

PERCEPTIONS OF DUTY AND MOTIVATIONS FOR SERVICE OF
AMERICAN SEAGOING OFFICERS DURING THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

A Thesis

by

BENJAMIN DUERKSEN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2012

Major Subject: History

PERCEPTIONS OF DUTY AND MOTIVATIONS FOR SERVICE OF
AMERICAN SEAGOING OFFICERS DURING THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

A Thesis

by

BENJAMIN DUERKSEN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	James C. Bradford
Committee Members,	Rebecca H. Schloss
	Kevin J. Crisman
Head of Department,	David Vaught

May 2012

Major Subject: History

ABSTRACT

Perceptions of Duty and Motivations for Service of American Seagoing Officers During
the American Revolution. (May 2012)

Benjamin Duerksen, B.A., The Colorado College

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. James C Bradford

This study utilizes correspondence, memoirs, and secondary sources to explore the lives and careers of six Continental Navy captains—Esek Hopkins, Joshua Barney, John Paul Jones, Hector McNeill, Lambert Wickes, and John Barry—and reveal the motivational factors of patriotism, a desire for fame and professional advancement, and financial stability which underlay their decisions to seek commissions in the Continental Navy, and influenced their conduct while in the service. Additionally, it suggests that prewar interactions in an "Atlantic World" context influenced the ideological and personal motivations that formed the foundations for service in the Continental Navy.

All three motivations played a role in each captain's career and affected their conduct in relation to their understandings of duty, but the degree to which they influenced the captains varied. Although the promise of a steady income helped motivate initial service, financial considerations played a larger role throughout Barney's and Barry's careers than they did for other captains. The desire for fame and personal prestige also affected the conduct and service of all six men, though Jones and Hopkins provide more concrete examples of its influence. Finally, experiences interacting with

West Indies and Atlantic trade networks before the war likely influenced the captains' development of revolutionary principles, and their dedication to the United States. In addition to patriotism, Jones professed a devotion to universal principles of liberty and rights, and McNeill perceived the Revolution as an attempt to establish God's Kingdom of the Just.

The degree to which each captain succeeded in achieving his goals, and the affect his Continental service had on employment after the Revolution, also varied significantly. Hopkins failed as the navy's commander-in-chief, but his performance did not negatively impact his social and political standing in his native Rhode Island. Unlike McNeill, Captains Barry, Barney and Jones also utilized their networks of friends and acquaintances well, helping them find prestigious and stable employment in other seagoing capacities after the war. Wickes died in 1777, but his brief service also suggests he would have achieved success had he survived.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
II YOUNG MEN AND THE SEA: THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF SIX CONTINENTAL CAPTAINS.....	11
Esek Hopkins.....	11
Joshua Barney	15
John Paul Jones	19
Hector McNeill.....	25
Lambert Wickes	28
John Barry	31
III CONCEPTS OF DUTY	36
IV A "PASSION FOR FAME" AND PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT	59
V LIBERTY AND FAITH.....	76
VI FOR WANT OF MONEY	87
VII CONCLUSION	96
BIBLIOGRAPHY	106
VITA	110

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the lives of six Continental Navy captains and reveals the complex, sometimes conflicting motivational factors of patriotism, financial stability, and a desire for social status and fame which underlay their decisions to seek commissions in the Continental Navy, and influenced their conduct while in the service. By examining their interpersonal conflicts and, at times, self-interested motivations, it provides characterizations that are more complete than those in many previous works. Furthermore, in offering an analysis of a portion of one stratum of the navy, it suggests that prewar interactions in an "Atlantic World" context influenced the ideological and personal motivations that formed the foundations for service in the Continental Navy.

Within the last century, military historians have come to emphasize the importance of studying ground-level combatants in order to understand how and why wars were fought. In particular, more recent studies on the Continental army and armies of the American Civil War argue that the experiences and motivations of soldiers are central to tracing social, political, and economic issues which affect the United States to this day. In *A Revolutionary People at War*, Charles Royster analyzes the non-materialist motives Continental soldiers had for serving, and the relationship between the army and American society. James McPherson's *What They Fought For, 1861-1865*,

This thesis follows the Chicago Manual of Style, Sixteenth edition.

and *Apostles of Disunion* by Charles Dew explore similar themes for the Civil War.¹

Although Jesse Lemisch pioneered this method of study in his essay on American sailors during the Revolution, no study of the Continental Navy explores sailors' motivations in any detail.² Apart from the plethora of biographies on John Paul Jones, and to a lesser extent John Barry, and a smattering of other biographies and published journals and memoirs of sailors, the voices and experiences of American men at sea are mostly absent from the current literature covering the American Revolution and Continental Navy. In focusing their debate on whether or not the Continental Navy was significant to the outcome of the Revolution, historians have largely neglected the human component of the service. Just as analyses of the motivations of men in the Continental Army or armies of the Civil War add significantly to the understanding of those services and conflicts, studies detailing the understandings of duty and motivations for service of American sailors during the Revolution stand to enhance historians' knowledge of the war, and the founding and development of the United States and its naval services.

While an all-encompassing approach examining sailors from all ranks and levels of society would benefit the field, the scarce and scattered resources on enlisted personnel appear to make this impossible at this time. Instead, this study takes six

¹ Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); James McPherson, *What They Fought For, 1861-1865* (New York: Anchor Books, 1995); Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001). These works, particularly Dew's, are more grounded in sociology than military history but present relevant information for military historians.

² Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen and the Politics of Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly* Third Series 25:3 (July 1968): 371-407.

Continental Navy captains, John Paul Jones, Joshua Barney, Esek Hopkins, John Barry, Lambert Wickes, and Hector McNeill and explores, compares, and contrasts their possible motivations and understandings of duty. These captains came from different backgrounds, and achieved varied success during their careers in the Continental Navy that influenced their lives after the Revolution; Hopkins went into local politics, Jones and Barney served in foreign navies, Barney and Barry accepted commissions in the U.S. Navy following its establishment in 1794, and McNeill re-entered the merchant service.³ Each officer held complex views about duty, and had multiple motives for serving.

Of the six captains John Paul Jones has received the most attention, although many of his early biographies, including Augustus Buell's two-volume contribution, are riddled with falsifications. Jones has likely received the most accurate characterization as well, complete with his egotism and desire for status and recognition, alongside his professionalism and naval ability. Such characteristics are most clearly defined in more recent books by Peter Vansittart and Frank Walker, and by James C. Bradford's essay on Jones in *Quarterdeck & Bridge*. Samuel Eliot Morison's 1959 Pulitzer Prize-winning biography probes Jones's motives in greater depth than Lincoln Lorenz's more detailed biography of a quarter century earlier. This study builds on these works to focus more closely on Jones's understanding of duty, and the factors that motivated him to join and continue serving in the Continental Navy after suffering significant setbacks.⁴

³ Lambert Wickes died during the war.

⁴ Augustus Buell, *Paul Jones, Founder of the American Navy: A History*, 2 vols. (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1900); Peter Vansittart, *John Paul Jones: A Restless Spirit* (London: Robson Books, 2004); Frank Walker, *John Paul Jones: Maverick Hero* (Gloucestershire, UK: Spellmount, 2007);

John Barry has likewise received considerable biographic attention, although to a lesser extent than John Paul Jones. William Bell Clark, like many biographers of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, stressed Barry's religious motivation rather than other aspects of his career.⁵ Other biographers, e.g., Joseph Gurn, simply misrepresent Barry in hagiographic works that advanced Barry's image at the expense of other captains, or credit Barry with unique attributes which, in actuality, were not exceptional.⁶ While more recent biographies, e.g., Tim McGrath's, have reassessed Barry in a much more accurate light, even deemphasizing Barry's oft-cited unofficial title as the "Father of the American Navy," his understanding of duty and reasons for serving have not received explicit treatment.⁷

The other four captains focused upon in this study have not been the subjects of significant historical inquiry. Although Hulbert Footner provided a biography of Joshua Barney in 1940, Barney was only recently rescued from obscurity by the efforts of Louis A. Norton. Norton does an admirable job of describing Barney's multiple career changes in both *Captains Contentious* and *Joshua Barney*, but provides only brief commentary on some of Barney's possible motivations, as well as his "self-imposed code of ethics." Although this essay reaches different conclusions regarding some of Barney's choices,

James C. Bradford, "John Paul Jones: Honor and Professionalism," in *Quarterdeck & Bridge*, ed. James C. Bradford, 15-39 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997); Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones: A Sailor's Biography* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1959); Lincoln Lorenz, *John Paul Jones: Fighter for Freedom and Glory* (Annapolis, MD: The United States Naval Institute, 1943).

⁵ William B. Clark, *Gallant John Barry, 1745-1803: The Story of a Naval Hero of Two Wars* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), vii.

⁶ Joseph Gurn, *Commodore John Barry: Father of the American Navy* (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1933), is especially critical of John Paul Jones in relation to Barry, p.55. For an example of a non-unique attribute presented as such, see Gurn's commentary on Barry's modesty in writing after-action reports, p.24. Although more concise than, say, those by John Paul Jones, Barry's official reports were no different than many other captains of the period.

⁷ Tim McGrath, *John Barry: An American Hero in the Age of Sail* (Yardley, PA: Westholme, 2010).

Norton's inquiries provide solid ground from which to expand upon Barney's understanding of duty and motivations for serving in the Continental, American, and French navies, as well as in private service.⁸

The death of Lambert Wickes early in the war and the paucity of sources explain the limited attention paid to him. Although included in more general works on the Continental Navy and its captains, the only book-length biography of Wickes was published in 1932. William Bell Clark's book contributes to the historiography by describing little-known facets of Wickes's career, but only briefly mentions Wickes's understanding of duty and leaves wholly unexplored Wickes's motivations for service.⁹

Hector McNeill and Esek Hopkins have received even less attention from historians than Lambert Wickes. Like Wickes, they are included in more general studies of Continental Navy captains, including William James Morgan's *Captains to the Northward*, and John A. McManemin's *Captains of the Continental Navy*, but neither is the focus of a book-length study. While works that include Esek Hopkins often describe his provincialism, they do not connect it to his motivation to serve, or pose other possible motives. Scholars have also largely ignored Hector McNeill, his character, and his motivations, a deficiency this essay corrects as the documents published by Gardner Weld Allen in 1921, although brief, provide significant material relating to McNeill's

⁸ Hulbert Footner, *Sailor of Fortune: The Life and Adventures of Commodore Barney, USN*. 1940. Reprint (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998); Louis A. Norton, *Captains Contentious: The Dysfunctional Sons of the Brine* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009); Louis A. Norton, *Joshua Barney: Hero of the Revolution and 1812* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000).

⁹ William B. Clark, *Lambert Wickes, Sea Raider and Diplomat: The Story of a Naval Captain of the Revolution* (New haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1932).

motivations for service and understanding of duty.¹⁰ McNeill's overtly religious conception of the Revolution, though not exclusive to him, is particularly unique from other captains and deserves further inquiry.

Whereas many more recent studies on the Revolution ignore, or at the very least reduce, the role of patriotism in the founding generation's motivations, this essay argues that patriotism deserves a very important place among the motivations for service in the Continental Navy. However, the patriotism displayed by the six captains is problematized in three important ways. Firstly, Jones, McNeill and Barry were foreign-born, leaving room to question whether they actually formed a dedicated attachment to the rebelling colonies during their time on the North American continent. Secondly, although provincialism existed in the North American colonies, the men who committed themselves to an independent United States did so to an idea, rather than to an established country. Finally, although the period around the turn of the nineteenth century is recognized as an Age of Revolution, the British West Indies did not follow the American mainland in revolt. These points suggest that the prewar experiences of the six Continental captains included elements that helped them develop principles which set them apart from people in other parts of the British Atlantic.

Considering the captains and their patriotism in an Atlantic World context helps reconcile the aforementioned complexities. In *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* and *The Many-Headed Hydra*, Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh argue that

¹⁰ William James Morgan, *Captains to the Northward: The New England Captains in the Continental Navy* (Barre, MA: Barre Gazette, 1959); John A. McManemin, *Captains of the Continental Navy* (Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ: Ho-Ho-Kus Publishing Co., 1981); Gardner W. Allen, *Captain Hector McNeill of the Continental Navy*. 1922. Reprint (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2009).

shipboard experience in the Atlantic World helped foster the ideas of liberty and individualism that prompted resistance to authority and colonial rebellion. The waterside communities that developed in Atlantic trade centers further served as areas of exchange and interaction amongst seamen and with counterparts on land, and promulgated universal principles of liberty.¹¹ Having participated in merchant activities in the West Indies before the war, the six captains would have conducted business and social affairs within those communities of exchange.

While Rediker and Linebaugh's conception of the Atlantic as a network for ideas may help explain why each captain developed revolutionary values, it does not explain why Hopkins, Jones, Barney, Barry, McNeill, Wickes, and other mariners took up arms against the British in support of an independent United States. To that end it is useful to consider why other British colonies in the West Indies did not display a latent desire to rebel. In *An Empire Divided*, Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy convincingly argues that many British inhabitants of the West Indies did not consider the islands their home; absenteeism was the rule of the day, and the West Indies colonies maintained strong social, cultural, and economic ties to Britain throughout the period.¹² By choosing to make their homes in the North American colonies, each of the six captains established a stronger connection to the continent than to Britain itself, and in the cases of Jones, Barry, and McNeill, the captains born in Scotland and Ireland, their connections to

¹¹ Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

¹² Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2000), 3, 58.

Britain were probably already strained. As a result, the ideas of liberty they encountered during their careers in the commercial world of the North Atlantic before the Revolution may have served as the foundations for their dedication to the idea of independence, and enabled their devotion to a not-yet-formed United States.¹³

The captains also possessed other motivations that were far less idealistic than universal notions of rights and freedom. Chief among these additional reasons for service was the advancement of personal image and fulfillment of individual pride. Public image was extraordinarily important in the advancement of one's personal and familial station in life, and military service was one of the few ways available to non-landed individuals to move up the social ladder. Successful ventures also created networks of personal and business contacts which created investment opportunities in trade, and provided introductions which could open doors for oneself or one's family. This was particularly true for many Continental captains, and the American, West Indies and French contacts they made before the Revolution and during their service in the navy provided additional opportunities for employment in private service and in foreign militaries.

Closely linked to one's public standing was an individual's sense of personal pride, a hugely influential factor not only in fighting for the Continental Navy. This same sense of pride influenced how each captain understood his duties and conducted himself while in service. Ever mindful of how others might assess their performance

¹³ The author's conception of patriotism is also heavily influenced by Douglas Adair, "Fame and the Founding Fathers," in *Fame and the Founding Fathers*, ed. Trevor Colbourn, 3-36. 1974. Reprint (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998).

and demeanor, the captains made decisions meant to bring personal fame while also buttressing each man's perception of his own character.

Financial stability also played a part in motivating service and conduct. Whether supporting their families in America, supporting themselves overseas, or in some situations providing for their ships and crews on the promise that Congress would reimburse the expenses paid, financial considerations were extremely important to Continental captains. While some were able to stay in the Continental Navy and support themselves throughout the Revolution, financial difficulties and the imbalance between the number of vessels and officers in the Continental Navy left some without ships to command, thereby forcing them to utilize their Atlantic World contacts to make multiple changes in employment over the course of the war and afterwards.

Importantly, it must be noted that none of the three main influences—dedication to a cause, personal image and pride, and financial stability—were ever at work alone. It is essential to understand that there was constant balancing at play among these motivational factors within all six captains, but that some influences were more important to certain captains than to others. Motives were further complicated by how each understood his duty as a gentleman, and as a naval officer.

Organized thematically to promote comparison, this study considers each of the influences or motivations in separate chapters. The first introduces the topic by describing its antecedents and objectives. Chapter two provides a biographical snapshot of each man to help orient subsequent discussions of events within the overall context of their lives. Chapter three begins the analysis by discussing how the captains understood

their duty, and where they located their place within the naval community. Each motivation then gets its own chapter starting with pride, fame, and professional advancement, followed by chapters on patriotism and financial motivations. The chapters on fame and patriotism include additional discussions of what the captains' opinions of privateers suggest about their motivations. Lastly, the concluding section offers final commentary on the main points of each chapter, and traces the naval service of each officer following the Revolutionary War.

CHAPTER II

YOUNG MEN AND THE SEA: THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF SIX CONTINENTAL CAPTAINS

The six captains examined in this study came from varying familial backgrounds and widely separated geographic regions. Each went to sea young, and their experiences prior to entering the Continental Navy influenced their decisions to join the service, and contributed to their understandings of professionalism and duty. Their actions and command temperament reflected their backgrounds and motivations for service, and help to account for the widely divergent career arcs they experienced. The following chapter provides broad context for subsequent discussions, focusing mainly on the important events in each man's life that are examined in later chapters, or that demonstrate connections to Atlantic World social, political, and economic networks.

Esek Hopkins

Born into a prominent, Quaker Rhode Island family on April 26, 1718, Esek Hopkins followed a number of his brothers to sea shortly after the death of their father in 1738. Within three years the young mariner became master of the merchant ship *Wentworth*, and subsequently commanded other vessels owned by prominent Providence merchants, plying the West Indies trade while establishing a large family at home.

Hopkins shifted to privateering during the French and Indian War, becoming one of Britain's more successful privateers, then returned to merchant work for a brief period until his election to the colonial assembly from North Providence in 1768. His reelection in 1771 and the press of public obligations led Hopkins to leave service at sea and become a merchant on land.¹

Appointed a brigadier general in October 1775, Hopkins served as the commander-in-chief of all the Rhode Island military forces before receiving a call to Philadelphia from his brother, Stephen Hopkins, a Rhode Island delegate to the Second Continental Congress. In December the elder Hopkins, a leading member of the Naval Committee, arranged for Esek's appointment as the senior officer in the new Continental Navy, and as the commander of its squadron.² Hopkins took the largest of the eight vessels initially obtained for the navy, *Alfred*, 24, as his flagship, and dropped down the Delaware River in mid-January 1776 after receiving orders earlier in the month to protect the coasts of Virginia and North and South Carolina, and to then turn northward to Rhode Island. Hopkins's orders gave him leeway to "distress the enemy by all means in your power" if he encountered severe weather or an unforeseen disaster.³

When the squadron put to sea on February 17, 1776, Hopkins ordered it to sail south, bypassing Chesapeake Bay and the Southern coast, and to proceed to New Providence in the Bahamas Islands where Hopkins knew a large amount of powder and

¹ William J. Morgan, *Captains to the Northward*, 22; John A. McManemin, *Captains*, 153.

² Journal of the Continental Congress, 22 December 1775, in William B. Clark, Michael J. Crawford, and William J. Morgan, ed., *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, 11 vols. to date (Washington: Naval History Division, Dept. of the Navy, 1964-), 3: 207-08. Hereafter NDAR. For Stephen Hopkins's letter to Esek offering him the position, see Stephen Hopkins to Esek Hopkins, 6 November 1775, in NDAR, 2: 907-08.

³ Naval Committee to Commodore Esek Hopkins, 5 January 1776, in NDAR, 3:637-38.

munitions were being stored. Hopkins and his squadron arrived off Nassau on March 1, but did not attack the forts defending the city until the following day. This delay afforded Governor Montfort Browne time to move the vast majority of the powder across the island, load it onto a sloop, and save it from capture. Even with the powder gone, Hopkins seized a variety of other munitions including 71 cannon, which took two weeks to load onto the American ships.⁴

During the return voyage to New England, Hopkins's squadron managed to take two small ships, the brig *Boston* and schooner *Hawk*, but was roughly handled in an engagement with an inferior British warship, the twenty-gun *Glasgow*, as it cruised off Block Island on April 6. Although outgunned and outnumbered, Captain Tyringham Howe and *Glasgow* managed to damage a number of the American ships before breaking off the engagement and outrunning his American pursuers. While the failure to capture *Glasgow* was perhaps understandable given the green nature of Hopkins's squadron, combined with some ineptitude on Hopkins's part, the incident nevertheless became a point of contention for the incompetence or cowardice displayed by certain captains during the battle, and it reflected poorly on Hopkins's leadership.⁵

Recruitment problems and desertions plagued Hopkins's squadron once it put into Providence, Rhode Island, and it would never again sail as a unit under Hopkins or

⁴ For an inventory of the items taken from Nassau, see Esek Hopkins to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Enclosure, 8 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 711. For additional details, see McManemin, *Captains*, 166, and William M. Fowler Jr., "Esek Hopkins: Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Navy," in *Quarterdeck & Bridge: Two Centuries of American Naval Leaders*, ed. James C. Bradford, 3-14 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 7-8.

⁵ For Hopkins's explanation of the encounter, see Esek Hopkins to John Hancock, 9 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 735-36. For Howe's account, see Journal of the H.M.S. *Glasgow*, Captain Tyringham Howe, 5-6 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 680. Also see Fowler Jr., "Esek Hopkins," 11.

any other officer. Congress called on Hopkins on June 14, 1776, to respond to complaints against him, and to explain the Continental Navy's inactivity.⁶ Congressional members were unconvinced by Hopkins's arguments and voted to censure him, though they allowed Hopkins to return to Rhode Island to retake command of his squadron.

