Articles of Interest:

Last Days at Fort Madison, Part III
Grog: A Sailor's Elixir, Part II

Visit 1812: Fort Niagara, New York

Forts George and Niagara clearly within gun-shot of each other

Features: Niagara Frontier, George McClure; Regional Chronology; News of Interest; and More...
Authors should note that the time from receipt of the submission to its' publication may be up to six months in this quarterly magazine. Authors will be notified should the estimated publication date exceed six months.

All submission should be sent as simple Word documents without any codes embedded for headings or other formatting. Font should be Times New Roman, font size 12, left justified.

Footnotes must be numbered using Arabic and not Roman numerals.

Important: Images must not be embedded in the text of a document and must be submitted separately, either in electronic format or clean hard copy. Electronic copies should be JPEG files, 300 dpi.

Authors are responsible for securing permission to publish copyrighted material.

The Editor reserves the right to make minor spelling, grammatical or syntax changes to any submission. Authors will be contacted should their work require any substantive changes or if their submission is unsuitable for publication.

At present the Consortium does not pay for submissions. Authors affiliated with bona fide historical organizations or societies may receive free notices of their organization's War of 1812 related activities in the Journal and these organizations or societies may be otherwise further profiled in the Journal.
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COVER PHOTO: Benson Lossing's fine map shows the relative closeness of the American Fort Niagara and the British Fort George. Print from the Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812
EDITOR'S QUOIN

The Ethical Path to Scholarship

Your Editor has been considering for some time how to explain the method of choosing the articles and features appearing in the Journal. The Consortium's broadest responsibility is to provide a magazine as accurate, as complete and full, and as prompt as integrity, devotion and time can devise.

The primary purpose of this Journal is to inform its readers of events of importance and of appropriate interest in an accurate and comprehensive manner.

The articles printed are designed not only to offer timely and accurate information, but also to present them in the light of relevant circumstances that give them meaning and perspective. This requires us to identify comment and subjective content and to acknowledge and correct any errors in fact that survive the editing process.

To the greatest extent possible we select material for publication that contains information of significance, of appropriate human interest, and of service to our readers. In an historical journal there is no room for sensationalism, misleading emphasis, or bombastic descriptions. This extends to our selection of advertisements and Letters to the Editor, too.

Today the on line services available on the Internet may provide us with more information than we need to accomplish our overall objectives. Sometimes, too, on line information is false and misleading. At all times the Journal will display a humane respect for the dignity, privacy and well-being of persons featured in these pages.

At all times the Journal is guided by the axioms that more information is better than less and that the public interest is served best by opening opportunities for dialog.

Hopefully beyond the news, readers will find in these pages only informed analysis, comment, and editorial opinion. Additionally, to the greatest extent possible, persons preparing copy for publication will be individuals whose competence, experience and judgment qualify and prepare them for the publication privilege.

Readers of this Journal should demand and receive no less than the service discussed in this essay. Your Editor hopes to gain and maintain the continued support of an enlightened, interested and engaged readership.

“The world will little note...”

Readers will also note that this quarter's issue of the Journal will highlight the events of the war which took place in upper New York State and along the Niagara Frontier. They should also note that as the Journal was going to press Governor David Paterson was vetoing the legislation which would have created the War of 1812 Anniversary Commemorative Commission.

Citing budget deficits and current priorities the Governor could not find the funds to support bicentennial commemorations in this one – of the most active battlegrounds of the war. Reaction is predictable.

Deficit hawks are happy; deficit doves have money for more favored causes; and 75% of the citizens of New York either don't know or don't care that the legislation was vetoed.

Estimates vary, but well-run historical commissions make money; poorly-managed ones just lose. While it was estimated that a fully funded Commission may have cost $2.25 million over five years, experience in New York State itself demonstrated that as recently as 2007 one commission cost only $125,000, leveraged over $450,000 more, and grossed in the end more than $3.5 million in tourist revenues.

As Lincoln said – and meant at the time: “The world will little note ... what we say here...” to which the Journal adds, “we will long remember what you did here, Governor!”
News of Interest to the War of 1812 Community

Chicago, Illinois: The “Massacre of Fort Dearborn” is no more. Please annotate those references to it, forthwith. At the request of the descendants of the Potawatomi Indians seeking recognition that there were deaths on both sides during the event in 1812, the South Side park near where the incident took place was renamed the “Battle of Fort Dearborn Park” this past August. A short release from the Associated Press on August 16 noted that Native Americans in headdress and War of 1812 re-enactors help to dedicate the park near the ambush site of 197 years ago. There was no sign of the Indian allies at the ceremony. Next up: the River Raisin, Fort Mims and Pigeon Roost “incidences.”

Washington, DC: Although proposed legislation authorizing the minting of US coins recognizing the War of 1812 has bounced around Washington for years, this past September witnessed the movement of the latest effort. On September 9, the Baltimore Sun staff reported on line that a resolution sponsored by Representative C.A. “Dutch” Ruppersberger (D-MD) passed in the House of Representatives. It would authorize the minting of commemorative $1 and $5 silver coins in 2012. The funds derived from the sale would support the costs associated with the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission. Since there is no Commission, yet (Editor's note – keep in mind this is a quarterly Journal and anything can happen!), the prospects of the resolution in the Senate looks...well...dim.

Bay City, Michigan: In addition to the coinage ideas moving around the Capitol, the Bay City Times reported October 7, 2009, that Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) introduced a concurrent resolution which sought to have a postage stamp issued in commemoration of the War. The non-binding resolution would have the effect of bringing the issue to the attention of the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee who has the authority to recommend that the Postmaster General issue the commemorative stamp. – by Kayla Habermehl, Bay City Times, October 7, 2009.

Detroit, Michigan: Probably too late for a mention in this Journal, but the Michigan Commission on the Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 has been running a logo contest open to Michigan's 7th through 12th graders since September with final entries due on November 7th. The selected logo will appear on all Web uses, print branding, and other promotional efforts of the Commission. Prizes include cash, free tickets at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven, and award appearances at the Michigan Historical Center in Lansing. Selections will be made by January 18th and the Lansing ceremony is scheduled for February 22, 2010. – by Christina Hall, Free Press, September 2, 2009.

Little Rock, Arkansas: The Baseline Meridian Chapter of the United States Daughters of 1812 (USD 1812) are active in Arkansas. This past summer the Chapter installed new officers and rededicated their chapter to the support of USD 1812 goals to promote patriotism, preserve and increase the knowledge of the history of the American people, and emphasize the heroic deeds of those who molded this government between the close of the American Revolution and the close of the War of 1812. – Published in The Hot Springs Village Voice, August 12, 2009.
Bicentennial Planning

Amherstburg, Ontario, Canada: According to the *Windsor Star* and others, Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada has received a grant of $500,000 to improve the exhibits at the Site before the bicentennial activities begin in 2012. New exhibits will seek to attract younger audiences and boost tourism. Some of the exhibits, says Elizabeth LeBlanc, acting site manager, are more than 30 years old. – by Sharon Hall, *Windsor Star* Staff Writer, August 12, 2009.

Monroe, Michigan: Following the passage and signing of legislation designating the River Raisin Battlefield National Park a unit within the National Park Service of the US Department of the Interior last April, the City of Monroe has been awarded a $350,000 grant to acquire land for the park. According to the *Toledo Blade* the grant was accepted October 5th and does not require any matching local funds. - *Toledo Blade*, October 7, 2009.

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada: The Councilors from the City of Hamilton have approved five specific heritage projects and have applied for $10 million in government stimulus funding to boost the area economy through infrastructure work. War of 1812 projects making the list include a proposed redevelopment of Battlefield House Museum and Park and a long-term management plan for the Hamilton and Scourge historic site. – Published in the *Hamilton Spectator*, August 11, 2009.

Brockville, Ontario, Canada: The St. Lawrence War of 1812 Bicentennial Alliance is fully engaged in multi-national efforts to promote the bicentennial beginning in 2012. The Alliance is one of six organizations the Ontario Ministry of Tourism funded to coordinate the commemoration activities and projects. Pat Macdonald, Alliance Chair, reports active, ongoing work with New York communities on the plans and events. Included in these events in Canada is Fort Henry at Kingston, Upper Canada Village at Morrisburg, and Crysler's Farm, each of which will develop new visitor centers under a $23 million grant. Ms. Macdonald hopes to involve as many communities and groups as possible in the overall effort. – by Joan Delaney for *Epoch Times*, August 20, 2009.

