

The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History

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NOTE ON THE INDEX

Certain aspects of the treatment of persons and vessels in this index supplement annotation in the volume.

PERSONS: The rank of military personnel is the highest rank attained by the individual between the declaration of war, 18 June 1812, and 31 December 1812. When all references to an individual lie outside that span, the rank is the highest applicable to the person at the times to which the text refers. Civilian masters of vessels are identified simply as "Capt." Vessels that civilians and naval personnel commanded during the period 18 June to 31 December 1812 are noted in parentheses at the end of the man's entry.

The rating "Ordinary Seaman" indicates a sailor not yet proficient at his trade, as opposed to an "Able Seaman." The designation "Seaman," however, is less precise. In some contemporary documents, in particular, muster rolls and payrolls, it was used to mean "Able Seaman." In other documents, such as the list of paroled prisoners on pages 480-87, it was used to refer to non-officer naval personnel of almost any rating. Of necessity, the designation "Seaman" in this index is used in that general sense.

VESSELS: The ship nomenclature adopted here is that which best describes the use and rig of a vessel, such as ship of the line, frigate, sloop of war, brig, schooner and sloop. *Sloop of war* includes warships referred to as corvettes, ships, and ship sloops, all of which were three-masted, square-rigged and usually flush-decked. *Brig* includes vessels called brig sloops and gun brigs, which were two-masted, square-rigged and flush-decked. *Sloop* includes sloops and cutters, single-masted, fore-and-aft rigged vessels. When confronted with discrepancies between our two main historical sources, J. J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy: An Historical Index*, 2 vols. (New York, 1969), and the Admiralty's Ships in Sea Pay list (see pp. 180-82); we have usually followed the latter as the more contemporary authority.

Several vessels are listed by their rate. *Leopard*, a fourth-rate, fifty-gun ship, was no longer considered strong enough to fight in the line of battle. Most British sixth rates were quarterdecked and technically frigates, but to call them such would connote a non-existent parity with fifth-rate frigates. The British termed sixth rates collectively "post ships," the weakest in the Royal Navy commanded by post captains, but the latter term is not widely used.

Since the use and rig of a vessel could vary, nomenclature used to identify vessels refers to the period 18 June to 31 December 1812. When all references to a vessel lie outside that span, the nomenclature is that applicable to the vessel at the time to which the text refers.

The names of commanders of warships, including privateers but not most gunboats, during the period 18 June to 31 December 1812, follow the vessel's entry in parentheses. The names of masters of commercial vessels are so listed when mentioned in the text.

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