Although Hopkins tried to get his ships to sea, even asking the General Assembly in Rhode Island to declare an embargo on local shipping until the Continental ships could find crews, his efforts were undermined by his vocal disdain for Congress and its authority. Hopkins's inability to capture the British frigate *Diamond* as the enemy ship sat aground during a minor engagement on January 2, 1777, also resulted in embarrassment.⁷ His poor performance and his quarrels with members of Congress resulted in his suspension from the navy on March 26, 1777, and his formal dismissal from service on January 2, 1778.⁸

Hopkins nevertheless remained an important figure in Rhode Island, whose voters elected him to the General Assembly from 1777 through 1786. He also served on the state council of war and other local committees, and as a trustee of Rhode Island College after 1783. The first and only commander-in-chief of the Continental Navy, Esek Hopkins died on February 26, 1802, after years of ill health at the age of 84.⁹

⁶ John Hancock to Esek Hopkins, 14 June 1776, in NDAR, 5: 528.

⁷ Esek Hopkins to William Ellery, 13 March 1777, in NDAR, 8: 98-99.

⁸ Hopkins's suspension from Journal of the Continental Congress, 26 March 1777, in NDAR, 8: 206. Dismissal in Journal of the Continental Congress, 2 January 1778, in NDAR, 11: 20.

⁹ Fowler Jr., "Esek Hopkins," 12; McManemin, *Captains*, 183.

Joshua Barney

Joshua Barney was born outside Baltimore to William and Frances Barney on July 6, 1759. Although wealthy due to family fortunes on both sides, his Catholic family lacked connections in high society. After attending common school until he was ten, Barney served an apprenticeship with a dry goods retailer in Baltimore, then worked at a counting house in Alexandria, Virginia.¹⁰ Soon afterwards in 1771, he enlisted on a Baltimore pilot boat and began his career as a sailor. A year later Barney entered into an apprenticeship under his brother-in-law, Captain Thomas Drysdale, and showed such promise that Drysdale named him second mate on the *Sidney* in 1774.

Drysdale's death mid-voyage in 1775 unexpectedly hurtled young Barney into command of the *Sidney*, over which he had no legal authority. The deceased captain's tyrannical treatment of his crew and Barney, along with Barney's successful completion of the voyage in a leadership position he did not expect, had lasting effects on his understanding of duty and professionalism.¹¹ During its return trip to Baltimore, an officer from the British sloop-of-war *Kingfisher* boarded the *Sidney* and informed Barney that the colonies had entered into a state of rebellion: an announcement which he

¹⁰ The dry goods retailer closed his business soon after Barney arrived. Mary Barney, ed., *A Biographical Memoir of the Late Commodore Joshua Barney* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, Press of I.R. Butts, 1832), <http://galenet.galegroup.com.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY106418237&srchtp=a&ste=14>,

4. Mary Barney, Joshua's niece, published this edited version of Joshua's memoir. Care has been taken to use sections in the biography that are directly quoted from Joshua Barney's original, and to alert the reader when the quote is Mary Barney's flourish.

¹¹ Joshua Barney described Drysdale's treatment as "very severe and brutal." See Joshua Barney as quoted in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 10-11.

"devoured ... with a greedy ear."¹² After reaching Baltimore, Barney settled his account with John Smith, owner of the *Sidney*, briefly visited his family, and then signed with the Continental Navy as master's mate on board the sloop *Hornet*, commanded by Captain William Stone.¹³ Stone's unwillingness to engage an inferior British tender from the frigate *Roebuck* prompted Barney to transfer to the schooner, *Wasp*, under Captain Charles Alexander. Barney's role in the successful evasion of the British frigates *Roebuck* and *Liverpool*, and the capture of the British brig, *Betsy*, earned him a lieutenant's commission in the Continental Navy.

Barney moved between positions on ships in the Continental Navy and private service for the rest of the war, including service aboard the Continental Navy brig, *Andrea Doria*.¹⁴ Captured by the British three times, Barney often received respectful and preferential treatment from his captors in comparison to the common treatment usually meted out to prisoners held on board notorious British prison hulks. After one such imprisonment, following the capture of *Saratoga* and Barney's escape from an English prison, he captured *General Monk*, which, according to James Fenimore Cooper, "has been justly deemed one of the most brilliant [captures] that ever occurred under the American Flag."¹⁵

Barney found few prospects for assignment in the Continental Navy upon his return to America in 1782, so accepted the command of the 100-ton converted

¹² This colloquial phrase is quoted from Joshua Barney's autobiography in Mary Barney's memoir. *Ibid.*, 26

¹³ Hulbert Footner, *Sailor of Fortune*, 14.

¹⁴ Private vessels include privateers and merchant ships. The *Andrea Doria* is best known for its cruises under Captain Nicholas Biddle, another American naval icon of the American Revolution.

¹⁵ James F. Cooper, *History of the Navy of the United States of America*, 2 vols. 1839. Reprint. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Literature House, 1970), 120.

merchantman *Hyder-Ally*, in the Pennsylvania State Navy.¹⁶ After overseeing its conversion to a warship, Barney was tasked on April 7, 1782, with escorting a party of seven merchant vessels to the mouth of Delaware Bay. When spotted by British blockading ships, the sloop-of-war *General Monk* and 32-gun frigate *Quebec*, Barney directed his helmsman to obey the opposite of his orders yelled within earshot of *General Monk*. The ruse worked; Barney and his crew soon captured *General Monk* with a loss of only four men dead and eleven wounded. Effecting an escape from *Quebec*, *Hyder-Ally* and its prize docked in Philadelphia where they were greeted with a thirteen-gun salute.¹⁷

For a time after the war Barney dedicated himself to pursuits ashore. He initially invested in a business venture that quickly faltered, and afterwards turned to local politics. His involvement in politics garnered him social and political friends, including members of George Washington's family, but also rankled Barney's future political opponents who later used his service in the French Navy to foil his own attempts at elected office. More immediately, however, his connections netted him offers of multiple government positions. Quickly tiring of those positions and "[fancying] that his health was very much impaired by his long residence ashore," Barney convinced his

¹⁶ Norton lists the unassigned naval officers in the Continental navy as 39 lieutenants and 22 captains. At the time, the Continental Navy possessed only two frigates, *Deane* and *Alliance*, and "a half dozen smaller vessels." Louis A. Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 71.

¹⁷ The victory is commemorated in "Song on Captain Barney's Victory Over the Ship *General Monk*" which can be found in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 120-21. In contrast to the statistics on *Hyder-Ally*'s losses, *General Monk* sustained 20 dead and 33 wounded (Captain Josias Rogers among them) out of a crew of 136. Louis Norton, "A Victory by 'the Rule of the Contrary,'" *Naval History* 18:2 (April 2004): 30-34. Also see Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 74-80.

business partner to purchase a small brig which he used for trading goods and slaves in South America.¹⁸

When offered a commission in the U.S. Navy in 1794, Barney rejected it in a dispute over his seniority, and subsequently joined the French Navy in 1795 as a *capitaine de vaisseau* in defense of the new French Republic.¹⁹ Eventually reaching the rank of *capitaine de vaisseau de premier*, the equivalent of commodore in the American service, and given a commission as *chef de division des armées navales*, Barney participated in events surrounding Saint Domingue and the Haitian Revolution. Allowed to resign his commission in 1802, Barney returned to the United States and made unsuccessful bids for Congress in 1806 and 1810. The outbreak of the War of 1812 presented him with an opportunity to return to naval service, which he did as a captain in the U.S. Navy on April 26, 1814. His command of the Patuxent Flotilla, and his contributions at Bladensburg and to the successful defense of Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor later that year, marked the end of a career characterized by numerous changes in direction, involving both personal achievements and disappointments

¹⁸ Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 161.

¹⁹ Barney refused multiple offers from the French Minister of Marine to join the French Navy before accepting this position. The position he finally accepted, unbeknownst to him, was not the equivalent of post captain as he believed. Instead, his rank was roughly equivalent to the rank of Lieutenant he already held. *Ibid.*, 192.

John Paul Jones

John Paul, the man remembered today as John Paul Jones, was born the son of a gardener and house maid in Arbigland, Scotland, on July 6, 1747. At the age of thirteen, after receipt of a rudimentary education at the Church of Scotland's Kirkbean Parish school, Jones apprenticed on board the *Friendship*, a brig out of Whitehaven, England, which sailed between Scotland, the West Indies, and Chesapeake Bay.²⁰ During layovers in Fredericksburg, Virginia, Jones often stayed with his older brother, William, who may have helped foster Jones's colonial sympathies.

Financial difficulties in 1764 forced the sale of the *Friendship*, and released Jones from his apprenticeship. He worked in the slave trade for the next two years, serving first on the *King George* of Whitehaven before accepting a position as first mate on the brigantine *Two Friends* of Kingston, Jamaica, in 1766. His reservations about human trafficking led Jones to abandon the slave trade in 1768, and seek passage home on board the brig *John* of Liverpool.

Jones, like Barney, was first thrust into a position of authority on his voyage home when both the captain and mate died of fever, and Jones, the only one aboard who knew how to navigate, brought the ship into port. Although Jones was twenty-one, whereas Barney was sixteen, it must nevertheless have been a harrowing experience. Impressed by his feat, the owner, Currie, Beck, & Co., gave command of its ship to Jones, and after two successful voyages to the West Indies provided him with a

²⁰Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 12.

recommendation which stated that “he approved himself every way qualified both as a navigator and supercargo.” This earned him command of the *Betsy* in 1772, and Jones made a significant amount of money during the next year trading between Tobago, Madeira, Ireland, and England.²¹

If these early voyages highlighted Jones’s potential as a great seaman, they also exposed his somewhat abrasive character and provoked the earliest of many accusations of mistreatment by those who sailed under him. The first incident occurred while commanding the *John*. The ship’s carpenter, Mungo Maxwell, claimed Jones had flogged him nearly to death. Although James Simpson, a judge of the vice admiralty court in Tobago, dismissed Maxwell’s accusations as “frivolous” after inspecting his wounds, Maxwell’s father Robert attributed his son’s death later that year to Jones, rather than to the fever Mungo caught on a subsequent ship.²² Charges were again brought against Jones, and again dismissed, but the rumor that he had flogged a man to death was not so easily escaped.

The second incident occurred during the *Betsy*’s last voyage when Jones refused to advance wages to his seamen after reaching Tobago. Instead, he used the funds he had to buy more cargo for the return trip. His proposition to pay the sailors after reaching Britain did not sit well with the crew, however, as they were without money to enjoy themselves in Tobago after a long Atlantic voyage; Jones faced a mutiny. When a

²¹ Jones to His Mother and Sister, Enclosure, Statement of Currie, Beck, & Co., 1 April 1771, in James C. Bradford, ed., *The Papers of John Paul Jones*, microform. 10 reels (Alexandria, VA: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986), 10. Hereafter JP.

²² Statement of James Simpson, 30 June 1772, in JP, 1986; Information and Complaint by Robert Maxwell against John Paul, 10 November 1770, in JP, 1982. For testimony regarding Mungo Maxwell’s death due to fever, see Statement of James Eastment, 30 January 1773, in JP, 1987.

crewmember cornered Jones against a hatch to the hold and tried to bludgeon him, Jones ran the offender through with his sword in self defense.²³

Jones's movements during the years following the Tobago incident are hard to track, not least of all because of multiple name changes which occurred between 1773 and 1775; the first to John Jones, and finally to John Paul Jones.²⁴ What is certain is that by 1775 he had made his way to Philadelphia where he obtained a commission in the Continental Navy. Thanks to Joseph Hewes, a congressman from North Carolina, Jones received an appointment as the senior lieutenant in the new service, and helped in fitting the Continental Navy ship *Alfred*.²⁵

Almost exactly a month after he received his commission, *Alfred* and seven other ships sailed for the Bahamas where Jones helped to capture Nassau. En route back to America the squadron met HMS *Glasgow*, which though of inferior power laid bare the inexperience and disorganization of the officers and crewmen of the American ships. In the shakeup of officers that followed, Jones was offered and accepted command of the sloop *Providence*, an opportunity he had turned down previously. In his first independent cruise, Jones captured or sank seven brigs, a sloop, six schooners, and two more ships of unknown rig or size, and upon his return Congress rewarded him with promotion to command of *Alfred*.

²³ Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 6 March 1779, in JP, 550.

²⁴ Jones probably changed his name after the Tobago incident following advice from friends on the island to "retire incog to the continent of America..." Ibid.

²⁵ Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 31; James C. Bradford, "John Paul Jones," 19. Although it is inferred that Jones lost a substantial amount of capital having fled Tobago, another letter describing "an unprofitable suspense of twenty months ... when my hopes of relief were entirely cut off" also suggests he suffered further financial setbacks. Jones to Stuart Mawey, 4 May 1777, in JP, 124.

Despite his record, the Marine Committee delivered a blow to Jones's ego in the seniority list for captains accepted on October 10, 1776. Likely due to his lack of New England political connections and his previous refusal to command *Providence*, the committee placed him eighteenth on the list.²⁶ Jones accepted the captain's commission offered to him on October 10, and cruised off of Nova Scotia in October and November, capturing a number of prizes including the *Mellish*, a 350-ton armed transport carrying winter clothing to British troops in Quebec.²⁷

Promoted again, Jones received command of the twenty-gun, 318-ton sloop-of-war *Ranger* on June 18, 1777. At the end of the year he sailed to France to take command of the forty-gun *L'Indien*, then under construction in Holland.²⁸ Nothing ever came of the offer to command the large frigate, however, and tired of inactivity Jones sought orders from the American Commissioners in Paris which would allow him latitude in operating from France. He received such orders in early January 1778, allowing him to "proceed with [*Ranger*] in the manner you shall judge best, for distressing the Enemies of the United States, by sea, or otherwise...."²⁹ Jones used his knowledge of the area around the Irish Sea to raid Whitehaven, England, and to capture HMS *Drake* off Ireland in April. Although the cruise gained him the attention of British newspapers, and had a great psychological effect on the British population, any exuberance Jones may have experienced over his promising start in Europe was soon

²⁶ Journal of the Continental Congress, 10 October 1776, in NDAR, 6: 1200-01.

²⁷ Commission as Captain in Navy, 10 October 1776, in JP, 45.

²⁸ For appointment to *Ranger*, see Marine Committee to Jones, 18 June 1777, in JP, 142.

²⁹ American Commissioners to Jones, 16 January 1778, in JP, 234.

diminished by a quarrel with one of his lieutenants, Thomas Simpson, which lost him the command of *Ranger*.

Feeling dejected and dishonored, Jones went without a ship until December of 1778 when the French Minister of Marine arranged the purchase of an old 900-ton French East Indiaman, the *Duc de Duras*, for Jones to command.³⁰ Although the ship that had been built in 1766 was “found too old for necessary alterations, and fit only for extemporary service,” Jones renamed it *Bon Homme Richard* and prepared his squadron of American and French ships, including the frigate *Alliance* commanded by Pierre Landais, to cruise the North Sea in the hopes of taking the large Baltic convoy later in the season.³¹

Although Jones failed to capture the entire Baltic convoy, his cruise was nevertheless successful and ended in the capture of HMS *Serapis* in the Battle of Flamborough Head on September 23, 1779. In an effort to save the convoy under his protection, Richard Pearson, captain of *Serapis*, placed his ship in between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the convoy. The two ships engaged each other almost simultaneously, with Jones trying to board the English ship, and Pearson attempting to maintain distance and sink *Bon Homme Richard* with cannon fire. Towards the end of the battle Captain Pierre Landais of *Alliance*, an officer who had shown extreme insubordination since the cruise began, steered his ship into the fray, and fired into *Bon*

³⁰ Sartine to Jones, 4 February 1779, in JP, 514. For Jones's attitude towards his situation, see Jones to Jacques Le Ray de Chaumont, 16 September 1778, in JP, 406; Jones to Edward Bancroft, 11 November 1778, in JP, 454.

³¹ *Bon Homme Richard*'s battery consisted of 6 nine-pounders, 28 twelve-pounders as its main battery, and 6 old eighteen pounders. The other ships in his squadron included the frigates *Alliance* and *Pallas*, the brig *Vengeance*, the cutter *Le Cerf*, and the privateer ships *Monsieur* and *Granville*. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 187, 191, 198.

Homme Richard multiple times.³² At one point in the battle Pearson is said to have yelled across to Jones asking if his ship had struck, to which Jones is attributed the immortal reply, “I have not yet begun to fight.”³³ The action lasted over three hours at extremely close range, with both ships taking horrific amounts of damage and over 400 sailors killed or wounded between them. *Serapis* eventually struck, but the damage to *Bon Homme Richard* was so severe that it sank on the way to Texel.³⁴

The well-fought action against *Serapis*, the pinnacle of Jones’s career, gave the Continental Navy a much-needed victory during a year of overwhelming losses. Jones commanded other ships until the end of the war, including the only line-of-battle ship in the Continental Navy, *America*, before it was gifted to the French, but the majority of his time was spent on shore in Europe visiting the king's court, petitioning for prize money owed him and his crew, or in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, fitting out *America*. Like Barney, he failed in business ventures after the war and personal restlessness combined with financial strain caused by unpaid prize money necessitated employment.³⁵

Jones wrote a memoir of his service for Louis XVI in a non-subtle bid for position as a flag officer in the French Navy, but instead accepted a position as a rear admiral in the Russian Navy in command of the Black Sea squadron.³⁶ He received the Order of Saint Anne for his part in the Battle of Liman, but was ousted from the Navy in

³² It is highly probable given Landais’s conduct during the rest of the cruise that he fired into Jones’s ship on purpose.

³³ Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 230.

³⁴ For a more thorough description of the battle, see John E. Walsh, *Night on Fire: The First Complete Account of John Paul Jones’s Greatest Battle* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).

³⁵ Unlike Barney, Jones merely invested in commercial enterprise, instead of participating himself.

³⁶ Congress also petitioned Louis XVI for a ship on Jones’s behalf. Congress to Louis XVI, 16 October 1787, in JP, 2083. For Jones’s commission, see Catherine II Order Concerning Commission of Jones, 15 February 1788, in JP, 2016.

October 1788, after coming into conflict with the Prince Charles De Nassau Siegen and Prince Potemkin. Accused of raping a ten year old in 1789, Jones left Russia and eventually moved to Paris in 1790.³⁷ There he led a “meager social life” for the next two years—Paris had changed and was no longer the Paris Jones loved and left behind in the 1780s—and his attempts to regain favor in Russia by offering Catherine military plans were ignored.³⁸ Although Jones received an appointment as the American Consul in Algeria on July 18, 1792, he died before receiving the news.

Hector McNeill

Born to a Protestant family in Northern Ireland on October 10, 1728, Hector McNeill moved to Boston in 1737 with parents. He went to sea young, and becoming a ship's master in his early twenties before leasing his schooner to the British for use as a troop transport during the French and Indian War. McNeill was taken prisoner in 1755 by Indian allies of the French, and after being exchanged he returned to merchant activities for a decade until the outbreak of the Revolution, when he joined the force

³⁷ Jones to Potemkin, 13 April 1789, in JP, 1837; Statement of Katerina Stepanova against Jones, 1 April 1789, in JP, 1999.

³⁸ Catherine declared in a letter she had “nothing more to say of Paul Jones. Catherine II to Baron Grimm Bourbon le Bair, 1 September, 1791, as quoted in DeKoven, 398.

commanded by General Benedict Arnold that invaded Canada in 1775, and retreated to New York the following spring.³⁹

Connections with John Hancock and Thomas Cushing, along with his military service with Arnold, likely accounted for McNeill's appointment as captain of the new Continental frigate *Boston* on June 15, 1776. The New England provincialism that dominated Congress probably also influenced McNeill's placement of third on the October 10, 1776, seniority list for Continental captains, with only James Nicholson and John Manley as his seniors.⁴⁰

Like most Continental ships, *Boston* suffered delays in putting to sea due to cannon and crew shortages. When McNeill finally sailed in May 1777, he did so alongside John Manley who commanded *Hancock*. Manley and McNeill shared an uneasy relationship, but did succeed in capturing the British frigate *Fox* in June. Buoyed by their success, the small squadron stayed at sea in an effort to capture additional British ships.

The decision to continue cruising instead of returning to port with their prize proved costly. When the American ships confronted a British squadron composed of the frigates *Rainbow* and *Flora* and the brig *Victor*, Manley mistook *Rainbow* for a ship-of-the-line and the three American vessels struck out in different directions to avoid engagement. *Flora* pursued and captured *Fox*, and *Rainbow* overtook *Hancock* after a

³⁹ McManemin, *Captains*, 300; Morgan, *Captains to the Northward*, 67. An autobiographical sketch of McNeill's actions during the French and Indian War, written in 1773, is included in Gardner W. Allen, *Captain Hector McNeill*, 10-27.

⁴⁰Journal of the Continental Congress, 10 October 1776, in NDAR, 6: 1200-01. Esek Hopkins was not included on the captains list. For McNeill's appointment to *Boston* see Journal of the Continental Congress, 15 June 1775, in NDAR, 5: 549.