Honoring the Veterans of the War

Bound Brook, New Jersey: The Old Presbyterian Graveyard in this Somerset County village is the resting place for more than 600 residents including War of 1812 veterans. This past month the county's
Cultural and Heritage Commission, assisted by Bound Brook reference librarians, conducted tours of 27 Somerset County historic sites, including the Cemetery. – by Tiffani N. Garlic, Star Ledger, October 6, 2009.

**Kenton, Harden County, Ohio:** The Fort McArthur Cemetery, near Kenton, contains the remains of approximately sixteen War of 1812 veterans. In 1812 General William Hull moved the bulk of his forces north from Ohio to Detroit, Michigan Territory, and to his inglorious surrender. A series of forts and blockhouses were constructed to protect his supply and communications lines. During the winter of 1812-1813, there were over 1,000 soldiers within and near the half-acre timber stockade at Fort McArthur built to protect the crossing established on the Scioto River.

**Augusta, Maine:** An interest in political history has had the effect of uncovering several more War of 1812 graves than previously known. The Maine State Library has relied on volunteers to index older cemeteries and Mr. Marlon Morgan is one of the most active volunteers. In the last 15 years he has indexed more than 160 cemeteries. The Library's Surname Index Project is ongoing and each find is registered in the Master File kept in the Library's Augusta headquarters. Lost someone? Perhaps Mr. Morgan has found him. – by Michele Cooper, The Morning Sentinel, August 2, 2009.

**AND SPEAKING OF UPPER NEW YORK STATE**

**Sackets Harbor, New York:** This year's re-enactment of the War of 1812 events at Sackets Harbor began with larger than usual crowds and ended the next day with a torrential downpour. Minor events were canceled but the weekend which drew a bi-national group of re-enactors was well attended. Members of the Marine Guard 1812 from Charleston, Massachusetts, and the Bateau Roosters from Plattsburg, New York, represented the United States participants. Representatives from the First Regiment of Foot (Royal Scots) Light Company assisted by the Glengarry Light Infantry Regiment and the 49th Regiment of Foot from Ontario offered the Canadian perspective. As one of the participants aptly said, as amateur historians, the re-enactors “learn what you're taught, but ... appreciate what you experience.” – by Gabrielle Hovendon, Watertown (N.Y.) Daily Times, August 3, 2009.

**Plattsburg, New York:** This year's commemoration of the Battle of Plattsburg (September 10, 1814) offered the opportunity to recognize the “valiant service” provided the country by the members of the 15th United States Regiment of Infantry. Recruited in New Jersey, the 15th arrived at Plattsburg in the fall of 1812 and served throughout the New York theater before it was consolidated with other units after the War. Battle honors included York (where its former commander, Zebulon M. Pike, was killed), Fort George, Frenchman's Creek, Cryler's Farm, and Cook's Mill. A 50-man company from the 15th successfully sortied against British forces at the Battle of Plattsburg without a loss. Other members of the Regiment served aboard Thomas Macdonough's USS Saratoga. “Valiant Service,” indeed. – by Brian Murphy, Press Republican, September 6, 2009.

**Batavia, New York:** Native American contributions in this area of New York was featured recently in an exposition at the GO ART! Cultural Center in Batavia. Seneca Indians from the Tonawanda Indian Reservation have served in America's military since the War of 1812. Recently historical materials have come available through the Tonawanda Reservation Historical Society. This summer's exhibit ran through October 30th. - The Daily News Online, October 8, 2009.
WAR LEADER PROFILE

GEORGE McCLURE
1771-1851
New York Militia Officer

On May 27, 1813, successful American attacks on Canadian soil left Fort George in the hands of the American army and New York Militia Brigadier General George McClure, under federal orders, in command. American occupation of the entire Niagara peninsula was brief and McClure found himself in the Fort and clearly on the wrong side of the River. By fall, 1813, most of the regulars had been withdrawn from Niagara in anticipation of a move on Montreal. McClure had about 60 regulars, 40 militiamen, and about 100 renegade Canadian Volunteers facing a resurgent British force under the capable Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond.

Forty-two year old McClure, an Irish immigrant and New York businessman, who had served in the New York Assembly, as a sheriff, and as a Surrogate and County Judge, was clearly out of his depth. His personal and financial growth, however, was typical of his era. After landing in Baltimore, an eager 20 year old, from a village near Londonderry, Ireland, he settled near Bath, New York. His study of the law led to the legislature and the judicial appointments. Like others at the time he joined the local militia and rose commensurate with his many civil accomplishments. His militia experiences before volunteering in 1812, however, did not prepare him for the spot fate left before the Americans at Fort George.

By December 10, an attack by a much stronger British force was coming and McClure was determined to withdraw to the American side of the river. He had attempted and failed to blow up the Fort. Perhaps the burning of Newark (now Niagara) would be the diversion during which he might safely move the command to the American shore. It was extremely cold that December morning and given only limited warning the residents, including large numbers of women and children, were driven into the snow as the fire, it is said, destroyed each of the 150 houses in the village, save one.

McClure claimed his actions were authorized by the Secretary of War, himself, and that his act was one of just many characteristic of the conflict. There is some evidence to that claim.

Earlier John Armstrong, the Secretary of War, had given permission to destroy Newark, but only if it became necessary to prevent British troops from finding cover close to Fort George, and only if the inhabitants were given adequate notice and were not, in the event, left destitute. There was little instruction regarding the abandonment of the Fort and none regarding a situation wherein only limited warning would be provided. Besides it was the Canadian Volunteers, their own countrymen, who performed most of the torching. McClure's actions were quickly disavowed and he never again commanded troops. Since the War his reputation has been further sullied by historians pointing out the consequences his actions brought.

After the burning of Newark, the British adopted a retaliatory strategy. For a time, “total war” on the Niagara was the rule and more non-combatants that one would expect in this early 19th century conflict lost their lives. In retrospect, it has been argued that the burning of Newark and at York (now Toronto) quickly led to the burning of Buffalo and other towns in December, 1813, and at Washington, DC, the following year.

By the late 1830s, McClure had practically been driven from New York. He relocated in Illinois and spent his last days at Elgin, a town he helped to found. As if the faintly damned are never forgiven, his remains were disturbed and moved to make room for an early 20th Century community project.

A Sailor's Favorite Elixir
The Spirit Ration Grog and the United States Navy, 1794-1862
Part II: The Advent of the Reform Movement
By Petty Officer Eric Brown
Mass Communications Specialist 1st Class,
USS Constitution

Editor: In Part I of this extensive study of Grog, Petty Officer Eric Brown laid out the historical significance and influence the alcohol ration had on the U.S. Navy during the Age of Sail. The study continues with an examination of the social and military pressures leading to the end of the practice.

According to an observer stationed aboard USS Constellation from 1829 to 1831, there was only one punishment many Sailors feared more than the cat-o'-nine-tails: having their grog rations stopped. Considering the nature of flogging (“The lash was said to feel like molten lead on the bare back….often men were incapacitated for several days.”), this is a strong indicator that some men (and boys) may have been only hours away from the delirium tremens, This condition is a severe form of alcohol withdrawal that involves sudden mental or neurological changes, including anxiety, hallucinations and seizures, and can lead to death) at any given time.28

Aided and abetted by shipboard living conditions and Navy culture, the grog ration and heavy-handed discipline became entangled in a vicious cycle of physical and substance abuse. The outcome was noted by longtime temperance advocate Navy Captain Andrew Foote (a nephew of Captain Isaac Hull) in 1854: “this grog ration causes more than three-fourths of the punishments in a man-of-war; it is the subversion of discipline; it engenders disease and crime; [and] it perpetuates drunkenness in the Navy…. In short this grog ration is evil, and only evil, and that continually.”29

Evil or otherwise, the use of grog was authorized by President George Washington on March 27, 1794, in Section 8 of “An Act to Provide a Naval Armament,” which describes Sailors’ rations, to include: “…one half pint of distilled spirits per day, or, in lieu thereof, one quart of beer per day, to each ration.” Following a drum roll, grog was served to all hands aboard ships at about noon and 4 pm daily from a scuttlebutt usually located at the mainmast on the gun deck or the gangway on the spar deck. Although each Sailor had to down his grog on the spot, the

29 Langley, Social Reform, 270.
commissioned, warrant, and sometimes petty officers were allowed to drink theirs at the mess table.  

