal, but participation would be voluntary by post. Where accepted, the inducement was practiced for a time but found to be ineffective in combating alcohol abuse.⁴⁵⁷

The Navy addressed this issue early in Jackson's administration with a house resolution on 25 February 1829 regarding allowing ardent spirit rations to midshipmen. Three Navy medical officers offered testimony to the House of Representatives. Secretary John Branch himself felt it unnecessary to provide his own testimony. Committees asked all to respond on the effect of alcohol on the Navy's morals, health, and character and discipline. Although the three surgeons agreed on the prohibition of ardent spirits, their disparate testimony also cast light on the difference in quality among the Navy's surgeons.

Dr Lewis Heerman,⁴⁵⁸ a German émigré, enlisted as a Navy surgeon in 1801 and, with nearly three decades of experience, could have offered a substantive response to the congressional inquiry. Instead, his two-page assessment assumed a moralistic tone rather than one of scientific inquiry. The ration of spirits was unnecessary for midshipmen because of their youthful health and vigour, which required no stimulating beverage. Rather, rations created 'a perversion of the moral sense' and alcohol was 'the bane of our otherwise happy country'.⁴⁵⁹ The standard half-pint ration was 'subversive in the end of rational discipline, and dangerous to the justly proud and chivalric character of the Navy'.⁴⁶⁰ Heerman continues that alcohol use resulted in

⁴⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁷ George Gibson to John Eaton, House of Representatives, 22nd Congress 1st Session, 6 January 1830.

⁴⁵⁸ Although he spent most of his career in New Orleans, he was no stranger to direct naval action having volunteered to join Lieutenant Stephen Decatur's mission aboard the ketch *Intrepid* to recapture and destroy the USS Philadelphia in Tripoli Harbor in 1804.

⁴⁵⁹ Lewis Heerman to John Eaton, House of Representatives, 23rd Congress 1st Session, 25 June 1829.

⁴⁶⁰ *ibid.*

'destitution of self-respect, irascibility of temper, ferocity and foolhardiness, as also irrational fear and apprehension of danger, are incidentally enumerated as growing out of intemperance'.

The second surgeon's report likewise focused on morality and made the assumption that a half-pint of ardent spirits led to inappropriate behaviour and a negative impact on health. Its length, sixteen pages of testimony,⁴⁶¹ far surpasses the other reports, but the testimony came from individuals, like Heerman, with lengthy service. Enlisting in 1809, William Barton was called upon by Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton prior to the War of 1812 to compile regulations for governing naval hospitals and during the war published a lengthy work on the subject.⁴⁶² Like Heerman, Barton avoided any analysis except to suggest that rations were not indispensable and that other drinks made from cocoa, chocolate, or coffee would have better effects on the health of naval personnel. Barton called alcohol rations a 'poison' that had an insidious and deleterious power on the Navy's youth. He painted a vivid picture of near insane men subject to hallucinations and suicide. The patient's suffering was one of tremors, exhaustion, and agony. Any effort to determine if one could safely determine the quantity of the rations, he argued, would be fruitless. Prone to citing Shakespeare or a poem about Cassio in order to make his point, he at least suggested that Congress consult the statistical accounts of temperance societies, public charities and infirmaries.

Surgeon Thomas Harris provided the third report.⁴⁶³ He had also entered the Navy in 1809 and later oversaw the construction of the Philadelphia Naval Hospital.⁴⁶⁴ The character of man, he wrote, is his reason. Alcohol suspended reason and placed the individual under the influence of 'an unrestrained or stimulated imagination'.⁴⁶⁵ Alcohol injured every tissue and

⁴⁶¹ William Barton to John Eaton, House of Representatives, 23rd Congress 1st Session, 14 September 1829.

⁴⁶² Barton was a board member that reviewed the first applications of Surgeon's Mates in 1824 and became commanding officer of the Naval Hospital in Norfolk in 1830. A decade later, he was appointed as the first head of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

⁴⁶³ Thomas Harris to John Eaton, House of Representatives, 23rd Congress 1st Session, 12 September 1829.

⁴⁶⁴ Harris would later succeed Barton as head of the Bureau of Naval Medicine and Surgery.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

organ and it weakened an individual's constitution that resulted in gout, rheumatism, dropsy and other ailments. In addition to having no beneficial impact on health, alcohol also played a role in the profession. 'An intemperate midshipman will not become a temperate lieutenant or captain.' Harris concluded with brief historical analogies that neither the Romans nor 'the enthusiastic disciples of the Koran' required ardent rations to forsaken empires.

