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“Find a Hell before You Leave this World”:  
Maritimers as Prisoners of War, 1812–1815

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YANKEE PRISON

**A**n Atlantic Canadian privateersman, captured on Maine’s Penobscot Bay in 1813, described the squalid stone cell in which he and his shipmates were incarcerated:

we found dung or dirt enough on the floor to load a cart; however, they were so kind as to get some lime and spread over the floor, also a bundle of hay, which was divided into two parts, and laid in the corner for four of us to sleep on. The room was ten feet square, with a hole cut in the wall 18 inches long, and 4 wide; this was to give us light. In this Cell of darkness and despair, we remained six weeks, and at one time, were so long neglected by the Keeper, that we were almost afloat in our own...

The author completed his account by warning, “If any of you are taken [by the Americans], run-away if possible, if you love your liberty; or you may be caught as I was, and find a hell before you leave this world.”<sup>1</sup>

This privateersman, known only by the initials “T.D.,” wrote the above letter to the editor of the Halifax *Acadian Recorder* in 1814. It describes in painful detail his cell in the Lincoln County Jail in Wiscasset, Maine, and his transfer to the prison ship moored at Salem, Massachusetts. For historians, it is a valuable account, because he wrote it while still imprisoned.<sup>2</sup> For Canadians it is especially intriguing because it is a very rare account of a Maritimer recording his time while incarcerated during the War of 1812. For Americans it can be interesting because the Lincoln County Jail still exists, and one can even tour “T.D.’s” cell, which is little changed from 1813. The nearby blockhouse of Fort Edgecomb, in which “T.D.” was imprisoned for a time, lies just across the river, and also remains extant.<sup>3</sup>

The Canadian perspective is intriguing because the experience of being a prisoner never really entered the consciousness or secondary literature of the Atlantic Provinces or Canada as a whole. The war’s imprisonment literature is instead dominated by American authors, who wrote about Melville Prison in Halifax, or the dreaded Dartmoor in southwest England. Even so, understanding the miseries of Maritimers who suffered imprisonment at the hands of their Yankee neighbors may shed

some light on the war and its impact on the region. In particular, it can be seen that the Canadian experience shared components of the British experience during the Napoleonic Wars as well as the experience of Americans during the War of 1812. The stories of escaping their Yankee gaolers was a most dramatic component of this experience, and Canadians proved highly adept at breaking out.

Most of the Maritimers who found themselves captured were either seafarers, especially privateersmen, or passengers on ships, mostly men, with a handful of women.<sup>4</sup> Most were captured fairly close to home, and incarcerated in New England ports in county gaols such as the one at Wiscasset or coastal batteries such as Fort Edgecomb for a time before being either paroled or sent to the prison ship in Salem. The poor provisions “T.D.” and his shipmates received in these facilities stands as a proxy for their shabby treatment on the whole. He described the food he received en route to the Salem prison ship:

[it] was such as no human creature could eat, unless dying with hunger—x days allowance of poor salt beef was boiled at once, and hove again into the same barrel it came out of. The bread was such, that had it not been for the form it was put in, when baked, it would have been impossible to tell whether it was bread, or English cross-grained sole-leather—the best of knives were of no use to us—we were once obliged to use a broad axe to cut it in small pieces, which we kept in our mouths like a quid of tobacco—in this way we supported nature for several days.<sup>4</sup>

## SOURCES AND BARDIC TRADITIONS

Placing the prisoner of war issue within in the context of the Napoleonic Wars reveals that Maritimers’ experiences were comparable to the British experience as prisoners of the French, and equal to the complaints that Americans made about their British captors. As Patricia Crimmin has written, prisoners of war formed a secondary, but not negligible part of war policy during the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>5</sup> Former British prisoners of war, especially officers, often published memoirs of their incarceration at the hands of the French. These accounts usually focused more on their escapes than their incarceration, bringing attention to how bold, clever, and lucky these men were. Examples include Edward Boys, who finally succeeded in regaining his freedom after multiple failed attempts, or Major Colquhoun Grant, who escaped his French captors in Spain and lived in Paris by posing as an American officer.<sup>6</sup> There is less available information on the War of 1812, and as one American scholar has noted, there is disappointing lack of British journals or diaries detailing their incarceration at the hands of the Americans.<sup>7</sup> That is true for Canadians as well, and for Maritimers the literature of prisoners of war has largely been that of the gaoler. Melville Prison has attracted a fair amount of attention, including Brian Cuthbert-