39 hour pursuit. McNeill was able to reach the Sheepscott River, and sneaked out of the inlet on August 1 to continue home. In doing so he saved one of the Continental Navy's new frigates, but his actions during the engagement were heavily criticized by congressional members and the public upon his return to Boston.⁴¹

Accused of abandoning his superior officer when confronted by the enemy, and suffering from problems with his own officers, McNeill's reputation was severely damaged after the cruise with *Hancock*. As a result, the Eastern Navy Board suspended him on November 12, 1777, and gave command of *Boston* to Samuel Tucker. The same court martial in June 1778 that exonerated Manley for the loss of *Hancock* also dismissed McNeill from service.⁴²

Although absolved of official blame for *Hancock's* capture on January 15, 1779, McNeill did not receive another Continental command. In the absence of an official appointment he accepted command of the privateer *Pallas* in 1780, and became the primary owner and commander of *Adventure* in November of the same year. McNeill returned to merchant ventures after the war, though he met with little success before his death on Christmas Eve, 1785.⁴³

⁴¹ James Warren to John Adams, 7 September 1777, in NDAR, 9: 891. Also see Morgan, *Captains to the Northward*, 90-91.

⁴² McManemin, *Captains*, 311.

⁴³ For some brief mention of McNeill's financial circumstances at the time of his death, see Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 10.

Lambert Wickes

Very little is known about Lambert Wickes's life before he received an appointment in the Continental Navy. He was born around 1742 to a distinguished Maryland family that traced its roots to Major Joseph Wickes, one of the earliest settlers on the Eastern Shore. Like many young men who grew up on the coast, Lambert Wickes joined the merchant marine in Philadelphia, and as early as 1774 he entered into a trading partnership with James Ringgold. Men involved in the merchant community also knew Wickes as an early supporter of American independence, the most important of whom was Robert Morris, the Continental Congress's future Agent of the Marine and Superintendent of Finance. Appointed a captain in the Continental Navy in the spring of 1776, Wickes took command of the 18-gun brig *Reprisal*.⁴⁴

On June 16, 1776, Congress ordered Wickes to take William Bingham to the French island of Martinique in the West Indies.⁴⁵ Bingham's mission included the purchase of munitions for the Continental Army and delivery of a letter to the governor meant to assess French support for America.⁴⁶ En route, Wickes was to protect a group of merchant vessels as they attempted to evade the British blockade of Delaware Bay.⁴⁷

On June 28, Wickes in *Reprisal*, John Barry in *Lexington*, and several merchant ships

⁴⁴ Bolander assigns two fewer guns to *Reprisal*'s main battery, but letters referenced by Clark make 18 the more likely number. Louis H. Bolander, "A Forgotten Hero of the Revolution," *Americana Illustrated* 22:2, 119-128 (April, 1928): 119; William B. Clark, *Lambert Wickes*, 10-13.

⁴⁵ Though no copy of the orders exists, Wickes acknowledged his orders in Wickes to the Committee of Secret Correspondence of the Continental Congress, 16 June 1776, in NDAR, 5: 569. For the Marine Committee's instructions to Wickes to retrieve the original orders from Captain William Hallock, see Marine Committee of the Continental Congress to Wickes, 10 June 1776, in NDAR, 5: 453-54.

⁴⁶ Committee of Secret Correspondence of the Continental Congress to William Bingham, 3 June 1776, *Ibid.*, 360. Bingham's original orders told him to report to *Hornet*, but it leaked too badly for a sea voyage.

⁴⁷ McManemin, *Captains*, 499.

weighed anchor, meeting the brig *Nancy* inbound from the West Indies as the Continental ships sailed southward. With six British pursuers closing in on the brig, its captain purposely ran his ship aground in an attempt to save its cargo from capture. Determined to assist in salvaging what they could, Captains Wickes and Barry sent men to the floundering vessel who offloaded a portion of *Nancy's* cargo, including 62 firelocks, 260 barrels of powder, and some dried goods, before setting a charge which destroyed the ship and killed upwards of 30 British sailors when they tried to board. The avoidance of total loss was bittersweet for Wickes, however, as a cannonball killed his brother Richard Wickes in the last minutes of the engagement.⁴⁸

Wickes finally left Delaware Bay on July 3, managing to capture two British merchant ships, the *Peter* and the *Friendship*, on his way to Martinique. Once arrived, he caused Captain John Chapman of the British sloop *Shark* some anxiety over neutral port laws after Wickes evaded pursuit by entering the harbor under the protection of French coastal guns. Wickes's completion of his mission both provided an important service to the United States by delivering Bingham safely, and proved himself a competent fighting captain, leading Congress to entrust him with transporting Benjamin Franklin to Nantes, France, to serve as an American Commissioner in Europe. Since "Wickes [had] already done honor in Action to the American Flagg," he received further orders to cruise for enemy vessels as the first Continental Navy ship in European waters.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ A colorful description of *Nancy's* explosion is provided: "The water was covered with heads, legs, arms, entrails, & c." Extract of a Letter From Philadelphia, 6 July 1776, in NDAR, 4: 952. For a detailed secondary account, see Tim McGrath, *John Barry*, 90-96.

⁴⁹ For details on delivering Franklin to Nantes, and the quote regarding Wickes's prior service, see Committee of Secret Correspondence to the American Commissioners in France, 24 October 1776, in NDAR, 6: 1405-07.

Wickes undertook multiple successful cruises in Europe, including one to the Irish Sea in the middle of June 1777, accompanied by the American ships *Lexington* and *Dolphin*, that resulted in the capture or sinking of eighteen ships in three days.⁵⁰ Following his initial operations, he refitted in French ports where he sold his prizes and their cargos through local merchants—he received especially amicable treatment in St. Malo—but reports of his activities and French complicity in his dealings soon spurred the British into action. Amid the difficulties and growing tensions between the French and British over his presence, Wickes wrote to the American Commissioners in late February expressing his desire to return to America: "As there is So many Difficulties Attending our Cruizing on the Coast of Europe I hope you Think it Best to order me Home as Soon As possible.... I have had much trouble hear but Am in hopes it is Now At an End."⁵¹

In early September, Wickes received the orders he sought and sailed for America.⁵² Unfortunately, *Reprisal* never made it to the United States as it foundered off the coast of Newfoundland, taking the entire crew save the ship's cook to their deaths. The loss of Captain Wickes deprived the Continental Navy of an experienced mariner, and in the words of Benjamin Franklin, "a gallant Officer and a very worthy man" whose death was "extreamly [sic] to be lamented."⁵³

⁵⁰ News From Whitehaven, June 1777, in NDAR, 9: 427-29.

⁵¹ Wickes to American Commissioners, 28 February 1777, in Leonard W. Labaree, Barbara Oberg, and William B. Willcox, eds., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 39 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-2008), 23: 403. Hereafter BFP. For an example of growing British pressure, see Stormont to Weymouth, 20 August 1777, in NDAR, 9: 579-82.

⁵² American Commissioners in France to Wickes, 9 September 1777, in NDAR, 9: 636-37.

⁵³ The American Commissioners to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1777, in BFP, 25: 210.

John Barry

The third foreign-born captain, John Barry, grew up on the coast of Wexford County, Ireland, after his birth in 1745. Raised as a Roman Catholic, he attended a government charter school until the age of nine when he became a cabin boy on his uncle's merchant ship. At fifteen years old, Barry made his way to Philadelphia and spent the next six years plying the West Indies trade. He took command of Edward Denny's 60-ton schooner, the *Barbadoes*, in 1766, and made nine round trips to Barbados trading North American foodstuffs for West Indian sugar.⁵⁴

Barry spent the remaining years leading up to the American Revolution commanding various other merchant vessels, and as early as 1769 became a member of the Society for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Masters of Ships.⁵⁵ At the outset of the Revolution, Barry commanded the 200-ton *Black Prince*, owned by Willing, Morris & Co., and oversaw its conversion to a warship when the Continental Congress purchased the ship and renamed it *Alfred*.⁵⁶ Six months later, on March 14, 1776, he received command of *Lexington*, a 16-gun brig, and orders to cruise from Sandy Hook to the Capes of Virginia. While putting to sea he avoided an encounter with the British frigate

⁵⁴ McGrath, *John Barry*, 19-21.

⁵⁵ Joseph Gurn, *Commodore John Barry*, 4. The Society had both fraternal and charitable purposes, and was instrumental in maintaining the 7 £ wage paid to merchant captains in Philadelphia during the Seven Years' War. See Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 1979), 208.

⁵⁶ Robert Morris owned the largest share of the company. McManemin, *Captains*, 21.

Roebuck in the Delaware River, and on April 7 engaged *Edward*, a sloop tender of HMS *Liverpool*. The battle lasted two hours before Barry succeeded in taking *Edward*.⁵⁷

When Congress authorized construction of thirteen new frigates, Barry received command of *Effingham*. Unable to procure cannon to arm the vessel, he spent the next year defending the Delaware River as a barge captain, and took part in the sinking of *Nancy* with Captain Wickes.⁵⁸ On July 4, 1778, Captain Thomas Thompson's suspension resulted in Barry's appointment as captain of *Raleigh*, 32. The command did not last long, however, as the British ships *Experiment*, 50, and *Unicorn*, 22, took *Raleigh* on September 28 after a day-long chase. Barry managed to save the majority of his crew by disembarking them to a nearby island, and although Congress exonerated him for the loss he did not immediately receive another command in the navy and thus spent the next two years as a privateer.⁵⁹

Finally, near the end of 1779, Congress named him commander of the 74-gun *America*, then under construction in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Frustrated by delays in its construction, Barry returned to private service as captain of the 14-gun brig *America* until September 5, 1780, when he was given command of the 910-ton Continental frigate *Alliance*, 36.⁶⁰ Over the next four years Barry made multiple round trips to France delivering people, goods, and official messages.⁶¹ The most well-known

⁵⁷ Captain John Barry to the Continental Marine Committee, April 7 1775, in NDAR, 4: 702.

⁵⁸ *Effingham* was promised to Barry as seventh on the captain's list of October 10, 1776. Journal of the Continental Congress, 10 October 1776, in NDAR, 6:1200-01; McGrath, *John Barry*, 140-43.

⁵⁹ McManemin, *Captains*, 42.

⁶⁰ Landais, the previous captain, was under court-martial for his conduct during the return trip to America following his cruise with Jones.

⁶¹ Multiple ships were captured on each cruise, but amount to minor successes compared to cruises by Wickes and Jones.

of his encounters while commanding *Alliance* took place on May 28, 1781, when Barry defeated the British ships *Atlanta* and *Trespassy*.⁶² His final voyage in the service of the Continental Navy took him to the West Indies, and while escorting the *Duc de Lauzun* to America Barry successfully captured HMS *Sybil* in the last naval battle of the Revolution.

The Continental Navy's dissolution in 1785 found Barry the last Continental Navy officer on active duty. He became senior captain in command of the frigate *United States* after the U.S. Navy's establishment in 1794, and captured seven French ships during the Quasi-War. Having provided services which eventually earned him the unofficial title "Father of the Navy," John Barry died due to complications with asthma on September 13, 1803.

The varied familial backgrounds and geographic origins of the six captains greatly influenced their career arcs and motivations for service. Given the New England domination of the early Marine Committee, it is likely that Hopkins's Rhode Island background, along with the fact that his brother served on the committee, helped him secure appointment as commander-in-chief of the new navy when it was formed. Personal connections Lambert Wickes and John Barry formed during their years in the merchant community, especially their acquaintance with Robert Morris, probably also helped them secure a captaincy in the navy. Prewar networks also aided Jones, and his initial appointment as the senior lieutenant in the Continental Navy was undoubtedly influenced by his connection to Marine Committee member and congressional

⁶² Barry was wounded in the shoulder by grapeshot during the encounter.

representative from North Carolina, Joseph Hewes, who had connections to Jones through the Freemasons. That Hopkins and Wickes came from locally prominent households with previous records of public service may have also inclined them to seek public employment to continue their family legacies.

While a captain's family and origin may have aided him in obtaining a commission, there is little evidence to suggest that the three foreign-born captains' origins played a negative role in their careers. McNeill secured the third spot on the captain's list of 1776 thanks to his connections with John Hancock and Thomas Cushing, and his previous combat experience, and Barry the seventh. Although Jones placed much farther down the list, his spot at eighteen was more likely due to his previous refusal of commands and lack of personal connections, rather than anti-Scottish sentiments. Family origin did play a part in McNeill's decision to serve, however, and his Protestant upbringing undoubtedly acted as his primary impetus for enlistment.

Furthermore, the captains' prewar activities in the West Indies trade helped inform their understanding of duty. New England mariners often went to sea between fifteen and eighteen, and those skilled enough for promotion often received command of a vessel by their early twenties.⁶³ Though not all from New England, many of the six captains went to sea young: Barry and Barney at ages nine and twelve, Jones at 21, Wickes and McNeill probably in their teens. Hopkins began his seagoing career in his early twenties, but similarly became master of a vessel within a few short years. The men's experiences at sea provided them with vocational training, and working their way

⁶³ Daniel Vickers, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 106, 114.

up the ranks on merchant ships helped develop their sense of loyalty both upwards and downwards.

Those notions of loyalty came into conflict with the professionalization of the military happening around the turn of the century, and along with their motivations for service helps to account for the disparate conduct each captain displayed in the Continental Navy. Indeed, each captain experienced a vastly different career arc. Hopkins and McNeill achieved high appointments early in the war, but were forcibly removed from the service due to perceived misconduct. Wickes ranked significantly lower than Hopkins or McNeill on the 1776 captain's list, but he achieved a great deal during the war and served as the first Continental captain overseas before his death. Due to financial difficulties caused by the navy's lack of ships, Barney and Barry were forced during different points in their careers to embrace private service. Although both were offered positions in the U.S. Navy when it was established a decade after the Revolution ended and the Continental Navy was disbanded, Barney opted to pursue a career in the French Navy for egotistical reasons. Financial necessity and the want of a ship also influenced Jones to accept employment in the Russian Navy after the war, though he faithfully served the Continental Navy during the Revolution even in times of financial distress. Those incidents during their diverse careers, among others, suggest that decisions to join the navy and actions while in command were influenced by the complex process of professionalization, as well as the motivational factors of patriotism, a desire for fame and professional advancement, and financial stability.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTS OF DUTY

The conflict between understandings of professional duty, and personal conceptions of a captain's loyalty upwards and downwards, heavily influenced each captain's conduct and career arc in the Continental Navy. Professional duty, the formation of which was an ongoing process, required the maintenance of naval hierarchy and deference to one's superiors; orders were meant to be obeyed whether one agreed with them or not, and criticisms of superior officers were seen as gross misconduct. Additionally, captains had an obligation to promote the wellbeing of other officers and sailors, and to conduct themselves in a professional manner towards captured enemy combatants. While all six captains expected the men around them to adhere to the above principles, personal observance was situational. Only some of the captains always followed their sailing orders or other instructions, and all but Lambert Wickes had particularly vocal disagreements with other officers and their superiors. Furthermore, in certain instances John Paul Jones's treatment of crewmembers did not match his conception of loyalty downwards even as he made rigorous efforts to secure the release of American prisoners in Britain. Regardless of his own conduct, however, each captain fully expected professionalism from the sailors and officers around him.

Whereas other captains were largely quiet concerning general attributes that were valuable in officers, Jones wrote prolifically about the qualities he felt an officer should possess. In his opinion, "a Captain of the Navy [should] be a man of Strong and well

connected Sense with a tolerable education, a gentleman as well as a Seaman both in Theory and Practice."¹ Furthermore, he believed naval officers "ought to be as far superior to the Abilities of Officers in the army" given the "greater number of [complicated] cases, than can ... possibly happen on the land."² Officers also had a duty to create enthusiasm for a captain's orders, and to recognize a plan's benefit beyond financial gain. The officers of *Ariel* received high praise from Jones on this final point, as their conduct demonstrated "the great advantage of having several good officers" who encouraged sailors to do their duty.³

Many of the men employed in the Continental Navy were deficient in those standards by Jones's estimation, and the navy made "no very brilliant or promising beginning " by 1778.⁴ Probably influenced by his dissatisfying placement on the October 10, 1776, seniority list, Jones could not "but lament that no little delicacy hath been Observed in the appointment, and promotion of Officers, in the Sea Service, many of whom are not only grossly illeterate [sic], but want even the Capacity of commanding Merchant Vessells [sic]." His opinion of officers aboard *Ranger* during the 1778 raid on Whitehaven, who "persuaded [the crew] that they had the right to judge whether a measure that was proposed to them was good or bad," reflected Jones's disappointment.

¹ Jones to Joseph Hewes, 19 May 1776, in JP, 23.

² Jones to Robert Morris, 28 July 1777, in JP, 167.

³ John Paul Jones, *John Paul Jones' Memoir of the American Revolution, Presented to King Louis XVI of France*, trans. and ed. by Gerard W. Gawalt (Washington: Library of Congress, 1979), 55.

⁴ Jones to McNeill, 17 November 1778, in JP, 464.

Not only did *Ranger's* officers conduct themselves contrary to their duty, but the sailors exceeded the role afforded to their place in the hierarchy.⁵

Jones exhibited his belief that sailors and officers had a duty to obey orders from their superiors during other points in his career as well. Early on, the Mungo Maxwell and Tobago incident demonstrated Jones did not take dereliction of duty lightly, and he resolutely dealt with men who he determined lacked discipline, or who encouraged insubordination. Later, during his command of *Ranger* when Jones accused Thomas Simpson of encouraging mutinous attitudes and of disobeying direct orders while acting as prize officer aboard *Drake*, he suspended Simpson and ordered him placed under arrest.⁶ Simpson obtained release after 77 members of the crew signed a petition to the American Commissioner, but Jones continued his efforts against Simpson and called for a court-martial. When Captain Abraham Whipple refused to serve on the court martial panel, arguing that Jones had released Simpson from his parole in previous correspondence, Jones called the decision a denial of “justice to his own honor and to that of the service.”⁷

Jones pursued satisfaction for another case of insubordination, perhaps the most severe of the entire war, after his cruise on *Bon Homme Richard* in 1779. Pierre Landais, commander of the 28-gun frigate, *Alliance*, became defiant early in the voyage: he “behaved towards [Jones] with great disrespect,” and told Jones that he would chase enemy ships “when and where he thought proper, and in every other matter that

⁵ Jones, *Memoir*, 17. Also see Jones to William Carmichael, 27 May 1778, in JP, 311. Jones's full 11-page report on the Whitehaven mission is in Jones to American Commissioners, 27 May 1778, in JP, 310.

⁶ Jones to Thomas Simpson, 7 May 1778, in JP, 684.

⁷ Abraham Whipple to Jones, 15 August 1778, in JP, 374. Quote about justice from Jones to Abraham Whipple, 19 August 1778, in JP, 377.

concerned the Service," thereby challenging Jones's authority as the squadron commander. On August 25, Landais took it upon himself to leave the squadron and cruise alone, and did not rendezvous with Jones until September 1 off the northwest coast of Scotland. Having rejoined the squadron, Landais continued to "[pretend] that he [was] authorized to act independent of [Jones's] command," and again abandoned the squadron to cruise on his own until the middle of September, just two days before the action with *Serapis*. In an effort to take the glory of *Serapis's* capture for himself, and probably influenced by his disdain for Jones, Landais fired into *Richard* once during an early part of the engagement, then proceeded to sail around lackadaisically until returning and firing another broadside into *Richard's* port quarter, and a third into its forecastle.⁸ Various crewmembers signed a complete list of Landais's infractions during the cruise, 25 in all, on Jones's behalf, but Landais escaped formal charges for his misconduct during the engagement with *Serapis*.⁹

Acting as commander-in-chief of the Continental Navy, Esek Hopkins also valued naval hierarchy, though he provided fewer examples of his thoughts on the subject than did other Continental captains. One illustration that does survive, however, is Hopkins's recommendation of Captain Robert Wiles, who he said "behaved like a good Officer has follow'd my Orders and been beneficial to the squadron."¹⁰ Obedience to orders, and therefore the maintenance of hierarchy, was important enough to Hopkins

⁸ Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 3 October 1779, in JP, 749.

⁹ To Officers of the Squadron, 30 October 1779, in JP, 831. The document was drawn up in response to Franklin's request for evidence of Landais's behavior and actions. Landais was later released from service in 1781 due to misconduct during his return voyage to America. For more information see Charles O. Paullin, "Admiral Pierre Landais," *Catholic Historical Review* 17:3 (Oct. 1931): 296-307.

¹⁰ Esek Hopkins to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, 28 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 1295.

to warrant inclusion in his recommendation, and tied into his ideas of the characteristics necessary in a good officer.

Additionally, Hopkins believed that regardless of rank, each man had a duty to perform to the best of his ability. To this end, Hopkins's recommendation also highlighted Wiles's beneficial contribution to the squadron. An officer's responsibilities consisted of more than simply following orders; each had a duty to perform to his utmost. Hopkins passed favorable judgment on himself in this regard even after his suspension, writing that "it gives me great Satisfaction that in my own Judgement I have done everything in my power ... for the Service of my Country."