While Heerman and Barton may have simply parroted the language of the temperance movement, all three were correct in that alcohol could have an effect on behaviour in the Navy. In the year leading to their testimony, the Navy had sufficient examples of how alcohol impacted careers. Responses to drunken behaviour could also be rather draconian such as the case of Matthew Calbraith Perry's father who was a naval officer during the Revolutionary War. When he found a troublesome midshipman, who had previously attempted to rape a sailor's wife, drunk on watch, he had three of his sailors urinate in the officer's mouth to induce vomiting.⁴⁶⁶

Midshipman Charles G. Hunter of *Java* found himself charged with drunkenness and scandalous conduct after a 4 July 1828 incident. Several officers accused him of being intoxicated and brandishing a cutlass yelling that Commodore John Rodgers was 'a damned raskel' [sic] and that he would kill Captain Perry if he met him. Among the many charges levelled against him, he was found not guilty of some, guilty of others, and some were not proven. For those in which he was guilty, the commodore privately admonished him.⁴⁶⁷ A subsequent duel led to Hunter's death and Jackson ordered Hunter to be erased from the list of officers⁴⁶⁸ along with the three other midshipmen involved.

The court martial list of naval officers abusing alcohol makes a long and depressing list. One sailor found himself charged with habitual drunkenness

⁴⁶⁶ John H. Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), p. 10.

⁴⁶⁷ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 478.

⁴⁶⁸ Daniel Feller, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, Volume VIII, 1830* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), pp. 164-65.

on the *Porpoise* to the degree where he 'could not articulate a syllable'.⁴⁶⁹ He was found guilty and suspended from the Navy for one year. Marine Second Lieutenant Francis Neville of the *Hudson* was charged with conduct unbecoming an officer and excessive intoxication as well as seditious and disrespectful conduct to the ship's first lieutenant. He pleaded guilty and was suspended for four months.⁴⁷⁰ A Sailing Master became 'flagrantly intoxicated' on the Island of St. Lorenzo and was charged with that act as well as scandalous conduct for violating his oath to abstain from alcohol. He was found guilty and cashiered.⁴⁷¹ A lieutenant aboard the USS *Dolphin* was likewise charged with intoxication and scandalous conduct for repeatedly violating his drinking pledge for which he received a suspension for eighteen months. A midshipman aboard the USS *Guerriere* behaved in a manner that all three surgeons had anticipated with his mental faculties diminished. While in the port of Rio, he became drunk on several occasions and exposed himself 'in a shameful manner in the street and public houses [...] to the great disgrace of the character of American officers. Other times he exposed himself in the steerage and on the berth deck to officers and crew'.⁴⁷²

If the officers of the Navy behaved in such a fashion, so too did the enlisted. But their punishments were considerably more severe. Seaman Nicholas Colby of *Delaware* was drunk at evening courtiers and charged with insolence.⁴⁷³ Others charged and found guilty received extremely disparate punishments based on their actions they took after becoming intoxicated. While Seaman William Hughes of *Delaware* drunkenly struck a petty officer, he was returned to duty without further punishment. But Seaman James Daley of the *Warren* refused an order ashore and told Midshipman George Gay to 'go to hell' and received a sentence of two hundred lashes. Commodore Crane mitigated this punishment to one hundred lashes dispensed among the three U.S. ships in port – including the *Delaware*.⁴⁷⁴ Seaman Moses Lee on *St.*

⁴⁶⁹ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 481.

⁴⁷⁰ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 487.

⁴⁷¹ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 497.

⁴⁷² NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 500.

⁴⁷³ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Case 472.

⁴⁷⁴ NARA, RG 125, M273, Roll 22 Vol 20, Cases 476 and 477.

Louis disobeyed an order by a midshipman while under the influence and received thirty-five lashes.

The issue of ardent spirits raised its head again in 1834. Based on the recommendation of the Board of Navy Commissioners, Woodbury stamped his own imprimatur on how best to deal with ardent spirits. He revised the laws on naval rations and consented to abolishing them. Yet the Secretary found himself limited in what he could impose. He wrote: 'Finding the component parts of the navy ration, unlike those of the army, fixed by law, it was not in my power to diminish or abolish it.'⁴⁷⁵ By 1842, Congress reduced the ration to one-quarter pint and no one – sailor or officer – could draw more than his ration.

Reorganizing the Marine Corps

Although the issue of the Marine Corps might be considered in this dissertation's chapter on personnel, changing the marines clearly falls under governance from a policy perspective as it involved the president, secretary of the navy, and senior captains. More importantly, it is an issue that demonstrates Jackson's rare capability of reversing himself on policy when presented with key points from competing sides. In 1830, the administration proposed dispensing with the Marine Corps. Secretary of the Navy Branch submitted a report⁴⁷⁶ to Vice President John Calhoun (serving as president of the Senate,) in response to a senate resolution of 1 March 1830 on the subject. Captain David Conner, commander of the USS *Erie*, had already fitted out his ship without the usual compliment of marines to test the concept of a warship without marines. Branch refrained from taking a position on the subject, deferring instead to the senior captains in the Navy who were themselves divided on the issue. Branch posed two primary questions to the senior naval leadership: should marines be dispensed with and could seamen assume their duties? With regard to the latter, Branch inquired if older or

⁴⁷⁵ Levi Woodbury to Campbell P. White, 23rd Congress 1st Session, Doc. No. 486, 10 June 1834.