son's recent *Melville Prison and Deadman's Island*, but there does not seem to be any published Canadian memoirs relating the experience of imprisonment at the hands of the Yankees, other than "T.D." As Cuthbertson points out, the literature of prisoners in the War of 1812 has received but scant attention, with influential Ontario-based scholars such as J. Mackay Hitsman and George Stanley scarcely mentioning them at all. This is part of an ongoing national bias that insists the war had little impact in the Maritimes. This is not merely a function of Toronto's self-fascination, but of a public inability to grasp the subtleties of naval power, especially blockade, which was of course an imperial affair, even if Halifax was the Royal Navy's most important base in the Americas.<sup>8</sup>

Unlike Canadians, American prisoners of war generated a substantial body of literature related to incarceration. This includes the semi-autobiographical accounts of Ned Myers, who documented his time at Melville Prison. His accounts are especially fascinating because he was born in Quebec, and grew up in Halifax, yet after only a few years in the United States identified himself as an American. He also admitted that his treatment at Melville Island was good. Pamphlets regarding the notorious Dartmoor Prison and the post-war massacre of American prisoners in April, 1815 were numerous, and stoked anti-British resentment for decades. The gist of these stories and analyses fits comfortably into a narrative whereby American sailors had been free, but were stripped of their rights and dignity by the oppressive Britons or others. The slave-owning Republic's citizens, both men and women, were and remain somewhat obsessed with captivity narratives, no matter whether by the British, Barbary corsairs, indigenous peoples, or even the chain gang, in both print and film. American scholars have developed elaborate theories about these writings, relating them to concepts of honor, manhood, and patriotism, but in an international context these ideas ring quite hollow. These elaborate narratives and analyses often reek of the same Yankee propensity to boast and bluster that Canadians and Britons have long found offensive. Stripped of assumptions of American exceptionalism, these accounts and their modern interpretation even sound a bit whiney to foreign audiences.<sup>9</sup>

Another component of the American bias in writing about the war is that with the exception of one doctoral dissertation and subsequent monograph, there is almost no consideration of how Americans treated their prisoners of war. There is good reason for this: conditions in Yankee facilities were awful, and it would detract from the persecution narrative. American gaolers were not very kind at the best of times, and as the war continued treatment worsened. Provisions became an increasingly difficult issue as the Royal Navy throttled American coastal shipping, and complaints about food were common.<sup>10</sup> Textile-starved America also had difficulty providing clothing and blankets for prisoners, and were very stingy with them. Even at larger facilities like the Salem prison ship, the prisoners were obliged to pay a cash security for their blankets.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, when prisoners of war were held in county

gaols, the gaolers practiced extravagant frauds against the federal government, such as charging for allowing the prisoners to exercise in the fresh air, or charging outrageous amounts for the most paltry of provisions.<sup>12</sup> Even officers who were paroled and stayed in inns had reason to complain. For example, a Nova Scotia man found that his board was \$3.00 per week, but the U.S. marshal only allowed him only \$1.40, putting him deeply in debt over the course several months.<sup>13</sup>

These ideas of clever escape and unjust imprisonment speak to what might be called bardic traditions regarding soldiers and sailors held in captivity. The term bardic means the comforting and familiar narratives or myths held by the populace at large. Canadian bardic traditions include the Upper Canadian “militia myth” and Laura Secord held so dear in Ontario, and more locally, the privateers such as the *Liverpool Packet* that brought so much confusion to New England’s coasting trade.<sup>14</sup> Two elements of bardic traditions relate the experiences of British, American, and Canadian experiences the best: the clever escape and the victimized prisoner. Examples of both can be gleaned from the Maritime Provinces, meaning in this context New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