Though more immediately concerned with the conduct of fellow seamen, Continental captains were also critical of the neglect shown by counterparts on land. The merchant community and agents who handled prize money were frequently accused of hindering the navy's operations, and of neglecting their own duty towards the cause of liberty. Hector McNeill became quickly disillusioned with the "Sleepy Agents, disheartened tradesmen and distress'd seamen who frequent the Streets of Boston," and referred to supply agents as "drones in the Common wealth."¹¹ Hopkins also encountered the strength of private interest in his home state when he petitioned for assistance in manning Continental vessels, though his own lack of influence likely perturbed him more than the existence of private interest itself.¹²

¹¹ McNeill to the Continental Marine Committee, in NDAR, 8: 1007-09; McNeill to John Bradford, 13 March 1777, *ibid.*, 96.

¹² Esek Hopkins to the Continental Marine Committee, 2 November 1776, in NDAR, 7: 17. The issue of Hopkins's influence and provincialism is addressed in chapter 4.

While captains clearly expected deference from their subordinates and respectful treatment by their superiors, their own levels of cooperation with men in superior positions did not always meet the same standard. Although naval commanders were often expected to act with some degree of independence while at sea, especially given communication lag during this period, Barney's actions directly conflicted with his sailing orders on various occasions, and Hopkins exercised an extraordinarily liberal interpretation of his orders to protect the Southern coast. Furthermore, excluding Wickes, captains did not always follow hierarchy regarding respect for one's superiors. Captains were often outspoken about the shortcomings they perceived in others, and were vocal about personal disputes.

During his 1777 Congressional trial, multiple people accused Hopkins of speaking poorly of Congress. According to Lieutenant James Sellers of *Warren*, Hopkins called Congress "a pack of damned fools," and further commented, "If I [Hopkins] should follow their directions, the whol [sic] country would be ruined...." Similar accusations were brought by James Brewer and John Truman, who testified that Hopkins referred to Congress as "a pack of ignorant lawyers clerks who knew nothing at all." Officers on *Warren* also indicted Hopkins for speaking "publicly [sic] in the most profane and disrespectful manner" about the Congress, and calling its members "wholly unacquainted with mankind, and perfectly acquainted with their business, and if their measures were complied with the country would be undone."¹³

¹³ Statement of James Sellers, Second Lieutenant of the Continental Frigate *Warren*, 23 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1265; Statement of the Gunner, Carpenter, and a Midshipman of the Continental Frigate *Warren*, 24 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1276; Officers of the Continental Frigate *Warren* to Robert Trent Paine, 11 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1166-68.

In addition to publicly criticizing his superiors, Hopkins took wide liberty with his orders in 1776, which provides the most extreme example of any of the six officers disregarding his sailing orders. Ordered to defend the Southern coastline, and to then disrupt British activity off of Rhode Island, Hopkins instead took his squadron to the Bahamas to raid Nassau for military supplies. Although some of his stated reasons for bypassing his ordered objectives were understandable, as the following chapter will detail, they were likely not his primary motivation.

Hopkins's return from Nassau also provides an example of his dereliction of duty. Commenting on the sailors in his squadron who were involved in the battle with *Glasgow*, he said they "had got too much liquor ... to be fit for duty."¹⁴ Although the sailors undoubtedly neglected their duty, Hopkins failed in his instructed duty as commander-in-chief to keep his squadron in order. His ineptitude as a commander and organizer were part of the reason Hopkins received orders to appear before Congress in June 1776 to explain why the Marine Board's efforts to "put Continental Ships upon a respectable Footing ... have been frustrated and neglected in a manner unaccountable to them...."¹⁵ While it could be argued that Hopkins also neglected his duty to perform to the utmost of his abilities, William M. Fowler Jr. suggests Hopkins simply did not possess the qualities demanded for the position he held.¹⁶

Like Hopkins, Joshua Barney also disobeyed orders and disrespected his superiors on multiple occasions. He temporarily lost control of his emotions in reaction

¹⁴ Esek Hopkins to John Hancock, 9 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 735.

¹⁵ John Hancock to Esek Hopkins, 14 June 1776, in NDAR, 5: 528.

¹⁶ William M. Fowler Jr., "Esek Hopkins," 12-13.

to Captain William Stone's failure to engage one of *Roebuck's* tenders, *Maria*, during its encounter with *Hornet* in April 1776. Although "the force of the sloop [*Hornet*] was so far superior to that of the *Roebuck's* tender," when given the opportunity to deliver a point blank broadside Stone ordered Barney "not to fire, as he had 'no inclination for shedding blood!'"¹⁷ The order was so contrary, as he thought, to every principle of duty and honor, that Barney flung his still-burning match-stick at the captain's head. Many on board witnessed this severe breach of etiquette towards Barney's superior. Perhaps due to embarrassment, Stone abandoned the ship immediately after arriving in Philadelphia and never brought charges against Barney.

Captain James Nicholson's actions during the night of March 31, 1778, also caused Barney to violate his professional duty as an inferior officer. The frigate *Virginia* ran aground in an attempt to bypass a British squadron, but rather than fight, or at the very least scuttle the ship so it could not be taken by the enemy, Nicholson "ran on deck, ordered the barge to be hoisted out, and without taking time even to secure his papers or private signals, left the frigate, and made good his escape to the shore."¹⁸ When Nicholson returned to his captured ship under a flag of truce to retrieve personal belongings which were left on board in his haste to escape, Barney released a tirade upon Nicholson in front of his captors; the outburst received no reply.¹⁹

While Barney felt obligated in some instances to abide by instructions, on one occasion stating "but orders must be obeyed" when justifying his reasons for putting to

¹⁷ Joshua Barney, quoted in Mary Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 32-33.

¹⁸ Joshua Barney, quoted in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 66.

¹⁹ A more detailed description of the encounter is in Hulbert Footner, *Sailor of Fortune*, 49-51.

sea during a gale, he often failed to comply with orders that implored him to refrain from unnecessary combat. He disobeyed one such order while in command of *General Washington*. Robert Morris instructed Barney to "on no account ... risk your ship or delay your voyage by chasing vessels, making prizes, or engaging, unless in the last necessity."²⁰ Disregarding his orders, Barney attacked a privateer brig of sixteen-guns in an attempt to take it as a prize, receiving damage to his mizenmast in the process.²¹ He also detoured briefly one night on his return trip to Philadelphia to fire on a group of loyalist refugee vessels anchored in the bay. In both instances Barney ignored the section of his orders which forbade him to risk his ship or engage the enemy unless absolutely necessary. Barney's "impulsive character" was so well known that Morris also implored Barney to "take care not to chase any vessel, but to avoid as much as possible everything which can either delay or endanger you" when assigned a mission to carry diplomatic papers to Europe.²²

Jones also recognized the importance of hierarchy, even going so far as to say the imposition of limitations on a captain's authority was necessary.²³ However, while he generally followed sailing orders, in one case Jones ignored instructions that curbed the financial resources available to him. Expenditures he incurred for outfitting *Ariel* in 1780 caused Benjamin Franklin particular distress after receiving a bill totaling nearly

²⁰ Robert Morris to Joshua Barney, 18 May 1782, as quoted in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 124-25. *General Washington* was the renamed *General Monk*, recently captured by Captain Barney.

²¹ Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 126.

²² Robert Morris to Joshua Barney, 7 October 1782, as quoted in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 134. Also see Louis A. Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 91. In this instance, Barney followed instructions and avoided combat.

²³ For Jones's comments on the importance of Congress restricting a captain's authority, including his own, see Jones to Buisson de Basseville, 14 July 1779, in JP, 684.

100,000 livres for *Ariel's* expenses, "having twice entreated you [Jones] for god Sake to consider my Circumstances, the Difficulties I had to provide for so many Expences [sic], and not take any thing but what was absolutely necessary...." In particular, Franklin criticized Jones's purchase of 6,000 livres worth of shot which he thought unnecessary, and over 20,000 livres worth of slops.²⁴

Other Continental captains likewise recognized the importance of maintaining naval hierarchy, but did not always follow instructions or keep criticisms of their superiors to themselves. McNeill was assigned to cruise with Captains John Manley and Thomas Thompson on October 23, 1776, even though "McNeil and Manly it is said like the Jews and Samaritans will have no connections or intercourse...."²⁵ Aware of how others perceived his relationship with Manley, McNeill wrote to Thompson that he "sett [sic] up a resolution to obey implicitly every one of his commands to the utmost of his power," and that he would follow Manley "as the Jackall does the Lyon [sic], without Grumbling except in my Gizard [sic]."²⁶

Although McNeill had previously resolved to follow Manley's orders without complaint, he wrote Manley a letter accusing him of almost causing their ships to collide, "[giving Manley] my mind freely on his misconduct."²⁷ McNeill did not reserve his comments for his close friends or Manley, however, and upon his return he submitted

²⁴ Benjamin Franklin to Jones, 1 November 1780, in JP, 1253. Jones was supposed to clear purchases with Franklin.

²⁵ Cruising Orders from Continental Marine Committee to John Manley, Hector McNeill and Thomas Thompson, 32 October 1776, in NDAR, 6: 1385. Commentary on the relationship between McNeill and Manley from James Warren to John Adams, 23 March 1777, in NDAR, 8: 184.

²⁶ McNeill to Captain Thomas Thompson, 21 July 1777, in NDAR, 9: 304-05.

²⁷ Journal of Hector McNeill, 26 June 1777, in NDAR, 9: 170; Journal of Hector McNeill, 27 June 1777, *ibid.*, 180.

a scathing letter to the Continental Marine Committee reporting Manley's actions. Providing the Marine Committee with his opinion, rather than solely operational commentary, McNeill stated that Manley was "unequall [sic] to the Command with which he has been intrusted [sic]— he being ignorant, Obstinate Overbearing and Tyranical [sic] beyond description...."²⁸

Like McNeill, Barry did not quietly suffer confrontational attitudes or poor decisions by his superiors even though he expected deference from his inferiors. The most demonstrative examples were Barry's disagreements with Francis Hopkinson involving the botched sinking of *Effingham*. Having lost Philadelphia in September 1777, George Washington recommended the scuttling of frigates *Effingham* and *Washington* at the end of October to avoid them falling into British hands. Hopkinson and Thomas Wharton followed Washington's advice, and ordered Barry and Captain Thomas Read to sink their vessels. When Barry confronted Hopkinson about the decision, Hopkinson patronizingly replied that he preferred "to take General Washington's opinion" over Barry's. Upset by the order itself, irritated by Hopkinson's demeanor, and further rankled that no one knowledgeable of ships had been involved in the decision, Barry defiantly told Hopkinson that he would only sink *Effingham* if Congress was consulted first.²⁹

In addition to holding an opposing view over whether the ship should have been sunk in the first place, Barry also rightfully blamed Hopkinson for the ineffectual

²⁸ McNeill to the Continental Marine Committee, 25 August 1777, *ibid.*, 804.

²⁹ Barry's full testimony of the *Effingham* debacle, including his recollection of dialogue, is in Captain John Barry to the Continental Congress, 10 January 1778, in NDAR, 11: 84-88

scuttling of the frigate. Unacquainted with the tide and the exacting procedure required to scuttle a vessel, Hopkinson's attempt at sinking *Effingham* resulted in the ship nearly capsizing, and coming to rest on its side in the Delaware River. The two men exchanged words during the operation to re-sink the vessel correctly, and Barry remarked to Hopkinson, "I don't value you anymore than my duty requires," and "had [you minded your duty] this ship would not be in its present condition."³⁰

Of the six captains, only Lambert Wickes strictly followed the professionalization of duty concerning orders and hierarchy; he never spoke ill of his superiors, and always endeavored to only act in accordance with instructions from his direct superiors.³¹ Wickes's penchant for adhering to the chain of command displayed itself early in the war during actions on the Delaware. Upon hearing that British ships were spotted at Port Penn, the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety sought permission from the Secret Committee of Congress to have Wickes supply boats and volunteers for the port's defense. When Captain Thomas Read approached Wickes for help, Wickes replied that "he received no orders and could not let any of his Men go without it, tho' wish'd at the same time to do it, and would Immediately on Receipt of orders." The Secret Committee's orders arrived later that morning, and Wickes complied with Read's request.³²

The effort Wickes expended to stay in the port of St. Malo after his successful cruise with *Dolphin* and *Lexington* also reflected his endeavor to only obey orders from

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ A brief mention of Wickes's compliance with commands was first made in William B. Clark, *Lambert Wickes*, 21.

³² Minutes of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, 7 May 1776, in NDAR, 4: 1493-94; Thomas Reed[sic] to the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, 7 May 1776, *ibid.*, 1445-46.

his superiors. Upon arrival, French authorities directed the American captains to leave port and return to America or risk sequestration.³³ However, having received no orders from the American Commissioners, Wickes and the other American captains attempted to stay in port by making the case that their ships required repairs to make the voyage. This was not altogether untrue: *Dolphin* possessed sailing qualities far below the other two American ships even in the best of shape, and at this point was “disabled in her mast,” and Wickes had sawed beams and thrown *Reprisal’s* guns overboard to escape the 74-gun *Burford* before sailing into St. Malo.³⁴ As the local Admiralty officers became more impatient and tried to enforce Louis XVI’s sequestration mandate, Wickes implored the American Commissioners for guidance:

Some new Demand is made almost every day derogatory to our honour [sic] as free and Independent States, which cannot be Reasonably Complied with on my Part, unless ordered by You ... I beg you will inform how far you think I may be justifiable in Complying with the orders of the Administration for my Governance....³⁵

Unable to delay any longer, and having finally received orders from the Commissioners to sail, Wickes departed for America after over a month of frustration and resistance on September 14, 1777.³⁶

In addition to the general maintenance of hierarchy, the six captains also believed officers owed a loyalty to their crews. Similar to their treatment of hierarchy, however, the ways and degree to which each captain fulfilled that duty varied. All were generally

³³ For reference to Louis XVI’s sequestration order, see Vergennes to Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, 16 July 1777, in NDAR 9: 501-02.

³⁴ Samuel Nicholson to Jonathon Williams, 27 June 1777, in NDAR, 9: 436. For commentary on *Dolphin’s* sailing qualities, see Wickes to the American Commissioners in France, 4 July 1777, in NDAR, 9: 465.

³⁵ Wickes to Commissioners, 15 August 1777, in NDAR, 9: 571.

³⁶ Orders to leave from American Commissioners in France to Wickes, 28 August 1777, in NDAR, 9: 610.

concerned about whether their crews received pay, and although keeping the crew happy benefitted the captain, their petitions were more likely to mention the crew's welfare rather than how desertion or mutiny could affect the service.

Each captain also noted the general good conduct of their crews after successful engagements, but only Wickes made unsolicited positive comments concerning specific individuals. For example, Wickes recommended Samuel Nicholson in January 1777, resulting in Nicholson's command of *Dolphin*.³⁷ Captain Henry Johnston of *Lexington* also received high praise from Wickes after their first cruise together, reporting "I had not the pleasure of knowing Captain Johnston before I could not give him a Character [sic] Sufficient to his Merit & Now beg leave to recommend him as a Very brave Active Officer & worthy of your Honours [sic] utmost Attention."³⁸ A further acquaintance, Captain John Green, also benefited from an endorsement by Wickes. Hearing of Green's unemployment, Wickes sent a message to the Commissioners requesting employment on Green's behalf, "as I am persuaded he will do every thing in his power to Serve the American cause & is Very Capible [sic] of Commanding either a Merchant man or Vessell [sic] of War." Thanks to Wickes, Green received an appointment on a Continental ship and served until the end of the war.³⁹

Men not eligible for a captaincy also received promotions thanks to Wickes. He recommended the promotion of Lieutenant John Elliott, commander of marines on *Reprisal*, to serve as captain of the marines on board a new 26-gun frigate under

³⁷ Wickes to the American Commissioners in France, 14 January 1777, in NDAR, 8: 525.

³⁸ Wickes to the American Commissioners in France, 28 June 1777, in NDAR, 9: 441.

³⁹ Wickes to American Commissioners in France, 22 August 1777, *ibid.*, 594; Clark, *Lambert Wickes*, 318.

construction in Nantes. Wickes thought Elliott "entitled to Preference [sic] to any other person, as has been in the Service from the Commencement of the Reprisal's being Army & behaved himself Very Well."⁴⁰

Whereas Wickes looked after his crews and fellow officers by helping their careers, Barney primarily concerned himself with his crews' morale and financial welfare. Captain Thomas Drysdale was a major influence on Barney in this respect. Even as Barney came to expect obedience from his own men, Drysdale's "conduct towards his brother-in-law (to use his own words) '[which] was always very severe and brutal,'" taught him the effect "tyranny and ill treatment" could have on a crew's morale.⁴¹ In return for willing subordination, Barney felt obligated to promote the wellbeing of his crew. Having brought the *Sidney* into port at Gibraltar during his first stint of command, Barney faced the dilemma of how to repair his ship. While not his only consideration, the welfare of his crew must have played a part in his decision to accept a sizeable advance of money to get the ship under way, instead of releasing the crewmen and perhaps leaving them stranded in a foreign port while he waited for further instructions.⁴² Consideration for his crew also probably played a part in undertaking the ill-advised engagement involving *General Washington* in 1782. As Louis Norton points out, "Barney felt that the captain of a privateer had a responsibility to his crew, who could make their fortunes by capturing prizes, not delivering messages."⁴³ Barney's

⁴⁰ Wickes to American Commissioners in France, 15 August 1777, in NDAR, 9: 571.

⁴¹ Quoted from Joshua Barney, in Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 10-11.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 14. It would be remiss not to consider Barney's retention of his original, loyal crew, as also possessing some aspect of selfish motive. If he dismissed them he may have gotten stuck with a new, unproven crew, or not have been able to recruit a new crew at all considering his age.

⁴³ Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 87.

personal financial success also depended on capturing ships however, so his actions should not be taken as wholly unselfish.

Jones also sought to aid his crewmembers by frequently petitioning commissioners and agents for prize money due to his men. In trying to reform the Continental prize money system, he commented in 1777 that "those poor fellows who have faithfully Served the term of their enlistment are detered [sic] from re-Entering ... so that it makes my heart Bleed to see them half Naked at this Severe Season."⁴⁴ Jones wrote often during his time in Europe concerning prize money as well, usually in similar language to the aforementioned letter. For instance, in 1780 he lamented that the "poor men, who so bravely served under my Command have not yet received a Sol ... either for Wages or Prizes."⁴⁵

Although surely interested in his own share of the prize monies and in correcting the recruitment difficulties that plagued the Continental Navy, it is clear Jones was also concerned with the money for his crews' sakes. In two instances Jones even paid the wages due to the men of *Alfred* and *Providence* out of his own pocket.⁴⁶ In exchange for making Jones their agent to collect prize monies on their behalf, Jones agreed to pay the crews himself. Wary of corruption in the system, however, some crewmembers misunderstood Jones's proposition and complained to Esek Hopkins. Writing on March 8, 1777, to the Marine Committee, Esek Hopkins referenced their protests, saying, "You also have a copy ... of several complaints which I have from time to time received

⁴⁴ Jones to Robert Morris, 16 January 1777, in JP, 86.

⁴⁵ Jones to Baudouin, 19 July 1780, in JP, 1161.

⁴⁶ Jones, *John Paul Jones' Memoir*, 10.

against Captn. Jones, and I have had a great number from the common people for his refusing to pay their Wages without they would make him their agent.”⁴⁷ Though misinterpreted, Jones's efforts were examples of his concern for loyal crews, and his efforts to encourage re-enlistment in the navy by ensuring prompt payment.

Captain McNeill did not go as far as Jones in trying to reform the prize money or wage systems, but still lobbied on behalf of his crew after he returned from his cruise that resulted in the capture, and subsequent loss, of the British frigate *Fox*. Not only did he request money for crew wages, but he also questioned what "provision [should] be made for the Familys [sic] of the Men we have Lost in the *Fox*, [and how] the relatives of the few Slain [could] apply for their Bountys [sic].”⁴⁸

A captain's loyalty to fellow sailors and officers also extended to prisoners. Each captain treated enemy prisoners well, and concerned themselves with the condition of American prisoners in British hands. Jones in particular dedicated himself to retrieving American prisoners overseas. In 1778, Jones eagerly sought to arrange an exchange of 200 prisoners he had taken during his cruise when he captured *Drake* for American seamen held in England. Upon receiving word from French naval commander Comte D'Orvilliers that the prisoners might be given up without an exchange, Jones resolved to try and send the prisoners straight to America, as he was "so fully ... convinced of the bad policy of releasing prisoners, especially Seamen, without an exchange that I am determined never to do it while there remains an alternative....”⁴⁹ Jones also held

⁴⁷ Esek Hopkins to the Continental Marine Committee, 8 March 1777, in NDAR, 8: 56.

⁴⁸ McNeill to the Continental Navy Board of the Eastern Department, 4 September 1777, in NDAR, 9: 873.