Lemon or lime juice was added to the grog as a preventive measure against scurvy, the most dreaded disease a mariner could expect in the Age of Sail. “Scurvy, a Vitamin C deficiency, was responsible for more deaths at sea than storms, shipwreck, combat and all other diseases combined.” One author estimates that scurvy caused the deaths of an estimated two million seamen.

Sugar was not part of a Sailor’s ration and was not added to the grog tub. However, Sailors could purchase sugar from the ship’s purser and add it themselves to make their grog into a punch. Although each Sailor consumed only a half pint (8 oz.) of liquor a day, the total quantity needed to stock a ship for a voyage of any length was immense. Aboard a 44-gun frigate such as the USS Constitution (assuming a company of 450 men), about 28 gallons would be required each day. That is more than 840 gallons per month.

With the Navy's annual consumption of rum at 45,000 gallons, small wonder the Jefferson's Secretary of the Navy, Robert Smith, believing whiskey cheaper and more wholesome than rum, ordered in 1806 the purchase of 20,000 gallons of whiskey. Whiskey production in the United States had begun in early 18th century. It is made from fermented mash of cereal grains and aged in wooden containers, each of which were readily available in the United States. The alcohol content was as high as 160 proof.

The actual strength (proof) of the early 19th century rum and whiskey is debatable, but it is universally agreed the proof was much higher than what is sold now, generally about 40 percent alcohol by volume, or 80 proof. It is mathematically possible that in the Age of Sail liquor was as much as 4 times as strong as that sold today. The sailor's 19th Century 'half-pint' could well be the modern equivalent of two full bottles!

31. Bown, Scurvy, 3.
34. Macdonald, Feeding, 42.
This primary ingredient in grog was strong stuff and was served by the U.S. government in large quantities. An 8 oz. ration a day produces an annual intake of almost 23 gallons per Sailor. A good guess, with the proof estimated to be at 150 (or 75 percent), each Sailor was consuming more than 17 gallons (about 65 liters) of ethanol (ethyl alcohol) a year from the grog ration alone. This was more than four times the amount the average American adult living ashore drank in the early 19th century and astronomical compared to what Americans drink today.

A study of early American drinking patterns shows that between 1800 and 1830 the quantity of spirits consumed increased to nearly 4 gallons, or about 15 liters, per capita. This was the highest rate in United States history. According to the World Health Organization figures for 2003, which show little variation from previous years, the per capita amount of ethanol for Americans over the age of 14 is about 8.5 liters – much less than the amount consumed by those early U.S. Navy seamen.\(^{35}\)

How intoxicating was a serving of grog, which contained 4 oz. of hard liquor, or about 3 oz. of ethanol? Views differ. While one maritime writer maintained that a Sailor could expect to walk away from the grog tub with “a warm glow suffusing his being,” another came to believe that a “half a pint of very strong rum … would have kept some men in an almost permanent state of intoxication.”\(^{36}\)

This latter opinion is shared by a contemporary British observer who had observed the effects of the grog ration throughout his career. “Every man on board was allowed, each day, no less a quantity than half-a-pint of ardent spirits, mixed with three half-pints of water; but, even when thus diluted, the allowance formed a quart of extremely strong drink,” he wrote in 1831. “This quantity was undoubtedly a great deal more than the average strength of men’s heads could bear... The captain was not authorized to diminish the allowance, while among the men it would have been a reproach in any one not to have drank the whole, whatever his taste or discretion suggested. In hot climates especially, I really do not think it an exaggeration to say, that one-third of every ship’s company were more or less intoxicated, or at least muddled and stupefied, every evening.”\(^{37}\)

A recent study at the University of Oklahoma is instructive. To determine exactly how impaired one serving of grog would make a Sailor, a standard Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) calculator was employed, assuming the weight of the drinker is 160 lbs. (and keeping in mind that most of the boys and teenagers serving aboard Navy ships would have weighed much less). Although the


\(^{36}\) Martin, *Fortunate Ship*, 78 (the glow); Macdonald, *Feeding*, 152 (the intoxication).

calculator is intended to measure drinks with a much lower proof (80) than what was served to seamen in the Age of Sail (assuming a proof of 150), and measures in drinks per hour (and not drinks consumed in a five-minute period), it can safely be assumed that the 160-lb. Sailor’s BAC was 0.16 percent, or twice the legal limit for intoxication in all 50 American states. Obviously, the day’s second helping of grog, served only about four hours after the first, would have raised that Sailor’s BACs even higher, peaking at perhaps 0.23 percent.38

Hard-drinking Sailors experiencing only a “warm glow” from their trip to the grog tub were less men of iron than men of alcohol dependence, a condition that includes a high tolerance to liquor resulting from excessive drinking. Chronic diseases such as liver cirrhosis, pancreatitis; various cancers, high blood pressure, psychological disorders and decreased life expectancy were some of the additional long-term effects of hard drinking, Navy-style.39

As was noted above, this type of drinking was the social norm in early 19th century America, and even more so aboard its naval vessels. There was a predictable outcome: “Given a taste for alcohol which was whetted by food preserved with a large amount of salt, a dangerous, hard, and sometimes lonely life with infrequent shore leave, and the general attitude of the age, it is not surprising that drunkenness was common.” Unfortunately for some men, half a pint of high-proof liquor a day simply wasn’t enough to get the job done. Navy Captain Thomas Truxtun complained to the Navy Department in 1801: “Men and boys who did not drink would sell or trade it to those who did, and it required great attention to keep many of the crew from being in a constant state of intoxication.”40

Getting additional alcohol from shipmates was easy. The truly desperate resorted to more daring ways and means. “For some men the only solution to the problem was to resort to smuggling,” Langley explained. “Whenever a naval vessel was in a harbor, her officers exercised unremitting watchfulness to prevent spirits from being smuggled onboard. But the ingenuity of the seamen often matched the intensity of their thirst.” One tactic involved Sailors hiding liquor-filled animal

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40 . Langley, Social Reform, 213, 214.

intestines, called “snakes,” under their clothes before being frisked at the gangway; in another ruse, seamen or their confederates disguised containers of alcohol to look like ordinary ship’s stores before they were brought aboard.  

Bringing alcoholic contraband aboard a naval vessel was not without its risks. A *USS Constitution* deck log from October 25, 1811, notes “Dominick Otero punished for smuggling liquor…” On another occasion, *USS Constitution’s* Captain Foxhall Parker wrote a letter, dated December 27, 1842, describing how “Captain of the Hold Samuel Wilson had been stealing liquor from the Spirit Room and sharing it with shipmates, resulting in drunkenness and disorderliness.”

Although none of the research indicates that any seaman ever tried his hand at fermenting homemade alcoholic beverages (“pruno,” in modern prison parlance) while underway, the motive, means and opportunity were certainly present. An airtight container and the basic ingredients – fruit and sugar – were at least occasionally available to early 19th century Sailors. Hiding the project for the six- to fourteen-day alcohol-producing putrefaction period would not have been difficult aboard a vessel loaded down with months’ worth of supplies and provisions. However, even those mariners with stomachs, livers and tongues hardened by years of grogging and shipboard dining may have found consuming the end product a singular challenge.

Authorized or otherwise, the daily routine of heavy binge drinking made an impact on Sailors and the Navy, with consequences running the spectrum from beneficial, both perceived and actual, to highly detrimental. On the plus side, the spirit ration catered to the common misconception of that era that alcohol was necessary for accomplishing hard work. There is actually some truth to this idea. Although alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, it does lower inhibitions, increase blood flow to the skin and heighten aggressive tendencies, all of which can temporarily make a drinker feel energized.

Also, the Navy probably used the grog ration in some small way to recruit and maintain the large numbers of men to fill its ships. “So common was inebriation among the tars that some drunkards, when dismissed from other jobs, went to sea in order to get liquor, to have drinking companions, and to assure themselves that their habits were normal.” The spirit ration could also be used as a tool for promoting order and discipline among the enlisted ranks. According to Chaplain George Jones, who served aboard *USS Constitution* from 1825 to 1828), “nothing that would sooner stir up a mutiny in the ship, than a refusal to serve out grog.”