### THE CLEVER ESCAPE

While prisoner accounts from the War of 1812 are scarce in British and Canadian sources, in a bigger Napoleonic context the story is different. A local example of the clever escape in the Napoleonic Wars is the memoir of Charles Hare. He was a Royal Navy officer who served in the Bay of Fundy during the War of 1812, and ended up living out his days in Saint John, New Brunswick. In 1803, his frigate wrecked on the French shore, and he found himself incarcerated in Verdun, and later in Germany. He made his bid for freedom in December, 1809, dressed in the uniform of a customs officer which a friend had given him. He travelled some five hundred miles in seven days, accompanied by his dog. Especially hair-raising were encounters with real customs officers and French police, but he kept his cool. To compensate for his less than perfect French language skills, he claimed to be Swiss. When he found himself enmeshed in uncomfortable conversations, he would let his dog slip away from him, apologize hastily, and go in pursuit of his pet. He eventually made it to the Netherlands, where sympathetic locals helped him find a boat that took him to a British warship. A few days later he was at his mother’s home, still in his foreign uniform, which remains with his descendants in Ontario to this day.<sup>15</sup>

New Brunswickers proved equally hard to confine in North America. Francis Leavitt of Saint John cut a hole through the privy of the prison ship at Boston in January, 1813, lowered himself to the frozen harbor, and made his way home somehow.<sup>16</sup> Nova Scotians were no less resourceful. For them, escape by sea was tempting, as when three prisoners on parole at Boston stole a pleasure boat and sailed to Halifax in April, 1813. In the latter instance, British authorities took a dim view of

these men violating their parole, and offered to return the men to the Americans, or even to have them flogged.<sup>17</sup> In fact the various facilities that held prisoners on the New England coast, especially those in Maine, were quite easy to escape from, and many prisoners escaped, either singly or in groups. The battery at Castine provides an example of multiple escapes. Within a month of the declaration of war, the tiny post had six prisoners of war, a number almost equal to the garrison of six enlisted men and a junior officer. More than a year later the battery had held a total of sixteen prisoners. Authorities paroled five, another five had escaped (one on his second attempt), and six remained. The garrison at the mouth of the Kennebec River also suffered from escapes. On the night of August 22, 1813, five escaped at once, leaving only twelve out of twenty-eight the privateer *America* deposited there on July 21. The deputy marshal reported that prisoners left daily. The district marshal's response was to march the prisoners in chains out of his jurisdiction as soon as possible. The poor conditions prisoners faced undoubtedly encouraged prisoners to escape, inattentive guards added to the problem, as did venal Yankees willing to aid for a price. Proximity to the border, or the blockading vessels of the Royal Navy (many of them within sight of shore) encouraged attempts as well.<sup>18</sup>

Solomon Jennings, commander the privateer *Crown* of Halifax, is an example the clever escape as well, and demonstrates how wily escapees could be. He found himself unexpectedly engaged in a fierce battle off Pemaquid Point, Maine. Jennings marvelled that "there is above 300 balls in our hull and spars, the sails and rigging of both vessels wonderfully cut to pieces, a number of balls through our hats and cloaths, yet there is not a man either killed or wounded on either side." Nonetheless, the American vessel, crewed by locals irate about the depredations of the Royal Navy in their waters, overwhelmed the *Crown's* crew and forced them to surrender. The Yankees landed their prisoners and marched them to Wiscasset, where they handed them over to federal authorities. The U.S. deputy marshal gave Captain Jennings parole to wander the village streets if he gave his word of honor to not escape. The captain took up quarters in an inn and awaited parole. The rest of his officers and men were confined in the local gaol before being transferred to Fort Edgecomb. After sixty-four days in captivity, Jennings became alarmed by news that he was to be placed in close confinement, and he ran away, local tradition claiming he disguised himself as a woman. Newspapers carried advertisements of his escape, admonishing him for breaking parole "contrary to solemn & honorable obligations," but stopped short of offering a reward for his capture.<sup>19</sup>