⁴⁹ Jones to American Commissioners, 9 May 1778, in JP, 288. The prisoners were not sent to America.

Captain Richard Pearson and his crew prisoners after the engagement with *Serapis* in the hopes of exchanging the British captain and his men for Captain Gustavus Conyngham and "an Equal number and denomination of Americans."⁵⁰

Sympathizing with "the horrors of hopeless captivity when the brave are overpowered and made prisoners of War," Jones devised a plan to aid American prisoners in 1778 while he was in command of *Ranger*. He intended to capture Lord Selkirk and use him to affect a prisoner exchange with Britain for captured American seamen, but Lord Selkirk's absence from his home on April 23 when Jones landed on St. Mary's Isle foiled the plan, and the only thing "captured" from the Selkirk manor was the family silver.⁵¹ Hearing of the Countess of Selkirk's admirable behavior during the event, Jones acted the gentleman and later returned the loot at his own expense.

Wickes also exerted efforts to benefit captured American sailors. Following his initial cruise in European waters, he proposed a prisoner exchange to the American Commissioners. The Commissioners wrote to Lord Stormont, Britain's ambassador in Paris, informing him that "Captain Wickes ... has now in his hands near 100 British seamen [and] desires to know whether an exchange may be made with him for an equal number of American seamen, now prisoners in England."⁵² In another instance, upon hearing of Captain John Nicholson's imprisonment along with the rest of *Hornet's* crew in Falmouth Prison, Wickes and Captain Samuel Nicholson submitted a plea to the American Commissioners to "please to appoint some mode or Method to furnish them

⁵⁰ Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 11 October 1779, in JP, 767. Jones also submitted a complaint about Conyngham's treatment in Jones to Richard Pearson, 20 October 1779, in JP, 794.

⁵¹ Jones to Countess of Selkirk, 8 May 1778, in JP, 287.

⁵² American Commissioners to Lord Stormont, 23 February 1777, in BFP, 13: 330-31.

with a trifle of Money in order to Release [sic] their present Necessitys [sic], as such a Conduct on your parts will tend to the Softning [sic] & Relieving their Sufferings."

Nicholson and Wickes further offered to "Readily & Willingly assist them as far as our Money or Credit will go," though they felt the Commissioners' help would be more reliable, and arrive more quickly.⁵³

Likely done in an effort to turn public opinion against the harsh treatment of American prisoners by the British, British prisoners taken during Wickes's cruises in European waters were handled with respect. Wickes restored personal belongings to the captains of the ships he took, and gave them an inordinate amount of freedom in port while he awaited word on what to do with his prisoners. This genial treatment continued even after the British captains wrote letters of protest and remonstrance for compensation of their ships.⁵⁴ Wickes's standard reserve buckled slightly upon hearing the captains had claimed he mistreated them, writing "I Am very Sorry to See that those Gentlemen are So Abandoned To Al Sence of Honour [sic]" for spreading falsehoods.⁵⁵ The *General Advertiser*, a newspaper in Liverpool, also later reported of Wickes's cruise in the Irish Sea that "the People in general speak in the warmest terms of the humane treatment they met with from the commander of the Reprisal and Lexington...."⁵⁶

McNeill also made efforts to relieve the suffering of American prisoners. In 1777, he implored the Massachusetts Council to use prisoners from *Fox* to free Americans held by the British; many, he pleaded, were suffering and had families that

⁵³ Wickes and Nicholson to American Commissioners, 6 September 1777, in NDAR, 9, 621.

⁵⁴ Clark, *Lambert Wickes*, 136-40.

⁵⁵ Wickes to American Commissioners, 19 February 1777, in BFP, 13: 349.

⁵⁶ *The General Advertiser*. Liverpool, Friday, 4 July 1777, in NDAR, 9: 445.

required attention.⁵⁷ For his part, McNeill sent funds to American prisoners, and provided assistance to the families of other sailors who were captured with whom he was familiar.⁵⁸

Although Joshua Barney did not appeal to British officials or American representatives for prisoner exchanges, he did cooperate with Admiral John Byron towards the betterment of conditions aboard British prison hulks during one of his periods of imprisonment.⁵⁹ Sent to replace Lord Richard Howe, Admiral Byron immediately moved the American prisoners to larger ships and ordered improvement in their care. The Admiral relocated Barney to his flagship, *Ardent*, and Barney acted as the admiral's intermediary between the prisoners and their captors, helping Byron determine the "condition and wants of the prisoners," and improve the quality of their treatment.⁶⁰

The amiable treatment Barney experienced at the hands of some of his British captors likely helped him develop what Louis Norton, a recent biographer, refers to as Barney's "self-imposed code of ethics." Whenever he could Barney made sure to pay in kind and take good care of British officers who fell under his charge. In the exemplary case of Lieutenant James Gray, captured in December 1777 after a failed attempt to take an American sloop, Barney "procured a flag of truce ... to obtain a supply of clothes and other little personal comforts" from Lieutenant Gray's ship, *Otter*. The captain of *Otter*

⁵⁷ McNeill to the Massachusetts Council, 16 September 1777, in NDAR, 9: 931. *Fox*, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was retaken by the British.

⁵⁸ Hector McNeill to Marine Lieutenant Robert McNeill, 14 October 1777, in NDAR, 10: 153.

⁵⁹ For additional information on general conditions aboard British prison hulks, see Charles Campbell, *The Intolerable Hulks: British Shipboard Confinement, 1776-1857*, 3rd Edition (Tucson, AZ: Fenestra Books, 2001).

⁶⁰ Barney, *A Biographical memoir*, 74.

sent back a present of porter and English cheese in response, as well as a letter thanking Barney for his kindness.⁶¹

British prisoners also singled out John Barry for his good treatment. After being taken captive by Barry in 1776, William Goodrich wrote to his brother that "I was treated Extreamly Jenteal [sic] by Capt Berry [sic]."⁶² Prisoners Barry took on his way to Europe in *Alliance*, including officers from the British ship *Ramilies*, also reported fair treatment by the captain, one saying that they did not suffer any "confinement, [nor] abridgement of food...."⁶³

Although Jones remarked "it is bad policy in superiors to behave towards their inferiors indiscriminately, as though they were of a lower species," it appears that only Jones violated the duty the six captains believed an officer owed to his crew.⁶⁴ His outbursts towards others provide a picture of an idealistic man who was prone to frustration and temper. Nathaniel Fanning recalled multiple instances of violence by Jones during his command of *Bon Homme Richard*. First, after a disagreement with the captain of *Monsieur*, a privateer who abandoned the squadron after it took its first prize, Fanning states that Jones "struck several of his officers with his speaking trumpet over their heads, and ordered one of his lieutenants under confinement" because of their failure to engage *Monsieur* before it was out of gun range.⁶⁵ On another occasion, Jones got into an argument with one of his lieutenants, and "kicked him on the breach several

⁶¹ Ibid., 65.

⁶² William Goodrich to John Goodrich, 5 September 1776, in NDAR, 6: 716.

⁶³ Officers of *Ramilies*, 28 September 1781, as quoted in McGrath, *John Barry*, 305.

⁶⁴ Jones to Joseph Hewes, 14 April 1776, in JP, 17.

⁶⁵ John Barnes, ed., *Fanning's Narrative: Being the Memoirs of Nathaniel Fanning, an Officer of the Revolutionary Navy, 1778-1783* (New York: De Vinne Press, 1912), 24.

times” as the lieutenant descended the ladder. In both instances the lieutenants were later invited to dine with the captain, and “thus it was with Jones, passionate to the highest degree one minute, and the next, ready to make a reconciliation.”⁶⁶ Jones also kicked Fanning on September 1, 1780, while serving on *Ariel*—a detail which Morison believes led Fanning to exaggerate the extravagant decadence of a party Jones threw on board.⁶⁷

Fanning's violent encounter with Jones may also account for accusations concerning Jones's treatment of General John Sullivan's nephew who sought passage to America on *Ariel*.⁶⁸ Fanning records that Jones repeatedly denied Sullivan's requests to go on shore, and that young Sullivan finally insisted he be allowed to leave the ship. Jones drew his sword in response, and threatened to run Sullivan through if he tried to disembark. After Sullivan attempted to leave anyway, Jones placed him in irons.⁶⁹ However, if the story were true, General Sullivan would probably not have provided Jones a letter of introduction to Meshech Weare, the President of New Hampshire, in 1781.⁷⁰

All of the captains' demeanors as Continental officers were heavily influenced by their understandings of professional duty and their conceptions of individualism, resistance to authority, and loyalty upwards and downwards. They expected men below them to follow orders to the utmost of their ability and without criticism, and they

⁶⁶ Ibid., 28.

⁶⁷ Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 303.

⁶⁸ John Sullivan was a major general in the Continental Army.

⁶⁹ Barnes, *Fanning's Narrative*, 90-96.

⁷⁰ John Sullivan to President Weare, 3 July 1781, as quoted in Horace Porter and Franklin Sanborn, eds., *Letters of John Paul Jones* (Boston, MA: The Bibliophile Society, 1905), 17.

insisted on respectful treatment from their own superiors. Additionally, the captains believed Continental officers owed a responsibility to other American sailors, both to their own crews and to those who had fallen into British hands.

While each captain sought to enforce professional standards on the men around him, all but Lambert Wickes sometimes failed to adhere to those principles. Hopkins took wide liberty with his sailing orders when he sailed to Nassau, and Barney often disregarded instructions to avoid engagements. Also, many captains did not show deference to their superiors even as they expected it from their crews and inferior officers. Hopkins faced accusations of insulting Congress, McNeill openly confronted his superior John Manley and wrote a scathing indictment of the captain, and on multiple occasions Barry traded words with Francis Hopkinson. In Jones's case, his interactions with subordinates sometimes lacked the civility he believed they deserved.

Although prewar experiences help explain why captains violated their understandings of professional duty at points in their career, their motivations for service are also suggestive. Captains may have disobeyed their orders in an effort to accomplish objectives, such as the capture of prizes, that would provide increased renown or financial gain. Patriotism could explain their vocal reactions to men who they believed violated their duty, and had therefore paid a disservice to the United States. The following chapters expand on these motivations, and detail how differing desires for fame and professional advancement, patriotism, and financial stability influenced the career arcs of each captain.

CHAPTER IV

A "PASSION FOR FAME" AND PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT

According to Douglas Adair, *fame*, the aspiration to leave one's mark on the world by appealing to a public, inclusive audience both "horizontally in space and vertically in time," was the chief motivation for many of the Founding Fathers.¹ To an extent, this also applies to the six Continental captains. Their decisions to serve in the Continental Navy, as well as their conduct as American officers, were motivated in-part by a desire for renown. However, the degree to which fame and promotion acted as a stimulus for each captain varied. The writings and actions of John Paul Jones, Esek Hopkins, and Joshua Barney provide strong evidence that each aspired to attain public recognition, while those of Lambert Wickes, Hector McNeill, and John Barry suggest they were more motivated by other factors.

In keeping with the modesty expected of gentlemen of the era, some captains professed to have no ambition towards higher station or renown. Although McNeill showed appreciation after receiving a compliment from John Manley, he prefaced his enthusiasm by writing "Titles & honours [sic] I despise them both."² Hopkins also denied having a desire for fame; in multiple instances he offered to resign his position as commander-in-chief in deference to "better men," and he told the Continental Marine Committee that he aspired to "no Command further than you Approve of."³ Regular

¹ Douglas Adair, "Fame and the Founding Fathers," 14.

² Journal of Captain Hector McNeill, 3 June 1777, in NDAR, 9: 9.

³ Esek Hopkins to the Continental Marine Committee, 14 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1199-1200.

petitions concerning rank, pay, and various operational proposals also gave Jones ample opportunities and reasons to deny ulterior motives. In an early letter in which he complained of the quality of commissioned officers, he remarked that his own enlistment "was not actuated by Motives of self interest."⁴ Writing to General Potemkin in 1789, Jones also claimed to "have never bent a knee to self interest, nor drawn my sword for hire."⁵

The very act of pursuing or accepting a commission as an officer in the Continental Navy, however, suggests the pursuit of public favor as at least a partial motivation. The vast majority of American ships that fought in the war were privateers.⁶ Provided that a ship enjoyed a competent crew, a capable captain, and a bit of luck, privateers could expect to turn a tidy profit from the sale of cargo and ships they captured. Importantly, privateers were paid the full amount of their capture's worth, while the Marine Committee's prize regulations of November 25, 1775, reserved for the government two thirds of a prize's sale if it was a merchantman, or half if the prize was a ship of war. Thus, from a financial point of view, the Continental Navy was a less attractive employment option than was service as a privateer. Privateering remained more appealing for financial gain even after the Congress relinquished its right to a portion of the proceeds from sales of captured men-of-war—though it retained its portion of the profit from the sale of captured merchantmen—plus privateers were free

⁴ Jones to Marine Board, 21 January 1777, in JP, 93.

⁵ Jones to Potemkin, 13 April 1789, in JP, 1837.

⁶ For more information on privateers see Edgar S. Maclay, *A History of American Privateers* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899); Nathan Miller, *Sea of Glory: The Continental Navy Fights for Independence, 1775-1783* (New York: David McKay Company, 1974), 262; Robert H. Patton, *Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2008).

to solely pursue prizes rather than run errands or perform convoy duty.⁷ In 1776, Congress licensed 136 privateers to ply the waves in search of English ships, and in 1781 the number rose to 449.⁸ These, it should be noted, were in addition to privateers sanctioned by individual states. Privateering's continued popularity was also reflected in the constant recruitment difficulties suffered by the navy; Continental ships often sat for months without an adequate number of crewmen, and rarely put to sea with a full complement.

While the Continental Navy could not compete with privateers in profitability, it certainly provided more incentives in terms of prestige. As the commander of a Continental ship, a captain was more likely to have his actions publicized than if he were one of the masses of privateers. If he was fitting out a ship or visiting an American port a captain would also certainly interact with leading business and political leaders, and their commissions gave most captains access to political and social connections with the leading American statesmen. Those who visited France could, for example, meet with Benjamin Franklin and John Adams and possibly even French governmental leaders. Any who went to Philadelphia could meet Robert Morris and other officials in the American government. Finally, by serving in the Continental Navy a captain could deny that greed was a motivating factor in his service. Instead, he could cite his dedication to higher principles, such as the defense of liberty, as Jones often did.

Although sincere in considering himself a "Citizen of the World" employed in the cause of independence and defense of human rights, Jones's "desire for fame [was]

⁷ Congress also started to only take half the proceeds from merchant sales.

⁸ Louis A. Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 16.

infinite," and he coveted honors, titles, and displays of preferment from men in prominent positions who were "above the Common Cast."⁹ He lost few opportunities to ingratiate himself in correspondence to others, and often included elaborately conceived passages of gratitude that reaffirmed his commitment to performing well and maintaining the confidence of men who showed him support. Jones perceived slights against him as quickly as he recognized praise, and many of his letters reveal a deep sensitivity about his honor, about how the public interpreted his position relative to other captains, and about his relationships with men of high station.

Jones's obsession with his rank during his career in the navy is the most salient example of his egotism. Though pleased with his promotion to captain, his placement of eighteenth of twenty-four on Congress's officer seniority list of October 10, 1776, made him furious.¹⁰ Jones felt particularly insulted because a number of men who joined the navy after he did, who had not demonstrated superior ability, were placed above him on the list. Writing to the Marine Board three months later, Jones remarked that "As I am unconscious of any Neglect of duty or misconduct since my appointment at the first as Eldest Lieutenant of the Navy, I cannot suppose that you can have intended to set me aside in favor of any Man who did not at that time bear a Captains Commission...."¹¹

His statement to the Marine Board was less confrontational than many of Jones's subsequent letters. He notified Joseph Hewes, representative from North Carolina, and

⁹Jones to Jacques Le Ray de Chaumont, 14 September 1778, in JP, 406. Jones added that he was not an "Adventurer of Fortune." While Jones did not believe a desire for fame conflicted with dedication to the cause, he did not believe financial gain was an acceptable motivation. Jones to Alexander Scott, 30 October 1779, in JP, 832. Jones remarked that because Scott's mind was "far above the Common Cast," that Scott's good opinion of Jones afforded him the "most rational and Sincere pleasure."

¹⁰ Commission as Captain in the Navy, 10 October 1776, in JP, 45.

¹¹ Jones to Marine Board, 21 January 1777, in JP, 93.

Robert Morris, that he could "not consider any man as my Senior Officer who durst not step forth at the beginning in such ships as the Alfred then was, nor will I ever draw my sword under the Command of any Man who was not in the Service as early as myself." The American Commissioners in Paris also received a letter from Jones at the end of August 1777, asking if they could procure a frigate for him to correct the fact that "I am myself superseded by thirteen Persons, who cannot plead superior Services or Abilities," and again declared his refusal to fight for anyone who joined the navy before him "unless he hath merited a Preference by his superior Services and abilities." To serve under such a person, he believed, would be the greatest disgrace, and worse hardship "than to be fairly broke, and expelled [from] the Service."¹²

Although some of his correspondents may have sympathized with Jones's situation, he never received satisfaction for his placement on the seniority list of 1776. It was one of the most crushing rebuffs of his career, as evidenced by his continued references to the event years after the fact. In a letter written in 1779 to Samuel Huntington, the President of Congress, he characteristically criticized the seniority list complaining that "there are individuals [ranked above me] who can neither pretend to parts nor education and with whom ... I would disdain to Associate." He left it to the Congress to "Judge how this must affect a Man of honor and Sensibility!" In another letter to Huntington specifically requesting redress for his rank, Jones declared that Congress "will not admit the Idea that I have been degraded from any fault or misconduct," although "I ought to be second in Rank in the American Navy." The issue

¹² Jones to Joseph Hewes, 17 August 1777, in JP, 171; Jones to American Commissioners, 30 August 1777, in JP, 183; Jones to Robert Morris, 24 August 1777, in JP, 173.

did not fade with the war, and Jones wrote another lengthy letter to Robert Morris in 1783 which included complaints about his rank, as well as Jones's commentary on operations of the navy.¹³

Beyond the issue of his ranking among Continental captains, Jones sought and valued other symbols of success. He prized the "Superb Sword [presented to him by Louis XVI], with an inscription in Latin on the Blade that would do honor to the Greatest Admiral in History," and the title "Chevalier" bestowed upon him by the French king. Jones signed his correspondence occasionally thereafter using his French title, and when Congress awarded him a gold medal, the plans for which he designed himself, it was presented to "Chevalier John Paul Jones."¹⁴ He also demonstrated his love for decorations during his service in the Russian Navy as a rear admiral. When Jones discovered that the Order of Saint Anne, awarded to him for his role in the First and Second Battles of Liman, was the lowest of the decorations given, he petitioned Potemkin requesting the Order of Saint George, which Prince Charles De Nassau Siegen had received.¹⁵

During his Continental service Jones often complained of conspiracies against him and insults against his honor, starting with the aforementioned issue of ranking below certain individuals which he called an undeserved "heavy Stigma."¹⁶ Jones

¹³ Jones to the President of Congress, 7 December 1779, in JP, 910; Jones to the President of Congress, 28 May 1781, in JP, 1317; Jones to Robert Morris, 3-4 October, 1783, in JP, 1480.

¹⁴ For a letter about Jones's sword, see Jones to Robert Morris, 27 June 1780, in JP, 1124. For Jones's medal, see Congressional Resolution, 16 October 1787, in JP, 2082.

¹⁵ Jones to Potemkin, 24 July 1790, in JP, 1890. Jones was also left out from the later distribution of additional medals and jeweled swords. See Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 380, and Mrs. Reginald DeKoven, *Life & Letters*, 2: 332.

¹⁶ Jones to Robert Morris, 24 August 1777, in JP, 173.

eagerly sought redress for his difficulties on *Ranger* involving Lieutenant Simpson, especially after he was directed to release the insubordinate officer on parole. Concerned that the situation could be misinterpreted, and that "every person who has gone from Europe to [America] within the last three months have taken with them the belief of my disgrace," Jones requested a letter from the American Commissioners that he could point to as proof that he had left *Ranger* of his own accord, and had consented to Simpson's release from parole.¹⁷ John Adams and Franklin responded with the requested letter, adding that Jones's departure from *Ranger* "cannot be any Injury to your Rank or Character...."¹⁸

Jones also considered his inability to exact justice for Landais's misconduct during his cruise on *Bon Homme Richard* as evidence of a plot against him. In this instance Jones was probably right. Although he had the support of Benjamin Franklin, there is evidence to suggest that Arthur Lee made an effort to sabotage Jones's career. Lee went so far as to write a three-page letter in support of Landais's inexcusable conduct, and reaffirmed Landais's commission as the Continental captain in command of *Alliance*.¹⁹ Moreover, the political scheming in Congress extended to Jones's friends. When Jones arrived back in America, he wrote a letter to Franklin in which he expressed

¹⁷ Orders to release Simpson are in American Commissioners to Jones, 3 June 1778, in JP, 328. Information regarding how Jones felt about Simpson's effect on his reputation is mentioned in Jones to Edward Bancroft, 11 November 1778, in JP, 454. Jones to American Commissioners, 15 August 1778, in JP, 347.