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41 Ibid., 212.
42 1812 Deck Logs courtesy USS Constitution Museum.
45 Rorabaugh, *Republic*, 144; Multi-Diet, “Alcohol Calories and Losing Weight,”
Alcohol is a calorie-dense food – each gram contains seven calories. Again, assuming that the proof of liquor served to seamen was 150, one ration of grog would contain 1,176 calories, more than a quarter of a U.S. Navy Sailor’s daily intake of 4,240 calories. Further, the anesthetic properties of rum and whiskey took the edge off of a life at sea that was characterized by sleep deprivation, hard labor, malnutrition, seasickness, overcrowding, strife, extremes in temperature and sometimes even combat. It deadened the nerves to physical discomforts, and gave a Sailor something to look forward to twice a day.46

Last but not least, the spirit ration provided one thing that was always in short supply at sea – fun. Within the lifelines of a ship, there were no women to court and no families to raise. Aside from the possible exception of gambling and a few shipboard pets, there were no recreational activities, no pastimes and no hobbies available to the men. However, there were literally hundreds of drinking buddies always around to help a Sailor “splice the main brace” and get “three sheets to the wind.”

Given the effects of alcohol in strong doses (decreased inhibitions, dizziness, nausea, impaired judgment and coordination, etc.) and a shipboard environment in the Age of Sail, the negative consequences of combining the two clearly constitute a recipe for disaster. Grog simply made men stupid. This invariably led to accidents, behavior for which corporal punishment was meted out, and an overall degradation of mission readiness. Aboard a rocking and rolling wooden ship at sea, most surfaces and moving parts were perpetually wet. Additionally, below, there were degrees of darkness. This was clearly not the safest place for a seaman to drink heavily, so of course, most did. Accidents were commonplace: falling from the rigging or down a hatchway, striking a low beam, or simply a fighting could each produce serious injury.47

Editor: Under these conditions the U.S. Navy policy was about to change. In the concluding part of this extensive study, the author will explain how the Grog experiences influenced the performance at sea during both the Age of Sail and, today, in the U.S. Navy.

http://www.multidiet.com/c0-web/04-lp/alcohol-calories.htm (accessed November 9, 2008);
Langley, Social Reform, 218.
47 Macdonald, Feeding, 152.
The Documents
Erastus Granger offers Indian volunteers during Niagara Emergency

Erastus Granger (1765-1826), a loyal Jeffersonian, was the American agent to Indian tribes along the Niagara Frontier. Since 1804 he had been in Buffalo and while not looking after Indian interests and affairs, he was the postmaster, collector of the port, and a judge in a much larger Genesee County, New York. During the War he sincerely sought to bring Indians into the posture of defending United States territory. Here in December, 1813, as British raiding parties were looking to avenge the burning of Newark, he tried again.

Buffalo, December 11th, 1813

General George McClure,

Dear Sir,

The various reports in circulation this day on account of the approach of the enemy on these frontiers have induced the citizens of this place to assemble for the purpose of taking into consideration the alarming situation in which they are likely to be placed. General Peter B. porter and myself have been requested to transmit the proceedings of the meeting. The proceedings or resolutions will speak for themselves. [These resolutions are not enclosed in the document.]

I would briefly observe that the immense amount of private property in this place and at Black Rock, as well as that belonging to the United States, is well deserving of the immediate protection of the Government.

I have had a conversation with Farmer's Brother and other Chief. They say they are willing to turn out, do duty, and defend this place, as their wives and children are here, but they are unwilling to go to Fort George. It is a fact that Indians are of no consequence in doing garrison duty, nor can they be compel[l]ed to be shut up in a fort. I think they would form a part of an efficient force at this place, and at less expense to the Government that the same number of militia.

If you think proper to direct the raising [of] two hundred Indian volunteers, to be stationed at this place and Black Rock, instead of Fort George, at the same pay and rations as the infantry of the United States troops, I think I shall be able to do it shortly.

I feel devoted to the service of my Country, and having received a military appointment from you, I shall implicitly [sic] await your further orders.

I am very respectfully your Obedient servant,

Erastus Granger

A New Perspective on the Last Day’s of Fort Madison
Part III: Abandonment and Result
By David C. Bennett

A Gallant Defense

The efforts of Lieutenants Hamilton and Vasquez, and the garrison against an estimated 200 Winnebago and Sauk warriors brought recognition to their efforts. Their district commanding officer, Lt. Col. Daniel Bissell wrote, “The brave and persevering defense, & the success of your arms, in repelling of the enemy, from their daring attack on that post, truly merits & receives my warmest Thanks.”65 Reports of their deeds were printed in books and newspapers across the country. A popular history of the war published in 1815 praised their efforts, “Lieuts Hamilton and Vasquez did themselves great honour in so ably defending this fort.”66 Another popular history that was published in 1815 mocked the efforts of the Indian warriors by proclaiming, “[Fort] Madison...was attacked...by the Indians, with all the desperation that a want of real courage, could inspire...”67

Despite the accolades, Hamilton’s first instinct was to evacuate the post. Bissell at first believed it would be “cowardly” to evacuate right after it was “Gallantly defended against an attack of a very superior force of Savages,” however, Bissell did believe that Fort Madison was a most “unmilitary” site, and eventually agreed with Hamilton.68 Missouri Territory Governor, and soon to be General, Benjamin Howard, disagreed. Though Howard “never considered it a happy selection ...for a garrison,” he felt that evacuating Fort Madison would be seen as a weakness to the Winnebago and Black Hawk’s Rock River Sauk. Howard clearly saw the major importance of maintaining Fort Madison, as it was the last remaining United States military post in hostile Indian country. Fort Madison, despite Hamilton’s desire to evacuate, had become an important location to collect information and movement of the British and their Indian allies in the Central

66  Sketches, 78.
67  Impartial and Correct History of the War between The United States of America, and Great Britain; Declared by Congress, June 18, 1812, and Concluded by a Ratification and Exchange of a Treaty of Peace, at the City of Washington, Feb. 17,1815 (New York: John Low, 1815), 67.
68  Carter, Lt. Col. Bissell to Secretary of War, 30 March 1813, 647.
West or the Upper Mississippi theater of operations.69

One thing that could be counted on, Captain Horatio Stark and the reinforcements arrived on September 16, 1812, after the siege had ended. Stark had on board 19 regulars and 17 U.S. Rangers from Captain Nathan Boone’s Company plus another brass howitzer that was quickly mounted in a blockhouse. 70

Captain Stark wasted no time recognizing his company’s efforts during the siege. On the same day he arrived, he posted Garrison orders which stated: “Capt. Stark hereby assumes the Command of the Garrison. It would be in the highest degree unpardonable to pass unnoticed the gallant and judicious defense of this post during the attack of the Indians from the 5th to the 8th, instant & the Commanding Officer tenders his unfeigned thanks to the Officers & Men...”71 Captain Stark would eventually leave the post again because about eight days after arriving at the fort, his wife and young child had died in St. Louis.72

Reinforcing and Re-equipping the Garrison

Even more reinforcements were coming. Captain Robert Desha’s company of the 24th Infantry arrived at Fort Belle Fontaine by November 30, 1812. 73 On March 28, 1813, Captain Stark was once more heading up the river to Fort Madison, this time with 1st Lieutenant Silas Stephens and 40 enlisted men of Captain Desha’s 24th Infantry. They sailed on the “Madison Packet,” a fortified keel boat. Each soldier, with spare flints and 24 cartridges in their cartridge boxes, were ready to battle the Indians.74 Stark’s Company of the 1st Infantry, a detachment of Owens’
Company, 1st Infantry, plus the platoon from of the 24th Infantry was now in garrison at Fort Madison. By April 3rd, there was one captain, two first lieutenants, one second lieutenant, and 100 enlisted men stationed at Fort Madison.75

In early June 1813, Captain Thomas Ramsey and his detachment of United States Riflemen recruits were ordered to leave Fort Russell in the Illinois Territory and report to Portage de Sioux, Missouri Territory. Upon their arrival, General Howard transferred Ramsey’s recruits to Stark’s and Clemson’s companies of the 1st Infantry on June 24th, and sent Ramsey packing back to Cincinnati with only one sergeant, one corporal and four privates, to start all over.6 In early June, Stark’s Company at Fort Madison consisted of 42 men and when the 40 newly transferred ex-riflemen recruits arrived in July, they swelled the company to over 80 men. One sergeant, two corporals, one musician, and thirty-six privates were ordered to ascend the Mississippi River while escorting supplies destined to Fort Madison.77 By July, 1813, 30 percent of the men were natives of Pennsylvania, 17 percent were from Virginia, and 14 percent were born in Ireland, the third highest birth group and the highest of the foreign born. The Fort Madison garrison boasted a diverse birth group with other soldiers from Connecticut, Indiana Territory, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Upper Louisiana Territory, Canada, England, Prussia, and Poland.78