⁴⁷⁶ 'On the Expediency of Dispensing with the Marine Corps as Part of the Armed Equipment of a Vessel-of-War', *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1860), pp. 560-569.

partially disabled seamen might be used as guards at naval stations. The Marine Corps was modelled on the Royal Marines with duties primarily ensuring ships did not suffer from mutinies by the crew, boarding enemy ships in battle, and defending navy yards.

The naval leadership was sharply divided. Commodores Daniel Patterson, Lewis Warrington, William Crane, Isaac Hull and Charles Ridgeley agreed that the Navy could dispense with the marines. Warrington called the marines superfluous. Commodore Alexander Dallas went further: 'The marine on board [...] is incompetent to the discharge of the seaman's duty. He never evinces the least disposition to acquire a knowledge of the profession and is never seen aloft.'⁴⁷⁷ Countering arguments that marines were necessary to deter mutinies, Dallas said that seamen were 'willing servants of a free country' and since they were not acquired impressment like other nations, marines were unnecessary. Presiding officer of the Board of Navy Commissioners, Commodore John Rodgers was the sole officer to take a centrist position, stating that marines could not be dispensed with but their total force could be reduced by one-fourth. This would have supported one of the Jacksonian goals to reduce personnel and thus save money.

Presenting the counter-argument to retain the Marine Corps were equally experienced Commodores including Edmund Kennedy, William Bainbridge, John Orde Creighton and Charles Stewart. Of all the responses, Stewart's was the lengthiest answer and for good reason. Of those who responded, Stewart had the longest career with commands held during the Quasi-War, Barbary War, War of 1812, as well as the Mediterranean and Pacific Squadrons. He was junior in the Navy only to James Barron who provided no comments. For the final two years of the War of 1812, Stewart commanded USS *Constitution* and had as his senior Marine Archibald Henderson, the current Commandant. During the *Constitution's* simultaneous defeat of HMS *Cyane* and HMS *Levant*, Henderson and his marines provided sufficient fire support that he later received a medal from Congress for his leadership. Certainly, Henderson was no stranger to Jackson

⁴⁷⁷ 'On the Expediency of Dispensing with the Marine Corps as Part of the Armed Equipment of a Vessel-of-War', *American State Papers Volume III: Naval Affairs* (Washington: Gale & Seaton, 1860), pp. 560-569.

either, having volunteered his services to Jackson during the incursion into Florida in 1818.⁴⁷⁸

Henderson served as the longest-serving commandant of the Marine Corps from 1820 through 1859. Therefore, it is possible that Stewart was in communication with him or at least influenced by him. Retaining marines, according to Stewart, was proper and necessary. Commenting on the distinguished history of the Marines, with whom he had served during the First Barbary War in particular, he stated that the Marines were the only portion of the crew of a warship that was wholly military. He also provided a different perspective on the impressment issue. Stewart noted that many people were under the impression that most mutinies in the British Navy originated with the practice of impressment. There was, he wrote, 'scarcely an instance of the kind on record. Their mutinies originate in oppression, and not in impressment'.⁴⁷⁹ The Navy was clearly divided about the role of the Marine Corps. It would not be the last time that public officials would question its utility or role. In fact, it would take nearly another century for the real debate to abate as the Marine Corps had proven its expeditionary benefits especially during World War I. For now, however, the fate of the Marine Corps would be on hold for another five years until Jackson attempted reorganization.

The Marine Corps faced the most significant threat to its existence to date at that point when Jackson proposed merging it with the Army. Henderson again led the defence of the organization with the assistance of key Navy captains who directly appealed to Jackson. Jackson, in turn, sent them and Woodbury to Congress to whom the regulations had been referred.⁴⁸⁰ Congress and the president agreed that the Marine Corps ought not to be disestablished but reformed. Consequently, Congress passed on 30 June 1834 'An Act for the Better Organization of the Marine Corps' which Jackson signed into law.

⁴⁷⁸ Joseph G. Dawson, 'With fidelity and effectiveness: Archibald Henderson's lasting legacy to the U.S. Marine Corps', *The Journal of Military History*, 62.4 (Oct 1998), 727-753 (p. 731).

⁴⁷⁹ 'On the Expediency of Dispensing with the Marine Corps as Part of the Armed Equipment of a Vessel-of-War', pp. 560-569.

⁴⁸⁰ Captain Charles Broome to Levi Woodbury, 28 January 1834, RG 80 General Records of the Department of the Navy, *Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886*.

The law accomplished several objectives. First, the Marine Corps would remain part of the Department of the Navy. Second, as commandant, Henderson would be promoted to the rank of Colonel.⁴⁸¹ Third, the Marine Corps would increase in size by forty percent.⁴⁸² Fourth, enlistment periods would be reduced from five to four years. It also clarified that pay would be equivalent to Army officers and that no marine could command a Navy yard. The law had an immediate impact on accountability and on the professionalization of the Marine Corps that Henderson had sought through his career.