¹⁸ Benjamin Franklin and John Adams to Jones, 10 February 1779, in JP, 523.

¹⁹ Arthur Lee to Jones, 13 June 1780, in JP, 1107.

the "deepest concern ... to find how much such worth as yours was misrepresented, by your disappointed Enemies."²⁰

Deeply concerned about how others perceived him, Jones was also sensitive to the opinions of people he held in high regard. He worried about his reputation with King Louis and his court during the American Revolution, and in Russia he was aware that his dismissal was due to his decreased standing with Catherine.²¹ Jones also experienced anxiety over the long period he endured in Europe without a command, fearing he may have lost the favor of the men in high positions he regarded as friends. For example, having received no orders or other correspondence from Franklin for some time in November, 1778, Jones lamented to Franklin that his "silence" had hurt him, and he expressed as much again to his friend Jonathan Williams in December.²²

Although sensitive to negative perceptions, Jones took great satisfaction in congratulatory letters and signs of preferment or respect he received throughout his career. He often mentioned his gratitude for the preference Congress showed him in various instances, such as his appointment as captain of *Ranger*, and in trying to procure Jones better ships even as the offers proved disingenuous or fell through. The same was true of the favors he believed the Court of France had shown him. Additionally, Jones appreciated letters from American leaders, and believed their attention reflected well on his merit and standing in the United States. The continuance of such approbation, which

²⁰ Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 13 December 1781, in JP, 252. Jones also believed that his want of a ship in Europe was due to political intrigue, and that he had "some Enemies, even on this side of the water." Jones to John Brown, 23 December 1778, in JP, 499.

²¹ Jones to Catherine II, 29 May 1789, in JP, 1838. In this letter to Catherine, Jones remarks that he "found [himself] driven from court, deprived of the good opinion of your majesty," by "mere accusations."

²² Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 27 November 1778, in JP, 476; Jones to Jonathan Williams, 16 December 1778, in JP, 490.

he held "as the greatest honor and most ample Reward," was often remarked as being the "ambition of [his] life."²³

While Jones pursued and valued praise from others, he rarely conferred such words on others. When reporting on his cruises, Jones always highlighted his own actions, and rarely included even a general mention about the performance of his ship's sailors unless his company had performed poorly. The majority of sentences in a letter describing the capture of the *Mellish* in late 1776, for example, start with "I," and in the 21-page report on the cruise that culminated in the capture of *Serapis* Jones did not mention the brave actions of any of his sailors or officers.²⁴ Individual recommendations were also rarely provided by Jones; in an ironic twist, two of the men for whom he wrote commendations were Lieutenant Thomas Simpson, who caused Jones a great deal of grief, and Nathaniel Fanning, who criticized Jones in his later memoir.²⁵

Jones's habit of emphasizing his own actions and minimalizing those of others did not go unnoticed. In 1779, the *Gazette de Leyden*, a widely read international newspaper produced in the Netherlands, published "an extract of my [Jones's] journal" in which he provided unfavorable commentary on certain individuals. Fearing damage to

²³ Jones to the Secret Committee, 22 February 1778, in JP, 254. Also see Jones to William Whipple, 11 December 1777, in JP, 220; Jones to Silas Deane, 21 September 1780, in JP, 1218. Of the French Court, Jones wrote that he was "sensible of the Singular Attentions I have experienced" which he should "remember with the Perfect Gratitude until the end" of his days. Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 3 October 1779, in JP, 749.

²⁴ Jones to Marine Board, 12 November 1776, in JP, 59; Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 3 October 1779, in JP, 749.

²⁵ For Simpson's commendation in an introductory letter, see Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 5 December 1777, in JP, 214; Certificate for Nathaniel Fanning, 17 December 1780, in JP, 1291. Another early recommendation for Fanning is provided in Jones to President of Congress, 10 December 1779, in JP, 914. Fanning's criticisms of Jones were covered in the previous section on crew treatment.

his reputation from a passage preceding the article that left "room to suppose that it has been my intention to augment the merits of my own Services by diminishing those of others," Jones wrote a letter to the editor. In addition to providing clarifications on his critiques in his private journal, Jones also uncharacteristically offered words of praise for some of the officers who served in the *Bon Homme Richard* squadron.²⁶ Benjamin Franklin also bluntly addressed Jones's habit of seeing evil where there was none, and of providing little tribute to those who deserved mention, in correspondence to Jones in 1780. In the letter, Franklin proposed to Jones:

if you should observe on occasion to give your officers and friends a little more praise than is their Due, and confess more fault than you can justly be charged with, you will only become the sooner for it a Great Captain. Criticising [sic] and censuring almost every one you have to do with, will diminish friends, encrease [sic] enemies, and thereby hurt your affairs.²⁷

As is apparent from his continued obsession with rank, titles, and honor after the war, however, Jones did not take to heart Franklin's suggestion that he temper his ego, though some other factor may have influenced his actions in Russia where, other than brief sections in letters to Catherine the Great and Potemkin, Jones did not expound at great length upon the conspiracy against him in Russia that resulted in his fall from favor, and in his dismissal from Catherine's service.²⁸

Esek Hopkins also displayed a desire for fame and professional advancement. In addition to making a name for himself and advancing his professional station, Hopkins was also concerned with maintaining his family's social status. Although work as a

²⁶ Jones to John Luzac, 11 November 1779, in JP, 868.

²⁷ Benjamin Franklin to Jones, 5 July 1780, in JP, 1147.

²⁸ Jones to Catherine, 17 May 1789, in JP, 1838.

merchantman or privateer had the potential to make a person wealthy, an appointment in an official capacity was more prestigious for the reasons previously discussed. In a world that respected statesmen and other "gentlemanly" professions, as well as a family that had its history in public affairs, the transition from the private sector to public service represented an important step for Esek Hopkins.

Hopkins worked as a privateer during the French and Indian War and commanded his own ship in the West Indies trade, but political reasons played as much or more of a role in his appointment in the Continental Navy as did his past experience. The creation of a navy was in itself a political act, and it was well known that the New England colonies would benefit the most from an official seagoing force. Eventually made up of seven members, four of whom were New Englanders, the Continental Marine Committee was also a hotbed of New England provincialism. Committee member John Adams had "a desire to see New England men ... lead the nation in launching a navy," and fellow members Silas Deane and Stephen Hopkins both harbored personal ambitions and strong sectionalist outlooks.²⁹ As a result, all of the initial captains appointed to the navy by the Marine Committee were from New England with the exception of Nicholas Biddle.³⁰

Multiple instances in Hopkins's career suggest that he shared his brother's strong sense of provincialism, and believed the Continental Navy's main purpose was to benefit the Northern colonies, specifically Rhode Island. In one case he offered Rhode Island

²⁹ William M. Fowler Jr., *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy During the Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 55-57; More information about initial appointments in Morgan, *Captains to the Northward*, 15, 21-22.

³⁰Gardner W. Allen, "Esek Hopkins," *The New England Quarterly* 9:1 (Sept. 1936): 483-85.

and Connecticut Continental military stores that were not his to give away without first consulting Congress, and in another he moved the Continental squadron to his homeport of Providence. When "earnestly persuaded to remove the squadron to Boston," James Brewer of *Warren* recalled Hopkins responded that "the ships shall not go to Boston, by God."³¹

The most drastic example of Hopkins's desire for fame was his decision to take his squadron to Nassau in March 1776, instead of defending the Southern coastline as his instructions had expressly ordered. On the surface, and according to Hopkins, the decision was well reasoned. First, he believed the supplies at Nassau were desperately needed by the Continental Army.³² Second, Hopkins reported that three or four days before he set sail on an intended course for Georgia, that he received intelligence of an additional British frigate in the area, and determined that the British squadrons were too strong for the infant American squadron. Furthermore, according to Hopkins his officers lacked resolve, and a large portion of his sailors were overcome with sickness which made combating a numerically superior British squadron impossible.³³ He used many of the same rationalizations to explain *Glasgow's* escape.

There should be little doubt that Hopkins was correct in his assessment that an untrained American squadron would not have been able to successfully engage a British squadron of the same size—Hopkins's squadron had a difficult enough time with

³¹ William M. Fowler Jr., "Commander," 10-11. For quote, see Statements of the Gunner, Carpenter and a Midshipman of the Continental Frigate *Warren*, 24 February 1777, in NDAR, 5: 1276.

³² A list of supplies taken, including over 80 cannon and thousands of munitions, is in Esek Hopkins to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Enclosure, 8 April 1776, in NDAR, 4:711.

³³ Esek Hopkins to Stephen Hopkins, 8 June 1776, in NDAR, 5: 424-25. According to one report, 140 men in Hopkins's fleet were sick after the expedition. See Esek Hopkins to Stephen Hopkins, 21 April 1776, in NDAR, 4: 1185.

Glasgow—or that the stores taken from Nassau would have provided great assistance to the American military effort. However, in an example of his provincialism, when Hopkins returned to America with the captured stores he gave them not to the Continental Army, but to Connecticut and Rhode Island. Furthermore, the fact that Hopkins completely bypassed the Southern coast and did not attempt in any way to counter British raiders in the area suggests an additional reason for the raid on Nassau. While defending the Southern coast may have helped quell uneasiness about the navy's use for New England's benefit, Nassau's capture was sure to attract more public attention as a major success for the fledgling Navy. As such, it had more potential to serve as a positive display of Hopkins's aptitude as a fleet commander.

Hopkins's fumbling of the engagement with *Glasgow*, and again against *Diamond* in 1777, along with delays in getting Continental ships to sea, made it apparent to the Marine Committee that he was unfit to oversee operations of the navy. Those acquainted with Hopkins and his pride, however, knew that official action would be necessary to remove him from his post. Robert Livingston, the Chancellor of New York, wrote concerning the situation, saying that "with respect to Hopkins- you have but one way left, appoint an Admiral- but [do not] flatter yourself that even that will bring about a resignation.... If you have not the courage ... to carry this as the next wise step sell your ships to private adventurers...."³⁴

Although the remaining four captains provide fewer examples of fame, pride, and professional advancement as motivating factors, there is nevertheless evidence to

³⁴ Robert P. Livingston to Edward Rutledge, 27 September 1776, in NDAR, 6: 1023.

suggest it played a part in some of their career decisions. Barney relished the honor of participating in patriotic events, and he took great pleasure in the recognition that accompanied them. Early in the war, he had the "enviable" opportunity to unfurl the first Flag of Grand Union in Baltimore, Maryland, while recruiting sailors for *Hornet*. Barney also proudly participated in the events following Maryland's ratification of the Constitution in April 1788. He "commanded" a miniature, fully rigged fifteen-foot ship, the *Federalist*, during the Constitutional parade in Baltimore, and afterwards launched the replica into Chesapeake Bay and sailed it to Mount Vernon as a present to George Washington.³⁵

Barney's response to a letter he received on June 5, 1794, informing him that he and five others were appointed as the first six captains in the Navy is also indicative of his pride. Listed in order of seniority, Barney found his name listed fourth behind Silas Talbot, future captain of *Constitution*.³⁶ Anticipating Barney's displeasure, Secretary of War Henry Knox included a preemptive letter on the 5th which stated,

Since the nominations to the Senate were made known, it has been said that you would not accept the appointment, on the ground that Capt. Talbot was junior in rank to you during the late war. That the reverse of this was the case, will fully appear, by the inclosed [sic] resolve of Congress creating Col. Talbot a captain in the navy on the 19th of September, 1779....³⁷

The letter went on to lay out Knox's argument for Talbot's seniority, and why he deserved the position ahead of Barney. If the fact that Talbot's name appeared before his

³⁵ Mary Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 30, 157-59. Also see Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 102-05.

³⁶ For more information on Silas Talbot's career see, William M. Fowler Jr., *Silas Talbot: Captain of Old Ironsides* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum), 1995.

³⁷ Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 198.

was not enough to irritate Barney, Knox's methodical argument which showed that Barney was technically only a Lieutenant in the navy would have made him furious.

Egotism also played a part in Barney's career in the French Navy. Unbeknownst to Barney, the rank *capitaine de vaisseau*, given to him when he joined the French Navy, was divided into three classes of seniority, and the position he accepted was the lowest and roughly equivalent to his previous seniority in the Continental Navy. When Barney realized what his new rank truly meant, he quickly resigned his commission and left to take personal command of a newly purchased privateer vessel. Not long after, the Minister of Marine in France convinced the Directory to offer Barney a position as *capitaine de vaisseau du premier*, or commodore. He gladly accepted this higher rank, and actively participated in the French service until 1800.

Wickes also saw opportunities which could advance his own career while at the same time furthering the cause of Independence, though his bids for ships and promotions were generally more subtle than Jones's or Barney's. He questioned cruising orders sent to him in mid 1777, advising the American Commissioners that not only were the recommended areas unfit for proper cruising, but that his ships were too small to effect a voyage of any duration. Instead, he proposed cruises which were more profitable to his small squadron and to the cause.³⁸

American Commissioners also tasked Wickes with inspecting French ships in ports he visited, and reporting whether the vessels were fit for purchase as ships of war. One frigate in particular, the 36-gun *St. John*, renamed *Comte de Maurepas* soon after he

³⁸ Wickes to American Commissioners, 5 March 1777, in BFP, 13: 428-29.

inspected it, caught Wickes's eye. He enthusiastically reported the ship's qualities to the Commissioners on January 11, 1777, making sure to mention how quickly the ship could be fit for service. Wickes wrote the Commissioners again concerning *Maurepas* on January 18 after he received the frigate's inventory and price, and later described the suitability of the vessel for a cruise off the coast of Africa, one of the aforementioned operations he proposed mid-1777. He believed the Guinea coast to be an ideal hunting ground for the heavy frigate.³⁹

Though not their only motivation, Jones, Hopkins, and Barney displayed desires for fame and professional advancement throughout their careers. Jones sought titles, awards, and preferment from men in prominent positions, and consistently lobbied on his own behalf for further opportunities for advancement. Esek Hopkins accepted the appointment as the highest ranking officer in the navy, and used the public position to gain renown. Barney's egotism was also well known, and he relished the opportunity to involve himself in important, widely reported patriotic events. Additionally, his pride served as the most influential factor behind his refusal to accept a commission in the new U.S. Navy in 1794.

Wickes's subtle petitions for the purchase of *Maurepas* also suggest a desire for promotion, but for the most part Wickes, McNeill, and Barry did not exhibit explicit desires for fame or professional advancement. However, Douglas Adair's conception of fame with regards to the Founding Fathers suggests that the very act of seeking a commission in the Continental Navy could indicate to some degree a desire for fame.

³⁹ Wickes to Commissioners, 11 January 1777, in BFP, 23: 152-54. Wickes to Commissioners, 18 January 1777, *ibid.*, 206-07; Wickes to American Commissioners, 5 March 1777, *ibid.*, 23: 428-29.

The navy provided an outlet through which each of the six captains could use his talents as a navigator and a fighter to gain recognition and status, while at the same time furthering the cause of independence. Rather than reduce the role patriotism played in their decisions to join the Continental Navy, their egotism likely enhanced their idealism as each captain sought to appeal to the widest audience possible to secure his name in history. For many of the captains, this meant stressing principles of liberty and universal rights they likely encountered during their early careers and interactions with the Atlantic World. For McNeill, it meant playing a role in establishing of God's Kingdom on Earth.

CHAPTER V

LIBERTY AND FAITH

Many recent works addressing the motivations of important Revolutionary statesmen have largely concluded that patriotism served as a veil to hide selfish intentions.¹ However, dedication to a cause undoubtedly played an important part in the six captains' decisions to serve in the Continental Navy. Each captain devoted himself to the idea of an independent United States, applying the principles of liberty he likely encountered during voyages in the West Indies to his home on the continent. John Paul Jones in particular stressed his dedication to ideas of universal rights and freedom that played an integral role in the Age of Revolution, and he considered himself a "Citizen of the World" as well as an American patriot.² Furthermore, Hector McNeill characterized the Revolution in an overtly religious context, and fought to establish God's Kingdom of the Just.

While Patriotism literally means devotion to one's country, it is described in numerous ways by authors throughout history, and in more popular usage is mired in connotation. Therefore, it is useful to consider Douglas Adair's conception of the patriotism displayed by the Founding Fathers as a comparison point for discussing each

¹ For examples of recent works that address the motivations of Revolutionary statesmen and Constitutional debates, see Terry Bouton, *Taming Democracy: "The People," the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); David Waldstreicher, *Slavery's Constitution: From Revolution to Ratification* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009). For civil-military relations involving the Continental Army, and motivations for service in the Continental Army, see the aforementioned Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War*.

² Jones to Jacques Le Ray de Chaumont, 14 September 1778, in JP, 406.

captain's personal dedication. Adair argues that the Founding Fathers were transformed by the American Revolution in the process of making it, and that their conception of honor in conjunction with a lust for glory and the reward of fame became key ingredients in their personal development after 1776. Because patriotism is neither ethically blind nor morally neutral, those characteristics of self-interest and ambition were transformed into efforts for the community, but still provided the occupational specialization and social position necessary for the honor and fame sought after by the Founders.³ Importantly, their patriotic sentiments were genuine, and the existence of additional motivations does not diminish the sincerity of their dedication.

Just as service in the Continental Navy is in itself a potential indicator for a degree of egotistical motivation, it is also suggestive of where one's dedication to liberty or faith stood in relation to other motives. Specifically, Lambert Wickes's and McNeill's continued service in the navy implies that financial considerations were inferior to patriotic or religious impetus. Even though John Barry sailed in privateer ships for part of the war, his efforts to remain in the navy, sometimes in frustrating positions, suggest patriotism served as a motivating factor for him as well. With respect to John Paul Jones and Esek Hopkins, while it is possible their naval service only represented a desire for renown and professional advancement, or that financial concerns rivaled their dedication to the United States, their correspondence and opinions on privateering suggest that financial gain was not a strong motive for either of them.

³Douglas Adair, "Fame," 27, 33-34. Adair also distinguishes between men of thought, and men of action, but the distinction is irrelevant for this essay's purpose.

The advantages and drawbacks to privateering were heavily debated by contemporary Revolutionaries. As previously mentioned, privateering remained a popular choice of employment during the war, and Congress alone licensed at least 1,700 privateer ships during the war. The practice had its supporters, among them John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, who believed privateers had much to offer the war effort by way of redirecting private interest into service for the public good. However, most men connected to the Continental Navy developed contempt, and in some cases outright loathing, for privateer vessels. For his part, William Vernon, the President of the Eastern Naval Board, prayed for an embargo against all private ships, as privateers had proven "fatal" to outfitting and manning Continental ships.⁴

Many Continental captains were also critical of privateers, the most outspoken of whom was Jones. He believed privateer owners and the men they employed were "actuated by no nobler principle than that of self interest," and were devoid of all "public virtue."⁵ In addition to their lack of character, Jones identified the negative impact privateers had on the navy. Meeting with countless manning difficulties early in his career, Jones took matters into his own hands to fill his complement on November 1, 1776. Finding the privateer *Eagle* at anchor, Jones had the ship searched; he recovered four deserters, and impressed roughly twenty additional men. The event demonstrated

⁴ William Vernon, Sr. to John Adams, 17 December 1778, in Mary-Jo Kline, Gregg L. Lint, and Robert J. Taylor, eds., *Papers of John Adams*, 15 vols. to date (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1977-), 7: 280-81. Hereafter PJA. For more information regarding the privateer debate, including the figure of 1,700 Congressionally licensed privateers, see Michael J. Crawford, "Privateering Debate in Revolutionary America," *The Northern Mariner* 21: 3 (July 2011): 219-34. Crawford cites four main complaints against privateers. In short, they are: privateers drove up the cost of borrowed money, increased the price of guns and created a scarcity of carriage guns, made it more difficult to man Continental ships, and made recruitment difficult for the Continental Army.

⁵ Jones to Robert Morris, 17 October 1776, in JP, 46; Jones to Robert Morris, 11 December 1777, in JP, 218.

Jones's disdain for privateers, and his opinion that the good of the cause required sacrifice from private service. He took pride in "being the first who hath broken thro' the shameful Abuses which have too long been practiced upon the Navy by Mercenaries...."⁶

Although he commanded multiple private vessels throughout the war, patriotism also served as a motivation for Joshua Barney. The potentially lucrative employment as a privateer did not interest Barney when he signed with Captain William Stone on *Hornet*. Barney's patriotism is also reflected in his reaction to the two instances of cowardice by other officers he witnessed. The first involved the aforementioned situation involving Captain Stone. The second event, which resulted in Barney's imprisonment by the British, also saw him breach the rules of subordination.

During the night of March 31, 1778, the frigate *Virginia* ran aground in its attempt to put to sea. Rather than fight, Captain James Nicholson quickly abandoned the frigate without securing his signals or papers.⁷ When Nicholson returned to his captured ship under a flag of truce to retrieve personal belongings which were left on board in his haste to escape, Barney released a tirade upon Nicholson in front of his captors.⁸ Only in these two instances of cowardice that flew in the face of patriotism and duty did Barney violate the etiquette of naval hierarchy.