Even as the garrison braced for more Indian attacks, new clothing arrived at the post. The new all-blue Infantry wool coat, pattern of 1813, new white woolen vests and woolen overalls arrived on July 10th. Instead of issuing the new pattern coats, Hamilton had them placed into stores along with the vests and overalls. The men continued to wear their wool blue bodied coats, with red cuffs and collar, that were issued prior to April, 1813. However, on the same day, the former Riflemen recruits received felt Infantry caps, linen overalls, shirts, neck stocks & clasps, shoes, socks, blankets, fatigue frocks, fatigue trousers, blue painted knapsacks and “gaithers” worn over the linen overalls to keep out the dirt and mud. The new coats and winter clothing would not be issued till issued until November 27, 1813.79 Medical supplies were also on the way to the post. On June 4th, medicine, tea, chocolate, barley, brandy, Madeira wine, molasses, sugar and vinegar were all prepared to be shipped from the Schuylkill arsenal in Philadelphia to the hospital at Fort Madison.80

75 Lt. Col. Bissell to Governor Howard, 3 April 1813, Bissell Letter Book, MHS.
76 Captain Clemson/Symmes Company Book and Captain Starks Company Book; Lt. Col. Bissell to Capt. Thomas Ramsey at Fort Russell, 7 June 1813, Bissell Letter Book, MHS.
77 Headquarters St. Louis, 24 June 1813, Belle Fontaine Letters, 24 August, 1808 to July 28th, 1813, bound with Fort Madison Garrison Orders, 2 January 1812 to 3 November 1813, bound with Belle Fontaine, 29 November, 1813 to 27 February 1814, Special Collections, West Point Library, USMA, West Point, NY. (Hereafter referred to as Belle Fontaine Letters. USMA.)
78 Captain Starks Company Book, NARA. There are various reports that Stark’s company numbered about 42 men by June, 1813 before it received the ex-riflemen recruits. Reviewing the Descriptive Book confirms that number.
79 Ibid.

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Indian attacks – July, 1813

Despite the efforts of Governor William Clark to move the nearby friendly Sauk and Fox, Fort Madison was still in constant danger from Black Hawk's band of approximate 100 warriors and the Rock River Winnebago. In July, Hamilton's men labored to build a “subterraneous passage,” perhaps a sally port, to the river, with a small blockhouse near the river bank. He also had the river banks cut down to be exposed to fire from the blockhouses. The ever active lieutenant decided to build a small blockhouse near the mouth of the ravine or “spring branch” on the west side of the fort. Hamilton wrote, “...this hollow affords them [attacking hostiles] about 60 yards of shelter and cannot be cut away so as to be raked by B.H. [Blockhouse].”81 Construction on this blockhouse began on July 5th. However, the Winnebago again used the spring branch to approach undetected and attacked the work party on the morning of July 8, 1813.82 The work party suffered two killed and one wounded. Private Samuel Heritage, 24th Infantry, was “killed in action,” along with Private John Minard, 1st Infantry, “shot and killed.”83

The new blockhouse was finally finished up to “above a man’s head.” Hamilton felt that the new blockhouse, though not completely chinked, “did actually appear very strong.” By July 16, he posted a corporal and three privates inside as a guard. Hamilton felt pleased when he over heard one the guards boast that they could hold out as long as they were inside the blockhouse. The guard received orders not to open the door until they were relieved by the next morning’s guard.

Three of the men who are known to have been in this guard were all from Captain Stark’s Company commanded by Hamilton. Thomas Faulkner, age 28, born in Ireland, had reenlisted at Fort Madison for five years on Christmas Day, 1811. Private Faulkner stood 5 feet 9 ½ inches high with blue eyes, brown hair, and a dark complexion. Private John Bowers, 21 years old, a former farmer from Morris, New Jersey, also stood at 5 feet 9 ½ inches tall, and like Faulkner, he had blue eyes, brown hair, but with a fair complexion. Originally recruited by Captain Ramsey for the Rifle Regiment in May 1812, he joined Stark’s company by early July 1813. Private John Ritts, 28 years old, the former express sergeant turned deserter, stood at 6 feet 1 inch tall, and also had blue eyes.84

81 Lt. Hamilton to Bissell 18 July 1813, RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation file, microfilm, NARA; Missouri Gazette, 11 September 1813, MHS.
82 Lt. Hamilton to Bissell 18 July 1813, RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation File, microfilm, NARA.
84 Lt. Hamilton to Bissell 18 July 1813 RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation File, microfilm, NARA.; Missouri Gazette, 11 September 1813, MHS.; Bowers roll no.2, Faulkner roll no. 5, Ritts roll no.10, Register of
On the morning of July 16, at about half past 6 am, the door to the blockhouse was seen wide open. A sentinel walked his post, between the stockade and the blockhouse, while the guard actually sat in the doorway. “Like a flash of lightening...” Sauk and Winnebago warriors attacked the guard at the blockhouse. At 7 am, the guard was shot at from the back side of the blockhouse, through the loop holes. The guard sprung up and ran inside attempting to close the door as more shots rang out. One Indian raced to the door and “sprung with his feet against the door to force it open,” but he was shot down by the soldiers at the stockade. Another warrior approached the blockhouse from the river side, and thrust a long spear inside the blockhouse through cracks in the chinking, striking the soldiers inside. Other Indians sprang high enough to shoot arrows into the blockhouse.85 The howitzers began to fire on the attacking warriors. Shells with about 5 second fuses exploded into the ranks of Indians. One Indian had his arm ripped off above the elbow while another suffered a broken arm above the wrist. Though the artillery managed to “clear the valley,” in less than 10 minutes, all four men of the block house guard were killed by a single warrior’s most effective weapon.86 It is probable that the Sauk warrior with the “long spear” was Sturgeon’s Head (Wee-Sheet).87 His spear appears to be a military espontoon. This fierce Sauk warrior had not been previously identified. Meanwhile, other warriors were taking out the stone underpinning of the blockhouse and managed to drag two of the men outside and mutilate their bodies. Hamilton blamed the corporal in charge of the guard for disobeying “a most positive order!” The Corporal was probably one of the men only recently transferred from Captain Ramsey’s detachment. Hamilton said this corporal was “not accustomed to obey such injunctions, but opened the door sufficient to be surprised, and then laid himself liable to all the confusion that is generally attendant on such sudden occasions.” For their error, the corporal and his comrades paid with their lives. The bloody assault on the block house guard impressed upon Hamilton that it was an act of “desperation.” He was almost at a loss to understand “...how instantaneously they were dispatched...” The nerve racking stress of being on constant alert resulted in an increase of men on the sick report. Hamilton wrote, “I must begin again cursing the situation of this Garrison...If there is any necessity of one in this part of the country why can it not be removed to a more eligible spot?”88

85 Lt. Hamilton to Lt. Col. Bissell, 18 July 1813, RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation File, microfilm, NARA; Missouri Gazette, 11 September 1813, MHS.
86 Lt. Hamilton to Lt. Col. Bissell, 18 July 1813, RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation File, microfilm, NARA; Missouri Gazette, 11 September, 1813, MHS.
87 “This man held a spear in his hand when he was being painted, with which he assured me he killed four white men during the war; I have some doubts of the fact.” Catlin painted him in 1832 immediately after the Black Hawk War, and was obviously not thinking of the War of 1812 when Sturgeon’s Head said, “...the war...” Most indications are that the Sauk did not think of “the Black Hawk War” as a war, especially when compared to the War of 1812. There are no documented accounts of a single warrior killing four white men during the Black Hawk War of 1832. I am indebted to Mike Dickey for leading the author to this information. George Catlin, Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians written during Eight Years Travel (1832-1839) amongst the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North America, Volume II, (New York: Dover Publications, 1973), Plate 286.
88 Lt. Hamilton to Lt. Col. Bissell 18 July 1813, RG 94, Fort Madison Reservation File, microfilm, NARA; Missouri Gazette, 11 September 1813, MHS.
Evacuation – November, 1813

By the end October, Hamilton had reason to be concerned over the contractor supplies of meat and flour. Hamilton ordered First Lieutenant Vasquez and Second Lieutenant William Parker, of Captain Cross’s Company of Artillerists detachment, and the garrison Surgeon Mate, Doctor Jonathan S. Cool, to examine the “quantity and quality of the Pork and flour belonging to the Contractor at this Post.” The board reported to the commanding officer who announced the next day on October 25, “...do certify that none of either is fit for use.” Frustrated, Hamilton sarcastically regretted that “…he knows not the object Government has in keeping up this establishment....” Hamilton did reassure the men stating, “...that what ever it may be, the soldiers composing it, will continue to retain their usual fortitude for a few days longer.”