In January 1835, Secretary of the Navy Mahlon Dickerson advised Henderson that all marines, since the reorganization of the Marine Corps legislation, were subject to the same laws as those governing the Navy.⁴⁸³ Consequently, the number of naval courts-martial rose dramatically in 1835 (see Figure 6.5). The accountability achieved, and the reforms implemented, significantly reduced the number of courts-martials in subsequent years.



Figure 6.5 Number of Courts-Martial Annually, 1829-38.

Henderson was not in full agreement with the organization, but he obeyed the law. In December 1835, he reported to Dickerson that he

⁴⁸¹ Mahlon Dickerson to Archibald Henderson, 11 March 1835, RG 80 General Records of the Department of the Navy, *Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886*.

⁴⁸² Joseph G. Dawson, 'With fidelity and effectiveness: Archibald Henderson's lasting legacy to the U.S. Marine Corps', *The Journal of Military History*, 62.4 (1998), 727-753 (p. 735).

⁴⁸³ Mahlon Dickerson to Archibald Henderson, 29 January 1835 RG 80 General Records of the Department of the Navy, *Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886*.

considered the marines ashore and on ships to be detached from his control and that they were now under the command of the local Navy commanders of yards.⁴⁸⁴ Unsatisfied with this declarative statement of submission, Henderson again wrote the secretary, expressing his unadulterated views on being under the command of Navy commanders. The Marine Corps had been, he argued, an independent military for nearly forty years with 'a spirit of forbearance, deference and good faith'.⁴⁸⁵ It had worked closely with the Navy. In appealing to the secretary, he invoked the blood that was shed by marines alongside naval heroes like Captain James Lawrence and aboard other ships like the USS *Constitution*. He reaffirmed his commitment in that he would not question the government but hoped that, in the future, consideration would be made for the Corps' unique military relations.

Conclusion

The 1830s witnessed a confluence of national trends that migrated to the Navy and helped to solidify an emerging naval culture. The religious awakening in the country demanded higher standards of living for the Navy's sailors and officers as well as a sense of national morality that emboldened its sense of maritime destiny over other nations. Scientific curiosity likewise advanced the Navy in incorporating new technology or improving the lives of sailors. With both, a professional, specialized corps of officers was established that would continue through the twenty-first century and lead the way for other specialized officers such as engineers. The same was true of the Marine Corps who found their place within the Navy. At the heart of all these advancements were changing expectations for Navy personnel. They were increasingly accountable for their actions and, as seen in Chapter 2, an intellectual awakening of the junior officers who were able to synthesize the various aspects of the decade into a coherent, structured force that became the genesis of the modern Navy.

⁴⁸⁴ Archibald Henderson to Mahlon Dickerson, 8 December 1835. RG 80 General Records of the Department of the Navy, *Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886*.

⁴⁸⁵ Archibald Henderson to Mahlon Dickerson, 24 December 1835. RG 80 General Records of the Department of the Navy, *Letters to the Commandant and Other Officers of the Marine Corps, Apr. 1804-Nov. 1886*.

Conclusion: The Awakening of the U.S. Navy

The 1830s is an overlooked period of American naval history, but it is an important era in the evolution of the US Navy. If historians and policymakers are to understand the development of naval culture, policy, and professionalism, however, this decade is as important as any other in American history. Evolving navies do not grow at a consistent rate. They advance, stagnate, and sometimes regress, in response to a variety of external and internal factors. Externally, key factors affecting a navy's growth include alliances, conventional and unconventional threats, commercial opportunities, and the availability of rich resources. Internally or domestically, the factors may include the influence of politicians and policymakers, the availability of resources and technologies, the economic ability to build ships or invest in other aspects of a navy, and the tenor of the naval culture, which either fosters new ideas and vision or suppresses them in favor of more conservative values and traditions. All these factors were evident in the five-decade prelude to Jackson's administration, leading to a period of advancement for the Navy during his term in office.

The American Revolution produced three distinct maritime entities: privateers, state navies, and the Continental Navy, but only one survived beyond the Revolutionary Era. The Constitution of 1787 prohibited the states from maintaining their own navies, favoring instead the unity of effort afforded only by a national navy. Likewise, the use of letters of marque to secure the services of privateers, which had been commonplace during the War of 1812, disappeared during the nineteenth century.⁴⁸⁶ The Constitution reserved the issuance of letters of marque and reprisal solely for the federal government. Only the briefly independent Republic of Texas⁴⁸⁷ in the 1830s and the Confederacy during the 1860s issued letters of marque to privateers. Though the U.S. sold off the Continental Navy after the Revolutionary War, Article I

⁴⁸⁶ The Paris Declaration Establishing Maritime Law (1856) effectively outlawed privateering. Charles Stockton, 'The Declaration of Paris,' *The American Journal of International Law*, 3 (1920), pp. 356-368 (356).

⁴⁸⁷ Paul Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History 1835–1836*. (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1992), pp. 86–87.