Barney's postwar service also suggests a degree of patriotism in his motivations. Although he refused a commission as a captain in the U.S. Navy, Barney volunteered his

⁶ Jones to Esek Hopkins, 2 November 1776, in JP, 57; Jones to Daniel Tillinghast, 20 January 1777, in JP, 91.

⁷ Mary Barney, *A Biographical Memoir*, 66.

⁸ A more detailed description of the encounter is in Hulbert Footner, *Sailor of Fortune*, 49-51.

service to President Jefferson after the Chesapeake Affair in 1807. In a letter dated July 4, 1807, Barney stated his belief that in a time of crisis "every citizen [should] step forward in support of his country." Receiving no reply from Jefferson, Barney sent a further inquiry to his acquaintance and newly elected President, James Madison, on March 12, 1809, which stated "I shall always feel a sincere pleasure in contributing my feeble abilities in any manner you please for the good of our country."⁹

John Barry also served as both a privateer and as a Continental captain during the war, but patriotism and personal prestige were more important motivational factors than money. He made efforts to remain engaged by the Continental Navy, and in cases when finances necessitated that he find employment in private service Barry obtained a leave of absence from the Marine Committee.¹⁰ While the construction and fitting of ships required a responsible man with relevant expertise, being stuck on shore was an experience no fighting captain would wish to endure. Yet that is the situation in which Barry found himself at the beginning of the war: he gave up his command, the *Black Prince*, after its purchase by Congress, and helped convert it for use by another captain before overseeing the outfitting of other ships he knew he would not command. The job was certainly against Barry's nature as a fighting captain, and one he likely viewed as being beneath his abilities. That Barry accepted such a status in the navy rather than take command of a privateer vessel implies that Barry's patriotism, along with a degree

⁹ Barney to Jefferson, 4 July 1807, and Barney to Madison, 12 March 1809, as quoted in Footner, *Sailor of Fortune*, 245, 247.

¹⁰ Tim McGrath, *John Barry*, 202.

of egotism and the promise of a regular salary, overrode any desire to accumulate wealth.

Similarly, there is very little concrete evidence to suggest that motivations other than patriotism and regular pay significantly influenced Lambert Wickes. It is clear Wickes had a personal conception of honor—particularly professional honor—but there is no indication he saw his identity linked to social stratification. Unlike John Paul Jones who constantly lobbied for position and vehemently protested his rank, Wickes seemed content with his position of eleven out of twenty-four captains. Though characteristically modest in most of his correspondence, Wickes's response to accusations of prisoner mistreatment shows he could protest effectively if a situation provoked him. Not only are there no complaints about his rank in any of his existing writings, but there is a complete absence on discussions of rank in general, or of his position in relation to other captains.

There is also no indication that Wickes sought public recognition or fame for his actions. Much like Barry, his after-action reports were extraordinarily modest and straightforward, and mentioned the exemplary conduct of others far more often than his own actions. None of his surviving letters express a desire for commendations or honors, detail his qualifications based on previous actions, or appear to be an attempt to ingratiate himself to those in superior position. Wickes, it seems, ignored service rivalry and simply wished to serve the cause in any way that he could.

It must be admitted that there is a paucity of information concerning Wickes's life prior to the war. It is probable that the onset of the conflict threatened his livelihood

as a merchant ship owner, possibly prompting him to seek alternative employment. The want for employment, however, is not in itself contradictory to patriotism or to Wickes's understanding of professional duty, and there were certainly other opportunities for work available during wartime. A case could also be made that Wickes joined the Continental Navy because a vessel and captaincy were promised to him by acquaintance Robert Morris, and that the assurance of respectable rank and pay, in addition to serving in an official capacity, was the reasonable and socially conscious career choice of a man from a family with deep roots in the community.¹¹

Although demonstrating an allegiance to the United States, other captains also dedicated themselves to additional principles. For Jones, liberty took a universal form; he fought not solely for American independence, but for common rights and liberty. He "stepped forth as a free Citizen of the World in defence of the Violated rights of Mankind," sacrificing financially and personally "To Support the Cause of Human Nature."¹² Jones painstakingly dedicated himself to that 'Glorious Cause' which he believed Congress had "vested [him] with a Publick [sic] Character" to serve.¹³

Hector McNeill also fought for more widespread, universal principles, though in a vastly different context from Jones's Enlightenment ideals. While all of the captains identified themselves with a religion, McNeill's references to religion and his overtly

¹¹ As previously discussed, this was probably the primary motivation behind Esek Hopkins's service. However, whereas one can point to Hopkins's provincialism and general character as support for that contention, no such correspondence exists for Lambert Wickes.

¹² Jones to Marine Board, 21 January 1777, in JP, 93. Writing to Madame de Chaumont, Jones expressed that his duty required him to "sacrifice all the soft emotions of the heart..." Jones to Madame de Chaumont, 13 June 1779, in JP, 641. Phrases like "Citizen of the World" were not unique to Jones, and are described by Morison as "eighteenth century stereotypes." Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 32.

¹³ Jones to Benjamin Franklin, 20 April 1780, in JP, 1052; Jones to Thomas Truxton, 24 October 1789, in JP, 1244.

religious conception of the American Revolution were unique among Continental captains. The religiousness of McNeill's family, or at what age his own faith solidified is unknown, but by the time he started writing his autobiography in 1773 McNeill believed in the "Goodness of God Manifested ... in many verey [sic] pressing dangers." He implored future generations of his family to have faith in "theire dependance [sic] on [God]."¹⁴

McNeill's religious character is also evident in many of the letters he wrote during the Revolution. At the most basic level, his religiosity revealed itself in the way he concluded some of his correspondence with prayers for his friends. Finishing a letter to Thomas Thompson, he wrote "may God bless and prosper you is the Prayer of your Friend," and to John Adams he hoped for "God [to] strengthen your hearts in this day of trial, and save our country by his Almighty power."¹⁵ He often wrote similar endings to his family, and to his friend Captain John Paul Jones, stating "May God preserve you," and offering his blessings and continued affections.¹⁶

While such statements are in themselves distinctive compared to other captains, religion's role in McNeill's life did not confine itself to formalities and the conclusions of letters. Indeed, religious conviction affected his entire outlook on the war. He prayed for "God [to] prosper our honest endeavours [sic] to establish the general rights of Mankind, and convince the world that we are worthy of Freedome...." Although similar to sentiments expressed by other captains regarding universal rights, McNeill fought for

¹⁴ Autobiographical Sketch, 1773, in Gardner W. Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 11, 15-17. The indicated pages from McNeill's autobiography also include information, and the quote, relating to McNeill's childhood.

¹⁵ McNeill to Captain Thomas Thompson, 21 July 1777, in NDAR, 9: 304-05; McNeill to John Adams, 9 October 1777, in Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 85.

¹⁶ McNeill to Jones, 4 September 1778, *ibid.*, 91; McNeill to his Wife, 14 September 1778, *ibid.*, 92.

a religious conception of liberty: for the creation of a "Kingdom of the just."¹⁷ In doing so he participated in the continuation of John Winthrop's ideas of American exceptionalism, and the expansion of the Puritan ideal of a "city upon a hill."

Other noteworthy voices in Revolutionary America also conceived of the war as the establishment of God's Kingdom on Earth. Writing in 1779, John Adams similarly identified the American cause as a "virtuous Vision of a Kingdom of the just."¹⁸ Both men also recognized dangers presented to the cause by human factors. Having presented his argument to the Marine Committee that John Manley's conduct caused the loss of *Fox*, McNeill wrote "May God Strengthen the Hands of the Congress & Save our Country by his Mighty Power, join'd with their honest Endeavours [sic] " in the absence of ability in many of the men Congress employed.¹⁹ More concerned with moral corruption than lack of ability, Adams wrote that if "selfishness, Vanity, flattery, and Corruption" continued to fester within his American countrymen that the cause would "not be worth the while of Men of Virtue."²⁰

McNeill conceived of the Revolution in more complicated terms than the dichotomy of good versus evil, or tyranny versus freedom. In early 1777, McNeill beseeched God to "Grant us that happiness when all our Contests with *unnatural* [sic] foes are honourably decided."²¹ Given the shared religious and cultural backgrounds of

¹⁷ McNeill to Brigadier General David Wooster, 6 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1116.

¹⁸ Adams to Arthur Lee, 24 March 1779, in PJA, 8: 16.

¹⁹ McNeill to the Continental Marine Committee, 4 August 1777, in NDAR, 9: 700-01.

²⁰ See note 204.

²¹ Emphasis added. McNeill to Brigadier General David Wooster, 6 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1116.

the colonies with Britain, it is likely that "unnatural foes" referred to the British.²²

Although he considered Britain an unnatural enemy, one he had served under previously, McNeill's "Superior Attachment [sic] to this country [withdrew] me from that service."²³

Whether they were more influenced by principles of universal rights, or solely by independence for America, Adair's assessment of the Founding Fathers' patriotism is probably also applicable to a number of Continental captains. Jones displayed patriotic fervor that at the very least matched his ego, and while less vociferous about his dedication, patriotism probably also played a part in Hopkins's decision to join the Continental Navy. Given Barney's reason for rejecting service in the United States Navy, and his reasons for joining the French Navy, it is also likely that Adair's argument applies to him as the Continental Navy harnessed his pride for the public good.²⁴

The three remaining captains, John Barry, Lambert Wickes and Hector McNeill, are more difficult to place within Adair's construction of fame and patriotism. Apart from the act of joining the Continental navy, and in Barry's case his efforts to remain in the navy, none of them displayed a vehement desire to acquire position or renown; indeed, issues of rank are absent from their writings. If his modest prose is indicative of the man, it would seem that Wickes's decision to serve in the Continental Navy was primarily driven by dedication to his country, and perhaps his familial background and

²² It is probable that McNeill identified Native Americans as "natural" enemies. He believed they were "Barbarous," and a "Cruel Bloody Bigoted Cowardly race of Vermine [sic]" who fought the English during the French and Indian War in the name of their own religion. Whether his establishment of a Kingdom of the Just required the purging of Native Americans after the Revolution deserves inquiry. Autobiographical Sketch, 1773, in Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 26-27.

²³ McNeill to the President of Congress, 15 February 1779, in Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 99-101.

²⁴ Remember also that Barney joined, then quit, then rejoined the French Navy all due to issues with rank or seniority.

the promise of steady pay. Regarding McNeill, religion heavily influenced his motivation to serve in the war; attached to principles of the rights of mankind, he fought to help establish a "Kingdom of the just."

CHAPTER VI

FOR WANT OF MONEY

In contrast to privateering, service in the Continental Navy provided few opportunities for significant financial gain. Salaries of naval officers compared unfavorably with those of their counterparts in the army, and their pay increasingly fell short of a livable income as the war progressed and inflation eroded the purchasing power of the money they received—when they received it, because their salaries often remained unpaid. The potential for prizes was a small consolation to many Continental officers, as long periods of inactivity on shore due to lack of ships or manpower restricted chances for prize money. Even when sailors were fortunate enough to capture a British ship, the Congressional prize money system did nothing to promote service in the navy over private employ as privateersmen received a larger portion of the value of prizes sold than did mariners in Continental service. Once condemned and sold, prize money was collected by prize agents who were sometimes lazy or corrupt, and did everything they could to delay transferring the money they received to the crewmen entitled to a portion of it. The government's financial difficulties forced many captains to advance crews pay out of their own pockets, and to refit their ships with the understanding that Congress would eventually reimburse them. While financial gain in addition to the potential for a steady paycheck was therefore not a motivation for initial service, financial stability nevertheless played an important role in influencing the career arcs of each captain. Joshua Barney and John Barry left the navy multiple times out of

financial necessity, and the other captains all experienced difficulties fitting and manning ships for lack of funds.

The Continental Navy's pay scale, established November 28, 1775, was wholly inadequate for a seagoing force that consisted of many more officers than it had positions to fill. Captains were salaried at thirty-two dollars a month, and lieutenants and masters at twenty dollars a month.¹ In comparison, the salary in the Continental Army for a colonel—the rank equivalent to a naval captain—was seventy dollars, over twice that paid a navy captain, and captains in the army earned forty dollars per month, i.e., more than a naval captain and twice that of a lieutenant—his equivalent in the naval service.² Although officers and men in the navy received a salary increase in November 1776, their pay remained well below salaries in the army.³ Weary of the inadequacy of their pay and the disparity between navy and army compensation, a group of lieutenants in the navy petitioned the Marine Committee in May 1777, asking that their monthly income be equal to those of an army captain, "it being Impossible for us to Support Ourselves & Families much More to lay in the Smallest Stores for Sea."⁴ Though they received better pay, army officers also complained about their inability to live on their income, a problem which George Washington recognized in 1778 when he implored

¹ In contrast, common seamen received just over six dollars per month in salary. Rules and Regulations of the Navy of the United Colonies, 28 November 1775, in NDAR, 2: 1174-82.

² Journal of the Continental Congress, 7 October 1776, in United States, Continental Congress, *Journals of the American Congress: From 1774 to 1788*, 4 vols (Washington: Way and Gideon, 1823), 1: 507-09. Hereafter JCC.

³ Journal of the Continental Congress, 15 November 1776, in JCC, 1: 549. In addition to raises, the navy pay scale was separated into men serving on ships with more than 20 guns, and those serving on ships of 10-20 guns. Captains on larger ships were salaried at sixty dollars a month, and lieutenants at thirty dollars.

⁴ Naval Lieutenants' Petition to the Continental Marine Committee, 15 May 1777, in NDAR, 8: 972-73. "Smallest Stores for the Sea" refers to the lieutenants having recently had their daily provisions reduced to the most basic level.

Congress to give officers and enlisted men in the Continental Army "adequate compensation" for their sacrifices.⁵

The lack of funds to pay wages and prize money compounded the situation, and sailors sometimes had to wait years to receive payment for their service. Writing in November 1778, John Paul Jones reminded Edward Bancroft he had "received neither Pay nor Rations from [America] since the date of my first Commission the 7th day of Decr. 1775...."⁶ Such extreme shortages led Continental agents to implore Congress to furnish them with additional money. Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., a New London merchant and Continental agent for Connecticut, wrote the Marine Committee in late 1777 and early 1778 to request "Twenty Thousand Pounds Lawfull [sic] Money" to cover ship provisions, wages, and advances of personal money he had made.⁷ John Langdon, who superintended construction of Continental warships in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, found himself in a similar situation, and wrote to the president of Congress that "the Marine Board at Boston are doing every thing [sic] in their Power to Supply me," but that he still required "a supply of Money to pay off" large sums owed to a number of people. The accounts must be settled, he added, even if "I am obliged to Sell my own Estate for the purpose."⁸

⁵ Washington to the Committee of Congress With the Army, 28 January 1778, in John C. Fitzpatrick and David M. Matteson, eds., *The Writings of George Washington From the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*. 39 vols (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-44), 10: 362-403. Washington believed the apathy and neglect of duty in the army would continue when "instead of gaining any thing [sic], [an officer] is impoverished by his commission."

⁶ Jones to Edward Bancroft, 11 November 1778, in JP, 454.

⁷ Nathaniel Shaw, Jr. to the Continental Marine Committee, 2 February 1778, in NDAR, 11: 264-65; Nathaniel Shaw, Jr. to the Continental Marine Committee, 24 November 1777, in NDAR: 10: 590-91.

⁸ John Langdon to the President of Congress, 3 March 1778, in NDAR, 11: 494-95.

Continental captains were also "loud in their complaints" concerning wages and prize money due themselves and their crews.⁹ Jones often petitioned on his crew's behalf, and advanced money of his own to fit ships he commanded and to pay his men. The shortage of Continental currency followed Jones to France, and he continued to support himself and his men, incurring personal debt in the absence of his salary for which he later sought and received compensation.¹⁰ Jones also spent time in Europe after the war pursuing prize money owed by France and Denmark, and in 1786 he finally received 167,483 livres from the French government for himself and the crews of *Bon Homme Richard* and *Alliance*. Jones informed John Jay of his success, and reminded the statesman of the "allowance that ought in Justice to be made for the great expence [sic], trouble, and time I have dedicated to this business" from the end of 1783.¹¹

Though not as eager as Jones in his efforts to help crewmembers, lack of funds also prompted Hector McNeill to send requests on their behalf. Following the loss of *Fox*, McNeill requested wages for his crew—he did not mention his own pay—and questioned how families of deceased sailors could collect compensation.¹² Like Jones, he also experienced a "want of cash," and advanced personal money to outfit his own

⁹ John Bradford to John Hancock, 20 February 1777, in NDAR, 7: 1241-42.

¹⁰ Expense Account, October 1777-June 1781, in JP, 1971; Expense Account, 1778-1780, in JP, 1973; Expense and Salary Account, 24 December 1782-83, in JP, 1979. He received compensation for travel expenses, past wages, and advances to the crew of *Ranger*, among other items.

¹¹ Jones to John Jay, 9 May 1786, in JP, 1606. Jones was unsuccessful in his trip to Denmark, but shares of prize money for captured vessels sent into Denmark were eventually paid by Congress in 1848. Samuel E. Morison, *John Paul Jones*, 358.

¹² McNeill to the Continental Navy Board of the Eastern Department, 4 September 1777, in NDAR, 9: 873.

ship; October of 1777 found McNeill "more than three thousand dollars in advance, and all this without fee or reward."¹³

Even as he supported efforts which might have resulted in prizes and an increase in his personal wealth, Lambert Wickes's letters made very few references to his finances. When he did mention money, it usually related to the disposal of prizes in neutral ports. Initial letters explained his clandestine method of selling prizes through local French merchants who would register and rename the captured ship, and then sell its cargo. Later missives also describe the sale of prizes, but detail the increasingly difficult time Wickes had disposing of his captures under the watchful eye of British agents, and the mounting political pressure on French officials by Lord Stormont. Wickes only lobbied the Commissioners once for money, and he did so in order to appease a mutinous crew who had served their one year contracts and wanted payment.¹⁴

Although financial circumstances affected all Continental captains throughout their careers, it played a more direct role in John Barry's and Joshua Barney's Continental service. Financial forced Barry to seek employment in private service. After losing *Raleigh* to the British, Barry returned to Philadelphia "At a very Grate Expence [sic] " in October 1778, with no foreseeable prospects for command of another Continental ship. Living off of previous earnings, Barry jumped at the opportunity to command the privateer *Delaware* in early 1779.¹⁵ Although the position proved lucrative, resulting in one prize and two successful trading voyages to the West Indies,

¹³ McNeill mentions being 4,000 dollars in advance at one point. McNeill to John Adams, 9 October 1777, in Gardner W. Allen, *Hector McNeill*, 85.

¹⁴ Wickes to American Commissioners, 27 April 1777, in BFP, 23: 618.

¹⁵ Memorial to Congress, 1785, as quoted in William B. Clark, *Gallant John Barry*, 172.

Barry returned to the Continental Navy in November when Congress offered him command of the 74-gun *America*, then under construction in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.¹⁶ This prospect for command fell through, however, and Barry's obligation to care for his own family, and for the widow and daughter of his recently-deceased brother, prompted him to obtain another leave from public service. Command of a privately owned vessel again presented an opportunity to "[retrieve] his [sic] loss sustained in the Public Service," and Barry completed one voyage on the brig *America* before he accepted command of the Continental Navy frigate *Alliance*.¹⁷

An unfortunate relationship with money characterized Barney's service more so than any of the other five captains' careers. Unlike Jones, Barney did not ardently detest privateers, but his initial employment in the Continental Navy and his multiple returns to public service show Barney still preferred Continental ships to private enterprise. Even so, the Continental Navy's lack of vessels in 1778 prompted Barney to accept a spot as first lieutenant on the privateer ship *General Mercer*. He assisted in the capture of the British privateer *Minerva*, and, after sailing the prize ship into Philadelphia, he left for Baltimore and sought another appointment on a Continental ship. Money continued to be a concern for Barney after accepting a position on *Saratoga*, and he petitioned Congress to ensure his pay as first lieutenant on board an 18-gun ship would still match the compensation he received for serving on larger vessels.¹⁸

¹⁶ Marine Committee to Barry, 6 November 1779, as quoted in Tim McGrath, *John Barry*, 207.

¹⁷ Memorial to Congress, 1785, as quoted in Clark, *Gallant John Barry*, 188.

¹⁸ Barney to Congress, 26 July 1780, and The Board of Admiralty to Barney, 7 August 1780, reproduced in Norton, 48-49.

Barney's voyage on *Saratoga* resulted in his capture by the British in early October 1780, and confinement on board British prison ships until his transfer to Old Mill Prison in Plymouth, England. Escaping on May 18, 1781, Barney arrived back in Philadelphia in March 1782, to grim prospects for work in the Continental Navy; 22 captains and 39 lieutenants were also unassigned.¹⁹ Financial obligations to his family necessitated Barney's employment, but instead of again looking for privateer work he accepted a captain's commission in the Pennsylvania State Navy, a promotion over his previous Continental rank of lieutenant, and received his first independent command, the *Hyder-Ally*.