Jennings led the American authorities a merry chase, but was nearly nabbed by the garrison at Eastport on the border. The soldiers failed to take him in the village, but pursued him across the border to Indian Island, New Brunswick. The Yankees demanded Jennings back, since he had violated parole. The island people almost did so, in part because Jennings had lied to them both about his name, and even denied

he had ever been in Wiscasset. After some discussion between the American soldiers and the islanders, an agreement was arrived at whereby Jennings would remain on the island while the British commander at nearby St. Andrews determined what to do with him. The next day, the British officer agreed to return Jennings to his American captors, but the island folk had spirited him away to Saint John and safety. It was a particularly Canadian moment, in which both American and British opinions were patiently heard out, but ultimately deciding upon a different way forward that suited their own interests.<sup>20</sup>

## VICTIMIZED PRISONERS

The Americans have made the most out of the prisoner of war experience, but there were some Canadians who could claim injustice and abuse, too. It also illustrates a problem for British North Americans; sometimes they suffered because of issues between the British empire and the United States, and they couldn't always escape as Solomon Jennings had. In 1813, a tit-for-tat cycle of retaliation against imprisoned seamen and privateers commenced between the United States and Britain. The origins of this controversy lay in the Caribbean, where the captain of the American privateer *Decatur* of Newburyport, Massachusetts, was placed in close confinement in Barbados. The U.S. government retaliated by placing some British prisoners into close confinement as well. Among these was Joseph Barss, Jr., of Liverpool, Nova Scotia. Barss had terrorized the New England coastline as commander of the privateer *Liverpool Packet*. Eventually his luck ran out, and he was captured by the American privateer *Thomas* in June, 1813, and brought into Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Initially, his captors treated him reasonably well, and gave him parole in the town. However, when just about to depart for Salem to be exchanged, federal officials apprehended him and placed him in the local gaol in close confinement. This meant that he was restricted to his cell, and even denied access to exercise in the gaol yard.

Barss turned to a fellow Nova Scotian for assistance in alleviating what he called his "extremely disagreeable situation." Thomas Barclay, a Nova Scotian who had served prominently in the Assembly and militia, was assigned as the British Agent for Prisoners of War. His duties included arranging exchanges and seeing to the welfare of prisoners. He arrived in the U.S. in early 1813, and immediately set to work. He was a little chagrined that the Americans compelled him to live in rural Harlem rather than New York City. He was further dismayed in early 1814, when American authorities demanded he move to distant Bladensburg, Maryland. Nonetheless, Barclay removed to this obscure place. Little did he know that it was to be the scene of a brief battle in August, 1814. The British quickly scattered the hastily assembled American force, and advanced on Washington, where they burned federal facilities such as the Capitol building, a navy yard, and the presidential residence. In the aftermath, a humiliated President Madison ordered Barclay out of the country, which

he ultimately left in October, returning to England. Until that time he did what he could to alleviate the sufferings of prisoners.<sup>21</sup>

Barss had friends in Nova Scotia who urged both Barclay and Lieutenant Governor Sir John Coape Sherbrooke to look into getting the captain out of his predicament. Barclay enlisted the aid of both Sherbrooke of Nova Scotia and Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren to assist Barss. Both officials wrote on the captain's behalf, but without any apparent effect, and he remained in the Portsmouth gaol under close confinement. In fact, when Barclay's sub-agent at Portsmouth made inquiries about Barss, he found himself knocked off a pier and nearly drowned by a man he referred to as "an infernal demo." By April, 1814, Barclay finally brought Barss some relief. The privateer captain was placed on parole, and his exchange seemed imminent. But the matter dragged on as the prisoner of war agreement between Britain and the United States broke down. In July he grew impatient with the system and fled to Nova Scotia. This exposed him to punishment by British officials, who took a dim view of breaking parole.<sup>22</sup>

If the British could take such actions against one of their own, one might imagine that the Americans would be even more harsh. Folklore tells us that the Yankees swore such fierce retributions if they recaptured Barss that he never again went to sea, but the reality is different from the bardic tradition. The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* records that he took an armed trading vessel to the West Indies, returning to Liverpool in August, 1814, meaning he must have taken command almost immediately upon arrival in Nova Scotia. Furthermore, newspapers reported that the Americans had again captured him later that year. Not much is known about this period of confinement, but it seems likely that the Americans did not know that they had a parole violator on their hands. If they had, surely things would have gone much worse for him, and it would have been touted in the pro-war newspapers. As it was, imprisonment seems to have broken him. Shortly after the end of the war he was back in Nova Scotia, his health poor and his seafaring life at an end. He died in 1824, never having recorded his wartime exploits and sufferings.<sup>23</sup>