Section 8 of the Constitution vested in Congress the authority to maintain a Navy. With this mandate, the early Republic built ships to protect American commerce and deter threats from abroad. The Department of the Navy, established in 1798, formalized the nation's commitment to its sea service. Nevertheless, the Navy's growth was inconsistent during its first decades.

From 1815 to 1829, the U.S. waded into the Navy's future. The Navy tested its strength and logistical ability in international maritime security by deploying squadrons to distant stations. The Navy also tested the use of steam power on one ship, but found that it lacked the necessary infrastructure to ensure efficiency or expansion across the fleet. Except for an increase in the size of the ships-of-the-line, the fleet remained what it had been for several decades. But under Jackson in the 1830s, the Navy evolved physically, intellectually, and socially, experiencing a multi-faceted growth spurt that significantly impacted its shape and character well into the late nineteenth century.

During Jackson's presidency, the fleet's size remained constant, but its overall capability improved. The years-long deployments to distant stations after the War of 1812 had put physical strain on the ships. When Jackson took office, he directed a much-needed reinvestment in the Navy's ships by decommissioning some, repairing others, and building new platforms. In 1831, naval construction spiked as the U.S. replaced several older and obsolescent ships. Construction of the first dry docks at naval stations also improved the capabilities of the fleet. These dry docks gave the Navy a tool previously afforded only to larger, more mature navies and quietly announced to the world that the Navy was preparing for an enhanced role in global affairs. During Jackson's tenure, commercial steamships also proliferated, enabling the transition of steam technology from commercial craft to Navy ships. By the end of the decade, the Navy was building its own steam-propelled frigates.

The 1830s was also a reflective period for officers, who collectively evolved intellectually. Influential officers like Matthew C. Perry fostered junior officers' thinking about naval issues. Establishment of the Naval Lyceum offered junior officers a forum in which to consider and discuss personnel challenges, force structures, strategies, and education. For the first time,

many wrote in public forums such as the Lyceum's *Naval Magazine* or other periodicals. Although the junior officers often wrote under pseudonyms to avoid the appearance of open disrespect, they nonetheless challenged the conventional thinking of their senior officers. Those senior officers sometimes responded in kind, thus stimulating a vigorous debate for the first time in the Navy's history.

During this period of technological advancements, naval officers began to recognize the inadequacy of their somewhat basic education in seamanship and navigation. Naval officers argued for a school to ensure that all new midshipmen learned the standardized science, technology, engineering, and mathematics required to operate and command the expected steam-powered Navy. They nourished the debate on naval education that led to the creation of the Naval Academy.

The Navy also assumed greater responsibility in the world in response to the nation's expanding commercial interests. The Navy had made its initial foray into commerce protection in the West Indies and the Mediterranean around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Having suppressed the Barbary States in the First and Second Barbary Wars as well as the pirates of the West Indies, the Navy turned its attention to other areas of the globe. As Englishman Sir Walter Raleigh once suggested, the fleet follows commerce. New treaties under Jackson meant more trade routes for American merchant ships, requiring greater protection by the Navy.

This geographical expansion of patrols meant the Navy increasingly encountered other navies, nations, and cultures. As the 1830s progressed, the Navy was becoming more exploratory and learning about the world. This development was evident at the Naval Lyceum as well as in the fleet itself. Officers collected items from the ancient sites in Greece, native tribes of the Pacific Islands, ancient civilizations of South America, and elsewhere. Officers mailed these artifacts with narratives to the Lyceum, which also served as a museum. Contacts with other navies resulted in meetings and lectures at the Lyceum.⁴⁸⁸ The Navy was growing intellectually, socially, and professionally.

⁴⁸⁸ Records of the Naval Lyceum including account ledgers, artifact donations, and visitor logs are in the possession of the Naval Academy Museum in Annapolis, Maryland.

A younger, less evolved Navy would have required a great deal of time and attention from its commander-in-chief and other leaders. The quickly growing Navy that Jackson inherited, however, had only two needs: first, accountability for its actions, and second, guidance on what it ought to do. Luckily, Jackson's approach to leadership coincided with the Navy's needs, and thus, his role for the Navy was a paternal one.

Just as Jackson expected fiscal accountability from the Navy itself, he and senior officers demanded professional accountability from its officers and sailors, demonstrated through adherence to regulations and the good order and discipline of naval personnel. Courts-martial offered the individual accountability necessary to discipline the adolescent officer corps. Proceedings reveal that both officers and sailors were expected to hold to high standards of behavior. Whereas a sailor's punishment, which might be as severe as a whipping, was administered immediately and then was over, an officer could be discharged and lose a lifetime of pay and prestige. Jackson took direct action in more naval courts-martial than any president from John Adams to James Buchanan (1798-1860). Jackson officially commented on one-quarter of the courts-martial that passed his desk. In one-third of the cases he reviewed, he either overturned the result or granted remission of the punishment recommended by the court-martial board, thereby establishing himself as a firm but compassionate father figure.