The years following the American Revolution were also fraught with financial misfortune for Barney. He entered into a business partnership with his brother-in-law in 1784, but multiple unexpected and unfortunate situations led the business to fail just a year later. An importation business Barney invested in afterwards nearly bankrupted him, and although the auction business he entered into with John Hollins in 1790 did achieve some financial success, it was not enough for Barney to support his family.²⁰ Those misfortunes led him to purchase the 300-ton *Sampson* in 1792 to trade with Saint Domingue in the Caribbean, but that enterprise ended when a British warship seized the *Sampson* for violating a British ban on trade with France or its possessions. Combined with the French consul general's refusal to honor Barney's debtor note for \$30,000, the

¹⁹ Barney's escape from Old Mill Prison is covered in the Journal of William Russell, in Ralph D. Paine, ed., *The Ships and Sailors of Old Salem: The Record of a Brilliant Era of American Achievement* (New York: Outing Publishing, 1909), 135-37. For unassigned officer statistics, see Louis A. Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 71.

²⁰ Norton, *Joshua Barney*, 100-02.

Sampson's seizure sealed his return to the brink of destitution just prior to accepting his commission in the French Navy.

Although the initial promise of a steady salary served as an incentive to join the Continental Navy, financial gain was not a significant motivating factor. All of the captains except Jones entered the war with some degree of financial stability from their prewar activities. All survived for extended periods without pay, and many possessed good enough credit to borrow money they used to help fit out the ships they commanded and to advance wages to men serving on board the vessels. The very act of seeking a commission in the Continental Navy shows financial gain did not play a significant role in their choice of employment. Privateering and merchant service presented opportunities of larger profits for a skilled captain, and more reliable payment after 1778 for services rendered. Even so, the captains all preferred public service to private enterprise, and Barry and Barney always returned to the navy when finances permitted. Jones's declaration that he was not an "Adventurer of Fortune" was representative of the other captains as well.²¹

Financial stability did, however, have the potential to affect a captain's conduct and career arc after accepting employment in the navy. Most notably, the navy's lack of ships and unreliable and inadequate pay forced Barney and Barry to seek positions in other seagoing services. Barney's financial situation remained particularly precarious after the war and influenced his decision to serve in the French Navy, and in private service at the outset of the War of 1812. As described in chapter three, financial concern

²¹ Jones to Jacques Le Ray de Chaumont, 14 September 1778, in JP, 406.

probably also influenced Barney's decision to disobey orders and engage the *General Washington* in 1782. Confronted with an erratic wage and prize money system, loyalty to their crews led McNeill and Wickes to petition on their behalf for compensation, and Jones also went to great lengths during and after the Revolution to ensure he and his men received prize money. Although not necessarily in personal distress, each captain experienced difficulties throughout his career due to the navy's lack of ships and financial instability

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Service in the Continental Navy was not a foregone conclusion for American seafarers who supported independence. Indeed, while some chose to serve the United States in an official capacity, a larger number entered private service to fight the British and make their fortunes as privateersmen. As the war progressed, the navy became increasingly hard pressed for ships and sailors, and for money to pay the salaries and wages of its officers and enlisted men. Still, some men chose public service over the potentially more-lucrative private enterprise presented by privateers, and the reasons why are important to understanding the men who formed the foundations of the American Revolution and the Continental Navy.

The early careers of the six captains presented in this study primed them for seagoing service during America's War for Independence. Employment on merchant vessels provided the professional training required to navigate and direct the operations of a sailing ship, and each captain learned his trade well enough to command a merchant ship before the war. Hector McNeill and Esek Hopkins also claimed previous military experience that helped them to secure their initial positions in the navy, as both had seen combat during the French and Indian War and served on land at the outset of the Revolution.

Although previous shipboard experience may have helped the captains secure their initial positions in the navy, higher rank and seniority required social connections.

New England provincialism dominated the Continental Marine Committee which issued commissions and established the list of seniority, and all of the first appointed captains except Nicholas Biddle were New Englanders. Esek Hopkins undoubtedly benefited from his brother's position as a leading member of the Marine Committee when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the first Continental squadron, and Hector McNeill's association with John Hancock and Thomas Cushing probably also influenced his placement at third on the October 10, 1776, seniority list for captains. Two officers with links to the Middle Colonies also did well in the seniority listing; John Barry, ranked seventh, and Lambert Wickes, ranked eleventh, both knew Robert Morris who may have induced them to seek employment in the navy. Much to his chagrin, Congress placed Jones, whose links were to Virginia and North Carolina, at eighteenth out of twenty-four.

But why serve in the Continental Navy in the first place? For Lambert Wickes and Hopkins, their family backgrounds may have provided some impetus to seek government employ. Hopkins came from a family with a history of public service, and his brother already served as a Rhode Island delegate to the Continental Congress, and as a member of the Marine Committee. The pursuit of a "gentlemanly" profession may have been expected of him. While little is known about Wickes before the war, his family had deep roots in Maryland as one of the earliest families on the Eastern Shore. A desire to contribute to his family's legacy in America may have also prompted him to seek a commission in the navy.

The captains' experiences in the West Indies trade also put them into contact with an "Atlantic World" which may have affected their understandings of duty, and helped them develop more universal ideas of liberty and resistance to authority. Because of their social, cultural, and economic disconnect from Britain, the captains would have applied those newfound principles to their homes in the North American colonies, and helped form an attachment to the idea of an independent United States. Although provincialism played a role in the formation of the Continental Navy, much like Charles Royster argues localism influenced participation in the army, the navy's development also occurred within an Atlantic World context, involving men whose early lives and careers were spent interacting with a diverse and expansive network of people and ideas.

A basic need for employment—not to be confused with a desire for financial gain—may have also played a part in the decision for some captains to serve. John Paul Jones in particular required a steady form of income after he departed Tobago in haste without settling his accounts. Though little is known about his movements between his departure from Tobago and when he received his lieutenant's commission in the Continental Navy, it is possible he remained unemployed through 1774 and most of 1775. The promise of a reliable income, though later found to be extraordinarily undependable, may have presented an attractive employment option.

On a more personal level, and intertwined with Hopkins's and Wickes's possible familial motivations, this study suggests that all six Continental captains were primarily motivated to join the navy by a desire for renown, and by a sense of patriotism. Because of the lack of materials relating to each captain prior to the war, it has used their conduct

during their varied careers to demonstrate each captain's dedication to the United States, and the pursuit of fame that underlay their service. Although each captain sometimes provided straightforward examples of their dedication and their ego, the majority of their writings did not explicitly elucidate their motivations. However, by comparing their actions to the understandings of duty that influenced their behavior in the navy, including instances where captains disobeyed orders, came into conflict with superiors, and their relationships with crews, the motivations of fame and patriotism are more clearly revealed. This method of inquiry also suggests that while financial gain was not an impetus for serving in the Continental Navy, the potential for a steady salary did promote initial service, and financial stability became an influential factor in each captain's career during the war.

Pursuing a commission in the Continental Navy is in itself indicative of some degree of egotistical motivation and suggests patriotism and ego were more influential factors than financial gain. While the navy could not compete with privateers in profitability, it provided more incentives in terms of prestige. Commanders of Continental vessels were more likely to have their exploits publicized than if they were one of the hundreds of American privateers, and public service put captains in contact with leading statesmen and other important figures in society.

Douglas Adair's assessment of "Fame and the Founding Fathers" is also applicable to the six Continental captains. The Continental Navy served as an outlet for each man's abilities, and bent their egotistical motivations into service for the public good while giving them the opportunity to pursue renown. Rather than overshadow their

patriotism, their desire for fame bolstered their dedication and enthusiasm for the American cause as the captains tried to appeal to the widest possible audience.

To varying degrees, events in each captain's career reflected his motivations for service. Although Esek Hopkins offered to serve the United States without pay and exerted a great amount of effort in behalf of the rebelling colonies, his actions during the war suggest a desire for renown accompanied his patriotism. Hopkins chose to disobey explicit orders from Congress to protect the Southern coast, and ordered his squadron directly to the Bahamas. While the raid had practical applications, it also represented a better chance for Hopkins to make a name for himself and demonstrate his abilities as a fleet commander. When Congress censured him for his actions, Hopkins's ego led him to openly criticize congressmen as corrupt know-nothings. His insubordination, combined with his ineptitude as a squadron commander and the navy's financial difficulties that forced most of the Continental squadron to remain inactive, resulted in Hopkins's dismissal.

Although unsuccessful in accomplishing his goal of achieving additional prestige that motivated Hopkins to serve in the navy, his service does not seem to have negatively affected his post-navy career. Despite his failure as commander-in-chief of the Continental Navy's first squadron, he enjoyed success in public office after his dismissal, serving on the General Assembly in Rhode Island from 1777-1786, and on the state council of war. Hopkins's local contacts made during his prewar career, his family's position in public affairs, and his initial role as commander of Rhode Island's

military forces during the Revolution undoubtedly aided his ability to recover from his dismal career in the navy.

Perhaps the most ardent patriot of the six captains, John Paul Jones often declared he fought as a "Citizen of the World" to support the cause of universal liberty and an independent United States. His desire for fame rivaled his dedication and enthusiasm for the cause of liberty, and Jones coveted rank, titles, and awards that accompanied great patriotic deeds. He ingratiated himself to others in letters and action reports in his quest for favor from men and women in high places, and was as quick to recognize praise as to identify slights against his honor. Although Jones went to great lengths to care for American sailors, including petitioning on their behalf for prize money and wages, and encouraging prisoner exchanges that could alleviate the condition of Americans held captive by the British, his passions sometimes overcame him and resulted in the mistreat of his crews and officers.

Jones's wartime contacts and experience indisputably helped him after the Revolution. He successfully acquired prize money owed to him and his crews by the French, and accepted a position in the Russian Navy in 1788 offered to him as a result of his performance during the Revolution. Although he died alone in Paris in 1792, possibly feeling abandoned and questioning his legacy, history has proven Jones successful in acquiring the prestige that influenced his decision to seek a commission in the Continental Navy.

Joshua Barney also took great pride in participating in patriotic events, but financial troubles throughout the war caused by the navy's lack of ships forced him to

seek employment outside of the Continental Navy on multiple occasions. He served as a privateer at one point during the war, and in the Pennsylvania State Navy following his escape from Old Mill Prison, but Barney always returned to the Continental Navy when his finances allowed. Money troubles and a want of rank and renown also influenced Barney's later decision to join the French Navy, and to then quit and rejoin over an issue of rank. Barney returned to American service as a privateer during the War of 1812, and accepted a captain's commission in the United States Navy in 1814.

Barney owed much of his success in negotiating multiple changes of employment to the contacts he made during the war, and to his travels around the Caribbean. He secured a position as first lieutenant on *General Mercer* because of his previous service with the ship's commander, Isaiah Robinson, and his prior naval experience probably helped him acquire command of *Hyder-Ally*. Barney's West Indian and French contacts also helped him after the war, first in establishing trade relationships in Saint Domingue, and then receiving a commission in the French Navy and operating in the Caribbean. Although his foreign service negatively affected his bids for political office, personal contacts and his naval experience netted Barney a captain's commission in the U.S. Navy during the War of 1812.

Like Barney, financial setbacks also caused John Barry to enter private service at two points during the war, though he preferred employment in the Continental Navy. Barry had a growing family to support, and languishing on shore without a command was never an option for long. When new opportunities to serve in the navy presented themselves, however, Barry always returned to public service. Though Barry's action

reports were usually straightforward and succinct and he did not try to promote himself in letters, his ego showed through during confrontations with Francis Hopkinson. Barry saw the order to scuttle *Effingham* as an affront on Hopkinson's part, and the relationship between the two men only worsened during the debacle involving the actual sinking.

Barry's ability to maintain employment during the war was largely due to his successful utilization of professional contacts. Positions on privateer vessels came as a result of his acquaintances and reputation, and his initial employment in the Continental Navy stemmed from his West Indian experience and the fact that he had previously commanded *Black Prince*, which he helped convert into the warship *Alfred*. Barry's wartime contacts also helped him maintain employment after the war, and he took command of the *Asia* to participate in the China trade, and later commanded the frigate *United States* as the most-senior captain in the new U.S. Navy. Unofficially labeled the "Father of the United States Navy" by many subsequent writers, Barry undoubtedly accomplished the ambitions that motivated him to serve in the Continental Navy.

Although McNeill's patriotism and desire for renown probably mirrored that of the other captains, his dedication to the United States included a unique religious element. A devout Protestant, McNeill characterized the Revolution as a war to establish a "Kingdom of the Just," and he continued his work as a privateer out of Boston after his dismissal from the Continental Navy. Though he may have considered his religious mission a success, McNeill failed in his pursuit of fame and professional advancement during his career in the navy, and his merchant activities following the Revolution made little money. Whether he failed to utilize his contacts in Boston and

the government successfully after the war, or if they abandoned him after *Hancock's* loss is unknown, but McNeill's death in 1785 left his family in destitution.

Finally, Lambert Wickes showed little personal motivation outside of his dedication to the United States. He strictly followed notions of professional duty, and his correspondence was extraordinarily humble and straightforward. Wickes seemed content with his place at eleventh on the captain's list of 1776, though his subtle bids for command of *Maurepas* suggest he harbored at least some impulse for professional advancement. Had he lived through the war, Wickes's continued outstanding service may have helped him achieve professional and public recognition on the level of Jones or Barry.

The outbreak of the Revolution presented American seafarers with choices: Whether to opt for neutrality, join the rebels, or to remain loyal to Great Britain. For those who decided to support the American quest for independence, the next question was how should one serve: in the merchant marine, as a privateer, or in the new Continental Navy. Patriotism and a desire for renown motivated Esek Hopkins, John Paul Jones, Joshua Barney, John Barry, Hector McNeill, and Lambert Wickes to seek commissions in the Continental Navy, and influenced their conduct while in the service. Financial considerations during the war further affected their conduct and career arcs, but the pursuit of wealth did not serve as any of the men's primary impetus for service. Never at work alone, there was a constant balancing act at play among the motivational factors within each captain, and each motivation's degree of influence was largely situational. By further analyzing and exploring motivations for service in the

Continental Navy, historians stand to better understand the personal motivations and Atlantic World context behind the ideological origins of the American Revolution, and the military forces that fought to win independence for a new nation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Allen, Gardner W., ed. *Captain Hector McNeill of the Continental Navy*. 1922. Reprint. Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2009.

Barney, Mary, ed. *A Biographical Memoir of the Late Commodore Joshua Barney*. Boston: Gray and Bowen, Press of I.R. Butts, 1832. <http://galenet.galegroup.com.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY106418237&srchtp=a&ste=14>.

Bradford, James C., ed. *The Papers of John Paul Jones*. Microform. 10 reels. Alexandria, VA: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986.

Clark, William Bell, Michael J. Crawford, and William J. Morgan, eds. *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*. 11 vols. to date. Washington: Naval History Division, Dept. of the Navy, 1964- .

Fanning, Nathaniel. *Fanning's Narrative: Being the Memoirs of Nathaniel Fanning, an Officer of the Revolutionary Navy, 1778-1783*. Edited by John S. Barnes. New York: De Vinne Press, 1912.

Fitzpatrick, John C., and David M. Matteson, eds. *The Writings of George Washington From the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*. 39 vols. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-44.

Labaree, Leonard W., Barbara Oberg, and William B. Willcox, eds. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*. 39 vols. to date. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959- .

Jones, John Paul. *John Paul Jones' Memoir of the American Revolution, Presented to King Louis XVI of France*. Translated and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt. Washington: Library of Congress, 1979.

Kline, Mary-Jo, Gregg L. Lint, and Robert J. Taylor, eds. *The Papers of John Adams*. 15 vols. to date. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1977- .

Porter, Horace and Franklin Sanborn, eds. *Letters of John Paul Jones*. Boston: The Bibliophile Society, 1905.

United States. Continental Congress. *Journals of the American Congress: From 1774 to 1788*. 4 vols. Washington: Way and Gideon, 1823. <http://galenet.galegroup.com.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY110073334&srchtp=a&ste=14>.

Secondary Sources

Bouton, Terry. *Taming Democracy: "The People," the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Bradford, James C., ed. *Quarterdeck and Bridge: Two Centuries of American Naval Leaders*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997.

Buell, Augustus. *Paul Jones, Founder of the American Navy: A History*, 2 vols. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1900.

Campbell, Charles. *The Intolerable Hulks: British Shipboard Confinement, 1776-1857*. 3rd ed. Tucson, AZ: Fenestra Books, 2001.

Clark, William Bell. *Gallant John Barry, 1745-1803: The Story of a Naval Hero of Two Wars*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1938.

—. *Lambert Wickes: Sea Raider and Diplomat*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932.

Cooper, James Fenimore. *The History of the Navy of the United States of America*. 1839. Reprint, 2 vols. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Literature House, 1970.

De Koven, Mrs. Reginald. *The Life and Letters of John Paul Jones, by Mrs. Reginald De Koven*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.

Footner, Hulbert. *Sailor of Fortune: The Life and Adventures of Commodore Barney, USN*. 1940. Reprint. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998.

Fowler Jr., William M. *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

—. *Silas Talbot: Captain of Old Ironsides*. Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1995.

Gurn, Joseph. *Commodore John Barry: Father of the American Navy*. New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1933.

- Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker. *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2000.
- Lorenz, Lincoln. *John Paul Jones: Fighter for Freedom and Glory*. Annapolis: MD, Naval Institute Press, 1943.
- Maclay, Edgar S. *A History of American Privateers*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899.
- McGrath, Tim. *John Barry: An American Hero in the Age of Sail*. Yardley, PN: Westholme, 2010.
- McManemin, John A. *Captains of the Continental Navy*. Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ: Ho-Ho-Kus Publishing, 1981.
- McPherson, James. *What They Fought For, 1861-1865*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995.
- Miller, Nathan. *Sea of Glory: The Continental Navy Fights for Independence, 1775-1783*. New York: David McKay, 1974.
- Morgan, William J. *Captains to the Northward: the New England Captains in the Continental Navy*. Barre, MA: Barre Gazette, 1959.
- Morison, Samuel Eliot. *John Paul Jones: A Sailor's Biography*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1959.
- Nash, Gary B. *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Norton, Louis A. *Captains Contentious: The Dysfunctional Sons of the Brine*. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2009.
- . *Joshua Barney: Hero of the Revolution and 1812*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000.
- O'Shaughnessy, Andrew J. *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2000.
- Paine, Ralph D., ed. *The Ships and Sailors of Old Salem: The Record of a Brilliant Era of American Achievement*. New York: Outing Publishing, 1909.

Patton, Robert H. *Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2008.

Rediker, Marcus. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Royster, Charles. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Vansittart, Peter. *John Paul Jones: A Restless Spirit*. London: Robson Books, 2004.

Waldstreicher, David. *Slavery's Constitution: From Revolution to Ratification*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2009.

Walker, Frank. *John Paul Jones: Maverick Hero*. Gloucestershire, UK: Spellmount Limited, 2007.

Walsh, John E. *Night on Fire: The First Complete Account of John Paul Jones's Greatest Battle*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

Articles & Essays

Adair, Douglas. "Fame and the Founding Fathers." In *Fame and the Founding Fathers*, edited by Trevor Colbourn, 3-36. 1974. Reprint. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998.

Bolander, Louis H. "A Forgotten Hero of the Revolution." *Americana Illustrated* 22:2 (April 1928): 119-128.

Crawford, Michael J. "Privateering Debate in Revolutionary America." *The Northern Mariner* 21:3 (July 2011): 219-234.

Lemisch, Jesse. "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen and the Politics of Revolutionary America." *William and Mary Quarterly* Third series, 25:3 (July 1968): 372-97.

Norton, Louis A. "A Victory by 'the Rule of the Contrary.'" *Naval History* 18:2 (April 2004): 30-34.

Paullin, Charles O. "Admiral Pierre Landais." *Catholic Historical Review* 17:3 (October 1931): 296- 307

VITA

Benjamin Duerksen
 Melbern G. Glasscock Building, Room 101
 TAMU 4236
 College Station, TX 77845
 bduerksen@tamu.edu

Education:

M.A. History, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 2009-2012

B.A. History, The Colorado College, Colorado Springs May 2007

Work Experience:

Texas A&M History Department 09/2011 – Present
 College Station, Texas Position: Teaching Assistant

Texas A&M Student-Athlete Services 09/2009-09/2011
 College Station, Texas Position: History Tutor, Learning Assistant

Grants:

Texas A&M History Department Conference Travel Grant, 2011
 Texas A&M History Department Summer Language Grant, 2010

Awards and Honors:

The Colorado College Dean's List
 The Colorado College President's List

Conference Papers & Participation:

"A Change in the Wind: The Legacy of Spain's 1628 Treasure Fleet and its Capture,"
 presented at the Louisiana State University History Graduate Conference, Baton Rouge,
 2011.

Panel Chair, Texas A&M History Graduate Conference, 2010 & 2011.