Barss was not the only Maritimer swept up in the prisoner reprisal affair. Ten other privateersmen were pulled off the Salem prison ship in retaliation for the close confinement of ten Americans in the Halifax gaol. They found themselves in the Ipswich, Massachusetts gaol, in what was termed a "dungeon," and which one newspaper compared to the "fatal black hole at Calcutta."<sup>24</sup> Their condition was reported by the Federalist anti-war press:

These men have ever since been kept in dungeons as dreary as President Madison could desire. The gaol is a gloomy stone building. The dungeons are 7 ft. by 10 on the ground floor, of rough stone at top, bottom and on all sides. There are loop holes or narrow openings of two or three inches

wide, through the upper part of the stone walls, to admit the little light and air which these unfortunate victims are allowed to enjoy. In damp weather, the water runs down the walls, and drips from the stone ceiling over the floors. These dungeons were never intended for any other purpose than to punish the worst of criminals by a few days solitary imprisonment, and it is believed have never been used even for that purpose. Yet in these places have 17 innocent men been languishing for three months, 16 of them four in a dungeon, and the other (Captain Ross) in a dungeon by himself.<sup>25</sup>

Through Barclay's intercession, the men were eventually removed from the basement dungeon cells to the more comfortable cells. However, these cells were also unheated, and the prisoners remained unsatisfied with Barclay's sub-agent. The sub-agents were Americans delegated by Barclay to visit prisoners and provide what relief they could by visiting, doling out small amounts of cash known as "soap money" to purchase items that would comfort them. Jonathan Simpson was the Boston sub-agent, and while he did visit to report on their conditions, he brought little relief to the Ipswich prisoners. On one occasion the sub-agent distributed a mere forty cents per prisoner for tobacco and soap to the Ipswich prisoners, while another received a meagre \$1.62 over a term of fifteen months. Luckily for these prisoners, sympathetic locals provided them with clothing and blankets to fight off the chill of their unheated stone cells. American officials finally relented in the spring of 1814, and moved them to the relative comfort of Fort Sewall in Marblehead. This was not done for humanitarian purposes, but because the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had passed a law forbidding its county gaols from holding prisoners of war, one manifestation of New England's opposition to the war.<sup>26</sup>

#### "CREDULITY HAS BEEN MY RUIN"

With peace in 1815 came a desire to repatriate prisoners, although not as quickly as they may have wished, and too late for one. George Collins of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, died in March, 1815, due to "a cold taken while on board the prison ship" at Salem.<sup>27</sup>

With the war over and news of the peace arriving in North America in early February, it became necessary to repatriate the prisoners, who were mostly concentrated at Salem. A cartel vessel sailed for Halifax at the end of February with sixty-three prisoners, among whom were women, children, noncombatants, and invalids, most of them from Nova Scotia. In an unexpected development, a British agent arrived from Castine to recruit seamen from the prison ship. British forces had occupied Castine in September, 1814, and it was necessary to evacuate that village. However, there weren't enough sailors there to crew the transports, and so a few were recruited from the waiting prisoners. Nonetheless, the repatriation process was too slow for

some men. Several escapes from the prison ship *Aurora* took place in early March, and maintaining order aboard the hulk continued to be difficult throughout the month as its inmates grew restless. The Reverend William Bentley noted in his diary that: "The prisoners on the Guard Ship are still troublesome, & use every effort to get out. It is said the two Cartels from Halifax are to take them. In some the impatience of confinement so long after peace, & in others a wish to dispose of themselves better than at Halifax, are the known causes of this discontent."