Potatoes were issued in lieu of bread and though the meat declared unfit, “probably a few pieces may be found that can be eat[en]...” Hamilton realized “...not many more days privation will be endured, we must be relieved ...otherwise we must evacuate the Post...”

Hamilton was filled with a desire to hold on as ordered, yet at the same time he seemed released from a great weight now that a sound reason for evacuation was at hand. He immediately made plans for the orderly evacuation of Fort Madison.

The detachment of Artillerists under the command of Lieutenant Parker would be split into two sections. The first section would sail in the “small Keel Boat” while the second would embark in the “Number two flat boat.” The infantry was divided into four sections; the first section with Hamilton would board the “Armed Boat,” a keel boat strengthened with double planking and small armaments. The second section under Vasquez was assigned to the “large Keel,” the third section would board the “Number one Flat” boat, and the fourth section to the “Number three Flat” boat. A list of the men who would be boarding each boat was posted in each barracks “orderly room.” He also warned his carpenters and blacksmith’s to be ready “…to dismantle the Garrison at a minute’s warning.”

Fort Madison’s forced diet of potatoes and rancid pork, coupled with the uncertainty when fresh provisions would be supplied, finally compelled Hamilton to order the evacuation. Garrison orders on November 3rd stated, “Tomorrow the Garrison will be dismantled of every thing valuable, and piled on the parade; in order to facilitate which the Carpenters and Black Smiths will be kept off from Guard duty.” It is probable that the doors, windows, sawn plank, and iron work would have been removed from the fort and taken aboard the boats. Any remaining

89 Heitman, 985; 25 October, 1813, Fort Madison Garrison Orders, USMA; Surgeon Mate Cool, who served with Clemson’s Company at Fort Osage, until it was evacuated in June, 1813, had recently been transferred to Fort Madison. Cool was ordered on 28 July 1813, to proceed with Lieutenant Parker’s detachment of Captain Cross’s Artillery Company to “ascend the Mississippi to Fort Madison as reinforcement to that garrison,” 28 July 1813, Belle Fontaine Letters, USMA.
90 25 October 1813, Fort Madison Garrison Orders, USMA.
91 25 October 1813, Fort Madison Garrison Orders, USMA.
92 3 November 1813, Fort Madison Garrison Orders, USMA.
contractor stores, clothing, camp equipage, brass howitzers, plus other ordnance supplies such as cartridges, shot, shell, and carriages, were also loaded. This is important because it explains many of the documented inconsistencies on munitions.

Second, Fort Madison, one of several factory forts of the United States Army, found itself by 1813 as a major information and intelligence collection point for military campaigns in the Mississippi River theater of operations. The soldiers were well trained, and defended their post against a brave and extremely determined foe. In the end, the Sauk and Winnebago Nations were unable to defeat or run off the soldiers at Fort Madison by force.

But lastly, the Fort Madison Garrison Order Book clearly refutes the 1897 account written by an unknown author with unknown sources. The garrison did not evacuate the post on September 3, 1813. This information coupled with the known fact that the soldiers had no reason to dig a...

Conclusion

Several conclusions can be made to correct the general record on the evacuation of Fort Madison. First, the new documentation also shows that the post was issued howitzers and not six pound artillery. This is important because it explains many of the documented inconsistencies on munitions.

Second, Fort Madison, one of several factory forts of the United States Army, found itself by 1813 as a major information and intelligence collection point for military campaigns in the Mississippi River theater of operations. The soldiers were well trained, and defended their post against a brave and extremely determined foe. In the end, the Sauk and Winnebago Nations were unable to defeat or run off the soldiers at Fort Madison by force.

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93 Lt. Col. Bissell to Maj. E. B. Clemson, 8 June 1813, Bissell Letter Book. MHS. When Fort Osage, sister fort to Fort Madison, was evacuated in June, 1813, plank, doors, and windows were all removed and taken to Portage Des Sioux, Missouri Territory. It was common practice that when leaving a post, ordinance stores received top priority and security.
94 The Missouri Gazette reported that the contractor had failed to supply the post with provisions, plus stated that the news of Fort Madison’s evacuation was known for the past “eight or ten days”. 20 November 1813, Missouri Gazette, MHS.
95 21 November 1813, Fort Madison Garrison Orders, USMA.

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trench on the night of September 3, to enable them to crawl on their hands and knees to safety, throws serious doubt upon the entire last two pages of the 1897 account published in the *Annals of Iowa*. The 1897 account described United States soldiers who were surrounded by the enemy, and then silently crawled to their safety after digging a trench on that night. This new documentation now brought forward, clearly shows that the defense of Fort Madison was well planned and well executed, and that the post was evacuated in November, not September, 1813. There is no documentation to indicate that the Fort Madison garrison was forced to flee for their lives by sneaking out of their post.

Following the evacuation, the Sauk and Winnebago continued to harass the settlements in 1814 and deal defeats to Lieutenant John Campbell and Major Zachary Taylor. Black Hawk would not stop fighting even after the war was over. His war did not end till 1832 and still he managed to strike the last blow at his enemies by dictating his autobiography.

The garrison at Fort Madison, along with the companies of the 1st United States Infantry from Fort Osage and Fort Belle Fontaine, would be sent to Canada in July, 1814, as part of a three company battalion, fighting at the “slaughter pen” of Fort Erie.97 Owens Company of the 1st Infantry would be eventually assigned to newly promoted Captain Hamilton, and the old Fort Madison Company would be broken up, the men going into the other two companies.98 The officers and men of the 1st Infantry in Stark’s and Owens’ Company, Desha’s Company of the 24th Infantry, and also Captain Cross’s Artillery, had plenty to be proud of. Despite that Fort Madison was the “most ineligible position for defense upon the Mississippi”, they “did themselves great honour in so ably defending this fort.” For their defense was most certainly a gallant defense against a formidable foe.99

*Editor:* For the last three issues of the *Journal the Consortium of the War of 1812* has gratefully unfolded this curious bit of western history. We extend our thanks to Mr. Bennett and all who may have assisted him in this research. Your editor encourages others to re-examine those “facts” associated with our conduct of the War to determine whether what we know as True is True.

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**A PLEA FOR RESEARCH**

A research project for the curious would be a re-examination of the true influence of Black Hawk on the conduct of the War of 1812. Since his memoir was first published in 1833, few scholars have researched the details of his influence. While there are excellent notes by Milo Milton Quaife in the 1916 Lakeside Press edition of his *Life*, only Professor Donald Jackson has attempted a re-edit and that was more than 20 years ago. The material is out there. Let's find it and bring this Native American personality to life again. Your Editor's own research indicates that he may have been the architect of Major Zachary Taylor's defeat on the upper Mississippi in 1814. Is that True?

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97 Christian Wilt to Brother, 23 April 1814, Christian Wilt Papers, MHS; Robert C. Nicholas, General Court Martial, 1816, RG 153, K-1, NARA
98 Captain Owens/Hamilton Company Book, RG 98, NARA.
99 *Sketches*, 77-78.
VISIT1812
OLD FORT NIAGARA
YOUNGSTOWN, NEW YORK

Old Fort Niagara has stood in defense of the fortunes of five nations – France, Great Britain, Canada, the United States, and the Iroquois peoples – for almost 300 years. It may be the most popular of the War of 1812 sites in New York State and may run a close second to the fort that defended the Star Spangled Banner, itself, in Baltimore – Fort McHenry.

Visited by more than 100,000 people every year, it is expected to be a prime focal point during the upcoming bicentennial celebrations.

Built on a bluff above Lake Ontario at its' confluence with the Niagara River, the fort is only miles from the Falls but centuries from it's initiation as a defensive work. During the colonial period, Fort Niagara controlled access to the Great Lakes and to the interior of the continent. The old French Castle reminds us of the French interests in North America. She lost to the British in 1759, but the building remains a symbol of her ambitions. The fort itself remained in British hands after the American Revolution and passed to the United States by subsequent treaty only in 1796.

During the War of 1812 the friendships fostered by the officers at Fort Niagara with their British counterparts at Fort George were quickly shattered, literally. Bombardments across the Niagara River were frequent and sometimes devastating. The Americans were able to capture and hold Fort George for a time in 1813, but the British attack across the Niagara in December 1813 resulted in their occupation of Fort Niagara until the end of the war.