Jackson also met the growing Navy's need for guidance and direction. Under his leadership, for the first time, the U.S. developed a global strategy to respond to crises, act as a deterrent, and protect growing American commerce. The nation was still a third-rate global power, but its quickly expanding economy and merchant fleet needed greater protection. The U.S. fleet numbered only a few dozen ships, but those ships were an important sign to both non-state actors and nation-states that the country intended to keep a forward presence.

Although Jackson had been an Army general, he recognized the importance of the global maritime environment. His addresses and messages to Congress make clear his belief that America's place in the world was dependent on shipping and that threats posed to that shipping could only be

answered by a sufficiently-sized Navy. He developed a national maritime strategy, which he expressed both in words (his limited statements) and in deed (the fleet's operational patterns). He promoted economic trade agreements with both traditional and new partners to establish favorable conditions for American merchant ships. He maintained and expanded the squadron system at key geographical locations to protect those ships and ensure security deterrence to potential predators. Finally, he ordered punitive strikes, though only if necessary and as a last resort. He also used the Navy in a supportive role along the coastline of Florida during the Second Seminole War and in riverine operations. Overall, when it came to the high seas, Jackson exercised the judicious use of force.

Jackson's annual messages to Congress, his inaugural addresses, and his farewell address reveal his thoughts on the purpose of a Navy, the pragmatic limitations of the current Navy, and its opportunity for growth in defense of the nation and its interests overseas. His executive decisions on diversifying the force structure, incorporating new technologies, expanding global operations in support of commerce, and directing joint Army-Navy activities in the Second Seminole War prove that he was as capable a navalist as the best of his predecessors. Jackson set a clear agenda for the Navy that continued with his successors.

Historians, especially biographers, have avoided lengthy explorations of the 1830s Navy. This abstention is most likely due to the pervasive, conservative view either that Andrew Jackson had no interest in the Navy or that the period featured minimal activity worth studying. Jackson was not John Adams, a key naval proponent during the American Revolution who later created the Department of the Navy. Nor was Jackson a Theodore Roosevelt, who wrote his Harvard thesis on the Navy during the War of 1812 and, as president, built up and used a modern Navy to match European powers and to enforce his policies. Nevertheless, this dissertation demonstrates that Jackson had a clear understanding of the Navy as a necessary arm of the nation's foreign policy and commercial expansion and of how to project its limited power in the pre-steam era. He had little experience with the Navy before he became president, but he learned quickly and thoroughly. Threats on the high

seas and in distant ports underscored the crucial role of the Navy in protecting and promoting his country's interests.

The early republic featured two primary philosophies about a navy, which have been defined as navalist and anti-navalist. Generally, the navalists promoted a strong standing navy, which would serve as point of prestige, an arbiter between larger competing navies, and a protector of vital American commerce. Anti-navalists were opposed to a large standing navy, preferring a more militia-like construct of state-supported navies and promoting a focus on westward expansion. Although this binary distinction can be helpful in classifying large groups of politicians, it can also be limiting. The spectrum of competing philosophies features multiple gradations. Some navalists held some anti-navalist views, and vice versa. In addition, an individual's beliefs could shift over time or even during the course of one debate. Such was the case with Jackson. He began his presidency with anti-navalist leanings but soon, out of necessity and vision, leaned the other way.

Jackson's military views had been formed by his experiences as a general conducting land warfare; his political views, by Jefferson's Democrat-Republicans. Both initially aligned him with the anti-navalists. Within days of his inauguration, however, Jackson heard of pirate attacks on American merchant ships and quickly learned the importance and usefulness of the Navy. Similar incidents throughout his first administration, and the accompanying need to protect the country's growing commerce, meant he was aware of the Navy as a crucial element of his administration's policies. In response, as evidenced by his support for ship construction, his presidential addresses, and his orders to deployed ships and squadrons, Jackson evolved into a maturing navalist. Although the country's primary focus in the nineteenth century was conquering the west, Jackson knew the Navy was essential for expanding overseas, whether in trade or lands. Significantly, Jackson did not retreat to U.S. ports or regroup ships in more defensive positions, as a strong anti-navalist would likely have done. Instead, he reinvested in the ships and infrastructure and deployed the Navy.

Having found in Jackson a necessary, though clay-footed, paternal figure, the Navy also needed a purer ideal that transcended politics, justified its

existence, and give it a cause. In the antebellum era, the strongest national rallying cry was 'Manifest Destiny' – the desire and expectation that America's boundaries would push west to the Pacific Ocean regardless of what or who lay in its path.⁴⁸⁹ Although the term itself was not formally coined until 1845, the impact of the concept was evident during the two prior decades. One notable example of this impact is Jackson's removal of tribes from their ancestral territories as Americans pushed further south and west. Manifest Destiny signaled that a virtuous people were entitled to the land and could seize it by any means necessary. The Army, either through its battles with Indians or in the war with Mexico, was critical in helping the U.S. actualize Manifest Destiny. The Navy's guiding principle, however, was different.