In other words, the prisoners were mostly mariners, and sought to gain employment on American vessels that paid better than British-flagged ones. A week later, the prisoners had departed. Bentley wrote

We are now rid of our Prisoners at this depot. It was the design of the Marshal to have obtained for national purposes some acknowledgement from the prisoners of their kind treatment, but the change of the guards from Citizens to Soldiers to prevent their escape after the news of peace had introduced by the connivance & aid of the soldiers so much spiritous liquor that the men were inaccessible & for the most part in confinement. . . . The prisoners passed in three bodies to their place of departure at C's wharf. They were merry & some a little more so.<sup>28</sup>

What are we to make of the experiences of Maritimers as prisoners of war? Given common backgrounds, we shouldn't be surprised that Anglophone Maritimers can easily be compared to their American or British cousins. They could certainly be clever escape artists, like Solomon Jennings. They could clearly be seen as victims, like Joseph Barss, Jr. And they can even be seen as humanitarians, like Thomas Barclay, who tried his best to ameliorate their circumstances. Canadians can also pull a historical sleight of hand by denying their role as gaolers, placing that blame on the British military.<sup>29</sup> Yet in the end, Maritimers as a whole have not taken the 1812 P.O.W. story to heart as the Americans have in their war for "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights." Furthermore, these prisoners do not seem to have had the lasting enmity for the United States that returning American prisoners continued to have against Britain. During the war, "T.D." railed that "Americans are a set of detestable wretches altogether, as void of honor, as they are of generosity. Humanity they possess not. In short, they are a lying, deceiving race, whose only delight is tormenting and betraying their fellow creatures. Like the canker-worm, they feed on the miseries of mankind. Let none of my countrymen ever trust, or depend on the Word or Honor of a Yankee: for truth they cannot speak."

This attitude, however, has not been especially prominent in Atlantic Canada's bardic traditions regarding the War of 1812, with the possible exception of Joseph Barss. "T.D." wrote that "Credulity has been my ruin," and perhaps his fellow Atlan-

tic Canadians have been too kind, too polite in their interpretations of the War of 1812. An examination of the treatment of prisoners of war in the War of 1812 may serve as a good starting point for Maritimers to reconsider the history of their relations with the American republic, which may be worse than they have been willing to admit. It can also be a starting point for Americans to reconsider their own narrative of British cruelty and oppression and examine their own actions as gaolers.<sup>30</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

1. "Yankee Prison," *Acadian Recorder* (Halifax, N.S.), June 25, 1814.
2. "T.D." was likely a crew member of the privateer *Fly* of Halifax. As early as July 17, 1813, the *Acadian Recorder* noted that the *Fly's* crew were imprisoned at Wiscasset and "confined to narrow limits and poor fare."
3. Lincoln County Historical Association, "Old Jail," <http://www.lincolncountyhistory.org/OJEstb1811Jail.html> (last accessed November 16, 2014).
4. RG 217, "Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury," Entry 215, Prisoners of 1812 Accounts of Thomas G. Thornton, 186-193, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.
5. Patricia K. Crimmin, "Prisoners of War and British Port Communities, 1793-1815," *The Northern Mariner/ Le Mariner du nord*, VI, no. 4 (1996), 17.
6. "Edward Boys," *Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, 133; Jock Haswell: *The First Respectable Spy. The Life and Times of Colquhoun Grant, Wellington's head of Intelligence* (London, 1969); Edward Fraser, *Napoleon the Gaoler; Personal Experiences and Adventures of British Sailors and Soldiers During the Great Captivity* (New York: Brentano, 1914).
7. Anthony Dietz and Harriett Grace Dietz, *For Their Safekeeping and Accommodation: British Prisoners of War in the United States During the War of 1812* ([United States]: Harriett G. Dietz, 2011), xvi. This is based on Anthony's doctoral dissertation, "The Prisoner of War in the United States During the War of 1812" (American University, 1964).
8. Brian Cuthbertson, *Melville Prison and Deadman's Island: American and French Prisoners of War in Halifax 1794-1816* (Halifax, N.S.: Formac Publ. Co, 2009), 5-6; See the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, "The War of 1812," which claims "In the Maritimes this war affected the population but little, and it was the central colonies that were chiefly involved." [http://www.biographi.ca/en/theme\\_1812.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/theme_1812.html) (last accessed November 16, 2014). For Halifax, see Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters, 1745-1815* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003).
9. James Fenimore Cooper, *Ned Myers: Or, A Life Before the Mast* (London: Richard Bentley, 1843), chapters 8-10; Amos G. Babcock and Benjamin Waterhouse. *A Journal, of a Young Man of Massachusetts* (Boston: Printed by Rowe and Hooper, 1816); John Melish, *A Description of Dartmoor Prison, with an Account of the Massacre of the Prisoners Designed As an Accompaniment to the View of Dartmoor Prison*, Drawn by J.J. Taylor, One of the Prisoners (Philadelphia: The author, 1815). Modern scholarship starts with Ira Dye's excellent piece "Maritime Prisoners of War, 1812-1815," in Timothy J. Runyan, *Ships, Seafaring, and Society: Essays in Maritime History* (Detroit, Mich: Published for the Great Lakes Historical Society by Wayne State University Press, 1987). See also Paul Gilje, *Free Trade and Sailors' Rights in the War of 1812* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chapter 19, "Dartmoor"; Myra C. Glenn, *Jack Tar's Story: The Autobi-*