Even after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 as an alternate way west, the Fort's defensive and commercial importance continued well into the 20th century. The fort seen today was restored between 1926 and 1934. While the last army units were withdrawn in 1963, the U.S. Coast Guard still maintains a military presence at the site.

The military architecture, living history events and programs, historical exhibits and collections, archeology, and educational outreach mix daily into a delightful experience for the War of 1812 enthusiast.

Old Fort Niagara is operated by the not-for-profit Old Fort Niagara Association and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation. The Association makes it possible to operate the fort in a virtual self-funding manner. Admissions, museum shop sales, memberships, grants, and fund-raisers each support the mission of preservation, research and education.

Admission fees are about $10.00 for an adult and $6.00 for children; those under 6 years old are free. Discounts are provided for seniors, AAA/CAA members, NYS Parks Master Pass coupons and guests of the Old Fort Niagara Association. There are also special group rates. The Park is open year-round. The hours of operation are generally 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (7:00 pm in July and August). The Park is closed January 1, U.S. Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

The Association can be contacted through Old Fort Niagara, P.O. Box 169, Youngstown, New York 14174-0169. Call: 716.745.7611 (Fax 716.745.9141).

Journal of the War of 1812, Volume 12, No. 3, Page 22.
This quarter we show in brief the events of the War centered in and around the Niagara Region on the New York and Upper Canada frontier.

**Pre-war Events:**

- **1811 Dec 02**: Br. Gov./Gen. Provost expects aggressive American action on Niagara frontier

**Events in 1812:**

- **Jun 24**: News of declaration of war reaches UC
- **Jun 28**: NY Militia Gen. James Wadsworth worries about preparedness of himself and troops
- **July 12**: Br. Gen. Isaac Brock expresses concern for loyalty of American immigrants to Niagara Region
- **Aug 10**: US Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer reaches Buffalo; assumes command of US troops
- **Aug 26**: US Gen. Van Rensselaer hears of loss at Detroit from Br. Sources
- **Sep 28**: US Gen. Alexander Smyth reaches Buffalo, intent on commanding a brigade
- **Oct 05**: Army inspector W. King reports deplorable condition of Winder's 14th Regiment of Infantry
- **Oct 08**: US captures Detroit and Caledonia at Fort Erie, UC
- **Oct 21**: US Gen. William Dearborn issues vague and indefinite orders to US commanders at Niagara
- **Nov 06**: NY Evening Post reports upon pending arrival of 2,000 PA militia
- **Nov 10**: US Gen. Smyth's first proclamation issued
- **Nov 12**: Br. troop returns show aggregate strength on Niagara frontier to be 1,225 effectives
- **Nov 17**: US Gen. Smyth's second manifesto/proclamation issued
- **Nov 18**: PA militia arrive at Niagara
- **Nov 20**: Br. Gen. Roger Hale Sheaffe orders bombardment of Fort Niagara
- **Nov 25**: US Gen. Smyth issues his battle order
- **Nov 27**: US Gen. Smyth's postpones invasion of UC
- **Nov 30**: US has second abortive invasion fiasco
- **Dec 08**: Over 1,000 PA militia desert in single day
- **Dec 21**: US Gen. Smyth resigns command

**Events in 1813:**

- **Feb 20**: US Secretary of War, John Armstrong, orders an assault on Ft. Erie
- **Mar 17**: Artillery exchange between Ft. Erie and Buffalo, NY
- **Apr 27**: American assault on York, UC; US Gen. Zebulon Pike killed
- **May 08**: Americans evacuate York; land at Four-Mile Creek
- **May 27**: American assault on Ft. George, UC
- **Jun 02**: Br. Gen. Vincent occupy Burlington Heights
- **Jun 03**: US forces arrive Stoney Creek
- **Jun 06**: Battle of Stoney Creek, UC
- **Jun 11**: Br. LTC Bisshopp raids Black Rock
- **Jun 13**: US Gen. Scott celebrates his 26th birthday
- **Jun 22**: Laura Secord's walk to Beaver Dams
- **Jun 24**: Battle of Beaver Dams, UC
- **Jul 15**: Br. issue order in attempt to curb Indian barbarity
- **Oct 04**: Armstrong's order on burning of Newark, UC
- **Nov 07**: US Gen. George McClure worries over defense of Ft. George, UC
- **Dec 10**: Burning of Newark, UC
- **Dec 19**: Br. raid and burn Buffalo and Black Rock

**Events in 1814:**

- **May 03**: US Gen. Peter B. Porter gets Indian agreement to fight for US
- **May 14**: US attack on Port Dover leads to Court of Inquiry
- **Jun 22**: British return shows strength at 4,400 men
- **Jul 03**: American army (3,400+) crosses to UC
- **Jul 05**: British surrender at Ft. Erie, UC
- **Jul 05**: Battle of Chippewa, UC
- **Jul 05**: Br. Gen. P. Riall counterattacks at Chippewa
- **Jul 14**: Br. Gen. Riall reinforced at Twenty-Mile Creek
- **Jul 18**: Br. order retaliation for American spoliation
- **Jul 20**: US Gen. Isaac Brown moves army to invest Ft. George, UC
- **Jul 25**: Battle of Lundy's Lane (Bridgewater)
- **Aug 01**: Br. Gen. Gordon Drummond begins siege at Ft. Erie
- **Aug 03**: Br. attack at Conjocta Creek, near Black Rock
- **Aug 04**: US Gen. Edmund P. Gaines arrives at Ft. Erie
- **Aug 13-5**: Br. Assault at Ft. Erie
- **Aug 20**: Intermittent skirmishing at Ft. Erie
- **Aug 28**: US Gen. E. P. Gaines severely wounded
- **Sep 16**: US raid on Port Talbot, UC
- **Sep 17**: US sortie from Ft. Erie
- **Sep 27**: US Gen. George Izard joins Brown on the Niagara
- **Oct 19**: Battle at Cook's Mill, UC
In many ways the 30-mile frontier between the U.S. and British Canada along the north-flowing Niagara River can be said to be an “accidental” war zone.

First, if the American war aims were to end impressment, free seaborne trade, stop Indian deprecations, or even conquer British Canada, then the Niagara was the wrong place to begin or end those efforts. If the British aims were to limit the drain on manpower needed for the European war with Napoleon and protect its colonial fur and timber trade and trading partners, then any conflict along the Niagara, in their view, should have been little more than a holding action.

No, the Niagara frontier became an increasingly active war zone for other reasons.

Simply, there were people there, some quite partisan. Development patterns after the American Revolution saw the movement of Americans with an independent and frontier spirit to Western New York. Decades of Indian conflict, some believed supported by British agents in Canada, resulted in this region's standing ranks with other frontier War Hawks demanding war. Peter Porter and other landholders saw the advantages of defending their interests and striking back at the supporters of their Indian tormentors.

Second, the Niagara Region stood along a natural chain of ancient trade routes from Halifax and Montreal to the interior. Unknown today to most Americans are the trail-blazing efforts north of the present U.S.-Canadian border which brought French and British explorers to the Pacific Ocean a decade before Lewis and Clark. The “West” was British for the exploiting and the Niagara River with its developed portages was a key link in the chain.

Lastly, in the early 19th century at least, European thought put European armies on terrain upon which they could maneuver and be supplied. Tactically, the approach routes and battle grounds in the Niagara Region suited the mode of warfare at the time. Additionally the river was readily crossed at several points and it was the crossings that focused the military mind.

The Queenston adventure, a major amphibious assault, and raiding dominated the events of 1812. In retrospect both sides were evaluating their respective military positions and postures, testing their own and the enemy's strengths and weaknesses, and, as in any war, exhibiting more individual bravado than collective prudence.

By 1813 campaigning season, both belligerents came to believe that control of the land meant control of the lakes. Major actions shifted to Lakes Ontario and Erie. Naval thought gained ascendancy. What land action there were (Fort George, York, Stoney Creek, etc.) were ancillary to the larger naval theory. The British command objectives seemed to be hold, attack where possible, and await such reinforcement as may come from across the Atlantic. And, yes, what you cannot get from your Mother Country, smuggle across the northern border from the United States.

The Americans benefited from a wartime phenomenon which sees the rise of men who have the vision, respect, courage, and control of the implements of war. While Smyth, Van Rensselaer, and Dearborn failed, Brown, Izard and Macomb, along with a young Winfield Scott, rose to the need. In 1813 critical wartime skills were being infused into the American Army effecting all from the teenage drummer to the ground force commanders.