During the American Revolution and the subsequent founding of the United States of America, a belief in divine providence featured prominently in the national consciousness. The leading authors of the governing documents believed that God had intervened directly to form the new government and that national growth could be achieved only by displacing non-Christian and uncivilized peoples across the continent. Although the Army and the Navy were both seen as instruments of divine providence, the two military services had different approaches to such national growth. The Army focused on Manifest Destiny, a concept whose objectives were both finite and attainable within a reasonable timeframe. Once the Army, and the citizens it was intended to protect, would reach the geographic boundary of the Pacific coastline they could go no farther.

The Navy, on the other hand, was governed by a broader and unlimited concept, that of maritime destiny. In essence, maritime destiny was the belief that America's future lay on the oceans, not merely in its lands. The term, which first appeared in *Miriam Coffin* by Joseph Hart (1834), predates Manifest Destiny by more than a decade. Its initial appearance in a work of fiction should not diminish its importance or value. On the contrary, its advent suggests the fundamental nature of maritime destiny. Hart's story focused on the Nantucket whaling industry, an enterprise that had been under the

⁴⁸⁹ Julius W. Pratt, 'The Origin of Manifest Destiny', *The American Historical Review*, 4 (1927), pp. 795-798 (795).

protection of the Pacific Squadron since 1817. Hart was part of a generation of early American literary figures who chose the sea as the outlet of their expression. These writers recognized and captured the national spirit of expectancy and hope. That spirit saw U.S. expansion to the Pacific as inevitable but also expected the U.S. to play a greater role in the world, a role that could be realized only on the sea.

A nation that relies heavily on shipborne trade understands the importance of the sea and is familiar with the tension between the risks and rewards of navigating an unforgiving ocean. The U.S., which had relied on shipborne trade since long before its own founding, was no exception. Americans, particularly New Englanders, had also experienced threats by other nations and by pirates. Unsurprisingly then, the U.S. could appreciate the need for a navy to protect the wealth that drove her economy and was willing to support it. Unlike the land-locked Army, the Navy was an instrument of the spread of American commerce and, correspondingly, American ideals to foreign shores.

It is not possible to quantify whether maritime destiny was an instrument of naval and national policy or was a perspective that developed and drew the Navy behind it. However, the Navy's operations, the president's vision, and the discourse among officers and literary figures indicate that, by the close of the 1830s, the young Navy had experienced meaningful growth and, in a sense, become self-aware. When Jackson assumed the presidency in 1829, the United States was a third-rate power with a Navy to match. When he left office in 1837, the Navy had professionalized and modernized, grown in capabilities and prestige, broadened its physical and intellectual horizons, and found its purpose. As de Tocqueville observed earlier that decade, America was 'born to rule the seas'.⁴⁹⁰ At the close of the 1830s, the Navy was not quite ready to assume that mantle, but it had made great strides forward and was acquiring the knowledge and wisdom that would soon bring fulfillment of this destiny.

⁴⁹⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 22.

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Interviews

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Appendix B2: Captain Assignments by Time in Service

	Entered	CAPT	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	
Angus, Samuel	1799	1816	18	19	20	21	22	23	24													
Bainbridge, Joseph	1799	1814	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27										
Bainbridge, William	1798	1800	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34				
Ballard, Henry E.	1804	1825								20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Barron, James	1798	1799	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	
Biddle, James	1800	1815	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Bolton, Wm. Compton	1806	1831																		27	28	29
Brown, Thomas	1801	1825								23	24	25										
Campbell, Hugh G.	1800	1800	17	18	19																	
Cassin, Stephen	1800	1825	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Catesby Jones, Thom	1805	1825													24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Chauncey, Isaac	1798	1812	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	
Chauncey, Wolcott	1804													24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
Claxton, Alexander	1806	1831															25	26	27	28	29	
Conner, David	1809	1835																				
Crane, William	1799	1814	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	
Creighton, John O.	1800	1816	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Dallas, Alexander J.	1806	1828													22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Deacon, David	1799	1826									27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36		
Decatur, Stephen	1798	1804	19	20	21																	
Dent, John H.	1798	1811	19	20	21	22	23	24														
Downes, John	1802	1817	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	
Elliott, Jesse D.	1804	1818		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Evans, Samuel	1798	1812	19	20	21	22	23	24	25													
Finch, William B.	1806	1831																				
Henley, John d.	1799	1817	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		
Henly, Robert	1799	1825								25	26	27										
Hoffman, Beekman	1805	1829														24	25	26	27	28	29	
Hull, Isaac	1798	1806	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	
Jones, Jacob	1799	1813	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	
Kearney, Lawrence	1807	1832																				
Kennedy, Edmund	1805	1828												23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Leonard, James T	1799	1815	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
MacDonough, Thomas	1800	1814	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24												
McCall, Edward R.	1808	1835																				
Morgan, Charles W.	1808	1831																23	24	25	26	27
Morris, Charles	1799	1813	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	
Murray, Alexander	1798	1821	19	20	21	22																
Nicholson, Joseph J.	1804	1827													24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Nicolson, John B.	1805	1828													23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Parker, Foxhall A.	1808	1835																				
Patterson, Daniel T.	1800	1815	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Perry, Oliver H.	1799	1813	18	19																		
Porter, David	1798	1812	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27											
Read, George C.	1804	1825								20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Renshaw, James	1800	1825								24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Ridgeley, Charles	1799	1815	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	
Rodgers, George W.	1804	1825								20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27					
Rodgers, John	1798	1799	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	20	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	
Shaw, John	1798	1807	19	20	21	22	23	24														
Shubrick, William B.	1806	1831																25	26	27	36	29
Sinclair, Arthur	1798	1813	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33					
Spence, Robert T.	1800	1815	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25											
Stewart, Charles	1798	1806	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	
Thompson, C.C.B.	1802	1825								22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29					
Tingey, Thomas	1798	1804	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30								
Trenchard, Edward	1800	1817	17	18	19	20	21	22	23													
Turner, Daniel	1808	1835																				
Wadsworth, Alexander	1804	1825								20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Warrington, Lewis	1800	1814	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Wilkinson, Jesse	1805	1829														24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Woodhouse, Samuel	1801	1827	16												27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Woolsey, Melancthon	1800	1816		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9	21.8	22.8	23.8	23.9	25.0	26.0	27.0	27.3	27.8	28.8	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	33.2	
			18.0	18.9	19.9	20.9																