*ographies and Memoirs of Sailors in Antebellum America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), see Chapter 2, “Manhood, Nationalism, and Sailor Narratives of British Captivity and the War of 1812” and pp. 73-75 for Ned Myers. For the American fascination with incarceration, see Daniel E. Williams, *Liberty’s Captives: Narratives of Confinement in the Print Culture of the Early Republic: the Jefferson City Editorial Project* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2006); Paul Michel Baepfer, *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

10. George S. Smith to Thomas G. Thornton, February 26, 1814, “Charles Henry Taylor Collection of Privateering Papers, 1718-1928” (MS Am 1087), Houghton Library, Harvard University (hereafter as “Privateering Papers”); Barclay to Mason, August 24, 1813, “Thomas Barclay Papers,” New-York Historic Genealogical Society. www.AmericanAncestors.org New York, NY (hereafter as “Barclay Papers”).
11. “The Prisoners of War” to Thomas Barclay, April 13, 1814, and Jonathan Simpson to Barclay, Boston, MA, September 14, 1813, both Barclay Papers; Jonathan Cook to Thomas G. Thornton, April 19, 1813, Thomas G. Thornton Papers, Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine (hereafter as TGT).
12. Prescott Currier, *The Jails of Lincoln County, 1761-1813* (Wiscasset, Me: Lincoln County Historical Association, 1992), 213; J. Mason to Thornton, April 6, 1814, and Thomas G. Thornton to J. Mason, April 24, 1816, all TGT; Jonathan Simpson to Thomas Barclay, September 14, 1813, Barclay Papers; Francis Cook to Thomas G. Thornton, September 2, 1813, Thomas Gilbert Thornton Papers, Mss 98. R. Stanton Avery Collections, New England Historic genealogical Society, www.AmericanAncestors.org (hereafter as Thornton/NEHGS); *Acadian Recorder*, June 25, 1814.
13. Capt. John Woodworth to Barclay, Portland, ME, February 17, 1814, Barclay Papers.
14. J. L. Granatstein, *Canada’s Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 4; William Gray, *Soldiers of the King: The Upper Canadian Militia, 1812-1815: a Reference Guide* (Erin, Ont: Boston Mills Press, 1995), 7-46; for Second, the latest iteration is Peggy Dymond Leavey, *Laura Secord :Heroine of the War of 1812* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2012), while the *Liverpool Packet* story is covered by Dan Conlin, “A Slave Ship Made Captive: The Schooner Severn,” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, 2 (1999), 203–212, and Faye Kert, *Prize and Prejudice: Privateering and Naval Prize in Atlantic Canada in the War of 1812* (St. John’s, Nfld: International Maritime Economic History Association, 1997), with the bardic source being C. H. J. Snider, *Under the Red Jack: Privateers of the Maritime Provinces of Canada in the War of 1812* (London: M. Hopkinson & Co, 1928).
15. Charles Hare, *Testimonials and Memorials of the Services of Lieut. Charles Hare, of the Royal Navy* (Saint John, N.B., 1848) 26-27; see also Joshua M. Smith, *Battle for the Bay: The Naval War of 1812* (Fredericton, N.B.: Goose Lane Editions, 2011). Hare wrote an account of his escape, “Account of the Escape of Lieut. Charles Hare, R.N., from a French Prison, 1809,” which remains in possession of the Hare family, which I have used with their kind permission.
16. *Columbian Centinel* (Boston, Mass.), January 30, 1813; *City Gazette* (Saint John, N.B.), February 27, 1813. *The New Bedford Mercury* noted that these three were immediately placed in confinement on board *HMS Centurion*, and that they were “to be made an example of,” although this does not seem to be the case.
17. *Columbian Centinel* (Boston, Mass.), April 24 and 28, 1813; Cuthbertson, *Melville Prison*, 63.
18. *Boston Repertory*, June 20, 1814; Charles Tebbets to Thomas G. Thornton, July 21, 1812, Privateering Papers; John Binney to King, December 10, 1812, William King Papers, Maine