A showdown on this front was inevitable. With the defeat of Napoleon in April, 1814, thousands of veteran British troops were sent to the North American battlefields. While there were successes and failures in each theater of war, the American Army, rag-tag and undermanned in 1812, held the British at Plattsburg, North Point and New Orleans. But the value of leadership, training, and execution really showed along the Niagara.

The battles at Lundy's Lane, Chippewa, and even Cook's Mill demonstrated for observers in critical decades to come that the United States could raise, train and support an army in the field equal, and at times superior, to any other world power of the era.

That was the lesson of the Niagara Campaigns during the War of 1812.

Reference:

Babcock, Louis L. The War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier (1927), among many others. - Editor.
BOOK REVIEWS


H. Alden Fletcher’s *Bravest of the Brave* recounts the truly illustrious life of David Porter (1780-1843), son of a naval captain, and father and adopted father of two of the most famous admirals of the American Civil War, David Dixon Porter and David Farragut. Among his feats, Porter fought against Jean Lafitte the pirate, and sailed the USS *Essex* around Cape Horn during the War of 1812, the first time an American warship had ever sailed on the Pacific Ocean. He was ordered to stand court-martial for an incident in Puerto Rico, left the U.S. to become the head of the Mexican Navy, and then returned in good graces to the U.S. Navy. Porter’s life was so full of adventure that he also was used in part as the model of the Captain Jack Aubrey character in Patrick O’Brien’s book series.

Fletcher has definitely done research for the book, as the fictional passages bring to life how Porter lived at sea, especially during battle, making life and death decisions, and being away from his family for months at a time. Many of the adventures chronicled in Fletcher’s work are based on Porter’s own writings and other period historical documents. The author uses fictional dialog to augment events from letters as well as events recorded in what is assumed is Porter’s personal diary, covering from 1796, when Porter entered life at sea, to his death in 1843.

The work is fact-based fictional, but italicized diary entries and personal letters give the incorrect impression the passages are direct quotes. Instead many passages are paraphrased, and unfortunately, none are sourced. If the diary, too, is only fictional, this should be stated at the start.

Porter’s life was full of adventure, indeed, but describing the intimate romantic evening of his return to his wife after months at sea was too much for this reader. The book will appeal to the basic War of 1812 enthusiast and readers who enjoy adventure blended with historical fiction, but a War of 1812 enthusiast may need more for an account of Porter’s life.

(Patrick O’Neill is a professional historian and archaeologist He is finishing nine years of research on Captain David Porter and his involvement between the burning of Washington and attack on Baltimore in 1814.)


John C. Fredriksen once again has immeasurably aided researchers, re-enactors and enthusiasts alike with his latest offering, *The United States Army in the War of 1812*. Its subtitle serves as a good summary of its contents: “Concise Biographies of Commanders and Operational Histories of Regiments, with Bibliographies of Published and Primary Sources.” And, indeed, it does.

This comprehensive research guide in one volume addresses the careers of the U.S. chain of command from the Commander in Chief, James Madison, to each of the 27 brigadier generals serving during the war. Additionally each of the infantry, rifle, cavalry and artillery regiments are included with excellent bibliographic references for the researcher.

With regard to regiments in the Army, Mr. Fredriksen pulls together and presents in one place the unit history, organization and battle honors for each unit. His research provides the available archival, manuscript, and primary and secondary sources.

The 3rd Regiment of Artillery is a good example. This 20 company regiment was widely disbursed during the War. Elements of the Regiment participated along the northern frontier from Queenston Heights to La Colle Mill and Oswego. George Armistead, hero at Fort McHenry, was a member of this Regiment. It's archival material is located at the National Archives, as well as the historical societies in Connecticut, Indiana, New York and Rode Island. Manuscripts supporting additional research on the 3rd are in Virginia, Michigan, Massachusetts and at the Library of Congress. This depth of information is replicated for each unit in the army's establishment.

Readers and researchers will find the work an essential resource, whether preparing for a commemorative event or re-enactment or simply a visit to a military park during the upcoming bicentennial period.

Find a space in your library for this one!

On August 22nd, the Horseshoe Bend National Military Park hosted its annual Muster. Over 1,600 visitors joined re-enactors, demonstrators and park staff in a day-long event amidst a beautiful Alabama summer.

In addition to the opportunity to tour the 3-mile loop road and the 2.8 mile nature trail, visitors were greeted with musket and cannon firing demonstrations supported by Capt. Bast's Company Spies and Scouts, R.L. Lehmann, 1st Sgt., inter-active Creek and Cherokee cultural exhibits, and opportunities to participate in the Junior Ranger Program and Friends of Horseshoe Bend.

Indoors, area scholars offered their insights into the Creek War, native American warfare, and the effect of Alabama topography on the conduct of the War. Mr. Steve Thomas, Dr. Kathryn Braund, and Dr. John Hall, each contributed to the success of the day. Drs. Braund and Hall were also available for book signings.

Your Editor was able to attend the Muster and discussed with Park Superintendent Marianne Mills, the upcoming 50th Anniversary of Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, the Park feature on the PBS Series “The National Parks: America's Best Idea Parks,” aired in late September, 2009 (look for the reruns!), and plans for the national bicentennial of the War of 1812.

All in all, a good day.

The Park is located in the Alabama highlands along the Tallapoosa River, 12 miles north of Dadeville, on Alabama State Road 49.

New York City Butchers were Patriots too. Don't think so? See the article on wartime commemorative events in the NY Evening Post on October 15, 1813.

Brigadier General Winfield Scott was severely wounded at Lundy's Lane and was carried from the field by Charles K. Gardner, the future Postmaster at Washington, DC.
War of 1812 Events Calendar  
November 2009 – January 2010

Oct 31 – Nov 1:  
Muster at Prophetstown 1812, Prophetstown State Park, near Battleground, IN. For more information contact Rich Ferguson at 765.566.3877 or by email at rich.ferguson@nwsc.k12.in.us.

Nov 7-8:  
11th Annual Muster on the Wabash, Fort Knox II, North of Vincennes, IN. For more information contact David Weaver at vincenneshs@dnr.in.gov or call 812.882.7422.

Nov 7:  
The World at War: Miniature War Gaming Day. Contact Fort Meigs, Ohio, 29100 W. River Road, Perrysburg, Ohio, 419.874.4121 or 1-800.283.8916.

Nov 14-15:  
Re-enactor Hayrides at Fort Belle Fontaine. St. Louis, MO. Includes stop at a camp of soldiers from the War of 1812. Reservations required. Contact Mile Kladky at 314.544.5714 or Fort Belle Fontaine Park, 13002 Bellefontaine Road, St. Louis, MO 63138.

Nov 21 and Dec 19:  
Special Seasonal Nature Tours on the Fort. Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. For more information, contact Vince Vaise at 410.962.4290, ext. 224.

Dec 13:  
Fort Meigs Holiday Open House. Fort Meigs, Ohio, 29100 W. River Road, Perrysburg, Ohio, 419.874.4121 or 1-800.283.8916.

Jan 8-9, 2010:  
195th Anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, Chalmette, LA. The event is being held downstream from the battlefield as the new visitor's center is under construction. Contact Danny Forbis, Chalmette Battlefield, 8606 West St. Bernard Highway, Chalmette, LA 70043, 505.589.3883, ext 228.

EVENT SPONSORS:  
The Journal of the War of 1812 will list your event free of charge. For a listing, contact the Editor at: the1812archive@gmail.com

The Journal Has Renewed its Advertising Program

The Journal is now accepting advertising copy. Each month more enthusiasts are being aggressively recruited into our ranks. They know the value of this publication and are bonded by common interests.

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We will be glad to forward our media kit with our sizes and prices to fit your business.

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December 1 for the Winter Issue  
March 1 for the Spring Issue  
June 1 for the Summer Issue  
September 1 for the Fall Issue

According to at least one study, at the end of the War of 1812, in 1815, Albany, New York, had the highest rate of growth of any city in the state, including New York City. Government was growing even then! See Alvin Kass, Politics in New York State 1800-1830 (1965), p. 8.
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*Journal of the War of 1812, Volume 12, No. 3, Page 28.*
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All you have forgotten about the Embargo Act of 1807

Ograbme!

Also next Quarter: England, France and the Urge for War!

Send your questions on the Embargo to the Editor at the1812archive@gmail.com