Appendix B3: Captain Assignments by Time in Grade

Entered	CAPT	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835
1799	1816	1	2	3	4	5	6	7												
1814	1814	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12									
1798	1800	17	18	18	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32			
1804	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1798	1799	18	19	19	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
1800	1815	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	2
1806	1831																1	2	3	4
1801	1825									0	1									
1800	1800	17	18	19																
1800	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1805	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1798	1812	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1804	1828												0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1806	1831															0	1	2	3	4
1809	1835																			
1799	1814	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1800	1816	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1806	1828												0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1799	1826									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1798	1804	13	14	15																
1798	1811	6	7	8	9	10	11													
1802	1817	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1804	1818		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1812	1812	5	6	7	8	9	10	11												
1806	1831																			
1799	1817	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
1799	1825									0	1									
1805	1829													0	1	2	3	4	5	
1798	1806	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
1799	1813	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1807	1832																			
1805	1828												0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1799	1815	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15					
1814	1814	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10											
1808	1835																			
1808	1831															0	1	2	3	4
1799	1813	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1798	1798	19	20	21	22															
1804	1827												1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1805	1828												0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1808	1835																			
1800	1815	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1799	1813	4	5																	
1798	1812	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13										
1804	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1800	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1799	1815	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1804	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6				
1798	1799	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
1798	1807	10	11	12	13	14	15													
1806	1831															0	1	2	3	4
1798	1813	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18				
1800	1815	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10										
1798	1806	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
1802	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6				
1798	1804	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24							
1800	1817	0	1	2	3	4	5	6												
1808	1835																			
1804	1825									0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1800	1814	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1805	1829													0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1801	1827												1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1800	1816		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		6.5	7.1	8.1	8.6	9.2	10.2	11.0	12.3	9.5	10.0	11.6	10.5	10.5	11.5	11.7	12.3	12.8	13.8	14.6
		1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835
	Years	6.5	7.1	8.1	8.6	9.2	10.2	11	12.3	9.5	10	11.6	10.5	10.5	11.5	11.7	12.3	12.8	13.8	14.6

Appendix C: Ship Deployment Rate, 1825-1835

(Based on end of year location)

	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836
Ship of the Line	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6
Commissioned												
Deployed	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Frigates												
Commissioned	9	9	9	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10
Deployed	4	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	3	2	4	4
Sloops												
Commissioned	6	10	10	16	16	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Deployed	6	7	7	12	12	10	10	7	10	9	8	8
Schooners												
Commissioned	5	4	4	5	5	5	7	8	8	7	7	7
Deployed	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	6	7	6	4	4
	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	
Ships of the Line	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	0	0	0	0	14.3	14.3	16.7	9.31
Frigates	44.4	55.6	55.6	40	40	40	22.2	20	30	20	40	37.1
Sloops	100	70	70	75	75	66.7	66.7	46.7	66.7	60	53.3	68.2
Schooners	60	100	100	80	60	80	57.1	75	87.5	85.7	57.1	76.6

Appendix D: Federal Spending 1829-1837

	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	% Increase
Budget	17	17	17	20	26	22	20	34	42	247.1%
Defense	9	9	10	11	15	12	12	21	23	255.6%
Navy	3.8	4.3	3.5	4.5	3.8	4.5	5	6.8	7.5	197.4%
	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	
Percentage	42.2%	47.8%	35.0%	40.9%	25.3%	37.5%	41.7%	32.4%	32.6%	
Percentage	22.4%	25.3%	20.6%	22.5%	14.6%	20.5%	25.0%	20.0%	17.9%	21.0%