- Historical Society; Return of Prisoners at Castine Fort, August 25, 1813, J.B. Swanton to Thornton, August 24, 1813, and "Return of prisoners taken by privateer America," July 21, 1813," both TGT.
19. Fannie Scott Chase, *Wiscasset in Pownalborough; A History of the Shire Town and the Salient Historical Features of the Territory between the Sheepscot and Kennebec Rivers* (Wiscasset, Me: Southworth-Anthoensen Press, 1941), 341; Matthew Clark to Thomas G. Thornton, June 26, 1813, Privateering Papers.
  20. *Eastern Argus* (Portland, Me.), July 8, 1813; George Ulmer to Thomas G. Thornton, July 11, 1813, Privateering Papers.
  21. Dietz and Dietz, *For their Safekeeping*, 321-322; Arthur McLellan to Thomas Barclay, September 2, 1813, Barclay Papers.
  22. Sherbrooke to Thomas Barclay, July 27, 1813, RG1/111 "Lt. Governor Correspondence," Nova Scotia Archives, Halifax; Edward Parry to Thomas Barclay, December 29, 1813; Barclay to Sir John Borlase Warren, July 14, 1813; and Edward Parry to Barclay, December 29, 1813, all Barclay Papers; Richard Elliott Winslow, *Wealth and Honour: Portsmouth During the Golden Age of Privateering, 1775-1815* (Portsmouth, NH: Published for the Portsmouth Marine Society by P.E. Randall, 1988), 170; Cuthbertson, *Melville Prison*, 63.
  23. Kert, *Prize and Prejudice*, 103; Catherine Pross, "Barss, Joseph," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* Online, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/barss\\_joseph\\_6E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/barss_joseph_6E.html) (last accessed August 10, 2014).
  24. *Essex Register* (Salem, Mass.), October 9, 1813; *Portsmouth Oracle* (Portsmouth, NH), October 30, 1813.
  25. T.F. Waters, "An Episode of the War of 1812," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (June, 1915), 497-498; see also detailed accounts in the *Weekly Messenger* (Boston, Mass.), January 28, 1814.
  26. Jonathan Simpson to Thomas Barclay., Boston, January 18, 1814; James H. Ross *et al.* to Barclay, December 30, 1813, and January 31, 1814, all Barclay Papers; Waters, "An Episode," 498; Dietz & Dietz, *For Their Safekeeping*, 205.
  27. *Salem Gazette* (Salem, Mass.), March 24, 1815.
  28. *Newburyport Herald* (Newburyport, Mass.), March 28 and March 7, 1815; *Concord Gazette* (Concord, NH), March 11, 1815; William Bentley, *Diary of William Bentley, D.D., Pastor of the East Church, Salem, Massachusetts* (Gloucester, MA: P. Smith, 1962), March 31, 1814 entry, 4:322-23. "C's wharf" was almost certainly Salem's Crowninshield Wharf.
  29. Cuthbertson, *Melville Prison*, 59-64.
  30. John Boileau, *Half-Hearted Enemies: Nova Scotia, New England, and the War of 1812* (Halifax, N.S.: Formac Pub. Co, 2005.); Robert L. Dallison, *A Neighbourly War: New Brunswick and the War of 1812* (Fredericton, N.B.: Goose Lane Editions, 2012).